



**Վ. ԲՐՅՈՒՍՈՎԻ ԱՆՎԱՆ ՊԵՏԱԿԱՆ
ՀԱՄԱԼՍԱՐԱՆ
ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
ИМЕНИ В. БРЮСОВА
BRUSOV STATE UNIVERSITY**

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ON THE AUTHENTIC PORTRAYAL OF THE CONCEPT “GUILT”

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Keywords: *concept guilt, author’s world picture, admission or rejections of guilt, constructive and destructive manifestation of guilt*

The article explores the distinctive features of the verbalization of the author's perception of the concept of “guilt” through the prism of Sidney Sheldon’s novels. The investigation carried out in the article dwells on revealing the individual perception and representation of the concept of “guilt”. The study of the data extracted from Sidney Sheldon’s novels allows us to disclose different ways of actualization of the concept in question with the aim of revealing the dynamics of the concept of “guilt” in the author’s world picture.

The analysis of the concept of “guilt” from different perspectives finds its reflection both in the lexicographic content of the concept under study and its verbal actualization in different contexts. To go deeper into the survey we find it important to investigate the concept of “guilt” from different perspectives: psychological, religious, and philosophical.

Guilt is a moral emotion believed to play an essential role in the generation and manifestation of human behaviour. The concept of guilt with its functions, causes, advantages, and disadvantages has been thoroughly investigated in psychology. Guilt is a relationship protecting emotion, which comes about when behaviours that threaten a relationship are either performed or contemplated. Because guilt results from unfavorable assessments of one’s behavior or anticipated behavior, it is considered a self-conscious emotion (Tangney 1990).

The primary functions of guilt are:

- transgression against others
- self-regulatory failure
- causing resentment in others even when such resentment is not one’s fault (Baumeister 1994).

Not only is guilt a common subject of study in psychology, but guilt is significantly related to religious affiliation. Guilt in Christian Bible is not

merely an emotional state but is a legal state of deserving punishment. The Hebrew Bible uses a single word “sin” to signify “the guilt of it, the punishment due unto it, and a sacrifice for it”. (Dein 2013: 130).

Moreover, guilt is a moral emotion that helps people behave out of spite, revenge, malevolence, at the same time filling the hearts of people with a feeling of great remorse. Some scientists differentiate between controllable and uncontrollable guilt, categorizing them into constructive and non-constructive types of guilt (Walinga, Corveleyn, Saane 2005).

Constructive guilt is controllable guilt with the subjective experience of “regret” and an action tendency of “repairing” and “improving oneself”. Constructive guilt implies a concern for the damage one has caused to another and the feeling that one can repair that damage and the social relation. Whereas non-constructive guilt is intrapersonal, uncontrollable guilt with the subjective experience of “sadness”, “feeling a weak person” and the intrapersonal action tendencies “rumination” and “self-reproach” (Walinga, Corveleyn, Saane 2005:116).

Thus, guilt contributes to the strength of morality, providing a measure of how much one cares about moral rules. Therefore, guilt-prone inmates tend to accept responsibility for their crimes and show much less aggression. Based on the theory of J. Tangney guilt especially matters in predicting and preventing crime and interventions targeted at moral emotions can help to reduce criminal behavior and recidivism. “Guilt is moderately preventive” (Tangney 1996:1258).

Weak guilt is correlated to aggression, violence, immoral and social undesirable behavior (Triverdi-Bateman 2015).

In our study, we have carried out an attempt to reveal Sidney Sheldon’s perception of the concept of “guilt” which is reflected throughout his novels in the nature of the characters, manifested either by admission or rejection of guilt. The analysis of the language means employed by S. Sheldon in the novels under study enabled us to probe deeper into the character’s inner world and to disclose their perception of the concept of guilt.

It is interesting to note that the feelings of sin and guilt relate to God and the intersection of the concepts of *guilt, sin, and punishment* constantly pass over into each other. The admission of guilt and reclaiming of inner peace can be illustrated in the extract beneath, where Sister Teresa turns to God in the request of releasing her from the feeling of guilt.

