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Strong Organizational Culture – An Effective Tool for Companies to Survive in a Pandemic World

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Abstract

Recent events related to COVID-19 have shown that many companies are on the edge of crisis. The unpredictable situation in the world has given rise to a new phobia in people: the inability to control one's life, the unpredictability of the future, anxiety for physical and financial well-being, fear of losing a job. The incident caused a state of mental and post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and other nervous diseases. These processes are particularly crucial in developing countries, where managers and staff of the companies have failed to collaborate and work coherently during the crisis. In many cases splitting of workforce and top-level management took place. Although people's engagement has grown caused by fears of job losses, the decision makers has often abused the current situation: reducing wages, increasing work time and intensity, and treating staff unethically. In our view, this separation will deepen in the post-pandemic period especially in the organizations that do not have an organizational culture. Organizational culture is the most important tool for regulating interaction in a group, a lever for increasing the efficiency and productivity of its members. Forming a culture in an organization, we create thinking architecture, a common psychology and value system that creates physical changes in the brain. All that we believe in, what we strive for, all the actions that we physically perform over a long period of time, our goals and objectives, ideas, values and traditions that we follow form our brain. In this research the impact of the pandemic on the staff coherency, the measures that were taken by managers to maintain stability in the company and the role of the organizational culture in overcoming the crisis are analyzed and relevant recommendations suggested.

Keywords: organizational culture, coherence, pandemic, collaboration, workforce, overcoming the crises

Introduction

The evolution of economic relations is closely related to the development of organizational forms of management. The world production boom predetermined the permanent desire of companies to adapt production forces to new, advanced means of production. In pursuit of leadership in a competitive race, companies are constantly looking for unique ways to maximize current profits. This is necessary, but today it is an insufficient requirement for obtaining the title of “high-performance company”, a successful company. The years of doing business have revealed the particular importance of the company's image and reputation as an important intangible asset that affects its life cycle and success.

The Oxford Dictionary defines reputation as “a widespread belief that someone or something has a particular characteristic”. Reputation is an intangible resource that can strengthen or weaken a company's position in the market. According to studies, companies with a good reputation (high rating, positive customer reviews) are more attractive to consumers and, therefore, have an advantage in competition. 86% of people would pay more for services from a company with higher ratings and reviews (**Status Labs, 2020**). On average, more than 25% of a company's market value is directly related to its reputation.

Building a company's reputation in order to achieve its “high performance” is one of the strategic issues of modern companies. There are many universal ways to enhance a company's reputation. These include high social responsibility, special requirements for the quality of goods and services produced, transparency and business style, etc. However, an important advantage of giant companies (Bosch, Netflix, Michelin, Canon, Sony, Microsoft, etc.) is that they were able to discover not a universal, but a unique path of public respect and self-presentation on a global market (**Natalie Singer-Velush, Kevin Sherman, Erik Anderson, 2020**).

Among the many factors that determine the success of the organization and form a positive business reputation of the company, the organizational culture is one of the most important. Companies face, performance and reputation is a mirror image of the quality of intra-organizational relationships, value systems, norms, and rules that exist in the company. The culture at whatever level it is considered (macrolevel - national culture or microlevel - organizational culture) is the connecting link of the members of the association, society. Moreover, the value and maturity of the organization, its resistance to crises and emergencies, and the potential for getting out of difficult situations is directly related to the degree of development of the organizational culture.

Organizational culture is a system of norms, rules, traditions, and values existing in the organization accepted and shared by members of the organization. The architecture of organizational culture reflects the main value and ideological attitudes, the most important value orientations that underlie relations between

people in the organization, as well as outside it. Organizational culture is what the organization believes in, its vision and awareness of the mission of its activities. At the same time, organizational culture is a way of fulfilling the organization's mission - how, using what way, and through what tools the organization achieves its goals.

The value of organizational culture is manifested through the functions of culture in the organization. The most important of them are:

Adaptive (through culture, people are socialized, they integrate into a new community, harmonize and synchronize their interaction).

Axiological / value (the formation of value priorities in the organization is done through culture)

Gnoseological / cognitive (through culture, the experience of employees is accumulated, the ways and stages of the organization's development are perceived, and their role in this process is realized, they identify (associate) themselves (employees) as part of the organization). Along with this, culture and the degree of its development are an indicator of how much people are involved in the life of the company, how devoted to it they are, what is the quality of relations between members of the organization, how great is the distance between authority and subordinates, how significant is the influence of employees on the future of the organization).

Communicative (through culture it becomes possible to transmit and exchange information, the formation of motivational messages. In this case, it is very important that the meaning and context of the most important concepts are decoded by the members of the groups adequately, correctly, without "communication noises" and distortion). Communication is intended to become an instrument of rapprochement and mutual understanding.

Functions of compilation of social experience (through this function, the values, rules, norms and traditions of the organization are transferred to new employees)

Through the implementation of the listed functions, culture consolidates the organization into a single core, a single system. The work of Aristotle, Plato, Kant, and Hegel is permeated with questions of the relationship between the whole and the parts. Holists, led by the founder of the holistic philosophical movement, Jan Smuts, in their philosophical teachings, consider the issue of the integrity of the system and come to the following conclusion: "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts". Relying on holism, an organization is a holistic system only when there are connections between its parts. In other words, if there is no interaction between people in an organization, then it is simply a crowd.

Organizational culture is the connecting core that turns the crowd into a holistic organization. Moreover, the stronger the connections between the members of the group, the more transparent the values and rules in the organization are formulated,

the higher the degree of their acceptance by people, the greater the likelihood of high motivation of the staff, their productivity, and High Performance. The studies confirm that 88% of the surveyed employees of American companies believe that a strong organizational culture is key to the success of the organization. 94% of managers agree with this (Heinz, 2019). 82% of respondents to this survey believe that culture is a potential competitive advantage.

Citigroup has an entire committee focused on ethics and culture and has implemented a website-based video series which shows in details the real work ethic dilemmas. Bank of America focuses on transforming its corporate culture to encourage employees to raise and escalate issues of concern or problems.

Wells Fargo is stepping up its efforts to collect feedback surveys from employees to become aware of its culture, current trends, and potential areas. The Netflix culture presentation, often used as an example, has been downloaded more than 12 million times since 2009. The presentation clearly describes a culture that combines high expectations with an engaging employee experience: Generous corporate perks such as unlimited vacation, flexible work schedules, and limited supervision balance a strong focus on results with freedom and appreciation for the expected achievement. Professor Andrew Oswald, one of three researchers who led the study, said companies that invest in employee support and satisfaction tend to succeed in generating happier workers.

At Google, employee satisfaction rose 37% as a result of those initiatives—suggesting that financial incentives aren't enough to make for highly productive employees **(Revesencio, 2015)**.

From the very beginning, at Toyota, it was believed that the key to success was the investment in human capital. Toyota's production system is primarily about the culture - the way people think and behave, and this is deeply rooted in the philosophy and principles of the company. The focus is on respect for people and continuous improvement. It took nearly ten years to create such a document under the leadership of Fujio Cho, the then President of Toyota.

The founders of the work on the importance of organizational culture were first voiced in the work of a group of scientists led by E. Mayo, who conducted an experiment in one of the American companies. Further, such scientists as E. Schein, V. Sate, T. Dila, and A. Kennedy and many others worked on this topic.

Organizational culture is of particular importance in crisis situations. An example of this was the 2020 crisis associated with the spread of COVID-19 in the world **(Lisa Dreier, Jane Nelson, 2020)**. The coronavirus pandemic has hit all countries hard and caused the worst economic downturn in a century. Factories and plants, enterprises, and organizations have been stopped. Schools, kindergartens and other educational institutions are closed. Transport links have been suspended. Countries have closed up their borders. The whole world froze in obscurity and unpredictability of the

course of events. According to the calculations of a world-renowned consulting company specializing in solving problems related to strategic management, it could take more than five years for the most affected sectors to get back to 2019-level contributions to GDP **(Mckinsey&Company, 2020)**

Particularly noteworthy are organizations in developing countries in which economic growth and population welfare are unstable and difficult to achieve. Developing countries, as exemplified by Georgia, are in a precarious socio-economic state and are more sensitive to changes in the external environment **(Kasradze & Zarnadze, 2019)**. The effect of crises on unstable systems extends over the long term. The suspension of innovative activity, the reduction in investment flow here are directly related to the loss of jobs, rising prices, reduced purchasing ability, high inflation, and ultimately are fraught with socio-economic disasters. In the crisis situation of the 2020 Corona-virus pandemic, the authorities of developing countries were also not able to fully provide “airbags” to companies, and survival in the market has become a priority for the companies themselves **(Government of Georgia, 2020)**. Once on the edge of the abyss, not having sufficient reserve funds to overcome the financial crisis, they are in search of other rescue opportunities.

One of such lifebuoys is the company's unique ideology, which forms the spiritual and emotional upsurge of employees. For Georgia, a country experiencing a shortage of free financial resources against the background of difficult socio-political conditions over the past few decades, cohesion, resilience, and patience as a psycho-emotional factor in overcoming a crisis situation is not new. By basing its organizational culture on these basic values for society as a whole, Georgia is trying to get out of the current crisis with minimal losses **(Kasradze, Tea; Zarnadze, Nino, 2018)**.

In general, a national culture largely determines the priorities of local companies and forms the nature of the organizational culture of companies. The history of the development of local companies is inextricably linked with the history of the development of economic relations in society, and, accordingly, with the culture of a particular society. It is possible that our mental programs are physically determined by states of our brain cells. Nevertheless, we cannot directly observe mental programs. What we can observe is only behavior: Words or deeds. When we observe behavior, we infer from it the presence of stable mental software. This type of inference is not unique to the social sciences; it exists, for example, in physics, where the intangible concept of “forces” is inferred from its manifestations in the movement of objects. Like “forces” in physics, “mental programs” are intangibles, and the terms we use to describe them are constructs. A construct is a product of our imagination, supposed to help our understanding. Constructs do not “exist” in an absolute sense: We define them into existence **(Hofstede, Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values, 1980)**.

From this point of view, the works of the Dutch sociologist Geert Hofstede are of particular interest to us. The Hofstede theory was developed in 1982. He conducted a

study at the well-known multinational company IBM, which shows the data of more than 110 thousand respondents in 40 countries of the world. The scientist has formulated 6 identifiers by which he distinguishes national cultures according to the following parameters **(Draguns, 2007)**:

Power Distance

Collectivism-individualism

Femininity-Masculinity

Uncertainty Avoidance

Long-term Orientation

Indulgence-Restraint

This study shows that in countries characterized by high level of collectivism (Colombia, Pakistan, Taiwan, Russia, and Georgia) the following features of organizational culture prevail:

Emotional dependence on the company;

Managers prioritize stability;

Managers hold traditional views, discouraging individual employee initiatives;

Group solutions are more attractive than individual ones;

Particular attention is paid to discipline and order, to a sense of duty;

Relationship according to the principle: friend-or-foe.

In countries characterized by a high level of individualism (USA and Western European countries), the following features of organizational culture prevail:

The priority of the personal interests of the employee over the interests of the company;

Emotional independence from the company;

Sober estimation prevails in relations with the company;

Managers encourage employees' initiative;

Managers call safety and pleasure as the main goals in life;

Faster career growth.

According to the research of G. Hofstede, collectivism is characteristic of poor and developing countries. They are also characterized by a large distance of authority (Philippines, Venezuela, India, and Russia). In fact, in these countries, managers are more authoritarian, prone to establish strict discipline and control. They are less

inclined towards group reasoning in the decision-making process, and employees prefer not to express disagreement or dissatisfaction.

In countries with a smaller authority distance (Denmark, Israel, Austria), managers tend to consult with their subordinates in the decision-making process. The word "authority", "wealth" does not cause negative emotions in subordinates. Moreover, subordinates are not afraid to express their disagreement with the manager. Workers tend to cooperate and collaborate. Interestingly, in countries with a shorter authority distance, highly educated workers are less likely to adhere to authoritarian values than poorly educated workers (**Kasradze, Tea; Zarnadze, Nino, 2018**).

In the countries studied by the author, the situation also differs in terms of the parameters of perception of uncertainty, since it is obvious that people from different cultural structures react to the state of uncertainty in different ways. For example, Latin American countries, Greece, Turkey, Japan, and South Korea are countries with a strong rejection of uncertainty:

The workers become managers here on the basis of the seniority criterion;

high positions are intended for adults, the elderly;

The hierarchy is strictly built;

Strict adherence to the rules;

Focus on continuous monitoring of employees;

Initiatives of employees should also be supervised;

The attitude towards the staff is respectful but pessimistic.

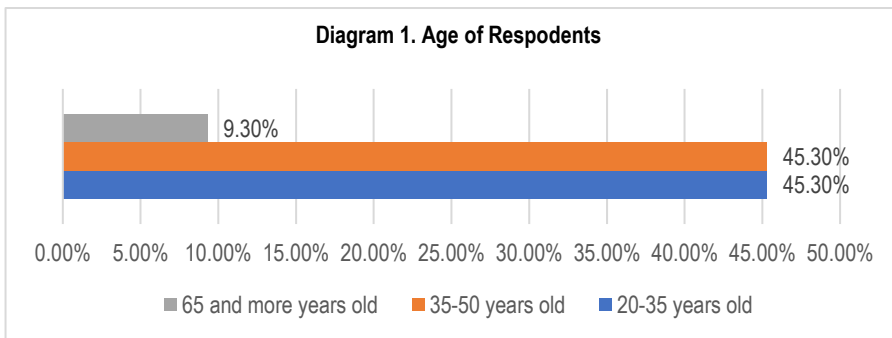
Thus, the unique ideology of the organization is, on the one hand, a reflection of the depth and characteristics of internal ties between employees, and on the other hand, it is closely linked to the national culture, its characteristics, and history. In general, the more trusting and transparent the relationship between employees in the organization, the more favorable working conditions for them. Studies in the field of personnel management have shown that the effectiveness of personnel depends on the environment in which they work. Economists calculated that "happiness led to a 12% spike in productivity, while unhappy workers proved 10% less productive" (**Revesencio, 2015**).

Organisational Culture in Georgia during Pandemic

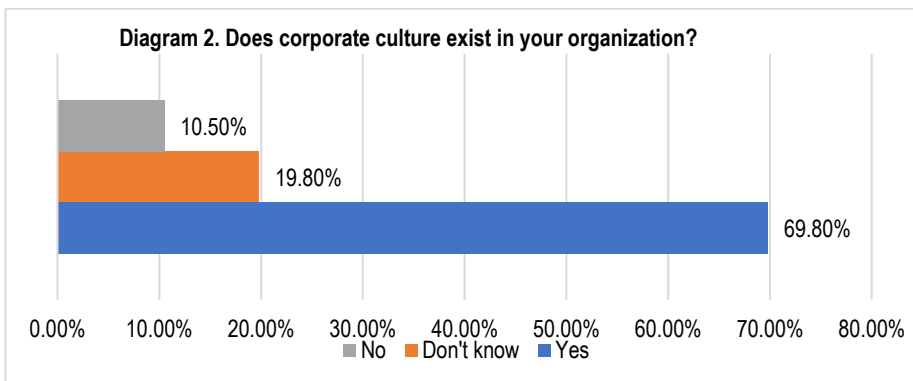
Based on the foregoing, the authors of this article conducted a study of the activities of companies during the pandemic in Georgia. The interest was due to the fact that at this stage in the development of economic relations, the role and importance of organizational culture in Georgia are underestimated. The main values, rules, and traditions, and in general, the entire organizational culture of modern Georgian organizations are spontaneously implemented rules and traditions, borrowed

(brought) from the national culture of Georgia. Being an informal law of behavior, these values are brought up and formed according to Georgian traditions from childhood and are considered universally recognized for all members of society (high empathy, complicity, and compassion, teamwork, high resistance to crises, etc.).

We conducted studies of employees of more than 80 companies starting with small businesses with a number of personal of up to 10 people to large businesses with a number of personal of over 250 people. The areas of activity of companies are different, but all companies are private. People of different age categories were involved in the study: 45% - people aged 20 to 35 years, and 45% - company employees aged 35-50 years. Employees of 50-65 years old made up a small part of the study - 8%, but their questioning is also interesting to us (Diagram 1).



According to the obtained data, more than 69% of respondents' answer that there is an organizational culture in their company, more than 30% answer that there is either no organizational culture in their organizations, or they know nothing about its existence (Diagram 2).



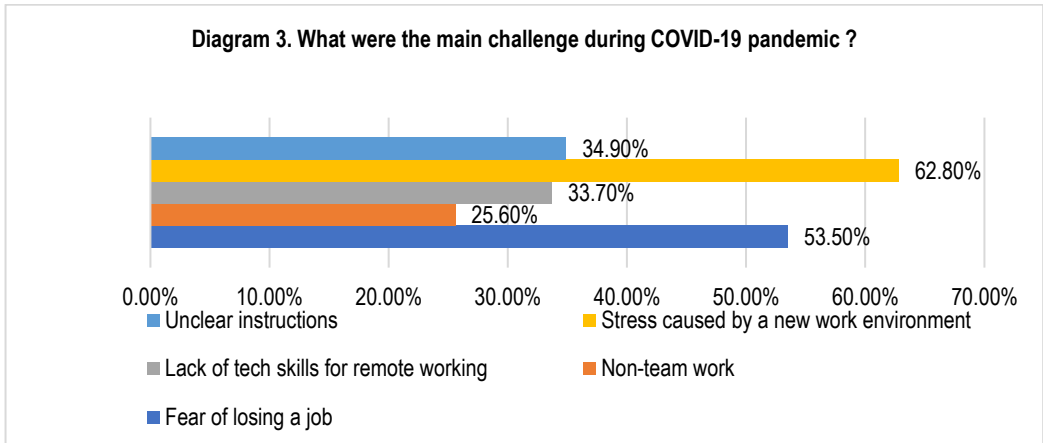
This actually means that a third of the employees we surveyed (not to mention their managers) do not understand the role of organizational culture as a real tool for effective employee interaction, as a platform that connects employees into a single whole, as a mechanism that increases employee productivity. In fact, every third respondent is deprived of a "team" feeling in the organization, the awareness of the

need for engagement, and high performance, which is directly proportional to the company's reputation and competitiveness in the market. Such employees often do not get satisfaction at work and work solely in the interests of material reward.

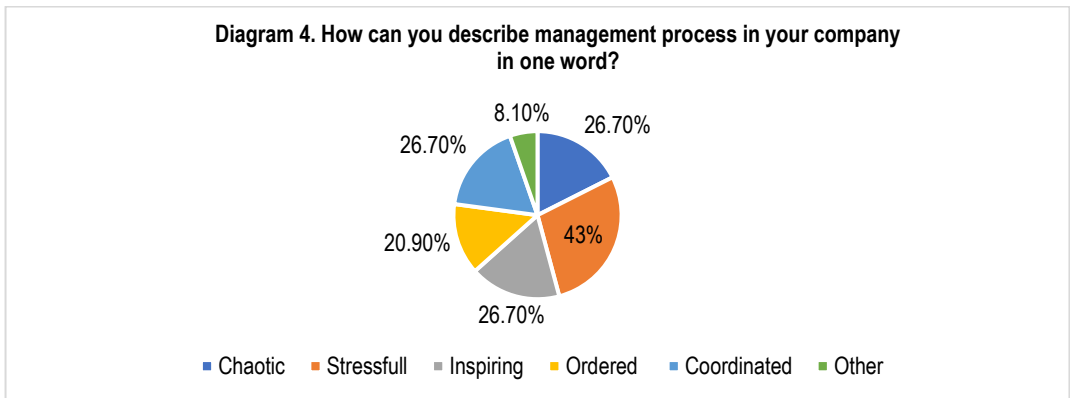
However, the most important factor in increasing the efficiency of the organization, its business reputation, and capitalization is the Person and the quality of his/her interaction in the group. We have already said above that organizational culture as an intangible asset of an organization is perhaps one of the most important. The importance of this intangible resource lies in the fact that it affects the productivity and efficiency of each member of the group and the team as a whole. Shawn Achor, author of *The Happiness Advantage*, has found that the brain works much better when a person is feeling positive. At those times, individuals tend to be more creative and better at solving problems. And additional research by Daniel Goleman has shown that when employees are happy they are more effective and so their productivity rises. As Daniel Goleman writes, "happiness leads to greater levels of profits" and for every 2% increase in how happy employees are revenue grew by 1% (**Goleman, 2013**).

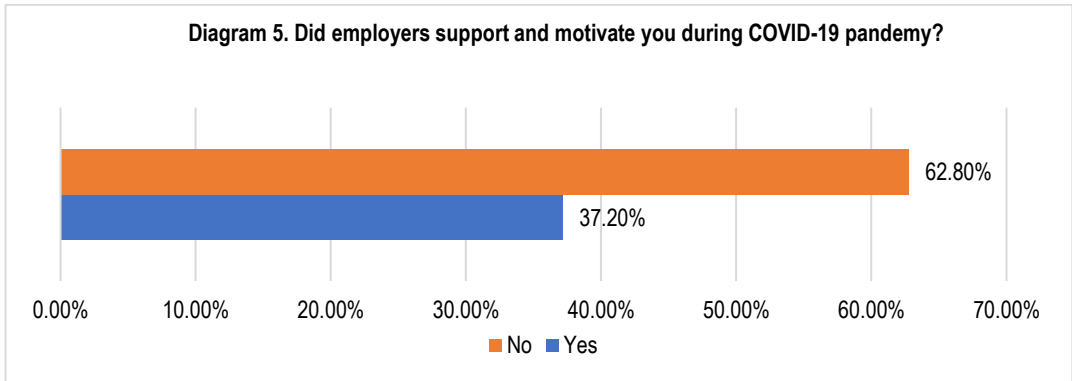
When asked what the most important characteristics of organizational culture are, respondents answer as follows: (care for employees, development opportunities, high sense of responsibility and discipline, sense of "team" and respect, hygiene and equality). In this case, it is of particular interest that none of the respondents named the economic elements of doing business as elements of organizational culture, for example, "low cost", "quality service", bonuses, remuneration, salary cuts, reprimands and warnings, which confirms our earlier hypothesis that 60% of the respondents who believe that their companies still have organizational culture still do not have a complete idea of what organizational culture is.

It is known that employees who don't like their organization's culture are 24% more likely to quit (Revesencio, 2015). However, this is truer for companies in developed countries. In developing countries like Georgia, where the level of unemployment is high and the level of well-being of the population is low, losing a job is a tragedy, and, accordingly, keeping a job and wages regardless of external conditions is the norm for Georgian everyday life (Kasradze, Poverty – A Global Socio-Economic Problem, 2013). This is confirmed by our research: more than 53% of respondents named fear of losing their jobs and about 63% of respondents named anxiety due to changes in working conditions as the main stress factors during the COVID-19 pandemic. The rest of the factors causing anxiety and concern that the respondents named were the unclear instructions of managers — 30%, uncoordinated work — about 28%, lack of tech skills for remote working — about 34%, non-team work — more than 25% (Diagram 3).

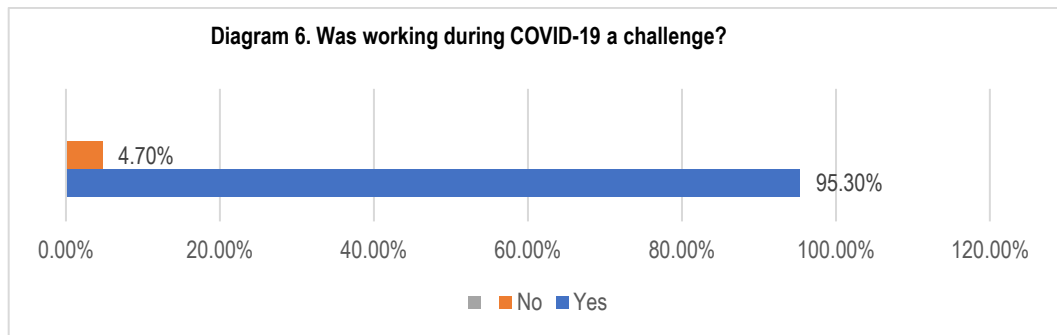


From this point of view, the role of managers and leaders is very important, who, considering the difficult material conditions of employees, must constantly try to increase their motivation and productivity, thereby contributing to the growth and development of the company. In fact, over 37% of employees believe that during the coronavirus pandemic, they did not receive the psychological support and motivational charge they needed from employers. 27% of respondents described the management process as chaotic, 43% - as stressful (Diagram 4) and (Diagram 5).

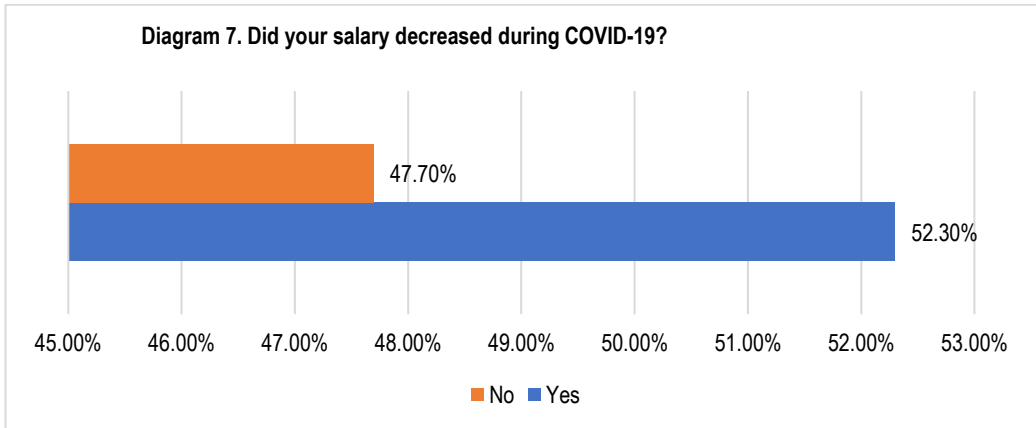




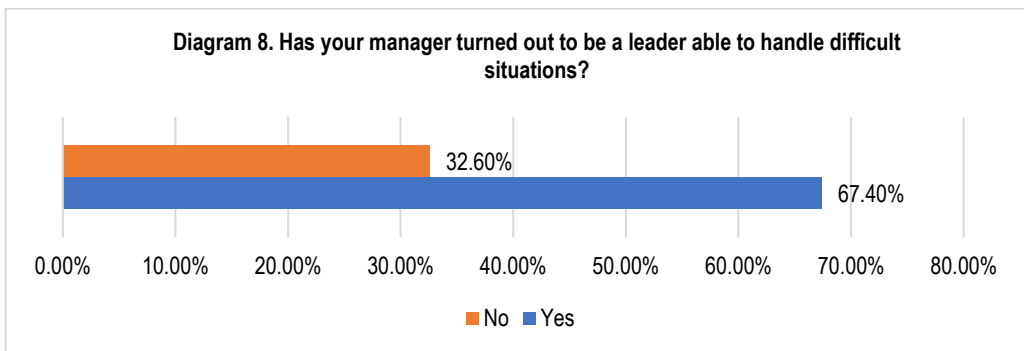
So, for example, despite the fact that approximately 60% of the employees participating in the survey were ready to work on a remote basis, for 95% of respondents, working in a pandemic was still a challenge (Diagram 6).



