



### Original Research Article

## “TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON”: A THYMOTIC MAN IN RAY BRADBURY’S *FAHRENHEIT 451*

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### Abstract

In this study, our primary objective is to expose the philosophical notion of human soul in Ray Bradbury’s novel, *Fahrenheit 451*. We will examine how the ruling authority’s efforts to enforce societal conformity lead to the emergence of resistant groups seeking recognition against the prevailing regime. Given that, such a “struggle for recognition” in Francis Fukuyama’s contention is referred to as *thymos*. By analyzing the thymotic desires of the characters, particularly focusing on the personal growth of Guy Montag, using Fukuyama’s analytical framework, we aim to elucidate the significant role of the thymotic individual in challenging the ruling government. In addition, the terms of *nous* and *epithumia* as two other component parts of Plato’s tripartite soul are illuminated in the psychological personality of the characters which will be examined accordingly. Our examination of *nous* and *epithumia* aims to enhance the understanding of the role of *thymos* in the novel. Furthermore, we seek to demonstrate that Guy Montag’s provoked *thymos* serves as a means through which he challenges the pervasive power of the ruling regime. Ultimately, drawing from the insights of ancient philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle will provide a clearer understanding of the underlying themes depicted in the novel.

**Keywords:** *Thymos*, Thymotic Man, *Nous*, *Epithumia*, Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451*

### Introduction

In Ray Bradbury’s novel *Fahrenheit 451*<sup>4</sup> (hereafter referred to as *F451*), a future American society is depicted where both reading and owning books are discouraged. Interestingly, the firefighters in this society have an inverted role, as they are tasked with setting fire to houses suspected of harboring books. Guy Montag, the novel’s protagonist, and a firefighter of ten years, impulsively decides to reject his role of burning books. Subsequently, upon resigning from his job, he devotes himself to preserving cultural writings. The novel’s subplot can be succinctly summarized as the interaction and conflict between Guy Montag and Captain Beatty, who respectively become the adversary and advocate of the ruling power.

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<sup>4</sup> Scientifically speaking, the title of the novel, *Fahrenheit 451*, refers to a degree in which paper catches fires.

Of the numerous articles and research touching on Bradbury's *F451*, George E. Conner argues in his article<sup>5</sup> that *F451* serves as a modern adaptation of Plato's allegory, illustrating how the firemen, akin to the prisoners in Plato's cave dialogue, remain unaware of their oppressive condition and resist seeking the truth. Furthermore, Conner's article delves into the manner in which Bradbury's "voice" (Conner 88) is expressed and asserts that he "speaks for himself" not through Montag (89). Jack Zipes (2008)<sup>6</sup> states that Montag undergoes different phases of "a learning experience" (5). He argues that the presence of "machines and the mass media" is to omit "differences and originality" (11). However, he mentions that, despite the stringent control, Montag fulfills "a process of rehumanization" (10). In consonance with Zipes's research, we categorize this process of "rehumanization" an encounter with *thymo*<sup>7</sup>.

