

GERTRUDE AND DIDO – TRAUMATIZED FEMALE CHARACTERS IN SHAKESPEARE’S AND MARLOWE’S PLAYS

The focus of this paper is on the analysis of two female characters from Shakespeare’s and Marlowe’s plays within the context of trauma studies. Queen Gertrude from William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* (1609) and Queen Dido from Christopher Marlowe’s *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (1594), can be taken as two examples of how women were portrayed within the context of the Renaissance writing in the Elizabethan England. The traumas that they share and the experiences that both of them had to endure bring us closer to understanding the overall traumas and conditions for women in Elizabethan England. The framework of trauma studies, relying on the research by Cathy Caruth (1996), Shoshana Felman, Dori Laub (1992) and others, offers a background upon which these two female characters are analyzed. Hopefully, this paper offers an insight into the minds of these two traumatized, female characters.

Key words: female characters, Dido, Elizabethan England, Gertrude, Marlowe, Shakespeare, trauma studies

1. Trauma Studies – Overview

The rise of interest in mental traumas can be traced back to Sigmund Freud and his study in the late 1800s, which focuses on studying mental health, acknowledging that mental health is as important as physical health. He manages to do so by introducing psychoanalysis, the main goal of which is to heal people from the traumas they have suffered through, or which have been inflicted upon them. The basic premise of psychoanalysis is to bring forth that which is unconscious into the “realm of cognition”, in order to analyze it, and, hopefully, overcome it (FELMAN, LAUB 1992: 16). The rise of trauma studies is connected with shifting the focus from the survival of the body towards the survival of the mind, in the aftermath of the two world wars. The word trauma means “wound” in Greek, and despite its initial connection solely with the injuries of the body, it became used for the wounds inflicted

¹ natalija.stevanovic@filfak.ni.ac.rs

upon the mind, thanks to Sigmund Freud (CARUTH 1996: 3). In his essay *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), Freud defines the wound of the mind as the “breach in the mind’s experience of time, self, and the world”, which is not something that is simple and healable, but an event experienced “too soon, too unexpectedly to be fully known”, and can become available to consciousness only if it “imposes itself again, repeatedly”, usually in the form of nightmares and repetitive actions (CARUTH 1996: 4).

In her book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996), Caruth elaborates her explanation of the importance of studying trauma by building her claims upon Sigmund Freud’s oeuvre. She conveys Freud’s words when she says that sometimes catastrophic events repeat themselves, and they seem not to be initiated by “[...] the individual’s own acts, but rather appear as the possession of some people by a sort of fate, a series of painful events to which they are subjected, and which seem to be entirely outside their wish or control” (CARUTH 1996: 2). Another notion connected to trauma is the fact that we do not experience the traumatic event as it happens, but, rather, it returns to haunt us in repeated flashbacks, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomena (CARUTH 1996: 91). It is quite difficult to express feelings about trauma, so this “unspeakableness” further affects the realm of language, and eventually, our ability to convey a cohesive narrative (ZAIKOWSKI 2010: 203). We lose our narrative abilities when experiencing a traumatic event, as it destroys our understanding of the world, and disables our ability to normally function in various aspects of our lives (ZAIKOWSKI 2010: 199).

In Shoshana Felman’s and Dori Laub’s book *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (1992), there is a particular approach to investigating trauma; in this case, they are trying to explain the nature of memory and the function of witnessing a traumatic act, with a focus on the Holocaust, as one of the most traumatic events in the modern society. They regard certain literary texts as *testimonies*, which serve the purpose of creating an “imaginative capability of perceiving history” in our own bodies, by giving us an insight and making it possible for us to identify and understand the core of a traumatic event (FELMAN, LAUB 1992: 108). When reading books or literary works which portray a traumatic event, we, the readers, are actually reading a testimony of the traumatized characters, trying to understand what it was that traumatized them, because, even though understanding eludes them, the distance that exists between the readers and the characters enables readers to testify, judge, and overcome. Literary works serve the purpose of helping people seek reality, to explore the injury inflicted by that same reality, to try to grasp it, understand it, and, hopefully, “[...] reemerge from the paralysis of this state, to engage reality as an advent, as a movement, as a vital, critical necessity of moving on” (FELMAN, LAUB

1992: 28). This paper provides testimonies of two women from two plays written during the Renaissance period in the Elizabethan England.