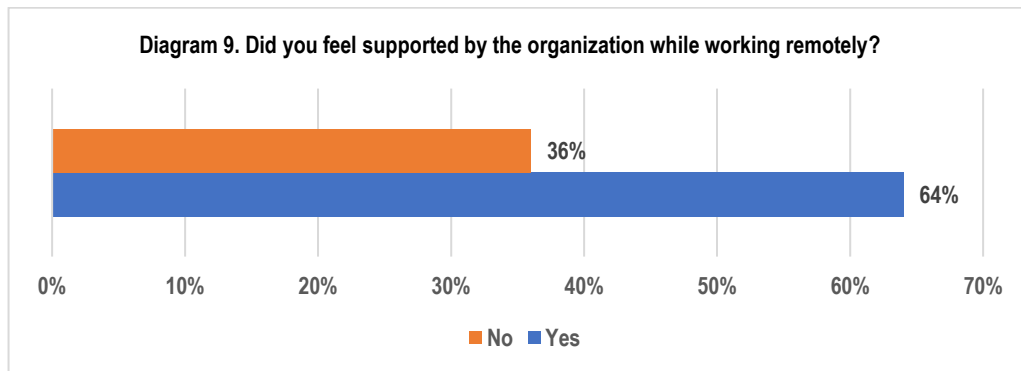
Thus, even for “ready-to-challenge” employees, the COVID-19 crisis has become a factor of great psycho-emotional stress. The following data of the study, which reflects the inextricable connection between the specifics of the national and organizational culture, which we mentioned above, became very interesting for us. More than 58% of employees did not receive financial assistance from the company during the COVID-19 crisis, wages of 52.3% of employees decreased (and about half of the respondents, 45%, consider the reduction of wages justified), while the intensity and time of work increased for 50% of respondents (Diagram 7). Despite the above data, more than 67% believe that their managers in difficult situations turned out to be strong leaders who are able to manage in difficult situations.



These statistics clearly reflect the fact that in a Georgian society (inclined towards collectivism, strict hierarchy, obedience, and respect for seniority, a masculine society) a manager is a leader – “a conqueror leader”. They believe in the manager, he/she is respected and followed even in the face of disagreement or inefficiency. Special attention should be paid to the fact that for a 67.4% of the respondents, their managers were strong leaders, which, from our point of view, is the topic of a separate study (Diagram 8).



Of particular interest is the fact that, during the COVID-19 period, in the Georgian companies, according to 66% of respondents, training and online meetings focused on enhancing team collaboration and cohesion were implemented either rare or not at all, but only 36% lacked support from the organization. In our opinion, the described situation is caused by an underestimation of the role of intra-organizational links, when even minimal participation is sufficient, the distance of authority is great and managers, employers are not considered obliged to do anything more than job descriptions. Ultimately, about 97% of respondents believe that a healthy, strong organizational culture would increase their productivity (Diagram 9).



Conclusion

As a result of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Organizational culture is the most important managerial resource that helps to increase the company's capitalization and competitiveness in the market, its reputation, and its performance.

The economic effect of the introduction of organizational culture is easily measurable and can be expressed in such indicators as employee productivity, time spent on implementation of work, the number of products and services produced per unit of time, etc.

Organizational culture is closely related to the national culture of the people forming the company, it has its own specific features and characteristics. The culture of the company can be judged by the national values and traditions of the country in which the company is located, by the history of its social and economic development. They are constructs, which have to prove their usefulness by their ability to explain and predict behavior. The moment they stop doing that we should be prepared to drop them, or trade them for something better. I never claim that culture is the only thing we should pay attention to. In many practical cases it is redundant, and economic, political or institutional factors provide better explanations. But sometimes they don't, and then we need the construct of culture **(Hofstede, 2002)**

Organizational culture takes on special importance in times of crisis and becomes a circle of salvation for employees, managers and the company as a whole.

The situation that has developed in Georgian companies during the coronavirus infection COVID-19 has shown that there is no understanding of the role and importance of organizational culture in society. There is a lack of understanding of the economic benefits of introducing organizational culture in companies **(Nino Zarnadze, 2019)**. The atmosphere existing in companies, which is spontaneously formed and borrowed from the national culture, is considered as organizational culture.

Formation of strong intra-organizational links will help Georgian organizations create a strong immune system of the organization, synchronize the actions of employees, maintain team spirit and raise the psycho-emotional mood of company employees, increase its profitability and work efficiency.

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The Many Faces of Turku - An Essayistic Study of Urban Travel

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Abstract

What does it mean to take a photographic, imaginary, or fictional journey to some destination? How does indirect observation of the object differ from direct observation? What are they like, the immediate and the mediated Turku? Which of them is more real or more authentic? Turku is Finland's most poetic city. It is also the most European of our cities. As the flâneur saunters along the banks of the River Aura, he traverses several centuries. The murmur of yesteryear is to be heard in the old buildings and in the foliage of the time-honoured trees. Here is the cradle, the first home of Finnish civilization. The philosopher-poet is able to see into the essence of a city: he has the patience to linger and listen to the humming resonance of the ages. The tourist cannot do that. What is needed is a traveller who makes sufficiently profound and discerning observations. It is in his existential looking glass that the many faces of Turku are reflected.

Keywords: essayistic study, urban travel, flâneur, Turku-ness, cultural-pedagogical city tour

Introduction

Prologue

The flâneur stands in the lush Linnanpuisto (Castle Park) and stares spellbound at the seemingly ancient name plate. It's

the same as the one in Samppalinna. They are both redolent of the past, of a yesteryear that has long since gone. The flank of the castle gleams a brilliant white. Around it the old trees stretch out and upwards. The grass is awash with a summer greenness. There is a powerful scent of flowers. And above everything there stretches the deep blue firmament of the sky. It's the very height of summer.

This is Turku, city of poetry. You begin to sense its feel already on the train as you approach the station. The River Aura, flowing deep in its bed, cuts meanderingly through the landscape. It's as if it's incessantly whispering words of antiquity. It's precisely in this city where you can think of the poet V. A. Koskenniemi as a professor.

Nowhere else. The writer Volter Kilpi also belongs here. And it was a good place for professor Sven Krohn to allow his philosophical ideas to develop and deepen.

People too seldom bother to take a walk round the castle. They go straight into the castle. The whole park area thus remains unseen and unexperienced. Yet, in this abundant greenery, in the soothing leafiness of these lofty trees, and in the tranquil retreats with their benches, it is possible to find quiet and restfulness. There is peace lying on the steps of the timber barns. The hustle and bustle of the city is far away. The noisy streams of tourists are gone. The mind rests. The proximity of the castle distances the traveller from the exhausting pace of everyday life. (See also Itkonen, 2019a, on flâneurism.)

The magic circle of Turku

"Is Turku a subject or an object?" I was recently asked. "A subject, of course," I answered without hesitation. Now I would give a more precise answer and say that Turku is both a subject and an object. This is something that merits more thorough examination.

Being a subject refers to action: a functioning and thinking being. Objectness, on the other hand, means being the object of an action or deed. So how then could a city actually appear in the role of a conscious and comprehending being? Of course, according to a strict interpretation, there is only one subject present in a situation, in a meeting between a person and a city. Yet the effect is undoubtedly two-way. There again, only one consciousness is involved in the creation of the Turku experience. Perhaps this is the point where even the phrase dialogic urban monologue could be used. Then the same person acts as questioner and respondent. One party in this totality, however, is the talk-inspiring appeal of Turku. Without Turku, there wouldn't be any dialogic urban monologue.

It's possible for a person to encounter different kinds of Turku. Or it's the same Turku all the time, but its essence, its urbanity, can be constructed in different ways. This is why we may be justified in talking about Turku's directness and its indirectness. Admittedly, the magical element probably implies that all of its manifestations feel like a firsthand Turku experience to the person experiencing them. So it is almost irrelevant whether you visit Turku in a very concrete way or through a photograph, a poem or a non-fiction text. Each time, the experience is almost as intense: the proof of this lies in the power of the dialogic urban monologue.

There's good reason to shed more light on this matter. Professor Rafael Koskimies's *Porthan's Time* (Porthanin aika) opens up a very interesting view of Turku. Typically of a research study, the description is objective and dispassionate: "Luostarinmäki, a designated museum area, provides an excellent and graphic insight into the lives of people living in the humbler areas of old Turku. This part of the city, created in the closing years of the 18th century, ascends the slope of Vartiovuori as a uniform cluster of houses. The close proximity of the houses and their plots and the relatively regular

'town plan' with its streets and alleys shows that this is really about an urban settlement and not a rural one. Its remoteness saved this treasure from the fire of 1827, and the Turku Historical Museum, by restoring the area's houses and homes wherever possible, has really kept this 150-year-old neighbourhood alive." (Koskimies, 1956, pp. 61-62)

The scientist's description is objective and dispassionate. It lacks ecstatic joy. The researcher's gaze is intent and thoughtful: itemizing, segmenting and seeking interpretation. Between the observer and the subject there is but a short distance. The researcher may think that he is located somewhere on the periphery of Turku's magic circle. The situation is similar in the official brochures and maps as well, where the object is also observed from some way off. In both cases, it seems as if the observer is looking at the world through spectacles of neutrality. There is no particular enthusiasm displayed. And there really is no need, because impartiality is a splendid starting point.

The tourist map of Turku is a good example of a matter-of-fact approach. The tone or spirit of the text is reminiscent of Koskimies's text: "An excellent overview of present-day Turku can be gained, for example, from the top of Vartiovuori, the site of one of C. L. Engel's early works, the observatory (nowadays a naval school), which was completed in 1818. However, the picturesque panorama that opens up is not particularly 'historic', since modern-day Turku, with its straight, wide streets and relatively modern houses, rose mainly out of the ashes of the great fire of 1827 (it destroyed $\frac{3}{4}$ of the city). However, charming Luostarinmäki (Cloister Hill) on the southern slope of Vartiovuori, with its interesting handicraft museum, has survived from before the time of the fire. The cathedral is still surrounded by the city of Turku's most uniform architectural centre, with its dominant neo-classical style." (Turku, 1950, pp. 3-4)

It can be assumed that, when depicted in a work of non-fiction and a map, Turku verges on appearing in the role of a pure object. Such descriptions lack ecstatic elation. And that's the way it should be. Otherwise, it wouldn't be possible to find a mode of presentation independent of one's own attitude. However, small details add a personal touch to both of the texts. Koskimies calls Luostarinmäki a treasure. The author of the map text has used the words "particularly" and "charming". I would argue that those traits also put Turku in the role of the subject. Nevertheless, the actual "dialogue" between the city and the person experiencing it is still missing. Perhaps one could argue that there is already the beginning of a small element of elation. This is something you need if you intend to reach into the core of the magic circle.

There is positive and negative elation. In this context, one should also be able to talk about the authenticity and inauthenticity of the manner in which elation comes about. The latter alternative involves excessive entanglement in media reality. Then the fundamentally important element becomes emphasising the presence of one's self.

Turku as a whole has mere instrumental value in pursuing some ultimate goal. Perhaps it's also about arousing some kind of enchantment with Turku playing an essential role. In other words, the city then, at least partially, takes on the role of subject. It is, however, the person describing who has the main role, especially in constructing their own story in a suitable Turku environment.

An examination without examples lacks the necessary detail. I need a photograph and a poem to express the magic of Turku. I'll start with the photo.



Photograph 1. Turku railway station.

More important than the photographer is the view of the place, the time and the people present. Here, the subjectivity of Turku, its Turku-ness, is consciously being constructed. Or you could think that Turku represents the whole of Finland and in its role as subject creates an entire domestic narrative.

The 'now' when the photograph was taken was the time of the Continuation War: the 1943 Independence Day celebrations. People were gathered at the railway station to receive President Risto Ryti. The Turku of yesteryear is also able to captivate the modern-day viewer. The place is of a time and yet it is also timeless. It's the people's clothing and the cars that actually tie it to the past. However, this view of the station itself is one you can still find. What it creates is a powerful impression of simultaneously being in the past and in the present. You could almost imagine yourself coming down to the station to check the train timetables.

In exceptional circumstances, positive stories are deliberately created. Still, I wouldn't make so bold as to argue that one possibility of elation linked to the image means inauthenticity. In fact, the complete opposite is true: the feeling of enchantment arises as if of itself. Turku in the role of subject gives the viewer the freedom to engage in an urban dialogue with Turku or to ignore the situation and continue their journey onwards. After all, this is precisely what travel advertising should be about. It's

important that people retain a sense of free will. Let them decide what action to take in each case. For this reason, sophisticated leading is a better approach than intrusive imposition.

The anonymous observer wandering in the flow of Turku's city life is undoubtedly a concrete part of living Turku-ness. Their connection to the city's magic circle is immediate. Dialogic urban monologue is on-going throughout the entire walk. That is, it happens in a living situation. If a photograph is capable of transforming indirectness into at least a partial directness or immediacy, then a poem too can have a similar effect. It can bring elation to the reader and give Turku the role of a subject that speaks to the reader. This is also the mechanism by which profound travel essays are born.

This is appropriately illustrated by the poetry of V. A. Koskenniemi. The collection "Kurkiaura" (Wedge of cranes) includes the poem "Aboa vetus et nova". Initially, Koskenniemi wrote the poem for the cantata celebrating Turku's 700th anniversary (1929), i.e. for a fairly large composition. Nevertheless, even today, 90 years later, the poem still allows entry into Turku's magic circle. A brief extract says everything that matters.

"A full harvest has been brought
by the thoughts of your men:
at your school the rest of Finland
has learned the alphabet.
On your banks a great dream
was dreamt by young Arwidsson,
and the voice of Porthan
has resounded in your halls.
And once the power of your song
brought enchantment, splendour to your land:
when under the Ruissalo oaks
the harps of poetry echoed."

(Koskenniemi, 1930, p. 136.)

Of course, readers must have the courage and ability to immerse themselves in the enchanting fascination of the poem. Then the urban dialogue with the Turku-subject also becomes a reality. Likewise, the reader's soul is suffused with genuine and positive elation. Simultaneously the pathway to timeless Turku-rambles opens up. Likewise, this study is trying to offer such an opportunity for elation. We need more insightful, powerful and eloquent texts about the magic circle of Turku's Turku-ness.

Turku for travellers or tourists?

Being and time are related to each other. Or maybe there would be more grounds for talking about time and being. The order depends on how the question of being is phrased: is time constructed from a specific being? Or does a certain time shape a specific being? In this essay being is the primary ingredient. Therefore, the specific order, being and time, is now the starting point for investigations. In other words, being begets time, Turku-time. It's part of Turku's more general time. Things will become clearer as the characterizations proceed.

Too often, the texts in travel magazines and the travel sections of newspapers are simply reports or some kind of case studies. They provide a summary of what happened. They are not travel descriptions or travel essays. Such writings lack both a literary dimension and any meditative depth. This fact is also seen in the disregard for linguistic correctness. Or then perhaps the writers simply don't know the rules of Finnish grammar. In particular, incorrect punctuation makes reading difficult. The text is full of the random commas familiar from a *Peanuts* comic strip. Yet it has nothing to do with creativity.

Does the flâneur belong in the traveller's Turku or the tourist's Turku? And does he wander in Turku-time or Turku's time? It is essential, therefore, to try and find out the nature of the flâneur's observations. However, an examination can't be made without documentation. Carrying out the investigation requires both visual and verbal "pieces of evidence". Indeed, the importance of the procedure has already become apparent in previous reflections. According to the principle outlined at the outset, first of all there has to be something before it can have some kind of temporal and local character. In this way, interpretations and stories are also created.

Once again, it is advisable to begin the investigation by analyzing two photographic documents.



Photograph 2. The clock tower of the Martinkirkko.



Photograph 3. The marks of war.

In photograph two, we have reached the essence of Turku-time. This totality continues to include the question of possible differences between the traveller and the tourist. At that time the existential clocks of the church tower sometimes measured eternity. Their imaginary existential hands showed the essential instants of both humanity and culture. It's still possible to think of being able to hear time grow. I, too, am part of the landscape of time flowing through me. The war years of the early 1940s, the end of peace, three wars and the intellectual annihilation of Europe are suddenly within my grasp. The almost timeless atmosphere of the church milieu simultaneously connects me to the past, to the present and to an anticipation of the future. When the existential hands are aligned and overlapping, the presents of different times are suffused, passing through each other. For those arriving there was only one entire moment of Turku-time, its essence eternal. A tourist would always be bound by a mere dimensionless clock face. As a traveller I'm able to detach myself from the yoke of a mere clock face and look at the reality of Turku-time from inside.

There is something very symbolic in the fact that the Martinkirkko clocks have no hands. Is that moment of the Continuation War timeless, then? Perhaps the existential hands are aligned so closely on top of each other that the human eye cannot detect them. During the days of war, the soldier, the church tower with its crosses, and the sky with its white clouds represented important values for the nation. They were probably marks of Finnishness and the will to survive. Therefore, it is quite justifiable to claim that picture two is part of both Turku-time and the Turku of the traveller. The camera is pointing upwards from below, which would seem to underline the importance of religion. It's as if the whole of being is reaching out toward heaven and God's sanctuary. The photo is uplifting in its spirit and mood. You can't relate the Turku of tourism to such insights. Only the outer shell is visible. (On the Martinkirkko, see, for example, Turun seurakunta, 2019.)

The tourist's time would thus be Turku's time. It would also mean time preshaped by an outside agent. It would only be left for the tourist to adhere strictly to the role ready written for him. You could think of finding a Turku like this in the descriptions of Mondo magazine, for example, and possible travel guides. A story of that sort can never do more than scratch the surface. Which is why the traveller goes his own way

and exists in Turku-time. I wonder whether it would work if we called it interpretative Itkonen time? Or would it just be time for Itkonen to notice his excessive self-satisfaction? I will answer these questions in my future research.

Photograph three shows Turku Castle after heavy damage by aerial bombing. The photographer was looking towards the castle from the harbour, which was where travellers generally departed and also arrived. In the rhythm of being this was a place encapsulating the essence of departure and return, or of beginning and ending. In this context the cycle of existence has both a concrete and symbolic significance. Sometimes peace foreshadows war and war foretells peace. Sadness is followed by joy, and a smile contains an imminent tear. Alternation is part of life. Yet, within this existential alternation a landscape destroyed by war represents ultimate despair. Ruins dominate the milieu. The roofless castle and the solitary chimney seem to be uttering an anguished request: "Stop the destroying, the rendering of everything into nothing."

Turku Castle resembles a temporal-cultural existential link, through which stories about Turku-time have been passed on for several centuries. They reveal a burning fire of civilization supported by nationalist respect. This idea, given an architectural form, has proudly carried the notion of Finnishness towards new futures. It's as if the arrangement of barrels in the foreground would like to tell you about the power of fire. Flames have destroyed the centuries-old signs of existence, even of Turku Castle. (On Turku Castle, see for example Museot, 2019.) It is at this point that our explorations should reach into Turku-time. To help describe this, I'll put together a brief practical example.

Kersti Bergroth, using the *nom de plume* TET, gives an interesting description of Turku in her book *Suurin hulluus auringon alla* (The Greatest Madness Under the Sun) (1928). Even today, the essence of the text lies in the perspective on the layered nature of being: "Turku is not easy to define right now. The old Turku is beginning to disappear from our consciousness, the new Turku is, at least in the eyes of the rest of Finland, the city of both [Finnish and Swedish] universities. And so far, the universities are still slightly theoretical concepts, still lacking the flesh and blood that tradition alone can provide. But actually, by cleverly connecting with what existed long, long ago, university life in Turku can very soon create its own convincing distinctiveness." (TET, 1928, pp. 112–113.)

What might war travel look like in Turku-time? One approach might be a cultural-pedagogical city tour. For example, one suitable theme would be the various bombings of Turku. Then, with the aid of photographs two and three, you would be able to visit the places bombed during the war. What did the landscape look like then and what does it look like now? In school, this would work as a topic for a cultural week, for example, with the focus specifically on local studies. At the same time, it would offer an opportunity for cross-curricular integration. History, visual arts,

philosophy as well as mother tongue and literature would open up interesting perspectives on layered Turku-time.

Another excellent travel companion would certainly be the newspaper *Turun Sanomat*. What did it report about the bombings of the city? Then you would quite concretely visit the places depicted in the texts. Photographs two and three would also fit in with this outline. It would be a multilevel cultural journey, where lived time blends with media reality time. A happier topic than war, though, would be cultural travel, and Bergroth's text would help in this. What must have happened over the decades for universities to change from theoretical concepts into highly respected seats of learning? Special college walks could be organized, which would reveal why it is easy nowadays to define Turku as a city of culture. In other words, university life in Turku would have created its own impressive distinctiveness, as already mentioned by Bergroth.

And is there also a Turku of memories and longing? Yes there is, and at the same time it is also a much loved city of schools. Just recently, I reread Aarne Mustasalo's novel *Jokikylän abiturientit* (The Graduates of Jokikylä), published in 1929. The author's real name was Heikki Nurmio. He had a master's degree and was also a jaeger officer. The novel contains some autobiographical features, for example, concerning Turku's Finnish realgymnasium. The eloquent cover picture is by Martta Wendelin. In places the language of the novel is beautiful and even touching. (On Mustasalo, see, for example, Raisio-Seura, 2019.)

The graduates of Jokikylä (river village) have very warm feelings for their school town. In particular, the final year of school and the approaching student examination bring emotions to the surface. In the centre of Turku, the graduates, well aware of their own worth, are only too willing to display themselves: "After returning from the school opening ceremony, we quickly ate dinner and headed to Linnankatu. We stopped at the corner of Aurakatu and gazed open-eyed on world history. Leaning on our rosewood canes, we took up a prominent position overlooking the centre of Turku and allowed people to admire ourselves." (Mustasalo, 1929, p. 15.)

The Jokikylä graduates also stand on Vartiovuori and deliver a rousing song to Turku: "Listen now, you doddering old man of Turku, our careful educator. Now your sons are singing a song for you – you, our famous, reknowned school town. Look at us up here. To you we sing, to you who has been the heart of Finland, the erstwhile cradle of light and freedom" (Ibid., 67.)

The novel gives a heart-stirring description of the sunrise of Turku and youth: "The sun rose and its golden rays first lit up the entire height of the cathedral tower, then the mountain ridges, roofs, gables and finally the whole city of Aura, hidden amongst its parks. Then, sparkling and flickering the day's sunbeams dart along the River Aura towards the castle and the sea." (Ibid., 214.)

With the help of Mustasalo's novel you could also take a summery poetry trip to Turku. Then the Turku-time traveller could stand in front of Porthan's statue. At the same time, you would feel you were part of Finnish cultural history. The flowers would blaze with colour, and beneath the leafy expanse of the trees you would feel the soft breath of this old city of culture and education. It would be worthwhile for each and every person to travel to Turku and stay there for several days. There is so much to see and admire there. Given its historic background, the Scandic Plaza might be a suitably philosophical hotel for you to undertake in-depth city explorations. The Jokikylän graduates' farewell to their beautiful school town would also be suitable for a traveller bidding farewell to magical Turku: "There the cathedral rose up, a magnificent statue of eternity set against the sky, at whose base we had lived, worked, and rushed from adventure to adventure. Countless times we had seen its handsome pointed tower and cross, sometimes against a backdrop of threatening thunderclouds with their lightning flashes or dangling strands predicting winter snowstorms, sometimes against a calm and clear starlit spring sky, wondrously shimmering. It has been drawn definitively in the depths of our hearts, and every time its warmly-coloured form once again meets our eyes, we are overcome with a devout spirit of celebration, in our ears a melody stirs from former times, times of happiness and youth, of song and poetry, times which will not return. There is nothing to match it in Finland. ... That spring evening we sat quietly around the statue of Porthan, and our young chests radiated our warm gratitude to you, our exalted, gentle mother, beautiful old Turku." (Ibid., 210 and 211.)

Should I choose, in accordance with the title, a traveller's Turku or a tourist's Turku? The answer really depends on what the visitor expects or wants from their visit. Maybe both types of Turku are needed. However, if you have to choose, the traveller's Turku is definitely the right choice. This will open up the way to the world's Turku, which there again means seeing through the outer shell, into the heart of the city. Then, instead of the merely superficial, the historical-cultural essence comes to life. The Turku-wind blows from afar, from the very roots of Finnish civilization. The souging centuries in Turku-time.

The traveller's Turku is a city of many layers. The tourist's Turku, on the other hand, is a city of consumption containing no more than a meagre moment of the present. Once you have taken a quick glance at it, you can move on and forget about the whole of Turku. It's just a city you have experienced. It also means a Turku of superficiality.

An experience remains in the mind for a long time. For this reason, Turku-time is a time of experience. Travellers are thrilled as they enter magical Turku. They become flâneurs who indulge in deep cultural insights. Thoughtful strolls through time and the city along the banks of the River Aura are the culmination of the Turku experience. And this is where essayistics starts.

Epilogue

It's definitely a good idea to take a turn at the corner of Brahenkatu and acquaint yourself with the new library. Its brightness and brilliant whiteness are stunning. The flâneur was recently attracted to an exhibition in the lower lobby, which featured the winning gems of architectural competitions. The display wall dealing with Alvar Aalto and functionalism was particularly inspiring.

The library interior creates a sense of easy movement and unlimited space. The exterior space continues into the interior, which partly overlaps with the exterior. The surfaces are hidden or vanish somewhere into the distance. For the person experiencing this, it is easy to be a part of the whole, a living essential element of a constructed world. Granite stairs ascend towards the sky; at the top a clear bright glow is visible. It gives an extraordinarily strong impression of arriving at a destination and of warm-hearted closeness. The city of poetry has been given a worthy home for books. The elegant Artek store also blends well into this milieu. The traveller's mental journey ends in the close embrace of the cathedral bridge. (See also Itkonen, 2019b, on the spirit of place.)

English translation by Glyn Hughes

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Mythology and Politics – The Case of Kosovo

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Abstract

This article deals with a specific semiotic connection established between mythology and politics that can be helpful in terms of explaining and understanding a very complex semiotization of Kosovo in South Slavic cultures. The author analyzes a poetic definition of Kosovo offered by Matija Bećković – “Kosovo is the most expensive Serbian word”, because in politics, just like in mythology, everything is about words and their meaning, and not about facts.

Keywords: mythology of Kosovo, semiotics, symbolic sign, defense, political solution, (post)colonial discourse, inferior culture, colonial trauma, auto communication

Introduction

Constructed sacredness

The abuse of Kosovo is very common in public discourse, especially in the South Slavic cultures and it almost always signifies a sacred place and memory unit that hurts every Christian heart and calling for revenge. This sacredness has been constructed with the great help of political centers of power, that are using Kosovo for centuries as a sign of Christian identity and strong resistance to the Turkish colonial power (Said, 1978) but also as a very forceful instrument of encouraging the hatred towards Alterity, especially Muslims. In 19th and 20th century, under the influence of political elite, Kosovo was transformed into a very powerful political weapon, always used when it's needed to call common people to die for the homeland due to the idea that the military defeat of Serbian, and, above all, Christian army in the Battle of Kosovo should be understood as a moral victory.

Ivan Čolović described the political abuse of Kosovo in his book entitled *The Death on Kosovo Field* and he used the syntagm *Kosovo myth*, with a strong attempt to demystify it. We believe that it would be more appropriate to use the syntagm *Kosovo mythology* because there is more than one story involved in this process of mythologisation, and by definition the myth is just one story though mythology is a dense network of stories that are forming the semantic, axiological and semiotic system, which happens in the case of Kosovo.

