

Fariba NOORBAKHSH (Olyaii or NoorBakhsh) UDK 821.111.09 Fowles, J.-31

No. 31, First Floor, Boostan (Shahid Moshayekh)
Alley, Bahar St., Karaj, Iran. Postal Code: 3153745487
fnoorbakhsh@ut.ac.ir

Pregledni članak

Primljeno: 1. rujna 2016.

Prihvaćeno: 1. prosinca 2016.

Fazel Asadi AMJAD

Kharazmi University
The Department of Literature and Foreign Languages
Enghelab St., Mofateh Jonoubi Ave., Tehran, Iran
fazel4313@yahoo.com

SARAH: THE HISTORIOGRAPHER OF THE PAST AND THE PRESENT OF THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT'S WOMAN

Summary

The article argues that Sarah, the title character of Fowles' novel *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969), resists the oppressive ideology of her time by *writing* her own historiography. In the process, not only does she emplot a tragic past for herself but she also insists on being identified as a depraved woman in the present. The analysis attempts to highlight the fact that Sarah, like a historiographer, selects the referents for her historiography—Mrs. Poulteney and Charles—and imposes her emplotment and prefiguration on her historiography of both her past and present. Employing Hayden White's theories of postmodern historiography and Linda Hutcheon's concept of historiographic metafiction, the paper illustrates ways in which Sarah historicizes her own past through tragic emplotment and metaphoric prefiguration of her narrative in order to convey her anarchist ideology, at the same time portraying herself as the "Woman" who has been abandoned by the French Lieutenant. Furthermore, by means of her historiography of the present, she imposes her liberal ideology through satiric emplotment of her fictional construct and ironic prefiguration of the referents of textualized oppression in society. She ironically puts Mrs. Poulteney and Charles in the situations in which their oppressive ideology is unraveled; in this way, she satirizes the codes of behavior of her present time.

Keywords: John Fowles, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, postmodern historiography, impositionism, emplotment, prefiguration

Introduction

Sarah writes the story of the past and the present of the French Lieutenant's Woman. As a historian, she is in need of referents. In her impositional historiography of the past, she emplots a tragic narrative—her oral history—and superficially portrays herself as a metaphor of sin and the epitome of anarchist ideology. By surrendering herself to Charles, she metafictionally proves that her historiography of the past is fake. Yet, her real ideology is imposed through her historiography of the present. The readers of her historiography of the past—Mrs. Poulteney and Charles—later become the textual referents of her historiography of the present. She uses her historiography of the past to historicize the present. In her historiography of the present, she imposes her liberal ideology by emplotting the Victorian age satirically while ironically selecting the textual referents of the follies of the age as the figures with whom she is in a direct relationship. Furthermore, while the product of her past historiography proves to be false, that of her present one is indeterminate. The point is that in neither the product is attained authentically. In her historiography of the present, she attempts to address the process of construction of the French Lieutenant's Woman not by the French Lieutenant but by the ideological and masculine perspectives of the present society. Due to her liberal ideology, she reacts against the age for which her being a “Woman” would suffice to practice its oppressive and possessive desires. Her ideology is implied through her histories of the French Lieutenant's “Women.”

Critics have employed different approaches in their analyses of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Joanne V. Creighton has studied the novel in light of Reader-Response Criticism, and Deborah Bowen reads the novel narratologically. Dwight Eddins has explored the existentialist overtones of the novel; Robert Siegle has adopted the poststructuralist views of Barthes and Foucault to study the metafictional implications of the novel, focusing on Chapter 35; Silvio Gaggi has found analogies between Fowles' fiction and metatheatrical aspects of the plays of Brecht and Pirandello with regard to their form and content. Frederick M. Holmes has explored the metafictional layers of the story through the paradoxical position of the narrating author who blends the real and the artificial self-consciously. Of course, he mistakenly identifies the narrator and the Fowles-like character within the novel as the same person. Patricia Hagen's views are, to some extent, in line with the present article. She calls the novel “a treatise on the construction of meaning” which follows “the processes of reading and writing” as two necessary and inseparable elements of meaning-making (439). Moreover, in her view, the novel emphasizes the