Governed by disciplined *epithumia* and *thymos*, and with the objective of establishing a uniform and compliant society, the ruling regime incites "thymotic passion" (Fukuyama 2006, 214) in certain groups of characters whose *thymos* is powerful enough to oppose the state's wishes. Drawing from Fukuyama's portrayal of *thymos*, some characters exhibit "passionate anger," recognizing instances of "small acts of injustice" and endeavoring to rebel against them (Fukuyama 180). *Thymos* literally has been translated as "spiritedness" (xvi), and is considered as "the source of honour, striving and motivation, and social bonding" (Kalimtzis, 1). In Homer, *thymos* is the seat of psychological phenomena and is responsible for generating "motion or agitation" (Bruno Snell 9). Plato in *Phaedrus* and later in *the Republic* numerates *thymos* as one of the three constituent parts of the human psyche. Considering Socrates' words, Plato consider the psyche to be the "essence" (*Phaedrus* 28) of an individual since it works as a determinant factor in shaping our behavior. In Plato's framework, *thymos*, the middle part of the tripartite soul, acts as a mediator between *logos* and *epithumia*. Connected with "anger, justice, manliness, and the military life" ((Koziak 1069), *thymos* is vulnerable to errors and harangues. Plato depicts *logos*, or the rational part as the "charioteer" driving two horses: *thymos*, a white and "noble" animal, and *epithumia*, a black and ill-looking one (*Phaedrus* 28). Including appetite and affection, *epithumia*, the lowest and least rational part of the soul, stands for bodily desires. Aristotle identifies *epithumia* in its narrow sense as "a specific kinds of bodily pleasure" concerning "tactile pleasures that arise from ameliorating painful disruptive bodily states". In its broader sense, *epithumia* extends beyond "bodily pleasures", and is also recognized with "non-bodily pleasures", grasped from "learning or victory" (Pearson 10). The rational part, *nous*<sup>8</sup>, encompasses a range of interrelated meanings such as "intelligence", "immediate awareness", "intuition", "intuitive intellect" and "intuitive reason" (Urmson, 115) and is considered the controlling part. *Nous* as an apprehension of first principle in Homeric diction is associated with psychological activities like "intellectual, emotional, and volitional aspects" (Sullivan1990, 180). It is a part of the soul that can distinguish the truth and analyzes the forms or ideas. However, in Plato, *nous* is considered to be the highest and noblest part of the tripartite soul, which also includes *thymos* and *epithumia*. In Aristotle's perspective, *nous* is the dwelling place of "intuition" (Biomdi 232) or insight that allows humans to grasp the first principles of knowledge. Moreover, *thymos* is a kind of longing or "*orexis*" (117), directed towards what is high or noble, but it is often used synonymously with anger (*orgē*) (Pearson 111).

Moving on, Fukuyama presents his argument in his widely acclaimed book *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992), suggesting that a considerable portion of human behavior can be expressed as an amalgamation of desire and reason. With reference to him, desire tantalizes people to seek external rewards, whereas reason directs them in identifying the most effective means of achieving them (xvi). Fukuyama delves into the concept of *thymos*, a term utilized by Plato in *the Republic* to describe an aspect of the soul. However, Fukuyama takes Plato's description further and associates *thymos* with societal dynamics. For Fukuyama, the tension between individuals arises when the ruling class fails to acknowledge the *thymos* of the subordinate group, particularly in relation to concepts such as "self-esteem" (xvii) and "self-worth" (165). Consequently, Fukuyama expands the notion of *thymos* by introducing *isothymia* as "the desire to be recognized as equal to other people" and *megalothymia* (the dark side of *thymos*) as "the desire to be recognized as superior to other

<sup>5</sup> "Spelunking with Ray Bradbury: The allegory of the cave in Fahrenheit 451".

<sup>6</sup> "Mass Degradation of Humanity and Massive Contradictions in Bradbury's Vision of America in Fahrenheit 451."

<sup>7</sup> It is also spelled "*thumos*" by some scholars, we follow Fukuyama's spelling.

<sup>8</sup> Also, it is spelled *noos*.

people” (182). While this essay does not delve into all the emotions associated with *thymos*, it will use select emotions as benchmarks and examples.

In terms of resemblance, *F451* reveals a vehement dramatization of tripartite description of the soul. Implicitly, the novel’s subplot revolves around the clash of three interconnected forces’ dispositions. On one side, there exists a group of characters driven by appetitive desires, reminiscent of Plato’s allegory of the cave, unaware of the true world beyond the confines of the dark cave (Conner 85). Mildred epitomizes this perspective, proclaiming “reality to be nothing else than the shadows of the artificial objects” (Shorey 123). Unfortunately, the totalitarian state suppresses or distorts the pursuit of truth through censorship and book burnings, discouraging critical thinking. On the other side, individuals characterized as “guardians” and “courageous and public-spirited” (Fukuyama 183) seek recognition and *thymos* experiences. This group, including characters like Guy Montag and Clarisse McClellan, is willing to risk and “sacrifice their material desires and wants for the sake of the common good” (183). Finally, there are those in pursuit of reason, such as Professor Faber, Granger, and other literary intellectuals.

