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The Making of Modern Villains: A Comparison of Hannibal
Lecter with Models in Older English Literature

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The making of modern villains: A Comparison of Hannibal Lecter with models in older English literature

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ZÁSADY PRO VYPRACOVÁNÍ:


Hlavním cílem této práce je prozkoumat, jakým způsobem vznikají zajímavé a u čtenářů oblíbené záporné postavy. Za hlavní příklad poslouží Hannibal Lecter z knih Thomase Harrise. Několik jeho povahových rysů a způsobů jednání bude srovnáno s těmi samými vlastnostmi a praktikami jiných záporných postav ze starší anglické literatury, například s Drákulou, Jagem, Jekylllem a Hydem a dalšími.

SEZNAM DOPORUČENÉ LITERATURY:

Harris, T.: Mlčení jehňátek. Frýdek-Místek 1999
Harris, T.: Hannibal. Frýdek-Místek 1999
Harris, T.: Červený drak. Frýdek-Místek 2000
Harris, T.: Hannibal Zrození. Frýdek-Místek 2007
Shakespear, W.: Makbeth. Praha 1947
Stevenson, R.L.: Podivný případ Dr. Jekylla a pana Hyda. Ostrava 1995
Stoker, B.: Dracula. London 2003

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Prohlašuji, že obsah této bakalářské práce jsem vypracovala samostatně pod dohledem vedoucího práce a s použitím citovaných zdrojů.

V Olomouci dne:

.....

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Introduction

In recent times, evil characters appear to have gained rather large amount of attention and space in fiction, and their portrayal is currently an important part of the entertainment industry. Their very existence is essential—after all, “conflict between two or more strong forces fuels all stories,” (creating a worthy villain) and without a villain, where would the hero be? He would be stranded in a tedious fiction.

The trend to pay closer attention to the ‘bad guys’ is easy to observe, there are comic books and their film adaptations such as *Thor*, where the villain Loki is in the beginning more sensible and even likeable than his spoiled older brother; there are TV shows whose main characters are killers such as *Dexter* or criminals as is the case in *The Blacklist*. In other words, “the realism of much modern fiction has revealed in forms of psychological veracity in which morally suspect figures are seen to thrive.”¹

It seems that the audience is lured to the evil characters, is fascinated by them, and even roots for them. As David Carr states: “Sometimes the hero is not a good guy, nor is the antagonist bent on evil. In fact, a villainous character can serve the function of protagonist, the ‘good guy,’ the hero of the story.”² Sometimes the difference between good and evil is not clearly distinguishable and “hero and villain are commingled instead of the hero falling into the villain’s snare”.³

The aim of this thesis is therefore to find common traits shared by evil characters—one could say the basic make-up of villains—by comparing their most noticeable character traits and answer a question why are modern villains capable of gaining sympathy of the audience, why are they likeable. How is it possible to find them amusing and appealing, to be sympathetic to their plight?

¹ David Carr. "The Lure of Evil: Exploring Moral Formation on the Dark Side of Literature and the Arts." *Journal Of Philosophy Of Education* 41, no. 1 (February 1, 2007): 95-112.

² William G. Tappy. "Creating a worthy villain." *Writer (Kalmbach Publishing Co.)* 117, no. 7 (July 2004): 34-38.

³ Elmer E. Stroll. "Heroes and Villains: Shakespeare, Middleton, Byron, Dickens." *The Review of English Studies*, 1942., 257.

In order to do so, I will compare one of the most notorious contemporary villains, Hannibal Lecter, with several characters who are found in older English literature, namely with Richard III and Iago, and also with Count Dracula and Henry Jekyll and his alter ego Edward Hyde.

The first part of the thesis will explain why Dr. Lecter is chosen as the prime example of a memorable villain, and it will also explore the process of his creation. The second part of this work will focus on the comparison between Lecter and the selected characters; what traits they have in common, what qualities seem to be a necessity for a successful villain and in which characteristics or behavior Lecter differs from his predecessors of evil. I will use mainly the first three installments of the Lecter series (both books and films) as sources for the process, with the fourth part serving only as a minor source since it is a prequel to the first three stories and the character of Dr. Lecter is not fully developed yet.

1. Dance with the Devil

1.1 Thomas Harris, the Maker of Mysteries

Any information about Thomas Harris is scarce, for he guards his privacy warily; he lives a reclusive life and avoids the attention that being the creator of the infamous Hannibal the Cannibal brings. This reticence in regard not only to his personal life but to this most known character as well partly helped in developing the fascination that surrounds Hannibal Lecter. The basic facts about his life become known, however.