It should be noted that the emotional state of the characters in question finds its reflection through an act of external self-flagellation which has a kind

of purifying effect. Emotions being inherent constituents of the admission of guilt can be manifested in the inner speech of the characters.

*Inside the convent, in the dark before dawn, Sister Teresa held the Discipline tightly in her right hand and **whipped it hard across her body**, feeling the knotted tails slashing into her as she silently recited the miserere. She almost screamed aloud, but noise was not permitted, so she kept the screams inside her. **Forgive me, Jesus, for my sins. Bear witness that I punish myself, as You were punished, and I inflict wounds upon myself, as wounds were inflicted upon You. Let me suffer, as You suffered. She was nearly fainting from the pain. Three more times she flagellated herself, and then sank, agonized, upon her cot.** She had not drawn blood. That was forbidden. Wincing against the agony that each movement brought, Sister Teresa returned the whip to its black case and rested it in a corner. It was always there, a constant reminder that **the slightest sin had to be paid for with pain.** (Sands of Time, p. 44)*

Being moral emotion guilt can result in virtuous behavior. By bringing into the narration the stylistic device of inner speech the author highlights the character's sincere admission of guilt and her inner tortures.

Moreover, Sidney Sheldon utilizes the stylistic device of *antithesis* opposing the characters of Sister Teresa and Sister Lucia with the aim of disclosing two faces of the admission of guilt: *sincere vs insincere*. The author gives the portrayal of Sister Teresa who sincerely accepts her guilt, whereas Sister Lucia, being the wealthy daughter of a Mafia Don, went to the convent as a means of escape after she had murdered three men involved in her father's arrest, and plans to hide there for a few months before escaping to Switzerland. A vivid example of the insincere admission of guilt is introduced in the below-illustrated extract.

"You will do penance by using the Discipline," the Mother Betina signaled her. Sister Lucia bowed her head meekly and signaled, "Yes, Holy Mother."

*Lucia returned to her cell, and minutes later the nuns walking through the corridor heard the awful sound of the whip as it whistled through the air and fell again and again. **What they could not know was that Sister Lucia was whipping the bed.** (Sands of Time, p. 29)*

By giving the portrayal of the two nuns Sidney Sheldon depicts two faces of the admission of guilt. Summarizing, it should be noted that in the case of Sister Teresa, the concept of guilt is verbalized as self-accusation and self-punishment, whereas in the case of Sister Lucia the manipulative nature of the concept of guilt comes to the fore.

As mentioned above the key concept underlying guilt in religion is sin.

*Sister Graciela opened her eyes, instantly awake, **her heart pounding frantically**. She looked around terrified, but she was alone in her tiny cell and **the only sound was the reassuring tolling of the bell**. Sister Graciela knelt at the side of her cot. **Jesus, thank You for delivering me from the past. Thank You for the joy I have in being here in Your light. Let me glory only in the happiness of Your being**. Help me, my Beloved, to be true to the call You have given me. Help me to ease the sorrow of Your sacred heart.*

*..... In contemplation she possessed everything, **for contemplation was the mind replying to the soul**. Her days were filled with a **wonderful peace**. Thank You for letting me forget, Father. Thank You for standing beside me. I couldn't face **my terrible past** without You...Thank You...Thank You... (Sands of Time, p.58)*

S. Sheldon gives the portrayal of Sister Graciela who sincerely admits her guilt and repents to God. To disclose the sharp contrast between her past and a new life of hope, the author uses the metaphor “*her heart pounding frantically*” and the epithet “*my terrible past*”. The contrast is highlighted by the use of the stylistic device of metaphor “*contemplation was the mind replying to the soul*” and the epithet “*wonderful peace*” implying the harmony and the emotional support she found through Christ and her prayers to the Lord.

Of special interest is the implication of the metaphorical epithet “*reassuring tolling of the bell*” bearing to the mind the image of the bell ringing eliciting sorrow and showing respect.

All the lexical units “*joy, glory, and happiness*” are indicative of the salvation Sister Graciela gained through Christ who offered her a new life of hope.

