

Original Paper

Myth Refunctionalization: The Solarpunk Turn in Olga

Tokarczuk's *Anna In in the Tombs of the World*

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Abstract

Sorapunk has become an important framework for the study of contemporary ecological and post-humanist literature, but Polish literature is largely absent from this dialogue. This article examines Anna In in the Tombs of the World (2006) by Olga Tokarczuk and argues that the novel can be understood as an early literary representation of the Solarpunk imagination. Starting from a cyberpunk-style closed narrative world, the text rewrites the Sumerian myth of Inanna's lineage in a specific direction. This transformation spans three dimensions: the organic integration of technology, cyclical timeliness and regeneration process, and the dispersion of subjectivity to multiple subjects. Through these changes, the narrative moves from closed to open, and finally expresses an ecological imagination consistent with Sunpunk. The article further demonstrates that this mythological choice responds to the historical configuration of the Polish nation-Catholic-patriarchal discourse. By mobilizing the narrative resources of the former nation and the former Christianity, the novel transcends the closed boundaries of national narrative and contributes to the construction of transnationality.

Keywords

Olga Tokarczuk, myth refunctionalization, cyberpunk, ecological narrative, solarpunk

1. Introduction

Anna In in the Tombs of the World (Anna In w grobowcach świata, 2006), the work of 2018 Nobel Prize laureate Olga Tokarczuk, is the only contribution of Polish writers to the Canongate Myth Series. The Canongate Myth Series is a global publishing project dedicated to re-imagining ancient myths from

different cultural traditions. The novel takes the myth of Sumerian Inanna's descent into the underworld as the narrative prototype, transposes this myth into the futuristic urban background, and rewrites the ancient story through Anna In's fall and return.

The three main directions of the previous research on novels are myth refunctionalisation, gender politics and psychoanalytic criticism. Siwor (2012) placed the text in the first category and studied how it combines the mythological patterns of Sumer with images from science fiction. Kozera (2016) further confirmed this trend through a comparison by reading the novel with Margaret Atwood and pointed out that modernisation, humanisation and polyphony are strategies for the rewriting of contemporary myths. Amenta (2018) studied how symbolism is employed and how a work's plot has been modified; she believed that Tokarczuk reinterprets the Inanna myth in a feminist manner and thought that this change in feminism was also feasible in the background of Poland's anti-feminist politics around 2006. Kłobukowski (2019) has explored in the field of gender politics how the novel recreates feminine mythological anthropology through the figure of a goddess, and Głos (2024) has studied the political nature of narrative structure and found that myth can be transformed into a counter-patriarchal story of solidarity. Adelgejm (2020) considered, from a psychoanalytic perspective, how the novel addresses the aesthetics of death and what kind of healing it provides; thus, he suggested that in a mythodramatic way, it can soothe readers' fear of death in modern times. Zgliniecka-Hojda (2020) also pointed out that there was a change from the original work to the opera's text, and thus started to explore adaptations. Most of the previous studies have focused on internal textual alterations of myths and have not explored the cultural and political reasons for the selection of these myths. Why does Tokarczuk choose the Sumerian myth over the indigenous narrative resources of Poland? What choice does this send out in the tradition of Polish literature, and what future is it looking for?

This article contends that the mythic refunctionalisation in *Anna In in the Tombs of the World* is a narrative act with a dual deconstructive function; that is to say, it both tears down the closed logic of technical rationality in the text and the hermetic logic of the Polish national-Catholic-patriarchal discourse. The two systems have the same structure, are both in linear time, focus on male consciousness, and have their own boundaries; therefore, they are closed. Tokarczuk reconstructs the myth of Inanna to raise problems about both systems in the era before the nation, Christianity and technology. In doing so, the novel has created an ecological idea of solarpunk that is not confined by national or species boundaries and has thus put forward an expansive transcultural narrative system for solarpunk.

For the purpose of scholarly contribution, this paper has integrated the new novel into the history of solarpunk literature and filled a gap in Polish literary studies of this new area. In addition, by placing the novel in the background of Polish literary history, this paper shows that Tokarczuk has used pre-national narrative resources to question the dominant narrative of national identity.

