Real Portraits in Literature
Stacie Friend

(In *Portraits and Philosophy*, edited by Hans Maes, Routledge 2019. Please cite the published version.)

Introduction
Portraits play a role, sometimes as central role, in many works of literary fiction. One thinks immediately of Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* or Balzac's *Le chef-d'oeuvre inconnu*. In these cases the portraits are fictional, invented by the authors. Other literary works make reference to real portraits existing outside the storyworld, for example the Darnley Portrait of Elizabeth I in A. S. Byatt's *The Virgin the Garden*.

By contrast with many other real entities represented by literary works, such as Napoleon and Russia in *War and Peace*, portraits are themselves representations. Portraits thus possess a double function in fiction, as both represent*ed* and represent*er*. I argue that this duality has implications for how we should appreciate the literary works in which real portraits appear. In making this argument I discuss two works of fiction which, though very different in other ways, are both murder mysteries in which real portraits figure: Josephine Tey's *The Daughter of Time* and Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red*.

I begin by drawing two distinctions relevant to understanding the representation of portraits in literature: between foreground and background and between visualizing and seeing. I then describe the roles of real portraits in Tey's and Pamuk's novels. By contrasting their treatments of portraiture, I articulate a particular way in which works of literature can misrepresent the real world, which has gone largely unnoticed: namely, by mischaracterizing the functions of representations – in this case, portraits – themselves.

Foreground and Background
Individuals represented in fiction, whether real or invented, may be placed in the foreground of events or remain in the background. The distinction is not, however, either/or; to the contrary, there are differing degrees of foregrounding and backgrounding along different dimensions. For example, in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot,* the eponymous awaited is never present in any scene, staying in that sense in the background; but is nonetheless central to the dramatic conceit, coming in that sense to the foreground. The same distinctions apply to portraits represented in fiction.

A nice example of differences in importance to the story may be found in *Hamlet*.[1] In Act II, Scene 2, Hamlet describes the practice of buying portrait miniatures of his uncle Claudius to curry favor, even among those who previously scorned him: 'It is not very strange, for my uncle is King of Denmark, and those that would make mouths at him while my father lived give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats apiece for his picture in little' (II.2.306-309). The 'picture in little' is mentioned almost in passing; apart from this remark it plays no further role in the drama.

Contrast this case with the role of portraits in Act III, Scene 4, when Hamlet insists that Gertrude compare pictures of Hamlet's father and his uncle: 'Look here, upon this picture, and on this, / The counterfeit presentment of two brothers' (III.4.53-53). The portraits of

Hamlet's father and of Claudius play a more significant role in the plot, insofar as Hamlet deploys them to draw a sharp distinction between Gertrude's two husbands. On the one hand, the picture of King Hamlet (we are told) reveals 'A combination and a form indeed / Where every god did seem to set his seal / To give the world assurance of a man' (III.4.60-62). The picture of Claudius is described very differently: 'Here is your husband; like a mildewed ear / Blasting his wholesome brother' (III.4.64-65). Having compared the two portraits, Hamlet demands of Gertrude, repeatedly in different variations, whether she has eyes to see the difference between the two depictions.

References to the portraits in the two scenes perform a similar function in Hamlet's mouth: to insult or condemn Claudius. However, the portraits in Act III, Scene 4 are clearly much more in the foreground, playing an essential role in Hamlet's efforts to persuade Gertrude to reject Claudius. The mention of miniatures in the earlier scene instead exploits the familiarity of contemporary theatergoers with the practice of producing miniature portraits of the royals – a practice of Elizabethan and Jacobean England, rather than Denmark in the late middle ages. This connection was recently highlighted by Tacita Dean's miniature video portrait of three Shakespearean actors, titled *His Picture in Little*, displayed in a 2018 exhibition at Britain's National Portrait Gallery alongside the collection of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century portrait miniatures (National Portrait Gallery 2018).

