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UDK 821.111.09 Keats, J.-1

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29162/ANAFORA.v7i1.10>

Prethodno priopćenje *Preliminary Communication*

Primljeno 19. studenoga 2019.

Received: 19 November 2019

Prihvaćeno 6. veljače 2020.

Accepted: 6 February 2020

THE LACANIAN GAZE IN JOHN KEATS'S “*THE EVE OF ST. AGNES*”: A ROMANCE OF RESISTANCE

Abstract

“The Eve of St. Agnes” is one of Keats’s most challenging poems when it comes to the poet’s emotions and beliefs on social structures, life, death, men, and women. Consequently, “The Eve of St. Agnes” becomes the arena of the conflict between femininity and masculinity, which preoccupied the poet during the composition of the poem. In the essay, we seek to examine this conflict in “The Eve of St. Agnes” through the Lacanian concept of the Gaze. This point of view allows us to analyze Keats’s ambivalence towards gender.

Keywords: John Keats, “The Eve of St. Agnes”, Gaze, Lacan, divided selves, resistance, Real

Introduction

In his poetics, John Keats introduced “negative capability” as an essential asset to be acquired by any poet. This Keatsian notion, which focuses on the impersonality of the poet, is opposed to “the bullying egotism of ‘Wordsworth & c’” (Homans 343). In spite of the masculinity of Wordsworth, Byron, Hazli-

tt, and other romantics who exploited their poetry, to borrow Laura Mulvey's words, for "the satisfaction and the reinforcement of the[ir] ego" (440), Keats used rather a feminine, receptive, ego-free technique, which also attracted many woman readers. "In the nineteenth century, the masculine self was thought to have a strong sense of its autonomy and ego boundaries . . . The feminine self was thought to be more pliable and yielding" (Mellor 215).

Keats, however, did not aspire to define his poetic self within the dominant frames of the masculine society of his time: "As to the poetical Character itself, (I mean that sort of which, if I am any thing, I am a Member; that sort distinguished from the [W]ordsworthian or egotistical sublime; which is a thing per se and stands alone) it is not itself – it has no self – it is every thing and nothing" (qtd. in Mellor 215). Keats's rejection of the "[W]ordsworthian or egotistical" poetic self led to trenchant comments by critics like Hazlitt, who accused him of lacking "the manhood of poetry," and put his masculine identity into question (qtd. in Mellor 214).

Resented and humiliated by his contemporaries, Keats sought to assert his authority as a masculine subject through an immature struggle to repel female readers and to gain sexual (visual) mastery over women. "[O]ne of Keats's habitual defenses against the power of women readers of whatever class is to transform them from reading subjects into objects of (visual) description" and to assure himself that "women need only be looked at" (Homans 348). Keats maintained the same stratagem towards Fanny Brawne by keeping her "the object of his vision," and even protecting himself from her admirations that would turn him into a "thing" (Homans 351). Bewildered by the two forces – his poetic genius and the pressure of the masculine poetic society, Keats oscillated between his feminine and masculine selves. He expressed this internal turbulence in "The Eve of St. Agnes", a poem that promises to reconcile and reunite his two selves.

Composed in 1819, before *Lamia* and *Isabella*, "The Eve of St. Agnes" is considered by many modern critics to be one of Keats's most successful poems in terms of the aesthetics of narration and poetic imagery. Through the love story of the two principal characters, Keats incarnates his fear and rebellion as well as his doubts and beliefs about life and the relation between genders. Moreover, in a revised version of "The Eve of St. Agnes", Keats attempted to create a more

masculine subjectivity in the character of Porphyro (Park 90), which shows his internal conflict about the issue:

In comparison with Keats's other male figures like Endymion and the knight-at-arms, Porphyro seems a confidently self-assertive lover. [Nevertheless,] Keats never seems quite comfortable with the uncomplicated display of masculinity that the poem's plot seems to demand, and the revised version leaves intact almost all the elements of the poem that so clearly distinguish it from a Byronic love-roman. (Park 90)

Theoretical Underpinnings

In his eleventh seminar, published as *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, and sporadically in some of his other essays, Jacques Lacan develops his theories about the gaze and the scopic field. He believes that, in order to strengthen the sense of unity and coherence in its ego, the subject looks for its ideal self in the mirror of the "other." According to Lacan, the narcissistic construction of the ego, in the Imaginary order, happens in relation with the perfect image the child identifies with while looking in the mirror of its (m)other's face. Joy comes from a *méconnaissance* (misrecognition) in perceiving this image as ideal and identifying with it (misrecognition because the ego is in fact full of lack). The ego's identification with the other is further followed by its sense of mastery over it. This "allows the subject to see in any representation not only a reflection of itself, but a reflection of itself as the master of all it surveys" (Copjec qtd. in Garofalo 358).