There are numerous authors who have written about Kosovo as a mythological phenomenon in scientific discourse (Čajkanović, 1973; Đorđević, 1984; Ćirković, 1990; Dejzings, (2005); Di Lelio, 2010) and Miodrag Popović (2007) came to a conclusion that in 19th century Kosovo and Vidovdan became the symbol of bloody revenge on everything that is Turkish or Muslim. On the other hand, the poets and the priests (Velimirović, 2013) mainly supported the political abuse of this phenomenon and contributed to the process of its mystification, which further strengthening could be very dangerous in unstable political situation in Balkans.

Demystification and deconstruction are the most dangerous processes that are not desirable in the political narration of Kosovo, because the political elite and Serbian Orthodox Church need this captivating effect on the crowd that Kosovo mythology still possesses. Therefore, it would be very important to analyze and to explain this specific semiotic phenomenon and to warn about its fatal influence when it's interpreted or considered as a doubtless historical truth.

Case Study: A spectre is haunting Balkans – the spectre of Kosovo

Aim and Objectives

Aim of this paper is to prove that nowadays Kosovo is a very dangerous and powerful semiotic product, which is ticking in South Slavic semiosphere like a special semiotic dynamite. There is no artistic code in South Slavic, especially Serbian culture in which Kosovo does not exist as a very powerful symbolic sign that has become sacred in a special semiotic process which took place in Balkans semiosphere in the last six centuries, after the Battle of Kosovo (28th June 1389).

Methodology

There are three disciplines in semiotics that make the famous semiotic triangle: syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Semiotic process that leads to establishing of a sacred sign occurs in the area of semiotic pragmatics when the interlocutor develops a very emotional attitude towards the particular sign, so he is ready to sacrifice his own life or to kill for its sacredness, which always gives specific status and functions to those signs in every culture. But, the pragmatic relation of a sign is the youngest, the most complex and least examined discipline of semiotics (Oraić Tolić, 1990).

In this pragmatic aspect of signs there is a great deal of manipulative potential that could be used in public, especially political discourse with an evil intent, to develop a social tension and anxiety, panic or fear. Cults have also been built in pragmatics and they lead to intense semiotization of sacred signs, which structure has become very complex, as a result of the process of intertextuality, and very influential in the social semiotics because it has set codes of behavior, conducts ideological patterns and forms the public opinion. Cults are very complex semiotic products which were created when sacred signs were submitted to additional semiotization during the ritual that involves a significant number of people and a great deal of social influence.

In this process of building a cult, the verse and its mnemonic functions play a very important role, so the poetry of the greatest Montenegrin poet Petar II Petrović Njegoš is included in this procedure of intense semiotization, as it has always played a very important role in shaping of Kosovo mythology.

Discussion

Kosovo mythology was created in South Slavic oral and written (post)colonial discourse, in which the ethically most correct picture of the world is clearly located within the Christian, rather Orthodox, colonized and inferior culture. Under the influence of (post)colonial situation and this social and cultural trauma stored deeply in collective memory, Kosovo mythology acts as a trigger of different defensive mechanisms of the domicile, Christian culture:

“The man has developed defence techniques in an amazingly clever way, not only in the field of the war circumstance but also in the field of religion, medicine and legal coercion. He must defend himself not only against potential hostile forces of nature but also against those in the human society.

Moreover, he also has to cope with the destructive forces in his personality. The aim of a religion is to eliminate the hazards that exist in nature, as well as those that are present in an individual. Law enforcement institutions were created to deal with social offenders, while an armed force is used against other communities. Medicine, in turn, protects the group or individual from a disease”. (Hol 1976: 58).

That’s why defense is a very powerful cultural mechanism which in every historical and political situation provides ethically correct position for defenders of homeland and domicile culture, national identity, dominant religion and image of God, so they are constructed in common mind as martyrs and knights in shining armor, and therefore they have a very wide influence on the crowd and its imaginarium.

Just like religion, medicine and legal coercion, the texts produced in a given semiosphere (Lotman 2004) function as a very important defense mechanisms of a culture because of the fact that their mnemonic function is crucial in preserving the identity of a socio-cultural community, which is particularly at risk in terms of the colonial situation. In such conditions the activity of religious codes as the strongest defense mechanisms increases, whose texts have emphasized pragmatic value because they are usually written to express sacredness and are rooted deeply in the phylogenetic memory, so they are the main carriers of resistance to colonial powers and all forms of cultural and identity violence.

We can recognize three areas in which semiotization of Kosovo took place:

1. Semiotization in oral codes, in the system of epic songs with the Kosovo cycle in its center. (This process is over);
2. Semiotization in artistic codes – poetry, painting, cimenatography, sculpture, music, pop and rap culture. (This process is still in progress);

3. Semiotization in political discourse. (Still in progress).

So, while offering a political solution, it is very important to bear in mind that we are not dealing just with a geopolitical phenomenon but with a first grade mythological phenomenon, because Kosovo is the most rigid and complex sign of Christian orthodox identity in the South Slavic (post)colonial discourse.

In this subtle semiotic way Kosovo is remembered and stored in the collective memory as a sacred sign, trapped in a malicious mythological net, with a great dill of transcendental meaning in its semantic field, so it can't be treated as any other place or geographic point in political discourse or practice. It's a very emotional and expressive sign for every member of South Slavic interpretative community. For example, the strength of Serbian identity narration is primarily based on Kosovo mythology, that was built for centuries and remembered in collective memory as a severe trauma with precise time and spacial coordinates, which made it very powerful in the field of social semiotics because it relied on doubtless hystorical "truth". So, in South Slavic, especially Serbian culture an intense process of semiotization of Kosovo took place, while this chronotope (Bahtin, 1989), within artistic codes and strategies, is transformed into a powerful simbol of identity:

"Geography is easily transformed into the symbols. It's especially noticeable when some geographical point becomes a place of permanent war operations, national or religious collision, or it's just differently recognized and valorized in the confronted national traditions." (Lotman 2004: 270).

Editional semiotization of Kosovo started in oral codes and during the further inter textual communication there's been formed a very complex symbolic sign that was curved deeply into the philogenetic memory. Therefore, the phrase – Kosovo is the most expensive Serbian word – is a very powerful clero-poetic product of that holly semiotization, which is awaking all dead martyrs and calling for defensive reaction by two serious authorities: one of the author, famous Serbian poet – Matija Bećković, and the other of the publisher – Serbian Orthodox Church, which already had a very wide influence on common people. Since religious texts and Church editions are keeping and caring on information of great importance for the community, in rough polemics of identity, the authority of ecclesial chiefs influenced the information so that no data is neutral in the ethic way, because the authority of the speaker or, in this case, publisher provides this special ethic value to the information.

Nationalists and the Church, the main keepers of the collective identity, are going to be very emotional and irrational in this Kosovo matter, and therefore very aggressive in every political situation. However, they're just like the opium for the crowd, so everything they're rolling on their seductive tongue is very dangerous in a rough political way. The characteristics of nationalists' discourse, which is always in a very aggressive dialogue towards the other identity patterns, are: playing with the strong collective traumas and, at the same time, with emotions of a recipient, afirmative kind

of intertextuality towards sacred texts (Bible or Qur'an), which includes the abuse of sacred signs, and intense autocommunication with a fatal consequences that lead to a cultural autthisam.

Nationalism, as a dominant ideological paradigm in Balkans today, and religious codes are endangering intercultural dialogue, with a rather retrograde and, unfortunately, very wide influence they aim to alienate not to connect. Nationalism, mainly based on mythological way of thinking, promotes aggressive strategies of communication, limiting free thinking and encouraging aggressiveness towards Alterity, so it's very dangerous ideological platform, and its further strengthening could be fatal considering Balkans cultural and religious dissimilarities that have deep hystorical foundation.

The most important religious dissimilarity in Balkans and in South Slavic cultures is the one between Christianity and Islam, as a consequence of historical events and colonial situation, which already had a fatal epilog in war in Bosnia. History shows that military operations in this area are accompanied by bloodshed between people of diferent religious identity, especially between Christians and Muslims. So, we can conclude that this religious dissimilarity will be always the source of aggressiveness on all levels of culture and it shouldn't be encouraged in public discourse, particularly not in political one. This religious dissimilarity is really calling for non-aggressive way of thinking, cooperative starategies of communication and positive semiotization and consideration of Alterity, especially after the latest refugee crisis in Europe, because the antiislamic mood is going to rise and it could be very dangers for Balkans.

In Balkans we are dealing with mythological human being suffering from postcolonial trauma that is especially reflected on narration of identity where Kosovo, as a very complex semiotic product, plays the main role because it splits history of Balkans in two parts functioning as a special temporal and semiotic border. Thus, temporal and spacial units appear as bearers of additional meaning because, in the view of anthropologists, time and space have ability to speak (Hol 1976), which results in increased semiotization of temporal units going beyond their primary function of an instrument for measuring time. The same semiotic process overtakes the spacial codes, so they can transfer non-spacial information as well, such as ideological, axiological or cultural one. Those semiotic procedures transformed Kosovo into a specific cultural border that splits the time on a period before the Ottoman invasion and colonization, and a period after that significant cultural impact with numerous very serious and painful consequences.

Lotman's observation that the organic connection between culture and communication is one of the basic principles of modern culturology (Lotman 2004: 28) may help in the interpretation of the particular communication established between the colonial power and colonized culture, which includes the modification of cultural codes as a necessary consequence of the colonial dialogue. In addition, the interpretation of culture as a form of communication has been advocated by some

important anthropologists, whose cultural theory relied upon the linguistic models (Hol 1976).

South Slavic oral discourse has been born under the influence of the colonial situation that had a decisive effect on the formation of axiological system of epics, while the texts created before the arrival of the Turks were modified due to the elements of another discourse and lexemes taken from the oriental lexical register. Creolization of the cultural units is always supporting the process of colonization, remembered by every member of the collective as his greatest trauma.

The oral formulations such as curses preserve linguistic evidence about the period of colonial trauma that is roughly carved into the collective memory, and a very firm axiological system can be found in a folklore text which is embedded in hatred of the „mighty and cunning“ Turks and Islam, as a stable attitude which continues to live in the South Slavic socio-cultural communities and after their withdrawal from the Balkans, because of the resistance of the ideological stance, deep-seated in the phylogenetic memory.

Colonial situation has a detrimental effect on cultural prohibitions and semiotic conventions of the inferior culture, where the victims are usually its most loyal guards – religious codes, sacred places and signs, because of the facts that the destructive power of the colonial dialogue is mainly focused on their degradation. Colonial semiotic activity is focused on the destruction of the semiotic potential of the inferior culture, especially its sacral sphere, while in the colonial communication the politeness strategies don't exist, and an aggressive logic of directives has been introduced, sent by the superior culture to the inferior one.

The image of the Ottoman Empire as a mighty colonial force which for centuries had been imposed on the colonies in the Balkans, their religion, language and culture, where one can recognize the basic colonial ideologeme, concretized in a bid of the superior culture that strives to modify other cultures and subordinate them, constantly accompanied by various struggles between different discourses for domination was created in the South Slavic (post)colonial discourse, where Kosovo plays the main role. In this struggle, the Muslim oral literature made a strong impact on the Christian folk discourse by means of bringing the oriental motifs and vocabulary in the literature. This process of creolisation affects all codes and texts within the colonized cultural space by modifying the culture as a whole, which results in the fact that the South Slavic textuality has been significantly marked by the explicit signs of colonial Alterity. There are also many signs of Austrian and Hungarian colonial aspirations, specially in western part of Balkans, that are reflected in literature and textuality as well, but those cultures are Christian, so there is no such a sharp collision as with the Turkish one.

The communication established between the colonial force and colonized culture always includes the modification of cultural codes as a necessary consequence of the

colonial dialogue. There are always numerous disorders or deviations in every communicational interaction, whose presence disrupts the process of conveying a message. For centuries, the major disturbing factor in Balkans was a colonial situation, which imposes numerous disense speech acts as the primary regulators of the interaction. Thus, the culture of the colonized and the colonizer's are treated as interlocutors in a colonial dialogue. A good strategy of linguistic interaction is a very important element of any communication, including the colonial one, as speakers, depending on the interactional goal, elect certain speech acts that will help them achieve this goal. However, the colonial situation imposes very aggressive aims, harmonized with an interaction strategy that focused on obedience to a particular submitted culture and maintenance of its inferiority, so the communication has to rely on various disense forms and speech acts, such as: judgment (verdictives), commands (exercitives) and comissives. At the same time, it is necessary to bear in mind the illocutionary power of speech acts, and perlocutionary effect they may have on the respondents and thus the realization of the goal, so that the communication strategy of the colonial force is always focused on disens (non-cooperativeness): "On the contrary, disensed situations are characterized by both or only one party to insist on their demands, which are, sometimes, inconsistent with the general objectives of communication." (Ivanetić 1995: 74)

The external messages, sent in the colonial situation, are received violently which leads to a significant deformation of the channel Me–The Addressee (Lotman 2004), while the channel Me–Me, due to the endangered cultural cohesion, increases its activity. Domicile culture is forced to intensify the autocommunication which includes resistance to messages that come from outside, from a channel Me–The Addressee, because its main purpose becomes the preservation of cultural identity, which can seriously jeopardize the strong and violent invasions of others' codes and texts. Therefore, the activity of this channel becomes reduced, through which only the obligatory messages can be recieved, and the result of this type of communication is creolisation of the domicile culture, which is something that never comes voluntarily, although the mechanisms of coercion are sometimes hidden and subtle. The domicile culture, forced to be autistic, turns to an intensive mythologisation and the cult of the past as a repository of identity information, which leads to an increased reproduction of the process of self-acknowledgement and egocentric speech. This is accompanied by reduced activity of the channel Me–Addressee, shown as refusing the texts written by others and the language of the colonizers. This defensive process leads to strengthening of oral codes and activating cultural and mnemonic mechanisms of the era of pre-literacy, because common people in Ottoman Empire, so called *raja*, usually don't write and read, and oral texts are used for storing the collective truth and facts relevant to the survival of vulnerable socio-cultural community.

So, in the cruel conditions of colonization the domestic cultural space is isolated as well, and, at the same time, protected against dialogue with the foreign texts just for the sake of survival, but that process will, eventually, produce a conservative, autistic

and self-contained culture, showing much less dynamism than required by the needs of the human society. The endangered culture activates all available defences, and as a collective always keeps itself and identity via texts, while intertextuality appears as a mnemonic and defense mechanism, whereby self-awareness, memory of the heroic being and the superiority of their own culture, are stored in the canonical texts, as in a kind of guardians of collective identity.

Christians in the Balkans have preserved their language and culture through the process of self-communication, which is crucial in maintaining the identity of the colonized cultures: "It is necessary to distinguish between two types of autocommunication: the one containing mnemonic function and the one without it." (Lotman 2004: 39). So, in the oppressed culture, an intense communication on a channel Me–Me, with a strong mnemonic function, has been developed as one of its defense strategies, while a temporal boundary that separates the two substructures has been created in the narration of identity – the domicile culture from the period before, and after colonization and creolisation because so sharp and aggressive intrusion of other people's cultural codes and cognitive patterns inevitably leads to a serious revision of codes of conduct and to modifications of identity patterns.

The inverting the real balance of power in the artistic text is one of the favorite strategies of the epic poet, who in this way kept for eternity memory of his own supremacy, though fictional, but very powerful in terms of social semiotics. Therefore, at the very time of endangerment of a social community the authors launch the texts in which is stored the memory of a fictional or real superiority of the collective and successful battle with someone else's culture because such texts function as a specific defense mechanisms of a culture.

Saidian connection between literature, geography, and imperialism (Said, 1978) is truly exposed in numerous literary works in South Slavic semiosphere or cultural space, since they are organized as an artistic transposition of the colonial situation, in which the authors present the turmoil of the semiotic energy, released during the collision of two cultures, different religious codes, which is why their antagonism is even deeper and communication more aggressive. The splitting of the space on the Christian and Islamic substructure is evident in South Slavic cultures, in social practise and literary works as well, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war.

Conclusions

It can be concluded that in this very strange mythological way Kosovo keeps for eternity the memory of Christian supremacy, though fictional, but very powerful in terms of social semiotics. Understanding of the alterity and intercultural dialog should be based on recognition of this specific mythological aspect of history, human existence and thinking, social practice and also politics. So, the political solutions that are going to be offered to Balkans issue should rely on that mythological and sacred

semiotic material, because the religious and identity map of Balkans is very complicated and it's based on numerous traumas, which shouldn't be provoked any more.

Recent political events indicate that there are layers and layers of aggressiveness in Balkans, which are produced in this boiling kettle of different cultural and religious codes, whose evil is always liberated in politically tense situations and military operations. So, Kosovo, as a very powerful mythological and political phenomenon, in the aggressive discourse of nationalists may function as such a trigger that could lead Balkans to another war situation.

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Štampar Makarije: Oktoih.

Public Health Communication in France during the Spanish Flu and the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Role of Experts

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Abstract

In times of crisis, a government's communication with the public is fundamental, as one of the government's main tasks is to provide critical information to protect the population. In the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, public health communication has been paramount because of the elevated risk of contagion. Moreover, in public health communication, experts play a pivotal role by providing reliable information on the basis of their technical expertise. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is often compared to that of the Spanish flu, a pandemic occurring in 1918-1919, whose global spread decimated tens of millions of people. This contribution aims to assess the role of experts in the two crises by highlighting the differences in France's public health communication during the two events. Assuming that the objectives of public health communication during the two pandemics were more or less identical, i.e. to prevent the spread of disease and inform and protect the public, the paper inquires about the means used to achieve them, focusing on the contribution of experts. The main characteristics of public health communication during the Spanish flu will be investigated by analysing articles published in the period between 1918 and 1919 in two French newspapers *Le Matin* and *Le Petit Parisien*. In terms of the current COVID-19 pandemic, this paper will probe articles published since December 2019 in the newspaper *Le Monde*.

Keywords: public health communication, expert, pandemic, COVID-19, Spanish flu

Introduction

The serious pandemic situation brought about by the spread of COVID-19 has highlighted the crucial role of public health communication in state crisis management. In this context, only clear and precise communication can provide useful information to protect the public and consequently limit the spread of the contagion as much as possible. The provision of up-to-date information on the development of the epidemic, alongside scientifically based prognoses on the probable development of the crisis, provides the public with valuable and useful information for planning their future actions. Finally, another important function of public health communication is to reassure the public of the measures taken to ensure

their safety and thus avoid situations of confusion and panic. To achieve these objectives, experts play a significant role in public health communication—especially but not exclusively in the field of health—as their professional competence makes the information provided more reliable. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that the role of experts is very difficult because they deal with phenomena that science can't explain yet. In such a situation, providing information that is necessarily incomplete can provoke extreme reaction from the public (Raoult, 2020).

The magnitude of the current COVID-19 pandemic is comparable to that of another global health crisis called the Spanish flu, which occurred in 1918–1919; its global spread decimated tens of millions of people. Assuming that the objectives of public health communication remain essentially identical, examining how public health communication during the first half of the last century differs from that in the current context is interesting. In particular, this paper aims to highlight the differences in public health communication in France during the two pandemics by analysing a set of contemporary newspaper articles reporting on them, with particular attention to the role of experts.

The paper is divided into three main sections. The first section describes the methodology used and the construction of two corpora: one containing newspaper articles published in 1918–1919 on the Spanish flu and the other consisting of newspaper articles on the COVID-19 pandemic published from December 2019 to June 2020. The following two sections present the results of the analysis aimed at identifying the main characteristics of public health communication in France during the Spanish flu (§2) and the COVID-19 pandemic (§3), with a focus on the contribution of experts. Finally, the conclusion highlights the major differences in French public health communication during the two crises.

1. Methodology and construction of the corpora

The main characteristics of French public health communication at the time of the Spanish flu were observed by analysing the corpus *Grippe espagnole*; it contains articles on the subject published during the period 1918–1919 in two French newspapers, *Le Matin* and *Le Petit Parisien*, which are available online on the Gallica website, the digital library of the BnF-*Bibliothèque nationale de France*. *Le Matin* and *Le Petit Parisien* were chosen because they are two of the four largest French newspapers on the eve of the First World War. At the time, both newspapers were sold in more than a million copies (Allemand & Oullion, 2005, p. 35). The corpus *Grippe espagnole* was formed by searching for all articles during the period considered containing the word 'grippe' and then selecting those relating to the flu epidemic. A total of 214 articles were identified, 70 of which were published in *Le Petit Parisien* and 144 in *Le Matin*.

Public health communication in France during the current health crisis was examined by analysing articles published from December 2019 to June 2020 in the French newspaper *Le Monde*. The articles in question are available to subscribing readers in the newspaper's archive, which is equipped with a search engine allowing readers to

carry out thematic searches. A total of 6,779 articles relating to the COVID-19 pandemic have been identified by searching the keyword 'coronavirus'. To facilitate the analysis, the number of articles was reduced by selecting those containing not only the keyword 'coronavirus' but also the term 'expert', as the focus of the current study is the contribution of experts. A total of 139 articles related to the pandemic were obtained, covering the whole period under examination. In the following phase, the corpus *Covid* was created, in which 62 articles with the main objective of informing about the coronavirus pandemic were selected from the previous corpus.

As for the texts that have been removed from the corpora because they did not have the Spanish flu or COVID-19 epidemic as their main subject, the following types can be identified:

- advertisements for medicines against the flu, also mentioning the Spanish flu (only in the corpus *Grippe espagnole*)
- advertisements with offers of medical consultations (only in the corpus *Grippe espagnole*)
- obituaries (only in the corpus *Grippe espagnole*)
- articles providing information on the state of health or death of public personalities
- articles containing non-experts' opinions on the pandemic
- other articles whose main topic is not the health crisis but its consequences (e.g. limited services, cancelled events, impact on the economy)

The aim of the analysis of the selected articles is to identify the characteristics of public health communication in France during the two pandemics with the following taken into account:

- the types of articles providing information on the epidemic
- the characteristics of the experts involved
- the type of information provided

2. Results of the analysis: The case of the Spanish flu

The analysis of the corpus *Grippe espagnole* revealed that the Spanish flu epidemic was mentioned for the first time in a short article, *L'épidémie de grippe en Espagne* [The flu epidemic in Spain], which was published in *Le Matin* on 30 May 1918. *Le Petit Parisien* reported the crisis for the first time on 2 July 1918 in the article *L'épidémie de Nuremberg. La grippe en plein été* [The Nuremberg epidemic. Flu in the middle of summer], calling the epidemic *grippe espagnole* [Spanish flu]. Let us look at the article from *Le Petit Parisien* to get an idea of how the emergence of the epidemic was assessed at the time:

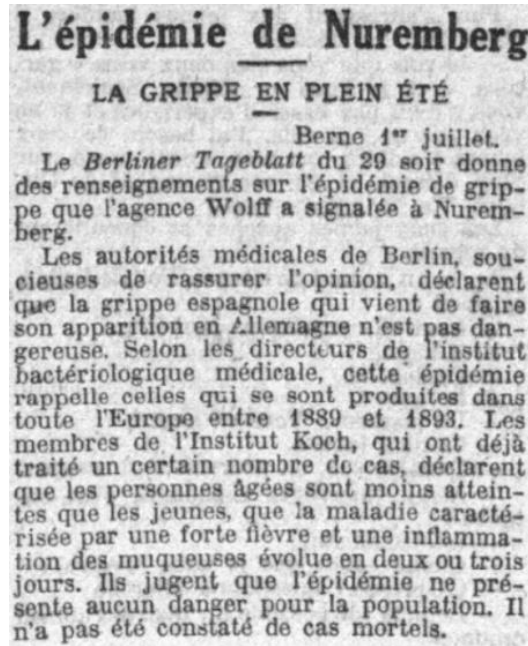


Fig. n. 1: The article *L'épidémie de Nuremberg. La grippe en plein été* published on 2 July 1918 in *Le Petit Parisien*¹

The term 'Spanish flu' was attributed to the epidemic because the first reports on its emergence informed about the situation in Spain. However, at the time, it was known that the first outbreak of the epidemic did not occur in Spain. The article *La prétendue grippe espagnole viendrait d'Allemagne* [The alleged Spanish flu comes from Germany] in 7 July 1918 (*Le Petit Parisien*) reports that the epidemic started in Germany a few months earlier and denounces how the local authorities managed to hide it. However, the press at the time was unanimous in stating that the name of the epidemic had no particular meaning; it was not a new disease but another flu epidemic with serious consequences:

'Qu'elle soit russe, espagnole, italienne ou allemande, peu importe : elle a fait des ravages et son nom est sans intérêt'. [Whether it (the flu) is Russian, Spanish, Italian or German,

¹ The Nuremberg epidemic

Flu in the middle of summer Bern 1st July

On the evening of the 29th, the *Berliner Tageblatt* informs the public about the flu epidemic, reported by the Wolf Agency in Nuremberg.

Anxious to reassure the public, the medical authorities in Berlin state that the Spanish flu, which has just appeared in Germany, is not dangerous. According to the directors of a medical bacteriological institute, the epidemic is reminiscent of those that occurred throughout Europe between 1889 and 1893. The members of the Koch Institute, who have already treated a number of cases, say that the elderly are less affected than young people and that the disease, characterised by high fever and inflammation of the mucous membranes, develops in two or three days. They consider the epidemic harmless to the population. There have been no fatal cases.

it does not matter: it has wreaked havoc and its name is irrelevant.] (*Le Matin*, 03/09/1918, the quotation comes from an article published in *Le Mercure de France*)

'Elle a beau changer de nationalité et prendre des déguisements variés, c'est toujours notre ancienne connaissance l'influenza'. [It (the flu) may change its nationality and take on a variety of disguises, but it's still our old acquaintance: influenza.] (*Le Petit Parisien*, 09/07/1918)

As for the course of the epidemic in France, according to the article *On peut lutter contre la grippe espagnole* [We can fight the Spanish flu] published on 26 September 1918 in *Le Petit Parisien*, the Spanish flu appeared in France in April 1918. The epidemic swept through the country in three waves: from April to August 1918, from September to November 1918 and from February to March 1919 (Bouron, 2009, p. 83). An analysis of the articles in the corpus *Grippe espagnole* shows that the most serious period of the epidemic in France seems to be the second half of 1918. Looking at the article titles, we can see the variability in the strength of various epidemic waves:

La grippe espagnole a gagné l'Europe. En France, cette influenza est bénigne et elle est guérie en une semaine environ [The Spanish flu has reached Europe. In France, this influenza is harmless and is cured in about a week] (*Le Matin*, 07/07/1918)

La situation sanitaire est toujours excellente [The health situation is still excellent] (*Le Petit Parisien*, 18/09/1918)

L'épidémie de grippe. Le nombre des malades a encore augmenté pendant la dernière semaine. Plus que jamais des précautions et des mesures sont nécessaires pour se prémunir contre le fléau [The flu epidemic. The number of sick people has increased again in the last week. Precautions and measures are needed more than ever to protect against this scourge] (*Le Matin*, 31/10/18)

L'épidémie de grippe va toujours s'atténuant [The flu epidemic is decreasing] (*Le Petit Parisien*, 09/11/1918)

Recrudescence de la grippe. Quoiqu'elle paraisse légère, prenons des précautions strictes [Recurrence of the flu. Although it may seem mild, let us take strict precautions] (*Le Matin*, 7/12/1918)

La grippe est en recrudescence à Paris. 900 décès sont attribuables cette semaine à l'épidémie ou à ses complications [Influenza in Paris is on the rise. 900 deaths this week are attributable to the epidemic or its complications] (*Le Matin*, 23/02/1919)

Sommes-nous débarrassés de la grippe? [Are we free from the flu?] (*Le Petit Parisien*, 24/10/1919)

The analysis of 214 articles in the corpus *Grippe espagnole* revealed that in 103 articles, the information is provided by experts. In particular, 34 articles come from *Le Petit Parisien* and 69 come from *Le Matin*. The other 111 articles (36 from *Le Petit*

Parisien and 75 from *Le Matin*) provide information on the epidemic without the contribution of experts.