The implied reference to the contemporary practice of creating miniatures draws attention to another sense in which portraits may be in the background of a piece of literature: by figuring in the shared assumptions that we are invited to bring to a work. Authors cannot detail every aspect of their storworlds; instead, they rely on readers and audiences to "fill in the gaps" by drawing on what they already know. For instance, *Hamlet* contains numerous allusions to humoral psychology, which are likely to be missed by today's audiences. Shakespeare's contemporaries, on the other hand, would have been prompted to understand the characters in the familiar terms of that theory.[2] Similarly, they would have relied on their background knowledge of miniature portraiture to grasp the role of the 'picture in little.'

A further contrast between foreground and background, highlighted by the Godot example, is whether a portrait is present in a scene. For a performance art such as theater, the question can be taken literally: Do the portraits make an appearance on stage? For the real miniatures Shakespeare's contemporaries knew the answer is certainly negative, and it is probably also negative for the 'picture in little'; but it is plausible that Hamlet confronts Gertrude with portraits of Claudius and King Hamlet. According to theater historian Richard Schoch (2016), it is unlikely that the original performances of *Hamlet* included the portraits as physical presences due to limitations on moveable scenery. However, productions since at least the eighteenth century have typically placed them on stage or, later, on screen. Since Shakespeare offers no guidance as to the form of the portraits, Schoch tells us, different productions have addressed the issue differently, sometimes using large portraits hanging on the walls, at other times small medallions held in the hand. Presenting portraits visible to the audience posed obvious practical problems in live performance, since the portraits had to resemble the actors playing Claudius and the ghost. For this reason many productions have kept the faces on the portraits obscured to the audience, leaving them to imagine the likenesses.

This difference, between imagining a portrait and seeing one, is essential to the contrast between real and fictional portraits represented in literature. I turn to this distinction in the next section.

Visualizing the Fictional and Seeing the Real

In her wonderful book *Portraits in Fiction*, A. S. Byatt analyzes the effect of including invented portraits in works of literature.[3] Discussing her novel *Possession*, in which a character has collected paintings and photographs of the fictional Victorian poet Randolph Henry Ash, she writes that

> readers will see as many Manets, as may Watts, as many imaginary photographs as there are readers, all connected, all different … Visual images are stronger than verbal half-images, and a good novel exploits the richness of the imprecision, of the hinted. (Byatt 2002, p. 92-93)

That is, invented portraits in literature are to be visualized, not seen; everyone will imagine a different picture. This is for Byatt a significant difference between the portraits created by authors and those created by painters, and a reason for novelists to be wary of film adaptations which show what would otherwise be the 'visualised unseen' (2002, p. 92).

To illustrate, we may consider what is perhaps the most famous imaginary portrait in literature, the picture of Dorian Gray in Oscar Wilde's novel, fictionally painted by Basil Hallward. Most book covers have a picture of the fictional protagonist on the cover, prompting us to all to see exactly the same image. Even more problematic, according to Byatt, are depictions of the portrait at the end of the novel, after the transformation. The painting by Ivan Albright for Albert Lewin's 1945 film revels in the macabre vision of moral and physical decay, but it thereby reduces the richness of our imaginings to a single image:

> *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is full of imaginary colours and solid objects. It is always odd, and odder on reflection, to see film versions of novels that were written to be imagined – more particularly the more visually evocative the naked words manage to be. … Films also make visible what was invisible – in this case, most particularly the demonic and changing portrait. (Byatt 2002, pp. 64-67)

Whether or not one agrees with Byatt's position, there is certainly a significant difference between visualizing and seeing a portrait. This is a key contrast between imaginary portraits and real portraits in fiction. Real portraits can be seen, not merely visualized.

What is a 'real portrait'? First and foremost, it is a portrait that exists outside the imagined storyworld.[4] In this respect Albright's painting, *Picture of Dorian Gray* (1943/44), is perfectly real; it is a physical object currently located at the Art Institute of Chicago.[5] There is a further question of whether the painting is a genuine *portrait*. Some conceptions of portraiture seem to rule out portraits of fictional characters or other nonexistent individuals (see Maes 2015). I agree with Maes that there is no good reason to exclude these works from the genre, though I do not argue for this position here. My focus will be on portraits of indisputably real individuals.

