The four novels *Hyperion*, *The Fall of Hyperion*, *Endymion* and *The Rise of Endymion* constitute the *Hyperion Cantos* by the American science fiction writer Dan Simmons. This galactic-empire, epic, science fiction narrative contains a plethora of literary references. The dominant part comes from the nineteenth-century Romantic poet John Keats. The inclusion of passages from his poetry and letters is pursued in my analysis. Employing Lubomír Doležel's categorizations of intertextuality—"transposition," "expansion," and "displacement"—I seek to show how Keats's writings and his persona constitute a privileged intertext in Simmons's tetralogy and I show its function.

Simmons constructs subsidiary plots, some of which are driven by Keats's most well-known poetry. In consequence, some of the subplots can be regarded as rewrites of Keats's works. Although quotations of poetry have a tendency to direct the reader's attention away from the main plot, slowing down the narrative, such passages in the narratives evoke Keats's philosophy of empathy, beauty and love, which is fundamental for his humanism. For Keats, the poet is a humanist, giving solace to mankind through his poetry. I argue that the complex intertextual relationships with regards to Keats's poetry and biography show the way Simmons expresses humanism as a belief in man's dignity and worth, and uses it as the basis for his epic narrative.

Keywords: Dan Simmons; *The Hyperion Cantos*; John Keats's poetry and letters; intertextuality; empathy; beauty; love; humanism.

The American author Dan Simmons is a prolific writer who has published in different genres. This thesis deals with four prize-winning science fiction novels with a common theme, which are usually referred to as the *Hyperion Cantos*. A glance at the titles—*Hyperion*, *The Fall of Hyperion*, *Endymion*, *The Rise of Endymion*—indicates that Simmons is deeply engaged with the writings of the English nineteenth-century poet John Keats (1795–1821). There is a plethora of literary allusions and quotations in the texts, but the ethical core in the novels is expressed through references to some of Keats's best-known poems and letters. Despite Simmons's great engagement with Keats, critical analyses of these novels usually focus on technological devices, scientific advancements, or societal issues, and very little of the analyses explore the intertextual contents. For this reason, my thesis will deal with how Simmons's use of Keats's writings forms part of a kind of humanism featured in the novels. Keats, as a believer in the healing powers of art,[1] describes the poet as a sage who is a humanist, a physician to all men.[2] A "humanist" is concerned with the nature and life of man. My purpose is to show how Simmons takes on board Keats's emphasis on empathy and love as part of a humanism that is a belief in man's dignity and worth. The fact that Keats's biography and his poetic works are used to such a great extent in the *Cantos* speaks to my claim that Simmons's understanding of Keats's humanism constitutes the ground for the humanism that permeates the novels. In my analysis, I will use the phrase "Simmons's humanism" to designate exactly this, and not necessarily what the author himself may or may not have believed.

The theoretical approach will have to vary somewhat, since Simmons uses literary works in several different ways. An intertextual type of analysis is necessary.

[1] Hirsch's introduction to *Complete Poems and Selected Letters by John Keats* (Hirsch xvi).
[2] I have slightly changed lines 189, 190 of Canto I of "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision."

However, an overview of the different types of intertextual analysis shows that few can be applied to Simmons's treatment of Keats's poetry, and some can be applied only with modification. For Harold Bloom, intertextuality is a consequence "of the psychological struggle to achieve selfhood" (*Norton* 1649). Bloom's assertion pertains to psychoanalysis, whereas my thesis is focused on semantic relationships. For the Marxist theorist Stuart Hall, intertextuality exists in the context of cultural studies, which define the relation between texts in their institutional positions (Hall 1791). This way of thinking requires that the analysis should consider both the social forces that contribute to the production of the text and the hegemonic work that the text does (Leitch et al. 1781), which would be outside the scope of my thesis, since my aim is a textual analysis. The poststructuralist Roland Barthes claims that every text is related to other texts (1329) and his student Julia Kristeva's theoretical approach places intertextuality in the realm of linguistics (Leitch et al. 2067). Doležel points out that this way of looking at intertextuality does not take into account how the intertext is integrated in the new text. In *Heterocosmica*, he points out that the conception of Kristeva and Barthes "is so broad as to be theoretically vacuous and analytically useless" (199). I find Doležel's straightforward and concrete discussion of intertextuality useful for my purpose. Barthes's approach is so theoretical and unspecific that the question of the origin and treatment of the intertext is left unanswered. For this reason, I will use Doležel's presentation of intertextuality as a starting point for the analysis of Simmons's text. Doležel emphasizes that intertextuality entails semantic interpretation, which shows that "the text's meaning can be grasped without identifying the intertext but is enriched, often quite substantially, by its discovery" (201). The most striking examples of this effect, according to Doležel, can be found in the "postmodernist rewrite" (206). He defines and analyses three types of rewrite: "transposition," "expansion," and "displacement."

First, "transposition" "preserves the design and the main story of the protoworld but locates them in a different temporal or spatial setting, or both" (206).[3] Second, "expansion" "extends the scope of the protoworld by filling its gaps, constructing a prehistory or posthistory, and so on" (207).[4] Third, "displacement"

[3] Doležel cites *Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.* (1973) by Ulrich Plenzdorf, which is a rewrite of Johan Wolfgang von Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* (1774), as an example of this category (Doležel *Heterocosmica* 207).

[4] Doležel shows how Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) is complementary as a prehistory of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) (Doležel *Heterocosmica* 213)

"constructs an essentially different version of the protoworld, redesigning its structure and reinventing its story" (207).[5]

Simmons's *Cantos* is generally regarded as a branch of science fiction which contains those kinds of "[p]ossible worlds [that] do not await discovery in some remote or transcendent depository but are constructed by the creative activities of human minds and hands" (Doležel "Possible Worlds" 787).[6] The plethora of fantastic technological devices in Simmons's books is subject only to the principle of what Doležel calls "ontological homogeneity" ("Possible Worlds" 788). Simmons is justly admired for his great creativity. He fills the universe with all kinds of beings living under diverse conditions. In doing so, he has the opportunity to change the reality of the worlds he creates, and it would be futile to search for a concrete scientific foundation for his speculations on the future. Consequently, following Doležel's definition, since Simmons's texts are performative, they are outside truth-valuation, meaning that they are neither true nor false (*Possible Worlds* 42). This results in the observation that "[t]he world-constructing power of the fictional text implies that the text is prior to the world, that it calls the world into existence and determines its structure" ("Possible Worlds" 790). A fictional world is incomplete of necessity. This is a consequence of the fact that "[f]ictional gaps are produced by the fiction writer, [and they] are ontological and irrevocable" (Doležel "Possible Worlds" 796). The intrusion of the figure of a historically identifiable Romantic poet in such a world is a strategic move which opens the possibility of the science fiction narrative being a reworked real world. On the one hand, in Simmons's novels the Keats persona is a result of the machinations of an artificial intelligence entity. On the other hand he is portrayed as someone who evidently had part of his existence outside the world of the novels. This means that there is information, which does not enter into the narrative, information pertaining to Keats that can be used in the reading of the novels as if the worlds in them are not self-sufficient. This sense of insufficiency is what, among the intertextual references themselves, defines one of the main topics of this thesis,

[5] Doležel analyses J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1986) as a rewrite of *Robinson Crusoe*. He asserts that "it is the most radical type [of rewrite], a politically loaded polemic against the canonical work" (Doležel *Heterocosmica* 217).

[6] Efforts to find a comprehensive definition of science fiction as a type of imaginative writing have generally ended in an impasse (Aldiss, Wingrove, Holmberg). Often the designation is used for stories which take place in imaginary worlds and times with some regard to scientific plausibility. Since the merit of a science fiction work rests on how well the author has been able to carry through the constructed world, *Stories of Wonder* and *What, if?* are descriptive tags which have been used.

Simmons's discourse on, or rather his use of Keats's discourse on, empathy, beauty and love. I will return to this later.[7]

The introduction of the works of John Keats creates a striking contrast in terms of literary style, and a discussion of the intersection between science fiction and English Romantic poetry is basic to the analysis. There is a great difference between the technological stories by Simmons and the devotion to sentiment and older literary forms cherished by the Romantics. Susan J. Wolfson points out that Keats, who was regarded as an exponent for the so called Cockney school, played with "avant-garde" couplets and experimental rhymes (405, 418). The contrast is even greater in view of the semantic differences in the narrative styles of the American contemporary writer and the early nineteenth-century poet. There are numerous quotations of Keats' poems in Simmons's tetralogy. My analysis aims at looking at the bigger picture as well as the details, to see the reverberations of Keats's poetry in the series. I seek to uncover Simmons's interpretation of Keats, that which will account for the incorporation of certain quotations in the novels. This is the starting point for a discussion of the context of Simmons's text that is related to the quoted poem. For this reason I shall try and do both a close reading of the poem in question as well as Simmons's text in order to answer the following questions:

- In what way is a particular case of intertextuality related to Keats?
- What meaning does Simmons's text seem to ascribe to the references?
- How is the context of Simmons's narratives shaped by quotations and/or allusions?
- How does the fictionalization of Keats's persona add to the meaning of the novels' plot?
- Finally, in relation to all of the above, the question is, what constitutes "Simmons's humanism," and how is it related to Keats's particular brand of humanism?

Following the summary of the critical context, my thesis will be divided in three sections:

[7] Palmer defines the novels by Simmons as galactic-empire epic fiction, which is characterized by hypermodern technology contrasted with pre-modern social forms set in the far future. In particular, he points out the influence of cyberpunk, whose most renowned exponent is William Gibson. There is even a lengthy passage where Aenea expounds the development of 80-byte proto-AI cell-things into 79-bytes, 45-bytes, 51-bytes, etc., which are preying on each other (*Rise of Endymion* 331) Simmons acknowledges his debt to Kevin Kelly for this idea of cyberspace evolution.

In the first section I will discuss the way Simmons uses Keats's biography and numerous quotations from Keats's works to give substance to a number of subplots, which in turn seem to infuse the overarching narrative with the sense of humanism I mentioned earlier. My analysis here will form the basis for my discussions in sections two and three of how Simmons adopts Keats's concepts of empathy, love and beauty in order to achieve this goal.

The second section will deal more closely with the way Simmons extracts and employs the connection between empathy and love from Keats's writings as the core of his humanism and how he uses this as an ethical core in all four novels.

The third section will focus on beauty, which is basic for Keats as a Romantic poet. It is displayed through the animistic beauty of nature, which we find in his poetry. I will discuss how it seems to have inspired Simmons.

In the final analysis, the idea is not that Simmons simply copies what he may see as Keats's humanism, but that the worlds he creates for his characters demand reworked, perhaps more complex notions of empathy, beauty and love.

Critical Context

The scholarly works devoted to Simmons's work to date are few, while there is a large interest in the form of fan discussions on the web. The most important academic engagement is represented by Christopher Palmer in an article analysing and comparing works by Dan Simmons and Iain M. Banks.[8] Palmer limits his scope of analysis to *Hyperion* and *The Fall of Hyperion* with occasional references to *Endymion* and *The Rise of Endymion*.[9] Palmer stresses the extravagant inclusiveness of the novels. The universe being vast beyond our imagination, the possible galactic empires are without boundaries. Space is full of planets and immense spacecraft. There is any number of societies, religions, sects, strange customs and conspiracies in this "multiverse." This is contrasted with an undercurrent of insecurity as the human

[8] There is also a master's thesis by Zachary Stewart, presented in 2013, which treats the religious content of the four novels, applying John Hick's concept of transcendental pluralism. I have not found his analysis useful for the purpose of my thesis.

[9] The fact that the four novels of the *Hyperion Cantos* were written over a period of several years warrants an explanation of how they are connected. For publishing reasons *Hyperion* and *The Fall of Hyperion* were printed as separate volumes. (Allbery *Hyperion* review) This is probably a consequence of the publishing company's (and the author's) wish to produce a book that sells well. *Hyperion*, the best-seller, is consequently more action-driven than *The Fall of Hyperion*, which relies to a great extent on philosophical and ethical discussions. The relation between *Endymion* and *The Rise of Endymion* is similar. In my opinion, the four novels might just as well be read as two stories.

protagonists are without agency seeing that "[t]hey don't choose or work; they experience, enjoy, suffer" (Palmer 76). Palmer asserts that Simmons's literary allusiveness to Chaucer, Beowulf, Yeats, etc. results in an overload. In particular, he states, "there is not a lot to be gained from tracing detailed parallels between Simmons's narrative and the Keats story" (76). He adds that the resulting effect is one of "bathos" (88). With this expression is meant a fall from the sublime to the commonplace. In other words, this intertextuality is anti-climactic. It seems to me that Palmer has not fully understood the rather complicated plot.[10] More importantly, he has not considered the overall impact of the Keats allusions and samplings. Not only does Simmons quote Keats's poetry, but he does it for the purpose of directing and giving substance to the plot. In fact, there are passages where Simmons pauses the narrative, explaining and analysing some features of Keats's poetics and philosophy. Two of the main characters in the first two novels are reconstructions of the poet's persona. A close reading shows the intertextual relation between Endymion's pilgrimage in the poem and Raul Endymion's adventures during his mission to save Aenea in the last two novels, named after Keats's character.

Endymion and *The Rise of Endymion*, which Palmer largely ignores, produce new and different perspectives on the two previous books. They contain several retarding segments of the narrative in which the philosophical pathos of the stories is expounded based on the writings of Keats (as well as other authors). In my opinion, Palmer makes a mistake when he does not pursue the allusions to Keats's poetry. In his analysis of Banks's and Simmons's way of creating plots, he points out that violence and pain are prevalent features in the novels of both authors. For example, turning to Simmons, whole planets are destroyed as the space battle climaxes in the end of *The Fall of Hyperion*. In *Endymion*, and particularly in *The Rise of Endymion*, the crusade against the Ousters results in massive killings of sentient beings. In my opinion, there is a difference between Banks and Simmons in how they describe and comment on such atrocities. What Palmer misses, and I intend to show, is how violence and pain are counterbalanced in the entire *Hyperion Cantos* by a humanism that is based on Keats's humanism.