2.1 Types of articles providing information on the epidemic

Regarding the articles providing information on the Spanish flu, the following types have been identified:

- articles providing statistical data on the course of the crisis in France (e.g. number of deaths, sick people)
- reportages describing the situation in France and, to a lesser extent, that in other countries
- reportages providing information on the proceedings of the meetings of scientific institutions (*Académie de médecine*, *Académie des sciences*), public administration bodies (e.g. city councils) and other institutions dealing with public health (hygiene committees)
- articles providing the results of scientific studies on the Spanish flu
- interviews with experts and public health officials

2.2 Characteristics of the experts involved

The experts in the field of health are mainly doctors and scientists (university professors and members of scientific institutions). With a few exceptions (e.g. *Professeur Vincent, le savant bactériologiste et maître réputé en épidémiologie, Le Petit Parisien*, 26/02/1919), the specialisation of experts is not specified. Very often, these experts in the field of health are members of scientific institutions and professional associations. Amongst scientific institutions, *Académie de médecine* plays the leading role. In the daily newspaper *Le Matin*, a special section is often dedicated to the news of this institution. Other scientific institutions whose members inform French society about the development of the epidemic are *Académie des sciences* and *Institut Pasteur*. Professional associations include, for example, *Société médicale des hôpitaux* and *Syndicat des médecins de la Seine*. In addition, individual cases were found in which the article provided information from a foreign scientific institution, such as the Koch Institute (Germany) and the London School of Hygiene (Great Britain).

The experts in the field of health play an important role in French public health institutions, such as the Epidemics Commission, the High Council of Hygiene, the Departmental Council of Hygiene, the City Council, the Medical Inspection Service and the Naval Health Service. The analysis revealed that health experts also intervene during debates on the Spanish flu in the French Chamber of Deputies. Finally, it should be stressed that the management of the Spanish flu crisis was carried out at two levels—the civilian population level (e.g. *Service des épidémies pour la population civile*) and the military level (e.g. *Service de santé militaire*).

2.3 Type of information provided

The information provided by the experts mainly concerns the following:

- the health crisis situation in France (statistics—number of deaths, etc.)
- development of the epidemic in other countries, such as Germany, Switzerland, Spain and England
- comparison of the Spanish flu epidemic with other flu epidemics in the past
- measures taken in France to prevent the spread of the disease
- useful tips to avoid the disease
- the path of the disease, its types and serious complications
- assumptions about the origin of the disease
- information on new treatments for the disease and the discovery of new medicines

3. Results of the analysis: The case of the COVID-19 pandemic

In a more globalized context, the Covid-19 pandemic is not only a health crisis, but a phenomenon with a considerable impact on the economy, social system and political situation of the countries concerned. Moreover, the epidemic also has an important scientific dimension. This has been analysed in detail by Jullien (2020). Among the scientific disciplines whose experts play a significant role in crisis management and public health communication, Julien (2020, pp. 287-297) highlights the contribution of epidemiology, molecular biology, genetics and the theory of evolution. Currently, the coronavirus pandemic represents a challenge for scientific institutions in the field of health because they have to react quickly, seeking to answer the major scientific and health questions of today's world. Therefore, the strategic plans of scientific institutions, such as that of the *Institut Pasteur* (Institut Pasteur, n.d), are developed with the aim of boosting research and increasing its impact on health issues.

During the period from December 2019 to June 2020, the first article providing information on the coronavirus-related disease was published in the newspaper *Le Monde* on 9 January 2020 under the title *Une pneumonie d'origine inconnue en Chine* [Pneumonia of an unknown origin in China]. The analysis of the corpus *Covid*, which contains 62 articles on the pandemic, revealed that in 48 articles, the information is provided by experts. The other 14 articles contain information of various kinds (particularly statistics on deaths and sick people) without the contribution of experts.

3.1. Types of articles providing information on the epidemic

The articles informing about the COVID-19 pandemic are of the following types:

- articles providing very precise statistical data on the course of the crisis in France and in other countries around the world
- reportages describing the situation in France and in other countries, also providing testimonies of the local population and of doctors helping in the fight against the virus
- reportages about the proceedings of meetings of certain institutions, particularly those of the World Health Organization

- articles providing the results of scientific studies on the coronavirus pandemic, including studies conducted abroad
- interviews with experts and public health officials
- articles reporting health experts' opinions on the health crisis

3. 2. Characteristics of the experts involved

In the management of the COVID-19 pandemic in France, an important role is played by 11 experts who form the *Conseil scientifique COVID-19*, established on 10 March 2020 with the task of providing relevant information to the French President. In managing the crisis, the French government is also supported by experts from the *Haut Conseil de la santé publique* (Zanola, 2020, p. 86). As regards the corpus *Covid*, the analysis revealed a wide variety of health experts providing the public with information on the pandemic. The specialisation of doctors (general practitioner, pathologist, neurologist, resuscitation doctor, etc.) is usually specified as well as that of the scientists consulted (immunologist, virologist, infectiologist, microbiologist, professor of emergency medicine, professor of public health, infectious disease expert, bioengineer, epidemiologist, professor of chemical biology, etc.). The health experts who provide information to the public are members of French scientific institutions (especially *Académie nationale de médecine*, *L'Inserm - Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale*, *Institut Pasteur*) and several foreign scientific institutions (e.g. Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, German Hospital Federation and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine). The analysis also showed that alongside health and biology experts, experts from other domains, such as anthropology, sociology and mathematics, also play an important role in crisis management and public information dissemination.

3. 3 Type of information provided

The types of information provided in the articles on the COVID-19 pandemic broadly correspond to those found in the articles about the Spanish flu. Compared with the corpus *Grippe espagnole*, the corpus *Covid* does not include articles comparing the coronavirus pandemic with previous influenza epidemics. The statistics on the course of the epidemic (number of deaths, sick people, etc.) are very precise and concern France and other countries. More often, scientists deal with the question of the origin of the virus. Many articles also contain the reflections of experts on the likely course of the pandemic and on life in the future after the virus. Attention should be given to articles aiming to disprove fake news about the origin of the virus, such as the following:

Non, cette vidéo virale ne prouve pas que le coronavirus est une « arme biologique militaire » [No, this viral video does not prove that the coronavirus is a 'military bioweapon'] (*Le Monde*, 18/03/2020).

Conclusion

The differences in French public health communication during the two pandemics separated by 100 years are mainly due to their different political contexts, technology developments and increased globalisation. Whereas in the years 1918–1919, the newspapers *Le Petit Parisien* and *Le Matin* were published in paper form and with a reduced number of pages (4), the newspaper *Le Monde* has many more pages and is also published in digital version. For this reason, more articles report on the COVID-19 pandemic than on the Spanish flu. It should also be noted that in the years 1918–1919, events related to the end of the First World War were the focus of attention, placing less emphasis on news about the Spanish flu epidemic. Indeed, a recent study aimed at analysing the Parisian press during the Spanish flu has shown that in almost all cases, articles on the flu epidemic are published inside the newspaper and not on the front page (Bar-Hen & Zylberman, 2015, p. 35).

During the two pandemics, experts play a significant role in providing reliable information on the situation and explaining to the public the necessity of the measures taken by the authorities—measures which restrict the freedom of the people (Baverez, 2020) but help reduce the spread of the disease. In the case of the Spanish flu, public health communication takes place almost exclusively in France; the data, which are provided by French experts, focus on the situation in the country. The national character of the management of this health crisis is also reflected in the fact that the term ‘pandémie’ is never used in the articles of the corpus *Grippe espagnole*. On the other hand, the information provided during the current COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the management of this crisis, has a more global character. The French public is provided with information not only on the development of the epidemic in France but also on the health situation worldwide. The experts providing information on the pandemic come from different scientific institutions around the world, and compared with the experts in 1918–1919, they have a wide variety of specialisations. Moreover, the analysis of the corpus *Covid* revealed that the main reference institution for pandemic information is no longer a French institution (such as *Académie de médecine* during the Spanish flu) but the World Health Organization, which was founded in 1948 (Organisation mondiale de la Santé, 2020). It should be also noted that after 100 years, the perception of experts has changed, especially because the figure of an *unreliable expert*, who spreads false information about the pandemic, is now much more visible. Therefore, in the current context of the coronavirus pandemic, public health communication and real experts also have the task of helping the public interpret properly the large amount of information provided, especially by identifying and disproving fake news. Finally, the analysis revealed that in public health communication, an important role is played by scientific institutions. That’s why in order to contribute effectively to crisis management, scientific institutions should be more and more committed to communicating research results to the public in a clear and appropriate way.

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A Brief Overview of the Discussion on Universal Grammar with a Focus on Chomsky's Theory

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Abstract

Over the past decades, linguists have argued over whether language abilities can be described as universal, something common to all speakers, or, whether they are learned secondarily. This paper introduces the main arguments for each side and arrives at a conclusion in support of universal language.

Keywords: universal grammar, Chomsky's theory

Introduction

In her study where infants were exposed to sound sequences, Saffran observed that infants were distracted for a longer time period by unfamiliar sound sequences than by sounds they were preconditioned to. She concluded that this is because humans have an innate ability to distinguish sounds, filter the sounds and pauses (Saffran). The idea that certain sounds seem to connect is the result of universal grammar that underlies all language. Regarding the language, linguist Noam Chomsky claims that since language is innate, there is a competence native to all speakers and hence universal grammar is shaped because the competence to distinguish sounds and ordering is universally shared by all speakers. However, Fodor and Garrett argues against the positivist approach and asserts that positivists abstract away too much of the variations in language and does not account for the underlying reasoning for all the variations. This paper discusses these views in details.

II. Chomsky's Theory

To illustrate his emphasis on innate competence of humans, Chomsky first introduces competence and performance. According to Chomsky, linguistic competence is the ability of the idealized speaker-hearer to associate sounds and meanings strictly in accordance with the rules of his language" (Chomsky 398). Therefore it is evident that Chomsky"s definition of competence refers to a broad and deep understanding of language, not specifically how language is spoken by each individual. Such specifics, such as variations in pronunciation, is referred to as performance. However, "Linguistic performance is, furthermore, governed by principles of cognitive

structure...that are not, properly speaking, aspects of language” (Chomsky 398). Therefore, to Chomsky, the varying performance can be abstracted away when studying language since it represents personal difference and does not truly represent variations in language.

When the variations among individual performances are abstracted, what is left of language is the inherent linguistic competence. This accounts for the similarities in languages that humans use. To evidence the claim, Chomsky lists sentences that are in the active and passive voice. Although sentences have different surface structures, the listener can still distinguish the sentences and understand that they mean the same thing. According to Chomsky, this is because “The grammar that each speaker has internalized does distinguish these deep 2 structures...But this fact about his internalized grammatical competence may escape even the careful attention of the native speaker” (Chomsky 433). In other words, since internalization is so universal, speakers can overlook the varying performances and accept universal grammar as the reason for the shared understanding.

III. Additional Theories

While Fodor and Garrett acknowledge that some slight variations in performance are individualistic and can be abstracted away from competence, they also believe that to simply take away the differences is over simplistic. This is because while certain variations are merely variations, other variations are results of deeper differences among human speech. And the positivists would overlook such distinctions because they tend to study the evidence of language rather than the underlying rules. More specifically, the “evidence” is that there are variations among individuals of the same language. Positivists would assume that all is presented is evidence, evidence of competence rather than presupposition for performance. However, in doing so, they undermine the potential underlying phenomenon that caused such variations in performance. That abstracted underlying phenomenon may be the root of scientific study in the field. Therefore, the positivists, in their approach of language, overlook “preposition p” and focus excessively on “the evidence for p” (Fodor and Garrett 135). For example, if the linguist “held that the object of his study was literally the behavior of speakers, his data was impoverished ...” (Fodor and Garrett 137). This is because if linguists study the behavior alone, then they are studying the evidence alone, without venturing into the actual preposition that caused such evidence to occur. Therefore, there may be underlying differences in language, as presented by variation in performance, but since positivists study the evidence alone and disregard the differences in performance, they have chosen to only accept the competence aspect of their studies. This is why the linguist’s data “is impoverished;” the linguist has chosen to ignore the prepositions for variations in performance and only accept competence.

IV. Discussion

Although Fodor and Garrett's counterargument is well-supported, I nevertheless agree with Chomsky regarding innate linguistic competence. For example:

John ate an apple. (A)

An apple was eaten by John. (B)

Although A and B are syntactically different, they nevertheless represent the same idea. The fact that we can interpret the different sentences to mean the same thing implies that we are innately able to deemphasize the details and focus on the true universal grammar. We can inherently interpret both sentences to mean the same thing because B's grammar is not diametrically different from that of A. In fact, B has "John" and "an apple" switched and the tense "ate" to "was eaten." But ultimately, since B can be transformed into A, we can interpret B in the form of A: that the person John ate an object, he ate an apple.

V. Conclusion

Based on the above overview, the author believes in universal grammar because similar grammar applies to languages such as Chinese as well. Although both A and B can be translated into Chinese, the A structure is prevalent (subject, verb, noun). Despite the differences in culture, history, and phonology, both languages share the subject-verb-noun grammatical formation. Although citing the example of Chinese alone is not enough to prove Chomsky's theory correct, the example nevertheless does not disprove the theory and helps to show merits of Chomsky's theory.

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Person and Personality – Dichotomy and the Proper Name

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Abstract

In this article we will try to show how the binary structure of the novel is also contained in many small elements that can be found throughout the story. The main story line is told in two main parts: Frankenstein's story and the Creature's story. We will show how the author uses small dichotomies/binarisms in order to incorporate them in the bigger frame of the divided story. These dichotomies are mostly incorporated in proper names which mainly show the opposite of the character of the person (Victor – the beaten; Felix – the unlucky; Justine – unjustly murdered...).

Keywords: dichotomy, binarism, Freud, proper name, person

Introduction

In Mary Shelley's work named *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus*, she responded to a challenge that her husband, Pierce Shelley, set her to face along with a close family friend named Lord Byron. Namely, the two who are probably the greatest poets of English Romanticism, during their socializing during the summer of 1816, were inspired by reading ghost stories and decided to arrange a competition in writing horror stories (horror story competition). Marry Shelley, whom at that time in many ways stood out from women-models in society, accepted the challenge and wrote her first and most popular book, Frankenstein.

However, Frankenstein was not only the ultimate literary work of a female individual in that time period (beginning of the 19th century), but a „highly individual and original piece of writing.“ (Marsh, 2009:206).

Where is the originality of *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* reflected upon? In relation to its two potential impacts, the gothic novel and Milton's *Lost Paradise*, *Frankenstein* shows many novelties. First of all, the gothic novel develops the theme of horror stories, related to ghosts, abandoned castles, and dungeons from the middle ages. The action in Frankenstein is placed in a contemporary context. The idea in a gothic novel is always based on the supernatural, while the work of Mary Shelley is substantiated

with scientific evidence, where the novel deserved to be called the first science fiction novel. The novel gave incentives to many later written superb novels such as *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) by Robert Louis Stevenson, *Dracula* (1897) by Bram Stoker and others.

The comparison with Milton's *Lost Paradise*, mainly stems from the fact that the Creature was reading that book and from there it acquired certain knowledge. There is no doubt the Mary Shelley was reading *Lost Paradise* (having to read other books as well since her father worked as a publisher and had his own printing house and bookshop at the house). However, the comparison between the characters of *Lost Paradise* and *Frankenstein* seem a bit pretentious. In that way, for example, Gilbert and Gubar (cf. 2000²:230-232) compared Victor Frankenstein among other things, even with Eve since Victor Frankenstein "brought to the world" a child. They compare the language used in description of the creation of the Creature with the labour pain of Eve, the labour pain of a woman, during childbirth: „incredible labours“, „a passing trance“, oppressed by a slow fever“, „nervous to a painful degree“... (ibid. 232).

Other than the characters, the comparison is retreated from the three-part structure in *Frankenstein* and *Lost Paradise*. While the structure in Milton's novel is divided in three parts, it is obvious that Shelley's novel is divided into two parts, until the eventual third part can be interpreted as a sort of prologue or an epilogue describing Captain Walton.

In our seminar, we will examine the possible ways of reading *Frankenstein* and we will direct our attention to the dichotomy/binarism that pervades throughout the entire novel.

Binary Structure of the Novel

As mentioned above, the action of the novel consists of two main parts in which each of the main characters, Victor and the Creature, are telling their own life story. Their stories are framed by a prologue and epilogue of a young sailor, Robert Walton, who was detained with ice far away from the North Pole, and wrote his stories to his sister in the form of a letter.¹

The very structure of the novel gives a hint that permeates the main motive to a greater or lesser form of the entire novel – binarism. Namely, Victor and the Creature describe two seemingly separate stories that are permeated with smaller episodes from other people's lives (De Lacey family, Justine Moritz, Elizabeth Lavanza), and all of which together make up one whole and affect the psychological profile of the main characters. From seemingly different and unrelated stories, there will come a merge of the common goal the two main characters will share - the destruction of the other.

¹ Since the novel did not share with us any prospective answers from Walton's sisters, Walton's letters served as an introduction and completion of two related stories - Victor's and the Creature's.

Regarding Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*, countless articles are written, essays and reviews, and the ways in which the novel is interpreted are the following-

Cultural criticism that connects the term Creature with the situation in society in the 19th century.

Postcolonial criticism that associates the term Creature with xenophobia and the inability of society to accept the difference and diversity.

Psychoanalytical criticism or the reading in which we can see Frankenstein's double in the Creature, actually his *alter ego*.

We can add to these readings the ability to connect the content of the novel with the life of the author of the novel and so we get a certain autobiographical reading of the novel. Her mother dies by giving birth to her so she becomes the cause of her death; her father marries another woman and distance himself from her, sends her to school where she is left to herself, had an affair in which her child was born. The act of giving birth to her became monstrous as she passed through a series of pregnancies, miscarriages, death of a newborn child and postnatal depression. (cf. Gjurgjan, 2002:292-293 respectively Shelley, 246-247).

Selection and Meaning of the Names (Covert Conflicts)

Title of the Novel

Before the actual analysis of the novel, we would say something about the title and the names of the characters, which, we believe, already with the selection points the character of the person.

The subtitle holds the name: *Modern Prometheus*. In Greek mythology, Prometheus was the titan who stood up against the will of the gods, Zeus, primarily to the Supreme God, in a way that because of the sympathy that he felt towards people, he took away the fire to allow them easier and better life. In that way, Prometheus gave them the independence and people ceased to be in need of the Gods. Fire as a factor for a better life was discovered by the Creature: "When night came again I found, with pleasure, that the fire gave light as well as heat and that the discovery of this element was useful to me in my food ..." (Frankenstein, p. 130)

Victor Frankenstein, from the reason Freud calls it sublimation¹, creates a new being which should not only provide a better life, but to even conquer death: "Pursuing these reflections, I thought that if I could bestow animation upon lifeless matter, I might in process of time (although I now found it impossible) renew life where death had apparently devoted the body to corruption." (Frankenstein, p. 65)

¹ One of the ways we tackle the unfulfilled desires is sublimation, Freud's term denoting the management of desire towards some socially accepted goal. (see Eagleton, 2003²)

However, after the achieved goals, Prometheus and Frankenstein suffered unbearable pain, one physical: Prometheus was chained to the Ural Mountains where crows pecked his liver, and the other psychological: Frankenstein's guilty conscience that gnawed at him, to the point of death: "My own agitation and anguish was extreme during the whole trial. (...) I could not sustain the horror of my situation... The tortures of the accused did not equal mine; she was sustained by innocence, but the fangs of remorse tore my bosom and would not forgo their hold." (Frankenstein, p. 105)

Apart from these obvious reminiscences of Prometheus, in several places of the novel, the author uses terms and expressions related to the fire, spark, light where she can strongly show the similarities between Frankenstein and Prometheus:

"... I should first break through, and pour a torrent of light into our dark world." (Frankenstein, p. 65)

"... that I might infuse a spark of being into the lifeless thing ..." (Frankenstein, p. 69)

"... come on, then, that I may extinguish the spark which I so negligently bestowed." (Frankenstein, p. 123)

Names of the Characters

The names of the characters, or for at least some, seem to not be completely random. She determines or to a certain extent illustrates some of the main characteristic traits of individual characters and in a certain way leads them towards the path of their fate.

In the name Victor Frankenstein, we can simply read the author's ironic game of the meaning of the word victor and the fate of the young scientist. Victor (lat. winner) managed to discover a way to breathe life and so to defeat death. Therefore, he is victorious over death. But his victory became a Pyrrhic victory and had a vast taste of defeat. He overcame death but all his loved ones died. Inside the same person he faced the greatest winner and the biggest loser.

The author probably picked the last name Frankenstein because in her "nomadic" life, she lived in close by village of the same name.¹

However, there are other ways of interpreting the selection of the last name Frankenstein. Very often, it is described as a combination of *frank* ("free") and *stein* ("stone"). This can be interpreted in various ways: free in the access to science, liberal and yet steady as a rock, firm and resolute in his intention. The second interpretation is associated towards religiosity: *stein* (cup stone) the enchanted cup which Christ drank from at the last supper. Furthermore, it can be seen as a very common place name in Germany.

¹ Today, the village is called Zabkowiec Slaskie and is located in Poland, while it belonged to Germany in the 19th century.

The second part of the last name, *stein*, as we have noted means “stone”¹, is a very common suffix in last names all over Germany. He represents the strong and resolute character of a young scientist to succeed in his intention, whatever it might be. He is adamant in that to achieve all the goals alleged by his family and society. After all, he is determined in his intention even at the price of being his own victim, to stand in defence of humanity and to defend it from the danger of the Creature’s threat, where it declared war, “perpetual war to that type,” meaning to humanity. However Frankenstein, sensing or imagining the potential danger of creating a female being firmly took his stand: “Begone! I am firm, and your words will only exasperate my rage.” (Frankenstein, p. 212)

The first part of the last name *Franken*, can be linked to a province in Germany. In that act, nothing would be unusual because ethnonyms are very common occurrence in names and last names, if it were not for that province that borrowed the name of France. Namely, the Franks as a Germanic tribe conquered the area of today’s France, which would then be banished from the Romans that actually kept the name France. After the expulsion of the Germans, their name remains but the eternal antagonism between the French and the Germans is felt even today. It is just enough to recall the centuries and centuries of war between the two countries and to realize that these are two irreconcilable sides (the same people).

Due to that, Shelley placed the action in Switzerland which again, paradoxically, brought together the four nations including the French and the Germans. And so, Victor Frankenstein in his name and last name is split in two irreconcilable parts.

The attention Shelley gave to symbolism can be seen in the names of several characters.

Justine Moritz, whose name with a little imagination means „righteous / justice dies”², is wrongly accused of the murder of Victor’s brother William and is being carried to the scaffold where she was executed despite her innocence and justice.

Henry Clerval, Victor’s friend and faithful companion since childhood, symbolizes a blend of purity and nature: “He was a being formed in the ‘very poetry of nature.’ His wild and enthusiastic imagination was chastened by the sensibility of his heart. His soul overflowed with ardent affections...” (Frankenstein, p. 197) His last name precisely means “clear / clear valley” (fr. *clair* – “clear”; *val(ée)* – “valley”).³

Felix De Lacey (from the Creature’s stories of the De Lacey’s) was a sad young man who lived with his father and sister in one cabin. “They were not entirely happy. The young man and his companion often went apart and appeared to weep.”

¹ The name can also be interpreted as homage to her mother Mary Wollstonecraft.

² lat. *justitia* “justice”; *morire* “to die”

³ Let us add in the fact that her half-sister was named Claire (Jane) Clairmont and there as well we could have seen a word play: *val – mont* (“valley” – “hill”). A particular influence probably played a role in the special relationship between Mary Shelley and her sisters. (See more in Marsh 2009:183-197).

(Frankenstein, p. 138) "... I was inquisitive to know why Felix appeared so miserable ..." (Frankenstein, p. 143)

His kind of condition lasted until the arrival of a young Arab woman names Safi. She was Felix's love and the reason for his previous depression and sadness and future happiness. "Felix seemed ravished with delight when he saw her, every trait of sorrow vanished from his face, and it instantly expressed a degree of ecstatic joy ..." (Frankenstein, p. 146) It is essential here to note another element in addition to the referral name (lat. *Felix* "happy") on the mental state of the person. The Creature connects the feelings of happiness with sharing the feelings of love to the opposite sex (which he could not and will never be able to feel), which will have a major impact on the further course of the story.

From all the examples above, dichotomy/binarism is clearly outlined and the symbolism of conflict between the name and the person, respectively, their faith.

Name vs. No name (Nameless Others)

Regarding the names of the characters in the novel, the Creature probably carried the most significant name. In fact, he was nameless, with no name whatsoever. This fact spoke about its status in society and the numerous unpleasant outcomes it faced for not having a name. The Creature was rejected, did not belong to society, was nobody, was not a person and he did not even have a name. Gjurgjan calls it the nameless Other, excluded from the society (2002:293) Many consequences derived, as we shall see, because of not naming a newly formed (new-born) being.

When a child is born, the first thing he/she receives is a name and owning a surname places the child in a narrow community called family. In this way, the name defines the child in relation to other individuals and the surname allows a specific affiliation to the community. Therefore, at birth the child becomes an identified individual in the community and it provides the child with security and love.

However, the opposite happened to the creature: he did not have a name and belonged to no one. It was bothered by this fact so much that at one point it asked: „But where were my friends and relations? No father had watched my infant days, no mother had blessed me with smiles and caresses ...“ (Frankenstein, p. 151) In the Creature's eyes, we can observe how it alluded to the idyllic family life of the De Lacey's. Despite the many hardships that have hit them, feelings of harmony and love were always present. At the end of its lamentations of its miserable condition which it was in, the creature added: „What was I? The question again recurred, to be answered only with groans.“ (Frankenstein, p. 151)

It seemed as if the Creature was suffering from a lack of the oedipal complex. Lin formulated it in the following way: "Creature must now search for that lost (m)Other who rejected and abandoned him at the moment of his birth; the abruptness of this "mother-child" separation makes it impossible for him to sense that moment of

wholeness/oneness that may ideally be experienced in the oedipal stage.” (Lin, 2005:30).

Growing up in a family community, the child goes through many stages of development until he/she accepts the situation and function he/she has to take over in the family, which are imposed by the society the child lives in. Throughout the adolescence, when the child “successfully” passes through all the earlier stages, it then develops into a person. The Creature said for himself: “From my earliest remembrance I had been as I then was in height and proportion. I had never yet seen a being resembling me or who claimed any intercourse with me.” (Frankenstein, p. 151) The Creature was compelled to create a link between its own isolated existence and the outside world. In that particular act, he had no protection from family and was like a helpless new-born. Therefore, it lacked one stage in life where it was supposed to meet and deal with the oedipal complex. “It is not just another complex: it is the structure of relations by which we come to be the men and women that we are. It is the point at which we are produced and constituted as subjects; and one problem for us is that it is always in some sense a partial, defective mechanism... Moreover, the Oedipus complex is for Freud the beginnings of morality, conscience, law and all forms of social and religious authority.” (Eagleton, 2003²:135-136).

