

days later the locusts rolled in from Hebei, officially declaring the failure of the blind worship of the locusts and the compromise programme led by the Fourth Master; Since the Fourth Master did not solve the locust plague, the Ninth Master logically became the leader of the herbivorous family during the second locust plague, *«He completely repudiated the Fourth Master's 'appeasement' policy towards the locusts, and led his clan, pooling funds to build the General Liu Temple, mobilising the masses to exterminate the locusts, and pursuing a hard-line policy of cooperation between the gods and humans policy»* [3, p. 107]. Empty of courage but without scientific assistance, although the locusts were eventually destroyed, they did not preserve the crops and trees on which the herbivorous family depended for survival, leaving only an empty earth; The third locust plague occurred during the decline of the Herbivorous Family, at which point the members of the Herbivorous Family were no longer able to stop it, and while waiting for the destruction to come once again, „ten biplane cyan-coloured agricultural planes flew over the Herbivorous Family's territory of the northeastern township of Gao Mi“ [3, p. 111]. The plague of locusts that the members of the Rack one's brains were unable to cope with was easily solved by the modern female pilots using science and technology.

Although the locust plague is the direct cause of the decline of the herbivorous family, the internal cause is the complex human desires. The Herbivorous Family is essentially like a miniature feudal dynasty, which has long been decadent and dilapidated internally. The members of the Herbivorous Family, who boast of their benevolence, righteousness, and morality, and claim that even the taste of their excrement is similar to that of grass, drive the locust plague to destroy other places, and ultimately are doomed to decline. By constructing the history of the rise and fall of the herbivorous family, Mo Yan borrows the locusts to make an ecological judgement on the herbivorous family, and expresses his concern for the Human alienation of the individual in the course of the epochal flood and his humanistic care.

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#### **DYSTOPIAN LEGACIES AND FEMINIST REVISIONS: G. ORWELL'S 1984 AND S. NEWMAN'S JULIA**

**Key words:** *feminist deconstruction; dystopia; shadow plot; moral complexity.*

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### ЖАНР ДИСТОПИИ И ЕГО ФЕМИНИСТСКАЯ РЕВИЗИЯ: «1984» ДЖ. ОРУЭЛЛА И «ДЖУЛИЯ» С. НЬЮМАН

В данной статье анализируется феномен феминистского литературного переосмысления, выраженный в пересоздании сюжетов классических романов и антиутопий. Основной аспект научной статьи – феминистская антиутопия, в частности, роман «Джулия» Сандры Ньюман – пересказ романа Оруэлла «1984», которая переосмысливает темы оригинала через сложный характер героини, чья прагматичная стратегия выживания контрастирует с идеалистическим бунтарством оруэлловского героя. В статье показано, как феминистские произведения усложняют традиционные антиутопические нарративы, исследуют моральную неоднозначность сопротивления власти в условиях репрессивных систем.

**Ключевые слова:** феминистская деконструкция; дистопия; «теневой сюжет»; моральная неоднозначность.

For many decades, feminist writers have been creating works that revisit famous male-authored novels or those written by women but heavily conditioned by traditional patriarchal patterns. This phenomenon in the literary world bears several names: feminist deconstructions, shadow-plot recreations or a kind of fan fiction. In some narratives, specific event sequences or full stories take on meaning from textually triggered, though not necessarily textually inscribed, antitheses – that is, the text prompts the implied or inferred shadow (or negative) plot, while the actual plot creates some contrasting stories or events. An early case to refer to is J. Austin's *Northanger Abbey* (1817) which contains a shadow plot – that of A. Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794). The model precedent for much of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century feminist deconstructions is Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) based on a shadow plot – Ch. Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847). *Wide Sargasso Sea* often poses in criticism as a feminist postcolonial rewriting of Bronte's classical text, as it gives voice to Bertha Mason, the «madwoman in the attic», and tells her story from a West Indian perspective, challenging the colonial and patriarchal narratives of the original. This case stands in the contemporary literary process as one of most representative examples of such revisions characterized by the focus on female subjectivity, where female protagonists resist patriarchy in the ways accessible to them.

