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PROF. RANKO BUGARSKI, PH. D.: A MEMORIAL TRIBUTE

It is with great sadness that I write this text to commemorate the passing of professor Ranko Bugarski, one of the two honorary members of the Serbian Association for the Study of English (SASE) and one of the pre-eminent scholars in the Serbian Anglicist, philological and academic community in general. Professor Bugarski left us on August 13th 2024, but will remain in the memory and writings of his colleagues, students, and fellow academics for evermore.

Ranko Bugarski was really an exceptional linguist, researcher, lecturer, author and thinker by all standards, well-respected and well-liked whenever and wherever he had a chance to interact or confer with others. A refined, composed erudite personality that was dedicated to spreading not only knowledge and understanding of language phenomena, but also tolerance among speakers and speech communities, he never tired of his enlightening mission till the end of his days.

Professor Bugarski was born in 1933 in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and graduated in 1957 at the Faculty of Philosophy of Sarajevo University. The Ph. D. title was conferred on him at the University of Belgrade in 1969, and he remained a professor at the Faculty of Philology at the same university till his retirement in 2000. But before that moment and for many years to follow, professor Bugarski made a long and highly fruitful career rendering him perhaps the best-known linguist of the region and one of the most prolific authors in the domain of his research which encompassed general, applied and contrastive linguistics, sociolinguistics, translation studies and terminology. He published a substantial body of work in the form of scientific papers and 26 books, among which *Jezik i lingvistika* [Language and Linguistics] (1972), *Jezik u društvu* [Language in Society] (1986), *Uvod u opštu lingvistiku* [Introduction to general linguistics] (1989), *Jezici* [Languages] (1993), *Jezik i identitet* [Language and identity] (2010), *Srpske slivenice: monografija sa rečnikom* [Serbian lexical blends: A monograph and dictionary] (2019), to name but a few.

Some other most notable lifetime achievements of professor Bugarski as a lecturer include his status of a Fulbright scholar at the University of Chicago, a visiting professor at Northeastern Illinois State College, Chicago and a guest lecturer at 24 other universities in Europe, the US and Australia. Furthermore, due to the

excellence of his authorship and during his tenure, Professor Bugarski was invited as a plenary or keynote speaker at numerous domestic and international conferences and designated a member of the academic board of international conferences at the University of London and universities in the US. His invaluable engagement as a translator or editor of seminal books resulted in his introducing the most influential linguists and their work to the professional and wider public in the Western Balkans, as well as presenting the important features of the dominant and groundbreaking theories within generative and cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics.

In my celebratory message to professor Bugarski on the occasion of his 90th birthday last January, I expressed my hope that he would continue to be of enormous support to the advancement of our English academic community and keep on providing the pointers toward the roads worth taking. In an answer, he kindly considered the words acknowledging the significant value of his scientific and pedagogical work, but primarily the enormous thankfulness by the generations of his students and mentees, as the best birthday present of all.

Ranko Bugarski's pioneering role in establishing the foundation, enriching the repository and extending the boundaries of linguistic studies in the region was also manifest in his position of a co-founder and first president of the Yugoslav Association of Applied Linguistics. His rank of an academician of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts in Salzburg, Austria and a corresponding member of the Council of Europe Expert on Regional or Minority Languages in Strasbourg, France, could be counted among some other superlative attainments. Finally, professor Bugarski was Honorary President of the Serbian branch of The English-Speaking Union, a position of which he was particularly proud.

So far, professor Bugarski has been honoured with three festschrifts in Belgrade and Novi Sad, and one published by John Benjamins Publishing, as well as with honorary presidency and memberships in four major associations in the country and abroad.

Those who were more closely acquainted with his qualities of a splendid conversationalist would readily confirm that professor Bugarski almost never failed to take advantage of an opportunity to amuse the auditorium with his first-rate witticisms, anecdotes and clever quips which he liked to share but also to hear from others. That's how and that's when, following any serious professional discussion, some of the ideas for future research would be born on the part of his younger colleagues and perhaps even his own.

His insightful mind, his quiet, modest character pillared by dignified grace and outlined by academic rigour, his belief in the power of sound argument, his uncanny ability to bring closer to the readers and students alike any intricate matters in language and linguistics with considerable ease and clarity will be sadly missed by all individuals who had the privilege of knowing professor Bugarski.

I sincerely believe that most of us can only feel humbled and grateful in front of the legacy professor Bugarski has built, a legacy as permanent as it is huge, and

which will be to the benefit not only to the academic community within the scope of his superb intellectual activity, but also to the entire nation, its educational tradition and cultural heritage as a whole.

In Niš, September 25th 2024

Vladimir Ž. Jovanović

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REPRESENTATIONS OF RAPE IN SHAKESPEARE'S SELECTED WORKS: A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This paper seeks to explore feminist reinterpretations of representations of sexual violence in Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Titus Andronicus*. Drawing upon Judith Butler's theory of performativity and incorporating feminist theories on rape culture, this study delves into the nuanced portrayal of gendered violence and its aftermath in these works. By examining the literary depiction of rape in Shakespeare's oeuvre, this analysis aims to uncover the layers of endurance manifested by the characters, the solidarity that emerges in the face of trauma, and the empathy evoked in the audience or readership. It argues that Shakespeare's treatment of sexual violence, often framed within the socio-political contexts of his time, resonates with contemporary feminist concerns, offering insights into the mechanisms of survivorship, communal support, and empathetic engagement. Through a comparative lens that highlights the link between British culture and other cultural perspectives, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how Shakespeare's portrayal of sexual violence and its emotional landscapes engages with and challenges modern feminist discourse.

Keywords: feminism, gender dynamics, rape culture, solidarity, violence

1. Introduction

Shakespeare's vast and variegated corpus has perennially served as a mirror reflecting the multifaceted nature of human experience. Among these reflections are depictions of sexual violence, a subject of increasing scrutiny within contemporary feminist discourse. This article positions itself at the confluence of Shakespearean literature and feminist theory, seeking to elucidate how Bard's portrayals of rape in *The Rape of* Lucrece and *Titus*

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Andronicus resonate with and contribute to ongoing discussions about gender dynamics, power, and the human capacity for resilience in the aftermath of trauma.

The relevance of this exploration extends beyond academic interest; it taps into the heart of current societal dialogues surrounding rape culture, victim advocacy, and the collective push towards understanding and fostering empathy. Through a feminist lens, particularly informed by Judith Butler's (1999) theory of performativity, this paper aims to untangle the complex interplay between Shakespeare's literary representations of sexual violence and how these narratives intersect with, reflect, and potentially challenge contemporary notions of gendered violence and solidarity.

In approaching Shakespeare's texts, this paper does not seek to impose modern sensibilities retroactively onto Elizabethan drama but rather to engage in a dialogue between periods, acknowledging the enduring power of these works to speak to fundamental human concerns across centuries. This endeavour is crucial for its contribution to literary and cultural studies and its potential to enrich feminist theoretical approaches to understanding trauma. Through examining selected works, this study highlights how Shakespeare's nuanced portrayal of characters and their experiences can offer insights into the enduring struggle against gendered violence.

This introductory exploration sets the stage for a detailed examination of feminist theoretical frameworks, the intricacies of Shakespeare's portrayals of rape, and the broader cultural and contemporary relevance of these discussions. Through this multifocal lens, the article seeks to contribute a rich, nuanced addition to the scholarly conversation, asserting the invaluable role of Shakespeare's work in fostering a deeper, more empathetic understanding of sexual violence and gender dynamics both within and beyond the realm of literature.

2. Theoretical framework

The theoretical foundations of this study rest on a confluence of feminist theories that challenge and deconstruct traditional narratives around gender and sexual violence. Central to our exploration is Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, which posits that gender is not an innate attribute but rather constructed through repeated social practices. Butler's seminal work, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990), revolutionises our understanding of gender as an ongoing, performative act that constitutes identity through these repetitive practices (Butler, 1999: XIV-XVI). This framework is pivotal in analysing Shakespeare's characters, not as fixed entities but as figures through whom the fluidity and constructedness of gender are made manifest. This examination extends beyond mere academic curiosity, tapping into the heart of societal dialogues surrounding rape culture, victim advocacy, and the collective push towards understanding and fostering empathy. By adopting Butler's theory of gender performativity, this analysis seeks to explore the complex interplay between Shakespeare's depictions of sexual violence and how these narratives intersect with, reflect, and potentially challenge contemporary notions of gendered violence and solidarity:

> I grew up understanding something of the violence of gender norms: an uncle incarcerated for his anatomically anomalous body, deprived of family and friends, living out his days in an "institute" in the Kansas prairies; gay cousins forced to leave their homes because of their sexuality, real and imagined; my own tempestuous coming out at the age of 16; and a subsequent adult landscape of lost jobs, lovers, and homes. […] It was difficult to bring this violence into view precisely because gender was so taken for granted at the same time that it was violently policed. It was assumed either to be a natural manifestation of sex or a cultural constant that no human agency could hope to revise. I also came to understand something of the violence of the foreclosed life, the one that does not get named as "living," the one whose incarceration implies a suspension of life, or a sustained death sentence. The dogged effort to "denaturalize" gender in this text emerges, I think, from a strong desire both to counter the normative violence implied by ideal morphologies of sex and to uproot the pervasive assumptions about natural or presumptive heterosexuality that are informed by ordinary and academic discourses on sexuality. (Butler, 1999: XIX-XX)

Expanding beyond Butler, this paper also draws upon Laura Mulvey's theory of *the male gaze* and its relevance to the objectification and victimisation of women in literature and media. Mulvey's insights into visual pleasure and narrative cinema provide a critical lens through which the representation of women's bodies and experiences of violence in Shakespeare's texts can be examined for their implicit perpetuation of patriarchal views (Mulvey, 1975: 1-18; Mulvey, 1989: 29-38).

Moreover, the concept of *rape culture* is meticulously explored through the work of scholars like Susan Brownmiller, Sabine Sielke, Jan Jordan, Lynn Higgins and Brenda Silver. Brownmiller's *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (1975) introduces the notion that rape is a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear. It also posits rape as a deliberate mechanism of intimidation, ensuring the perpetuation of male dominance over women:

> From prehistoric times to the present, I believe, rape has played a critical function. It is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear. (Brownmiller, 1975: 15)

This idea is instrumental in understanding the power dynamics at play in Shakespeare's narratives of sexual violence.

Sielke's exploration into the rhetoric of sexual violence in American literature underscores the complex ways in which rape narratives serve as both reflections and constructors of cultural attitudes towards gender and violence:

> Such practice could be applied to any text; it evolves systemic violence yet tends to ignore the particular cultural functions and the historically specific meanings texts assign to sexuality and sexual violence. Reading rape figuratively, as a rhetoric, I follow the symbolic traces of violation instead, exploring its business within the structure of particular literary texts and larger cultural narratives as well as within the construction of individual and communal identities. Such correspondences between aesthetics and politics can be probed because literary texts and the formation of cultural identities involve similar processes of refiguration. Like metaphors, identities are structured against difference (of race, class, gender, ethnicity, and age, for instance). (Sielke, 2002: 5)

By examining the evolution of rape narratives, she reveals how these stories often reinforce gendered power dynamics while also offering spaces for resistance and critique. Her analysis invites a reconsideration of Shakespeare's narratives, such as the tragic aftermath of Lucrece's rape in *The Rape of Lucrece*, as more than historical artefacts; they are part of an ongoing cultural conversation about the intersection of violence, gender, and power. Sielke's work suggests that Shakespeare's depiction of rape can be understood not only within the context of Elizabethan attitudes but also within a broader historical continuum of sexual violence narratives that negotiate and challenge societal norms.

Jan Jordan's *Tackling Rape Culture* (2023) brings to the fore the systemic nature of rape culture and its perpetuation through societal institutions, media, and popular culture. Jordan's emphasis on the need to challenge and dismantle the patriarchal structures that sustain rape culture resonates with a critical reading of Shakespeare's texts. While the twin mechanisms of objectification and silencing have emerged in this book as critical contributors to the maintenance of rape culture, the discussion broadens here to consider how global gender inequalities reflect and maintain patriarchal thinking. Patriarchy harms not only women but also men, and its overthrow is essential if rape culture is to be dismantled and a planet characterised by mutually respectful relationships established. This book primarily argues for patriarchy to be excavated from the archaeological rubble of previously dismissed or backlash theories. Rape culture must be understood as a consequence of the social divisiveness that emerges from the logic of patriarchy (Jordan, 2023: 23).

Her work encourages scrutiny of how Shakespeare's plays − often considered pillars of Western literature − either contest or contribute to the normalisation of sexual violence. Through Jordan's lens (2023: 83), the dynamics of power and victimisation in plays like *Titus Andronicus*, where Lavinia's body becomes a site of contestation and control, can be critically analysed as reflections of enduring patriarchal ideologies that sanction violence against women:

> Despite the severe punishments imposed on women who failed to keep silent, there were some who resisted and railed against such requirements. One prototype emerged first in Greek mythology in the story of Philomela's rape by her brother-in-law, Tereus, described in Ovid's Metamorphoses. He ordered her to remain silent and, when angered by her defiance, cut out her tongue to guarantee it would be kept (Beard, 2015). Philomela, however, found another way to speak – she wove the story of his rape of her into a tapestry. Mary Beard suggests this was why, when Shakespeare included a variant of this story in one of his plays, Lavinia had not only her tongue removed but also her hands (Beard, 2015).

The volume *Rape and Representation* (1991), edited by Lynn Higgins and Brenda Silver, delves into the literary and cultural representations of rape, focusing on how such representations inform and are informed by the societal understanding of rape. The contributors focus on highlighting the problematic aspects of voyeurism and victim-blaming in narratives of sexual violence. These aspects can be critically applied to Shakespeare's portrayal of characters like Lucrece and Lavinia:

> Over and over in the texts explored here, rape exists as an absence or gap that is both product and source of textual anxiety, contradiction, or censorship. The simultaneous presence and disappearance of rape as constantly deferred origin of both plot and social relations is repeated so often as to suggest a basic conceptual principle in the articulation of both social and artistic representations. Even when the rape does not disappear, the naturalization of patriarchal thinking, institutions, and plots has profound effects: just as victims of rape often end up blaming themselves, the texts explored below present women telling stories that echo or ventriloquize definitions of rape that obliterate what might have been radically different perceptions. The prevalence of masculine perspectives in stories told by women leads Coppélia Kahn, in her essay, to ask "who or what speaks in the character we call Lucrece?" and us to ask where, or how, critics can hear and validate another subjectivity and voice. (Higgins & Silver, 1991: 3)

This volume may be used in dialogue with Shakespeare's narratives, prompting a re-evaluation of the audience's complicity in consuming stories of violence and the ethical implications of representing rape on stage or page.

The intersectionality framework, as proposed by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), further enriches this study by highlighting the multiple axes of identity that intersect to shape experiences of oppression and violence. This perspective is crucial in acknowledging Shakespeare's characters' varied and layered experiences and the audiences and readers who engage with these narratives.

By weaving together these feminist theories, the paper aims to construct a robust theoretical framework that not only challenges traditional interpretations of gender and violence in Shakespeare's works, but also illuminates how these narratives intersect with and contribute to contemporary discussions on rape culture, victim advocacy, and the broader feminist movement. This multidimensional approach underscores the importance of literary representations in mirroring and contesting the prevailing ideologies of their time, offering a critical lens through which the enduring power of Shakespeare's texts can be interrogated and re-envisioned. The theoretical framework is the backbone of this exploration, providing the tools and perspectives necessary to dissect and interpret Shakespeare's complex portrayals of gender, power, and violence. It lays the groundwork for examining how these literary representations resonate with, challenge, and expand contemporary feminist discourse on sexual violence and the dynamics of gendered power relations.

The book *Zeus Syndrome: A Very Short History of Religion-Based Masculine Domination* by Joachim Kügler (2022) provides a critical assessment of biblical concepts of gender hierarchy and the intersection of sex/gender power and religion. Starting with the #MeToo movement and the abuse of religious power in the Catholic Church, it presents a concise selection of historical case studies to demonstrate how a specific construction of the relationship between sex/gender power and religion not only excludes women and every person conceived as feminine or effeminate from power but also produces a rape culture. This culture, in turn, uses and excuses violent sexuality as an appropriate manifestation of masculine power:

> What is much more relevant is the message sent out by reserving ordination to men only. It says to all the Christians and to the rest of the world that men have the right and the

> power to exclude women from central areas of dignity and power and that this exclusion is executing God's will. This fatal message declares gender justice as not only necessary but even ungodly. Therefore, one can say that church has to change not only to solve inner problems. It is for the sake of human development that Christianity must come back to the role of an advocate of gender equality and gender fairness – a role played by early Christians as the gender avant-garde of their time. (Kügler, 2022: 44)

Kügler's analysis is particularly relevant for contemporary feminist reinterpretations of Shakespeare's works. By highlighting the historically entrenched linkage between gender power dynamics and religious narratives, this context provides a deeper understanding of how representations of gender and power in Shakespeare can be re-evaluated through a feminist lens. Kügler's discussion on the role of ancient myths and their influence on societal structures and cultural memory offers a foundation for examining the persistence of these themes in literature, including Shakespeare's portrayal of characters and narratives (Kügler, 2022: 54, 75).

This framework underscores the importance of examining Shakespeare's works not merely as literary artefacts but as texts that reflect and contribute to their time's cultural and societal norms, which continue to influence present-day perceptions of gender and power. Kügler's work encourages a critical engagement with Shakespearean texts, advocating for readings that recognise and challenge the remnants of historical gender power dynamics that still pervade contemporary society. By integrating Kügler's insights on the intersectionality of gender, power, and religion, contemporary feminist reinterpretations can illuminate new perspectives on Shakespeare's works, particularly concerning gendered violence and societal responses, thereby contributing to the broader cultural shift toward recognising and addressing the complexities of rape culture and gender dynamics.

3. Representations of rape in Shakespeare's works

Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Titus Andronicus* stand as stark representations of sexual violence, each exploring the ramifications of such acts on the individual psyche and the broader societal fabric. In *The Rape of Lucrece*, Shakespeare delves into the devastating impact of rape on Lucrece's sense of self and honour, framing her subsequent suicide as a tragic assertion of agency in a world that leaves her with few alternatives. This narrative strategy opens a window into Elizabethan attitudes towards female virtue and honour while also presenting an opportunity to explore themes of endurance through the lens of feminist theories on bodily autonomy, the social construction of gender roles, and the mechanisms of patriarchal control.

Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Titus Andronicus* vividly capture the brutal realities and profound psychological impacts of rape. In *The Rape of Lucrece*, the poet examines the intersection of personal trauma and societal honour. The narrative depicts Lucrece's internal struggle and ultimate decision to take her own

life as a means of reclaiming her agency in a world that has violently stripped it from her. This act of suicide, while tragic, can be interpreted as a form of resistance against the patriarchal structures that define her worth solely in terms of her chastity. Lucrece's story highlights the oppressive weight of societal expectations placed on women and the devastating consequences when these expectations are violated. The poem, through its detailed portrayal of Lucrece's plight, forces readers to confront the harsh realities of gender-based violence and its lasting impact on the victim's psyche and social standing.

In *Titus Andronicus*, Shakespeare presents a more graphic and visceral depiction of rape through the character of Lavinia. Her brutal assault and subsequent mutilation serve as a powerful commentary on the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and vengeance. Lavinia's enforced silence −having her tongue cut out − symbolises the broader societal tendency to silence and marginalise survivors of sexual violence. The physical mutilation she endures further underscores the brutal control exerted over women's bodies and voices in a patriarchal society. Lavinia's character becomes a poignant symbol of the enduring pain and trauma inflicted by rape, as well as the resilience and strength required to navigate life in its aftermath. Shakespeare's portrayal of Lavinia's suffering compels the audience to engage with the emotional and psychological scars left by such violence, encouraging a more profound empathy and understanding of the victim's experience. These narratives, when examined through a modern feminist lens, reveal the enduring relevance of Shakespeare's work in highlighting the pervasive issues of gendered violence and the ongoing struggle for justice and equality:

> A female definition of rape can be contained in a single sentence. If a woman chooses not to have intercourse with a specific man and the man chooses to proceed against her will, that is a criminal act of rape. Through no fault of woman, this is not and never has been the legal definition. […] Rape could not be envisioned as a matter of female consent or refusal; nor could a definition acceptable to males be based on a male-female understanding of a female's right to her bodily integrity. Rape entered the law through the back door, as it were, as a property crime of man against man. Woman, of course, was viewed as the property. […] Slavery, private property and the subjugation of women were facts of life, and the earliest written law that has come down to us reflects this stratified life. […] The capture of females by force remained perfectly acceptable outside the tribe or city as one of the ready fruits of warfare, but clearly within the social order such a happenstance would lead to chaos. […] Criminal rape, as a patriarchal father saw it, was a violation of the new way of doing business. It was, in a phrase, the theft of virginity, an embezzlement of his daughter's fair price on the market. (Brownmiller, 1975: 18)

In contrast, *Titus Andronicus* portrays the violent rape of Lavinia as a weapon of war, employed to exert power and enact revenge. Lavinia's mutilation − her hands cut off and her tongue cut out − symbolically strips her of the means to communicate her trauma, reflecting societal tendencies to silence and invalidate the experiences of sexual violence survivors. Through Lavinia's story, Shakespeare interrogates the intersections of gender, violence, and power and challenges the audience to confront the physical and psychological toll of rape (Jordan, 2023: 90, 146).

Both narratives, while deeply rooted in their historical contexts, resonate with modern feminist critiques of rape culture as delineated by scholars like Susan Brownmiller and Sabine Sielke, Jan Jordan, and Brenda Silver. Brownmiller's notion that rape functions as a pervasive threat used to uphold patriarchal structures finds echoes in the use of rape as a tool of domination and humiliation in *Titus Andronicus*. Integrating the insights from Sielke, Jordan, and Silver illuminates the multifaceted ways in which Shakespeare's works intersect with contemporary conversations about sexual violence, rape culture, and feminist resistance. Their analyses suggest that Shakespeare's plays, far from being static relics of the past, participate in a dynamic cultural discourse that continues to evolve. The portrayal of sexual violence in Shakespeare's works, when examined through the prism of these feminist theories, reveals a complex interplay of power, gender, and resistance that remains profoundly relevant in the contemporary struggle against rape culture.

A feminist reinterpretation of these works, informed by Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, further illuminates the performative aspects of gender that underlie the characters' actions and societal roles. In *The Rape of Lucrece*, Lucrece's gender identity is both constituted and constrained by societal expectations of female virtue and purity, illustrating how gender roles are perpetuated through repetitive social practices. Similarly, Lavinia's enforced silence speaks to the performative denial of agency and voice to women, particularly in the aftermath of sexual violence, highlighting the ongoing struggle for survivors to be heard and believed.

These Shakespearean portrayals of rape, when viewed through a modern feminist lens, serve not only as historical artefacts but also as entry points into discussions about power, gender, and the enduring impact of sexual violence. They underscore the necessity of endurance, solidarity, and empathy in navigating the aftermath of trauma and the importance of feminist scholarship in uncovering and challenging the profoundly ingrained power dynamics that facilitate and perpetuate rape culture (Sielke, 2002: 73-74).

By dissecting Shakespeare's narrative strategies for depicting trauma and resilience, this section endeavours to bridge the gap between Elizabethan and contemporary discourses on sexual violence. It highlights the potential of literary analysis to contribute to a broader understanding of the mechanisms of power and domination and the vital role of feminist theory in advocating for a more just and empathetic society:

> It is no feminist catchword but merely accurate to term that world patriarchal, because it was patrilinear and primogenitural in the means by which it deployed power and maintained degree as the basis of the social order. There as in the Rome of the poem, it is men who rape women and patriarchal constructions of gender and power that enable rape. […] Yet the poem fascinates and moves me precisely because Shakespeare, I believe, tries to fashion Lucrece as a subject not totally tuned to the key of Roman chastity and patriarchal marriage and to locate a position in which he as poet might stand apart from those values as well. He fails, but his attempt reveals how narrowly the rhetorical traditions within which he works are bounded by an ideology of gender in which women speak with the voices of men. Despite the "tongue" with

> which Shakespeare provides her and the understanding with which he represents her, ultimately he inscribes her within the same constructs of power and difference as Tarquin. (Kahn, 1991: 143)

The integration of these feminist perspectives underscores the relevance of Shakespeare's works in contemporary discussions on sexual violence, offering nuanced insights into the mechanisms of survivorship, communal support, and empathetic engagement. Through a comparative analysis that also draws upon the work of Lynn Higgins and Brenda Silver, the portrayal of sexual violence in Shakespeare's oeuvre is positioned as a critical site for examining the intersection of literary representation and societal attitudes towards rape and gendered violence (Higgins & Silver, 1991: 117).

4. Contemporary feminist reinterpretations

In recent decades, feminist scholarship has cast new light on Shakespeare's portrayal of gender, power, and sexual violence, challenging traditional interpretations and offering nuanced critiques that resonate with contemporary discourses on rape culture and gender dynamics. This section examines how feminist reinterpretations of *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Titus* Andronicus contribute to an evolving conversation around sexual violence, empowerment, and the complexities of gender identity.

Contemporary feminist reinterpretations of Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Titus Andronicus* apply Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity to uncover the complex ways in which gender roles are constructed and challenged in these narratives. In *The Rape of Lucrece*, Lucrece's tragic fate can be seen as a direct result of the rigid gender norms that define her identity solely in terms of her chastity and virtue. By viewing Lucrece through Butler's lens, modern scholars argue that her identity is performatively constituted by societal expectations, constraining her autonomy. Her suicide, therefore, is not only a response to personal violation but also a powerful act of resistance against the patriarchal system that has confined her. This reinterpretation highlights how Shakespeare's text critiques the gendered power structures of its time, offering a poignant commentary on the destructive effects of these norms on women's lives.

In *Titus Andronicus*, feminist scholars use Butler's framework to explore Lavinia's enforced silence and mutilation as symbolic of the broader societal silencing of women. Lavinia's brutalisation − having her tongue cut out and her hands removed − serves as a stark representation of how patriarchal societies control and suppress female voices and bodies. This performative act of violence illustrates how gender roles are enforced and maintained through physical domination. Additionally, contemporary feminist readings incorporate Laura Mulvey's concept of *the male gaze* to critique the objectification and voyeurism inherent in Lavinia's portrayal. By doing so, these reinterpretations reveal how Shakespeare's work can be understood as both a product of and a critique of the patriarchal culture perpetuating such violence.

These feminist analyses underscore the enduring relevance of Shakespeare's works in contemporary discussions on sexual violence, power, and gender dynamics, emphasising the need for ongoing critical engagement with these texts to foster a more empathetic and equitable understanding of gendered experiences.

Feminist scholars like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Judith Butler have paved the way for reevaluating Shakespeare's narratives through the lens of gender and power. Spivak's concept of subalternity provides a framework for understanding characters like Lucrece and Lavinia not just as victims of their circumstances but as figures whose silence speaks volumes about the systemic erasure of women's voices and agency. Through this lens, Lucrece's suicide and Lavinia's mutilation emerge as profound acts of resistance against a patriarchal order that seeks to control and suppress female autonomy (Spivak, 1988: 303).

Butler's theory of gender performativity offers a powerful tool for deconstructing the gender binaries that shape the narratives of *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Titus Andronicus*. In *The Rape of Lucrece*, Lucrece's identity is both constituted and constrained by societal expectations of female virtue and purity, illustrating how gender roles are perpetuated through repetitive social practices. Similarly, in *Titus Andronicus*, Lavinia's enforced silence and mutilation starkly reveal the performative nature of gender, where her ability to communicate and assert agency is violently stripped away to uphold patriarchal dominance. These characters' experiences underscore the socially constructed nature of gender roles and how these roles are used to maintain power dynamics. By highlighting the performative aspects of gender, Shakespeare's works challenge traditional gender norms and expectations, revealing the potential for more fluid and inclusive understandings of identity. This deconstruction of gender binaries not only undermines patriarchal norms but also calls for a re-evaluation of how gendered violence is understood and addressed within both historical and contemporary contexts. Moreover, the work of intersectional feminists like Kimberlé Crenshaw informs a more nuanced analysis of Shakespeare's characters. They urge consideration of how intersecting identities − race, class, gender −compound experiences of oppression and resilience. This perspective enriches our understanding of Shakespeare's works by inviting a more complex exploration of the characters' social positions and the multifaceted forms of solidarity and empathy they embody.

Contemporary feminist reinterpretations also engage with the concept of the *male gaze,* as articulated by Laura Mulvey. They examine how the objectification of female characters in Shakespeare's plays reflects broader societal patterns of sexualising and victimising women. By critiquing *the gaze* through which we view Shakespeare's heroines, feminist scholarship encourages a re-evaluation of audience complicity in perpetuating gendered violence. It offers pathways toward a more critical and empathetic engagement with these texts.

These feminist readings have not only deepened our appreciation for the layers of complexity in Shakespeare's works but have also connected these centuries-old texts to current debates on sexual violence, gender politics, and the struggle for gender equality. By highlighting how Shakespeare's narratives of rape, gender fluidity, and

power dynamics intersect with modern feminist concerns, these reinterpretations underscore the continued relevance of his works in fostering dialogue around critical social issues.

The impact of these feminist reinterpretations extends beyond academic discourse, influencing public understanding of rape culture and contributing to broader cultural shifts toward recognising and addressing sexual violence. As such, Shakespeare's plays re-examined through a contemporary feminist lens, serve as a vital touchstone for exploring the enduring challenges and possibilities of gendered existence. Feminist scholarship has significantly reshaped the conversation around literary representations of rape, advocating for a more critical examination of texts that have historically been celebrated uncritically. The #MeToo movement, alongside broader feminist discourses, has catalysed a re-evaluation of narratives that depict sexual violence, urging readers and scholars to confront the implications of these portrayals and their contribution to sustaining rape culture. This re-examination extends to the works of Shakespeare, whose complex narratives of power, violence, and gender dynamics offer fertile ground for contemporary feminist critique.

Feminist reinterpretations of Shakespeare, such as those found in Newman's *Rape Culture* (2022), emphasise how narratives of sexual violence are deeply entwined with issues of power and gender oppression. For example, in *The Rape of Lucrece*, Shakespeare presents not merely a personal tragedy but a critique of the societal structures that enable such violence. Feminist readings highlight how Lucrece's body becomes a battleground for male power struggles, her agency overshadowed by the actions of Tarquin and the subsequent political upheaval. These interpretations align with feminist theories that view rape as an expression of patriarchal power rather than a mere act of individual aggression, thereby challenging readers to reconsider the societal norms that perpetuate gendered violence.

In reinterpreting Shakespeare's works, contemporary feminists like those contributing to Holland and Hewett's *#MeToo and Literary Studies* argue for a recognition of the potential within these texts for fostering empathy, solidarity, and resistance against rape culture. Through the lens of feminist theory, characters' responses to trauma − such as Lavinia's silence in *Titus Andronicus* −are reevaluated not as mere victimhood but as forms of resistance. This perspective encourages a reading of Shakespeare that values the resilience of survivors and the communal bonds that can arise from shared experiences of trauma.

The feminist reinterpretations also challenge the traditional narrative by highlighting the problematic nature of romanticising or ignoring the violence within Shakespeare's works. The discussions in *Rape Culture* and similar analyses urge a critical engagement with texts, advocating for an approach that neither dismisses nor glorifies these narratives but instead uses them as a means to confront and critique the enduring presence of rape culture in contemporary society. By doing so, feminist scholarship seeks to dismantle the acceptance of sexual violence as inevitable, instead promoting a culture of accountability, empathy, and resistance.

The contemporary feminist reinterpretations of Shakespeare's works serve as a testament to the enduring relevance of his plays in discussions about gender,

power, and violence. They challenge us to confront uncomfortable truths about societal norms and structures and offer pathways towards understanding, empathy, and change. As we continue to navigate the complexities of rape culture and gender dynamics, the feminist lens provides a critical tool for reevaluating literary classics and their impact on our collective consciousness and societal norms. Through this ongoing dialogue, we can envision a world where narratives of violence are neither normalised nor ignored but are instead met with resistance, critique, and a hopeful push towards transformation.

5. Conclusion

This exploration into Shakespeare's portrayal of sexual violence, gender fluidity, and the interwoven themes of endurance, solidarity, and empathy offers a rich understanding of the complexities of Shakespearean drama and its profound resonance with contemporary feminist discourse. By applying a multifaceted feminist theoretical framework to *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Titus Andronicus*, this paper has illuminated the nuanced ways in which Shakespeare's works engage with and challenge our understanding of gendered violence and power relations.

The feminist reinterpretation of *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Titus Andronicus* reveals the deep scars that sexual violence leaves on individuals and societies, highlighting the need for endurance in the face of such trauma. These narratives, while rooted in their Elizabethan context, resonate with modern discussions around rape culture, showcasing the timeless struggle against patriarchal oppression and the silencing of survivors. Contemporary feminist reinterpretations of Shakespeare's texts have deepened our understanding of these works and positioned them as vital resources for engaging with current debates on gender politics, sexual violence, and the quest for a more empathetic and inclusive society. These reinterpretations remind us of the dynamic interplay between literature and culture, where age-old texts can shed light on modern issues and, conversely, contemporary perspectives can offer new insights into historical narratives.

In conclusion, this paper asserts the enduring power of Shakespeare's works to foster a nuanced dialogue on sexual violence, resilience, and human empathy. By bridging historical literary analysis with contemporary feminist theory, this study highlights the continued relevance of Shakespeare's works in contributing to a deeper understanding of gender dynamics and advocating for change. As we navigate the complexities of modern gender relations, Shakespeare's exploration of endurance, solidarity, and empathy remains a beacon, guiding us toward a more just and compassionate understanding of the human experience.

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REPREZENTACIJE SILOVANJA U ODABRANIM ŠEKSPIROVIM DELIMA: FEMINISTIČKA PERSPEKTIVA

Apstrakt

Ovaj rad nastoji da istraži feminističke reinterpretacije prikaza seksualnog nasilja u Šekspirovim delima *Silovanje Lukrecije* i *Tit Andronik*. Oslanjajući se na teoriju performativnosti Džudit Batler i uključujući feminističke teorije o kulturi silovanja, studija se bavi nijansiranim prikazom rodno uslovljenog nasilja i njegovih posledica

u ovim delima. Analizom književnog prikaza silovanja u Šekspirovom opusu, cilj je da se otkriju slojevi izdržljivosti koje likovi ispoljavaju, solidarnost koja se razvija suočavanjem s traumom i empatija koja se budi kod publike ili čitalaca. Rad nastoji da pokaže Šekspirov pristup seksualnom nasilju, često uokviren u socio-političkim kontekstima njegove epohe, da odražava savremena feministička pitanja, nudeći uvide u mehanizme preživljavanja, podršku okruženja i empatijski angažman. Kroz komparativni pristup koji naglašava vezu između britanske kulture i drugih kulturnih perspektiva, studija doprinosi boljem razumevanju načina na koji Šekspirov prikaz seksualnog nasilja i njime uslovljenih osećanja komunicira sa savremenim feminističkim diskursom i ujedno ga izaziva.

Ključne reči: feminizam, rodna dinamika, kultura silovanja, solidarnost, nasilje

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FROM INSTRUCTION MANUALS TO ENTERTAINING EPISTOLARY NOVELS: LETTERS IN BOTH GENRES FROM THE 17TH TO THE 19TH CENTURIES

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Abstract

This study presents an analysis of salutations and subscriptions in letters across genres in the Late Modern English period. The paper compares letter-writing manuals addressed to women and three epistolary novels (*Love-Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister*, *Evelina*, *Lady Susan*) written by women, namely Aphra Behn, Frances Burney and Jane Austen, dating from the end of the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century. The aim is to observe the evolution of the formulae to start and conclude letters along the centuries under analysis in both genres and to establish a comparison between them. The results show that more similarities than differences are found between the two genres, and that changes displayed in the formulae used through history in the manuals seem to be present also in the novels. The conclusion suggests that the novelists must have been familiar with the instruction provided in the manuals but, despite the linguistic similarities observed, the letters in the novels created a narrative that went beyond such instruction.

Keywords: letter salutations, letter subscriptions, letter-writing manuals, epistolary novels, Early Modern English, Late Modern English

1. Introduction

Communication was established by means of correspondence when people were away from each other already in ancient cultures (Palander-Collin, 2010), and in Britain writing letters gained popularity in the Early Modern English period (Cusack, 1998). This custom very gradually extended and in the eighteenth century letter-writing manuals such as *The Art of Letter-Writing* claimed that "Nothing is so

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common as to write Letters … The Necessities of Life oblige almost all Manner of Persons to have Recourse to an Epistolary Correspondence" (Anon., 1762: 1). This explains the proliferation of letters and of letter-writing manuals. At the beginning of the period, "imported Latin manuals" were the most frequently used ones (Green, 2007: 102), and it was not until the early seventeenth century that the manuals written in English began to appear. These manuals varied in style and they were characterised by different features depending on the audience that they were aimed at. Similarly, they also changed over time, for instance, Green (2007: 115) indicates that "[b]y the Restoration, letter-writing manuals take a mannerist turn", influenced by styles observed in France at that time, and which had gained popularity thanks to George II's return to England from exile.

From the end of the eighteenth, and especially during the nineteenth century, the increase in literacy among people in lower ranks of society and the movement of population to the urban areas implied that a higher rate of people wrote letters at that time (Tieken-Boon van Ostade, 2009). Consequently, the number of letter-writing manuals available also increased. Some of these manuals were re-edited several times along the whole Late Modern English period and although the contents are similar, the variation they display can contribute to an understanding of some of the changes that the language was experiencing at the time.

In addition to being the main means of communication, letters began to be used in other contexts. According to Del LungoCamiciotti (2014: 25), thanks to "the adaptability of the epistolary form … different written genres" could appear. She adds that it was the motivations that made women write letters that "contributed to the rise of epistolary novels whose heroines were female letter writers" (Del LungoCamiciotti, 2014: 25). Although both types of books contained letters and there seems to be a connection between them (Beebee, 1999), the audience and the objective of each were different.

Despite not being exclusively written by and for women, "novels largely had a female readership" (Tieken-Boon van Ostade, 2009: 8-9). In addition, Epstein (1985: 400) explains that for many women epistolary novels became a way to consolidate themselves as writers, and she adds that "by the end of the seventeenth century letters had become inextricably tied to feminine ways of self-expression and to a social world over which women presided". This demand explains the focus of the present paper, letter-writing manuals addressed specifically to women and epistolary novels written by female authors. The study is diachronic since it analyses the similarities and differences between these manuals from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, but it is also synchronic, as it observes the possible influence that these manuals may have had on the style of the letters in the novels of that time. More specifically, the focus will be on the salutations and subscriptions used in the letters found in both types of texts, the manuals and the novels.

2. Salutations and subscriptions in Modern English letters

Although the salutations and subscriptions analysed in the present study will be described in section 6, a brief explanation of the two terms will be provided here, together with reference to some studies that have dealt with this topic before.

Both the salutation and the subscription are parts of letters and they usually are realised by fixed formulae, which very often depend on the type of letter and the relationship between the writer and the addressee. Whereas the salutation is placed at the beginning of the letter, addressing the recipient, as in *Dear Mr Smith*, the subscription will close the letter before being signed, using structures in present-day English such as *Yours Sincerely*.

Over the years, the formulae used in both types of expressions appear to have changed and these changes are reflected in instruction letter-writing manuals. From a historical point of view, studies have mainly focused on the politeness issues related to the use of the different formulae, considering the concept of face as developed by Brown and Levinson in 1987 (e.g. Dossena &Del LungoCamiciotti, 2012; Jucker, 1995; Nevalainen &Tanskanen, 2007; Pahta et al., 2010). Polite language was equated to proper language, that is the language that was prescribed in the grammars and that speakers would aspire to use, and the changes that were taking place in society in the Late Modern English period were reflected in the changes that can be found in the manuals of the time (Fens-de-Zeeuw, 2008).

There are several corpus-based studies which have focused on the Early Modern English period and the eighteenth century. As regards salutations, for instance, Nevalianen and Raumolin-Brunberg (1995) analysed address terms in different types of letters, dating from the Late Middle English period to the seventeenth century. They conclude that in their period under investigation there "is a process of both social and structural simplification of deferential address terms, and hence decreased negative politeness between distants" (Nevalianen & Raumolin-Brunberg, 1995: 590). Similarly, Nevala (2007) focuses on address forms but covering the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. She finds that when writing to somebody in a higher position and when writing a formal letter, there is less variation between the two centuries than when letters are exchanged between people of lower ranks. Also, she concludes that it is not clear to what extent letter-writing manuals influenced letter writers, which is in line with other studies that she refers to and which point to the fact that letter writers did not always follow the formulae that appear in the manuals. In this respect, Nurmi and Pahta (2010: 156) find in their data one subscription that was not included in the manuals consulted in this study, this is the French borrowing *adieu* (see section 6), and they conclude that "terms such as *adieu* or *addio* are more tied to the conventions of contemporary polite society".

Also, regarding subscriptions, a comprehensive analysis of Late Modern English business letters discusses not only the structure of these formulae in British English but in other varieties of English. Dollinger (2008) observes a higher degree of variation in the letters written outside Britain and that the term *servant* is used more frequently in British letters.

3. Letter-writing manuals addressed to women in Modern England

The fact that some letter-writing manuals were specifically addressed only to women supports the idea that women needed this type of texts. Writing letters was not only a leisure activity or a way to keep in contact with friends and family, but it was also a need as letters were written on all occasions. It seems that it was not until the middle of the seventeenth century that female audiences were taken into consideration when writing these manuals. For example, on the front page of the 1652 edition of *The Secretaries Studie* by Samuel Sheppard, the presence of the word *ladies* points to women as being part of the target audience. Other manuals were clearly written with a female audience in mind, as they are directly mentioned in the main title of the book. This is the case of *The Female Secretary*, written in 1671 by Henry Care. In a similar way, other instruction manuals for women contained a section on letters. Two of these are *The Gentlewomans Companion*, attributed to Hannah Woolley and first published in 1673, and *A Supplement to the Queen-like Closet* written by Hannah Woolley in 1674.

The four manuals mentioned above share similarities but they also display differences. Despite being both specifically letter-writing manuals, *The Secretaries Studie*[2] and *The Female Secretary* would not have provided women at the time with the same information. The reason for this is the way they present the letters and the presence or absence of additional instruction regarding the art of letter writing. *The Secretaries Studie* displays the letters organised in different groups depending on the type or content, that is, there are *amorous letters*, *houshold*[3] *letters*, or *requesting letters*, to name a few. However, in *The Female Secretary* the author does not apparently distribute the letters following any specific criteria. Also, whereas Care provides readers with a great deal of instruction in the last pages of *The Female Secretary* regarding different sections of a letter and proper forms of address for people of different rankor the relationship with them, Sheppard only includes the letters in *The Secretaries Studie* without any further indications as to how to write them.