The Creature was deprived from those norms and moral senses, which allowed it to that extent to suppress guilt to continue on with the killings and hurting people he knew were innocent. The Creature did all of those horrific acts only with the intention to hurt Victor Frankenstein as much as possible. It was guided by its instincts since it did not have a reliable someone to learn from and adopt the rules of human society.

Of course, here one can ask the question: “Why do many people who have had a normal childhood reach out to violence and why does one’s own conscience trouble someone more and someone much less? According to Freud one of the problems is that the Oedipus complex is in some ways always an incomplete, truncated mechanism (see Eagleton, 2003²: 134-135). Similarly, it can be read from the words of Victor Frankenstein: “...we are unfashioned creatures, but half made up, if one wiser, better, dearer than ourselves – such a friend ought to be – do not lend his aid to perfectionate our weak and faulty natures.” (Frankenstein, p. 30)

The Creature understood that in human society there are rules that are based on a number of complex relationships that are affected by natural and acquired feelings (for example: the relationship of a mother and child, father and son, and feelings that develop in these relationships). The Creature desired to get to know these feelings, but those feelings could not have been artificially learned. It referred to the De Lacey’s¹ as protectors, wanting nothing more than to identify and get closer to them. However, as the Creature himself admitted, it all happened to be an innocent, but half-

¹ The De Lacey family represented the world in a miniature, actually as an image of a functioning broader human society.

painful self-deception (Frankenstein, 130). The Creature wanted to feel their feelings and be able to apply them even though it did realize that at the same time it is alike and unlike people. It could have discerned the feelings of which the De Lacey's spoke of at their cottage, as the Creature listened to their lessons being taught. Unfortunately, he was not able to feel them because those feelings were gained mutually rather than being a one-way activity. Despite all the effort, the Creature remained nameless and as an undeveloped spirit. No one cared for it and it felt no sense of belonging. It was akin to no one, had no sense of love and understanding from another person and was rejected and maladjusted in human society.

In addition, even though Victor Frankenstein was completely sure in his success that he will create a man (human being), it never crossed his mind that that man should have a name (personal identification of an individual). Having no name, Victor referred to the Creature as: a demon, demonic carcasses, monster, devil, creature of Satan, destroyer, vile creature, parasite, creepy devil, and creature¹.

5. Creator vs. Creation

Only God, the creator, has the privilege to create a living being. M. Shelley was aware of that, as she explained in the preface of her novel the idea that prompted her to write it: "I saw – with shut eyes, but acute mental vision – I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life, and stir with an uneasy, half-vital motion. Frightful must it be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world." (Frankenstein, p. 6)

As a 13-year-old boy, Victor Frankenstein began to take an interest in the "secrets of heaven and Earth," and his curiosity and research were always focused on the metaphysical and physical secrets of the world. When he was 17 years old, his parents decided to send him the University of Ingolstadt, where he met professors of natural philosophy and chemistry. They guided him towards the achievements in modern science and he was delighted with the outcomes of his studies in those fields. In particular, he was interested in the structural aspect of the human body. Victor rapidly progressed in his studies and after only two years of dedicated work, managed to discover the secret of giving a life: "After days and nights of incredible labour and fatigue, I succeeded in discovering the cause of generation and life; nay, more, I

¹Since the Creature had no name, we decided to call the newly created being: The Creature, and we wrote it capitalized to distinguish it from other, real unidentified creatures. Also, we did not want to call it a monster due to the relativity of the concept and applicability to other characters in the novel, which were considered as human beings and called by their own name. Nowadays, the Creature is often called by the last name of his creator, Frankenstein, so many titles of movies in relation to the novel appear as: *Frankenstein's son*, *Frankenstein's house*, *Frankenstein's encounter with a man-wolf* and many others in which the Creature has a name. (Information taken from Gjurgjan, 2002:292).

became myself capable of bestowing animation upon lifeless matter." (Frankenstein, p. 63)

After his adolescent fantasies about the creation of the world, Victor Frankenstein began to reach closer to his own Creator. Like Him, he had the power of giving life. In this way, he as a man became God.

The similarity which he and the Creator shared did not stop. His spirit travelled further and exceeded the limits of a self-conscious scientist that made his achievements for the availability and benefit of mankind. "Life and death appeared to me ideal bounds, which I should first break through, and pour a torrent of light into our dark world. A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me." (Frankenstein, p. 65)

Victor's thoughts and plans went too deep and far out into the bloom. Apart from defeating life, he got drifted into the idea that he was able to even defeat death. The traumatic shock he felt in the oedipal phase when he lost his mother, made him come up with the idea to overcome death. More precisely, to bring the dead back to life. His idea was closely related to the death of his dearly missed mother and the inability to reconcile with it. He created a new form from death, hoping how someday he will succeed to reach his original subject of desire-his mother. This can be seen from the dream he had after the revival of the Creature.

The other connection we have with the Creator is the Creature's salutation to Victor Frankenstein. At the beginning, the Creature addressed Victor as "My Creator." As the story went further, the Creature talked much more about the embarrassments, disappointments and sufferings he faced in its short-term life. The Creature portrayed his creator as a cursed creator. Therefore, from an imaginary and blessed creator, he became a hated, cursed creator.

A few other minor comparisons with the Creator can be found in the text.

The Creature criticized Frankenstein for creating it as a freaky and hopeless monster, when God created Adam in his own image as a perfect being. "Like Adam, I was apparently united by no link to any other being in existence; but his state was far different from mine in any other respect. He had come forth from the hands of God a perfect creature, happy and prosperous, guarded by the especial care of his Creator; he was allowed to converse with and acquire knowledge from beings of a superior nature, but I was wretched, helpless and alone." (Frankenstein, p. 163)

The Creature mostly disliked the fact of being alone and for not having a companion like Eve: "... no Eve soothed my sorrows nor shared my thoughts; I was alone." (Frankenstein, p. 165) Here we can see the evident connection and dependence the Creature had towards its Creator: the demand for a female counterpart represented the emptiness, the inability to enter the symbolic establishment of primary human

relations and to structure subjectivity. This feeling of emptiness will be of crucial importance for the actions taken throughout the entire novel.

However, perhaps the best comparison with the Creator and the creation of a living creature happened after the revival of the Creature. At one in the morning on a gloomy November night, Victor felt disgusted from the moment the Creature opened its eyes, which caused him to faint. When he woke up, the first thing he saw was a white tower of the church in Ingolstadt. It is clear that the church represented God and that He in that way pointed out to Frankenstein that he knew about his venture. This is confirmed by the clock on the tower "...which indicated the sixth hour." (Frankenstein, p. 71) Again, the reminiscence of creation is clear, respectively, *the Book of Genesis*, in which God created man on the sixth day.

6. Life vs. Death (Eros vs. Thanatos)

a. Life vs. Death

Mary Shelley's novel can be understood from various perspectives and it indeed befits the finest work of Gothic literature. One of the main motives that pervade the entire novel is probably the motive of life and death (which, given that we are talking about two opposite ends of one appearance-existence fits well in the general binarism motive in the novel)¹.

The very background of the story is tied to the desire of finding the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life.² Frankenstein's advancement in science was directed to inhale life to the inanimate - create a living being. The ultimate goal, which he failed to accomplish, was to conquer death.

Countless times, life and death were evoked in the novel, and several times mentioned in such phrases: "Life and death appeared to me ideal bounds, which I should first break through ..." (Frankenstein, p. 65)

However, while in the beginning the author approaches syntagm *life and death* rather frivolously, as if it is about a harmless issue, later in the novel, she takes on a much deeper and more subtle meaning. It is no longer just about a term that could be attributed to a youthful dazzle of one's own success or kind of rashness. That phrase slowly takes on the fullness of what Freud summarized in words that the aim of all life is death. Eagleton expresses it as follows: "The final goal of life is death, a return to that blissful inanimate state where the ego cannot be injured." (Eagleton, 2003²:139)

¹ "If Victor is the creator of the Creature's life, the latter is the author the former's death." (Lin, 2005:48).

² As an adolescent, Victor Frankenstein was amused by the works of Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus and Albert Magnus, who practiced chemistry, magic and occult sciences that lead to gaining the best knowledge of God.

“Let the day therefore be fixed; and on it I will consecrate myself, in life or death, to the happiness of my cousin.” (Frankenstein, p. 241)

“... and I devote myself, either in my life or death, to his destruction.” (Frankenstein, p. 254)

Victor Frankenstein is aware that only the death of one of them (him or the Creature), will bring peace. To give a peaceful life to his family, he decided to fulfil a long time ago promise, which was to marry his adoptive cousin named Elizabeth Lavanza. The decision about the wedding was caused and approved by the feelings he always had towards Elizabeth, his mother’s last wish for them to marry before her death, the urging of his father and mostly the Creature’s words. After Victor Frankenstein broke his word about creating a new female counterpart, the Creature “promised” Victor: “... but remember, I shall be with you on your wedding-night.” (Frankenstein, p. 213)

Victor Frankenstein rated that moment as very likely the last one to directly meet with the Creature, and that the death of one of them will interrupt the series of senseless killings. Victor is aware that the Creature’s death will not bring him the desired peace and freedom, yet his family will then be able to relax because he will no longer be tortured and persecuted by the Creature.

“If he were vanquished, I should be a free man. Alas! What freedom? Such as a peasant enjoys when his family have been massacred before his eyes, his cottage burnt, his lands laid waste, and he is turned adrift, homeless, penniless, and alone, but free.” (Frankenstein, p. 239)

On the other hand, he knew that the Creature was much stronger than him and that his death would be a much more certain outcome from a combat with it. That would actually be a twice more favourable outcome for Victor. After the Creature kills Victor, he will no longer have an incentive for further persecution of his family because he only and primarily wants revenge from Victor and in this way, his family will be safe. “Well, be it so; a deadly struggle would then assuredly take place, in which if he were victorious I should be at peace and his power over me be at an end.” (Frankenstein, p. 239)

In that situation, we realize Freud’s words and Eagleton’s paraphrases. Only in death, in return to a senseless state, his ego will become safe knowing that neither he nor his family will experience something terrible.

When talking about life and death separately, you can read along how death only brings the real and true salvation from life. Life and death are inseparable parts of our being: something that we have always been and something that we will always be forever.

Striving towards death and repulsion from life can be read in the following allegations:

The Creature could still not conceive the state of death, but he knew well the feeling of pain and he said: "... but I learned that there was but one means to overcome the sensation of pain, and that was death..." (Frankenstein, p. 151)

Victor, after the accusations against him for the death of his friend Henry Clerval with resignation asked: "Persecuted and tortured as I am and have been, can death be any evil to me?" (Frankenstein, p. 227)

When Victor saw how dead and mutilated Elizabeth looked lying down on their bed, in disgust and some kind of insane irony noted: "Could I behold this and live? Alas! Life is obstinate and clings closest where it is most hated." (Frankenstein, p. 248)

The pain that permeates us in life (in that short sequence of our (non) existence) incomparably is larger and heavier than any kind of death whatever we thought about it.

Eros vs. Thanatos

Eros

Eros and Thanatos are in very close connection with life and death, almost of perfect synonyms with the difference that life and death are conditions and Eros and Thanatos are instincts for those conditions.

About Eros as the instinct for life, was written by J. Hale in his article 'Constructing Connectedness: Gender, Sexuality and Race in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein'. She sees it strictly as a desire for erotic love, for sexual deprivation, and she seeks the confirmation in certain behaviour that Victor and the Creature possess.

Victor Frankenstein was jealous of a female's privilege to give birth, so he decided to confront nature and create a new life himself. The drama of a monstrous creation is the result of a scientist's repressed desire (Oedipal desire for your mother).

Hale attributed particular sexual instincts to the killings committed by the Creature. "Gazing at the portrait of the beautiful Caroline Beaufort, the monster revises his account of why he murdered William – not "to silence him" or to exact "eternal revenge", but because he was "deprived the delights" of erotic love. The monster clearly associates his violent, murderous acts with sexual deprivation" (Hale, 2001:15).

Eros and Thanatos are directly connected in the Creature's character. Appealing to Justine in her sleep after killing William, once again reveals the Creature's erotic desire to the opposite sex: "Awake, fairest, thy lover is near – he who would give his life but to obtain one look of affection from thine eyes; my beloved, awake!" (Frankenstein, p. 181)

However, if we move away from Eros as the sole instinct for sexuality and if we examine it as a drive for life that is contrast with Thanatos, the death drive, we can see that the Creature's craving is primarily geared towards sensual rather than sexual

emotions. It wants someone who will not abhor its appearance, someone it can share its feelings with and someone it will be able to live with. It does not care where it will live (he swore that he would go to South America). It is important to the Creature to just live, to feel, and that in return it receives the same feelings.

In the dialogue with Victor, we can see the Creature's true feelings:

"I am alone and miserable; man will not associate with me"; "You must create a female for me with whom I can live in the interchange of those sympathies necessary for my being."; "Am I not shunned and hated by all mankind?"; "Let him live with me in the interchange of kindness, and instead of injury I would bestow every benefit upon him with tears of gratitude at his acceptance.", "If any being felt emotions of benevolence towards me, I should return them a hundred and a hundredfold", "Oh! My creator, make me happy; let me feel gratitude towards you for one benefit! Let me see that I excite the sympathy of some existing thing", "My evil passions will have fled, for I shall meet with sympathy!" (Frankenstein, pp. 182 – 185)

Primarily, the important thing to the Creature was the sensibility for humane moral feelings and that the drive for Eros is secondary in its request for a female being. The creature wanted someone who will have the same flaws as he did, even though he knew that they will always be seen as monsters to humanity. "...cut off from all the world; but on that account we shall be more attached to one another. Our lives will not be happy, but they will be harmless and free from the misery I now feel." (Frankenstein, pp. 183-184) Paradoxically, the Creature (monster) wants a life worthy of a man that the Creature (man) can disable with monstrous evil and guided by human logic and laws.

However, it should be noted that the Creature did not ask for the exact same being as it was, but for a female counterpart. Although he declared that it would be overjoyed grateful a thousand times for the exchange of affection with a human (it did not specify whether it was referring to a man or woman), nevertheless, it is only asking for a female counterpart-being of the opposite sex. It can be that when the Creatures saw the happiness that seized Felix De Lacey when Safia came, he realized that the right sense of fulfilment comes only from a relationship of a man and a woman. In other words, beings of the same race but opposite sex and therefore, the Creature required a companion. Maybe even somewhere in its mind lies the thought how one day it might want to have a sense of being a parent (parent-child), which it was unfairly abridged from. Besides, being a parent is also one of the most important feelings in human life, which in numerous ways makes the Creature's existence difficult to accept where it tends to feel unfulfilled and denied.

In that case and only in that one, we can understand Victor Frankenstein when he said: "Shall I create another like yourself, whose joint wickedness might desolate the world?" (Frankenstein, p. 182)

Thanatos

"The aim of all life is death" (Freud)

At the beginning of this chapter, we have already mentioned Freud's statement written above that appears as a ubiquitous paradox of every life. In fact, no one wants to die and as much as possible with the aid of various assistive devices (for example, the elixir of life, philosopher's stone), everyone would like to live longer and even for eternity. However, the human ego drives us to accept death as a peaceful phase in the continuation of (non) existence. The human ego is subject to external influence which makes it either happy or oppressive. "The ego is a pitiable, precarious entity, battered by the external world, scourged by the cruel upbraiding's of the superego, plagued by the greedy, insatiable demands of the id." (Eagleton, 2003²:140). Regarding the two main characters, it is about the dejection of the ego with only an occasional greater or lesser period of happiness.

Victor Frankenstein was a beloved child, who lived up until his adulthood lived in a happy family. When he was 18, he went to a university and was left alone to himself. He only seeks pleasure in studying and to reach his ultimate goal-the creation of a living being. "From this day natural philosophy and particularly chemistry (...), became nearly my sole occupation. [...] Two years passed in this manner, during which I paid no visit to Geneva, but was engaged, heart and soul, in the pursuit of some discoveries which I hoped to make." (Frankenstein, pp. 60-61) His goal, or better said his id, occupied him so much that he completely forgot his friends and his own health.

The Creature was constantly torn. He was torn apart by its own feelings: it felt the goodness of others but towards it no one showed that affection, it helped others and in return got beaten up, they drove it away, hated it (The De Lacey's, father of the girl it saved the life of, the peasants...). His luck was only perceived in the promise of Victor Frankenstein that he will create a companion that will not be scared of it and with whom it will be able to share the same sentiments. However, the only real true feelings of both heroes are stated in their strive towards death, to Thanatos, respectively to the feeling of life fulfilment and finally a peaceful (non) existence. They want to reach a state in which their (its?) ego will no longer be tortured nor torn. Only at death, the ego will be able to calm down the id and gain the deserved eternal peace. This is the way in which Freud's first instinct came into being: the instinct to return to inanimate state.

Their mindless pursuit of one after the other can only be completed by destroying both of them. However, that is their fate and they cannot escape from it. While both are alive, none of them will be able to find peace and contentment. But as soon as one of them dies, the other will die as well. They are like two sides of the same coin. You cannot have one without the other. After the death of Victor Frankenstein, the creature comes to mourn beyond him and asks for forgiveness for the atrocities he has committed. Unfortunately, it knew deep down that it was already too late. It

remains to execute the final murder in its life: to kill itself. That act will not at all be harsh for it to perform. It is almost happy that everything is finally over and that it will finally be able to find the desired peace it has always been yearning for.

“Do not think that I shall be slow to perform this sacrifice... I shall die. I shall no longer feel the agonies which now consume me or be the prey of feelings unsatisfied, yet unquenched. (...) Polluted by crimes and torn by bitterest remorse, where can I find rest but in death? [...] Soon these burning miseries will be extinct. (...) My spirit will sleep in peace... Farewell.” (Frankenstein, pp. 281-282)

The pity that Frankenstein provokes in Walton leads him to one possible conclusion: “The only joy that he can now know will be when he composes his shattered spirit to peace and death” (Frankenstein, p. 266), so when its divided Id becomes one again. It can find that condition only in death.

Conclusion

Mary Shelley’s novel, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*, offers many different ways of interpretation. We have tried to analyse the novel from different aspects. In every aspect, we tried to find dichotomy/binarism or certain duality that permeated the novel. We started from the structure of the piece, to the character names (Victor Frankenstein, Justine Moritz, Felix) to certain motives (name-no name, creator-creature, and life-death). In all aspects, we can partially read the dual structure of the piece.

The names of some of the characters show their double destiny, just the way Walton said it for Frankenstein: “Such a man has a double existence.” (Frankenstein, p. 31) Victor was the defeated winner, Justine was the righteous person who unjustly died, Felix was the “unfortunate lucky man”. We can find the symbolism of the names in (holy) cities, where Walton stayed in - St. Petersburg and Arkhangelsk, from which he began to encounter icy wasteland, in one kind of hell.

The nameless creature was rejected from its creator, unaffiliated in society, and persecuted by all. His revenge is the result of misunderstanding and lack of compassion and love. It, just like Victor Frankenstein, was torn by its own conscience. He did not kill willingly, took no pleasure in his immoral acts, as Frankenstein showed the opposite. The only murder that did not affect it was the murder of Elizabeth. She was his polar opposite and the only threat to Victor’s happiness, forever deprived of a female being and perpetually unhappy.

We tried to explain Walton’s narration in a way that it connects the Creature’s to Frankenstein’s story and to find binaristic elements in it. Their life paths greatly resemble each other’s and it seems that in numerous ways they complement each other as the novel resembles the unconventional life of its author.

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Characterization in William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar

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Abstract

Julius Caesar, one of Shakespeare's finest tragedies, has baffled readers, critics and scholars alike for centuries. It still remains one of the most read plays written by William Shakespeare and it has been part of high school curriculum in many English speaking countries world-wide. One of the most important features of it is the ambiguous and ambivalent portrayal of its characters and this paper endeavors to elaborate on the kaleidoscopic characterization in Julius Caesar by exploring its main characters with a special focus on the two tragic heroes of this play: Caesar and Brutus. Also, the paper will deal with some other important aspects of the play such as its political implications, its characteristics as a problem play and a tragedy of moral choice by building upon a wide corpus of critical criticism on Julius Caesar, and finally it will attempt to work out the play's relevance to the 21st century readers and audiences.

Keywords: kaleidoscopic characterization, tragic hero, political play, problem play, a tragedy of moral choice, monarchy vs. republic, liberty vs. tyranny

1. Introduction

Julius Caesar was written between 1599 and 1601, although various critics have mentioned different years for its production. So E.K. Chambers (1930) refers to 1599, whereas M. W. MacCallum (1910, p.174) will place it in 1600 or 1601. Ernest Schanzer has called it one of Shakespeare's most perplexing plays (1955); Allardyce Nicoll regards it as one of William Shakespeare's "most difficult plays rightly to assess"; (1952, p.134) whereas Wilson Knight thinks that "to close analysis it reveals subtleties and complexities which render interpretation difficult." (1931, p. 63) The plot in a nutshell is this: the Republicans, led by Brutus and Cassius, assassinate Julius Caesar, dictator of Rome, and restore the republic. Marc Antony with Octavius, adopted son of Julius Caesar, force the Republicans to leave Rome and defeat their army in the battle at Philippi; Cassius and Brutus, in order not to fall into the hands of

their adversaries, commit suicide one after the other; the Roman Republic eventually turns into an autocratic dictatorship.

All the events and characters of the play, with the exception of Lucius, Brutus's attendant, and some trivial details, are faithfully borrowed from Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, translated from Greek into English by Sir Thomas North in 1579. Shakespeare did nothing but dramatize them, and intertwined them so beautifully that he created one of the most solid theatrical works in the world and synthesized this period of Roman history so masterfully that his brief play *Julius Caesar* is worth more than a dozen volumes on the topic by specialized historians.

Julius Caesar's characterization by Shakespeare has generally been criticized for not being faithful to the historical events, but at this point we have no reason to blame the greatest English playwright. It is true that the dictator of Rome was not an empty talkative braggart but, according to Plutarch's testimony, he seems to have become one in his late years as Shakespeare depicts him for us.

John Dover Wilson writes that "the play's theme is a single one, Liberty versus Tyranny" (1949, p.xxv). So, if we take this statement for granted, the question that arises is: why does this play, which is the hymn sung in praise of revolutionary liberators, bear the name of a tyrant? Critics have provided long and detailed explanations for this and since this issue is not the object of this paper we will not dwell on them. It is rather plausible that Shakespeare, as a practical Anglo-Saxon businessman, chose this title because it stood out more for advertising; on the other hand, living in the autocratic period of Elizabeth I and James I, he used this title not to appear as he was taking the side of the Republican liberators against a future king; and perhaps for this reason he observed the historical facts faithfully - which he actually did not do with his history plays so that, if the monarchists and absolutists accused him, he would blame Plutarch for that. Renowned writers before and after Shakespeare have resorted to such tricks, but no one has combined the work in such a subtle diplomatic way as to confuse not only the audience/readers of his time, but also those of modern times.

2. *Julius Caesar* as a political play, a problem play and a tragedy of moral choice

Another issue of concern for us is why Shakespeare wrote this tragedy at all, especially at this particular time of English history. In order to answer this question we will refer to the view that this play falls under the generic heading of the "political play", although many critics have denied that *Julius Caesar* has political implications, for example both H. J. C. Grierson (1948, pp. 91-95) and Hazleton Spencer (1940, p. 229) have argued that Shakespeare was not at all interested in political issues represented by the death of *Julius Caesar*, but only in character, and that the Bard remained detached from political concerns. A further radical view regarding this issue was elaborated by renowned critic Ernest Schanzer, according to whom William Shakespeare was intentionally ambiguous in portraying *Julius Caesar*, playing upon

his audience's divided attitudes towards Caesar and the rightness of his assassination for pure dramatic purposes, creating in this way a sort of "problem play" like *Measure for Measure*. (1955, pp.297-308)

However, modern scholarship acknowledges the fact that Shakespeare was thoroughly concerned with political problems of his age, and certainly his plays reflected that concern. Thus, James Emerson Phillips argues that *Julius Caesar* is a vindication of absolute monarchy, represented by Caesar, against the claims of a constitutional system represented by Brutus, with Rome as the actual hero of the play (1940, pp. 172-188); whereas Virgil K. Whitaker holds that the play is a defense of absolutism (1953, pp.224-250). Whitaker also considers *Julius Caesar* a tragedy of moral choice, and Brutus, its protagonist, the tragic hero. The same view is further elaborated by Ernest Schanzer when he states that the main issue in the play, represented in the tragedy by Brutus's dilemma is a moral one, "consisting in the conflicting claims of the realm of personal relations and that of politics." (1963, p. 68)

We think that both views: the one referring to *Julius Caesar* as a political play and the other that views it as a problem play, focusing on Brutus's tragedy as he is torn by a moral dilemma are correct. It was natural for Shakespeare to resort to the history of the assassination of *Julius Caesar*, a would-be dictator and tyrant by Brutus and other supporters of the Roman Republic at a time when Renaissance England's main political concern was the succession issue. The aging and childless Queen Elizabeth I, had not named her successor yet, and England was anxious about the consequences of such an omission- the civil war being the worst and most dreadful of them. So Shakespeare's timing of writing *Julius Caesar* at this particular perplexing time for England was perfect. On the other hand, the play is not only concerned with political issues such as absolutism, dictatorship, republicanism, liberty versus tyranny, etc., but first and foremost deals with how these public concerns interplay with personal ones, as reflected into Brutus's moral choice, his dilemma of joining the plot against Caesar and ultimately murdering him. And despite his doubts, his decision is firm: Caesar must be destroyed as Irving Ribner argues, not because he has been a tyrant but because he aspires to unlawful power, and such power must inevitably corrupt the most virtuous man and turn him to tyranny, (1957, p. 13) as it is shown in the

following lines while Brutus contemplates his reasons and resolution for having Julius Caesar murdered:

And, to speak truth of Caesar,
I have not known when his affections swayed
More than his reason. But 'tis a common proof
That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;
But, when he once attains the upmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend. So Caesar may.
Then, lest he may, prevent. And since the quarrel
Will bear no color for the thing he is,
Fashion it thus: that what he is, augmented,
Would run to these and these extremities. (II, i, 20-33)

3. Main features of characterization in Julius Caesar

After having referred to some modern critical interpretations of Julius Caesar, now let us turn to the major focus of this paper: characterization and its elements. Naturally, we will deal with the main axis of the play's characters: Caesar versus Brutus. In addition to focusing on the characterization features of Caesar and Brutus, we will refer to other major characters in the play as well, of considerable importance to its interpretation: Cassius, Brutus's co-conspirator and Marc Antony, Caesar's loyal friend.