[10] For instance, he writes that Aenea is "daughter of Brawne Lamia and the cybrid Joseph Severn" (Palmer 82). The fact that her father is Johnny, the first Keats cybrid, is mentioned several times in *Hyperion* and *The Fall of Hyperion*. Sheehan on the other hand understands this (3).

Although few scholars beside Palmer and Zachary Stewart have worked on Simmons, the great popularity of the *Hyperion Cantos* has resulted in much commentary by science fiction fans. Some of this has ben printed in fanzines. In 1998, Bill Sheehan conducted the major work of summarizing the whole of the *Hyperion Cantos* and gave much incitement for a general discussion of the novels. Although he does not try to analyse the effect on the narrative by the literary references to Keats, I find his assertion that Keats "is the patron saint of this vast enterprise" to be true (1). In Sheehan's opinion,

> Simmons is after nothing less than the Ultimate Meaning Of It All, and his stubborn attempts to fathom both the nature of the universe and the nature of our role in the universe – what Keats called 'the meanings of all motions, shapes, and sounds'[11] – is audacious and admirable. (6)

Sheehan describes *Hyperion* "as a kind of far-future Canterbury Tales" (2). According to him, one main theme in *The Fall of Hyperion* as well as in the *Endymion* novels is empathy, which is described as the binding force of the universe. Sheehan notices that "the primal importance of empathy and love, both in the conduct of human affairs and in the essential nature of the universe itself, stand[s] at the heart of the visionary impulse which animates [*Hyperion*]" (3). Moreover, he asserts that Keats's notion of beauty is an influence in Simmons's *Cantos*. I find this particularly true in Simmons's descriptions of the animistic beauty of nature.

Writing about *Hyperion* and *The Fall of Hyperion*, Janeen Webb makes a thorough effort to sort out the logical inconsistencies in the narrative. She ascribes the verbatim repetition of some passages in the text to "sloppy editing" (80). Having tried to enumerate all the literary allusions in the text, she eventually compares the novels to "The Hunting of the Snark" by Lewis Carroll (85). However, she does not analyse the references to Keats's poetry and philosophy, which makes her review less helpful for my thesis.

Given the overall interest in the plots among Simmons's readers, I turn now to the first section of my analysis which looks at the way Simmons uses Keats's work in the main story's various subplots in order to introduce the notions of empathy, beauty and love, which I will later discuss as core elements of Simmons's humanism.

[11] Sheehan is quoting from "Endymion," Book III, line 698.

Keats's role in the six subplots

Action is a characteristic of science fiction, giving the narrative a certain pace which carries the plot forward. In contrast, Simmons's prolific use of poetic references is uncommon for the genre. His quoting of Keats's poetry at length seems to have a retarding effect on the narrative pace because a poem is supposed to be read with careful attention, giving room for contemplation. Apparently, Simmons intends to have the reader pause, attempting to interpret how the tale is qualified by the poetry. This is the basis for my assertion that the Keats intertext is important for the philosophical ground of the four volumes. In the *Hyperion Cantos* there are certain passages built around one or two poems, which serve as a kind of nucleus for the narratives. Complemented by other references to Keats's writings, they govern what may be regarded as a subsidiary story inserted into the main story, setting the mood and defining the central issue. I have been able to discern and extract a number of subplots, which could have been turned into separate stories, but which are nevertheless important for how the bigger narrative is developed.[12] As Sheehan points out, Simmons has written Hyperion, the first novel, as a science fiction take on Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. I intend to discuss six subplots, all of which are clearly related to Keats. The first subplot starts as a separate story in *Hyperion* narrating the love story between the private investigator Brawne Lamia and a "cybrid," a construct imprinted with Keats's personality. The subplot featuring the poet Martin Silenus as main character also starts as a separate story in *Hyperion*. Two subplots in *The Fall of Hyperion* are related directly to the John Keats persona. One subplot frames the story which is narrated in *Endymion*. Another one, appearing in *Endymion*, is an explanation of Keats's philosophy. As will be clear in my discussion, these subplots are constructed differently, which makes it difficult to analyse them from a structuralist point of view.[13] What further complicates the analysis is the fact that the subplots are to various degrees intertwined. I argue that the subplots represent

[12] In fact, one is based on a short story which Simmons published some years before he wrote *Hyperion.* The story, actually designated "novelette," was called "Remembering Siri." It was published in the December issue of *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* in 1983. In the *Hyperion* novel it is retold as "The Consul's Tale" (Sheehan 3). I have not discussed it further, since the connection to Keats seems weak.

[13] Seeing that *Hyperion* is structured similarly to Boccaccio's *Decamerone*, it would have been tempting to use the same method that Tzvetan Todorov applied to Boccaccio's tale. However, I have found that his approach cannot be applied because the subplots are not similar enough.

different manifestations of John Keats, the nineteenth-century Romantic poet. This will follow from my discussion of the subplots.

Although the subplots may seem to slow down the narrative, they are nevertheless essential for the understanding of the overarching plot as it is developed in the series, since they demonstrate how Simmons relates to Keats's creed of empathy, love and beauty, which I will analyse in depth in the two sections following this one.

In order to have a background for my discussion of the six subplots mentioned above I shall start with an outline of the main plot. This is needed for my analysis of Simmons's own enunciation of the importance of the concepts of empathy and love. Commencing with *Hyperion* and *The Fall of Hyperion*, it is evident that Palmer's characterization of Simmons's novels as galactic-empire epic fiction is a general description (73). Seven hundred years into the future there are three contending parties: the "Hegemony," which is made of a large number of colonized worlds, the "TechnoCore," which is a conglomeration of autonomous AI entities, and the "Ousters," who are human descendants, genetically adapted to live not on planets but between the stars.

The plot is centred on the predicted imminent opening of artefacts called "The Time Tombs" on the planet Hyperion, which are believed to have been manufactured in the future, travelling back in time. The Time Tombs are somehow associated with the killing machine "the Shrike," also from the future. The opening of the Tombs entails a fundamental insecurity in the TechnoCore's prediction of the future, which must be avoided. The TechnoCore is instrumental in choosing seven persons for a pilgrimage to these Tombs. During the one-week pilgrimage, the protagonists tell stories about themselves to explain why they have been chosen for this endeavour, which they believe will end in their deaths. The Ousters, too, are competing for the Tombs, but the ensuing war between the Hegemony and the Ousters is in fact staged by a faction of the TechnoCore. This discovery is the theme of a subplot narrating the death of a second Keats cybrid, and another one based on the lament of the cybrid's AI creator. In order to free humanity from the machinations of the Core, the farcaster portals—vital means of instant transportation across the enormous distances of this universe—are destroyed, which results in the collapse of the Hegemony and the defeat of the Core.

The story of the next two novels in the series, *Endymion* and *The Rise of Endymion*, is set some eleven hundred years in the future. The narrative has been given a deepened philosophical undertone in that the main theme of empathy has become the evolutionary struggle towards empathic consciousness as opposed to a static society with neither birth nor death, dominated by unfeeling artificial intelligences, making the religious content of the plot conspicuous.[14] Lacking the farcaster facilities, the former Web Worlds are held together by faster-than-light spacecraft. The new society is dominated by the revived Catholic Church, supported by the military, called "Pax." The TechnoCore is lurking somewhere, its constituent parts scheming inconsistently. The story is told by Raul Endymion, who functions as the omniscient narrator. Those who belong to the Church carry a parasitic "cruciform," which is provided and controlled by the TechnoCore, giving eternal life through resurrection. Raul is special since he does not carry the cruciform.

Aenea, the twelve-year-old daughter of Brawne Lamia and Johnny, the first Keats cybrid, is considered by the Pope a threat to the Church and all of humanity because she represents empathy and love, whereas the church points to the necessity of obeying God's will as it is proclaimed by the ruling powers. Aenea must be eliminated, since she carries a virus from the future, which can incapacitate the cruciform, making resurrection impossible. Most of *Endymion* is taken up by Raul's and Aenea's flight from the Pax military and the artificial murdering agents of the TechnoCore. In a momentary lull, Aenea takes the opportunity to explain her father's, that is Keats's, concept of "pleasure thermometer." This will be analysed as the sixth subplot. *The Rise of Endymion* takes place several years later. The Pope has declared that the Ousters are abominations and must be exterminated. Aenea and Raul, who were separated in their flight from their pursuers, meet again and become lovers. Aenea is truly the awaited "One Who Teaches," who is explaining to her followers about the workings of the universe, declaring that everybody can be an empathic part of the "Void Which Binds" and the force of love behind it. Those who drink the wine with a few drops of her blood will join the Void Which Binds and be able to sense the

[14] Sheehan mentions that there are references to C. S. Lewis, whose science fiction and fantasy novels are characterized by a Christian pathos. Russ Allbery, an amateur reviewer and science fiction fan, writes that "Aenea's life and teaching methods parallel the stories of Jesus, making similar moral points and frequently producing echos that will cause the reader familiar with Christian mythology to nod in recognition." He points out that *The Rise of Endymion* is the gospel of a messiah of empathic humanism, set against the backdrop of a space opera universe." (*Rise of Endymion* review)

living and the dead in the universe; if they carry the cruciform, the parasite will wither away.

When Raul and Aenea try to warn the Pope about the machinations of the TechnoCore they are captured, and Raul is sent away in a Schrödinger's cat prison. The fifth subplot is centred on Raul in his imprisonment. He experiences how Aenea is tortured and burnt like a witch. This cruelty causes the downfall of the Church and the Pax through the "Shared Moment" of her death.

My analysis of the six subplots mentioned above, which all rely on references to Keats's writings, gives the basis for a further discussion of how Simmons connects to what has been called Keats's notion of humanism as it is enunciated in his philosophical letters and his poetry.

Subplot I: Brawne Lamia's story

The first subplot I want to discuss is the story that Brawne Lamia relates. The female detective has an important part in the *Hyperion* stories because of her relationship to Johnny, the first Keats cybrid, who is actually the main protagonist in her story. This artificial human is struggling to define his humanity and really take on the part of the Romantic poet. In naming her Brawne Lamia, Simmons refers to Keats in two ways. Firstly, Fanny Brawne was John Keats's sweetheart in his final years. Secondly, one of his poems is called "Lamia." In ancient demonology this is a monster appearing as a serpent-woman (Keats 536). Palmer asks, "How could a character possibly combine Fanny Brawne and Keats's Lamia" (76)? He asserts that the woman has more affinity to a heroine from one of Raymond Chandler's mystery novels. I suggest that there is more to Simmons's choice of name. As is clear from the narrative, Johnny often thinks of Keats's love, sometimes imagining Brawne Lamia to be his one-time sweetheart. So Simmons's choice of name underlines Johnny's insecurity about who he really is and is thus directly related to his philosophical inquiry. In Keats's poem, Lamia is both a lover and a demon. Threatened, Simmons's Brawne Lamia turns into a fighter in the nude against five would-be male assassins (*Hyperion* 374). It seems as if the name may be regarded as a kind of oxymoron, which was, according to Harold Bloom, "Keats's most characteristic rhetorical device" (95). This example suggests how deep and intricate Simmons's use of Keats as intertext truly is.

Brawne Lamia has been chosen to take part in the pilgrimage because of her love affair with Johnny. He is the father of her, as yet unborn, daughter Aenea, which

is of concern to the TechnoCore, since she is predicted to play a decisive part in the fate of the universe.

The Keats cybrids are constructs made by one part of the TechnoCore. This requires a template made from DNA remnants (*Fall of Hyperion* 46) and writings of John Keats. Johnny enumerated the sources: "[h]is letters. Diaries. Critical biographies. Testimony of friends. But mostly through his verse" (*Hyperion* 337–338). Thus the cybrid was imprinted with the personality of the nineteenth-century Romantic poet as it could be inferred from writings by and about him. Throughout the novels, various explanations are presented for the creation of cybrids, which are based on the "retrieval persona" of certain historic personalities. Brawne Lamia tells the other pilgrims that the cybrid who approached her believed that he was part of a Keats Project, whose purpose was the TechnoCore's attempt at realizing the "Ultimate Intelligence," which would, in fact, be tantamount to God (*Hyperion* 372).

In his novels, Simmons describes the looks of the Keats cybrids in terms that correspond to the known appearance of the historic poet. When the first cybrid came to her office, Brawne Lamia observed that

> [h]e was a short man … His face was a study in purposeful energy: low brow, sharp cheekbones, compact nose, solid jaw, and a wide mouth that suggested both a sensuous side and a stubborn streak. His eyes were large and hazel-colored. (*Hyperion* 327)

In *The Fall of Hyperion* the second Keats cybrid dreams about Brawne as she is close to The Time Tombs. Due to an implant in her brain he sees the first cybrid through Brawne's eyes as she is dreaming of her lover.

Brawne Lamia is immediately attracted to the cybrid, who hires her to investigate the murder of his persona. He introduces himself as Johnny, adding that he has the personality of John Keats. During the first few minutes of their meeting she thinks again and again "God, he was beautiful" (*Hyperion* 328). So she falls in love with the cybrid, regarding him as human.

