CHARACTER INDIVIDUALIZATION IN SWIFT'S SATIRE *TALE OF A TUB*

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Abstract:
A Tale of a Tub resembles a 'puzzle' in which the structure of the book, the allegory, the satire, the unknown and even the identity of the real author are united into a single element, waiting to be revealed. These characteristics of the book make it possible for the author to build a satire targeting a wide variety of aspects taken from everyday life. The article aims at revealing the way Swift characterizes Peter, Martin and Jack by analyzing their language and the narrator's descriptions. It points out the similarity each of the younger brothers has with the oldest brother, despite their claims and efforts to appear very different from him. Swift's attitude towards them is also highlighted as an indicator of the way the reader should judge these characters.

Keywords:
Individualization**,** device**,** awareness, satire, allegory, Swift.

Introduction

What makes Jonathan Swift's*A Tale of a Tub*an important achievement is the variability of the allegory, present throughout the entire story. A meaningful part of the writer's style, this rhetorical device at the core of his literary work, can be considered as a means exploited by Swift with a view to pointing out the use of pedantic vocabulary, selfishness, different forms of deceit, etc. These characteristics of the book make it possible for the author to build a satire which targets a wide variety of aspects taken from everyday life. In the same context, it is worth mentioning that a prominent role and a meaningful part of the multitude of hidden messages, which, very often, substitutes the allegory, in this book, is played by various deviations from the topic, carried out by the author and his narrator.

The complicated structure and the existence of various topics overlaying each-other comprise an important prominent feature, very useful for creating allegory, irony and satire on different disturbing phenomenaof

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the time. Beside the satiric attack on the religious practices of the church, one of the main topic of this book remains the latter's continuous distancing from the truth, which gradually immerses man in perpetual delusion. Eager to undertake actions which are against their father's will, the three brothers, Peter, Martin and Jack, fail to resist the temptation and constantly refine their argumentative abilities, with a view to pursuing their passions, up to the point when their capability reaches the highest level and they manage to concoct a way out of the will, which would allow them to make changes and add various ornaments to their coats.

Another recurring elementin the book is the incongruity between what the 'modern author', as the narrator of the book, wants to convey and the way he expresses it. The reader often encounters different opinions declared by the modern author, conveyed in thoroughly formal language andelevated speech, which time after time is either used in formal contexts or is interrupted by inappropriate, low register elements. Moreover, this very same discrepancy between the different registers of language used by the narrator makes up another form by means of which the author highlights the pretended formality of the narrator, the lack of his general background and the stability of his personality.

The element of discrepancy, similar to that of deviations, is observable at two different levels. The writer utilizes the former not only in different speeches with a view to pointing out the negative features of the narrator, but also as a special powerful device. Inaddition to this, even though he is an adherent of the simple style of writing, the language particular to this work remains hard to follow. The intermingling of various lexical fields, neologisms, puns and the overuse of Latinisms, added to the cunning use of the graphical elements, imbues the text with a plurality of enigmatic crosslinks, filled with valuable messages. The transmission of the latter would have been impossible if they had been formulated in a more direct way.

The story of the three brothers remains, essentially, different from the other topics pursued by the writer and easier to understand. Martin himselfcan be considered as a reflection of this topic. [1] Besides the drastic change in the way Martin and Jack perceive everything that surrounds them, reflected mainly in their coats, the work conveys another important element

[1] K. Williams, 1973, p. 695.

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of the discussion, which is that of the distinction between the ability to judge and that of being even-tempered in the two younger brothers.

The prominent features of Peter

At the beginning of the story, the reader is acquainted with the oldest brother, Peter, the most cunning. This ability is added to his argumentative oratory, highly efficient in fabricating implied meanings in the structure of the words found in the 'will'. Besidethe changes to their given coats, this makes possible the building of trust in the other two younger brothers.

