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OPPOSITIONAL GAZE, OPPOSITION TO VIOLENCE AND AWAKENING OF THE WOMAN IN IVO ANDRIĆ'S NOVELETTE "THE PASCHA'S CONCUBINE"

This study posits that the significance of the character Nevenka, despite not being the central figure in Ivo Andrić's novelette "*The Pascha's Concubine*," surpasses that of the protagonist because she powerfully signifies women's emancipation and empowerment during patriarchal tyranny. Using interdisciplinary perspectives derived from the works of hooks, Foucault, Sartre, and others, this study delves into Nevenka's oppositional gaze, dissecting the author's intent in crafting such a symbolic female persona. By examining Nevenka's resistance from multiple perspectives, including her defiance in the face of physical abuse and her rebellion in a spiritual way, this study aims to elucidate the historical underpinnings and the evolutionary process of women's self-awareness in the late 19th-century Balkans. The significance of the present study is that our analysis encourages the critical thinking of present-day readers and contributes to raising awareness and awakening people, especially women, which is necessary in the society in which we live at global level.

Keywords: oppositional gaze; opposition to violence; awakening of woman; resistant reading; Ivo Andrić

1. Introduction

Nobel laureate Ivo Andrić's (1892–1975) works in the Balkans and worldwide are widely renowned, read, and analyzed. Inspired by the theory of oppositional gaze proposed by bell hooks in "*The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators*" and resistant reading explained in Judith Fetterley's "*The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction*", this study analyzes the novelette "*The Pascha's Concubine*"^{3,4} ("*Mara milosnica*") by Ivo Andrić. Much like Murphy (1987: 114), who quoted Rich (1979: 35)—"The act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering another text from a new critical direction - is for women - an act of survival"—our study highlights unique in-

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3. The translation of the name of the novelette "*Mara milosnica*" into English is "*The Pascha's Concubine*" according to the translation by Joseph Hitrec: Andrić, Ivo. *The Pasha's Concubine and Other Tales*. Translated by Joseph Hitrec, 1st ed., Alfred A. Knopf, 1968.

4. Andrić, Ivo. „*Mara milosnica*”. Jelena žena koje nema, Sabrana dela Ive Andrića, Udruženi izdavači, knjiga sedma, dopunjeno izdanje, Beograd: Prosveta, 1981, str. 91-169. All the quotes from the novelette are from this edition, their translation into English in this paper is my own and their source will be written throughout the paper as (ANDRIĆ 1981).

sights, through resistant reading and oppositional gaze, into understanding the novelette “*The Pascha’s Concubine*.”

“*The Pascha’s Concubine*” is a novelette comprising 80 pages, which narrates the sorrowful lives of several women living in Bosnia at the end of the 19th century. This novelette consists of five parts, with the present study focusing precisely on the fourth and fifth parts, wherein the female character (daughter-in-law Nevenka) appears for the first time. She reaches the wealthy house of the Pamuković family and soon experiences abuse by her husband and mistreatment by other family members. However, she unexpectedly opposes her husband and the others by directing the “oppositional gaze” toward them, escaping the mayhem that the women of this era experienced. Nevenka gradually desired revenge and, through these thoughts, she encouraged awareness of herself as a woman and an individual, which was challenging in the patriarchal system and the era in which she lived. As Li (1989: 34) notes: “This is a novelette that calls for women’s liberation.”⁵ Few studies have explored the motive of women’s liberation in this novelette, which we believe is crucial and requires further attention. Fetterley (1978: 11) observes, regarding her book, that: “It is the purpose of this book to give voice to a different reality and different vision, to bring a different subjectivity to bear on the old ‘universality.’” Our study significantly supports the aforementioned reading perspective.

Furthermore, this study is novel because it places focus on the minor character—in contrast with the usual representation of a woman at the end of the 19th century in the Balkans—due to her courage, boldness, determination, and the hope she gave to women at that time and continues to give to readers of this novelette today. We have not found other studies that primarily analyze and especially focus on the minor character Nevenka in this novelette. Indeed, although Nevenka seems to not have a particularly prominent function in the fabula, after a deeper and more detailed analysis of this female character, as well as her role in the story, one can realize that her significance is much more profound than it appears to be.

Our study aimed to provide a new perspective through which we can analyze a significant topic in Andrić’s literary work, namely the importance of awakening the woman to liberate herself as an individual and gain awareness of her own identity and equality with man. This study analyzes how Nevenka, as the female character in the novelette “*The Pascha’s Concubine*,” created an oppositional gaze, and the representation of the said gaze, that is, how it is manifested through opposition to abuse and through the desire for revenge, to contribute to the awakening of women.