textuality of the world in the sense that “we are all readers and writers of our lives, constructing and deconstructing our worlds in light of our experiences, knowledge, beliefs, conventions, and the needs” (439). Likewise, “[w]e reread and revise our pasts in light of the present, our presents in light of the past” (439). Such a construction leads to the fictionalization of our lives due to our alteration of our past or presents (or even futures) “to reveal or conceal, to gain power or approximate truth” (439). With reference to composition theory, which prioritizes process over product, she argues that the novel “reminds us that meaning is created not only by the writer’s process but also by the reader’s” (441). Hagen is true in her description of Sarah as a writer who continually revises and fictionalizes her history to write or construct her future (444). It is mentioned that Sarah’s reading of Mrs. Poultney, Charles, and Victorian conventions leads her to write her life (445). Moreover, she is able to read what the Victorian society has written for her future as a wife, or a governess, or a prostitute (445). Since rewriting the Victorian convention or an acceptable future is impossible for her, she decides to “rewrite her life in the margin” (139). Hagen’s article is very informative and comprehensive with regard to the notions of reading, writing, rewriting, and revising cultures and characters, but her article does not provide the reader with adequate proofs from the novel, especially concerning Sarah as the belated protagonist. Moreover, Sarah’s historiography is just hinted at and not discussed. These scholars, along with many others—Cristina Malinoiu Patrascua, Hind Reda Jamal Al-Leil, included—have mostly analyzed the novel in terms of its meta-fictional tendencies; however, its historiographical perspective, focusing upon Sarah, has not been fully explored. This study hopes to fill in this gap and to widen the scope of studying historiographic metafiction. The approach of this article can be used for further analyses of the other historians within the novel—the narrator as an example—and John Fowles’ fiction in general, as well as the other writers of historiographic metafiction including Graham Swift and A. S. Byatt.

Hayden White’s Conception of Historiography

For postmodernists, History is sublime (Munslow 166, Brown 113). As a neither narrativized nor structured discipline, History is not presentable or knowable (Elias 42). According to Elias, due to its sublimity, the only possible way to articulate History is through “representation” (97). Hayden White argues that “historical narratives” are “verbal fictions,” as Ankersmit puts it (205). Ankersmit relates the word “fiction” to “something that is being ‘made’

or ‘invented’ in the way that one may say that the scientist ‘makes’ or ‘invents’ a theory” and also to “fictional literature” which has “the connotation of being ‘fictional’ and [is] not in agreement with actual fact” (205). White differentiates between History—the sublime—and history—fiction, and rejects the possibility of acquiring historical knowledge. It is not the existence of the past or referentiality but the possibility of its faithful capturing that White denies (see Munslow 117, 140). In his view, there is no necessary correspondence between the narrative representations of the past and the past itself (see also Iggers 548, Munslow 12). Like Bolingbroke, Foucault, and Barthes, White opposes the scientific approach towards history, regards it as a literary discipline, and attributes narrative structures to historiography (Brown 105, Munslow 61, 150, Southgate 544). According to Munslow, White regards historiography “as much a product of the historian’s society and culture as it is a rational interpretation of available evidence” (159).

The facts, not the events, are a historian’s sources (Munslow 71). In the same vein, E. H. Carr differentiates between events and facts (see Brown 26). Postmodern historiography does not deny the happening of an event in the past; however, this approach rejects the possibility of a truthful portrayal of events. In other words, the past events are available in the shape of facts as their expression (Brown 27). As an intertextual act, historiography makes use of textual relics of the past as its referent. According to White, the historian investigates the already existent emplotments of the past and not the past events themselves (qtd. in Munslow 73). In other words, the historian studies the present text to investigate the way the past is “historicized” (Jenkins 86). The major role of postmodern historians is “to narrate a story based upon their understanding of other narratives and their pre-existing interpretations” (Munslow 24). In the process of describing the past, the historian takes advantage of the referent to create “a plausible historical text rather than *the* past,” as Munslow puts it (149).