> "After much Thought, one of the brothers who happened to be more Book-learned than the other two, said he had found an Expedient. 'Tis true, said he, there is Nothing here in this Will, ŧ *totidem verbis*, making mention of Shoulder-knots, but I dare conjecture, we may find them inclusivè, or *totidem syllabis*... . I dare engage we shall make them out tertio modo, or totidem literis." (*A Tale of a Tub*, p. 83)

> "Duke vrarë mendjen për një kohë të gjatë, njëri prej vëllezërve, që, siç doli, merrte vesh, më shumë nga librat se dy të tjerët, tha se kishte gjetur një zgjidhje për këtë problem. "Është e vërtetë, -tha ai, - se në këtë testament s'ka asgjë që të flasë "*totidem verbis*" (lat. Fjalë për fjalë) për xhufkat, por unë marr guximin të them se ne mund t'i gjejmë ato inclusive (përfshirë), *totidem syllabis* (rrokje për rrokje)... . Unë marr guximin të them se ne do t'i gjejmë ato tertiomodo *në mënyrë të tretë – lat.) ose totidem literis (gërmë për gërmë)." (Përralla e Fuçisë, fq. 281)

Possessed by his own desire to make changes to his plain coat, Peter neglects the fulfillment of his father's testament, by employing mythological and allegorical meanings to the words in the will. Likewise, by picking some random letters from the will, he gets to the point of supporting the idea that changes are allowed to be done. As it can be easily noticed from the examples above, this character is so determined to achieve his own aims, that he is not discouraged by his failures, but keeps trying to find a way out. This determination on Peter's side is used by Swift to identify the "resoluteness of the Roman Catholic Church in bringing changes to the original version of their sacred book"[2], in accordance with their own gratification and evolution in life. This character's unrelenting immersion

[2]Frederik N. Smith, *Language and Reality in Swift's A Tale of a Tub*, Ohio State University Press: Columbus, 1979, p. 15.

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into unrealistic justifications is another feature worth highlighting. These justifications are seen as part of a world constructed by his own logic.

The use of Latin terms is also evident in his speech. Expressions like "*totidem verbis"*or "*totidem syllabis"* are made part of Peter's vocabulary, with a view to creating a context which would suit the high level of intellectualism supposed to characterize the behavior and the fluency of a well-educated individual, on the one hand, and that of conveying the pedantic element in his speech, on the other hand. This feature, purposely introduced in Peter's vocabulary, is in fact very similar to that characterizing the modern author. The pompousness through which these two characters express their own ideas and beliefs to the others, and especially to the reader, alongside with their absolute belief in their endless knowledge, are two defining elements of the book. What differentiates their speech is the fact that, while the writer aims at transmitting pompousness and trickery, a typical part of Peter's personality, he seeks at the same time, to convey, in compliance with the context, the features of the modern author. We should add that the translation of these Latinisms is preserved and provided by the Albanian version in parenthesis, in order not to prevent the Albanian reader from enjoying the real effect of their use.

Beside his determination, the manipulative ability that Peter possesses is prominent in convincing his brothers to obey his orders and observations.

> "What then, my Lord, replied first, it seems this is a shoulder of Mutton all this while. Pray Sir says Peter, eat your Vittles and leave off your Impertinence, if you please, for I am not disposed to relish it at present" (*A Tale of a Tub*, p. 118)

> "-Ku është parë e dëgjuar kjo? Kjo na qënka kofshë dashi!" "Dëgjoni, zotërinj, hani ushqimin tuaj dhe lërini paturpësitë, se tani s'ua kam ngenë". Por vëllai tjetër, i provokuar prej seriozitetit të shtirë të zotit Pjetër, nuk mundi të duronte." (Përralla e Fuçisë, fq. 310)

Anyway, despite his ability to bring arguments and to relate all his statements and decisions to the faith in God, the boundary up to which the human brain bears to pass over the observations carried out by itself becomes insurmountableat a certain point. The abovementioned maneuvers and the threats made by Peter seem to lose their effect on his brothers, who find his nonsense totally unacceptable and intolerable. Anyway, the way he reacts to Martin's remarks is indicative of the behavior of a strategist, aware

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that suppressing every revolt of his brothers from the outset is the easiest and best way to rule them.