Thomas Harris was born on April 11, 1940, in Tennessee to William and Polly Harris. The family moved to Mississippi shortly after his birth and growing up in a small town named Rich in the Deep South influenced Harris greatly; being isolated as he was, he became an introverted avid reader—Ernest Hemingway was his favorite writer and even his inspiration.⁴

Harris graduated from Clarksdale High School and obtained a degree in English from Baylor University in Waco, Texas. There he worked as a reporter for Waco Herald Tribune. During this time, the 1960s, Harris married and divorced his wife Harriet. Unfortunately, any other information regarding this part of Harris' life is not publically known.

His occupation as a crime reporter in Waco proved to be bland and uninteresting and he moved to New York. In New York City he returned to his work as a reporter and editor mapping the crimes happening not only in U.S. but Mexico as well.⁵

Apart from his curiosity about the police procedures and workings of forensics and criminal psychology, his crime reporter experience presented Harris with the opportunity to decry the criminal world, and gave him an uncanny understanding of the criminal mind which led to the creation of his first novel, and subsequently to the demanding creation of the Lecter series. Smith even states:

⁴ "Thomas Harris," *FamousAuthors.org*, <http://www.famousauthors.org/thomas-harris> (accessed April 24, 2015)

⁵ "Thomas Harris," *Mswritersandmusicians.com*, <http://www.mswritersandmusicians.com/writers/thomas-harris.html> (accessed April 22 2015)

“Art-making (and here is one of the places it separates from simpler forms of craft) requires great courage. Sometimes it is the courage to keep going in the face of doubt and psychological conundrum; sometimes it is to ‘say’ what many may not want to hear. Or it can be the courage to show frankly what is before you; to defy current convention; to push the limits of a form; to risk foolishness; to challenge the past; or simply to reveal bald difference.”⁶

Harris must possess such great courage; his peculiar interests in combination with his reclusiveness even cast doubts on his own mental stability and he faced doubts. Harris refused to give interviews for more than three decades⁷ after a journalist—perhaps jokingly and perhaps not—suggested that it took a psychopath to write about one, and as the article regarding Harris continues saying: “It must indeed be a terrible burden to be drawn ceaselessly to murder, violence and suffering, to what is worst in the human story.”⁸

Black Sunday which was published in 1975 became Harris’ first major success. Six years later *Red Dragon* was published and the world was introduced to Doctor Hannibal Lecter for the first time. Harris is said to be a very thorough researcher who pays attention to the details and factuality of his work, thus the second Lecter book *The Silence of the Lambs* was published in 1988 with *Hannibal* following in 1999 and *Hannibal Rising* in 2006.

For his courage to venture again and again back into the world inhabited by Dr. Lecter, Harris might deserve to be declared an artist, and Lecter his masterpiece. More about the formation process of the character will be mentioned in following chapter.

⁶ Janna Malamud Smith, "Ruthlessness and Art-Making." *Virginia Quarterly Review* 88, no. 3 (Summer 2012): 145-158.

⁷ "Thomas Harris Biography," *Imdb.com*, http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0365383/bio?ref=nm_dyk_trv_sm#trivia (accessed April 24 2015)

⁸ Jason Cowley, "Creator of a monstrous hit," *Theguardian.com*, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/nov/19/fiction.thomasharris> (accessed April 24 2015)

1.2 Dr. Salazar, the Mexican Madman

As mentioned above, Harris is reluctant to divulge any personal information and his unwillingness to talk to the press lasted until 2013, when he revealed the source of his inspiration for the character of Hannibal Lecter.

While writing an introduction to the 25th anniversary edition of *The Silence of the Lambs* he mentioned a meeting with ‘Dr. Salazar’ at the Nuevo Leon State Prison in Monterrey, Mexico. Harris, 23 years old at that time, was supposed to interview another inmate named Dykes Askew Simmons who was there for the murder of three people. During his visit, Harris learned about an incident which involved Simmons, an attempted escape, gunshots and a surgeon who saved Simmons’s life. Thus he encountered ‘Dr. Salazar’, as Harris nicknamed him to protect the doctor’s identity.⁹