2. Method

2.1 *Cyberpunk*

Solarpunk can be known in comparison to its predecessor, cyberpunk. In the 1980s, cyberpunk originated and William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1984) was one of the representative works. Prosthetics, implants and artificial intelligence are used to address problems with the body and mind (Sterling, 1986), and thus cyborgs are formed, which are both the material conditions and cultural constructions of humanity (Haraway, 2013). All the key works of cyberpunk have shown some common traits in their structure. The technology environment, in other words, is an agency without its own will, and it is directed by others (Hollinger, 1990). In terms of the narrative form, there is a combination of several layers of technology and ontology to construct the world of narrative (McHale, 1992). Ideologically, cyberpunk is often seen as a form of resistance that lacks political awareness and does not aspire to social change (Nixon, 1992), and at the level of political economy, it is in line with the late-capitalist logic of accumulation and control (Bellamy, 2019). Therefore, Cyberpunk is a world of high technology and low life; algorithmic systems have taken over the functions of government, bodies and consciousness, information flows have divided subjectivity, and a digital desert of simulation covers the truth of material scarcity. The resistance of the individual is bound by the system's own logic; it is radical on the surface but also conservative, seemingly beyond the restrictions of material life, yet it ultimately falls under the logic of capital.

2.2 *Solarpunk*

Solarpunk is a new utopia and, as such, has developed in various places such as manifestos, art and literature, the internet, etc. Given that there is no full theoretical system available, this paper will reconstruct the history of solarpunk through network discourse to determine its basic features as a literary form. Thus, we have built an operational analytical framework for the textual reading of *Anna In in the Tombs of the World*.

In 2008, the term "solarpunk" was first mentioned on the blog *Republic of the Bees* and has since spread through other means to become a system of culture. Gillam (2023) holds that the three basic ideas are anarchism, ecology and justice. Solarpunk is an ideal society after the end of scarcity and hierarchy that advocates for local, sustainable ecological coexistence to reduce social alienation, etc. The *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* (2026) believes that solarpunk is a type of science fiction subgenre that emerged in the 1980s and has gradually gained popularity since the end of the 2000s; it can be viewed as a counter-movement to cyberpunk.

Solarpunk takes on the critique of cyberpunk and changes it. Technological imagination has brought a new kind of connection and renewal to the ecosystem that is not based on exploitation, at the level of technology (Rivero-Vadillo, 2023). In terms of time, it is no longer a straight-line decline but rather a cycle of decline and recovery. Więckowska (2025) is of the opinion that, in terms of subjectivity, agency is distributed among the collective, multi-species and hybrid formations of humans and

non-humans. Therefore, the structure of the story has changed from systemic collapse to ecological restoration, mutual assistance and long-term cohabitation (Klata, 2022), and together they still bear the critical view of cyberpunk on the technological society but direct this criticism towards hope. Build an ecological forest and create a multicultural city for everyone around us today.

The first three are as follows: First of all, Solarpunk is about a rearrangement of the relationship between technology and nature; instead of being a foreign object, it wants to be integrated into the web of life as a natural force. Second, in terms of the conception of time, it does not believe that life should progress linearly in decline as in cyberpunk but rather is cyclical and regenerative. Thirdly, Solarpunk is also developing in the direction of decentralised subjectivity, and its narratives have started to incorporate various agencies, such as marginalised human communities, non-human entities and hybrid combinations of humans and technology, and cross-species connections have also begun to appear in the stories. The three together form the typical story structure of Solarpunk fiction, showing the change from restraint to freedom and the end of loneliness.

Based on the above system, it is argued in this paper that *Anna In in the Tombs of the World* can be considered an early literary manifestation of solarpunk imagination. Although the term was not coined until 2008, formal naming in literary history regularly lags behind the practices it is meant to describe.

The city is built on the ruins, and beneath it is a world of tombs. This space arrangement is a metaphor for closure; at each upper level of the city, there are several layers separating it from the world below, and the natural root system of the earth is considered to be in disarray and death, so it is in a state of absolute rootlessness. In this place, the three fathers are jointly responsible for the entire system of patriarchal rule, and each bears the responsibility of maintaining the closure of the system in a different way: linguistic order, the illusion of technological immortality, and hierarchical structure.