Johnny has an AI identity entailing that his consciousness resides partly in the TechnoCore. Simmons uses the poem "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" as a starting point for this tale. In order to explain his decision to become human and a poet, the Keats cybrid recites part of the poem beginning with:

> Fanatics have their dreams, wherewith they weave
> A paradise for a sect, the savage too
> From forth the loftiest fashion of his sleep
> Guesses at Heaven; pity these have not

> Traced upon vellum or wild Indian leaf
> The shadows of melodious utterance…. (*Hyperion* 384–385)[15]

In order to take on the identity of John Keats, it is crucial for Johnny to contemplate a preserved copy of the poem "Hyperion." He imagines that there is a connection to the planet.[16] In order to travel there, Johnny wants to self-destruct the AI persona to allow the transfer of the consciousness from the TechnoCore to the cybrid. Having penetrated the Core and accomplished the transfer, Johnny now thinks of himself as Keats. Remembering what Keats had experienced, as if it were his own experience, he tells Brawne Lamia:

> I remember first looking into Chapman's Homer. And my brother Tom's eyes as he haemorrhaged in the night. And Severn's kind voice when I was too weak to open my own eyes to face my fate. And our night in Piazza di Spagna when I touched your lips and imagined Fanny's cheek against mine. (*Hyperion* 398)

Edward Hirsch relates that Keats wrote the poem "On first looking into Chapman's Homer" in September 1816 after a night spent together with a friend "poring over a borrowed 1616 folio edition of George Chapman's translation of Homer" (xx). The poem expresses his wonderment at his discovery. His brother passed away three years before his own death in 1821. The event was a constant foreshadowing of his ultimate end. Although Johnny has appropriated Keats's memories, he has not really taken on the identity of the poet, since the memory of Fanny is interfering with his experience of Brawne Lamia.

Recuperating from their escape from the TechnoCore after the transfer, Brawne Lamia discovers that Johnny has had a memory loop implanted in her head. He is able to transfer into her brain a copy of his own consciousness. He explains to her about the three contending factions of the TechnoCore: the Stables, wanting to preserve the symbiosis between humankind and the Core, the Volatiles, advocating extinction of humankind, and the Ultimates, being obsessed with the Ultimate Intelligence project. The main concern of the TechnoCore lies in the planet Hyperion being unpredictable. Moreover, Brawne Lamia has learned that the TechnoCore's interest in The Time Tombs depends on the connection of the artefacts to a war in the future. Johnny is then killed when he tries to "become" Keats, and travel to Hyperion.

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[15] The cybrid recited lines 1–18 from Canto I of "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision," only exchanging "sable charm" for "sable chain."

[16] In order to explain the connection between the Keats cybrid and the planet, a bishop of the Shrike Church declares that "the persona of the Old Earth poet Keats has been woven into the cultural mythos of the Hyperion colony" (*Hyperion* 379).

Instead, Brawne Lamia goes on the pilgrimage, knowing that she is pregnant. Before leaving she goes to the archives and looks at two manuscripts in Johnny's handwriting. The first one begins "The day is gone, and all its sweets are gone!" As a sentimental contemplation of the separation from the beloved it describes her sense of loss. The other fragment is "This living hand, now warm and capable," a short poem which is important to Keats/Severn, the second cybrid. I will return to this in my discussion of the next subplot. Apparently, Johnny used the fragments when striving to identify with the historic poet. As will be clear in the following, the second cybrid, using the name of Severn, actually considers himself the author of the two poems. In that he has come further than Johnny, the first cybrid, in being Keats.

In *The Fall of Hyperion* the story is narrated in the first person by the Keats/Severn cybrid. He can dream of what the pilgrims are experiencing at the Tombs, thanks to the imprint in Brawne Lamia's memory loop. This makes her dream of her beloved Johnny, looking exactly as she remembers him: "sharp cheekbones, hazel eyes, compact nose and solid jaw. Johnny's brownish-red curls still fell to his collar" (*Fall of Hyperion* 206). The implanted copy of his consciousness in her brain wants to explore the TechnoCore, and "[t]he datumplane analog of Brawne Lamia and her retrieval persona lover strike the surface of the megasphere like two cliff divers" (*Fall of Hyperion* 273).

Johnny finds the way, leading a frightened Brawne Lamia to the AI entity Ummon, who foretells the death of the Keats persona. The Web is being destroyed, and Johnny must die so the second cybrid may live. Ummon describes the three factions of the TechnoCore, explaining that they have developed and created The Ultimate Intelligence/God in the future. Ummon tells Johnny and Brawne Lamia that the TechnoCore is everywhere in the farcaster system, and when humans use it, their brains serve the Core. However, the Core has encountered another UI, which was accidently created in the future, using human minds for circuitry. The human UI is composed of three parts: Intellect, Empathy and The Void Which Binds. It lives in the Heisenberg/Schrödinger space-time.[17] Ummon explains to them that "there is a war [between the Core's UI and the human UI] such as blind Milton would kill to see" (*Fall of Hyperion* 288). But the Empathy part of the human-made UI, refusing to fight, has fled back through time, disguised as a human. In order to eliminate the

[17] This blending of cosmology and quantum theory may seem intriguing, but it is of doubtful physical meaning.

Hyperion variable, the Core's UI has sent The Time Tombs back in time to carry the Shrike searching for the hidden Empathy. He tells them that "if the Empathy third of the triune can be found and forced to return to the war\\The Tree of Pain will call him\\The Shrike will take him\\The true UI will destroy him" (*Fall of Hyperion* 289). Then Ummon kills the Keats persona in Brawne Lamia's memory loop, letting her escape from the megasphere. In the very end of the tale, just before the AI consciousness of the Keats/Severn cybrid departs for ever, it meets with Brawne Lamia, who is in the final stage of her pregnancy, and apostrophises her as yet unborn daughter "Thou still unravished bride of quietness!" (*Fall of Hyperion* 514),[18] which anticipates Aenea's life and death. Moreover, it signals the eternal values of her teachings of love and beauty.

The story of Brawne Lamia is important for three reasons. First, because of its relation to the Romantic poet, describing his appearance in detail, locating the Romantic poet in a different temporal and spatial setting. Moreover, bearing in mind that the consciousness of the cybrid was constituted from remnants of writings by and about him, it seems that Simmons is addressing the question of the relation between the short-lived historic individual and his work. Second, the story is important for its reference to a poem where Keats extolls poetry. Third, it is important because it introduces empathy as a part of the Ultimate Intelligence, different from love and intellect. Other than stating that empathy is in some way a response to pain inflicted on the victims on the tree of thorns, Simmons does not say in this subplot what he intends with the concept. We need to look at the other subplots to see Simmons's complex use of empathy.

Subplot II: The story of Martin Silenus

Unlike Johnny, old Martin Silenus is not striving to become John Keats, but he is the young man's poetic avatar. He is poetry incarnate, epitomizing throughout the *Hyperion Cantos* the importance of poetry in Keats's time as well as in the imaginary far future. This seems to be the main purpose of the story of Martin Silenus, which spans around a thousand years, as he appears in all four of the novels.

With his satyric and drunken demeanour, in contrast to the historic poet, Martin Silenus quotes Keats's poetry as if it were his own. Simmons has chosen the name aptly. In Greek mythology Silenus is an older satyr and the tutor and foster

[18] This is the first line of "Ode on a Grecian Urn."

father of Bacchus, the wine god (Keats 532), being invoked in Book IV of "Endymion" and the beginning of "The Fall of Hyperion; a Vision." In this way, Martin Silenus is not only the personification of John Keats, but he is also appearing as a character in his poetry. He explains his mission as a poet in this manner:

> To be a poet, I realized, a *true poet*, was to become the Avatar of humanity incarnate; to accept the mantle of poet is to carry the cross of the Son of Man, to suffer the birth pangs of the Soul-Mother of Humanity.
>
> To be a *true poet* is to become God. (*Hyperion* 192; *Fall of Hyperion* 409, original emphasis)[19]

Simmons's admiration for Keats is obvious in a discussion between Martin Silenus and his patron Sad King Billy about the purest poet who ever lived. Silenus answered John Keats and told the king "about a life dedicated almost totally to the mysteries and beauties of poetic creation" (*Hyperion* 214). In trying to understand the essence of being a poet Silenus remembers what Keats once wrote to his friend Benjamin Bailey: "I am certain of nothing but [of] the holiness of the Heart's affection[s] and the truth of Imagination—What the imagination seizes as Beauty must be truth—whether it existed before or not" (*Hyperion* 191).[20] As I shall point out in the next section, Simmons regards Keats as a Zen master who has empathic ability to negate his "self" and be part of his poetry. Describing Silenus's poetic efforts, Simmons shows his admiration for poets like John Milton, Lord Byron, W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, Dylan Thomas, and Delmore Schwartz, some of whom have literary connections to Keats (*Hyperion* 193).[21] During the pilgrimage, Martin Silenus recites poetry by Chaucer, Yeats, and particularly by Keats. The quotes are often comments on the predicaments of the pilgrims. "Ode on a Grecian Urn" is quoted four times in the Cantos.[22] As the pilgrims discuss the means at their disposal in order to reach The Time Tombs in *Hyperion*, they realize that they have probably been selected to be sacrificed. With a kind of black humour Silenus recites the fourth stanza of "Ode on a Grecian Urn," beginning with "[w]ho are these coming to the sacrifice?" (*Hyperion* 244). When the pilgrims have reached the Tombs he quotes the first four lines of the same stanza a second time (*The Fall of Hyperion* 66–67). Laughing in the face of

[19] This passage is repeated verbatim. This is one example of what Janeen Webb calls 'sloppy editing'.
[20] The letter was written on 22 November, 1817 (*Keats* 489).
[21] In naming Silenus's first published collection of poems *The Dying Earth* (*Hyperion* 195), Simmons winks at his fellow science fiction writer Jack Vance, who published four novels under this title.
[22] I will offer a separate analysis of how this poem connects to Keats's philosophy of love, beauty and empathy in my discussion of Keats's pleasure thermometer in the second part of this essay.

death he equates the TechnoCore with gods demanding sacrifice. Silenus tries to recite Keats's "Where's the Poet?" but he mistakes some words in his drunken state (*Hyperion* 241–242). As the pilgrims are running short on food, Silenus takes the opportunity to pose as Keats, quoting one of three stanzas which Keats sent in a letter to his good friend Charles Armitage Brown. The stanza, which I think should be understood as comment on their situation, starts with: "Ne cared he for wine, or half-and-half/ Ne cared he for fish or flesh or fowl" (*Fall of Hyperion* 135). After all, the pilgrims did not bring much food, since they anticipated their own deaths meeting with the Shrike upon arrival at the Tombs.

The two poems by Keats which are central in determining Martin Silenus as Keats's heir are "Hyperion*"* and "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision." As the pilgrims are discussing what fate they will meet by the time they reach the Tombs, Silenus defiantly intones eight lines of a poem beginning with: "There is no death in all the Universe … No smell of death—There shall be no death, moan, moan;" (*Hyperion* 16). However, in Keats's poem "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" the corresponding lines read: "There shall be death. Moan, moan" (Keats 384).[23] The passage is part of old Saturn's lament over the fate of the defeated Titans. Simmons's insertion of "no" changes the meaning in line with Silenus's defiant composure.

Looking on the sculptured figure of Sad King Billy on the mountain above the city of Keats, despite his slight admiration for the king, Silenus whispers the first lines of "Hyperion," beginning with "Deep in the shady sadness of a vale" (*Hyperion* 104). In the poem, defeated Saturn is mourning his fate thus resembling Sad King Billy, who is in Silenus's mind also defeated. To this is added Silenus's own defeat, meaning his failure to publish poetry which his publisher is willing to market. Silenus remembers that finally he fell out with Sad King Billy, because the king believed that his poems were attracting the Shrike and so must be destroyed. In fact, Silenus thought of the murdering monster as his Muse. Like Keats, he connected death with fantasy and dreams (Perkins 104). When Silenus tells the story to the other pilgrims, he recites two passages from "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" as if he is the author (*Hyperion* 230).[24] These lines seem to contain wishes for death as the king suspected. The destruction of the unfinished manuscript puts an end to Silenus's poetic

[23] "The Fall of Hyperion; a Vision," Canto I, 424–430.
[24] "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision," Canto I, 256–263 and 388–399. However, Simmons writes "story" instead of "stay" in line 388 and "thought" instead of "methought" in line 395.

endeavours, but it does not stop the Shrike. The incident anticipates Silenus's efforts with the poem 250 years later, when The Time Tombs are predicted to open.

When the pilgrims have reached their goal, Martin Silenus returns to what was previously his working room in the now derelict castle of Sad King Billy. He contemplates that he has been working on his *Hyperion* C*antos* for 200 standard years. At last, he has the possibility to finish "the finest literary work of his age" since his Muse, the Shrike, is close at hand (*Fall of Hyperion* 169). Silenus's poem relates the struggle between the Titans and the Greek gods, signifying the end of a golden age and the beginning of dark times for humanity. For him, the relation between the gods and the demigods and the powers in the Hegemony Web is obvious: "the Titans were easily understood to be the heroes of humankind's short history in the galaxy, the Olympian usurpers were the TechnoCore AIs" (*Fall of Hyperion* 168). When he is captured by the Shrike and impaled on the tree of thorns, Silenus recites "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" beginning with "Though art a dreaming thing/ a fever of thyself" (*Fall of Hyperion* 256 – 257),[25] repeating Moneta's admonishing. It is with such pain that Silenus composes his poetry. These lines are also a description of the dreamer's role as poet, a humanist, which will be further discussed in the next section. The passage anticipates the dream of the dying Keats/Severn cybrid, who is experiencing Silenus's agony (*Fall of Hyperion* 389). Silenus remembers that

> [h]e knows the verse, not his, John Keats's, and feels the words further structuring the seeming chaos of pain around him. Silenus understands that the pain has been with him since birth – the universe's gift to a poet. It is a physical reflection of the pain he has felt and futilely tried to set to verse. (*Fall of Hyperion* 256 - 257)

In order to ease the agony of Sad King Billy and the pain of the others who suffer the same torment on the Tree of Thorns, he continues with the first stanza of Keats's "Song" (*Fall of Hyperion* 257).[26]

After the downfall of the Hegemony, Silenus tells Sol Weintraub that he finished his poem on the tree. Moreover, "I learned that poets aren't God, but if there is a God … or anything approaching a God … he's a poet. And a failed one at that" (*Fall of Hyperion* 504). Although Simmons never fails to show the value of poetry in his narratives, apparently his character Silenius has changed his mind after the torturous impaling on the tree of thorns. In this context, Silenus's answer relates to the

[25] "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision," Canto I, 168 – 179.
[26] The stanza was made part of Gustav Holst's *First Choral Symphony*. Silenus appears as the soloist singing with a choir of agonized souls.

existence or non-existence of a non-loving god, who demands sacrifices. It is relevant for my discussion of the concept of empathy and love in the next section.