The number of letters in the two books referred to above by Woolley is lower than in the two previous letter-writing manuals. This could beexplained by the fact that Woolley's texts also addressed other issues of interest for women at the time. It is precisely due to the broader information covered in these two books that more women may have had access to them. When the sections devoted to letters are analysed in both, it can be observed that in *The Gentlewomans Companion*, a subsection on "some general and choice Rules for writing of Letters" (Woolley, 1673: 218) is included. This contains not only information regarding address terms but also aspects concerning instructions for writing different types of letters depending on their content and subject matter. This subsection precedes the actual letters, which

[2] All the titles, words and quotations extracted from the manuals are shown in their original spelling form.

[3] As these terms in italics are extracted directly from the manuals, the spelling may show deviation from standard spelling, as is the case here.

would probably be the expected order. On the other hand, instruction is not provided in *A Supplement to the Queen-like Closet*, because the author does not feel this is necessary, as she states that she gave this in another book and in this case she thinks "it not amiss to give some Forms or Patterns of Letters for Elder, and more serious people" (Woolley, 1674: 148). A set of letters distributed along approximately forty pages concludes with the following comment: "I have now done with the Letters, having given you the Forms of as many as they teach you all the rest, that possible you may have occasion for" (Woolley, 1674: 182).

Despite the presence of these manuals for women already in the seventeenth century, the eighteenth century continued to be dominated by manuals addressed to men. One of the few manuals for women was *The Ladies Complete Letter-Writer*, published anonymously in 1763. Not only is this a manual for women, but the letters in it are written also by women, according to the front page of the book. In the preface the author claims that "It has often raised my Wonder, that no Book of this kind has ever been thought of for the Use of the Fair Sex particularly" (Anon., 1763: i). This shows that the author was unaware of the existence of the books that have been described above, which date from the previous century, but it also points to the awareness of the need of this type of texts for women. The manual is divided into several parts, each of which includes different types of letters according to their subject matter, and it also contains an introduction with directions mainly regarding different modes of address .

Some manuals published in the eighteenth century included ladies among their audiences, for example, in *The Art of Letter-Writing*, published in 1762, the anonymous author indicates that the book is intended for young people, but also for *Gentlemen and Ladies*. This manual follows a very similar pattern to that of *The Ladies Complete Letter-Writer*, both in the organisation of the letters and in the instruction provided at the beginning.

Sometimes instruction towards women's behaviour was presented in the form of letters. An example of this is *The Polite Lady; or a Course of Female Education*, which was first published in 1760. This book was reprinted on different occasions and even reedited, which indicates its popularity. The letters contained in it cover different aspects of women's education at the time, and they were aimed at governesses to be used for instruction. This type of text differs from the letter-writing manuals since its aim is not instruction on how to write letters but on behaviour. Despite not containing information on the style of letters, the salutations and the subscriptions present in them can be compared to the ones both in the manuals and in the novels.

In the nineteenth century letter-writing manuals seem to address both ladies and gentlemen. This is clearly stated in the title or subtitle of the book, as in *The Comprehensive Letter Writer: a Universal Guide to Correspondence for Ladies and Gentlemen* (Anon., 1858), or in *The Universal Letter-Writer ... adapted to the Use of Both Sexes* (Cooke, 1822). The latter is in fact a new edition of a manual that appears to have been fairly popular in the previous century as stated by the number of reprints that it had even in the nineteenth century. In the first edition the comment

in relation to the audience was not present. This may suggest an awareness of the need of these types of texts for women as well as for men. Although both nineteenth century manuals contain directions and instructions as to how letters should be written, they present this information in different ways. Whereas *The Comprehensive Letter Writer* includes one section on general information regarding letter writing depending on the type of letter (e.g. juvenile, mercantile or love) and another section on how to address, commence and conclude letters according to the addressees, *The Universal Letter-Writer* does not provide instruction in separate sections but it is included in the body of some letters.

Despite the extended publications of these manuals, it cannot be concluded that they were consulted regularly when writing, and therefore, "it remains difficult to say with any certainty how strongly the prescriptions of these popular books influenced the practice of individual letter writers (Hannan, 2016: 11). However, educated writers of the time would have probably had access to these instruction books either directly or indirectly.

4. Epistolary novels and their connection with letter-writing manuals

The *Oxford English Dictionary* online defines *epistolary*, in its combination with the noun *novel*, as "in the form of letters" ("epistolary, A.2"). This definition is fairly broad and establishing the borderline limiting what epistolary novels are does not seem an easy task. Bannet (2021: xvi) explains that when referring to "narrative-epistolary writing … writers in this tradition combined narrative and letters in an amazing variety of interesting ways for" several reasons. Therefore, while traditionally epistolary novels may have been considered to be the ones including mainly collections of letters, there are some later novels in which letters play a significant role and they may also be part of epistolary narratives. In the present study, the chosen novels are written solely in the form of letters, thus following the traditional definition of the term.

Tracing the roots of novels in general, Visconti (1994) highlights the importance of the epistolary novel as a base for the development of later novels. The author also indicates that it is at the end of the seventeenth century when this text type becomes popular but it is during the eighteenth century when it flourishes. Visconti adds that the custom of communicating via letters, which was very common at the time, contributed to the development of this genre. Similarly, this explains the proliferation of letter-writing manuals as there was a social need to write letters on all occasions. The closeness between reality and the story told by means of an epistolary novel lies in the fact that it is told in first person, and as Visconti (1994: 299) points out, "It may … be difficult to distinguish epistolary narrative from genuine correspondence", as the two genres only differ "in the fact that the novel must present itself as a complete and self-contained world with all the information necessary to understand the story and its characters".

Singer (1933: 20) analyses the epistolary novel genre from its beginnings to its decline. This author also refers to the importance of letter-writing manuals "in the development of the use of the letter as a literary … instrument", and he (1933: 25) adds, "They give a definite impulse and direction to the creation of the familiar letter as a form of literature". This reinforces the connection between the two genres under analysis.

Finally, when referring to prose in general, McIntosh (1998: vii) observes changes in the eighteenth century, probably connected to the changes in society and she indicates that "Prose published around 1710 is characteristically more oral, more informal and colloquial, whereas late eighteenth-century prose became more bookish, more elegant, more precise, and more consciously rhetorical." She also points to the fact that women writers became very important in that century and as such is reflected in the variety of text types produced by them.

5. The present study

5.1. The data

Since the number of epistolary novels and letter-writing manuals published between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries in Britain is large, the data have been restricted to three novels written by women and a selection of letter-writing manuals either aimed exclusively at women or mentioning *ladies* as part of their expected audience.

Since a diachronic analysis was intended, the three chosen novels were published between the end of the seventeenth century and the nineteenth century. They are composed mainly of letters although they also include some narration in-between the letters. The number of letters varies as does the length of each novel. They are as follows:

- *Love-Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister* (Aphra Behn, 1684) – consisting of three volumes, with a total of 99 letters.
- *Evelina, or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* (Frances Burney, 1778) – containing 84 letters.
- *Lady Susan* (Jane Austen, written ca. 1794) – the shortest novel, including 41 letters in total.

Aphra Behn's novel was first published in three separate volumes, the first volume dating from 1684. *Evelina* was published at the height of the epistolary novel period, in 1778. The third epistolary novel, *Lady Susan*, was not published until 1871 (Gilson, 2005), despite possibly having been written in 1794 or in 1795 (Sutherland, 2005). It is important to note that the manuscript copy of *Lady Susan* that has survived possibly dates from the very beginning of the nineteenth century, as some of the papers include the year 1805 (Sutherland, 2005). Although the present study intends to observe the evolution of the salutation and subscription formulae

until the nineteenth century and none of the novels were probably written as late as that, the fact that *Lady Susan* was published posthumously in 1871 suggests that there is a possibility that this novel might have been manipulated by the editor or the publisher following some of the letter-writing conventions of the late nineteenth century.

Regarding the manuals used, they are as follows, in chronological order:

- *The Secretaries Studie* (1652)
- *The Female Secretary* (1671)
- *The Gentlewomans Companion* (1673)
- *A Supplement to the Queen-like Closet* (1674)
- *The Polite Lady; or a Course of Female Education* (1760)
- *The Art of Letter-Writing* (1762)
- *The Ladies Complete Letter-Writer* (1763)
- *The Universal Letter-Writer, a new edition* (1822)
- *The Comprehensive Letter Writer* (1858)

5.2. The method

Selecting the data described in 4.1 was the first step. The selection of the novels was carried out considering several aspects. To begin with, they had to be epistolary and have been written by women. Secondly, they had to have been published over the period that was intended to be analysed, from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century. Aphra Behn's *Love-Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister* has been claimed to be the first English epistolary novel (Gardiner, 1989), which explains why it was thought to be an appropriate choice to begin this study. The epistolary novel developed its potential in the eighteenth century and *Evelina* has been considered a "great epistolary novel" (Singer, 1933: 101) of such a century, which had mainly been dominated by popular novels written by men such as Richardson. Finally, the end of the eighteenth century appears to have witnessed the decline of this type of novels (Singer, 1933). The intention was to select the third novel as an example of nineteenth century epistolary novels, however, due to the lower number of these after 1800s, a different criterion was followed, the date of publication was considered rather than the date of composing the novel. *Lady Susan* was probably written at the end of the eighteenth century although it was not published until 1871 (see 4.1), which may imply some editorial manipulation, and therefore, the introduction of changes in the letter writing style.

After the selection of the novels, the next step was the choice of manuals. Two criteria were followed, first that the instruction was directed clearly at women or that women were mentioned onthe front page of the manual as part of the intended audience. The three novels were downloaded from the Gutenberg Project webpage in plain text format. The manuals published in the seventeenth century were extracted from the Early English Books Online collection whereas the eighteenth and nineteenth century manuals were downloaded from Google Books.

A qualitative analysis was thought to be the most suitable option for the present study mainly due to the fact that the manuals contain both instructions and model

letters. This means that the examples found in the instruction sections could be used for qualitative analysis but not for a quantitative analysis, as they would not contribute to any conclusive results. Also, the types of letters vary considerably between the two genres, and this variation could imply a biased result because different types of letters would favour different types of salutations and subscriptions. In this respect, manuals usually include a wider variety of topics than the ones present in the novels. However, in the analysis of the novels some quantitative data are also provided.

The analysis was two-fold, as the texts were compared both diachronically within each text type and between the two genres. The manuals were analysed first. The salutations and the subscriptions were observed both in the sections that contained directions and instructions, in the manuals that included them, and in the model letters. The different formulae used in each manual were written down and analysed manually in order to observe possible patterns and trends. Next, they were compared diachronically. Following this, the salutations and subscriptions used in each novel were extracted and analysed manually. They were then grouped depending on their presence, their position in the letter (in the case of the salutations) and their structure (see Tables 1 and 2 in section 6). Finally, they were compared with the manuals.

6. Analysis and results

6.1. Salutations and subscriptions in Early and Late Modern English letter-writing manuals

Despite the differences observed in the letter-writing manuals analysed not only along history but also within each of the centuries, in all of them either directly or indirectly both salutations and subscriptions are found because they are part of the letters.

6.1.1. Salutations

Differences are found in the manuals despite them being subtle at times. In general, there seems to have been a change from a wider variety of salutations to the use of more fixed formulae. This can be particularly observed in personal familiar letters. On many occasions, these salutations contain very subjective adjectives, which refer directly to the addressee. In a similar way, the use of proper names in salutations was not common in the early manuals consulted. In this respect, the author of *The Female Secretary* indicates that 'tis not customary to set down the Persons Name" (Care, 1671:148).

Apart from providing direction in relation to which salutations to use, some manuals also indicate that depending on the addressee, more or less distance should be left between the salutation and the body of the text. For instance, in *The Female Secretary* it is mentioned that the more familiar a relationship is, the less distance is required (Care, 1671: 148). These aspects are indirectly referring to pragmatic issues, particularly in relation to politeness.

In the seventeenth century manuals consulted, no salutations have been found with the proper name of the addressee, with the exception of one (*Susanna*, see below). On the other hand, when familiar letters are provided, it is very common to find the relationship term as in *Dear Daughter*, *Dear Cousin* or *Dear Friend*. However, *dear* is not always present. Instead, salutations such as *Madam* or *Sir* seem to be the most commonly recommended and used in the models, particularly when writing to a superior, although they can also be found in letters from children to either of their parents. Also, the adjective *Honoured* followed by the kinship term or nouns such as *Sir* or *Lady* are frequent. Finally, another common salutation is *My Lord*, which is both present in the instruction and in the models.

Despite the commonalities just mentioned, the first manual used in this study, *The Secretaries Studie*, is the one that displays more variation of all in the salutations used. Although it is not clearly stated, the letters contained in this manual were probably created by its writer, as can be inferred by comments on the front page such as the letters being "furnished with fit Phrases, Emphatical expressions, and various directions". Variation is especially found in the amorous letters, where the letters written by a man often include adjectives in the salutation. Examples of these are *Dearest happiness*, *Divine Lady*, *My only happiness*, *Sweet sole* or *Glorious Lady*, to name but a few. Contrarily, women's letters to their beloved men mainly start with the word *Sir* although occasionally more elaborate salutations can also be found, such as *Worthy Sir*, *Unkind Sir* or *Decrepit Sir*. This points to differences between men and women particularly in relation to women's position in society, mainly dominated by men at the time, and possibly to politeness issues. In the more formal letters, adjectives are also frequently used. In this respect, salutations such as *Noble Sir*, *Good Lady* (or *Sir*), *Worthy Sir* or *Honourable Lord* are found.

The other seventeenth-century manuals consulted do not display the rich variety of adjectives that has just been described. Only occasionally, a qualifying adjective is present. For example, in *The Female Secretary*, *Sweet Friend* or *Grave Sir* are found in the model letters. These are also present in the section containing directions, specifically in the list of salutations provided, where *Cruel Beauty* or *Sweet Madam* can be found. However, the dominant expressions are *Sir* and *Madam*. The two manuals attributed to Woolley follow a very similar pattern to this and they hardly ever include adjectives apart from *dear*. Similarly, the most frequent salutations are *Sir* and *Madam*, followed by those introduced by *Dear* and the relation's name, as in *Dear Friend* or *Dear Child*. Rarely expressions such as *Indeared Friend*, or *Beloved Cousin* are found in *The Gentlewomans Companion*, and in *A Supplement to the Queen-like Closet* a proper noun is present in one salutation. In fact, this salutation only includes the name, *Susanna*. This is the only example that has been observed in all the letters of the four manuals containing the name of the addressee and it is precisely in an informal context, in a letter from a mother to her daughter.

Eighteenth-century manuals present some differences when compared to the manuals of the previous century. Nevertheless, the expressions *Sir* and *Madam* are dominant, with the exception of *The Polite Lady*, which is not surprising as in this manual all the letters are between a mother and a daughter, which most

probably explains the limited variation in the salutations used in it. Similarly to the seventeenth-century manuals, the expressions including *Dear* and the kinship term are also common. For instance, *Dear Mother*, *Dear Niece* or *Dear Brother* appear. As regards the differences, the presence of other adjectives is very rare with the exception of the occasional expression such as *Good Madam* or *Honoured Madam* (or *Sir*). However, the clearest difference between the two centuries is in the use of first names following *Dear* or *My Dear*. For example, in *The Ladies Complete Letter-writer*, *Dear Lucy* or *My Dear Sally* can be found in the model letters. In the instruction provided both in *The Ladies Complete Letter-writer* and in *The Art of Letter-Writing*, which is almost identical, no reference to the use of proper nouns is made as they seem to focus more on the salutations to people of higher ranks and the proper names only appear in more familiar contexts. The case of *The Polite Lady* deserves a special comment as all the letters are only exchanged between two people, a mother and her daughter *Sophy*. This explains why the only two salutations used are *My dear Sophy* and *Dear Mamma*. It is interesting to note that the two contain features that were hardly, if ever, present in seventeenth-century manuals, the use of the proper name, *Sophy*, and the colloquial and familiar word to refer to the mother, *Mamma*. Seventeenth-century manuals opted for *Dear Daughter* and *Dear Mother* instead.

A final feature that can be seen in one of the eighteenth-century manuals, *The Ladies Complete Letter-Writer*, is the presence of the salutation inside the first line of the letter rather than as an introduction to it. For example, in letter CXII, the following appears: "You oblige me extremely, *Madam*, to…". Even though this is not very frequent, it is important to refer to it, as it is a characteristic that has not been found in other manuals.

In the nineteenth century there seems to be a continuation of some of the characteristics of the manuals of the previous century, and a maintenance of the most popular salutations already present in the seventeenth-century instruction manuals. The uses of *Sir* and *Madam* remain the most common both in the model letters and in the instructions provided. In familiar letters, in addition to the combination of *Dear* with the relationship term, as in *Dear Daughter* or *Dear Father*, the presence of proper nouns appears to be gaining ground. For instance, both in *The Universal Letter-Writer* and in *The Comprehensive Letter-Writer* salutations such as *Dear Sam* or *My dear Cecilia* are found. There is only one salutation that did not seem to be popular in the previous centuries but it is encountered in these two manuals, the word *Gentlemen*, which is both mentioned in the instruction and also present in some model letters.

6.1.2. Subscriptions

One of the most common ways of starting a subscription in all the manuals is with the determiner *your* or the pronoun *yours*. In a similar way, the noun *servant* appears frequently, usually modified by the adjective *humble*. Other adjectives such as *affectionate*, *dutiful*, *obliged* and *obedient* are also common, not only in combination with *servant* but also with kinship terms such as *mother* or *son*.

Seventeenth-century manuals display fairly similar subscriptions which include the characteristics that have just been described. However, those found in *The Secretaries Studie* deserve special attention due to the higher degree of variation that can be observed. As in the salutations present in this manual, the subscriptions also show the creativity of the writer, as can be observed in *your devout/sincere adorer*, *yours in prevailing truth* or *your living dying friend*. This is particularly the case in the amorous and familiar letters whereas in more formal letters *yours*, followed by some comment, is found before the signature, as in *yours, most dutiful*. In *The Female Secretary*, *your humble servant* is the most common expression but in familiar letters both instruction and models show long noun phrases as subscriptions, for example, *your most affectionate husband till death* or *your loving and most obedient daughter*. Woolley's manuals follow the pattern described of noun phrases with adjectives introduced by *your*.

Some novelties seem to have been introduced in eighteenth-century manuals. For instance, the inclusion of *&c*. at the end of some of the subscriptions becomes common in the three manuals analysed. Particularly, the most common phrase where this is used is accompanying the pronoun *yours*, as in *yours, &c*. This ending is also instructed in *The Ladies Complete Letter-Writer*. Together with the frequent expression of *your humble/obedient/obliged servant*, other noun phrases are common. These include particularly the adjective *affectionate,* and when children write to their parents, the adjectives preferred are *dutiful*, *obedient* and *obliged*. Also frequent are the expressions beginning with *I am*, on occasion simply followed by *&c*. The subscriptions in *The Polite Lady* are very limited as there are only two writers, the mother uses either *your affectionate mother* or *yours, &c*. whereas the daughter opts for the typical adjectives used by children in other manuals, namely *dutiful*, *obedient* and *obliged*.

In the nineteenth century the tendencies initiated in the previous century appear to have been established as norms. While it is clear that the formula *your humble servant* seems the preferred option in formal letters, those letters exchanged between people who knew each other well opt for the use of adjectives, as has been described before. Similarly, the use of sentences opening with *I am* is also prevalent. It is in *The Comprehensive Letter-Writer* where expressions that are common today appear for the first time, these are *yours sincerely* and *your faithfully*. In addition, the use of *yours* in combination with other words is also a regular feature, as in *ever yours*, *yours very affectionately* or *yours truly*. This manual also recommends in the instruction section the use of phrases like *I am, Sir, your obedient servant* when concluding a letter. The fact that expressions such as your *humble servant* or *your obedient servant* continue appearing at this time reinforces the idea that many manuals continued copying model letters from manuals written in the previous century (Hannan, 2016).

6.2. Salutations and subscriptions in the epistolary novels

Before describing the main characteristics of the salutations and the subscriptions of each novel, a few general characteristics need to be mentioned. To begin with, the

three novels under analysis differ in length, *Lady Susan* being the shortest and *Love Letters* the longest. Also, despite being epistolary novels, sometimes there seems to be some narration in third person placed between some letters. This is particularly the case in Aphra Behn's novel, where this narration outside the letters themselves appears to gain ground as the parts of the novel develop, with the third part containing the most. One example of this can be found when the author refers to something that Sylvia did and writes: "This letter she sent him back by his page, … at the same time she threatened him with banishment".

In addition, in *Evelina* there are not only very long letters but also many of them are a "continuation" of the following, as indicated at the beginning of them. This does not occur in the other two novels. This may explain some of the differences explained below regarding the types of salutation or subscription used.

Very often the novels also include a type of superscription at the beginning[4], whose function is possibly to guide the reader so as to know who is writing to whom in each letter. For instance, in Aphra Behn's novel, these are some of the superscriptions: *To Philander*, *To Sylvia* and *Octavio to Philander*. Similarly, in *Evelina*, both in the table of contents and at the beginning of each letter the names of the writer and the addressee are included, using the same formula, *X person to X person*, and the same applies to the letters in *Lady Susan*.

6.2.1. Salutations

The three novels included in the present analysis differ in terms of their content. These differences probably contribute to some of the variation found when comparing them, depending on whether they include more or less formal letters, the presence of more or less formal salutations will be more prevalent. Similarly, the novels vary in relation to the presence of salutation formulae and their position in the letters (see Table 1).

Behn's novel displays both formal and informal salutations at the beginning of the letters. Expressions such as *Madam* and *My Lord* are the most common, whereas the use of *dear* is not frequent. The use of other adjectives is also a regular feature. For example, *Fair angry Sylvia*, *My everlasting* Charmer or *My adorable* Sylvia are some of the salutations present. These examples show that the use of proper nouns is also a characteristic of these salutations. As regards the presence of the salutation and its position (see Table 1 for total figures), in over half of the instances the salutation appears as part of the first sentence of the letter, as in "There is no pain, *my dear Octavio*, either…", The absence of salutations is also observed, as is its position at the beginning of the letters, in a separate line, where the formal formulae of *Sir* and *Madam* are only found.

In Burney's *Evelina* three different types of beginnings can be observed in the letters. These are the use of a salutation followed by the letter in the next line; the incorporation of the salutation, separated by commas, in the first line of the letter;

[4] These superscriptions are also instructed in the manuals but they have been left out of this study because no variation can be observed in these fixed structures.

and the absence of salutation. This last type is the most frequent (see Table 1 for total figures) and it is found in those letters which are a continuation from the previous letter, in other words, there did not seem to be a need for addressing, as the addressee had already been mentioned before. Regarding the salutations that appear at the beginning, followed by the letter, in addition to the commonly used *Sir* and *Madam*, *Dear Sir*, *Dear Madam* and *Dear Rev. Sir* are the most frequent. It is in the salutations incorporated in the first line of the letter where more variation is found. For instance, "Once more, *my dearest Son*, …" and "Be not alarmed, *my worthy friend*, …" are present in some of the letters. As can be observed, although some salutations are the same as in the previous group, there seem to be more conventional expressions as evidenced by the use of adjectives such as *worthy* and the superlative form *dearest*.

Lady Susan is the shortest of the three novels under analysis. It is also the one with the least number of formal letters as opposed to the previous two. There is a total of forty-one letters and in 10 of them there is no salutation present (see Table 1 for total figures). In the remaining letters the salutations are either present immediately before the body of the letter, although not in a separate line, where the punctuation seems to point to a separation before the salutation and the rest of the letter, as in *My dear Sir,—I have this moment received your letter* (Letter XIV); or incorporated in the first line, as has been observed in the previous novels, as is the case of *I received your note, my dear Alicia, just before I left town* (Letter V). In either case, the formulae used are very similar. In most cases they include either the first name of the person the letter is addressed to or that of the relation. For instance, it is very common to read salutations such as *My dear mother*, *Dear brother*, (*My*) *dear Alicia* or *My dearest friend*. Although the expression *Madam* is not found, *Sir* is also a regular introduction in the more formal letters.

Novel	No salutation	Salutation separated from the body of the letter	Salutation incorporated in the first line of the letter	Total
Love letters	24 (24%)	56 (57%)	19 (19%)	99 (100%)
Evelina	52 (61%)	6 (7%)	26 (32%)	84 (100%)
Lady Susan	10 (25%)	19 (46%)	12 (29%)	41 (100%)

Table 1. Salutations in the novels according to their presence and location in the letters

6.2.2. Subscriptions

The analysis of the three novels shows a few similarities, but it mainly points to some differences. Whereas the content of the novels may have influenced these, in general there seems to be a development in time towards a more fixed type of subscription as the centuries advance.

As regards their similarities (see Table 2), the term *adieu* is present in the three novels although its frequency varies, being most commonly used in *Evelina*. It should be noted, however, that this term is hardly ever used as a subscription as such, it is

often found in the concluding paragraph and often followed by addressing the person that the letter is for and a longer comment. For instance, in *Evelina* the following is found: "*Adieu*, my dear Sir, …". The three novels display subscriptions introduced by the possessive adjective *your*, followed by a noun or an adjective modifying a noun. An example of this is *Your most obedient and humble servant*, where the adjectives *devoted*, *faithful* and *most obliged* are modifying *servant*. Although *servant* is commonly found in this structure (13% in *Love Letters*, 60% in *Evelina* and 10% in *Lady Susan*), other nouns are also present, usually referring to kinship relationships and preceded by the adjective *affectionate*, as in *your affectionate sister*.

Another similarity is that it is not infrequent to find that the writer concludes simply with his/her name or not even this, although differences can be observed[5]. In Behn's novel the final paragraph seems to lead to the signature by including the writer's name in the syntax of the text, although positioned in a separate line, as in "thou[6] who commandest all his artillery, put them on, and fly to thy languishing SYLVIA". In *Evelina* the letters that are usually left without a subscription, and even with no signature, are those that *Evelina* writes as a continuation of other letters. In *Lady Susan* these letters are few and are exchanged between the same two characters. In addition, the use of *Yours* followed by the name of the writer is also a commonality between the two earlier novels.

Novel	*Adieu* (on its own or not)	No subscription	*Your /thy*[7] + (modifier) + noun	Other	Total
Love letters	4 (4%)	8 (8%)	31 (31%)	56 (57%)	99 (100%)
Evelina	28 (33%)	40 (48%)	15 (18%)	1 (1%)	84 (100%)
Lady Susan	3 (7%)	4 (10%)	10 (24%)	24 (59%)	41 (100%)

Table 2. Subscriptions in the novels

Despite their similarities, the three novels differ in several aspects in relation to the form of the subscriptions used[8]. In Behn's novel the letters exchanged between lovers are usually concluded with a subscription that contains an adjective expressing emotion in general. For instance, some of the subscriptions are *the lost Philander*, *unfortunate Sylvia*, *impatient adorer* or *thy languishing Sylvia*. In letters between other characters in the novel other noun phrases can be found with different adjectives such as *your affectionate sister* or *constant friend*.

Burney's most frequent endings are either the combinations with the French word *adieu* or the lack of subscription, as already described above. However, there

[5] Due to the variety of all of these forms, they have all been included in the category of 'other' in Table 2.

[6] Note the use of the archaic form *thou* instead of *you*.

[7] The archaic form *thy* in some salutations is only found in Aphra Behn's novel.

[8] These refer mainly to the phrases introduced by *your* and those incorporated in the category of 'other' in Table 2, as will be explained below.

are some subscriptions that differ, despite their resemblance to those found in Behn's novel. Although the use of nouns modified by adjectives is also a feature of *Evelina*, these are usually longer phrases, as *your dutiful and affectionate, though unpolished, Evelina* or *sincerely affectionate and obliged Evelina*. These adjectives do not refer to the feelings of the writers, as many do in Behn's work, but they resemble the more formal subscriptions that included the word *servant*, that is, they focus on the relationship towards the addressee and the relative power difference between the writer and the recipient. Another type of subscription found here is a formula beginning with *I am*, followed by sentiments to the addressee, as in *I am, with all love and duty, your Evelina*. Finally, on one occasion *&c.* is observed in one letter immediately before the signature.

The most common subscription in *Lady Susan* is *yours ever* (*&c*.), followed by *yours, &c*. The word *yours* is also found on its own and as part of other phrases such as *yours faithfully*, being the first of the novels analysed where this is present. Similarly, *your* introduces other regular phrases such as *your affectionate brother* or *your sincerely attached*. It is important to note that Austen adds *&c*. to different endings apart from the ones mentioned and she also shares with Burney the subscriptions beginning with *I am*.

Interestingly, when Tables 1 and 2 are observed, *Love Letters* and *Lady Susan* seem to share some features. However, as has just been indicated, when specific examples and the category of 'other' in the subscriptions are analysed, variation exists. Particularly, what can be found is that Aphra Behn uses many more adjectives as modifiers than Jane Austen's work, where *affectionate* appears as the main qualifier. Also, some expressions present in *Lady Susan* resemble some structures that are used in more recent times, as *yours faithfully*.

7. Manuals versus novels

Despite the differences between the two genres, similarities are also observed. In terms of general structure, whereas the novels sometimes incorporate a short narration in-between some of the letters, some of the manuals include sections on instructions. As regards the salutations and subscriptions found, there seems to be a corresponding evolution in both genres, although some variation is also encountered.

In the seventeenth century both starting and concluding a letter appear to have been a more creative activity, explained by the high number of different adjectives found. Similarly, formulae do not seem to have been as fixed as in later centuries, particularly in the nineteenth century, when expressions that are clearly fixed today (e.g. *yours faithfully*) appear for the first time. In addition, the use of a person's name in the salutations appears to have been a late eighteenth-century innovation. Furthermore, the uses of introductory terms such as dear seem to have been first connected to informal and familiar letters rather than in formal letters while *Madam* and *Sir* seem to have fallen into disuse as time advanced despite still being present in some formal letters. When concluding, the proliferation of the use of *&c.* at the end

of some subscriptions and the introduction of subscriptions with *I* am appear to have been parallel in both genres.

Throughout the period analysed there are some structures that are present in the novels and not in the manuals. For instance, the term *adieu* used on its own or accompanied by a phrase is found in the three novels (see Table 2 in 6.2.2) as a subscription. This French borrowing had been found in real letters in previous studies (see section 2). Also, the name of the writer is often included at the end, as a signature, without a previous subscription. However, the clearest dissimilarity between novels and manuals regarding the two aspects analysed is the absence of subscriptions and the higher presence of salutations incorporated in the first line of the text in some letters in the novels as opposed to those in the manuals. The former may be due to the fact that the letters in an epistolary novel are part of a longer piece of narration that follows in consecutive letters whereas the letters in the manuals are independent texts. The latter feature is occasionally found in eighteenth-century manuals but its higher presence in the novels points to a possible technique used by writers to make the narration flow more easily. All this is in line with what Visconti (1994) refers to when regarding the similarities and differences between the two genres.

In general, it is when the two types of genres are examined as a whole, rather than only the salutations and the subscriptions, that some features presented in the novels show the narrative cohesion created by the letters included in them. However, this cohesion is achieved in different ways in the three novels. For instance, in Aphra Behn's, sometimes a narrative piece of text explains the context of some of the letters. In this respect, there are comments such as "written in a leaf of a table-book", which are not part of any letters but simply a comment so as to help the reader visualise the context of the text better. Similarly, at the beginning of the second part of the book, the writer sets the scene by recalling how the first part concluded, as this second part starts with "At the end of the first part, we left Philander…". In *Evelina*, there are many letters that are a continuation of the previous one written mainly by Evelina. Very often these are letters without a salutation and there is no indication of the addressee , even in a superscription, as this is not required because the reader has read the previous letter and knows the context. In the case of *Lady Susan*, the narration seems to be enhanced by superscriptions such as "From the same to the same", which obviously mean that the reader is familiar with who is writing to whom because they have read the previous letters in the novel. Furthermore, the repeated use of references to places and people in the letters establishes a connection between all of them.

8. Conclusion

Although manuals often claimed that they included real letters, it may not be easy to know to what extent the letters they contained were in fact real. For instance, in the case of *The Secretaries Studie* the comments by the author both on the front

page and in the letter addressing the readers seem to point to the fact that in this particular book the letters were invented for the purpose of instruction. This means that, at least in some of the manuals, they may have been as fictional as the letters included in the epistolary novels. Leaving the content aside, both genres appear to have followed similar patterns regarding the salutations and the subscriptions used.

It seems clear that the style of the seventeenth century was different from that of the nineteenth century and that this applies not only to the letters in the manuals but to those in the novels as well. Undoubtedly, there is an evolution towards a more fixed set of formulae as time advances. Similarly, there appears to be a connection between what the manuals instructed and what the novelists used, which suggests that the three authoresses were familiar with the directions provided in the manuals and they probably had had access to some of these books before writing their novels. Also, the novels display, on occasion, some archaic language features, which suggest that they may have followed manuals printed in previous decades or reprints of manuals from earlier times.

Although the similarities and differences between the two genres regarding the use of salutations and subscriptions do not provide many insights into the features that contribute to understanding the epistolary novels as narrative texts different from the manuals, a wider analysis of the novels as a whole points to the presence of other characteristics that help to establish a cohesion between the letters included. Further studies on this should contribute to a clarification on these issues.

Since the present study only focuses on women writers, further research is expected to include similar analyses of novels written by men and to compare them with manuals aimed at men in order to see if men followed a similar pattern and if they were also influenced by instruction manuals when writing.

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OD PRIRUČNIKA ZA PISANJE PISAMA DO ZABAVNIH EPISTOLARNIH ROMANA: PISMA U OBA ŽANRA OD 17. DO 19. VEKA

Apstrakt

Ova studija predstavlja analizu pozdrava i završnih formula u pismima kroz različite žanrove u periodu kasnog modernog engleskog jezika. Rad upoređuje priručnike za pisanje pisama namenjene ženama i tri epistolarna romana (*Ljubavna pisma između plemića i njegove sestre*, *Evelina*, *Lejdi Suzan*) koje su napisale žene, odnosno Afra Ben, Fransis Berni i Džejn Ostin, a koji su napisani u periodu od kraja sedamnaestog veka do devetnaestog veka. Cilj rada je da prati razvoj formula za početak i završetak pisama kroz vekove u oba žanra i da ih međusobno uporedi. Rezultati pokazuju da između dva žanra postoji više sličnosti nego razlika, kao i da se promene uočene u formulama korišćenim u priručnicima kroz istoriju mogu pronaći i u romanima. Zaključak je da su romanopisci verovatno bili upoznati sa uputstvima iz priručnika, ali da, uprkos

uočenim lingvističkim sličnostima, pisma u romanima stvaraju narativ koji prevazilazi pomenuta uputstva.

Ključne reči: pozdravi u pismima, završne formule u pismima, priručnici za pisanje pisama, epistolarni romani, rani moderni engleski jezik, kasni moderni engleski jezik

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HECUBA IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD: MARINA CARR'S USAGE OF REPORTED SPEECH

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Abstract

Marina Carr relocates Euripides' Hecuba from a women-empowering myth into a twenty-first century colonial piece. Her choice stems from the fact that she "writes in Greek" (McGuiness, 2003) and highlights "contemporary issues through the plight of a marginalised, gendered individual" (Kurdi, 2010). Her rewriting centers around the Irish colonial struggle by introducing a new, vulnerable Hecuba who loathes war and reveals colonial motifs. What Carr also does is employ reported speech throughout the play to replace dialogue that is "at the heart of every dramatic encounter, whether in theatre or in the classroom" (O'Neil, 1989). Her usage of reported speech invites the audience to investigate the different motifs behind it. In Carr's adaptation, the whole play is written in reported speech. Carr, I assume, experiments with a new narration method that was exclusive to messengers as a part of their duty of delivering a message. She instead reconstructs this way of narrating to include monarchs and noblemen like Agamemnon and Odysseus. Her play centers around ancient colonial motifs and agenda that still exist in our days. Furthermore, according to Greg Myers (1999), "reported speech both depicts the experience of the original utterance and detaches reported utterance from the reporting speaker", which contributes to the objectivity of the story. In view of that, my research will focus on the motifs behind the use of reported speech as a way of voicing the silenced, providing evidence, shifting the frame, and acquitting Hecuba.

Keywords: reported speech, Greek tragedies, Irish drama

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1. Introduction

Reported speech, typically a messenger's duty, substitutes dialogue in Marina Carr's (2015) adaptation of Euripides' *Hecuba*, also known as Queen of Troy. The whole play is crafted in reported speech and Carr repurposes the story as Linda Hutcheon (2006: 14) reminds us that adaptation is "a product and a process of creation and reception". Carr recycles the ancient tragedy into a modern context with colonial motifs and manifests what Douglas Lanier (2014: 36) terms "radical creativity". Frank McGuiness (2003: 89) states that Carr "writes in Greek", and Carr herself declares her attempt to 'correct' Euripides because she believes in the unfairness of the Euripidean text. Carr re-orients the story because her "adaptation rewrites Euripides explicitly in order to rescue Hecuba from misrepresentation, but in doing so diminishes the protagonist's agency and complicates the play's capacity to speak to a contemporary feminist anger" (Wallace, 2019: 514).

Mikhail Bakhtin (1981: 338) states in *The Dialogic Imagination* that:

> The topic of a speaking person has enormous importance in everyday life. In real life we hear speech about speakers and their discourse at every step. We can go so far as to say that in real life people talk most of all about what others talk about-they transmit, recall, weigh and pass judgment on other people's words, opinions, assertions, information; people are upset by others' words, or agree with them, contest them, refer to them and so forth.

The significance of reported speech in Carr's play resides in its ability to replace dialogue, voice the marginalised, and convey what is being reported. Patricia Sawin (2004: 68) contends that "in many instances the reported conversation and the relationship between actors therein depicted or the relation between words and actions is very much the point of the narration". Aristotle (1907: 23) states that tragedy is an "imitation of an action that is serious and complete and of a certain magnitude…through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions". In contemporary Irish drama, Aristotle's imitation extends beyond actions to life itself. Carr holds up a "mirror to nature" (HAM 3.2.21-33). Narration in Carr's adaptation becomes not only the means of conveying meaning but also the meaning itself.

In doing so, Carr allows her characters to mimic and accurately depict previous conversations with the same tone and attitude. Usually, in discourse, dialogue serves primarily as the main realm from which the audience derives implications and transforms them into meaningful interpretations. But instead, reported speech, a narration method often associated with messengers in ancient times, is exclusively employed in Marina Carr's colonial adaptation of the play where she attributes the story to a modern frame. I aim in this paper to examine Carr's usage of reported speech throughout the play in comparison to Euripides' dialogues, I also study some functions of reported speech in her narration and try to provide insight into her colonial implications.

2. Reported speech replaces dialogue

Cecily O'Neill (1989: 528) claims in her *Dialogue and Drama: The Transformation of Events, Ideas, and Teachers* that "dialogue is at the heart of every dramatic encounter, whether in theatre or in the classroom", which is particularly true in virtually all literary products. Theatre specifically requires an enactment of the written dialogue. If we are to examine Euripides' tragedy, we detect the systematic dialogue in which there is a speaker who speaks for themselves and another who responds, e.g., the dialogue between Hecuba and Odysseus:

> "Hekabe: I curse the knowing of you.
> You ruin friends lightly,
> so long as it helps you please your constituency".
> Odysseus in return replies:
> "Hekabe, take a lesson.
> And do not, in your passion, harden your mind against good counsel."
> (Euripides, 2006: 113)

Looking at the above scene from Euripides' drama, translated by Anne Carson, one observes that each character presents their own speeches and ideas without any obstruction from others. The heart of Greek dramatic works lies in dialogues that teach moral lessons and narrate a myth for a better understanding of the era and their literary canon. Dialogues, in fact, serve as Plato's early form of juggling ideas, they constitute abstractions of the universe and can and have been developing ever since. But what happens if we neglect an imposed dialogue throughout a play and construct one instead?

2.1. Marina Carr's usage of reported speech

Marina Carr evidently develops the concept of dialogue by using reported speech instead. She has individuals speak for each other in many instances throughout the play: Agamemnon describing his dialogue with Hecuba upon their meeting, Odysseus persuading Agamemnon to sacrifice Hecuba instead of her daughter, and many more. A good example of such dialogue can be found in Agamemnon's description at the onset of the play:

> Agamemnon: I tell her there's no time, she has to get on the ships, but she's not listening, she's losing it. We're evacuating Troy, burning it to the ground, this city of liars and rapists. She's listening now, turns on me, blood rising, hands shaking with rage, goes into a reel, spittle on her lips as she gives vent. You came as guests she hisses. (Carr, 2015: 15)

Agamemnon narrates his words, Hecuba's reaction to them, and, ultimately, her words too. His narration gives him the upper hand over the narrative, allowing him to warrant the Greek invasion, but, at the same time, provides a description of their meeting and Hecuba's actions and words. Reported speech here serves as the only source of information: "I tell her", "she's losing it", and "you came

as guests she hisses" (Carr, 2015: 15), and they all help interpret what happens in the play.

Although, according to Kathleen Ferrara and Barbara Bell (1995: 265), dialogue "can heighten the performance value of their stories, thus making them more vivid", instances of reported speech were always considered a part of the dialogue because "reported speech both depicts the experience of the original utterance, and detaches reported utterance from the reporting speaker" (Myers, 1999: 376). In ancient Greece, the line between direct and indirect speech is blurred due to the orality of their literary traditions which, I argue, grants Carr the liberty of using reported speech throughout her play.

In his *Intermediate Ancient Greek Language*, Darryl Palmer (2021: 102) argues that "all dramatic dialogue is, by its nature, direct speech; but it is not directly reported speech. However, in drama short passages of direct speech may be quoted within a longer speech. Most commonly, this may occur within a messenger's speech". Naturally, a messenger's speech would contain fragments of reported speech as a part of their duty, however, Carr seems to include reported speech intensively in the speeches made by royals to voice the marginalised, provide evidence, and shift the frame.

Prior to delving into the functions of reported speech in the play, it is important to note that in employing reported speech instead of dialogue in her *Hecuba*, Carr bids the audience to imagine what is being reported. William Gruber (2010: 7) defines this approach as The Theatre of Imagination where narrative "tends to impede any further inquiry into the ways in which mental image-making on the part of the audience—as distinct from scenic enactment by the figures on stage—constitutes a functional and important part of classical tragic dramaturgy". Audiences "shift the grounds of imitation from the stage to the imagination" (Gruber, 2010: 6). Carr encourages the audience to envision the narrative unfolding on stage, thereby offering fresh avenues for interpretation. In doing so, she redefines the roles of reported speech, as we shall see.