Guy Montag’s awakening is a result of his encounters with various characters. His interactions with Clarisse, who challenges societal norms, and Faber, who emphasizes the importance of literature and knowledge, significantly impact his development. It is Montag’s *nous* that enables him to discern the truth behind the society’s deceptions and propaganda. His *thymos*, more actively, gives him enough courage and urge to rebel against such perceived privacy violation. Clarisse McClellan with “intense *aliveness*”, borrowing Eller and Touponce’s word, awakens the dormant dimension of Montag’s suppressed “consciousness” and provokes the “reveries of the material imagination” (93). Eventually, Montag becomes skeptical of his role in burning books and the alleged heroic nature of his job. Clarisse embodies the role of an “antisocial” (Bradbury 26) or, in Seed’s words, a “catalyst-figure,” serving as “a productive irritant in the protagonist’s consciousness,” which hastens his realization process (Seed 233).

Clarisse triggered thymotic passion in Montag and awoke him from daydreaming and gaining artificial pleasure. As such, she goes on to tell Montag that:

“If you showed a driver a green blur, Oh, yes! he’d say, that’s grass! A pink blur? That’s a rose garden! White blurs are houses. Brown blurs are cows. My uncle drove slowly on a highway once. He drove forty miles an hour and they jailed him for two days. Isn’t that fun, and sad, too?” (Bradbury 6).

Her teasing words and critical thinking vividly censure the notions of sameness and conformity. In this matter, Fernanda Luisa Feneja (2012) argues that “she fully represents alterity and difference against sameness and likeness, and this is the trait that most impresses Montag and thus ignites his life change” (9). Hence, the courage that Montag discovers within himself renders his life, according to Leo Strauss, “interesting” (1989, 167). Clarisse acts as a replica in showing Montag the interesting reality of existence outside the restraining disciplines. McGiveron (1998) likens Clarisse to a mirror who “guilelessly reflects the truth into Montag’s eyes” (284). Noting that she expresses: “They name a lot of cars or clothes or swimming pools mostly and say how swell! But they all say the same things and nobody says anything different from anyone else” (Bradbury 2012, 28). Her influence compels Montag to undergo a tumultuous emotional upheaval, wavering between contrasting forces.

So it was the hand that started it all. He felt one hand and then the other work his coat free and let it slump to the floor. He held his pants out into an abyss and let them fall into darkness. His hands had been infected, and soon it would be his arms. He could feel the poison working up his wrists and into his elbows and his shoulders, and then the jump-over from shoulder-blade to shoulder-blade like a spark leaping a gap. His hands were ravenous. And his eyes were beginning to feel hunger, as if they must look at something, anything, everything. (38)

In light of her intellectual acumen and inquisitive nature, Beatty refers to Clarisse as a “time bomb” (Bradbury 57), whose proclivity towards plurality and divergence must be curbed. Montag infers that “there must be something in books, things we can’t imagine, to make a woman stay in a

burning house; there must be something there. You don't stay for nothing" (48). The internal conflict of showing approval or opposition to his former life drives Montag to change from the government's loyal agent to an angry and combative insurgent (thymotic man). Therefore, Montag can be a good candidate of a thymotic man whose passions and heroic emotions supersede other facets of his body.

While Guy Montag is categorized as a thymotic man grappling with his *thymos*, his *epithumia* also displays considerable activity. He figures out that what he has learned as happiness is just a fake and superficial copy of happiness. More particularly, such a realization demonstrates itself when he enters home and sees the hostility of Mildred overdosing on sleeping-tabloids. Comparing Clarisse's agency and liveliness with his indifferent and dull wife exacerbates his dissatisfaction with his spouse and life.

