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Existentialism in the Works of John Fowles
Existencialismus v díle Johna Fowlese

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Abstract

This master's thesis is focused on the theme of being and having in concrete works of John Fowles. The aim of this thesis is to analyse literary existentialism in the works of this eminent British prosaist. The thesis mainly concentrates on his first novel *The Collector* in connection with the theme of money and the question of human physical and mental freedom. Then the thesis compares Fowles' essays with his novel *The Collector*, particularly with a collection of his private philosophy *The Aristos* and his essays about nature *Seeing Nature Whole*, *The Tree*, *The Enigma of Stonehenge*.

Anotace

Tato diplomová práce je zaměřena na téma být a vlastnit v konkrétních dílech Johna Fowlese. Cílem práce je analýza literárního existencialismu v díle tohoto významného britského prozaika. Práce se zabývá především prvním Fowlesovým románem *Sběratel* (*The Collector*) v návaznosti na tematiku moci peněz a otázek lidské svobody fyzické i mentální. Práce dále konfrontuje Fowlesovu esejistickou tvorbu s románem *Sběratel* a zaměří se zejména na sbírku soukromé filosofie *The Aristos* a Fowlesovy eseje o přírodě *Seeing Nature Whole*, *The Tree*, *The Enigma of Stonehenge*.

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Introduction

Having been impressed by Fowles' work *The Collector* I could not decide for any other theme when finding this, among several others, as a potential topic for my master's thesis.

The theme of *being* and *having* symbolises the key words of this thesis as well as of Fowles' literary existentialism. The theme of *being* and *having*, the terms which are embodied by Miranda Grey and Frederick Clegg in *The Collector*, also creates the key idea of *The Aristos*, *Seeing Nature Whole*, *The Tree* and *The Enigma of Stonehenge*. In Fowles' works, the theme of *being* stands for the superordinate terms of existence, individuality, originality, love, progress, freedom, spontaneity, chaos, interest, and life itself. The theme of *having* covers the opposites of subordinate terms of *being* which are stagnation, indifference, predictability, affectation, order, imprisonment, and many others. The main difference probably consists in incapacity of a person from *having* group to shift his/her attention towards the others so he/she keeps captivated by his/her limited mind. Fowles deals with these themes not solely in relation to human society but also to nature which is noticeable in his essays *Seeing Nature Whole*, *The Tree* and *The Enigma of Stonehenge*.

The thesis is divided into five main chapters. The first one consists of Fowles' life, background of his writing career and attitude toward life which is more specified in the third chapter where the main focus is on Fowles' social experience and in the second chapter, describing Fowles' mode of writing. The fourth chapter deals with the philosophy of being and having – the key idea of this work that is also based on Fromm's theory of *to have or to be*. The fifth chapter is dedicated to literary existentialism in *The Collector* – the key work of this thesis besides the theme of *being* and *having*. The chapter *The Collector* is further divided into four sections dealing with the main characters' interpretation of reality, their personal stagnation or development, the evil in Clegg and the intertextual relations to this work. The following chapter deals with Fowles' literary existentialism in his nonfictional essays about society (*The Aristos*) and nature (*Seeing Nature Whole*, *The Tree* and *The Enigma of Stonehenge*).

The aim of the thesis is to describe and analyse literary existentialism in concrete Fowles' works. The thesis is focused on his first novel *The Collector* in connection with the theme of money and the question of human physical and mental freedom. Then it compares Fowles' essays with his novel *The Collector*, particularly with a collection of his private philosophy *The Aristos* and his essays about nature *Seeing Nature Whole*, *The Tree*, *The Enigma of Stonehenge*.

1. John Fowles

John Robert Fowles (31 March 1926 – 5 November 2005), the English writer violating the rules of narrative tradition, is considered to be positioned between modernism and postmodernism by many critics, among others reflecting the influence of Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus in his work¹, undermines his narrative by shifting the reader's attention to the actual narration or the circumstances in which the story is produced. Consequently, this narrative technique forms the main motifs of his books. Literally, Fowles' fiction can be called the embodiment of freedom, individuality, and existentialism, however there is still a relationship between the author, the narrator and the reader who still depends on the text of the story (cf. SALAMI 1992: 13). Fowles is characteristic of his denying to be called a novelist, as well as for rejecting any possible classification of his personality. Most probably, he wants to emphasise the importance of freedom and, not only his individuality but also the individuality of others – the issues of freedom and individuality – both of them were eclipsed by the political regime of Europe at that time.

Fowles was born March 31, 1926 in Leigh-on-Sea, a small town at the mouth of the Thames located about 35 miles from London in the county of Essex. His uncle Stanley with his friend would often take little John on nature expedition into the countryside so Fowles' passion for it was even more encouraged. That probably also contributed to his idea of writing his first published essay *Entomology for a Schoolboy* – dealing with an account of how to trap moths by smearing a mixture of honey and beer on a tree which he wrote in his twelve. The love for nature was central for him as was the pursuit of literature. In 1939 he won an exhibition from Alleyn Court to Bedford School with a reputation for preparing boys for the service in the Empire. It was a shock for him and he was very unhappy with this strange new school so he moved to Ipplepen, a Devon village, to live there with his family. John's boyhood was one of sharp contrasts. On one hand comfortable upbringing in Leigh-on-Sea and the shock of the boarding school on the other; the peaceful country life in Devon and the war damage which he saw every time he went back to Bedford for a new term. The marvels of the one world must have

¹ cf. SALAMI 1992: 23-25

balanced the disappointments of the other (FOWLES 2009). During his study at Bradford, Fowles became Captain of cricket, Head of school and won a place at Oxford to read Modern Languages. Although he embodied authority for the rest of the students, in his private life he had qualms about the show of convinced rightness that his role required. Fowles often thought of Nazi bombers who attacked Bedford Station and said: *"I became increasingly aware of the opposition between what the Nazis were doing to us and what I had to do to countless younger boys at the school."* This inner sense of injustice turned into a catalyst for the sort of writer John Fowles would become. In late 1944, he went on from Bredford to join the officer training corps of the Royal Marines, then he was posted to Plymouth and eventually, as an instructor of training commando units, to Okehampton camp on Dartmoor. Later on, a visit from the Socialist mayor of Plymouth, Sir Isaac Foot, helped him to decide whether to stay on in Marines or to study at Oxford. The mayors' words were following: *"Only a fool would choose a military career."* From that time on, at New College in Oxford, he dedicated himself to quite different kind of issues. By previous experience which was in contrast with those of Oxford, he was forced to change his life. In other words, going through the discipline and order of the military life on one hand and the intoxicating liberty of Oxford where he could do what he liked on the other – that enabled him to compare one's possibilities and to find himself. Fowles' self-discovery involved a revolt against the military, as well as against his own family. The birth of his sister Hazel opened up a gulf between his needs and those of his parents due to his father's decision to leave Devon and to move back to Leigh-on-Sea. In this way, his parents showed him they did not care about that he did. Undoubtedly, Oxford not only contributed to his life with knowledge of French and German but also transformed his personality into new one - brave and autonomous. In 1948, just after the war, when few people travelled abroad, he and his old school friend Ronnie Payne, made a journey to the south of France to the university of Aix-Marseilles where they went for a month-long exchange trip. From that time on, a sequence of events followed, including travelling and getting to know new places and people. He experienced the warmth, the culture and the civilization of the South as well as the cold emptiness of the extreme North (cf. *ibid.*)

2. Fowles' Narration

I do not plan my fiction any more than I normally plan woodland walks; I follow the path that seems most promising at any given point, not some itinerary decided before entry. I am quite sure this is not some kind of rationalization – or irrationalization, after the fact; that having discovered I write fiction in a disgracefully haphazard sort of way, I now hit on the passage through an unknown wood as an analogy. (FOWLES 1979: 62)

This excerpt mirrors his nature of his adolescent exploration of Devon countryside that made him what he was – and in many other ways besides the writing (cf. FOWLES: 62). In the context of the trees, he said that it is apposite that the ancestors of the modern novel appearing in the early Middle Ages had forest as a setting and quest as the central theme so frequently. Every novel since the literary time began, since the epic of Gilgamesh, is a form of a quest, or an adventure, and only two other environments can match forest as a setting for it – the sea and the space – they are also, as well as the woods, remote from our human scale, their vistas far less immediately and incessantly curtailed. It is of no great importance that the forest is often a monotonous thing because the metaphorical forest is a constant suspense, stage awaiting actors; heroes, maidens, dragons and mysterious castles (cf. *ibid.*: 63). The tree setting was simply transferred to the now more familiar forest of town and city of brick and concrete. Fowles saw certain juxtapositions of a tree and a building. There is also the magic of standing side by side, half-hiding or half-revealing but geometric, linear cities make geometric, linear people, while wooden cities make human beings. The attraction of the forest setting to the early pioneers of a fiction was not an attraction to the forest itself which was clearly evil – being evil though, gave an excuse for the legitimate portrayal of its real or supposed dangers to the traveller. This can hardly deny the general truth of being human: the inherent wickedness of godless nature, in outer reality as in a man himself. Raymond Chandler and other creators of Fowles' own century used the same technique of substituting an evil city for evil trees (cf. *ibid.*: 64). According to Fowles, pastoral settings and themes of some of Shakespeare's plays – the depiction of

unrewarding exiles from the safe garden of civilization in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, *The Tempest* and the rest – are not examples of the foresight of a genius, but the skilful pandering to a growing vogue. Yet almost none of this was reflected in the actual seventeenth-century way of life – and least of all in its gardens remaining in general as formal as medieval ones. The opinion – the nearer nature, the nearer Caliban², remained an immense green cloak for Satan; for the commission of a crime or a sin, for doubters of religious and the public order, above all for impious doubters of a man himself (cf. *ibid.*: 65-66). Despite being so innocent, in a fiction or another literary writing, forest is understood as something mysterious and dangerous although in the matter of perceiving it depends on a man's inner reality.

What seemed to be logic to Fowles in the matter of seeing woods evil, was the fact that throughout history trees provided refuge for both the justly and the unjustly persecuted and hunted. In the wood he knew best there was a dell, among beeches, at the foot of a chalk cliff. Three centuries ago, it was crowded every Sunday, for it was where the Independents came, from miles around along the border of Devon and Dorset, to hold their forbidden services. There is a freedom in woods that our ancestors perhaps realised more than we do. Fowles used this particular wood in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*³ for scenes that it seemed to him, in a story of a self-liberation, could have no other setting. That was the main reason Fowles saw trees as the best analogue of the prose fiction (cf. FOWLES 1979: 67-68).

In Fawcner's *Timescapes of John Fowles*, Fowles confesses discovering himself by writing fiction texts and he does it more precisely by progress of writing them (cf. FAWKNER 1984: 9). “*I don't see that you can write seriously without having a philosophy of both life and literature to back you. (...) The novel is simply, for me, a way of expressing my view of life.*” (MCSWEENEY 1983: 104) That could remind us of writing a diary because it is recommended to write down everything that is on a man's

² This does not agree with the message of *The Collector*. Clegg is called Caliban for the different reason.

³ The novel opens with a detailed description of Lyme Regis in 1867 (cf. HAEN 1983: 24).

mind at the time of troubles or many thoughts. After all, this is the exact way of Miranda's acting in *The Collector* – she is writing a diary^{4,5} and the reader is supposed to form his own opinion about her character. There is no mediation of any narrator in case of her speaking and thinking and thus no misrepresentation of her acting⁶. It would be logical if the reader, reading the first part of the book, stood by Clegg's side and then, after getting to know Miranda's perspective, he would change his mind.

In *Daniel Martin* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman* Fowles employs his existential ideas through the use of narrative past – he uses a constant shift 'I' and 'he' as the shift from a subjective to an omniscient perspective (cf. SALAMI 1992: 18).

Although each of the main characters gets his/her space to express himself/herself, the reader is, for roughly half the novel, trapped inside a sick mind of Clegg and then, inside Miranda's inner world of dramatic irony, frustration, and a sense of helplessness. According to Tarbox (1988), Fowles invites the reader to feel a state of being imprisoned by two monologues and by the fact that the story itself is a kind of imprisonment for it has no plot – every encounter ends with seeking freedom and locking the door and thus the process of the story is rather circular than linear (cf. TARBOX 1988: 41). A disposition of the classic realist text should be linear and so diachronic but Fowles does not demonstrate such linearity – he offers a horizontal or synchronic movement instead, that is, at a certain moment in time. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* certainly undermines the linear movement by the constant intrusion of the modern narrator into his Victorian narratives but it is the multiplicity of texts throughout Fowles' novels where each character writes his/her own text and history. Fowles' novels do not follow the dictates of the classic realistic text because they incline towards the modernism or a high degree of the aesthetic self-consciousness (cf. SALAMI 1992: 22). The modernistic text is no more interested in the narrative closure nor in resolving plots. As for the problematic issue of linking Fowles to postmodernism, the use of a metaphoric language culminates particularly in *Mantissa* (1982) where the

⁴ "The diary will really try and tell people who you are and what you were." (FOWLES, DRAZIN 2009: xix)

⁵ Daniel Martin as a narrator appears as 'I' and 'he' especially in the first chapter. The term for the narrative past is called *passé simple* (cf. SALAMI 1992: 17).

⁶ Fowles is extremely distanced from the text (cf. TARBOX 1988: 40).

metaphorical language concerns the sexuality but the real meaning of the novel is the relationship between the narrator and his muse stimulating his power of writing. The modernist novel exploits the metaphoric but also the metonymic language. The metonymic style of the classic realism is connected in time and space and through the cause and effect and the plot is in the metonymic relation to the story or a relation of the 'part and whole'/'thing and attribute'. On the contrary, the modernist novel is more metaphoric since it does not conform to the cause and effect, nor to the contiguity, but to contradictions and the combination of "things otherwise different". Virtually, the metaphoric mode appears more dramatically in modernism that places greater stress upon the form and the technique of a narration and its main preoccupation is more with the formal matter of the aesthetics and the language than with the mimetic representation of the reality. The matter of the form and the self-consciousness reflects the shift of the modernist novel into postmodernism – a literary movement Fowles has to be placed within (cf. SALAMI 1992: 23). Postmodernism represents literary movement rejecting any form of a totalised narrative – not surprisingly Fowles is considered to be the genuine postmodernist.

The type of a fiction that self-consciously and systematically focuses on its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between reality and fiction is called 'metafiction' and Fowles' fiction embodies most of its characteristics – in *The Collector* primarily a contradiction, a permutation, a randomness, an infinite regress, an explicit dramatization of the reader, Chinese-box structures, an intertextuality, self-reflexive images and games (cf. SALAMI 1992: 24).

In addition to Fowles, the writers such as Barth, Pynchon, Barthelme, Beckett and Brooke-Rose are also characteristic of the postmodernist tendency (cf. SALAMI 1992: 26).

In *The Collector* the author provides a suggestive introduction to the issues of power, creativity and gender exploring that within a generic structure combines an awareness of novelistic trends of 1950s with elements of a detective fiction, a thriller, and a Gothic novel. In this context Fowles investigates, with frankness unequalled until

*Mantissa*⁷ (1982), the artist as a potential pornographer and the woman as pornographic artefact⁸ and despite this, *The Collector* is found to be Fowles' least ambitious novel, both technically and intellectually. Clegg's strategies for controlling Miranda are identified in the style and structure of the novel. They are not only physical but also linguistic (cf. COOPER 1991: 19).