Another device employed by Jonathan Swift is that of spelling proper nouns in capital letters, in certain contexts: "Even though he negates it in the "Apology", the writer purposefully avoids giving the names of the brothers. "[3] Aiming at providing the reader with yet another clue as to what each of them represents, the writer has seen as more appropriate to give Peter a name only in chapter four, while his two brothers receive their names in chapter six.

> "He told his Brothers, he would have them to know, that he was their Elder, and consequently his Father's sole Heir; Nay, a while after, he would not allow them to call Him, *Brother*, but Mr. *PETER;* And then he must be styl'd, *Father PETER;* and sometimes, My *Lord PETER"* (*A Tale of a Tub*, p. 105)

> "Një ditë ai u tha të vëllezërve se kish ardhur koha t'i njoftonte ata që ai ishte vëllai i tyre më i madh, pra dhe trashëgimtari i vetëm i testamentit të babait të vet; bile pak më vonë ai nuk i lejoi ata ta thërrisnin ndryshe veç *zoti Pjetër*, pastaj ai duhej të *thirrej padre Pjetër* dhe më në fund *imzotPjetër*." (Përralla e Fuçisë, fq. 300)

The plurality of the titles Peter reveals to the reader can be a clear denotative of "Swift's attitude towards papal restraint, inclined towards pretentious respect. "[4] The way the writer juxtaposes Peter and Jack is another element which shows the importance that words have to him. In this context, it is worth highlighting that the way in which the allocation of titles and the progressive improvement in rank they refer to functions differently for Peter and the writer. Thus, to Peter the existence and the determination of the titles with progressive importance is something normally deserved bysomeone with a high level of education. To the writer, on the other hand, their exploitation makes a useful satirical device, employed in order to point out the gradual growth of selfishness, self-assessment and greediness in this character. In addition, this device, among others, draws the reader's attention to the high expectations for artificial respect and delight.

The issues with Peter's personality involve sudden changes in his emotional state, which are accompanied by strange decisions and attitudes.

[3]Frederik N. Smith, 1979, p. 15.
[4]*Ibidem*.

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> "In the Height of his Fits (as it is usual with those who run mad out of Pride) He would call Himself † God Almighty, and sometimes Monarch of Universe... . then he would raise it as high as their Chops, and give them a *damn'd Kick* on the Mouth, which hath ever since been call'd a Salute." (*A Tale of a Tub*, p. 115)

> "Kështu, kur e mbërthenin krizat, në kulm të tyre, në ekstazë (fenomen ky krejt i zakonshëm për ata të cilëve u zë sytë marrëzia e krenaria boshe), ai filloi ta quante veten zot të plotfuqishëm dhe herë-herë monark i universit. … atëherë padreja një të ngritur i bënte këmbës dhe i jepte faqeziut një shkelm vendçe mu në gojë, veprim ky që qysh prej asaj kohe ka marrë emrin salutim." (Përralla e fuçisë, fq. 308)

In examples above, besides the juxtaposing of two different types of words and rhythms within the same context and sentence, which, as a matter of fact, allows the writer to reveal his mastery in establishing ironical situations, way too effectual in expressing more than a single idea simultaneously, we observe the use of an explanatory parenthesis, employed by the modern author. Attempting to put forward his excessive knowledge, he tries to make a clearer explanation of the reasons leading to Peter's strange behavior, by leaving aside his attitude in favor of him and passing to making fun of his reactions. Furthermore, in the attempt of showing off, he breaks the formal rhythm of Latin words by using English monosyllabic words. This usage, on the other hand, serves the writer's other aims, who, as well as pointing out Peter's pretentiousness, manages to convey the lack of the modern author's linguistic background.

Martin – the conscious one

As a younger brother, the influence his opinion has on the other two is way too little compared to that of Peter. What is more, the way he and Jack, the youngest brother, agree with the suggestions and arguments Peter provides about the changes to be made to their coats, by means of various strange methods, is something to be considered more carefully.