Sending Raul Endymion on the mission to rescue Aenea from the Pax, Silenus, now almost a thousand years old, quotes a passage from "Endymion." The lines, starting with "In the wide sea there lives a forlorn wretch/ Doomed with enfeebled carcass to outstretch/ His loathed existence through ten centuries/ And then to die alone" seem to describe not only his own situation but also the endeavour Raul is embarking upon (*Endymion* 103).[27] Moreover, describing the immortality of the poet, the passage promises eternal life to him who "expounds/The meanings of all motions, shapes, and sounds." In this subplot, it summarizes what Silenus as Keats's avatar is hoping for, being near his own end. I will return to this poem when I discuss the intertextual relation between Keats's poem "Endymion" and Simmons's *Endymion* novels.

Simmons's admiration for the Romantic poet seems to be the main theme in this subplot, as Keats is manifested in various ways in this subplot. To begin with, it is apparent how his poetry is appropriated by Silenus. As I have pointed out, Silenus is actually trying to complete Keats's unfinished poems. In terms of intertextuality, I find that this particular use resembles the kind of rewrite that Doležel calls "expansion." Simmons is trying to fill in gaps in Keats's poetic endeavours by having Silenus working to finish the poems. In contrast, Silenus's hardships in acquiring a language of poetry and his agony in composing his cantos do not seem to mirror Keats's own way forward in his short lifetime to become the renowned Romantic poet. In fact, at one time in his youth, Silenus had only nine words at his disposal due to brain damage incurred during interstellar travel (*Hyperion* 192). Having become the satyric poet personifying the old wine god in Keats's poems, Silenus thinks that his Muse is the Shrike, who torments him on the tree of thorns. Silenus as a personification of Keats is an essentially different version of the young poet. Considering the Greek myths as intertext, Mnemosyne, the mother of the Muses, is personified as the young woman Moneta,[28] who has some influence over the Shrike,

[27] "Endymion," Book III, 689–811.

[28] In Greek mythology Hyperion was one of the Titans, who were defeated by Zeus as the leader of the Hellenic pantheon. Keats's poems describe the despair of the fallen Titans. In antique mythology Mnemosyne, too, was a Titan and the goddess of memory. In "Hyperion" Mnemosyne is giving solace to the grieving Titan. In "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" Moneta is a priestess of defeated Saturn, identified with Mnemosyne. Her role in "Hyperion" and "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" has been questioned by D. G. James. However, "in both versions she is the mother of all poets, in her sorrow and

although it is not one of the original nine. It seems that Keats uses her according to his own fancy in his "Hyperion" poems, disregarding the mythological context. In the same way, Simmons includes her as a character in his novels with little thought of her Greek origin. Clearly, Keats's "Hyperion" poems are founded rather freely on Greek mythology. However, in view of Silenus's explanation above, the intertextual relationship between Simmons's novels and Keats's poems may be regarded as "transposition" in Doležel's terminology. Despite the difference between poetry and prose, it seems that Simmons strives to preserve the original design of the poems, placing the story in the distant future.

Subplot III: Keats/Severn's story

A second Keats cybrid, who has chosen the name of Joseph Severn, is the main protagonist in the third subplot which is inserted piecemeal into the main narrative of *The Fall of Hyperion*, the second book of the *Cantos*. Keats's/Severn's story may be regarded as an imaginative re-telling of the historic Joseph Severn's description of John Keats's final days in Rome. Although some of the details around the cybrid are fictitious, all information pertaining to the fictionalized poet and his death are known historical facts, from his lodgings in a small hotel near Piazza di Spagna (*Fall of Hyperion* 366); what he uttered during his final days; the autopsy of Keats's body showing that there was hardly any lung tissue left (*Fall of Hyperion* 389); up to the burial in the Protestant churchyard in Rome with the inscription "Here lies one whose name was writ in water" on Keats's nameless headstone[29] (*Fall of Hyperion* 469). In the story, Leigh Hunt, secretary to the Hegemony's CEO, and the Keats/Severn cybrid are cut off from the society they inhabit. They find themselves transferred to a depopulated simulation of Rome as it was in the era of the historic Keats. They are followed by the ghostly shadow of the lurking Shrike, but they have no knowledge of its masters. The intentions of the manipulators are also not known; they are just aware of not being able to leave the place. The cybrid thinks that they have been quarantined by the TechnoCore to stop him from preventing the Hegemony to use the immoral ultimate military weapon against the Ousters. Moreover, the cybrid knows of the secret location of the TechnoCore and its parasitism on humankind. Some details have evidently been changed in Joseph Severn's description. Most striking is Simmons's

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suffering and luminous serenity" (James 164). For Greek mythology I have consulted Robert Graves's *The Greek Myths*.

[29] Cf. Edmund Gosse's work on English literature.

exchange of Leigh Hunt for Joseph Severn, a painter who nursed the dying Keats and passed away in 1879. Hunt, who died in 1859, was a central figure in the Romantic Movement and a friend of Keats's. Simmons's story of the dying cybrid is enacted in a time period of just a couple of days. The historic poet came to Rome on November 15, 1820 and died on February 22, 1821. Doležel presents counterfactual thinking "as a significant part of human intelligence … to open new horizons for knowledge and understanding" (*Possible Worlds* 101). He points out that it may be the beginning of alternative ways of thinking of the past. His suggestion is appropriate for Simmons's treatment of a poem, which is central to the Keats/Severn subplot, namely:

> This living hand, now warm and capable
> Of earnest grasping, would, if it were cold
> And in the icy silence of the tomb,
> So haunt thy days and chill thy dreaming nights
> That thou wouldst wish thine own heart dry of blood
> So in my veins red life might stream again
> And thou be conscience-calm'd—see here it is—
> I hold it towards you. (Fall of Hyperion 270)

These lines were written by a young man who had seen first his mother and then his younger brother dying from tuberculosis. Moreover, he had had his first pulmonary haemorrhage and knew that he was marked for death. It should be regarded as more than an epitaph. According to Hirsch, the lines show how the young poet is afraid of death and rages against his fate. Knowing that his hand will soon be cold as death, he holds it out to us seeking help and comfort. Anticipating his end, he seeks contact and love to help him in the throes of death (Hirsch xxxiv). The cybrid, now having assumed the persona of Keats, remembers having scrawled these lines in December 1819 "on a page of the satirical 'faery tale' I had just started—*The Cap and Bells, or, The Jealousies*" (*Fall of Hyperion* 271, original emphasis). This piece of information is corroborated by Hirsch (xxxiv). In the novel, Simmons makes a different connection to Keats's poetry than Hirsch does. The Keats/Severn cybrid thinks that "[i]t was not a message across time to Brawne, not even a contemporary lament for Fanny, my single and dearest soul's desire" (*Fall of Hyperion* 271). Instead he would have substituted it for the 18th line of "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision": "When this warm scribe my hand is in the grave" (*Fall of Hyperion* 271). This is part of the poetry that Johnny recited to Brawne Lamia, explaining his wish to be human. In this instance the second cybrid has really assumed the identity of "John Keats, the consumptive poet" (*Fall of Hyperion* 271–272). Simmons here emphasizes that there

may be a different explanation for the short poem than has usually been assumed by literary critics.[30] In science fiction circles it may be invoked as an example of *What, if*' After all, it seems that these scribbled lines were never commented on by Keats, and besides they were not published during his life-time. Even if we do not know the intention of Keats himself, it has a meaning to Johnny as an artefact. Only Keats/Severn utters a definite statement, since he is closest to assuming the persona of John Keats. Anyway, the sympathy or compassion for the dying poet which is invoked by the poem is negated by Simmons's suggestion. This tallies with his argument that empathy is not the same as sympathy. I think that although Simmons wants us to empathise with the manifestation of John Keats, he is at the same time telling us that this entails more than feeling pity for the dying man. I intend to discuss this in the context of Keats's notion of "negative capability" in the next section.

Travelling to the nineteenth-century replica of Rome, Keats/Severn suffers a haemorrhage, coughing blood. He explains to the horrified Hunt that it is tuberculosis, which does not exist in their time. He says: "[b]ut John Keats had it. Died of it. And this body belongs to Keats" (*Fall of Hyperion* 345). Evidently, the TechnoCore is able to manipulate his body from a distance. As he realizes that they are close to Rome, his personality merges with that of the historic poet. When they finally reach Rome, totally devoid of people, Keats/Severn is now very sick and frequently vomits blood. In the night, he has a nightmare:

> The siren song of pain continues to rise and fall from the world I left behind—the everyday pain of each person everywhere, the pain of those suffering from the war just begun, the specific, focused pain of those on the Shrike's terrible tree, and, worst of all, the pain I feel for and from the pilgrims and those others whose lives and thoughts I now share. (*Fall of Hyperion* 380 – 381)

In order to prove to Hunt that he really is a poet he recites the second stanza of the poem "*A Song about Myself"* starting with "There was a naughty boy" (*Fall of Hyperion* 383–384), which Hunt does not appreciate. In addition he imagines hearing "cries from Martin Silenus on the tree, suffering for writing the poetry I had been too frail and cowardly to finish" (*Fall of Hyperion* 389). In his fever all his feelings and thoughts are restructured as verse, as poetry. He thinks of a note he sent to Fanny a year before he died:

[30] That Keats may have other intentions with these lines is suggested in a note (Keats 560).

> I had written: "If I should die," said I to myself, "I have left no immortal work behind me—nothing to make my friends proud of my memory—but I have lov'd the principle of beauty in all things, and if I had had time I would have made myself remembered." This strikes me now as futile and self-centered and idiotic and naïve…and yet I desperately believe it still. (Fall of Hyperion 401, original emphasis)

He continues in the same vein, emphasizing his effort as poet to sharpen his empathy. Since he is a cybrid, partly residing in the TechnoCore, he observes how his body is dying, and in the end, just before the death, he talks about the body in the third person. He has realised that he is just the "One Who Comes Before," not the coming messiah, "The One Who Teaches" (*Fall of Hyperion* 452).[31] He is merely a poet dying far from home. Just before he dies, Keats/Severn recites a passage from "Hyperion" beginning with "A wondrous lesson in thy silent face" as his poetic legacy (*Fall of Hyperion* 453).[32] In this passage the poet identifies with Apollo as the Sun God. In fact, the Keats cybrids in succession have experienced death several times, as Johnny told Brawne Lamia, but this does not make dying easier (*Hyperion* 369). Keats/Severn, experiencing the agonies of the Romantic poet, almost manages to assume the persona of John Keats, until the final moment, when his consciousness is separated from the dead body of the cybrid. When the body of the Keats cybrid is dead, its consciousness is able to pass through the megasphere to warn the CEO of the Hegemony not to use the ultimate weapon, which was devised by the TechnoCore. It is also able to tell her about the Core's localization in the farcasters, which makes her destroy the portals thus defeating the TechnoCore. Aenea tells Raul of her father's AI personality that "it had a separate existence in the megasphere and then resided in the Consul's ship for a time" (*Rise of Endymion* 24). In a way she suggests that the cybrids manufactured by the AI entity Ummon had souls. Since only human beings can have souls, her comment pertains to the question to what extent the cybrids are able to assume the identity of the Romantic poet. If the TechnoCore is able to create real human beings, then it has truly become God. This issue is discussed several times in the *Cantos*. In my opinion, Simmons does not reach a conclusion. The fact that the consciousnesses of the cybrids are created from writings by and about Keats speaks against the notion that the cybrids can become humans. In the end of *The Fall of Hyperion*, the AI personality of the ship is heard reciting the last stanza of "Ode on

[31] This allusion to the story of Jesus is clarified further by the cybrid's musing "I am, after all, little John Keats, not John the Baptist" (*Fall of Hyperion* 494).
[32] "Hyperion," Book III, 113–121.

Indolence" (*Fall of Hyperion* 516). As part of the Keats manifestation it says adieu to love, ambition, and poesy.[33] When the ship departs, Brawne Lamia tries to remember "the final lines of her love's longest and finest unfinished work," which is how Simmons considers "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision." And Brawne imagines that like Hyperion, her beloved Johnny "gave a roar as if of earthly fire" (*Fall of Hyperion* 517).[34] Besides marking Brawne Lamia's farewell to the Keats/Severn cybrid's AI consciousness, the passage seems to be defying the downfall of humankind as imagined by Silenus when writing his poem.

