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UPISIVANJE ŽENSKOG ISKUSTVA U ŠKOTSKI KNJIŽEVNI KANON: PERIOD
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FINAL PAPER

WRITING FEMALE EXPERIENCE INTO THE SCOTTISH LITERARY CANON:
PERIOD BETWEEN THE TWO DEVOLUTION REFERENDUMS

MA Thesis

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Table of contents:

| | |
|---|----|
| Abstract..... | 5 |
| Apstrakt..... | 6 |
| 1. Introduction..... | 7 |
| 1.1. Scottish devolution referendums – trajectory of the sense of independence..... | 9 |
| 1.1.1. The first Scottish devolution referendum – 1970s unwinding..... | 11 |
| 1.1.2. 1980s – a road to the second chance..... | 13 |
| 1.1.3. Second Scottish devolution referendum – 1990s and their peak..... | 14 |
| 1.2. Writers and literature during 1970s-1990s..... | 18 |
| 1.2.1. The position of female writers vs. a predominantly male canon..... | 19 |
| 1.2.2. Attitudes towards national and gender identity – Lochhead, Galloway, Owens..... | 20 |
| 1.3. Scottishness vs Britishness – or Scottishness as a part of Britishness?..... | 22 |
| 2. Writing female experience – Liz Lochhead, Janice Galloway, Agnes Owens..... | 23 |
| 2.1. Liz Lochhead and <i>Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off</i> | 23 |
| 2.1.1. Who is Liz Lochhead? – a biography of the leading female voice in Scottish literature..... | 23 |
| 2.1.2. Lochhead, literature and politics – 1970s-1990s..... | 24 |
| 2.1.3. Raising and echoing female voices in <i>Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off</i> | 29 |
| 2.1.4. Relevance of drama as a genre for the representation of national and gender identity..... | 36 |
| 2.2. Janice Galloway and <i>The Trick Is to Keep Breathing</i> | 38 |
| 2.2.1. A brief note on Janice Galloway’s life and work..... | 38 |
| 2.2.2. The trick is to know how to present problems – style and themes..... | 39 |
| 2.2.3. Women’s mental health..... | 41 |
| 2.2.4. The novel and the representation of mental health issues..... | 48 |
| 2.3. Agnes Owens and “When Shankland Comes”..... | 50 |
| 2.3.1. Biography of a less known but quite extraordinary author..... | 50 |
| 2.3.2. Looking at the mirror – Owens’ working-class female characters..... | 51 |
| 2.3.3. Short story – a way of conveying direct, striking message..... | 54 |
| 2.4. Translating Scottish women’s literature – demands, challenges and solutions..... | 56 |
| 3. Conclusion..... | 59 |

4. Bibliography 61

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyse the position of female writers in Scotland in the period between the two devolution referendums (1970s-1990s) and the significance of their works for the development of different view on the role of women as well as for the questioning of socio-political position of Scotland at that period. In the introduction, the detailed historical overview is presented, showing the political situation in Scotland that led to the first and second devolution referendum. What is also analysed in the introduction is the significance of writers when it comes to Scottish politics and national identity, position of female authors in comparison to male writers and the complex identity question of Scottishness vs. Britishness. In the main part, the focus was on the analysis of three works from three female Scottish authors – Liz Lochhead and her drama *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, Janice Galloway and her novel *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* and Agnes Owens with a story “When Shankland Comes” from her collection of short stories *Agnes Owens: The Complete Short Stories*, regarding the representation and discussion of national and gender identity which resulted in showing the inferior position of women at that time and struggles that women were facing in political and private life, as well as the neglect of female mental health and inferior position of working-class women. The three authors represent voices which stand up for the rights of women and demand change regarding their position in society. At the end, the thesis tackled the translations of these works which are not that present in Bosnian language, including their challenges and strategies that help in transmitting the right message.

Key words: Liz Lochhead, Janice Galloway, Agnes Owens, national identity, gender identity, Scotland

Apstrakt

Cilj ovog rada je da analizira položaj spisateljica u Škotskoj u periodu između dva referenduma za devoluciju (od 1970-ih do 1990-ih) i značaj njihovih djela za razvijanje drugačijeg pogleda na ulogu žena kao i za propitivanje društveno-političkog položaja Škotske u tom periodu. U uvodu je predstavljen detaljan historijski pregled koji prikazuje političku situaciju u Škotskoj koja je dovela do prvog i drugog referenduma za devoluciju. Ono što je također analizirano u uvodu je značaj pisaca kada je u pitanju Škotska politika i nacionalni identitet, položaj ženskih u poređenju sa muškim autorima i kompleksno pitanje škotskog i britanskog identiteta. U glavnom dijelu, fokus je bio na analizi tri djela tri škotske spisateljice – Liz Lochhead i njene drame *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, Janice Galloway i njenog romana *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* i Agnes Owens sa pričom “When Shankland Comes” iz njene zbirke kratkih priča *Agnes Owens: The Complete Short Stories*, radi zastupljenosti i diskusije o nacionalnom i rodnom identitetu. Analiza je pokazala inferioran položaj žena u tom periodu i nedaće s kojima su se žene suočavale u političkom i privatnom životu kao i zapostavljanje ženskog mentalnog zdravlja i inferioran položaj žena radničke klase. Ove tri autorice predstavljaju glasove koji se zalažu za prava žena i zahtijevaju promjenu njihovog položaja u društvu. Na kraju, rad se dotaknuo prevoda ovih djela koji nisu toliko prisutni u bosanskom jeziku, uključujući njihove izazove i strategije koje pomažu u prenošenju prave poruke.

Ključne riječi: Liz Lochhead, Janice Galloway, Agnes Owens, nacionalni identitet, rodni identitet, Škotska

1. Introduction

Scotland, as a country and as an artistic area, was always appealing and interesting to those who explore the notions of national identity because of its “character” – when we think of Scotland, we think of tradition, history, art and a tendency for independence. Since the Act of Union in 1707, Scots have begun to balance their identity with the new-found British national identity, which led to years of dispute and debates over the preference of one or the other and drew particular attention in the second half of the 20th century with two devolution referendums, where the emphasis was on transferring power from the Parliament of the United Kingdom to the Scottish Parliament whose establishment was part of the referendum politics. The preference leaned towards Scottish national identity on the second referendum in 1997, with the majority of people voting “yes”.

Scottish people were always inclined to articulate their attitudes toward public happenings and political situation through various spheres of art. One of the most prominent branches of art that is used as a medium for political insurgence is literature – so the Scottish strive for devolution and independence is constantly mirrored in it as well. Thus, their writers are highly respected and people listen to their attitudes, inclinations and advice. They and their works shape the mindset of Scottish people and a lot of writers tend to turn towards writing about political aspects and issues. Those who agree with the prevailing political attitudes regarding devolution and independence, considering it as the right way of handling the relationship between Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom, thus promoting the Scottish national identity include Hugh MacDiarmid, Neil M. Gunn, Edwin Morgan, Tom Leonard, Liz Lochhead, James Kelman, Alasdair Gray and Irvine Welsh. On the other side, among those against devolution and independence are C.J. Sansom and James Meek, Scottish authors who represented their political attitudes through public statements and actions rather than explicitly through their works and who, by sharing their opinions of wanting to balance and retain both their Scottish and British identity, seeing one as well as the other as an integral part of themselves, showed that the question regarding devolution and national identity in Scotland is complex and that people, including writers, have different opinions which are influenced by the long, complex relationship between Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom.

In this paper, we will discuss and analyse female experience in the Scottish literary canon in the period between the two devolution referendums, the timeframe from 1970’s to the end of 1990’s. We will discuss the position and attitudes of Scottish female writers and their works, but also the position of women in general. The writers that are going to be presented and

discussed in the paper are: Liz Lochhead and her drama *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, Janice Galloway and her novel *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* and Agnes Owens with a story “When Shankland Comes” from her collection of short stories *Agnes Owens: The Complete Short Stories*. Their fields of interest, approach to the themes and style of writing are great examples of the representation of gender identity, the struggle for women’s rights and the representation of their position in society, together with the prism of politics and national identity. Each of them puts their characters into the center of the overall problematics of national and gender identity, but takes into consideration different aspects of that problematics. Besides that, the selected works belong to three different genres: Lochhead’s work belongs to the dramatic genre, Galloway’s work is a novel and Owens’ work is a short story. This gives insight into the challenge of representing certain problematics through several forms of writing, including both the possibilities and limitations that each genre offers. Three writers, three works and three genres will provide a thorough analysis and answer the following research questions:

1. How did the period between the two devolution referendums affect women writers in Scotland?
2. How did these three writers advocate for the representation of women in literature and how did they represent women and the problems they face in their works?

Research and discussion will be presented through a clear thesis structure which encompasses an introduction with a historical overview and a brief insight into the role and position of male and female authors, the analysis of selected works through three distinct thematic lenses and a brief discussion about translation of these works, especially from a female perspective as well as concluding remarks. Throughout the paper, we will problematise several important points – political situation in Scotland before, during and after the two devolution referendums, position of women in society, politics and literature in that period, the influence of female writers as well as frequency and the representation of female characters and their issues in Scottish literature, the way in which Lochhead, Galloway and Owens presented and discussed those issues in their works, attitudes and their public life and the aspect of translation of these types of works, which includes its frequency and importance as well as applicable translation techniques. More specifically, it will be discussed how certain historical events led to the devolution referendums, together with different political views and attitudes, and how writers played an important role there. Finally, the analysis will focus on three key issues, which bring

together all the previously mentioned topics: women and (political) power, the lack of interest in women's mental health and the position of working-class women in society.

Corpus for this thesis includes the works mentioned above: *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*, a play by Liz Lochhead, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*, a novel by Janice Galloway and "When Shankland Comes" from the collection of short stories by Agnes Owens. Along with other relevant academic sources on the social, cultural and political climate in Scotland in the last three decades of the 20th century, the thesis will also draw on my personal communication with professor Amy Haveron from the University of Graz which I attended during my Erasmus+ International exchange semester. These interviews greatly contributed to my understanding of Scottish politics and literature by providing an insight from the point of view of a Scottish citizen.

1.1. Scottish devolution referendums – trajectory of the sense of independence

Scotland's rich history is marked by its resilience from the early beginnings. United Scotland first occurred in 843 and will gain its historically famous name 'Alba' in the next few decades. The fight for their lands throughout the years resulted in the formation of the Kingdom of Scotland, which traces its roots again into the year 843 and marks the beginning of formation of today's Scotland (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024).

The first rise of Scottish national consciousness appeared in 12th and 13th centuries and will continue to this day. It led to a series of political and armed conflicts with England throughout the years, with Wars of Scottish Independence, fought in 13th and 14th centuries, being the most well-known. The disbalance of succession among Scottish royals made English king at the time, Edward I, realize there is an opportunity for the assimilation of Scotland. This will start a chain of events and conflicts for the Scottish throne from the English side, but will also trigger conflicts among Scots, or more precise, among the supporters of Robert Bruce on one side and John Balliol on the other, where neither side wanted to accept the other as a rightful monarch, which will be continued over the period of several different successors. (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024). The latter is an important point for understanding the position of Scotland, which needed to develop an agreement between its own leaders in order to stay independent from English rule. "Through the Anglo-Scottish conflict, Scotland developed a basic tendency—to seek self-sufficiency and also to look to continental Europe for alliances and inspiration—that persisted at least until 1560" (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024, Competition

for the throne of *The Wars of Independence* section, para. 1). That series of conflicts, even though it formally ended during the second half of the 14th century, will be reflected in a complex relationship between Scotland and England during the next two centuries, with different quarrels and agreements appearing, but will be brought to peace for the first time in 1603 with the event called the Union of the Crowns. It joined some aspects of jurisdiction of the two kingdoms with the intention to make leadership easier for both, but remaining separate countries. This will mark the beginning of the union we have today and will develop, more than a hundred years later, in 1707, with one of the key events that happened in the history of Scotland and today's United Kingdom – Act of Union. It arose first from the fear of another unnecessary conflict but then also from mutual needs – England needed a political safety from France, while Scotland needed economic support. Both sides realized the benefit of the union and the agreement was settled. A Kingdom of Scotland and a Kingdom of England united to form the Kingdom of Great Britain which will eventually become today's United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This will unite them in a closer way than ever before: Parliaments of Scotland and England will come together into one – the Parliament of Great Britain (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024). While the Union's goal was fulfilled and mutual benefits worked well, this historical milestone represents a thorn in the side for many Scots who are vocal about Scottish national consciousness and who take it as an indicator of former Scottish independence. “In a society that is distinctly heterogeneous in cultural, religious and linguistic terms, this shared history of statehood indeed constitutes one of the most potent markers around which the Scottish sense of identity is built” (Tijmstra, 2006, p. 11).

Because of all this, the beginning of the 20th century was the beginning of reviving the Scottish national and independence consciousness. “The modern movement that was dedicated to the re-establishment of Scottish statehood was born during the 1920s and developed in an intellectual environment in which nationalism was seen as an up-and-coming ideology in Europe between the wars” (Finlay, 2022, p. 62). Changes occurred after Scots realized that notions of nation and state are closely linked and that they are seen as a stateless nation, but that they also feel like one.