> "This Distinction was immediately approved by all; and so they fell again to examine the Will ... This Discovery was also highly commended, upon which they fell once more to the Scrutiny, ..." (*A Tale of a Tub*, p. 87)

> "Ky dallim u pëlqeu që të treve dhe u aprovua në çast: kështu ata filluan përsëri të rrëmonin nëpër testament. Edhe ky zbulim u vlerësua më lart prej tyre dhe përsëri filluan kërkimet, ..." (Përralla e Fuçisë, fq. 281)

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In the fragment above, thesetwo characters are presented as easily manipulated individuals, almost always in the guiding shadow of Peter. Itis undeniable that the acceptance of a similar position gives them the opportunity to enjoy similar benefits to those of their oldest brother. The use of adverbs like 'immediately' in 'immediately approved' and 'highly' in 'highly commended', in the modern author's narration shows they support Peter's suggestions, by approving indirectly their own desires, too. What is more, not only do they agree with what he suggests, but they also help him to achieve what he suggests, as a way towards the realization of their own goals.

Hereinafter, the author reveals to the reader two new brothers, expelled from their common house, but highly aware of their mistake. Outraged by the deceit into which they had been led by Peter, the two brothers seem to become more reasonable and to reflect on the main causes, which leadthem to a totally erroneous way, highly contrary to the attitude they were supposed to have from the beginning.

> "Martin laid the first Hand; at one twitch brought off a large Handful of Points, ... But when he had gone thus far, he demurred a while: He knew very well, there yet remained a great deal more to be done; however, the first Heat being over, his Violence began to cool, and he resolved to proceed more moderately in the rest of the work; ..." (*A Tale of a Tub*, p. 136)

> "Martini vuri dorë i pari dhe, me një të ndukur, ai hoqi një tufë të madhe sumbullash, ... Por si arriti deri këtu, ai mbeti për disa çaste në mëdyshje dhe po nguronte: ai e dinte mjaft mirë se mbetej akoma shumë për të bërë, megjithatë, si iu fashit ai afshi i parë, rrëmbimi i tij filloi të binte, dhe ai vendosi të vepronte më mengadalë dhe më i matur për pjesën tjetër që i mbetej, ..." (Përralla e Fuçisë, fq. 326)

Eager to return to the initial point, the two brothers decide to get rid of every element added to their coats. However, as it can be noticed from the examples, despite being angry and aware of their guilt, the small amount of time this character needs to crystallize his own ideas and to reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of an immediate and careless deliverance from a certain part of the ornaments on the coat remains impressive. In this section of the book, Martin's reactions are conveyed as that of a prudent and careful individual, who does not make hasty decisions on the procedures necessary for the reformation he intends to undergo. Thus, the modern author introduces the reader to a character conscious about the necessity of the changes to be made to the coat, accompanying this with the wisdom of a

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discreet individual, who understands that the possibility of damaging the coat during the harsh process of removal, would have been much more detrimental than the presence of a small, considerable amount on it. This way of reasoning, as a matter of fact, is very similar to that of Peter, according to whom the disapproving of a principle is acceptable when this is done for the sake of a more important one. This can be clearly observed from the way Martin argues his attitude to Jack, by employing part of the will.

Martin's attitude towards the former undertaking, as a representative of the Church of England, is a reflection of the view Swift himself holds towards the position and the attitude of the latter. "[5] Making use of the modern author, Swift manages to express irony and satire towards the speech the 'newly aware' brother holds to Jack, who, on the other hand, is full of 'zeal' in getting rid of everything added to his coat, at all costs.