Subplot IV: Ummon's story

The fourth subplot has to do with the AI entity Ummon, who is an independent part of the TechnoCore. He plays a decisive role in *Hyperion* and *The Fall of Hyperion*. Ummon's story echoes the inevitable downfall of the Titans in Keats's "Hyperion" and "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision," which govern the subplot. Like the historic Zen master, the AI entity makes all his explanations in the form of "koans," which are characterized by their ambiguity and apparent lack of relevance, adding to the confusion of the story.[35]

As Keats/Severn is dying, his AI mind is drifting in the frightening metasphere and is able to enter the megasphere where chaos reigns because of the struggle between the constituent parts of the TechnoCore. Finally, he is captured by Ummon, who is his father. Ummon knows that he himself must die when the Core's UI is born. Assuming the part of Hyperion in Keats's poem, Ummon recites a passage bemoaning his fate (*Fall of Hyperion* 418).[36] Keats/Severn recognizes the words, because they were written by John Keats nine centuries earlier. A few days before, Martin Silenus claimed that he was writing the same poem ascribing the part of the fallen Titans to humankind. Apparently, the same fate will befall Ummon. Being partly a Zen master, recognizing the Zen value of existence, Ummon does not want to die. When asked what will happen to him if the farcaster network is destroyed, Ummon recites two lines from "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision": "There is no death

[33] Kroeber points out that the theme of the ode is connected to Keats's "theory of 'negative capability', and his desire to attain 'disinterestedness"' (Kroeber 270), which I shall discuss in connection to the concept of empathy in the next section.
[34] Most of the quotations from "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" are found in the *Hyperion* novel. Simmons quotes 63 lines from the poem out of 468 lines in Canto I and 61 lines in Canto II .
[35] In June 2008 on his web site, Simmons explained his admiration for Ummon, the famous Zen master who died in 949.
[36] "Hyperion," Book I, lines 231 – 242.

in all the universe/No smell of death,—There shall be death. Moan, moan."[37] Those are the lines that Silenus previously quoted, omitting the word "no" in "There shall be death." To this Ummon adds "For this pale Omega of a withered race," meaning himself (*Fall of Hyperion* 420). The corresponding phrase in "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" reads "The pale Omega of a wither'd race"[38] referring to Moneta, the admonisher. Ummon evidently identifies with the Titans and in a Miltonic manner he recites the passage from "Hyperion"[39], where Oceanus addresses the other Titans praising evolution (*Fall of Hyperion* 421–423).[40] Although the Titans have been beneficial rulers of the universe, they "must yield to a race of gods superior in beauty and magnanimity" (Bush 35). This passage of the poem is important for the plot, not only for its suggestion of an evolution towards beauty as proposed by Roberta D. Cornelius (93), which I will analyse further in the next section, but also because it explains a more general theme in Keats's philosophy and in Simmons's novels, namely the development of consciousness and empathy. Aenea explains this to Raul when she is talking about her father's concept of pleasure thermometer.[41] The last lines of Ummon's recital are

> We are such forest-trees, and our fair boughs
> Have bred forth, not pale solitary doves,
> But eagles golden-feathered, who do tower
> Above us in their beauty, and must reign
> In right thereof, for 'tis the eternal law
> That first in beauty should be first in might…. (Fall of Hyperion 423)

I will assert in the next section, referring to Cornelius's discussion, that this poem is essential for understanding Keats's and Simmons's humanism.

Ummon explains that the future is not predetermined. One possibility is the destruction of Ummon to make room for the Core's UI. But there is also a possibility that the human UI defeats the Core's UI. The discovery of the empathic part of the future UI of humanity might prevent his death. The purpose of the Shrike and its Tree of Thorns is to broadcast the infliction of pain which is the antithesis to empathy.

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[37] "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision," Canto I, 423, 424.
[38] "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision," Canto I, 288.
[39] Most of the quotations from "Hyperion" appear in Simmons's *The Fall of Hyperion*. Altogether there are 68 lines from Keats's poem, which has 357, 391, 135 lines in Books I – III, respectively.
[40] "Hyperion," Book II, 173 – 229 and line 243.
[41] It is also a constant question in the mind of the Jesuit–pilgrim Lenar Hoyt, as he deliberates over the theological writings of Teilhard de Chardin on the evolution of The Supreme Being towards the Omega Point. Although Simmons seems to consider Teilhard's ideas important for the general theme of his *Cantos*, I have chosen not to pursue this further, since I can not connect the religious implications to Keats.

Ummon recites a poem of his own, explaining that the Keats cybrid was intended to be a "refuge so attractive/ that the fleeing Empathy/ would consider no other home/" (*Fall of Hyperion* 425). However, Keats/Severn realizes that he cannot be the Chosen One of Empathy. The reason is that he is not fully human (*Fall of Hyperion* 309). Like all races in the Galaxy, he is apparently being watched by "lions and tigers and bears" in the metasphere, who are monitoring humankind for signs of empathy. Discussing how Keats's empathy is connected to his notion of "negative capability," Simmons has declared him an exponent of Zen (June 2008). In the Ummon subplot, Keats/Severn is constantly reminded of his status of apprentice, chastised by the Zen master's "Kwatz staff." When Aenea repeats Ummon's poem, her purpose is not only to explain and stress the concept of empathy but also to modify Ummon's proposal. She says that the Keats cybrids "were created to be the instrument of that fusion between the Core and humankind. To have a child, in other words" (*Rise Endymion* 134–135). Aenea is that child, being human born. Yet, she seems to be able to communicate with cyberspace. In that she is more than either of the parts of her parentage.

When the Keats/Severn cybrid dies in Rome, his consciousness travels in the datasphere delivering messages to those who have the power to stop the TechnoCore's parasitic use of human brains. Watching the struggle between the factions of the TechnoCore, he sees a great light, which he believes is Ummon being destroyed. In the end, Ummon shares the fate of the defeated Titans. I think that Keats's poem "Hyperion" may be regarded as the intertext for Ummon's story. Keats considers the defeat of the Titans inevitable, giving room for a higher breed of gods. I believe that this is what Simmons's *Cantos* is leading up to. Referring to my earlier remark in view of Silenus's explanation, I think that Ummon's story is part of Simmons's rewrite of Keats's poems, which I called "transposition".

Subplot V: The Schrödinger cat story

Raul Endymion is the omniscient narrator in *Endymion* and *The Rise of Endymion*. In the Schrödinger cat box story he is imprisoned in a capsule in space. He has been sentenced to death, which will be the result of a certain radioactive decay occurring in the capsule. Waiting for death to happen, he relates the story of Aenea's, Bettik's and his flight from the Pax. In his sleep he is visited by Aenea, his beloved and future leader of the insurgent movement. In fact, the whole of *The Rise of Endymion* is

pervaded by their mutual love. Aenea dedicates the first stanza of "Ode on a Grecian Urn" to Raul, naming him "Thou foster-child of Silence and slow time" as he is sleeping in his Schrödinger cat capsule (*Endymion* 563). She omits the first line, which the Keats/Severn apparition quoted to Brawne Lamia, seeing Aenea's mother pregnant as she was close to giving birth. These lines from Keats's best-known ode apparently constitute a connection over time between the lovers. Moreover, the poem demonstrates the similarity between Aenea's empathic ability to be part of The Void Which Binds and Keats's empathic relationship with the world of his poetry, which will be dealt with in the next section.

In his confinement, Raul realizes that because he is mortal and has taken part in the communion with Aenea, he can open himself to the Void Which Binds in empathic relation with the universe. He can hear Keats's, Silenus's and Aenea's voices reciting a passage from "Endymion":

> *But this is human life: the war, the deeds,*
> *The disappointment, the anxiety,*
> *Imagination's struggle, far and nigh,*
> *All human; bearing in themselves this good,*
> *That they are still the air, the subtle food,*
> *To make us feel existence, and to show*
> *How quiet death is. Where soil is men grow,*
> *Whether to weeds or flowers; but for me,*
> *There is no depth to strike in…*(*Rise of Endymion* 665, original emphasis).[42]

This passage summarises Keats's belief that death is an indispensable part of human life, which is a salient part of Aenea's teaching. When Raul regards a young boy with a fatal illness he hallucinates her voice saying: "*To lose all this forever is the essence of being human, my love*" (*Rise of Endymion* 163, original emphasis). Critics have observed that Keats at times represents death as a positive experience. For instance, David Perkins points this out discussing Keats's search for a symbol of fulfilment in "Ode to a Nightingale" (Perkins 108–109).

Simmons's description of Raul's situation in the Schrödinger cat capsule has a certain likeness with a story in Greek mythology. In the most common version of the myth about Endymion, he was loved by the moon goddess Selene (Graves 199). To enable her to kiss him at her own convenience, she put him to eternal sleep. In this way the beauty of the young man was preserved. In Keats's poem, Endymion dreams

[42] "Endymion," Book II, 153 – 161.

about the beautiful moon goddess, enjoying her physical beauty. Richard H. Fogle states that "Endymion is in love with the Moon-Goddess, and he is the hero in a poem saturated with references to moonlight" (Fogle 43). It is not a chaste love, since "his goddess is soft white flesh" (Bush 22). Keats's emphasis on beauty and love in his rewrite of the myth is typical of all of his poetry. In contrast, very little is told about Raul's appearance. Simmons writes only that he is broad-shouldered and that his name rhymes with "tall," which describes his stature. Raul's beauty is rather an inner quality. For instance, on one occasion he saves the man who just tried to kill him and nearly gets himself killed in consequence. He is moreover repeatedly shown to be a man of compassion.

Although Simmons's description of Raul's predicament has some likeness to the Greek myth, as a rewrite it changes the basic idea. In the Greek story the reason for Endymion's captivity is love because he is beautiful, but in Keats's poem, which seems to be guiding Simmons, Endymion is not imprisoned, although beauty and love are the main themes. What Karl Kroeber writes about "Ode to Psyche" could be equally applied to "Endymion": "Keats does not imitate the form of the old mythological story … He finds in it the inspirational source of immediate and personal imaginative experience" (263).[43] In Simmons's narrative it is the evil powers of the Church and the TechnoCore that are responsible for Raul's imprisonment in the capsule, where he is expecting death at any moment. The Greek myth is static, since Endymion is forever imprisoned in his sleep. In Keats's poem he is free, searching for beauty and love. The goddess whom he meets is not an ethereal spirit but a woman of flesh and blood. The young girl Aenea says that "[f]ather thought that true friendship between humans was on an even higher level than our response to nature, but that the highest level attainable was love. … Father meant erotic love" (*Endymion* 282). She continues, reciting:

> *Now I have tasted her sweet soul to the core*
> *All other depths are shallow: essences,*
> *Once spiritual, are like muddy lees,*
> *Meant but to fertilize my earthly root,*
> *And make my branches lift a golden fruit*
> *Into the bloom of heaven.* (*Endymion* 282 – 283, original emphasis)[44]

[43] Since Keats did not read Classical Greek, he is likely to have read about Endymion in a Latin version or an English summary (Cornelius 88, 89; Hamilton 446).
[44] "Endymion," Book II, 904 – 909.

Raul's and Aenea's flight from their enemies parallels Endymion's pilgrimage in Keats's poem.[45] For instance, as I mentioned in the story of Martin Silenus, when the old poet sends Raul away on his mission to rescue Aenea, he recites what Glaucus is reading from a book entreating Endymion to lift Circe's spell (*Endymion* 103). Thus the relationship between Raul and Keats's protagonist is emphasized. Again, when the sea god Glaucus meets Endymion he exclaims: "Thou art the man!"[46] When Aenea, Bettik and Raul meet Father Glaucus on the icy world Sol Draconi Septem in Simmons's novel, Raul is greeted with the same words (*Endymion* 434). Raul does not understand the reference, commenting on it from a later point in time: "It took me a while—years—to put that comment in the proper perspective" (*Endymion* 434). It seems as if Simmons intends to give the reader a clue to the intertextuality, provided that the reader is familiar with Keats's poem. Like Endymion in Keats's poem, Raul knows no bounds as soon as he learns how to listen to the music of the spheres in *The Rise of Endymion*. Aenea appears as a manifestation of the moon goddess, visiting Raul in his confinement in the Schrödinger cat box. Using Doležel's term for rewrites, this intertextual relationship between Keats's poem and the Greek myth constitutes a form of "displacement," since Keats has redesigned the original story, giving the hero an active part in his pilgrimage for love and beauty. Endymion in Keats's poem is not without agency, in contrast to Palmers's remark about the human protagonists in the *Hyperion* novels. On the other hand, Simmons's complex science fiction story is in my opinion an example of "transposition" of the poem and the myth in combination. In the story which frames *Endymion* he appears as the beautiful young man in the Antique myth. In the rest of the *Endymion* novels he follows the hero's quest in Keats's poem. Consequently, the main stories in both these intertexts are essentially preserved.

Subplot VI: The pleasure thermometer

In her capacity of the messiah, Aenea appears as the One Who Teaches. In *The Rise of Endymion*, Simmons gives her ample space to explain central philosophical issues to her followers. Sometimes, however, Raul is the only listener. Most important for the reader's understanding of the plot is the talk during a lull in their flight from the Pax. The twelve-year-old girl is explaining Keats's idea of pleasure thermometer to Raul,

[45] "Endymion," Book II, line 1014.
[46] "Endymion" Book III, line 234.

who is a grown man. The references to Keats's poetry and to his creed do not carry the narrative forward. However, Aenea's explanation anticipates the central theme of love in *The Rise of Endymion*. It seems that Simmons intends to take the opportunity to demonstrate the purpose of all his quoting of Keats's writings in order to make the reader realize how the story can be interpreted. In other words, Simmons is not so much concerned with the chain of events as with emphasizing the character and deeper significance of the events.

Simmons has built this rather short part of the narrative around two extracts from Keats's poetry. *Endymion* ends with the first stanza of "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (first line excluded) combined with the first five lines of Keats's "Endymion," invoking beauty (*Endymion* 562 – 563). The poems have been scribbled by Aenea visiting Raul in his sleep. In the context of that particular passage in the story, it may be regarded as homage to beauty and love. However, by pursuing Earl Wasserman's analysis of the ode, which has many affinities with Aenea's account, it is possible to understand that Simmons has yet another intention in including the poem in the narrative. Like Wasserman, Simmons refers to the poem "Endymion" to elucidate Keats's philosophy, charging Aenea with expounding it. Referring to the ode, Wasserman asserts that "its intrinsic theme is that region where earth and the ethereal, light and darkness, time and no-time become one" (114). The fact that the urn was to hold the ashes of the dead contrasts with the temporal celebration that is depicted on its frieze. Wasserman uses the term "mystic oxymoron" to describe Keats's search for the limits of man's imagination. Hirsch mentions Keats's obsession with fusion experiences, exemplified by life and death coming together (xxvii). To illustrate this, Wasserman quotes lines 293–302 of Book I of "Endymion," where the worshippers of Pan pray to the earth-god (114). In the novel, Aenea says, quoting the same passage, "Father thought that some people—not all—were moved by their response to nature to be stirred by that elemental, Pan-like imagination" (*Endymion* 281). It seems that Raul is one of those. Her remark relates to words like "sylvan," "flowery," and "leaf-fringed" in the Ode. She points out that this was the first stage on the "pleasure thermometer," described in a letter by Keats where he talks about "the gradations of Happiness even like a kind of Pleasure Thermometer" (Wasserman 119).[47] Aenea continues: "Father thought that the first stage of human happiness was a 'fellowship

[47] Letter to John Taylor, January 30, 1818.

with essence'" (*Endymion* 280). "'By that', she said, 'Father meant an imaginative and sensuous response to nature'" (*Endymion* 280 – 281). She adds: "For Father imagination and truth were the same thing. He once wrote—'The imagination may be compared to Adam's dream–he awoke and found it truth'" (*Endymion* 281).[48] In a later section I intend to discuss Keats's fascination with the animistic beauty of nature as a basis for Simmons's appropriation of Keats's humanism.