Now, authors use real portraits for a variety of reasons. One involves inventing a story about the person depicted. For instance, in the National Portrait Gallery's *Imagined Lives* exhibit in 2011-2012, authors were invited to create fictional stories about the unknown subjects of fourteen portraits in the collection (National Portrait Gallery 2011).[6] The same motivation appears to have been behind Tracy Chevalier's representation Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring* in her novel of the same name, in which the author creates an identity and story for the presumed sitter. It should be noted, though, that most scholars classify Vermeer's work not as a portrait but as a *tronie*, a type of painting that was not meant to represent any specific individual, real or imagined (Janson 2002). Instead, tronies were studies of character or facial type and often allowed artists to demonstrate their skills, for instance the ability to render exotic clothing (see Sooke 2014). Nonetheless, the painting itself is obviously real and therefore can be seen, not mere visualized.

When an author refers to a real picture, she depends upon readers' knowledge of how it looks, or their ability to find out. Byatt exploits this knowledge in her novel *The Virgin the Garden,* in which the Darnley Portrait of Elizabeth I is introduced in the Prologue at an event at the National Portrait Gallery in 1968. Various characters see themselves in the portrait, though in very different terms, and readers are invited to consider their perspectives in light of the appearance of the real portrait.

In this case, though, there is an added dimension: not only is the portrait real, it represents a real (and well-known) individual. This fact opens up a further dimension of appreciation. We are called upon not only to consider the portrait as a visible physical object, but also the way in which it represents its subject. In the rest of the chapter I explore the significance of this observation by considering the contrasting roles played by real portraits in two very different works of literature.

The Daughter of Time

The first work is Josephine Tey's *The Daughter of Time.* 'Josephine Tey' is a pen name of the English author Elizabeth MacKintosh, used for her series of five crime novels featuring Inspector Alan Grant of Scotland Yard. *The Daughter of Time,* published in 1951, is the last of the series and the work that has won MacKintosh the most acclaim. The novel has for years occupied the No.1 slot in the UK Crime Writers' Association list of the 'Top 100 Crime Novels of All Time.' (It is No.4 in the Mystery Writers of American 'Top 100 Mystery Novels of All Time.')

Throughout the novel Grant is laid up in hospital in London, injured in an accident pursuing a suspect. Because he is renowned for his skill in the interpretation of faces, his friend Marta brings him a set of portrait prints associated with historical mysteries, including one of Richard III from the National Portrait Gallery. Here is the portrait described when Grant first looks at it:

> It was the portrait of a man. A man dressed in the velvet cap and slashed doublet of the late fifteenth century. A man about thirty-five or thirty-six years old, lean and clean-shaven. He wore a rich jewelled collar, and was in the act of putting a ring on the little finger of his right hand. But he was not looking at the ring. He was looking off into space. …
> On the back was printed: *Richard the Third. From the portrait in the National Portrait Gallery. Artist Unknown.* (Tey 1995, pp. 29-30)

The usual assumption, judging by book covers, is that the print Grant is given is of this portrait, which is one of two similar portraits on display in the National Portrait Gallery at the time of this writing:

<FIGURE 1 HERE>

The portrait is by an unknown artist from the late sixteenth century, most likely a copy from a portrait made while Richard was alive.

It is the portrait that motivates Grant to investigate the historical disappearance of the so-called 'princes in the tower,' Richard's nephews – Edward V and his brother Richard – who disappeared around 1483. The disappearance famously provides the central plot of Shakespeare's *Richard the Third,* a play that effectively cemented the idea of Richard as an evil hunchback regicide through the ages. Using documents brought by a young researcher from the British Museum Library, Grant eventually determines that the widespread assumption that Richard had his nephews killed, shared by Shakespeare and most historians since, is utterly wrong. Instead, Grant concludes, Henry VII was responsible.