2.2. Functions of reported speech

Hecuba voices the silent characters in Euripides' play, the Trojan women who were taken as slaves. In Euripides' version, the female servant is only a conveyer of news, Polydorus' death is announced by her. The servant states:

> "I bring Hekabe pain.
> Evils all around. Not easy to say something happy." (Euripides, 2006: 128)

Her announcement voices Hecuba's suffering only, Trojan women are marginalised in Euripides' version. This is because ancient tragedies focused solely on the actions of high heroes and left low-class individuals on the periphery (Miller, 2015). By contrast, Carr's Hecuba voices these marginalised females and grants them the freedom of wailing about their loss and expressing it on stage. Instead of the servant being a messenger who reports the deed, Carr reveres the roles, and the servant becomes voiced by herself in a move that aims to capture the suffering of

those below Hecuba. The servant in Carr's (2015: 23) version replies to Hecuba's lament of the war and reminds Hecuba that the Greeks "put a sword through my son's heart as we got on the ship. He's seven. Then they flung him into the sea" and continues: "He was all I had. His father died for Troy. He fell early on. He was all I had". This moving conversation highlights Carr's unwavering dedication to the strategy of amplifying the voices of the marginalized and elevating the unheard narratives that are often disregarded in traditional historical accounts.

Carr also corrects Euripides in the sense that she acquits Polymestor of the crime of killing Polydorus for the gold sent by Priam and Hecuba should Troy fall. She rather ascribes the deed to Agamemnon, the coloniser, who killed Polydorus to guarantee the end of Priam's bloodline. In Euripides' play, it is Polymestor, the king of Thrace, who murders the boy and throws his body in the sea, his motifs being gold and:

> "Prudence and foresight.
> I had a fear that if this boy-your enemy- survived,
> He would resurrect Troy,
> Then if the Greeks heard a son of Priam was alive
> They'd make a second expedition
> And devastate Thrace
> And we'd suffer once again
> For being neighbors of the Trojans,
> As we have in the past" (Euripides, 2006: 152)

Euripides only alludes to Agamemnon's ability to expand his colonial territories and presents him as a sympathetic leader who allows Hecuba to avenge her son. Carr transposes Agamemnon to being a real-life coloniser who seeks to expand his empire at any cost. In Carr's adaptation, Agamemnon kills Polydorus and Polymestor's sons too. When Polydorus pleads for his life, Agamemnon replies: "I can't. I wish it were otherwise but I can't" (Carr, 2015: 37), which indicates his intention of annihilating the legacy of Troy, perhaps even Thrace.

Moreover, Polydorus' ghost is present in Euripides' play only at the beginning where he narrates what happened to him and what will happen to Troy. Euripides writes:

> "But when Troy perished,
> And Hector perished,
> And my father's hearth was razed to the ground
> And my father himself slaughtered at the gods' altar,
> By Achilles's bloodyminded son,
> Then Polymestor cut me down
> To get the gold-
> That guestfriend of my father- tossed me in the sea
> And kept the gold for himself" (Euripides, 2006: 102)

While in Carr's version (2015: 39), Polydorus is present in the flesh and more vocal upon his meeting with Agamemnon, Polydorus asks Agamemnon:

> "Why? He says, why? Why do away with us like this? There are laws around the conduct of war. Why torture a vanquished people, why burn their city to the ground, throw salt on the fields, decimate the livestock, poison the rivers, the lakes, the very sea. Why slaughter the old, the weak, the young?".

His refutation of war and its calamities makes Carr's argument clearer, he reinforces the notion of resistance presented earlier in the play. Polydorus appears in this version to also acquit Polymestor of his murder, the guestfriend of Hecuba and Priam kept his promise of safekeeping the boy and the gold, but had to sacrifice his promise to save his children who were also eventually killed by Agamemnon.

Patrice Pavis (1998: 230) argues in her *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis* that "the narrative cannot, however, take on too much importance in the body of the play without running the risk of destroying its theatrical quality". Nevertheless, Carr balances narrative and action while simultaneously highlighting the importance of both of them. Carr melds stage directions and narrative into a cohesive entity, for instance, Agamemnon describes Hecuba: "She rattles on about their paved streets, their temples, their marbled libraries, their Holy Joe priests, their palaces of turquoise and pink gold. I say, where's Helen? We can't find her" (Carr, 2015: 15). In this context, the narrative does not dominate the action (or the stage direction) but rather collaborates with them to foster an immersive experience.

Later, by having Cassandra, the prophecy-doomed daughter of Hecuba, narrate the end of Carr's play, her narrative gains more credibility, but that is also the function of reported speech because it "provide[s] evidence; it can do this because of the sense of 'direct experience' arising from depiction, the conveying of how it was said as well as what was said" (Myers, 1999: 386). Carr indeed presents the audience with the reality of war, the truth behind colonial motifs (Carr (2015: 00.44) says in an interview with the Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama that Helen is a "rack." And that she thinks "it is the excuse nations make up to go in and take and do what they were going to do anyway"). She uses reported speech intensively to make her story lifelike and accurate. Hecuba says: "I pretend I don't know who he is. And you are? I say. You know damn well who I am he laughs, and you may stand" (Carr, 2015: 13). Hecuba narrating Agamemnon's words as they were uttered by him implies Carr's intention of voicing and empowering her despite her different portrayal in the play.

In the final speech by Cassandra, Hecuba is acquitted, and all the horrible vengeful deeds accredited to her are absolved. In this case, Carr not only corrects Euripides, but she also clears Hecuba's reputation after centuries of misjudgment. Cassandra speaks of Hecuba's accusations, saying: "they said many things about her after, that she killed those boys, blinded Polymestor, went mad, howled like a dog along this shore", but later she reminds the audience that the Greeks were "the wild dogs, the barbarians, the savages who came as guests and left an entire civilisation on its knees" (Carr, 2015: 57). Carr rewrites the story of Hecuba because, for her, "the process of adaptation starts to move away from simple proximation towards

something more culturally loaded" (Sanders, 2016: 27), she loads an ancient tragic war tale with a modern cultural frame, and this is where her usage of reported speech serves the process.

Another function of reported speech is frameshift. The "proximation towards something more culturally loaded" requires a frameshift from the source text's cultural, religious, political, and philosophical frame to the present-day frame. This frameshift was introduced by Grey Myers (1999: 379) where he examines the function of reported speech and states that reported speech "mean[s] something more like Goffman's frame shift from the primary frame that we take to be immediate reality, to another frame shared for the purposes of interaction". As Euripides writes in the immediate reality, his tragedy is filled with dialogue. In her work, Carr offers a powerful framework that encompasses the intricate cultural, political, and philosophical elements present in today's society. With this shift, the nuances within reported speech are revealed, showcasing its crucial role in navigating the complexities of cultural adaptation and interpretation.

Additionally, Carr shifts frames when she uses reported speech because the source text and the present-day colonial and feminist topics interact on different levels, they both share a theme of exile and war, although they are set in different settings. In Carr's adaptation, and within the speech by Hecuba pleading Odysseus to take her instead of Polyxena, she narrates Hecuba, Odysseus, and Cassandra's interaction upon Odysseus's refusal of her proposal:

> But if it's a human sacrifice you want isn't one as good as another? And I can't believe I'm having this argument, that there are words for this. The women have started to wail. No, he says, it's Polyxena they want. Agamemnon's command. I don't know his thinking, I just obey. Get up, Mother, Cassandra says and drags me to my feet. So you were right after all I say. (Carr, 2015: 38)

As Odysseus and Cassandra speak, their words transport us from the ancient setting of Greece to the present day. Within this modern context, they boldly delve into discussions of colonial themes and issues."The aim", as James Andreas (1999: 107) writes about adaptation, "is not replication as such, but rather complication, expansion rather than contraction", which is clearly illustrated in Carr's adaptation. She complicates the plot by infusing a sexual encounter between the coloniser and the colonised, expands the tragedy to include Cassandra, and contracts the play into a shorter narrative.

Furthermore, Elizabeth Holt and Rebecca Cliff (2006) suggest that reported speech is used to make a complaint and evaluate the addresser's intentions. In Carr's work, the addresser and the addressee are equal in their ability to report each other's speeches despite their different positions in the war. Agamemnon is holding power here and Hecuba is defeated, yet Carr matches them in terms of reporting each other. Agamemnon reports his superior position while meeting Hecuba for the first time, saying:

> And she's looking me up and down. She has an eye on her. Eighteen children I'm told. I wonder if they're all Priam's. I wouldn't mind making a son with her. Only way to sort a woman like that out is in bed. Take the haughty sheen off her, the arrogance

> even while she's skidding in blood, stepping over corpses, the lip curling. This is my husband's head she says, brandishing it at me. You didn't even have the decency to give me back his body. (Carr, 2015: 13)

Here, "the recipient can be given 'access' to a reprehensible comment enabling him or her to offer a negative assessment of it and thus support the teller's own evaluation. Thus, Drew (1998) and Holt (2000) find that reported speech is recurrently associated with recounting the climax of a story involving a complaint" (Cliff &Holt, 2006: 15). Noticeably, the whole play is written in reported speech as a parody of war. The objectivity of the royals, who are supposed to be men of honour and truth, when reporting all the events in the play suggests the colonial motifs behind it.

3. Different portrayals of Hecuba

The portrayal of Hecuba's relationship to Agamemnon differs in the two versions. Hecuba cooperates with Agamemnon in Euripides' play, while in Carr's Agamemnon defeats her by the end of the play. For instance, in Euripides's version, Agamemnon is portrayed as the coloniser and yet Hecuba trusts him to help her with her vengeance plan. She even declares that even though she is enslaved, she would still want an honourable death after her vengeance and ironic honouring of Achilles. Hecuba states:

> "Now me, no matter how meager my life from day to day,
> I'm satisfied-
> So long as I see my tomb decorated as it deserves.
> The grace lasts a long time." (Euripides, 2006: 114)

While for Carr, Hecuba is weak, defeated, and more concerned with the damage the coloniser brought upon her land, she publicly accuses the Greeks of being barbarian colonisers, who destroy and abuse the Trojans' resources as well as their culture. Carr's Hecuba is more outspoken than Euripides' about their living conditions and the catastrophes the war brought upon them. Carr (2015: 15) writes: "you came as guests, rolling in here stinking of goat shit and mackerel and you came with malice in your hearts. You saw our beautiful city, our valleys, our fields, green and giving. You had never seen such abundance. You wanted it. You must have it. You came to plunder and destroy". The above sentences epitomise the core of colonialism in history and are used by every coloniser to justify their deeds.

4. Conclusion

To conclude, Hecuba resurfaces in the twenty-first century as a rejector of colonialism, an emblem of freedom, and an acquitted queen of Troy on account of Marina Carr. What I like to call "Carr's Greek sensation" serves her process of writing and adapting plays that reflect the modern world. She uses reported speech

to provide evidence to her colonial argument, blurring the line between reality and her fiction. She also shifts the frame from ancient Greece to the modern world for purposes of interaction, voices the marginalised, and acquits Hecuba. Her usage of reported speech is certainly suggestive of not only feminist but also colonial implications.

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HEKUBA U SAVREMENOM SVETU: UPOTREBA NEUPRAVNOG GOVORA KOD MARINE KAR

Apstrakt

Marina Kar premešta Euripidovu Hekubu iz mita koji osnažuje žene u delo s kolonijalnim kontekstom iz 21. veka. Njen izbor proizilazi iz činjenice da ona „piše na grčkom jeziku" (Mekginis, 2003) i ističe „savremene probleme kroz sudbinu marginalizovane, rodno određene individue" (Kurdi, 2010). Njena obrada fokusira se na irsku kolonijalnu borbu, uvodeći novu, ranjivu Hekubu koja mrzi rat i otkriva kolonijalne motive. Pored toga, Kar koristi neupravni govor kroz celu dramu kako bi zamenila dijalog, koji je „srž svakog dramskog susreta, bilo u pozorištu ili u učionici" (O'Nil, 1989). Njena upotreba neupravnog govora poziva publiku da istraži različite motive koji stoje iza njega. U adaptaciji Marine Kar, cela drama napisana je u neupravnom govoru. Pretpostavljam da Kar eksperimentiše s novim metodom pripovedanja koji je ranije bio rezervisan za glasnike kao deo njihove dužnosti da prenesu poruku. Umesto toga, ona rekonstruiše ovaj način pripovedanja, uključujući monarhe i plemiće poput Agamemnona i Odiseja. Njena drama fokusira se na drevne kolonijalne motive i ciljeve koji i dalje postoje u našem vremenu. Pored toga, prema Gregu Majersu (1999), „neupravni govor istovremeno prikazuje iskustvo originalnog iskaza i odvaja preneti iskaz od govornika koji ga prenosi", što doprinosi objektivnosti priče. U tom smislu, ovo istraživanje će se usredsrediti na motive za upotrebu neupravnog govora kao načina davanja glasa onima koji su ućutkani, pružanja dokaza, pomeranja okvira i oslobađanja Hekube.

Ključne reči: neupravni govor, grčke tragedije, irska drama

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VOICE AND SILENCE OF THE GENDERED SUBALTERN IN MARY SHELLEY'S *FRANKENSTEIN*

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Abstract

The present paper examines the production and perpetuation of Orientalist discourse, as well as the voicing and silencing of the gendered subaltern Other in Mary Shelley's worldwide classic *Frankenstein*.

More specifically, the analysis argues that there are specific characters of Oriental ancestry or appearance in the novel, namely Safie and the creature, which are attributed essentialized and stereotypically Orientalist characteristics when juxtaposed to the white European characters of the novel. Furthermore, the paper stresses that the female subaltern, that being Safie, as well as the female creature, who is destroyed by her creator, are not allowed to claim a voice. More specifically, Safie's story is fully narrated by the creature and the female creature is killed before she can actually narrate her own story. It is further argued that although the male subaltern, Frankenstein's creature, is presented as a savage figure of terror, he is given a powerful voice, as he is educated and eloquent, openly defying his master and demanding his freedom. This condition reveals a complex differentiation in the representation and access to power of the subaltern subject depending on the subject's gender.

In particular, this study employs Gayatri Spivak's theory *Can the Subaltern Speak?* which focuses on the epistemic violence that the subaltern subjects, especially the female, experience as they become silenced. Edward Said's theory on *Orientalism*, which discusses the stereotypical representation of the Orient based on which the Occident is constructed, is also used to facilitate this study. The paper thus, aims to contribute to the rich research which examines *Frankenstein* in a post-colonial context for its Orientalist discourse, by focusing on the less explored voice and silence of the gendered Subaltern.

Keywords: Orientalism, subaltern, gender, voice, representation

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1. Introduction

It is characteristic that many of the quintessentially classic novels in British literature, have been quite recently, more specifically in the postmodern era, examined in terms of their racialized and gender-binary perception of what horror and violence entail. Taking into consideration the fact that the gothic novel is a hybrid literary genre, great research has been made upon its constituent subgenres such as horror and science fiction and especially on the underlying theories it has employed such as the Orientalist discourse. In this Orientalist discourse, which advocates the superiority of the Occident over the Orient, a constructed notion, the condition of the Subaltern subject is highly complex in that it constitutes the amalgamation of different parameters such as Race, Gender and Class. Taking as a point of departure, Gayatri Spivak's (2018: 79) position that the subaltern is an inherently heterogeneous subject which is never allowed to speak or listened to when it actually speaks, the current paper closely examines the role of the narratorial strategies of Voice and Silence as these are employed in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (2006 [1818]). Being a complex gothic novel, *Frankenstein* demonstrates the different manifestation of the subaltern condition, as it is experienced by the male subaltern, namely the creature, who appears dominant in the gender hierarchy, and the female, such as Safie and the unborn female creature, whose voices are always either suspended or mediated. Although both the male creature and Safie internalize the white man's language, as it is exemplified in Shelley's novel, in order to acquire the voice and identity that they are denied by the white European oppressor, it is only the male subaltern that manages to challenge the master−slave hierarchy, whereas the female subaltern remains forever silent, always represented by her oppressors.

2. Theoretical background and previous research

In order to accurately examine the exact condition and social construction of the subalterns presented in Shelley's novel, it is vital to firstly explore the fascinating concept of the Subaltern itself, as well as Edward Said's seminal work on Orientalism and the man-made construction of the Other.

To begin with Said's (2018: 10) influential concept of Orientalism, which is defined as "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'"., this concept has proved an extremely fundamental tool for scholars invested in a postcolonial literary analysis. More specifically, Said's (2018: 9) argumentation that the "Orient is not only adjacent to Europe … [but also] its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the other" as well as "a battery of desires, regressions, investments, and projections" (Said, 2018: 16), has provided the means with which to explore and revisit classic literary works under a new prism, examining Oriental novelistic characters, as well as the power dynamic relation between these characters and the European characters to whom they are so often

juxtaposed and contrasted. It has thus, opened up the possibility for various scholars to share fresh perspectives on works such as Shelley's *Frankenstein*, a work which thrives on such juxtapositions between the Orient and the Occident.

As far as the theorization of the Subaltern is concerned, Antonio Gramsci (2010: 14) was the first to explore the condition of the subaltern subjects, underlining the heterogeneity of these marginalized social groups, as he has famously argued that "the history of the subaltern groups is necessarily fragmented and episodic". His (Gramsci, 2010: 14) further commentary on the predicament of the subaltern subject is reflected in his argument that "the subaltern groups are subject to the initiative of the dominant groups, even when they rebel and revolt". Hereby, he points out the extremely difficult task of the subaltern subject to combat the dominant group which is responsible for the subaltern's subjugation and the effort of the subaltern to claim a new position in the social hierarchy. Gramsci's work has been a valuable point of departure in postcolonial work, as it has made visible the struggle of subaltern, marginalized groups and it has laid the foundation for more thorough research upon the condition of subaltern people, such as the groundbreaking work of Gayatri Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*

In this seminal work, Spivak investigates the correlation between epistemic violence, gender and education in the societal production of the subaltern and its consequent subjugation by dominant, capitalist forces. More specifically she (Spivak, 2018: 76) defines epistemic violence as "the remotely orchestrated, far-flung, and heterogeneous project to constitute the colonial subject as other", underlining the fact that the subordination of the subaltern is a complex, systematic and strategic, colonial practice. She (Spivak, 2018: 77) further discusses the importance of education in the persistent effort of the subaltern to be liberated by the imposed social restrictions, as she argues that "the education of the colonial subjects complements their production in law" and she (Spivak, 2018: 78) then rightly proceeds to stress that "the oppressed, if given the chance (the problem of representation cannot be bypassed here) … can speak and know their conditions". Indeed, as this paper will proceed to argue, in *Frankenstein*, the male creature's successful effort to educate himself, actually enables his liberation from societal, hierarchal restrictions through his self-realization process. However, the most interesting argument in Spivak's (2018: 82) analysis, which has proved crucial in this research paper, is her assertion that "both as an object of colonial historiography and as a subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant". Spivak's argumentation of the heterogeneity of the subaltern condition as experienced by the male and female subalterns, constitutes the basis of this research, as the paper investigates the subalterns' different representations and the different processes they are allowed, or not allowed to follow towards their liberation.

Moreover, Spivak's essay "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism", which touches upon the work of *Frankenstein* itself, provides some interesting insights regarding the influence of imperialist thought on the novel, examining Shelley's work as a product of its time, which draws on different disciplines such as Kantian philosophy, Freudian thought and essentialist representations of the

Other. What makes this essay particularly interesting for the purposes of this paper, however, is Spivak's commentary on the destruction of the female creature, the misrepresentation of Safie and most importantly the vast difference described in Shelley's novel between the male creature and Safie's education, self-realization and transformation processes. More specifically, Spivak's (1985: 257-258) arguement that "Shelley differentiates the Other [and] works at the Caliban/Ariel distinction", invites further exploration of this distinction. Although the differentiation of the Other is positive, as it reflects the heterogeneity of the subaltern, resisting essentialist thought of the Other as a timelessly, essentialized identical figure, Shelley's emphasis on the aesthetic beauty of Safie and the representation of her lack of educational or individual transformation is problematic, as this paper discusses.

Furthermore, *Frankenstein* has been at the center of various feminist readings, which discuss Shelley's narrative strategies and her effort to underline the social restrictions and injustice faced by women. One of these works is Joyce Zonana's work "They Will Prove the Truth of My Tale": Safie's Letters as the Feminist Core of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein", which focuses on Safie's written documentation of the events, a piece of work which is never explicitly quoted or reproduced in the text itself, as Jonana's article argues. Zonana (1991: 170-171) rightly points out that "for the reader of *Frankenstein* Safie's letters remain opaque, a mysterious talisman of 'truth' that passes from hand to hand within the text". She (Zonana, 1991: 173) discusses Shelley's specific narrative choice, arguing that they "are central thematically as well as structurally, a fact Mary Shelley signals not only through her characters' use of them as evidence, but also through their content, their form, and their peculiar silence -- their absence as text from the novel". This absence is further explored in the present research, which aims to contribute to the existing bibliography by examining intersectionally, questions of voice, silence, representation and grief in relation to the subaltern condition.

3. Orientalism and the othering of the subaltern

In examining the subaltern condition in terms of its voice and silence, it becomes evident in various points in the novel that it is influenced by Orientalist thought. More specifically, such influence is perceived in the stereotypical depiction of the central subaltern figures, in comparison to the white European characters, such as the case of the male subaltern, the creature that Victor Frankenstein has brought to life, who is compared to his white victims. If Said's (2018: 9) argument on the role of the Orient as "its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the other" is actually applied to the case of the subaltern Orientalized figures, their description as savage figures of horror may quite easily support the elevation of the white European protagonist and secondary characters. Specifically, Victor Frankenstein's observation of its creation's "dull yellow eye" and his "yellow skin [which] scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath … his shrivelled complexion and straight black lips" (Shelley, 2006: 318) informs the reader that

the male subaltern is no white European worthy of respect and compassion, but a figure of terror and repulsion, which is supposed to heighten the dramatic effect of the creation scene and present Victor as a victim of his fate. Furthermore, Jerrold Hogle's (2020: 656) argument that the creature's composition "has resulted in a multiracial one, yellow as well as black and white, and so subjected the Creature to all the prejudiced discourses of racial differentiation" points out that the creature's appearance is responsible for all the hate and distrust that he receives from the humans that he encounters throughout the novel, even from William, who is supposed to be a young unprejudiced child. Therefore, the subaltern's hybrid countenance and deformed body, when juxtaposed to William's "sweet laughing eyes, dark eyelashes and curly hair" (Shelley, 2006: 327), necessarily represents the fear of miscegenation which may threaten the purity of the white benevolent characters in the novel.

Furthermore, reflecting upon the romanticized and idealized representation, of Safie the female subaltern, it appears that despite being a minor character in terms of her contribution to the plot, she constitutes nevertheless, an acute example of the Western perception of the exotic Oriental woman. Taking into consideration Said's (2018: 16) argument that the Western perception of the Orient is not based on empirical reality but is determined by "a battery of desires, regressions, investments, and projections", it comes as no surprise, that the Oriental woman, the female subaltern, would also be assigned an identity reflecting the white man's desire and fantasy over her body, being represented by her oppressor as an exotic, sexually promiscuous apparition. Although Safie is not described in sexual terms in the novel, she is still described by the creature as a "countenance of angelic beauty … [with] her hair of shining raven black, and curiously braided" and her dark eyes "gentle, although animated" (Shelley, 2006: 382), constituting thus an inherently idealized and romanticized female figure, satisfying to the European eye and imagination. Furthermore, after her performance on the guitar is praised by the creature, he compares her to a white character, by referring to the "gentle words of Agatha" in contrast to the "animated smiles of the charming Arabian" (Shelley, 2006: 387). As it becomes apparent, Agatha, the white woman, is not assigned an exotic appearance or an alluring personality as the female subaltern is. Reflecting upon Joseph Lew's (1991: 280-281) position that when "the creature begins to recount Safie's earlier history … we see her as unequivocally Oriental …[y]et Mary Shelley inexorably strips away each of these 'oriental' traits", it is vital that his argument upon the challenging of Safie's stereotypical representation is more thoroughly examined. While it is obvious that Safie is stereotypically represented as quintessentially Oriental, the fact that she is a likeable character who gets married to a white man does not necessarily imply that she acquires an objective representation or that she even acquires a voice for that matter. On the contrary, Felix's admiration of her is based upon her idealized external appearance and not on her voice, a voice which is repressed.

Moreover, it is characteristic that the novel includes examples both of female and male racialized Others, whose subaltern experience becomes gradually differentiated, despite the fact that they are presented as sharing a similar alienating experience,

mostly because of the linguistic barrier. In this context of Othering, Gayatri Spivak's (2018: 79) argument that "the colonized subaltern subject is irretrievably heterogeneous" is both empirically materialized, as it has been demonstrated in the description of the two central subaltern figures, but also epistemically visible in their access to voice. At first, both the creature and Safie appear to face the same alienation that emanates from their lack of knowledge of the French language. More specifically, the creature compares himself to Safie stating that "although the stranger uttered articulate sounds … she was neither understood by, nor herself understood the cottagers" (Shelley, 2006: 383) quite similarly to his own experience when he did not know a single word. What is important, however, is the creature's recognition of Safie as a stranger, pretty much like him. Additionally, as the creature remarks that he "listened to the instructions bestowed upon the Arabian" (Shelley, 2006: 386) it is revealed that they are both actually instructed in the colonizer's language in order to facilitate communication with the white man. Therefore, examining Hogle's (2020: 656) argument that the creature "gains much of his very Western education by overhearing the cottage conversion of this black-haired Arab into a French-speaking Christian" which actually means "that the Creature is similarly "colonized" and still left as an "Other", it can be argued that they both have to be linguistically and consequently culturally colonized in order to claim their right to voice and recognition, exactly because they are both othered. In light of this, what is rather interesting is the necessity of the colonized to learn the colonizer's language and not the other way round, as none of the De Lacey cottagers actually try to learn the female subaltern's mother-tongue. It is this condition that initially presents both male and female subaltern subjects as similar, however their similarity ends here.

4. Gender hierarchy and voice of the male subaltern

Despite the fact that both the creature and Safie are forced to employ language as a means to assimilation into the white Western culture, their education appears to be portrayed in different terms by Shelley, as the male subaltern appears more eloquent than the female, according to his claims. Taking as a point of departure Spivak's (2018: 82-83) hypothesis that "if in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female in even more deeply in shadow", the description of the creature's high accomplishments in comparison to Safie's hesitant learning process, may actually start unraveling the double predicament of the subaltern woman within the colonial context, that is her race and gender. In specific, the creature takes great pride in his education, exclaiming that he "improved more rapidly than the Arabian, who understood very little … whilst [he] comprehended and could imitate almost every word that was spoken" (Shelley, 2006: 385), a statement which aims to underline the creature's high intellect and implicitly demonstrate the male subaltern's superiority over the female. In fact, the creature feels rather strongly the need to turn to language in order to battle his marginalization that is the outcome of the aforementioned othering.

Considering Katherine Montwieler's (2011: 75) similar observation that "[a]fter his initial rejections by people, the creature turns to nature for comfort. Reading history, literature, and the classics offers him an education, but it is complemented by his life", it can be stressed that the importance given to the sublimity and beauty of nature, becomes quite understandable since *Frankenstein* is undoubtedly a gothic novel, highly influenced by Romanticism. However, what makes specifically language, literature, knowledge and education vital for the creature's survival is their ability to shape and establish the power hierarchy and consequently to offer him an opportunity to improve his position in this hierarchy.

The exemplifying of the silence of the female subaltern, necessarily involves an evaluation of the male subaltern's education and access to voice, which despite the condition of being narrated by Frankenstein and Walton in the novel's epistolary form, it still remains rather powerful and eloquent. As it has been already mentioned, education is important to both subalterns, especially considering Spivak's (2018: 77) argument that the "education of colonial subjects complements their production in law", that is their right to be at least theoretically acknowledged as human beings. Specifically, education is essential for the subaltern in order to be recognized even as a subaltern in the social hierarchy, taking its place at the bottom of the social pyramid. In this context, it is highly remarkable that the male subaltern not only manages to acquire a voice through his colonial education, but most importantly he acquires a powerful voice, as he makes his master listen to his story. More specifically the creature tries to reason with Frankenstein by exclaiming rather eloquently "Be calm! I intreat you to hear me before you give vent to your hatred" (Shelley, 2006: 364), an attempt that appears to be successful as the creature manages to narrate his unfortunate condition through Victor and Walton. Even though the novel's form is distinctively epistolary, in the form of letters containing one another, the male subaltern still manages to get his story across. The creature's aim during his narration seems to be to utilize the knowledge that might make the cottagers ignore the deformity of his figure (Shelley, 2006: 379) as he admits, and indeed his voice carries power as his eloquence cannot be easily ignored by Frankenstein. Taking into account Criscillia Benford's (2010: 334) argument that "once the authorial audience reads the creature's narrative … they begin to doubt Frankenstein's description of the creature's moral character", it can be easily stressed that the male subaltern actually comes to challenge the gruesome story of his evil deeds as they are presented by the white man, his creator. As a consequence, he tries and succeeds in retrieving back the voice that he is denied and the readers are thus enabled to make their own assumption about the credibility of the two conflicting narratives.

What is more, as soon as the creature acquires the human language, his inferior othered position appears to be reversed, considering that he gradually becomes able to control not only his fate but also the fate of his master Frankenstein, both linguistically with his persuasion and physically with his bodily sturdiness. In that respect, Spivak's (2018: 82) argument that "both as an object of colonialist historiography and as a subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant" appears highly justifiable, considering that the male

subaltern manages quite successfully to assert his power and use his voice in order to demand what he considers his unequivocal right, namely his freedom. Apart from his claim to freedom, the creature demands that Frankenstein creates another subaltern creature, a female one in particular, with the prospect of having a companion in life. It is characteristic that Frankenstein is described as being influenced by the creature's reasonable, eloquent voice, as he remarks that "his words had a strange effect upon [him]" (Shelley, 2006: 414), that is that he is persuaded to start creating the female creature. However, when he changes his mind and moves on to destroy this unborn creature, the male subaltern uses his new-found power and voice to warn the white man who poses a threat to his aspirations. In fact, his voice greatly impresses the reader in that it constitutes an explicit attack to the master−slave hierarchy that is imposed upon him as the creature exclaims "[s]lave, I before reasoned with you … [r]emember that I have power … [y]ou are my creator but I am your master" (Shelley, 2006: 437), whereby he not only challenges Frankenstein's authority but he actually reverses the existing hierarchy. Reflecting upon Benford's (2010: 328) line of reasoning that the creature's voice "empowers him to challenge traditional authority and the concomitant belief that the people must be spoken for by more highly ranked advocates" it can indeed be argued that the male subaltern employs language to lay claim on Frankenstein's position in the social and racial hierarchy, as he asserts that his deformed body can guarantee Frankenstein's enslavement to his demands. Therefore, the creature appears to control his creator's life by threatening him and killing his most precious kin, exercising a form of power that emancipates him from the societal restrictions that are imposed on the subaltern subject.

5. The female subaltern, silence and the plight of misrepresentation

On the other hand, it is critical to contrast the male subaltern to the female one, Safie, who is being introduced to the reader only by the narration of the creature, which is narrated by Frankenstein. Her story is conveyed in third person, in contrast to the creature whose first-person voice prevails. A dramatic past full of fear of the Turkish harem and her tyrannical father is assigned to her. If Said's account on Flaubert's perception and establishment of the quintessentially Oriental woman is examined in relation to Safie's silence and misrepresentation, their condition will be revealed to be quite similar. More specifically, concerning his argument that "Flaubert's encounter with an Egyptian courtesan produced a widely influential model of the Oriental woman; she never spoke of herself … [but] [h]e spoke for and represented her" (Said, 2018: 14) it can be rightfully stressed that the specific female subaltern is also being represented solely by the male subaltern in third person. At no point in the novel is Safie offered the option to express her convictions, her fears or her feelings. On the contrary, it is the creature that describes her supposed fear of returning back to Turkey, back to her presumed tyrannical father, as he narrates that Safie "sickened at the prospect of again returning to Asia and being immured within the walls of a harem" (Shelley, 2006: 390), a claim which can by no means be proved

or disproved by Safie, given the fact that she does not possess a first-person voice in the first place. Considering Jeanne Britton's (2009: 5) assertion that the creature's narration of Safie's story "exists in the distinct forms of speech and text, as narrative summary and epistolary document", it can be argued that despite the documentation of the creature's narration, this by no means can guarantee that this narration is more than an idealized misrepresentation, which is influenced by the creature's sympathy of this subaltern person. In fact, Joyce Zonana's (1991: 176) argument that "Safie, a woman who narrowly escapes being 'immured' in a harem under her father's 'Mahometan' law, is a woman escaped from patriarchy … is a woman who insists on her own possession of a soul", takes for granted the Orientalist discourse which presents Safie's father as a tyrannical figure. It does not take into consideration the fact that as the male creature is the one copying Safie's letters, it is quite possible he has altered or left out parts of Safie's narrative. Safie is not given the opportunity to present her own truth explicitly. As a matter of fact, Safie's story is bound to be misrepresented as it is mediated by three male figures to the reader, all of which are most probably ignorant of the subaltern woman's predicament but still actually speak for her. Furthermore, Zonana's (1985: 180) assertion that "Safie and Felix share a relationship of mutual respect and pleasure, a relationship embodied in the formal structure of the letters, and one that eludes the other speakers", can in no way be proved, as the reader's only source of information is the creature's description of the woman's fortune, which is again mediated by Frankenstein and Walton.

More specifically, all of these men that represent and misrepresent her, appear to focus on the assumption that she needs to be saved and protected from the horrifying fate in Asia which she supposedly abhors, a fear assigned to her as it has been exemplified previously, by these male oppressors. Under these circumstances, what appears really interesting, is Spivak's (2018: 92) well-founded criticism of the strong conviction that "[w]hite men are saving brown women from brown men", or at least this is what they claim to be doing in the colonial context. If it is argued that the white man desires to control the subaltern woman permeably and absolutely, even more than the male one, the white colonizer can only justify his conduct, on the grounds that he gallantly protects the subaltern woman from the presumed evil subaltern man. It is this exact pretext that justifies Safie's arrival in Germany, away from the barbarous Orient and away from her treacherous father. However, as it has been already discussed, Safie cannot possibly comment upon this mediation of events. The creature attempts to validify his narration by exclaiming "I have copies of these letters … they will prove the truth of my tale" (Shelley, 2006: 389), the accuracy of these letters, however, can be still contested, since such documents could have easily been fabricated or altered in order to solidify the creature's narrative. Furthermore, by examining Britton's (2009: 17-18) point that the creature's "knowledge of her is confined to limited visual and textual exposure … [and that] the monster cannot in turn adopt that voice when he tells her story", it can be highlighted that the creature's subjective narrative cannot in any way replace the female subaltern's voice or justify her silence and that the described exposure is not only limited but highly equivocal. This complete silence and inherent misrepresentation of the female's voice can be

considered a conscious effort by Shelley to shed some light on the double predicament of the subaltern woman. However, a powerful female voice, able to represent and express herself, might have been proved more effective in challenging the colonial institutionalized silence of the subaltern woman. Therefore, it can be claimed that Safie is freer than the other women in the novel, though the freedom she enjoys is granted to her at the cost of denying her the voice that speaks her identity and culture, given the fact that Safie has internalized the European French language in order to be assimilated and accepted by the Delaceys.

Additionally, Safie does not constitute the sole example of a subaltern woman, taking into account the almost complete creation of another female creature which would perhaps also be treated as a subaltern if it actually came to life. The destruction of the female creature constitutes more than just an act of violence and termination. More specifically, Frankenstein's impulsive choice to destroy his newest creation which remains forever in the dark, does not offer the female creature the opportunity to be educated and be introduced in society, not even as a female subaltern. The female creature is not allowed even to assume the lowest position at the bottom of the societal hierarchy. Her absence from society and her inability to obtain a voice and speak for herself, are all testimonies to the condition that the female subaltern has to face, an absolute denial of any form of representation and in this particular case even the right to an embodied physical materialization. Spivak (1985: 255) rightly underlines the impact and implications of the female creature's destruction highlighting that "[e]ven in the laboratory, the woman in the making is not a bodied corpse but a human being", arguing that what Frankenstein perceives as an amalgamation of different butchered pieces of flesh, that he has put together, is in fact more than that. Indeed, Frankenstein's act of hubris has created life, therefore the female creature is indeed a human being, a human being who is denied basic rights. First and foremost, the female creature is denied the right to life and consequently the right to education and freedom of expression. Consequently, the reader needs to take into consideration the potential existence of the female creature and what this potential presence would have to offer both to society and to the male creature. Zonana's (1991: 182) insightful commentary that "Frankenstein's destruction of the half-completed female creature … masks the fear of female spirituality, and its powerful challenge to patriarchal domination" captures the essence of Frankenstein's violent action, as he seeks to exterminate and annihilate not only the body but also the female creature's thinking mind. It can be argued that the female creature might have revolted against Frankenstein and his exercise of control over his creations. The thinking female creature might even have denied the male creature's offer of companionship and even demanded a position higher than being placed under the male creature in the social pyramid. Therefore, Shelley's poetic decision to describe vividly the destruction of the female body constitutes a quite symbolic example of the everlasting silencing of the female subaltern.

Considering that Frankenstein destroys the body of this female subaltern without any remorse, this conduct is indicative of the predicament of the female subaltern, who is not treated as a living being but as a non-grievable object. This condition in

fact, correlates highly with Judith Butler's (2004: 32) pioneer argument that certain lives are considered to be of extremely high value and protected at all costs, whereas "[o]ther lives will not find such fast and furious support and will not even qualify as 'grievable'", such as the white idealized characters whose deaths are largely grieved, in contrast to the female subaltern's body which does not qualify as human. In particular, Victor's declaration that he has "a resolution to pursue [his] destroyer to death" (Shelly, 2006: 471) in order to avenge the death of his family and friends, actually demonstrates which lives are considered worthy of grief, namely white, high-class European lives. On the contrary, the description of the female subaltern's destruction involves no compassion for the female creature nor does it invoke any condemnation, as Victor narrates how "trembling with passion, [he] tore to pieces the thing" (Shelley, 2006: 436) on which he was working. Considering that the female creature is defined as a thing and not as the body of an actual person, what becomes distinctively visible, is the overall objectification of the female body, and especially of the subaltern one. Reflecting upon Zoe Beenstock's (2015: 8) commentary that "Victor destroys the female creature to guarantee social stability and explains this act as preempting a possible revolution in sexual politics", it can be clearly perceived that Victor desires indeed to secure and preserve the dominance of white masculinity over both white and subaltern femininity, in order to prevent his downfall. As a result, the lost future and non-grieved body of the female creature, further reinforce the argument that in order to be grieved, a person needs to be firstly acknowledged as human, a privilege which is never really attained by the female subaltern.

More specifically, as the body of the female creature becomes obliterated, and is offered no option to acquire a voice and negotiate its position, it can be easily argued that the female subaltern becomes forever silenced through this male violent action, left to be represented by the dominant male. It is in no case coincidental, that both Safie and the female creature, which constitute different manifestations of the female subaltern identity, are denied in the novel any actual access to voice and first-person narration. In the light of this realization, Spivak's (2018: 93) insightful assertion that "one never encounters the testimony of the women's voice-consciousness" virtually materializes in the novel's complete and successful silencing of the female subaltern by the dominant male in the established gender hierarchy. This silencing can be perhaps thoroughly explained in relation to the masculine fear of the female voice's capacity to reverse and dismantle the existing power relations. In specific, the possibility of an eloquent and reasonable female subaltern is highly dreaded by the white dominant male, as it necessarily poses a threat to his established power. In fact, Victor's justification of the destruction of the subaltern body indeed confirms his intimate fear of it, as he openly admits that "she, who in all probability was to become a thinking and reasoning animal, might refuse to comply with a compact made before her creation" (Shelley, 2006: 435) and thus disturb both Victor and the creature's efforts to control her body and voice. It is for this exact reason that the female creature shall never be born or heard. In regard to Beenstock's (2015: 8) position that "Shelley contrasts the female creature's powerless status and silenced voice with Victor's privileged position, and also with that of the articulate male

creature" it can be indeed argued that the contrast between this female character and the male ones is evident. However, whether this contrast is intended by Shelley to highlight the subaltern's predicament remains ambiguous. What remains unambiguous, however, is the persisting fact that the female subaltern, in all cases, remains both implicitly and forcefully silenced and misrepresented by her oppressor, who speaks on her behalf.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, *Frankenstein* is a complex gothic novel, considering that its inherent hybridity is largely indebted on the fusion of different literary genres and theories, among which the Orientalist discourse is unequivocally central. The stereotypical portrayal of the novel's non-white characters indeed betrays that it is highly aware of the epistemological binary between Orient and Occident that Said has touched upon. Both the creature's appalling apparition and hybrid body, along with the eminently idealized and romanticized misrepresentation of Safie as the quintessentially exotic Oriental woman, can be viewed as profoundly Orientalist. On the other hand, the novel's innovation and point of divergence from Orientalism, can be traced in relation to the subaltern male's acquisition of a powerful voice, which undoubtedly functions as a form of conscious resistance to the dominant white man and the established race hierarchy. The creature's newfound eloquence and power enables him primarily to become a master of his fate and secondly to address, persuade and openly challenge his white creator and his narrative, reversing the master-slave hierarchy. In this light, the male creature manages quite successfully to escape the limitations of the subaltern condition and to create a new societal position for himself, before his mysterious disappearance in the novel's ambiguous closure. In this context of the novel's Orientalist discourse, if the subaltern male's acquisition of voice, through the employment of the white colonizer's language, is compared to the corresponding internalization of the European language by the female subaltern, the predicament of the subaltern woman appears in all its entirety, as she is denied any access to voice and any opportunity to be represented objectively. In contrast to their male equivalent, neither Safie nor the almost alive female creature are allowed to have their own narrative in the epistolary form of the novel, but they are at all times misrepresented by the male characters, both white and subaltern, that wish to control them. In this respect, it becomes quite apparent that there is indeed no position for the subaltern woman to actually speak and be heard of in this novel (Spivak, 2018: 103). The destruction thus, of the female creature's body is highly indicative of the oppressed and silent condition of the subaltern woman. It constitutes a rather symbolic testimony to the systematic silencing and act of erasure that the Western, male dominated social hierarchy exercises over the female subaltern's body and mind.

The present paper explored *Frankenstein*, under a feminist, postcolonial prism, building up on the already rich research carried out by scholars such as Spivak, Zonana and many more researchers, who pushed the limits of the existing bibliography on

what constitutes undoubtedly a timeless classic novel. This research drew largely on key theoretical works, bringing together seminal concepts such as that of orientalism, the subaltern condition, examining previous commentary on the text's employment of such concepts. Moreover, this paper undertook to contribute to the current bibliography, by focusing more closely on the narratorial strategy of voice and silence as these are skillfully employed by Shelley in her novel, underlining the role of voice in the subaltern's perennial effort to be liberated. The paper also elaborated on the role of silence and the literary representations of absence and erasure as these are best reflected in the case of the female subalterns. Last but not least, this research introduced to the equation questions of precariousness and grievability, drawing on Judith Butler's work, in order to investigate the significance of grief for the perception of the subaltern as human. The paper thus opens up further questions, in relation to the various literary strategies that can be utilized in order to creatively present and represent the predicament of the female subaltern, as the narratorial strategies of voice, silence and grievability that have been hereby examined.