2. Trauma in the Context of the Renaissance Writing in the Elizabethan England

Most historians and writers agree that the place of origin of the notion of the Renaissance is Italy, in the late 1300s, a period of decline of the influence of Roman Catholic Church, and: “[...] the reawakening of interest in Greek and Latin texts by philosophers such as Aristotle, Cicero, and Seneca, historians including Plutarch and poets such as Ovid and Virgil” (DICKSON 2017). In her book *The Faustian Motif in the Tragedies by Christopher Marlowe* (2013), Milena Kostić points out that the main philosophy of the XV and the XVI century, with its birthplace in the minds of the Italian thinkers, relies mostly on its insistence on “looking backwards” (KOSTIĆ 2013: 9). The Renaissance writers and thinkers who follow the Latin humanist tradition cherish “rhetoric and good literary style”, whereas the ones who follow the Greek humanist tradition cherish “philosophy, theology, magic and science” (KOSTIĆ 2013: 9).

The influence of the Renaissance writing in England in the mid-1500s is tremendous (DICKSON 2017). This era of flowering of literature and art is known as the Elizabethan era, named after one of the greatest monarchs in Britain. Elizabeth I (1558–1603) is known as the most famous ruler from the Tudor dynasty, and not only is she lauded as a competent ruler, she is also known as an avid supporter of art in her country. Matthew Martin notices that there is a fascination that the writers of the period exhibit when it comes to translation, searching to root all aspects of its cultural revival in the classical past, especially in the trauma of Troy. He also mentions that the most important translation that the writers of the period are fascinated with is “*translatio imperii*: the translation of empire” (MARTIN 2012: 306).

There is another aspect to this return to the myth of Troy – the trauma of Troy. This trauma “provided early modern culture with one of its collective myths of origin” (MARTIN 2012: 306). This notion of the translation of empire does not only transmit and translate the power, but also the trauma, personal and historical (MARTIN 2012: 305). The experience of trauma is something essential to being human, as all of the history of humanity is written in blood (VAN DER KOLK, BESSEL et al. 2007: 3). However, the portrayal of trauma in art differs in different periods, as do the different ways that trauma is experienced. In the Elizabethan England, the notion of trauma is rather different than the one we know of today and is solely connected to the experiences of the nobility. The essence of portrayal of trauma can be found

in tragedies, the definition of which is taken from Aristotle, who sees it as an: “[...] imitation (*μίμησις*) of a serious, complete action, which has a certain magnitude and is in appropriate and pleasurable language”,² and that action is in a dramatic form, causing pity and fear in the audience, and, eventually, the purgation (*κάθαρσις*) of pity and fear aroused by the action (DUKAT, ARISTOTLE 1983: 18). The trauma of that period is usually portrayed in tragedies which tell the stories of the people of noble origin, who the audience of that time can understand and ultimately relate to, as the characters are neither good nor bad, but in-between. That is the crucial property that the best playwrights of the time endeavor to portray in their plays – the trauma of being human.

William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe focus on a more humane trauma in their plays. They place their characters in different situations, trying to see how they cope, and if they eventually emerge undamaged or traumatized, and how they display that trauma. Their plays are important because they are valid for the time that they write in. They write about trauma in their plays, allowing their characters to experience loss, thirst for knowledge that comes with a terrible price, betrayal from the ones they hold dear to their hearts, abandonment, trials, discrimination, hatred, manipulation. The greatness of both Shakespeare and Marlowe can be seen in the ways they masterfully intertwine words with experiences, so that the readers can still feel the pain and fear and uncertainty that the characters experience. This paper is focused on their less discussed, female characters, who are not one-dimensional, but complex, and there are multiple reasons for the words they utter and the decisions they make, but they still bear the, sometimes unfavorable, beliefs about women in Elizabethan England.