2. The socio-historical context

Andrić’s writings are based on the end of the 19th century, when the patriarchal system was vigorous and stringent in the Balkans, specifically the transitional period between the end of Turkish rule and the beginning of Austro-Hungarian rule over Bosnia and the Balkan region. This is evident in a quote from Ivo Andrić’s doctoral thesis “*The development of spiritual life in Bosnia under the influence of Turkish rule*,”⁶ where he

5. The translation of this quote from the original Chinese “这是一部为妇女解放奔走呼号的小说。” into English is my own.

6. This is my own translation of the title into English from the original: Ivo Andrić, *Razvoj duhovnog života u Bosni pod uticajem turske vladavine*, Beograd: Prosveta, 1995.

describes the situation in Bosnia at the time of the invasion (1995: 25) and here he cites (RANKE) saying that Bosnia was:

“in the state of transition, which constitutes one of the most important stages in every nation’s life, from what was taken since the dark beginnings, which was patriarchal, locally limited, into the legal order of things, formed from spiritual consciousness and in accordance with the general development of the human race.”⁷

In his doctoral thesis, Andrić described the people from Bosnia, who were forced to live a challenging life and had to pay various taxes, with the most emotionally harrowing of those being (in Serbian: *danak u krvi*) “blood tax.” Andrić mentions the stringent patriarchal system in one segment of his doctoral thesis and details the spiritual restraints and suffering of the people, as well as the painful atmosphere of everyday life, which can be observed in the novelette “*The Pascha’s Concubine*.” Vučković (1995: 113) in the Afterword of this book cited Konstantinović (1982: 275) saying that: “in the dissertation can be discovered the genesis of everything that Andrić as a writer has shaped and expressed”⁸.

The end of the 19th century in the Balkans was historically known for many uprisings and riots. The Ottoman rule was ending and the Austro-Hungarian occupation was beginning. History suggests that this was a time of resistance and rebellion: there were uprisings in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Serbia, and subsequently, in 1878, the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia. Antonić (2000: 146-147) writes in the review about Čubriović’s book “*Bosnian uprising 1875-1878*”⁹ (“*Bosanski ustanak 1875-1878*”) that one of the reasons for the uprising was a “...national awakening and movement of the Serbian people in Bosnia, who, like their compatriots in Serbia, are trying to free themselves from the yoke of centuries-old Turkish rule.”¹⁰ The Balkans people lived a challenging life and endured foreign rule. This led to dissatisfaction that lasted a long time and caused the outbreak of rebellions and uprisings to preserve and revitalize the national identity and achieve spiritual liberation from foreign rule. Since the era of the oppressors was long-lasting, the people were eventually unable to endure such conditions any longer, and this kind of life was miserable. Indeed, it is quite understandable that the rebellions finally happened. Broadly, the aforementioned is why, in this story, Nevenka is the embodiment of a nation wanting to regain and preserve its dignity and identity and symbolizes desire and hope for the liberation of people from foreign rule.

This period marked the need for national awakening and awareness, and at the same time, Nevenka in this novelette marked the awakening of women. Considering the overall picture and socio-historical background in this novelette, the existence of a character such as Nevenka is comprehensible. As this era of chaotic conditions in Bosnia, Serbia, and the entire Balkans observed an awakening of national consciousness, there was a desire for a national identity and Nevenka’s character belonged to this atmosphere

7. The translation of this quote into English is my own. This quote is cited in the abovementioned book by Ivo Andrić, “*Razvoj duhovnog života u Bosni pod uticajem turske vladavine*” on the page 25, and in the notes on the page 92 about this quote it is written RANKE L.c., p. 13.

8 The translation of this quote into English is my own.

9 The translation into English is my own.

10 The translation of this quote into English is my own.

of awakening in society.

We believe that Andrić intentionally places the story in this historical context, a period of change in government that indicated certain changes in society, especially considering the place of women in the social system. Apart from the broader imagery of Nevenka, which is a desire for national liberation from foreign rule, there is a narrow and more specific interpretation, namely a desire for the liberation of women from patriarchal oppression and injustice.