While writing *The Collector*, Fowles was fully in control of the narrative that is in contrast with writing his long fiction *The Magus* which was written before but published two years later. The thing these two novels have in common is the idea of being set apart to struggle alone and reconstruct herself or himself in silence – as Nicholas does in *The Magus* and Charles does after losing Sarah in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Like Nicholas in the 'godgame', Miranda often feels to be disassembled (cf. TARBOX 1988: 44). *The Magus* tells the reader about young Oxford graduate and aspiring poet Nicholas Urfe who works as a teacher at a small school but he feels bored so he wants to leave England. Looking for another job, Nicholas begins a relationship with Alison Kelly, an Australian girl he meets at a social gathering in London. It fails to prevent him from accepting to be a teacher of English at the Lord Byron School on the Greek island of Phraxos. The removal brings him only boredom, depression, and disillusion. Struggling with loneliness, Nicholas contemplates suicide and wandering around the island, he comes across a wealthy Greek recluse Maurice Conchis who slowly reveals that he, during World War II, may have collaborated with the Nazis⁹. He starts to manipulate Nicholas within psychological games which mirror Conchis's paradoxical views on life and his mysterious persona. At first, it seems to Nicholas it is a joke, but later he loses connection between reality and that what is artificial so he becomes a

⁷ *Mantissa* consists of supposedly imaginary dialogue in a head of the writer Miles Green, between himself and an embodiment of the Muse Erato - Muse of lyric poetry, especially love and erotic poetry – after he wakes amnesiac in a hospital bed.

⁸ Clegg's taking pornographic photos is significant from a psychological perspective – he takes them to turn Miranda to an object for the reason of his disability of social or physical intercourse.

⁹ Fowles suggests in *The Magus*, Nazi politics, like collecting, rely on isolation and the maintenance of the status quo (cf. TARBOX 1988: 46). Status quo or stagnation corresponds with Clegg's personality (see more in chapter 5.1.2).

performer in the ‘godgame’ against his will and knowledge. Eventually, Nicholas realises that the reproduction of Nazi occupation and the indecent parodies of Greek myths are not about Conchis's life, but about his own (THE MAGUS online). In all probability, *The Magus*, an instant bestseller, is based on Fowles’ experience of teaching on the Greek island of Spetses and what Fowles retrospectively claimed, is also the influence of Pip from *Great Expectations* (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 122). At the same time, Fowles uses fragments of battlefield description of his father in a passage of *The Magus* (THE TREE online).

Despite being so impressive, fascinating, and readable in each case, the novel displays an extended account of seemingly endless mysteries that engulf Nicholas Urfe on an exotic Greek island. *The Magus* reminds us of some characteristic features of the first novel: an autobiographical and a self-conscious flavour; narrative, stylistic, and a thematic excesses; and an undemanding in the sense of form. Fowles called it “*a novel of adolescence, written by a retarded adolescent*”¹⁰ and admitted that he tried to say too much that he wanted to say everything about life and it emerged that it was too complicated. *The Collector* possesses the qualities *The Magus* lacks: a formal tightness, comparative brevity, no extraneous detail or incident, and a powerful cumulative thrust. Another valuable feature of *The Collector* was what Angus Wilson¹¹ called its “remarkable mimetic powers” – alternating first person accounts of the main characters, a non-communication, and the death as impressive stylistic achievements (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 102-103). In *The Collector*, a telling is replaced by a showing and by this work Fowles became ‘the chameleon poet’: the story does not show a trace of a self-consciousness, no reflexive questioning of the status of the text and the end of the story is firmly closed (cf. *ibid.*: 130)

The abovementioned term ‘godgame’ – as a crucial point of the story of *The Magus*, is further explained in *The Aristos*. Fowles summarised ‘godgame’ into eleven paragraphs. Especially these two are fitting in Nicholas’ story:

¹⁰ MCSWEENEY 1983: 102

¹¹ Sir Angus Frank Johnstone Wilson (11 August 1913 – 31 May 1991), the English novelist and short story writer who was awarded the 1958 James Tait Black Memorial Prize for *The Middle Age of Mrs Eliot* and later received a knighthood for his services to the literature (MACKAY online).

The Devine Solution is to govern by not governing in any sense that the governed can call being governed; that is, to constitute a situation in which the governed must govern themselves. (FOWLES 2001: 9-10)

If there had been a creator, his second act would have been to disappear. (ibid.: 9-10)

Through the narrow creativity of Clegg and the enclosed space which he produces, negative aspects that are suggested less directly are emphasised in the novel, how unhealthy the isolation is, the relationships formed within it, its capacity to entrap and stifle even as it protects. Miranda Grey is Fowles' first fictional embodiment of the *princesse lointaine*¹² - the idealised and erotically desirable woman inhabiting the Edenic enclosure but here, Miranda is surrounded only by walls of stone and by Clegg (cf. COOPER 1991: 20).

The reader's comprehension of many issues in *The Collector* is clouded by the ambiguous nature of both characters partly because none of them speaks to the author. As a matter of fact, Fowles created a complete illusion of autonomy for them for they seem to have no author. In Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* he is very distant but he controls the reader's feelings about all Jason Compson says – Faulkner has under his control the irony, the tone, and the image patterns of this collection of monologues. In contrast to him, Fowles guides the reader to only qualifications and contradictions (cf. TARBOX 1988: 55).

As it was to D. H. Lawrence, the visual image seemed to be very important to Fowles. In his fictions he constantly referred to painters and painting due to his fondness for the art of past. Claiming to have no artistic ability he further explained the tendency of art usage in his works:

I once said that if I weren't a novelist I would like to have been an artist. In a way I both envy and pity painters their general inability with writing and words. More practically, I think the countless wordless shortcuts

¹² French, literally 'distant princess', from the title of a play by E. Rostand, based on a theme in troubadour poetry. An ideal but unattainable woman (OXFORD DICTIONARIES online).

the painters have to make to show their truths are of value to all writers. In semiological terms they have a whole vocabulary of signs totally beyond literature, obviously. (BAKER online)

Claiming that the language of other arts does not use words, Fowles expands on his pleasure in reading poetry and as for science he adds: “*Science is always in parenthesis; poetry is not.*” (FOWLES 2001: 180)

I do not believe, as it is fashionable in this democratic age to believe, that the great arts are equal; though, like human beings, they have every claim to equal rights in society. Literature, in particular poetry, is the most essential and the most valuable. (FOWLES 2001: 177)

The reader has to teach Fowles’ lesson for he is implied and abhors the human inclination to lean on borrowed ideas and behaviour. The reader is maneuvered into dialectic within himself so the only standards of judgement for all the bewilderment in the story are within him. In this sense, the narration mirrors the theme of freedom when the reader’s freedom is confronted with Miranda’s. Fowles is out to teach in an extraordinary way not intending to teach what he thinks but what people think – he proposes the existential problems that awaken the reader’s power of discernment. Virtually, Fowles gives what Clegg withholds (cf. TARBOX 1988: 58).

Many years ago, Fowles said about his novel that it did not convey any philosophical propositions or scientific truths but ‘feeling truths’ (FOWLES, DRAZIN 2009: xix). This statement corresponds with the abovementioned. Fowles does not intend to be in a position of a teacher, a leader, or a ruler. His purpose consists in awakening the reader’s sense of humanity because Fowles’ ‘humanity’ does not have to be necessarily clever but it is clever in a way which is closer to nature.

3. The Philosophy of Being and Having

Having, not being, governs our time. (FOWLES 2001: 105)

The social psychologist, psychoanalyst, sociologist, humanistic philosopher, and democratic socialist Erich Fromm (March 23, 1900 – March 18, 1980) forecast a society obsessed with possessions. He divided human beings according to their orientations into two groups, people oriented on being and those who are oriented on having. Obviously, the *being* oriented person focuses on experience – meaning which could be derived from exchanging, engaging and sharing with other people meanwhile the *having* oriented human beings seek to acquire things, property and they even seek to possess people, finding it only leads to dissatisfaction and emptiness (THE PHILOSOPHY OF HAVING AND BEING online). According to Fromm (2008), *having* seems to be a normal function of our life because people are supposed to have things and moreover, they must have things in order to enjoy them. In a culture where the supreme goal is to have and where it can be spoken of someone as *being worth a million dollars*, there is the opposite point of view which tells us that if one has nothing, one is nothing (cf. FROMM 2008: 13).

Unfortunately, this can be considered as truth and it is not very optimistic if the language consists of idioms using the words *worth* and *dollars* at the same time. Although it was gold instead of dollars in the past, the idea of money still remains in the background. Another Fromm's (2008) observation of *being* and *having* philosophy is that from a linguistic point of view *being* is connected with verbs and having is connected with nouns because man cannot possess activities or processes which are expressed in terms of *being* – they can only be experienced. Of course, it can be said *I have an idea* but does not it actually mean *I think* (ibid.: 17)? In the society we live in, there is the main emphasis on *having* which is understood as a natural mode of existence (ibid.: 24).

These two extremes are reflected in the attitudes of main characters of Fowles' first and probably the most famous work *The Collector*. While Miranda Grey presents the

extreme of *being* because, even more, she is pushed to such situation that she has to fight for her freedom and for the possibility of living at least ordinary life. Unfortunately, her effort is of no effect. Frederick Clegg is the representative of the second extreme – *having*. He is obsessed with Miranda. His main goal is to possess her because of his inability to love her in a human way and he is able to give her anything but freedom. Most probably he does not understand the word *love* or *loving* properly because even if he says to Miranda that he loves her, his way of loving is possessive at all events. The worst thing is that he is unconscious of that and feels even wronged. At first, Miranda thinks that Frederick has at least sexual motives for abducting her but she reveals his true character very soon and feels pity for her captor. Clegg's predisposition to possess is thus emphasised because he does not even want to make love with Miranda, he simply wants to own her.

According to Fromm (2008), loving can have two meanings depending on whether it is spoken of in the mode of *having* or *being*. There exists only the act of loving in reality because to love is a productive activity – caring for, knowing, enjoying, responding, affirming: the tree, the person, the idea, the painting etc. This is representative sample of *being* mode. In addition, love can be experienced in the mode of *having* as well – this consists of confining, controlling and imprisoning and the people, calling this love, misuse the word in order to hide the reality of their not loving (cf. FROMM 2008: 37).

Miranda often describes her feelings of being imprisoned by Clegg. One of those feelings could be found in her words below.

He is solid; immovable, iron-willed. He showed me one day his killing bottle. I'm imprisoned in it. Fluttering against the glass. Because I can see through it I still think I can escape. I have hope. But it's all an illusion. A thick round wall of glass. (THE COLLECTOR online: 94)

Indeed, she knows her fate but she does not deny the possibility of a miracle in terms of escaping from Clegg's control. "*What she never understood was that with me it was having. Having her was enough. Nothing needed doing. I just wanted to have her, and safe at last.*" (THE COLLECTOR online: 45)

4. Fowles and Society

Once man believed he could make his own pleasures; now he believes he must pay for them. As if flowers no longer grew in fields and gardens; but only in florists' shops. (FOWLES 2009: 109)

Fowles criticised the society for its lust for possession, utilitarianism and the power of science¹³ which became more important than human common sense. His feeling about it was expressed through the following quote.

This is the monetization of pleasure; the inability to conceive of pleasure except as being in some way connected with getting and spending. The invisible patina on an object is now value, not its true intrinsic beauty. (...) And even other human beings, husbands, wives, mistresses, lovers, children, friends, come to be possessed or unpossessed objects associated with values derived more from the world of money than from the world of humanity (FOWLES 2009: 109).

By means of *The Collector*, Fowles told the readers about his indignation connected with the difference between lower and upper middle class. Miranda's diary consists of many bitter comments about that social problem so she reminded the reader of angry young men of 1950s¹⁴. Social theme of *The Collector* is brought into focus through creating a situation that makes direct confrontation of class extremes imaginable, the Few and Many as Fowles calls them in his description of the novel's deeper message (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 108).

In connection to *The Collector*, Fowles also spoke about Adam and Eve as the most powerful biological principles whose smooth interaction in society was one of the chief signs of social health but he also highlighted the problem of emancipation of women

¹³ Especially the chapter *Seeing Nature Whole* deals with the lust for utilitarianism and the belief in science.

¹⁴ Fowles earned a place in Britain's gallery of angry young man for his diatribe against the abuses of freedom (cf. TARBOX 1988: 40).

arising from selfish tyranny of men (FOWLES 2001: 202). He described his feelings towards the myth of Adam's temptation, providing following explanation.

Adam is hatred of change and futile nostalgia for the innocence of animals. The serpent is imagination, the power to compare, self-consciousness. Eve is the assumption of human responsibility, of the need for progress and the need to control progress. The Garden of Eden is an impossible dream. The Fall is the essential processus of evolution. The God of Genesis is a personification of Adam's resentment. (FOWLES 2001: 142)

Fowles compared Adam to stasis or conservatism and Eve to kinesis or progress. In other words, Adam presented society of the strict obedience to established institutions and norms – the Victorian era¹⁵ was typical period of this kind. Eve, on the other hand, presented society typical of encouraging innovation, experiment, and fresh definitions, aims, modes of feeling – embodiment of the Renaissance or Fowles' century. For his justification he mentioned possible occurrence of male Eve or female Adam (cf. FOWLES 2001: 142-143).

In *The Collector*, Clegg's fantasies about Miranda are primarily possessive, and spring partly from his frustrations with a tedious job and a depleted emotional life. The novel's awareness of Clegg's economic poverty and intellectual and social limitations which this imposes upon his life associates it generically with fiction of the 1950s depicting English working class' experience (cf. COOPER 1991: 21). Authors like Kingsley Amis and Alan Sillitoe saw the clash of wealthy middle class and an underprivileged but upwardly mobile working or lower middle class, dubbed 'the New People' in the book as characterising English society in the post-war years. *The Collector* portrayed the class conflict while also rebelling but rebelling in Fowles' way.

¹⁵ *The French Lieutenant Woman* partly invokes, partly negates the typical Victorian repertoire of the relationship between sexes as in nineteenth-century novels *Wuthering Heights*, *Jane Eyre*, *Middlemarch*, and *Jude the Obscure*. Victorian conventions were reigning those relationships between men and women so they seemed to be equally victimised by those obstacles (cf. HAEN 1983: 29).

That formulated 1950s fictional convention of the encounter between an educated class-privileged woman and a resentful, socially deprived man. Fowles' interest in the flexibility of fictional form was evidenced in his reversal of the terms of class struggle as it usually appeared in 'proletarian' fiction. Instead of imitating Sillitoe by making Clegg into a kind of Arthur Seaton, who tried to liberate his heroic vigour from the environmental torpidity that imprisoned it, Fowles constructed a wholly negative working-class protagonist (cf. COOPER 1991: 22).

As for the society, either Clegg or Miranda are collectors for their tendency to categorise people without regard for their individuality. Both of them have collector-oriented views about the society they live in so they both are guilty of putting time into categories. While Miranda hates everything old and square, Clegg is incapable of any progress (cf. TARBOX 1988: 54).

4.1 Fowles' Socialism

A Christian says: "If all were good, all would be happy". A socialist says: "If all were happy, all would be good". A fascist says: "If all obeyed the state, all would be both happy and good". A lama says: "If all were like me, happiness and goodness would not matter". A humanist says: "Happiness and goodness need more analysis". This last is the least deniable view.
(FOWLES 2001: 97)

In *The Aristos*, Fowles comments on the fact that people are forced into the effort to recompense from any situation they are in and that their ability to enjoy is conditioned by the situation where they have had to learn to enjoy.

That leisure seems to have no duties is precisely what puritans object to in it; the puritan fallacy is that there is something intrinsically noble in work. This historically explicable need to enhance the value of work really undertaken only in order to get wages has created a climate in which too much external pleasure and enjoyment very quickly cloy. (FOWLES 2001: 113-114)

Fowles stated, in conversation with Susana Onega, he was really a socialist of a kind by conviction and that there was a richness in the middle classes and the middle-class field of life but, for a novelist especially, confining oneself into the working-class view of life rather restricted one's perspective (FOWLES, VIPOND 1999: 168).

Above all, socialism enshrines the vital concept that there is too much inequality in the world; and that this inequality can be remedied. The best socialism wishes to achieve a maximum of freedom with a minimum of social suffering. The intention is right, however wrong the means may sometimes be. (FOWLES 2001: 101)

It is quite sure, according to Fowles' words, if one word summed up all the bad in our world, it would be inequality and he further explained that it was not Lee Harvey Oswald but inequality that killed President Kennedy (cf. FOWLES 2001: xi).