The relationship between form and content is the focus of postmodern historiography. According to postmodern historiography, the form of the sources is as important as their content. For postmodern historiographers, instead of projecting the content of the past, history projects its form (see Munslow 19, 32, 99). White considers historical narratives as “verbal fictions, the contents of which are more invented than found and the forms of which have more in common with their counterparts in literature than they have with those in the sciences” (qtd. in Iggers 10).

In White's model of historical explanation, the form of the historical narrative prefigures the content of the past. White views impositionism and prefiguration, and not natural laws or principles of empiricism, as the roots of historical explanations (see Elias 37, Munslow 142, 153). In White's view, the historian's narrative is prefigured by tropes and modes of emplotment, argument, and ideological implication that he selects for his historical explanation (see Ankersmit 206, Jenkins 87). Accordingly, the historian is not a discoverer of the actual happenings of the past; instead, he is an interpreter who inevitably selects the events from the referent; he also has to choose the construction of his explanation from prefigured strategies of explanation for his "ideologically-structured narrative," (Elias 36-37). The historian figuratively reconstructs the past, and the criterion of judgment of his/her historical account would be his/her *way* of describing the events. As a result, the historian inevitably imposes *a* meaning upon the past for "explanatory, ideological and political reasons" (Munslow 33, 153).

According to Munslow, the historian's objectivity is challenged by postmodern historians. Postmodern historiography acknowledges the impositionism of the historian (102–3). Since the historians write texts, they "inevitably and primarily impose a narrative or textualized shape on the past" (Munslow 26). In the view of postmodern historiography, the historian is regarded as the "mediator" between the past and the present (Brown 133). Because of the historian's invention of a narrative to explain the past, his imposition upon the past is inevitable. Postmodern historiography thus indicates that the existence of history depends on the narrative that the historian imposes on the referent and addresses the imposition of the historian while questioning the possibility of recovering the intention of the author in a source or an interpretation (Munslow 67–8, 118). The historian's interpretation, which is just one among the many, is subject to change with the new impositions as the historian selects, omits, and orders some events to produce a narrative explanation (Munslow 118, 146).

For White, the tropes stand for the stages through which we futilely try to understand the world. White agrees with Vico and Foucault that the explanatory power of narrative lies in its tropic structure (see Munslow 137, 174). He identifies four rhetorical tropes of metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and / or irony in historical explanations (31, 426). According to him, the historian, intentionally or not, but inevitably, renders the events tropically to give meaning to the referent and to interpret the past that he purports to explain (see Elias 78). In Munslow's words, he/she examines the relationship between "the tropes and social and cultural practice" (72). In White's

view, the episteme of a period and its social changes can be recognized and explained through its “tropic prefiguration”. Moreover, for him, the plot is imposed upon history by the historian. In a historical explanation, according to White, emplotment is preferred over depiction of what actually happened (qtd. in Munslow 11, 71, 159). In other words, explanations of events and arguments are generated from the emplotments (White 30). These modes of emplotment determine the meaning of a story. In White’s view, the past is real but chaotic; therefore, order and meaning are imposed upon it by the historian’s narrative emplotment, which inevitably reflects the linguistic, rhetorical, and ideological conventions of its time of construction (qtd. in Iggers, 548). Such a conception does not mean that White devalues narrative; instead, he highlights narrative as the focus of history. Moreover, the past finds meaning—becomes understandable—through narrative emplotment of the historian who has imposed the ideological position of his time on the past. In White’s formal model of historical explanation, diverse meanings of the past events arise out of different emplotments of the same events. In other words, history emerges from different historical explanations (see Munslow 66, 142, 146, 162).