Other factors had an influence for the rise of national consciousness too, such as the situation after World War I that was reflected in huge number of victims and economic distress. “The aim of Scottish independence was only systematically articulated for the first time in the interwar period, with the SNP founded as the primary political vehicle for this goal in 1934” (Jackson, 2020, p. 4). Scottish National Party (SNP) emerged or developed firstly from the Scots National League (SNL) and later from Scottish National Movement (SNM). SNM

worked together with other nationalist bodies in Scotland to form National Party of Scotland (NPS) in 1928 which will, in 1934, merge with Scottish Party and become a Scottish National Party (SNP). It served as a primary means of starting the process of devolution and independence discussions, with its task to promote those means and improve Scotland's political position in order to be able to achieve significant results. "Yet the SNP achieved little popular success during the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. The first serious nationalist electoral breakthrough occurred in the 1960s, with (...) the subsequent rise in the vote share of the SNP during the 1970s" (Jackson, 2020, p. 4).

1.1.1. The first Scottish devolution referendum – 1970s unwinding

1970s in Scotland marked a step up from mere discussions about devolution and independence to the concrete possibilities of organizing a referendum. The plans were oriented towards devolution, which would give Scotland power over some of the aspects of their legislation, but which would still keep the advantage of being a part of the United Kingdom. Devolution, by definition is "the transfer of power from a central government to subnational (e.g., state, regional, or local) authorities. Devolution usually occurs through conventional statutes rather than through a change in a country's constitution; thus, unitary systems of government that have devolved powers in this manner are still considered unitary rather than federal systems, because the powers of the subnational authorities can be withdrawn by the central government at any time. (...) Devolution is viewed in many countries as a way to dampen regional, racial, ethnic, or religious cleavages, particularly in multiethnic societies" (Haus, 2024, *devolution section*, para. 1&5).

But what is devolution for a Scottish citizen, irrespective of definitions? The following excerpt can provide an interesting insight:

"When I think of devolution, I think immediately of, um, Scottish identity in the sense of it being divorced from the British and the English identity and desire to take fate into our own hands, sometimes in the pursuit of I think a little bit of ego, but also just in the spirit of rebellion that, kind of, part of, being part of Scottish history and woven into the quilt of it, um, but also a degree of, of, of fairness and wanting to do absolutely right by its people, and um, a legitimate sense, this is a bit political now but, um, a genuine sense of interest in doing the best for the people

of Scotland ... And I think of the first First Minister and his statue which stands in Glasgow, Donald Dewar, I think of the Parliament building, I think of the independence referendum... And it is obviously something that I teach about, something that is a part of the fabric of the UK” (A. Haveron, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

To go back to the 1970-s, the popularity of SNP continued and, according to McCrone (2001), at the peak of its electoral success in the mid-1970s, particularly 1974, the party gained favour and thus votes from people coming across all social classes. That lack of a class connotation or, we may call it the ‘classless’ appeal of SNP especially drew attention of working-class people, be it those who no longer did manual jobs or the ones who still continued to do them. The main reason for that is susceptibility to a kind of political perspective which was different from the one with which they had grown up and their view of SNP as an alternative to the traditional class-based parties. It soon became the second most popular party in Scotland, following Labour Party. Another one, besides those two, which enjoyed electoral popularity was Liberal Democratic Party.

Their advocacy for devolution remained firm and continuous throughout the following years, so the First Devolution Referendum was on its way. What pushed it even more forward was a situation which British Prime Minister at the time, James Callaghan found himself in during the sudden 1976 by-election. He had lost his parliamentary majority and, in order to ensure votes in the House of Commons, he agreed to support devolution referendum in Scotland (and Wales), in exchange for their support in the House of Commons. The SNP (and Plaid Cymru - Welsh political party) agreed to that, so the First Scottish Devolution Referendum, which “was designed to grant Scotland its own assembly with limited legislative and executive powers” (Moulton & Cameron, 2024, North Sea oil and the rise of Scottish nationalism of *World War II and after section*, para. 2) was held in 1979. But it was not successful, at least in its primary goal. “While a majority of the voters at the 1979 referendum supported devolution for Scotland, they were not a large enough proportion to meet the threshold of 40 per cent of the electorate voting in favour for the measure to pass” (Jackson, 2020, p. 5). Because of the imposed 40 per cent voting rule, or its consequence, SNP withdrew the support previously promised to James Callaghan in the House of Commons, since the expectations of successful devolution referendum were not met and the nation turned towards a new decade with the same goal. There were divided opinions regarding this referendum. According to Jackson (2020), the members of the newfound party faction called the ’79 Group, which was formed within the SNP in order

to orient its political profile more towards a left-wing politics, stated that the 1979 referendum marked the decisive end of one phase in the growth of Scottish nationalism (pp. 105-107). This can be understood as their interpretation of the referendum results as a first step towards a successful devolution and an event from which they needed to draw conclusions about what to improve in order to move forward with their political ambitions. On the other side, there were those who believed that devolution referendum was not the right path for Scotland. Among them is Margaret Thatcher, the Conservative Party leader from 1975 and a British Prime Minister from 1979. According to Czapiewski (2016), Thatcher's opinion about Scottish devolution came from her political attitudes, which included the strong belief in the unity of the Union as an important part of British prosperity, so she saw devolution as a slippery slope to the independence of Scotland. She also saw it as a way of creating another layer of bureaucracy and instead argued about introducing "real devolution" which meant taking away the powers of public authorities and returning the freedom and independence of the citizens, something that is reflected in the politics of her mandate.

These two opposing sides will continue to be main political currents in the following two decades.

1.1.2. 1980s – a road to the second chance

After the First Devolution Referendum, Scots continued to support their country's efforts for greater political autonomy, not being discouraged by the first voting's lack of success. They were aware of their possibilities when it comes to raising a voice of change and their path remained the same: successful devolution referendum. As Tijmstra (2006) states, throughout 1980s, and later, Scotland's cultural markers were pointed even more and more towards the image of Scotland as a stateless nation within a 'foreign' state (p. 11). So, with that additional motive, everyone became more vociferous, from politicians and citizens to influential figures from all sorts of other areas, including literature, and it was obvious that Scottish cultural confidence grew despite different problems that they still faced, especially economic and political. Tijmstra (2006) also points out that during the period of Conservative rule, especially focusing on years 1979-1997, the macro-economic policies of the central government were mostly pointed towards England, precisely the south of England and their needs, which was detrimental to the Scottish economy, so previously mentioned idea of greater political autonomy continued to resonate with the Scots (p. 15).

This favouring of one area of the country above other is reflected in the rise of economic and political ideas and policies named Thatcherism which were introduced by Margaret Thatcher. Her solutions to the economic and social tensions included “the privatization of nationalized industries, a limited role for government, free markets, low taxes, individuality, and self-determination” (Britannica, 2024, *Thatcherism section*, para. 1). Danner (2020) points out how these changes in British politics specifically harmed Scotland at that time, stating that they led to deindustrialization, mass unemployment, uninhabitable housing conditions and an overall sense of deprivation and disenfranchisement and that people were largely devoid of the immediate option to improve their circumstances due to a lack of economic means and limitations related to their social statuses.

All of that culminated and resulted with the establishment of the Campaign for the Scottish Assembly which had a task to keep the ideas of devolution and formation of a Constitutional Convention in discussion. Their constant efforts finally panned out in 1989, with the establishment of an association called the Scottish Constitutional Convention, comprised of people from different spheres of influence such as representatives from political parties in Scotland, local authorities, voluntary organisations and similar, which had the goal and request similar to previous ones, but the aspect that differentiated them from previous similar discussions was that they shaped those ideas and requests into the document called the Claim of Right, composed and signed in 1989 (The Scottish Parliament, 2024). This document “declared that the people of Scotland were sovereign and demanded a devolved Assembly or Parliament for Scotland” (Torrance, 2018).

This was an introduction to the 1990s, a decade of a great importance and achievement of many goals Scottish nation had in mind.

1.1.3. Second Scottish devolution referendum – 1990s and their peak

1990s came and devolution was never closer to Scottish people. The amount of more serious moves made towards it was increasing rapidly. The effect of the Scottish Constitutional Convention was still present and three parties – SNP, Labour and Liberals continued to work together through the mandate of the anti-devolution Conservative Party.

As Hauss (2024) explains, during the 90s (as well as 80s, as previously explained) support for devolution in Scotland increased, particularly because, despite the fact that voters in both Scotland and Wales elected Labour candidates to the House of Commons by

an overwhelming majority, the national government in London was dominated continuously for more than 18 years by the Conservative Party (1979–97). This caused discontent among people, due to the effects Conservative party had on Scotland, so the continuous support for devolution was obvious.

It reflected the constant Scottish sense of independence, individuality and identity which could and still can be seen in numerous occasions, so professor Haveron gave one example of it:

“I mean if you want a genuine, everyday anecdote, I’d mention the money, um, the absolute fury of the Scottish person when a Scottish banknote is not accepted in England will be, would be one example from everyday life, when an English person in the shop says I can’t take this, this is not British money and you’re like, yes it is, it’s Bank of Scotland, but it’s sterling, it says on the money. People take it as a sort of micro aggression but people are just not used to [it], people will be like why don’t you accept my Scottish money?” (A. Haveron, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

This shows, in a way, tensions between Scotland and England in an everyday life but also the resilience and persistence of Scots who don’t just accept the fact that there is a possibility that their money will not be accepted in England. It mirrors the same resilience and persistence in all other spheres and situations when it comes to Scotland and its people, like, of course, in the commitment for the achievement of the devolution referendum.

When it comes to other spheres of life, such as media support, Tijmstra (2006) notes that “Scottish newspapers and television and radio stations reinforced the idea of a distinct Scottish cultural and economic reality and provided pro-devolution groups with a platform through which to spread their ideas” (p. 22).

The Scottish Constitutional Convention (SCC) continued to work and propose different reports, inquiries and consultations, their last one “Scotland’s Parliament, Scotland’s Right” being published in 1995. It built on the existing attitudes and commitment of the association, with the emphasis on proposals for a devolution arrangement and, as stated in the report itself, detailed arrangements regarding the establishment and functioning of the (future) Scottish Parliament, such as electoral system, electoral contract, working arrangements and security. With an interesting name, an elaborate and encouraging content, this report has drawn attention of people since the moment of publication, which is demonstrated in the following excerpt:

“The first and greatest reason for creating a Scottish Parliament is that the people of Scotland want and deserve democracy. Their will is powerful and clear. It has been expressed calmly and consistently over a period of decades, and has strengthened rather than diminished with the passing of time. In a responsive and effective democracy, this would be reason enough for change. But present constitutional circumstance denies Scotland responsive and effective democracy. That is the second reason for change” (Scottish Constitutional Convention, 1995, p. 9).

This paragraph, a small portion of the whole report, represents everything Scotland wished and advocated for, and aptly summarizes facts regarding history of Scotland already stated in this paper.

The year 1997 came and general elections were on their way. Labour Party headed by Tony Blair won and “the SNP joined Labour and the Liberal Democratic Party to campaign vigorously for a second referendum proposing the creation of a Scottish Parliament” (Broughton, 2024, *History of Scottish National Party section*, para. 4).

Blair, a newly appointed Prime Minister, introduced a new set of devolution proposals and a call for another referendum, which took place in September, 1997. “Unlike 1979, this referendum was held before the relevant devolution bill was introduced into Parliament, not after it had been enacted. This was to ensure that devolution was the expressed will of the people of Scotland and not simply a government policy. Unlike 1979, a simple majority was required to implement change” (The Scottish Parliament, 2024). Referendum ballot paper contained two questions – one for the establishment of the Scottish Parliament and the other for giving the body the power to change tax rates. It ended with the result of 74.3% of ‘yes’ vote for Parliament, in addition to 63.5% approval regarding tax rates. The Referendum was successful.

“After this result, the Scotland Bill was introduced in the UK Parliament in December 1997. It became law as the Scotland Act in November 1998” (The Scottish Parliament, 2024). The same webpage also further explains what the Scotland Act is, stating that it established the devolved Scottish Parliament and gave it authorisation to legislate on certain matters (The Scottish Parliament, 2024). It basically put the referendum requests and results onto the paper and allowed for the formation of the Scottish Parliament.

That happened in 1999. All the procedures regarding the start of work of the Parliament happened during that year. The first elections took place on 6th May and the first meeting of Parliament happened on 12th May. The Parliament was officially opened by the Queen Elisabeth II on 1st July and received its full law-making powers (The Scottish Parliament, 2024). It was finally concluded that the Scottish Parliament gained wide powers over certain matters such as health, education, housing, regional transport etc., but remained subject to the British Parliament in the majority of areas such as foreign affairs, foreign trade, defense, the national civil service, economic and monetary policy etc. (Brown & Moulton, 2024).

The (devolved) Scottish Parliament finally saw the light of the day.

On its first meeting, Winnie Ewing, who was a prominent Scottish politician, member of the SNP, MP in the House of Commons, member of the European Parliament and a vociferous advocate for Scottish independence (BBC, 2023), gave a speech in which she expressed gratitude and delight regarding the opening of the Scottish Parliament. Here is an excerpt from it:

“I have the opportunity to make a short speech and I want to begin with the words that I have always wanted either to say or to hear someone else say: the Scottish Parliament, which adjourned on 25 March 1707, is hereby reconvened. (...) This is an historic day and, after a long time in politics, I am aware that we owe a debt to many who are not here, who did not live to see the promised land” (The Scottish Parliament, 2024).

Besides understanding her speech in terms of the progress that they made in the history of Scotland, one cannot but notice in these few sentences that the existence of Scotland within the Union from 1707 is marginalized. While being aware of the Scots feeling inferior for a long time and of their need to steer their revival of national identity towards a more independent nation, it cannot be said that the Union of 1707 and Scottish position after it brought no good for Scotland. On the contrary, there are many advantages for both Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom that are gained from being a part of that Union. Scotland, even though not having its own Parliament or being independent, still developed and progressed through those years.