3. The Cyberpunk World under the System of the Fathers

The first half of *Anna In in the Tombs of the World* constructs a distinctly cyberpunk-like narrative environment. The novel opens with a vertically expanding city. Deep within this urban structure, “The sunlight does not reach deeper into the city; over the years, as successive floors were erected, its allergy to the sun intensified. In its stead, white fluorescent lamps and multicolored neon prevail” (Tokarczuk, 2006, p. 10). Through metallic, rhizome-like architectural forms and a damp, oppressive sensory atmosphere, the novel establishes a claustrophobic urban landscape and a corresponding narrative tonality of compression and enclosure. The city is built upon ruins, and beneath it lies a world of tombs. This spatial arrangement functions as a metaphor for closure: each upward tier of the city reinforces its separation from the subterranean world below, treating the natural root systems of the earth as symbols of chaos and death, and thereby producing a condition of radical rootlessness. Within this spatial order, the three fathers together constitute a complete allegorical figure of patriarchal governance, each maintaining the system’s closure from a distinct dimension: linguistic order, the illusion of

technological immortality, and hierarchical structure.

3.1 Temporal Enclosure under Linguistic Order

The first father's existence is a single-direction linear time, and he is entirely ruled by linguistic rules. When Nina Szubur appeals to him for help, this administrator of the Department of Encyclopedic Supervision of Intellectual Configuration replies to her crisis not with care but with a choking grammatical analysis. He dissects the proposition "every living thing must die" (Tokarczuk, 2006, p. 49) into its syntactic components, explicating the semantic function and logical relationship of each word in turn. He then breaks this statement down grammatically and explains what each word means and how they are connected logically. He needs to follow the rules of verb conjugation, and the inflections at the end should be uniform. He has given a life force to this language system and proclaimed that "Rational action is equivalent to the order of language. That is the grammar of being" (Tokarczuk, 2006, p. 48). The declaration has achieved full-blown instrumentalisation of language; it is no longer about communication but rather a system of rules to organise life via grammar.

At the level of sentence structure, imperative and conditional forms are dominant; thus, depersonalised discourse has been formed, and grammatical rules seem to speak independently. Subject Positions are gone, and language takes on the character of natural law. Nina's emotions, such as fear, anxiety and begging, are in the form of expression, and only grammatically correct sentences will be recognized by the system. This syntax also has a sense of time. The sentence has a fixed premise-conclusion structure and is not recursive, repetitive or retrograde.

3.2 Bodily Dissolution under Technological Immortality

The second father's line of systemic defense operates through the technological processing of the body: he reduces existence to computable information, thereby dissolving the body and substituting it with a digital surrogate. When Nina appeals to him for help, his first concern is not whether Anna In is alive or dead but whether a scanned backup was made. His project, called Equivalence, claims to scan a person and upload them to a compact disc in four seconds, preserving them in a digital heaven. The images of disc, upload, and heaven form a cluster of techno-religious metaphor in which the disc replaces the eucharist, uploading replaces ascension, and digitization replaces salvation. By reducing human existence to processable information, this scheme treats the body as a dispensable vessel that can be reconstructed and beautified at will in virtual space. The separation of existence from embodiment constitutes a fundamental negation of the mind-body unity of human subjectivity.

Behind this vision of technological immortality lies a deeper convergence of technological mediation and consumerist logic. Different "heaven versions" correspond to different price tiers, ranging from ornamented palaces with enslaved attendants to wellness-oriented paradises and even time-reversal services. Immortality is thus fully commodified, reproducing late capitalist logics within a putatively post-mortal domain. Even in a scenario claiming to transcend death, accumulation remains the governing principle.

It is precisely this consumerist logic that exposes the system's central contradiction: a heaven without material existence must nonetheless rely on the most lavishly material imagery to conceal its affective poverty. The version of heaven the father offers Anna In is filled with corporeal detail: "she will be an immaculate goddess moving among prostrate worshipers, dressed in sky-blue feathered robes and stiletto heels, treading on a serpent's head, breathing out fragrant rose petals, dwelling among alabaster and ivory, jade and pearls" (Tokarczuk, 2006, p. 52). The more luxuriant these fantasies become, the more apparent the inner vacancy they are meant to fill. That vacancy is a vacancy of affect. Affect, understood as pre-cognitive bodily modulation (Wang, 2017), precedes structured emotion and emerges from corporeal encounters with the world. In the technological family model proposed by the second father, relation is reduced to repetitive declarations just "I love you", emptied of experiential transformation. This simulation of intimacy lacks embodied modulation and thus exposes a deficit of affective production. In this sense, technological immortality excludes the organic integration of life and death, replacing it with a data-driven illusion system governed by abstraction and control.