Her face was like a snow-covered island upon which rain might fall; but it felt no rain; over which clouds might pass their moving shadows, but she felt no shadow. . . the small crystal bottle of sleeping-tablets which earlier today had been filled with thirty capsules and which now lay uncapped and empty in the light of the tiny flare. (11)

Apparently, to Montag, Mildred's attitudes and dispositions contradict those of Clarisse's, she wishes to conceal her unhappiness or "emptiness" (Eller and Touponce 94) by idling away in front of TV, and resorting to narcotic pills. Systematically, *epithumia* is exploited and conducted by the ruling government, thus an absurd and exaggerated form of it is advertised. Consequently, the citizens are hooked to media, narcotic drugs, and consumerism. Evidently, such forced *epithumia* and unconsciousness loosens the family bonds and increases apathy. Mildred's lifestyle lacks any need for *thymos* and mirrors Fukuyama's notion of the "last man", a typical citizen of a liberal democracy who is so much satisfied with his happy state that he is ". . . unable to feel any sense of shame for being unable to rise above those wants". Nietzsche, according to Fukuyama's interpretation, goes to that extreme to contend that the last man ceases to be "human" (xxii). Montag's relationship with his wife, a consumer of the dominant propaganda and hegemony, has become purely mechanical, devoid of any remaining love between them.

In line with Plato's classification, the characters' *nous*, *thymos* and *epithumia* have been curtailed and suppressed. Moreover, the regime, by all available means like restricting different sources of perceiving awareness, strives to disconnect individuals from their past and external world. As argued by David Mogen (1986), *F451* "dramatizes entrapment in a sterile and poisonous culture cut off from its cultural heritage and imaginative life, vigilantly preserving a barren present without past or future" (105). This controlling activity leads to a palpable divide among citizens. Enclosed within personal and political boundaries, subjects are alienated and detached from each other and the external world. It is evident that they are living in a form of "social quarantine" (Foucault 216) without having any "political awareness" (141). For the same token, in such a situation, Captain Beatty, a devilish proponent of the ruling regime, acknowledges the strong link between reading books and awareness and thus deems book reading as a threat: "A book is a loaded gun in the house next door. Burn it. Take the shot from the weapon" (Bradbury 56). Captain Beatty's rational principle (*nous*) and irrational principle (*thymos*) are emphasized by his mental and physical power, respectively. His *thymos* is evident in his rank and position and also his *nous* reveals itself in the form of the broad knowledge, particularly the power of language which he possesses. However, he employs his power in serving the regime to reach its utilitarian desires by constraining the ways of acquiring reason.

Conspicuously, the existence of *thymos* and *nous* in a person works as a kind of "moral behavior" which entails a desire towards justice or its opposite, injustice. (Sullivan 1990, 181). In the case of Captain Beatty, *nous* is perceived as a desire for deceitful actions and injustices in support of the state. In many cases the *nous* can be hidden, consenting an individual to outwardly behave unlike his inner intention (181). For instance, Montag, by keeping and hiding the books, concealed what his true characteristic is. *Nous* sometimes works as an "active agent" and it is open to the peripheral influences. *Nous* is not inherently stable, but it is prone to change over time and with age. (180).

However, *thymos* is manipulated and exploited by the dominant state, as long as the people are in harmony with the state's *epithumia*, they are endorsed to be courageous and even violent. More severely, the government attempts to manipulate and direct the rational part of the soul and that is to

exploit *nous* in favour of its own benefits. As such, Captain Beatty adds that no one is born “free and equal” but according to the “the Constitution. everyone made equal” (Bradbury 55). He further advocates for conformity, stating that “we must all be alike,” (55). Subsequently, Captain Beatty warns Montag that whoever tries to “fool” the government will be deemed “insane” (31). Deprived of *nous*, any assumed offender will be confined in the asylum. As such, various segments of society including book lovers, book hoarders and whoever opposes the hegemonic monopoly is persecuted. Captain Beatty’s fervent efforts focus on suppressing intellectual development from an early age and preventing children from experiencing a nurturing home environment. More pointedly, to rationalize his ideology, he claims that “the home environment can undo a lot you try to do at school. That’s why we’ve lowered the kindergarten age year after year until now we’re almost snatching them from the cradle” (57). The ultimate purpose is to train children from early ages in accordance with the defined rules and regulation of the prevailing hegemony, creating individuals with controlled thymotic impulses. Needless to say, such a description is best exemplified by the role of firemen fighters, whose responsibilities have been inverted in favor of the regime’s interests in five rules.