3. (Traumatized) Women in the Elizabethan England

A progress made during the Renaissance regarding the human mind and its altered states, is that, at last, human madness is separated from the supernatural one, which was regarded in the periods prior to the Renaissance as the consequence of demonic or divine possession (VAN DER KOLK, BESSEL et al. 2007: 50). The traditional medicine of the time claims that the cause of hysteria is “uterus pathology”, and is thus considered to be a women’s disease, whereas melancholy is mostly related to men (IBID.). This explanation is no longer regarded as scientifically legitimate in today’s context, for the advances of psychology, psychiatry, and neuropsychology prove that there is more to the causes of human madness than traditional

² This is the author’s translation.

medicine was able to explain. Despite physical aspects, a myriad of other aspects should be regarded. Madness, anxiety, hysteria can also be caused by traumatic events, such as wars, deaths, rapes, and even those events which can be easily overlooked – problems people encounter in their everyday lives but which they cannot control. However, female traumas are quite superficially explained in Elizabethan England.

The main reasons for that are related to the general beliefs about women during the period. The authority of the time on scientific facts is Aristotle, who differentiates between males and females in both “physical nature and emotional tendencies” (GRAF 2013: 6). According to him, women are more impulsive, more emotional, less energetic, and, not to be trusted as their speech is false and they have no shame (GRAF 2013: 6). As the Renaissance thinkers rely heavily on the authorities from the past, Aristotle being one of the most notable, it is no wonder that these stereotypes are widespread throughout the literature of the time.

The Renaissance period in England is marked by the rule of Queen Elizabeth I and her lack of beliefs about equality between women and men (GRAF 2013: 6). Most of the forms of public and private authority is in the hands of men (IBID). Her reluctance to change the state and position of women during her reign can be attributed to her awareness that her being the Queen, with no husband, is problematic enough for the patriarchal society of England back then. If she were to change the conditions and place more power in the hands of women, that would have caused an uproar and she wanted to secure her reign and peace within her own people (GRAF 2013: 6).

As is obvious that women of the period are of no particular importance, it is interesting to trace how they are portrayed in writing. Although there are mentions of the traumas that the women in literary works had to suffer, there is not a particular insistence on explaining what is the outcome of those traumas, or how they cope with it. They are mostly represented as mad, fickle, and constantly changing their disposition. In general, no particular endeavor to account for their madness can be found, as they are merely considered pawns in the hands of patriarchy. Many female characters lack the depth needed to understand their altered behavior due to traumatic experiences. However, Shakespeare and Marlowe do try to add dimension to their female characters. Upon a closer inspection of the text of their plays, in the absences of replies, carefully chosen words and silences, we can analyze and understand their traumatized female characters.

4. Traumatized Female Characters

4.1. Gertrude

William Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet* between 1599 and 1602. Set in Denmark, it follows the story of a young prince, Hamlet, who mourns the death of his father, and is at the same time appalled by his mother's, Queen Gertrude's, decision to remarry, and to none other but to her late husband's brother, and the new king, Claudius. The problem with analyzing Queen Gertrude is whether one should take Hamlet's stance on perceiving his mother as a woman who betrays the memory of his late father and marries his uncle, the new King, or perceive her as a thoroughly traumatized character, who has to find a way to survive in a male-dominated society, in which a woman has to either be subordinate, at least on the surface, or be shunned aside and abandoned? She is usually taken as a character who quickly remarries her husband's brother and murderer, which does no justice to her character (GRAF 2013: 3). Such interpretations usually neglect to mention that she lives in an extreme, patriarchal society where women are nothing when not having a certain role next to a man in their lives.

The problems in the life of Gertrude, Queen of Denmark, begin when her husband dies under mysterious conditions, and she has to get married to her husband's brother, Claudius. Her role has been thought to be passive, and the critics understood her short speeches as "the reflection of her male counterparts' thoughts and opinions" (TUBB 2017). The ambiguity in understanding Gertrude comes from the scarcity of lines that she utters, which makes it difficult to understand the true nature of her character (IBID.). However, upon a closer analysis, it is obvious that her speeches are direct, insightful, portraying her as an intelligent character who can perceive what is happening around her (IBID.). She makes rather shrewd observations in regard to the men around her, noticing that Polonius is a "pretentious, rambling old fool", and identifying the cause of her son's madness when she tells her new husband, Claudius, that their union upset her son, besides his father's death (IBID.). Her silence can be taken as a sign of trauma, rather than complacency. Despite her ability to perceive things as they are, the discrepancy in her behavior makes her quite complex to understand.