Harris described him in these words: “Dr. Salazar was a small, lithe man with dark red hair. He stood very still and there was a certain elegance about him”, and that “Dr. Salazar’s eyes were maroon with grainy sparks like sunstones.”¹⁰ Lecter’s description in Harris’ book is “Doctor Lecter’s eyes are maroon and they reflect the light in pinpoints of red,” and he “was small, sleek.”¹¹

‘Dr. Salazar’ asked him during their talk: “Do you think Simmons was tormented on the school playground because he was disfigured?” and after Harris gave an affirmative answer, the doctor inquired if Simmons’ victims were attractive. After another confirmation, Harris asked if he thought that Simmons was provoked and ‘Dr. Salazar’ told him: “Certainly not. But early torment makes torment easily... imagined,” and continued with: “You are a journalist, Mr. Harris. How would you put that in your journal? How do you treat the fear

⁹ Simon Gaskell, “The Silence of the Lambs: Thomas Harris opens up on real life inspiration for Anthony Hopkins' Hannibal Lecter,” *Walesonline.co.uk*, <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/silence-lambs-thomas-harris-opens-5374350> (accessed April 24 2015)

¹⁰ Gaskell, “The Silence of the Lambs: Thomas Harris opens up on real life inspiration for Anthony Hopkins' Hannibal Lecter.”

¹¹ Thomas Harris, *The Silence of the Lambs* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), 28.

of torment in journalese? Might you say something snappy about torment, like ‘It puts the hell in hello!’¹²

This conversation is reflected in the interactions between Will Graham and Dr. Lecter in *Red Dragon* and even more in the exchanges between Clarice Starling and Dr. Lecter in *The Silence of the Lambs*. The similarity is principally evident in Lecter’s diction, the nature of his intrusive questions and how both investigators react and answer to him:

“How is Will Graham? How does he look?”

‘I don’t know Will Graham.’

‘You know who he is. Jack Crawford’s protégé. The one before you. How does his face look?’

‘I’ve never seen him.’

‘This is called *cutting up a few old touches*, Officer Starling, you don’t mind, do you?’¹³

Even the notion of ‘Dr. Salazar’s’ stillness is transferred into Harris’ work, both in *Red Dragon* and *The Silence of the Lambs* the opening scenes introducing Dr. Lecter start in the same manner; the man is found lying on his cot. In the first book Graham’s impression is that he must be asleep because Dr. Lecter is so still, while in the second book he is calmly reading a magazine. In *Hannibal*, Dr. Lecter is first encountered as he addresses a group of scholars, standing next to a bronze sculptural group. He stands so still that it is impossible to distinguish whether the voice emanates from him or the statues.¹⁴

It is not easy to think of Lecter as an insane murderer after his first meetings with Graham and Starling based purely on the way he presents himself—not when he speaks in cultured tones and his words and questions are only demonstrating his unique view of the world.

Thomas Harris was unaware that his ‘Dr. Salazar’ was a convicted murderer who was believed to be insane during their meeting—not when the man’s words and questions provided an interesting insight into Simmons’ case. He learned the truth only after a warden told him.

¹² Gaskell, “The Silence of the Lambs: Thomas Harris opens up on real life inspiration for Anthony Hopkins’ Hannibal Lecter.”

¹³ Harris, *The Silence of the Lambs*, 33.

¹⁴ Thomas Harris, *Hannibal* (New York, N.Y.: Delacorte Press, 1999), 124.

The resemblance is hardly purely coincidental; ‘Dr. Salazar’s’ appearance laid the foundation for Harris’ character’s visage. The impression left by ‘Dr. Salazar’ during their accidental meeting determined the future persona of Dr. Lecter and led Harris to the creation of his brilliant and insane character. Harris needed someone with “peculiar understanding of the criminal mind” to appear in his *Red Dragon*, but “It was not Dr. Salazar. But because of Dr. Salazar, I could recognize his colleague and fellow practitioner, Hannibal Lecter.”¹⁵

Despite Harris’ efforts to keep the identity of ‘Dr. Salazar’ a secret, it was discovered—by matching available information with media records—that the real-life murderous surgeon’ name was Alfredo Ballí Treviño.¹⁶

He murdered his sexual partner Jesús Castillo Rangel with a scalpel, cut the body into pieces and buried it.¹⁷ Ballí was sentenced to death for Castillo’s murder, yet was suspected of several crimes of the same nature. His sentence was later changed to 20 years in prison and he was released in 1981.