As it can be inferred from the analysis of the illustrated examples, the concept of guilt is correlated with *repentance and remorse*.

In the following example, the vivid description of the character's fears makes clear for the reader that the character is experiencing an intense feeling of guilt. It is interesting to note that dreams are said to be a mirror of the subconscious mind. Sidney Sheldon, trying to zoom deeper into the problem of the experience of guilt and its reflection in the mind of his characters, brings into the narration the description of Ellen's haunted dreams.

*That night the ghosts came back. She thought that she had **exorcised** them long ago. In the beginning, after the memorial services for her brother-and sister-in-law and Patricia, the night visitors had come frequently. **Pale***

mists hovered over her bed and voices whispered in her ear. She would awaken, her pulse racing, but there would be nothing to see (Sands of Time, p. 200).

To reveal Ellen's fears and pricks of conscience Sidney Sheldon utilizes the emotively charged word "exorcise", signifying her futile efforts to drive out the evil spirits and the epithet "pale mists" to highlight the association with obscured memories still gnawing her conscience. In addition, by virtue of the expression "voices whispered in her ear" the author emphasizes the inner tortures of the woman, who experiencing the feeling of remorse, hears some voices which are the constant reminder of her guilty deed.

In the novel "Master of the Game" the concept of guilt is widely actualized. S. Sheldon throughout the novel tries to reveal the destructive and constructive means of representation of the concept of guilt. The latter has several associations by which the author's covert perception of the concept under study is disclosed.

Kate remembered the incident at Briarcrest when Eve was accused of selling marijuana and the blame had been put on Alexandra. Eve had not blamed Alexandra, she had defended her. That was Eve's technique—to be the villain and play the heroine. Oh, she was clever. (Master of the Game, p.176)

By employing the stylistic device of metaphor "**to be the villain and play the heroine**" Sidney Sheldon highlights skillfully elaborated techniques on the part of Eve to conceal her genuine intentions – to shift the blame on her sister by disguising her mean motives.

From the time she was a little girl, Eve Blackwell had been aware of her ability to manipulate people. Before, it had always been a game with her, but now it was deadly serious. She had been treated shabbily, deprived of a vast fortune that was rightfully hers, by her scheming sister and her vindictive old grandmother. They were going to pay in full for what they had done to her, and the thought of it gave Eve such intense pleasure. Their lives were now in her hands. (Master of the Game, p.192)

Sidney Sheldon introduces into narration the psychological disorder of the character via the inner thoughts of the character who tries to mask her real intentions under the cover of self-defense. Most importantly, the author employs the stylistic device of *irony* to underscore the disparity between the real state of events and the underlying truth. Thus, all the epithets utilized in the novel are in the sharp contrast between the reality and Eve's distorted perception of the "victim".

The stylistic device of *irony* is used with the aim of highlighting the manipulative nature of the character. To emphasize the irony of the situation Sidney Sheldon describes the erroneous vision of the character to distort the reality and give her own wrong perception of what is going on. The root of the rejection of guilt, in this case, is engendered by Eve's egocentric, narcissistic character. Therefore, the irony of the situation lies in the fact that all the epithets utilized by Eve to characterize her sister and her grandmother are more suitable for her own characterization.

One more example of antithesis is utilized in the novel "The Doomsday Conspiracy". The author exposes the failure of the military and other governmental organizations, to tell the truth concerning certain events they would rather not explain but display cruelty against witnesses, shifting the blame on the aliens. By means of contrasting the main character Robert, an officer of Naval Intelligence, and the immoral, powerful government, the author reveals the constructive and destructive forces engendered by admission or rejection of guilt.

*Robert got back in his car and started driving toward Uetendorf and the scene of the UFO crash. As he drove, **he thought of all the tragedies that had occurred because of it and all the lives that had been taken Dead. All of them dead.** I want to see the face of Janus, Robert thought, **and look into his eyes.** The villages seemed to race by, and the pristine beauty of the Alps belied all the **bloodshed and terror that had started here, the nightmare had begun.** (The Doomsday Conspiracy, p. 256)*

In the above-mentioned passage, the concept of "guilt" is associated with *repentance, sorrow, regret, anguish, remorse*, whereas the members of the government are characterized as those who *lack empathy and compassion* towards human beings.