Napoleon once said: 'Society cannot exist without inequality of wealth, and inequality of wealth cannot exist without religion.' He was not of course speaking as a theorist of history, but justifying his Concordat with the Vatican; however, this Machiavellian statement suggests admirably both the aims and the difficulties of socialism. (FOWLES 2001: 97)

Fowles avoided being a fascist in the eyes of readers and justified it by the assertion that, in *The Collector* as well as in *The Aristos*, he maintained the importance of a polar view of life; that everything was dependent on strength and energy of its opposite. This was also true for the Few and the Many, the evolutionally over- and under-privileged – they. The Few are dependent on the Many and vice versa. There are healthy as well as unhealthy products in this embattled condition. Hazard, a factor we shall never be able to control, will always plague our lives with inequality (cf. FOWLES 2001: x-xi). Heraclitus' harmony of the opposites and the quote below can clarify Fowles' attitude towards the abovementioned.

Fascists attempt to found a unipolar society. All must face south, none must face north. But in such societies there is a fatal attraction towards the counterpoles of whatever is commanded. If you order man to look to the future, he looks to the present. If you order him to worship God, he worships man. If you order him to serve the state, he serves himself. (FOWLES 2001: 102)

In other words, the outer pressure on humans causes opposition which can be understood as a defensive mechanism. The question is, why humans, defending themselves, often do the very opposite. Another example of such human defence is connected with the safety of socialism that does not enable to live one's life in original way.

The welfare state provides material welfare and psychological illfare. Too much social security and equality breed individual restlessness and frustration: hazard starvation and variety starvation. The nightmare of the welfare state is boredom. (FOWLES 2001: 99)

Boredom, posing a threat to people's minds, can evoke a feeling of doing something new or revolutionary. That social stagnation may occur in extreme societies – extremely just or extremely unjust. This must necessarily lead to three things – war, decay, or revolution (cf. FOWLES 2001: 99).

In this context, Fowles, having been interviewed, expressed his opinion about future society. *“Do I think that things will get better in any immediate future, no; that there is some kind of slow progress, despite countless wrong turnings, yes.”* (BAKER online) Despite his realistic mode of thinking, Fowles' believed in the better world where the three things – war, decay, or revolution could be understood as representatives of possible and predictable threat and not a consequence of ill-considered acting.

5. Existentialism in the Works of Fowles

The best existentialism tries to re-establish in the individual a sense of his own uniqueness, a knowledge of the value of anxiety as an antidote to intellectual complacency (petrification), and a realization of the need he has to learn to choose and control his own life. Existentialism is then, among other things, an attempt to combat the ubiquitous and increasingly dangerous sense of the nemo¹⁶ in modern man. (FOWLES 2001: 102)

There is a number of philosophical issues in the works of John Fowles but generally, all of Fowles' works are based on the philosophy of existentialism. "I'm interested in the side of existentialism which deals with freedom: the business of whether we do have freedom, whether we do have free will, to what extent you can change your life, choose yourself, and all the rest of it." (MCSWEENEY 1983: 105) This Sartrean concept of authenticity and inauthenticity, as Fowles called it, was used in developing his major characters. In *The Magus*, Conchis explains to Urfe that mystery has its energy and that man needs the existence of mysteries, not their solutions. Charles Smithson, the protagonist of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*¹⁷, comes to recognise that being atheist is not a matter of moral choice but of human obligation and that man can stay in prison, called by his time duty, honour, self-respect or he can be free but crucified at the same time (cf. *ibid*: 105-106). One cannot be sure as for Fowles' works but at the end of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* Sarah seems to have reached a certain degree of mental balance which enables her to live in the presence but not to be destroyed by Nemo within her. In *The Cloud*, Catherine must enter 'The black hole' from where she is not

¹⁶ 'Nobody' or state of being nobody – 'nobodiness'. As physicists postulated an anti-matter, there exists in the human psyche an anti-ego = nemo (cf. FOWLES 2001: 35).

¹⁷ The main woman character of the novel *The French Lieutenant's Woman* Sarah Woodruff was inspired by Mary Anning – Lyme Regis fossil hunter, acclaimed as top British scientist (cf. HUDSTON online).

able to return due to her un-narrated suicide (cf. *ibid*: 113). Miranda, in *The Collector*, finds herself in the situation from which she is not able to escape as well.

The features of *Poor Koko*: the isolated setting, the imprisonment of a weaker person by a stronger one, their unbridgeable differences of class, culture and speech, indicate that it is a variation on the theme of *The Collector*, however, *Poor Koko* is a representative of more cerebral fiction (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 117).

In case of *The Collector* Fowles dedicates himself to the questions of the nature of art, humanity¹⁸, freedom¹⁹ and God. Although these issues are mentioned by Miranda's diary notes, Fowles' personal point of view can be found in his second literary work, his self-portrait of ideas *The Aristos*.

The central proposition of existentialism can be summarised in the phrase *existence precedes essence* which means that the most important consideration for an individual is the fact of an independent acting and a responsible conscious being (existence) rather than stereotypes, labels, roles, definitions, or other preconceived categories the individual fits (essence). The loss of hope and religious belief, the deliberation about death and meaning of life, the anxiety, the absurdity of human life, the vain effort to escape and existence depending on time – these could be understood as the key words for the existentialist era of 1940s – 1960s.

Fowles, inspired by Heraclitus, called him a “proto-existentialist” and in his essay on Kafka he insisted on the fact that most of the themes of that modernist went back as far (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 105).

According to Fowles' words, an existentialist confesses his good actions as well as his past bad actions and he says that he cannot deny them because if he did, he would be a coward or a child and thus he can only accept them. Some of the modern writers argued that committing a crime deliberately, without remorse but still accepting that man has committed a crime, he can demonstrate his existence as a unique individual and his rejection of the hypocritical organised society. But this would be a romantic ‘perversion’ of existentialism. Man cannot prove his existence by committing deliberate crimes and making senseless decisions for their possible ‘acceptance’ and thus

¹⁸ Fowles was against artists “high on craft and low on humanity” (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 105).

¹⁹ Unfreedom is the great evil in this novel (cf. TARBOX 1988: 48).

constitute a proof of the uniqueness of his existence. By so acting he demonstrates nothing but his own specific sense of inadequacy in face of social reality. Man proves his existence by accepting past bad actions and using that as a source of energy for the improvement of his future actions or attitude inside that reality (cf. FOWLES 2001: 139-140).

From the existential point of view, the question of a sin is also mentioned in the quote dealing with committed evil, accepting it but at the same time, realising that no other evil can clean that preceding one.

Existentialism says, in short, that if I commit an evil then I must live with it for the rest of my life; and that the only way I can live with it is by accepting that it is always present in me. Nothing, no remorse, no punishment, can efface it; and therefore each new evil I do is not a relapse, a replacement, but an addition. Nothing cleans the slate; it can become only dirtier. (FOWLES 2001: 140)

The Aristos is known as Fowles' private philosophy. The theme of existence of human being as well as existence of God is the main question of the first few chapters. Deep despair of human life is obvious from the paragraph below.

My only certainty in life is that I shall one day die. I can be certain of nothing else in the future. But either we survive (and so far in human history a vast majority has always survived) and having survived when we might not have done so gives us what we call happiness; or we do not survive and do not know it. (FOWLES 2001: 30)

According to his opinion, the only certainty of his life was death. Definitely, World War II had also a strong influence on his literary topic. As Miranda's freedom is being taken away from her, she wishes only basic things – to be allowed to go outside and to breathe fresh air, to see the sun and to listen to birds. This represents an extreme situation which is common in the field of existentialism.

Miranda's existential awareness broadens when she lets go of the notion of a patronising God willing to intervene and help (cf. TARBOX 1988: 45). She is not sure

about her faith but she feels better after confessing her difficulty to her diary and thus to God.

I've been sitting here and thinking about God. I don't think I believe in God any more. It is not only me, I think of all the millions who must have lived like this in the war. The Anne Franks. (...) He lets us suffer. (...) I mean perhaps God has created the world and the fundamental laws of matter and evolution. But he can't care about the individuals. (...) So he doesn't exist, really. (THE COLLECTOR online: 101)

Although praying is her first impulse in captivity, she realises that God cannot hear her (cf. TARBOX 1988: 45). Denying God's existence, she cannot believe her unfavourable situation and still hopes he could help her and prays for it.

I don't know if I believe in God. I prayed to him furiously in the van when I thought I was going to die (...). But praying makes things easier. It's all bits and pieces. I can't concentrate. I've thought so many things, and now I can't think of one. But it makes me feel calmer. The illusion, anyway. Like working out how much money one's spent. And how much is left. (THE COLLECTOR online: 56)

It is interesting that the first thought that ran through Miranda's mind, was to compare the process of praying with earning and spending money. Although people say that *danger makes men devout*, Miranda, even in such a dangerous situation, has doubts about God. What is ambiguous though is the question if she is endangered or if she is just reprobated. Nevertheless, according to another saying, *one who sows, trusts in God* Miranda acts as if she counted with happy ending because, during her captivity, she is drawing, reading books, writing her diary and moreover, she tries to communicate with Clegg and to educate him at least a bit. In Fowles' words, God is comprehended as situation. “'God' is a situation. Not a power, or being, or an influence. Not a 'he' or a 'she', but an 'it'. Not entity or non-entity, but the situation in which there can be both entity and non-entity.” (FOWLES 2001: 12) At the same time, he puts the title *God* into

inverted commas to purge it of all its human associations and in addition, he illustrates the difference between existence and God by the example below.

Because people cannot understand that what is not can influence what is, they maintain that 'God' is and does. Our ignorance of 'God' and its motives will always remain infinite. To ask 'What is 'God?'' Is as futile as to ask 'When does infinity begin and end?' Existence is ultimately or potentially knowable; 'God' is infinitely unknowable. The most we shall ever learn is why existence is as it is; why it requires such laws and such constituents to continue. We shall never learn ultimately why it is. (FOWLES 1980: 12)

Fowles played a modern – an absent God to raise the questions, to let grow a man because man needs the existence of questions, not answers (cf. TARBOX 1988: 57).

He further explains the existence of God that is irrefutable in a very clever way by using comparison of God's creation with leaving a dice in the room: *"Put dice on the table and leave the room; but make it seem possible to the players that you were never in the room."* (FOWLES 2001: 9) As mentioned in the chapter *The Aristos* though, there is no aim to persuade the reader of existence of God or to persuade him of anything else. Fowles just observes his reality and one would say he has as much of brains as common sense because he says in contrast to the abovementioned:

Freedom of will is the highest human good; and it is impossible to have both that freedom and an intervening divinity. We, because we are a form of matter, are contingent; and this terrifying contingency allows our freedom. (FOWLES 2001: 16)

It is necessary to emphasise that he also comments his attitude to God or to atheism in these words: *"I do not consider myself an atheist, yet this concept of 'God' and our necessary masterlessness obliges me to behave in all public matters as if I were."* (FOWLES 2001: 18) Briefly, Fowles does not declare himself a believer or an atheist also by reason of not being able to accept religions as believable explanation of reality. It is incredible to him in relation to the degree of their requirement for his belief in positive human attributes and divine intervention (cf. *ibid.*: 18).

Eventually, the actual evil in Clegg overcame the potential good in Miranda, Fowles adds though that by this he does not mean he is pessimistic about the future nor that a precious *élite* is endangered by the barbarian hordes. He simply means that unless people confront this unnecessarily brutal conflict, based on an unnecessary envy or on an unnecessary contempt, between the biological Few and the Many; unless people admit that they never will be born equal, though they are born with equal human rights; unless the Many can be educated out of their false assumption of their inferiority and the Few out of their false assumption that biological superiority is a state of existence instead of a state of responsibility – they shall never reach a more just and happier world (cf. FOWLES 1980: 10).

5.1 *The Collector*

“*que fors aus ne le sot riens nee*” – the introductory verse of *The Collector* comes from *La Châtelaine de Vergi*, an old French romance between a knight and his forbidden love and translated it means “*apart from them no living being knew*” or “*and no one knew but them*” which refers to the hidden romance between the main characters (MYERS online). Those are also Miranda’s words at seventh night of her imprisonment. “*I keep on thinking the same things. If only they knew. If only they knew.*” (THE COLLECTOR online: 54) Fowles’ purpose in *The Collector* was the attempt to analyse, through a parable, some of the results of confrontation between good and evil, perfect and imperfect, intelligent and unthinking, Few and Many. Clegg, the kidnapper, played a role of evil but Fowles wanted to show and explain the background of his acting. It was not only the result of bad education but also mean environment and being orphaned – factors over which he had no control (cf. FOWLES 1980: 10). The general idea for the novel’s plot was developed by synthesising the general idea of a man imprisoning a woman in a cellar from Bartok’s opera *Bluebeard’s Castle* with a contemporary newspaper report of a boy who captured a girl and imprisoned her in an air raid shelter at the end of his garden outside London for over three months (cf. GOOSMANN online). In contrast to *The Magus*, Fowles, instead of expansiveness, sunshine, passion, and humanity, gives the reader darkness, despair and death in *The Collector* (cf. TARBOX 1988: 40).

The Collector is narrated from two different perspectives – it is divided in two parts, both commenting on the general theme of Miranda’s imprisonment in very different ways and also, both narratives are diametrically opposed to one another. The first part is represented by Clegg’s narration and the following is provided for Miranda’s retelling the story, concerning two months of her imprisonment, from her point of view.

After Miranda’s narration, in the concluding pages, Clegg becomes a narrator again as the thief and the man of letters in *Poor Koko* (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 131).

Frederick Clegg was brought up by his aunt Annie and uncle Dick because his father killed himself by driving inebriated. Clegg thinks that it was his mother who had brought his father to alcoholism and then she left. This could be the reason of his calling women just exemplars – he compares them with the exemplars of butterflies and it also contributes to the explanation of his attitude to women.

After winning a large amount of money in a football pool, Clegg still criticises hypocritical society because, according to him, people look at him as if he is still just a clerk. Anyway, he buys a country house and, after preparations connected with Miranda’s potential escape, kidnaps her from outside her apartment in London. Miranda’s story, as the second part of the book, consists of diary notes according to single dates of two months of her imprisonment. Her writing opens with the note “*It’s the seventh night*” but she is not very sure about the day due to noting the date with a question mark (THE COLLECTOR online). Both of main characters are shown as victims: highly personal in their own contributions, they tend to misread and misinterpret the narratives of the respective other.

From a stylistic point of view, narration of both differs – Clegg’s narration is rather informal and pure, he is unable to deal with ideas and by his tortured syntax reveals his vague comprehending of cause and effect (cf. TARBOX 1988: 46). Miranda’s language is almost poetic and philosophical and, in contrast to Clegg, she does not bother the reader with technical details. The difference can be also seen in the way they think about any possible issues. The following sample of their dialogue – Miranda called it *Dialogue between Miranda and Caliban* in her diary notes, pictures Clegg’s language and humanity in contrast with Miranda’s mode of expressing herself and her attitude to social issues:

What do you think about the H-bomb? C. Nothing much. M. You must think something. C. Hope it doesn't drop on you. Or on me. M. I realise you've never lived with people who take things seriously, and discuss seriously. (He put on his hurt face.) Now let's try again. What do you think about the H-bomb? C. If I said anything serious, you wouldn't take it serious. (I stared at him till he had to go on.) It's obvious. You can't do anything. It's here to stay. M. You don't care what happens to the world? C. What'd it matter if I did? M. Oh, God. C. We don't have any say in things. M. Look, if there are enough of us who believe the bomb is wicked and that a decent nation could never think of having it, whatever the circumstances, then the government would have to do something. Wouldn't it? C. Some hope, if you ask me. (THE COLLECTOR online: 61)

The sample above could serve as the precise example of Clegg's mode of thinking. Meanwhile Miranda cares about what happens to the world, Clegg seems to be not so ignorant as rather indifferent to H-bomb. It is enough for him, if he and Miranda are saved and he does not care what happens to anybody else. In this way, through Clegg's character, the absence of self-made opinion of society during Fowles' time is probably pointed out. He made it clear by following statement:

It is not by accident that the discovery of self is not encouraged by the state. An educational system is organised by the state to prolong the state; and the discovery of the self is also often the discovery of what the state really is. (FOWLES 2001: 152)

The irony is that, in *The Collector*, Miranda is effectively choosing one collector over another²⁰ for both Clegg and G.P. exploit and try to control women – one through an icy celibacy and the other through an indifferent promiscuity.