3.3 Political Space under Hierarchical Order

The third father has formed a system of closure in the hierarchical spatial logic. He draws a tree diagram to organize the world according to predation relations and places all entities at different levels of competition and selection. Survival is a mode of optimization; only the successful will be reproduced and others will perish. Thus, there is a form of social Darwinism that considers the world to be a closed hierarchy and continues through competition and exclusion. Spatial organization is therefore a form of political order.

The tall buildings in the city offer a place for this competition among the ranks. The value of a person is determined by their position in the hierarchy, and space itself is a visible structure of power. The city's upward extension above the ruins is in line with the differentiation of levels in the tree of life; the higher one goes, the closer one is to sunlight and fresh air, and the lower parts are damp and dark. Nina feels this spatial hierarchy directly on her way up to the fathers' residences; with each floor, the faces of the people are more wrinkled, their hands are cleaner, and the water is sweeter. The vertical spatial layout is a manifestation of the system of social stratification and can be observed in the structure of the city and people's daily life.

The power structure extends further into an affectless administrative mechanism. When Nina asks the third father not to allow Anna In's body to decay, he refuses by citing the absolute logic of the system: "Tonight, as I see, she has been deleted, and her identification number has been canceled. It is a pity, for I loved her nonetheless; she was my most talented child. I am sorry, my dear" (Tokarczuk, 2006, p. 58). By presenting this decision in desubjectified terms, as the automatic output of the system rather than a human choice, the mechanism renders power invisible as an act of will. Since hierarchy reproduces itself without requiring explicit intervention, it constitutes, at the narrative level, a self-sustaining and increasingly rigid structure.

In all three aspects, the system of the three fathers has produced a single logic of closure. Language can shorten the time to an irreversible loss; Technology has created an informational substitute for the body; hierarchy is a division of space. Together, the above mechanisms have formed a world of systemic enclosure and pessimistic determinism that is in line with cyberpunk. However, the world is still producing a surplus that it cannot absorb; syntactic rupture, the return of materiality, and a loosening of spatial directionality have kept the structure in a state of continuous instability. Therefore, the shift from cyberpunk to solarpunk in the novel should not be regarded as a complete replacement of one system with another, but rather as an adjustment to the problems that have occurred in the old system. It is this instability that makes Anna In's fall and rise necessary in terms of narrative, and it is through this fall and rise that the solarpunk turn is achieved.

4. Anna In's Intervention in the Solarpunk Turn

Anna In's fall is the turn of the story in the novel. Before that, the city was under the rule of the System of the Fathers; technology did not serve life, time was linear, and there was only one consciousness. Then, the logic of myth starts to reorganize the logic of the system. The three revisions of narrative are carried out gradually: First, a new idea of the relationship between technology and nature is formed; Second, linear time is disrupted by cyclical time; Third, the openness of narrative subjectivism towards a polyphonic community is achieved.

4.1 Organic Integration of Technology

Technology is integrated with organic development to protect the environment and achieve ecological civilization, fostering an intimate relationship between people and nature in the works of literature. First of all, the change of Dumuzid the Shepherd into a regular gardener is a rearrangement of the cyberpunk idea of technology. Originally a pastoral and vegetative deity associated with natural fertility, Dumuzid becomes in the novel a widely welcomed gardener in the city, who constructs mobile gardens for children using paper and cardboard. The children greet his arrival with enthusiasm: "The gardener has come, bringing the garden on wheels" (Tokarczuk, 2006, p. 41). These simple, biodegradable materials are transformed by his hands into sources of joy and growth, and at the center of the city his hanging garden sustains a living tree, whose presence within a city maintained by steel and neon creates a productive tension with the closed logic of the system. The gardener's orientation toward technology as something that serves life stands in direct contrast to the second father's scheme of digital immortality, which seeks to replace the real with simulation. Where the second father eliminates embodied experience, the gardener reawakens people's perception of life through the simplest of materials.