Now, Tey's novel is not merely a fictional take on history, art divorced from life. *The Daughter of Time* puts forward the author's interpretation of real historical events. Even the title alludes to this purpose; it is a reference to the proverb 'truth is the daughter of time,' which Tey quotes in the epigraph. Tey purposely deploys Grant's systematic deductions from the materials he is brought to weave an argument for Richard's innocence – not merely within the storyworld but more importantly in the actual world. And the argument has been remarkably persuasive: *The Daughter of Time* is almost single-handedly responsible for motivating the twentieth-century movement to exonerate Richard (Polsky 2015).

The portrait plays a key role in motivating the investigation that develops into this historical argument. Grant is intrigued because he perceives a stark contrast between how Richard appears in the picture on the one hand, and how he is portrayed in the official history on the other. Grant initially assumes that the portrait is of a judge rather than a criminal; as he puts the contrast several times in the novel, it seems to show someone 'on the bench' rather than 'in the dock.' When he turns it over and discovers that the subject is Richard III, he is surprised. He contemplates the portrait at length and repeatedly throughout the novel, later musing, 'He is the author of the most revolting crime in history, and he has the face of a great judge, a great administrator' (Tey 1995, p. 91).

Grant also demands opinions of its subject from everyone who comes into his hospital room, before telling them who it is. Predictably, none of his interlocutors guesses Richard's identity. Instead, their observations reinforce Grant's sense that the portrait reveals something contrary to the standard historical line. For example, when the surgeon is confronted by the picture he says, 'It's the look one sees on the face of a crippled child' (Tey 1995, p. 32). The hospital matron responds, 'It is the most desperately unhappy face that I have ever encountered' (p. 49). Marta reports the words of the Victoria and Albert Museum expert who selected the portraits for her: 'That's the most notorious murderer in history, and yet his face is in my estimation the face of a saint!' (p. 83).

Although the portrait itself is not treated as decisive proof of Richard's innocence, it is a motivation for reconsidering the evidence, and remains ever-present throughout the novel. This is by contrast with the role of a different portrait in the novel I turn to next.

My Name is Red

Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red* was published in Turkish in 1998 and translated into English in 2001. The novel brought Pamuk to international attention, and he won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2006. *My Name is Red*, like *The Daughter of Time*, is a historical murder mystery. Set in Istanbul in 1591, it opens with the murder of one of the Ottoman Sultan's *miniaturists:* court artists who illustrate classic texts in a style descended from Persian art (not to be confused with painters of portrait miniatures in Renaissance England).

Although both works are murder mysteries, they are otherwise very different. Tey writes in a straightforward, realistic style with effaced, third-person 'omniscient' narration. Pamuk relates his story through eleven different, often unreliable, narrative voices. These include the murderer and two of his victims, as well as Black, the character who investigates the murders. Not all the narrators are human; chapters are related by Satan, a dog, a counterfeit gold coin, and the color Red itself. The novel is steeped in metafictional and intertextual references, with the characters reflecting modern sensibilities and concerns; in both respects the novel has been compared to Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*.

In the novel the murders are tied to a book of paintings for the sultan, which the miniaturists are completing secretly under the guidance of Black's uncle, who is later one of the murder victims. The book is secret because it will not be illustrated in the traditional style of the official court studio. Instead, it will be painted in the 'Frankish' or 'Venetian' style – that is, in the manner of Western European art, characterized by realism in portraying identifiable people detached from a narrative context. By contrast, Ottoman illumination always illustrates a text, in a conventionally stylized technique that eschews the realistic representation of individuals or scenes. The anonymity of the artists, who are meant to adopt the conventions of their studio rather than develop an individual style, along with the subordination to the text, were taken to render the art permissible despite the Quranic proscription against idolatrous imagery.