Where did Britain stand at the beginning of the new century, after the change that was not only significant to Scotland, but to the entire United Kingdom as well? As Houston (2008) explains, the British Government was aware that the devolved Parliament was an inevitable compromise

necessary to maintain the Union, but it was unpopular among English either way, especially regarding the possibility for Scots to vote on issues that affect only England, but not vice versa. On the other side, they still legislated on very important matters regarding Scotland, which were under the influence of Westminster alone (p. 37). Scotland did not gain independence, but it was in a good position nevertheless. Houston (2008) goes on to say that it got the opportunity to make and implement policy and laws on plenty of ‘devolved matters’, while still being a part of the strong Union, especially when it comes to ‘reserved matters’, those under the legislation of the United Kingdom (p. 37). After the devolution, Britain had to adapt to a system they did not encounter since becoming a Union, with a lot of aspects to balance and deal with, but still managed to arrange them in a way to remain a stable country.

1.2. Writers and literature during 1970s-1990s

When we look more closely into this period, we will notice how big and strong the campaign was for the devolution referendums. Politicians and citizens played an important role in it as well as radio stations, television stations, newspapers and among them, literature and writers. Literature was instrumental in the campaign and everything that it encompasses, with writers pointing their field of interest and topics of works towards the future of their country. Stirling (2008) depicts the scale of influence of literature on the politics of the time (and in general) in Scotland by quoting Janice Galloway, who said that “writers don’t follow politicians, rather the reverse” (p. 111). A very interesting quote and rather true, since, one of the easiest ways of approaching people is via literature. People trust authors, especially notable, famous ones with good reputation and do not hesitate to follow their political choices or messages directed towards readers. “Despite economic and political problems in the 1980s Scottish cultural confidence grew in most areas of artistic activity. Established Scottish writers such as Alasdair Gray and James Kelman pursued new themes in Scottish literature. They were joined by a new generation of younger writers, notably Irvine Welsh, whose novel *Trainspotting* (1993) was made into a successful film” (Moulton & Cameron, 2024, North Sea oil and the rise of Scottish nationalism of *World War II and after section*, para. 3). Many other Scottish authors had a significant role during this period, such as: Edwin Morgan, Liz Lochhead, Janice Galloway, Agnes Owens etc. “One dimension of the intellectual history of this period has already been well documented – the cultural history of Scottish literature, drama and art. The creative arts have certainly been highly influential in shaping Scottish identity since the 1960s. (...) The

cultural sphere is therefore a crucial domain in which changing ideas about Scottish identity and experience can be pinpointed” (Jackson, 2020, p. 8).

All of this highlights the importance of literacy for a nation – the written word is a crucial factor for its preservation, since it testifies its history and identity. Throughout different periods in Scottish history, literacy and literature proved to be an important aspect that followed through different events and quite often expressed attitudes and political climate of the time, in which the notion of national identity can be noticed from as early as the 14th century. “The history of Scotland and the people who have lived in Scotland informs the trajectory of a distinctive Scottish literature. Particular themes related to that history are represented in Scottish literature. For example, the union of the parliaments in 1707 precipitated a number of poems and songs which are part of a long tradition of literary work addressing the question of the national identity of Scotland, its role within the British Empire and the hostility of many of our best writers to imperialism” (Riach, 2009, p. 8). From this, it is evident that Scottish people were aware of the fact that for a small country like theirs, all the accessible resources for progress have to be used and valued, in order for the results to be achieved – an attitude that persisted throughout the 20th century as well.

1.2.1. The position of female writers vs. a predominantly male canon

When we look at the literary work of this period, we can notice the disproportion in the presence of female writers in comparison to male authors. Literary scene was dominated by male writers such as Kelman, Morgan and Gray so the other side and perspective needed to be seen and represented more.

One of the first female voices that appeared during this period was Liz Lochhead, who is one of the most important and notable Scottish authors up until today. In a way, she paved the way for other female authors in Scottish literature for various reasons, one of them being that, when she appeared, there was a very small number of other female authors who managed to forge their way up the literary scene, amongst which there were also Valerie Gillies and Muriel Spark.

The period of the Scottish Renaissance, one of the most important literary periods in Scotland marked the beginning of the 20th century, the timeframe of which was also characterized by a male dominated world. Stirling (2008) explains that the Scottish Renaissance’s violent reaction to the “femininity” had a legacy which continued late into the twentieth century, almost up

until the mid-eighties, even though, as already stated, there were female Scottish authors even before that (p. 113). Anderson and Norquay (1984) share the same attitude as Stirling toward gender inequality in literature: “By equating masculinity with Scottishness and taking their models for both from the past, [Scottish men] leave little room for development” (as cited in Stirling, 2008). Scottish men took the leading part in literature, but also in expressing Scottishness as their national identity, making it strange for Scottish women to talk about it too. Liz Lochhead, in her interview with Rodríguez González (2004) explained this in a clear and concise way: “Of course you look to older writers and the interesting question is why there weren't many other women writers just at the time that I came along. There weren't. And they had been marginalised by the men really.” (p. 107). Only in the period from 1970s-1990s and beyond women forged their way up to the Scottish literary scene.

1.2.2. Attitudes towards national and gender identity – Lochhead, Galloway, Owens

How did women in literature combine these two aspects – national and gender identity? How do they see them? Interviews with three authors, Liz Lochhead, Janice Galloway and Agnes Owens, provide an insight into their attitudes towards these issues.

Lochhead is a person who is consistent in strongly advocating for female rights, but also for a greater Scottish independence. In the interview with Rodríguez González (2004) she stated: “I wasn't particularly interested in national identity. At that time I think I was too involved with female identity and female identity within Scotland, really.” (p. 103). She emphasizes her gender identity over the national one and this is connected to the marginalization of women in literature. She focused more on raising female voice and presence, in which she was successful. But the second part of her sentence is quite interesting – ‘female identity within Scotland’. She narrowed down her interest and goal to a nation, to her nation, giving an impression of the tight connection between gender and national identity, depicting them as one being the subcategory of the other. In the same interview, she also speaks about her asking herself: “What kind of country does not want more control of its own affairs?” (Rodríguez González, 2004, p. 103), which explains her subconscious interest and attitude towards national identity, which will be confirmed later in her works and behaviour in general. Rodríguez González (2004) also quotes another prominent Scottish author, Jackie Kay, who said: “Lochhead was one of the first women poets that made it possible to speak in her own voice, which was a Scottish voice.” (p. 107). This clearly explains the attitude of Lochhead towards national and gender identity,

where she embraced both, presenting them as separate, but also as inseparable aspects of a human being.

Galloway gives us a slightly different insight. It can be said that she sees these two aspects of identity as something implicit, something that is just there, present within every person. She gives a slight advantage to gender identity, but even then she just sees it as something that is always a part of her and should not be questioned. In an interview with Sacido-Romero (2018), she simply states: “I’m a feminist by self-definition”, and also “I’m a woman who writes” and goes on to explain that women generally go through so much and that she is interested in talking about those issues, whether in her works or in everyday life, but she concludes that statement with “that’s being humanist”, pointing out that both male and female can and should be talking and raising awareness about all issues (pp. 4-5). When it comes to national identity, she explains her opinion: “I regard Scotland as being part of the universal — like Spain or Bangladesh or Sweden are. Like everyone is. Out of the particular comes the universal — no? (...) Other people do wish to deal with the specifics of nation because it’s how their heads work and how better they can say what they have to say. It’s not so much a ‘choice’ as one way of working to me.” (Sacido-Romero, 2018, p. 8). While giving more attention to female identity, it can be said that she discusses national identity too, but in a more indirect way, like in her novel *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*. Among other things, she depicts the position of women and their problems as a reflection of the position of nation and its problems.

Owens, on the other hand, gives an advantage to her national identity. In an interview with Gray (2008), she states: “I would rather just be seen as Scottish, though. I know Scotland. I was born in Scotland. I think the character is entirely different from the English.” She also states: “Well, maybe I’d rather be seen as a Scottish writer rather than a female writer. I have that kind of attitude – because I’m far from a good person! – that sometimes I would rather read what men write.” (Gray, 2008). This can be quite surprising, but it can also be understood, especially with the rest of the interview where she explains that both female and male literature should have a respectable place and should not exclude one another, that she is more interested in the quality of the work, no matter who wrote it (Gray, 2008). But, as Toussaint (2020) notes, Owens had also stated that it was pleasing “to be thought of as a woman writer”. All of this can lead us to the conclusion that Owens’ interest was mostly about content and context of the text and situation.

These analyses lead us to the conclusion that all three authors value the importance of both national (Scottish) and gender (female) identity, nurturing them in their works and everyday life, but with different levels of preference and in different ways and styles.

1.3. Scottishness vs Britishness – or Scottishness as a part of Britishness?

At the end of the chapter 1, I would like to briefly mention an aspect of Scotland (which can be applied to all other parts of Britain) that is frequently discussed when mentioning a sense of identity in the United Kingdom. It is an aspect of how identity should be perceived: as one national identity (Scottish) or as multiple identities (Scottish and British, as well as other more local identities) that are functioning together or are interchanging and shifting, sometimes noticeably, sometimes subconsciously. Even though Scottish people (we will focus only on Scotland now) are pointing out their Scottish identity and fighting for it, there is always that part of Britishness that is, mostly inevitably, a part of them. Throughout time, when this was discussed, there are always two sides: one that dismisses everything that is not Scottish identity and the other that accepts Britishness as part of their identity, that does not think that Britishness means something bad by default.

Professor Haveron also commented on this, saying that identifying only as Scottish or as British too depends on which Scottish person you ask. She goes on to explain that for her there is an overlap and there is no hard border between the two, and that it is mostly visible in certain linguistic features or particular aspects of Scottish and English or British law (A. Haveron, personal communication, June 11, 2024).

The connection between the two is discussed by McCrone (2001) as well, where he explains that “the idea that national identity is not fixed, like a badge which is attached to one at birth, can be gauged from research on people who migrate from one society to another, even when this happens within the same state” (p. 153). Calling this “a matter of meaning and mobilisation” (McCrone, 2001, p. 153), he described a situation in which we can see Scotland and the rest of Britain, where they are inevitably connected through geographic and political union and where the frequency of mobilisation through which they exchange identity markers gives us one joint British identity from these nations who often tend to differentiate between their national identities. Through this connection we can understand that pure identity is not sustainable concept and that notions of Scottish and British identity are “not mutually exclusive categories, and we know from historical work that for much of the history of the Union they were nested, one within the other” (Smout, 1994 & Morton, 1999 as cited in McCrone, 2001).

2. Writing female experience – Liz Lochhead, Janice Galloway, Agnes Owens

2.1. Liz Lochhead and *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*

2.1.1. Who is Liz Lochhead? – a biography of the leading female voice in Scottish literature

Liz Lochhead is a Scottish poet and playwright. She was born in 1947, in Motherwell, Lanarkshire. She studied at the Glasgow School of Art and taught art at schools in Glasgow and Bristol.

“During her career, Lochhead has been described variously as a poet, feminist playwright, translator and broadcaster but has said that ‘when somebody asks me what I do I usually say writer’. Lochhead’s careers as poet and playwright have always been co-existent” (BBC, 2004).

During her time as an art student Lochhead began to attend Stephen Mulrine’s writers’ workshop and write poetry. She was also a member of the prestigious writers’ group led by Philip Hobsbaum during the 1970’s, together with Alasdair Gray, Tom Leonard and James Kelman.

In 1971, Lochhead published her first collection of poems, *Memo for Spring*, which won a Scottish Arts Council Book Award.

As Varty (2013) points out, Lochhead made her debut in drama in 1978 with her feminist revue *Sugar and Spite*, which was performed at the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh. She travelled to Canada in the same year, after being selected for a Scottish Writers Exchange Fellowship, and she became a full-time writer, performance poet and broadcaster (Brief Biography of Liz Lochhead section).

The 1980s was an immensely productive decade when it comes to her work for the theatre and poetry.

She was a Writer in Residence at Edinburgh University (1986-7) and a Writer in Residence at the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1988, but also in Glasgow University, Glasgow School of Art and Eton.

Her plays include *Blood and Ice* (1982) as an adaptation of Frankenstein for the stage, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* (1989), *Dracula* (1989) and *Cuba* (1997). She also translated and adapted Molière's *Tartuffe* (1985) into Scots, premiered at the Edinburgh Royal

Lyceum in 1987, and her adaptation of Euripides' *Medea* (2000) for Theatre Babel won the Saltire Society Scottish Book of the Year Award in the same year.

She, as an author, is described as “a female poet in a male-dominated field, her writings cross the boundaries of poetry, prose and drama. They are poignant and often humorous pieces that tell stories and question assumptions of female and Scottish identity. Often they also contain Gothic elements” (National Galleries Scotland, 2024).

Her awards and acknowledgments include: an honorary degree by the University of Edinburgh (2000), Poet Laureate of Glasgow (2005-2011), an honorary fellow of the Association for Scottish Literary Studies (2010), Scotland's Makar - its national Poet Laureate (2011-2016), an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (2014) and the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry (2015). She is currently the Honorary President of the Caledonian Cultural Fellows at Glasgow Caledonian University.

A variety of different genres with numerous successful works and many awards, as well as honorary recognitions within a long career proves why she is the leading female voice in Scottish literature.