Borrowing Northrop Frye’s theory of fiction, White identifies four major archetypal plot structures that are employed in the historians’ narratives: “romance, tragedy, comedy, and satire” (7). By selecting the emplotment of romance, the historian shows that the success of the historical agent in his quests is achieved through his unequalled power. The satirical emplotment depicts the historical agents as “inferior, a captive of their world, and destined to a life of obstacles and negations” (Munslow 158). In the tragic emplotment, hamartia causes the fall of the hero, whereas the emplotment of comedy depicts the hero’s triumph over obstacles (9). No event is tragic or comic by nature. In White’s view, the historian selects a specific type of emplotment consistent with the episteme of his time of construction of historical explanation (10-11).

Sarah’s Look of “a Century to Come”

Hutcheon’s idea that “Sarah is the narrating novelist’s surrogate within the novel” can be modified by taking her as the surrogate of the Fowles-like, twentieth century impresario who is present in the narrative (qtd. in Holmes 195). The narrating novelist offers his/her observation of the age from his/her position within the twentieth century while the impresario—like Sarah—is there *in* the nineteenth century. Sarah does not belong to her age. She is like

a liberal historian who goes back to the past to rewrite it critically. Neither her capacities nor her appearance go with the time and the class she is located in: “she was born with a computer in her heart” (Fowles 52); she has read literature much more than her peers (53); to the young men of her class, she looks “too select to marry,” and those of the higher class consider her “too banal” (53); even the shape of her face does not correspond with the taste of the age (Fowles 10, 119); her clothing at the beginning of the narrative is at odds with the fashion of “those past forty years” (Fowles 9); and Charles finds the look of the next century in Sarah’s face (Fowles 180). In the “unforgettable face” of Sarah, Charles sees no trace of qualities which are normally ascribed to the women of the age: “no artifice . . . no hypocrisy, no hysteria, no mask; and above all, no sign of madness” (Fowles 10). Seeing Sarah sleeping, Charles came to think of the way Sarah deviated from the standards of behavior of her time: “He could not imagine what, besides despair, could drive her, in an age where women were semistatic, timid, incapable of sustained physical effort, to this wild place” (71). The narrator mentions that Sarah does not wear “crinoline,” not because of her “knowledge of the latest London taste,” but due to “oblivion” (Fowles 9); it can be added that since Sarah belongs to the century to come, she follows the fashion of *her* time and not that of the Victorian Age.

Linda Hutcheon’s idea that the quintessential concepts in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* are “freedom” and “power” seems convincing (*Poetics* 45). Sarah deconstructs the past and the present and puts them into a plausible fictive construct. In fictionalizing both the past and the present, she seeks to surpass both through her authority as a writer; in other words, she revolts against the past and the present by attributing fictionality to both. Deborah Byrd analyzes Sarah’s progressive trend from a victimized rebellion to an autonomous figure. However, this view can be questioned if Sarah’s initial plans are taken into consideration. Sarah is introduced to the narrative as an *already* autonomous rebellion. Therefore, we agree more with Tony E. Jackson’s interpretation, for whom Sarah is “a suddenly occurring new kind of self,” and not a part of the evolutionary species. According to Jackson, the concept of progress is attributed to Sarah more than to the other characters. Therefore, as far as postmodern evolutionary theory is concerned, evolution does not necessarily mean progress towards man’s present condition (227). Also, Jackson’s assertion that Sarah’s “extent” of plans is not clear enough seems convincing, and it can be added that, regardless of the product of her plans, she enjoys the process of authority (227). At the beginning of the narrative, we see her seeking her means of acquiring authority.

Having been deprived of her freedom by the oppressive authorities of her father and society, Sarah—with her profound insight and education (Fowles 53)—takes advantage of her “passion and imagination” to structure a fictional world with which she can triumph over power structures of her time (Fowles 189). She weaves the fictional past and present for herself in order to expose the textually constructed nature of both. Instead of representing her past, as an author, she *presents* it tragically and ironically; she takes the same procedure to structure the present.