1. Answer the alarm swiftly.
2. Start the fire swiftly.
3. Burn everything.
4. Report back to firehouse immediately.
5. Stand alert for other alarms. (32)

Similarly, the duty of firefighting necessitates the readiness of the practitioners, who resemble Plato’s Guardians in their overflowing thymotic passion and constant striving for heroic endeavors. In terms of utility, the firefighters’ role aligns closely with the appetitive desires of both government officials and citizens, who seek comfort and relaxation.

Equally importantly, via a strong network of espionage and reportage, pleasure-seeking is so widely dispersed in the society that people are against those who are violating it. Ironically, with the help of Mechanical Hound almost all the responsibilities of the policing and tracking of the offenders (book hoarders) have been entrusted to the firefighters. This suspicious figure of Mechanical Hound, equipped with a needle filled with morphine or procaine in its mouth, is expertly designed to swiftly bite and numb its victims, symbolically depriving them of their soul. More significantly, the Mechanical Hound’s savage and devouring passion is a portrayal of the state’s desire, and its ubiquitous presence functions as a prototype for the system’s ultimate goal of inducing conformity. The Mechanical Hound emits an amalgam of control and terror, undermining rationality and reflecting the government’s desire to trace and trap those who oppose it. Its ubiquity precludes individuals from achieving intellectual clarity, as exemplified throughout the novel: “the Mechanical Hound slept but did not sleep, lived but did not live in its gently humming, gently vibrating, softly illuminated kennel back in a dark corner of the firehouse” (Bradbury 21-22) Overall, the Mechanical Hound’s image, from its early appearance up to its destruction, looms over Montag’s head like the Sword of Damocles.

Furthermore, the ruling state restrains individuals’ access to knowledge and, using Paulo Virno phrase, “shared experience” (26) by misusing technological devices and mass media. The government targets nonconformist individuals with different ideologies, like seventeen-year-old Clarisse, and eliminates them without leaving any trace. Captain Beatty states that “the poor girl’s better off dead.” “Yes, dead.” “Luckily, queer ones like her don’t happen, often. We know how to nip most of them in the bud, early” (Bradbury 58). Notably, Captain Beatty’s *nous* and insight is comparable to that of Faber, who later provides Montag with a wealth of information about past cultural heritage. Zipes highlights the similarities between Captain Beatty and Faber, asserting that “both Beatty and Faber serve as Bradbury’s mouthpiece here and portray a history in which the masses are depicted as ignorant, selfish, and more interested in the comforts provided by technology than in creativity and humanistic communication” (11). In a similar vein, these two characters possess extensive knowledge about different issues and represent individuals whose rational principles dominate their essence. They offer unique perspectives based on their profound knowledge.

More ironically, in order to justify living in the current regime, Beatty refers to American Civilization as “our happy world” (Bradbury 59). To put it another way, the regime masks its disciplinary measures behind “a facade of material prosperity” and justifies everything based on the

“utilitarian grounds of the majority’s happiness” (Seed 22). However, as McGiveron points out, “families are hollow and loveless, suicide is commonplace, violence is endemic on the streets and in broadcast entertainment, and jet bombers circle ominously in the night” (1998, 286). Although Montag is uncertain about how to deal with his awakened *thymos*, he pretends to be ill and stays in bed. Observing Montag’s anxious behavior over the past few days, Captain Beatty approaches his bedside and strongly warns against those who disturb the government’s notion of happiness: “We stand against the small tide of those who want to make everyone unhappy with conflicting theory and thought. We have our fingers in the dyke” (Bradbury 59). Ostensibly, due to the suppressing voice of the government, as Joseph F. Brown argues, the society has “. . . become vapid, more interested in mindless entertainment than knowledge, understanding, and critical thought, and the ability to discern between two fundamental documents has no place” (56). Furthermore, many of the television viewers, like Mildred, consider the television characters to be members of their family. On that account, the hollowness of such a rigid society compels Montag, the thymotic man, to embrace diversity and difference and to vehemently oppose the homogenous notion of happiness. By reciting some of Mathew Arnold’s *Dover Beach* in front of his wife’s guests, Mrs. Phelps and Mrs. Bowles, Montag publicly displays strong resistance against the dominant hegemony. Later on, in a downbeat assessment, Mildred sounds the book alarm, despite having prior notions that her house would be set ablaze. Such action in sounding the book alarm resembles what Fukuyama highlights about Soviet families during Stalin’s reign of communism. He contends that the totalitarian system does not deprive individuals of freedom; instead, the system makes him/her “fear freedom in favor of security, and to affirm the goodness of his chains even in the absence of coercion” (24).