Secondly, the scene of Ninma's (corresponding to the Sumerian goddess Ninhursag) creation of humanity extends this technological ethic to the act of creation itself, constructing what might be called a mutually flourishing dimension of life. Ninma initially refuses to participate, valuing non-creation

over creation and stillness over movement. She eventually consents, shaping new humans from the purest clay and refined materials. These beings possess qualities distinct from earlier humans that they are light yet capable of taking root and calm like plants yet not devoid of intelligence. Competitive structures fail among them; races end in mutual waiting, games are played through cooperation, and strategic moves are openly disclosed. These details delineate a form of life organized not by competition but by mutuality and coexistence. Ninma's greenhouse thus functions as a site of organic technological integration, where cultivation is guided by care, patience, and symbiosis rather than efficiency or selection.

Additionally, the fabrication of the flies broadens the organic integration of technology to the boundaries of matter itself, making technology a mediating force between life and death. When the Fathers finally resolve to create beings capable of entering the tombs to rescue Anna In, the materials they select are the discarded remnants of a waste drawer: bent paperclips, rusted screws, flaking paint, fragments of metal and rust. These residues, abandoned by the urban technological system, are given new life form in the hands of the third father. The flies "are neither living nor dead" (Tokarczuk, 2006, p. 117), and it is precisely this threshold existence that allows them to pass through the seven gates of the tomb without being detected by the gatekeepers. Tokarczuk is forging new ways of telling stories, using both the world of nature and cold technology, but these are not alone; life and death, nature and technology are also combined here. Technology here does not aspire to mimic or replace life; rather, it gives rise to new forms of existence at the junction of nature and artifice and becomes a link in the web of life.

4.2 Return of Cyclical Temporality

The return of cyclical time is shown at the level of narrative devices, subjective experiences and bodily experiences with death. The first signal of this intervention is the reversal of count in the elevator. Anna In and Nina Szubur go down to the bottom of the tombs, and at that moment, Nina sees that "the elevator's numbering turns negative, moving from zero downward and backward, as though time itself were flowing in reverse" (Tokarczuk, 2006, p. 15). At the narrative level, this detail marks a fracture in linear time, opening a point of entry for cyclical temporality.

At the level of narration, this detail is an interjection that introduces the idea of cyclical time. Nina's sense of time is subjective due to the experience of repetition. As she goes back to the city with the news, she can feel that this is the umpteenth time she has climbed the same steps. This is in line with Bergson's concept of duration; that is to say, duration is the way in which the continuity of our states of consciousness appears (Bergson, 1910, p. 100). The time Nina feels is not a straight-line count of the elevator's numbers but rather an accumulation of time in which meaning gradually appears. The first father makes death a logical statement that can be universally quantified and reduces the experience of time to verifiable symbolic operations. Nina's sense of repetition can restore time in the sense of individual experience.

The return of cyclical time can also be experienced through the material life of the body. As Anna In crosses each of the seven gates of the tomb, she must give up one piece of clothing or an ornament: the horned crown, the necklace, the brooch, the ring, the belt, the outer robe, and the skirt. What was taken away at each gate were the layers of treasures bestowed upon her by the fathers, which symbolized the father's approval and the mark of patriarchal identity imposed on women's bodies. Thus, it is about to die and be born again. Anna In's embodied death is a kind of cyclic in time; it is about death and rebirth itself. After being judged by the tribunal of the underworld, her body loses functions one by one: speech, sight, hands, heart, legs. Death is here expressed as a process of gradual loss of senses and is still a material thing in the face of the digital-virtual immortality plan proposed by the second father. Death and rebirth are thus a cycle of time in this work, and they also represent a story.

Based on the above results, Nina Szubur's conscious experience of repetition and the material dimension of Anna In's embodied death are considered the affective logic of cyclical time in the novel. Body and sense are not independent; only when there is contact with the body can affect spread, and in the cycle of time perception, they are passed on by one another. This agreement is in line with Spinoza's view of affect: "A body that moves or is at rest must be caused to move or stop moving by another body, which has also been caused to move or stop moving by another, and that again by another, and so on, infinitely" (Spinoza, 2004, pp. 29-30). Such a model is in line with the time imagination of solarpunk and does not believe that decay is irreversible; rather, regeneration is an integral part of the process of decay.

4.3 Resonance of Plural Subjectivity

The novel establishes a polyphonic narrative structure in the sense of Bakhtin; that is to say, there are many voices that live together without being dominated by a single authoritative viewpoint, and "it is precisely in polyphony that a combination of several individual wills takes place, that the boundaries of the individual will can be in principle exceeded" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 21). A group of polyphony serves to break the tradition of a single voice and allows different voices from both people and animals to be heard.