2.1.2. Lochhead, literature and politics – 1970s-1990s

Lochhead's work started in the 1970s, in the significant period for Scottish politics. As already stated, it was not easy for a female writer to become visible at that time, but Lochhead, with her interesting, perceptive and striking works managed to do that. Given the already discussed position of women in society and in literature, it is quite understandable that her efforts led her to become associated with the birth of a female voice in Scotland and its literature. She fought for rights of women and expressed her pro-feminist attitudes openly, but not with the aim of belittling men and their importance in literature, but in order to endorse equality of men and women. Noting that the position of women (writers) was inferior to men, there were more male writers on the literary scene, but since they shared her attitudes, she was, in a professional sense, closely connected to them, for example Edwin Morgan but also Alasdair Gray and James Kelman.

But, in the 1980s, especially the mid-1980s and later in the 1990s, Lochhead included the aspect of national identity into her literary spectrum. She started to be more interested in happenings in the Scottish politics and she depicted all of what she found interesting, problematic and important to talk about into her works, mostly dramatic works, since the 1980s marked her

beginning of the career as a playwright. She had a talent of taking different aspects of political life in Scotland and putting them in different settings or time periods, but also combining them with other issues, such as Scottish society and, of course, female identity. One of the most prominent plays that characterises this choice of literary expression is *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* which “dramatises the history of Scotland from the female point of view” (National Galleries Scotland, 2024). This play is the exact combination of the Lochhead’s newfound way of writing and, at least when it comes to her plays, the one that became the most successful.

This continued into the 1990s as well, when, as Lochhead explains herself, she became even more aware of the importance of the Second Devolution Referendum, like many other people. “The 1990s saw a move away from the more overtly feminist agenda of Lochhead’s early works and into a wider concern with issues of voice in general” (BBC, 2004). The consecutive Conservative ‘rule’ largely contributed to it, since many people, among them Lochhead herself, were extremely dissatisfied with the rule of anti-devolution party, which they saw as anti-Scottish or anti-change party as well.

Overall, as Varty (2013) describes it, Lochhead became a key voice in complicating notions of Scottish identity (p. 37). Together with her male counterparts, not only did she express her tendencies towards certain political choices before the crucial changes, but she also (dis)approved of them afterwards, stating her opinion and giving insight into her preferences and attitudes, which helped people who read (or watched) her works to decide on their political choices and attitudes.

That is the case with her play *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* too. With plenty of motives and messages, the play is the embodiment of Scotland at the time, regardless of its different time period. The national and political framework of the play contribute to a powerful representation of Scotland, reviving different aspects of what it means to be Scottish. Immediately in the introduction Lochhead states that: “To my enduring delight and pride it has become a Communicado – and national – landmark” (Lochhead, 2009, p. 5), pointing out the importance of the play being a symbol of Scottish national identity. The Communicado Theatre Company was at the time a newfound theatre led by Gerry Mulgrew, which differentiated from traditional theatres in its approach to drama, staging and a strong sense of national Scottish identity. “When doing new plays, the company works directly with the playwright to create a production that will be coherent both vocally and visually” (Koren-Deutsch, 1992, p. 425). It was the case with *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* as well, where, in its introduction, Lochhead describes the whole process of how the play came to life, from

Mulgrew's idea to create a play about Queen Mary, the offer to Lochhead to write it, all the way to the long process of writing the play, and a constant consultation with Mulgrew, whose idea was also to perform the play for the first time in 1987, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Queen Mary's death (Lochhead, 2009). It indeed premiered in 1987, at the Edinburgh Festival.

In Act One, Scene One, La Corbie, a bird opens the play with a description and questions about Scotland:

“Country: Scotland. Whit like is it?

(...)

Ah dinna ken whit like *your* Scotland is. Here's mines.

National flower: the thistle.

National pastime: nostalgia.

National weather: smirr, haar, drizzle, snaw!

National bird: the crow, the corbie, la corbeille, le corbeau, moi!” (Lochhead, 2009, pp. 17-

18).

At the beginning of the play, Scotland is immediately mentioned. It is in the foreground, described with its first associations and symbols. It sets the tone and attitude as it is, among other things, impossible not to notice the word national used four times at the first two pages only, but also, with the possessive pronoun ‘mine’ or as it is in original ‘mines’, it gives us an impression of national pride and feeling of protectiveness.

But besides understanding it as a praise of Scotland and its identity, this excerpt can also be understood as a way of playing with stereotypes about Scottish national identity, widespread among people in Britain, but outside of it as well. “Although they seem to be rather useful from the perspective of associating a nation's positive features with its cultural propaganda, the dangers and traps of stereotyping have been quite difficult to avoid” (Kostić, 2014, p. 103). The standard stereotypes about Scotland such as bad weather and nostalgic mood are reversed here from something many people see as negative and use as an opportunity for mocking to the aspects of praise which serve as a first description of Scotland for people who start reading or watching the play.

La Corbie, who introduces this description, is a very important character in the play. She is a bird, a crow in the role of a narrator who is on the stage, also acting as a chorus or as play's consciousness. She speaks to the characters and the audience, she sings, dances and watches

the play unfolding. An interesting choice of a narrator came from Lochhead's belief that this play should have one along with Mulgrew's statement that in *Communicado* she can have anything, including talking animals. (Koren-Deutsch, 1992, p. 427). Lochhead describes La Corbie as "the spirit of Scotland" whose role is to reveal "different discourses that have contributed to create a stereotyped Scotland" (Rodríguez González, 2008, p. 95). Through her role as a guide during the play, La Corbie takes us below the surface of different aspects and narratives, in order to make us understand and reconstruct them.

The evidence that the beginning of the play, specifically Act One, Scene One is full of notions of national identity and tendencies towards national pride, but injustice towards Scots too, is visible in the next excerpt as well:

"CORBIE: Once upon a time there were twa queens on the wan green island, and the wan green island was split intae twa kingdoms. But no equal kingdoms, naebody in their richt mind would insist on that.

For the northern kingdom was cauld and sma. And the people were low-statured and ignorant and feart o their lords and poor? They were starvin! And their queen was beautiful and tall and fair and... Frenchified.

The other kingdom in the island was large, and prosperous, with wheat and barley and fat kye in the fields o her yeoman fermers, and wool in her looms, and beer in her barrels and, at the mouth of her greatest river, a great port, a glistening city that sucked all wealth to its centre – which was a palace and a court of a queen. She was a cousin, a clever cousin, a wee bit aulder, and mibbe no sae braw as the other queen, but a queen nevertheless.

Queen o a country wi an army, an a navy and dominion over many lands.

Quick burst of a sad or ironic jig" (Lochhead, 2009, pp. 18-19).

A comparison and description of Scotland and England, this excerpt is an example of Lochhead's talent of setting the play into different settings and time periods, with the intention to send a more universal message and make a more universal point, not obviously and directly said but easily recognized.

The notion of inequality permeates this monologue. La Corbie describes the two kingdoms as unequal and ends a sentence with a strong statement that nobody in their right mind would insist on them being equal. This is a very interesting formulation of a sentence since it reminds us of the insistence of Scotland on the devolution referendum. Why would the 'national bird'

of Scotland call that idea ‘crazy’? The irony is loud and La Corbie actually mocks England’s attitudes towards Scotland’s aspiration for the devolution and their general attitude of superiority.

The notions of inequality and superiority are combined in the rest of the excerpt. The description of Scotland as cold and poor country is followed by the description of England as large and rich country. What is interesting is that only England is described as the one that has a country administration, an army and a navy, the one that politically functions as a country. But in what way is that described is even more interesting. ‘A city that sucked all wealth to its centre’ – revolt against England’s political and economic self-centeredness; ‘dominion over many lands’ – a note on England’s rule over other countries, one of them being Scotland itself. The entire analysis above is summarized in the last sentence, with the words “sad” and “ironic” which represent two layers of this excerpt’s interpretation.

The excerpt can also be interpreted through the aspect of historiographic metafiction in drama. The term historiographic metafiction was first coined by the literary theorist Linda Hutcheon where she explains that “historiographical metafiction refutes the natural or common-sense methods of distinguishing between historical fact and fiction. It refuses the view that only history has a truth claim, both by questioning the ground of that claim in historiography and by asserting that both history and fiction are discourses, human constructs, signifying systems, and both derive their major claim to truth from that identity” (Hutcheon, 2004, as cited in Martinec, 2022). She further goes on to explain that “historiographic metafiction acknowledges the paradox of the reality of the past but its textualized accessibility to us today” (Hutcheon, 2004, as cited in Martinec, 2022). Historiographic metafiction connects history and fiction which often depict the connection between past and present in order to shed light onto marginalized individuals or nations, sometimes even in an ironic way – which is the case in this excerpt. The representation of Scotland and England in it is the depiction of their position in the period in which the play is set, but it also mirrors their position in the modern period of 1970s-1990s. Through it, Lochhead deconstructs and erases boundaries between different time periods and instead highlights their similarities in order to emphasize the importance of recognizing issues and making a change. Ahmetspahić (2021) discusses in detail the aspect of historiographic metafiction, or as she refers to it, historiographic metadrama, arguing that “Lochhead has also recognized the dire need for revising and rewriting the past, thus allowing for the emergence of unheard voices and voices suppressed by different metanarratives. Historiographic metadrama (...) shows that our reality is pervaded by metanarratives that have, unfortunately, become naturalized and universalized” (p. 228).

In the introduction to the play, Lochhead says: “There was at that time a real sense of frustration in Scotland, a need for us to tell our own stories and find our own language to tell it in” (Lochhead, 2009, pp. 9-10). This is a direct and concrete statement about the need for the real Scottish voice at the time when the play was written. She also confirms that the play is “a debate about the then current state of affairs between Scotland and England” (Lochhead, 2009, p. 9). One of the problems she is referring to is the Conservative rule together with the leadership of Margaret Thatcher. As it is already familiar, Scots were not Thatcher’s supporters, including Lochhead, which, when it comes to her, partly has to do with the fact that, as Crawford (2014) explains, she comes from a working-class family that worked in a coal-mining industry – Thatcher’s politics had a negative impact on her too (p. 208). A sense of frustration and a need for their own (political) voice came from a dissatisfaction with the current political leader and the current political state of affairs.

From what we saw, Lochhead focused a lot on Scottish national identity and Scottish political situation in this play, supporting Scotland’s tendency towards taking (more) matters into its own hands, with which she made a significant impact on Scottish literature and politics. “By situating Lochhead within the larger framework of Scottish drama and literature, scholars gain a more comprehensive understanding of her role as a Scottish female bard and her exceptional ability to resonate with audiences through her powerful and evocative poems and plays” (Gölcük Mirza, 2023, p. 58).

2.1.3. Raising and echoing female voices in *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*

Liz Lochhead is known to be one of the most prominent female voices in Scottish literature. Through her entire career, there were several aspects and notions that served as themes of her works, but one aspect that was constantly present and that marked the beginning of her career is the aspect of the female voice, of raising and strengthening that voice, of representing women and their rights through literature, to her audience. Lochhead’s goal was, as Crawford (2014) describes it, the articulation of the struggle for women to achieve a form of gender independence, mostly, but not exclusively, in Scottish society (p. 212). Koren-Deutsch (1992) describes Lochhead as both explicitly and implicitly feminist, supporting her statement by quoting Lochhead herself: “She has said that “the longer I live in Scotland the more assertively feminist - in the sense of longing for ‘womanly values’ in both men and women in this repressed, violent, colonised society - I get.”” (p. 431).

One of her works that delves into this is the play *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*. Written in 1987, the play premiered that same year at the Edinburgh Festival as a commemoration to the four hundredth anniversary of Queen Mary Stuart's execution. It gained immediate success and, at the same festival, won an Edinburgh Festival Fringe First Award. She cooperated with the Comunicado Theatre Company which embodied new visions when it comes to bringing theatrical pieces to people, so, with Lochhead's progressive and encouraging ideas they found common goals and the partnership begun, soon resulting in a big success that continued until today.

Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off portrays two queens, Mary I of Scotland and Elizabeth I, both on their thrones, ruling their respective countries. The play opens up with La Corbie, a bird in the role of a narrator, who sets the tone of the play and introduces us to the main characters through her comparative description. We follow queens' lives both as monarchs and as women in the patriarchal society (with more attention to Mary's story), from marriage offers and their different decisions - Mary chooses to marry while Elizabeth decides not to marry at all, to their rare, private moments of expressing their feelings and worries to their maids. Since they cannot show emotions in public, because of their role as queens, for them, these moments are very important, while for us, they give a glimpse into their thoughts and private lives. Elizabeth admits that she is in love, but decides that, if she does get married, she will put her country's wellbeing before her own feelings. We also follow Mary, who confronts several figures from political and public life, such as John Knox, a notorious Scottish minister, who preaches against women and Catholic church and Bothwell, who she manages to gain as an ally against Knox. Her imprisonment and death were preceded by a series of events, from her marriage to Lord Darnley, murder of Riccio, Mary's secretary, planned out of jealousy by her husband, after which Scottish nobles (who were disguised as travelling players and who murdered Riccio, but who also turned against Mary) proclaimed Darnley as a king and decided to imprison Mary, but she seeks help from Bothwell. Both queens appear on opposite sides of the stage, expressing their feelings and reconsidering their actions. The play ends in an interesting and unusual representation of its characters as children, singing the folk rhyme "Mary Queen of Scots got her head chopped off" while grabbing Marie Mary by her throat, when the lights first go red, then black.