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GLAS I TIŠINA RODNO ODREĐENOG SUBALTERNOG SUBJEKTA U ROMANU *FRANKENŠTAJN* MERI ŠELI

Apstrakt

Ovaj rad ispituje stvaranje i održavanje orijentalističkog diskursa, kao i davanje glasa i ućutkivanje rodno određenog subalternog Drugog u svetski poznatom klasiku Meri Šeli, *Frankenštajn*. Zapravo, analiza pokazuje da se određenim likovima orijentalnog porekla ili izgleda u romanu, kao što su Safi i stvorenje, pripisuju suštinski i stereotipno orijentalističke osobine u poređenju sa belim evropskim likovima. Štaviše, rad naglašava da ženskim subalternima, u ovom slučaju Safi, kao i žensko stvorenje koje njen tvorac uništava, nije dat glas. Preciznije, Safinu priču u potpunosti pripoveda stvorenje dok žensko stvorenje gine pre nego što je dobilo priliku da ispriča svoju priču. Dalje se tvrdi da, iako je muški subaltern, odnosno Frankenštajnovo stvorenje, prikazan kao divljački izvor straha, njemu je dat moćan glas, jer je obrazovan i elokventan, otvoreno prkoseći svom tvorcu i zahtevajući slobodu. Ova situacija otkriva složenu diferencijaciju u reprezentaciji i pristupu moći subalternog subjekta, u zavisnosti od njegovog roda. Ova studija oslanja se na teoriju Gajatri Spivak, *Može li subaltern govoriti?*, koja se fokusira na epistemološko nasilje koje subalterni subjekti, posebno žene, trpe kada bivaju ućutkani. Takođe, rad se oslanja i na teoriju Edvarda Saida o orijentalizmu, koja se bavi stereotipnim prikazivanjem Orijenta na osnovu kojeg se stvara slika Zapada. Sledstveno tome, cilj rada je da doprinese postojećoj obimnoj literaturi posvećenoj proučavanju romana *Frankenštajn* u postkolonijalnom kontekstu u svetlu njegovog orijentalističkog diskursa, sa fokusom na manje istražene aspekte glasa i tišine rodno određenog subalternog subjekta.

Ključne reči: orijentalizam, subaltern, rod, glas, reprezentacija

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SEX, LIES, AND *GRAND THEFT AUTO*: THE CONTEMPORARY EFFECT OF RACIST CARICATURES ON THE PERCEPTION OF THE BLACK FEMALE BODY

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Abstract

The *Grand Theft Auto* (*GTA*) Saga (1997-2013) developed by Rockstar North has been one of the most successful action-adventure videogame productions with millions of fanatic players globally and billions in earnings (Wright, 2022: 1). Yet, in spite of its commercial *frenzy*, it has often been denounced for the debasing depiction of non-playable female characters designed to function as ornaments, be ridiculed, killed for fun or level upgrading, sexually objectified to serve the "male-gaze" experience as described by Mulrey (1979: 837) and others (Malone, 2014: 11-25; Ruberg, 2018: 314-27; Waszkiewicz, 2019: 175, 180; Wright, 2022: 150). Still, literature proves scarce in terms of research on the lack or the negative representation of Black female characters in the game even if the preponderance of playership consists of mainly Black male adolescents (Wright, 2022: 142). Hence, the focal point of this paper rests upon the deconstruction of the image of certain female figures of Black descent that has been denounced as being prejudiced across the *GTA* series (particularly the installments of *Vice City* (2002), *San Andreas* (2004), and *V* (2013), where such characters appear the most) via the introduction and systematic analysis of the following deep-rooted and long-standing racial stereotypes, namely the *Mammy*, the *Jezebel*, the *Sapphire* and, finally, the *Ghetto Hood Girl/Angry Black Woman*, and their effect on male and female playership.

Keywords: *GTA*, *Mammy*, *Jezebel*, *Sapphire*, *Ghetto Hood Girl/Angry Black Woman*

1. Introduction

Rockstar North's *Grand Theft Auto* (*GTA*) Saga (1997-2013) is one of the most popular action-adventure videogame productions, amassing millions of devoted gamers and fans worldwide and generating billions of dollars in revenue (Wright,

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2022: 1). Despite its rampant commercial success, it has been heavily criticized for the stereotypical portrait of non-playable female characters with many scholars' suggesting that it crosses the lines of satire and moves towards reinforcement of biases that could severely impact players' perception of women in real life (Malone, 2014: 11-25; Ruberg, 2018: 314-327; Waszkiewicz, 2019: 175, 180; Wright, 2022: 150). In particular, what can be traced in the game is the absence as well as the misrepresentation of ethnic-minority female characters, such as those of Black descent. This is critically analyzed in the present paper as a void in academic literature in need of exploration via the use of ingrained racial tropes, namely the *Mammy*, the *Jezebel*, the *Sapphire* and the *Ghetto Hood Girl/Angry Black Woman*, indicating how these possibly affect both male and female players outside the game setting.

First and foremost, the main objective of the *GTA* franchise is for the players to select a character, increase their social status and make a reputation mainly among gangsters by completing missions (Mehra, 2023: n. p.). Specifically, a noteworthy element which is traced is the characteristics the playable main characters/protagonists share, namely the fact that they are male, have a convictions history, and their purpose throughout all the installments of the game franchise is to rise through the ranks of the criminal underworld by accomplishing a set of various main and side quests that unlock new territories and facilitate plot progression (Mehra, 2023: n. p.). These mainly involve committing a set of different offences, such as physical assaults, shoplifting, drug dealing, drive-by shootings and vehicle thefts, as suggested by the title of the game (*Grand Theft Auto*, 1997-2013). Neither strict linearity nor a structured storyline characterizes *GTA*, which constitutes an open-world game that offers players autonomy over the way and order in which they can achieve the assigned challenges without simultaneously overlooking the gameplay rules (Mehra, 2023: n. p.). Additionally, there is free spatial mobility across a plethora of fictional places, which are based upon real-life locations, mostly in America, like New York City and Los Angeles (Mehra, 2023: n. p.).

In general, there is a form of "homogeneity", lying beyond the identity construction as well as personality and social deconstruction of the average video gamer (Waszkiewicz, 2019: 174-175). Such a depiction is associated with the act of satisfying the needs of the "ideal imagined player", who − based on mistaken perceptions rather than real demographics − often describes a well-off heterosexual Caucasian male appetitively aroused by aggressive behavior and voyeur of sexual activity (Waszkiewicz, 2019: 174-175). These traits are thought to describe certain attitudes that ostensibly define, mark and validate manhood (Przybylski et al., 2012: 69-70). This is applicable not only to adults but also to younger ages despite the "M" ("Mature") rating attributed to many games by the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) as in the case of *GTA* (Turtiainen, 2017: 10). In the gaming world, players are provided with unlimited opportunities to experiment with various analogous *assumed* along with socially-fabricated and -assigned masculine identities that facilitate direct yet guided physical and emotional expression along with extension of the self (Przybylski et al., 2012: 69-70). Hence, the gaming portrait of women follows this norm, fostering the creation of the players' ostensibly *ideal* image.

To be more precise, what can be evidenced in the earliest *GTA* games is the manifest absence, under- or negative representation of non-white female characters, which is a strong indication of "symbolic annihilation" (Haines, 2019: 12). This specifically relates to the systematic denunciation, disparagement, disregard or intended erasure of certain social categories from the popular media, such as persons with disabilities, members of LGBTQIA+ community, or ethnic-minority groups, like those of Black descent in this case (Haines, 2019: 12-13). Even though there has been a significant change in the later *GTA* games with the inclusion of characters from different racial backgrounds other than the Caucasian ones, the portrayal of Black women may be regarded as stereotypical, propagated over the passage of time and affecting real people in society negatively (González, 2014: 18-20; Turtiainen, 2017:17-18).

Black women have been the locus of research interest across time owing to their constant struggles to achieve social change in a world filled with deep-seated biases that have forestalled their lifelong process of gaining a unique and socially-acknowledged identity (Banaji et al., 2021: 3-5). They have truly been the direct target of long-established prejudice that has arisen as a *natural* consequence of institutional racism dating back in the period of slavery, fear of the unknown and imminent threat as well as media representation, and it has taken the form of offensive caricatures, which have escalated into "controlling images" that continue to degrade and dehumanize this specific racial and gender group, like various others (Collins, 2000: 23). Indicative examples are the stereotypes of the *Mammy*, the *Jezebel*, the *Sapphire* and the *Ghetto Hood Girl/Angry Black Woman*, which will be touched upon in the present paper via a close examination of certain female characters from four notable installments of *GTA*, focusing upon their behavior, external appearance, narrative role and certain linguistic features. Although *GTA* is thought to be a "satire" of the American media culture and society, and, thus, it must be approached accordingly based on the creators' statements, it is intriguing to observe how these caricatures have influenced the game developers' mentality towards the characters' overall design and treatment, and, by extension, players' perception of women, which continue to fuel concerns over biases spread across time despite opposite intentions (Turtiainen, 2017: 20; Wills, 2021: 2-4).

2. The *Mammy* stereotype

First and foremost, the *GTA* saga presents a sardonic version of the *Mammy* stereotype, especially in its fourth installment, that is *Vice City* (2002). In particular, Christian (1980: 12) offers a rather poignant portrait of this stereotype, stating that the *Mammy* is of black origins as well as fat, having such large breasts that she is capable of feeding all the starving children at a global scale. Truly, in *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City* (2002), the character of Auntie Poulet incarnates this racial caricature being displayed as an overweight and buxom elderly woman of Haitian descent, which could negatively affect players' perception of older Black women in real life

(Rogers, 2016: 97-99). What is notable is that even the name of the character, namely "Poulet", means "chicken" in French, which further intensifies this mocking and derogatory aspect of the character's build (Bruce & Gipson, 2002: 57).

Christian (1980: 12) continues the ironic description, stating that the *Mammy* is also portrayed with a headwrap with the purpose of concealing her "kinky" hair, which is as an indicator of her "ugliness", while being asexual, profoundly religious and credulously believing in witchcraft. This stereotypical portrait is indeed observed in the game, since Auntie Poulet's garment consists of an unappealing yellow or purple knee-length dress with a matching headwrap owing to which no evident sign of her hair color, length and texture can be discerned, along with white or purple slippers and grey socks (*Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, 2002). These colors are considered to be really important due to their symbolizing the attire of Papa Legba, namely a West African fertility or trickster deity that is said to function as an intercessor between humans and the supernatural world according to the Haitian Voodoo religion (Hume, 2013: 143-146). Hence, Auntie Poulet could possibly stand as a figure of this kind via this thought-provoking color scheme and involvement with witchcraft, facilitating players' interaction with the spiritual world within the game setting.

Additionally, the headwrap constitutes a form of expression of the cultural identity of the African women with a rich history dating back to the early 1700s when − especially Nigerian − queens used such fabric to embellish their hair and to indicate their aristocratic, religious and marital status (Benda, 2021: 168-169). Still, what started as a statement of sumptuous wealth and spirituality soon evolved into a symbol of serfdom at the age of slavery in the mid-1700s and onwards when female domestic and plantation servants were obliged to wear headwraps as a sign of obsequiousness (Buckridge, 2004: 89-91). This uniformity imposed among the African women slaves completed the look of the heavily-commercialized *Mammy* caricature spread across the popular media (Johnson, 2016: 7). Hence, Auntie Poulet's headwrap can function as a direct reference to the stereotype of that time yet, apart from its apparent practicality and stylistic flair, it evokes her pride in her Haitian roots while simultaneously being a symbol of resistance, authority and devoutness to her religion.

Moreover, Auntie Poulet's ritual practice can be evidenced in a plethora of Voodoo paraphernalia traced in her place of residence, such as skulls, hallucinatory potions served on a pretense of being harmless tea refreshment, wax candles and dolls that are employed with the intention of overpowering potential enemies by means of sorcerous force (*Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, 2002). Also, even her mats laid out on the floor of her shack for both religious and decorative purposes depict and allude to Voodoo deities of the Yoruba pantheon "Iwa" (meaning "spirits"), like the snake-figured "Damballa", who is the protector of the injured and the creator of the universe, "Erzulie Freda", who is the embodiment of the ideal woman and a symbol of purity and beauty, the mermaid-like "La Sirene", representing the marine life (Siedlak, 2019: n. p.), and, last but not least, the three-horned bull-shaped deity called "Bossou Twa Kon" that is the powerful liberator and a prominent figure of the Haitian religion (Oswald, 2008: 22).

Furthermore, Auntie Poulet challenges Christian's (1980: 12) description that the *Mammy*'s external appearance is linked to her submissive and docile personality "used in the service to her white master", while, as a motherhood figure, she is characterized by affection and faithfulness. To be more specific, though seeming benevolent and caring at first glance, the character stands out as an authoritative matriarch, a manipulator and a relentless boss of a Haitian gang group involved in various criminal acts (*Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, 2002). She is also in a longstanding rivalry with a Cuban gang led by Umberto Robina for reasons of territory and drug-trafficking control (*Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, 2002). As shown especially in the "Juju Scramble" mission, Auntie Poulet proceeds to persuade Thomas "Tommy" Vercetti to consume the supposed-to-be-tea liquid she has brewed herself, which turns out to be a hallucinogenic drug out of her voodoo ritual, causing him to perform a series of illicit tasks in her name at the expense of the Cuban gang to which he has friendly ties (*Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, 2002). What is notable is that Thomas does not seem to recall any of his actions after the mission, indicating that the effect of Auntie Poulet's potion is truly powerful (*Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, 2002).

Elaborating upon Auntie Poulet's voodoo practice, such African witchcraft has often been related to wickedness and abjection with the aim of hurting or, in some cases, brutalizing the white oppressors in an act of seeking vengeance (McGee, 2014: 70). This had led to the emergence of another stereotype, namely that of the *Magical Negro*, which began to disseminate across time owing to the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) out of false depiction of Black suffering (McGee, 2014: 72-74, 236). During this period, various rumors and drawings portraying seemingly black-on-white violence in the form of demonic rituals against the French soldiers-conquerors were spread due to the Haitians' strong desire to liberate themselves and retaliate for the barbaric acts executed against them (McGee, 2014: 72-74). Hence, the twisted image of the *Mammy* was created to persuade the public that slavery was humane, while promoting, in fact, institutionalized racism (Collins, 2000: 23). Still, as a trope in literature and film industry, the *Magical Negro* describes a Black character with spiritual powers that mostly functions as the sidekick of the − predominantly − Caucasian protagonist (Glenn & Cunningham, 2009: 137-140). A depiction of this kind may not fully accord with the role of Auntie Poulet, who stands out as a *cartel queen* and not as a mere aide, but it certainly serves as a socially and culturally sensitive stereotype of an ethnic-minority group's exhibiting serfdom towards the white race (Glenn & Cunningham, 2009: 143-144).

Finally, there needs to be a noteworthy reference to the *Aunt Jemima* stereotype at this point in juxtaposition to the *Mammy*. Lexically speaking, the names "Mammy" and "Aunt" are both used in the fiction of the antebellum South to describe both a person and a role within the plantation home (Athnasios, 2021: 5-6). These stereotypes function as "controlling images" fabricated with the purpose of concealing the harsh living and working conditions alongside the long suffering of Black female slaves (Collins, 2000: 40). The difference between these two terms rests upon the fact that *Aunt Jemima* constitutes the evolution of the *Mammy*, and is characterized by a more cheerful and pleasant personality (Athnasios, 2021: 5).

Also, the daily duties of *Aunt Jemima* are mainly restricted to cooking, which in the case of Auntie Poulet refers to her knowledge as well as skillful making and use of voodoo potions (Athnasios, 2021: 5-6). Even her oral discourse within the game is indicative of her ascribed role. However, she satirizes her role to downplay her strength and criminal activity actuated by dark magic: "Mmmm... The Cuban boys so clever. And me? Just a silly old woman", so she sarcastically wonders why and how "a little old woman" like herself "with a big old cooking pot" can pose as an intimidating figure (*GTA Wiki, n. d.: n. p.*; *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, 2002). Overall, the character of Auntie Poulet is carefully designed in such a way so as to bear a unique confluence of certain distinctive traits of a tripartite of stereotypes, namely that of the *Mammy*, the *Aunt Jemima* and the *Magical Negro*, which she manages to effectively deliver in a satirical manner.

What needs to be pointed out, though, is that there is a fine line between satire and reinforcement of biases. While the inclusion of the aforementioned details in Auntie Poulet's description (namely clothing and home-decoration choices, oral discourse, rituals and criminal behavior) may add depth and complexity to both the character and the storyline, socio-cultural sensitivity concerns may arise, since it could still propagate various harmful misconceptions among players and the public about how Voodoo practice and Black − mostly elderly − women may be erroneously considered to be interconnected. Over-exposure to such racial caricatures may lead players to internalize and normalize the stereotypes promoted, facilitating the perpetuation of systemic discrimination, institutionalized violence and inequity (Lopez-Fernandez et al., 2019: 10). Therefore, the game developers should be mindful of the potential implications the representation of certain social groups may have on players and generally society, they should approach this issue responsibly, thoughtfully and with care, especially in the next series, so as not to promote marginalization and dehumanization due to ignorance or false depictions (Mou & Peng, 2009: 928-931).

3. The *Jezebel* stereotype

Another recognizable stereotype presented especially in the fifth installment of *Grand Theft Auto* (2013) is the *Jezebel* one, which is exhibited through Tonya Wiggins. This "random", as called in the game, character belongs to the category of "Strangers/Freaks", providing the male protagonist with a small bonus mission, additional health or pleasure rate, and an objective (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). In terms of her external appearance, *Jezebel* contradicts *Mammy*'s sexless depiction, having attractive European physical features, which, as Jewell (1993: 45-46) pinpoints, tend to appeal to and erotically stimulate the Caucasian viewership, and mainly playership in this case.

The *Jezebel* stereotype can be certainly identified in the character of Tonya Wiggins. To be more precise, she is a young, fair-complexioned woman of African descent with brown eyes and ear-length, dyed-red hair, fleshy lips and a smaller nose, having full-face make-up with vivid shades of grey, red and purple (*Grand*

Theft Auto V, 2013). She is a licentious temptress often willing to sell her body and other services for a few dollars to satisfy her own and her husband's, JB Bradshaw's, crack-cocaine addiction (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). When further adumbrating Tonya's portrait, what becomes apparent is her pair of tight, low-waist, denim shorts that highlights her long legs matched with a lime-green sleeveless shirt, which gives prominence to her conspicuous tattoos in both of her arms (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). She also wears white lace-up and open-toe espadrille wedges with colorful heels along with standout accessories (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). These include golden-yellow *hoop* (namely large and round) earrings, a matching triangular-shaped necklace and a watch on her right wrist, together with a set of tribal-inspired *bangle* (namely big and round) bracelets on her left wrist, whose colors match those of her shoe heels (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). Such a portrait aligns with the Jezebel archetype constructed by the media in the context of gender, race and sexuality.

Tonya frequently professes that she has reduced the drug abuse and she merely does "baby-hits just to get a taste" every once in a while, which seems rather doubtful to Franklin Clinton's eyes, who is one of the three male protagonists (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). In this way, *Jezebel* goes hand-in-hand with Weaver's (2016: 60-62) *Financially Needy* and *Drug User* stereotypes owing to the media's and entertainment industry's disproportionately overrepresenting Black Americans, and mainly women, as destitute and drug addicts. Tonya and her husband reside in the area of South Los Santos, running a towing vehicle business together, whose responsibilities they often seem to disregard due to their substance dependence (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). In order for the business not to declare bankruptcy, Tonya asks Franklin Clinton, who is a friend of her spouse, to "pull" some work favors on her behalf in the form of side-missions to save their job (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013).

In addition, Tonya claims that she possesses a certificate in cosmetology, which she accidentally describes as "cosmology", as she brags about her long stylish nails (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). This triggers Franklin Clinton to mock her, asking her if she is about to make a space flight, and in an attempt to further demean her educational status, he states that she learned Maths "on the corner in Davis" Avenue outside a booze store, insinuating that it was sex work and not school that molded her (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). In this way, what can be stressed is that Tonya is designed as having some features of a Black "bimbo", meaning that she is an African-American female character that may be enticing yet is portrayed as lacking fundamental pedagogical background and potentially intelligence (Cassell & Jenkins, 2000: 337-338).

Another *Jezebel* stereotype can be traced in the character of Millie Perkins in *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas* (2004). Millie is a promiscuous, young woman of Black descent, who works as a croupier at roulette games in the mafia-owned *Caligula's Palace* casino located in the area of Las Venturas, where she also resides (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). She is one of the six girlfriends of another male protagonist of the game, namely Carl Johnson− unless he decides to kill her instead of dating her to speed up his mission to receive a keycard to enter the casino and rob it (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). In terms of clothing, Millie is

depicted as wearing the typical dress attire of her workplace, namely black pants with a white collared, button-down shirt, a pair of black shoes as well as a black vest with a matching bow tie (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). She also shares some soft European features, since she has a lighter skin complexion with brown eyes and a small nose, and, when especially at work, her make-up is earth-tones and her hair is usually tied up in a tight, sleek and low ponytail (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004).

Be that as it may, Millie is fond of BDSM practice, assuming the role of a dominatrix as signified by her respective outfit, namely her black leather underbust corset accompanied by a pair of black thigh-high socks that leave her buttocks exposed, and a black lace choker necklace (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). Moreover, when exercising her habit, her make-up is heavy with smokey eyes and dark lips, and her hair is tucked behind her ears (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). Furthermore, her place of residence is filled with many BDSM gadgets, toys and equipment, like a metal bondage bed, ticklers, harnesses, a leather swing, a black tight gimp suit for sexual pleasure, and others (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). Even the license plate of the car she drives has the word "SPANK" written on, which alludes to her BDSM habit (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004).

Both Tonya's and Millie's overall physical characteristics satisfy what Mulvey (1975: 835-836) describes as "scopophilia", since the passive female character is sexually objectified to maximize the active male player's or spectator's pleasure derived from the latter's act of looking at lustful visual content. Mulvey (1975: 837) further suggests that the female figure is dressed in accordance with such a dictating "male gaze", which casts its erotic fantasy upon it, as in Tonya's and Millie's looks. This means that, since the majority of white − often heterosexual − men owns a gross percentage of the media while being heavily invested in the entertainment industry, it should be held accountable for perpetuating debasing sexualized images of women made by and mostly for their own sex (Harris-Lowe, 2017: 30-31; Mulvey, 1975: 837-838; González, 2014: 18-20; Venegas, 2012: 95-97: Wright, 2022: 142).

Another issue raised is that such depictions not only limit the diversity of roles assigned to female characters but also foster body image dissatisfaction created due to the game developers' act of projecting figures with deformed and, thus, unrealistic physical proportions, which, by extension, distorts − predominantly female − players' self-perception of healthy bodies and acceptance of their diversity (Lopez-Fernandez et al., 2019: 7-10). In this way, several mental problems could arise, like low self-esteem due to unfavorable comparisons between real and animated bodies as well as beauty standards, depression, and constant anxiety over external appearance resulting in eating disorders, distress and impaired social functioning (Raouf et al., 2022: 2-5).

Additionally, what should be remarked is that the *GTA* Saga allows the playable male protagonists to have the choice of paying for the services of prostitutes and brutally kill them after the act so as to take their money back. Even Millie Perkins in *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas* (2004), who, though not a sex worker, can be physically assaulted depending on the player's personal choice let alone other

female characters across all *GTA* installments (1997-2013). This sense of having the freedom to act with no remorse, however, reinforces the biased victim-blaming image of women, and especially female sex workers, being regarded as unworthy of any sort of empathy, respect, compassion and humane treatment (Beck et al., 2012: 3017-3027; Ruberg, 2018: 7-8). Also, it even bolsters the misconception that such *Jezebels* are regarded as *expendable* and deserve to be abused once they have served their purpose, which is a significant dimension of the repercussions of the "male gaze" (Ruberg, 2018: 12; Weaver, 2016: 60). This further suggests that the ability offered to players to enjoy absence of consequences in the virtual world of video games may negatively impact how they perceive, comprehend, and interact with women in reality, leading to high criminality levels, especially gender violence (Lopez-Fernandez et al., 2019: 10).

Indeed, a meta-analysis study from Gentile et al. (2004) has shown that the astounding percentage of 89% of the most best-selling video games in the United States contains some form of violent content, while approximately 50% of them, including the first installments of *GTA* (1997-2004), includes physical and sexual violence targeting other characters, especially female ones, within each game. Although this does not necessarily suggest a direct causal relationship between excessive playing of such video games and exhibiting delinquent behavior, it certainly indicates that the former could be a serious risk factor of the latter based on relevant data (Anderson & Bushman, 2001: 353-358, 2002: 27-35; Ferguson, 2015: 646-665; Greitemeyer, 2019: 635-641; Olejarnik & Romano, 2023: 1-10). Truly, according to behaviorism and the social learning theory, repeated exposure to violent video games and other media could potentially lead to the reinforcement of aggressive behavioral motifs, which individuals adopt through close observation and imitation (Shao & Wang, 2019: 1-7; Yao et al., 2019: 662-669; Zhang et al., 2021: 1-11). Hence, extending the analysis within the framework of *GTA*, children and adolescents may internalize the negative behaviors and attitudes they are exposed to within the game, resulting to the 'normalization' of interpersonal violence and the perpetuation of gender and ethnic stereotypes. Yet such an inference must be approached with caution because, even if there is some basis for concern, we need to consider the broader context and the multifaceted nature of the influence of video games on human behavior based on more research for holistic and accurate results.

4. The *Sapphire* stereotype

Grand Theft Auto V (2013) also presents the *Sapphire* stereotype through another supporting character worthy of analysis named Denise Clinton, who, unlike others, neither has any quests related to her throughout the game nor does she seem to affect its progress significantly. Denise is the aunt of Franklin Clinton on his mother's side, both of whom live in the area of Strawberry, Los Santos (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). She is a well-preserved woman of Black descent in her 50s, who relishes jogging around the vicinity while rhythmically and repetitively singing empowering mottos

of female liberation with the purpose of adding a spiritual dimension to the overall feminist cause (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). However, such a "new-age" feminist approach is often treated with mockery and disdain throughout the game by the rest of not only male but other female characters, too (Malone, 2014: 67).

As far as her external appearance is concerned, Denise has an athletic look, consisting of a pair of white trainers and black workout leggings, a varsity-stripe, lightweight yellow or blue hoodie jacket, and an asymmetric cold-shoulder (namely having one sleeve) top in turquoise or purple color (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). In addition, her make-up is natural with earthy tones, her hair is not loose but tied into a messy up-do, and she has long round-shaped, white nails (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). Finally, some silver jewelry, namely a set of carved-face earrings with a matching tribal-inspired feather necklace, completes her neat look (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). What can be inferred is that she does not seem to conform to any fashion rules, setting herself aside from fashion homogeneity stereotypically ascribed to other female characters across the *GTA* Saga, such as the *Jezebel* Tonya Wiggins.

A plethora of *Sapphire*'s personality traits and behavioral patterns can be identified in the character of Denise. To be more specific, the character exhibits impoliteness, sassiness, unnecessary loud vocalizations when conversing, anger-management issues and obstinacy, which set the basis for the later development of the *Angry Black Woman* stereotype (Collins, 2000: 156; Donahoo, 2017: 61; Townes, 2006: 62; Weaver, 2016: 60). Even her body language signifies her emasculating and aggressive personality, since she is often seen in a hands-on-hips pose, reflecting an intense emotional state of vexation, impatience and rage, accompanied by head shaking, finger pointing and generally excessive hand gestures, foot tapping, and bruxism (namely teeth grinding) (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013).

Denise's interpersonal relationships are frequently characterized by volatility, being repugnant to anyone she may find disrespectful as inferred, for example, by her inability to have long-term romantic partners (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). This can be also indicated via her multiple posts on the online social networking service "Lifeinvader", where she keeps grumbling about the fact that she cannot find a man due to Franklin (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). This is because she usually has the tendency to accuse others of her miserable state instead of actually trying to change her lifestyle, which is consistent with the *Sapphire* racial trope (Luckoo, 2018: 34). What can be additionally noted is that Denise exhibits a compulsive sexual behavioral pattern as stated by other characters, which can be further substantiated by the fact that she is often heard producing orgasmic moans during her yoga practices while extending her pelvis on the lumbar spine as well as her willingness to become a certified pelvic-floor trainer (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013).

In general, the feelings of grief and sorrow Black enslaved women were gripped by owing to the harsh living and working conditions in the plantations and as in-house servants, which was rightfully expressed into rage, laid the foundation for the development of the *Sapphire* trope during the 19th century (Lewis, 2015: 29; West, 2012: 289-290). The *Sapphire*'s behavior is perceived as masculine, owing to the deep-rooted prejudice permeated especially across the popular media, suggesting

that there is a robust connection between the black female body and the properties determining the male sex (Rosenthal & Lobel, 2016: 5; Townes, 2006: 62). This is heightened by the fact that, due to father absence, Black females were obliged to take care of the various household responsibilities while being the *breadwinners* in parallel to support their families (Luckoo, 2018: 34). Denise in *Grand Theft Auto V* (2013) has assumed a "quasi-parental role", becoming both a mother and a father to her nephew, Franklin, with *Sapphire* stereotype intersecting with matriarchy (Lewis, 2015: 16).

In this way, *Sapphires* tend to be critical of other − mostly African-American − males' impoverished, unemployment or lackadaisical state, their sexual preferences, since they often blame them for showing attraction to Caucasian women instead of females of their own race, or even their *fractured* community ties (Townes, 2006: 61-62). Indeed, Denise is endowed with justice sensitivity and she always reacts to any potential incidents of wrong-doing she may detect (Lewis, 2015: 13). Hence, she is known for making acerbic remarks and being cynical towards her nephew, whom she often verbally abuses, describing him as one of her sister's "mistakes because she blames him for exhibiting a volition, adopting a phony attitude as well as neglecting their home duties, his gang group and the hood he was raised in (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013). Such adherence to the roots, though, is indicative of Denise's pride as a Black female and of her desire to strengthen the bonds among the members of her ethnic group so as for the latter to keep its dynamic character across time (*Grand Theft Auto V*, 2013).

Although the overall game portrayal of Denise Clinton as a *Sapphire* caricature seems to ridicule the racist mythology surrounding Black females, special attention must bepaid. The reason rests upon the fact that studies using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) have provided compelling evidence that frequent exposure to negative stereotypes can activate certain brain regions related to threat perception and social judgement (Bagnis et al., 2020: 1-11; Chekroud et al., 2014: 1-9; Kubota & Phelps, 2016: 299-310). Thus, individuals may start over-associating these traits with the targeted group, and, in particular, Black women, leading to one-sided, generalized and inaccurate views about them (Beck et al., 2012: 3017-3020; Lopez-Fernandez et al., 2019: 10; Mou & Peng, 2009: 928-931). This can thereafter influence how players may treat and interact with Black women in real life because such erroneous perceptions can shape their expectations of and behavior towards them, resulting in discrimination, micro aggressions, or even overt racism, since they may act on these learned associations unconsciously (Beck et al., 2012: 3017-3020; Stevenson, 2023: 9-11).

5. The *Ghetto Hood Girl*/*Angry Black Woman* stereotype

In *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas* (2004), Denise Robinson is another female character of Black descent classified as a "Stranger/Freak" worth mentioning. As a resident of Garton area in Los Santos, she is also one of Carl Johnson's girlfriends,

like Millie Perkins, offering the male protagonist her vehicle, namely her emerald "Hustler" coupe car, and a blue suit used for pimping missions as rewards (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). Just like other characters, she can be sexually exploited, abused and even killed upon the player's preference (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004).

Denise is a skinny young Black woman with a casual athletic style indicative of the Grove Street Families gang she is a member of (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). In particular, appearing with little or no makeup, she wears an oversized navy-blue or green T-shirt with a v-neckline, having the slang term "GROWLER" in capital letters embroidered on the back as well as the number 88 both at the front and at the back that is placed in the center in striking large size and red color (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). A white lightweight long-sleeved blouse can be discerned within the T-shirt for both functional reasons, like enhanced warmth, and aesthetic purposes, such as layering (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). She also wears a pair of white baggy sweatpants with elastic cuffs in the ankle area, matching trainers and a blue paisley bandana, which could further mark her gang affiliation (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004).

It is not accidental that the capitalized noun "GROWLER" is written on her T-shirt, meaning "an unappealing female", since it could be an indication of sarcasm on behalf of the *GTA* developers who wish to create an image that may be subjected to the typical stereotypes surrounding the *Ghetto Hood Girl* or *Angry Black Woman* but it certainly contradicts that of the *Sapphire*. Truly, as inferred, Denise does not seem to conform to the discriminatory feminine beauty standards concerning build, facial features, clothing and hairstyle as set by societal norms (Johnson, 2016: 39-40). Her portrait also semi-accords with the *Angry Black Woman's* racial trope standards because she does not seem to argue over social justice and equality issues as in the case of Denise Clinton presented in *Grand Theft Auto V* (2013), which is heavily satirized (Harris-Perry, 2011: 182-220; Wills, 2021: 2-4). Still, an aspect of this deep-rooted stereotype traced can be discerned in the repetitive projection of the single-sided image of a Black woman being intrinsically audacious, belligerent, confrontational and always irritable with no apparent reason (Welang, 2022: 115).

The *Ghetto-Hood* discriminatory traits reinforce her loud, aggressive and threatening personality that takes pleasure in all prejudiced aspects of living in the hood, which signifies that Black females have been stigmatized out of their lack of willingness to adhere to assumed gender roles (Johnson, 2016: 39-40). Even on the license plate on Denise's car the emphatic capitalized word "HOMEGIRL" can be seen, alluding to her being proud of leading a ghetto life as a young woman (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). Indeed, she loathes driving around well-off regions but prefers hanging out in establishments in the vicinity of Los Santos, like fast-food restaurants, namely "Cluckin' Bell", and nearby clubs, such as "Alhambra" (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004).

What is truly remarkable is Denise's favorite, yet illicit recreational activity, which is to perform drive-by shootings with submachine guns either from her own or Carl Johnson's vehicle at the expense of antagonist gangs, like the Mexican *Los*

Santos Vagos and the African-American *Ballas* (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). The purpose is to amuse herself, construct her personal identity and cement her reputation within the gang group she belongs to or in the mind of the rival ones (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). This can be depicted through a fun meter appearing at the top of the screenduring the game, which increases as she shoots other individuals (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004).

What is not clarified throughout the game is the kind of job Denise does for a living but it can be assumed that she may be employed as a sex worker due to her previous unintended pregnancies, which resulted in her putting three babies up for adoption (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). This idea is reinforced by the pimp suit the male protagonist, Carl Johnson, is given by Denise upon total progress completion as well as the fact that the word "Hustler", which is the brand name of her car, constitutes a slang term meaning "pimp" or "prostitution" (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). Last but not least, though a member of Grove Street Families, she is seen in the territory of *Los Santos Vagos*, perhaps because she may be offering sexual services to the members of that rival gang (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004). Finally, in the "Hot Coffee Mod" version, in which Carl Johnson has a sexual intercourse with Denise, he often compliments her performance comparing it with that of a professional, which could further substantiate the assumption that she may actually be a sex worker even though this is not officially stated (*Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, 2004).

What is further noticeable is the aspect of "speech stereotypicality" traced in the oral discourse of Denise, affecting the extent to which Black female characters, and, by extension, real individuals within the American society are perceived and treated as potential offenders, as in the case of Black residents of ghetto neighborhoods (Kurinec & Weaver, 2021: 1-3). Language truly constitutes a strong marker of the social status of an individual, activating various biases about gender, race, facial features, and even criminal status (Kurinec &Weaver, 2021:2). Drawing upon the research of Kurinec and Weaver (2021: 2), the character of Denise Robinson in *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas* (2004) uses "African American Vernacular English" as proven by the frequent use of the habitual "be" ("better not *be* hittin' me" instead of "better not hit me"), omitted "be" ("you tryin'" instead of "you are trying"), the unstressed present perfect "been" ("we *been* married" instead of "we have been married"), the third-person singular/plural absence and use of "ain't" together with double negation ("that *ain't no* manners" instead of "those aren't manners"). Additionally, as far as phonology is concerned, what can be observed is the "g-dropping" phenomenon with the prevalence of the alveolar nasal [n] in words ending in "-ing" ("enjoyin'" rather than "enjoying"), and the dropped "-r" or nonrhotic dialect (e. g. "stat" instead of "start"), and, moreover, the pronunciation of [th] as [d] (e. g. [dæt] rather than [ðæt] in the word "that") (Kurinec &Weaver, 2021: 2).

In another study of Kurinec and Weaver (2019: 4), what is stressed is that although the credibility and validity of "African American Vernacular English" have long been established, there is still prejudice against its users, perpetuating biased assumptions that circulate around ethnic-minority groups and offending behavior,

which is also spatially reinforced, especially if these individuals reside in ghetto neighborhoods. As in the example of Denise Robinson in *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas* (2004), who lives in a predominantly African-American district of South Los Santos that is poverty-stricken with increased offending rate, she uses this specific language system that is mistakenly yet frequently disparaged as slang, less standard, inappropriate, incorrect, gang-related and crime-prone (Kurinec & Weaver, 2019: 4-6). As inferred, the *Ghetto Hood Girl/Angry Black Woman* stereotype can be understood via language as well, which is another element of mere importance as "controlling" as "image", extending Collin's (2000: 40) account, and it can be skillfully yet deviously manipulated to degrade residents of Black descent and present them as a menace to mainly American society at large.

Overall, via the character deconstruction of Denise Robinson, what can be inferred is that she embodies certain distinct elements of the *Ghetto Hood Girl/ Angry Black Woman* stereotype. From her external appearance and oral discourse to her confrontational personality traits and involvement in illicit activities, Denise appears to perpetuate some discriminatory representations. As stressed throughout this essay, even if the *GTA* Saga (1997-2013) has been known for its projecting exaggerated characters with a sarcastic overtone, the repeated portrayal of such stereotypes can reinforce harmful misconceptions about Black women, since the players may subconsciously associate the individuals of this specific ethnic-minority group residing in ghettos with deviant behavioral motifs, leading to race and socio-spatial stigmatization, as studies have demonstrated (Beck et al., 2012: 3017-3020; Mou & Peng, 2009: 928-931; West, 2012: 150). Therefore, this particular analysis underscores the significance of encouraging the development of more varied and complex in-game characters approached with special care and sensitivity with the purpose of challenging and mitigating the impact of biases.

6. Conclusion

To sum up, the study shows that even though the *GTA* Saga developers have made some changes in promoting character diversity over the years, certain stereotypical elements still seem to permeate the game. These could subconsciously have a negative impact on players' perception of and interpersonal relationships with real women outside of the gamespace. Particularly, no matter how *benevolent* or *harmless* the intentions may be at first glance, gender stereotyping is pervasive, since, especially, excessively sexualized images of in-game female figures exhibiting the *Jezebel* stereotype could encourage, or even *glorify* violence against women as well as lead to a wider acceptance of the rape myth alongside victim-blaming attribution. This indicates that the great extent of autonomy and the right to unaccountability granted to players within the virtual environmental settings of the video games could have, among others, adverse effects on their sensory awareness, understanding and treatment of women in real life.

Another concern that has been touched upon in this paper is that these stereotypical portrayals of Black women not only restrict the variety of roles and

the fluidity of identities that can be attributed to female characters, but they also encourage body image dissatisfaction, especially among female players. This phenomenon occurs because of the over-projection of figures with deformed and, therefore, unrealistic somatic proportions as in the case of both the *Mammy* and the *Jezebel* racial tropes. This, in turn, distorts players' perceptions of both their own and others' bodies, and their acceptance of their diversity, leading to the rise or exacerbation of many health problems. To combat these issues, game developers need to expand the target playership and concentrate on creating more diverse, accurate and well-rounded female characters with whom players can identify and, so, a healthy and realistic body image can be prioritized over −predominantly male − hypersexualized fantasies which are heavily commercialized for profit.

Even in the case of the *Sapphire* and the *Ghetto Hood Girl/Angry Black Woman* tropes, which do not seem to abide by the typical biased beauty standards regarding feminine body proportions and facial characteristics as prescribed by societal norms, discrimination can still be traced via Denise Clinton's and Denise Robinson's speech patterns, clothing choice, deviant behavior and their main place of residence (namely the ghetto), which are all stereotypically interconnected in cognitive psychology terms. Specifically, as observed in the essay, the human brain may subconsciously link certain socio-racial features with particular behavioral motifs and backgrounds due to overexposure to analogous images, resulting in implicit biases with sometimes dreadful outcomes for the targeted individuals, or, in this case, women of Black descent. Still, more research is required to further investigate how video game narratives and character portrayals can perpetuate or challenge stereotypes related to race, criminality, and urban environmental settings.

What is thus addressed is the imperative need to confront and review gender representation, perhaps from a feminist perspective, in the *GTA* series and, subsequently, the gaming industry as a whole, embargoing recurring patterns of biased portrayals of Black characters and ideas about women spread across space and time. Hence, careful consideration is needed on behalf of the game developers when deciding to incorporate such figures to avoid causing confusion and propagation of hurtful biases. Only by striving for a thoughtful creation of more holistic, inclusive, multi-faceted and active characters that stand out for their authenticity and empowerment in terms of representation can the video game industry progress towards developing more *human-centered* and less *player-centered* games with a positive impact on players themselves.