At that time, women were mostly “invisible” and subjected to a patriarchal way of life; however, gradually hope emerged for women. In the Balkans, women who went to study abroad and beyond the framework of the expected life for women at that time appeared, Rajić and Leovac wrote about such women in Serbia (2018: 397-402). They slowly began being educated, although to a lesser extent, and remained a symbol of change. Pijanović (2012: 66) also observes that, at that time, “The life of the women in the city is changing and they have become more emancipated.”¹¹ Thus, in Ivo Andrić’s novelette arose the possibility of the existence of such a character as Nevenka. She can certainly be interpreted as an inspirational figure, encouraging women to stand up for themselves and establish and provide oppositional gaze, even in challenging and complicated social circumstances. The name Nevenka is indicative in Serbian language, since it is related to the term “to wither;” specifically, the name has the meaning of the negative form “to not wither,” symbolizing the strength and power of women in not withering, not giving up, and instead resisting.

Nevenka stands as an example to all women abused in marriage, recognizing the possibility for a woman to resist, arise from unpleasant situations to seek help, and not be subjected to suffering any kind of abuse. It is unfortunate that the minor female character Nevenka remains almost unnoticed in literary criticism and analysis of Andrić’s works in the Balkans and beyond. In our opinion, Andrić intentionally devoted almost entirely the two final chapters of this novelette to the aforementioned minor but salient character.

According to abovementioned need and desire for confrontation of women in prevailing social conditions, we recognized a theory that articulates resistance and the defense of identity, this is the theory of “oppositional gaze”.

3. Theoretical framework

This study used the extended version of “Oppositional gaze” theory. Oppositional gaze was first presented by the author bell hooks (1992: 115–131) in her work *“The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectator,”* where she writes about the social position of Black women, who represent opposing authority, offer resistance, and can rebel. In her work, she states that the oppositional gaze is a gaze that holds power, leading to the person being observed actually becoming an observer. This term is also used in feminist theories to represent women’s gaze directed at men due to their subordinate position in the patriarchal system. In addition, our analysis relies on the work of Foucault (1982: 794), who observes that in a relationship where there is power, there is also confrontation. Sartre (1993: 429) states that: “The essence of the relations between consciousnesses is not the *Mitsein*; it is conflict.” This may explain the essence of the oppositional gaze and the human’s need for opposition in a relationship where there is power. Furthermore, Murphy (1987: 115) ex-

¹¹ The translation of this quote into English is my own.

plains Sartre's perception of "the look": "Insofar as each person is capable of receiving and returning the gaze, each person can function as oppressor and oppressed."

In our study, oppositional gaze is analyzed from three perspectives, namely opposition to physical violence (that is, the first spontaneous physical reaction), mental opposition (thinking), and awakening of women (raising awareness and finding a way to reach the freedom that belongs to everyone). The oppositional gaze is composed of a first and second stage, specifically opposition to physical violence and mental opposition, resulting in the third stage of women's awakening. The logical connection between these three stages is that one stage arises from the other. First, there is an instinctive natural physical reaction when someone attacks our body, followed by a mental reaction regarding how to further protect ourselves in specific situations. Finally, our consciousness is raised to a higher level to question this phenomenon of existing threats to our life and how to advocate for ourselves and our freedom.

4. Opposition to physical violence

According to Sartre (1993: 429), as we understand, there must be a confrontation for a person to become aware of their self and feel their existence. The most illustrative example of physical opposition to and confrontation of abuse is found in the novelette when Nevenka's husband comes home intoxicated late at night, insults her for not being pregnant, and then hits Nevenka in the chest with a boot while she is helping him change his clothes; Nevenka, however, hits him back with the same boot. In this scene, Nevenka does something that makes her different from the average woman of that time, and even today her gesture reflects the oppositional gaze toward a man. The husband was "more startled by her unexpected boldness than by the hit itself" (ANDRIĆ 1981: 150) and remained so in amazement.

For the first time, we see Nevenka's confrontation as she finds the courage and audacity to confront a physical and verbal insult from her husband who, until then, had repeatedly acted out this abuse. However, when Nevenka realized that she could and had the right to fight back, like any other human being, she created a precondition for opposition. Subsequently, whenever he drunkenly attacked her, she would defend herself and respond to him. Here we see direct opposition to the physical abuse for the purpose of self-defense, but at the same time rebellion and opposition to the usual behavior aimed at women, namely the inflicting of inappropriate behavior by men who cause women misfortune, pain, and sadness. Here, Nevenka shows that, although she is a thin, weak, and small woman, symbolizing the women against men scenario, she can still defend herself and not allow a man to dominate her. This is exactly the oppositional gaze that bell hooks mentions: "There is power in looking." (1992: 115). It is the gaze that carries within itself the power to oppose, confront humiliation, and be controlled by another, while it also carries rebellion and revenge, creating a change in reality. As Sartre (1993: 429) states, "It is therefore useless for human reality to seek to get out of this dilemma: one must either transcend the Other or allow oneself to be transcended by him." This suggests that relationship dynamics between two people revolve around who will prevail; there is the person who rules and the person who is oppressed by the other, similar to Nevenka and her husband.