Western portraiture and its contrast to Ottoman illumination is the central theme of the novel. Black's uncle's embrace of Western art generates the impetus for the secret book, which will contain a number of realistic paintings, most importantly a portrait of the Sultan. My focus, however, is a real portrait, specifically, Gentile Bellini's portrait of the Sultan Mehmet II (Mehmet the Conqueror), from 1480, shown here:

<FIGURE 2>

Bellini was sent by Venice to Mehmet's court in 1479 after the Ottomans and Venetians signed a peace treaty. He spent eighteen months in the East, producing numerous paintings including the portrait, which is now in the collection of the National Gallery in London. The portrait, along with many other Bellini works, was later sold off by Mehmet's puritanical son, Bayezid II, who rejected it as 'un-Islamic' in light of the Muslim proscription against idolatrous images.

Bellini's portrait would not have been present in Istanbul in 1591 when the events of the novel take place, and by contrast with the painting of Richard III in *The Daughter of Time*, it plays no direct role in the plot. It is instead mentioned in the final part of the work, in Pamuk's 'Chronology,' which extends from 336 BC to 1617AD and contextualizes Bellini's portrait within the world of the story. Here is a selection of relevant entries (boldface in the original):

> 1453: Ottoman Sultan **Mehmet the Conqueror** took Istanbul. Demise of the Byzantine Empire. Sultan Mehmet later commissioned his portrait from Bellini. (669)
> …
> 1574-95: The reign of Ottoman **Sultan Murat III** (during whose rule the events of our novel take place) (670)
> …
> 1591: **The Story of Black and the Ottoman Court Painters.** … Black returns from the east, beginning the events recounted in the novel. (Pamuk 2011, pp. 669-671)

Apart from the references to the events of the story, everything in the chronology is accurate historically, right down to the identifications of some of the miniaturists in the novel with actual court artists.

We might therefore say that the portrait is in the background, in the characters' pasts. More importantly, though, it is a familiar image in the readers' present, at least for Pamuk's original audience of late-twentieth-century Turks:

> The portrait has spawned so many copies, variations, and adaptations, and the reproductions made from these images have gone on to adorn so many textbooks, book covers, newspapers,

posters, banknotes, stamps, educational posters, and comic books, that there cannot be a literate Turk who has not seen it hundreds if not thousands of times. (Pamuk 2008, p. 314)

In this respect, the Bellini portrait functions similarly to the reference to portrait miniatures in Act II, Scene 2, of *Hamlet*, triggering audience recognition of familiar background facts.

Though in the background, Bellini's portrait provides a model for what the miniaturists working on the secret book in the novel are trying to do: namely, to make a portrait of the Sultan in this style. At the same time, the sense that doing this is blasphemous – as Mehmet's son thought about Bellini's portrait – provides the backdrop to the murder mystery itself. The murders are committed to protect the miniaturists' art from the encroachment of the European style, which poses a threat not only to an artistic tradition, but also to religious sensibilities. The concern is nicely expressed in this passage narrated by Satan:

These [European] artists also dare to situate their subjects in the center of the page, as if man were meant to be worshiped, and display these portraits like idols before which we should prostrate ourselves. Is man important enough to warrant being drawn in every detail, including his shadow? If the houses on a street were rendered according to man's false perception that they gradually diminish in size as they recede into the distance, wouldn't man then effectively be usurping Allah's place at the center of the world? (Pamuk 2011, pp. 465-466)

By contrast with the Persian-inspired Muslim miniatures, portraits give human beings a pride of place which, according to this view, ought to be reserved for God.

Although Bellini's portrait of Sultan Mehmet II is not mentioned by the narrators, its role in the background allows readers to understand the source of conflict: This is the kind of representation to which the miniaturists working on the secret book aspire, and which they fear. At the same time Pamuk's novel, like Tey's, has implications that reach beyond the storyworld. The conflict between art and religion, and the relation between violence and Islamic fundamentalism – the murderer is inspired by a radical preacher – reflect pressing issues in modern Turkey. The familiarity of the portrait functions to anchor the fictional events to a shared background.