The doctor spent the rest of his life working with the poor and elderly.¹⁸ He said to the reporter who interviewed him in December 2008: “I paid what I had to pay. Now I’m just waiting for the divine punishment.” Alfredo Ballí Treviño died only shortly after at the beginning of 2009.¹⁹

1.3 The Author and his Characters

Lecter’s wide-spread notoriety is attributed not only to the readership but to the film adaptations which brought him closer to the general audience as well. Yet the mystery, the question why Lecter of all the petty villains in films and literature in the last few decades stayed in our subconscious mind as truly evil—and mostly alluringly puzzling—could be answered simply.

¹⁵ Sam Webb, “The real life Hannibal Lecter revealed,” *dailymail.co.uk*, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2382118/The-real-life-Hannibal-Lecter-revealed-Thomas-Harris-inspired-Mexican-doctor.html> (accessed April 24 2015)

¹⁶ Maria G. Valdez, “Who Was The Real Hannibal Lecter?” *Latintimes.com*, <http://www.latintimes.com/who-was-real-hannibal-lecter-see-photo-gay-mexican-doctor-alfredo-balli-trevino-who-was-inspiration> (accessed April 24 2015)

¹⁷ Webb, “The real life Hannibal Lecter revealed.”

¹⁸ Webb, “The real life Hannibal Lecter revealed.”

¹⁹ Valdez, “Who Was The Real Hannibal Lecter?”

It would seem from the way the character is treated by the author himself that Hannibal Lecter is—in a sense—alive.

Harris' meeting with 'Dr. Salazar' combined together with his fascination with criminal psychology and his working environment resulted in the formation of Hannibal Lecter—that was already stated before and this fact, that there is a real-life inspiration, adds to the veridicality of the character. However, it appears that the creation of Lecter in his current form was a long process that evolved into something quite unexpected. Lecter developed from Harris' initial need to have an advisor like figure for Graham into a figure which took permanent residence inside of the writer's conscious mind, and to some extent, in the subconscious mind of the audience.

In the film *Hannibal*, Starling states that she thinks about Dr. Lecter "at least thirty seconds every day," because "He's always with her, like a bad habit."²⁰ Starling's line summarizes both hers and Harris' state of mind; and as the popularity of the good doctor slowly extended, the character himself gained his own life accordingly, demanding more—becoming more. Dr. Lecter seems to be able to find his way into the heads of those around him. He seems to be able to capture attention and hold it as a real character in the fictional world, and as a fictional character in the real world.

The majority of screen characters are perceived partly as alive because the audience can hear them, see them, even though their face belongs to a man with his own name and life and even though that same face can be seen in a different role in a different film or a TV show. It is less taxing for the imagination of the viewer to visualize and see the character as an actual person.

The literary Lecter is treated as such—not from the very first book, or the second, when he functions only as a supporting character. In *Hannibal*, when the doctor is at large and without any restraint, Harris approaches him with caution. A shift in narration is noticeable.

While other situations and characters are introduced or described using the common simple past, the first scene with Dr. Lecter who is not approached as the persona of Dr. Fell, which is the identity he assumes while on the run—is written in simple present (the same shift also applies for example to Jame Gumb in *The Silence of the Lambs*). Harris addresses the readers, dares them to

²⁰ Ridley Scott, *Hannibal*, DVD, Bontonfilm. 2002

step closer alongside with him, the humble observer, to visit the doctor. He asks them: “If you believe you are beyond harm, will you go inside? Will you enter this palace so prominent in blood and glory, follow your face through the web-spanned dark, toward the exquisite chiming of the clavier?” After that, he continues with “A puff of air as Dr. Hannibal Lecter passes us. The great door creaks, closes with a thud we can feel in the floor.”²¹

The last chapter of the novel with both Lecter and Starling is written in the same style. Why would Harris do it? What effect is it supposed to have, what purpose it serves? Dr. Lecter is there, very much alive and lethal, and the readers—due to the author’s careful prodding—are also there in such a thrillingly close proximity.

Harris’ portrayal of Lecter makes the audience feel that the man is somewhere out there still at large and able to do as he pleases, unrestrained. The author himself acknowledges the peculiarity of the situation of Lecter’s existence in a piece of writing ‘Forward to a Fatal Interview’ (a foreword to one of editions of *Red Dragon*):

“Years later when I started *The Silence of the Lambs*, I did not know that Dr. Lecter would return. I had always liked the character of Dahlia Iyad in *Black Sunday* and wanted to do a novel with a strong woman as the central character. So I began with Clarice Starling and, not two pages into the novel, I found she had to go visit the doctor. By the time I undertook to record the events in *Hannibal*, the doctor, to my surprise, had taken on a life of his own. You seemed to find him as oddly engaging as I did.”²²

Harris even says that he dreaded doing *Hannibal* and even feared for Starling, perhaps just as much as the readers do, but in the end, he ‘let them go’. This demonstrates the fascination the writer holds for his creations and supports the claim that this seems to transfer to the audience.