Sartre (1993: 429) further observes that “The oppressed class can, in fact, affirm itself as a We-subject only in relation to the oppressing class and at the latter’s expense; that is, by transforming it in turn into ‘they-as-objects’ or ‘Them.’” Here we see that Nevenka has established this opposing relationship; she was initially oppressed but later reached a state of awareness of possibly turning the situation and becoming a subject rather than an object by directing her gaze toward the oppressing class, namely her husband.

Sartre (1993: 364) explains this very well:

“EVERYTHING which may be said of me in my relations with the Other applies to him as well. While I attempt to free myself from the hold of the Other, the Other is trying to free himself from mine; while I seek to enslave the Other, the Other seeks to enslave me. We are by no means dealing with unilateral relations with an object-in-itself, but with reciprocal and moving relations. The following descriptions of concrete behavior must therefore be envisaged within the perspective of *conflict*. Conflict is the original meaning of being-for-others.”

This may be termed a “game of power,” wherein everyone strives to prevail. Perhaps a philosophical and ontological basis for the oppositional look can be sought from this interpretation of the relationship between people which Sartre discusses. Oppositional gaze is an intrinsic human reaction, including males and females, although only the women are conditioned to be submissive and not oppose anyone, representing modesty and a positive evaluation of a woman, which unfortunately begins from a young age. Such behaviors are considered somewhat virtuous and are expected and desirable; they are encouraged, supported, and sanctioned if necessary. However, the relationship between Nevenka and her husband showed a conflict, wherein the direction of the gaze differed, first from the husband to Nevenka and later from Nevenka to her husband.

Sartre may be referring to the conflict as representing a healthy contest to ensure conventional justice and good for the people and humanity, which is not true for patriarchy. In contrast, healthy competition is not encouraged but one is muffled and silenced, lacking rectitude and justice.

As Foucault (1982: 789) says:

“Is this to say that one must seek the character proper to power relations in the violence which must have been its primitive form, its permanent secret, and its last resource, that which in the final analysis appears as its real nature when it is forced to throw aside its mask and to show itself as it really is? ”

This reveals the essence of power and how it can cause violence, as observed in numerous examples in the novelette.

4.1. Family support in the opposition to violence

The support of her mother was significant for Nevenka’s oppositional gaze and resistance to abuse. Notably, her mother was disabled and could not walk. However, she had strong willpower and defiance, both of which were inherited by Nevenka. This shows the importance of women in the family having moral support from their parents, and, above all, from mothers. We further observe that spiritual strength and will are crucial; the disabled mother portrays spiritual strength even during a period of stringent patriarchy, such that a frail woman primarily restricted to bed rest retains psychological stabi-

lity, which she extends to her daughter, providing her courage to develop resistance and oppositional gaze.

Nevenka's mother, a critical female character in the novelette, represents the first observation that an oppositional gaze can exist in a woman. Based on her experience, and that of other women at the time, she recognizes that women suffer in marriage and that there is the possibility of violence, but regarding the time when, following customs, a girl must marry, she provides unconventional advice to her bride-to-be daughter: "...don't let them hurt you." (ANDRIĆ 1981: 141–142):

"Daughter, I am not giving you away because it will be good and easy for you, but because it is a destiny. That is a complex and vicious house. You will not be hungry for bread, but for nice words and attention. But be patient; a time will come when you will put them all under your belt. It will not be worse for you than it was for me living with your father. Care about your man and listen to them, but don't let them hurt you. And if you can't stand anymore, you know where our door is."

This illustrates the mother's awareness of the existing subordinate position without a possible solution to, or escape from, the challenging situation and subordinate status. However, it also demonstrates some hope for a better and more beautiful tomorrow that she believes will inevitably come. The mother's words for Nevenka are the absolute essence of the relationship between a man and a woman in marriage, which prevails today in the Balkans. Rather than typical good wishes and joyful tears, which are expected in such situations, Nevenka's mother spoke about the undeniable reality of marriage between husband and wife, and explicitly cautioned Nevenka regarding what may occur, as if marriage may present "danger," which is not commonly expressed in the Balkans nowadays. These are not words that most mothers would speak to their daughters on their wedding day; quite the opposite, most mothers look forward to their daughter's marriage with joy, at least externally. Nevenka's mother may have silently concealed a natural spontaneous defiance—described by bell hooks as an 'oppositional gaze'—which she discreetly passed to Nevenka, who later expressed it candidly and behaved accordingly. Here, we see Andrić's fascinating ability to observe the fundamental nature of a person, which is prominent in his oeuvre. He easily conveys the wisdom of life that each individual encounters in marriage to some degree and lives with every day.