Looking at the time when the play is set, in 16th century, Scotland and England were opposed, even though they were linked by their proximity, but more importantly, by many royal blood relations which often complicated their relationship even more. Mary Queen of Scots was Elizabeth I's cousin who was considered by many English Roman Catholics as the rightful heir

to the English throne, since she herself was a Catholic, while Elizabeth was a Protestant (Fraser, 2024), which caused the never-ending hostility between the monarchs. During the 1980's, an eventful period for Scotland, Lochhead decides to use this timeframe as an indicator of the constant tension between Scotland and England which rose again during Scottish discussions about devolution. More specifically, since that period is the period of Thatcher's mandate, which was met with dissatisfaction among Scots, Lochhead decided to connect England from 16th century led by Elizabeth I with England in 1980s led by Margaret Thatcher, seeing both women as positioning themselves as superior leaders, looking down at the leadership of anyone else. Kostić (2014) describes the play as a modern Scottish classic and states that "its modern and classic traits are wisely yoked together for the sake of maintaining and alluding to Lochhead's previously mentioned idea of "eternal conflict"" (p. 112).

Mary is emotional and gentle (but able to be strict when she deems it necessary), while Elizabeth is austere and does not show emotions (at least not at first and not in public). Their characters interchange, but the characteristics that describe them in their core make them different, yet they are both struggling to maintain their position of power, thereby showing the true abilities of women and breaking prejudices against them. In other words, "*Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* is a feminist drama not because it blazons female triumph but because it dramatises an issue which has made society, and particularly Scottish society, uneasy: what John Knox viewed as a threat, the 'regiment of women' – female empowerment" (Crawford, 2014, p. 212). That strong voice that fights against restrains and for equality, respect and rights of women is visible throughout the entire play, of course. Here are some examples:

"Scene Five

MARY: *Nobody* speaks to the Queen like that!

(...)

MARY: I want, in my realm, Maister Hepburn O'Bothwell, that women should sleep sound in their beds.

(...)

MARY: Bothwell, as well as Queen, I am widow. And maiden. And I would hae all unprotectit women in my realm honoured in their privacy!" (Lochhead, 2009, pp. 37-40).

Since, out of the two queens, the bigger focus is on Queen Mary, we can discuss her position and rights described and presented in the play. If we take into consideration the description of

Scotland in Act One, Scene One as an inferior country, having to carry that label imposed by others, then Queen Mary is confronted with two burdens that she has to bear. That double label she is forced to deal with makes her everyday political and private life considerably harder, which is explained in more detail in the following quote: “This doubleness is expressed as a double oppression: Scottish women occupy a position of inadequacy not only because they are Scottish but because they are also women” (Stirling, 2008, p. 79). In the following excerpts from Scene Two and Scene Three, we will analyze Mary’s statements through the prism of doubleness:

“Indeed I wish that Elizabeth was a man and I would willingly marry her! And wouldn’t that make an end of all debates!

(...)

It’s daein nothin, Bess! The Queen. And I hae nae power tae mak my country flourish.

I want to marry, Bessie, I want to marry and begin my reign at last” (Lochhead, 2009, pp. 23-25).

The first layer of doubleness is visible immediately at the beginning. Queen Mary expresses her wish that Queen Elizabeth were a man so that she could marry her. As a Queen of England, Elizabeth is strong, influential and prosperous political figure in the eyes of many, including Mary, who feels the pressure of the constant consideration of her as Scottish and, by default, inferior. So, in that desperate state, she wishes to be in Elizabeth’s position in order to be able to prove herself and her abilities.

The second layer of doubleness unfolds in the second part of the excerpt. Her despair continues as she explains her problem of being a female sovereign. She emphasizes words *The Queen* as her position and status and proceeds to reveal her real political position. The discrepancy of being the head of the state but having limited powers to lead the nation or to make it prosperous is a frustrating example of the position of women not just at the time of Queen Mary’s reign but even in our near past. The excerpt ends with a very striking sentence that desperately calls for the change in perception of women. Even though she is the Queen and the leader of her country, Mary wants to marry since that is the only way for her not only to *broaden* her political powers, but to actually *begin* the reign, as she emphasizes it, at last.

Further on, as we critically examine the play from the point of representation of women and their rights, but problems too, we come to the aspect of women’s political vs public life. Female

leaders are not expected to show certain emotions, especially those emotions that will reveal a part of their personal life, but instead they have to stand firm – another aspect presented and depicted in *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*. Mary is seen as weak because of her emotional and soft character and on the basis of that only, without giving her the chance and space to prove herself. On the other side, Elizabeth is presenting herself as cold, austere and someone who does not appreciate unnecessary emotions, all of it for the sake of keeping her throne safe, to herself, without meddling of others. She knows it is possible only with that kind of behavior so “Elizabeth’s masculinisation is, hence, a strategy to escape patriarchal authority” (Rodríguez González, 2004, p. 148). Lochhead, caring about national identity, but above all, gender identity is “concerned with the ways in which femininity is constructed and performed and she has the character of Elizabeth enact masculine types of behaviour (even appearing on stage in men’s clothes) as a means of representing the exclusion of feminine behaviour in the political realm” (BBC, 2004). But, her emotional side shows up when she is alone or accompanied by her maid, as in the following excerpt from Scene Five:

“ELIZABETH. Mum was... Dad was... Dad was there, I was only tiny and... my... dolly’s head... fell off. Then it changed the way it does in dreams and Leicester, well, we were just two little children playing in the woods, but I knew the way you do that it was really I and my Robert and... then long empty corridors I was all alone and a crown rolling...

She cries again” (Lochhead, 2009, p. 34).

Elizabeth I is daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, whose tumultuous relationship is one of the frequent historical topics. They were married after Henry insisted on the annulment of his previous marriage, which led to the English Reformation, after the break with the Roman Catholic Church. After only three years of marriage, Anne was charged with adultery and found guilty, which resulted in her beheading. Her guilt is unlikely to be completely true; she was an apparent victim of a court faction supported by Thomas Cromwell (Bullen, 2024). Her parents’ relationship and her father’s patriarchal attitudes affected Elizabeth throughout her life, even as an adult who is in a position of a monarch. The trauma or fear that Elizabeth experiences is expressed through her dreams in which her doll’s head is severed from its body, representing her mother’s destiny and her father’s patriarchal attitudes where, even in his slight discontent with women’s behavior or actions, he deprives them of their power, often in a very harsh way, such as murder (Kostić, 2014, p. 109). Through such actions, he shows his power and the

inferior position of women in that period which is symbolized through rolling of the crown, representing the loss of secular power. Elizabeth does not want to be ruled by patriarchal figures, so, that loss of secular power is a climactic moment for her that reflects her own fear of helplessness in case her crown and her throne is taken away from her. In order to avoid that, she decides to enact the destructive and austere behaviour common for the patriarchal figures at that time (Kostić. 2014, p. 109).

Another problem regarding women's political vs private life presented in the play is the way men perceive women in politics. They consider them as less capable or unfit for that type of position, deploying misogynistic behavior as a daily occurrence. Lochhead depicted those men through the character of John Knox who views the two queens, and women in general as dangerous, subversive and unfit for political leadership (BBC, 2004):

“Scene Seven

KNOX: She's only a silly spilte wee French lassie, Bothwell.

BOTHWELL: Only a silly spilte wee French lassie wha could cowp the kirk and cut your heid aff, John Knox.

KNOX: She's only a queen.

BOTHWELL (*as they begin to exit*): And what's a queen?

KNOX: Juist a silly, spilte wee lassie” (Lochhead, 2009, p. 48).

He also describes them as “an abomination against nature” and their reign as “monstrous regiment o women” in Scene Four (Lochhead, 2009, p. 28).

John Knox was a Scottish minister who preached against women and Roman Catholic Church. He accepted changes in the religious aspect of Scotland with the Scottish Reformation, the process through which Scottish Church broke away from Roman Catholic Church and established Protestant Church of Scotland, and even became the main spokesman for the implementation of Protestantism (Stevenson McEwen, 2024). He particularly spoke against Queen Mary, since she was a Catholic woman in power. “In this way, Scottish powerful patriarchal representatives, both from the spiritual and the secular sphere, are revealed for being identical in their destructive attempts at annihilating the female influence in the state affairs” (Kostić, 2014, p. 111). With his attitudes towards women as sinful, dangerous and unfit for leadership, he embraces “cultural codes of male dominance” and sets himself as an example of the destructive patriarchal culture (Kostić, 2014, pp. 109-110).

In Scene Five Mary explains the disrespect she constantly faces:

“MARY: I’m your queen. And in three years in this country I canna depend on any o ye to show me royal respect as I am due, although in every way I try – (*Dissolves into shaming tears.*)” (Lochhead, 2009, p. 38).

No matter how different Mary and Elizabeth seem to be, their struggle with patriarchal society and views which impose inferiority of women bound them together, representing a rare common aspect between the two, but a very important one. By depicting these two queens, Lochhead shows us the position of women at that time, which was extremely inferior and hard to the point that no matter how they act and no matter which decisions women make, they end up paying some sort of price for it – for women at that time, there was essentially no situation where they can succeed completely. Elizabeth had to give up on love in order to stay in power and Mary hoped she can juggle between the two and believed she can find true love no matter what, but with each marriage, she loses some of her hold on the Scottish throne (Koren-Deutsch, 1992, p. 427). “However, these extremes in the confronted queens’ conduct just point to their fruitless attempts to escape the dominant patriarchal ideology they are immersed in from the moment of their birth” (Kostić, 2014, p. 108). In order to completely understand both queens, we have to recognize their common battle to maintain their position and strength against the men around them (Koren-Deutsch, 1992, p. 429). When we look at this analysis and the time period in which the play was published, we can see the references to the politicians of the 1980’s, particularly Margaret Thatcher. The connection between the two actually lies in their differences, since Thatcher, even though she was a woman in power, was not a model of women’s freedom. Her attitudes were strict, without emotions and sentiment and they reflected attitudes of patriarchal society more than the expected attitudes of a female leader.

With this play, Lochhead is raising and echoing female voice both through presenting them as strong individuals who stand firm in spite of their environment and through showing the problems they face(d), advocating for a much-needed change. “Its women seek to achieve a redefining of gender roles so they may remain discernibly female at the same time as asserting a right to take on roles (including career roles) often seen as the preserve of men” (Crawford, 2014, p. 212).

2.1.4. Relevance of drama as a genre for the representation of national and gender identity

Lochhead decided to bring the story of Mary and Elizabeth to us through the genre of drama which enables her to present key parts of the story very effectively but also enables a faster pace of that story. In addition, she can shift through time with the ability to occasionally set the stage differently, allowing for the messages to take on a more universal tone. “Feminism, along with the pluralistic openness of postmodernist and gender theories and practices, has indeed liberated female dramatists in unprecedented ways, and consequently opened the once exclusively male zone to their respective (subjective) experiences and voices, which have been defiantly contesting patriarchal social and cultural practices and discourses since the 1970s” (Čirić-Fazlija, 2022, p. 173). As almost in every other aspect of life, women’s position and presence in Scottish theatre was frowned upon, but that started to change during the 1970s as well, so, by the time of this play’s publishing and staging “the male dominion over the Scottish theatre was challenged by feminist theatre which focused on history and its perpetuation of the images of women as subordinate to men” (Ahmetpahić, 2022, p. 226).

As a contemporary, inventive and imaginative playwright (British Council, 2024), she partnered with the Comunicado Theatre for a long time, very successfully. Comunicado, as “a distinctly Scottish voice in theatre, one that breaks away from the history of English theatrical domination of Scotland” (Koren-Deutsch, 1992, p. 425), leans a lot onto the methods of Brecht’s epic theatre which work very well for history plays. Koren-Deutsch (1992) explains these methods and their relevance to the *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off*: they introduce dramatized historical world with contemporary meaning and constantly remind the audience not to become too involved with the actions depicted on the stage, which allows them to examine historical events through a filter of contemporary morality (p. 425). The contemporariness in this play is reflected both through the costumes (and stage setting) – the feature that enables the before mentioned universal tone of the message and articulates the feminist issues the play examines. “With all its emphasis on performance and cyclic reperformance, the drama implicitly challenges its audience to break out of this cycle and perform things differently” (Crawford, 2014, p. 215). This method of performance and staging delivers the message through making the audience understand the rights and wrongs in order to ‘break the cycle’ and proceed to do the right thing.

The costumes and props that are used in the drama are an important factor for the connection between the 16th and 20th century. The mix between the traditional and the modern shows us the universality of the play and its messages as well as the importance of understanding the

play as a powerful reference to problematic aspects from 16th century which reappear in the 20th century. One of such examples is the appearance of Elizabeth dressed as a Thatcherite Yuppie in leopard skin and Ray-Bans (Koren-Deutsch, 1992, p. 425), which, besides linking the two through the similarity of their character, links them visually as well.

Lochhead also uses some other techniques in order to convey the ideas into the right form of drama so “rather than focus solely on the plight of Mary as a closed historical character, Lochhead, using cross-cutting and role-playing techniques which highlight the similarities and contrasts in the choices open to the two women and in the decisions they take, investigates the conflicting personal and public demands made on women” (Crawford & Varty, 1993, p. 135). In order for that to be more emphasized, as Crawford (2014) states, the intercutting technique, which characterises the drama, appears in several scenes, one of them being the joint appearance of Mary and Elizabeth on stage (p. 214). By being able to parallelly follow them, we are given more insight into the options they have and their decisions, as explained above, as well as into the demands the society imposes on women.