Creating specifically feminist dystopias has also become a noticeable trend in modern fiction. Texts worthy of attention include Katharine Burdekin's *Swastika Night* (1937) set 700 years after an imaginary Nazi victory in WWII, where women are relegated to mere breeding cattle; James Tiptree, Jr.'s (Alice Sheldon) *The Girl Who Was Plugged In* (1973) which explores commodification and objectification of women; Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976) focusing on women in the context of class, race, and disability; and *The Power* (2016) by Naomi Alderman imagining a world where women develop supremacy to inflict pain and domination. The most celebrated novel of this genre is undoubtedly *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) by Margaret Atwood, a foundational feminist dystopian novel about the oppression of women and their role – reduced solely to reproduction – in a theocratic society. These works explore topical issues of women's right to their own bodies, identity construction, power distribution, and the social consequences of patriarchal or totalitarian systems through the lens of women's experiences.

The genre is also enriched by rewriting classical dystopian texts, such as *Frankissstein* (2019) by Jeanette Winterson. This book is inspired by Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and touches upon super-contemporary problems of gender fluidity and artificial intelligence through a comic lens.

George Orwell has also fallen under scrutiny and criticism from feminist authors for his alleged ignorance or neglect of women's roles in his dystopias. Anna Funder's *Wifedom: Mrs. Orwell's Invisible Life* (2023), a biography of Eileen O'Shaughnessy (1905–1945), George Orwell's first wife, recreates her shadowy but very potent role, through her literary intelligence, behind her husband's successful creative work and his infidelities.

Sandra Newman's *Julia* (2023) is a most recent feminist revision of dystopian fiction. It retells G. Orwell's *1984* (1949) from the perspective of Winston Smith's lover, Julia, providing a feminist reorientation of the story, which, nevertheless, adheres largely to the core plot and dystopian setting of *1984*. What distinguishes this work as a novel in its own right is its ability to fill the gaps left by Orwell's original, revealing Julia's life, motivations, and experiences under the oppressive regime. The book was authorized by the Orwell estate and «won the approval of Orwell's 79-year-old son, Richard Blair» [1], who said: «There are all these questions that Orwell sets up and never answers... How Julia gets goods on the black market; her other love affairs – she never says who they were with or how she got away with them, or whether this is considered normal in their world. I wanted to know more about her time writing pornography for the Party: you really want to know what that pornography is like, and Orwell does not tell you» [1]. Newman extends and deepens the original dystopian world, especially highlighting Julia's viewpoint on sexual politics and resistance within Oceania.

Some aspects in the comparative paradigm of these two novels reveal fresh insights into the dystopian poetics and highlight contemporary issues. *Julia*, as a feminist dystopian rewriting based on a shadow plot, is characterized by hybridity and genre transgression: it is not just a classical dystopia, but a feminist psychological novel bordering on postmodernist relativist aesthetics. The comparative analysis below reveals these aspects.

*1984* follows the classical dystopian trajectory: it depicts an oppressive regime which uses propaganda, surveillance, fear and censorship to maintain strict control over citizens, and points out to the loss of individuality and personal freedom, permeating the narrative with ubiquitous albeit not always obvious social critique. In Orwell's novel, as well as in a number of its predecessors, a particular focus is placed on language which serves as a tool of manipulation and harnessing of independent thinking: «Don't you see that the whole aim of Newspeak is to narrow the range of thought? In the end we shall make thoughtcrime literally impossible, because there will be no words in which to express it» [2, p. 58]. The plot is triggered by Winston's rebellion, which is also a classical quality of dystopian fiction. His point of view dominates the narrative.

In S. Newman's novel *Julia*, several key features of Orwell's masterpiece are modified through the shift in perspective to the female protagonist. The story is told from her point of view and offers a more detailed depiction of daily life in Oceania, including community housing, black markets, government plans on reproduction, and the use of Newspeak in everyday life. The role of the normal language distorted and crippled by Newspeak is unexpectedly eroticised in a perverted way: during Julia's

sexual adventures, «many people liked to curse the Inner Party and call them swine and bastards. Julia had had one fellow who'd got aroused from saying, 'Emmanuel Goldstein isn't all wrong' – always those same five words, then he leapt upon her in urgent passion» [3, p. 90].