Aenea continues, explaining why "Endymion" was not well received by critics in 1818. She says that her father did not reach the real essence by which is meant '"*The meanings of all motions, shapes, and sounds*,' whispered the girl. '…*all forms and substances/ Straight homeward to their symbol-essences…*'" (*Endymion* 283, original emphasis). This passage from "Endymion" ends with "He shall not die."[49] It is part of the poem which is recited by the thousand-year-old Martin Silenus, the personification of Keats, extolling the art of poetry, as he sends Raul on his mission. This short subplot in *Endymion* appears as a discussion of Keats's philosophy of imagination, beauty and truth. What Aenea intends is expressed in another way by Sheehan when he asserts that Simmons aspires to explain the meaning of our existence.

The purpose of my analysis in this section has been to show how Simmons uses Keats's poetry and other writings in order to construct plots which are subsidiary to the main narrative. As an example of intertextuality, I think that it is clear that Simmons appropriates the main theme and design from "Endymion" for "The Schrödinger cat story." Moreover, I argue that the *Hyperion Cantos* has a similar intertextual relation to Keats's Hyperion poems. I think that "transposition" in Doležel's terminology comes closest in describing the literary connection to Keats. If we consider the whole *Cantos*, there are other subplots with different intertexts, which I have not analysed. They indeed enrich the narrative but no single source affects the structure and the underlining meaning of the entire series as Simmons's use of Keats. When discussing the subplots, I have pointed out Simmons's frequent mentioning of empathy, love and beauty. An analysis of how these concepts are connected is basic for understanding how they contribute to Keats's and Simmons's humanism, which I intend to deal with next.

[48] Letter to Benjamin Bailey, 22 November 1817 (*Keats* 489).
[49] "Endymion," Book III, 698–700.

Empathy and Love

In the preceding section, where the importance of Keats's poetry for the subplots has been discussed, empathy has been highlighted several times as a major component not only of the subplots, but also as that which connects the subplots to the larger narratives. Moreover, empathy often appears in relation to love and beauty.[50] Evidently, these three notions come together both as themes in Simmons's story and as a basis for what could be called Simmons's humanism. In fact, towards the end of the *Hyperion Cantos*, all three surface as a demonstration of Simmons's use of Keats's humanism for the building of his own. To reiterate what I declared in the introduction, by the phrase "Simmons's humanism" I do not necessarily ascribe to the author himself a certain kind of humanism, but rather denote an ethos of the cantos as a whole, a thematic thrust that is consonant with the various allusions to and samplings of Keats the poet and his work. As Cornelius proposed: "A humanist is one who is concerned with the nature and life of man, who believes in man's dignity and worth, and who attaches supreme importance to such expression of man's capabilities as will contribute to the lasting enrichment of human life" (87). Adopting Keats's own humanism as a point of departure, I find that *The Hyperion Cantos* puts a great emphasis on the notions of empathy and love. In Keats's "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" the narrator says to Moneta, the admonisher: "sure a poet is a sage;/ A humanist, physician to all men."[51] Assuming that Keats intends an accomplished poet, this should be regarded as a qualification of the definition meaning a student of men. Quoting from Keats's poetry and letters to his brothers, Cornelius and Kroeber seek to show how Keats's humanism is exhibited. Simmons has inserted a number of these same quotations in his *Cantos*. In my opinion, with his emphasis on empathy and love, Simmons expresses his humanism in a more explicit way than Keats does in his poetry. I intend to discuss some examples of this attitude in the four novels.

Critics like Hirsch and Walter Jackson Bate have pointed out how Keats came to regard the annulment of the self as a part of the highest poetic imagination. That this is connected to the notion of empathy is explained by Wasserman, who writes, "the doctrine of empathy is one of the cardinal principles of Keats's poetic and

[50] In his analysis of "Ode to Psyche" Kroeber states that Keats had "an inspired vision of love and beauty as supra-natural, divinely eternal" (265). I argue that is implicit in Simmons's references to Keats.
[51] "The Fall of Hyperion: A Vision" Canto I, 189–190.

religious creed" (120). By that he means "the act of freeing the self of its identity [in] the act of mystic absorption into the essence of outward forms." In his analysis of "Ode on a Grecian Urn,"[52] Wasserman emphasizes "Keats's emphatic [sic!] entrance into the life of the frieze" (119). Simmons expresses this in yet another way by calling Keats a great Zen master, giving the following explanation: "Zen is looking at things with the eye of God, that is, becoming the thing's eyes so that it looks at itself with our eyes" (June 2008). Summing up: one characteristic of Keats as poet is his ability to immerse himself into the framework of his poetry.

Hirsch writes that Keats possessed an "ardent, permeable, and empathic imagination" (xxii), which "made him especially vulnerable to the anguish of others" (xxxii). Bate discusses Keats's reading of William Hazlitt's *Essay on the Principles of Human Action*. This book was intended to disprove Thomas Hobbes's contention that "self-love, in one way or another, is the mainspring of all human action" (Bate 62). Its subtitle reveals what Hazlitt wanted to demonstrate, namely "the Natural Disinterest of the Human Mind" (Bate 62). I think that "disinterest" in this case should be taken as "impartiality" or even "unselfishness," which is slightly different from what Keats describes as "disinterestedness."

Discussing Keats's professionalism, Simmons points to the poet's admiration for Shakespeare (October 2014), who in William Hazlitt's words "was nothing in himself; but he was all that others were, or that they would become" (qtd in Simmons December 2004).[53] This led Keats to the concept of "disinterestedness," which is "a passionate interest in the behavior and character of these others [other human beings, the sparrow pecking at gravel outside his window, a nightingale, Nature, the living and the dead],[54] but analysis without judgment, observation without opinion, and perception without preaching" (qtd in Simmons December 2004). Cornelius, who comments on Keats's observation that few men have a "disinterested" point of view,[55] gives "unbiased" or "unselfish" as synonyms for this word (92). Keats attended Hazlitt's lectures and was influenced by his concept of imaginative sympathy or sympathetic identification, which can be taken as "empathy," a concept which, however, was not introduced to English philosophy until the beginning of the

[52] Parts of this poem are quoted at least four times in the novels.
[53] This statement is also quoted by Bates in his essay "Negative Capability" (65).
[54] Simmons is referring to Keats's letter to Benjamin Bailey 22 November 1817. Bate, too, mentions the often-quoted remark (61).
[55] Letter to George and Georgina Keats, 14 February to 3 May 1819.

twentieth century (Bate 63). Nevertheless, Hazlitt's thinking influenced Keats's poetic writings. In the frequently quoted letter to Richard Woodhouse he wrote that a poet "has no Identity—he is continually in for—and filling some other Body—The Sun, the Moon, the Sea and Men and Women who are creatures of impulse are poetical and have about them an unchangeable attribute—the poet has none; no identity—he is certainly the most unpoetical of all God's Creatures" (Keats 501).[56] Keats's declaration of the poetical process is elucidated by Wasserman, who describes it as "self-annihilating empathy" (135). It is quite clear that Keats's empathy is related to, or even the same as, his notion of "negative capability," which he mentioned in a letter to his brothers.[57] With this he meant the situation "when man is capable of being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason" (Keats 492). According to Bate, for Keats "what is needed is an imaginative openness of mind and heightened receptivity to reality in its full and diverse concreteness. This, however, involves negating one's own ego" (56).

So far the concept of empathy has been approached in different ways. Considering that this is a common word in everyday usage, despite the fact that it was coined only a hundreds years ago, I think that it is desirable to clarify its meaning in different contexts. In their analysis of Keats's poetry, Wasserman and other critics conclude that Keats's notion of "negative capability" can be equated with empathy. I think that Keats's concept of "disinterestedness" has a similar meaning. This seems to be the opinion of Simmons too, when he calls Keats a Zen master. Simmons, who has indeed written about Keats's empathy and negative capability, emphasizes on his Web site under the heading *Writing Well* that "Empathy is not sympathy" (June 2008). It entails not only feeling compassion for the downtrodden, but also trying to identify with the oppressor. Simmons writes that "[t]o be a writer, you must be able to show empathy toward Adolf Hitler, if Adolf Hitler is your character. You must lie down in the snow next to Hitler—or in this case, in the flames—and rise, or not rise, secure in your hatred of all Jews" (June 2008). Considering the character of the narrative in the *Hyperion Cantos,* in my opinion he is exaggerating in his intention to make a point. In an article in *Svenska Dagbladet* John Sjögren discusses a recent book by Glenn Haegerstam titled *Den empatiska människan [The Emphatic Human]*. In this book empathy is defined by quoting Edith Stein: "Empathy is my consciousness, which

[56] 27 October,1818.
[57] Letter to George and Tom Keats, 21, 27(?) December 1817 (Keats 491–492).

strives towards a meaningful understanding of the feelings of the other" (Stein qtd in Sjögren 2014).[58] It seems that in Simmons's novels, empathy has two related meanings, one similar to "identification," in Haegerstam's words "cognitive," the other coming close to "compassion," called "affective" by Haegerstam. I conclude this discussion with the observation that the meaning of the word "empathy" varies over a range of related connotations. Philosophers like Haegerstam try to give it a precise definition, which is, however, difficult to apply in a literary context. Simmons in his books uses it broadly and mentions it often as being related to love. Critics writing about Keats ascribe empathy to him, equating it with the expression "negative capability." In the following I will assert that empathy combines "compassion" with "identification" in Simmons's books. Applied to Keats I think that "identification" comes closest, although a connotation of "compassion" can be argued.

The two meanings of empathy are brought together in the subplot of the dying poet in Rome, which I discussed earlier. In his throes of death the Keats/Severn cybrid experiences also the pain of his alter ego, Martin Silenus. Simmons makes the poet think, as he is feeling the disappointment of failure of his life's endeavours: "We thought we were special, opening our perceptions, honing our empathy, spilling that cauldron of shared pain onto the dance floor of language and then trying to make a minuet out of all that chaotic hurt" (*Fall of Hyperion* 410). At the end of the story, when he is a thousand years old, close to the end of life, Silenus settles the issue of the poet's objective. He states that the mission of writers is to listen to the pain of others when composing poetry (*Rise of Endymion* 695). In this way Simmons refers to Keats's ability to observe and perceive reality as a foundation for his poetry.

Aenea personifies both aspects of empathy, one ability being a consequence of the other. Whenever people are killed she is aware of their deaths, feeling their agony. As Aenea, Raul and Bettik are fleeing from the Pax, having arrived on the planet Qom-Riyadh, suddenly the young girl feels a great pain (*Endymion* 477). She falls ill running a severe fever. When she recovers, she tells her companions how the friends they have just left behind in their flight have been killed by a TechnoCore agent. Blind Father Glaucus, who is one of the victims, said that "'[e]volution brings human beings. Human beings, through a long and painful process, bring humanity.' 'Empathy', Aenea said softly" (*Endymion* 449). Empathy is a characteristic of

[58] My translation of what was originally formulated by philosopher and Carmelite nun Edith Stein, who was murdered in Auschwitz in 1942.

humanism which governs how certain characters relate to the world they live in. Raul remembers that "Aenea heard the music of the spheres. She resonated with the Void Which Binds, which resonates in turn to sentient life and thought" (*Rise of Endymion* 663). Waiting for death to occur in his Schrödinger cat prison, Raul comes to understand the purpose of the Keats cybrid as Aenea explained it:

> It had taken the abilities and perceptions of both AIs and human beings to create the hybrid ability to see directly into the Void Which Binds … for humanity finally to learn the language of the dead and of the living. Empathy was another name for that ability, and Aenea had been the Child of Empathy. (*Rise of Endymion* 660)

The quality of empathy can be transferred to others. Those who drink of the wine with a few drops of Aenea's blood in it will envision the universe with empathy (*Rise of Endymion* 408).[59] Not only that, those who have partaken in the communion can transfer the ability themselves. That is the reason why the shared moment of her death is felt by

> [a]ll of the worlds where she left disciples who had partaken of communion and renounced the cruciform. Her Shared Moment … the hour of her death … was like a signal broadcast and rebroadcast through all of these worlds. (*Rise of Endymion* 671)

This is the cause of the downfall of the Pax, the Church, and the TechnoCore. Moreover, Aenea's followers feel the pain of others whom they hurt. Consequently, there is little bloodshed as the Pax loyalists are defeated and chased away (*Rise of Endymion* 633, 673).

Raul, who is described a couple of times as a man of compassion in the narrative, is able to listen to a song by Jews imprisoned in Treblinka after he has been given the Eucharist (*Rise of Endymion* 573). In the same way there is the possibility for people to use their freedom of will to "choose again" and consequently arrive at an empathic stage where they are capable of travelling through time and space.