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SEKS, LAŽI I *GRAND THEFT AUTO*: SAVREMENI UTICAJ RASISTIČKIH KARIKATURA NA PERCEPCIJU TELA CRNKINJA

Apstrakt

Saga *Grand Theft Auto* (GTA) (1997–2013), koju je razvila kompanija *Rockstar North*, jedna je od najuspešnijih produkcija akciono-avanturističkih video igara, sa milionima posvećenih igrača širom sveta i prihodom koji se meri milijardama (Rajt, 2022: 1). Međutim, uprkos komercijalnom uspehu, igra je često kritikovana zbog ponižavajućeg prikaza ženskih likova koji se ne mogu kontrolisati, osmišljenih da služe kao ukrasi, predmet poruge, žrtve ubijanja radi zabave ili napredovanja u nivoima, seksualno objektifikovani kako bi zadovoljili „muški pogled", kako ga opisuje Malri (1979: 837) i drugi autori (Malon, 2014: 11-25; Ruberg, 2018: 314-27; Vaskijević, 2019: 175, 180; Rajt, 2022: 150). Ipak, mali je broj radova posvećenih nedostatku ili negativnom prikazu crnkinja kao likova u igri iako većinu igrača čine uglavnom crni adolescenti (Rajt, 2022: 142). Iz tog razloga, osnovna ideja ovog rada se temelji na dekonstrukciji prikaza pojedinih ženskih likova crnačkog porekla okarakterisanog kao predradusnog u čitavom serijalu *GTA* (naročito u delovima *Vice City* (2002), *San Andreas* (2004) i *V* (2013), gde se takvi likovi najviše pojavljuju), kroz uvod i sistematsku analizu sledećih duboko ukorenjenih i dugotrajnih rasnih stereotipa: *Mammy*, *Jezebel*, *Sapphire* i, na kraju, Devojke iz geta/ljutite crnkinje i njihovog uticaja na muške i ženske igrače.

Ključne reči: *GTA*, *Mammy*, *Jezebel*, *Sapphire*, Devojka iz geta/Ljutita crnkinja

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MUSIC IN BLACK AND WHITE

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Abstract

Rather than focusing on literary allusions, this article will explore musical allusions by exposing the relationship between the songs and the text in Eugene O'Neill's play *All God's Chillun Got Wings* (AGCGW). The music allusions in the AGCGW contribute to the plot by making an impact via musical expression. The songs are introduced in the intervals as an expression of cultural practice, enriching the meaning, understanding, and knowledge of the text. The songs employed by O'Neill reflect the inner and outer manifestations of Black and White races. The songs not only justify the behavior of the characters in the play but also verify that the chronology of the songs explores the significance of the plot created by O'Neill. In addition, the paper clarifies how O'Neill has tried to make sense of the connection of music, spirituality, and innocence by placing the songs in the play and justifying their relationship with the written text.

Keywords: children, cultural expression, marriage, race, song

1. Music and its significance as a cultural expression

Eugene O'Neill's plays and the characters in them do not happen in the text or on the stage without borrowing a part of his life. Therefore, it is one's duty to peep into his biography to gain a better understanding of the text one wants to explain. In his *1922 WORK DIARY*, quoted in Dowling (1970: 51), he jotted down the seed of the idea: "Play of Johnny T. – negro who married white woman – base play on his experience as I have seen it intimately – but no reproduction, see it only as man's". The protagonists, Jim Harris and Ella Downey, in *All God's Chillun Got Wings* (*AGCGW*) endure racial psychological torture after they get married. This understanding of

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psychological torment reflects O'Neill's experiences of the relationship between his own parents, Irish immigrants to the United States who both suffered from alcohol and drug addiction. According to Richard Brucher (1994: 47), Jim, a black husband, and Ella, a white wife, symbolize the incompatibility between the O'Neills, one in which Jim (Eugene's father) is the ethnic "other" and Ella (Eugene's mother) the white "standard".*AGCGW* is an expressionistic play that unfolds in a setting best fit to exhibit racial inheritance. The two streets in the play, one inhabited by a black community and the other populated by white people, demonstrate the social and cultural differences and commonness between black and white people. O'Neill (1924: 279) commences the first scene of his play by providing a brief but splendid introduction of the locality that accommodates the two different races: "A triangular building in the rear, red brick, four-storied, its ground floor a grocery. Four-story tenements stretch away down the skyline of the two streets. The fire escapes are crowded with people. In the street leading left, the faces are all white; in the street leading right, all black." O'Neill used expressionistic devices to expose the black − white relationship; the contrast between music from each street reflects their outer manifestation of inner psychological drives. Julia Walker (2005: 153) explains:

> O'Neill's expressionistic technique has been long misunderstood by critics who have assumed that he simply borrowed his technique from German Expressionism and adapted it to his own dramatic ends … "expressionism" for O'Neill is a means of universalizing human experience. Unfortunately, this use of the term "expressionistic" caused him problems as well. For, as practiced and imported by German theatre artists, Expressionism tended to reduce character to an abstraction, a cipher, a mere symbol – exactly the opposite of his aims for this play.

O'Neill's representation of music in his plays is not just a sprinkle of entertainment; it is, rather, closely knitted with the text. His passion for music is not confined to *AGCGW*, O'Neill's engagement with music can be noticed in his other plays as well. For instance, Laurin Porter (2006: 133) shows that the plays of O'Neill that employ the most music are *Ah, Wilderness!*, with ten songs; *The Iceman Cometh*, with twelve; and *AGCGW*, with thirteen. *AGCGW* envelops popular American music along with blues. O'Neill employed blues intentionally because, for him, the outer manifestation of social and cultural behaviour was more important than the personal experience of married life. In *AGCGW*, the songs including blues bind the text and create further sub-plots which clarify the gravity of the chronology of the music employed in the play. James Baldwin's *Blues for Mister Charlie* (1964) is worth mentioning here, as it offers an account of how important the chronology of the songs is, especially when they move along with the acts in the play. Joe Weixlmann (1997: 35) explains the significance of the chronology of the songs by describing an incident that shows how Baldwin reluctantly agreed to change the chronology of the songs in *Blues for Mister Charlie* in need of added financial support after the director Burgess Meredith convinced him, but he never saw *Blues* after the sequence was changed. This shows a playwright's concern for the songs/music he has included along with the text. Jay Plum (1993: 561) describes blues as a connective force

that links the past with the present, and the present with the future; for him, the blues serves as an African American "Always Already" text that inscribes cultural experiences. W. D. E. Andrews (1980: 187) in his "Theatre of Black Reality: The Blues Drama of Ed Bullins" asserts that *Jones's Blues People* (1963) and *Black Music* (1968) were two important studies of the blues in the larger context of black culture. O'Neill's *AGCGW* is a clear race play that is crafted along with the songs, not all of them, concealing the pain of racism. According to Ulrich Adelt (2007: 165), in the southern United States, popular music relied on cross-racial practices and repertoires in the late 19th century and became segregated by "race" in the first three decades of the 20th century. Indisputably, all thirteen songs employed in *AGCGW* by O'Neill happened to be released in the first two decades of the 20th century or earlier.

In 1923, a time of struggle with racial and religious prejudice, a time when the streets of Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington were proudly crowded with thousands of white-hooded Ku Klux Klan, O'Neill came up with a play that showed how thoughtful and concerned he was. However, deep down, O'Neill knew that issues like racism could not be dealt with merely by words, and therefore, he decided to rope thirteen significant songs to make his play more effective. O'Neill crafted a play that left its impression on the audience with words and a piece of music. As in the introduction of *Words and Music*, Victor Kennady and Michelle Gadpaille (2013: ix) assert, "Most people appreciate music, whether or not they can sing or play an instrument, and the kind of music they most enjoy is the kind that has words attached, especially familiar ones. When words meet music, a special transaction occurs between rhythmic, harmonic and verbal signification". The songs chosen by O'Neill were the popular ones at the time among white and black folks. However, the timelessness of music cannot be denied. For instance, when *AGCGW* was revived in October 2001 by The Peccadillo Theater Company, the audience responded to the play enthusiastically. The urban drama, set in 1903, was directed by Dan Wackerman. The music director Chantel Wright filled the whole stage with jazz tunes. To explain the significance of jazz, Simon Frith (1996: 117) argues:

> For American writer and musician Greg Tate, as for other jazz writers, the story in music describes an entanglement of aesthetics and ethics; such a narrative is necessary to any claim that art has something to do with life. A good jazz performance, that is to say (like any good musical performance), depends on rhetorical truth, on the musicians' ability to convince and persuade the listener that what they are saying matters. This is not a matter of representation or 'imitation' or ideology but draws, rather, on the African-American tradition of signifying; it puts into play an emotional effect, a collusion between the performer and an audience which is engaged rather than detached, knowing rather than knowledgeable.

Though O'Neill did not employ even a single song in the final act of *AGCGW*, director Wackerman chose to add seven songs in the final act. He employed some symbolic ballads including "Sometimes I Feel Like a Mourning Dove,"[2] and "Black

[2] "Sometimes I Feel Like a Mourning Dove" was created by author and folklorist Duncan Emrich in 1908. Available at https://www.loc.gov/item/afc9999005.3484. (accessed July 20, 2024)

is The Colour of My True Love's Hair." In total, nine singers performed the chorus splendidly under the supervision of the notoriously famous company "Five Points Chorus" (2024). Chantel Wright's decision to use the chorus can be interpreted through Simon Robinson's words, who clarifies his explanation by quoting the composer Hector Berlioz's reaction to Gluck's opera *Armide*:

> I closed my eyes, and whilst listening to the divine gavotte with its caressing melody and its softly murmuring monotonous harmony, and to the chorus, "Jamais dans ces beaux," so exquisitely graceful in its expression of happiness, I seemed to be surrounded by all sides by enfolding arms, adorable intertwining feet, floating hair, shining eyes, and intoxicating smiles. The flower of pleasure, gently stirred by the melodious breeze expanded, and a concert of sounds, colour and perfumes poured forth from its ravishing corolla. (Robinson, 2013: 4-5)

2. Songs and their relationship with the text

The two popular songs, "Bird in a Gilded Cage"[3] from the whites' street, and "I Guess I'll Have to Telegraph My Baby"[4] from the blacks' street can be heard in the opening scene of *AGCGW* (O'Neill, 1924: 279). "A Bird in a Gilded Cage" presents a woman who gets married for money instead of love. On the other hand, "I Guess I'll Have to Telegraph My Baby" exposes a stereotype of black people. The first song symbolizes the possible entrapment in marriage and presents a negative picture of the scenario. The Blacks' song shows the underrepresentation of their community. These songs present not only the current situation in the neighbourhood but also the potential future events. Both songs enhance the audience's understanding of the play by commenting on the plot via music, and they foreshadow the further development of the play for Jim and Ella. The ballad from the white neighbourhood later becomes part of Ella's life when she decides to get married to Jim out of love, and the song from the black neighbourhood becomes Jim's reality of seeing the whites as a "superior" race. In the same scene, the song "Annie Rooney" is played by an organ grinder when Ella declares that she likes Jim and forms a friendship with him. "Little Annie Rooney"[5] is a boyfriend's confession that little Rooney is his sweetheart, and he would like to marry her:

> Ella – I like you.
> Jim – I like you.

[3] "A Bird in a Gilded Cage" was penned as a ballad by Arthur J. Lamb and composed by Harry Von Tilzer in 1900. Available at https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mmb-vp/104/. (accessed July 20, 2024)

[4] "I Guess I'll Have to Telegraph My Baby" is considered a "coon song" written and composed by George M. Cohan in 1898. The word "coon" is extremely derogatory and dehumanizing and is used to refer to black people by the white supremacist. Employing a coon song was, in fact, a significant move by O'Neill since it shows the inner psychological characteristics of the main protagonist Jim. Available at https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/779104ad-a46c-a888-e040-e00a18062eb1. (accessed July 20, 2024)

[5] "Little Annie Rooney" was written by Irish singer Michael Nolan in 1889. Available at https://www.loc.gov/item/jukebox-126759/. (accessed July 20, 2024)

Ella – Do you want to be my feller?
Jim – Yes.
Ella – Then I'm your girl. (O'Neill, 1924: 282)

Nine years later, the setting of scene 2 unfolds with the song "Gee, I Wish That I Had a Girl"[6] from the white street, representing romantic proximity. The blacks' street replies with "All I Got Was Sympathy" which encapsulates the theme of this part of the play (O'Neill, 1924: 283). Both songs offer a foreshadowing of the second act. In nine years, Ella has forgotten the promise she had made as a child. She is grown up now and engaged in her white community. Moreover, she is more interested in a white man named Mickey, another childhood friend, who is a racist and hates Jim. Ella seems to have started resenting colored people too. Although she does not admit it, her resentment can be noticed when Jim approaches her after graduation:

Jim – Do you hate me, Ella?
Ella – (confusedly and more irritably) Say, is he drunk? Why should I? I don't hate anyone.
Jim – Then why haven't you ever hardly spoken to me – for years?
Ella – (resentfully) What would I speak about? You and me've got nothing in common any more.
Jim – (desperately) Maybe not any more – but – right on this corner – do you remember once – ?
Ella – I don't remember nothing! (angrily) Say! What's got into you to be butting into my business all of a sudden like this? Because you finally managed to graduate, has it gone to your head? (O'Neill, 1924: 287)

"Gee, I Wish That I Had a Girl like the Other Fellows had" was chosen by O'Neill to manifest the restlessness of Jim, who feels lonely and as an outcast. Another song, "All I Got Was Sympathy,"[7] seems to be arguing that the boy deserved a smile, though all he got was hatred from the girl and sympathy from the others. The song becomes real and takes place when Jim tries to get Ella's friendship back:

Jim (*insistently*) – if you ever need a friend – a true friend –
Ella – I've got lots of friends among my own – kind, I can tell you. (*Exasperatedly*) You make me sick! Go to the devil! (O'Neill, 1924: 287)

O'Neill situated "I Wanted Love but All I Got was Sympathy" so well that it justifies the text after Ella rebukes Jim. Joe, another black man and Jim's friend, gets angry and approaches Jim, asking if he is a nigger or not. Jim accepts that he is the same as Joe. Jim's confession calms Joe, and Joe sympathizes with him, offering a cigarette:

[6] "Gee, I Wish That I Had a Girl like the Other Fellows had" was written by Gus Kahn and composed by Grace Le Boy in 1907. Available at https://www.sheetmusicsinger.com/i-wish-i-had-a-girl/. (accessed July 20, 2024)

[7] The song "I Wanted Love but All I Got was Sympathy" was written and composed by Fred Malcolm and Arthur Le Clerq in 1919. Available at https://www.sheetmusicwarehouse.co.uk/20th-century-songs-i/i-wanted-love-but-all-i-got-was-sympathy/. (accessed July 20, 2024)

> Joe – (*after a puff, with full satisfaction*) Man, why didn't you 'splain dat in de fust place?
> Jim –We're both niggers. (O'Neill, 1924: 288)

O'Neill has felt the loneliness that Jim has felt his entire life. His search for a companion after detaching himself from his family relates to the longing of Jim, who wants Ella's approval for the love he has for her. Stephen Black (1994: 6) asserts "Knowing O'Neill's in mourning helps one understand most of his subsequent plays". The next moment, the same organ grinder from scene one appears in the corner and plays the chorus of "Bonbon Buddie the Chocolate Drop That's Me" (O'Neill, 1924: 288). Though the "Bonbon Buddie the Chocolate"[8] is all about recalling one's true identity and sticking to it, it also depicts Jim's acquiescence to the notion of race. O'Neill's choice of songs creates a pathway for the reader/audience to understand the cultural aspects of two different races via the route of music. Each song chosen by O'Neill supports the text, enriches its meaning, and helps to develop a stronger relationship between the text and the music. Act 1, scene 3 begins five years later, playing two melancholy songs in the absence of laughter from both sides of the streets. The arc lamp reveals faces with favourless cruelty. In the whites' street, the last half of the chorus of "When I Lost You"[9] takes place. The song was written by Irving Berlin in 1912 after his wife, Dorothy Goetz, died of typhoid fever. O'Neill employed this song to present the sorrowful account of Ella, who has lost her child. Another song marks its appearance with the sorrowful voice of "Waitin' for the Robert E. Lee" (O'Neill, 1924: 289). The folks in the song "Waitin' for the Robert E. Lee"[10] are waiting for the ship named "Robert E. Lee" to carry their cotton, and a girl who would come along because a boy who is waiting for her. The theme of the song reflects the period spent by Jim waiting for Ella to return to him as his lover. A Salvation Army band plays and sings the song "Till We Meet at Jesus' Feet" (O'Neill, 1924: 291) after Ella sends Shorty away and waits for Jim. "Till We Meet at Jesus' Feet"[11] is a reference to the church where Jim and Ella will be united by marriage. Jim displays his cultural degeneration by saying "All love is white. I have always loved you" (O'Neill, 1924: 293) after Ella mentions that he has been white for her. Straight away, the organ grinder comes to the corner playing "Annie Laurie" (O'Neill, 1924: 294). "Annie Laurie"[12] is the depiction

[8] "Bonbon Buddie the Chocolate Drop That's Me," created by Alex Rogers and composed by Will Marion Cook in 1907. Available at https://levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu/collection/145/093. (accessed July 20, 2024)

[9] "When I Lost You," written by Irving Berlin in 1912. Available at https://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/sheetmusic/1569/. (accessed July 20, 2024)

[10] "Waitin' for the Robert E. Lee," written in 1912 and composed by Lewis F. Muir. Available at https://egrove.olemiss.edu/sharris_c/42/. (accessed July 20, 2024)

[11] "Till We Meet at Jesus' Feet," written by Jeremiah Eames Rankin and composed by William Gould Tomer sometimes between 1860 and 1896. Available athttps://www.hymnal.net/en/hymn/h/861. (accessed July 20, 2024)

[12] "Annie Laurie" is originally an old Scottish song based on a poem written by William Douglas of Dumfriesshire sometime between 1672 and 1760. Available at http://thistleandbee.com/annie-laurie.html. (accessed July 20, 2024)

of William Douglas' intense romance with Annie Laurie and a symbol of William's deepest love for Laurie. In Radmila Nastić's (2015: 195) opinion, O'Neill's characters always have a dream of belonging and they keep trying to achieve those dreams, although they are traumatized and frustrated by a hostile society that never gets tired of crushing their dreams. In the context of achieving their dream, Nastić further claims that O'Neill roped in the "Annie Laurie" song to display the much-anticipated love of Jim for Ella, and with the help of such a romantic song, he develops his text further and creates the situation in the play for Jim to propose to Ella:

> Jim – (*...They sit in listening, hand in hand.*) Would you ever want to marry me, Ella?
> Ella –yes, Jim. (O'Neill, 1924: 294)

The setting of scene 4 does not offer any song from the white street, but a voice with a shadowy richness can be heard from the blacks' street. A black tenor sings the first stanza in a childlike melancholy: "Sometimes I feel like a mourning dove," the second with a dreamy, boyish exultance: "Sometimes I feel like an eagle in the air," and the third with a brooding, earthbound sorrow: "Sometimes I wish that I'd never been born." All three stanzas here provide an understanding of Jim's inner and outer manifestations:

> Sometimes I feel like a mourning dove,
> Sometimes I feel like a mourning dove,
> Sometimes I feel like a mourning dove,
> I feel like a mourning dove.
> Feel like a mourning dove.
>
> Sometimes I feel like an eagle in the air,
> Sometimes I feel like an eagle in the air,
> Sometimes I feel like an eagle in the air,
> I feel like an eagle in the air.
> Feel like an eagle in the air.
>
> Sometimes I wish that I had never been born,
> Sometimes I wish that I had never been born,
> Sometimes I wish that I had never been born,
> I wish that I had never been born,
> Wish that I had never been born.[11]

According to Frith (1996: 117), music pleasure is also a narrative pleasure, and he claims his argument by referring Greg Tate's appreciation of Cecil Taylor:

> Someone once said that while Coleman Hawkins gave the jazz saxophone a voice, Lester Young taught it how to tell a story. That is, the art of personal confession is one jazz musicians must master before they can do justice by their tradition. I couldn't relate to Cecil's music until I learned to hear the story he was shaping out of both black tradition and his complex 'life as an American Negro'.

Samuel J. Bernstein (2006: 51) quotes Bogard Travis from *Contour in Times*, "Whatever O'Neill meant by the play's 'real intention,' what he has accomplished is, for 1924, a bold treatment of the social and personal problems that emerge from

an interracial marriage". All three stanzas above are a clear indication of O'Neill's perspective about interracial marriage, which he uses through the medium of this song. The first stanza of the song provides him with a cultural view of Jim's feelings of inferiority which he inherited from the society ever since he was a child. The second stanza presents his current emotional state while getting married to Ella, his childhood love, which makes him feel like he has won the battle. The third stanza reflects the scene that takes place just after their marriage, when the newlywed couple steps out of the church. "The halves of the big church door swing open and Jim and Ella step out from the darkness within into the sunlight. The doors slam behind them like wooden lips of an idol that has spat them out" (O'Neill, 1924: 295). While they are fixed and immovable, looking back at the people who have been staring at them scornfully, the organ grinder comes in from the right and plays the chorus of "Old Black Joe"[13] (O'Neill, 1924: 296), which is full of soft melancholy that evokes a feeling of sorrow without bitterness. "Old Black Joe" makes such a deep impression on Ella that she says to Jim at the end of the play, "Sometimes you must be my old kind uncle Jim who's been with us for years and years. Will you Jim?" When Jim starts crying and asks God to purify his soul, Ella becomes like a child and asks him not to cry by saying, "Don't be old Uncle Jim now. Be my little boy Jim" (O'Neill, 1924: 315).

The songs are undoubtedly the threads that tie together the whole text of the play, and O'Neill fixed the songs in their best chronological order. Each song, whether popular American music playing from the whites' street, or the blues, either from the blacks' street or an organ grinder, represents the relationship between the characters within the corresponding scene of the play. This is the only play that contains thirteen songs, which, certainly, is the greatest number of songs in any of the plays written by Eugene O'Neill, despite the fact that the Act 2 does not contain a single song. There is no explanation for why O'Neill did not use a song in Act 2. However, one thing is clear: all the scenes in Act 1 take place in a society where songs from both sides, from the street of the whites and the blacks, can be heard; where an organ grinder might appear at the corner and play the blues, or a black tenor might appear singing in his sorrowful voice. Unlike Act 1, all three scenes are set in a home located on the blacks' street. Although O'Neill fixed all the songs in Act 1 it makes only twelve of them, whereas the play claims to have thirteen songs in it. Surprisingly, the final, thirteenth song is "All God's Chillun Got Wings," a black spiritual song whose writer and date of composition are unknown, which was used as the title of the play itself. O'Neill's decision to use the title of the song as the title of the play exemplifies the belief that the innocence in children protects them from racial hatred and that everyone, whether white or black, is a child of God. Thomas Turino (2008: 1), in the *Introduction: Why Music Matters*, commences his book by stating "Music sounds are a powerful human resource, often at the heart of our most profound social occasions and experiences. People in societies around the

[13] "Old Black Joe" was penned by Stephen Foster and first released by Banda Rossa in 1899. Available at https://www.loc.gov/item/jukebox-29906/. (accessed July 20, 2024)

world use music to create and express their emotional inner lives, to span the chasm between themselves and the divine, to woo lovers, to celebrate weddings, to sustain friendships and communities, to inspire mass political movements, and to help their babies fall asleep". According to the title song, it's only children who have wings (free from good and evil) and who can access God's heaven. Therefore, the play ends with Jim's statement after Ella asks him to play with her:

> Jim – (*still deeply exalted*) Honey, Honey, I'll play right up to the gates of Heaven with you! (O'Neill, 1924: 315)

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the title *All God's Chillun Got Wings* justifies the climax of the play when the two adults, who happen to be husband and wife, become children again and verifies the fact that the text of the play has an intricate relationship with the songs employed by O'Neill. Although *AGCGW* is not considered one of the greatest plays written by O'Neill the fact cannot be ignored that the play is still relevant in terms of identity, psychology, culture, race, politics, and music. The play's revival in 2001 proved that audiences want a serious theme along with thought-provoking plots and significant characters, especially with musical numbers. All the songs, employed by O'Neill, created a deep rhythmic effect and left the audiences with unforgettable, moving memories.

ALL GOD'S CHILLUN GOT WINGS[14]

I got a robe, you got a robe
All o' God's chillun got a robe
When I get to heab'n I'm goin' to put on my robe
I'm goin' to shout all ovah God's Heab'n
Heab'n, Heab'n
Ev'rybody talkin' 'bout heab'n ain't goin' dere
Heab'n, Heab'n
I'm goin' to shout all ovah God's Heab'n

I got –a wings, you got –a wings
All o God's chillum got –a wings
When I get to Heab'n I'm goin' to put on my wings
I'm goin' to fly all ovah God's Heab'n
Heab'n, Heab'n
Ev'rybody talkin' 'bout Heab'n ain't goin' dere
Heab'n, Heab'n
I'm goin' to fly all ovah God's Heab'n

[14] "All God's Chillun Got Wings" is considered a Negro spiritual song. Its exact origin is unknown, but in the public record it is credited to Elizabeth White in 1933. Available at https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/98501242/. (accessed July 20, 2024)

I got a harp, you got a harp
All o' God's chillun got a harp
When I get to heab'n I'm goin' to take up my harp
I'm goin' to play all ovah God's Heab'n
Heab'n, Heab'n
Ev'rybody talkin' 'bout heab'n ain't goin' dere…
I got shoes, you got shoes
All o' God's chillun got shoes
When I get to heab'n I'm goin' to put on my shoes
I'm goin' to walk all ovah God's Heab'n
Heab'n, Heab'n
Ev'rybody talkin' 'bout heab'n ain't goin' dere
Heab'n, Heab'n
I'm goin' to walk all ovah God's Heab'n

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MUZIKA U CRNO-BELOM

Apstrakt

Umesto fokusiranja na književne aluzije, ovaj rad istražuje muzičke aluzije, otkrivajući odnos između pesama i teksta u drami Judžina O'Nila *Sva božja deca imaju krila*. Muzičke aluzije u ovoj drami doprinose radnji, ostavljajući jak utisak putem muzičkog izraza. Pesme se povremeno pojavljuju kao izraz kulturne prakse, obogaćujući značenje, razumevanje i poznavanje teksta. Pesme koje koristi O'Nil odražavaju unutrašnje i spoljašnje manifestacije crne i bele rase. Pesme ne samo da opravdavaju ponašanje likova u drami, već i potvrđuju da redosled pesama naglašava značaj radnje koju je stvorio O'Nil. Pored toga, rad objašnjava kako je O'Nil pokušao da pronađe smisao u povezanosti muzike, duhovnosti i nevinosti uključivanjem pesama u dramu i opravdavanjem njihovog odnosa sa pisanim tekstom.

Ključne reči: deca, kulturni izraz, brak, rasa, pesma

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"MY EXPERIMENTS HAVE TAUGHT ME GREAT RESPECT FOR ALL CREATURES": RICHARD ADAMS'S *THE PLAGUE DOGS* AND THE ANTI-VIVISECTIONIST MOVEMENT[1]

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Abstract

Relying on historical research by A. W. H. Bates, Hilda Kean, Harriet Ritvo, and others, the paper examines Richard Adams's 1977 novel *The Plague Dogs*, its stance on scientific experimentation on animals, and its depiction of human−animal relations, against the background of the nineteenth-century anti-vivisectionist movement in Great Britain. Though writing in the 1970s, Adams, it is argued, appropriates, and replicates the anti-vivisectionists' specific concerns and rhetorical devices – primarily the focus on the human experimenter's virtue, and the suffering of the animal during experimental procedures – with the general aim of painting animal research as an exercise in sadism with little to no scientific value.

Keywords: animal experimentation; anti-vivisectionist movement; Richard Adams; *The Plague Dogs*

1. Introduction

Over the course of Richard Adams's *The Plague Dogs* (1977), Rowf and Snitter, the traumatized and disabled canine protagonists, occupy distinct yet always precarious positions of lab animals, starving strays, and (supposed) biohazards hunted down by the British army. Each of these positions is accompanied by their own bodily and mental terrors, detailed, and delivered, so effectively (through the mixture of

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realism and "Gothic tropology" (Höing, 2020: 59)), that the happy end, in which the drowning dogs are rescued from the sea by real-life British naturalists Sir Peter Scott and Ronald Lockley, and Snitter is reunited with his beloved, falsely-presumed-dead master, is impossible to believe. Preceded by the metafictional "colloquy" (Adams, 2015: 481) between the reader and the author, in which the reader begs "dear author" to "bring lost dogs home" "on some miraculous breeze!" (ibid.), the happy end, moreover, is explicitly referred to as a dream by the narrator himself. Namely, after recounting the tearful reunion between Snitter and his "vanished" man, the narrator continues, "[n]ow I saw in my dream that they had gone only a very little way…" (Adams, 2015: 505); a few passages later, Snitter comments, "It's jolly being dead, isn't it?" (ibid: 507). The harrowing novel thus concludes appropriately: there is no real happy end for the dogs in the world which is "bad for animals", as Rowf repeatedly asserts throughout Snitter's and his ordeal.

The Plague Dogs employs the talking animal trope associated, from the eighteenth century onwards, with children's literature, but this is an emphatically adult text, not merely because it frequently depicts animal and human death in all its brutality (the sheep, ducks, and hens that the starving dogs devour on occasion; the tod being torn apart by the foxhounds; Kiff, a fellow lab dog who dies by cumulative electrocution and is constantly in Snitter's broken mind, speeches, and songs; Mr. Ephraim and Geoffrey Westcott). Rather, it is in the gradual recognition of the inevitable destruction of the innocent that the adult nature of the text lies: in this aspect, and in its emotional impact, *The Plague Dogs* is comparable to *King Lear* (1606)*, Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1892), and *Grave of the Fireflies* (1988). "Gradual" is an important qualification, as the greater part of the narrative is not concerned primarily with the dogs' death – nor with the experiments to which they have been subjected – but with their prolonged, hopeful-then-desperate struggle to survive in the Lakeland hills throughout October and November, after their escape from A.R.S.E. (the satirical acronym for "Animal Research Scientific and Experimental", the fictional research station situated at Lawson Park in the Lakeland area). The novel, especially in the beginning, does detail instances of deliberate mental and bodily harm to which "man's best friends", and countless other nonhumans, are put in the context of scientific research, and in the name of human knowledge, human health, and human safety. Human knowledge, health, and safety, the long-debated yet, nowadays, largely honored arguments in favor of scientific experiments on animals, are from the very start of *The Plague Dogs* treated merely as excuses for the soul-degrading exercises in sadism over the disempowered, the innocent, and the disposable – very much in line with the views held by the nineteenth-century opponents to animal experimentation, as well as contemporary animal rights activists.

Adams's novel depicts human–animal relations at their worst, yet the tradition to which *The Plague Dogs* belongs and continues as a text which is firmly against animal experimentation, that of the nineteenth-century anti-vivisectionist movement in Great Britain, sheds a different, arguably more positive light on these relations. This paper, therefore, examines *The Plague Dogs*, its stance on scientific experimentation

on animals, and its depiction of disposable lab animals, in the context of the anti-vivisectionist movement in Great Britain, "an anti-cruelty movement unequalled anywhere in the world" (Bates, 2017: 197) whose specific concerns and rhetorical devices – primarily the focus on the human experimenter's virtue (Bates, 2017: 1), and the highlighting of animal suffering during experimental procedures – Adams appropriates and replicates for similar ideological and political purposes.

2. Anti-vivisectionist movement in nineteenth-century Great Britain

Experimentation on live, disposable animals, including human ones, is as old as science itself – and nearly as old are the objections raised to it. In *De Anima* (c. 210), for instance, Tertullian calls Herophilus "a butcher", who, along with Erasistratos, was the first to practice both human and animal vivisection in third-century BC Alexandria (Geller, 2010: 4),. Tertullian also gives a scientifically valid argument against vivisection, repeated by contemporary critics of animal experimentation such as Andrew Knight (2011): pain and violent death which human and nonhuman animals experience during experiments cannot possibly result in any reliable insights.

> There is that Herophilus, the well-known surgeon, or (as I may almost call him) butcher, who cut up no end of persons, in order to investigate the secrets of nature, who ruthlessly handled human creatures to discover (their form and make): I have my doubts whether he succeeded in clearly exploring all the internal parts of their structure, since death itself changes and disturbs the natural functions of life, especially when the death is not a natural one, but such as must cause irregularity and error amidst the very processes of dissection[3].

Some of the early animal vivisectionists themselves, moreover, were evidently bothered by the nature of their work. Writing in the second century, Galen specifically recommended the use of pigs rather than apes for studying the larynx, in order for the experimenter to avoid "the loathsomeness of the [facial] expression in vivisection" produced by the apes (Persaud, Loukas & Tubbs, 2014: 43). In the seventeenth century, however, Descartes' revolutionary "monstrous thesis" of bête-machine relieved experimenters from their concerns, having defined the animal as an irrational, non-feeling automaton whose cries of pain are comparable to "the creaking of a wheel" (Visvanathan, 1997: 24). A direct result of such conceptualization was the rich tradition of vivisection in France throughout the eighteenth and the nineteenth century. Yet in Great Britain, the "monstrous thesis" was not unanimously accepted. According to Philip Armstrong, Descartes' reinforcement of the human–nonhuman

[3] Knight (2011: 33, 36) also discusses "pain-related physiological, psychological, and behavioural distortions" in experimental animals, which often result in "statistically significant distortions in a range of physiological parameters, including cardiovascular parameters and serum concentrations of glucose and various hormones".

binary on the basis of reason rather than the older, Christian criterion of an immortal soul, was tested and rejected in British literature, primarily in the work of Jonathan Swift (Armstrong, 2008: 49-61). Swift's fellow eighteenth-century author, Alexander Pope, already a vegetarian, became a passionate anti-vivisectionist having witnessed the blood circulation experiments of Reverend Stephen Hales. While Swift was suspicious of the Enlightenment's infinite faith in human reason, Pope raised the issue of the limits of human power over animals: "…he [Rev. Hales] commits most of these barbarities with the thought of its being of use to man; but how do we know that we have a right to kill creatures that we are so little above as dogs, for our curiosity, or even for some use to us?" (Monamy, 2009: 17).

British critical approach to French philosophy and science became even more pronounced in the next century, in the responses to the work of Francois Magendie: according to A. W. H. Bates, it was Magendie's public lectures, always involving vivisection since he "repeated his experiments as demonstrations" (Kean, 1998: 96), that initiated the British anti-vivisectionist movement in the 1820s. It is not insignificant that Magendie, who is regarded as the founder of modern physiology, competed for this title with a Briton, Sir Charles Bell, as they "both claimed to have been the first to identify separate motor and sensory nerve roots, a discovery acknowledged by their contemporaries as one of the most important of the age" (Berkowitz, 2006: 98). Their claims are nowadays recognized in the name of the law that expresses their common findings, the Bell-Magendie Law, but the two scientists employed radically different approaches in their research: Bell relied on deduction based on dissection, while Magendie performed numerous vivisections (ibid., 99). Magendie's preferred experimental subjects, moreover, were six-week-old puppies whose spines he cut without anesthetics. According to some sources, Magendie killed over 4000 dogs in these experiments (Visvanathan, 1997: 24). Like Tertullian, sixteen centuries earlier:

> Charles Bell, who accepted a limited role for animal experimentation, criticized Magendie's experimental approach to physiology from both a methodological and an epistemological point of view. He not only highlighted the pointless cruelty inflicted on an unreasonably large number of animals, but he also pointed out that vivisection disrupted the system of the animal's body, causing an abnormal behavior which might differ from the natural state which physiologists wished to assess. (Bertomeu-Sánchez, 2012: 15)

Wider public's objections to vivisection, however, were not raised to its epistemological merit, or lack thereof, but to its undeniable cruelty. It was Magendie's public lecture in London, in 1824 – the same year in which the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) was founded – when he "nailed a greyhound to the dissecting-table before cutting it open", and left it overnight, that "provoked a vociferous anti-French outcry that marked the start of the organized anti-vivisection movement in Britain" (Bates, 2017: 16-17). What followed was the decades-long public campaign to bring about legal changes regarding animal experimentation, which eventually resulted in the less-than-satisfactory 1876 Cruelty

to Animals Act: the passing of this act, moreover, marked the beginning of the end of the anti-vivisectionist movement[4].

Spurred by the centuries-old tension between the two nations, particularly pronounced in the age of competitive nationalisms and imperialist struggles, British nineteenth-century anti-vivisection movement, led mostly by socially conservative Christians, was thus informed by:

> concerns that vivisection would exert a demoralizing effect on individual experimenters, and on society as a whole. The potential benefits to medical knowledge, and whether the animals used were physiologically, intellectually, or spiritually comparable to ourselves, were issues of lesser importance than the feeling that inflicting pain on helpless creatures was *a morally dangerous business*. (Bates, 2017: 196, italics added)

In "Some Popular Fallacies about Vivisection" (1875), Lewis Carroll expressed these concerns eloquently:

> The hapless animal suffers, dies, and 'there an end': but the man whose sympathies have been deadened, and whose selfishness has been fostered, by the contemplation of pain deliberately inflicted, may be the parent of others equally brutalized, and so bequeath a curse to future ages. And even if we limit our view to the present time, who can doubt that the degradation of soul is a greater evil than the suffering of bodily frame?

The degradation of the experimenter's soul and the consequent social unravelling – the potential for directing vivisectionist violence against fellow humans – were explored in sensationalist detail in the anti-vivisectionist literary works, such as *St Bernard's: The Romance of a Medical Student* (1887). Written by Edward Berdoe under the pseudonym Æsculapius Scalpel (Waddington, 2013: 246), the novel depicted monstrous acts of human vivisection taking place within London's teaching hospitals (ibid., 247). Wilkie Collins's *Heart and Science* (1883) is another example: Dr Benjulia, who vivisects dogs in his laboratory, "insinuates himself into Carmina's sick-room and uses her […] for his experiments" (Kean, 1998: 101). Yet the suffering of the experimental animal's bodily frame was not ignored by the anti-vivisectionist campaigners – at least when the animal in question

[4] Cruelty to Animals Act was, in fact, "a legislative victory for scientists" (Ritvo, 1984: 59). The Act represented a compromise between the opposing demands from the anti-vivisectionists and British Medical Council; it "required that any person wishing to perform experiments using live vertebrates must first be licensed, and all experiments involving cats, dogs, horses, mules and asses, or those conducted to illustrate lectures, be certified by the British Home Secretary" (Monamy, 2009: 24). The use of animals in science was thus not abolished, only regulated. In addition to placing great power in the hands of Home Secretary, the Cruelty to Animals Act, ironically, resulted in increasing the number of experiments and the animals dying in them: "[t]hree times as many vivisectors were licensed in 1878 as were practicing in 1875" (Kean, 1998: 105). Further blow to the abolitionist cause came in 1881, when "a high-profile legal case suggested the 1876 Act could be ignored with impunity", which was followed by "increasingly confident statements on the value of animal experimentation from the medical profession" (Waddington, 2013: 252). By that same year, "a survey conducted by *The Zoophilist*, an antivivisection periodical, found that almost no local RSPCA chapters were actively anti-vivisectionist" (Ritvo, 1984: 59).

was a dog, a cat, or a horse[5]. In addition to emphasizing the morally corrosive effect that vivisection might have on the soul of the individual who engaged in it, anti-vivisectionist speeches, pamphlets, and literary texts devoted their attention to the agonies inflicted upon the innocent animal. Frances Power-Cobbe's *Light in Dark Places* (1883), for instance, reproduced scientific images from physiology textbooks which showed the "tools of the trade" used by the vivisectors, and animal bodies in pain during experiments (Cronin, 2018: 3). Especially relevant for *The Plague Dogs* are animal "autobiographies" which include works such as Ouida's *Puck* (1870); Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty: The Autobiography of a Horse (*1877); William Gordon Stables's *Sable and White* (1893), and, across the Atlantic, *Beautiful Joe: An Autobiography* (1894), a novel by Margaret Marshall Saunders, as well as Mark Twain's short story, "A Dog's Tale" (1903). In opposition to the dominant depiction of animals as mute and innocent victims, in all of these "autobiographies", the animal characters narrate their lives and the lives of the fellow horses and dogs, and inevitably come to describe the ill treatment they receive at the hands of humans. A section of "A Dog's Tale", moreover, explicitly discusses vivisection; in *Sable and White*, also, there is a passage that denounces vivisection as the cruelty of "that proud biped":

> We [the dog who is narrating and the fellow dogs] were to undergo the torture I had often heard poor Professor Huxley speak about, the torture of vivisection; that, in a word, we would be tied to a bench or stool and cut to pieces alive, and all for the supposed benefit of that proud biped, the microbe man. (quoted in Kean, 1998: 98-99)

Separating vivisection from its scientific or medical promises, and seeing it only as torture, is in keeping with the key philosophical underpinning of the nineteenth-century anti-vivisectionist movement. Vivisectionists relied on the Cartesian concept of the animal as a beast-machine; the opponents found support in Jeremy Bentham's footnote to *An Introduction to the Principles and Morals of Legislation* (1789). The now-famous passage, very much alive in present-day animal rights activism, stated that:

> The day may come when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withholden from them but by the hand of tyranny. […] What else is it that should trace the insuperable line? Is it the faculty of reason, or perhaps the faculty of discourse? But a full grown horse or dog is beyond comparison a more rational, as well as a more conversable animal, than an infant of a day or a week or even a month, old. But suppose they were otherwise, what would it avail? The question is not, Can they reason? nor Can they talk? but, Can they suffer? (quoted in Monamy, 2009: 18-19)

[5] Not all experimental animals were deemed equal in the eyes of the nineteenth-century reformists: "the experimental frog had few defenders" (Woods, 2019: 150). Victoria Street Society fought for the use of anesthesia for surgical experiments, and pushed for the legal abolition of experiments on dogs, cats, and horses, demonstrating that the "concern for the welfare of animals in experiments is hierarchical" (Monamy, 2009: 53).

Published in 1977, and influenced, as explicitly stated in the *Preface*, by Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation* (1975) and Richard Ryder's *Victims of Science: The Use of Animals in Research* (1975), *The Plague Dogs* revives the nineteenth-century tradition of focusing on the "degradation of soul" of the experimenter, and the suffering of the nonhuman test subjects, to condemn animal experimentation as mere cruelty. Without explicitly invoking Singer's equal consideration of interests, Adam's text is nonetheless deeply influenced by Bentham's and Singer's shared notion of the animal's capacity to suffer as the criterion on which to judge the morality of human actions: "If a being suffers there can be no moral justification for refusing to take that suffering into consideration" (Singer, 2001: 8). Moreover, following in the footsteps of Ouida, William Gordon Stables, Mark Twain, Anna Sewell, and Margaret Marshall, Adams, too, "unmutes" the animals – his Snitter, in particular, never stops talking.

3. "I wouldn't want you to suffer avoidably": Lab animals and animal experimentation in *The Plague Dogs*

Commenting on the scene from Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* (1611) in which the Queen announces she will test the doctor's compounds "on such creatures as we count not worth the hanging, but none human", and Cornelius replies, "Your Highness shall from this practice but make hard your heart", Dr Johnson writes:

> There is in this passage nothing that much requires a note, yet I cannot forbear to push it forward into observation. The thought would probably have been more amplified, had our author lived to be shocked with such experiments as have been published in later times, by a race of men that have practiced tortures without pity, and related them without shame, and are yet suffered to erect their heads among human beings.

It is these two quotations that Adams uses as epigraphs for *The Plague Dogs*, and they effectively convey the two major thematic concerns of the novel – on the one hand, the "tortures without pity" inflicted on disposable nonhumans; on the other, the hardening of the hearts of those who conduct them, to such a degree that their very humanity becomes questionable and their cruelty turns against fellow humans.