For her historiography of her past, Sarah fabricates her own identity and past and willingly lets herself be introduced as “poor Tragedy” or “The French Lieutenant’s . . . Woman” (Fowles 9). In order to practice her liberal ideology, she emplots her history in the tragic mode and prefigures her present story ironically. She provides the story of her faked fall with tragic qualities. Her desire to arouse sympathy in Charles is misinterpreted by Dr. Grogan as a symptom of hysteria. For her tragic emplotment, she introduces herself as a tragic heroine who grandly welcomes her punishment since she has willfully surrendered to the French Lieutenant (Fowles 174). For her ironic prefiguration, she attempts to exhibit and prove her uncommitted guilt by evading, disobeying, or changing many rules and norms—she refuses to answer Mrs. Poulteney’s questions related to the French Lieutenant (Fowles 37); she—through tact and not disease—changes the authorized time of her outgoing (Fowles 59); she keeps going to the Cobb in spite of Mrs. Poulteney’s prohibiting command (Fowles 63); she repeatedly plans to visit Charles (Fowles 99, 138). Moreover, she displays a totally false image of herself—she lies about her sinful relationship with the lieutenant to Charles (Fowles 173); she claims that she is envious of Ernestina and Mrs. Talbot (142, 179), and she makes Mrs. Fairley see her in Undercliff (250).

As a historiographer of the present, Sarah investigates the relics of the Victorian age. She attempts to highlight the *textual* nature of these relics. Looking for the proper referent, she chooses Mrs. Poulteney and Charles because of the former’s claims of moral observation and the latter’s humanitarian gestures. She is aware that such claims and gestures are the façade for the textualized oppression. Accordingly, Mrs. Poulteney’s piety becomes the means of subjugation of individuals and Charles’ human sympathy proves to be at the service of his possessive desire. Ironically, she negates the consecutive religious and secular powers of Mrs. Poulteney and Charles by making herself open to them. She takes the role of the savior of Mrs. Poulteney’s soul (Fowles 55) and the object of desire of Charles’ body in order to highlight the oppressive nature of both. In other words, she subverts the notions to which

she is highly attached. Sarah criticizes the past for textualizing today's power structures; meanwhile, she accuses the present society of concealment of its textuality due to its hypocrisy.

As the referents of her historiography, Sarah selects two figures who are seemingly poles apart, Mrs. Poulteney and Charles. Mrs. Poulteney and Charles, respectively, represent the fittest exemplars of religious and secular tastes of the age. Both of them have a self-acclaimed sense of superiority. Mrs. Poulteney's superiority is conveyed through her literal distance—the “commanding position” of her house (Fowles 18)—and that of Charles is displayed through his intellectual one—his Darwinism. Sarah uses her talent of history making to expose the hypocritical prudery of Mrs. Poulteney, Charles, and Victorian society in general. In this way, she can attain her desired freedom as a writer. She tells Charles that the other women cannot understand the freedom she has given herself, and of course not even Charles comprehends “this talk of freedom” (Fowles 175). Not only does she not try to prove her chastity to society but she also puts herself in the situations which magnify her perversity of social norms of the time. Therefore, she confesses her faked sin to society: “I did it so that people *should* point at me, *should* say, there walks the French Lieutenant's Whore” (Fowles 175). Moreover, she decides to live in Mrs. Poulteney's house not because of its “view” or her “penury,” as the narrator claims (Fowles 37). Instead, there, she can acquire opportunities to convey her liberal outlooks by deviating from the social and moral codes. Besides, she chooses Charles not because of his being “the least prejudiced judge” (Fowles 144) or a “gentleman” (Fowles 141), as she claims and he thinks he is; instead, she chooses him to “reduce” him to what he really is, as the solicitor later on tells him (417). In her labeling the French Lieutenant as “insincere,” as a “liar,” who “like a lizard, changes color with its surroundings,” who in that inn was “what he was,” she ironically characterizes her referent, Charles (Fowles 173). From another perspective, Mrs. Poulteney and Charles take the role of the explicit and implicit contextual referents of the oppression of the power structures.