Placing her as a queen, Shakespeare gives Gertrude a place of power in a patriarchal society, albeit a dubious one (GRAF 2013: 14). Gertrude rarely speaks, and the occasions upon which she is attacked and described unfavorably do not give enough room for her to defend herself (GÜNENÇ 2015: 167). She seems to be "overwhelmed and upstaged by the more powerful men around her" (GRAF 2013: 14). There are rare scenes in which she gives orders, and silently shares the stage with Claudius, who openly exerts his power, so it

can be said that Gertrude is powerful only because she is married to the king (LEHMANN 2013: 75). However, even as a queen, she suffers through the same anxieties which trouble the women of her time, for she is constantly torn between her private and public sphere, between being a wife and a mother, a ruler and a woman (LEHMANN 2013: 4). All of her decisions bear a certain significance and also cause the people around her to judge her as they see fit. The fact that she refuses to explain or defend herself and her decisions, even though that meant that she would be alienated from the son she loved so much, suggests that she is brave and bold enough to “challenge social norms by rejecting them altogether” (HUSSEIN 2015: 92). However, that boldness does not come without a prize; the trauma she experiences due to the loss of her beloved husband, the remarriage which she has no particular say in, the estrangement from her son, and also the fact that her new husband murdered her previous one, prove that she is another traumatized female character who has to find coping mechanisms to survive in a ruthless society.

Even though some people are able to continue their life after being exposed to traumatic stressors, that does not mean that the traumatic events go unnoticed, or that they do not return to haunt them (VAN DER KOLK, BESSEL et al. 2007: 5). This can be used as a main argument in the claim that Gertrude is also a traumatized character. First of all, she lives in a time when women are supposed to get married quite young, and usually have no say in the matter. So, even though her past is not explicitly portrayed in the play, it is safe to assume that she could not avoid such fate, and had to get married to a man she probably barely knew and bear a child, probably at a young age, which is also quite traumatic for women. As she finally manages to lead a rather normal life as a wife, a mother, and a queen, her husband, and her protector as well, dies, and she has to remarry her brother-in-law. This remarriage, although condemned by Hamlet and many literary critics, has quite a rational explanation. She could have refused to remarry, which would have left her and her son without a roof above their heads. By remarrying, she secures her son’s inheritance and position, protects him from being murdered, which was not an unusual practice of new kings when there was a rightful heir to the throne who posed a threat. However, she refuses to talk about her decision, leading everyone to wrongly assume that she is “incestuous” and “adulterous”, although “the union between the deceased husband's brother and the wife were not considered incestuous and were often practiced, especially if that meant that the property would not be lost” (ŠOFRANAC 2011: 49). However, the real truth is that she is traumatized, oppressed by the male power surrounding her, and she keeps seeking ways to save herself, to not be devoured by the forces of the patriarchal society (GÜNENÇ 2015: 170). She is not perceived within the scope of her own utterances, but rather through the

words of the men in her life. Her trauma consists in being aware of everything that is happening around her, as she is an intelligent woman, but being unable to change that, as every single action she does causes betrayal, and so does every inaction (LEHMANN 2013: 33-34).

The magnitude of Gertrude's character is in the things that she is ready to do for her son. She sees through his feigned madness and realizes what bothers him. Despite her being constantly controlled and monitored, she risks her safety by inviting Hamlet into her private quarters, which she usually visits, and upon rare occasions, her husband. "The fact that Gertrude invites her son into this space would signal to Hamlet, not that their meeting would be private, but that their meeting could not be private" (GRAF 2013: 38). However, Hamlet blames her and accuses her, and tells her that her husband, Claudius, murdered her late husband, Hamlet's father. Upon this being revealed, she is visibly shaken and begs Hamlet to stop, for she is suffering, and feeling shame. She is traumatized by the realization that she is married to her late husband's murderer, by the accusations that Hamlet continues to enlist, and estrangement of her own son, whom she loves dearly. She stages a situation in which Hamlet can understand that he is being tricked, and he does not show that he is not really mad until he murders Polonius, the threat which was eavesdropping behind the curtain (GRAF 2013: 37). Gertrude's distress is visible, and she is broken. However, she still finds enough strength to, once again, oppose the patriarchal world by promising not to disclose the secret of Hamlet's sanity.

