

their Neolithic ancestors» [4, p. 18]. Thus in the poem we find out that *With pails and barrows / those mound-dwellers / go waist-deep in mist / to break the light ice / at wells and dunghills* [1, p. 22]. The poem reflects on cycles of life and death, beginning with imagery associated with vitality – clear water – and transitioning towards darker themes towards the end, such as «dunghills». This progression symbolizes not only the passage of time but also the inevitable intertwining of life's beginnings and endings. Heaney captures this cycle through detailed descriptions that connect human experiences with natural processes. The Gaelic name «Anahorish» refers here to both a specific place and to personal memories of it, suggesting that language carries historical weight and personal resonance.

We also suggest that Edward Soja's concept of «Thirdspace» can be used in connection with the chronotope of memory on Heaney's poetry. Third spaces are the in-between, or hybrid, spaces, where the locations like home (first spaces) and social institutions (second spaces) work together to generate a new third space, rather a virtual one. This concept avoids the dualities of the social and the individual, of culture and nature, of the real versus the imagined. For example, in the poem «The Forge» (from *Door into the Dark*, 1969) Heaney employs the imagery of a blacksmith's forge to explore themes of creation and transformation. This imagery blends past and present, as the speaker reflects on memories associated with the forge while engaging with its sounds and sights, creating a sense of timelessness. The forge acts as a sort of «Thirdspace» where the physical act of forging metal parallels the creative process of writing poetry.

The principles of spatial organization of Seamus Heaney's poetry reveal a rich interplay between place, memory, and identity. Through such principles as *dynamic settings*, *rhizomatic structures*, *juxtaposition*, and *the chronotope of memory*, Heaney's poetic landscape invites readers to engage with the complexities of human experience within diverse geographical contexts. These principles cannot be separated and presented as single devices: they are united into the general spatial poetics where the space dynamics is not linear: the transition may be abrupt and momentary, the concrete detail employed in the depiction of settings may transit into abstract spaces opening up potential philosophical reflections.

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CONCEPTS OF MASCULINITY AND FEMINITY IN P. BARKER'S HISTORICAL NOVEL *REGENERATION*

Key words: *historical novel, contemporary British literature, masculinity, femininity.*

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КОНЦЕПЦИЯ МУЖСКОГО И ЖЕНСКОГО В ИСТОРИЧЕСКОМ РОМАНЕ П. БАРКЕР «РЕГЕНЕРАЦИЯ»

В данной статье рассмотрены концепты маскулинности и феминности в романе «Возрождение» («Regeneration», 1991) британской писательницы П. Баркер, которая, как и Р. Тремейн, Х. Мантел исследуют историю своей страны, выявляя социальную «сконструированность» гендера. Роман «Возрождение» указывает на неопределённость границ между мужскими и женскими характеристиками и показывает, что забота, эмоциональность и сострадание являются универсальными человеческими ценностями, не имеющими гендерной принадлежности. Выбор жанра исторического романа помогает автору возобновить дискурс о гендерных стереотипах в новую эпоху.

Ключевые слова: исторический роман; современная британская литература, маскулинность; феминность.

The historical novel as a genre underwent a significant transformation at the end of the 20th – early 21st century. A noticeable tendency emerged: many female writers started exploring the concepts of masculinity and femininity. And for this purpose, instead of producing feminist novels with women as the main characters and exposing the contemporary struggles with gender and identity, they turn to the historical novel and to male protagonists. The logic of their choice is that in order to understand the concept of femininity one needs to learn what masculinity is and the mechanisms behind it, as these concepts always exist within the dichotomy of male vs. female.

Among such writers is Pat Barker, a Booker-prize winning British writer. Her literary career first started off as a conspicuously feminist author: her first novels *Union Street* (1982), *Blow Your House Down* (1984), and *The Century's Daughter* (1986) focus on the struggles of English working-class women with poverty, sexism, violence, etc. Yet the author felt rather limited in this subject matter, so she expanded her scope of topics and went further on to publish the *Regeneration* trilogy – *Regeneration* (1991), *The Eye in the Door* (1993) and *The Ghost Road* (1995) – historical novels revealing the psychological turmoil of the Great War (1914–1918) shown through the accounts of regular soldiers and doctors. Many critics mistakenly believed that Barker was moving in a direction contrary to feminism.

The story in the first novel follows the army doctor W. H. R. Rivers during WWI. The character works at the mental asylum Craiglockhart located in the suburbs of Edinburgh. The novel starts with «A Soldier's Declaration» written by Siegfried Sassoon, a poet and soldier who publicly condemns the war and is therefore sent to the asylum to be silenced. Sassoon becomes one of Rivers's patients along with Billy Prior, a young lieutenant suffering from shell shock, Ralph Anderson, a military doctor with a phobia of blood, David Burns, a soldier who is unable to eat since being thrown into the intestines of a dead German, and many others. Rivers's method of treatment does not require any physical therapy but rather imitates S. Freud's «talking cure»: he makes patients acknowledge and face their horrifying experiences and understand their feelings, get to the mental root of their problems. The doctor's approach is radically different from that of other medics like Dr Lewis Yealland, who uses shock therapy to cure patients. The novel also provides a glimpse into the lives of munitionettes: Sarah Lumb and

her friends who make detonators at a factory in Edinburgh and try to navigate their relationships in the realities of the war. This way, even though the book's focal point is the mental impact of the warfare, the novel's system of characters includes both males and females which diversifies the story.