Technically, despite the pervasive enforcement of strict disciplines to suppress soul, a new niche is opened for the advent of resistant subjects whose *nous* or *thymos* are more actively engaged. Leo Strauss (1978) argues that *thymos* “. . . includes a large variety of phenomena ranging from the most noble indignation about injustice, turpitude, and meanness, down to the anger of a spoiled child who resents being deprived of anything, however bad, that he desires” (110). As such, these subjects regard the prevalence of such rules unjust and grapples with the methods of dealing with the polar opposites of either negating or accepting them. Guy Montag emerges from within the heart of the same administrating regime. Montag’s current existence, revolving around a government-promoted artificial happiness, is depicted as reaching the so-called “end of history,” as Fukuyama refers to it, or in other words, the cessation of battles and brutal revolutions (Fukuyama 311). However, at the zenith of his success, Montag suddenly decides to stand against the very regime he has previously defended. It is no secret that individuals like Montag grow weary of their monotonous lives in such a stagnant situation. Therefore, for being recognized, relying on Kojève’s notion, Fukuyama argues that individuals must allow their “human desire” to overcome their “animal desire for self-preservation” and take risks (150).

What Beatty advertises as happy state is analogous to Fukuyama’s notion of the liberal democracy. Fukuyama posits that the typical citizen of the liberal democracy resembles Nietzsche’s “last man”, who forsakes “prideful belief in his or her own superior worth in favor of comfortable self-preservation” under the education and influence of modern liberalism (xxii). He further explains that liberal democracy engenders “men without chests” who primarily act based on their reason and self-interest. These individuals do not obey their *thymos* but instead search to calculate their “long term interest” (xxii). Fukuyama contends that the last man does not pursue any form of superiority, therefore no room for “excellence or achievement” (xxii) is probable as the subjects are deprived of desire for glory. Accordingly, a man who fails to rise above the aforesaid desire and is satisfied with his current state of happiness ceased to be truly “human” (xxii). In other words, Fukuyama suggests that in the end of history the subjects would “become animals again, as they were before the bloody battle that began history” (311). Additionally, Fukuyama employs Socrates’ metaphor wherein he likens a man with *thymos* to a “noble dog who is capable of great courage and anger fighting strangers in defense of his own city” (163). In contradiction to a noble dog, people at the end of history resemble inactive dogs, satisfied with their present well-fed lives, and indifferent to the success and oppression of others (311).

Thereby, he concludes that if a man’s life fails to strive toward “abolishing injustice,” his life will mirror that of this dog (311).

In line with Fukuyama's interpretation, Montag's encounter with Clarisse triggers his thymotic passion, leading to a shift in his attitudes and revolutionary opinions. Like a noble dog, Montag wants to be the "nobler man" who considers his self-worth superior and will be greatly "angry" when faced with injustice (165). Despite not facing significant issues in his own life, Montag perceives his disciplined existence as an unjust form of injustice. Apparently, his *thymos* is not satisfied with his return to stagnant animal-like life at the end of history which, for him, signifies the end of bravery and *thymos*. Therefore, symbolically Montag strives to drag back his life into "history" with all its battles, wars and injustices (312). Influenced by Clarisse's words and his book readings, conspicuously, Montag's rebellious behavior negates the idea that history has come to an end, discovering a reason for struggles and moves the history forward. His thymotic passion reaches its pinnacle in overcoming his most fundamental animal drives, which Hegel describes as the instinct for "self-preservation" (xvi). Put another way, for the sake of higher values and principles, Montag risks his body for what he idealizes. Further, in Fukuyama's words, only a thymotic man like Montag or "the man of anger" (180) is able to defend his own self-esteem and the dignity of his community, who share the same values. Montag derives his prestige and dignity from something greater than "the complex set of desires that make up his physical existence" (180). Hence, all alone, he is ready to risk his own life by standing up against firemen and Mechanical Hounds. Drawing on Alexander Hamilton's "love of fame [or] the ruling passion of the noblest minds" (356), Montag's passion corresponds with Fukuyama's notion of thymotic desire, which propels him to risk his life on behalf of other individuals for "higher causes" (149). Ultimately, Montag sacrifices himself because his *thymos* and need for diversity cannot tolerate the sameness he despises the most. Likewise, Harvey Claflin Mansfield (2006) claims that "*thymos* makes the soul insist on itself and, precisely when insisting on itself, offer to sacrifice itself so as to be unbeatable. The ultimate sacrifice is the ultimate defense" (207). Therefore, by satisfying his thymotic urges for adventure and gaining knowledge, Montag feels obliged to risk his own life to save the cultural heritage contained within the books of past generations.