This act of disobedience towards her husband paves the way for a successful realization of revenge that Hamlet has in plan. This loyalty towards her son causes her death at the end of the play. Although she spent most of the play being passive and obedient, in Act 5, Scene 2, she "willfully disobeys Claudius by drinking the poisoned wine". Even though Claudius warns her not to drink the wine, she senses the intention behind that and refuses to follow the command, saying: "I will, my lord, I pray you pardon me" (SHAKESPEARE 1996: 5. 2. 273). Despite her spending her whole life obeying the patriarchal authorities, she defiantly goes towards her death, saving her son by warning him that the drink has been poisoned, because he was supposed to drink the mentioned wine, proclaims herself murdered by Claudius, which prompts Hamlet into action, and he finally completes his purpose by killing the King (TUBB 2017). Despite her being silenced throughout her life, Gertrude still uses her dying breath to defy the king, fulfill her role as a mother and become immortalized as a traumatized character (LEHMANN 2013: 33).

4.2. Dido

Christopher Marlowe's influence within the context of the Renaissance writing is enormous when it comes to his critique of "conventional patriarchal

ideology” (KOSTIĆ 2013: 74). Both he and Shakespeare base their model of writing on the style of Ovid, a quite popular writer from the ancient Rome in Elizabethan England. One of the reasons for his popularity is that he “[...] portrayed even the gods and goddesses as victims of unreasonable desires, and whose vision of the world was governed by sudden mutation and shifting nature of human passion” (IBID.). A notion which can be perceived in the writings of the Renaissance is the notion of *translatio imperii*, or the translation of empire, which is supposed to translate and transmit personal and historical trauma (MARTIN 2012: 305). The empire that the writers in the Renaissance are primarily interested in is the empire of Troy, as is expected, considering the fact that the whole era is known as the return to the ancient times. Virgil, an ancient Roman poet of the Augustan period, and his epic poem *Aeneid*, are also rather popular at the time. Some of the reasons for its popularity were the facts such as epic heroism, manly virtue, and the display of heroic ideals (KOSTIĆ 2013: 76).

Christopher Marlowe decides to subvert the heroic ideals and dismissal of women in his own version of this epic poem, and he also shifts the focus from *Aeneid* to Queen Dido, and thus names his play *Dido, Queen of Carthage* (KOSTIĆ 2013: 76). By doing so, he follows the tradition by another poet from Augustan Rome – Ovid. One of the most famous endeavors of Ovid is a literary project in which he writes “a series of imaginary letters from heroines who have suffered as a result of their relations with heroic men” (KOSTIĆ 2013: 77). Each of these letters is a female version in which masculine success and reputation come as a result of female loss and abandonment (IBID). One of those heroines is Dido, and Ovid paints a picture of her as an intelligent, energetic woman, who suffers and who is traumatized due to her being abandoned (KOSTIĆ 2013: 77). This is the version of Dido that Marlowe decides to present in his play. The message that the play is supposed to convey is the “incompatibility of love and duty”, and the extent of female sacrifice needed for a man’s success (BUCKLEY 2011: 129).

Marlowe makes Dido the main focus of his play, as the Queen of Carthage, a powerful, self-sufficient queen. One day, a few survivors of the Trojan war, including Aeneas, a son of Venus and a mortal father, arrive in Carthage, after six years spent at sea. She welcomes them, and helps them regain their strength. She listens to Aeneas retelling the traumatic Trojan war and the experiences he had. This subversion of the traditional roles and portrayal of her as strong and the one who comforts the emotional and weakened Aeneas makes Dido’s downfall even more tragic. Her downfall starts with a divine intervention, when Cupid’s arrow scratches her and makes her become conscious of the true meaning of the feelings she unknowingly had for Aeneas from their first encounter; however, she is afraid of anyone

noticing them (KOSTIĆ 2013: 89). This intervention transforms her from a strong, independent queen into a woman too shy to confess her feelings.