²¹ Harris, *Hannibal*, 138.

²² Thomas Harris, “Forward to a Fatal Interview by T.H.” [sites.google.com](https://sites.google.com/site/lektalekton/Home/forward-to-a-fatal-interview), <https://sites.google.com/site/lektalekton/Home/forward-to-a-fatal-interview> (accessed April 24 2015)

1.4 The Incarnations of Evil

Hannibal Lecter enjoys a great popularity, the cult of this particular doctor, the cunning cannibal, reaching all around the world; he is an iconic character at present, voted as the number one villain in *AFI's 100 Years...100 Heroes & Villains* list.²³ He has even more than three thousands stories linked to his universe at one of the world's largest fan fiction page fanfiction.net (as of March 6 2015).

However, Lecter's fame—or notoriety—is not based solely on the book series. Any good book—or let me rephrase it, any successful book with the potential to be successfully profitable on the silver screen—is followed by a film adaptation. *Red Dragon* was no exception and in 1986 *Manhunter* was released starring William Petersen as Will Graham, Brian Cox as Dr. Lecter and Tom Noonan as Francis Dollarhyde. Michael Mann was both the director and screenwriter.

Dr. Lecter's place on the top of AFI's villain list brought *The Silence of the Lambs* in 1991, curiously released on 14th February. The date attracts attention because the story itself starts in February, with the Valentine's Day playing a special part in the story.

It is this particular incarnation of Dr. Lecter which gathered the attention of the general audience—the film was deemed number seventy four of *AFI's 100 Years...100 Movies—10th Anniversary Edition*²⁴ and number five of *AFI's 100 Years...100 Thrills*.²⁵

Moreover, it is the cast and crew who are responsible for the success of the film; *The Silence of the Lambs* won the 64th Academy Awards for Best Picture, Oscars also went to Jonathan Demme for directing, to Jodie Foster and

²³ “AFI's 100 Years...100 Heroes & Villains,” *afi.com*, <http://www.afi.com/100Years/handv.aspx> (accessed April 25 2015)

²⁴ “AFI's 100 Years...100 Movies—10th Anniversary Edition,” *afi.com*, <http://www.afi.com/100Years/movies10.aspx> (accessed April 25 2015)

²⁵ “AFI's 100 Years...100 Thrills,” *afi.com*, <http://www.afi.com/100Years/thrills.aspx> (accessed April 25 2015)

Anthony Hopkins for main leading characters, and to Ted Tally for the best adapted screenplay.²⁶

Hopkins appeared in his role in the following film adaptation of *Hannibal* in 2001, but Foster refused the offer to portray Starling and was replaced by Julianne Moore. Ridley Scott was entrusted with directing and the screenplay was written by David Mamet and Steven Zaillian.

Minor changes in the screenplay were to be expected, but the main difference from the book can be seen most noticeably in the interpretation of the complicated relationship between Starling and Lecter, or more precisely in the ending of the film. The book shows in passing remarks how affected Starling is by her meeting with Dr. Lecter, and that “some of their stars are the same.”²⁷ the book leads the characters to their own controversial variation of the classical sunset happy ending, while the film portrays them without the emotional intimacy, with their mental connection greatly reduced, and offers more acceptable ending.

Either way, the success of the previous film was not repeated, and *Hannibal* did not win any noticeable film awards.

The second film adaptation of the first book followed in 2002, keeping the original name of the novel, with Hopkins’ last appearance in the role of Dr. Lecter. Graham was played by Edward Norton and Ralph Fiennes lent his face to the “Tooth Fairy”. Ted Tally wrote the script and Brett Ratner directed the film. This adaptation did not win any reputable film awards either.

The last film *Hannibal Rising* was released in 2007, a year after the fourth book was published. Gaspard Ulliel played the part of the young Hannibal Lecter, and the directing was entrusted to Peter Webber. The last adaptation was noticeably less successful than the previous films as the profits could demonstrate.²⁸

In recent years, the character of Hannibal Lecter has come back to life in the TV show *Hannibal* in 2013. Bryan Fuller’s version of the story is only loosely

²⁶ “The 64th Academy Award Winners,” *oscar.go.com*, <http://oscar.go.com/blogs/oscar-history/1992-64th-academy-award-winners> (accesses April 26 2015)

²⁷ Harris, *The Silence of the Lambs*, 367.