The addition of Enheduanna shifts the source of the story to be more ancient and matrilinear. Enheduanna is one of the earliest known named authors, high priestesses and composers of hymns to Sumerian gods; she is portrayed as Anna Enhudu in the novel. Ninma is Nina's teacher and friend who helps to show how the world around Anna In has been arranged in the gynocentric system for thousands of years. In Enhudu's account of the creation of humanity, this act is shown to be a process of dispute, compromise and contingency; it differs greatly from the rigid rational plan proposed by the Three Fathers. Then, the controller of the patriarchal system becomes a female character who has taken back her own freedom.

Flies add subjectivity to non-human things. Artificial beings have been endowed with the ability to feel and act morally. In meeting the lady of the underworld, they are given the power of empathy and can

feel her sadness and pain through their own bodies. A connection between people and animals has formed. Technology is now used to support ecological and community development, and in this way, we are cooperating with nature. Subjectivity is at the junction of life and non-life, and a posthuman order will arise.

Nina changes the position of the narrator and combines the two types of narration to achieve an even more radical opening up of the subject. At the beginning of the novel, she says that “I, Nina Szubur, I, every narrator, I, a person” (Tokarczuk, 2006, p. 8), which is a formulation that sets up the polyphonic nature of the narration from the start. By being open to new participants, it can be said that the narrative subjectivity in this work is fluid and shareable. As the story develops, her status fluctuates; at one time, she is Anna In’s friend; at another time, she carries a message from Ninma; and yet again, she learns about Enhudu. At times, the focus shifts to the flies, and they are briefly granted the power of the narrative. The movement of the narrative voice does not fall under the first father’s language system. Instead of a fixed subject under the rules of grammar, the narrative gives different characters the power to act and is therefore spread out and multi-voiced. Thus, there is a shift in the source of narrative authority; it is democratic in nature, and through this reorganization, literature has become a joint process of meaning-creation by all beings, including people and non-humans.

5. The Solarpunk Vision in Mythological Rewriting

Through intervention of myth, it is shown that there is a change in the narrative of cyberpunk to solarpunk in the three linked aspects of technological integration, cyclical temporality and distributed subjectivity. By restructuring, people, technology and other entities of non-human nature will be arranged together in a single system of relations. Anna In’s fall and revival link the worlds of life and death, and through them, she moves among the upper city, the subterranean world of the tombs, and the outside world of nature in a seamless space. Flies are not humans or living things; they serve to help in the rescue work. Ninma is a person who guides the productive forces of urban and non-urban areas for the purpose of life cultivation. This narrative ultimately points toward a solarpunk vision, which finds its most direct expression in the scene of Anna In’s return to the surface:

Behind her, behind Inanna, the crowd let out a long hiss; the sudden light stung eyes long accustomed to endless darkness. They covered their faces with pale hands. In the sunlight, the dead and the living stood face to face, taking each other in (Tokarczuk, 2006, p. 142).

The force of this scene lies in its radical equality: the closed System of the Fathers, the boundary between life and death, and the darkened ecological chain are all penetrated by the light of this moment. Looking back at *Anna In in the tombs of the world*, the novel’s solarpunk vision is rooted in the specific historical context Tokarczuk faced and the narrative choices she made within it. The novel responds to two distinct cultural predicaments: the global question of gender equality and the weight of Poland’s national literary tradition.

The first predicament concerns the global question of gender equality, for which Jungian psychology provided Tokarczuk with a direct intellectual resource. Tokarczuk has acknowledged the depth of her engagement with Jung, describing herself as his student and stating in an interview that among all great thinkers and psychologists, Jung is the most fitting mentor for a writer. The inspiration for her reworking of the Inanna myth may well derive from Jung's *Symbols of Transformation* (1956), in which Ishtar, the Akkadian counterpart of Inanna, is identified as one face of the mother archetype. Jung argues that the father represents the world of moral commands and prohibitions (Jung, 1956/2009, p. 450), while Ishtar, as an embodiment of the mother archetype, figures the unconscious drive to be recognized and the maternal principle (Jung, 1956/2009, p. 495). Within this framework, the Fathers in the novel each instantiate the institutional form of the father archetype and its logocentrism: through linguistic order, technological control, and hierarchical judgment respectively. The intervention of the Inanna myth activates precisely the unconscious dimension that this institutional form suppresses, namely relationality, embodiment, and cyclical time. However, Tokarczuk's aim is not to assert a binary opposition between male and female but to envision their equal collaboration. Anna In is androgynous, simultaneously possessing feminine and masculine qualities, transcending the gender binary in order to construct an egalitarian world (Amenta, 2018).