²⁰ Becoming furious when G.P. has a sex with Toinette, she feels she owns him as well as Clegg feels he owns her. Realising that Miranda does not truly love him G.P. sends her away. Her feelings change as the novel proceeds – she comes to realise that she loves him but it could be a matter of loneliness and deprivation (cf. TARBOX 1988: 50). Nevertheless, she criticises Clegg in the way G.P. used to criticise her (cf. TARBOX 1988: 53).

I know what I am to him. A butterfly he has always wanted to catch. I remember (the very first time I met him) G.P. saying that collectors were the worst animals of all. He meant art collectors, of course. I didn't really understand, I thought he was just trying to shock Caroline—and me. But of course, he is right. They're anti-life, anti-art, anti-everything. (THE COLLECTOR online: 57)

Both of them, Clegg or G.P., have the ability to be a lover or a jailer. Through Paston (G.P.) as well as Clegg, Fowles began to develop his sense of an artist as a morally suspect man, and of art as a sinister activity (cf. COOPER 1991: 40-41). Miranda, probably knowing the fact of this male obsession, becomes reconciled to it but she is still capable of certain self-esteem.

The power of women! I've never felt so full of mysterious power. Men are a joke. We're so weak physically, so helpless with things. Still, even today. But we're stronger than they are. We can stand their cruelty. They can't stand ours. I think -- I will give myself to G.P. He can have me. And whatever he does to me I shall still have my woman-me he can never touch. (THE COLLECTOR online: 113)

The difference between Paston and Clegg is more one of degree than of kind, for it connects the two men whom Miranda perceives as so different and reveals the level on which they are united. Paston and Clegg are identical in their male perception of the desired woman as a victim and both of them enjoy emotional and physical fragility of their shared quarry – both of them seek to discourage Miranda from her artistic ambitions into a relationship that emphasises only her sexuality, no matter how intellectually irreconcilable these men are (cf. COOPER 1991: 42). In *The Magus*, Fowles shared his point of view on male and female perceiving of relationships.

Men love war because it allows them to look serious. Because they imagine it is the one thing that stops women laughing at them. In it they can reduce women to the status of objects. That is the great distinction between

the sexes. Men see objects, women see relationship between objects. (...) I will tell you what war is. War is a psychosis caused by an inability to see relationships. (THE MAGUS online: 52)

Yet Miranda believes in Paston as the embodiment of right values. As much as she admires Paston – Clegg admires her. Miranda stays alive through her writings to Paston who, however never receives them. She sees God in him and so she tries to obey the commandments of his artistic or social life and feels guilty if she breaks any of these laws. These commandments strongly remind her of Fowles' own life attitude. Miranda confesses that they altered her.

The philosophy of Paston²¹ consists of following statements – 1. A real artist gives his whole being into his art; 2. He does not want to impress people; 3. He has to be Left politically because Socialists want to better the world; 4. An artist must create, always. He must act, if he believes something. Talking about acting is like boasting about pictures he is going to paint; 5. If he feels something deeply, he is not ashamed to show his feelings; 6. He accepts being English; 7. He does not compromise with his background. If he is suburban, he cauterises the suburbs. If he is working class, he cauterises the working class in him. And the same, whatever class he is, because class is primitive and silly; 8. He hates political business of nationality and everything in politics and art and everything else what is not genuine and deep and necessary. He does not have any time for silly trivial things. He lives seriously – does not go to silly films, does not read cheap newspapers, does not listen to trash on the wireless and telly, does not waste time talking about nothing. He uses his life (cf. THE COLLECTOR online: 66-67).

Miranda could represent, if the reader stands back from the immediate circumstances of the story, the embodiment of a Protestant heroine – a secular saint, pure, selfless, noble, principled, and convinced of her virtue – whose ancestors were, for instance, the Lady in Milton's *Comus*, Richardson's *Clarissa*, Browning's *Pompilia*, George Eliot's *Dorothea Brooke*, and Shaw's *Saint Joan*. All of them are sustained by

²¹ Paston, male character of older and creative artist – a painter, is behind Miranda while in *Magus Conchis*, behind Julie, is omniscient artist living inside the world of the novel (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 107).

their assurance that they are the representatives of the elect Few (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 134).

5.1.1 Clegg's interpretation versus misinterpretation of the reality

Both of the main characters probably suffer some form of a state of mind that does not always allow them to see realistically but it is mainly about Clegg who has problems with evaluating the nature and content of his own plans and acting realistically.²² Miranda misinterprets her reality by obsessive intellectualising²³, meanwhile Clegg is retrospectively trying to justify his reprehensible acting explaining all of that as 'acting for the best of X'²⁴. The interesting point about this strategy is that Clegg tries to convince an absent onlooker but himself as well²⁵. "*What I'm trying to say is that having her as my guest happened suddenly, it wasn't something I planned the moment the money came.*" (THE COLLECTOR online: 5) In the matter of imprisoning Miranda, confessing the fact of having been inspired by *The Secrets of the Gestapo*, he justifies keeping her far from newspapers and outside world only to Miranda's profit.

But I thought it would be better if she was cut off from the outside world, she'd have to think about me more. So in spite of many attempts on her part to make me get her the papers and a radio I wouldn't ever let her have them. The first days I didn't want her to read about all the police were doing, and so on, because it would have only upset her. It was almost a kindness, as you might say. (THE COLLECTOR online: 18)

In his mind, the concepts of humanism are associated with perverted meanings and he understands almost all of them in a wrong way. One night, when gagging and bounding Miranda, he thinks: "*It was very dark of course, but clear, you could see some stars. I took her arm tight and let her stand there for five minutes. I could hear her breathing*

²² Miranda also does not think realistically but she is probably forced to do so by the given surroundings.

²³ cf. TARBOX 1988: 42

²⁴ The variable X might be filled by various contents as the novel proceeds.

²⁵ His narration is a masterwork of self-delusion and self-effacement (cf. TARBOX 1988: 43).

deep. It was very romantic, her head came just up to my shoulder.” (THE COLLECTOR online: 22) This could serve as a solid evidence of his inability to differentiate between what is valid for him, and what is valid universally.

It is at this very point that the mentality of Clegg – collector could be linked with the concept of the simulacrum²⁶, because he values the outward appearances of objects rather than their intrinsic value. Butterfly collectors or entomologists are in all probability interested in the beauty of certain specimens and not in their biological function (cf. POLLHEIDE 2003: 29). Clegg cannot see Miranda’s rich inner life for being captivated by her beauty and unfortunately, in his case it holds true as in the case of any other collector that it depends on ‘quantity’ rather than on ‘quality’.

*Everything she did was delicate like that. Just turning a page. Standing up or sitting down, drinking, smoking, anything. Even when she did things considered ugly, like yawning or stretching, she made it seem pretty. The truth was she couldn’t do ugly things. She was too beautiful.*²⁷ (THE COLLECTOR online: 29)

Clegg sees Miranda as anima with the same intensity as Miranda sees G.P. as animus²⁸ but she admires him for being a famous painter – physically, he does not attract her attention. As for Clegg’s perception of anima in Miranda, it is vice versa – he idolises her personality according to her outward appearance.

The anima-animus relationships work for Miranda or Clegg – both of them avoid sex with their animus or anima to retain the romance. To this context, Miranda says that her tie with G.P. will never be the same when she reveals his and Toinette’s sexual affair – Clegg is of the same mind after Miranda tries to seduce him (cf. TARBOX 1988: 50-51).

Fowles said that man cannot describe reality and that he can only give it the metaphors to indicate it. In his words, the mode of human description is metaphorical as

²⁶ Latin term for ‘likeness’ or ‘similarity’ means a representation or imitation of a person or A thing. Jean Baudrillard dealt with this philosophical topic in 1981 to find the relationships between reality, symbols, and society (cf. FELLUGA online).

²⁷ Obviously, Clegg sees only the facade, the dream girl (cf. TARBOX 1988: 49).

²⁸ cf. TARBOX 1988: 49

well as any description of the eminent scientist. That is to say, one's description of reality is the product of the imagination or 'human freedom lives in human art' (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 109-110).

Clegg is aware of Miranda's different language and he is convinced that she contradicts herself while speaking about nonsense of class distinction:

She often went on about how she hated class distinction, but she never took me in. It's the way people speak that gives them away, not what they say. You only had to see her dainty ways to see how she was brought up. She wasn't la-di-da, like many, but it was there all the same. (THE COLLECTOR online: 17)

Here, his interpretation of reality, as for Miranda's acting, seems to be right and his comment on the fact that a man has a tendency not to think much about the fact that he takes things for granted is justifiable.

You could see it when she got sarcastic and impatient with me because I couldn't explain myself or I did things wrong. Stop thinking about class, she'd say. Like a rich man telling a poor man to stop thinking about money. (...) There was always class between us. (THE COLLECTOR online: 17)

Miranda betrays herself confiding her thoughts to the diary and, at the same time feeling a pity for him, she reveals how loathsome Clegg seems to her.

What irritates me most about him is his way of speaking. Cliche after cliche after cliche, and all so old-fashioned, as if he's spent all his life with people over fifty. (...) I know it's pathetic, I know he's a victim of a miserable Nonconformist suburban world and a miserable social class, the horrid timid copycatting genteel in-between class. (THE COLLECTOR online: 74)

Not solely Miranda's diary entries prove her aversion to Clegg's social background but also her oral criticising his mode of speaking. "You know what you do? You know how rain takes the colour out of everything? That's what you do to the English language. You

blur it every time you open your mouth.” (THE COLLECTOR online: 31) Miranda calls his speech Calibanese which could represent a vocabulary of inadequate euphemisms he uses for justifying his vicious behaviour. *“I told him what he could say, and he said he’d think about it. Which is Calibanese for “no.””*²⁹ While stating *“It was almost a kindness”* after kidnapping Miranda, keeping her from the outside world and all of the information, he gives reasons to his acting – *“because it would have only upset her.”*

Clegg’s conscious or unconscious minds are completely confused that he displaces his dreams to the daytime world (cf. TARBOX 1988: 43).

I lay there thinking of her below, lying awake too. I had nice dreams, dreams where I went down and comforted her; I was excited, perhaps I went a bit far in what I gave myself to dream, but I wasn’t really worried, I knew my love was worthy of her. (THE COLLECTOR online: 12)

His dreaming defines his real personality although he is a master of pretention. After the phrase “I don’t know why” usually follows a mad action (cf. TARBOX 1988: 43).

The matter of trust plays fundamental part in the behaviour of both characters. When Miranda tries to convince Clegg about sending money to charitable organizations, he rejects with claiming that all of those organizations solely abuse donations (cf. TARBOX 1988: 55).

But he won’t trust anything. That’s what’s really wrong with him. Like my man in Hampstead, he doesn’t trust people to collect money and use it for the purpose they say they will. He thinks everyone is corrupt, everyone tries to get money and keep it. (THE COLLECTOR online: 97)

On the other hand, Miranda’s trust is unquestioning.

“It’s no good my saying I know it’s used for the right purpose. He says, how do you know? And of course I can’t tell him. I can only say I feel sure—it must go where it’s needed. Then he smiles as if I’m too naive to have any right on my side.” (THE COLLECTOR online: 97)

²⁹ THE COLLECTOR online: 90

Clegg is at least corrective to Miranda's pretensions to idealism. Fowles demonstrates her trusting nature as praiseworthy but at the same time, he does not let the reader forget about the fact that it was her nature what made her get in Clegg's van and thus it caused her fatal mistake. The story does not provide a solution to a moral dilemma but it leads, like *Conchis*, its listeners only to questions (cf. TARBOX 1988: 56).

5.1.2 Miranda's personal development versus Clegg's stagnation

I'm growing up so quickly down here. Like a mushroom. (THE COLLECTOR online: 72)

Miranda's diary entries can serve as a proof of her growing away from the shallow liberal humanism towards a deeper conception of human existence. Closer to her death, she is learning to be more authentically alive. Unlike her, from those months spent with Miranda, Clegg only learned that his next victim should be a girl of a lower social prestige due to his incapability of arguments for Miranda's questions or altercations (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 108). "*If Clegg's impulse is only for destruction, Miranda knows only growth.*"³⁰ As in *The Magus*, the final reward of the story is self-knowledge^{31,32} which is something Clegg will never be able to understand. The diary of Miranda symbolises a certain process or a progress and self-examination³³, on the contrary, Clegg's narration, at least from emotional perspective, sounds like an instruction manual.

Regarding didactical aspects, G.P. teaches Miranda about art and life, Miranda teaches Clegg about art and manners while he teaches her how to behave, looking forward to teaching Marian who is potentially his next victim. On one hand, Clegg and Miranda are both sort of simile makers. On the other hand, Clegg is excused by his

³⁰ TARBOX 1988: 45

³¹ cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 120

³² Urfe's progression is visible on the shift from an initial state of egoism and a sense of class superiority to the classless and 'speciesless' (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 123)

³³ cf. TARBOX 1988: 44

madness while Miranda who is mentally healthy thinks that the reality mirrors art. G.P. attempts to explain this problem to her³⁴:

The women I've loved have always told me I'm selfish. (...) Do you know what they always think is selfishness? (...) Not that I will paint in my own way, live in my own way, speak in my own way—they don't mind that. It even excites them. But what they can't stand is that I hate them when they don't behave in their own way. (THE COLLECTOR online: 80)

Unlike Clegg, she is trying to understand her past – recalling her relationship with Paston she realises how they misunderstood each other, re-examining her bitter relationship with her mother she finds out that she would overwhelm her with love right now (cf. TARBOX 1988: 45). A large part of her growth stems from her battle with language because retelling or speaking makes her more creative. Writing keeps her alive – she writes even on verge of her death (cf. *ibid.*: 1988: 46).

Clegg probably enjoys his state of stagnation and however the characters are different from each other; Fowles mitigates this polarity and draws them together in their lack of existential freedom. His effort is to prevent the reader from his own collector impulses and to demonstrate that inauthenticity can dwell in each of us (cf. TARBOX 1988: 48).

Miranda as an art student is constantly thinking about the relation of life, freedom and art.

Art best conquers time, and therefore the nemo. It constitutes that timeless world of the full intellect (Teilhard du Chardin's noösphere) where each artefact contemporary, and as nearly immortal as an object in a cosmos without immortality can be. (FOWLES 2001: 159-160)

Miranda's enthusiasm for abstract art is coincident with her compulsion to ideate (cf. TARBOX 1988: 49). She is convinced that Clegg's mercilessness is caused by his ignorance of art. "*Do you know anything about art?*" she asked. *Nothing you'd call*

³⁴ cf. TARBOX 1988: 53

knowledge. “I knew you didn’t. You wouldn’t imprison an innocent person if you did.” (THE COLLECTOR online) While she tries to find out about him as much as possible, to let him express himself, to let him talk about his past, to understand his personality and thus to empathise with him – he only lives in suspense and fear because to be ‘revealed’ by Miranda is the last thing he would permit. Instead of opening himself up to her, he attempts to triumph over her in the game that is, for her, an unfair and a losing one. Despite being so unique, especially in sense of emotional immaturity, it is paradoxical that Clegg cannot accept Miranda’s individuality or originality. Meanwhile, Miranda is one who searches for originality during her life and she appreciates these varieties of human character. “Everything in my life seemed fine. There was G.P. But even that was strange. Exciting. Exciting.”³⁵ (ibid.: 55) Clegg, on the other hand, is the exact opposite; everything which is standing out or different is reasonable for self-protection. Miranda also reaches to be touched by Bach’s spirit: “I always used to think Bach was a bore. Now he overwhelms me, he is so human, so full of moods and gentleness (...)” (ibid.: 109)

In order to keep novel from simplifying into melodrama, it is necessary to suggest the existence of hidden affinity between the main characters, for neither of them has any sexual or love experience (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 131).