Her ultimate fear is the fear of rejection. She has spent her life rejecting suitors, building her city on her own, guarding it and ruling on her own, and suddenly, she feels dependent upon another person, a feeling not experienced before, and therefore quite traumatic. Dido's reluctance to admit her feelings to herself and to Aeneas show her inner turmoil, the fear that arises from her inability to know the outcome, which can be quite traumatic in itself. Dido's restraint is not merely a "concern for her royal dignity or woman's reputation", but rather the fear of "tremendous emotional risk that a surrender to love entails", which is her life (KOSTIĆ 2013: 89). There is a constant "oscillation between a crisis of death and the correlative crisis of life: between the story of the unbearable nature of an event and the story of the unbearable nature of its survival" (CARUTH 1996: 8). The event of surrendering to another person is traumatic for Dido, for she is ready to give her life in order to keep Aeneas by her side. Once she allows her feelings to govern her, there is nothing that she would not renounce to prevent Aeneas from pursuing Italy and founding a new kingdom there; she offers her kingdom, all the wealth that she owns, she even offers Carthage to Aeneas to make another Troy of it (KOSTIĆ 2013: 89-90).

Aeneas refuses to accept her offers, and becomes obsessed with building a new empire, also showing traces of the traumatic influence, as if he "has internalized the enemy, from whom he has suffered so much, in the manner of a victim that eventually identifies with the torturer" (KOSTIĆ 2013: 87). He internalizes the "patriarchal, imperialist ethos" which holds no place for women (IBID). Dido, afraid of losing him, suggests coming with him, willing to abandon her kingdom, but he refuses that as well, and stealthily sails to Italy (IBID). His patriarchal, selfish, goal-centered style cannot be reconciled with her matriarchal style which is accepting, and integrating, and able to bring together fame and love (KOSTIĆ 2013: 78). In her attempt to keep Aeneas by her side, she abandons her quest for self-determination, and loses her sense of identity (BUCKLEY 2011: 139). Traumatized people relieve their trauma, being unable to fixate on anything else, but being in a loop of negative emotions which do not lessen. Her life becomes fixated on trying to find a way to prevent Aeneas from leaving Carthage and leaving her. This fixation becomes traumatic for her because it disables her from leading a normal life. In lieu with the standards of writing in the Renaissance, Marlowe portrays her as a pawn in the hands of gods and men, not because he regards her as being unable to lead her life on her own, but in order to add to the overall traumatic experience that Dido is going through. He portrays the downfall of a mighty, intelligent queen, used as a tool in order to send one man on a quest to

pursue his destiny rest upon him by the gods. Dido is powerful enough to offer anything Aeneas wants, but, matriarchal figures usually suffer at the hands of the patriarchal ones. She is left alone and broken.

The way she copes with her abandonment is one of the most telling signs of people who live through trauma. In order to remove all the traces of Aeneas, she burns all of his belongings (KOSTIĆ 2013: 90-91). The trauma that his departure has caused obliterates the boundaries between the acceptable and unacceptable behavior of a queen. She acts as a mad woman, identifying love with life. I argue that her falling in love is also quite traumatic for her, as she led a self-sufficient life, relying on her own devices, her intelligence, and her ability to think in a rather progressive way, something not allowed for women at the time. All of that contributes to her mental downfall, and with words "Live, false Aeneas! Truest Dido dies!" (MARLOWE 2019), she jumps into the fire, and dies.

5. Comparison

These female characters that Shakespeare and Marlowe created can be compared in the field of their traumas, despite their initial differences. First of all, the positions they occupy in the society they live are important. Gertrude, despite her being a queen, has only a titular position. She still has no say in decisions that are made and is merely following her husband's orders. However, that is a way for her to survive. If women in that era were without a husband, they could easily fall victim to poverty, abuse, rape. Gertrude remarries to avoid that possibility, and the fear that she is living in, the powerlessness she feels add to her traumatic life. Dido, on the other hand, is a self-sufficient queen, living in a matriarchal world, who does not need to marry and has no plans to do so until a divine intervention happened which makes her fall in love with Aeneas and makes her susceptible to male influence.