The second problem is the burden of Polish national literary tradition; it has a fundamental contradiction between the tragic narrative of martyrdom and the heroic narrative of national greatness. The messianic stream has long linked the national image of Poland to the Passion of Christ and passed down a story of the people. With the division of the country (1772-1795), Polish poets such as Adam Mickiewicz believed that Poland was the "Christ of Nations" and that its "passion" and "resurrection" would save all of Europe (Chrostowski, 1991). Thus, national suffering was given a purpose, and martyrdom, sacrifice and redemption became the foundation of the Polish national idea. Henryk Sienkiewicz, a Polish writer who won the 1905 Nobel Prize in Literature, belonged to the heroic school, and he used it to foster a sense of national consciousness among Poles living under foreign rule; however, his idea of a "noble nation" was also flawed by class prejudice (Ryś, 2019). The Catholic faith of Poland also broke its connection to the pagan mythological heritage of the West Slavs. After Mieszko I's conversion to Christianity in 966, the former West Slavic mythological culture was disrupted and lost a place in modern life. As Janion (2003) has pointed out, for a long time Polish identity has been built upon a disavowal of its Slavic roots and an affinity with Western culture, which led to profound anxiety about identity and a sense of cultural deficiency.

Tokarczuk chose the myth of Sumerians instead of Polish and Christian myth in this historical background; thus, it has gained some advantages. Sumerian cosmology was formed before the development of Indo-European national consciousness, Abrahamic religions, and the East-West civilizational division. Therefore, a pre-national mythical level has been constructed to build an alternative narrative reservoir that does not end with the closure of national discourse. Tokarczuk's

earlier use of suppressed heterodox traditions in *The Books of Jacob* does not belong to this approach; rather, it is far removed from national cultural memory and places the resources of narrative in a deeper time period of civilisation.

The two factors together form a cross-border narrative direction that can be spread throughout the world via the idea of solarpunk. Solarpunk has begun to function as a new form of distribution in modern culture, and is now an eco-aesthetic idea concerned with sustainability, relational ethics and a post-anthropocentric world. Therefore, the narrative practice of Tokarczuk can be considered an early, culturally specific expression of the wider imagination.

6. Conclusion

Through her reworking of Sumerian myth in *Anna In in the Tombs of the World*, Olga Tokarczuk raises a question that remains persistently unanswered: Do the traditions of other cultures contain narrative resources that are waiting for a spark of literary imagination, and do ancient myths and folk cultures around the world hold a solarpunk potential that has yet to be uncovered? It links the novel to the general modern problem of whether literature can both break free from a closed narrative and provide resources for building an optimistic outlook on life. The novel indicates that the answer is a form of creation through return; one must look back at the earliest stories and feel their gentle reverberation over thousands of years.

Tokarczuk's application of myth is not only for the sake of narrative but also to expand the boundaries of imagination in modern fiction by bringing new life to old myths. Literarily speaking, this work is a kind of Polish foreshadowing that alters the inheritance path of the genre and shows us that the visionary structure of solarpunk need not be based on modern technology but can also draw from myth. It is a "solarpunk turn" that, with the help of others, will meet the needs of an environmentally damaged future in the traditional way. The novel has a strong connection to the present day, shows a certain Polish trend in this direction, takes advantage of the cyborg inheritance of cyberpunk to move away from systemic pessimism and embrace an optimistic, inclusive attitude. *Anna In in the Tombs of the World* has developed and extended the discussion on solarpunk through the combination of technological imagination from cyberpunk and ecological relational ideas. Although its focus is still on the problems of women, the novel is also a type of proto-solarpunk experiment in narrative form that anticipates a world full of diversity, connections and rejuvenation.

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Note(s)

Note 1. Due to the absence of a published English edition of the original Polish novel *Anna In in the Tombs of the World* (*Anna In w grobowcach świata*, 2006), all translated excerpts throughout this paper have been rendered by the author to ensure textual accuracy and analytical consistency.