It was funny, we sat in silence facing each other and I had a feeling I’ve had once or twice before, of the most peculiar closeness to him—not love or attraction or sympathy in any way. But linked destiny³⁶. Like being shipwrecked on an island—a raft—together. In every way not wanting to be together. But together. (THE COLLECTOR online: 86)

While captor’s personality is incapable of change and growth, that of the captive is shown to change during the course of the novel. At the beginning, Miranda does answer

³⁵ In *The Magus*, for Urfe Alison is – at the beginning demotic, offbeat, abundant of sex appeal, and mixed up but later on ‘crude but alive’ and she represents for him human warmth (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 123).

³⁶ The imprisonment and deprivation teaches her about linked destiny with all humans (cf. TARBOX 1988: 44).

to Fowles' own depiction of her for being arrogant in her ideas, a liberal-humanist snob, like a great number of university students. This also contributes in favour of not reading the novel as a melodramatic confrontation of black and white (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 133-134).

As long as Miranda's thoughts soar, Clegg's sink. She fills her time with imagining and remembering³⁷ – she expands on her thoughts, while Clegg narrows his attention down to prevent Miranda from escaping. Miranda's need for humanity drives her into a relationship with Clegg that she does not welcome but she has no other choice.

(...) But there is a sort of relationship between us. (...) It's partly because I'm so lonely, it's partly deliberate (I want to make him relax, both for his own good and so that one day he may make a mistake) (...) But there's a mysterious fourth part I can't define. It can't be friendship, I loathe him. Perhaps it's just knowledge. (...) And knowing someone automatically makes you feel close to him. Even when you wish he was on another planet. (THE COLLECTOR online: 64-65)

The evil in Clegg leads to spiritual and moral growth, as Miranda becomes more different from the modern twenty-year-old whom he kidnapped. It is the purity of her heart what enables her to say³⁸:

A strange thought: I would not want this not to have happened. Because if I escape I shall be a completely different and I think better person. Because if I don't escape, if something dreadful happened, I shall still know that the person I was and would have stayed if this hadn't happened was not the person I now want to be. It's like firing a pot. You have to risk the cracking and the warping. (THE COLLECTOR online: 114)

During her imprisonment, meant from the beginning to the end of the story, her most passionate desire is to live. "I never knew how much I wanted to live before. If I get out of this, I shall never be the same. I don't care what he does. So long as I live."³⁹

³⁷ cf. TARBOX 1988: 43

³⁸ cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 134

In *The Aristos*, Fowles comments on the character of one who is real aristos⁴⁰ – After some time of her imprisonment, Miranda’s personal features corresponds with the ability to fulfil the following rule:

He knows we all live at the crossroad of myriad irreconcilable poles, or opposing factors. Their irreconcilability constitutes our cell, and the discovery of living with, and utilising, this irreconcilability constitutes our escape. (FOWLES 2001: 186)

5.1.3 Evil in Clegg

Despite Clegg’s maniacal cleverness and obsession with the idea of perfect crime, Fowles does not want to collect characters by slipping them into categories – uniformly good or uniformly evil. However, it is Clegg’s character that approximates to the state of ‘nemo’(cf. TARBOX 1988: 42). According to Fowles’ definition of creating our identity, Clegg is not capable of changing his obsessive, egoistic, and shallow perception of reality and thus the ‘nemo’ in him grows only wider – his evil identity endures though.

The prime intention of this mental territory we erect around us is of course to counteract our sense of nemo, of nonentity; and this immediately warns us that it is not sufficient to destroy the vanities, illusions and complexes with which we wall ourselves in (or demarcate ourselves) since thereby we risk destroying identity. (FOWLES 2001: 156)

Very banal and narrow-minded is what makes Clegg’s evil so appalling. First of all, it makes him happy when he successfully kidnaps and incarcerates Miranda (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983:133).

I can only say that evening I was very happy, as I said, and it was more like I had done something very daring, like climbing Everest or doing something in enemy territory. My feelings were very happy because my

³⁹ MCSWEENEY 1983: 134

⁴⁰ see chapter *The Aristos*

intentions were of the best. It was what she never understood. (THE COLLECTOR online: 12)

He justifies his act by suggesting he would not rape Miranda like many other men and summarising the 'successful' night, he adds it was the best thing he did in his life after winning the pools.

It was like catching the Mazarine Blue again or a Queen of Spain Fritillary. I mean it was like something you only do once in a lifetime and even then often not; something you dream about more than you ever expect to see come true, in fact. (THE COLLECTOR online: 12)

After Miranda's death, Clegg is agitated but following words seem to be outspoken without emotions, without remorse which makes him a monster in the mind of the reader. *I kept on thinking of her, thinking perhaps it was my fault after all that she did what she did and lost my respect, then I thought it was her fault, she asked for everything she got.* (THE COLLECTOR online: 123)

Despite Miranda's certain kind of snobbism behind her social background, she is ultimately memorable as an embodiment of Good than as one of the sociological Few, for Clegg is also more interesting on a psychological rather than a social level (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 134). For that matter, Miranda's last words give evidence the reader. *"The last thing she said was, "I forgive you."* (THE COLLECTOR online: 119)

Clegg is nothing but observer and therefore of such little account of human being so Miranda, while writing with surprising infrequency about him, prefers a large cast of other characters whom she looks upon with warmth (cf. TARBOX 1988: 43).

The issue of taking photographs is also looked upon as evil, for Miranda's claiming that it takes the life out of things (cf. TARBOX 1988: 49). *"They're dead. (...) Not these particularly. All photos. When you draw something it lives and when you photograph it it dies."* (THE COLLECTOR online: 25)

As stated in *The Art of John Fowles*, the most emotional issue Fowles raises in the novel is the question of right use of violence. Clegg has no compunction about being violent but when Miranda decides to be violent with him she realises possible impacts on her humanity (cf. TARBOX 1988: 56).

Violence and force are wrong. If I use violence I descend to his level. It means that I have no real belief in the power of reason, and sympathy and humanity. That I lameduck people only because it flatters me, not because I believe they need my sympathy. (THE COLLECTOR online: 104)

As in Kafka's *Process*⁴¹, Miranda's death is illogical aspect of the story and it serves no other purpose but opening the reader's mind to the subject of death. In the end each reader faces his own end, for her death is a memento mori. Everyone witnessing Miranda's death is supposed to make sense of his own end through hers (cf. TARBOX 1988: 56). "*It wasn't necessary. It is all pain, and it buys nothing. Gives birth to nothing. All in vain. All wasted.*"⁴² Despite Fowles provides the reader with explanations in many other subjects, he does not offer an opinion to the question which is applied universally. "*What has it all been for?*"

What is obvious and what Fowles undoubtedly wanted to indicate and answer is that abusing freedom is the worst crime of all (cf. TARBOX 1988: 57).

5.1.4 Intertextual relations to *The Collector*

The Collector, an allegorical story about post-war England and the values of the current society, is being compared with *The Tempest* (1610 – 11) - the play by William Shakespeare, set on a remote island, where Prospero, Duke of Milan, plots to restore his daughter Miranda to her rightful place using illusion and manipulation. He creates a storm by magic to lure his brother Antonio and the complicit King Alonso of Naples to the island. His machinations bring about the revelation of Antonio's lowly nature, the redemption of the King, and the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand – the son of Alonso. Caliban is one of the main characters, a villainous island native, son of a witch named Sycorax, ruling the island before Prospero arrived. He despises Prospero but he is supposed to be his slave. In *The Collector*, Miranda calls Frederick Clegg Ferdinand but later, when she gets to know him better, she calls him Caliban by reason of her feelings of hatred for him. G.P. (George Paston) presents an intellectual idol for Miranda

⁴¹ - my comment;

⁴² THE COLLECTOR online: 116

and so she calls him Prospero in her diary notes. In other words, Miranda likens the characters of her life to *The Tempest* (THE COLLECTOR online). The allusions to Shakespeare's *The Tempest* underline the novel's occupation with the questions of nature versus nurture and good versus evil. Evil in *The Collector*, in contrast to Nazi evil in *The Magus*, is home-grown and ordinary, unexceptional clerk from a Town Hall Annexe (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 130).

In this context, it is necessary to mention the issue of intertextuality in Fowles' works. Intertextuality or shaping of a text's meaning by another text can be, for instance, an author's borrowing and transformation of an earlier text or to a reader's referencing of one text in reading another. Generally, intertextuality reflects the fact that the literature arises from the literature. According to Heinrich Plett, intertextuality has a function as "the trademark of postmodernism" (cf. PLETT 1991: 209). The reader can find not only *The Tempest* in *The Collector*. Miranda feels like *Emma* while finishing this book by Jane Austen. At the hand of this intertext, another character trait of Miranda might be worked out: her constant tendency to identify with the characters of literature.

I am Emma Woodhouse. I feel for her, of her and in her. I have a different sort of snobbism, but I understand her snobbism. Her priggishness. I admire it. I know she does wrong things, she tries to organise other people's lives, she can't see Mr. Knightley is a man in a million. She's temporarily silly, yet all the time one knows she's basically intelligent, alive. Creative, determined to set the highest standards. A real human being. Her faults are my faults: her virtues I must make my virtues. (THE COLLECTOR online: 72)

Comparing her life circumstances to *Emma*, likening the male characters of the work to those of her life again, she becomes more and more inauthentic.

Caliban is Mr. Elton. Piers is Frank Churchill. But is G.P. Mr. Knightley? Of course G.P. has lived a life and has views that would make Mr. Knightley turn in his grave. But Mr. Knightley could never have been a phoney. Because he was a hater of pretence, selfishness, snobbism. And they

both have the one man's name I really can't stand. George. Perhaps there's a moral in that. (THE COLLECTOR online: 100)

Generally, Fowles' works abound with intertextuality – even the introductory verse of *The Collector* indicates the plot of the whole story. The novel also mentions novels like *The Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger and *Saturday Evening, Sunday Morning* by Alan Sillitoe.

C sat reading The Catcher in the Rye after supper. Several times I saw him look to see how many pages more he had to read. He reads it only to show me how hard he is trying. (THE COLLECTOR online: 83)

After finishing *The Catcher in the Rye*, Clegg gives it back to Miranda and she is asking for his opinion. Clegg responds by saying that he does not like how the main hero talks and that he seems 'a mess' to him. Miranda then explains to him why she wanted him to read that book.

M. I gave you that book to read because I thought you would feel identified with him. You're a Holden Caulfield. He doesn't fit anywhere and you don't. C. I don't wonder, the way he goes on. He doesn't try to fit. M. He tries to construct some sort of reality in his life, some sort of decency. C. It's not realistic. Going to a posh school and his parents having money. He wouldn't behave like that. In my opinion. (THE COLLECTOR online: 94)

Old Man of the Sea, the work of Greek mythology where a boy Sinbad is forced to carry him on his back, is also mentioned when Miranda alludes to the similarity between old man and Clegg who also, in her viewpoint, gets on “the back” of everything that is vital to bear it down. The reader can also recognise her feeling of being unique – of being “few”,⁴³ in the following excerpt.

⁴³ The discourse of the 'Many' and the 'Few' is developed at more length in the chapter *The Aristos*.

He is the Old Man of the Sea. I can't stand stupid people like Caliban, with their great deadweight of pettiness and selfishness and meanness of every kind. And the few have to carry it all. The doctors and the teachers and the artists—not that they haven't their traitors, but what hope there is, is with them—with us. (THE COLLECTOR online: 94)

Besides *Saturday Evening*, *Sunday Morning* Fowles also mentioned *Room at the Top* by John Braine. Through Miranda's words, probably, Fowles shared his opinion on those works.

I've just finished Saturday Night and Sunday Morning. It's shocked me. It's shocked me in itself and it's shocked me because of where I am. It shocked me in the same way as Room at the Top shocked me when I read it last year. (THE COLLECTOR online: 104-105)

She thinks Alan Sillitoe would be perfect in paint, for he says what he means but adds that it is not enough to write well to be a good writer. Miranda hates the way Arthur Seaton does not care about anything outside his own life – he is mean, narrow, selfish and brutal, he hates his work and is very successful with women. The only thing she likes about him is the feeling that there is something there that could be used for good if it could be got at.

Because I think Saturday Night and Sunday Morning is disgusting. I think Arthur Seaton is disgusting. And I think the most disgusting thing of all is that Alan Sillitoe doesn't show that he's disgusted by his young man. I think they think young men like that are really rather fine. (THE COLLECTOR online: 105)

Most probably, Sillitoe wanted to attack the society that produces such people. But he does not make it clear. Miranda suggests he felt in love with what he was writing. He started out to write it as disgusting as it was, but then its disgustingness conquered him. Arthur Seaton reminds her of Clegg.

It shocked me too because of Caliban. I see there's something of Arthur Seaton in him, only in him it's turned upside down. I mean, he has that hate of other things and other people outside his own type. He has that selfishness—it's not even an honest selfishness, because he puts the blame on life and then enjoys being selfish with a free conscience. He's obstinate, too.
(THE COLLECTOR online: 105)

5.2 Existentialism in Fowles' Nonfiction

All of the following nonfictional writings extend on Fowles' theory of socialism, his rejection of industrialization and 'computerization' of society, his calling for equal consideration of the arts and his support of the postmodernist appeal for freedom and for literary and social pluralism (cf. SALAMI 1992: 45). In contrast to his fictional books, here Fowles opens up to the reader, he exposes himself. In this sense, the reader is enabled to understand the writer's personality and his relationship to life, nature, and society. *The Aristos* is a collection of Fowles thoughts dealing with human existence, God and religions, the arts and science, the obsession with money, the main difficulties of politics, individuality, education, freedom etc. With a slight exaggeration it could be said that this private philosophy represents instructions for human life, similar to the New Testament of the Bible. *The Tree*, consisting of three parts, deals primarily with the issue of nature. Focusing on the relationship with his father in the first part, then drawing attention to the relationship of humans towards nature and on the destructive power of Victorian society and science⁴⁴ Fowles concludes the essay with a walk around the English moors and meditations. If *The Tree* deals with the problem of dehumanising of society and alienation from nature by scientific approach, *The Enigma of Stonehenge* proves the fact that humankind, by means of science, will neither be able to decipher the meaning of these stones nor the way they were erected. Virtually, if *The Tree* is focused on the relationship between man and nature, *The Enigma of Stonehenge* is focused on freedom and mystery. *The Aristos* demonstrates the generalised ideas mentioned in his non-fictional as well as in fictional pieces.

⁴⁴ *Seeing Nature Whole* is the official title of the second part of the essay.