There is a difference in the treatment that these characters go through in their relationship with men. Gertrude is placed in situations which women had to face in Elizabethan age which show how cruel and merciless men can be (GÜNENÇ 2015: 171). As women are considered weak, they have to be dependent on men (IBID.) Gertrude's trauma is caused by men, and her death is an escape from the ruthless place in which there is no room for her individuality. She is a pawn in the hands of the patriarchy, and as soon as she serves her purpose, she is forgotten. Dido, on the other hand, spends her entire life relying on her own intelligence to help her make decisions. She has no one to follow, for she is the queen in her kingdom where matriarchy still has a predominant role and is much more respected than patriarchy. However,

Marlowe introduces the negative influences of patriarchy of his age in this play, and forces Dido to face the destructive power of patriarchal heroic needs, which destroy her independence, and in the end, her life.

Other similarities are in the ways they ultimately find the way out of their traumas. Gertrude is murdered because she defiantly drinks the poisoned wine that her son is supposed to drink and Dido leaps into fire and kills herself. Even though Dido willingly, for lack of a better word, commits suicide, and Gertrude is killed, the events that lead to their deaths are guided by men in their lives. Gertrude's traumatized life marked with obeying the patriarchal authorities finally makes her reach her breaking point. She refuses to listen to her husband's order, sensing that there is something foul in his plan, and she drinks the poisoned wine, exclaiming that she has been killed, and dying. Dido is abandoned when Aeneas sails for Italy, without telling her, and the fear that she had to live through up to the point of his departure, the pain of losing him, the trauma of remembering all the things they had done together brings her to madness, because she cannot live with the knowledge that her true feelings did not matter to someone who she was willing to give everything to.

6. Conclusion

The fact that Marlowe and Shakespeare deem it necessary to give personality to their female characters, complexity as well, in a way to make it possible for the readers to hear their stories is rather peculiar for the time that they write in, but is precisely one of the reasons they are regarded as masters of their craft even today.

These two female characters that they created need to be understood. They deserve being analyzed, and being placed within proper contexts. Their only escape is found in eternal rest, but their traumas and the testimonies of their lives still deserve recognition and understanding. They should not be dismissed, as Shakespeare and Marlowe certainly did not create them for the purpose of merely completing the plots of the plays – they created them to explain, to warn, and hopefully, to educate. Trauma studies do help us view these characters in a different way. They help us explain their behavior and pinpoint the exact reasons which led to what happened to them. Instead of looking at the characters on one level only, superficially, they help us create a model of them, and analyze them in a way Sigmund Freud probably would if he ever had the chance of psychoanalyzing them. The writers portray them as traumatized due to their abandonment, betrayal, fear, loss, and they help us understand them. They tell us their stories.