Although the play is titled Julius Caesar, there is no doubt that Brutus is its protagonist as A. C. Bradley argues that "Caesar is in a sense the dominating figure in the story, but Brutus is the 'hero'." (1904, p.7) Also Anne Paolucci holds that Shakespeare's characterization of Brutus has "often puzzled readers and critics of Julius Caesar, but rarely has anyone challenged Brutus's role as the hero of the play." (1960, p. 329) Caesar-Brutus dichotomy unfolds even when it comes to the play's major theme. J. Dover Wilson is absolutely certain that the play was intended "as a bitter denunciation of the tyrant Caesar" (1949, p.xxx), while, on the contrary J. E. Phillips puts forward the idea that Julius Caesar is after all an exposé of Brutus and a resounding affirmation therefore, of the monarchical principle. (1940, pp. 172, 204)

Regardless of the contrasting views on the major concern of the play, critics, however, agree that Julius Caesar is a very ambivalent play, and it is precisely this ambivalence

that allows for such contradictory responses to it. Thus Derek Traversi thinks that both Caesar and the conspirators who oppose him are portrayed as ambivalent figures, (1963, p.12) while Adrien Bonjour is of the opinion that every character in Julius Caesar is marked by the confusion of good and evil. (1958, p. 3)

Ernest Schanzer on the other hand argues that the enigmatic characterization of Julius Caesar is of paramount importance to the play treated in a Pirandellian manner by Shakespeare, resisting any definite outline, making us wonder that "...perhaps there is no real Cesar, that he merely exists as a set of images in other men's minds and his own?" (1963, p. 32) It is exactly this ambivalent and ambiguous portrayal of characters by Shakespeare in Julius Caesar that has led Ernest Schanzer to regard the kaleidoscopic characterization as a dramatic strategy intrinsic to the problem play: Julius Caesar is portrayed in an ambiguous way to preserve the moral dilemma which is the play's concern.

Shakespeare's characterization of Brutus has likewise often puzzled readers and critics of Julius Caesar- however rarely has anyone challenged his role as the real hero of the play, so it is clear that Brutus is not the villain of the play. In his equivocal portrayal of Brutus, Shakespeare, in exploring Brutus's personality above all is exploring the character's ambivalence and actually Shakespeare's own reaction to his protagonist is both ambiguous and ambivalent. T. S. Dorsch tries to resolve this by saying that "A man who committed Brutus's crime could not be portrayed as a wholly sympathetic character, but Shakespeare shows him as blind, not evil. And finally he buries Brutus's crime in his virtues and ends the play with Antony's tribute..." (1955, p. xlv) Brutus's blindness, his failure to grasp the true reality is his real problem, what Coleridge refers to as a principle of Shakespearean characterization: "The character himself sees himself through the medium of his character, not exactly as he is." (1960, I, p.301)

Cassius, the shrewd politician and practical realist takes advantage of the so-called Brutus's problem- he misleads Brutus into believing everything he is told in order to persuade Brutus into joining the conspiracy against Caesar. However Cassius and Brutus are radically different, although brought together by a joint cause but for different reasons and ends. They represent two political schools, two systems quite different in terms of the method that must be followed to achieve liberty from tyranny successfully. They are completely in agreement that the main task, namely the overthrow of the tyrannical regime, must be carried out by any means, without mercy and without moral scruples. They agree immediately on that without questioning the issue at all. However, after taking the major step, which in this case is the murder of Caesar, Brutus and Cassius part ways.

Cassius thinks that one should go straight to the goal taking a shortcut, with as many friends and by any means, overlooking the details, without mercy and without moral scruples, to the end. All those who might replace the tyrant must be crushed, for it is better to commit some unnecessary murder than not to commit a murder necessary

for the common good, and therefore on this occasion to eliminate along with Caesar his close friend Marc Anthony too. Opponents should be discredited in the eyes of the people, the latter should be turned against the former with any type of propaganda, and therefore Marc Antony should not be allowed in any way to confuse the mind of common people with a word of praise for Julius Caesar. All the people that might serve for something like Cicero should be used, as many friends as possible are needed, even those won over by means of interest and bribery, because there is a risk they may side with your opponents unless you do it first. In short, to oppress tyrants, one must use the ways tyrants use to oppress the people and the defenders of their freedoms, as Marc Antony and Octavius do afterwards.

On the other hand, Brutus feels that, in order to achieve freedom successfully, one must take the safest path, with well-chosen friends and with generous means; that the people do not see the purpose, nor do they pay attention to decorum and rhetoric; they judge politicians by their friends, their tools and their work. Unnecessary bloodshed should not be instigated, because then the liberators will appear as butchers in the eyes of the people and, instead of admiration, they will attract dangerous antipathy, and this is why Brutus forbids the murder of Marc Antony and any other murder at all. The people must be enlightened to know their own good, they must be made enthusiastic about the cause of freedom, they must be inspired with faith in their liberators, and this goal is not achieved by lies and the unjust discreditation of opponents, and therefore he gives permission to Marc Antony to deliver his speech at Caesar's funeral on condition that he does not criticize those who killed Caesar. Good, loyal and disciplined friends are needed, they should be won over for the cause, for the general interest, since bad friends, recruited by means of special interests, money, bribes, desert sooner or later, once they see greater advantages elsewhere, jeopardize every step of the action and discredit the whole group in the eyes of the people.

Shakespeare depicts both systems with so much fairness, sympathy and objectivity, that it is impossible to say which of the two he prefers. Perhaps he believed that one or the other should be used, or rather an intermediate system, according to the occasion, need or people, but this is of course only a hypothesis. Either way, it can be generally said that both schools are practical and lead to success but, as history teaches us, the success of the Cassius's system, faster and easier from the very beginning, is uncertain and rarely survives afterwards, meanwhile the success of Brutus's system, slower and harder in the beginning, has solid foundations and rarely shakes or collapses afterwards.

This can be implied from this play, where we see that Cassius himself yields to Brutus's system and leadership. It can also be implied that Brutus's mistakes and shortcomings lead the Republicans to disaster, but to counterbalance this impression, Shakespeare provides us with some facts, which mainly brought about the disaster and for which neither Brutus nor his method are to blame. And in this Shakespeare

himself follows Plutarch's lead, who regards the failure to murder Marc Antony as the first mistake and granting him permission to deliver the speech at Caesar's funeral as Brutus's second mistake but also adding very rightly that all: fate, occasion and gods have turned against the Republicans.

Up to a point Brutus and Cassius are so much alike: they are both inspired by the sacred fire, by the ideal of freedom, by the love of their country, they both feel it their supreme duty to fight to the end for the common good of the people; both are practical and hard working people; both, as heroes of classical antiquity, are of the opinion that the good brave man should either live as a man or die as a man. They are both Roman by instinct, but they are different in terms of background.

Brutus is a disciple of the Stoic philosophical school, whose teachings are almost entirely in line with Roman traditions, but he departs from it when it comes to the matter of suicide, and, as an arrogant Roman, he prefers to kill himself rather than be crushed by the triumphant chariot of tyrants in the streets of Rome. Cassius, on the other hand, is a disciple of the philosophical school of the Epicureans, which preached skepticism and the joy of life, but in real life he does the opposite: he is a militant bigot of a political ideal, for which he sacrifices every joy of life; he loves neither music, nor games, nor merriment; gloomy and dry in appearance, he seldom laughs, but studies, observes, works, struggles, suffers and dies as a martyr for a cause he does not even believe in. From this point of view he is even more tragic than Brutus.

From the same point of view, Marc Antony is a bit more tragic than Cassius. When the latter is Epicurean only in theory, Antony is Epicurean and hedonistic in theory and in practice. He is so fond of games, pleasures and women that he is considered by his friend Caesar as well as by his opponent Brutus as a man completely incapable of any serious work. But Cassius is not fooled by him. Subsequent developments prove him completely right: Marc Antony, although rotten by vices, has a streak of manhood, which requires just an opportunity to emerge. Let's notice the transformation of this man.

When Brutus and Cassius are about to assassinate Caesar, one of his friends removes Marc Antony from the Senate and quietly takes him to a party. There they party with food and drink, with women and with songs and dances. In the course of the party, Marc Anthony learns the horrific news of his friend's murder. He sobers up, wakes up, transfigures. When he goes home he is a completely different man, a heroic figure that magically emerges from the remains of a drunkard. After contemplating the situation, he prepares a plan and puts it into action immediately: he will avenge his friend's blood, or he will die next to Caesar's corpse.

Neither Cassius nor Marc Antony have moral scruples and they both make use of every means to achieve the goal. Antony falls at the feet of the Republicans, behaves like a friend to them, gets permission from Brutus to bury Julius Caesar and deliver his funeral speech, accepts their conditions and then violates them all. With the corpse

of Julius Caesar as an ally, with the latter's toga pierced by daggers like a bloody flag in his hand, fearless when everyone is scared to death, he confuses the crowd by delivering his famous speech:

Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

The evil that men do lives after them;

The good is oft interrèd with their bones.

So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus

Hath told you Caesar was ambitious.

If it were so, it was a grievous fault,

And grievously hath Caesar answered it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest

(For Brutus is an honorable man;

So are they all, all honorable men),

Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral. (II.ii.82-93)

turning them against the Republicans and winning thus the whole war. Marc Antony from the table of pleasure goes to the funeral and from the funeral to the fight against the Republicans and then to the ultimate triumph. Thus, his Roman instinct, suddenly woken up, performs unexpected wonders and in complete contradiction to his upbringing and lifestyle.

Brutus and Cassius, twin brothers by instinct and by ideals, differ not only in terms of upbringing and system of action, but also character, temperament, and abilities. Brutus, born to be a commander, is a man of few words, of iron will, of steely nerves, patient in adversity, cold-blooded in danger, quick as lightning in action. He has disciplined his passions and knows how to control himself so completely that he does not show any external sign of what suffering and struggle takes place in his heart, as for example when he tries to hide the suicide of his beloved wife from his friends and when he restrains himself and does not weep over the corpse of the suicidal Cassius, in order not to despair his supporters prior to the final attack against Caesar's followers. Only indirectly does he let us know that there is a storm going on in his head and fire burning in his chest.

He has absolute faith in his ideal, in his system, in himself and he is so lucid, pure, uninterested, generous that not only his friends and people obey him with respect, but also his opponents are forced to acknowledge his sincerity and praise him after

his death, as a man in every sense of the word, as Marc Antony refers to him respectfully:

This was the noblest Roman of them all. (V, v, 74)

Cassius lacks Brutus's absolute faith, composure, patience, self-control, self-confidence, generosity and sweetness, but surpasses him in organizational propaganda and political skills, practical life experience and deep knowledge of people. Narrow-minded, fearing that the conspiracy has been discovered, if composed Brutus had not held his hand, he would have killed himself in the Senate before Caesar was murdered, and ultimately Cassius commits suicide at Philippi, because of a tragic misunderstanding, without waiting to learn what had actually happened. While Brutus is silent, endures under a tyrannical regime and waits for the favorable occasion, Cassius prefers death to submission, speaks up, works, wins over friends, prepares the next uprising, organizes the republican camp, and ambushes the tyrant on all sides. He hates tyrants with all his guts, he has no scruples, justice or mercy for them, he is ready to become twice as tyrannical as them in his methods until he crushes them and wipes them off from the face of the earth.

While both Brutus and Caesar are deceived by Marc Antony's fake appearances, Cassius recognizes in Antony's face the man who can claim the heads of all Republicans. Antony knows how to win people over. Studying people and their weaknesses, Cassius has become pessimistic, distrustful of the people whom he despises; he has lost hope, and has come to the conclusion that the new Romans should be inadvertently liberated, that they should be guided towards the path of progress. Cassius does not trust people, and they do not trust him either; people are afraid of him, his opponents are scared of him, his friends are suspicious of him. But just as Cassius knows others, he also knows himself: he knows very well what others think of him, he is aware of his own faults and the shortcomings of his system; he thinks he should be the one to lead this cause. And here lies the beauty of this idealist. For the sake of the cause, he sacrifices his personal ambition and, although he is the oldest soldier and the finest politician, although he has organized the Republicans, although he has doubts about Brutus's system, he acknowledges the latter as the leader, puts himself under Brutus's command and obeys him in all with the discipline of a Roman soldier. When he sees that Brutus's methods lead to disaster, he protests, gets angry, screams and sometimes gives the impression as if he is going to attack his friend: nothing like that. We learn how much Brutus valued this brave man, the terror of the tyrants, but softened for the companions of the ideal, when he says after Cassius's death:

The last of all the Romans, fare thee well. (V.iii.111)

Marc Antony, on the other hand, surpasses Cassius as a master of manipulation. Antony knows how to appeal to the mob's sense of justice when he is allowed by

Brutus to deliver his speech at Caesar's funeral. As every cunning and shrewd politician he knows how to use the exact words to achieve his ends:

For Brutus, as you know, was Caesar's angel.

Judge, O you gods, how dearly Caesar loved him! (III, ii, 193-4)

Brutus, so far has made a series of mistakes: has failed to lead the plot against Caesar to success; has rejected the oath; has refused to kill Marc Antony; has given permission to Marc Antony to deliver the funeral oration; but his greatest error of judgment, as Shakespeare views it, is his appeal to the rational side of the mob, while Marc Antony is aware of the irrationality of the mob and feels that the mob can be moved only by appealing to its emotions as he does through his famous speech.

4. Conclusion

So far we have concluded that Shakespeare has depicted both Julius Caesar and Brutus as the two great tragic heroes of his play: although Shakespeare is much intrigued by the latter and has made him the real protagonist of Julius Caesar. A final question we need to address is: If Brutus is not the villain of the play and Shakespeare has made this well-understood, then who? The answer is simple: the mob. From the very beginning of the play, Shakespeare makes it clear how irrational and fickle the mob is and he highlights that what the mob supports can never lead to any good, a theme which culminates when Marc Antony manipulates the mob as we discussed earlier.

As a final conclusion we can say that Julius Caesar is now almost unanimously (with a very few objections on the critics' side) read as a problem play which is marked by ethical, psychological and political ironies of a decidedly modern and painfully human kind. And here lies its appeal to 21st century readers and audiences- in addition to its dealing with universal themes of tyranny, liberty, ambition, virtue; in Julius Caesar Shakespeare created two exceptional tragic characters, each bringing about his own destruction and together subjecting Rome to chaos and civil disorder. Shakespeare admires and condemns both almost equally, but his final loyalty rests with Brutus because, being a Renaissance man, a lover of personal and political freedom, the Bard would always be against tyrants and oppressors of human rights, no matter how great men the latter used to be once.

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The Issue of Genre in Pekić's Early Opus

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Abstract

The paper presents the analysis of genre definition of Pekić's prose. Genre definition of the prose work *The time of miracles* is mainly analysed and explained, which theoreticians define differently, determining it as a chain, stories, but also as a novel. The analysis of the corpus, that is, the works *The time of miracles* and *New Jerusalem* is conducted through the prism of Bakhtin's theory on the novel, with a brief resistance of Lukacs' theory to Bakhtin's when it comes to the analysis of Pekić's prose. After the explanation of the characterisation of *The time of miracles* as a novel, we deal with chronotope, as genre definition, where the most common chronotopes that we encounter in Pekić's prose are indicated. The novelties that Pekić brings to Serbian literature are reflected in one complete novelistic image, a parallel world, documented by historical sources, the witness' stories, archeological sites. Generally speaking, the central point of his work is occupied by problematising man's position in the world in general – so, also in the past, present, but in the future as well. And precisely that and such his relation towards culture and existence – erudite, problematising, predictive, revealing – is “analogous to the correlations between chronotope within the work” (Bakhtin, 1989, p. 386).

Keywords: postmodernism, genre, novel, Bakhtin, Pekić

Introduction

Many theoreticians, such as Aristotle (*Poetics*), Tomashevsky (*The theory of literature*), Lukács (*The theory of the novel*), Bakhtin (*On the novel*) and Derrida (*The Law of Genre*) considered genre issues, thus the classification into lyric poetry, epic poetry and drama is well-established. Bearing in mind these three notions, it seems easy to define the genre of an individual work. However, with the advent of the novel, this task became somewhat more complex for literary theorists. It is no longer simple to decide which epithet could, in this context, possibly be attached to the title of a book, especially if it is epic and the novel. We had epics in the past, which Bakhtin sees

as rigid formations¹, in order to slowly create the environment for the formation of the novel and so that we would be standing today in the place where its form is not finished yet, at the place in time where there still is not an established pattern for writing novels. There is no pattern, no mold we could follow to be sure to write something we can call a novel. Notably, postmodernists use the openness of the novel in this aspect for various combinations of alphabet, lines, essays and many other forms. Some theoreticians think that the end of postmodernism is nearing as well, that is, that we are entering the period of post-postmodernism. It appears as post-postmodernism and a criticism of the creed that everything is acceptable in architecture and urban planning in architect Turner, who wrote about it in 1995, and then it appears as trans-postmodernism in Epstein in 1999 in a book on Russian postmodernism. One of our greatest literary theoreticians Alexander Flaker, who also reflected on this issue in an interview for "Politika" (2008), when he voiced his displeasure with the notion *postmodernism* in general, and emphasised his *ars combinatoria*, which postmodernism really is². „

The paper will analyse the statements of literary theoreticians about the opus of Borislav Pekić, more precisely, their views on the genre issue and definition of Pekić's opus. Next, the characteristics of postmodernism in Pekić's works will be analysed and specifically demonstrated in two works – *The Time of miracles* and *New Jerusalem*. Although the sottie *How to quiet a vampire* presents Flaker's *ars combinatoria*, we decided on *The Time of miracles* as the novel which some theoreticians believe to be the beginning of postmodernism in Serbian literature. *New Jerusalem* represents a collection of short stories with the biblical subtext and the criticism of history as a science, and so these two works can serve as research corpus, that is, sample works in which we can find necessary elements for analysis. We will also discuss the acceptance of Pekić's opus in Serbian and world literature. We will rely on the theory of Mikhail Bakhtin for the analysis of the characteristics of the novel.

1 "We talk about an epic as a definite real genre that reached us. We find it as already completely finished, even rigid and almost dead genre. Its perfection, persistence and absolute artistic non-naivete, speak about its long past, about it being as old as the genre. (...) Whatever its origin, the real epic that reached us is absolutely completed and perfect genre form, whose constitutive feature is the transposition of the depicted world to the absolute past of national beginnings and endings" (Bakhtin, 1989, p. 446–447).

2 "It is reduced to that, because it is the period when literature stopped inventing something, a new style, and started to combine old topics. I know that it is the substitute for what the others would call postmodernism. Quoting in general, the whole relation to tradition means taking from the tradition what you need, chewing it over and presenting it in combination with something else" (Politika, 2008, <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/63650/%D0%9F%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B3%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%98%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8-%D0%BC%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%B0%D0%BC>).

On the novel in Pekić and in general

Before starting the analysis, a short explanation for choosing precisely Bakhtin's theory of novel will be given. Lukacs' theory of the novel seems too rigid for the age of postmodernism and to a certain degree, it still strives to canonise and mold, while Bakhtin observes the novel as a literary form, which has not become rigid yet, and which carries in itself the change of both genres and literature itself. Indeed, Lukacs states that the novel, as a form, "presents an inconsistent balance" (Lukacs, 1990, p. 58), while claiming that it requires "even more strict and more infallible artistic norm than the norm of 'closed forms'" (Lukacs, 1990, p. 58), specifying tact and taste as the laws that the novel has to adhere to. We will allow ourselves the freedom here to remark how Lucas' laws cannot possibly be measurable, objectively analysed, and consequently, there can never be space for the term "norm". Another thing that could be held against Lucas' analysis today is his comparison of the novel with "mature masculinity" (Lukacs, 1990, p. 56) excluding or disregarding the female principle, female author and reader equally from the birth of the novel.

Further, when it comes to the connection, so to say, of the novel or the novelistic world to the past, the present and the future, Lukacs states that the novel demonstrates "the line that defines the problem and which is the only one important, touching everything that precedes that follows only in perspective reflection and referring to the problem" (1990, p. 65). We find that Bakhtin connects the novel more appropriately, to the past particularly, via his theory of multilingualism. When it comes to the analysis of the postmodern novel, this theory clarifies how and why it gained a new form, where it got its malleability and states that the novel is "pure malleability" (Bakhtin, 1989, p. 473), that it is "a genre which eternally searches, eternally explores itself and re-evaluates all its developed forms" (Bakhtin, 1989, p. 473).

New, and yet changed, type of novel that appears in postmodern literature, is characterised by intertextuality, that is, "plagiarism", where well-known topics or motifs are used in a different way, often with irony. And then, it is characterised by openness, so to speak, intentional incompleteness and the introduction of texts of different genres, such as letters, myths, documents and such like. Then there is citation, and scientism and erudition are very typical of Pekić, which also reflects on his works.

Speaking about the development of the novel ever since the ancient times (that is, creating the conditions for its formation), Bakhtin cites one feature which is thought to be typical of the postmodern novel in the contemporary literary thought. However, he claims that the novel "parodies other genres (just as genres), exposes conditionality of their forms and language, displaces some genres, and introduces others in its internal construction, by rethinking and reaccentuating them" (Bakhtin, 1989, p. 437). At that point, he is primarily thinking about occupying the place in genre classification, while in postmodernism, parody and the exposure of the genre

forms are placed at the very center of each individual work. Besides, he adds that “consistent parodying or travesty of the ruling and fashionable types of that genre, which long for stereotyping, run throughout the entire history of the novel” (Bakhtin, 1989, p. 438). We could conclude that the postmodern novel is becoming contemporary right at the moment when the novel as a genre is prevailing, when it is showing the tendencies to “settle down”, to establish its course, and it, as a carrier of changes, does not have any other way of solving problems except to parody itself, to pull itself out of potential stereotyping. Precisely Bakhtin states that the self-criticism of the novel is its incredible characteristic, especially as a genre in the making (Bakhtin, 1989, p. 438).

Pekić’s novels engage in specific problems (again, Bakhtin cites this characteristic) from the point of view of a modern man who more often experiences existential crisis, and ponders and envisages a new future, indicated to him by human development. Orwell predicted in his *1984*, the control of man’s freedom, creativity, opinion and thinking that we are bearing witness to. So, we, the people of the 21st century, are experiencing the predicted future offered to us by Orwell (in his works *1984* and *Animal farm*), and Ilić (*A million years after*), and therefore, it is necessary to think about the next stage, the way a man is to design his life further, and the way, if he will at all, prolong his existence. In “*Rabies*”, Pekić predicts the end of the titan; he predicts that man will manage to “trick” the nature, but only for a short while, because even in that titan, of superhuman strength, those constant base desires, which have been following us since the dawn of civilisation known to us, prevail: jealousy, desire and suicidal thirst for power, the lack of empathy towards others (Matthew, blinded by fear and the instinct for self-preservation, leaves his pregnant wife Andrea to the rabies, fighting to survive: “With wide opened eyes from which the spark of reason was vanishing, Andrea Laverick was left in that darkness, and he, he didn’t himself know how, opened the door of the passengers cabin and rolled down the metal steps into the wall of rain which awaited him” (Pekić, 2014, p. 428), selfish impulse for self-preservation and struggle to acquire material possessions in an obvious decay and dying of everything, even your closest ones. Pekić explains how and why the new race is necessary in the twenty-first chapter of *Rabies*, and how the genetically modified rabies virus developed in the first place, only for the two survivors from the airport, though infected with this rabies virus, which grants them superhuman strength, to fight each other for the survival and the prolongation of the species, at the end of the novel:

“Two rabies are fighting on the roof of Queen’s Building. As far as we can see from here, they are the only survivors” (Pekić, 2014, p. 606).

In the collection of short stories *New Jerusalem*, Pekić places the events in several key historic events of humankind, whereby the last story is placed in still distant year of 2999, where man goes around in circles, tormented by his ignorance, with the speculations about distant civilisations, parodying also our utopian image of Atlantis

as a supreme civilisation, one of the best that has ever existed, which is supported by little or no evidence. Such modern man comes across the remains of Gulag in 2999, and he imagines it romantically as our contemporary imagines Atlantis.

When we talk about Pekić and the definition of the novel, we need to reflect on the classification stated by Petar Pijanović. He distinguishes five types of Pekić's novels:

1. the novel without novel or: the destruction of the biblical myth
2. towards the novel, or: two antic motifs in a new key
3. an epistolary novel or: the criticism of a dogmatic mind
4. novel-saga, or: the destruction of myth in history and history in no-time
5. anti-utopian novel, or: the apocalyptic gospels of the witness of the future and future past (Pijanović, 1991, p. 23).

Even in such classification, postmodern characteristics such as questioning myths and the historical narrative in general, can be observed. The classification itself is preceded by Pijanović's genre analysis and he points out that Pekić himself did not call his works novels „I actually did not call any of my books a novel“ (Pekić, 1993, p. 63). All of this leads the researcher of his works into a dilemma how to characterise them, and on the other hand, it presents a certain novelty in Serbian literature itself.

When it comes to the characteristics of his works, they inevitably possess the **features of postmodernism**, which is obvious from the titles of his works. For example, *The Time of miracles*, *The Pilgrimage of Arsenije Njegovan* refer to biblical and religious subtext, and citation is rather quickly observed in the works. Next, the very title 1999 can be reminiscent of George Orwell, *Atlantis* and *The Golden fleece* on questioning myths and so on.

Pekić's works and postmodernism

The beginnings of postmodernism are connected to the sixties and seventies of the 20th century and we can find its influence in all types of art. The postmodern novel “openly demonstrates its propensity for illusory tricks of the manipulation of stereotypes and narrative, openness to multiple interpretations in its entire contradictoriness and inconsistency“ (Batler, 2012, p. 89), and there is the “desire to demonstrate its formal organisation to the reader“ (Batler, 2012, p. 89).

When it comes to Serbian literary criticism, the beginning of postmodernism is related to three names – Kiš, Pavić and Pekić. The authors disagree to some degree when it comes to the very beginning of Pekić's opus. Namely, while Radovan Vučković considers the first Pekić's novel *The Time of Miracles* to represent just the initial spark, beginning or indication of postmodernism, Alexander Jerkov already considers this novel to be a postmodern work. However, Vučković places Pekić's early works into Neo-avantgarde, thinking that only the novel *How to quiet a vampire* presents a different achievement, in which “he (puts) stylistic and technical features of the neo-

avantgarde novel into the function of a new approach to novel material and the erudite style based on embedding documents into the novel, with a great number of citations from all scientific, literary and historical domains“ (Vučković, 2013, p. 601). In his analysis *From modernism to postmodernism*, Jerkov already refers to Pekić's *The Time of miracles* as an indication of postmodernism in Serbian literature, also concluding that the *turning point* in the development, movement of literature is precisely the year 1965, that is, the year in which “three significant novels of a new generation of writers; *Garden, Ashes* by Danilo Kiš, *The Time of miracles* by Borislav Pekić and *My sister Elida* by Mirko Kovač“ (Jerkov, 1991, p. 100) were published.

We also encounter different views of genre definition of this work. Pekić himself, as has already been mentioned, does not consider this work, or any other work except *The Golden fleece* to be a novel, but he calls it a chronicle. Perhaps the reason for such definition is Pekić's intention for *The Time of miracles* to include two additional chapters – *The Time of words* and *The time of resurrection*, besides the two chapters of the novel in the form known to us. A. Tatarenko states that *New Jerusalem* is a chronicle which becomes a chronicle of “the supposed life of historically unprovable hero – a sort of hagiography, in which a miracle is missing“ (2008, p. 124), and after that says that the author “is creating a new historical reality – the reality of his work which defies both History and Legend“(2008, p. 124). In relation to *The Time of miracles*, the difference is that there is not a lack of miracles in the story of Jesus and Judas, and history and legend are equally balanced. In his thesis *Poetics of Borislav Pekić's novels*, Petar Pijanović cites this work as the novel without a novel. Referring to Tomashevsky, he states that *The Time of miracles* includes short stories, the stories the existence of which can be separated from the unity of the work, that is, the unity presented by the work can be destroyed. Indeed, the stories could be read separately, but the ambiguity would remain and the reader's wondering about what came before, and what came after.