5.2.1 *The Aristos*

To most people it is a pleasure to conform and a pleasure to belong; existentialism is conspicuously unsuited to political or social subversion, since it is incapable of organised dogmatic resistance or formulations of resistance. It is capable only of one man's resistance; one personal expression of view; such as this book. (FOWLES 2001: 103-104)

In preface of *The Aristos* Fowles confesses that he was told not to write this book for keeping his image good and then he adds that he used his success *The Collector* to issue this failure because, according to him, a favourable image is still not of any great human. The aim of *The Aristos*, Fowles explains, was to protect freedom of an individual against pressures that threatened the century he lived in because people were rather labelled by what they made money and what they famed for. “*To call a man a plumber is to describe one aspect of him, but it is also to obscure a number of others.*” (FOWLES 1980: 7) Describing his intention not to be labelled *novelist*, he adds “*I am a writer; I want no more specific prison than that I express myself in printed words*”. (ibid.: 7) His words are explained more precisely by the following extract from *The Aristos*:

What will matter finally is intention; not instrumentation. It will be skill in expressing one's meaning with styles, not just in one style carefully selected and developed to signal one's individuality rather than to satisfy the requirements of the subject-matter. This is not to remove the individual from art or to turn artistic creation into a morass of pastiche; if the artist has any genuine originality it will pierce through all its disguises. The whole meaning and commitment of the person who creates will permeate his creations, however varied their outward form. (FOWLES 1980: 203)

As for the issue of preserving man's individuality, *The Collector* and *The Aristos* are strongly connected by this main idea. It seems that it was *The Aristos* and not *The Collector* what Fowles wrote as his first work and one could think that he applied a great part of his private philosophy on creating that famous story. Fowles does not

expect agreement from the reader; he just states the facts in his intellectual self-portrait. McSweeney (1983) says that Fowles' occasional prose – essays, prefaces, reviews, interviews and the non-fictional works are, in addition, mainly focused on his views on the nature and function of art, especially *The Aristos* – didactic in intension, uncongenial in presentation and the style is sometimes repugnant – this collection is inspired by the fragments of Heraclitus⁴⁵ (cf. MCSWEENEY 1983: 103). From Fowles' point of view, one of the great tyrannies of his time was a vision that in our world sociology should be left to the sociologists, philosophy to the philosophers, and death to the dead and that only the specialists had the right to have opinions and moreover, only in their own subject (cf. FOWLES 1980: 8). Fowles compared his society to one of the mentally laziest and most *sheep-like* ages that had ever existed. He criticised the main reason of human dissatisfaction, thus the most fundamental human birthright – to have a self-made opinion on all that concerns them (cf. *ibid.*: 8).

Aristos is a word taken from the ancient Greek and means roughly *the best for a given situation*; however, it is also an adjective and can be applied to an individual. People cannot expect him to always be the *aristos* because everyone is sometimes of the Many but he will never belong to any organization, for he does not need any uniform or symbols. Because he is one of the Many, he knows that the difference between him and the Many can be based only on intelligent and enacted goodness; that everything is relative and nothing is absolute and he will never join any organization for its tendency to constitute an elect, a Few – he knows that every congregation of the elect is driven to make allowance for using bad means to reach good ends; not accepting that evolution cannot be controlled and its dangers limited, he has to accept the necessity of his suffering, his isolation, and his absolute death; for him, the only human aim is contentment because it can never be fulfilled; he is aware the Many are starved of equality and they try to reach a blue sky where they could not exist while, at the same time, their cell waits to be properly lived in; he knows that all religions and politics are

⁴⁵ The original impetus for Fowles' notes and many of the ideas in them came from Heraclitus – living at Ephesus in Asia Minor five hundred years before Christ, known as born to a ruling family but refusing to rule, going to the best schools but claiming that he educated himself, preferring to play with children and wandering about the mountains and listening to the glossy platitudes of his contemporaries (FOWLES 1980).

*faute de mieux*⁴⁶; are utilities; he knows the Many are like an audience serving as material for the conjuror's tricks and that people are predestined to be magicians; knowing about human limited freedom he accepts it as well as one's isolation, one's responsibility and he learns how to use his power and how to use it to humanise the whole – *that is the best for this situation* (cf. FOWLES 2001: 185-186).

Greek philosopher Heraclitus, as reported by Fowles, divided mankind into a moral and intellectual *élite*. First ones *aristoi* – the good ones and the second ones *hoi polloi* – an unthinking, conforming mass, the many. There is no need of intelligence testing to prove that the vast mass of mankind is not highly intelligent, moral, gifted artistically or highly qualified to carry out any of the nobler human activities but, of course, a division of people into excellent Few and despicable Many would be 'idiotic' because none of us is wholly perfect or imperfect (cf. FOWLES 1980: 9-10). Such a distinction obviously plays into hands of all those subsequent thinkers who have advanced theories of the superman, the master-race, government by the few or by the one, and so forth. In every field of human endeavour it is obvious that most of the achievements and the great steps forward came from individuals – whether they were artistic or scientific geniuses, saints, revolutionaries, no matter who (cf. *ibid.*: 9). This Fowles' thought corresponds with Miranda's words while she is speaking about H-bomb trying to find out Clegg's opinion on it. She is rather angry with him due to his shallowness and indifference.

M. How do you think Christianity started? Or anything else? With a little group of people who didn't give up hope. C. What would happen if the Russians come, then? (Clever point, he thinks.) M. If it's a choice between dropping bombs on them, or having them here as our conquerors - then the second, every time. C. (check and mate) That's pacifism. M. Of course it is, you great lump. Do you know I've walked all the way from Aldermaston to London? Do you know I've given up hours and hours of my time to distribute leaflets and address envelopes and argue with miserable people like you who don't believe anything? Who really deserve the bomb on them? (THE COLLECTOR online: 61)

⁴⁶ - for want of something better;

Apparently, Clegg does not care about the issue as such but he cares about how he looks like while speaking with Miranda and without justification, he is persuaded that she wants to humiliate and confuse him by equivocating.

As reported by Fowles (1980), in history, not least in the twentieth century, it is showed that society has persistently seen life in terms of struggle between the Few and the Many, between “Them” and “Us”. Fowles’ purpose in *The Collector* was to attempt to analyse some of the results of such confrontation through a parable (cf. FOWLES 1980: 10).

In the interview, as for Few and Many, Fowles confessed the preference of the company of reasonably intelligent and educated people, but he also added that *being ‘superior’ in intelligence or education does not excuse an indifference to hoi polloi, the Cleggs and “fools” they have to live among* (BAKER online).

5.2.2 *The Tree*

Fowles the novelist insisted upon playing other roles. He was an imaginative historian, an environmentalist, and a student of natural history as evidenced in *Islands* (1978), *The Tree* (1980), *The Enigma of Stonehenge* (1980), and *A Short History of Lyme Regis* (1982).

As in *The Aristos* as well as in *The Tree*, *Seeing Nature Whole*, *The Enigma of Stonehenge*, and in his other non-fictional works, Fowles becomes the actual agent of the communication or the mediator of the events and thus responsible for the production of the sequence of events as a whole (cf. SALAMI 1992: 14).

His non-fictional work, dealing with relationship of man with nature follows Fowles’ point of view seeing the relation between man and nature far more important and real to him than that between man and God or between people. He gives the reasons to this statement “*Men often bore, books often bore, all things human can bore; nature, never.*” (FOWLES, VIPOND 1999: 192)

In *The Tree* Fowles discusses the essence of nature and its relation to the creative arts, especially writing. The first words in the book mention the author’s strong connection to his native home and actually, the rest of the book is abundant with the autobiographical notes.

The first trees I knew well were the apples and pears in the garden of my childhood home. This may sound rural and bucolic, but it was not, for the house was a semi-detached in a 1920's suburb at the mouth of the Thames, some forty miles from London. (THE TREE online)

Fowles confesses a lack of space for his father's passion in the paragraph below but he also describes the way of solving this problem. His father kept the constant debranching and pruning of the trees by which he could continue his pleasurable pastime. He also indicates his subjective feelings about the possible opinions of his neighbours on their functionally arranged garden but he adds that the neighbours could not find it foolish for fruits the trees produced. In other words, his father's personality could represent the sort of people that are completely familiar with the proverb *where there is a will there is a way*.

The back garden was tiny, less than a tenth of an acre, but my father had crammed one end and a side-fence with grid-iron espaliers and cordons. Even the minute lawn had five orchard apple trees, kept manageable only by constant debranching and pruning. It was an anomaly among our neighbours' more conventional patches, even a touch absurd, as if it were trying to be a fragment of the kitchen-garden of some great country house. No one in fact thought of it as a folly, because of the fruit those trees yielded. (THE TREE online)

Admiration, respect and love of the son for his father are obvious from Fowles' writing. As for the trees, he accents the needs of human care that is irreplaceable and says that those trees had a far greater influence on their lives than he ever realised when he was young – besides other things he regarded them as members of his family. Fowles narrates the story of his childhood and he describes every single member of his closest relatives – the way they lived their life in relations to nature. For instance his uncle was a keen entomologist and took his nephew on occasional expeditions into the country but his two cousins were also interested in nature. This fact, as Fowles avows, aroused in him a passion for natural history and the countryside. That was far more strengthened

by moving into a cottage of the Devonshire village that Fowles fictionalised in *Daniel Martin*.

As for nature, Fowles' father refused to be moved by what moved his son himself. Unlike his father, Fowles admires the kind of nature that is wild and untouched by humans and he explains the impact of his father's acting on him as similar to what pruning does for young fruit trees – to direct their growth and determine their future. He compares their attitudes to the branches of one tree.

That I should have differed so much from my father in this seems to me in retrospect not in the least a matter for Oedipal guilt, but a healthy natural process, just as the branches of a healthy tree do not try to occupy one another's territory. The tree in fact has biochemical and light-sensitive systems to prevent this pointless and wasteful secondary invasion of one branch's occupied space by another. The fact that the two branches grow in different directions and ways does not mean that they do not share a same mechanism of need, a same set of deeper rules. (THE TREE online)

The quote above is the exact explanation of the fact that the son and his father were getting on quite well. According to Fowles' words, it was immaterial that he does not cultivate trees in any sense that his father would like it. Perhaps, the reason was that he would never have conceded his son's "jungle" was the equivalent of his beautifully disciplined apples and pears. Each of them was in a very different relationship with nature. They were so different that there were two possible ways of criticism – to criticise everything or nothing.

He would not have understood that something his son saw down there just an hour ago, at that moment he wrote – two tawny owlets fresh out of the nest, sitting on a sycamore branch like a pair of badly knitted Christmas stockings and ogling down at this intruder into their garden – means to him exactly what the Horticultural Society cups on his sideboard used to mean to him; a token of order in unjust chaos, the reward of perseverance in a right philosophy. That his chaos happens to be my order is not, I think, very important. (THE TREE online)

What seemed to be an order to Fowles, his father found to be chaos and vice versa – Fowles did not understand his father’s effort to cultivate nature excessively. To this context, the excerpt from the interview could serve as an explanation and also clarification of his opinion.

Man really hates everything outside the "hortus conclusus," this walled garden. We do not like the wilderness, the chaos. The Church was against it for centuries because it was where sin took place. (...) I know there are wage reasons and all the rest of it, but I am all for getting back to the country. I am all for depopulation. I should not say this in a Catholic country but I find the world population growth abominable. It is one of the worst problems the world has at the moment. (FOWLES, VIPOND 1999: 180)

Literally, father embodied a man with a sense for cultivation and his son could not be happier than seeing nature whole – untouched and unspoiled by humankind. At the end of the chapter, he narrates the story about being sent two cordon pear trees after first visit of his father and that a few miserable fruit are produced by those trees yet he would never have them out. On one hand, he let them grow untouchable, on the other hand, Fowles confesses that everybody and everything – those trees or his friends take his father’s side. They showed him the consequence of his doing that is mentioned in the following statement: *“No fruit for those who do not prune; no fruit for those who question knowledge; no fruit for those who hide in trees untouched by man; no fruit for traitors to the human cause.”* (THE TREE online)

His deep feelings towards woods, with some religion elements, are probably the cause of being brought up without any orthodox faith and so the trees could have enriched his spiritual life instead. Fascinated by the mysterious atmosphere of trees, Fowles found them the man-made holy place and in his mind, all sacred buildings, from the greatest cathedral to the smallest chapel, and all religions, were derived from the natural aura of a woodland or forest settings. According to him, standing among them means standing among older, larger and infinitely other beings – beings waiting altogether like the only form a universal god could conceivably take. The Neolithic peoples, together with their ‘invention’ of farming, were the first deforesters of our

landscapes, and perhaps it was a guilt that made them return to trees to find a pattern for their religious buildings — where they were followed by the Bronze Age, the Greeks and Romans with their columns and porticoes, the Celtic Iron Age with its Druids and sacred oak-groves. To Fowles, woods are like the sea, sensorially too various to be captured, defeating view-finder or drawing-paper, they cannot be framed. Here, the words are hopelessly too laborious used to capture the reality (cf. FOWLES 1979: 63).

As for the portrayal of the trees, even the great seventeenth-century landscapists, such as Ruysdael, do not get close to natural reality – their works were still composed in accordance with their own notion of the picturesque. In many ways painters begin to see nature whole after the camera saw it for them; and, in this context, had begun to supersede them. For that we cannot own, control, see or understand, most of us remain firmly medieval, self-distancing and distanced – science fiction and its prejudice that any visit from outer space must come with evil intent; Voltaire’s famous sarcasm about the wickedness of animals in defending themselves when attacked still haunts the common unconscious, what is not clearly for mankind must be against it (cf. FOWLES 1979: 65).

Describing their fragility, Fowles says that trees do not possess the ability to defend themselves when attacked, they cannot hide and the arms they sometimes have, like thorns, are static. It means that they are the most defenceless of creation in regard to man, universally placed by him below the level of animate feeling, and so the most prone to destruction and despite the ancient fears of what they may harbour in terms of other creatures and the supernatural, present, in their silent depths, something that is also protective or maternal (cf. FOWLES 1979: 67). In the matter of science or reason, Fowles claims that what was caused by them, cannot be cured by the same. As for future, he was very pessimistic about the relationship of science with nature and added that the two natures, private and public, human and non-human, cannot be divorced, any more than nature or life itself can ever be truly understood through other people's eyes and knowledge and neither art nor science can ultimately help (cf. *ibid.*: 68).

I pray my pessimism is exaggerated, and we shall recover from this folly of resenting the fact that we are to all practical intents and purposes caged on our planet; of pretending that our life on it is a temporary inconvenience

in a place we have outgrown, a boarding-house we shall soon be leaving, for whose other inhabitants and whose contents we need have neither respect nor concern. Scientists speak of biological processes recreated in the laboratory as being done in vitro, in glass, not in nature. The evolution of human mentality has put us all in vitro now, behind the glass wall of our own ingenuity. (FOWLES 1979: 68)

5.2.3 *Seeing Nature Whole*

Not lacking the autobiographical elements, dealing mostly with man's relationship with nature and also Fowles' relationship with trees, this essay represents the excerpt from the abovementioned work *The Tree*. Fowles, being famous for his feelings of hatred for categorization, discourses in *Seeing Nature Whole* on this topic again.

In the interview with Susana Onega, Fowles clarified his love of mystery and hatred for science by the opinion that he would hate a world where everything was explained. In his words, there is an art of living and of knowing and the scientists are not able to accept it for their conviction that everything is rational or not. What seems to be more nonsensical to Fowles, is the fact of applying the scientific view of life to everything else – to existence. *"It's because I think existence itself is not scientific. Even the purest scientist can't actually live his own existence that way. It's not possible."* (cf. FOWLES, VIPOND 1999: 164)

In Fowles' words, evolution turned mankind into creatures, seeing the world from the point of view, mirroring the way we think of our private selves – detaching an object from its surroundings makes us concentrate on it and this is a criterion in all our judgements. Science does the same – it provides specific labels, explains specific mechanisms and ecologies for sorting what seems indistinguishable in the mass. Even the knowledge of the names and habits of flowers or trees starts this distinguishing or individualising process. It destroys individual possibilities of seeing and it is the bitter

fruit from the tree of Uppsala⁴⁷ knowledge. We think we are nearest to a tree's 'essence' when it happens to stand like us, in isolation (cf. FOWLES 1979: 50). Fowles said for the denial of this statement:

But evolution did not intend trees to grow singly.⁴⁸ Far more than ourselves they are social creatures. (...) Their society in turn creates or supports other societies of plants, insects, birds, mammals, micro-organisms; all of which we may choose to isolate and section off, but which remain no less the ideal entity, or whole experience, of the wood – and indeed are still so seen by most of primitive many kind. (FOWLES 1979: 50)

His ideas were most probably derived from his own experience, spending all his younger life as a more or less orthodox amateur naturalist or a pseudo-scientist who had been treating nature as a sort of intellectual puzzle, or game, in which being able to name the names and explain the behaviours and to identify all the constituted pleasures. Fowles realised the inadequacy of the approach that perceives nature as a kind of opponent, an opposite team to be defeated and thus he came to believe that such approach represented a human alienation affecting us personally and socially (cf. FOWLES 1979: 51).