The concept of a gendered gaze, implicit in Lacan's theories, has inspired Laura Mulvey and other film theorists to propose their feminist interpretation of Lacan. Mulvey thus asserts that the projection of an ideal ego, from the part that she calls a determining "male gaze," onto the female figure demonstrates the duality-based structure of the language in which the man is the active/looker-on and the woman is the passive/looked-at (442).

However, in his later essay "OF THE GAZE AS *Objet Petit a*," Lacan complicates his theories by distinguishing between "the look" and "the gaze": the gaze, thenceforth, "refers to the uncanny sense that the object of our eye's look or glance is somehow looking back at us of its own will. This causes the subject to lose some sense of autonomy upon realizing it is also an object" (Felluga). As

Žižek elaborates, “the eye viewing the object is on the side of the subject, while the gaze is on the side of the object” (109). In fact, when the subject looks at the object, the object is “always already looking at it from a point at which [it] cannot see” (Žižek 109). Thus, what seemed to be ignored by Mulvey and the film theorists is that the looked-at is not to stay in a passive state. To put it in Beth Newman’s words, there is a “resistance” on the part of the looked-at, which is missed by Mulvey¹ (464).

Therefore, for Lacan, the gaze – distinguished from the “male gaze” – is not a vehicle of mastery belonging to the subject, but a breaking down of that mastery by the *objet a* (the object of desire). That is how the gaze makes one aware of the failure of the ideal mirroring, and, hence, of one’s lack. This “uncanny feeling of being gazed at by the object of our look affects us in the same way as castration anxiety (reminding us of the lack at the heart of the symbolic order)” (Felluga). We may conclude that the gaze is interpreted as the *objet petit a*, representing the power of resistance and disillusionment.

In the same essay, Lacan also explains that it is through the gaze (with its new signified) that a transcendence from the Imaginary and the Symbolic into the Real happens. In other words, a perception of the Real is possible through the process of the gaze:

Lacan then argues in “Of the Gaze as *Objet Petit a*” that there is an intimate relationship between the *objet petit a* (which coordinates our desire) and the Gaze (which threatens to undo all desire through the eruption of the Real). . . . Lacanian Gaze, [is] the realization that behind our desire is nothing but our lack: the materiality of the Real staring back at us. (Felluga)

The Gaze in “The Eve of St. Agnes” :

In “The Eve of St. Agnes”, “the central narrative impulsion that draws together the friction of Keats’ fiction is Porphyro’s desire for the vision of Madeline and Madeline’s visionary vision of him” (Bennett qtd. in Thomson 340). This narrative fact becomes even more important as Keats’s “The Eve of St. Agnes” is a poem in which the word “gaze” (apart from “look,” “see,” “peep,” “eye,” “sight,”

¹ Influenced by what Copjec calls a Foucauldianization of Lacanian gaze theory, Laura Mulvey and the film theorists rendered a feminist interpretation of the Lacanian gaze that does not allow the possibility of resistance (Newman 464).

or “vision”) has merely been repeated four times, which makes it noteworthy from the point of view of the theories on gaze and its role in the formation of the subject.

As mentioned before, to defy his critics Keats tried to assert his masculine subjectivity by treating women as objects of his desire and by keeping them under his vision. The same stratagem is undertaken by Porphyro, with whom, according to Jack Stillinger (546–47), Keats identifies. Looking at Madeline is the initial objective of Porphyro, that “self-assertive” (Park 90) Keatsian hero. At the beginning of the poem, Porphyro “implores / All saints to give him sight of Madeline / But for one moment in the tedious hours / That he might gaze and worship all unseen” (Keats, IX: 77–80). The word “unseen” best depicts the gaze study, as the gaze is always after the unseen and the unknown, i.e., the “other.”