At the beginning of the novel, Montag, as a compliant agent, seeks for *epithymia* whose mere amusement is burning books. This is evident in the opening lines of the novel where Montag expresses his joy, stating: "It was a pleasure to burn" (Bradbury 1). In this matter Seed describes Montag as being like "a robot" and "a member of the state apparatus" content with his job in burning the books (227). Montag's role aligns him with the ruling establishment, imposing restrictions on the local population to fulfill the government's *megalothymia* in creating obedient subjects. Moreover, by controlling Montag's bodily movement and people of his ilk, the regime subjugates him entirely inside the imposed walls of defined heroic pleasure for the favor of its own domination. Nevertheless, the regime's policies are not flawless since new gaps, amid all these controlling structures purported to produce obedient citizens and soldiers, are opened for the emergence of defiant groups. Prior to Montag's realization, many individuals, particularly intellectuals, have been enticed to seek change and challenge the societal norms. Therefore, the desire to break free from these constraints existed even before Montag's awakening, albeit on a smaller scale.

In the novel, like Homeric Hymns, *nous* is functioning as "an active agent" within the individual and it is considered to be receptive and "open" to both internal and external influences. More particularly, *nous* is "a changeable entity" that varies both with "time and age" (Shirley and Richard D. Sullivan. 1990, 180). Montag's *nous*, at the age of 32, is expected to reach its full potential as his perception and understanding deepen. Similar to Sullivan's note, *nous* exerts influence on Montag's "inner level", deepens his vision and alters his perceptive vision of the external world, thus Montag's "behavior" is affected by *nous* as well (Sullivan 1988, 7).

In the same vein, to quench his thirst for knowledge, Montag turns to Faber, a retired professor, to fill the void left by Clarisse's absence. Considered as a foil for Beatty, he plays a crucial role in acquainting Montag with the cultural significance of literature. Inasmuch as Beatty threatens Montag if he stores the books, Faber encourages Montag to possess them. In brief, Beatty's main responsibility is to detect and crack down individuals who oppose the government. In an opposite side, Faber warns Montag against Captain Beatty's threat: "Remember that the Captain belongs to the most dangerous enemy to truth and freedom, the solid unmoving cattle of the majority. Oh, the terrible tyranny of the majority" (Bradbury 104). Faber urges Montag to muster his courage (*thymos*) and take risks against Captain Beatty and other agents. Discovering his affiliation with the ruling

regime and his close proximity to other firefighters, Faber inspires Montag to use his influence and take practical steps to challenge the state. One of these steps involves disseminating “seeds of suspicion” by printing additional books and hiding them in firemen’s houses (81). Indeed, compared to other subjects, Beatty’s soul is more dominated by *nous*. As a demonic symbol of the supposed utopian society, he confidently utilizes his *nous* and intuition to detect acts of disobedience. In this matter, McGiveron contends that: “Beatty unwittingly may be the novel’s best spokesperson against the stifling anti-intellectualism of his society, but he refuses to let any doubts interfere with his work; unlike Montag’s, his hands never waver” (2012, 451- 179). Instead, however, he employs his *nous* and insight to further the interests of the ruling power, essentially functioning as their most effective representative.