Representation and Misrepresentation

It will be evident that *The Daughter of Time* and *My Name is Red* represent real portraits rather differently. In Tey's novel the portrait of Richard III is foregrounded. It appears in nearly all the scenes of the novel – it is kept propped up in Grant's hospital room, where all the events take place, and Grant or others frequently mention it – and provides an impetus for the plot. In Pamuk's novel, Bellini's portrait of Mehmet II is backgrounded. It is never present to the characters, existing in the storyworld only in their past, though it contributes to the shared background of author and (intended) readers. I will come back to the significance of the foreground/background distinction, but first I would like to draw attention to a further distinction between the two novels.

Tey's interest in the portrait at the heart of her novel is an interest in its subject, Richard III. By contrast, what matters to Pamuk about Bellini's portrait is not the Sultan Mehmet II, but instead *how it represents him*. This is not surprising, since it is precisely the style of representation – that of Western portraiture – that constitutes a central theme of the work. The contrast with Tey is striking: For all the attention paid to the portrait in *The Daughter of Time*, its representational style is almost entirely ignored.

In fact, Tey treats the portrait as a window into its subject, as if there is no mediation between the viewer and the sitter. This is evident in the comments made by various characters already

cited above, such as the museum expert ('his face is in my estimation the face of a saint!') and Grant himself ('he has the face of a great judge, a great administrator'). Grant's conviction that Richard has been misjudged rests on his special talent for reading *faces*, rather than expertise concerning their representation.

The portrait's representational dimension receives attention only when Grant first examines it, before identifying the subject:

> Of all the portraits Grant had seen this afternoon this was the most individual. It was as if the artist had striven to put on canvas something that his talent was not sufficient to translate into paint. The expression in the eyes – that most arresting and individual expression – had defeated him. So had the mouth: he had not known how to make lips so thin and so wide look mobile, so the mouth was wooden and a failure. What he had best succeeded in was the bone structure of the face: the strong cheekbones, the hollows below them, the chin too large for strength. (Tey 1995, p. 30)

The artist was also successful, in Grant's opinion, in portraying

> that incommunicable, that indescribable look that childhood suffering leaves behind it … This the artist had both understood and translated in terms of paint. The slight fullness of the lower eyelid, like a child that has slept too heavily; the texture of the skin; the old-man look in a young face. (Tey 1995, p. 30)

Though these observations putatively concern the way in which the artist represents Richard, the implication is that the truth about Richard shines through – partly because of, but largely in spite of, the artist's rendering.

The idea that portraits tell us something more about their subjects than what they look like – in particular, that they provide insight into the mental lives of their subjects – is common. Cynthia Freeland builds this idea into her definition of portraits, one condition of which is that they depict the subject as 'possessing … an inner life, i.e. some sort of character and/or psychological or mental states' (2010, p. 5). I am not convinced that this is a criterion of portraiture even today, but it certainly was not a criterion in the past. Thus Freeland recognizes that her conception 'might not have been accepted during previous periods of history' (2010, p. 74). This is because portraits of rulers before the early modern era performed conventionally determined, political functions which had nothing to do with revealing the inner lives of their subjects. As the art historian Shearer West puts it, these traditional portraits of rulers 'emphasize the "effigy," or social role of the individual, over the likeness or personality' (2004, p. 72). The chances of examining such portraits to plumb a monarch's psychological depths are slim at best.

Now, Tey does not misrepresent the portrait with respect to the basic facts about its appearance or provenance, which are described accurately enough. The portrait is indeed 'of a man' who is 'dressed in the velvet cap and slashed doublet of the late fifteenth century,' and it does hang in the National Portrait Gallery in London. The accurate descriptions serve two purposes: first, to prompt recognition of the real portrait and second, to establish the real-world grounding of Grant's investigation. Had Tey gotten the basic facts wrong, readers could easily tell just by looking at (a reproduction of) the actual painting. It is for this reason that authors who aim for realism often avoid foregrounding real individuals; depictions that conflict with readers' prior knowledge can reduce verisimilitude (Jacobs 2006, pp. 19-20). Instead, they keep real individuals in the background so that readers fill in the gaps themselves, as Pamuk does with the portrait of Mehmet II.