> "Martin had still proceeded as gravely as he began; and doubtless, would have delivered *an admirable Lecture of Morality*, which might have *exceedingly* contributed to my Reader's Repose, both of Body and Mind: (*the true ultimate End of Ethicks*) …" (*A Tale of a Tub*, p. 139)

> "Martini po vazhdonte po me atë seriozitet që nisi bisedën, dhe do të kishte mbajtur një lekşion të admirueshëm morali, që do ta kishte ndihmuar shumë lexuesin tim për të pushuar pak, si fizikisht dhe mendërisht (*fundi i vërtetë e final i etikës*), ..." (Përralla e Fuçisë, fq. 329)

Besides the reaction of the two brothers, we are introduced to a 'modern author' who has gained a certain amount of ability to make objective, decent descriptions, expressed through a plentitude of words characteristic to lofty speech. The way he conveys the prudent reaction of Martin is interrupted by an ironical parenthesis on ethics, intentionally used by the writer as an indicator of the discrepancies in this character's statements. The objectivity on the modern author's side is, indeed, not likely to be due to his features and background, as a constantly changing character.

The irony and satire expressed by the modern author towards the logic and arguments presented by Martin is also worth mentioning. Despite being in favor of and understanding the latter's statements throughout alarge part of the story, in this passage, the narrator changes his attitude and describes Martin's speech as an "admirable lecture of morality". The adjectives

[5] M. Price, 1973, p. 697.

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'gravely' and 'exceedingly' are indicators of the irony underlying his description. Martin, on the other hand, despite being sympathetic and fair at first sight, cannot avoid being totally similar to Peter, not only in accompanying his arguments with passages taken from the will, but also in his hidden objectives, beyond his attitude towards them.

The characterization and linguistic individualization of Jack

As mentioned above, Jack is the one who takes the harsher actions towards his coat. Full of hatred for Peter, who had constantly deceived him, he shows all his resentment on the coat.

> "Having thus kindled and enflamed himself as highly as possible, and by Consequence, in a delicate Temper for beginning a reformation, he set about the work immediately and in three Minutes, made more Dispatch than Martin had done in as many Hours... . For, (Courteous Reader) you are given to understand, that Zeal is never so highly obliged, as when you set it a Tearing: and Jack, ... in a great Rage, he tore off the whole Piece, Cloth and all, and flung it into the kennel, and furiously thus continuing his Career; " (*A Tale of a Tub*, p. 139)

> "Duke i futur vetes xixat në kulm dhe, si pasojë, i prirë për të bërë një reformë, ai në çast filloi nga puna dhe në tri minuta shqepi shumë më tepër nga ç'kishte mundur të shqepte Martini për shumë orë me rradhë... . Se, i dashur lexues, ju duhet ta kuptoni se zellit, më shumë se kurdoherë tjetër, i detyrohemi kur kemi për të prishur diçka, dhe Xheku, ... në zemërim e sipër, e grisi tërë pallton dycopash dhe e flaku në kanal, pastaj iu kthye të vëllait po me atë furi, ..." (Përralla e Fuçisë, fq. 327-328)

The consequences of such an irritation are sure not to be good and effective on the coat. The writer specially emphasizes the Jack's rampage by means of verbs such as 'kindled' and 'enflamed', coordinated by 'and', which in Albanian are conveyed with the single simpler expression "duke i futur vetes xixat". Similarly, he guides the reader towards the negative side of a similar reaction by using the expression: 'and by consequence, in a delicate temper for beginning a reformation', where the effect of the adjective 'delicate' is much heavier than its surface meaning. On this point, the reader is left looking for other problematic events, the transmission of which remains a duty of the modern author and his 'objectivity'.

The entire passage, in fact, is dedicated to the desire for improvement, which, under the pretense of 'zeal', transforms Jack into an unreasonable individual who cannot control his rage. The writer juxtaposes Martin and Jack with the intention of highlighting their trickery, lack of balance, evil

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reasoning, unrestrained anger, adaptation and transformation. It is Martin, complacent with the logical and argumentative abilities he possesses, who in the end becomes the best endowed of the three brothers. His nature asan individual equipped with the traits and outlook of the wise people of the time points to another element, that of people who are partly aware of the world around them. The brother's allegorical association with the church, Martin's and Jack's awareness of being misled and their desire to return to the starting point constitute a really useful device for Swift. Onthe other hand, he brings to the reader's focus the fact that "individual awareness and his effort to leave the dream world and the desire to fulfill our passions, in some cases, is not enough" due to the fact that "after a certain period of time, distinct changes can become part of man's personality" and, as such, "avoiding them becomes completely impossible. "[6]

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that while Peter is attributed several titles, Jack is given only nicknames.