When Nevenka's mother saw that her husband was abusing her, she immediately adopted an attitude of resistance, signifying the initial oppositional gaze. When her mother discovered that Nevenka was covered in bruises, she complained bitterly:

"...I have only one child. I thought I was giving her away to get married into a baptized household and not in the wastelands. And if their son wants a wife, let him come and get her, so I can ask him how to break the ribs of others. And her face, big and shiny, blazed in the evening light (ANDRIĆ 1981: 143)."

A mother's desire to protect her child is stronger than all traditional restraints and unwritten laws. Although she may have experienced violence herself and was aware of how women were subordinated to a patriarchal way of life in that era, the mother rebelled for her daughter, standing up for her and protecting her, despite being old, sick, and disabled. This encourages the reader to realize that a woman must, even if physically weaker than a man or immobile, protect herself from injustice and abuse by men using

her attitude, self-confidence, and a distinct comprehension of the rectitude and injustice of actions. Notably, Nevenka's mother also expresses the hope that better times will come for Nevenka, and for women in general.

4.2. Opposition to the husband's family mistreatment

Nevenka also extends the "oppositional gaze" to her family members. She feels their arrogance and attempts to prevail in power, rise above it, and establish preeminence. Nevenka is described by Andrić as follows: "Thus the bride returned and remained among the Pamuković family as a 'domestic enemy,' a secret enemy and a silent victim" (ANDRIĆ 1981: 143). The confrontation is also observed in the scenes where Nevenka defies the old Pamuković lady by "pretending not to know anything" (ANDRIĆ 1981: 151) when she is called for household chores during pregnancy. This may aptly describe Nevenka's role in the story: she endures the challenging traditional role of a woman and wife but also protects and defends herself, while devising her "revenge." She hopes for a better future, representing hope and optimism for women's life and their position in society in that era. Building such a character, Andrić unequivocally and daringly addresses the issue of women's position in society. It may be that he deliberately leaves the entire chapter on Nevenka for the end because it is, in fact, a new beginning. Andrić wrote this novelette in 1926, when the idea of "oppositional gaze" was still unrecognized, which raises questions on whether he anticipated the increased awareness of women in society that subsequently followed. As Murphy (1987: 118) states: "An authentic appraisal of our situation as women, requires a commitment to taking up our lives in the midst of the patriarchal gaze." Although Nevenka believes she must rebel, she accepts the apparent patriarchal rules while remaining cognizant of the injustice and accepts those rules as an obligation without internalizing them. This is a step forward toward awareness, as discussed later in the current study.

Hooks's (1992: 131) statement regarding Black women, that is, "Looking and looking back, Black women involve ourselves in a process whereby we see our history as counter-memory, using it as a way to know the present and invent the future." is applicable to women living in a patriarchal society worldwide.

5. Mental opposition to violence

We see mental resistance in Nevenka's thoughts when, staring into the distance, she is deeply engaged in thoughts regarding the Pamukovići and how she will oppose them and seek revenge. Nevenka knew that her husband and other family members, who are the subject, perceived her as an object, but she gradually realizes being viewed as the state of the subject again. However, the patriarchal era in which she lived made it difficult for her to fully enter the state of consciousness required to be viewed as a subject, since this kind of defiance was rare at the time. Consequently, she searches for a solution and a way to take on the role of the subject, despite it being unfamiliar, obscure, and daunting to her. Her yearnings and belief in the subject's righteousness surpass these fears, despite her having no support from others, except for her mother, who is disabled and does not live with her. At the end of the novelette, Nevenka has still not taken concrete action regarding the absolute state of the subject, but the story remains somewhat unfinished, giving hope to the reader that Nevenka will eventually assume the role of the subject.

Nevenka's contemplation of the Pamukovićs and her desire for revenge indicate mental resistance and oppositional gaze (ANDRIĆ 1981: 147):

"Thus in vain she searched for a place where she would distort and demolish them by right and merit. And when a languid thought fell down, it curled up in a circle and began to eat itself; suddenly an opposing thought appeared above it: that after all, it cannot be like this, that there must be someone somewhere who will expose, punish and destroy them, and give the right to her, her mother, Jela, Mara, and everyone whom the Pamukovićs despise, torture and trample."