To depict the cruelty of the killers Sidney Sheldon gives the description of violent actions and dreadful scenes such as "*stepped behind him and hit him hard across the skull, "lifted the body of Dan Wayne and tossed it over the half door into the stall", "knife slashed into his chest", "man slammed his foot down" etc.*

The death of Daniel Wane arouses the filling of terror.

*"The second man had **stepped behind him and hit him hard across the skull with a blackjack.**"*

*'Now,' the smaller man said. His companion **lifted the body** of Dan Wayne and **tossed it over** the half door into the stall. They watched the bloody scene for several moments, then, satisfied, turned and left." (The Doomsday Conspiracy, p. 256)*

As it can be inferred from the analysis of the data the admission of guilt contributes to the strength of morality, providing a measure of how much one cares about moral rules. Therefore, guilt-prone inmates in the novels tend to accept responsibility for their crimes and show much less aggression. In reverse, the rejection of guilt leads to such negative consequences as the manifestation of violence accompanied by a deep feeling of satisfaction. To sum up, the investigation of the concept of “guilt” enabled us to find the correlation and intersection between such concepts as violence, power, and vanity.

The analysis of the author’s perception of the concept of guilt allows us to disclose constructive and destructive manifestations of the concept under study. The former is associated with *repentance, regret, remorse, responsibility, self-condemnation* and has a kind of purifying effect, while the latter is correlated with *manipulation, conspiracy* and is verbalized as *misdemeanor, transgression, lapse, malfeasance, crime*.

ՀԱՍՄԻԿ ՔԱՋԲԵՐՈՒՆԻ, ԱՆԱՀԻՏ ՄԱԿԱՐՅԱՆ - «ՄԵՂՔ» ՀԱՍԿԱՅՈՒՅԹԻ ՀԵՂԻՆԱԿԱՅԻՆ ՀԱՅԵՑԱԿԵՐՊԻ ՊԱՏԿԵՐՈՒՄԸ Ս. ՇԵԼԴՈՆԻ ՎԵՊԵՐՈՒՄ

Հիմնաբառեր՝ «մեղք» հասկացույթ, հեղինակային աշխարհընկալում, մեղքի ընդունում կամ մերժում, մեղքի զգացման կառուցողական և կործանարար դրսևորում

Սույն հոդվածը նպատակ ունի ուսումնասիրել «մեղք» հասկացույթի առկայացման միջոցները Սիդնեյ Շելդոնի հեղինակային ոճում՝ մի շարք ստեղծագործությունների վերլուծության միջոցով: Տվյալ գրական երկերում մի շարք ոճական հնարների գործածմամբ Ս. Շելդոնը պատկերում է «մեղք» հասկացույթի կառուցողական և կործանարար դրսևորումների հնարավորությունները, ինչը անհատին կարող է դրդել ինչպես զղջման, պատասխանատվության զգացման, և ավստասանքի, այնպես էլ հակառակը՝ բռնության, անպատասխանատու վարքագծի դրսևորման և հանցանքի կատարման:

АСМИК КАЧБЕРУНИ, АНАИТ МАКАРЯН - РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЯ АВТОРСКОЙ КОНЦЕПЦИИ КОНЦЕПТА “ВИНА” В ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЯХ С. ШЕЛДОНА

Ключевые слова: концепт “вина”, индивидуально-авторская концепция, признание или отрицание вины, конструктивное и деструктивное проявление вины

Данная статья посвящена изучению способов языковой вербализации индивидуально-авторской концепции концепта “вина”, а также выявлению характера эволюции особенностей идиостиля автора. Особый интерес представляет рассмотрение авторского восприятия конструктивных и деструктивных проявлений концепта “вина” посредством лингвостилистического анализа.

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