In Keats’s poetry, the creation of the “other” is in part influenced by his loss of his own mother when he was fourteen. The “shocks of this bewildering flux of events would be perpetually registered in the series of adored and adoring but inconstant women in his later poetry” (Wolfson xxiii). In “The Eve of St. Agnes”, it is Madeline who embodies the m(other), the object of desire and scrutiny, or in Lacanian terms, the *objet petit a*. As the object of the look, Madeline bears all the idealizations projected on her by Porphyro, who stands for the subject, desiring to be united with his “peerless bride” (Keats, XIX: 167) in order to satiate his lack. Madeline is described several times in the poem as an ideal, perfect, immortal creature: she is “divine” (Keats, VII: 57), a “splendid angel” (Keats, XXV: 223), “seraph fair” (Keats, XXI: 276), even “heaven” (Keats, XXI: 277), etc.

At the same time, the rich sensual imagery of the poem evokes the Lacanian Imaginary order, which is a phase “captivated by images” (Benson 58). In addition, “the warmth and security of Madeline’s chamber are contrasted with the coldness and hostility of the rest of the castle” (Stillinger 534). This creates a warm womb-like atmosphere, which best fits the “mirror stage,” where the narcissistic formation of the ego takes place in relation to the (m)other.

Thereafter, Porphyro first hides in Madeline’s closet “of such privacy / That he might see her beauty unspied” (Keats, XIX: 165–6). He then hides behind the curtains, which is again a dark place safe from the others’ gaze, and peeps while Madeline gets naked. Playing a peeping-Tom from a position in darkness (it is Madeline who carries the taper) “promotes the illusion of voyeuristic separation” (Mulvey 440) as “the subject’s pleasure in looking (without being seen) . . . 213

returns the subject to the sense of completeness associated with the scopophilic pleasures of the mirror stage” (Newman 451–2).

Porphyro’s scopophilia² and his idealization of his object of desire go hand in hand with objectifying the other and subjecting her to a mastering look. His position as the active observer is highlighted by Madeline’s passive, “supine” (Keats, VI: 52), “slept” (Keats, XXVIII: 252) position. The descriptions of Madeline’s passivity and stillness are suggested in images such as her sleepy eyes in her “silken, hush’d, and chaste” chamber (Keats, XXI: 187), “a mission’d spirit, unaware” (Keats, XXII: 193), “blinded” and “shut” (Keats, XXVII: 242–43). In Stanza XXV, line 225, Porphyro further describes Madeline as “so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint” (Keats), which indicates that Porphyro both objectifies Madeline as “a thing,” to have mastery over her, and idealizes her as an immortal, innocent being, to confirm his own ideality and completeness. The animal imagery and the image of hunting (Stillinger 540) reinforce the mastery of Porphyro and the passivity of Madeline as well: “Now prepare, / Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed; / She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray’d and fled” (Keats, XXII: 196–8). In stanza XXIII, Madeline is again depicted “As though a tongueless nightingale should swell / Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell” (Keats, 206–7). So far, “The Eve of St. Agnes” has illustrated the patriarchal power relation dualities of language in the Symbolic order that may be summarized in antinomic duos such as Porphyro (man) / Madeline (woman), subject/object, looker-on/looked-at, active/passive, and hunter/prey. Nonetheless, if the second part of Lacan’s gaze theory, with “gaze” as a signifier for *objet a*, is taken into consideration, the change from “I look” to “I’m looked at” is inevitable.³

In his eleventh seminar, Lacan defines the gaze as a split in which the subject, or the “I of the equation, can see only from one point [in this poem, from the closet and from behind the curtains] . . . but in the other side of the equation [is] looked at from all sides” (Lacan, *Four Fundamental Concepts* 72). Foucault likewise explains that, in the context of the panopticon, everyone, including the scrutinizer, is under scrutiny (Krips 97). This produces an anxiety⁴ of being

² Scopophilia, or pleasure in looking, is a term mentioned in Freud’s *Essays on Sexuality* and developed in his article “Instinct and Their Vicissitudes.”

³ The expressions “I look” and “I’m looked at” are initially used and explained by Freud in “Instinct and Their Vicissitudes” (1997), pp. 92–94.