Notably, women must understand that they are not obliged to suffer due to something that is illogical and dictated merely by customs or traditions, or makes them unhappy. Nevenka finds solace in the prayer she devised for herself to oppose them and protect herself: "It was the only place where she found what she longed for, an area where one truly knows who is right and who is guilty, who is impudent and mean and who is good and pure" (ANDRIĆ 1981: 148). Her prayer symbolically indicates the need for change, and that women do not have to comply with centuries-old conventions but must design their own life and attitude. Everything about Nevenka indicates a desire for change, for something new, better, fairer, and completely different. This prayer, which is woven from new words that Nevenka invented and, therefore, authentic, may indicate a subconscious desire to create one's own identity—something that few women thought about, especially during the era of the story.

As the story progresses, we also see a literal look of confrontation in Nevenka, when she looks thoughtfully into the distance, and revenge is visible in her gaze:

"In the twilight that was coming, Nevenka's face was completely white, her mouth elongated and tightened, and her eyes even blacker and brighter, full of hatred, were looking somewhere through the window, and her gaze, as if going through both Pamuković houses, was lost in the distance (ANDRIĆ 1981: 152)."

Notably, here Nevenka—and thus Andrić—showed that a woman can think calmly and judiciously about justice and injustice and her position within the patriarchal system, gather courage and determination, oppose if her life is threatened, and is not obliged to suffer evil and end her life tragically. Nevenka dedicatedly thinks about the revenge (ANDRIĆ 1981: 152): "And the daughter-in-law did not even notice her but continued to look out the window, completely absent, and engrossed in memories and thoughts about revenge and the child."

Nevenka differs from the other characters in the novelette because she has the desire and the audacity to confront the Pamukovićs (ANDRIĆ 1981: 144): "During the whole day, and even at night, she argues and measures herself against them in her thoughts; it eats her up and torments her and never leaves the need to defend herself against them and compare herself to them." Nevenka knew that her thoughts and feelings were somewhat prohibited, considering the customs imposed by the patriarchy of the time; however, she remained true to her spontaneous thoughts and accepted them wholeheartedly.

6. Talking about violence

Nevenka talks incessantly about violence and the family that mistreats her: "And the bride deliberately and more often stayed alone with her, and secretly talked to her

about herself and about the Pamukovićs” (ANDRIĆ 1981: 140). Talking about violence is emphasized, perhaps because women rarely spoke of it due to feelings of shame and fear, which may be prevalent even today. This is confirmed by the title in the novelette itself, written in capital letters: “THIS WAS THE STORY OF NEVENKA, THE PAMUKOVIĆ’S BRIDE” (ANDRIĆ 1981: 141). The transition from a passive state and the status of being observed to an active state, that is, the status of an observer, signifies a conversation regarding violence. Especially, victims of violence must vocalize and communicate with others to receive help and encourage other victims. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Many victims of violence, such as domestic violence, do not share their experiences even with those closest to them because they believe it to be normalized, expected, or themselves to be in the wrong and deserving of violent punishment. They choose to remain silent and thus prolong their agony without knowing how to end it. We believe that Andrić deliberately emphasized discussing violence to stress the importance of talking and help women slowly become aware and overcome their feelings of fear. Even if they do not manage to regain their pride and dignity immediately, it is still crucial to vocalize to receive the necessary help.

Hooks (1992: 116) emphasizes that:

“Foucault insists on describing domination in terms of ‘relations of power’ as a part of an effort to challenge the assumption that ‘power is a system of domination which controls everything and which leaves no room for freedom.’ Emphatically stating that in all relations of power, ‘there is necessarily the possibility of resistance,’ he invites the critical thinker to search those margins, gaps and locations on and through the body where agency can be found.”

According to this citation, we can see this agency in Nevenka’s opposition to the violence in the novelette.

7. Awakening of women and critical thinking

Owing to her opposition to the physical abuse and mental opposition, Nevenka felt her individuality awaken. She was increasingly becoming conscious of her worth as an individual and that she had no obligation to endure the mistreatment from her husband or other family members.

Notably, she had a deep desire to become a mother before she became pregnant, but later found herself less happy than she expected when actually receiving the news. This may be because she realized that only when she gave birth to a Pamuković family child, and especially when it was a boy, could she officially become a part of their family. This changed her desire, which may have stemmed from her awakening and achieving a higher level of awareness.

Although Nevenka could not completely free herself from the injustice that reigned in the Pamuković house, and therefore from the unjust customs in the patriarchal society, as a character in the novelette, she represents a significant step toward the awakening of women. She begins the process of raising women’s awareness with her behavior and later with her perspective. Nevenka did not surrender to fate, succumb to those stronger and more powerful, or allow her husband and members of the Pamuković family to dictate her life. Likewise, we can see that, when Nevenka establishes an oppositional

gaze, she feels relief and self-confidence, which are crucial on the path to awareness and feelings that a person has when they deeply value freedom.