Naming things is always implicitly categorising and therefore collecting them, attempting to own them; and because man is a highly acquisitive creature, brainwashed by most modern societies into believing that the act of acquisition is more enjoyable than the fact of having acquired, that getting beats having got, mere names and the objects they are tied to soon become stale. There is a constant need, or compulsion, to seek new objects and names – in the context of nature, new species and experiences. Everyday

⁴⁷ The old Swedish university town of Uppsala – the place that Fowles visited for, in his eyes, the most beautiful garden in this world that is comparable only with the garden of Genesis. The owner of that garden was Carl Liné – who between 1730 and 1760 docketed most of animate being (cf. FOWLES 1979: 50).

⁴⁸ In *The Collector*, Miranda is also a victim of destroying power of isolation.

ones grow mute with familiarity, so known they become unknown. (FOWLES 1979: 51)

In connection with the quotation above, the act of losing interest is the issue referring to non-human nature as well as that of a human. Again, Fowles mentions the problem of lust for collecting that is more precisely pictured in *The Collector*:

*“I hate scientists,” she said. “I hate people who collect things, and classify things and give them names and then forget all about them. That’s what people are always doing in art. They call a painter an impressionist or a cubist or something and then they put him in a drawer and don’t see him as a living individual painter any more.”*⁴⁹ (THE COLLECTOR online)

He claims credit for that unhappy legacy to Victorian science which was characteristically obsessed with both the machine and exact taxonomy. To the extent, one day, in the museum where he had been a curator he found a letter in a forgotten drawer. The letter was from a well-known Victorian fern expert, concerning about twenty specimens he had sent from Dorset – to a modern botanist, all reducible to three species but that expert felt obliged to grant each specimen some new sub-specific or varietal rank in a welter of Latin polysyllables. In addition, Fowles said that it would be absurd to deny the Victorians their achievements in scientific fields (cf. FOWLES 1979: 52). *“But the most harmful change brought about by Victorian science in our attitude to nature lies in the demand that our relation with it must be purposive, industrious, always seeking greater knowledge.”* (ibid.: 52) The inability of humankind to understand the true relationship with nature is further explained in the quotation below:

Achieving a relationship with nature is both a science and an art, beyond mere knowledge or mere feeling alone; and I now think beyond oriental mysticism, transcendentalism, 'meditation techniques' and the rest – or at least as we in the West have converted them to our use, which seems increasingly in a narcissistic way: to make ourselves feel more positive, more meaningful, more dynamic. I do not believe nature is to be reached that way

⁴⁹ Miranda’s words.

either, by turning it into a therapy, a free clinic for admirers of their own sensitivity. The subtlest of our alienations from it, the most difficult to comprehend, is our need to use it in some way, to derive some personal yield. (FOWLES 1979: 54)

In connection with the serious puritanical approach, (in the nineteenth century, nowhere better exhibited than in the magazines aimed at young people) it had two damaging effects. The first one was that such fierce attitude of society turned the vast majority of Western mankind away from nature. The second was that the saner eighteenth-century attitude, viewing nature as a mirror for philosophers, as an evoker of emotion, as a pleasure or a poem, had been forgotten. Additionally, Darwin purposed a mechanism seemingly as iron as the steam-engine, but his method of discovery offered an equally iron or one-sided model that made the older and more humanist approach seem childish (cf. FOWLES 1979: 52). Besides these words, Fowles mentions the unchangeable truth: “A ‘good’ amateur naturalist means one whose work is valued by the professional scientists in his field.” (ibid.: 52)

An additional element of alienation came with the cinema and television, which were selective in another way⁵⁰. They presented natural reality through other eyes and Fowles made a comment on that ‘miracle of modern technology’: “*It will no more bring the viewer nearer the reality of nature, or a proper human relationship with the actual nature around him, than merely reading novels is likely to teach the writing of them.*” (cf. FOWLES 1979: 52)

An ordinary experience made of a complexity of strands, past memories and present perceptions, times and places, private and public history stands far beyond science's powers to analyse.

Science has two principle effects on its practitioners. One, totally beneficial, is heuristic – that is, it trains the scientist to think and discover for himself. Plainly we need as much education in this aspect of science as we can get. But another characteristic of science is double-edged, and this is

⁵⁰ In *The Collector*, Clegg lives as in a fiction due to his madness but his eyes are represent camera eyes – he sees everything from a distance (cf. TARBOX 1988: 48).

its tendency to analyse, to break down the whole into components. Now plainly analysis is a very vital part of the heuristic process; but its side-effects, as in some medicines, may be extremely pernicious. (FOWLES 2009: 128)

It is quintessentially wild or chaotic, in the sense Fowles' father disliked so much. According to Fowles, half by its principles, half by its inventions, science now largely dictates and forms public perception and attitudes to external reality. One of the oldest bodies of myth and folklore was the idea of the man in the trees. This notion of the green man – or green woman, as W. H. Hudson made her – seen as emblem of the close connection between the actuality of present consciousness and what science had censored in man's attitude to nature, misled Fowles for a time. In the 1950's he grew interested in the Zen theories of 'seeing' and of aesthetics; of learning to look beyond names at things-in-themselves. He stopped identifying species new to him and, instead of that, he concentrated more on the daily nature around him. For a writer, living without names it seemed impossible but he discovered there was less conflict than he had imagined between nature as external assembly of names and facts and nature as internal feeling; that the two modes of seeing or knowing could take place simultaneously to enrich each other (cf. FOWLES 2009: 53).

According to Fowles, humankind will never fully understand nature (or itself), and certainly never respect it, until it dissociates the wild from the notion of usability – however innocent and harmless the use is. It is the general uselessness of nature that lies at the root of man's ancient hostility and indifference to it. We will not cease to be alienated from nature – by our knowledge, by our greed, by our vanity until we grant it unconsciously alienate us. In this context, Fowles emphasised the threat of urbanisation – a trend that, in the future, will be hard to reverse because no intellect and no education can reach the acquaintance with nature (cf. FOWLES 2009: 54).

It may be taken as an example that for artists, great factual knowledge, taste, or intelligence, would go rather amiss – and if not, Fowles added, our best artists would also be the most learned academics due to the fact that “(...) *in nine cases out of ten what natural knowledge and imagination cannot supply is in any case precisely what*

needs to be left out.” He confessed that it took him years to realise that even geniuses like Shakespeare, Racine and Austen have human faults (cf. FOWLES 2009: 55-56).

Two different branches of one tree, two different people or men – the father and his son and two different ways of getting to know our world – through art or through science – this reflects Fowles’ developed sense of seeing the facts from various perspectives, enabling him to enter plus or minus to both's credit.

The threat for nature is presented not only with urbanization and purpose, but also with art and nature itself where all emphasis is placed on the created, not the creation – for nature is not art in terms of its product (cf. FOWLES 2009: 55-56).

It is not necessarily too little knowledge that causes ignorance, possessing too much, or wanting to gain too much, can produce the same result. Nature suffers particularly in our indifference and hostility to it and that is closely connected with the fact that its only purpose appears to be being and surviving. (FOWLES 1979: 61)

In his point of view, science being almost metaphysically obsessed by general truths, by classifications that stop at the species, by functional laws, by statistics, he saw a little hope of any recognition of this until humankind accepts three things about nature. The first one brings the rule that knowing it fully should be an art as well as a science. The second one: the heart of that art lies in our own personal nature and its relationship to other nature; never in nature as a collection of any material subjects outside us. The last rule is that this kind of relationship is irreproducible by painting, by photography, by words, even by science itself. Voltaire’s unregenerate animal will not be owned, or disanimated, unsouled, by the manner we try to own it – if it is owned, it disappears. Perhaps nowhere else is our human mania more harmful to us than in our mind statement that what is owned cannot have a soul of its own. Such disanimation justified the horrors of the African slave trade – if the black man was so willing to be enslaved, he could not have the soul of a white man, he must have been animal. In steps of such emancipation we should not forget what began the emancipation of the slaves in Britain and America. It was not science but religious conscience and fellow-feeling (cf. FOWLES 1979: 67).

5.2.4 *The Enigma of Stonehenge*

*What is Stonehenge? It is the roofless past;
Man's ruinous myth; his uninterred adoring
Of the unknown in sunrise cold and red;
His quest of stars that arch his doomed exploring.*

*And what is Time but shadows that were cast
By these storm-sculptured stones while centuries fled?
The stones remain; their stillness can outlast
The skies of history hurrying overhead. (SASSOON 1949: 179)*

Stonehenge, a prehistoric monument in Wiltshire, England, is distanced about 2 miles (3 km) west from Amesbury and 8 miles (13 km) north from Salisbury. Thanks to a more or less short distance, Fowles, being born in Leigh-on-Sea and studying at Bedford during Second World War, could experience the spirit of this mysterious complex. He could get himself by car either from Leigh-on-Sea or Bedford to Stonehenge approximately for two and a half hours. Moreover, he could compare the old and, at his time, new Stonehenge of whose author had been no one else but man. Those changes presented a certain disappointment to him and he mentioned his observations and feelings in his work *The Enigma of Stonehenge*. Barry Brukoff's photographs added to the authenticity of Fowles' writing where Fowles criticised man and his attitude to nature or, in this case, to natural phenomena.

Fowles' first meeting Stonehenge was happy because he could not understand that enticing clutter of boulders, so like a Dartmoor hilltop, whatever he had been told beforehand. Stonehenge seemed to him the most natural building, the most woven with light, sky and space, in the world (cf. FOWLES, BRUKOFF 1980: 5). His assumption was, as for those long stones, they were imitating, or immortalising tree trunks (cf. *ibid.*: 7). The two insinuations above – changes made by man and the stones reminding tree trunks – give a clue to the readers as to the contents of that work. In *The Enigma of Stonehenge*, Fowles spoke not only about the past of the complex and its physical

history but he also interspersed it with his own thoughts and opinions in a question: “What is Stonehenge for?”

What is necessary to mention though is the fact that Fowles gave preference to, according to him, the greatest of all the early mythmakers and paradoxically, the closest to a modern archaeologists – William Stukeley (1687 – 1765, also a doctor of medicine) whose book consists of his field-drawings and notes of ancient remains and ruins all over the southern England, and especially in Wiltshire. Stukeley believed that Stonehenge was built by Druids and that, in the future, people will never be able to decipher its meaning or to establish what it is saying to them (cf. FOWLES, BRUKOFF 1980: 8-9). As in previous chapters of this thesis, it is convenient to mention Fowles’ denial of the scientific discoveries, however interesting they are or were. Based on his common sense, Fowles said the science could not explain the total experience of Stonehenge – the presentness of its past or the effect it still has on most visitors. Fowles admired the remarkable openness of Stonehenge under his conviction that no ancient monument was more see-throughable (cf. *ibid.*: 51). “(...) *Stonehenge is a ring not merely of doors, but open doors. It invites entry, it does not rebuff the outsider, like the Pyramids and so many other monuments to an élite caste or en élite knowledge*”. (*ibid.*: 52) It is obvious what Fowles meant by these words. The topic of not only social classification was the true cause of his indignation. As far as Stonehenge is concerned, he probably felt certain liberation, certain freedom.

To Fowles mind, the most interesting thing about Stonehenge, or Bronze Age builders of it in stone, was the growth of that obsession with durability (cf. FOWLES, BRUKOFF 1980: 52).

We are all children of the Stonehenge builders; their compulsion, however dim and instinctive still to them in their own time, gave mankind a major new orientation, a major new purpose in existence, a major new social impetus – gave birth to all our own contemporary achievements and faults. That is why these ancient piles of stone excrement, in Wiltshire, in Anatolia, at Saqqara, in Central and South America, hold such fascination for us still. (FOWLES, BRUKOFF 1980: 53)

Astronomers assume that Stonehenge was an attempt to solve some problems about accurately measuring time (cf. FOWLES, BRUKOFF 1980: 70). There are hidden more possible theories though. As a follow-up to Stukeley, Fowles mentioned that archeologically, the Celts of the La Tène culture, whose shaman-priests we call Druids (Old Celtic for ‘magician’), could have had nothing at all to do with the building of Stonehenge because they did not arrive in any numbers in Britain until at least a thousand years after the final building phase of about 1500 B.C. The Celts were the Red Indians of ancient Europe, and like the Red Indians, they could not be quite let off on the grounds of foreign exploitation; they can be admired for their fierce resistance to the Romans rather more easily than some of the values they were protecting. Originally, there were three classes of priests in Celtic circles – Vates or augurs, Bards or tribal celebrators, and the Druids, responsible for religious ritual, medicine and the law. But finally, all of these functions became druidic practise. They were holding festivals at nineteen-year intervals which, Fowles said, must have reminded people of the long moon cycle that Stonehenge may have been built to detect (cf. *ibid.*: 107-108). In the matter of Celtic legends, the central motif presented the trio of trusting king, torn queen and adulterous knight. In other words, there could be seen a conflict between sexual passion and social duty, between faith and treachery and also between Christian guilt and pagan innocence (cf. *ibid.*: 109). The king stood for the secular or priestly power that maintained due observance, and picked a surrogate or scapegoat for both the ‘marriage’ and the sacrifice; the queen stood for the promise of fertility invoked; and the knight was at the same time the victim and saviour of his society. Perhaps, those Celtic triangles seemed remote from Neolithic and Bronze Age Stonehenge but Fowles said that probably nowhere was the Druid connection closer. Although Druid theory was scientifically worthless, the essentially mystical approach to the place remains very alive. Fowles simply justified his opinion by the statement that the worshipers of his time, or today’s worshipers, were attracted by Stonehenge for exactly the same reason as Thomas Hearne two and a half centuries ago (cf. *ibid.*: 110).

The very – and quite proper – caution of modern scientists in their conclusions about the ancient realities of Stonehenge effectively leaves a huge empty space, a field for speculation, in the less scientific mind. In this

Stonehenge remains almost like a blank sheet of paper – in a world where, in terms of knowledge, blank sheets become increasingly rare things.
(FOWLES, BRUKOFF 1980: 110)

Not only Stonehenge represents such a phenomenon. There are many others that are shrouded in mystery – Yeti, the Loch Ness Monster, the Bermuda Triangle, the U.F.O. ‘sightings’ – these probably will never be quite totally unravelled.

Fowles added that every period needed any myths, or unprovable explanations of reality that could express itself. Intrinsic value of them was or is far less important than the richness of the reaction they provoke (cf. FOWLES, BRUKOFF 1980: 110). *“Mystery, or unknowing, is energy. As soon as a mystery is explained, it ceases to be a source of energy. If we question deep enough there comes a point where answers could be given, would kill.”* (FOWLES 2001: 17)

William Blake used the Druids to embody a deeper fault in humanity than religious sloth or libertine scepticism. His hatred of the man’s tendency to imprison himself, to build walls of a tradition, theory and creed, around his soul, had something to tell us about Stonehenge (cf. FOWLES, BRUKOFF 1980: 123).

In Fowles’ words, there are no facts about Stonehenge to bury it in certainty and this is, in fact, a criterion people habitually apply to the greatest works of art – they are inexhaustible since every age can interpret them anew. The serious mistake people make is that forgetting those lunatic fringes and false mysticism are only cheap prices to pay for the existence of such phenomena (cf. FOWLES, BRUKOFF 1980: 125). *“We can never regain the old landscape or the emotional effect of the old monument, just as a wild animal in zoo can never affectively resemble the wild animal in its natural habitat”.* (ibid.: 126) The other Stonehenge, Stonehenge Fowles was exploring, meant to him not only labyrinth of words, pictures, speculations, feelings and impressions but also that sad fact of scientific worthlessness (cf. ibid.: 126).

Conclusion

This master's thesis is focused on the theme of *being* and *having* in the concrete works of John Fowles. The aim of the thesis was the analysis of the literary existentialism in the works of this eminent British prosaist. Mainly, the thesis is focused on his first novel *The Collector* in relation with the theme of money and the question of human physical and mental freedom. Then the thesis compares Fowles' essays with his novel *The Collector*, particularly with the collection of his private philosophy *The Aristos* and his essays about nature *Seeing Nature Whole*, *The Tree*, *The Enigma of Stonehenge*.