The subplot of the poet dying in depopulated Rome epitomizes some of the themes which are connected to Keats's poetry: the aspiration and agony of the poet, his love of beauty and the importance of empathy. The Keats/Severn cybrid is able to feel the pain and sorrows of others. In addition, I think that Simmons asks of us readers the same kind of empathy for the dying poet, who has declined to be The Chosen One, although it would have saved him.

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[59] Both Aenea and Wasserman quote "Endymion" Book I, 797–802. The passage ends with "and we are nurtured like a pelican brood." This is a reference to the legendary pelican feeding her offspring with her blood. Simmons has not elaborated on this connection.

The connection of empathy to pain is prevalent in the narrative. Simmons's aestheticism of pain is in line with Keats's tendency to blend opposites. The Keats/Severn cybrid exhibits a high degree of empathy, feeling the agonies of his dying mother, of his brother Tom, and of the pilgrims (*Fall of Hyperion* 388 – 389). As he is dying he receives the pain of others and turns it into poetry (*Fall of Hyperion* 400). However, when Father Duré asks the Keats/Severn cybrid if he may be the empathy part of the future Ultimate Intelligence which fled back in time, he says no,

> I'm not even … not even fully human. My consciousness floats somewhere in the matrix of the Core. My body was reconstituted from remnants of John Keats's DNA and biofactured like an android's. Memories were implanted. The end of my life … my 'recovery' from consumption … were all simulated on a world built for that purpose. (*Fall of Hyperion* 309)

I mentioned earlier that Keats/Severn declared how poets have to struggle to sharpen their sense of empathy. Although Keats himself expressed the notion differently in his writing, it is clear that his developing of empathy is connected to both Keats's historic persona and his poetry, which was grafted into the consciousness of both cybrids. The fact that he is not fully human may be the reason why he cannot take on the burden of becoming the empathy part, which was created by humans in the future, in harmony with Teilhard de Chardin's idea of the process of evolution toward the day, "where all of creation, humanity included, would become one with the Godhead" (*Endymion* 448). However, Father Glaucus thought that even the TechnoCore might evolve and develop empathy. This is why the Keats cybrid is part of the narrative as a possible receiver of the human empathy part. In his description of Ummon's death it is clear that Simmons thinks that Ummon, too, might be regarded as a sentient being. "The old Master, if indeed it is he, does not cite koans as he dies, but screams in agony as sincerely as any conscious entity ever has who is in the process of being fed to the ovens" (*Fall of Hyperion* 476). Although Ummon is part of the TechnoCore, he is the result of spontaneous evolution towards a higher consciousness. Simmons seems to point out that, with regard to the notion of empathy, no clear boundary can be discerned between that which is the result of biological evolution and that which was created artificially.

Several of the main protagonists are characterized by their empathy shown as compassion. For instance, at the age of seven Rachel gave most of her family's rationed food to the migrant workers. Moreover, Lenar Hoyt, who is in great pain in

his own personal hell, remembers that "[h]ell is also the memory of starving children in the slums of Armaghast and the smile of politicians sending boys off to die in colonial wars" (*Fall of Hyperion* 41). Father Duré, who has exposed himself to extreme pain in order not to succumb to the domination of the cruciform, says that faith is necessary for us to make pain meaningful. To this the scholar-pilgrim Sol Weintraub objects, asserting that there must be no more sacrifices to God: "we have offered sacrifices to that God for too many generations … that the payments of pain must stop" (*Fall of Hyperion* 226). Having stated this, Sol has a revelation that God is bound to evolve towards empathy. The machine god, the Ultimate Intelligence, must surely realise that empathy is a response to the pain of others. However, this UI is too stupid to realise that empathy is far more than that. Sol thinks that empathy and love are inseparable and inexplicable, but the machine UI will never understand it (*Fall of Hyperion* 492). Moreover, the Void Which Binds is nothing more or less than love. Sol feels that love is "as hardwired into the structure of the universe as gravity and matter/antimatter" (*Fall of Hyperion* 493). Sol Weintraub believes this, and he believes further that it can explain the anthropic principle.[60] In their meeting with Father Glaucus, Aenea states that Sol was right in thinking that love is a basic force of the Universe (*Endymion* 457). In her talk to her followers on the planet T'ien Shan, Aenea emphasizes Sol's discovery, adding that the Void Which Binds is a product of the evolving universe (*Rise of Endymion* 400).[61] When Raul argues that love is an emotion, not a force, Aenea replies that love is "the only key to unlocking the universe's greatest supply of energy" (*Rise of Endymion* 596). Sitting in his Schrödinger cat prison Raul remembers that Aenea once told him that "[l]ove was the prime mover in the universe" (*Rise of Endymion* 664). Now he understands that "[m]uch of the music of the spheres was created by the elegant harmonies and the chord changes of love" (*Rise of Endymion* 664).

Although he is not human, the android Bettik says when observing Raul's love for Aenea that he feels Aenea to be right when she teaches that love "may well be the mainspring energy of the universe" (*Rise of Endymion* 558), thus refuting Hobbes's argument. In fact, as is revealed in the end of the narrative, Bettik is an observer sent by the agents in the metasphere of the universe which the TechnoCore refers to as

[60] Sometimes referred to as the "Goldilocks zone," meaning that the parameters of the universe have been "just right" to create intelligent life.

[61] Expressed differently, just like humankind, that which we refer to as God is a result of the evolution of the universe.

"lions and tigers and bears." These are Ummon's words when he explains the reason why the Core was afraid to reach out in the metasphere (*Rise of Endymion* 701). Bettik's purpose, like that of the observers from the other races using the Void, has been to find out if humanity can be trusted to join them in the Void Which Binds, because "[n]o sentient race can appreciate the Void medium without having evolved empathy" (*Rise of Endymion* 405). In their conquest of the universe, humankind had acted as Vandals, exterminating other sentient races which might become competitors. The Seneschai empaths on the planet Hebron is but one example (*Fall of Hyperion* 370). The colourful people of the Spectrum who treated Raul when he felt ill on the planet Vitus-Gray-Balianus-B were all descended from empath stock. "The Helix was and is a way to refine that empathic ability" (*Rise of Endymion* 176). Since they are not carrying the cruciform, they run a great risk of being destroyed by the combined forces of the Pax and the Church. Fortunately, those forces are toppled when the shared moment of Aenea's death is felt everywhere in the universe of humanity.

Simmons's pathos is the strongest when he describes the crusade against the Ousters. They are depicted as having made themselves "something more and less than humans," having "traded their immortal souls for the machinery to adapt to space" (*Endymion* 440). Thus the Church declares them not human. When Father Captain de Soya hears the resurrected pope declaring the glory of the crusade he understands it as "[a] final solution of the Ouster problem.[62] Death beyond imagining. Destruction beyond imagining" (*Rise of Endymion* 68). He weeps as billions are cheering. He is given command of a spaceship with orders to destroy all Ouster bases. He is told that

> His Holiness, Pope Urban, has declared this a Crusade against the human travesties the Ousters are breeding out there in the darkness … [T]hese unholy mutations are to be eliminated from God's Universe. *There are no civilian Ousters*. Do you have a problem understanding this directive, Father Captain de Soya? (*Rise of Endymion* 88 – 89, original emphasis)

After having destroyed a birthing rock of the Ousters, some of de Soya's men are beginning to feel qualms about what they are commanded to do. One of the soldiers tells de Soya in confession that "we turned off our outside phones, sir. All of us did. But somehow we could still hear the crying and the screams through the containment fields and our helmets. I can still hear them, Father…" (*Rise of Endymion* 145). The

[62] Cf. *Endlösung der Judenfrage*, the euphemistic expression used by the Nazis for the killing of Jews during WWII.

killings of the Ousters come to weigh so hard on the conscience of de Soya and parts of his crew, that they go rogue, taking part in the destruction of the Church. In my opinion, Simmons's pathos is an important component of his humanism. The above passage demonstrates his belief in the dignity and worth of all sentient beings, which adds to his humanism. Through his quoting of Keats's poetry Simmons expresses his humanism through that of Keats. Moreover, the importance of the poet's endeavours is stressed when Keats tells us not to forget "the great end/ Of poesy, that it should be a friend/ To soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts of man" ("Sleep and Poetry," 245–247). According to Cornelius, "what might have stood as Keats's ideal of disinterestedness—perhaps the highest quality of genuine humanism" is the speech by Oceanus,[63] looking without jealousy at the young god of the seas, where he tells the "other Titans, unreconciled and embittered as they are" (94):

> Have ye beheld the young God of the Seas,
> My dispossessor? Have ye seen his face?
> Have ye beheld his chariot, foam'd along
> By noble wingèd creatures he hath made?
> I saw him on the calmèd waters scud
> With such a glow of beauty in his eyes
> That it enforced me to bid sad farewell
> To all my empire.

In Simmons's *Cantos,* the first part of this passage was recited by Ummon to Keats/Severn (*Fall of Hyperion* 421–423). With this rather long quote from Keats's poem, the humanism in Simmons's *Cantos* connects to that of the poet.

Referring to Cornelius's definition of humanism, Kroeber states his belief that "it is proper to regard Keats's odes as the celebration of a new 'humanism', which strives to define the unity of mankind in terms of the vitality of each man's unique and personal experience" (271). Keats's concern with the nature and life of man is clearly expressed in a letter,[64] where he writes that man cannot escape from the misfortunes of the world. What by "'the misguided and superstitious' [is called] 'a vale of tears' [ought to be called] '[t]he vale of Soul-making.' … I say '*Soul making*' Soul as distinguished from an Intelligence—There may be intelligence or sparks of the divinity in millions—but they are not Souls till they acquire identities, till each one is personally itself" (Keats 505, original emphasis). In another letter,[65] where he

[63] "Hyperion," Book II, 232–239.
[64] Letter to George and Georgina Keats, 14 February to 3 may 1819.
[65] Letter to John Hamilton Reynolds, 3 May 1818.

compares human life to "a large Mansion of Many Apartments," he writes about the effect

> of sharpening one's vision into the heart and nature of Man—of convincing one's nerves that the World is full of Misery and Heartbreak, Pain, Sickness and oppression—whereby This Chamber of Maiden Thought becomes gradually darken'd and at the same time on all sides of it many doors are set open—but all dark—all leading to dark passages—We see not the balance of good and evil. (Keats 498)

Reflecting on Milton and Wordsworth, Keats observes "the general and gregarious advance of intellect" (Keats 499), thus attesting his belief in Man's worth and dignity, which seems to be a fundamental component of Simmons's humanism.

The description of the main characters Keats/Severn, Sol Weintraub, Aenea, de Soya, Raul and others, shows that empathy and love are the two most important factors characterizing Simmons's humanism, being given as inseparable. The meaning of empathy combines compassion with identification in Simmons's *Hyperion Cantos*. For Simmons, the antithesis of empathy is the ability or willingness to inflict pain on others. Those who have the gift of empathy cannot administer pain, not even to their enemies. This discussion leads me to Keats's well-known emphasis on beauty.

Animistic beauty of nature

In the preceding sections I have discussed how Keats's life and work can be regarded as the intertext for some subplots in Simmons's *Cantos*. Moreover, I have shown how Simmons's use of Keats's notions of empathy and love works as a way of promoting a particular kind of humanism. In this section I will analyse further effects of Keats's work on Simmons's narrative style. Implicit references to Keats's poetry indicate that this is indeed the intertext. Admitting that there is a difference between poetry and prose, I argue that Simmons complements Keats. This is most evident in the way Simmons treats "nature" in his novels.

Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" ends with the statement "Beauty is truth, truth beauty." Wasserman observes that for Keats "beauty and truth are different in degree, not in kind" (130). He explains that the evolutionary goal of beauty is truth.[66]

[66] In contrast to the beautiful moon goddess in "Endymion," only Johnny and Brawne Lamia of the main characters in Simmons's novels are seen as beautiful by others. With regard to Aenea, only her hair is mentioned by Raul as being conspicuous, but not beautiful. The facial features of Raul are never touched upon. Usually Simmons gives just one or two remarks upon the appearance of the characters.

I have not found that Keats's statement that beauty is truth is mirrored explicitly by Simmons. On the other hand, considering all Simmons's references to Keats's poetry and his preoccupation with beauty, I argue that Simmons has indeed appropriated the notions of beauty and truth. In particular, Keats's love for the animistic beauty of nature is taken up by Simmons.

Aenea's explanation of her father's conception of the pleasure thermometer touches on Keats's own love of nature. Hearing this, Raul confesses his own affinity to nature. Moreover, his love of nature, which is semi-sentient, is highlighted several times in the two *Endymion* novels. In all of the *Hyperion Cantos* there are passages when Simmons lets nature come to life, giving it human properties. This is very much related to Keats. According to Hirsch, "[t]here is a startling quality of animism in much of Keats's best work …. The trees and mountains come alive almost as people … rather than abstract emotions" (xxiv). Firat Karadas explains this in the following way: "with the transformational function of metaphorical and mythical language, the act of perception becomes for the imagination an act in which natural phenomena are incarnated and imbued with spiritual and sometimes divine features" (64). This refers to Keats's use of Greek mythology in poems like "Endymion," "Hyperion," and "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" that Simmons uses as background for his *Hyperion Cantos*. Simmons appropriates Keats's poetry in yet another way, which is less direct. For instance, in *Hyperion* the narrative on the fifth day of the pilgrimage starts with the following: "Sunrise over the Sea of Grass was a thing of beauty" (*Hyperion* 24). This phrase echoes the beginning of "Endymion": "A thing of beauty is a joy forever: / Its loveliness increases; it will never/ Pass into nothingness," Hirsch states that the poem "grants the pagan world its animistic wonder" (xxiv). With this reference to Keats's poem, Simmons combines the world he has created with that which Keats imagined, thereby appropriating Keats's animism. A few days later, the Consul observes how at sunrise "the Sea of Grass spread to all horizons, unchanging except for the sensuous ripples and furrows caused by the occasional breeze," as if the place is alive (*Fall of Hyperion* 217).