The kind of misrepresentation at issue in *The Daughter of Time* is far subtler that misdescribing what is manifest. Instead, Tey misleads concerning the relationship between

the portrait and its subject. The plot relies on our accepting that a sixteenth-century royal portrait offers insight into the psychology and character of the individual it depicts. This is a mischaracterization not just of the Richard III portrait, but of portraiture – or at least, portraiture of this conventional type – more generally. By contrast, Pamuk's descriptions of the Venetian style and its contrast with Ottoman illumination are meticulously accurate. Though the identifiability of the subject is frequently highlighted as a feature of Western portraiture, there is never any hint that a realistic portrait of the Sultan would provide psychological insight into the sitter. Unlike Pamuk, Tey misrepresents the *representational function* of real portraits.

Tey has been criticized by historians for her casual approach to the real historical sources in the novel, which she mixes freely with fictional sources (see Stewart 1991). I suggest that she can also be criticized for her misrepresentation of the function of the Richard III portrait and of portraiture more generally.

The criticism is not just that Tey misrepresents a feature of the real world. We expect works of fiction to invite us to imagine the real world to be different from how it actually is (Friend 2017b). Think of the power of George Orwell's portrayal of a dystopian London in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* or, more recently, Colson Whitehead's reimagining of slave institutions in the American south in *The Underground Railroad*. In a different medium, the humor of Michael Palin's portrayal of Pontius Pilate in *Monty Python and the Life of Brian* presupposes that we do not take it seriously. In all these cases distortions of fact, including facts about specific real individuals, typically enhance rather than detract from our appreciation.

This is not, however, because authors of fiction have carte blanche to misrepresent reality. To the contrary, we frequently criticize works of literature that get certain facts wrong, for example historical novels which make basic mistakes about the facts or realistic stories that postulate psychologically implausible motivations for behavior. A good example is the criticism levelled at Charles Dickens for having the character Krook die of spontaneous combustion in *Bleak House*. Dickens defended himself in the Preface of the published book not by maintaining that authors of fiction can invent whatever they want, but rather by marshalling (putative) evidence that spontaneous combustion of human beings is an actual phenomenon.

The difference between *Bleak House* on the one hand, and *Nineteen Eighty-Four, The Underground Railroad* and *Life of Brian* on the other, is that we recognize that the latter are not intended or correctly interpreted to be accurate in the relevant respects. Dickens's novel is otherwise physical realistic; and given what we know about Dickens, it is reasonable for readers to expect accuracy with respect to the physical facts. This expectation is violated by Krook's death.

Similarly, although Tey's novel is obviously not meant to be truthful in *all* respects – for instance, concerning the existence of fictional people like Grant – readers are right to expect accuracy with respect to historical facts pertinent to the argument for Richard's innocence. Tey's project relies on our accepting that the fictional characters are examining real historical people and events, and the portrait plays a central role in achieving that end. Our expectations are violated by the misrepresentation of the portrait of Richard III.

This critique of Tey's treatment of portraiture does not show that *The Daughter of Time* is undeserving of its many accolades. It remains an outstanding exemplar of the crime novel

genre. However, because the work also incorporates into its narrative an interpretation of real historical events, the misrepresentation can be considered a flaw insofar as it diminishes the power of the argument. What is interesting from the present perspective is the particular kind of misrepresentation: not of the portrait as material object, but instead as a representation in its own right – exactly the dimension of portraiture that is the focus of *My Name is Red*.

Perhaps it is unfair to contrast Tey's and Pamuk's novels in this respect. After all, portraiture is a theme of the latter and a mere device in the former. Nonetheless, I suggest that the device is less effective insofar as it relies on misconstruing the representational function of the Richard III portrait. The portrait plays a dual role in the novel, and neither dimension of the role can be ignored.[7]

REFERENCE LIST

Byatt, A. S. (2002). *Portraits in Fiction*. New edition. London: Vintage.