When Nevenka becomes aware of her individuality and sense of self, she can establish an oppositional gaze and thus gain strength. In Andrić's story, Nevenka is a character who becomes aware of herself, as shown through the scenes of her thinking. In this way, Nevenka builds and creates her own self or identity, and that is the selfness that Sartre (1993: 422) refers to: "...from the object-state by transforming it into a We-subject" and further explains: "In this sense the experience of the Us-object refers to that of the We-subject just as the experience of my being-an-object-for-others refers me to the experience of being-an-object-for-others-for-me." This process occurs when the one who is observed and is the object becomes the subject, while the original subject becomes the object. Thus, Nevenka, who was observed, brought herself into the state of the observer through the oppositional gaze.

Nevenka is aware of her inferior position but draws strength and courage to oppose the Pamuković family, just as Murphy (1987: 119) after citing (RICH 1981), further explains and states:

"That our eyes need not be shaped by the oppressor becomes increasingly evident as we claim our freedom in the midst of our historical situation. In the refusal to exist for others and in the development of our consciousness as oppressed beings there emerges a new mode of seeing by which we move out of oppression."

This segment of the novelette represents the awakening of women's consciousness, which, even if not entirely achieved, shows a tremendous change.

Sartre (1993: 438) declares the following: "It is the act which decides its ends and its motives, and the act is the expression of freedom." Here, Sartre explains the essence of action, which is freedom. He believes that whoever is free can take action, and this freedom may refer to that of will and physical freedom because when someone feels the freedom of the spirit, they can think freely without restrictions and restraints or the fear of being sanctioned or punished. Nevenka felt that, even in those conditions, she had the freedom of spirit, making those thoughts possible.

Initially, Nevenka thought about confronting the Pamukovićs, opposing them, and comparing herself to them, only to realize the troubles, misfortunes, and evil in their family. She increasingly thought about them and evidently realized the imperfections in their family and the dominant evil:

"Her first and constant thought was: where did so much evil come from? Without any kindness, pity, or tenderness for anyone and anything that is not Pamuković. As if through the darkness, she trod through their evil and could not see its end, neither its meaning, nor its reason. Only: evil (ANDRIĆ 1981: 147)."

Here, the Pamuković family may be a metaphor for the patriarchal system, implying that Nevenka could be thinking about the evil and unhappiness caused by the patriarchal system. Andrić emphasizes Nevenka's thoughts about the injustice in the Pamuković family, especially toward women and misfortunes that happen to men, suggesting certain conclusions and that the patriarchal system is unhealthy for both women and men. During the time when Nevenka in the novelette lived in the Balkans, specifically

at the end of the 19th century, women did not receive education, which is crucial for broadening horizons and developing self-awareness. Nevenka's thinking is a sign that women should think critically rather than unquestioningly obeying the patriarchal system. Thinking critically is a part of the oppositional gaze because it is a questioning, critical attitude, crucial for reasoning and recognizing integrity and righteousness.

Although Nevenka could not fully understand the root of this evil, she was aware of how it caused deep suffering for women and sometimes led to tragic ends. Nevenka repeatedly thought about the Pamuković family and it seemed to her "that their wickedness and ugliness will never be denounced or loudly expressed, but that forever and in every place they will remain like this, respectable, powerful, indomitable" (ANDRIĆ 1981: 147). Although this behavior of Nevenka was unusual among people at that time, it has the obvious symbolic significance of initial self-awakening for women in Balkan society in the 19th century, signaling the birth of a new woman who refuses to be dominated by the patriarchal system.

Sartre (1993: 483) observes that:

"In addition it is necessary to point out to 'common sense' that the formula 'to be free' does not mean 'to obtain what one has wished' but rather 'by oneself to determine oneself to wish' (in the broad sense of choosing)."

Everyone has the right to decide what they want—that is the freedom of all people, both men and women. This quote captures the essence of freedom, which is the freedom of human thoughts and individual birthrights toward thoughts and desires. In the novelette, Nevenka has desires and individual thoughts stemming from her harsh reality. These thoughts indicate her mental and spiritual awareness, making her a pioneer on the path to achieving freedom. She dared to have a desire and be free in her thoughts, which is the initial step toward awakening and raising awareness.