214 ⁴ Lacan emphasizes “desire” and “anxiety” as the two important pre-requisites for a true gaze. In short,

externally scrutinized by a look from the other (Krips 92). Lacan goes on to state that, “in the scopic field, everything is articulated between two terms that act in an antinomic way – on the side of the things, there is the gaze, that is to say, things look at me, and yet I see them” (*Four Fundamental Concepts* 109). That is how Porphyro (the “I of the equation”) has already been under the gaze of the castle and of Madeline’s kinship. Different parts of the castle are described in a vigilant scrutinizing stance: the voices,⁵ “The carved angels, ever eager-eyed” who “Star’d” (Keats, IV: 34–35), the “glaring watch . . . with ready spears” (Keats, XL: 254), “the wakeful bloodhound” beside the Porter with “his sagacious eye” (Keats, XLI: 265), and even the diamonded casement “All garlanded with carven imag’ries” and its “shielded scutcheon blush’d with blood of queens and kings,” which occupies a whole stanza (Keats, XXIV) in the poem, and acts as if looking with all its glow and glory at Porphyro, humiliating and fearing him like the Lacanian sardine can.⁶

Madeline, however, enters the poem as a Medusan other “to thwart Porphyro’s challenge to her self-possession” (Kanupriya 236) by looking back at him, melting him into her dream (Keats, XXXVI: 320), and turning him into stone: “Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone / Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone” (XXXIII: 297–98). Thus, despite Madeline being the victim of the “peeping-Tomism” (Stillinger 75) of Porphyro and despite Madeline being supposed not to look “behind; nor sideways” in her rite (Keats, VI: 53), she does look and, thereupon, defies Porphyro and deprives him of his mastery. She, hence, gains the agency of the observer, rather than remaining mute and observed. Madeline, according to Kanupriya, is “Medusan in that her gaze represents a female power to freeze/frieze the enthralled male and ‘enchant, subvert, or threaten’ his voice” (241). She becomes “La belle dame sans mercy”

the gaze must be an object of the scopic drive, producing not only pleasure but also anxiety (Krips 93). That Porphyro takes pleasure in looking at Madeline is of no question. The poem also seems to deliver in terms of the second condition, i.e., anxiety, as Porphyro is truly frightened lest one of those “barbarian hordes,” “hyena foemen,” and “hot-blooded lords” (Keats, X: 85–86) from the castle discover him. In addition, when he wants to creep toward Madeline, he is described as “Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness” (Keats, XXVIII: 250).

⁵ Voice, along with gaze, is also of considerable importance to Lacan. For more information on this subject, see: Garofalo, Daniela. “‘Give me that voice again . . . those looks immortal’: Gaze and Voice in Keats’s “The Eve of St. Agnes”.” *Studies in Romanticism*, vol. 49, no. 3, 2012, pp. 353–73.

⁶ In the famous Lacanian anecdote, a shining sardine can in the sea blinds the young Lacan, who is on an adventure trip with some fishermen. The can gives him a sense of malaise and anxiety as a result of the impression of being under observation from an unknown point.

evoked earlier in Porphyro's ditty (Keats, XXXIII: 292). Created before Lamia in the eponymous poem, Madeline, as the Medusan, castrating other, becomes a prototype developed later by Keats in *Lamia*. Madeline's gaze testifies to the fact that

the other sees and therefore resists being reduced to an appropriable object. That is, Medusa defies the male gaze as Western culture has constructed it: as the privilege of a male subject, a means of relegating women (or "Woman") to the status of object . . . Such defiance is surely unsettling, disturbing the pleasure the male subject takes in gazing and the hierarchical relations by which he asserts his dominance. (Newman 451)

By attributing the gaze to Madeline and reversing the object/subject, passive/active positions, Keats gets to break such fixities of language and the hierarchal order in the gaze relationship between the genders.

The next point to be discussed is that Madeline as the embodiment of the *objet a*, and, therefore, of the gaze, does not fulfill Porphyro's wish. In his essay on Hamlet, Lacan states that "With respect to the *objet a* . . . the subject feels himself to be in an imaginary situation of otherness. This object satisfies no need and is itself already relative, i.e. placed in relation to subject" ("Desire and Interpretation" 15). Copjec further explains that, in the gaze, "one is looking for confirmation of the truth of one's being or the clarity of one's vision, but the gaze of the other will not validate one. In the encounter with the gaze, one meets not a seeing eye, but a blind one" (qtd. in Garofalo 11). This leads to the inevitable failure of mirroring reciprocity in the gaze relationship. After peeping at the idealized, seraph-like Madeline, Porphyro, who is by now near enough to his object of desire, beseeches Madeline to validate this ideality, and to confirm the fantasy of his self-completion, by reciprocating his gaze in all divinity and perfection:

"And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!
 "Thou art my heaven, and I thine hermit:
 "Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,
 "Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache." (Keats, XXXI: 276–79)

Madeline, though, does not at first respond:

It seem'd he never, never could redeem
 From such a stedfast spell his lady's eyes;

So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofed phantasies. (Keats, XXXII: 286–88)

And when she opens her eyes, it is “so dreamingly” a cold blind look that “still beheld / Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep” (Keats, XXXIV: 298–99). This look does not confirm or satisfy what Porphyro yearns for, but resists, fails, and scares him, sinking him to his knees so that, kneeling “with joined hands and piteous eye,” he “fear[s] to move or speak” (Keats, XXXIV: 305–6).

According to Lacan, *objet petit a* is an “ever threatening real” over which the subject projects its narcissistic fantasy of fullness and completion. However, to come too close to this *objet a* threatens to give the subject the inevitable final experience of the Lacanian gaze: the realization that behind its desire is nothing but its lack (Felluga). Lacan suggests that “*objet a* is most evanescent in its function of symbolizing the central lack of desire” (*Four Fundamental Concepts* 105). In it, it is similar to the Freudian concept of “Medusa’s Head” as the Freudian concept evokes the Lacanian notion of “castration anxiety” or “lack” as well. Hence, the gaze Madeline casts back at Porphyro not only fails to affirm his idealization but also shockingly makes him understand that reality is something else and that he is full of lack. He apprehends how fantasized his perception of a perfect, unified ego has been.

The same process is true for Madeline, whose main purpose and “desire” (Keats, VI: 54), though a woman, have been to achieve a vision of Porphyro that night through St. Agnes rituals – therefrom the title of the poem. Madeline has likewise idealized Porphyro as an “ethereal man” (Keats, XXXVI: 318), with “spiritual and clear” eyes and “immortal” looks (Keats, XXXV: 310, 313). And when she opens her eyes, she confronts Porphyro, who fails to return her gaze and to affirm her “woofed phantasies” (Keats, XXXII: 287) by being mute and unseeing at first. She calls Porphyro “a deceived thing” (Keats, XXXVII: 332). Madeline thus confronts reality in the following way:

There was a painful change, that nigh expell'd
 The blisses of her dream so pure and deep
 At which fair Madeline began to weep,
 And moan forth witless words with many a sigh;
 While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;
 Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous eye,
 Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so dreamingly.

“Ah, Porphyro!” said she, “but even now
 “Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
 “Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;
 “And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:
 “How chang’d thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!
 “Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
 “Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!
 “Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,
 “For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go.” (Keats, XXXIV and
 XXXV: 300–15)

Hence, despite Stillinger’s assertion that only Madeline was deceived (541), we may argue that, in fact, both Porphyro and Madeline are deceived.

Nevertheless, the lovers confront the Real by realizing and accepting their deception and the failure of their fantasy, making the fairy-tale-like poem a “romance of reality” (Cox 64). If “the destiny of desire is realization” (Copjec 61), the disillusionment and the awareness of their lack and their incomplete selves mature the lovers and grant them the power to transcend their surroundings. Their story of gaze boomerang lets them encounter the Real, which is an important stage in identity formation:

[A]ny feeling of scopophilic power is always undone by the fact that the materiality of existence (the Real) always exceeds and undercuts the meaning structures of the symbolic order. . . . By having the object of our eye’s look *look back at us*, we are reminded of our own lack, of the fact that the symbolic order is separated only by a fragile border from the materiality of the Real. (Faluga, italics in the original)

The intrusion of the Real often undercuts “the symbols of power and desire . . . (wealth, art, science, ambition)” (Felluga). Keats creates such symbols in his poem from the very beginning by describing the wealth and glory of the “blood-thirsty race” (XI: 99) assembled that night in the castle, and intertwines them with the narration of Porphyro, who takes the risk of entering Madeline’s chamber in spite of this antipathetic situation. Ultimately, the lovers revolt against their society by escaping the castle and “fle[eing] away to the storm” (Keats, XLII: 371). The story of their gaze duel, thus, comes to an end, having gone through different stages of revolt and resistance. “The resistance arises in

desire – both the subject’s desire (which resists the discourses and apparatuses that construct the subject) [Porphyro entering Madeline’s chamber stealthily in this poem] and the other’s (which disrupts power by unsettling the other’s power to control it) [Madeline’s looking back at Porphyro]” (Newman 543). The resistance thus dwells in “a gaze that escapes patriarchal specular relations [, which] would not simply reverse the position of male and female . . . but would eliminate the hierarchy altogether” (Newman 543).