In keeping with Dr Johnson's quote, and the nineteenth-century anti-vivisectionist rhetoric, scientific experimentation on animals in the novel is from the very start, and consistently, depicted as sadism with little to no scientific value, causing irreversible damage to those who are "not worth hanging" but are, nonetheless, capable of great suffering. The novel opens memorably, with the metal tank filled with water and "gilded streaks of urine and floating, spawn-like bubbles of saliva" (Adams, 2015: 3), containing a drowning dog. As in Upton Sinclair's depiction of industrialized slaughter in *The Jungle* (1906), the human-created spaces into which animals are forced for human use – here in the name of science and the advancement of knowledge – are phantasmagoric and downright Gothic: the tank is black, and the

turgid movement of saliva and urine creates the "illusion that this was not water, but perhaps some thicker fluid, such as those concoctions of jam and stale beer which are hung up in glass jars to drown wasps, or the dark puddles splashed through by hooves and gumboots on the concrete floors of Lakeland cattle sheds" (ibid.). Making this comparison, Adams seems to place experimentation on animals within the wider tradition of animal (ab)use: the elimination of pests, the use of cattle for meat and dairy products. It is only from the dialogue between Mr. Powell and Dr Boycott that the reader learns this deliberate drowning of the dog is, in fact, a scientific experiment, the sole purpose of which is to qualitatively measure the effect of expectation of survival on the dog's struggle for life, expressed through the precise time kept, to the last second, with the help of Mr. Powell's stop-watch. The Gothic setting with which the novel opens is additionally emphasized by the invocation of ghosts: when the dog (Rowf, as will be revealed later) sinks down to the bottom of the tank, "[t]here were further sounds of splashing from inside the tank, but faint, like metallic echoes, rather as though a ghost were trying, but failing, to come down and trouble the waters" (Adams, 2015: 4). The scene aptly conveys the ghost-like status of the lab animals, which is contrasted with their intense physicality and thus the capacity for suffering: the ghost failing to trouble waters, Adams (2015: 5) informs the reader, also has "the black, delicately lyrated nose".

The attempted killing of the dog by drowning (one in a series of such attempts) is neutralized through language, both colloquial and disrespectful ("I think it's packing in, chief" (Adams, 2015: 3)), and scientifically detached:

> It's rather remarkable how regular the increase appears to be. At this rate the graph will work out as a straight incline, although obviously we must reach a diminution somewhere. There must come a point where the additional endurance induced by the dog's expectation of removal is counterbalanced by the limits of its physical capacity. (Adams, 2015: 6)

This exchange between Dr Boycott and his assistant illustrates a familiar insight that "discourse has the power to legitimize relationships in which one group causes immense suffering to the other" (Stibbe, 2012: 50); immense animal suffering, the issue that was central to Jeremy Bentham, the nineteenth-century anti-vivisectionists, and Peter Singer, inter alia, is not even acknowledged as such by the A. R. S. E. scientists. However, Dr Boycott helps Mr. Powell extract the dog from the tank, as the younger man's wrist has been injured, stating, "I wouldn't want you to suffer avoidably" (Adams, 2015: 5). The irony of such a statement, uttered over the tortured body of the dog, is impossible to miss: suffering is, indeed, recognized as undesirable, but only in humans. This split in the scientists' perspectives on nonhuman and human suffering continues throughout the novel, as does the narrator's ironic approach to it; significantly, the narrator's irony and sarcasm are never directed at the dogs or any other nonhuman victim of science, but towards greedy fear-mongering journalists like Digby Driver, self-serving politicians, and most of all, sadists like Dr Boycott.

The narrator's irony is particularly pronounced in the otherwise realistic, and well-researched, descriptions of the experiments conducted at A. R. S. E. – especially the ones that Francis Bacon would describe as "experimenta lucifera" or "experiments which shed light", as opposed to "experimenta fructifera" ("experiments which yield fruit", or applied science (Monamy, 2009: 58)). Namely, during their escape, Rowf and Snitter enter the various rooms in A. R. S. E., which allows Adams to provide the reader with the review of the research station's prisoners, from pigeons and mice, to rats, cats, and primates, and to satirize the utter futility of experiments, mostly through the narrator's sarcastic comments.

> They had entered the pigeon aviary, reservoir of one of the more eagerly watched, important and ambitious projects in which Animal Research was engaged. The object was nothing less than to discover how and by what means pigeons exercise their homing instinct—a Promethean undertaking indeed, since the birds themselves have always been content with ignorance in the matter. The thoroughness of the experiments, devised and conducted by Mr. Lubbock, a colleague and friend of Dr. Boycott, was impressive. Here, systematically divided into groups and caged in different compartments, lived hundreds of birds, each a grain of coral in that great reef of conscious knowledge to be built by Mr. Lubbock for the good, or the advancement, or the edification—or something or other, anyway—of the human race. Of those birds which had already been released to flight at greater or lesser distances from the station, some had had one eye or both eyes occluded by special appliances; some had been fitted with minute contact lenses, to distort their vision; others had had the sensitivity of feathers, feet, nostrils, beaks, mouths or lungs impaired or destroyed before setting out; others again had undergone carefully planned conditioning designed to confuse them when exposed to normal weather conditions. (…)
>
> The results of all the experiments so far had been most informative, yielding the basic information that while some of the birds succeeded in returning home, others did not. Many, in fact, in obedience to their defective stimuli, had flown straight out to sea until they perished; which was most interesting. One could draw the firm and valuable conclusions first, that birds whose faculties had been impaired were less swift and competent in getting home than birds whose faculties had not; and secondly, that in any given group, some succeeded in returning while others, who did not, presumably died. (Adams, 2015: 31-32)

"Experimenta lucifera" such as the one conducted on pigeons, seemingly (or truly) motivated by the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of knowledge, are not the only ones. In the cat block, Rowf and Snitter stumble upon cats that "were kept permanently in hoods covering their eyes and ears (in order to discover the effect upon cats of being kept permanently in hoods covering their eyes and ears)"; they pass octopi who are being electroshocked while fed certain foods, in order to test their memory; guinea pigs who have had their legs amputated only for the scientists to discover that they "possessed no power of adaptation, but continued to attempt to behave as though they had four legs" (Adams, 2015: 38). The dog block, also, houses a three-legged whippet with an ominous "bandaged stump" (Adams, 2015: 12); "a brown retriever with a great scar across its throat" (ibid.), and, of course, Rowf

and Snitter, the latter easily recognizable by a black cap on his head – "a surgical dressing made of stout oilskin and fastened securely to the head with cross-bands of sticking-plaster in such a way as to prevent the dog from scratching and worrying at the antiseptic lint beneath" (Adams, 2015: 13) – which he wears because he has been submitted to "experimental brain surgery" that has him confusing objective and subjective realities. In Snitter's own memorable words, "There's a mouse – a mouse that sings – I'm bitten to the brains and it never stops raining – not in this eye anyway" (Adams, 2015: 15).

To the reader unfamiliar with the specifics of twentieth-century animal testing, the experiments which the narrator lists might appear grossly exaggerated for the purposes of satire and the related moral criticism. Yet, in the Preface, Adams writes that, although A. R. S. E. does not exist ("[i]n reality, no single testing or experimental station would cover so wide a range of work"), "every 'experiment' described is one which has actually been carried out on animals somewhere" (Adams, 2015: xviii). Even cursory examination of the topic confirms Adams's claim. Thus, Rowf's being drowned and revived is modelled on real-life experiments by the biologist Curt Ritcher, who used drowning rats to measure the impact of hope ("survival expectation") on actual survival; Dr Boycott's social deprivation experiment on a rhesus monkey replicates the work done by the American psychologist Harry Harlow in the 1960s. The great conclusion of Harlow's experiments was that the infant monkeys, forcibly separated from their mothers immediately after birth, preferred cloth mother substitutes to the ones made of wire, before going psychotic and dying – "experimenta lucifera" indeed, especially when one sees the photos. Lodo, another dog from the A.R.S.E., talks about being forcefully addicted to tobacco, alluding to real-life experiments usually involving beagles; mice and rats that Rowf and Snitter come across as well during their escape are the most used lab animals for biomedical (genetic and cancer) research, and product testing. At one point, also, Mr. Powell directly references Radiation Research conducted by W. P. Norris et. al. in 1968, which concluded that "13-month-old purebred beagle dogs" deliberately exposed to radiation, died from "acute bacteremia, secondary to bone marrow damage" (Norris, Fritz, Rehfeled, & Poole, 1968: 681). Near the end of the novel, Snitter summarizes the death-oriented curiosity of animal experimenters – "I'm a whitecoat […] I need to find out how and in what way you two dogs are going to die under this particular crag" (Adams, 2015: 359). From the perspective of their victims, "whitecoats" cause suffering and death, observe suffering and death, and write about suffering and death: for the animals, as for Adams, there is no other dimension to scientific experimentation.

But it is Rowf and Snitter themselves who best exemplify the multifaceted harm done to the dispensable experimental animals in the name of increasing the questionable "sum of human wisdom". Most obviously, their two bodies, capable of feeling pain, of being flooded by adrenaline, and experiencing fear, hunger, and cold, are undeniably tortured in the "survival expectation experiment" and experimental brain surgery. The agonies of the body affect their minds as well. While he appears

mentally healthier than Snitter – to be fair, every animal character in *The Plague Dogs* does – Rowf, a huge black mongrel, is clearly traumatized by his repeated drownings. As the novel progresses, Rowf becomes increasingly weighed down by the cumulative stress of the past experiments and the present unrelenting hunger, as well as anxiety over his brain-damaged friend, until he reaches the point where he starts experiencing his hard-won freedom "like the whitecoats' tank. I feel just as though I were sinking, sometimes. And there's no avoiding it, either. We've got to eat. But I'm afraid the time's coming when I'm not going to be able to kill" (Adams, 2015: 312). Rowf's disability, however, is not only mental; his paw gets wounded during their escape from A. R. S. E., and the wound takes its toll every time he tries to hunt sheep or some other animal for food. Consequently, on the 13th November, twelve days before their suffering ends, Rowf returns to Snitter and the tod "bloody-mouthed, swollen with his kill but lamer than ever" (Adams, 2015: 284).

In Snitter's case, the damage done to him is meant to be both shocking and visible: thus, soon after escaping from A. R. S. E., Snitter loses his black cap, which in turn exposes the huge scar on his head. He appears like this before a local woman, Phyllis Dawson, whose reaction, while not praiseworthy, is understandable:

> It was indeed a terrible sight – the wreck of what had once been a pedigree, black-and-white, smooth-haired fox terrier. One paw was held awkwardly off the ground and the left flank was plastered with a mixture of dried mud and blood – whether its own or the other dog's was uncertain, for it had no discernible wound. The stitched gash in its skull was more than Phyllis could regard steadily. After one glance she turned away… (Adams, 2015: 226)

As with Rowf, moreover, the damage done to the once pedigree dog is not only physical. The outcome of Snitter's surgery has him confusing objective and subjective reality: "it [sic!] might see something objective and act as though it was nothing but the equivalent of some thought in his mind" (Adams, 2015: 251), Mr Powell explains to Digby Driver. This makes Snitter utterly incapable of surviving on his own as he cannot reliably interpret even the basic sensory input from the outside world: "I never can see anything straight when these humming fits come on. I wish I didn't feel so giddy and queer" (Adams, 2015: 318). In his fatal encounter with Mr Ephraim, Snitter is consumed by a ringing sound – "a vortex, a circling funnel of sound, broad and slow at the top, but descending rapidly inwards to a dizzy, spinning hole which was at once both the pierced centre of his own brain and the barrel of a gun pointed at his muzzle" (Adams, 2015: 182) – which results in the accident in which Mr Ephraim is killed. During the forty days they wander the Lakeland area, Snitter is dependent on Rowf and the tod, for a while, for (occasional) food, protection, and emotional support, just like a very young dog, or achild, for that matter – "he had pushed, like a puppy, deep under Rowf's side, [and] returned almost at once into a sleep even deeper than that in which his friend had left him" (Adams, 2015: 326). It is important to note, however, that in the best tradition of "wise madmen", Snitter has moments of lucidity, such as this one, when he comments on the "whitecoats" and their work, voicing the quintessentially anti-vivisectionist belief that animal

experimentation has a morally corrosive effect on the experimenters, and society in general: "But they never *look* happy, do they – not like – well, not like a chaffinch or a puppy. Perhaps they don't know what they're doing any more than we do. Perhaps they do bad things to each other, not just to us –" (Adams, 2015: 313, italics in the original).

4. "A race of men that have practised tortures without pity": Human experimenters in *The Plague Dogs*

The novel proves Snitter right: human beings capable of experimenting on animals do bad things to other humans. This other legacy of the nineteenth-century anti-vivisectionist movement – what Bates terms the virtue-centered approach to the personality of the experimenter – is to be found primarily in Adams's depiction and treatment of Dr Boycott, and, to a lesser degree, Dr Goodner, a former Nazi scientist hired by the British government to experiment with plague as a potential bioweapon. The names, obviously, are deeply satirical. In his first appearance in the novel, Dr Boycott appears attentive to human, as distinct from animal, suffering, although he is consistently dismissive of and condescending to his young assistant, Stephen Powell, while at the same time servile towards the Director – Adams perfectly captures the hierarchy of modern science and the treatment of junior researchers by the established scientific authorities. For the greater part of the novel, Boycott is clearly invested in reinforcing the human/nonhuman boundary through violence, which is called "research" in the scientific context. Those who are nonhuman, unsurprisingly, are subjected to all kinds of abuse in the name of human curiosity and knowledge – including the replication of Harry Harlow's notorious social deprivation experiment.

In Boycott's rendition of Harlow's real-life experiment, a young monkey is locked up in a cylinder, then placed in a balance-cupboard of a rarely-used room, and not exposed to even sights and sounds of any other living being. The scene that has Dr Boycott reading the report on one of the many experimental groups in A. R. S. E., the kittens deliberately infected with lung-worms who have died, is also illuminating. Not once does Boycott express any compassion or regret for having caused the young animals' painful deaths, only disappointment that the experiment did not yield expected results: "What a shame! 'Death of almost entire group' – h'm – 'preceded by' – h'm, h'm – 'excessive salivation, impairment of locomotion and vision, muscular twitchings, panting, respiratory distress, convulsions' – how disappointing!" (Adams, 2015: 428). Earlier, the narrator cynically comments that it took Dr Boycott "as short a time as three months" to make "the remarkable discovery that overcrowding, rough handling and prolonged thirst were beyond doubt the major contributors to higher-than-average death rates occurring among small mammals transported by air" (Adams, 2015: 37). The scientist driven by "intellectual curiosity" (Adams, 2015: 21), who extensively experiments on animals, apparently does not know the first thing about them, for instance, that they are living

beings and as such sensitive to stress and *thirst*. This lack of elementary knowledge problematizes Dr Boycott's scientific credentials and practices to the degree that he strikes the reader as an ordinary sadist relying on the complicated discourse of science and its mythology of "the benefit of humanity" (even worse, the alleged "respect for all creatures") for his brutal exploitation of the helpless. The reader's contempt for Dr. Boycott is helped along by passages such as this one:

> He was a qualified expert, initiative was expected of him, his subjects had no legal rights; and intellectual curiosity is, after all, a desire like any other. Besides, who in his senses could reasonably expect Dr. Boycott to ask himself, on behalf of the human race, not 'How much knowledge can I discover?' but 'How much knowledge am I justified in seeking?' Experimental science is the last flower of asceticism and Dr. Boycott was indeed an ascetic, an observer of events upon which he passed no value judgements. He represented, in fact, a most ingenious paradox, noble in reason, express and admirable in action, his undemonstrative heart committed with the utmost detachment to the benefit of humanity. *Something too much of this*. (Adams, 2015: 21, italics in the original)

Snitter, too, speaking in the voice of a "whitecoat", parodies the scientist's intellectual curiosity which, detached from even a hint of compassion, is deadly to the brutalized test subjects:

> You'll have noticed that I smell very smooth and clean, which is just as it should be: and that I cover everything up. You must understand that I'm not insensitive to the situation of my charges. My experiments have taught me great respect for all creatures. Your life certainly won't be wasted. Even your bones will have a use – you should feel proud and interested. Let me explain. There's a kind of buzzard that looks like a maggot – flying, of course – (Adams, 2015: 359).

After the launch of Sputnik II that carried Laika to her lonely, painful death among the stars in a matter of hours, Soviet chief engineer Sergei Korolev used identical language in an official statement: "the study of biological phenomena made during the spaceflight of a living organism – something done for the first time in Sputnik II – [was] of tremendous interest" (Caswell, 2018: 6). Phrases like "biological phenomena" and "a living organism" attempt but fail to obscure the fact that the study "of tremendous interest" is only the study of an animal's death: non-fictional Sergei Korolev is just another "whitecoat" watching the dog die. Snitter's use of "smooth and clean" while describing Dr Boycott, moreover, seems to echo Francis Power-Cobbe's conviction that there is no distinction between an animal experimenter and a butcher: "the smooth cool man of science [...] stands by that torture trough" (Kean, 1998: 103). Dr Jekyll, in Stevenson's celebrated novella, is also characterized by smooth facial features, hiding a lot of violence which will be externalized in Mr. Hyde. Unsurprisingly, Boycott's smoothness extends to his behavior as well. He knows that "dogs can't contract bubonic plague", but chooses to stay silent on the issue, amidst the media frenzy, so as to protect his position in A. R. S. E., assuming Rowf and Snitter will soon enough be eliminated by the Army. "Presumably we've only got to say so [that dogs cannot carry bubonic plague] and the whole thing'll die

down. But all the same, the quicker they're shot the better" (Adams, 2015: 295-6). But his moral deficiency, or, as Lewis Carrol termed it, "the degradation of soul", in line with the nineteenth-century anxieties, does not remain limited to animals: eventually it is turned against fellow human beings. In a confidential letter to the Director, Boycott recommends Stephen Powell for dismissal from A. R. S. E., on the basis of Powell's "inappropriately emotional feelings about a proposed experimental project", "on at least one occasion" (Adams, 2015: 432). Near the end of the letter, Boycott concludes: "In a word, he is expendable" (Adams, 2015: 433). As in *The Jungle*, the disposability of humans and animals is thus gradually revealed as shared, especially in those unexpected settings, such as meatpacking factories and research stations, that seem to strengthen the human/nonhuman boundary through massive violence. Powell, moreover, is informed by Boycott that he, too, is being subjected to an experiment, "an experiment in retrenchment" (Adams, 2015: 443).

Powell's final act as a scientist is highly significant. Taking his leave of A. R. S. E., he frees the young monkey, who has, by that time, spent over 41 days in total isolation. Finding the animal "crouching in a fetal posture, knees drawn up to chin and head bowed between them" (Adams, 2015: 445), unresponsive and surrounded by "a stench of ordure mixed with disinfectant" (ibid.), Powell tucks him under his coat, and takes him home. It is only after Powell's dismissal that the readers learn about his dying daughter, to whom he reads *Dr Dolittle* novels (the excerpt explicitly quoted in the novel concerns "an Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals" (Adams, 2015: 497)). While still having faith in animal experimentation, even though he agrees with his daughter that it is "unkind to the animal" (Adams, 2015: 496), Powell announces he will move on from science to do something else: "Could be teaching, might even be farming" (Adams, 2015: 494). Though farming is not necessarily kinder to animals, being removed from Dr Boycott and his surveillance of the employees' emotional responses would certainly be kinder to Stephen Powell – not to mention the traumatized monkey.

5. Conclusion

Published in 1977, *The Plague Dogs* approaches animal experimentation from a firm anti-vivisectionist position. The central tenet of the Victorian anti-vivisectionist movement was that experimenting on animals was cruelty inflicted on the helpless nonhumans, which had a built-in potential for turning against human beings as well. The writings associated with the movement emphasized both the brutality of the vivisector and the suffering of the experimental animal in order to bring about specific legal changes, ignoring or denying the potential advances in medical knowledge that might result from vivisection. In a similar fashion, Adams argues against animal testing by focusing on the physical and mental harm inflicted on the canine victim-protagonists. Having given Rowf and Snitter voices and distinctive characters, Adams, moreover, deliberately echoes the nineteenth-century animal

autobiographies, which were generally critical of the human treatment of dogs and horses, and which were deployed by the anti-vivisectionists in the struggle to abolish, or at least limit animal suffering in the experiments. Another echo of the anti-vivisectionist debates is to be found in Adams's satirical treatment of the scientists, derogatorily termed "whitecoats", who are depicted as mere sadists with little actual knowledge of, let alone compassion for, the animals that they are experimenting upon. "Whitecoats", moreover, are represented as a danger to society because their well-practiced cruelty can, and does, turn against fellow humans as well.

Adams depicts animal experimentation in black and white terms; he does not see anything redeeming in the scientists, apart from Mr. Powell – and this is only after Powell is radicalized into direct action of liberating one experimental animal, and is, effectively, no longer a scientist. By introducing Powell's dying daughter late (and briefly) into the narrative, Adams hints at motives other than sadism that animal experimenters might have; however, he does not pursue this theme further. This, also, makes his novel in tune with the nineteenth-century anti-vivisectionist position. Ironically, though anti-vivisectionists ignored the potential advancements in medicine, the definite collapse of the antivivisection movement in the first part of the 20th century was, in fact, brought about by the demonstrable benefits of animal experimentation in the preceding period, first in the case of rabies, and then diphtheria. "The discovery of diphtheria antitoxin in 1894, which promised to save thousands of lives each year and which would not have been possible without experiments on live animals, was a decisive blow. Anti-vivisection lost its ability to mobilize public sympathy and came to occupy a position on the outer fringes of respectable opinion" (Ritvo, 1984: 62). In 1921, moreover, Sir Frederick Banting and Charles Best isolated insulin from canine pancreases, which became the first effective treatment for *diabetes mellitus* – a death sentence for humans before this discovery. While the suffering of the countless experimental dogs subjected to pancreatectomy cannot possibly be denied or exaggerated – "It was very difficult to keep diabetic animals alive for a long period of time due to infections in bad sanitary animal facility conditions. A lot of dogs died even if Banting's surgical technique improved" (Rostène & De Meyts, 2021: 511) – the significance of insulin (itself "filtered fetal calf extract") is impossible to overstate as well. Nor were all scientists indifferent to animal suffering in the name of human health. Sir Benjamin Ward Richardson, the nineteenth-century anesthesiologist, for instance, "developed carbonic oxide, chloroform and sulphuric ether specifically to prevent pain to animals" (Kean, 1998: 97). In 1959, also, William Russell and Rex Burch proposed the "3Rs" – the three rules that were intended to make animal testing more humane by *replacing* animals in research with other models, *reducing* the use of animals, and *refining* the research by relying on the "methods that alleviate or minimize potential pain, suffering, or distress and enhance animal welfare for the animals used" (Miller, 2023: 315). Russell and Burch also posited the so-called "high fidelity fallacy" i.e., "the incorrect assumption that, because placental mammals are similar to humans in some respects, they will always accurately reproduce key human responses, and

hence will always provide the best possible model for medical research and testing" (Knight, 2011: 211). Examples such as these problematize the black-and-white picture of animal experimentation that Adams paints, though properly addressing the moral ambiguity or the epistemological uncertainties involved with animal testing would require several separate papers, or a full-length study, at least.

The issues surrounding animal experimentation are not limited either to the nineteenth century or the 1970s, the experiments are still ongoing and more than 115 million animals worldwide die every year in them. Nowadays, however, the abolition of scientific experimentation on animals is not a separate matter as it was for the Victorians, but is rather subsumed under the general cause of animal liberation, which seeks to abolish all human use of all nonhuman animals. In contrast to both the British anti-vivisectionist movement and Adams, contemporary struggle for animal liberation, primarily in academia, is mostly rights-focused and takes the form of attempted "personhood attributions through biological, philosophical, and legal frameworks" (Tuck, 2020: 1). The rapidly developing field of posthumanism, especially the work of Donna Haraway and Cary Wolfe, has to be mentioned, too, though their branch of posthumanism is mostly oriented towards theorizing/historicizing the unstable and shifting distinction between human and nonhuman animals. Conversely, neither Adams nor the anti-vivisectionists ever attempted to argue for animals' legal rights, or abolish the nonhuman/human boundary and the human place in the hierarchy of living beings. Some of the key figures of the movement, like Frances Power-Kobbe, the founder of the Victoria Street Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection, still ate meat; while speaking at an anti-vivisection meeting, George Bernard Shaw "was shocked to find himself sharing a platform with hunters and fur-wearers" (Bates, 2017: 22). Magendie's student, Claude Bernard, pointed to precisely this inconsistency in anti-vivisectionists' thought in 1865[6]. Throughout the novel, Adams, too, makes a distinction between "real masters" who love and protect their pet dogs, like Snitter's Alan Wood, and the "whitecoats" who torture dogs and other animals with their cruel experiments – but it is humans who are, unquestionably, the masters, and thus responsible for

[6] "Have we the right to make experiments on animals and vivisect them? … I think we have this right, wholly and absolutely. It would be strange indeed if we recognised man's right to make use of animals in every walk of life, for domestic service, for food, and then forbade him to make use of them for his own instruction in one of the sciences most useful to humanity. No hesitation is possible; the science of life can be established only through experiment, and we can save living beings from death only after sacrificing others. Experiments must be made either on man or on animals. Now I think that physicians already make too many dangerous experiments on man, before carefully studying them on animals. I do not admit that it is moral to try more or less dangerous or active remedies on patients in hospitals, without first experimenting with them on dogs; for I shall prove … that results obtained on animals may all be conclusive for man when we know how to experiment properly" (Claude Bernard quoted in Monamy, 2009: 12). Bernard practiced what he preached; a physiologist and a student of Magendie, he vivisected dogs, often in his kitchen, which eventually destroyed his marriage. Hilda Kean (1998: 101) writes that "it was the sight of dogs mutilated by her husband, the physiologist Claude Bernard, wandering in and out of the kitchen of their own home, that led his subsequently estranged wife to establish an asylum for stray cats and dogs in Paris".

the wellbeing of their pets, or lack thereof. In the context of contemporary critical animal studies and the struggle for animal rights and liberation, Adams's position seems both old-fashioned and unforgivably anthropocentric: the term "master" or "owner" is frowned upon (the preferred expression is "guardian", just as "pets" are referred to as "companion animals"), and pet-keeping itself has been increasingly problematized by philosophers and thinkers ever since John Berger's "Why We Look at Animals" (1977) – not always without ground. Yet it is possible to argue that Adams advocates for dogs better than (some) critics and theorists: for the majority of dogs, "real masters" are truly the best they can hope for, especially bearing in mind their evolutionary preference for humans. Nor is human responsibility and duty of care for their (companion) animals merely an expression of human supremacy over the nonhumans – though, again, these lines of investigation should be the subject of future research in order to be properly developed.

As a final point, it is Adams's focus on experimental animal suffering that is the most relevant aspect of *The Plague Dogs*. While modern abolitionist efforts take place within a wide variety of philosophical and legal frameworks (Singer's utilitarianism, Tom Regan's and Garly L. Francione's animal rights, Christine M. Korsgaard's reworking of Kant's deontology, Matthew Scully's Christian ethics, Lori Gruen's care ethics, to name just a few), suffering is still the focal point and the motivation behind the call for animal liberation in the field of critical animal studies and animal rights activism in general. Experimental animal suffering, too, is the starting point of Donna Haraway's (2008: 69) attempt to justify, unsuccessfully, "instrumental relations between laboratory animals and their people"[7]. It is worth noting, also, that the key

[7] In the chapter "Sharing Suffering" from her 2008 study *When Species Meet*, Haraway finds inspiration in the YA novel by Nancy Farmer called *A Girl Named Disaster*. In the excerpt Haraway (2008: 69) quotes, Baba Joseph, an employee of a small scientific post in Zimbabwe tasked with caring for the guinea pigs which are deliberately exposed to the painful bites of the tsetse flies, places his own arm in the cage holding these insects, in order "to learn what the guinea pigs are suffering". He continues, "It's wicked to cause pain, but if I share it, God may forgive me". From this single paragraph in a YA novel, Haraway weaves a complicated and verbose fantasy of human caretakers sharing suffering with the experimental animals, which somehow justifies what she incorrectly terms the "labor" of lab animals. Redefining lab animals as "significantly unfree partners" [sic!], and attempting to move the discussion of their suffering away from the framework of sacrifice, Haraway states that "[w]e are in the midst of webbed existences, multiple beings in relationship, this animal, this sick child, this village, these herds, these labs, these neighborhoods in a city, these industries and economies, these ecologies linking natures and cultures without end. This is a ramifying tapestry of shared being/becoming among critters (including humans) in which living well, flourishing, and being 'polite' (political/ethical/in right relation) mean staying inside shared semiotic materiality, including the suffering inherent in unequal and ontologically multiple instrumental relationships. In that sense, experimental animal research is, or can be, necessary, indeed good, but it can never 'legitimate' a relation to the suffering in purely regulatory or disengaged and unaffected ways" (Haraway, 2008: 72). As long as the vivisector is not disengaged from or unaffected by the suffering of the lab animal, therefore, experimental animal research is morally good and justified. This is not the end of Haraway's fantasy: "The animal caretaker is engaged not in the heroics of self-experimentation (a common trope in tropical medicine histories) but in the practical and moral obligation to mitigate suffering among mortals – and not just human mortals – where possible and to share the conditions of work, including the suffering, of the most vulnerable lab actors" (ibid: 70). Several serious objections can be raised against Haraway's concept of sharing suffering: lab animals are

theorists propagating animal rights, Tom Regan and Gary L. Francione (2005: 174-177), effectively revive the anti-vivisectionist rhetoric in their twenty-first century work. Denying all benefits of animal experiments, Tom Regan (2005: 177), for instance, concludes: "Vivisection is just the sort of evil we should not do". Francione's (2009: 174) position is more moderate, though he, too, is suspicious of the benefits of animal experimentation: "I do not share the view of some animal advocates that we have learned nothing useful from vivisection, although I do maintain that claims about what we have learned are greatly exaggerated". Much of the anti-vivisectionist mute-and-innocent-victim iconography, moreover, including the famous "Can they suffer" quote, is also alive and well in contemporary vegan street and online activism which, while not limited to the scientific abuse of animals, utilizes "the visual culture of animal advocacy" (Cronin, 2018: 22) from the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century exemplified by Power-Cobbe's *Light in Dark Places*. Present-day activists show graphic images and videos not only of lab animals, but also animal slaughter, gestation crates in factory farms, chained calves kept in isolation and minimal space, chickens being transported to slaughterhouses, fattened foxes in tiny wire cages on fur farms, etc. Animal suffering is relentless and unending; although Adams lacks contemporary theoretical sophistication, he should be applauded for protesting against some forms of it, however morally simplified his position appears to be.

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certainly not actors, "significantly unfree" human partners or laborers; the sharing of suffering between humans and experimental animals is impossible (even in the fictional example, the arm of a grown man exposed to the bites of the tsetse flies does not experience pain in the same way as the guinea pigs' entire bodies). Nor are animal caretakers (or the majority of researchers) interested in mitigating the suffering of lab animals. "Justifying the use of animals in experiments is viewed as a waste of time: 'Why do I have to bother with these things? It's just getting in the way of the science'" (Miller, 2023: 15). Had she read another piece of fiction – Adams's *The Plague Dogs* – Haraway would have come across the following sobering description of the animal caretaker employed in a research station: "He [old Tyson] understood dogs well enough, his attitude towards them being equally valid for the purposes of A.R.S.E. or for those of a Lakeland hill-farm – namely, that they were pieces of technological equipment which one needed to know how to maintain and use properly" (2015: 33).

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„MOJI EKSPERIMENTI SU ME NAUČILI DA POŠTUJEM SVA STVORENJA": *KUŽNI PSI* RIČARDA ADAMSA I POKRET PROTIV VIVISEKCIJE

Apstrakt

Oslanjajući se na istorijska istraživanja A. V. H. Bejtsa, Hilde Kin, Harijet Ritvo i drugih, rad razmatra roman Ričarda Adamsa iz 1977. godine, *Kužni psi*, prevashodno njegov stav prema naučnim eksperimentima na životinjama i prikazivanje odnosa između ljudi i životinja, u kontekstu pokreta protiv vivisekcije iz devetnaestog veka u Velikoj Britaniji. Iako piše sedamdesetih godina prošlog veka, Adams, kako se u radu dokazuje, prisvaja i reprodukuje specifične teme i retoriku boraca protiv vivisekcije – ponajpre fokus na moralne vrline ljudi koji eksperimentišu na životinjama, ali i na patnju životinja tokom eksperimenata – sa ciljem da istraživanje na životinjama prikaže kao čin sadizma čija je naučna vrednost niska, ili nepostojeća.

Ključne reči: eksperimenti na životinjama, *Kužni psi,* pokret protiv vivisekcije, Ričard Adams

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EMILY DICKINSON AND THE POETICS OF LABOR

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Abstract

This article explores Emily Dickinson's poetics of labor and the relationship between work and leisure in both nineteenth-century and contemporary US culture. Historically, labor has been perceived as the axis of social and economic values. Individuals, however, are frequently encouraged to deviate from their work routines, making it difficult to appreciate them. Using a comparative and interdisciplinary approach, this study examines Dickinson's oeuvre in dialogue with the philosophical and sociological framework on the distinction between work and leisure and its implications for people's lives, as well as how the value of work has changed over time. Through a close reading of selected poems and letter fragments, this article demonstrates how Dickinson's work blurs traditional boundaries between labor and leisure, suggesting that creative work can hold intrinsic, self-validating worth irrespective of economic or societal pressures. Finally, Dickinson's perspective on work and time may inform contemporary debates around meaningful labor and life balance in a capitalist society.

Keywords: Emily Dickinson, poetics of labour, nineteenth-century, work ethics, leisure, values

1. Introduction

This paper explores Emily Dickinson's poetics on the relationship between labor (or work) and leisure.[2] Today, labor has become the axis of social, cultural, political, and economic values. Nonetheless, people are frequently urged to break away from

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[2] While Hannah Arendt establishes a distinction between the activities of "work" and "labor" in *The Human Condition* (1958), the terms will be used as synonyms throughout this paper.

their work routines, which makes it harder to appreciate them, given that they are undertaken for the sake of external compensation. The centrality of work, according to Sigmund Freud (1930: 73), is closely related to people's willingness to sacrifice "a portion of [their] possibilities for happiness for a portion of security". For Michel Foucault (2003: 247), labor's regulatory technology has been designed to take control over people "insofar as they are living beings". In other words, most people's lives are shaped by work which is, simultaneously, determined by economic valuation. From a philosophical perspective, work was a well-established social value by the end of the nineteenth century (Just, 2017: 435). Both Hegel and Marx argued that labor was central to determining both individual productive potential and population well-being (Just, 2017: 441). Conversely, Nietzsche (1882: 183-4) referred to the contemporary exaltation of work as "the true vice of the new world", wherein leisure is not the diametric opposite of work but rather its natural equal; more specifically, leisure is not a *reward* for work; it is a *necessity* that enables one to do more work.

To place Dickinson's poetics within the philosophical and sociological context of work ethics and its implications for people's lives, it is necessary to consider how the value of work has evolved over time. Jiri Zuzanek examines the historical significance of work and leisure in Western culture. According to him (Zuzanek, 2021: 2), work, either vocational or alienated labor, emerges "as the glue that holds society together"; on the other hand, leisure is perceived as the arena "not only of individual gratification and respite but also of the experiment, breaking the rules, and looking for the infinite". To some extent, Dickinson's exploration of work and leisure provides a poetic framework that resonates with the changing nineteenth-century concepts of labor and time. Martha Ackmann (2020: 122) notes that Dickinson "looked upon her verse as constantly in play and the work of a lifetime". In light of Dickinson's obituary, Judith Farr (1992: 11) stresses the relationship between Dickinson's "worth" and "work", as well as the connection between her art and personal integrity. Paul Crumbley (2010: 7) points out that Dickinson frequently values the process over the outcome owing to her emphasis on action and individual autonomy. When reading some of her poems on work, Eileen John (2021: 187) suggests that Dickinson finds "immodest achievements" and certain knowledge in the routines and aptitudes inherent to working life. Bearing this in mind, Dickinson's perspectives on work help us in addressing questions that plague the modern worker, such as whether "non-waged" labor can be called work, how "waged work" can be intrinsically valuable, whether it is possible to separate "work" from the "rest of life" (or leisure time), or whether this distinction can be avoided entirely.

This paper situates Dickinson's poetics of labor within the larger socioeconomic and philosophical context of her time, by using an interdisciplinary approach that integrates literary research with economic, social, and philosophical perspectives. The literary approach focuses on Dickinson's poetic techniques, looking at how her use of form, imagery, and language reflects her unique philosophy of labor. Sociologically, the paper places Dickinson's work within the context of labor ethics, examining how her depictions of work align with or diverge from the Protestant ethic of labor and contemporary work values. Philosophically, the study explores how her poetic oeuvre intersects with critiques of capitalism and the valuation of time. Rather than

merely conducting a thematic or close reading, this analysis uses Dickinson's poems and letter fragments as a case study to interrogate broader socio-economic theories and questions, including the extent to which labor can hold intrinsic value outside of economic compensation and the potential to integrate work and leisure as a holistic approach to life. Key themes – such as the merging of work and life, the resistance to economic valuation, and the affirmation of time's intrinsic worth – are examined as part of an ongoing dialogue between Dickinson's poetry and intellectual history.

Through a comparative analysis of Dickinson's poems alongside theoretical insights from these disciplines, this paper aims to illustrate Dickinson's vision of labor as an inseparable part of life's continuum, prompting us to reassess the boundaries between work and leisure. Similarly, it opens a space for contemporary discussions on labor and the poetics of everyday life. Dickinson centrality in this study stems from the notion that her exposure to Greek culture and philosophy gave her access to a distinct order of things that she could use to challenge the nineteenth-century view of labor and leisure that became dominant in later centuries. First, I will briefly analyse some of Dickinson's poems that contain the term *work* or its cognates. The paper then delves into the intellectual history of work ethics that shaped Dickinson's own formation as well as environment, such classical tradition and the Protestant virtue of work. Likewise, it compares Dickinson's views on the intertwining of work and leisure – as well as the value of time itself – with current scholarship on the topic to shed light on both the paradox of modern labor and the possibility of a post-work society. Finally, the paper reflects on Dickinson's relevance to contemporary debates about labor, underscoring the capacity of her work to question, and perhaps reimagine, the role of labor in a life worth living.

2. Dickinson's poems on the value of work

Dickinson addresses the topic of work explicitly in several poems, emphasizing its intrinsic value rather than its economic function. In more detail, her descriptions of work call into question traditional concepts of productivity, arguing that work does not have to be motivated by economic necessity and can be valuable as a process in and of itself. For instance, Dickinson reflects on a spider's web-making as a form of artistry in the following poem:

> The Spider as an Artist
> Has never been employed -
> Though his surpassing Merit
> Is freely certified
> By every Broom and Bridget
> Throughout a Christian Land -
> Neglected Son of Genius
> I take thee by the Hand -[3]

[3] Emily Dickinson, Poem 1373, vol. 3, *The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Variorum Edition*, edited by Ralph W. Franklin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998). Hereafter cited in-text according to the editor's numbering system.

The speaker's admiration for the spider's artistry is contrasted with the acts of a maid who indiscriminately removes its web. Dickinson's use of short, concise lines conveys precision and purpose, evoking the spider's meticulous weaving. Likewise, she compares the spider's web-making to artistic labor, which does not require employment or external recognition. More specifically, the lines "Has never been employed -/ Though his surpassing Merit / Is freely certified" imply that, like the spider, the poet's work can stand apart from employment and financial compensation. Dickinson's depiction of the spider's work mirrors her approach to poetry, a vocation she pursued without concern for publication or profit, aligning her more closely with the timeless, non-monetized aspects of labor. This viewpoint is consistent with Foucault's, who questioned the reduction of all activities to utilitarian labor and economic concern (Just, 2017: 443). According to Helen Vendler (2010: 418-9), Dickinson "commends a Creature like herself, anthropomorphizing him to such a degree that she can take him 'by the hand'". As discussed in following sections, Dickinson's oeuvre underscores the significance of the present moment, the value of processes, and the vastness of earthly existence. As a result, labor (or work) and leisure are inextricably linked, as both are essential components of what can constitute a life worth living by Dickinson's standards. For instance, the following stanza depicts how intertwine labor (or toil) and leisure (or rest) may be:

> What respite from her thrilling toil
> Did Beauty ever take -
> But work might be Electric Rest
> To those that Magic make – (Fr1556)

The speaker here suggests that work may be perceived as "Electric Rest". This phrase captures the paradoxical restfulness of creative activity, implying that labor can be both gratifying and self-sustaining. Moreover, the poem questions the binary between labor and leisure, positing that work, for those who "make magic" (such as poets), can embody both effort and renewal. This integration shows Dickinson's views of work as an essential part of life, rather than a separate activity. The poem's rhythmic structure may illustrate how labor in her poetics becomes an ongoing, regenerative force.

By invoking "Electric Rest", Dickinson's speaker presents work as an energizing force, contrasting with the view of labor as exhausting or alienating. The latter view is consistent with Marx's definition of labor, which contended that alienation and commodification exhausts the worker's essence (Arendt, 1958: 162). Dickinson's perspective implies a type of work that is intrinsically rewarding and regenerating, blending with the act of living. Given the non-distinction between labor (or "thrilling toil") and leisure in nature, some of Dickinson's poems reinforce this notion. In more detail, the process of creation itself, like with the spider in the aforementioned poem, is what confers an artist's work value, not the fact that they are paid for it. The merit of a working activity is determined by the process rather than the income. As a result, work is no longer reduced to a purely human activity, or tied to a salary, as the speaker asserts below:

The Frogs got Home last Week -
Are settled, and at work -
Birds mostly back -
The Clover warm and thick- (Fr983)

This stanza delves into the integration of work within the natural world. Here, the seasonal rhythms of animal life reflect a continuous cycle of work that occurs regardless of human-imposed schedules or reward. Lines like "Birds mostly back - / The Clover warm and thick -" suggest that, for Dickinson's speaker, nature is "at work" in a state of constant activity that does not require external validation. This naturalized view of work critiques the capitalist structure that allocates value based on economic productivity, proposing instead that value may lie in continuity and process rather than in measurable results. Regardless of employment, both humans and animals work. Furthermore, Dickinson's lifetime poetic project, despite the fact that it was never tied to a salary because she was never externally employed, was "rewarded work" for her.[4] In more detail, Dickinson considered poetry to be a meaningful working activity, and her daily routine did not distinguish between work and leisure time.[5] Today, however, there is a clear distinction between these two categories.