Mrs. Poulteney accepts Sarah to show her charity to the public. Sarah is aware of Mrs. Fairley's “suitably distorted” reports of her conduct outside the house; however, she continues going out (Fowles 61). Ironically, Sarah's “influence” upon Mrs. Poulteney surpasses that of Mrs. Fairley (Fowles 61). Although Mrs. Poulteney is not usually forgiving with regard to duties, it is Sarah who convinces her not to fire a maid who had forgotten to water the fern (Fowles 55). Moreover, her voice gradually replaces that of Mrs. Poulteney; for example, reading the Bible to Mrs. Poulteney, Sarah's voice made the servants

cry, the same servants whom Mrs. Poulteney could not “reduce . . . to that state of utter meekness and repentance which she considered their God (let alone hers) must require” (Fowles 57). Of course, the narrator adds that Sarah’s way of reading the Bible signifies her reading through the follies of the Victorian Church (Fowles 57). Ironically, Sarah is the one who carries Mrs. Poulteney’s tracts to the citizens of Lyme who learn more from looking into her eyes than from reading the pamphlets (Fowles 59).

Regarding his physical appearance, Charles is a man of “a very superior taste” (Fowles 4). Looking “through” him, Sarah comes to identify him as her second referent (Fowles 10). The narrator explains that Sarah was able to look through people because “she saw them as they were and not as they tried to seem” (Fowles 52). In fact, Charles becomes the target of her “lance” (Fowles 10). Sarah tries to unravel Charles’ hidden prejudice concerning his social status. In Sarah’s eyes, Charles looks like the pupils of the seminary; they “looked down on her; and she looked up through them” (Fowles 53). Likewise, Sarah understands that Charles looks down on her by establishing a distance between, “to remind her of their difference of station,” as the narrator argues according to Charles’ perspectives (Fowles 164). Through her ironic prefiguration, she literally affirms what she figuratively negates. Sarah tells Charles that she admired the French Lieutenant’s bravery not knowing that “men can be both brave and very false” (167). Charles’s *bravery* in confronting the society proves to be a hypocritical maneuver. Likewise, his humanitarian claims are rejected through his falsehood towards Ernestina. Although he does not tell a lie to Ernestina, superficially due to Sarah’s request, he conceals his meetings with Sarah from her through silence since “silence seemed finally less a falsehood in that trivial room” (Fowles 89). Talking of the French Lieutenant, Sarah foreshadows Charles’ prejudice in spite of his self-expression: “Perhaps I heard what he did not mean” (168). Charles does not understand her *not* because of his not being a “woman” or a “governess,” as Sarah distractively asserts; in fact, the root of Charles’ misunderstanding her lies in his blindness towards his own prejudice and hypocrisy. As the heir to a baronet, he is cautious not to threaten his social position. When Sarah tells him that “[n]o gentleman who cares for his good name can be seen with the scarlet woman of Lyme,” he acknowledges his indifferent attitude towards the opinions of bigots like Mrs. Poulteney and their “show of solemn piety” (122). Yet, in several occasions, he is afraid of being seen or judged by the others (Fowles 143, 184, 247, 259). With Charles’ relief over not being viewed by Sam and Mary, Sarah smiles. Charles takes it as the “revelation” of her “not total” sadness while, in fact, she smiles because she has found a referent for

her historiography (Fowles 185). Then, while Charles was watching Sam and Mary, he comes to notice that Sarah has been observing his spying look (Fowles 187). For Charles, the provincial life is without “mystery” or “romance,” as he tells Ernestina (Fowles 10). By contaminating her history, Sarah reveals Charles’ freight of exposition of his own “mystery” or “romance.” At Mrs. Poulteney’s house, Charles defends Mrs. Talbot against Mrs. Poulteney’s and Ernestina’s accusation of taking Mary’s misconduct for granted. There, “[f]or the first time, [Sarah] did not look through him, but at him” (Fowles 106). She knows that he does not say what he believes in.