Julia is given a full name, Julia Worthing, and a detailed backstory (which is a gap in *1984*), including her highly traumatic adolescence and a more in-depth psychological portrayal. While she poses as Winston Smith's lover, almost devoid of tangible identity in Orwell's book, in the reconstruction, she acquires an independent personality, which extends beyond being just Winston's lover. The novel reveals that Julia works covertly with the Thought Police as a sex worker hiding behind the membership in the Junior Anti-Sex League, and Winston is one of her lovers. This reinterpretation complicates Julia's motivations, as she does not appear to be a genuinely enamoured and simple woman of this beleaguered dystopian hell, which adds irony and shades of grey to the original events. Rather, Julia is calculating and self-possessed in her choices, defying traditional romantic or emotional expectations: «But then he noticed Julia, and his mouth thinned with revulsion. It was startling how it changed him: hawk to reptile. Julia thought: *Nothing wrong with you a good shag wouldn't fix!* This almost made her laugh, for of course it was true. His real trouble wasn't that his parents had been unpersons, or that he couldn't keep up with Party doctrine, or even his nasty cough. Old Misery had a bad case of Sex Gone Sour. And naturally the woman was to blame. Who else?» [3, p. 10]. Thus, Newman's reconstructive text shifts the moral implications and power dynamics of *1984* towards a non-binary perspective.

Julia's sexuality and sexual experiences appear shameless and explicit, with taboo words freely circulating the story, which is not the case in *1984*. Torture and imprisonment scenes in *Julia* are more graphic and strewn with more gruesome details – in comparison with Orwell's text. However, as Natasha Walter correctly observes, «The torture chambers he [Orwell] imagined felt desperately real, built from accounts of survivors of gulags and concentration camps, so that even the unlikely creation of Room 101 became horribly convincing. Newman's prison has something of the performative cruelty of *The Hunger Games* or similar recent dystopias» [4].

Newman's novel incorporates moments of sophisticated psychological analysis of the human psyche. One episode when Julia visits O'Brien seven years after her betrayal of Winston, reveals the devilish designs of the ruling elite not only to transform people in terms of their outward behaviour and conscious mind, but to completely alter their very subconscious: «'You were a person like others around you, a fatuous creature that called its weakness virtue. But by this choice, you were transformed. Through the years that followed, the years of hiding what your fellows called a crime but you knew to be courage, you were transformed. It is how a lump of coal is changed to a diamond, by pressures that deform and crush it. ... you are more than a woman; more indeed than a man. You are *Homo oceanicus*, the race yet to come. In our work, every one of us has made such a choice. It is the choice that we call Love.' As he said it, she felt it could be true. She was stronger than others. After all, she'd escaped the SAZ when no others could. She had become a member of the Party, though her parents were both criminals. She had found work at one of the big four Ministries. She sat now in front of O'Brien of Love and hadn't begged or cried, hadn't said a wrong thing» [3, p. 144]. Julia's survival approach appears to be very

pragmatic, which contrasts with Winston's psychological and moral rebellion. It is well reflected in Julia's scepticism of Winston's heroism.

Newman presents Big Brother's regime as less all-powerful – she points to the double lives people have adopted and in reality, many are not zombies – they devise survival techniques, albeit perverse ones. This feature of the book somewhat undermines the original's picture of an absolute totalitarian state. To support this aspect, Newman introduces more diverse characters and groups that were largely absent in Orwell's narrative, such as people of colour, different ages, and wounded war veterans. This enriches the social fabric of the dystopia and shows how the regime manipulates various social divides. While *1984* has a bleak and serious tone, *Julia* introduces an ironic and sometimes sardonic narrative voice that broadens the thematic palette, making room for humour alongside oppression, and suggesting a different kind of struggle against it seen through a marginalized woman's eyes.