> "And now the little Boys in the Streets began to salute him with several Names. Sometimes they would call Him, * *Jack the Bald;* sometimes, † *Jack with a Lanthorn;* sometimes, || *Dutch Jack;* sometimes, * *French Hugh;* sometimes, † *Tom the Beggar;* and sometimes, || *Knocking Jack of the North*. And it was under one, or some, or all of these Appellations (which I leave the Learned Reader to determine) that he …" (*A Tale of a Tub*, p. 141-142)

> "Tani fëmijët e rrugëve filluan ta përshëndetnin me emra nga më të ndryshmit. Shpesh atë e thërrisnin Xhek Tullaci, ndonjëherë tjetër Xheku me fener, herë-herë Xhek Holandezi herë të tjera Hafi i Francës dhe më në fund Xhek Boksieri i Veriut. Dhe është pikërisht me njërin ose tjetrin prej këtyre emrave (këtë po ia lemë lexuesit të nderuar ta gjejë se cili ishte pikërisht ky emër), që ai ..." (Përralla e Fuçisë, fq. 330-331)

Attentionis drawn to the lack of balance between the addressing forms each of these two brothers receives. Not only does Peter award himself several titles with growing importance, but he also obliges his brothers to use them. What is more, we should note that the writer italicizes each of the nicknames attributed to Jack, accompanying each of them with an explanation. This helps reflect the evident lack of balance between them and highlight names, which bear a special importance to the writer and hidden meanings intended for the reader. If we start from the assumption that "the

[6] K. Williams, 1973, p. 695.

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name of an individual is his most precious property, the presence of a series of names belonging to a single character, in this book, undermines a number of identities for the same person. "[7] The words of the modern author, who leaves the attribution the Jack's name to the reader, illustrate precisely this idea.

Proper names, as a matter of fact, have the tendency "to shift, to be free and not necessarily to refer to people. "[8]In reference to this, it can be added that the numerous names in this work do not only represent the disruption between Catholics and Protestants, but also reveal the undeniable truth according to which, in spite of their labels, they remain indeed the same thing. In relation to the same phenomenon, it is worth mentioning the writer's mastery in implementing the impact of his message and, at the same time, in making fun of the modern author's lack of imagination in creating so worthless nicknames for Jack.

Conclusion

Peter, the learned brother, is the one who manages to find a way out of every situation and to accomplish all his goals and desires, by way of relevant arguments derived from his father's will. His greediness makes him exercise his persuasive skills and try to impose his power on his brothers. He resembles the narrator of the book in the language and rhythm they both use. Moreover, to imposing power and respect, he attributes himself various titles, each of which designates a higher social level.

The irony and satire directed by the modern author towards the logic and arguments presented by Martin clearly representthe instability of this character, on the one hand, and the intention of the latter not to be completely disconnected from Peter and his influence, on the other hand. This character is the reflection of the man who pretends to be totally aware of his actions and reactions, but in reality remains deceived, as no one can escape from the seduction of the real world.

Jack, the most rebellious one, is shown to be guided by the power of 'zeal', being left in the end with no coat at all. He seems to lack the ability to judge and reflect for himself, so he is only given nicknames by the narrator of the book. His temper is shown to be very similar to that of Peter, and in this context, they resemble eachother very much.

[7] Frederik N. Smith, 1979, p. 17.
[8] Frederik N. Smith, 1979, p. 17.

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The discrepancy between Swift's suggestions on the advantages of the use of simple language and the actual writing is another noticeable feature of this work. This serves Swift's satirical purpose of using language to guide the reader towards the discovery other connotative meanings of the words. It is by the same means that the writer leads the reader to find similarities between Peter and Martin or Peter and Jack. This is clearly indicative of the relationship between them as descendants of the same family.

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