In light of these examples, one can argue that Dickinson redefines labor as a transformative, self-affirming process. In contrast to the nineteenth-century commodification of work, as shown in the following sections, where productivity was often measured in economic terms, Dickinson's views of labor challenge the societal trend toward economic valuation and externally driven definitions of work. Furthermore, the notion of labor as a creative process transcends the economic imperatives of her time, illustrating a philosophy of work that embraces the intrinsic worth of action, much like the Greek ideal of *schole*.

3. The value of *Schole* (leisure) in Greek tradition vs. the virtue of labour in Protestant ethics

Dickinson's poetry reflects a nuanced understanding of labor and leisure that draws implicitly on ancient Greek and Protestant traditions. In Greek philosophy, *schole* (or leisure) was regarded as the highest prerequisite for intellectual and spiritual growth, whereas the Protestant ethic redefined leisure as idleness and labor as divine duty (Zuzanek, 2021: 2). Dickinson's poetics of labor oscillates between these two perspectives, agreeing with neither the exaltation of work nor the detachment of *schole*. Instead, she combines labor and leisure, drawing on elements from both traditions while crafting her own vision. Dickinson's exposure to Greek

[4] This idea is well-expressed in her poem "The Service without Hope" (Fr880).

[5] The distinction between meaningful and non-meaningful working activities will be examined in light of Jean-Philippe Deranty's (2021) essay in the last section of this article.

philosophy, through periodicals and American intellectual circles,[6] introduced her to a form of leisure that was not a mere absence of work but a pursuit of reflective, creative engagement. For Sebastian de Grazia (1962: 2), Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle introduced the concept of *schole*, and the Greek and Latin terms for work were *un-leisure*. Plato's *schole* referred to ideal and gratifying leisure, an opportunity to experience "excellence, creativity, and meaning" (Zuzanek, 2021: 22). Like Plato, Aristotle (1996: 274) underscored the value of *schole* while depriving labor of moral worth and limiting its function to providing leisure; in his own words, "we do business in order that we may have leisure". Since then, work and leisure have been perceived as distinct.[7]

For Dickinson, poetic creation could be seen as a kind of *schole*, a process inherently valuable not because of productivity or economic return, but due to the fulfillment and insight it provides. In other words, because she did not have to make a living from her art – due to her privileged economic position – she was able to prioritize human values over economic ones. For instance, in her poem opening "Publication - is the Auction / Of the Mind of Man -", her speaker is reluctant to "reducing" any "Human Spirit / To Disgrace of Price-" (Fr788). More specifically, this phrase suggests a fundamental incompatibility between artistic work and economic valuation. According to David Hills (2021: 178), Dickinson "renounced and condemned literary investment" and "literary commerce". The "Disgrace of Price" might thus be viewed as the ignominy of external economic valuation or, as Aristotle put it, the need to "do business in order that we may have leisure". Dickinson's artistic project, on the other hand, integrates these two categories, for what the Greeks called *schole*'s domain was also part of Dickinson's work domain, as a place of "Electric Rest". As a result, her work could be viewed as *schole*, an invitation to engage in contemplation (thinking), meaning, and creativity.

By integrating labor and leisure, Dickinson's poetics challenge the dichotomy established by both Greek and Protestant traditions. In opposition to the classical ideal, the Protestant ethic – particularly as it evolved in America – valued labor as a moral and spiritual undertaking, prioritizing productivity, diligence, and the responsible use of time.[8] According to Bennett Berger, the influence of Greek

[6] Dickinson became acquainted with Greek culture and tradition through U.S. periodicals and literary figures such as Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Henry David Thoreau. For instance, there were numerous articles in *The Atlantic Monthly* at the time Dickinson read it that made references to Greek culture and philosophers. According to Caroline Winterer, before the late nineteenth century, classicism was America's most important intellectual endeavor after Christianity, and "reverence for ancient models helped to structure ethical, political, oratorial, artistic, and educational ideals". See *The Mirror of Antiquity: American Women and the Classical Tradition, 1750 – 1900* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2007: 2-10).

[7] Nonetheless, historian Keith Thomas points out that, prior to Capitalism, there was a smaller disparity between the concepts of work and leisure than there is today – for instance, during the middle ages. See Keith Thomas, "Work and Leisure in Pre-Industrial Society," in *Past and Present*, 29 (1964: 50-66).

[8] According to Cynthia Estlund, "the idea of work as a moral imperative runs deep in Western religious thought, though its religious foundations bear little weight for many citizens yet". See *Automation*

tradition on the value of leisure intersects with the concept of labour as a moral obligation in U.S. culture, as shown below:

> We no longer feel that idleness is sinful, but we still retain something of the expectation that work should have moral content and feel rather cheated and slightly betrayed when we discover that moral content has simply disappeared from much industrial work … We are, in short … compromised Greek citizens longing for leisure, who carry the burden of compromised Protestant ethics. (qtd. in Zuzanek, 2021: 2)

Daniel Just investigates the historical development of this "burden" by means of Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930). He contends that the virtue of work, or God's worship through labor, will have "far-reaching social and psychological consequences for modernity" (Just, 2021: 436-7). To be more precise, the Protestant emphasis on labor as a means to venerate God and generate economic profit spread rapidly throughout the Western world. While the longing for wealth has always existed and is unrelated to capitalistic conduct, Weber (2001: 10) ties the spirit and origins of capitalism to the ethics of austere Protestantism. In the eighteenth century, the importance of the Protestant work ethic in American society is well exemplified in Benjamin Franklin's passage:

> Remember, that *time* is money. He that can earn ten shillings a day by his labor, and goes abroad, or sits idle, one half of the day, though he spends but sixpence during his diversion or idleness, ought not to reckon *that* the only expense; he has really spent, or rather thrown away, *five shillings besides*. (qtd. in Weber, 2001: 14)

Weber observes that the spirit of capitalism existed prior to the capitalistic order, especially in Massachusetts, where both Franklin and Dickinson were born, albeit its spiritual foundation had vanished by Franklin's time.[9] Consequently, "the values of achievement and profit" formed the basis of a mentality that endured until the end of the nineteenth century (Just, 2021: 438).

Dickinson's nineteenth-century context emerges historically as a complex phenomenon. At the advent of the mass consumption age, the poet was exposed to a wide variety of voices and experiences, including a religious revival known as the Second Great Awakening and the American Civil War. Linda Freedman (2011: 2) asserts that Dickinson's Puritan heritage, combined with liberal Christianity and classical mythology, was "a source of poetic enrichment" rather than a barrier. Despite the fact that the Protestant ethic of work was prevalent in her milieu, Dickinson's poetic labor was neither reduced to a profit-making activity nor subjugated to "Disgrace of Price". The term "business" in Dickinson's cosmology did not refer to commercial trade, but rather to artistic occupation. "My business is circumference", the poet wrote in a letter to the editor T.W. Higginson in 1862.[10]

Anxiety: Why and How to Save Work (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021: 69).

[9] Weber (2001: 123) asserts that there was "a peculiarly calculating sort of profit-seeking in New England, as distinguished from other parts of America, as early as 1632".

[10] Emily Dickinson, Letter 268, vol. 1, *The Letters of Emily Dickinson*, edited by Thomas H. Johnson and Theodora Ward (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1958). Hereafter cited

Later that year, Dickinson declared to her friend Elizabeth Holland, "My business is to love" and "My business is to sing" (L269). Moreover, "singing – as she often called writing poetry", Ackman n (2020: 122-3) notes, "had become to her the work of a lifetime and as fundamental as breathing". Dickinson's work challenged "the values of achievement and profit" prevalent in her environment by associating the term "business" with notions that did not rely on economic valuation.

Unlike Franklin, time did not equal money for Dickinson.[11] Time is priceless because it is limited, which is why individuals should not waste it, but not for fear of losing their money. As Dickinson expressed in a letter, "I fear we think too lightly of the gift of mortality which, too gigantic to comprehend, cannot be estimated" (L524). In other words, time itself is of greater value than money, since mortality – or time on Earth – "cannot be estimated". Another example is the poem below:

> We do not know the time we lose -
> The awful moment is
> And takes its fund a mental place
> Among the certainties -
>
> A firm appearance still in flates
> The card - the chance -the friend -
> The spectre of solidities
> Whose substances are sand - (Fr1139)

The persona emphasizes the value of time here by stating that one day, a person's existence – or the presence of a friend – looks to be solidly anchored on this world and, the following day, this person may just be gone. In more detail, "We do not know the time we lose" because people do not know how much time they have left before death, or "the awful moment", which is the only thing that is guaranteed. For Ackmann (2020: xxi), "creative expression was the fundamental force" of Dickinson's work and life, and "writing poetry both defined and sustained her". To be more specific, Dickinson's integration of *schole* into her working routine, together with a rejection of the Protestant work ethic and its emphasis on profit, opens her poetics to broader interpretations of labor as an intrinsic and self-validating practice, as well as the significance of time in people's finite existence.

Some of Dickinson's poems address work as an activity integrated into her way of life, presenting an image of labor that transcends economic worth and spans the realms of work and leisure. As a result, her poetry tackles the contradiction between self-fulfillment and societal expectations, arguing that labor does not need to be justified by external validation or economic production. In fact, the "Electric Rest" of labor holds intrinsic value. Nevertheless, the premise of modern labor proved to be the least self-rewarding activity since its value generally resided in external compensation. In merging work and leisure, Dickinson anticipates the post-

in-text according to the editor's numbering system. According to Judith Farr (1992: 29), the term "circumference" is one of Dickinson's "metaphors for poetry".

[11] Dickinson's views of time will be further examined in following sections.

work view advocated by theorists like David Graeber, who critiques modern work as often devoid of human *value*, serving more as a filler in a society obsessed with productivity and economic worth.

4. The paradox of modern work: value vs. values

Dickinson's poetics of labor confronts a paradox central to modern work culture: the tension between economic *value* and human *values*. Referring back to Foucault, this dichotomy frames labor as a means of achieving material security, often at the expense of individual fulfillment. In contrast, Dickinson's work challenges the commodification of labor, advocating instead for a perspective where the process itself holds intrinsic worth, independent of its productivity. Following the industrial revolution, Western societies increasingly measured work by productivity and profit, relegating personal well-being to secondary importance. According to Graeber (2018: xxiv), "we have evolved into a work-centered civilization, not even 'productive work' but work as an end and meaning in itself". In his analysis, Graeber looks at Thomas Carlyle's "Gospel of Work" (1843), which argues that labor should be considered as the substance of life itself, rather than a means to satisfy material wants (Graeber, 2018: 228). Carlyle (1843: 173-4), unlike Aristotle, highlights the moral value of work, provided that "a man perfects himself by working" since "all true work is sacred" and "this is the noblest thing yet discovered under God's sky". Likewise, across the Atlantic, Abraham Lincoln stated in his first annual address to Congress in 1861, "labor is prior to and independent of capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration" (qtd. in Graeber, 2018: 230). Further, the "Gospel of Work" gave way to the "Gospel of Wealth" after the American Civil War, with consumption replacing production as the "source of status".[12] Consequently, the consumerism cult emerged as a reaction to the fact that individuals have little control over their time and rarely act or live their lives as they would like (Graeber, 2018: 247).

Graeber unveils "the paradox of modern work" through surveys and research on work conducted during the twentieth century. He (Graeber, 2018: 241) claims that "most people's sense of dignity and self-worth is caught up in working for living"; however, "most people hate their jobs". More specifically, workers "gain feelings of dignity and self-worth *because* they hate their jobs" (Graeber, 2018: 242). For Graeber, modern work returns to Carlyle's standpoint, which consists of "a peculiar diatribe against happiness" on a daily basis, as shown in this excerpt: "the only happiness a brave man ever troubled himself with asking much about was, happiness enough to get his work done. It is, after all, the one unhappiness of a man that he

[12] It was "no longer the ability to make things", as Harry Braverman points out, "but simply the ability to purchase them" that represented "a monumental shift in popular consciousness" (qtd. in Graeber, 2018: 233-4).

cannot work, that he cannot get his destiny as man fulfilled" (Carlyle, 1843: 134). It is unsurprising that the work routine would be a torment for Carlyle and ascetic Protestantism; however, being unemployed would be far more tormenting, as man's "destiny" was to labor. For this reason, work's value rests on being an obligation rather than a choice. Likewise, its economic *value* – and the need to make a living from it – discourages people from prioritizing other *values*. According to Hannah Arendt, the instrumentalization of work "makes value itself impossible" since it causes a "limitless devaluation of everything existing", reducing "nature and the world into mere means, robbing both of their independent dignity" (Arendt, 1958: 156-7).Like Arendt, Graeber asserts:

> If you just want to make a lot of money, there might be a way to do it; on the other hand, if your aim is to pursue any other sort of value – whether that be truth (journalism, academia), beauty (the art world, publishing), justice (activism, human rights), charity, and so forth – and you actually want to be paid a living wage for it, then if you do not possess a certain degree of family wealth, social networks, and cultural capital, there is simply no way in. (Graeber, 2018: 253)

Fortunately, Dickinson did "possess a certain degree of family wealth", and her poems show how she was able to pursue other sorts of values.

Modern work subordinates human values in favor of economic ones, and it depreciates daily experience. Conversely, Dickinson's poetry subverts this utilitarian view of work and her poems offer an alternative to nineteenth-century and modern standards, confronting Carlyle's "peculiar diatribe" against the value of every day. In fact, *day* is by far the most commonly used noun in Dickinson's poetry, which appears 232 times (Keane, 2008: 26). This shows how important each day was in Dickinson's poetic life. When it comes to the distinction between *value* and *values*, some of her poems equate concepts like price or income with abstract worth rather than economic valuation. For Greg Sevik (2022: 146), "the only values" Dickinson truly recognizes are "the contingent ones here on Earth". For instance, in her poem "One blessing had I than the rest" (Fr767), her speaker discusses a "Value in the Soul -" which is the "Supremest Earthly Sum -". Thus, this "Value in the Soul" is priceless. Likewise, the following stanza highlights the inestimable worth of existence in itself:

> *One life* of so much consequence!
> Yet I - for it - would pay -
> My soul's *entire income* -
> In ceaseless - salary – (Fr248)

In this case, the terms "salary" and "income" do not refer to any waged labor since her life's intrinsic value does not require any additional economic compensation. In a similar vein, Dickinson wrote in a letter, "to have lived is a Bliss so powerful - we must die - to adjust it -" (L523). Death here is perceived as a necessary prerequisite for estimating bliss. To be more precise, time in itself is priceless because it is finite.

All of these poems and letter fragments show Dickinson's refusal to succumb to the exigencies of valuing wealth accumulation over the processes and activities

that lead to it. In other words, her poetics underscore the qualitative, non-economic dimensions of labor, presenting it as an integral, self-validating activity. Besides, Dickinson articulates a view of time that transcends economic measurement, positioning it as a precious, irreplaceable element of human existence.

5. The value of time in Dickinson's work

Unlike the dominant tendency to equate time with productivity, Dickinson's work reveals a deep reverence for time's intrinsic worth. Starting in the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century, time became increasingly commodified, as demonstrated by Franklin's dictum "time is money". Influenced by Protestant principles, the American work ethic transformed time into a resource to be maximized. By the early twentieth century, thinkers like John Maynard Keynes predicted that technological advancements would reduce work hours, but instead, time was further subordinated to the demands of economic gain (Suzman, 2019: 31). In fact, Juliet B. Schor (1993: xvii) asserts that the "culture of time" in the United States is harmful to well-being, and the decrease in leisure time contrasts sharply with the increase in productivity. In more detail, Schor (1993: xviii) argues that the capitalist drive to increase productivity and profits has actually led to longer working hours and less leisure, counter to earlier projections that economic advances would grant individuals more free time. In the 1950s, it was expected that as productivity rose, labor hours would decrease. For instance, *The Harvard Business Review* (1959) critically scrutinized the assumption that leisure time was about to increase and pondered: "what would regular Americans do with all of that extra time?" (Schor, 1993: 4). However, the leisure panic subsided when it failed to arrive. Besides, people's stress levels increased as a result of juggling the responsibilities of work, family, and life, and their "work-and-spend" cycle hindered them from living more leisurely (Schor, 1993: 5-9). Schor (1993: 11) questions what she calls a "conventional wisdom", that capitalism has created the world's first truly leisured societies. This claim is valid only when contrasted to eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europe and America; however, it is false when we go "a bit farther chronologically".[13] Consequently, she (Schor, 1993: 9-10) argues that increased levels of wealth and prosperity brought by capitalism's higher living standard come at the expense of a significantly busier workweek.

Like Schor, James Suzman (2019: 33) discusses both the devastating consequences of our worldwide economic system and primitive prosperity as characterize by the anthropologist Marshall Sahlins. Sahlins disputes the premise that people now live better than those in the past by analyzing hunter-gatherers' approach to happiness. Rather than boosting their work effort to obtain more things, as we do today, their lifestyle was predicated on having few possessions and few

[13] Schor (1993: 6-7) notes that "the lives of ordinary people in the Middle Ages or Ancient Greece and Rome may not have been easy, or even pleasant, but they certainly were leisurely".

wants. Despite being materially impoverished by contemporary standards, primitive people were affluent in one dimension: the disposal of their time (Schor, 1993: 10). These notions contrast significantly with the 1950s' American dream, which celebrated "the ability of capital, industry, and ultimately plenty of good honest hard work to narrow the gap between an individual's material aspirations and their limited means" (Suzman, 2019: 38). According to Suzman (2019: 38), the notion of primitive affluence challenges the idea that "Europe and America [are] at the vanguard of humankind's journey to bigger and better things", as exemplified in his book's epigraph by Seneca: "true happiness is to enjoy the present, without anxious dependence upon the future, not to amuse ourselves with either hopes or fears but to rest satisfied with what we have, which is sufficient, for he that is so wants nothing" (Suzman, 2019: 1). By centering time's worth in the present moment, rather than future productivity, Dickinson's work indirectly challenges the capitalist ethic that subordinates all aspects of life to labor's economic function and aligns with the idea of primitive affluence.

Returning to the presumed crisis of leisure addressed at *The Harvard Business Review*, it appears improbable that time would ever feel as "extra" for Dickinson given her tremendous appreciation for the "gift of mortality". As an example, she wrote to her sister-in-law Susan two years before her death, "tell the Susan who never forgets to be subtle, every Spark is numbered" (Leyda, vol.2, 1960: 430). Likewise, the poet's niece Martha depicted an incident in which the poet's appreciation for her limited time is well illustrated: "once in that happy place [Dickinson's room] I repeated to Aunt Emily what a neighbor had said – that time must pass very slowly to her, who never went anywhere – and she flashed back Browning's line: 'Time, why, Time was all I wanted!'" (Bianchi, 1970: 46). In other words, time was all she wanted and needed. For Albert Gelpi (1971: 82), Dickinson valued time over eternity, "for the one is still, but the other moves". Likewise, the poet believed that the fluidity and precariousness of time is what gives life meaning. In Martin Hägglund's (2019: 10) words, "we are free because we are able to ask ourselves what we ought to do with our time". Certainly, Dickinson was able to ask herself this question.

Dickinson's view of time contrasts sharply with the temporal pressures of modern work culture. Some of her poems show how her speakers both kept their wants low in the contest between *having* and *wanting*, and highlighted the value of the present. For instance in "The missing all -prevented me / From missing minor things -" (Fr995), the persona cherishes all that was unreachable to her, or missing, because it allowed her to focus on those "minor things" that, while not normally appreciated by some people, were essential to her. In reality, those "missing all" were never so "large" as to force her to forsake her "work for curiosity". In this context, work refers to activities – such as poetry writing – that are both rewarding and present in the speaker's world; activities that are "Sufficient for my Own" (Fr11036), as Dickinson declared in another poem. Like Seneca's sufficiency in enjoying the present, Dickinson's speaker posits, "How much the present moment means / To those who've nothing more -" (Fr1420). According to David Reynolds, Dickinson's awareness of "the momentousness of the Present" surpassed all her contemporaries'

(Reynolds, 2011: 34). Having nothing more than the present moment may only be assessed by those who deny the existence of eternity, such as atheists, or by those who recognize that "every spark is numbered".

For Dickinson, time cannot be subordinated to the mechanistic needs of productivity without losing its essence. Some of her poems and letter fragments imply that the meaning of time emerges only when individuals have the freedom to engage in fulfilling work, an idea that modern critiques of work culture – namely Graeber, Schor, and Suzman – similarly emphasize. Besides, Dickinson's approach promotes a more attentive, present-centered understanding of time and work that departs from economic necessity or social obligation.

6. The existential value of work: Beyond economic and social validation

Some of Dickinson's poems, by intertwining labor with existential fulfillment and present awareness, show that work can hold deep personal meaning outside societal expectations of productivity and financial gain. This approach is consistent with contemporary debates about the purpose of labor and the pursuit of happiness, which are examined by theorists who argue for reinventing work as a practice that fosters individual identity and societal cohesiveness rather than meeting economic imperatives. Cynthia Estlund (2021: 63) sheds light on a current debate about how to attain the three components of a life worth living – work, money, and leisure – in the face of automation and technological advancement. In her (Estlund, 2021: 67) own words, this debate is vital "to enable people generally to achieve a better balance between work and the rest of life – that is, a better societal work-life balance". On the one hand, waged labor is fundamental "to most people's identities and to our social and political life" (Estlund, 2021: 15). Americans, in particular, have primarily used employment to measure their own and others' worth and status (Estlund, 2021: 70-1). On the other hand, as exemplified in Keynes's envisioning, "most humans throughout history have aspired to a life with more leisure and less toil"; nonetheless, "free time without an adequate source of income is just the malaise of long-term unemployment" (Estlund, 2021: 15).While work is not as popularly valued as leisure and income, Estlund (2021: 76-7) contends that labor and working interactions have a social value that is much less likely to occur in other sorts of associations.

Like Estlund, Jean-Philippe Deranty (2021: 1) underscores the social benefits of work, and argues that, while revising the existing work ethic under capitalism is necessary, we should nevertheless adhere to some "ethic of work". This approach contrasts with other post-work theorists, such as Graeber, who point out the inherent discord in making work the axis of economic and cultural values, given that it is an instrumental activity by definition (Deranty, 2021: 4). In his (Deranty, 2021: 7) own words, "if we take seriously the idea that human society operates as a cooperative scheme that ensures its own reproduction and that of its members, then it is unrealistic and misguided to advocate for 'post-work' societies". In his essay, "work" is defined

as an activity, and he highlights the perks of work from an activity-centered rather than an economy-centered perspective. For Deranty (2021: 8), "the success of the working activity is not defined by the worker but by the addressee", provided that there is always an "external authority". While this authority corresponds to the various tiers of management in waged work, it can also be linked to society's expectations in non-waged work. Therefore, work, when seen as an activity, can be waged and non-waged. These working activities represent potential for "self-development" and "self-realization" for the individual only if they create "a challenge that must be met", which is typically external rather than 'self-defined'. In Deranty's (2021: 10) words, internal challenges "rarely provide the rigid frame within which the subject needs to mobilise all her powers to achieve tasks", considering that "mastering any complex task is difficult', and "involves renouncing comfort and habits".

While work can be characterized as an activity, not all activities are meaningful. For Deranty (2021: 11), a "meaningful activity" is directed at producing a specific outcome, "one that will fulfil a need", and it relies on "outside pressure" and "normative expectations". As a result, if the outcome is private, it is likely to be less meaningful for individuals. Some of "the social goods of working" are its "social recognition", the perks of "cohesive work collectives" and "occupational culture", as well as "effective cooperation", which undercuts "discriminations and ideologically based inequalities" (Deranty, 2021: 12-17). For all these reasons, in a "post-work society", he (Deranty, 2021: 12) suggests that "we would get very bored, as we would have to come up with meaningful activities that would need to be supported solely by our own self-motivation". Further, he (Deranty, 2021: 18) claims that "insisting on the goods of work is even compatible with a demand that work take less place in our lives". While both Estlund and Deranty distinguish between "work" and "the rest of life", Dickinson's merging of work and life calls this categorization into question. For instance, in her poem opening "Adversity if it shall be" (Fr1616), her speaker depicts "This Me" as someone "that walks and works -". By placing *walking* and *working* on equal terms, Dickinson's speaker points out that both the act of moving through life and the act of laboring are intrinsic to her sense of self. In a similar vein, when T.W. Higginson detailed his encounter with Dickinson in a letter to his wife, he wrote:

> I asked if she [Dickinson] never felt want to employment, never going off the place & never seeing any visitor "I never thought of conceiving that I could ever have the slightest approach to such a want in all future time" (& added) "I feel that I have not expressed myself strongly enough". (L342a)

Dickinson, "in all future time", did not feel any "want to employment", because her work as a poet was fully assimilated within her living practices, much like "the Spider as an artist", who performs his laboring activity without regard for any external authority or valuation that may "certify" his task.

Dickinson's poetic work was a meaningful activity for her, despite the fact that some of the features that Deranty associates with such activities might conflict with her approach. While her poetic work proved crucial in her life, it is unclear

how it fit into "a cooperative scheme". Dickinson shared several of her poems with friends and family, and these poems may have helped them on various occasions. Nonetheless, the primary reason for engaging in this activity was not "producing some useful outcome", but rather that writing poetry – and thinking through poetry – was meaningful and valuable for its own sake. Dickinson's poetic contribution to the world was neither "clear" nor "concrete", and yet, her poetic activities were meaningful. Moreover, did Dickinson want "external authority" to legitimize the "success" of her poetic work? On the one hand, it is true that when Dickinson first wrote T.W. Higginson in 1862, she included four poems and inquired whether her verse was "alive" (L260). She also signed several of her messages to him as "your scholar" and expressed gratitude for his advice and recommendations. His authority, however, was insufficient to overpower hers. Likewise, while Dickinson shared a substantial portion of her writing with her sister-in-law Susan – her primary addressee – this act did not signify a search for "external authority" but rather one of reciprocal involvement and interest in poetry. According to Ackmann (2020: xx), when Dickinson sent her poem "Safe in their Alabaster Chambers" (Fr124) to Susan "for critique", she listened to her "advice but went in another direction", and she reacted in a similar way to "Higginson's recommendations: open to his criticism, but holding fast to her own point of view". As one of Dickinson's speakers claimed: "The pedigree of Honey / Does not concern the Bee" (Fr1650). The external validation of Dickinson's creative endeavor did not interfere with her own appraisal or that of the process itself. Dickinson's poetry was not made public during her lifetime, yet that did not render it any less meaningful to her. Her privileged socioeconomic status, as previously stated, freed her from both the need to make a living from her poems and, in Deranty's words, "the anonymous gaze of society's expectations", given that her poems were published posthumously.[14]

Deranty's critique of a "post-work society" in which people "would get very bored" looking for meaningful and self-motivating activities echoes the question posed by *The Harvard Business Review* sixty years earlier. Individuals' perceptions of the mechanics, goals, and value of work appear to have not changed much over time, and it is still perceived as a kind of activity – whether or not meaningful and socially valued – that is performed out of obligation rather than choice, externally assessed and rewarded rather than internally, and separated from the rest of the activities that individuals freely choose to do. Would Dickinson have preferred that her work had taken 'less place' in her life? This question may have seemed irrelevant to her since the space that her poetic work occupied was the one she wished it to take, no more, no less, and its process spanned her entire life. To be more precise, Dickinson's poetics of labor were incorporated into her daily activities, and as a result, her work intertwined with her life, and vice versa.

[14] Dickinson published ten poems in her lifetime. They were published anonymously and were apparently "made public against her wishes" (Franklin, 1967: xv).

7. Conclusion

Emily Dickinson's poetics of labor present an alternative to both her nineteenth-century context and contemporary understandings of work. Through her unique integration of labor and leisure, Dickinson challenges dominant economic and social paradigms that equate work with productivity. Beyond that, her poetry positions labor not as a transactional activity but as a deeply personal and existential endeavor, one that holds intrinsic value irrespective of external validation or material outcomes. By drawing on both Greek philosophical ideals of *schole* and Protestant work ethics, Dickinson develops a vision of labor that transcends the conventional divide between work and rest. Her poetry blurs these boundaries, suggesting that labor could be inherently fulfilling, akin to leisure, and intrinsically tied to the joy of creation. This approach confronts the capitalist commodification of both work and time, advocating for a model where each moment − and each act of labor − is meaningful in its own right. Within her life's circumference, Dickinson's aim was not that work would "take less place" in her life, as Deranty implied, or to separate work from "the rest of life", as Estlund pointed out. Furthermore, she did not engage in "business" in order to have leisure, as Aristotle advocated, or to turn time into money, as Protestant ethics urged. Instead, Dickinson's poetic endeavor and its activities intended to merge life and work, and they became one and the same. Therefore, Dickinson's poetics of labor and its emphasis on the worth of processes highlights the benefits present in her lifetime journey through poetry. Finally, Dickinson's work resonates with contemporary debates about work-life balance, personal fulfillment, and the social impact of labor, offering a timeless critique of the forces that continue to shape modern work culture. By embracing Dickinson's views, we find a pathway to a more holistic understanding of work − one that values presence and process over mere productivity, and affirms the potential of labor to bring deeper meaning and connection into our lives.

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EMILI DIKINSON I POETIKA RADA

Apstrakt

Ovaj članak istražuje poetiku rada Emili Dikinson i odnos između rada i dokolice u kontekstu američke kulture 19. veka i savremenog društva. Istorijski gledano, fizički rad percipira se kao osnova društvenih i ekonomskih vrednosti. Međutim, pojedinci su često podstaknuti da odstupaju od svojih radnih rutina, zbog čega je teško sagledati njihovu vrednost. Koristeći komparativni i interdisciplinarni pristup, ova studija analizira opus Emili Dikinson u dijalogu s filozofskim i sociološkim okvirom koji razmatra razliku između rada i dokolice, kao i posledice koje ta razlika ostavlja na živote ljudi, ali i način na koji se vrednovanje rada promenilo tokom vremena. Detaljnom analizom odabranih pesama i delova pisama, ovaj rad pokazuje kako dela Dikinsonove brišu tradicionalne granice između rada i dokolice, sugerišući da kreativni rad može imati fundamentalnu, samopotvrđujuću vrednost, koja nije uslovljena ekonomskim ili društvenim pritiscima. Naposletku, njen pogled na rad i vreme može doprineti savremenim raspravama posvećenim uspostavljanju smislene ravnoteže između rada i života u kapitalističkom društvu.

Ključne reči: Emili Dikinson, poetika rada, devetnaesti vek, radna etika, dokolica, vrednosti

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NON-HUMAN NATURE AS ALLY AND ADVERSARY IN *THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING*: AN ECOCRITICAL READING

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Abstract

This paper presents an ecocritical reading of *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954), the first volume of *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-1955), from the perspective of deep ecology, a philosophical and ethical approach that holds that all human and non-human species (including geographical features like rivers, lakes, mountains and forests) are equal in the shared ecosystem, and rejects anthropogenic view that humanity is the dominant species. The paper will explore how non-human beings (non-human animals, plants, forests, rivers, the weather, etc.) appear as allies and/or adversaries to human/human-like protagonists. The aim is to offer an ecocritical reading that will lead to a deeper understanding and greater appreciation of Tolkien and his works as a call to humanity to change their destructive ways and recognize the interconnectedness and interdependency of all participants in our ecosystem.

Keywords: ecocritical reading, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Lord of the Rings*, non-human nature, deep ecology

1. Introduction

The year 2024 marks the 70th anniversary of the first publication of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954). In the years that followed, this book and the subsequent volumes, *The Two Towers* (1954) and *The Return of the King* (1955), have grown into a landmark work of the high fantasy genre, regarded as a paragon of fantasy literature as a whole. Although not initially considered "serious" or high-brow literature, its reputation has continued to grow, inspiring numerous

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critical interpretations and scholarly works. The novel has been examined from feminist, Marxist, postcolonial and ecocritical perspectives and the philosophical, religious and allegorical elements have been analysed.

In the past thirty years, there has been a renewed interest in the books, partly due to the enormously popular and critically acclaimed movie trilogy (2001-2003) and partly due to the rising awareness of the devastating effects of human activities on the environment, especially evident in global warming, air and water pollution and ozone layer thinning. *The Lord of the Rings*, indeed, raises many issues that humanity seems to have only recently become aware of and that resonate with us more than ever – deforestation, habitat loss, species extinction, pollution and human encroachment on wildlife ecosystems. This has inspired much ecocritical research into Tolkien's works, most prominently *The Lord of the Rings*.

2. Ecological literary criticism: An overview

Over the past forty years, ecological literary criticism, or ecocriticism, has evolved from a regional movement of the U.S. literary scholars who were interested in nature writing and environmental literature, to an international and interdisciplinary community of scholars and researchers who express an ever-growing concern over the current environmental crisis and agree that this crisis is a material expression of modern culture's (mis)understanding of the relationship between nature and humanity (Gersdorf & Mayer, 2006: 9). One of the first anthologies of ecocriticism was Glotfelty and Fromm's *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996), which broadly defines ecocriticism as "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment". At the turn of the 21st century, prompted by the sense of approaching environmental crisis, which manifested in the 1980s and 1990s in ecological incidents such as oil spills, epidemics such as mad cow disease, and increasingly frequent instances of weather extremes, ecocriticism becomes as relevant and recognized as such established methodologies as feminist criticism, post-colonialism, or new historicism (Gersdorf & Mayer, 2006: 9).

Most ecocritical scholars (Garrard, 2004; Gersdorf & Mayer, 2006; Glotfelty & Fromm, 1996; Sessions, 1987) agree that the founding text of modern environmentalism was Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962). Using poetic language and relying on the literary genres of pastoral and apocalypse, Carson warns against using organic pesticides and goes on to present scientific evidence of the threat they pose both to wildlife and to human health. According to Greg Garrard (2004: 2-3), ecocriticism is, like feminism and Marxist criticism, overtly political mode of analysis, frequently closely linked to "green" moral and political agenda, and consequently to environmental philosophy and political theory. Another broad cultural definition of ecocriticism, proposed by Richard Kerridge in *Writing the Environment* (1998), claims that the purpose of ecocriticism is to evaluate texts and ideas in terms of whether they are "useful as responses to environmental crisis" (Kerridge, 1998: 5, cited in Garrard, 2004: 4).

Garrard gives a brief overview of major trends in the development of academic ecocriticism: from an almost exclusive interest in Romanticism, nature writing and wilderness narratives, to a much wider scope of interest, ranging from the science of ecology to studies of art, film, architecture and all the processes and products through which human – non-human interaction takes place. With the widespread awareness of the environmental crisis in the 21st century, the interest in ecocriticism has increased, which is evident in a growing number of ecocritical essays and publications, and a number of distinct eco-philosophies or approaches have emerged (Garrard, 2004: 16), each having a distinct view of environmental crisis, its roots and causes, its course and possible solutions, and what should (or should not) be done about it. "Moderate" environmentalism, according to Garrard (2004: 18), comprises "the very broad range of people who are concerned about environmental issues such as global warming and pollution, but who wish to maintain or improve their standard of living as conventionally defined, and who would not welcome radical social change". Deep ecology rejects the instrumental approach (preserving the natural resources only for the sake of humanity) and argues that human-centric value system (Anthropocentrism) is at the root of the environmental crisis. Similarly, ecofeminism argues that the root of the environmental crisis is in the oppression of Man (specifically male) over Other, with Other identified as nature, women, non-white, non-Western, poor, working-class, underprivileged, powerless, children (Birkenland, 1993; Gaard, 1993; Kurth-Schai, 1997; Warren, 1997; Rowland, 2015; Hummel, 2019). For eco-Marxists and social ecologists, economic and ecological exploitation are inextricably linked: owners of the means of production (developed nations) enjoy the surplus created by human hyper-consumption and widespread pollution, with less wealthy nations often left vulnerable to environmental threats as a consequence of such activities (Garrard, 2004: 29).

The following sections will examine the tenets of deep ecology as an ecological philosophy that could be applied to Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (LOTR).

3. Deep ecology

The origins of deep ecology can also be traced back to Carson's *Silent Spring*. According to Sessions (1987: 105), besides drawing attention to the rampant overuse of pesticides and their devastating effect on the environment, Carson also challenged the capability of humankind to "manage" natural resources and anthropocentrism as a worldview, claiming that the belief that nature exists for the convenience of man betrays humankind's arrogance and ignorance, leading to species extinction and environmental degradation.

Many ecocritical scholars, not only deep ecologists, have discussed or touched upon some of the tenets of deep ecology, as is evident in Glotfelty and Fromm's *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996). Fromm (1996: 30-33) criticizes the falseness of Cartesian dualism of mind vs. body and emphasizes humankind's connectedness to nature. Similarly, Howarth (1996: 69) emphasizes that the duality of nature vs.

culture should be abandoned, as any culture is inextricably linked to its environment and natural resources. He advocates ecocriticism as a discipline which could bridge this gap. In the same vein, Rueckert (1996: 108) invokes the first law of ecology: "Everything is connected to everything else", offering an interesting insight into connections between ecology and literary criticism. Any work of art such as a poem, a painting or a symphony, he claims, is an eternally renewable energy resource, generating creative energy in the human mind. However, Rueckert emphasizes that "man's tragic flaw is his anthropocentric (as opposed to biocentric) vision, and his compulsion to conquer, humanize, domesticate, violate, and exploit every natural thing" (Rueckert, 1996: 113). The only way, he (Rueckert, 1996: 114) believes, is to reject the anthropocentric vision and incorporate ecological vision into "the economic, political, social and technological visions of our time, and radicalize them". Other scholars (see Campbell, 1996; Love, 1996) similarly reject anthropocentrism and -centrism of any kind, insisting that, as everything is connected and nothing is isolated, human beings must no longer be viewed as the centre of value and meaning, and that non-human nature has meaning and exists apart from humans and human languages.

Garrard (2004: 21) calls deep ecology "the most influential beyond academic circles" of the four radical forms of environmentalism, having inspired many activist organizations as well as scholars. The most prominent proponent of deep ecology, Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, set out eight tenets of the deep ecology platform, which emphasizes the need for a radical shift in human attitudes towards nature. This radical shift involves, among other things, a substantially smaller human population and a recognition of intrinsic value not only in all living beings, but also in "all identifiable entities or forms in the ecosphere" (Sessions, 1995: 270), such as rivers, landscapes, and ecosystems. Deep ecologists have been criticized for some of these views, the critics often focusing on the elusiveness of the term "intrinsic value" and claiming that if value resides everywhere, then it resides nowhere (Garrard, 2004: 22). Another major objection is that deep ecology is misanthropic, advocating human population decrease and disregarding human interests. Although some more radical deep ecologists made such remarks, "mainstream" deep ecologists recognize that "'vital' human needs may take priority over the good of any other thing, thus ruling out difficult conflicts between the interests of humans and the interests of a man-eating tiger or a bubonic plague bacillus" (Garrard, 2004: 22). Garrard notes that the biggest paradox of deep ecology is that it rejects "scientifically informed attempts to manage ecosystems as part of the 'problem'", i.e., the anthropocentric attitude that sees nature only as useful to humans, thus remaining on the sidelines of environmentalism, only criticizing but not offering any real solutions.

Regardless of the (in)effectiveness of deep ecology as a philosophy and practice, this paper will examine *The Fellowship of the Ring* through the lens of the first tenet of deep ecology: that both human and non-human life on Earth have intrinsic value in themselves, and specifically that "these values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes" (Sessions, 1995: 68).

4. Ecocritical readings of Tolkien's works

Critical reception of Tolkien's literary works, especially in the early years since the publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, has been one of either obliviousness or hostility (Curry, 2005). Two of the most prominent Tolkien scholars, Tom Shippey and Patrick Curry, in their respective essays on Tolkien and his critics, remark on "the strange nature of critical responses to Tolkien" (Shippey, 2014) and "remarkable critical disdain" (Curry, 2005) in the face of the enormous popularity of his works, with *The Lord of the Rings* being regularly included in the best-selling novels of all time (approximately 150 million copies worldwide) (50 Best-Selling Books of All Time, February 9, 2024), translated into more than 30 languages, and named the book of the 20th century by Waterstone's customers and the nation's best-loved novel by the BBC in their "The Big Read" poll of the British public (*Lord of the Rings Stats*). Curry, in his 2005 essay, analyses the extreme nature of various critical responses to Tolkien: the author and by extension, his most popular work, have been accused of being infantile, escapist and reactionary; of propagating or implicitly endorsing class snobbery, racism, sexism, even fascism; of indulging in English nationalism, celebrating the bourgeois pastoral idyll, offering "a bucolic retreat from "reality" that encourages an apolitical passivity and/or right-wing quietism" (Curry, 2005: 12). Admittedly, Tom Shippey's seminal work *The Road to Middle-Earth* (1982), in which he used philological, historical and linguistic approach to repudiate Tolkien's critics and to show that Tolkien is an important twentieth-century author, did much to open the doors to scholarly study of Tolkien. In the words of Drout and Wynne (2000: 103), *The Road to Middle-Earth* is "the most important, influential and well-written work of Tolkien criticism published before 2001" that has largely set the agenda for the next two decades of Tolkien scholarship, especially the source-focused, philological approach to Tolkien studies.

Tolkien scholarship in the 21st century is proof that Drout and Wynne were correct. Scholarly and academic interest in Tolkien's works has continued to flourish. The 21st century has seen the publication of numerous books, essay collections, and conference proceedings on Tolkien, as well as establishment of several academic journals (Books about Tolkien). Besides the abovementioned critical approaches, scholars and graduate students have increasingly become focused on ecocritical readings of Tolkien's works. In their 2006 book *Ents, Elves, and Eriador*, Matthew Dickerson and Jonathan Evans examine *The Lord of the Rings* through the ecocritical lens, focusing on Tolkien's emphasis on restraining our appetites, both as individuals and as a species, protecting and "defending beloved landscapes against the ethical and technological challenges symbolized by Mordor, and fostering sustainability in our communities". They also emphasize the concept of stewardship, exemplified in the book by the attitude of the Hobbits towards the Shire. Although Tolkien's vision of the Shire has previously been dismissed by critics as nothing more than a sentimental memory of the English village of his childhood, Dickerson and Evans show that the carefully tended and preserved Shire community has a distinctive value

that is revealed in the concept of stewardship that permeates the book. Represented in various characters such as Gandalf, Aragorn, Faramir, and above all, Sam Gamgee, "stewardship is a matter of faithful and discerning action on behalf of a beloved landscape and community". Dickerson and Evans note that environmentalism must find a middle ground between wilderness preservation (ecocentric) and conservation (anthropocentric) and believe that stewardship as exemplified in LOTR may be the answer.

Other important studies (see Curry, 2004; Curry, 2014; Jeffers, 2014) have applied the ecocritical approach to the study of Tolkien's Middle-Earth and the way different groups and individuals in *The Lord of the Rings* interact with their environments. Susan Jeffers (2014: 16-17) argues that this interaction takes three forms: some groups and individuals, like Hobbits, Elves and Ents, have "power with" their environments; others, like Dwarves and Men, draw "power from" their environments, with cities or locations symbolizing their dominance or right to rule; still others, like Sauron and Saruman, strive to have "power over" their environments.