Freeland, Cynthia. (2010). *Portraits and Persons*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Friend, Stacie. (2000). Real People in Unreal Contexts: Or Is There a Spy Among Us? In: Hofweber, Thomas and Everett, Anthony eds. *Empty Names, Fiction, and the Puzzles of Non-Existence*. Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications, pp. 183–203.

———. (2017a). Elucidating the Truth in Criticism. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* 75(4), 387-399.

———. (2017b). The Real Foundation of Fictional Worlds. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy,* 95(1), 29-42.

———. n.d. Reference in Fiction.

Jacobs, Naomi. (2006). *The Character of Truth: Historical Figures in Contemporary Fiction*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Janson, Jonathan. (2002). Girl with a Pearl Earring: Portrait or Tronie? [Online]. Essential Vermeer. Available from: http://www.girl-with-a-pearl-earring.info/tronie.htm. [Accessed 11 March 2019].

Maes, Hans. (2015). What Is a Portrait? *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 55(3), 303–22.

———. (This volume). [To be completed]

National Portrait Gallery. (2011). Imagined Lives: Portraits of Unknown People. *National Portrait Gallery* [Online]. Available from: https://www.npg.org.uk/whatson/display/2011/imagined-lives-portraits-of-unknown-people.php. [Accessed 4 May 2018].

———. (2018). His Picture in Little: Shakespeare, Hamlet and Tacita Dean. *National Portrait Gallery* [Online]. Available from: https://www.npg.org.uk/whatson/display/2018/his-picture-in-little-shakespeare-hamlet-and-tacita-dean. [Accessed 4 May 2018].

Pamuk, Orhan. (2008). Bellini and the East. In: *Other Colours*. Trans. Freely, Maureen. London: Faber and Faber, pp. 313–20.

———. 2011. *My Name Is Red*. Trans. Göknar, Erdağ. London: Faber and Faber.

Polsky, Sara. (2015). The Detective Novel That Convinced a Generation Richard III Wasn't Evil. 24 March 2015. *New Yorker* [Online]. Available from: https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/the-detective-novel-that-convinced-a-generation-richard-iii-wasnt-evil. [Accessed 3 March 2019].

Schoch, Richard. (2016). Portraits in Hamlet: 'Look Here upon This Picture, and on This.' 8 April 2016. *Shakespeare & Beyond* [Online]. Available from: https://shakespeareandbeyond.folger.edu/2016/04/08/portraits-in-hamlet-shakespeare/. [Accessed 4 May 2018].

Shakespeare, William. (2002). The Tragical History of Hamlet Prince of Denmark. In: Orgel, Stephen and Braunmuller, AR eds. *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare*. 2nd rev. ed. New York: Penguin Classics, pp. 1347–91.

Sooke, Alastair. (2014). Vermeer's Girl with a Pearl Earring: Who Was She? 21 October 2014. *BBC* [Online]. Available from: http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20140701-who-was-the-mysterious-girl. [Accessed 4 May 2018].

Stewart, Richard. (1991). Richard III, Josephine Tey, and Some Uses of Rhetoric. *Clues: A Journal of Detection,* 12(1), 91–99.

Tey, Josephine. (1995). *The Daughter of Time*. New York: Scribner.

West, Shearer. (2004). *Portraiture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

---

[1] All quotations of *Hamlet* are from *The Complete Pelican Shakespeare* (Shakespeare 2002).

[2] I discuss this example in Friend (2017a).

[3] Thanks to Hans Maes for drawing my attention to this invaluable resource, in conversation.

[4] That works of fiction *refer* to real entities is controversial. I have defended reference in fiction elsewhere (Friend 2000, n.d.). However, the present argument turns only on the relatively uncontroversial claim that works of fiction can represent real entities, however indirectly, as well as real practices, such as royal portraiture.

[5] I set aside worries about the ontology of artworks. My claims are compatible with the portrait's being something that depends on or is closely related to, rather than identical to, a physical object.

[6] See Maes (this volume) for discussion of portraits by unknown sitters.

[7] I wish to thank the participants and audience members at the National Portrait Gallery's Symposium on Portraits and Philosophy for helpful comments that contributed to this paper.