In the segment *From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse*, Bakhtin states that the language we encounter in the novel “does not only represent but is itself the object of representing. Novelistic word is always self-critical“(1989, p. 400). As an old genre, it uses already old, established language, but it gives a new sense to that language, a new sense in its unity. From this perspective, we can say that we have another argument why we would characterise *The Time of miracles* as a novel instead a collection of short stories. Certainly, the short stories could be read individually and the reader with literary background, could only then (whether we want to admit it or not) to a certain degree understand the message Pekić is sending. Only in the presence of other short stories as well does the allusion to biblical discourse become quite clear. Bakhtin cites the example of *Don Quixote*, which contains sonnet forms, where these sonnets does not present a complete form, but the sonnet is “*the object of representing*; here the sonnet is *the hero of parody*“ (Bakhtin, 1989, p. 402). Therefore, a short story is not here a mere narrative form, but the object of representing.

Bakhtin further cites the example of “comic Odysseus” that is actually “a parodic travesty of his supreme epic-tragic figure” (1989, p. 404). Such character is mentioned within the satirical dramas, which Bakhtin says to have been equally canonised and laws as well as the texts which are parodied. Is Pekić digressing here? His Jesus, who we can in no way say to be comic, certainly has different characteristics than those presented in *The Bible*, however, it is not only he that is parodied, but also other characters, and situations, which will be discussed later. The character of Jesus is parodied by avoiding comic features and buffoonery. In Christianity, that is, *The Bible*, he is the personification of universal love, understanding, forgiveness, he is the healer, savior of souls, a devoted character who proudly and bravely advances, heading towards death without fear, without hesitation. Jesus in *The Time of miracles* is a stark contrast. He brings misery through his miracles. Eglā, who renounces her obedience to God, is anyway cured of leprosy, but understands very quickly that the cure is a curse because the healthy think that she is unclean on the inside, and the lepers, based on the obvious outer appearance, do not accept her. Eglā devastatingly realises that “the unclean and the clean (...) always use the same stones” (Pekić, 2012, p. 90). Next, he is more a puppet of Juda’s desire and endeavours to realise the Scripture than he is interested in performing the miracles himself: “Am I not He who is, and Jesus just what I wanted him to be?” (Pekić, 2012, p. 324) Lazarus calls him a “bastard” (Pekić, 2012, p. 250) because Jesus keeps resurrecting him, and Lazarus dies several times, not having found peace.

It is not parodying for the sake of entertainment, but for the purpose of destroying the myth, questioning history, overall belief of a civilisation, not Serbia, not Orthodoxy, not any individual faith. Pekić acts as a true erudite, a true global citizen, providing his novelistic world with a universal character.

The plot itself is biblically charged, and can be observed as an inverted image of Jesus’ life, the task in general which is closely related to the saving of the world and humankind in general, the topic which Pekić later deals with from other aspects as well (1999, *Rabies*). Namely, Jesus does perform miracles, makes people physically recover, the blind see again, the lepers recover, but all those acts, instead of making people happy, elevating them, giving them a positive change in life, make them angry, furious because their life, and so their habits, have radically changed, without their consent. For example, it shows the cripples earning money effortlessly by begging, while lying, counting on people’s sympathy. After a miraculous recovery, they are forced to work, which all leads to enormous discontent, escalating in betraying Jesus to the authorities. The Nazarene is not interested in his miracles, nor in fulfilling the Holy Scripture, he is unprepared and would rather avoid that duty. Opposite him, Judas Iscariot is standing, who is a symbol of betrayal in the Christian world, but here acquires a completely different role. He insists that every letter of the Holy Scripture be fulfilled, fearing that the world and the humankind will not be saved, nor their sins redeemed if even the smallest part is changed, missed. Taking Jesus’ mission on himself, but not without Jesus, because only he can really perform miracles, he thinks

of himself as a would-be God, son of God. With a heavy heart, he performs even the last letter which concerns his destiny – he hangs himself from a tree, calm and peaceful that Jesus is taken to Golgotha, where he will sacrifice his life for the universal sin of the humankind, never finding out that Jesus managed to avoid his part of the Scripture by surviving and leaving the humankind without a chance of ever being saved from the sin.

What did Pekić want to achieve by this unexpected turn and generally presenting a mirror image of the Bible? As professor Vladošić states in one of his oral presentations on Pekić, evil inevitably exists, it is especially clear to a modern man, the man following the First and Second World War, which left him painfully wondering how to confront it and what to do, and where it originates at all. Christianity provides the answer that God is omnipresent, that He is love. But, why is there hatred and that evil in His world? Pekić here offers the rethinking of history, legend, destroying the myth which has deceived the humankind for centuries. What if Jesus is not what we imagine him to be and how he is represented? What if the world is not originally redeemed from sin? Instead of salvation, man continues to fight with and against the evil which inevitably exists in the world it happened to be in.

We will now reflect on the gothic chronicle (Pekić's term) *New Jerusalem* in more details. This work consists of five separate stories, which are connected by the idea of the incompleteness of history as a science, then the topic of death, five elements, each of which is assigned to a single story, and the idea of New Jerusalem, which is summarised in the last story, and which roughly represents the death of man's whole history, the death of a civilisation, the oblivion of everything that existed before the contemporary man of the year of 2999, and the evident failure in interpreting the past in a way characteristic of man. *New Jerusalem* outlines non-analyticity and non-criticality of a contemporary man which threatens to continue further, condemning thus a man to constantly go round in circles, in search of his past, his identity.

Two motifs figure in each story, and those are the motif of the flute and the motif of the spindle. They indirectly lead to the fundamental, main motif – the motive of man's death (perhaps even the death of history, but not narration) and thus hold the thread that links these five stories. According to the DoS¹, the sound of the flute is "heavenly music, the voice of an angel" (DoS, p. 222), while the spindle refers to eternal return. "The spindle spins with uniform movements and leads to the revolving of the cosmic whole" (DoS, p. 1068), it represents "a type of automatism in a planetary system" (DoS, p. 1068), and simultaneously links three time dimensions: the past, present and future, indicating the inevitability of fate. In the story, the spindle first appears in defense of the spinner Germaine, whose judgement was the first Popier ate. The same night, after that, he dreams of the iron spindle which is the symbol of guillotine, because he does not know what guillotine actually looks like. Iron is cold, dead,

1 Dictionary of Symbols, DoS is going to be used in the text.

belongs to the chthonic world, and in combination with the spindle, it certainly implies death. In the same dream, there is the flute: "From somewhere, instead of the drums, which accompanied all the executions with their rumbling noise, I heard soft, melodious sound of the flute. The tune was cheerful, and even daring, little suited the scene" (Pekić, 2014: 113), and we also encounter it at the very end of the story, at the moment they are taking him to the guillotine to execute him.

Could we call these stories novellas? We could certainly draw a parallel with Meyer. Meletinsky writes that he is "a poet of unresolved contradictions, and not on a social (as in Keller), but on a metaphysical level: between a man and society, life and death (...) " (1996, p. 296), then in Pekić: between man and history, between narration and history, between inner turmoils of the hero and the world around him. "Contradictions, as a rule, are insoluble, and the best escape for most of his heroes is death" (Meletinsky, 1996, p. 296), and we have a similar situation in Pekić: the craftsman from the first story died of plague after he had finished his life's work, but he did not deliver it to the patron, but kept it for himself, while he sent out a copy; in the second story, the death of others is the salvation for the accuser of witches; in the third, a man ends up on a guillotine after he woke his inner, till then unknown (to himself as well) mechanism for evaluating whose life is worth saving, divinity in him would grow until he was equal with his enemy, and death saved him from the depth of hunger and the thirst for power; in the fourth, one of the actors of the story commits surreal suicide, fighting his own demons of conscience, and the fifth – the fifth is a death of a civilisation, its historical meaninglessness and the elevation of the residents of Gulag to the perfect and incomparable, just civilisation. When it comes to characters, they are not described in detail, which often makes a character itself elusive, and if we want to describe it, we will not succeed, only the outline is given. However, on the basis of actions, inner dialogues, the outlines of characters indeed, gain a full form. The action is initiated out of their characters. For example, in the story, *The imprint of a heart on the wall*, Blacksmith begins his story with a description of accidental identification of a witch from the neighborhood, so the reader is thinking that the gift is simply given to the child or that the child's imagination or fear directed his finger towards the neighbor's window. Further in the story, he seems righteous, sometimes vain, but humble. "Duty, if it existed, was, towards my gift, divine, so, not mine, human" (Pekić, 2014, p. 85) Only close to the end do we find out where all the courage, resolve, commitment to witch hunt come from. It is somewhere first implied: "Drawing blood would do little good. I was supposed to die. And nobody knew that" (Pekić, 2014, p. 88), and only at the very end of the confession do we discover the true nature of the boy's clairvoyance. He identified those equal to him. "And so far I have flown without any fuel. Just on a broom" (Pekić, 2014, p. 94).

Chronotope as a genre definition

Bakhtin thinks that in order to define genre features, time and space are of crucial importance, that is, what he calls by one name, chronotope. "The features of time are

revealed in space, and space is created and measured by time. Artistic chronotope is characterised by that intersecting of sequences and fusing features“ (Bakhtin, 1989, p. 194).

How does Pekić build his novelistic world? To him, it is important to place the plot at a certain historical point, and so we often find years in his works, which specify when the narration takes place. For example, every story in *New Jerusalem* is linked to a precisely determined year, hence the title of the novel *1999*. If there is not a year, there is a certain time period which thickens to the biggest possible boundaries, as well as the place of the event (a ditch in *Miracle in Jabneel*, the apartment of Arsenije Njegovan, the airport in *Rabies*, the cramped workspace of Popier). A man is squeezed into a corner, a micro-image of society is given and in general, a psychological idea of different characters. Although pushed like that, the actors are sent on the road, which further moves the plot. It is not usually a long road, but getting out of one's safe space – Arsenije Njegovan leaves his apartment only to encounter unpleasant events again, which originally trapped him in the apartment, then Popier leaves his workspace to see a guillotine, where he later dies, Jesus the Nazarene goes from place to place so that the Holy Scripture starts happening, that is, realising.

One of evident features of Pekić's narration is death, and with regard to that, accentuated physicality, that is, materiality. We often come across descriptions of torture, then inner fight that is manifested in physical characteristics, as with Popier (*New Jerusalem, The man who ate death*). “He had a small, thin body that did not release water. It did not release it, although, at times, it seemed to him that he is made of it. That, except water, he does not have anything else within himself“ (Pekić, 2011, p. 111). He originally retains water in himself, he does not sweat with fear nor pressure, only to start sweating profusely and urinate occasionally after the first paper meal, which leads him to the act of mercy, that is, concealing judgement. Later, simultaneously with the intensified counter-revolutionary activism, the water which shoots out of his body also intensifies. “He is sweating, alas, more than if he were wearing a coat in the heat. He keeps going to the toilet. He felt the water in himself before, but he never thought there was so much of it“ (Pekić, 2011, p. 115). Souls need water to live, and in Popier it stagnates, there is no movement, it keeps him alive. At the moment it leaves his body (again the chronotope of the road, but the road of water through the body), and which matches his actions of saving people from the guillotine, it can quite clearly represent the soul cleansing, by purifying, expelling dirty, unclean waters from the organism. Namely, the only water mentioned is his sweat and urine, which is considered unclean.

In *The Time of miracles*, physical defects, diseases are depicted. In the story about Eglá, the torture that she endures willingly is described in detail, because it is the torture of soul, the struggle between love towards two men, the leper and non-leper, hatred towards any god and her punishment she believes to be undeserved. Rolling down the border between two cities, two worlds, the clean and the unclean, she suffers for

the love she left behind and which she listens to every night. "(...) started scraping her limbs on the rock, scratching her face with her nails and whimpering like a young animal in its death throes, swallowing sand moist with tears, mucus, sweat and urine.(...)" (Pekić, 2012, p. 49). Here also, we encounter unclean bodily fluids, which can be a sign of Eglá's spiritual preparation for the healing that Jesus brings her. Everything is materialised here, in order to emphasise the distance from spirituality, from God. Pekić writes the noun *god* with the initial letter in lower case as a narrator, and when one of the actors mentions it, one of the "faithful" and believers, in capital initial letter, whereby the distance of the author from the dogmatic traps is additionally emphasised. By emphasising the individuals, physicality, Pekić demonstrates what kind of strength and influence, the ideology has on a man. A man in ideology, dogma is a marginal factor, replacable, his pain, his fate, his identity, freedom – everything disappears, and is subordinate to the greater good, in the name of God, in the name of Church, and in the name of the Holy Scripture or anything else:

"Because, what chance of success does the potential wish of a patient not to get better have if the act of healing has a higher purpose than health itself, if, at first instance, it illustrates a supernatural benefit, and only incidentally provides natural benefit to a chance beneficiary?" (Pekić, 2012, p. 145)

In what manner does Pekić introduce a reader to the world of *The Time of miracles*? The signs which give the impression of the time of distant history are the quotations from *The Bible*, then sentence constructions, aorist, and the dictionary we can find within it, which is especially evident in *The Annunciation* and *Miracle at Cana*, which also present the introduction to further events, but also introduce the main actors – Jesus the Nazarene and Judas Iscariot: And there was evening and there was morning./they said/ you cry out after me/ it already seemed as if he did not see it.

New Jerusalem opens with a quotation from the *Book of Revelation*, suggesting thus the orientation towards the future, towards the vision of a new, in humankind's hopes, better world. Pekić's vision, as well as in *The Time of miracles*, the fate of humankind is not anywhere close to the one preached by the official religion. We find the interconnection of the five stories of this gothic chronicle, their common mission not only in the initial quotation, which perhaps tells it in a more metaphorical manner, but also in the first story about Megalos Mastoras: "as if the entire past is to be encompassed by the same narrative breath or the forced unification of independent images is the act of the past itself, when it comes back, when it speaks about itself" (Pekić, 2014, p. 11). Wondering why Pekić describes precisely these, seemingly insignificant events from the past, we have to bear in mind what he implies by history and narration. There is certain synonymy which is used when it comes to the terms history and storytelling, with the latter often considered a croatism. What do these two terms signify in Pekić? In short, it could be said that storytelling is a history story, and *history* is the story of a bloodhound, that is, historiographer, just like the one in *New Jerusalem*. History belongs to the ruling classes and their interests, narration

belongs to people. "Big dates of history tend to block insignificant dates, although the lives of the people, and sometimes that history as well, may depend on them, those insignificant events" (Pekić, 2014, p. 14). Such Pekić's vision of the future does not promise, it forces to reconsider both the world, and man, starting with one's inner being. The first three stories are told by the narrator, referring to various sources such as legends, lost, old manuscripts, while in the last two stories, the narrator is also a hero of the narration. In the first three, Pekić salvages the sources from the past and oblivion, placing in front of the reader a man, a representative of a certain time, which is much more than withered notes of history books. In the fourth, two main actors belong to the present, they are living witnesses to the past, which warns them by the flute music and the appearance of the spindle. The author's friend is haunted by the "golden" high school days, when he did not show solidarity with his friends. Besides, this story is a middle, a border, a connection between the past and present, before Pekić reflects on the past from the future perspective: "In that wondrous moment of spiritual entropy, in which, on the other side of the window, our only barrier, history was taking place, the two of us, two grown children, were sitting petrified, dead, killed before it could occur to anyone at all that we were living" (Pekić, 2014, p. 174). The main feature of the *The fire of New Jerusalem* is an unknown, a great distance in time in relation to the archeological site and the discoverer, where Pekić outlines the way in which also a man of today reveals history, with the help of speculations, associations originating from the sources and his meager knowledge, creating great misconceptions.

Chronotope is the materialization of time. What happens when two historically distant times cross? Pekić approaches biblical time, mythical events from the position of a contemporary man, equipped with knowledge, but also with a possibility to observe differently, more objectively the events which happened or are believed to have happened. He parodies bible stories in order to demythologise one of the oldest dogmas and figures to indicate the possibility that a contemporary man has a mistaken perception of history, that he is blinded by dogmas not allowing himself one bit of doubt about what was written a long time ago, which happened a long time ago. Pekić reduces myth to everyday life ("And there was Joshua ben Joseph, Jesus the Nazarene, Savior of the world. Who knows which day, every day" (Pekić, 2012, p. 14)), and thus humanises, exposes exalted personalities, historically distant to us, for example, by saying the following words to Nathaniel about Jesus and the apostles: "if we had nothing better to do than yawn and prepare ourselves for the heavenly kingdom by exercising our jaws" (Pekić, 2012, p. 24). Pekić represents them as a group of idle, poor men who are waiting for the Scripture to happen, and in that waiting, they do not give the impression of contrite, spiritual individuals, but people with sins and doubts. Each story takes place in a different place, whereby it is named, which actually establishes the chronotope of the road, which enables intersecting, Bakhtin emphasises "at one time and space point of space and time path of different people, representatives of all classes, conditions, nationalities, ages" (Bahtin, 1989, p.

373). Each movement leads to the culmination of the novel (one more reason for the opinion that this work is nevertheless a novel), that is, a glorious misunderstanding between the heaven and earth, as Pekić states at the end (Pekić, 2012, p. 402). By reflecting on the very beginning of the novel, where the author cites a somewhat changed quotation from the Ecclesiastes, that is, The Old Testament, it becomes clear that a man returns to himself, and that he is on his own because “what has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun”.

When it comes to *New Jerusalem*, we could say that we have a sort of the chronotope of meeting. Every actor in five stories has a profound, spiritual meeting with himself, where he can analyse himself in the past and himself at the moment he is in and that provides him with the possibility of self-knowledge unattained up till then, looking into the sheer network of one's own thoughts, feelings, intentions and readiness to act, and which is most clearly emphasized in the story *The Fiddler from the Golden Time*, because the motive of a double is introduced. It is a mirror in which a man directly meets the past and after confronting himself, he disappears: “Nothing pointed to him being dead, or alive. He disappeared just as perfectly as a hunted indian warrior disappears(...)” (Pekić, 2014, p. 176).

Likewise, for example, Kir Angelos realises how much art is important for his life, in which he is helped by the appearance of the Stygian man, the customer he was supposed to make the best chair in the world. “It was not about the stranger's conscience, but his own. (...) Art was above them both. And needs, and rights. Above all” (Pekić, 2014, p. 46).

What pervades the works analysed here is one important element, each time covered in different disguise, and that is death. Death is uncertain in *The Time of miracles*, death is the sacred bringer of change, through his death Judas paves the way for the realisation of the Scripture, Christ prevents that same Scripture by avoiding his death and changes the whole destiny of humankind. On the road to the realisation of the Scripture, death is lurking: Lazarus, who has to die in order to be resurrected, but that dying is turned into a parody in order to emphasise the blindness by faith and ideology, then physical withering of prostitutes, which are spiritually untouched, identical, but physically transformed into virgins. In *New Jerusalem* death is, as has already been mentioned, the way out of the situation in which heroes are placed, but not just any way out. Deadly previous spiritual transformation or spiritual self-awareness, pointing the finger at the little man, who nevertheless, no matter how worthless he seems to history is important for its course. Next, in *The fire of New Jerusalem* we have the death of history and its rebirth, the death of civilisation and the birth of interpreter, bloodhound. Death is the only thing that is certain and sure.

Conclusion

The novelties that Pekić brings to Serbian literature primarily reflect in one complete novelistic image, one almost parallel world, which is entirely his creation,

documented by historical sources, the witnesses' stories, archeological sites. Pekić, like an objective observer, walks through history, from the Old Testament to the future, the year of 2999, when a man from the future believes to have discovered New Jerusalem, which is a perfectly created allusion to all the mistakes men make in dealing with history. That world represents harsh criticism for the man of today about quite open acceptance of everything given to him on a historical plate, unwilling to investigate, ask, analyse, staying in one's own safe haven, forgetting that death is inevitable and that in it, we are all equal.

In this analysis, the largest part is dedicated to *The Time of miracles* as a work which is not often defined as a novel, but, for example, a chain¹ or a collection of short stories, which we have already rebutted through numerous examples. A novel of gradational course, moves from the summarised Old Testament to Jesus' high treason of mankind, and Jesus himself, even if he does not figure in each story individually as a central figure, constitutes their unavoidable foundation, making those stories closely connected through sense. It could be said that the miracles play the main role, just as in the novel *Rabies* that function is assumed by the illness itself.

Generally speaking, the central point of his work is occupied by problematising man's position in the world in general – so, also in the past, present, but in the future as well. And precisely that and such his relation towards culture and existence – erudite, problematising, predictive, revealing, destructive towards myths and dogmas, inquisitive – is “analogous to the correlations between chronotope within the work“ (Bakhtin, 1989, p. 386).

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Methodological Approach to the Literary Character

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Abstract

The literary character is a structural and semantic element of the literary work as a whole. Depending on the perspective from which it is observed, the predominant spiritual and scientific basis and the genre in which it appears, the literary character is further referred to as a hero, personality, figure, agent or actor. It is an instance of a literary text and one of the structural elements of a literary work, but also an independent system. The terms “personality” and “character” are often equated, but at the same time there are differences in the context of their use. In this sense, character is usually regarded as a “broader concept”, whilst personality is attributed to people when a certain individuality and relative stability with respect to changes is assumed. The vagueness of the term personality is also due to the fact that it is generally used in everyday speech as a positive or negative trait of an individual in the ethical and psychological sense and a description of their psychological characteristics, particularly in relation to attitudes, emotional relationships and motivation. It is precisely this usage of the term personality in everyday speech that makes it closer and more relevant to students in teaching literature. Therefore, personality as a structural component of a literary work is oftentimes given as the starting point for the interpretation of a literary work in teaching literature. Nevertheless, in the traditional personality analysis in literary works, this vagueness of the concept of personality is often reduced to an evaluation of their ethical attitudes, i.e. attention is paid to whether the personality is positive or negative. In this way, one loses sight of the fictionality of the literary personality as a phenomenon that exists exclusively in a literary work, which is the only one “giving” it ethical attributes and psychological characteristics. In contrast to traditional literary analysis, the character analysis in recent literary science frequently focuses on the characterization process, which has also had a rather positive effect on the methodological approach to the literary character in teaching literature.

Keywords: literature methodology, teaching literature, literary character, characterization, interpretation

1. Introduction

The literary character as an independent system consists of content-related elements that are connected with each other and directly built into ethical, sociological, biological, historical, psychological or other characterizations, while the indirect characterization process of the literary character is realized through formal elements such as narrative structure, plot, description, etc. In characterizing the literary character, all components of the structure of a literary work are included, while at the same time it is considered both as an independent part of the artistic whole and as an integral part of the whole.

Exploring the motivational system underlying the whole activity of the character makes it possible to understand and grasp the character, which is also conditioned by the interpreter's point of view. When characterizing or interpreting a literary character, however, it is impossible to separate the literary character from the other elements of the literary work in its entirety, since all these parts appear in the characterization of the character, but the literary character should be explored simultaneously, as an independent part of the whole and as a part integrated into the whole and determined by other parts of the literary work. The result would be the central experience of the literary character as an aesthetically organized structure whose autonomy is determined by the entirety of the literary work.

The literary character is frequently imposed in school interpretation as the most receptive structural element of a literary work. The choice of the literary character can also serve as a motivational tool to further the pupils' or students' interest in exploring the role of the character in a literary work, but also theoretical questions about the general role and significance of the literary character in literary science. Specifically, the literary character is structured depending on the narrative form; however, regardless of whether it is a fable, fairy tale, novella, novel or another narrative form, the literary character as the one who carries the plot and exhibits the personality traits, that is, the embodiment of an inner, conditionally autonomous world artistically formed according to real life and brought through fiction, is always observed both as an independent part and as part of a whole.

Nevertheless, being that the literary character, as a multi-layered creation composed of several elements, is one of the central literary and structural layers of a narrative work, i.e. the most important element of a work of art in understanding the ethical, aesthetic, ideological and thematic and other qualities of the work, it is not surprising that many foreign and domestic theorists have studied the theory and typology of the literary character. Therefore the paper relies on theoreticians whose research, with their diverse approaches, has contributed to the typology of literary character theories and the understanding of the various processes of characterization. Given that school interpretation is often based on scientific interpretation, these literary and scientific contributions have had a great influence on methodological approaches to the literary character.

2. On the Literary Character

The attitude towards the literary character changed in proportion to the attitude of society towards the individual. The old criticism or rhetoric, according to Vlatko Pavletić, “distinguishes in terms of characters between the following figures and genres: portrait, formula, allegory, personification, description of customs” (2009: 34), whereas, for instance, in the identification and semantic classification of characters Hamon aims to both combine “*quantitative*” (frequency of notes on the character explicitly stated in the text) and “*qualitative*” criteria thus pointing out that the following should always be asked:

“[...] is the information on the *being* of the characters given to us by the characters themselves or did we learn it indirectly through the comments of other characters (or the author himself/herself), or is it implicit information which we can obtain after looking at what the character is *doing*. Every analysis of a novel must, sooner or later, distinguish between what the character is and what it does, between *being* and *doing*, *qualification* and *function* [...] or between *narrative* and *descriptive expression*.” (2000: 446)

Some literature theoreticians like Milvoj Solar will emphasize that the terms “personality” and “character” are often equated, but at the same time there are differences in the context of their use. In this sense, character is usually regarded as a “broader concept”, whilst personality is attributed to people when the following is assumed:

“certain individuality (characters in a fairy tale, for example, are distinct types, but cannot be understood as elaborate characters) and relative stability with respect to changes (if the character changes radically in each new situation and always ‘plays certain parts’ – as is the case in some modernist works – we talk about character destruction)” (2011: 236).

According to Solar, the vagueness of the term personality is mostly reflected in the traditional character analysis in literary works, often reduced to an evaluation of their ethical attitudes, that is, paying attention to whether the personality is positive or negative while losing sight of the fictionality of the literary personality as a phenomenon that exists exclusively in a literary work, which is the only one “giving” it ethical attributes and psychological characteristics. In contrast to traditional literary analysis, more recent literary science often focuses on the process of characterization in character analysis (2011: 236).

According to the semiotic approach as one of the more recent approaches to the literary character and its place and role in a literary work developed by Phillippe Hamon in his work titled *Towards a Semiotic Model of Character* (2000: 446), from the aspect of semiology, the character in the text is regarded as a sign and is given a signifier i.e. name by which it is recognized. However, this “marking” of the character is neither constant nor predetermined, but the character is perceived as a

construction which is, with the collaboration of context and the reader, gradually realized and materialized through reading.

The signs addressed by semiotics must be recognized, and in order for semiotics to address signs, they must be “embedded in the expression and understood based on at least partial knowledge of the metalanguage in which they function by producing meanings and impressions and generating attitudes” (2009: 34). According to this understanding, in dealing with literary characters, semioticians will focus on the functionality of the actantial level of the story, while semanticists will reflect on the implied motivational system of literary characters without going into ideological, political, sociological or psychological or other dimensions of literary characters. When dealing with the literary character and addressing the importance of the character in prose, Arnold Bennett gives it a special significance by pointing out that good prose is based on „[...] character-creating and nothing else” (2000: 431).