While *1984* ends on a terribly pessimistic, bleak and chilling note – «Two ginscented tears trickled down the sides of his nose. But it was all right, everything was all right, the struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved Big Brother» [2, p. 304] – the ending of *Julia*, being equally unsettling in depiction of psychological pressure and interrogation, invites for more reflections on the ways to resist totalitarian oppression. The concept of survival through sheer pragmatism, complete detachment from any affective ties, and fitting the demands of those in power stands grim and ambiguous, as this detached endurance precludes any positive change. Thus, Newman's novel ends with Julia who emerges as a tough and pragmatic survivor. Even with her defiance, the oppressive state apparatus remains dominant over her life and freedom. The ending challenges readers over Julia's moral principles (if any), her incomprehensible methods of collaboration, offering a complex and less hopeful closure to her story than in Orwell's original narrative: «After all, she couldn't stop what the Brotherhood would do, or make her do. Julia was a criminal. Worse, she was pregnant. She didn't have the freedom to think of what was right. She must do what was safe. It was as Ampleforth had said: one had no choice, one must only live through it as if one had. ... One was carried forward, and tried to be kind whenever one could. 'You are prepared to lose your identity and live out the rest of your life as another person?' – 'Yes.' – 'You are prepared to separate from everyone you know and never see them again?' – 'Yes.' – 'You are prepared to cheat, to forge, to blackmail, to corrupt the minds of children, to distribute habit-forming drugs, to encourage prostitution, to disseminate venereal diseases – to do anything which is likely to cause demoralization and weaken the power of the Party?' – 'Yes,' said Julia. 'Yes, I will. Yes.'» [3, p. 385]. To quote N. Walter again, «The shocking power of Orwell's novel lay in his refusal to allow any crack in the totalitarian state where the light might get in. He discarded false hope regarding an individual's effect on the system, and left the reader endlessly wondering what resistance means when there is no chance of success. Newman's novel gradually turns into something like the replay of a video game, in which you are allowed to respawn as another avatar, to move through the same scenes with new lines, and get to a different place. This new trajectory is much less convincing than the original's hard-won knowledge» [4].

It brings us to a form of conclusion about the ideology behind feminist dystopias: they seem to contest fixed or stable societies and emphasize ongoing struggle of feminist efforts, even though the forms of resistance gradually turn into the forms of survival and heavily expose the moral complexity of such choices.

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## THE PRINCIPLES OF SPATIAL ORGANIZATION OF S. HEANEY'S POETRY

**Key words:** *spatial organization; poetry; juxtaposition; rhizome; Seamus Heaney.*

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## ПРИНЦИПЫ ПРОСТРАНСТВЕННОЙ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ В ПОЭЗИИ Ш. ХИНИ

*В статье рассматриваются принципы пространственной организации поэтических произведений известного ирландского писателя Ш. Хини. Выявлены принципы изображения пространства в динамике, «принцип ризомы», заключающийся в ассоциативности связи между локусами, принцип сопоставления, высвечивающий контраст между образами пространства, а также создание особого пространственно-временного континуума индивидуальной и коллективной памяти, в котором личный опыт поэта переплетается с культурно-историческим наследием ирландского народа («хронотоп памяти»).*

**Ключевые слова:** *пространственная организация; поэзия; сопоставление; ризома; Шимус Хини.*

To identify the principles of spatial organization in the poetry of Seamus Heaney (1939–2013), one of the greatest 20<sup>th</sup>-century Irish poets, a Nobel Prize winner, we shall analyze some representative poems that reflect both the evolution of Heaney's work and the various shifts from materiality and physicality of places to their spiritual, cultural or philosophical meanings in Heaney's poetry.

S. Heaney's first poetry collection, *Death of a Naturalist* (1966), marked the beginning of his illustrious career and showcased themes related to his Irish heritage and the contrast between his family's agricultural background and his own path as a poet. The poems in this volume (many of which contain micro-plots) can serve to illustrate what we shall term as the principle of *dynamic settings* in Heaney's poetry. By the dynamic setting we shall mean a place, a locus that is characterized by change, adaptability, and interaction with the poetic persona. In Heaney's poetry, many locations do change under the influence of human activities or nature's elements