Many scholarly articles which use ecocritical approach to Tolkien studies (e.g. Morgan, 2010; Haberman & Kuhn, 2011; Ulstein, 2015; Bal, 2021) emphasize that fantasy fiction has a potential for exploring ecocritical ideas and offering alternative, non-anthropocentric visions of the world. They argue that Tolkien's work in general and *The Lord of the Ring* in particular promote ideas of stewardship and successful environmental preservation, as well as the essential role of non-human nature.

The sections that follow will explore how non-human beings (non-human animals, plants, forests, rivers, weather, etc.) appear as allies and/or adversaries to human/human-like protagonists, for reasons that may not be immediately apparent, but are revealed in the intrinsic value and meaning of non-human nature. The aim of this paper is to offer an ecocritical reading that will lead to a deeper understanding and greater appreciation of Tolkien and his works as a call to humanity to change their destructive ways and recognize the interconnectedness and interdependency of all participants in our ecosystem. I will not be arguing that deep ecological thought is deliberately present in *The Fellowship of the Ring* (the movement emerged some twenty years after the book's publication), but that the principles and concerns of deep ecology may be applied to the characterization and the plot. This is, I believe, an example of the endless and seemingly inexhaustible "applicability" (as Tolkien himself called it in the Foreword to the 1966 second edition) of *The Lord of the Rings* that lasts to this day.

5. Non-human nature as ally and adversary

The Lord of the Rings is mainly told from the perspective of the Hobbits, "an unobtrusive […] little people" who "love peace and quiet and good tilled earth", as the author explains in the Prologue (*The Fellowship of the Ring*, 1954: 13). From their peaceful land of the Shire, the plot follows the main protagonist Frodo Baggins and his fellow Hobbits as they set out on a quest to destroy the One Ring and thus

vanquish the main antagonist Sauron, helped and hindered by many human/human-like and non-human beings along the way. The first volume, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (FR) starts from the Shire and the events are seen mainly through Frodo's eyes, although the scope of the story gradually widens, as Frodo leaves the Shire and comes across many dangers, but also finds unexpected allies. The Shire is presented as an idyllic countryside, reminiscent of pre-industrial England, and Hobbits as a simple people, who "do not and did not understand or like machines more complicated than a forge-bellows, a water-mill, or a hand-loom" and maintain "a close friendship with the earth" (FR, 1954: 13). Tolkien asserts in the Prologue that Hobbits are close relatives of humans ("Men") and "liked and disliked much the same things as Men did" (FR, 1954: 14). As such, they mediate between the modern world known to readers and the ancient, heroic world of Middle-Earth. Simultaneously, they are meant to represent simple, unadventurous people who are nonetheless capable of doing great things when the need arises. On the other hand, Hobbits' "close friendship with the earth" makes them capable of moving so swiftly and silently that to humans this ability seems magical, although Hobbits "have never studied magic of any kind" (FR, 1954: 13). Tolkien also ascribes specific physical characteristics to Hobbits (the most obvious being their height) that establish them as a variety of humanity. It could be argued, therefore, that the story is told from an anthropocentric perspective; however, the sections that follow will examine certain characters and events which include an ecocentric perspective as well.

The importance of trees, woodlands, and forests in Tolkien's works, in *The Lord of the Rings* especially, has been discussed by many Tolkien scholars (see Curry, 2014; Dickerson & Evans, 2006; Flieger, 2000; Jeffers, 2014; Saguaro & Thacker, 2013; Shippey, 1982; Stanton, 2008). In his writings, Tolkien often expressed his love for trees and dismay at their mistreatment at human hands: he found it as hard to bear as mistreatment of animals (Jeffers, 2014: 16). Cutting and burning of trees and forests almost always symbolizes violation and injustice in Tolkien's universe. Trees and forests are very often presented as sentient or partly sentient, with a will and mind of their own. At the same time, forests often appear as places of danger and malevolent magic, corrupted by evil forces.

Without delving too deeply into Tolkien's cosmology and mythology, which is beyond the scope of this paper, his philosophy regarding trees could be summarized as follows: trees are one of the oldest living beings in Arda (Tolkien's name for Earth) and for a long time were the only inhabitants of Middle-Earth. However, vast primeval forests of western Middle-Earth began to dwindle, when first Elves, then Men and other two-legged beings began to make their settlements there. Only a few remnants of these forests remain at the time when the events of *The Lord of the Rings* take place: most were cut down to make way for agricultural land or destroyed in battles long ago.

It is telling that, as Frodo and his companions set out eastwards through the Shire, their first encounter with danger happens in the still tame woodlands: they are hunted by the Black Riders, in fact the nine Ringwraiths, terrifying servants of the Dark Lord, who are drawn by the One Ring Frodo is carrying. Luckily, the Shire

woodlands are the haunt of a wandering company of the Elves, whose singing drives the Riders away. But the first real adversary the Hobbits encounter is the Old Forest, an ancient woodland stretching along the eastern border of the Shire.

Tolkien remarked in one of his letters that "the Old Forest was hostile to two-legged creatures because of the memory of many injuries" (Carpenter, 2023). When Frodo's companions, his cousins Merry Brandybuck and Pippin Took, and his gardener Sam Gamgee, reveal that they know about his perilous quest and are determined to follow him, the Hobbits discuss how to leave the Shire undetected by the Black Riders and other spies of the Dark Lord. Merry's advice is to cut through the Old Forest, although it has a sinister reputation. When the Brandybuck family settled the stretch of land between the Brandywine River and the Old Forest, they began to encroach upon the forest and thus reawakened the hostility of the trees. They soon found that the trees were not ordinary trees: they seemed to shift and would lead astray those who wandered inside; they would become lost and not return. The trees whispered at night, swayed when there was no wind and intimidated the Hobbits by dropping branches, sticking out roots and grasping at them with trailers (FR, 1954: 125). The Bucklanders planted and maintained a long hedge along the edge of forest to keep it away. However, the trees did not like this and attempted to attack and destroy the hedge. The Bucklanders retaliated by cutting and burning many trees. After that, Merry concludes, "the trees gave up the attack, but they became very unfriendly" (FR, 1954: 125).

Immediately upon entering the forest, the Hobbits feel the hostility emanating from it: "they all got an uncomfortable feeling of being watched with disapproval, deepening to dislike and even enmity" (FR, 1954: 126). The trees seem to close in on them, herding them to the heart of the forest; the air is hot and stuffy, so that the Hobbits grow sleepy and disoriented, and instead of keeping to their path, they wander along the River Withywindle right into the trap of Old Man Willow, a malevolent spirit appearing as a large willow tree. He hypnotizes the Hobbits with the music of his rustling leaves and puts them to sleep. When Frodo and Sam wake up, they realize that Merry and Pippin have been trapped inside the tree trunk. Frodo and Sam uselessly try to free them, kicking at the tree, which seems to be laughing at them. However, when they light a fire against the trunk of the tree, they awaken the anger of the forest: "the leaves seemed to hiss above their heads with a sound of pain and anger" (FR, 1954: 133). Old Man Willow threatens to squeeze Merry in two if the fire is not put out. At the last moment, the Hobbits are saved by Tom Bombadil, a mysterious figure appearing as a short stocky man, who counters Old Man Willow's spell by one of his own.

Much has been written about Tom Bombadil's character and his role in the Tolkien legendarium (see especially Beal, 2018; Dickerson & Evans, 2006; Flieger, 2011; Hargrove, 1986; Jeffers, 2014; Shippey, 1982). Tom Bombadil appears as a kindly man with a beard, who lives in the Old Forest with his wife Goldberry, "the River-daughter" (FR, 1954: 138), appearing as a beautiful young woman with a lovely singing voice. The character of Tom Bombadil first appeared in the poems invented by Tolkien for his children, that far pre-date LOTR (Beal, 2018: 12-13).

Tolkien stated that at first the character was meant to represent the spirit of the English countryside. He later decided to include him in the final version of *The Lord of the Rings* and stated that Bombadil's purpose and origins were intentionally enigmatic (Carpenter, 2023). Indeed, Tom Bombadil does not fit neatly into any of the categories of Tolkien's beings ("races"). Tom calls himself "Eldest" and claims that he "was here before the river and the trees; Tom remembers the first raindrop and the first acorn" (FR, 1954: 146). Most importantly, he seems to know everything about Frodo's quest already, and the One Ring has no effect on him: unlike everyone else, when Tom puts the Ring on, he does not disappear. Most scholars, therefore, agree that Tom is a deity, or a spiritual being incarnated as a Man. Hargrove (1986) claims that Tom Bombadil is one of the Ainur, angel-like beings in Tolkien's cosmology who participated in the creation of the universe. Another popular interpretation is that Tom Bombadil, Goldberry, and Old Man Willow are nature spirits taking different physical forms. In that sense, they are non-human, but as immortal spirits they are outside nature, and as such will not be examined at length.

Tom Bombadil's function, however, is much more important than his provenance. He tells the Hobbits many tales "of bees and flowers, the ways of trees, and the strange creatures of the Forest, about the evil things and good things, things friendly and things unfriendly, cruel things and kind things, and secrets hidden under brambles" (FR, 1954: 145). Tom, as a guardian of nature, teaches the Hobbits how to understand non-human nature and adopt a more ecocentric perspective:

> As they listened, they began to understand the lives of the Forest, *apart from themselves, indeed to feel themselves as the strangers where all other things were at home* [our italics]. Tom's words laid bare the hearts of trees and their thoughts, which were often dark and strange, and filled with hatred of things that go free upon the earth, gnawing, biting, breaking, hacking, burning: destroyers and usurpers (FR, 1954: 145).

Tom's tales emphasize the interconnectedness of human and non-human nature and the connection between actions and consequences. The environment that the Hobbits perceived as friendly, or hostile is such as a result of the actions of its inhabitants and has an intrinsic value, apart from them.

In the episode discussed above, the forest appears as an adversary of the protagonists. In the final chapter of Book 1, "Flight to the Ford", non-human nature – a river – appears to be an ally. The role of water in Tolkien's works has not been examined often, according to Schürer (2021). Most scholars, notably Curry (2014), Dickerson and Evans (2014), and Jeffers (2014), ascribe to water, seas and rivers especially, a positive symbolic value. Dickerson (2011) and Auer (2019) write that water has a spiritual value, symbolizing hope and salvation, and that the pollution of water is associated with evil (Schürer, 2021: 22). In contrast, Schürer argues that elements like water and fire are morally neutral and can be used for good or evil ends. I agree with Schürer that associating certain elements in Tolkien's works only positive symbolic values is oversimplifying: "fire and water can also be used for destruction, and nature and life are not necessarily good" (Schürer, 2021: 23) – a point that *The Lord of the Rings* drives home again and again. On the other hand,

Dickerson and many other Tolkien scholars are right to argue that the pollution of water – and, indeed, non-human nature in general – is associated with evil. Schürer (2021: 35) notes that "the condition of water is always a bellwether for the state of a community: where beings live together in peace and harmony, water is plentiful and clean; conversely, a ruined community has dirty or no water".

Unlike trees and forests, bodies of water rarely appear to take on sentience. A notable exception is the Bruinen River, which "rises in anger" (FR, 1954: 240), sweeping away the Black Riders and saving a wounded and exhausted Frodo from them. Gandalf explains, however, that Elrond, the elf-lord of Rivendell, holds the river "under his power" and that he commanded it to attack the Black Riders. Schürer (2021: 33) notes that it is (perhaps intentionally) left unclear "if the 'anger' is Elrond's or the river's". The wizard Gandalf makes it clear that without the intervention of the river, Frodo would have perished; not even Glorfindel, a powerful elven warrior, and Aragorn, an equally powerful and experienced human warrior, could have defended him from the nine Ringwraiths at once (FR, 1954: 240).

After a time of rest and healing in the Elven sanctuary of Rivendell, the representatives of the Free Peoples of Middle-Earth – Elves, Dwarves, Men and Hobbits – are gathered in council. On the advice of Elrond and Gandalf, it is decided to attempt the destruction of the One Ring, and the Fellowship of the Ring is formed (FR, 1954: 286-287; 292-293). The Fellowship sets out to cross the Misty Mountains, a high mountain range to the east, and then turn south. During the first stage of their journey, they are immediately surrounded by hostile non-human nature. They find themselves in "an ever wider land of bleak hills, and deep valleys filled with turbulent waters", where paths are "few and winding", leading them often "only to the edge of some sheer fall, or down into treacherous swamps" (FR, 1954: 299). They have a sense of being watched, and soon realize that flocks of birds are spying out on the land (FR, 1954: 302). The region they are traversing was left desolate by long wars between the Elves and the Dwarves and the Dark Lord's armies; however, as Aragorn remarks, "there are many evil and unfriendly things in the world that have little love for those that go on two legs, and yet are not in league with Sauron, but have purposes of their own" (FR, 1954: 306). When the Fellowship tries to cross a mountain pass called Caradhras, they become trapped in a snowstorm, even though snow seldom falls so far south. Moreover, they hear "eerie noises in the darkness round them", like "shrill cries and wild howls of laughter" (FR, 1954: 306), and stones crash on their path from the mountainside. They are forced to spend the night crouching against the cliff face, and in the morning, they decide to go back.

In this instance, it is the mountain that is ascribed sentience and agency. "It is the ill will of Caradhras", says Gimli the dwarf, "He does not love Elves and Dwarves" (FR, 1954: 310). Finally, when they retreat, the clouds begin to break, "as if Caradhras was satisfied that the intruders had been beaten off and would not dare to return" (FR, 1954: 311). Like the Old Forest, Caradhras does not like strangers, whether because of steady encroachment of "those that go on two legs" (FR, 1954: 306) on their territory, or because of inherent ill will. The text does not give definite answers; still, in the treatment of non-human nature like the Old Forest and Caradhras

we can identify an ecocentric, non-hierarchical world in which human and human-like beings are inextricably connected with non-human nature through their good and bad deeds, across time and space.

Not being able to cross the mountains, on Gandalf's advice, the Fellowship considers going under them, through the Mines of Moria, an ancient underground kingdom of the Dwarves, now long abandoned (FR, 1954: 313-314). Moria has a sinister reputation, and many members of the Fellowship are reluctant to enter it. They delay the decision until morning. However, during the night, they are attacked by a pack of Wargs, wolf-like creatures who serve the Enemy. Going underground now seems like their only chance to escape. To get to the Gates of Moria, they traverse Eregion, an abandoned country of the Elves, which had long ago been allied with Moria. However, the land is now desolate and empty, the roads are broken and decayed, and the stream that ran to the Gates has been dammed. The water had filled the valley in front of the Gates and formed a lake (FR, 1954: 318-319). The lake is described as "dark", "ominous", with a "sullen surface"; the water is dark and unclean, and Frodo shudders with disgust when they must thread a narrow creek across their way (FR, 1954: 319). Of course, it is not really the lake that is dangerous, but the monstrous being living in the lake, called the Watcher in the Water (FR, 1954: 326-327). Disturbed by the stone thrown in the water, the Watcher grabs Frodo with one of its many tentacles, while "the waters of the lake seething, as if a host of snakes were swimming up from the southern end" (FR, 1954: 326). The Fellowship escapes into the Mines, and the tentacles slam the gates after them.

Once again, the encroachment of outsiders is met with ill will and hostility by non-human nature. Gandalf remarks that "something has crept, or *has been driven out* [our italics] of dark waters under the mountains" (FR, 1954: 327). Several times throughout the book (see FR, 1954: 257, 359, 375) it is implied that the Dwarves, known for their metal craftsmanship, craved "greater wealth and splendour" of Moria, as the only place where a precious metal mithril could be found, disturbed "the nameless fear" (FR, 1954: 257) deep under the mountains. To quote Jeffers (2014), Dwarves, like Men, draw power from their environments: it is the wealth of ore and precious metals that give non-human nature value. The consequences of this attitude are shown to be dire: the Fellowship is attacked by a Balrog, an ancient fire demon. Gandalf confronts the demon, allowing the others to escape, and they both fall into the abyss of Moria.

In contrast to the frightening experience of Moria, the Fellowship finally finds sanctuary in the Elven land of Lothlorien, east of the Misty Mountains. The land (which is in fact a forest) is governed and protected by Galadriel, a powerful Elf-queen. The Elves, in general, are the people that coexist in almost perfect harmony with their environment: as Gandalf remarks, "much evil must befall a country before it wholly forgets the Elves, if once they dwelt there" (FR, 1954: 301). The Elves, as immortal creatures, are most aware of the interconnectedness of all living beings, and have the greatest respect for non-human nature, to the point that they seem to understand and communicate with trees, rivers, and stones (see FR, 1954: 301, 357). Therefore, Lothlorien is a land of peace and comfort: instead of hostility,

the forest offers shelter, and the stream washes away "the stain of travel and all weariness" (FR, 1954: 357). During their stay in Lothlorien, the visitors are struck by the timeless beauty of its landscape: when Frodo lays his hand upon the bark of a tree, he becomes keenly aware of the life within it. He feels delight in the touch of the tree, "neither as forester nor as carpenter" (FR, 1954: 370). The experience in Lothlorien changes some members of the Fellowship in many ways, but one of them is certainly that they begin to see non-human nature as possessing intrinsic value, apart from themselves.

It is telling that of all the members of the Fellowship it is Boromir, a Man from Gondor, and Gimli the Dwarf who are most reluctant to enter Lothlorien ("the Golden Wood", FR, 1954: 356) and those who rule there, as the representatives of races that value "power over" or "power from" their environments (Jeffers, 2014: 16-17). Boromir, arguing against entering Lothlorien, says: "But of that perilous land we have heard in Gondor, and it is said that few come out who once go in; and of that few none have escaped unscathed." Aragorn answers: "Say not *unscathed*, but if you say *unchanged*, then maybe you will speak the truth (…) [It is] perilous indeed (…) fair and perilous; but only evil need fear it, or those who bring some evil with them." (FR, 1954: 356-357). Aragorn's words could be applied to all non-human nature in LOTR: when non-human nature is valued and respected, the result is harmony; when it is degraded, the result is often hostility and devastation.

After a respite in Lothlorien, the company decides to set out south down the Anduin River. Upon departing, each member receives a parting gift from Lady Galadriel; notably, Frodo and Sam, who are about to undertake the most perilous path of all, receive gifts that are of little material value, but are highly valuable in another way. Sam is given the nut of the *mallorn* tree (a species native to Lothlorien) and some Lothlorien soil, which he uses in the end to revive and restore the war-ravaged Shire countryside. Frodo receives a phial containing the light of Eärendil, the most beloved star of the Elves, to be "a light to [them] in dark places, when all other lights go out" (FR, 1954: 397). These elements of non-human nature, the tree and the star, become symbols of hope and endurance for the Hobbits, and more broadly, for the readers, serving as reminders of intrinsic value and interconnectedness of human and non-human nature, and as testaments of the restorative power of the natural world.

6. Conclusion

This paper examines how non-human nature (non-human animals, plants, forests, rivers, weather, etc.) appear as allies and/or adversaries to human/human-like protagonists in *The Fellowship of the Ring*. The paper offers an ecocritical reading of the novel, which emphasizes the importance of recognizing the interconnectedness and interdependency of all participants in any ecosystem. I have used some of the tenets of deep ecology to show that they can be applied to many characters and settings of the novel. The most important tenet of deep ecology, that every life form, human and non-human, has an intrinsic value and meaning, is present throughout

the text, both in the characterization and plot elements. *The Fellowship of the Ring* is narrated primarily from the perspective of the Hobbits, a species akin to humans but depicted as more in tune with the natural world. While the story can be seen as anthropocentric, it also explores ecocentric themes through certain characters and events.

Non-human nature such as trees, forests, and woodlands are often presented as sentient or partly sentient, with a will and mind of their own. In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, the protagonists experience forests and woodlands as places of danger and malevolent magic (the Old Forest), but also as places of healing and enchantment (the woods of Lothlorien). Similarly, bodies of water may appear as allies (the Bruinen River) or as predatory entities (the pool at the Moria Gates). Environmental degradation (e.g. deforestation, water pollution, human encroachment) almost always symbolizes violation and injustice in Tolkien's universe. The treatment of non-human nature in Tolkien's works emphasizes the interconnectedness of human and non-human nature and the connection between actions and consequences. The environment that the characters perceive as friendly, or hostile is such as a result of the actions of its inhabitants. Non-human entities such as the Old Forest and Caradhras dislike outsiders because of their steady encroachment upon their territory and the disruption of the natural balance that they cause. Conversely, entities such as the Bruinen River and the Lothlorien Forest function as agents of salvation and comfort, respectively, because the Elves as a people inhabiting these spaces peacefully coexist with non-human nature.

The Fellowship of the Ring offers an ecocentric, non-hierarchical perspective where non-human nature has an intrinsic value apart from human/human-like inhabitants. At the same time, human and human-like beings are inextricably connected with non-human nature through their good and evil deeds, across time and space. When non-human nature is valued and respected, the result is a harmonious and peaceful coexistence; when it is degraded and abused, the result is danger and hostility towards human and human-like intruders.

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NE-LJUDSKA PRIRODA KAO SAVEZNIK I PROTIVNIK U *DRUŽINI PRSTENA*: EKOKRITIČKO TUMAČENJE

Apstrakt

Ovaj rad predstavlja ekokritičko tumačenje *Družine prstena* (1954), prvog toma trilogije *Gospodar prstenova* (1954–1955), iz perspektive duboke ekologije, filozofskog i etičkog stanovišta koje tvrdi da sve ljudske i ne-ljudske vrste (uključujući geografske elemente poput reka, jezera, planina i šuma) imaju jednaku vrednost u zajedničkom ekosistemu i odbacuje antropogeni pogled prema kom čovečanstvo predstavlja dominantnu vrstu. Rad će istražiti kako se ne-ljudska bića (životinje, biljke, šume, reke, vremenske prilike, itd.) pojavljuju kao saveznici i/ili protivnici ljudskim ili ljudolikim protagonistima. Cilj je da se ponudi ekokritičko tumačenje koje će dovesti do boljeg razumevanja i većeg vrednovanja Tolkinovih dela, kao apel čovečanstvu da promeni svoje destruktivno ponašanje i uvidi međusobnu povezanost i međuzavisnost svih učesnika u našem ekosistemu.

Ključne reči: ekokritičko tumačenje, *Družina prstena*, *Gospodar prstenova*, ne-ljudska priroda, duboka ekologija

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THE ROUTLEDGE COMPANION TO ENGLISH STUDIES, SECOND EDITION

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A review of available literature regarding the English language as a global phenomenon indicates English is no longer defined by functions seen as territorial, cultural and social. Research shows that the study of English is dynamic focusing on applied language perspectives, while considering interdisciplinary and decolonizing viewpoints. Scholars argue for the need to transform knowledge production in applied linguistics (Ali Fuad Selvi, 2024) while suggesting that English Programs can promote the decolonization of applied linguistics by reconsidering their role in English language teaching and the industry (Litzenberg, 2021). The field's historical development is characterized by the technologization of linguistics, the multinationalization of English and potential shifts in the economic and cultural control of English from Anglo-American centres to Asia (Iyer, Kettle, Luke, & Mills, 2014).

A decade has passed since the first edition of *The Routledge Companion to English Studies* (Leung & Street, 2014) and it is undeniable that the study of English has been implicated in emergent, urgent and progressive trajectories. Multilingual communication practices, transnational approaches, technology-mediated communication, advanced historical perspectives, transcultural language environments and the more than protruding adoption of Artificial Intelligence have created an entirely new universe for the study of English.

The second edition presented in this review, i.e. *The Routledge Companion to English Studies*, was edited by Leung and Lewkowicz (2024) and presents contemporary viewpoints contributed by established scholars from around the world who consider English through language-centred disciplines, communication practices and the use of technology. The chapters also provide a new take on the

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role of English in education and society from social and global perspectives and highlight the importance of the link between English and other languages in the context of multilingualism and translanguaging. The collection features thirty-one commissioned chapters providing a new and original portrayal of the diverse field of English studies. Advanced students and established researchers alike will benefit from this highly informative volume.

Given the broad range of topics included in this volume, the thirty-one contributions are organized into four thematic sections: English in disciplinary studies, English in language education, English in the world and Commentaries. With the sincere intention to avoid prioritizing either topics or authors, the individual contributions in the sections are presented in alphabetical order of the key terms in the chapter titles. As the editors point out, the "assigning of chapters to these sections does not mean that there are watertight boundaries between them" (Leung & Lewkowicz, 2024: xviii). The individual discussions often tackle issues thematically belonging to more than one section because English as the main topic of the explorations refers to more than one domain of life. Therefore, the thematic divisions should be seen as signposts helping readers follow the thematic contents.

The first section in the companion, English in disciplinary studies, includes thirteen chapters which explore particular perspectives in the study of English. The topics in the chapters range from language structure to meaning-making and communication. In the first chapter, Rymes and Lee explore the nuances of communication repertoire as a new orientation to English as a global language that "recognizes the many localized incarnations of English as an area in need of further research" (Leung & Lewkowicz, 2024: 3). They are inviting a new approach to global English which would depart from traditional linguistic research. O'Halloran then presents critical issues and topics in corpus linguistics as well as key techniques of analysis and concepts that can enrich the study of language in general. In the next chapter, Wodak focuses on the notions of power, ideology and critique as constitutive elements of critical discourse analysis, but she also discusses various theoretical and methodological approaches that have developed during the last four decades. The fourth chapter is a contribution by Rowe who examines the connection between digital communication and the language and literacy practices that people engage in when using English and other languages in schools. The chapter focuses on digital communicative practices. Flowerdew reminds us of the necessary belief in the fundamentally contextual nature of meaning and the fact that individual utterances are not inherently meaningful. This means that the context of an utterance is essential for its interpretation. Chapter six by Dewey focuses on the study of English as a global lingua franca by considering the history of EFL as a paradigm for English language studies. Edwardes discusses the interaction of language and cognition, reminding us of the fact that language is a subjective tool for sharing meaning and a multifunctional system composed of both processes and structures. In the eighth chapter, Lalić-Krstin and Silaški discuss the concept of lexical creativity, i.e. linguistic creativity. They point out that this type of creativity is "manifested in the act of creation of novel lexical items and/or meanings of existing lexical items"

whereby the longevity of the creations is not an issue (2024: 95). Deterding focuses on phonetics and phonology in the ninth chapter offering an overview of the key points, but also of some crucial historical and sociological perspectives. Prior shows that semiotics illustrates that "life always involves historically unfolding blends of multiple, situated, embodied, semiotic resources, media, and channels" (2024: 119). As pointed out in the chapter, semiotic perspectives not only enable the analysis of artefacts but also point to the semiotic worlds in which people live and communicate. The eleventh chapter, contributed by Carnie, focuses on the formal syntactic approach to the study of English by highlighting the fact that syntactic and semantic patterns of grammar depend on a particular geometric structure which is "built in stages from the most embedded structure to the least" (2024: 131). Rajendram and Garcia focus on how the translanguaging of pedagogical practices promotes the use of a learner's entire linguistic repertoire to facilitate learning and communication in English, challenging the dominance of English-only teaching and the idea of separate language learning. In the final chapter of the first section, Kirkpatrick and Deterding first review the development of World Englishes, then analyze the debates concerning the motivations for changes in the field and finally consider some recent developments regarding English as a lingua franca.

The theme of the second section is English in language education. It comprises seven chapters and presents a scholarly effort showing how language research meets real-world pedagogic practices and curriculum development. Gao's chapter focuses on English as an additional language and its importance in contexts where English is the most commonly used language. Significant attention in the chapter is put on the fact that though English is the medium of instruction, it may have limited use beyond the classroom, which causes significant pedagogical issues. Cushing examines the construction of English as a subject in schools. Emphasis is put on policy reforms in England after 2010, as they brought about significant changes to the shaping of English as a school subject. Bloome explores the evolution and importance of ethnography in the field of English studies pointing out that ethnographic research has become mainstream in the study of English education. In chapter seventeen, Hyon focuses on the importance of genre in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) by showing that this concept is by far the most important one in ESP. McKinney and Norton trace the genesis of research on identity and language learning by following research from the 1970s to the present day. They address prominent methods of identity research and their implications for classroom practice. Foley explores the concept of literacies by highlighting key issues that have influenced existing research in this field by referring mainly to Western/European perspectives on literacy education, but also including scholarship from the Global South thereby challenging hegemonic thought and practice. Chapter twenty by Cummins reviews "empirical and ideological foundations of the multilingual turn" (Leung & Lewkowicz, 2024: 254), as the potential scope of such analysis is crucial in the light of various academic disciplines that have explored this issue.

The third section of the volume, English in the world, illustrates "how English is used and how it is positioned in relation to other languages in different parts of

the world where, as an additional or second language, it is part of the linguistic landscape at community and national levels" (Leung & Lewkowicz, 2024: 254). This section comprises seven chapters starting with Guerrero-Nieto's presentation of how Columbian language policies regarding the English language have influenced the discourses about those language policies and how they have brought about different practices of teaching and learning English in Columbia. Similarly, in the next chapter, Mattos and Jucá discuss the contextual differences in teaching English in Brazil. Given that English in this South American country is attributed a significant position, the differences are of crucial importance. Slawek's chapter focuses on English studies in Eastern and Central Europe with emphasis on the understanding and perception of the Anglo-Saxon culture that the learning of English undoubtedly implemented in the minds of English language learners in those regions. Sailaja focuses on English as a lingua franca in post-colonial India. Being a conglomeration of languages and cultures, India has lived through an exponential growth of English due to its economic liberalization, the computer boom, the rise of social media and the service sector. Hiramoto and Furukawa discuss language ideologies regarding the issue of gender, as related to English in Japan. English has no notion of grammatical gender which is why the Japanese face significant challenges when learning English, given their native language is marked by gender essentialism. Wee focuses on the characteristics of contemporary settings of English language learning showing that interdependence, automation and diversity are three crucial characteristics to account for when planning language policies. In the last chapter of this section, Runcieman discusses contemporary notions of English and multilingualism and their impact on the work of interpreters and translators by focusing on those features that are relevant to language mediation based on the transfer of meaning from one language to another.

The fourth section in this volume presents four chapters under the title Commentaries. The first is a contribution by Rymes and Lee, who discuss the role of English in building a speaker's communicative repertoire, thereby focusing on the role of English in the context of the internet, global capitalism and race. In the next chapter, Cordova, López and Valtierra-Zamudio present colonial-oriented consequences that impact ELT in Mexico. They stress linguistic imperialism, native speakerism and racism as the most crucial issues. In the next chapter, Isbell focuses on aspects of open science that affect the role of English and its position in the humanities. The focus is on increasing transparency, methodological rigour and the accessibility of published research. The author also suggests the term open scholarship instead of open science. In the final chapter of both this section and the entire volume, Ivanenko discusses changes in language pointing out that these are not related only to English, but have to be regarded in the context of English and its impact on other languages. What is also highlighted is that English takes up additional meanings in different parts of the world, which is why the author illustrates this point using examples from the Ukrainian language.

The second edition of *The Routledge Companion to English Studies* provides interdependent, yet convergent approaches to the broad field of the study of English.

Each chapter focuses on an individual concept, yet, together, the chapters provide a synergy of viewpoints and approaches to topics that are now, more than ever, crucial. More explorations can be expected not only from the authors who contributed to this volume, but also from scholars who will take the research further, thereby disseminating the study of English in an international context.

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CONSTRUCTION GRAMMAR AND COLLOSTRUCTIONAL ANALYSIS

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by Vladan Pavlović

Konstrukciona gramatika i kolostrukciona analiza (*Construction Grammar and Collostructional Analysis*) is a book by Vladan Pavlović, a full professor at the English Department of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš. Published by the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš, the book builds on Professor Pavlović's extensive work in the field of construction grammar. Prior to this publication, he had already contributed with several works, including his MA thesis *Sintaksičko-semantička analiza konstrukcija sa glagolima složene prelaznosti u engleskom jeziku* (2006) (*Syntactic and Semantic Analysis of Constructions with Complex-Transitive Verbs in English*). The current book reflects his long-standing interest in constructionist approaches, which began before 2006 and has continued to develop over the years.

Collostructional analysis represents a set of quantitative (statistical) corpus-linguistic methods designed to examine the relationships between words and grammatical structures they inhabit. While closely related to construction grammar, it is not restricted to this framework alone (see Pavlović, 2021: 77; Tošić Lojanica, 2021: 108).[2] Pavlović carefully structured the book to familiarize the reader with the topic, offering a comprehensive overview of concepts related to the main subject. Collostructional analysis can be linked to cognitive approaches to grammar, as it is normally related to constructionist approaches, which represent a part of cognitive-functional linguistics (see Belaj & Tanacković Faletar, 2013: 21; Pavlović, 2021: 15). Therefore, the author begins the monograph by discussing the theoretical foundations of constructionist approaches in the first chapter titled *Konstrukcioni pristupi* –

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[2] Using low keys (e.g. construction grammar), we refer to the cognitive-linguistic approaches to grammar, while using capital letters (e.g. Construction Grammar), we refer to a particular theory within constructional approaches (in this case, a theory by Adele E. Goldberg).

teorijske osnove (*Constructionist Approaches – Theoretical Basics*). Following this, Pavlović explores statistical and corpus analysis in the second chapter *Kvantitativni zaokret u kognitivnoj lingvistici i veliki elektronski korpusi* (*Quantitative Shift in Cognitive Linguistics and Large Electronic Corpora*), which is in accordance with the quantitative nature of collostructional analysis. The third chapter *Kolostrukciona analiza – Teorijsko-metodološke osnove*, *tipovi i primeri upotrebe* (*Collostructional Analysis – Theoretical-Methodological Foundations, Types, and Examples of Use*) serves as the central chapter of the book, directly addressing the main topic. It discusses different types of collostructional analysis and provides illustrations of how each type can be conducted. The fourth chapter *Kolostrukcioni ogledi* (*Collostructional Experiments*) includes four papers in which the author analyzes three different constructions. The final chapter *Zaključak* (*Conclusion*) summarizes the main purpose of the book. Each chapter contains various subchapters that focus on a specific subtopic. Additionally, the book includes lists of tables, diagrams, illustrations, and abbreviations, as well as a preface and a bibliography.

In the chapter *Konstrukcioni pristupi – teorijske osnove* (*Constructionist Approaches – Theoretical Basics*, pp. 13–53) Vladan Pavlović introduces construction grammar and emphasizes its role in analyzing syntax and semantics across various languages. He distinguishes between broader and narrower interpretations of construction grammar, paying special attention to how the notion of construction has been understood and studied within various theories of linguistic analysis. Pavlović discusses the evolution of constructionist theories and contrasts them with generative grammar, emphasizing the importance of idiomaticity and the continuum between syntax and the lexicon. He refers to traditional theories that separate syntax from the lexicon, argues that idiomatic expressions do not fit neatly into this dichotomy, and emphasizes the need to view language through a more integrated, symbolic lens. Pavlović specifically refers to Goldberg's Construction Grammar, including its principles and the significance of constructions as fundamental units in the mental lexicon. The chapter also reviews contributions to construction grammar by Serbian authors and provides a brief overview of Pavlović's own research within the field.

In *Kvantitativni zaokret u kognitivnoj lingvistici i veliki elektronski korpusi* (*Quantitative Shift in Cognitive Linguistics and Large Electronic Corpora*, pp. 55–75) Pavlović explores the factors behind the quantitative shift in cognitive linguistics (and construction grammar) and emphasizes the increased use of quantitative data and statistical analysis. The author reflects a view in the literature (referring to Stefanowitch, 2011) that cognitive linguistics should adopt a more scientifically rigorous and methodologically valid approach, ensuring that its claims are empirically testable and less theoretically ambitious. The chapter also provides insight into the historical development of electronic corpora, starting from the Brown Corpus in the 1960s to modern examples like the iWeb Corpus and Serbian language corpora. The author reviews the use of statistical tests in corpus linguistics and provides various resources and courses for learning about quantitative methods. Finally, Pavlović concludes that while the quantitative shift enhances pattern detection and scientific rigor in linguistics, it also poses risks like over-reliance on quantitative data and

marginalization of under-studied languages, recommending a balanced integration of qualitative and quantitative methods.

In the third chapter, *Kolostrukciona analiza – Teorijsko-metodološke osnove, tipovi i primeri upotrebe* (*Collostructional Analysis – Theoretical-Methodological Foundations, Types, and Examples of Use*, pp. 77–120), Pavlović defines collostructional analysis as a quantitative corpus-linguistic method designed to explore the relationship between words and the grammatical constructions they appear in. He presents three main types of this analysis: simple collexeme analysis, which assesses individual word-construction associations; distinctive collexeme analysis, which compares word usage across constructions or language varieties; and covarying collexeme analysis, which examines co-occurring lexical units within the same construction. These approaches reveal statistically significant associations between lexical items and constructions, as well as patterns that reflect subtle differences in their meaning and usage. The chapter demonstrates the application of simple collexeme analysis to two syntactic structures, such as the ditransitive *V N2 N3* construction and imperative construction. Distinctive collexeme analysis is illustrated by analyzing differences between constructions like *V N2 N3* and *V N3 to N2*, which vary in their implications of effort and transfer, as well as *get N2 V-en* and *have N2 V-en* constructions. Covarying collexeme analysis is demonstrated using the *It BE ADJ to V* and *V2 N2 into V-ing* constructions. The illustrated analyses have been drawn from the relevant literature such as Gilquin (2006), Gries and Stefanowitsch (2004), Hilpert (2014), Stefanowitsch (2006), Stefanowitsch and Gries (2003), Wulf, Stefanowitsch and Gries (2007), etc. Additionally, the chapter explains that this method addresses diachronic language changes and synchronic variations, showing its broad applicability in understanding language structure and change. Despite its strengths in providing empirical insights into language patterns, collostructional analysis faces criticisms by authors such as Schmind and Küchenhoff (2013), regarding its methodological strictness, technical demands, and cognitive validity, which have led to ongoing refinement and debate within the field.

The fourth chapter, *Kolostrukcioni ogledi* (*Collostructional Experiments*, pp. 121–171), presents four studies using collostructional analysis in syntactic corpus research. The studies explore three different syntactic constructions and examine how culturally influenced conceptualizations are reflected in language use. The first and third studies are the translated versions of previously published works (see Pavlović, 2020a; Pavlović, 2020b), while the second and fourth studies are original and published for the first time in this monograph. The first and the second paper focus on the analysis of the *too ADJ to V* construction, using distinctive collexeme analysis. The first paper focuses on identifying differences across American, British, and Indian English, while the second paper employs the same theoretical and methodological framework and builds upon the first paper since it includes a fourth variety – Canadian English. The aim of these papers is to analyze cultural differences reflected in this construction by examining collocational patterns in the GloWbE corpus. The results show that collocational patterns vary between English varieties, reflecting subtle differences in cultural conceptualizations unique to each variant. The third

paper analyzes the *ADJ enough to V* construction and their cultural implications in American and British English, (AE and BE respectively). Using the GloWbE corpus, the study analyzes the frequency and statistical significance of various ADJ-V pairs in AE and BE. For instance, some results reveal that certain ADJ-V pairs, particularly those involving adjectives related to intelligence or its lack (e.g. *smart*, *stupid*, *dumb*) are highly distinctive in AE, whereas such pairs are less frequent and statistically significant in BE. These findings suggest that the *ADJ enough to V* construction reflects subtle cultural differences between AE and BE, with AE favoring direct and informal expressions and BE leaning towards more reserved communication styles. The analysis employs a distintive collexeme analysis, focusing on the statistical significance and frequency of ADJ-V pairs across these English varieties. The author states that this type of distinctive collexeme analysis is quite rare, as it typically involves the analysis of individual lexemes rather than pairs. Pavlović (2021: 142, 163) explains that, apart from this study, the only instance of distinctive collexeme analysis conducted in this manner is found in the first paper presented in this section and states that this kind of analysis is called *(multiple) distinctive collexeme analysis of co-varying collexemes* (see also Pavlović, 2020a). The final paper in this chapter presents the analysis of the *V N2 into V-ing* construction. The aim of the paper is to reevaluate the previously observed differences in the use of the construction *V N2 into V-ing* between British and American English, focusing on causal interpretations of this construction. The corpus used includes a broader and more balanced set of data compared to earlier studies, with sources from COCA, GloWbE, BNC, and their relevant subsets for both American and British English. The analysis employed was a distinctive collexeme analysis. The results challenge the previous conclusions of British English using more forceful verbs and American English favoring more persuasive ones, showing subtle patterns where both varieties use a mix of verbal persuasion and physical force. The conclusion emphasizes the need for careful consideration of regional differences and suggests using more diverse corpora to provide a more comprehensive understanding of linguistic constructions.

The fifth chapter, *Zaključak* (*Conclusion*, pp. 173–177) represents a synthesis of the entire monograph, focusing on the theoretical frameworks, quantitative methods, empirical studies and the motivation behind writing the book. It addresses the limited availability of resources on construction grammar in Serbian, particularly Goldberg's Construction Grammar, and emphasizes the aims to bridge this gap by presenting both foundational and advanced material. Another aim refers to encouraging scholars in Serbian and foreign philologies to explore construction grammar, even if they are hesitant about quantitative methods. Emphasizing the quantitative shift in cognitive linguistics, the book argues that quantitative methods now surpass the qualitative ones in significance and precision, thus improving the scientific status of linguistics. It supports collostructional analysis as a valuable quantitative method for studying word-grammar interactions, revealing patterns often missed by traditional descriptive statistics. However, it also warns against overreliance on quantitative data, which can lead to trivialization and fragmentation of research. Therefore, a balance between quantitative and qualitative methods is considered ideal. The book

stresses the importance of large electronic corpora in providing comprehensive data, while addressing issues of underrepresentation and imbalance. It promotes the study of cross-linguistic and sociolectal variability over seeking universal linguistic principles, aligning with cognitive-functional linguistics. Additionally, it calls for improvements in teaching corpus linguistics and quantitative methods in Serbian education, emphasizing the need for more courses and resources in these areas.

The contributions of this monograph are numerous. It can be seen as pioneering, being one of the first books in this field in Serbia, besides J. Vujić's monograph (2016). Since it has been written in Serbian, it provides an invaluable source of translated terminology and, in addition, it serves as a source of relevant literature. The book is comprehensive and thorough, covering not only collostructional analysis, but also related fields such as cognitive grammar and quantitative methods. Consequently, it serves as an invaluable resource for both newcomers and experts in the field. Additionally, it offers concrete examples of how construction grammar, which can be abstract for beginners, might be applied in empirical studies, thus bridging the gap between theoretical concepts and practical application. Building on this foundation, future publications could explore the application of collostructional analysis to Serbian constructions using Serbian corpora.

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