Georges Polti noted the „doing” of a literary character as an important determinant of the character itself and emphasized the significance of the relationships between characters where the liveliness and intensity as well as the emotional aspect of a literary character come into play. On the other hand, Greimas defined the actantial relationships according to their functions in the plot and their interrelationships (*subject/object*). Shklovsky reduced the character relationships to the language of mathematics (*A kisses B*), which Barthes, like most theoreticians, will generally avoid since in this „mathematical” way the character becomes a constant and such an understanding of the literary character would interfere with the very essence of the literary work and the possibility of its always different reception. When addressing the issue of the literary character Beremond, inter alia, points to two modeled characters: *the recipient* and *the initiator* without which there is almost no action and they never actually appear in a pure form when it comes to novels with a more developed plot. Lidiya Ginzburg distinguishes between the „literary role” of the character and the “literary personality” attributing one-dimensionality and one-sidedness to the „literary role” and multidimensionality and liveliness to the “literary personality”, while Foster divides characters into relief and non-relief ones. (according to Pavletić 2009: 28-147)

Despite the fact that, in addition to the aforementioned theoreticians, many others, such as Goodman, Huxley, Tinjanov, Markiewicz, etc., have dealt with the issue of the literary character, whether they developed typologies of the literary character, theoretically explained it or touched upon it in their literary studies, it can be concluded that there is no actant model that could be universally applied to all literary works, which would also be contrary to the nature of the literary work itself and, as already mentioned, its always different reception.

As regards the Croatian literary theory scene, which is concerned with the theory of the literary character, i.e. with general questions on this topic, the literary science

contributions of Milivoj Solar, Gajo Peleš, Vlatko Pavletić and Zvonimir Diklić stand out, whose theoretical findings, inter alia, are used in this paper.

Touching upon the theoretical essence of the literary character in a chapter of his book titled *Ideja i priča*, where he refers to the literary character as a personality, Milivoj Solar emphasizes two important aspects of each personality, which will be discussed later in this paper, and points out the complexity of this structural element of a literary work, which always carries a certain uniqueness and autonomy:

“Personality is not merely an element of a literary work like the plot or motif; personality is a way of designing the work as a whole which is, depending on the understanding of the nature of the character, always ‘interpreted’ or at least accepted as a work that potentially carries a certain ‘vision of a man’. Personality belongs to the world of the literary work **and only in a certain understanding of this world**¹ lies the possibility of it becoming the subject of an analytical process.” (2004: 174).

Gajo Peleš also sought to answer the theoretical question of the literary character, while achieving “precision and systemic consistency of terminology” (Užarević 1995: 32) in the chapter of his book “Značenjski sustav ili svijet pripovjednog teksta” titled “*Priča i značenje*” (cf. Peleš 1989: 241-277), which was included in his subsequently published book “*Tumačenje romana*” where it is titled “Semantička substruktura romana ili njegova ‘forma sadržaja’”, in which he defines and develops the literary character as a “psychemic, sociemic and ontemic narrative figure” while also elaborating semantic sets and the hierarchical order of narrative figures (cf. Peleš 1999: 218-283). Peleš’s previously published book “*Iščitavanje značenja*” is also relevant for exploring the literary character, in particular chapters “Lik i ličnost: ili o odnosu književne i izvanknjiževne zbilje” and “Konstrukcija lika (knez Miškin i Benjy)” (cf. Peleš 1982: 43-62).

Furthermore, in his essay “Znakovita životnost i životna znakovitost lica u književnosti” included in the book “*Umijećem do umjetnosti*”, Vlatko Pavletić presents an overview of actantial models and their creators and, inter alia, points to the conventions of context and the acquisition of meaning when it comes to literary heroes and argues that:

“within a certain culture, the novelist must take into account the value system if he wants a person to receive his works and acknowledge the hero status socially, contextually. **The author is not the only one determining who can be the hero, this is also defined by the conventions of the context in which the text acquires meaning.**² Therefore, in certain periods of the revolution, the crowd may also become the hero of the novel since the hero does not depend on a)

1 Pointed out by the author of this paper.

2 Pointed out by the author of this paper.

anthropomorphization (it can be an animal as well) and b) individualization.” (2009: 33)

Given that this paper, in addition to the literary approach to a literary character, discusses the literary character in the methodological context, i.e. school interpretation of the literary character, particular importance is given to the methodological aspect where Zvonimir Diklić, when addressing the literary and literary-methodical angle of the literary, theatre and film character emphasizes that:

“In relation to other elements of a literary and artistic creation – the character has a particularly prominent place, meaning, function and purpose in the structure of the work. The literary character is a multi-layered creation composed of several elements, one of the central literary and structural layers of a narrative work, its most important element, demonstrating ideological and thematic and other qualities of the work and the purpose of the literary work as a whole.” (1989: 9-10)

Despite the fact that this is a narrative context, for a methodological approach to the literary character it is useful to consider the arguments of Maša Grdešić indicating the attributes of a literary character, which can be used in the methodological context to modernize literary content and successfully motivate pupils for the school interpretation of a literary work, but also for reading literary works in general:

“The characters are, even more than events, the element of a narrative text that makes the readers compare it to reality in search for a connection between literary heroes and the people around them, their friends and neighbors, but also themselves. Characters provide us the possibility of identification, but also the refusal to identify with them, they cause feelings of sympathy and antipathy, love and hate, fun and boredom, and in some cases even infatuation. (Grdešić 2015: 61)

In conclusion, when it comes to the literary character as a subject of exploration or characterization, it is certainly necessary to note the relevant understanding in literary theory, which highlights two aspects of the literary character: **character analysis and technical process analysis**¹, as pointed out by Milivoj Solar:

“The first [...] aspect is the one where the character is understood exclusively within the story in the broadest sense of the word, that is, a certain concept of the world of the prose work in which the world of the novel is considered in analogy with the mythical world. The character appears as a function of the story, its psychological characteristics are being considered as relations between certain circumstances which condition and thereby reveal human destiny; the character is inexplicable outside the medium in which it appears, and characterization is only one of the modalities of developing a story. Therefore, to paraphrase Aristotle, there is no novel without a story understood in the broadest sense of the word, but the novel is possible even without distinct characters.

1 Pointed out by the author of this paper.

The second aspect is the one in which the character is being interpreted in such a way that the world of the novel is brought into a certain connection with the real world, which means that the character is, either way, “measured” in relation to real people. The character is then necessarily brought into a certain “imitation” relationship with certain types of man, it is aimed at being assessed as a representative of certain historically important human abilities or as a direct expression of highly specific philosophical, political, religious or scientific doctrines. This is when the character becomes a function of the idea; the novelist expresses himself through his characters, the characters speak of certain attitudes they represent or want to fight against. This means the characters by their very existence, the choice of characteristics that the author attributes to them and their way of acting in the story demonstrate how the novel should be understood or interpreted.

[...]

Both aspects, however, must retain the distinction between the analysis of the term character and the characterization analysis as a process of character presentation in literary works; the dominance of one aspect of the understanding of the novel’s artistic world determines both how the character will be roughly understood and how the analysis of the way of characterization will be approached in general.” (2004: 174-176)

3. On the Characterization of the Literary Character

Characterization can be defined as the totality of the literary processes involved in shaping a literary character. It is a complex process incorporating other elements of a literary work and influenced by various literary process, while, as argued by Solar: “everything in a work belongs to the characterization of the characters and nothing belongs only to the characterization of the characters” (2004: 169). However, regardless of the complexity and totality of influential characterization elements and processes, if we want to define a characters it is necessary, as noted by Peleš:

“[...] to carefully single out, with an almost descriptive procedure, its basic attributes. We get them by following the character through events, we determine it in each plot segment in which it has some function (direct or indirect). By describing a character, we seek to reconstruct its basic semantic components found in the text itself. The character is an artificial fact that we must not combine directly with other features outside the literary work until we finish reading them in the structure where they were found, and the same holds true for other thematic units of the text. This artificial fact has its own form, which is, due to its artificiality, a firmly harmonized value and therefore carries a particular semantic burden. To reiterate information theory, the more firm a system, an independent set of components, the more information it contains. It is therefore inappropriate not to read the character, as a unit of information, within the system where it gets its semantic value. Far-fetched psychologizing in analyzing a literary structure, in connection with the character, did

not entirely take into account the features of this sign of personality in the system from which it was taken. In particular, post-Romantic criticism, with its vague character–author, character–person (as an extra-literary fact) comparisons, attached to the sign of personality properties which did not take into account the interdependence of that unit in a particular thematic system. When pointing out the necessity to read the semantic properties of a character in the thematic system analysis, we do not have in mind the post-Romantic psychologizing of impressions but the structural and analytical process where we try to determine the components of the sign of personality and their function in the text.” (1982: 22).

The problematization of characterization processes and the motivational system of a literary character depends on different types of characterization or different interpretation approaches to the character, particularly because characterization depends on the inclusion of all elements of the literary work. When it comes to the question on all possible types of characterization, Solar answers by defining the basic possibilities of characterization:

“[...] if, in fact, we ask ourselves in what ways we can learn anything at all about a character in a literary work. It is basically the same as asking ourselves how we can learn anything at all about a man’s character, since the fictional character of a novel belongs to the fictional world of the novel in the same way that the real character belongs to the real world. To that end, there are following possibilities for learning about the character: we learn about people based on what they say, what they do and how they look.” (2004: 169-170)

As mentioned in the previous part, Zvonimir Diklić deals with the typology of characterization of a literary character in the methodological context, noting that the way of characterization depends on the way the author structures the literary character. Character structure includes the composition of the personality with regard to its internal characteristics, which are influenced by temperament, upbringing, environment, education, social circumstances and issues, and other forming conditions, followed by the logical and content-related and the literary and artistic component relevant for character formation and finally the philosophical, aesthetic and experiential and cognitive world of the reader in whose consciousness literary characters are materialized and become fictitious personalities, but also part of the collective consciousness, i.e., in the words of the philosopher Terence Parsons, “nonexistent objects”¹. Depending on how the author structured the character, Diklić

1 “Such objects do not have a reference, that is, a thing they refer to in real life, but they have limited meaning since the expressions used for naming them always refer to a certain set of described properties. Emma Bovary is an example of such an nonexistent object and narrative figure, e.g. a set of properties named with an expression. According to Parsons, there are three types of fictional objects: a) “incomplete”, e.g. “golden mountain”, which only has the property of “being a mountain”, but does not have the property of, for example, “being golden” and “being a mountain”, but does not have, for example, the property of being high; b) “nonexistent”, which can be complete, such as characters in a novel where all of their properties are given, or incomplete, such as the aforementioned “golden

distinguishes several types of characterization: ethical, psychological, sociological, philosophical, historical, physiological (biological), speech and linguostylistic characterization of the character and characterization of the character depending on narrative prose type. (2009: 83-99) As part of this typology of characterization, we can also talk about aesthetic and ideological characterizations, which dictate the content and nature of the literary work itself. Aesthetic characterization defines the beauty and harmony of literary character formation, i.e. the literary and artistic component of its construction, while the ideological approach presents the ideological attitudes of the character, explores his ideological views on the world, society, family, etc.

4. Characterization in the Methodological Context

The characterization of a character also depends on the narrative form or the type of narrative prose, so that in this sense there is a significant difference in the technique of shaping a literary character that appears in a fable or fairy tale in relation to the creative process of character formation in a modern novel, especially when it comes to the methodological context. Since the modern novel comes close to a philosophical discussion in its structure and approach to the subject in question, the characterization of the novel character is much more complex than the characterization of the character appearing in a simpler prose form. (Diklić 2009: 83-99)

The ethical characterization of the character or the ethical interpretation approach is the process through which the author shapes and determines the moral code, the social orientation of the character in relation to the individual and/or the community, the general relations between the characters, the character's relationship to the world and to life. Hence, the ethical characterization includes the social conditioning of the moral norms of a literary character and its component of morality. A textbook example of such a characterization is found in the novel *Kurlani*¹ by the Croatian author Mirko Božić, when the narrator describes one of the most notable male characters, Andrija Kurlan:

Andrija left the house clean and fair, wearing new clothes and shoes, with his face washed with the youthlike contours. His sunburned gnarled fists clenched with health and strength, the full wreath of veins tensed under the white shirt and loosened down

mountain"; c) "impossible", or objects such as "round square", which has contrary properties (in theory, they can be both "complete" or "incomplete"). (Peleš 1999: 302-303).

1 In his modernly structured prose work titled *Trilogija o Kurlanima*, which includes the novels *Kurlani Gornji i Donji (Kurlani, Upper and Lower)* (1952), *Neisplakani (Uncried)* (1955) and *Tijela i duhovi (Bodies and Spirits)* (1981), the Croatian author Mirko Božić (Sinj, 21 October

1919 – Zagreb, 1 August 1995) uses the unique Shtokavian dialect and his own specific neologisms vividly painting the souls of the characters with originality and expressivity and elevates them to the level of universal forces that comprise the general picture of the world and man. With his original linguistic expression, the writer creates a rich palette of characters and depicts a certain culture, time and space, and it is precisely these elements that form a unique linguistic and literary expression.

the karst as supple tendons, easy and bouncy, from stone to stone, as if preparing to fly. The lad felt ethereal, like his purebred young stallion, his gaze pierced through people with impudent clarity, faintly derisive and increasingly haughty, full of the freshness of a rested morning and himself; he pondered about his tensions and heroism that will be conveyed and used today in the tavern and in a song, in the circle dance, on the meadow, with the lads, with brothers and – perhaps – around the nightfall, in a secluded place, with some capricious and alluring girl. It preoccupied him the most. [...] I'd shatter the corn with her, the land would be worn-out flat underneath. He feels the coming downpour of lustful shivers boiling in his groins. But in it, he is unskillful, cloddish or unlucky. He then hurries his bouncy light pace, his body tilts on the slope, his arms spread a bit as if he is spreading his wings and swooping into the valley, quiveringly and swiftly like an eagle. (Božić 1989^a: 222)

Through the psychological characterization of the character or psychological approach, the author is uncovering conscious and subconscious states, as well as psychological processes of the literary character, motivation for character's actions and behaviors, together with his emotional, intellectual and volitional life. A special place within this characterization is given to the utilization of psychoanalysis in the formation of the character. The finest illustration of this characterization is found in the way Božić subtly insinuates the ambivalence of Andrija's character, whose duality grows deeper and becomes more complex during the trilogy novel.

Andrija frowned, he unwrapped the shroud and saw a small face, white and motionless. He felt something soft and powerless piercing his heart again. There is this ache within him that will cost him life yet cannot seem to get rid of it. May everything in him that is pitying and mild, everything feminine and forgiving be damned. Both dead and living children weaken him, thin his blood out, melt his heart. And that will certainly be the end of him. And how can such a weakling continue the line of Kurlan. This repels him from marriage too, although he has long been tortured by the carnal urges and a fearful trepidation that he will die before he gets to embosom a body of a woman. (Božić 1980: 281)

Božić's narrator announces consistently but unobtrusively the coming psychological states and spiritual changes of this character that will follow from novel to novel of the trilogy:

Andrija took the lifeless infant bundle, that with a tender sentiment melted his Kurlan temper, already softened with mother's blood, which he wished to vex and boil to the needed mountain measures of strengths and manliness, in vain. (Božić 1980: 281)

Andrija felt a monstrous uncoupling: the heart is alive but the soul is dead? (Božić 1989^b: 241)

With the sociological characterization of the character or sociological approach, the author forms the social determinants of the character (social origin, class, social adaptation, interpersonal relationships, influence of the social environment) and

sociological features such as material status, political beliefs, socio-ethical attitudes, class affiliation, etc. become evident. Andrija Kurlan, in the context of the novel in which he originates and exists, evidently belongs in the rural environment. The author, using the character's environmental affiliation through adjectives ("irascible and wild"), alludes to both relationships and the impact of the environment on the social (in)adequacy, while using them as a type of gradation for portraying the metamorphosis of the character after a personal and public catharsis:

Andrija Kurlan, "irascible and wild peasant", proved himself as a hero with his selfless struggle and revealed himself as a man with his peaceful sorrow (Božić 1989^b: 215).

With the historical characterization of the character or the historical approach, the author determines the historical conditionality of the character by materializing it in a given time and space in which it lives and acts. It reveals the social moment in which the character acts, that is, historical events related to the character. The author puts Andrija Kurlan, a commander during World War II, in a situation where he, as a commander and the person in charge, has to take responsibility and in the name of higher and moral good kill his own brother Krđa Kurlan to save many lives and brings Andrija's character to their father:

You heard his dry sob, his sorrowful soul. Your son seeks comfort, not a curse. Be kind to him! There's your life purpose! There's your fatherly purpose!

Son! There's war! ... People are dying in many ways. (Božić 1989^b: 300)

History will never do justice when describing the nameless agony of Kamešnica, the skeletal stone throne for generations to come. (Božić 1989^b: 280)

The philosophical characterization of the character or the philosophical approach deals with the analysis of the literary character's inner world, determines its life philosophy and relationship to the world, his mental and cognitive notions and ideological stances. The author indirectly exposes Andrija's inner world, while clearly expressing Andrija's relationship to the real world as well as his beliefs:

He is not just a champion – the doctor proclaims excitedly – He is a hero! A tragic hero – he exclaims– (...) Strmenduša! What a word! What symbolism! A soul on a slope, on the edge of an abyss. A fistful of soil of Strmenduša was surely called soul by the peasants, but it means something else for me now. Matan would now certainly say: "A fool speaks of the soul!" He came from this place but his roots don't go deep, he does not seek to understand the meaning of forefathers, even his thoughts about the future are depthless. Strmenduša? Stremenduša is a word from the ancient times. The battlefield of the souls! A mutual destiny! To be or not to be! Winners and losers. The living and the dead. (...) The ancient choir would praise Andrija to the skies and be proud of him. "You are great, Andrija! I gotta hand it to you! You saved our souls in Stremenduša. You prevented a bloodshed amongst brothers by shedding your own brother's blood. You are mighty, Andrija! You are a human and soldier's honor! (Božić 1989^b: 292-293)

Physiological (biological) characterization of the character (physiological and biological approach) refers to exploring the bio-physiological factors of the character relevant for its characterization, such as hereditary traits, traits evoked by a certain environment or acquired by the impact of the surroundings in which the personality is formed. In the *Kurlani* trilogy, Andrija's biological determinants have been stressed several times:

[...] *it has been told that he could race a horse for a short time.* (Božić 1989^b: 236)

Moreover, the character of Andrija Kurlan, as the whole Kurlan family, bears the motivation in the biological heritage which in its genetic structure contains the code for survival in the rocks, in difficult living conditions where everyday life is agony, surviving the struggles thanks to the boiling Kurlan blood, instinct and passions:

He saw himself in tomorrow's night, with Iglica inside a steaming bed. He will peel her like an orange and painfully bite her sweet pink breast. They will burn together in the naked sleeplessness for the first time, the abundance of passion will flow through his fingers like water, pour out of his hand like dough, blow on the tips of his ears like the wind because the passion has overflowed both of them like rain in two deep mountain canyons of life. (Božić 1989^a: 391)

The linguostylistic characterization or the linguostylistic approach determines and analyzes the characteristics of the speech of the narrator (author) and the hero, the linguistic features and function of language (lexical, semantic, phonetic, morphological, syntactic phenomena) and the author's stylistic techniques applied in the characterization, the logical, affective and impressive values of the character's speech, emphasizing the vividness, specificity and emotionality of author's style used to form the character and its expression. It is precisely this linguostylistic dimension of Božić's *Kurlani* novels that has been the most extensive research subject¹ given the author's unique language, his spirit, knowledge and imagination that he used to create and portray the distinct world of his characters whose speech is a device of the novel and does not exist anywhere beyond it. The intensity, vulgarity and passion of Andrija's speech are the best reflection of his inner strength, bravery and handsomeness. The author also manages to portray Andrija's loudness and toughness by a specific lexis.

Ya gonna shoot? – he screams while pulling the machine gun from the shoulder.

Who the fuck are ya! Who is on whose land? I am Andrija Kurlan! This is my land! You are on my land, you ass!

He firmly grabs...“Light of anger, bell of roar!”

Hooold! – the goat yells, again.

1 M. Selaković, V. Kalenić, N. Barac, Z. Bogdan, S. L. Udier et al.

Move the rifle, I'll blow your guts, you goddamn goat! Get your stinkin' ass up! Call my brother! Brotheer! Krđa, Krđaaa! Krđaaa!

All sweaty, fired up, in bare water, in a torch of anger – he takes it out on the doggie.

In the blue twilight and sleeping crown of the... his depths unfold with the hundred-eyed darkness.

Strmenduša! (Božić 1989^b: 256)

Depending on the nature and structure of a literary work or literary character, the analysis of a literary character usually combines two or more types of characterization, meaning that the qualitative element of interpretation is best achieved by an interdisciplinary approach which is always based on the aspect of literary theory and principally guided by literary theory. Thus, in the manner school interpretation in order to explore this remarkable male character of Božić's *Kurlani trilogy* in the sense of literary science as well as methodological sense, different interpretive approaches can be combined, in order to interpret Andrija's character in all its literary aesthetic richness. Methodological interpretation processes reveal that this is a literary character who is lonely, introverted, introspective, preoccupied with existential issues, but above all with the question of guilt. It offers an opportunity to analyze the hero's consciousness or his philosophical musings on life, i.e. in an essayistic way, reflects upon certain issues in the hero's interest. The characters thoughts, or better to say, profound painting of his emotional and mental world, are the center so the narration about the character is replaced by the internal monologue as the fundamental tool for the literary formation of the character. Andrija Kurlan is shaped through narration, dialogue, description and internal monologue, he is portrayed in the most intimate world of impressions, associations, memories, fantasies and thoughts.

5. The Literary Character in Methodological Context

The literary character is reflected in the minds of pupils and students as an important component of literary art, that is, an essential aesthetic phenomenon whose literary theory, stylistic, linguistic, psychological, literary history, philosophical, sociological and other determinants are clarified in the literature teaching process. A meticulous analysis of all layers of a literary character reveals the creative laws of its genesis and meaning. The methodological approach to the literary character enables the pupil to acquire the conceptual (terminological) tools with which to interpret the character and enter its structure.

Through school interpretation, a literary work is transferred to the teaching process, while the methodological approach to the literary character requires certain phases such as the perception of the literary work as a whole, the affective reaction to the literary work and the character, and the rational inclusion of the literary work as an esthetic fact in which the character is formed.

When dealing with the literary character in a methodological context in which the way of processing and the methodological approach to a literary character in literature teaching are considered, organized and realized, it is important to point out the role and importance of the school interpretation introducing the young reader or pupil to the process of conceiving a literary work as an aesthetic object.

School interpretation¹ has an educational purpose, addresses all the essential elements of a literary work and does not have to provide novelty, but given the possibility of its implementation in teaching literature at all levels of education from primary to higher education, it can lead to scientific interpretation, although it does not have to, and is always based on a template of scientific interpretation. Scientific interpretation is a procedure used for obtaining scientific knowledge, the value of which can be confirmed or denied by methodologically systematized literary discourse, and it can address an individual element of a literary work and presupposes novelty. Interpretation is the unique way of understanding and presenting a literary work, and sometimes it is difficult to distinguish it from literary theoretical analysis and criticism. Nonetheless, the analysis breaks down the literary work into its component parts in order for the work to be seen in its complexity, while criticism is the process aimed at assessing the quality of a literary work, and interpretation is the task of discovering the internal laws of the literary work structure. To interpret means to logically present the aesthetic essence of a literary work and to reveal its artistic distinctiveness and specificity, which is realized precisely in its uniqueness and inimitableness. Nonetheless, since a literary work as a work of art is “alive” and as such inexhaustible, it is not surprising that even today in literary science there is no absolute theory of interpretation with a generally

1 The first mention of school interpretation can be found in the handbook titled *Pristup književnom djelu* (Frangješ-Šicel-Rosandić), from 1962 and in our region, it was mostly and most comprehensively dealt with by Dragutin Rosandić. His manifesto of this new methodological concept that began to develop and developed in the late 1980s by the name “school interpretation” can be regarded as the text for the interpretation of this concept published in 1973 in the work titled *Metodičke osnove suvremene nastave hrvatskog ili srpskog jezika i književnosti*, and can also be found in the book *Metodika književnog odgoja i obrazovanja*. The final sentence of that manifesto states: “Interpretation affirms the active and creative process of teaching literature that teaches the student to experience, feel, imagine, observe, analyze, conclude, explore, or simply discover the meaning of a work of art.” (Banaš 2010: 428-440). Building upon Rosandić’s methodological contributions, Zvonimir Diklić deals, among others, with exploring the literary character in the methodological perspective, that is, building and forming the entire methodological system of character interpretation, referring to it as “the system of teaching (school) interpretation” (cf. Diklić 1989: 10). Reflecting on the differences and similarities between didactic and scientific knowledge, also addressing “school literature”, Ante Bežan indicates the similarities and differences in the cognitive process of scientific and school interpretation (cf. Bežan 1989, Bežan 2008). Following, inter alia, Rosandić’s assumptions, in his work titled “Znanstvena i seminarska interpretacija. Odnosi književne metodologije i visokoškolske didaktike književnosti”, Zvonko Kovačević develops the concept of seminar interpretation as an interpretation appropriate for teaching in higher education and comparing its correlates and correspondence with scientific interpretation (cf. Kovačević 2008: 251-262).

accepted logical terminology. Therefore, the interpretation of a literary text and thus the literary character is based on several different literary theories which enrich literary science with their diversity and complementarity of various theoretical and methodological perspectives and reveal literary works that have never been, nor by their nature can be, “fully” interpreted – which indirectly, through school interpretation, affects methodological approaches to the literary character and literary work in teaching literature.

One of the starting points for the interpretation of a literary character, but also for interpretation in general, is the pupil’s aesthetic sensibility as an essential determinant of modern literature teaching. Given that the pupil is a fully-fledged aesthetic component of the teaching process, it is necessary to awaken and develop their aesthetic experience, sharpen their literary and observational skills and critical mind and shape their literary taste.

Interpretation of the literary character as an independent unit that is at the same time part of the literary work as a whole, activates and encourages the emotional, imaginative, intellectual, critical and creative potential of the pupil. In the methodological approach to a literary character, the experiencing of a literary character and a literary work is conditioned by the pupil’s reception, as well as overall life experience. For a successful design and implementation of the methodological approach to a literary character, the teacher’s comprehensive knowledge of the literary work in which the character exists and the methods of its interpretation is needed, as well as coexistence with the world of the work, a clear and thought-out interpretation plan, and methodological invention and communication skills (according to Rosandić, 2005: 215).

Conclusion

Even though the emphasis of this methodological approach is on the literary character, the interpretation is always guided by the idea that the character can be seen only in the totality of the work of art that it builds and creates as its individual element. The characters’ behavior and action, the moral of the work and the universal sense, the leveling of the characters or the loss of those features that determine the contrast between the characters as well as the psychological nuances and complex characterization should determine the methodological approach to a literary character. Starting primarily from the work in which the character is created and exists, it is necessary to combine the concretization of the character achieved through various characterizations within the literary work and the interpreter’s personal, independent intervention in the creative process of constructing a literary character in the context of the literary work as a whole.

Through the school interpretation of a literary work, which is always based on a scientific interpretation template from which it takes all relevant knowledge, processes it and adapts it to the teaching process, taking into account all the reception

requirements of the particular age of the pupil for whom it is intended, introduces the interpretation of the literary character as an integral world that has its own laws, and these laws are revealed in the literary work and by reconstruction of creative processes shaping the literary work as a whole. In structuring its system, the school interpretation of a literary work interprets the literary character taking into account the pupils' cognitive-experiential abilities, and understands the literary text as a source of aesthetic experience and knowledge.

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