The importance of drama’s performative nature is in its visuality, allowing people to audibly and visually experience all the aspects that writer wants to be understood. All of what is written in a play comes to life on stage, presenting the problematics, irony or humour more vividly and strikingly. Another advantage of staging a play is that it is possible to balance and change different appearances in order to give more importance to different aspects each time a play is enacted.

Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off is an extraordinary play that encompasses aspects of both national and gender identity, specifically (the importance of) Scottish and female identity, which can be observed separately, but they also intertwine and overlap in many scenes. It also connects female empowerment and national independence that became more insistent in the twenty-first century (Crawford, 2014, p. 213).

2.2. Janice Galloway and *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*

2.2.1. A brief note on Janice Galloway's life and work

Janice Galloway is a Scottish writer of novels, short stories, memoirs, libretti, plays and poems. She was born in 1955 in Saltcoats, Ayrshire and went first to Ardrossan Academy and then studied music and English language at Glasgow University. Before she started her career as an author, she was a school teacher.

McQuillan (2003) notes that “Scottish literature as a whole seeks to establish a counter-narrative to the tradition of English literature which has previously assimilated Scottish national identity under a wider notion of Britishness which was really an expanded sense of Englishness. However, Galloway’s work in the company of contemporaries such as A. L. Kennedy and Liz Lochhead, has begun to redress that imbalance.”

Her first novel, *The Trick is to Keep Breathing* gained huge success and is now widely regarded as a Scottish contemporary classic and “a significant force in Scottish cultural life” (McQuillan, 2003). It was published in 1990 and won the MIND/Allan Lane Book of the Year in 1990 as well. It was also shortlisted for the Whitbread First Novel, Scottish First Book, Italia Premio Acerbi and Aer Lingus Awards (Blake Friedmann literary agency, 2023).

Brown (1996) describes Galloway as a literary endoscopist who goes beneath the surface of life and exposes the nerves. Galloway focuses on several essential points in her writing such as “to make the reader feel” and to “haul the reader in” (Brown, 1996), expressing the importance of an individual’s own journey of questioning and addressing his or hers own issues.

Her other works include: novels *Foreign Parts* (1994) and *Clara* (2002), collections of short stories *Blood* (1991) and *Where You Find It* (1996) which were later published as *Collected Short Stories* (2009), but also *Jellyfish* (2019) and two volumes of her “anti-memoir” *This is Not about Me* (2008) and *All Made Up* (2011).

Her prizes and awards include Scottish Arts Council Book Award (1990), Saltire Society Scottish Book of the Year Award (1991 and 2002), The American Academy of Arts and Letters EM Forster Award (1994), Creative Scotland Award (2002), Scottish Arts Council Book of the Year Award (2002) and Scottish Best Book of the Year (2012). She was also elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 2023.

Janice Galloway’s work is representative of the Scottish postmodern literature. “She admits the significance for her work of Alasdair Gray and Marguerite Duras, admires Catherine Carswell

and Jessie Kesson, but insists that nothing that a writer reads or experiences is ever wasted” (McMillan, 2010).

She lives in Fife.

2.2.2. The trick is to know how to present problems – style and themes

Janice Galloway did not pursue her writing career immediately after finishing her education, but a decade later. Thus, her debut novel saw the light of day in the 1980’s, specifically at their peak, at the turn of a decade, in 1989. In the midst and during the most important years for Scottish politics, Galloway presented *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* an unusual piece of literature at the time, but nonetheless, it was greatly received. It certainly divided the opinions of people, to those who understood its meaning on all levels and those who did not see the Scottishness of the novel and criticized her for the lack of interest in the political matters that concern not only politicians, but the whole society. But Galloway’s position was, as is well-known, that novels or literature in general do not have to discuss politics in any way, directly or indirectly, so she decides to follow that and deal with other important things besides politics at the period when there were not many authors who chose that literary path.

The Trick Is to Keep Breathing is a novel written in the stream of consciousness narrative technique and follows the life of a drama teacher Joy Stone who is dealing with depression and anxiety which gradually get worse and worse, and her struggle to go through her everyday life. As we follow her through her mind, we find out the reason for her state as she goes back and forth to the specific event and describes it in fragments, when she is ready to confront it – the death of her lover Michael. Since then, she is in a complete deterioration, physically and mentally and the reader is informed of not only her mental state but physical transformation and her surrounding too as we go through her life with her day by day.

Postmodernism, as a movement characterized by skepticism, relativism, suspicion of reason and a sensitivity to the role of ideology in asserting and maintaining political and economic power (Duignan, 2024), uses stream of consciousness narrative style as a frequent technique for the achievement of desired meaning and tone of the novel. Stream of consciousness is a “narrative technique in nondramatic fiction intended to render the flow of myriad impressions—visual, auditory, physical, associative, and subliminal—that impinge on the consciousness of an individual and form part of the character’s awareness along with the trend of the character’s rational thoughts” (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024, *stream of*

consciousness section, para. 1). Definitions of postmodernist literature and stream of consciousness narrative technique describe Galloway's work and give explanation as to why Galloway opted for this style in order to convey messages she chose to deal with.

Galloway decided to step away from obvious references to Scottish national identity and write about other, equally important problems and aspects of society, specifically women and their position and importance. She focuses on women's individuality and health problems, while putting forward something that was always overshadowed by other aspects of life.

There are certain details from Joy's life that can be connected to Galloway's. First one that can be noticed is the similarity in profession – Galloway was a teacher and Joy is also a (drama) teacher. Second one is the similarity in a specific family relationship. Joy mentions her sister several times who also comes and visits her in order to check on her but ends up criticizing everything and just broadening the gap between them that goes back all the way to Joy's childhood:

I've been afraid of Myra ever since I remember. She and my mother/ her mother were pregnant at the same time. She could have been my mother. I think about that if I feel hard done by, making myself grateful for small mercies. Myra's baby died. I didn't. Maybe that was why she hit me so much. I don't know. Hands like shovels. Myra left marks. None of them show. (Galloway, 1999, p. 55)

They cannot get along, they never could and that is something Joy is aware of as well as the understanding that their relationship will probably never advance. Similar situation happened to Galloway too. "Galloway's childhood was dominated by a much older sister who returned, having left her own husband and child, to tyrannize the household" (Mcmillan, 2010). It does not mean that this novel contains autobiographical elements, it rather means that, by taking snippets of her life too, Galloway is trying to show us the universality of the problem, the possibility of this happening to anyone.

"Galloway's route to writing forms the familiar path of many of her peers, from a deprived childhood through the Scottish education system (studying music at Glasgow University) and from there to creative writing as an expression of that transition" (McQuillan, 2003). What is also interesting to mention is that this novel is often compared to "The Bell Jar" by Sylvia Plath. Both authors write about a woman's state of mind, internal feelings and struggle and even though they published their works in different time periods, in different decades and in different countries, the universality of their writing and message is something that connects

them and makes those books striking and popular while making their message echo through generations of readers. That layer of universality is something that differentiates *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* from other Scottish works, but beneath it we can discover aspects of national and gender identity specific to Scotland, where Galloway does not only shed light onto the problems of Scottish women but also on the importance and problems of Scottish politics and identity but in a more indirect way, through an individual struggling with her own personal matters, representing nation which consists of many individuals like Joy who are often unheard and isolated.

2.2.3. Women's mental health

As already noted, Janice Galloway decided to give voice to those problems that are often overlooked, ignored, seen as less important and swept under the carpet. Being familiar with the importance of Scottish writers and critics for Scotland as a nation, she knew that this novel could shed light and start a discussion about mental health issues – she hoped she could start a change.

Joy Stone is a woman whose life started changing since the death of her lover. Under the influence of this trauma, she became a different person. She started struggling with severe depression and anxiety which kept her away from going through her everyday life. She struggled to do basically anything: from getting up, showering, eating, cleaning, going to work to enjoying her hobbies and falling asleep. She did not feel like herself anymore – she felt empty and distant from her own mind and body.

“I watch myself from the corner of the room sitting in the armchair, at the foot of the stairwell. A small white moon shows over the fencing outside. No matter how dark the room gets I can always see. It looks emptier when I put the lights on so I don't do it if I can help it. Brightness disagrees with me: it hurts my eyes, wastes electricity and encourages moths, all sorts of things. I sit in the dark for a number of reasons” (Galloway, 1999, p. 8).

This is how the novel starts. This is how Joy's mind opens up to us. She feels separated from herself, from her body – she is trapped in the dichotomy of her mind and body. The darkness and emptiness are what surrounds her, but what is inside her as well. She has been in darkness

for so long that she now prefers it more than light – she is familiar with it more and light reminds her of her surroundings, of everything that happened, of reality, of everything she should do, but cannot make herself to do and of everything that is missing: as she claims, “it looks emptier when I put the lights on” (Galloway, 1999, p. 8). The lit-up room and its emptiness remind her of all the reasons *she* feels empty.

Her name can be seen as a metaphor for her state: Joy as an ironic remark of her present and a reminder of her happier past; Stone as something heavy and inanimate, a burden. Her name can be seen as representing her past; her surname, quite the opposite – her present, how she feels now.

She describes her state of mind very vividly, in a concise but striking way, in the following excerpt:

“I’m starting to hate things. I hate where I work. I see small things about too many small people and it makes me bitter. I don’t want to be bitter. Bitterness hurts. I’m lonely. I’m afraid I’ll go sour and nobody will love me any more. Something about me kills people. I’m losing days and drinking too much. I’m not a proper woman. I no longer menstruate. Sometimes I think I don’t exist. I keep looking for the reasons and never find them, waiting all the time but I don’t know what for. I always do the wrong thing” (Galloway, 1999, p. 97).

Through this, Joy expresses her feelings of tiredness, meaninglessness and being lost but also expresses her silent cry for help and feeling of fear and worry for herself. She does not enjoy anything anymore and keeps herself in a vicious circle of sadness, wanting to escape it but not knowing how and not having the strength to do it alone. She does not want to be lonely, she wants to be loved instead, but barely anyone around her recognizes her problems or makes an effort to at least ask how she is, let alone do something to help. On the other side, there are people who try to help her, such as her friend Marianne, but Joy’s mental state makes her want the help but at the same time having a hard time accepting it and moving away from the enchanted circle of anxiety and depression.

Galloway presents the importance of women’s mental health in a very direct, raw and real way, putting forward both the struggle in mind and body as well, not forgetting the second aspect that is often neglected when thinking and discussing about mental health. People often think that mental health struggles do not have visible effects, that they do not affect the body, but the physical side of those struggles is very common and often present, which can be seen in the

excerpt above too, where Joy is struggling with physical disbalance that affected her menstruation; throughout the book, we can see that it affected her appetite as well, leading to the series of struggles and illnesses such as anorexia and bulimia. As much as Joy feels separated from her body, and sometimes from both body and mind, the connection between the two is inevitable. Every time Joy remembers the traumatic and tragic event that made her condition worse, she does not only feel anxious and depressed, the trauma does not only affect her mental health, but she becomes physically sick as well. Other problems that add on to the reasons for her mental state are loneliness and the way society sees her now, after finding out about her relationship with Michael. Everyone judges her because Michael had been a married man. She is forced to isolate herself and narrow down her circle of acquaintances. Her colleagues at work try to sweep that problematic relationship under the rug by completely ignoring her and acting like she is invisible, as was the case at his commemoration. She is the only one to be blamed now; when it comes to Michael, him being deceased makes it inappropriate to say anything besides words of praise and prayers.

But Joy does not give up completely. She occasionally repeats phrases such as “I’m trying”, encouraging herself and giving strength to move forward:

“I’m trying, Marianne. I do want to know how to get better. I wait to see doctors but there is nothing fixed. Maybe this is part of the therapy. I don’t know. Ros says she has seen a psychiatrist twice. She has been here a long time. I know I have to try” (Galloway, 1999, p. 112).

But her trying and wanting to be good is not just because of herself and her health, but because of the rooted idea of women having to be good housewives in order to gain worth. Even though Joy represents an independent woman who wants to break out of the patriarchal society, some issues are subconsciously rooted in her mind and she wants to fulfill those expectations, hoping that someone will notice and praise her, which would make her feel seen and less lonely.

Through all of this, Galloway points out the struggles women go through with their parents, partners and society as well as the importance of preventing them. Also, it is important to understand that mental health should not be neglected and seen as less important in comparison to other problems and aspects of life, as is presented in this novel, where we can conclude that mental health, especially female mental health is ignored. “It would indeed be true to say that many studies of Scottish society, history and culture have been gender blind, and that it is only recently that this is beginning to be remedied through the development of feminist analysis”

(Breitenbach et al., 1998, p. 44). That is why authors like Janice Galloway took it upon themselves to speak and write about these problems, in order for them to start changing. Other problematic aspects Galloway presents and discusses in this novel are aspects of state's attitude towards an individual, society's attitude towards women and the national identity. The following excerpt depicts several layers of those aspects:

“No sign of bleeding yet?

I shook my head.

A scan is the quickest way to resolve things then. Best to be sure.

I agree it's best to be sure.

The gel was freezing but I didn't flinch. Then the monitor flickered and we turned to watch TV. The metal magnet was cold, drawing over the gluey stuff on my skin then sparks scattered on the screen, green splinter patterns like fireworks in a night sky. He frowned. I tried to see what he saw. This green cave was me. I make light on the screen therefore I am. I tried to lie back and see my insides objectively while the gynaecologist rubbed infinity signs over and over again on my belly. It wasn't swollen but so what. Maybe I really was pregnant. We might be doing more than discovering I exist: someone else might exist in there too. I scoured the screen looking for something sure to surface out of the haze on the monitor. The doctor stiffened.