For instance, CEO Meina Gladstone's eyes are "large, brown, and infinitely sad" (*Fall of Hyperion* 10). Leigh Hunt, her aide, has a "basset-hound face" (*Fall of Hyperion* 72, 326, 345). In contrast, their adversaries are often described in negative terms in a few words. Firat Karadas remarks that "the sense of loss, transience of human life, and the immortality of natural beauty and art seem to be the prevailing themes of … Keats's poems (65).

Aenea explains that if we can feel the beauty of nature, and experience the essence of sensuous delight, then we proceed to the next two stages of happiness of the pleasure thermometer. To demonstrate this, Wasserman and Simmons (Aenea in the novel) quote the same passage from *Endymion*:[67]

> But there are
> Richer entanglements, enthralments far
> More self-destroying, leading, by degrees,
> To the chief intensity: the crown of these
> Is made of love and friendship, and sits high
> Upon the forehead of humanity. (Wasserman 121; *Endymion* 282)

The steps, or stages, of the imagination towards a truth are the empathic entrances into the sensuous beauty of nature (Wasserman 121). The word "self-destroying" may be taken to mean the poet's ability of self-annulment, which was one outcome from my discussion of Keats's concept of negative capability in the previous section. Poems like "'I stood tip-toe upon a little hill'," "To my Brother George," and "Sleep and Poetry," which were published in Keats's first collection of poems in 1817, are often cited as examples of his ability to endow nature with a mystical and spiritual essence. However, my discussion in the following will focus to a great extent on "Endymion," because this is the longest of Keats's completed poems. Moreover, there are many intertextual contacts between this poem and Simmons's novels about Aenea and Raul.

Keats describes how Endymion on his pilgrimage through the forest caves encounters

> Enormous chasms, where, all foam and roar,
> Streams subterranean tease their granite beds;
> Then heighten'd just above the silvery heads
> Of a thousand fountains
> [but]
> Those spouting columns rose
> Sudden a poplar's height and 'gan to enclose
> His diamond path with fretwork, streaming round
> Alive, and dazzling cool. ("Endymion" Book II, 601 – 609)

In a similar way Simmons describes the environment as if it is alive. The kilometre-deep cleft on the southern continent of the planet Hyperion greets Father Paul Duré with "voices of stone giants, gigantic bamboo flutes, church organs the size of palaces" (*Hyperion* 48). Having descended to the bottom, the noise of the river makes him feel that he is "being consumed by a great beast's roar" (*Hyperion* 76). When the pilgrims reach their destination "the huge shapes of the Tombs seem to creep closer

[67] "Endymion" Book I, 797 – 802.

like saurian apparitions from some antediluvian age" (*Fall of Hyperion* 19). Fleeing from the Pax military, the girl Aenea, Raul and Bettik find themselves on a river beach on an alien planet, and "[t]wenty meters above, the gymnosperm fronds rustled and quaked like the antennae of some great insects" (*Endymion* 241). During a short break in their flight from the murderous agents of the TechnoCore on the planet T'ien Shan, when Aenea is a young woman, Raul sees as in a poem how "[t]he tiny, succulent plants that carpeted this steep fell field were becoming tumescent as they gorged themselves on the first moisture of the monsoon months" (*Rise of Endymion* 434).

In Keats's poem, Endymion seems to descend into the underworld

> Where sameness breeds
> Vexing conceptions of sudden change,
> Whether to silver grots, or giant range
> Of sapphire columns, or fantastic bridge
> Athwart a flood of crystal. On a ridge
> Now fareth he, that o'er the vast beneath
> Towers like an ocean-cliff, and whence he seeth
> A hundred waterfalls. ("Endymion" Book II, 235 – 242)

There are many allusions to Keats's love of the beauty of nature in Simmons's narrative, which is evident both in terms of content and the aesthetics of his narrative. There are some magnificent animistic descriptions of scenery in the novels, echoing the above lines from "Endymion." The following excerpt describes Raul's wonderment, as he finds himself high up in the atmosphere of a gas giant planet:

> Far above me, feathered cirrus and rippled cirrocumulus caught the twilight in a pastel riot of soft pinks, rose glows, violet tinges, and golden backlighting. It was as if I were in a temple with a high, rosy ceiling supported by thousands of irregular columns and pillars. The columns and pillars were towering mountains of cumulus and cumulonimbus, their anvil-shaped bases disappearing in the darkening depths … whatever constituted these tawny cumulus in the diffuse daylight, sunset set them afire with rust-red light, brilliant crimson streaks, bloody tractus streaming away from the main cloud masses like crimsons pennants, rose-colored fibrates weaving together the cirrus ceiling like muscle strands under the flesh of a living body, billowing masses of cumulus so white that they made me blink as if snowblinded, golden, striated cirroform spilling out from the boiling cumulonimbus towers like masses of blond hair blowing back from pale upturned faces. (*Rise of Endymion* 219 – 220)

Simmons also uses colours symbolically. The people on the planet Vitus-Gray-Balianus-B, for instance, are special not only because they do not want to join the Church with its parasitic resurrection but also because they use colours as metaphors

for positive human values (*Rise of Endymion* 128). As an example, white is the symbol of purity of intellectual honesty and physical love. The following excerpts are more modest in their use of colours. When the Consul dreams about his childhood home on the planet Maui-Covenant, "the dream was filled with color: the bottomless blue sky, the wide expanse of the South Sea, ultramarine fading to green where the Equatorial Shallows began, the startling greens and yellows and orchid reds of the motile isles as they were herded north by the dolphins…" (*Fall of Hyperion* 219). The Keats/Severn cybrid recalls having made a short visit to the town of Keats on the planet Hyperion, seeing that in the light of the rising sun "[l]ow clouds glowed brilliantly as they were lighted from below, the hills to the north sparkled a bright green, violet, and russet, and the strip of sky below the clouds to the east was that heart-stopping green and lapis which I remembered from my dreams" (*Fall of Hyperion* 82).

Simmons's description of the animistic surroundings of Raul's awakening on the first morning in Martin Silenus's care is like a poem. Leaning out of the window, Raul observes how "[y]ellow chalma and the thick tangle of low weirwood wove a solid canopy of treetops up hills to the horizon" (*Endymion* 20). Disregarding the different rhythm, this echoes Keats's description of the region where Endymion lives, where "A mighty forest [was outspread]; for the moist earth fed/ So plenteously all weed-hidden roots/ Into o'erhanging boughs, and precious fruits" ("Endymion" Book I, 64–66).

For his final battle with the Shrike, Kassad is transferred into the future, to a place where

> [l]ow, orange grass—if grass it was—grew on the flatlands and low hills like fuzz on the back of some immense caterpillar, while things which might have been trees, grew like whiskered-carbon sculptures, their trunks and branches Escher-ish in their baroque improbability, their leaves a riot of dark blue and violet ovals shimmering toward a sky alive with light. (*Fall of Hyperion* 385)

Simmons describes how man-made structures, too, can exhibit animism. When Martin Silenus comes to the planet Heavens Gate as a young man he sees

> [m]ud lanes … like a pattern of sores on a leper's back. Sufrus-brown clouds which hang in tatters from a rotten burlap sky. A tangle of shapeless wooden structures … their paneless windows now staring sightlessly into the gaping mouths of their neighbours. (*Hyperion* 187)

When the Shrike has abducted old Martin Silenus to impale him on the tree of thorns, the room in the derelict castle of Sad King Billy is empty and then

> [t]he wind came up, rattling loose Perspex panes and masonry, shifting brittle leaves across dry fountains, finding entrance through the broken panes of the dome and lifting manuscript pages in a gentle whirlwind, some pages escaping to be blown across the silent courtyards and empty walkways and collapsed aqueducts. (*Fall of Hyperion* 172–173)

The night before the opening of The Time Tombs, as Duré and Sol Weintraub sit together outside the Sphinx building, "the wind had come up, moving vermilion dust in lazy spirals and moaning around the wings and rough edges of the Sphinx" (*Fall of Hyperion* 225). Keats writes in the same vein in "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" that the poet saw "An image, huge of feature as a cloud, / At level of whose feet an altar slept"[68].

It seems that animism may spread to the megasphere, too. Brawne Lamia sees

> forests of green-gray data trees grow and prosper, sending out new roots and branches and shoots even as she watches; beneath the forest proper, entire microecologies of dataflow and subroutine AIs flourish, flower, and die as their usefulness ends. (*Fall of Hyperion* 273)

As the Web datasphere collapses, the consciousness of the Keats/Severn cybrid barely manages to escape thinking that "Brawn [sic!] Lamia's view of the megasphere as an organic thing, a semisentient organism more analogous to an ecology than a city, was essentially correct" (*Fall of Hyperion* 489).

I mentioned above how Keats has used Greek mythological features in *Endymion*. The animistic character of the poem has resulted in a population of nature spirits and nymphs like fauns, satyrs, syrens, naiads and nereids. Critics have observed that this is a common trait in Keats's poetry. Reference has often been made to Hunt's remark "that Keats never beheld an oak tree without seeing a dryad" (xxiv). Such animism is obvious in the Templars in the *Hyperion* novels, as the Templars seem to take on the guise of dryads. The description of the railings on a platform in their worldtree emphasizes this. Father Duré notices how "a delicate tracery of handcarved vines, posts and balusters boasted the faces of gnomes, wood sprites, faeries, and other spirits" (*Fall of Hyperion* 335). That their connection to their treeships is almost telepathic is mentioned first by the Consul (*Hyperion* 473) and later by Sol Weintraub (*Fall of Hyperion* 224). This empathic relation demonstrates

[68] ("The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision" Canto I, 88–89).

the principle of negative capability as the ability to leave the self, appropriating another state of mind.

God's Grove, which is the home planet of the Templars, was originally alive with trees everywhere. This was destroyed in the war with the Ousters. Simmons adds, describing the devastation of the environment that "[t]he Templars had fancied themselves the ecological conscience of the Hegemony" (*Endymion* 503). Consequently, they are also referred to as the Brotherhood of the Muir, whose writings are guiding them.[69]

Over and over, as is evident from this selection of examples, it appears that by using Keats as intertext to an extent that borders on obsession, Simmons seems to endorse the idea that imagining beauty is important since it engenders truth. He seems to want to be a writer in the vein of Keats's idea of a poet. As Hirsch explains, Keats endorses "the archaic poets who greeted the world as alive in all its parts" (xxvi–xxvii). Poetry, in the shape of Apollo the charioteer, talks to nature, which responds in kind in "Sleep and Poetry." The poet brings solace to mankind through his poetry, thus showing himself as a humanist, who is in contact with everything human, at the same time annulling the self. Simmons in his references to the animism in Keats's poetry and poetical style appropriates another big part of Keats's humanism and uses it as a foundation for his own, which entails recognizing the dignity and worth not only in humans but in all sentient beings.

Conclusion

I have found that a kind of humanism is prevalent in the *Hyperion Cantos*. Many science fiction works deal with similar philosophical and ethical subjects, but few rely so much on one single author(ity) as Simmons relies on Keats, making his four novels unusual for the genre. There is a form of engagement, bordering on the obsessive, with everything that Keats represents, from his poetic persona to the complexities of his works. Throughout the *Cantos*, the importance of empathy, beauty and love is emphasized. These concepts are presented as inseparably connected. Simmons describes an evolution of humankind struggling towards empathic consciousness ultimately defeating the idea of a static society with neither birth nor death, ruled by

[69] John Muir strived for the preservation of the western forests of the US and was a founder of the Yosemite and Redwood national parks.

unfeeling Artificial Intelligence. The belief that death is an indispensable part of human life is a salient feature. A large number of references to Keats's poetry and letters demonstrate that the Romantic poet is important for the way the narratives develop.

In my analyses of Simmons's use of intertext, I have mainly followed Doležel's theories on intertextuality. This entails semantic interpretations that enrich the meaning of the text by identifying the intertext. To begin with, the very titles of Simmons's novels show clearly that the intertext is Keats's writings, in particular the poems "Endymion," "Hyperion" and "The Fall of Hyperion: a Vision." In Simmons's work, Keats is manifested in different ways in what I have identified as subsidiary plots. I find that the story of Aenea's and Raul's flight parallels Endymion's pilgrimage, and the description of Raul's imprisonment echoes the Greek myth. The subplot, "The Schrödinger cat story," is clearly an example of "transposition" in Doležel's terminology. Moreover, I argue that the *Cantos* can be seen as "transposition" of the "Hyperion" poems. In addition, it seems that Simmons is addressing the question of the relation of the author to his work, as he is presenting counterfactual details in the subplots.

In the second section, I have shown how empathy, which is emphasized in all four parts of the *Cantos*, is perhaps the major notion that Simmons adopts from Keats. This concept has several connotations. When critics discuss Keats's empathy, they are usually referring to his ability to be part of the world he envisages in his poetry. This entails negating the self. In Keats's philosophy it is a consequence of what he called "negative capability." His use of "disinterestedness" seems to carry the same meaning: to observe everything in the world without giving judgement. Hirsch mentions Keats's vulnerability to the anguish of others, but ascribing the modern usage of compassion for empathy to Keats would probably be tantamount to anachronism. Although Simmons warns against equating empathy with sympathy, in his *Cantos* he is describing empathy as being partly compassion and partly identification. He even goes as far as asserting that empathy is a response to the pain of others.

In the third section I have suggested that Simmons's description of the animistic beauty of nature may be influenced by Keats's love of nature's beauty. This is also suggested by Aenea's and Raul's talk about "Endymion" in the "Pleasure Thermometer story." I agree with those critics who argue that Keats's empathy is

closely connected to his humanism. To Keats, the poet is a humanist, giving solace to mankind through his poetry. Ummon's recital of "Hyperion" to Keats/Severn demonstrates Keats's humanism as a belief in man's dignity and worth, which has been recognized as one of Keats's salient traits. Simmons appropriates this, expanding the belief to all sentient beings in the vast universe of his creation.

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