8. Conclusion

This study analyzed the extended version of the oppositional gaze in Ivo Andrić's novelette "*The Pascha's Concubine*," which primarily concerns the female character Nevenka. We explored the oppositional gaze that Nevenka directed to others from three perspectives: the opposition to the physical violence, mental opposition to the violence, and the awakening of the woman. After observing the plot of the novelette against a specific social-historical background, we discovered that Nevenka in broader context symbolizes the awakening of national consciousness and, narrowly, the awakening of woman. We argue that it is crucial for a woman to show resistance to physical violence in this sense and not allow abuse to any extent, which is the first stage of oppositional gaze analyzed in the current study. We believe that the support of family members is critical, especially the support of a mother for her daughter. Apart from her husband, Nevenka also directed the oppositional gaze to other family members who mistreated her. Furthermore, in the second stage, Nevenka directed the oppositional gaze through her mental strength in her thoughts. Both the first and second stages are equally important and complement each other. In the end, when a woman has previously shown enough courage and boldness to oppose, there follows the third stage of the awakening of the awareness in a woman. Here, she realizes that she has the same human rights as a man because she is an independent

individual by birth, but unfortunately, she has to become aware of them and regain them.

The significance of this novelette lies in showing the strength of a woman and the awareness that there is a possibility of resisting and opposing things that make a woman unhappy. A woman can and should oppose physical abuse and realize that she is not obliged to suffer because of someone's inappropriate behavior; indeed, the highest goal is to awaken her awareness of the fact that she is worthy of respect and appreciation.

The topic in this novelette is timeless and universal because it can be applicable to any era or place worldwide, if there were similar situations. The novelette links women worldwide to a common, unique thread and sends an unequivocal message that every individual has the right to freedom, and if this is unfairly seized from a woman, she should stand opposed and try to make her life truly meaningful and fulfilling.

This way of analyzing a female character in a novelette by a Nobel laureate can contribute to encouraging critical thinking among women in society in the Balkans, as well as worldwide. If, through the reading and analyzing of literature, critical thinking is encouraged, especially among young people but also among all generations, they will have better understanding of gender equality. Raising people's awareness is a long-term but necessary process in the world and society we live in, and thus literature and the analysis of literary works help us tremendously in this conscious awakening.

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OPREČNI POGLED, SUPROTSTAVLJANJE NASILJU I OSVEŠĆIVANJE ŽENE U PRIPOVECI IVA ANDRIĆA „MARA MILOSNICA“

Rezime

Ova studija, inspirisana radom bel huks koja govori o „oprečnom pogledu” i knjigom Džudit Feterli koja govori o „čitanju uz otpor”, uz oslanjanje na dela Fukoa i Sartra, analizira pripovetku Iva Andrića „Mara milosnica”. Fokus naše analize je na četvrtom i petom delu pripovetke kada se pojavljuje snaha Nevenka, koja trpi zlostavljanje od strane svog muža i njegove porodice. Za razliku od drugih žena u pripovesti, Nevenka koristi svoj „oprečni pogled” koji ukazuje na osvešćivanja žene u patrijarhalnom društvu i postojanje kritičkog mišljenja. Istorijski kontekst dodatno oslikava izazove sa kojima se susreću žene patrijarhalnog društva u Bosni tokom smene turske i austrougarske vlasti, i uopšte na Balkanu krajem 19.veka. Naslućuju se težak život naroda i želja za otporom tuđinskoj vlasti. Prema našem mišljenju, Nevenka u širem smislu simbolizuje nadu za nacionalnim oslobođenjem a u užem smislu nadu za oslobođenjem žene, kao i rastuću svest o nepravdom položaju žena u tadašnjem društvu. Nevenkino suprotstavljanje ilustruje njenu želju da prevaziđe ograničenja koja joj nameće patrijarhalni sistem. Studija prati Nevenkin razvoj oprečnog pogleda kroz tri faze: suprotstavljanje fizičkom nasilju, mentalno odupiranje nasilju i buđenje žene. Nevenkina majka na izvestan način simbolizuje rani oblik oprečnog pogleda,

te igra važnu ulogu u Nevenkinom vaspitanju podstičući kod nje stvaranje oprečnog pogleda. Dok se Nevenka suprotstavlja nasilju od strane svog muža, ona istovremeno traga za svojim identitetom. Pripovetka daje naznake da postoji potreba da žene razgovaraju o svojim iskustvima zlostavljanja i kritički sagledaju društvene norme koje im postavlja patrijarhalno društvo. Lik Nevenke u ovoj pripoveci, iako sporedan i retko analiziran, ističe značaj osvešćivanja žene i njenog zalaganja za sebe.

Ključne reči: oprečni pogled; suprotstavljanje nasilju; osvešćivanje žene; čitanje uz otpor; Ivo Andrić