Ahh. he said.

I stopped breathing.

Much as I thought. Nothing there at all. You can see for yourself. Look. You can see for yourself.

I looked. I was still there. A black hole among the green stars. Empty space. I had nothing inside me. The doctor smiled directly at me for the first time.

Nothing for either of us to worry about then. Nothing at all” (Galloway, 1999, pp. 134-135).

Her examination is conducted at the psychiatric clinic, where she was sent off very quickly, after doctors scarcely tried to find other ways of helping her. While Joy is struggling with many other problems besides her absence of menstruation, through this excerpt (and throughout the rest of the book) we can see how doctors are treating her regarding her condition. The level of

detailing when it comes to the examination is scarce, where doctors do not bother trying to understand her condition and reasons for it, asking simple and superficial questions and as seen in the excerpt above, giving up on the examination quickly after not finding the obvious reason for the condition – the reflection of the state’s attitude towards an individual. The welfare state policies include commitment to needs and problems of the vulnerable categories of people. Thatcher’s healthcare policies, which were based on privatization and thus unequal conditions, especially regarding the income discrepancy as better income resulted in better treatment create a clearer picture of the controversial healthcare system Joy is facing. As Mulalić (2022) explains, welfare state healthcare betrayed their policies by creating a uniform treatment for all patients, while Thatcher’s system showed no empathy for individuals’ rights or problems that people who struggle with (mental) health issues deal with (p. 70).

They also constantly focus only on the physicality of her condition – but the “problem” regarding that is that they are focusing on the feminine side of her physicality, the lack of menstruation, ignoring other physical issues (anorexia and bulimia), and even more, mental health struggles which are the cause of the physical illnesses and key to their solution – if someone would pay attention and take care of her mental health, her physical health would improve as well. But for them, the only thing worth examining is the absence of menstruation – without it, women are often seen as incomplete, since they are being seen through the prism of motherhood as their only role in the society. Also, another reason why they are concerned about her absence of menstruation is the possibility of pregnancy, only because that would be shameful for the clinic – having a pregnant patient who is not married.

Joy’s feeling of distance and emptiness also reappears. She recalls her existence only through the small details spotted on the ultrasound scan: “I make light on the screen therefore I am” (Galloway, 1999, p. 134). It seems as if that was a sign to her, a proof of her existence – as much as she confirmed her feeling of emptiness by “a black hole” on the green screen.

Galloway also deals with the abovementioned aspects through the food metaphor. With it, she presents us the depiction of society’s attitude towards women. Food, its preparation and the concept of meal is what the society imposed on us as a symbol of the domestic sphere and as something that places women into the central position as a housewife since a long time ago. While following Joy through her (repetitive) day, we can notice the frequency of her being in the kitchen. For her, it is something that draws her attention at least for a moment, rather than it being the way for her to feed herself – mostly everything she cooks, she throws up or throws away. It is actually another way of her trying to be good, through the abovementioned symbol

of domestic sphere. But when she is expected to cook for others, especially for her partners, that is where the problem begins:

“We had bad times and we had good times on and off over the seven years. I learned to cook good meals and run a house. The fridge was always well stocked and the cupboards interesting. I cleaned the floors and the rings round the bath that showed where we had been but I knew there was something missing. I felt we were growing apart. We were.

(...)

I don't need you for anything, he said, loud and flat. I don't need you for a thing.

I racked my brain to find something to prove it wasn't true.

I came up with the only answer left.

Look, I'm going to make us something to eat. At least I can do that much. You need me all right. You need me because you can't cook” (Galloway, 1999, pp. 39-40).

The partner in question is not Michael; it is Paul, a man Joy date for seven years. They lived together and during the entire time she cooked and cleaned, subconsciously positioning herself as a housewife once again.

Reducing her role in the relationship to someone who is there only to provide food and house hygiene is the depiction of the position of many women back then, but sadly now too. There is no partnership or togetherness, only her trying to fulfil the expectations in order to be seen and loved, while simultaneously juggling all of that with the want and need to be an independent woman in a patriarchal society.

Patriarchal society always considered women as inferior – at work, at home, in politics; and that is the problem women were facing for a long time, some of them are still facing it. In her interview, Galloway explains the mindset imposed to men and women regarding their knowledge and confidence:

A woman might have felt compelled to apologize for it, the way Jane Austen did. ‘I only know one tiny little thing and this is all I can write about’ in a kind of an apologetic way. Knowing that one thing is no different than what some male writers have always known, but they were encouraged to think that the one thing they knew

was important. Whereas women were always encouraged to think that the few things they knew were not (Footage Sales, 2022).

Food metaphor brings along the political topic for discussion.

“Galloway’s metaphor suggests that for women, such a position is socially encoded: They have been conditioned over time in even the most basic of human needs to put themselves second. The leftovers that a mother eats after serving men and children (“weans”), like women’s writing, are innately secondary/supplemental, on one hand, but also self-nourishing. Politics must be fed first, leading to the possibility that the women’s issues will not get enough meat and will starve. (...) In particular, eating and its disorders serve Galloway as means to comment on the interactions of nation, femininity, and class, particularly in her 1989 novel, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing*” (McGlynn, 2008, p. 222).

Not only does this show the position of women in society, constantly being treated as second, but it also shows the state’s attitude towards an individual. Women’s needs, problems and any other aspect of their life, such as writing, for example, are always considered a secondary thing, as something to deal with later, if at all. Some of those problems are depicted as, literally, problems regarding nutrition and eating – Joy’s struggle with bulimia and anorexia. Depoliticising women’s issues and problems is dangerous – if the emphasis is only on the political issues and not on personal issues of the citizens, it leads to neglecting an individual, a citizen, resulting in a nation surrounded by its own problems and left to deal with them alone, having no possibility to even consider thinking about politics and their national identity. As Mulalić (2022) explains, Galloway also sheds light on the depoliticisation of women’s issues in the sense of the imposed opinion of patriarchal society that female concerns are less important than male or political concerns (p. 69). “It appears that the male concern with national and class identity has the effect of creating a closed space. Regardless of how much they try to break through the norms of the dominant English culture, they mimic the same principles of subjugation by consistently trying to depoliticise female concerns” (Mulalić, 2022, p. 69). Joy’s aversion towards food symbolizes a protest against ignoring and depoliticizing important issues but also invokes a silent call for change.

Janice Galloway chose not to openly talk about national identity and Scottishness in a standard way that dominated Scottish literary field during the 1980s and 1990s. “The single-track was

the expectation that Scottish writers, in the late twentieth century, would have something to say about national identity” (Stirling, 2008, p. 111). She chose to focus on other aspects but also to present her Scottishness in a more symbolic and concealed way. She shows it through Joy – her problems and condition reflect relationship between Scotland and England – a want for change, but constant pushbacks that lead to circling around, making it hard to step up towards that change.

Janice Galloway talks and presents women’s issues in an extraordinary way, trying to shed light and draw attention to very important aspects of life, while also encompassing the political aspect that was especially present and important during the period between 1970s-1990s. To show that there is always a solution, she ends the novel with a moment of Joy’s expression of hope:

“Maybe I could learn to swim.

(...)

I’m gawky, not a natural swimmer. But I can read up a little, take advice. I read somewhere the trick is to keep breathing (...)” (Galloway, 1999, p. 212).

2.2.4. The novel and the representation of mental health issues

Janice Galloway is a writer who is not bound to one genre as a way of expressing her literary themes. She writes in various genres, such as poetry, short stories, memoirs and novels.

As her debut work she chose to express her attitudes and observations, the things she considered important to speak about and discuss through the genre of novel, since it gives her specific opportunities and space to use various techniques in order to convey the message. The matter of length of the work is not limited, so Joy’s life, thoughts and problems can be presented without barriers. The novel is in a form of stream-of-consciousness narrative technique and it follows the pattern of Joy’s state of mind – the chronological sequence of days, recollections of memories, fragmented recollection of trauma during several occasions that match her readiness to confront it, periods of increased depression and anxiety and a lack of chapters or headings as a representation of chaos in her mind. “The novel, written in the manner of a diary, is an attempt by the narrator to come to terms with both her mental and her cultural condition” (McQuillan, 2003). Several other techniques used by Galloway are discussed by McQuillan (2003) as well, by finding the similarity throughout her works, where the cut between the styles

of presentation can be noticed, specifically between dramatic dialogue and prose description in the style of stage instructions – this approach can be considered both as “a subversion of the norms of English prose-writing and the staging of dramatic scenes within a novelistic context” (McQuillan, 2003), but also as an example of Galloway’s postmodernism or “an appropriation of modernist and postmodern techniques, as a way of distancing Galloway’s own writing from the traditions of the English realist novel” (McQuillan, 2003). At last, Galloway leaves us with an open ending of the novel, where Joy’s progress is visible, but it is far from what it should be or what she would want. It gives an effect of having space for more progress that may or may not happen.

2.3. Agnes Owens and “When Shankland Comes”

2.3.1. Biography of a less known but quite extraordinary author

Agnes Owens was born in Milngavie near Glasgow in 1926. She lived a hard life since her childhood, fighting poverty and unemployment for years. Her father started working in a papermill in 1936 and Owens wanted to follow in his footsteps, but her parents insisted on her education “so she learned to type and take shorthand, but an early marriage to an alcoholic soldier saw her mother’s aspirations curtailed” (MacKenna, 2019). For the first few years, she, her husband and child went around Scotland in search of a job and a place to live, living temporarily in tents or squatting (abandoned) buildings. After some time, they got one of the council’s pre-fabricated houses, where they settled. “Agnes then had two more children and found work as a factory worker and a typist. Sam’s drinking often saw him hospitalised, she said: ‘That was my happiest time, going to visit him. It meant I didn’t have to put up with him back home.’” (MacKenna, 2019). After his death, she married again and continued to work in order to ensure a decent life.

In order to find a hobby, something to do in her own free time, she started attending creative writing class in 1973, held by Liz Lochhead, who immediately recognized her talent. “Agnes gave her comic and deeply unsettling tale, “Arabella”, to Lochhead, who showed it to Gray and Kelman. The writers recognised one of their own and set about mentoring and encouraging Agnes” (MacKenna, 2019).

Since then, she published many works, including novels: *Gentlemen of the West* (1984), *Like Birds in the Wilderness* (1987), *A Working Mother* (1994) and *For the Love of Willie* (1998) and collections of short stories: *Lean Tales* (1984), *People Like That* (1997) and *The Complete Short Stories* (2008).

After “discovering” her, Lochhead, Gray and Kelman remained very close friends with Owens, while also collaborating and working together in the sphere of literature. “She co-authored *Lean Tales* with Kelman and Gray, contributing nine stories to the book and receiving critical acclaim” (MacKenna, 2019).

She is considered by many as an author whose work did not receive as much attention and recognition as she deserved. Alasdair Gray described her as “the most unfairly neglected of all living Scottish authors”.

She died in 2014, at the age of 88.

2.3.2. Looking at the mirror – Owens’ working-class female characters

Agnes Owens’ style of writing is not something that is quite usual and conventional and not because of her themes, but because of the way in which those themes are presented. “Her novels and short stories offer a visit into the lives of the working classes. They present extreme difficulties and traumatic happenings in a prose which provide the reader with a laser-clear view of those lives – without seeming to care if we look or not” (MacKenna, 2019). Her raw, direct, unsettling and tragic but real stories are a true insight into the struggles of Scottish working-class society, often inspired by Owens’ life as well. In one interview, Owens explains her goal when it comes to depicting her characters: “I’m portrayed as a writer who champions the underdogs, in a way. But I don’t do it in an *obvious* way. And the underdog can turn round and bite you just the same as any other dog! I would say I want to convey people that are condemned in a better light than what people would think, you know, or maybe to make people think, well, these people are human” (Gray, 2008). She gives voice and human characteristics to people who are often being dehumanized and ignored, left to themselves to deal with (very serious) problems.

In that same interview she stated that she sees herself as a Scottish writer rather than a female writer. When looking at her work, it can be concluded that she should not be categorized as exclusively one type of writer. She is an author who writes about Scottish working-class people, male or female and her goal is to present their life conditions, struggles and problems they face in order to bring them closer to the society in general and hopefully make a change.

The short story that will be analysed in this paper is called “When Shankland Comes”. It was first published in 1996, in the collection of short stories *People Like That*, but was later included in her collection *Agnes Owens: The Complete Short Stories* which was published in 2008 and which will be a point of reference in this paper.

“When Shankland Comes” is a story about a woman named Ivy, who lives in a small village near the small town of Blairmaddie. She works in a hotel as a cleaner and occasionally serves in its bar, when needed. She cares about her job, not because she likes it, but because she needs it in order to live at least a decent life with her son Dennett. One of the problematic aspects occurs exactly there: everyone would think that her son is a baby or a boy who cannot work and help a family. But he is actually seventeen and can work part-time jobs in order to provide some money for him and his mother. Even so, he is a lazy, spoiled teenager who is interested only in spending days doing nothing or drinking with his friends:

“When she came into the living room Dennett was sitting in the armchair facing the television with the gas fire turned up full.

‘So, you’ve managed to get up then,’ she said, turning the fire low. He stretched his legs and kept his sharp profile fixed ahead. She noticed with distaste that his hair was uncombed. It lay on his shoulders, light brown and straggly. ‘You might have washed yersel’ at least,’ she muttered, as she went through to the kitchenette to put on the kettle. A minute later she was startled to see him towering above her, looking anxious.