In White’s view, the same relics can cause the emergence of a number of “equally plausible narratives,” as Jenkins puts it (86). And we see that all the three endings can equally be the plausible products of Sarah’s process of historiography. In the first ending of the novel, Sarah’s fate is unclear; it is reported that Charles and Ernestina marry, and they have “let us say seven children” among whom the sons are driven to business (337). In the second product, Charles finds Sarah, “possesses” her, and discovers her innocence, breaks his engagement with Ernestina, goes abroad, receives a telegraph about Sarah, comes back, finds her as a “New Woman,” and comes to understand that he has a daughter. It seems that they are united after all. The third narrative goes back for fifteen minutes, and Charles, understanding that Sarah has been aware of his broken engagement, accuses her of selfishness and bigotry and leaves her. Different endings of the novel convey the priority that is given to the process or the form of Sarah’s historiography over its product or content.

Conclusion

The present study has employed Hayden White’s model of historical explanation to foreground the role of Sarah as an impositionist historiographer whose liberal ideology is inscribed in her explanation of the Victorian Age. For Hayden White, there is no distinguishing element between history and fiction, and Sarah proves to be both a fiction writer and a historiographer. She deconstructs her past through a tragic emplotment and metaphoric prefiguration of her narrative of the past and highlights her anarchical ideology. With Charles’—and the reader’s—recognition of the constructed nature of the facts, the narrative comes to be known not as the history of Sarah but as a satire directed against the follies of the Victorian Age. To practice her liberal ideology, Sarah adopts the satiric mode for her emplotment of history / story and makes extensive use of ironic prefiguration to give meaning to the referents she has selected for her explanation of the age. The emphasis is on the *process* of her authorship and not the *product*. While the process of her construction

is manifested fully, its product is problematized; hence, the self-conscious triple endings of the novel.

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SARAH: HISTORIOGRAFKINJA PROŠLOSTI I SADAŠNJOSTI ŽENE FRANCUSKOG PORUČNIKA

Sažetak

Fariba NOORBAKHS (Olyaii or NoorBakhsh)

No. 31, First Floor, Boostan (Shahid M. shayekh)

Alley, Bahar St., Karaj, Iran. Postal Code: 3153745487

fazel4313@yahoo.com

Fazel Asadi AMJAD

Sveučilište Kharazmi

Odsjek za književnost i strane jezike

Enghelab St., Mofateh Jonoubi Ave., Teheran, Iran

fnoorbakhsh@ut.ac.ir

U članku se tvrdi da se Sarah, naslovni lik Fowlesova romana *Ženska francuskog poručnika* (1969), opire opresivnoj ideologiji svojega vremena pišući vlastitu historiografiju. Na taj način ona fabulira tragičnu prošlost za sebe i inzistira na tome da ju se percipira kao izopačenu ženu u sadašnjosti. Analiza pokušava istaknuti činjenicu da Sarah, poput povjesničara, odabire referente za svoju historiografiju – gđu Poulteney i Charlesa – i nameće svoju fabulaciju i prefiguraciju historiografije vlastite prošlosti i sadašnjosti. Koristeći se teorijom postmoderne historiografije Haydena Whitea i konceptom historiografske metafikcije Linde Hutcheon, rad prikazuje načine na koje Sarah historizira vlastitu prošlost kroz tragičnu fabulaciju i metaforičku prefiguraciju svoje pripovijesti kako bi istaknula svoju anarhističku ideologiju i istodobno sebe prikazala kao „žensku“ koju je napustio francuski poručnik. Nadalje, pomoću svoje historiografije sadašnjosti ona nameće svoju liberalnu ideologiju satiričkom fabulacijom svog fikcionalnog konstrukta i ironičnom prefiguracijom referenata tekstualiziranog društvenog ugnjetavanja. Na ironičan način, ona gospođu Poulteney i Charlesa stavlja u situacije u kojima se njihova represivna ideologija razotkriva; na taj način satirizira kodove ponašanja u svojoj sadašnjosti.

Ključne riječi: John Fowles, *Ženska francuskog poručnika*, postmoderna historiografija, impoziranje, fabulacija, prefiguracija