By creating a romance of resistance at a time when he “could not rest comfortably within the masculinist constructions of Apollonius or of Hazlitt” (Mellor 225), Keats externalizes his own resistance and gender confusion. He thwarts his own antagonism towards women by eventually granting the gaze to Madeline. Identifying himself with his principal characters (both Madeline and Porphyro), Keats creates his “solution sweet” (XXXVI: 322): an androgynous equilibrium between the two ends of his internal gender tension, transcending the conventional definitions. His feminine and masculine heroes melt into each other “as the rose / Blendeth its odour with the violet” (Keats, XXXVI: 320–21). Porphyro and Madeline “experience various stages of reality and fantasy,” and “their separate realities collide” till they begin to share the “wish for their union to become reality” (Housser 134). In this way, Keats thus

challenged the existence of fixed, stable boundaries between the sexes. He did so in two ways: by occupying the position of a “woman” in his life and in his writings, and by blurring the distinction between masculinity and femininity. . . Keats deliberately resists what he sees as Wordsworth’s masculine construction of the self: bounded, unitary, stable, complete, and instrumental, an empowered agent. (Mellor 215)

In the final stanza of the poem, the narrator suggests the transcendence of the lovers’ union over time and space by saying “And they are gone: ay, ages long ago / These lovers fled away into the storm” (Keats, XLII: 370–71). Such an ending has raised speculation about the tragic fate of the lovers, which is further supported by the many images of death, haunting the narration. The possibility of their tragic end is consistent with Lacanian theories on gaze, much as the gaze in Holbein’s painting *The Ambassadors*, which is Lacan’s favorite example of gaze, shattering the viewer’s illusion, is a skull representing death. Moreover, the gaze, as the object of desire, has been associated with the Freudian death drive (Van Slyck 644), which Žižek interprets as “the Freudian name for immortality” (qtd. in Van Slyck 658).

Nevertheless, Keats makes the lovers leave the castle for a desired world not represented in the narrative of the poem. He leaves the ending open by “not saying” what happened next, directing the narration towards a new *objet a*. Thus, “for everything that is displayed to the subject, the question is asked, ‘What is being concealed from me?’ The point at which something appears to be invisible, this point at which something appears to be missing from representation, some meaning left unrevealed, is the point of Lacanian gaze. It marks the *absence* of the signified” (Copjec qtd. in Wang 490, italics in the original). If “the source of gaze is a point where what we try to apprehend seems to elude us” (Lacan qtd. in Krips 97), Keats, then, masters his narration, in an unconventional dynamic way, towards a deferred object of desire, which promises deconstruction and resistance. A bilateral resistance that helps him escape, if not master, the reading of both his romantic critic peers and his women readers.

Conclusion

In spite of their gradual completion and ambiguous nature, Lacan's theories on gaze and the scopic interrelations can be utilized in the analysis of the trajectory of identity creation toward resistant agent in the protagonists of John Keats's “The Eve of St. Agnes”. The poem becomes the battlefield where Keats's gender vacillation gets to confront the reality and to go beyond the stereotypical gender determinations of his time. It becomes a textual poetic arena where his divided selves get along in peace and liberation in an unknown place not defined in the structures of the system. Whether he achieved in his personal life what his poetry attains through poetic language and narration is yet another story.

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LAKANOVSKI „POGLED“ U PJESMI „THE EVE OF ST. AGNES“ JOHNA KEATSA: ROMANSA OTPORA

Sažetak

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“The Eve of St. Agnes” / „Večer uoči Svete Agneze“ jedna je od Keatsovih najizazovnijih pjesama o pjesničkim emocijama i vjerovanjima u društvene strukture, život, smrt, muškarce i žene. Slijedom toga pjesma postaje poprište sukoba ženskosti i muškosti, što je pjesnika posebno zaokupljalo tijekom pisanja. U ovom eseju želimo ispitati taj sukob kroz *lakanovski* koncept pogleda ili *zurenja*, što pruža nove uvide u analizi Keatsove ambivalencije prema rodu.

Ključne riječi: John Keats, “The Eve of St. Agnes” / „Večer uoči Svete Agneze“, *zurenje*, Lacan, podijeljeno jastvo, otpor, realno