The setting of the trilogy has great significance for gender roles in modern society. The war marked the time when women took the place of men in the job market, specifically the hard manual jobs at the factories, producing munitions and all kinds of hardware, while men fought in the Great War. In the first novel, *Regeneration*, we see how P. Barker explores the historical contingency of gender, the way people view what is normal for men and women. Only men could go into service during the Great War, and warfare was designated exclusively for men. A good soldier had to exemplify such qualities as heroism, endurance and courage. Breaking down and showing signs of distress was believed to be a sign of weakness – the recognizable feature of the time which heavily marginalizes the patients of the war asylum.

The umbrella term for all psychological symptoms prompted by the warfare used to be «shell shock», which, as one can guess from the wording, emphasizes the physical, external aspect of the malady. Based on private practice, Dr Rivers in the novel draws parallels between what is identified as shell shock and hysteria – an old-fashioned medical term used for the female psychological disorders of various natures. The doctor supposes that both disorders stem from being passive and vulnerable, having no control over the situation reminding of what women often faced before emancipation.

In the opposition of «active vs. passive», it is usually men who are associated with being active, while women who are thought to be passive. People initially link these associations to the anatomical traits of men and women, thus attributing particular behaviors and activities to the ways of nature. Yet the male characters of the novel are put into the position of women (in the sense of perceived passivity) enduring the exposure to danger and not being able to change the circumstances of their current being: „[t]he war that had promised so much in the way of 'manly' activity had actually delivered 'feminine' passivity“ [1, p. 146]. Psychoanalysis (used to treat hysterical symptoms in women), which dominates the novel's plot, serves as a tool to blur gender stereotypes and create space for effectively addressing both personal and national trauma. As K. Steffens concludes, „*Rivers provides a model of trauma that reclaims realism as therapeutic and an inevitable part of the healing process. Instead of dismissing realism as a form that makes trauma easily consumed due to its penchant for narrative closure that is often interpreted as catharsis, realism for Barker is necessary in both the psychoanalytic treatment of shell shock and narrative representing such treatment*“ [2, p. 47]. This assertion stresses the importance of realism in depicting vulnerable traumatic experience. K. P. Knutsen notes that in the novel, „*the masculine is feminized and the feminine is masculinized, subverting the dominant discourse of trauma at the beginning of the war*“ [3, p. 23].

Many of the patients purposefully avoid the treatment as they deem it humiliating to their manliness. The main means of demonstrating their manliness during the war is the suppression of emotions. From the point of view of Doctor Rivers, „[t]hey've been trained to identify emotional repression as the essence of manliness“ [1, p. 65]. The constant suppression of acute emotions like fear, guilt, repulsion or despair evolves into a mental breakdown and severe physical conditions. To overcome this, a soldier needs to talk about his experiences, the emotions induced by them and accept all that. Rivers is called a „*male mother*“ [1, p. 145] by one of his patients, which points

to another issue: the ability of caring for someone (like doctors or psychologists do) is generally attributed to women and is perceived as a feminine trait. The doctor dislikes this phrase, as it again suggests that certain aspects of life are inaccessible to men.

During the Victorian times, men were expected to be the breadwinners of their families, and the institute of family was built on that principle. Anderson, a patient of Rivers's, becomes unable to provide for his family. He used to be an army surgeon but, as it was previously mentioned, he developed a great fear of blood during the war after performing multiple amputations daily for a long period of time. Incapable to earn money as a doctor, Anderson feels humiliated as a man. The war also produced large numbers of invalids: men either became unable to work or were horrifyingly disfigured, which marginalized and alienated them from society. These phenomena resulted in a revision of the family hierarchy, and as the structure of the basic social unit changes, it calls into question the relevance of the traditional concepts of masculinity and femininity.

In the realist literature of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the axiological aspect of fiction is of utmost importance. For *Regeneration*, it is connected with the figure the psychoanalyst Doctor Rivers and the women-workers. As Barker herself mentioned, „[t]hey are, together with Rivers, a sort of moral centre“ [4]. The system of values these figures represent comprises acceptance, open-mindedness, nurturing, compassion, emotionality, affection, intuition, etc. The Great War changed the course of history and forced the emancipation of women via male jobs, as we can see in the case of Sarah: the twelve-hour shifts made Sarah financially independent along with many other women who joined the usually male-dominated workforce. Even though she has financial independence and does not need to find a man to support her, she takes interest in Billy Prior, uses her intuition to determine that he is a good person and accepts the fact that Prior is a patient of the asylum, without judgement. Instead of wanting to be patronized by Billy or dominating over him, Sarah treats him like her equal, gives him moral comfort and hears him out.

To sum up, we can say that Pat Barker investigates men and masculinity in the context of the Great War for the purpose of comparing it with women and femininity and to reveal the contingency and the social «constructedness» of gender. The carefully crafted Victorian notions of the male and the female are quickly forgotten after the massive historical and social factor of the Great War. The author infers that a mental breakdown is a taboo for men, yet the modern warfare puts men into situations where they are exposed to unexpected dangers and cannot protect themselves, and this inevitably causes trauma, while the traumatic experience is further exacerbated by repressing the memories and emotions connected to it. Acceptance of these repressed emotions is needed for men to treat the war trauma and combat gender stereotypes. The novel *Regeneration* points to the blurred boundary between masculinity and femininity that were highlighted by the challenging times of WWI and shows that nurturing, caring, emotionality, compassion are the universal human values that have no gender allegiance.

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