On the grounds of literary sources, Fowles' works – *The Collector*, *The Aristos* and his essays about nature – *Seeing Nature Whole*, *The Tree*, *The Enigma of Stonehenge* are unquestionably abundant with the theme of existentialism, the philosophy of *being* and *having*, theme of money, and the question of human physical and mental freedom.

In *The Collector*, the theme of existentialism is reflected by Miranda's hopeless situation from which she is not able to escape and she is forced to become reconciled to her imprisonment in Clegg's cellar. Her character mirrors the question of human physical and mental freedom. Physically imprisoned but mentally free, Miranda grows weaker physically but develops spiritually. According to Fromm's theory of *to have or to be*, Clegg's possessive tendency corresponds with the philosophy of *having*, while Miranda lives her life as a representative of *being* group. Their life conviction creates a parallel with Fowles' Adam and Eve – Adam, being afraid of any form of a change and thus of a progress and Eve, with the need of the opposite. As for money, through Clegg who wins in a football pool, Fowles pictures the example of person who cannot treat money well. Miranda whose innocent mode of thinking would lead her to send the money to those in need, is in contrast with Clegg's suspecting those charitable organisations. The analysis shows that it is Clegg's social background that makes him indifferent towards the others. He feels unimportant, uneducated and does not understand the fact he could be beneficial to society.

In *The Aristos*, Fowles spoke about the monetization of the pleasure in a sense of the obsession with money.

On the basis of Heraclitu's theory, he spoke about the mutual dependence of the Few and the Many – the educated élite and an unthinking, conforming class. This fact

corresponds with the story of Miranda and Clegg. Representing the Few, after her imprisonment, Miranda becomes even more reliant on Clegg whose role is that of the Many. Uncultured Clegg depends on Miranda's knowledge and humanity.

As for existentialism, he described it as an attempt to combat the dangerous sense of 'nemo' that is nothingness or emptiness in us. According to Fowles, the central proposition of existentialism is reflected in the phrase *existence precedes essence* that is an independent acting of individual and responsible conscious being (existence) and not a stereotype, labels, roles, definitions, or other preconceived categories the individual fits (essence). Fowles further explained his notion of existentialism as personal acceptance of one's good or bad actions and using them for the improvement of his future actions. Miranda is a portrayal of such acceptance but we do not know, except for her diary notes, whether she would change her life in real, for her life is ended prematurely.

The theme of freedom in Fowles' essays about nature is focused on the fact of human incapability to live in harmony with nature and to let nature live freely. It is clear from the sources that problem of dehumanising of society and alienation from nature was caused by scientific approach by Victorian era and so by man.

As emerged from my analysis, the philosophy of *being* and *having* can be varied depending on the kind of relationship – the relationship between two humans or the relationship between man and nature. There can be a *having-being* or a *being-having* relationship between a man and a woman, or a *having-having*, rarely a *being-being* kind of relationship. What is sad though is the fact that there will always be a notion of *having* man in relation to nature.

The analysis shows that Fowles' attitude towards life consisted in freedom. He rejected the idea of scientific existence for his love for wild nature which could not be limited by words, let alone labelling.

Resumé

Tato diplomová práce je zaměřena na téma *být a vlastnit* v konkrétních dílech Johna Fowlese. Cílem práce bylo analyzovat literární existencialismus v díle tohoto významného britského prozaika. V práci jsem se zabývala především prvním Fowlesovým románem *Sběratel (The Collector)* v návaznosti na tematiku moci peněz a otázek lidské svobody fyzické i mentální. Práce dále konfrontuje Fowlesovu esejistickou tvorbu s románem *Sběratel* a je zaměřena zejména na jeho soukromou sbírku filosofie *The Aristos* a jeho eseje o přírodě *Seeing Nature Whole, The Tree, The Enigma of Stonehenge*.

Diplomová práce byla rozdělena do pěti hlavních kapitol. První kapitola pojednává o autorovi samotném, čili o pozadí jeho spisovatelské kariéry a jeho životním postoji, což je upřesněno v kapitole třetí, kde je hlavní důraz kladen na jeho zkušenosti se společností a ještě předtím v kapitole druhé, kde je popisován a zdůvodněn Fowlesův způsob psaní. Čtvrtá kapitola zahrnuje filosofii *být a mít* jako ústřední myšlenku této diplomové práce a je dále založena na Frommově teorii *být nebo mít*. Pátá kapitola je věnována literárnímu existencialismu románu *Sběratel*, jehož analýza je společně s teorií *být a mít* hlavní náplní této práce. Kapitola *The Collector* je dále rozdělena do čtyř podkapitol, které se zabývají vnímáním reality hlavních hrdinů, jejich osobním rozvojem a nebo stagnací, zlem v Cleggovi a v románu přítomnou intertextualitou. Následující kapitola je zaměřena na Fowlesovu nefiktivní tvorbu o lidské společnosti (*The Aristos*) a o přírodě (*Seeing Nature Whole, The Tree* and *The Enigma of Stonehenge*).

Téma *být a vlastnit*, kterým se mimo jiné zabýval také Erich Fromm, je ve *Sběrateli* velmi zřetelné. Fromm, který rozdělil lidstvo do dvou skupin, popsal vlastnosti těch, co spadají do skupiny *být*, jako orientované na zážitky a na proces, zatímco jedince ze skupiny *vlastnit*, jako materialisty s potřebou nabytí a uchování majetku, ať už jde o věci nebo o lidi. Filosofii *být*, na rozdíl od filosofie *vlastnit*, chápe jako aktivní proces.

Ve vztahu ke společnosti Fowles hovoří o zpeněžení radosti ve smyslu posedlosti penězi jako takovými. V románu *Sběratel* dochází k setkání zastupitelů dvou rozdílných společenských vrstev, které jsou charakteristické různým posazením intelektuálních a

sociálních hranic. Clegg zosobňuje prototyp anglické dělnické třídy padesátých let a její zkušenosti a naproti němu stojí vzdělaná a sociálně zvýhodněná Miranda, která si není úplně vědoma své, v tuto chvíli bezúčelné, výhody. Cleggovy vlastnické tendence korespondují s filosofií *vlastnit*, kdežto Miranda chápe život, jako zástupkyně skupiny *být*. Stejně tak, jako Fowlesova Eva má potřebu nějakého pokroku či změny a jeho Adam, který má ze změny strach. Svým tvrzením, že nejlepší pohled na společnost je pohled očima humanismu se Fowles v otázce společnosti odklání od jakékoli formy extremismu. Na jednu stranu kritizuje nerovnost lidí, na druhou stranu však zdůrazňuje nezbytnost dvojího pohledu na svět. Inspirací mu byl Hérakleitos, který chápal spojení dvou rozdílných sil, jako klíčové pro výslednou harmonii světa. Na základě této teorie hovoří o vzájemné závislosti *menšiny* a *většiny* a popírá tak své sklony k fašismu. Tvrdí, že každý nátlak na společnost způsobuje obranou reakci a sociální stagnaci vidí, jako hlavní iniciátor války, úpadku či revoluce. Fowles si jako realista uvědomoval nemožnost dokonalé harmonie lidské společnosti, ovšem přiznal, že i přes tyto špatné odbočky věří v pomalý pokrok.

Člověk, který chápe podstatu života, si podle Fowlese musí být vědom veškerých svých skutků a z těch horších se poučit a použít je ke zlepšení sebe sama. Klíčový pojem pro Fowlesův existencialismus představuje ‚nemo‘ čili nicota neboli prázdno v nás, které se spisovatel ve své fikci snaží přemoci. Fowlesův Bůh, na rozdíl od existence, je nepřítomný a zcela nepoznatelný. Nepřítomnost Boha ovšem vyvolává v souvislosti s Fowlesovým psaním pozitivní reakci, co se osobního růstu týče, poněvadž nezodpovězení otázek vede k dalšímu a dalšímu tázání. Čtenář je tak nucen zamýšlet se a uvědomit si smysl života a zvážit, zda život opravdu žije naplno, zda se nenutí do cizích postojů. Fowles, sám inspirován Hérakleitem, ve svém eseji o Kafkovi trvá na tom, že i on jistě čerpal z jeho myšlenek.

V románu *Sběratel* je kladen nespočet existenciálních otázek, které ovšem zůstávají autorem a samotným příběhem takřka nezodpovězeny. Ostatně je to Fowlesův záměr, kterým se snaží probudit ve čtenáři touhu po odpovědi a tím ho nutí vést rozmluvu se sebou samým. Probouzí v něm jeho soudnost a dále jeho představivost v otázce, jak by se vypořádal s rolí Mirandy či Clegga, s rolí vězněného či věznitele. Podle literárních pramenů však nejsou pozice vězněného a věznitele tak jednoznačné. Clegg sice bere Mirandě svobodu, avšak pro svou posedlost sám zůstává uvězněn ve svém světě

exemplářů, povrchnosti, emoční zploštělosti a neschopnosti empatie. Miranda je uvězněna ve fyzickém slova smyslu, avšak pro přílišné idealizování světa, vžívání se do rolí hrdinek z knih a napodobování Pastonových (G.P.) postojů nelze její stav od Cleggova zcela odlišovat. Z konce příběhu je zřetelné, že útěk není jednoduchý či vůbec možný v každém z těchto dvou případů. Mirandino vysvobození představuje až smrt, ke které dochází z důvodu Cleggovy obavy odvézt ji do nemocnice. Cleggovo vysvobození z jeho obsese a neschopnosti zamyslet se nad podstatou života pravděpodobně přinese také až smrt. Odlišnost v jejich prožití života spočívá v rozdílu mezi slovesy *být* a *vlastnit*. Miranda, prožívající život prvním způsobem, je otevřena změnám, originalitě, individualitě, pokroku, rozvoji a růstu. Clegg naopak stagnuje ve smyslu potřeby vlastnit Mirandu, držet ji a získat si ji násilím. Stagnuje ve smyslu pocitu, že Miranda ho chce přelstít, že ho chce pokořit díky svému sociálnímu původu, a také v tom smyslu, že ho ani nenapadne zamyslet se nad svou minulostí, nad důsledky svého jednání v přítomnosti a nad tím, že někomu bere svobodu. Fowles chápal odpírání lidské svobody jako ten nejtěžší hřích, avšak co se týče *Sběratele*, neměl v úmyslu vytvořit dílo, kde vyhrává dobro nad zlem. Nicméně Mirandě osud nepřinesl jen předčasnou smrt za stísněných podmínek, ale zajistil jí také mimořádný osobní růst. Z moderní a velice kritické dívky se stal člověk, který je schopen sebereflexe vlastní existence, který je schopen pochopit a soucítit s člověkem, jehož vinou se nachází v takto bezvýhodné situaci. Otázka vězení je jedním z pilířů románu. Nejen Miranda a Clegg jsou, i když každý jiným způsobem, uvězněni, ale také samotný čtenář, který je uvězněn ve dvou monologách a především v odkázání na sebe samého v otázce závěru příběhu, který zůstává autorem neopodstatněn.

Alegorický příběh románu *Sběratel*, vyprávějící o poválečné Anglii a o hodnotách její společnosti, byl inspirován Bartókovou operou *Modrovousův hrad* a novinovým článkem o muži, který věznil ženu nedaleko Londýna. Prolíná se jím Shakespearova *Bouře*, kde Miranda přirovnává sebe ke stejnojmenné hrdince a Clegga zprvu k Ferdinandovi a později, když zjistí jeho úmysl, ke Kalibanovi. Kalibanštinou pak nazývá i jeho eufemistický způsob vyjadřování. Prospero jí připomíná Pastona. Miranda se dále vžívá do role Emmy Woodhouseové a dodává, že chápe její druh snobství. Přitom staví Clegga do role Eltona a Pastona do role Knightleyho – tím si ale není zcela jistá. Po zjištění, že Clegg se silně podobá Caulfieldovi z *Kdo chytá v žitě*, mu dává

knihu přečíst a tvrdí, že stejně, jako on, Clegg nikam nezapadá. Dále Clegga srovnává se starcem představující břímě na cestě Sindibada, s hlavními hrdiny *V sobotu večer*, *v neděli ráno* a *Místo nahoře*, kdy je šokována lhostejností k citům druhých. Přiznává, že Sillitoe chtěl pravděpodobně poukázat na problém společnosti, která plodí takové lidi, ale podle jejího názoru to neobjasnil a tím se stává stejně odporným, jako celý příběh.

Snobství, ke kterému se Miranda přiznává, souvisí s přiznáním náležitosti k *menšině*. Podobné znaky nese prototyp zásadové protestantské hrdinky uvědomující si svou vyvolenost a myslící na dobro celé společnosti.

Přestože Miranda nenávidí Clegga a Pastona zbožňuje, její vášeň se rozplývá v duchu existencialismu a realismu. S Cleggem nakonec soucítí, uvědomuje si, že i když s ním nechce být, je zde jistý společný osud a je si vědoma, že oplácet někomu stejnou mincí by ji stavělo na jeho úroveň. Pastona, v době před uvězněním, obdivuje a chápe, jako ztělesnění správných hodnot, ale nedokáže ho milovat pro jeho věk a jeho sexuální rozvolněnost. Clegg i Paston jsou v jistém smyslu oba sběratelé, protože u obou se objevuje tendence vládnout ženě a zpochybňovat její umělecké ambice.

Ve své literatuře faktu Fowles pojednává o svém vztahu ke společnosti, o socialismu, odmítání industrializace společnosti, vyžaduje rovnost umění a svobodu pro literární i sociální rozmanitost. Zde, na rozdíl od své fikce, se čtenáři otevírá, a ten tak může snáze pochopit Fowlesovu osobnost a to především v knize *Aristos*, která představuje spisovatelovu soukromou sbírku filosofie. Zabývá se zde tématy, jako je lidská existence, Bůh a náboženství, umění a věda, posedlost penězi, politické problémy, individualita, vzdělání, svoboda atd. S trochou nadsázky lze knihu *Aristos* nazvat moderní Biblií, která zahrnuje všechny Fowlesovy hlavní myšlenky objevující se v jeho fikci i literatuře faktu, udávající možný návod na život. V první části eseje *The Tree* popisuje svůj vztah k otci, ke kterému choval úctu i přesto, že byli oba tak rozdílní – jako větve jednoho stromu směřující opačným směrem. V druhé části eseje nazvané *Seeing Nature Whole* se zabývá hlavně vztahem přírody a člověka a ničící silou vědy a viktoriánské průmyslové společnosti. Ve třetí části tohoto eseje Fowles, procházející kolem Wistamnova lesa, přemítá o podstatě přírody a nemožnosti jejího pochopení lidmi a završuje jej ohlédnutím se zpět na tento les jakoby zpět nohama na zemi.

Jestliže v eseji *The Tree* zmiňuje Fowles problematiku odlidšťování společnosti ve smyslu postupného odloučení se od přírody vědeckým přístupem, esej *The Enigma of Stonehenge* je důkazem toho, že prostřednictvím vědy nebude nikdy lidstvo schopné rozluštit význam těchto kamenů ani způsob, jakým byly postaveny. Pokud je tedy *The Tree* zaměřen na vztah mezi člověkem a přírodou, *The Enigma of Stonehenge* klade důraz v první řadě na svobodu a tajemství.

Na závěr bych chtěla uvést Fowlesův citát, který se týká jeho optimistického a velmi prozíravého vnímání budoucnosti.

Stát budoucnosti nebude průmyslový stát. Ostatně ani být nemůže, pokud se automatizace uměle nezpomalí. Stát budoucnosti musí být univerzitní stát, v původním smyslu slova univerzita. Bude to stát nekonečných příležitostí získat vědomosti, stát s co nejširším vzdělávacím systémem, stát, kde všichni budou moci využít různých služeb, díky nimž bude možné studovat, tvořit, cestovat a získávat zkušenosti a zážitky. Bude to stát, kde se prvek náhody, rizika a překvapení začlení do společenského systému a kde radost nebude peněžní hodnotou.

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