‘Did ye get my fags?’ he asked.

‘They’re in my bag,’ she said, exasperated. ‘Do ye no’ think it’s terrible I should have to buy you fags and you’ll no’ even make an attempt to earn money to buy them yersel’?’

‘I wisnae feelin’ well this mornin’,’ he said, ripping the Cellophane from the packet. ‘I’ll go tae work the morra.’” (Owens, 2008, pp. 192-193).

His disinterest and obliviousness towards taking care of the household (and his mother) is evident. He does not think he has obligations towards the home he lives in and considers them all as his mother’s obligations:

“Ten minutes later she shouted from the living room, ‘Dennett, come and get your supper.’ When he came through he peered at the plate on the worktop, saying in a perplexed manner, ‘Toasted cheese? How did ye no’ make chips for a change?’” (Owens, 2008, p. 195).

The position of women in the society and men’s attitude towards women is reflected in this excerpt from the story. Be it a husband, a father or a son, their image of the role of women at that period is that a woman is a housewife who needs to take care of the household but often, many men consider women being the only ones responsible to provide income and food as well even though they consider her as inferior – but in reality, women are often the ones who bear all the work, but their work remains unnoticed and their voice remains silent. It only emerges through strong advocates in influential spheres such as literature.

Ivy raises her voice, occasionally, protesting and demanding the change:

“‘And here’s me workin’ my pan in to keep you in meals and fags and put a good face on everythin’ and tryin’ to keep decent and there you are tellin’ me you’re above muckin’ out byres . . . Well, I don’t particularly like bein’ a cleaner and gettin’ paid in washers either, but I have to do it to keep a roof above our heids.’

Dennett sneered, ‘That’s up tae you.’

Enraged, Ivy jumped up from the couch and slapped him on the cheek” (Owens, 2008, pp. 194-195).

Even when she stands up for herself, she does not get an answer. At least not the right one. A lack of interest and understanding continues, with all the responsibility being put once again on her – with one sentence: “That’s up tae you.” (Owens, 2008, p. 195).

Through this mother-son relationship, Owens shows us the position of women in the (working-class) society and behaviour of men towards them, which is the same i.e. oppressive, regardless of the type of their connection to them.

Another problem that concerns working-class women, but society in general as well, is the aspect of workplace. Working-class men and women are constantly pressed by the lack of work, especially well-paid work, in order to make ends meet. In this story, Joy works as a cleaner but she is also serving in a bar when the work load is on a higher level so more workforce is needed. She does not complain, on the contrary, she wants to increase the amount of her working hours so that she is able to earn more money and she is hoping that the manager and director will agree with that. But, she gets fired instead, and faces something so many working-class people face on a daily basis and no one pays any attention to it or offers any help:

“The afternoon wore on and still there was no sign of Shankland. Sproul passed her once or twice as she was polishing the woodwork in the corridor, and ducked his head in an embarrassed way which made her wonder. But when Jim handed over her pay-packet at half-past four, she found out why. Inside was two weeks’ money and a letter saying that due to increased overheads and poor trade, the management regretted that they no longer required her services. However, as soon as trade picked up they would send for her again” (Owens, 2008, p. 200).

The last betrayal occurred when she went to talk to the director of the hotel. There were no signs of understanding, compassion or willingness to help, but rather a disinterested, plain answer that depicts the strife between working-class and upper-class society:

“‘Yes, I’m sorry it had to happen,’ he said guardedly. ‘But you see, it was either that or closing down the hotel altogether. However, if the place does better in the summer we’ll send for you again, don’t worry on that score.’ And with that he turned back to the minister, who had been listening anxiously.

(...)

Shankland scarcely looked at her. ‘Go away, Ivy,’ he said wearily” (Owens, 2008, p. 202).

After Ivy lost her patience and confronted the director, we find out about the complexity of their relationship. Shankland is actually Dennett’s father, but Ivy kept it a secret in order to keep her job and hoping that that will eventually change Shankland’s behaviour towards her and her son. But Shankland actually only cares about hiding that truth, in order for him not to get embarrassed. From this, we can understand the position of working-class women, who were often left to take care of their family alone, while the patriarchal pressure of superiority often followed them in and kept them away from trying to fight for their own rights.

Through her work, Owens sheds light on very important issues that were present back then, but sadly even now too. She lived through similar situations as her characters and decided to give us a first-hand depiction of the struggles working-class people, especially women face on an everyday basis.

2.3.3. Short story – a way of conveying direct, striking message

Agnes Owens’ work, when it comes to genre, is mostly focused on prosaic types of genre. She did write some poetry, drama as well, but her main focus were novels and short stories.

The majority of her literary scope are short stories, published in several different collections. Short story usually deals with a single effect conveyed in few significant episodes or scenes. Even so, what characterises it is the ability to provide a complete or satisfying treatment of its characters and subject (Hansen, 2024). That is exactly what Owens also achieves through her short stories. Another reason why she chose this genre in particular may be in the fact that her

themes, and stories that she wanted to tell, are real and emotionally heavy. Being aware of that, short stories give the opportunity for the writer to make the right effect and impression to the reader, to leave them struck and wordless and to present certain aspects in a concise and clear way. Owens' stories catch the reader's attention and create an effect of shock in the scope of several pages – the exact effect Owens want to achieve. She is a writer who wants to present real-life struggles, especially of working-class people, so she understands that the best way for people to remember the individual struggles she describes is through a shocking effect.

Many consider writing a short story a very difficult task – the need to form an interesting and developed plot in the limited number of pages is a skill that not everyone possesses. But Agnes Owens, with her interesting, striking and well-developed stories proved that she does possess that skill and shows why she is considered the most unfairly neglected of all Scottish authors, as Alasdair Gray described her.

2.4. Translating Scottish women's literature – demands, challenges and solutions

Besides the classics of the 19th century and before written by authors such as Walter Scott and Robert Burns, the translation of Scottish literature started to stagnate, at least in the “smaller” languages, such as Bosnian language. Nowadays, there is a scarce number of translated works of Scottish literature in Bosnian, partly because of the linguistic challenges of Scots, but also because of the inability to come through onto the literary market as well, since it is full of mainstream English and American books.

It is the case with three works presented in this paper as well – besides some translated excerpts or few short stories in certain collections of translated works, one of them being *Antologija savremene škotske proze* (Kravitz, 2007) which will be the point of reference in the following discussion, there are not many other translated works present in Bosnian language.

The main challenge for translation is the style in which these works are written, such as linguistic challenge of Scots and the transmission of the stream-of-consciousness narrative technique, as well as the importance of transmitting all the important messages these works contain. As a woman, these works affected me in the specific way, so it is an enormous responsibility to transmit the important messages of female identity, rights and struggles in the right way, in order for the reader to understand it correctly and get the true impression of the message author wanted to send.

Translation techniques and strategies that can be used, as well as solutions translators who worked on *Antologija savremene škotske proze* came up with will be presented through the following excerpts.

Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off is a drama that uses an elevated language, which should be translated in the same style. Lochhead uses a mix of English and Scots, so the challenge of Scots appears immediately:

“Once upon a time there were twa queens on the wan green island, and the wan green island was split intae twa kingdoms. But no equal kingdoms, naebody in their richt mind would insist on that” (Lochhead, 2009, p. 18).

This could be solved by finding the similar equivalent of the tone and dialect in Bosnian language, in order to transmit the same tone and the same effect. For example, “once upon a time” could be translated with the common phrase used for the translation of beginnings of works which deal with past – “jednom davno”, while word “twa” could be translated into the

Bosnian dialect “dvi”. The main translation strategy used for these translations is the method of domestication, where text is translated in the tone of the target language, adapting all words and phrases as well as context to the language we are translating the work into.

The Trick Is to Keep Breathing is written only in English, but its challenge is in the stream-of-consciousness narrative technique that is used by the author:

“We had bad times and we had good times on and off over the seven years. I learned to cook good meals and run a house. The fridge was always well stocked and the cupboards interesting. I cleaned the floors and the rings round the bath that showed where we had been but I knew there was something missing. I felt we were growing apart. We were. It was called growing up but I didn’t know that at the time” (Galloway, 1999, p. 39).

In this excerpt, the flow of the novel is shown, especially visible in the moments when Joy is by herself, alone with her thoughts that come to her one after another. It is important not to break the flow when translating and to follow the pattern as much as possible:

“U toku tih sedam godina, smjenjivali su se dobri i loši dani. Naučila sam da dobro kuham i vodim domaćinstvo. Frižider je uvijek bio pun, a kredenci su izgledali zanimljivo. Brisala sam podove i tragove oko kade koji su ostajali iza nas, ali sam znala da nešto nedostaje. Osjećala sam da se udaljavamo, a tako je i bilo. To se zvalo odrastanjem, ali tada to nisam znala” (Kravitz, 2007, p. 334).

It is exactly what the translator achieved here, following the pattern of the original, with few slight changes such as connecting the sentences which brought even more coherence to the text because of the different linguistic and stylistic features of Bosnian language.

In “When Shankland Comes”, the biggest challenge is, again, the use of Scots, because of the frequency of dialogues in the story:

“In the big kitchen, Babs, the cook, was pouring out two cups of tea. Ivy began to spread butter thickly on a roll.

‘That Sproul gets on ma goat,’ Babs said.

‘What’s he done this time?’ said Ivy.

‘He says we’ll have tae put less meat in the sandwiches.’ Staring hard at Ivy’s roll, she added, ‘He’ll go mad if he sees that.’

‘I’m no’ takin’ any meat,’ Ivy pointed out.

‘I’ve got tae account for the butter as well,’ said Babs, her voice aggrieved” (Owens, 2008, p. 190).

The same translation technique previously mentioned would be used – the method of domestication by finding the equivalence of the similar dialect in Bosnian, which is what this translator did, noting it at the beginning of the story:

“U velikoj kuhinji, kuharica Babs je sipala dvije šoljice čaja. Ivy poče mazati debeo sloj maslaca na kiflu. “Što meni onaj Sproul ide na živce,” reče Babs.

“Šta je sade uradio?”, reče Ivy.

“Kae da moramo mećati više mesa u semdviće,” reče Babs. Zatim, napeto buljeći u Ivynu kiflu, doda, “Poludiće ako to viđa.”

“Neuzmam mesa,” istaknu Ivy.

“Moram mu i za maslac polagati račune,” reče Babs, mučnim glasom” (Owens, 2008, p. 5).

Considering all of this, there are some really good techniques and strategies that can be used as solutions to the challenges in translation of the Scottish literature. Those are mainly the method of domestication and the use of the same stream of consciousness technique with the possibility of changing the flow of the text slightly, if that is necessary in order to follow the grammatical rules of the target language. “Moreover, successful translations can often be shown to fit an established cultural paradigm; alternatively, translations aim to introduce a new paradigm that the translator feels is lacking in Scottish culture” (Schoene, 2007, p. 340). As Schoene explains, it is also common and acceptable to alternate certain parts if the translator thinks that it is needed in order to bring the work closer to Bosnian language.

With all that in mind, we as translators should strive towards translating more of these and similar works in order to bring the richness of the Scottish literature to readers.

3. Conclusion

Throughout this paper, selected works of three female Scottish authors – *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* by Liz Lochhead, *The Trick Is to Keep Breathing* by Janice Galloway and “When Shankland Comes” by Agnes Owens – were discussed within the context of the period between two devolution referendums – from 1970s to the end of 1990s. We discussed their position as writers at that time, their political views, themes and issues raised in their works and their impact on Scottish literature and society.

The research questions that we needed to answer are:

1. How did the period between the two devolution referendums affect women writers in Scotland?
2. How did these three writers advocate for the representation of women in literature and how did they represent women and the problems they face in their works?

Period between the two devolution referendums was also the period of the revival of female literature in Scotland. With the rising respect towards women in public life, more of them became prominent during this time, especially if their works dealt with national identity, since it was the main topic in the period from 1970s to 1990s.

But besides national identity, female writers in Scotland at that time devoted their works to the representation of women in literature, mainly through writing about struggles women face in everyday life. From those works, we find out about the inferior position of women in politics, at home and at work where patriarchal society with its patronizing attitude towards women made it difficult for them to prosper in any sphere of life. However, through their characters, these three authors showed us that constant fight and vociferous advocacy for female rights are the only right way towards change.

Through the analysis of three different authors and three different genres we can conclude that all of them, regardless of the type of genre they are writing in, tried to present the importance of female identity and struggles and issues women deal with. What is interesting is that, besides this paper having three different authors and genres, each work is dealing with different social class – upper class/royalty, middle class and working class, in the order of appearance of works. That showed that women’s position at the time was not very different regardless of their social status.

They also discussed, but not necessarily prioritized, the importance of national identity as an integral part of any Scottish citizen, especially at that time period.

At last, we discussed the aspect of translation of Scottish literature written by women and concluded that there is a lack of translated Scottish works in Bosnian language as well as a need for more translations, in order to introduce readers to the rich Scottish literary heritage. We also analysed certain translation techniques and strategies and their importance in the process of transmitting the right message from source language to target language. Among them, the ones that stood out are method of domestication and stream of consciousness technique used in the source language as well.

Lochhead, Galloway and Owens are three strong female voices in the time when that voice was hard to hear. They fought for both female and Scottish identity and managed to influence and leave an important mark on Scottish literature and beyond.

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