Works Cited

- BUCKLEY 2011: BUCKLEY, Emma. "‘Live false Aeneas!’ Marlowe’s Dido, Queen of Carthage and the limits of translation." *Classical Receptions Journal*, vol. 3, issue 2 (2011): p. 129-147.
- CARUTH 1996: CARUTH, Cathy. *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996.
- DICKSON 2017: DICKSON, Andrew. "Key features of Renaissance culture." *The British Library*, (2017) <<https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/key-features-of-renaissance-culture>> 15. 09. 2019
- DUKAT, ARISTOTLE 1983: ARISTOTLE. *Poetics. Translation and explanation* by Zdeslav Dukat. Zagreb: August Cesarec: 1983. [orig.] ARISTOTEL. *O pjesničkom umijeću*. Prevod i objašnjenja Zdeslav Dukat, August Cesarec Zagreb, 1983.
- FELMAN, LAUB 1992: FELMAN, Shoshana, and Dori LAUB. *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*. New York and London: Routledge, 1992.
- GOODSON 2010: GOODSON, Ellen T. "'And I of Ladies Most Deject and Wretched:' Diagnosing Shakespeare's Ophelia with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder." *Inquiries Journal/Student Pulse* 2.07 (2010). <<http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/a?id=274>>
- GRAF 2013: GRAF, Emily. *Gertrude's Role in Hamlet*. 2013. Honors College, Eastern Michigan University, Senior Honors Theses.
- GÜNENÇ 2015: GÜNENÇ, Mesut. "Ophelia and Gertrude: Victimized Women in Hamlet." *The Journal of International Social Research*, vol. 8, issue 41 (2015): p. 164-172.
- HUSSEIN 2015: HUSSEIN, Ahmed. "The Condemned and Condoned Mona Lisa: The Unique Characterization of Shakespeare's Gertrude". *Linguistics and Literature Studies*. 3. (2015) p. 91-99.
- KOSTIĆ 2013: KOSTIĆ, Milena. *The Faustian Motif in the Tragedies by Christopher Marlowe*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing: 2013.
- LEHMANN 2013: LEHMANN, Erin Elizabeth. *Pois'ned Ale: Gertrude's Power Position in Hamlet*. 2013. Boise State University Theses and Dissertations.
- MARLOWE 2019: MARLOWE, C. *Dido, Queen of Carthage*. <https://emed.folger.edu/sites/default/files/folger_encodings/pdf/EMED-Dido-reg-3.pdf > 10. 09. 2019.
- MARTIN 2012: MARTIN, Mathew R. "Translatio and Trauma: Oedipus, Hamlet, and Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage." *Lit: Literature Interpretation Theory*, vol. 23, issue 4, (2012): p. 305-325.
- SHAKESPEARE 1996: SHAKESPEARE, William. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. Oxford: The Shakespeare Head Press, Wordsworth Editions, 1996.

- TUBB 2017: Tubb, Tamara. "Character analysis: Gertrude in Hamlet." *The British Library*. (2017) <<https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/character-analysis-gertrude-in-hamlet>> 15. 09. 2019.
- VAN DER KOLK, BESSEL et al. 2007: VAN DER KOLK, Bessel A, and MCFARLANE Alexander C., and WEISAETH, Lars, editors. *Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experience on Mind, Body, and Society*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2007.
- ZAIKOWSKI 2010: ZAIKOWSKI, Carolyn. "Reading Traumatized Bodies of Text: Kathy Acker's Blood and Guts in High School and Sarah Saterstrom's The Pink Institution." *Nebula*, 7.1/7.2 (2010): p. 199-219.
- ŠOFRANAC 2011: ŠOFRANAC, Nataša. "Traumatizing Memories and Memorizing Trauma: Hamlet and the Macbeth." *Linguistics and Literature*, vol. 9 issue 1, (2011): p. 47-52.

Sources

Freud, Sigmund. *Collected Works*. The United States: Pacific Publishing Studio, 2010.

Natalija S. Stevanović

GERTRUDA I DIDONA – TRAUMATIZOVANI ŽENSKI LIKOVI U DRAMAMA ŠEKSPIRA I MARLOA

Cilj ovog rada je da se u kontekstu studija traume analiziraju dva ženska lika iz drama Šekspira i Marloa. Kraljica Gertruda iz drame *Hamlet* (1609) Vilijama Šekspira i kraljica Didona iz drame *Didona, kraljica Kartagine* (1594) Kristofera Marloa, se mogu uzeti kao dva primera kako su žene predstavljane u kontekstu renesansne književnosti u elizabetanskoj Engleskoj. Traume koje one dele i iskustva kroz koja su obe prošle pomažu da se shvate traume i uslovi u kojima su žene živele u elizabetanskoj Engleskoj. Teorijski okvir studija traume se oslanja na istraživanja Keti Kerut (1996), Šošane Felmen, Dori Laub (1992), kao i drugih, i pruža pozadinu na osnovu koje se ova dva ženska lika mogu analizirati. Svrha ovog rada je da pokuša da pruži uvid u umove ova dva, traumatizovana, ženska lika.

Ključne reči: Didona, elizabetanska Engleska, Gertruda, Marlo, studije traume, Šekspir, ženski likovi