Close to the final scenes, as Montag’s residence was ignited by the fire brigade, Captain Beatty, despite acknowledging Montag’s disloyalty to the regime, allows him to stay armed with the fire-hose. Evidently, Beatty perceives no utility in subsisting under the fake hegemony of the government. Refusing to endure the role of a manipulator or in Conner’s word, the “puppeteer” any longer (Conner 87), he decided to self-destruct and effectively end his obedience. It appears that his *thymos* was not strong enough to oppose the injustices and based on Faber’s saying to “be one of us” (Bradbury 87). Indifferent to his own rescue, “Beatty had wanted to die. He had just stood there, not really trying to save himself, just stood there, joking, needling” (116). Using this opportunity, Montag pointed the fire-hose at Captain Beatty and reduced him to the ashes. Strauss denotes *thymos* as “derivative willingness to kill and to be killed, to destroy human beings” (1989, 166), signifying the inclination of the thymotic individual to defend oneself and challenge the government using the very apparatus employed by the state for repression. Despite Beatty’s erudition, his principles diverge significantly from those of scholarly proponents of literature. Fed up with his own life, he elects not to confront the government’s authority, instead terminating his own life with fire without posing a tangible threat to Montag.

Eller and Touponce argue that fire symbolizes the government’s endeavor to “reduce everything to ashy sameness and death” and omit diversity and vitality (96). Likewise, Montag understands the pleasure and power of fire, which can be harnessed to reach his desires: “It was a special pleasure to see things eaten, to see things blackened and changed” (Bradbury 1). Montag’s audacious endeavor stems from honour-seeking facet of *thymos*, as posited by Strauss that *thymos* “. . . is a desire for victory” (1989, 166). Thus, by eliminating Captain Beatty as symbol of the regime and dismantling the Mechanical Hound as a representative of fright and control, Montag overcomes the regime, exemplified by his successful escape in the final section of the novel. Moreover, the regime’s internal weakness, victimizing another passerby in a hunger game instead Montag, is vividly shown.

Although Montag’s fiery emotions and feelings are in association with his *thymos*, his passion for restoring and reading books sheds light on his intellectualism and *nous* as well. The distinct line between *thymos* and *nous* is not precisely drawn, and they often overlap. Conspicuously, *nous* is in charge of “intellectual matters, and of things emotional” (Snell 12). Apparently, joining a cult of escaped book-memorizing intellectuals in the forest contributes to the diversity that Montag seeks. According to Fukuyama, individuals like Montag do not just pursue “material comfort, but respect or recognition, and they believe that they are worthy of respect because they possess a certain value or dignity” (152). Montag and his group aspire to establish a new city, which Plato refers to as the “just city,” a place where “all three parts of the soul [reason, desire and *thymos*] were satisfied and brought into balance under the guidance of reason” (337). A chosen excerpt of the novel demonstrates that:

And when the war’s over, some day, some year, the books can be written again, the people will be called in, one by one, to recite what they know, and we’ll set it up in type until another Dark Age, when we might have to do the whole thing over again. (Bradbury 146)

Therefore, when the bombardments of the city commences, Guy Montag and other intellectuals remains hopeful that that a new civilization will emerge from the destruction, akin to the symbolic phoenix rising from its fiery ashes, where human dignity and value are acknowledged. Finally with regard to Francis Fukuyama’s remarks, it can be concluded that although the novel’s protagonist, Montag, lacked depth, his personal development and thymotic passion drove him to become the preserver of past life. Montag possessed several distinct qualities that set him apart as an



integral part of the regime and allowed him to recognize the injustice of citizens' controlled rationality, irrationality and appetitive desires.

He undertook significant risks to earn prestige, honor and self-worth, exhibiting heroic-like features. Montag is a salient example of a thymotic man whose stagnant life motivated him to seek recognition and dignity, refusing to settle for artificial happiness and obedience. His thymotic growth relied deeply on Clarisse's influence, who instigated his "thymotic pride," directing him to discover his own worth and dignity. Montag and other intellectuals sought more than disciplined desire and happiness; they wished to be "recognized, above all by the government of the country they live in" (206). In brief, the power of *thymos* drives a thymotic man like Montag to negate the dominant regime's imposed *epithumia* and rebel against it, hoping that the world may become civilized once again, where diverse voices are heard.

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