²⁸ “Box Office,” *boxofficemojo.com*, <http://www.boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=hannibalrising.htm> (accessed April 27 2015)

based on the first book of the Lecter series. Graham is played by Hugh Dancy and a Danish actor Mads Mikkelsen appears in the role of Dr. Lecter. The show is rather successful returning in June of this year to the TV screens with the third season and both Dancy and Mikkelsen are also praised for their performances as their nominations, and the nomination of the show itself, for this year's Saturn Awards suggest.²⁹

²⁹ "Saturn Awards," *collider.com*, <http://collider.com/saturn-award-nominees-2014-gravity-hobbit-desolation-smaug/> (accessed April 24 2015)

2. Introducing the Monsters behind the Men

2.1 Dracula the Warlord

Bram Stoker's *Dracula* appeared in 1897 for the first time and since then he is a prime example of an evil character. There could no doubt about the fact that he is a villain, the propelling force of the story which is unquestionably evil because it is simply in its nature.

There are two distinctive characteristics that attract the attention of audience. First, he is a vampire, an unnatural creature that finds nourishment in the blood of others, and this fact alone marks him as an evil character. The idea of consuming other human being to sustain oneself is foreign and abhorrent to people of western civilization in general, and together with the fact that Count Dracula is an undead corpse feeding on blood, something unnatural and heretical in predominantly Christian society, it creates a villain worthy of notice which is proved by the generations of readers enthralled by the Count.

However, the supernatural character of Dracula's evil is not necessarily the only trait to note about him as a villain. Since the aim of this thesis is to find the qualities that make a villain, mostly the traits that they seem have in common, the focus should be on the natural characteristics and this leads to Dracula's second noticeable trait—his aristocratic origins and his effort to integrate into the world around him as a Transylvanian noble.

Despite that, the Count is a warlord, a long forgotten archaic relic of violent times who, to some extent, cannot and will not relinquish the memory of older days and the bloodied glory of those times. It could be seen for example in this lament like exclamation: "What devil or what witch was ever so great as Attila, whose blood is in these veins?" He later continues: "The warlike days are over. Blood is too precious a thing in these days of dishonorable peace, and the glories of the great races are as a tale that is told."³⁰ Dracula endures the passage of time, remembering and mourning the loss of the ages which were in some form much simpler for him. He, in fact, does not belong to the society of the end of 19th century England. Dracula's character defies human understanding for he

³⁰ Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (Charlottesville, Va.: University of Virginia Library, 1996), 44.

is virtually beyond humanity and his unholy nature—for example his ability to transform into animals—speaks of his bestiality just as much as his red eyes.

2.2 Shakespeare's Silver Tongues

Two of Shakespeare's notorious evil characters were chosen for this thesis and comparison of villain character traits, namely Iago and Richard III. Both of these characters seems to share several qualities that mark them as 'evil' and yet both of them, to some extent, continue to fascinate the audience even four hundred years after their creation; are both eloquent and able to convince people in their vicinity to listen to them, persuade and bend them to their will.

Richard III covets the throne and is prepared to destroy everyone standing in his way, and his morality is unquestionably tarnished or even non-existent as his opening speech suggests. In his opening speech, he even prepares the audience to what they could expect to unfold before their eyes: "Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous, by drunken prophecies, libels and dreams, to set my brother Clarence and the king in deadly hate the one against the other,"³¹ so there is no doubt what part is Richard's; he is the villain of the play, and yet, he manages to execute his plans with the help of his silver tongue and his influential position and familial bonds he has with other characters of the play.

To support this, let us consider the moment when Richard tries to woo Lady Anne. He says: "Speak it again, and, even with the word, that hand, which, for thy love, did kill thy love, shall, for thy love, kill a far truer love; to both their deaths thou shalt be accessory,"³² and considering the setting where this exchange is taking place, the strength of Richard's speech and his ability to manipulate others must be remarkable.

Therefore, the following words might apply to both of Shakespeare's villains and both plays: "Within a larger matrix of all sorts of manipulations, one finds many acts of persuasion,"³³ but it effectively leads to the character of Iago who shares the same eloquence and the ability to manipulate his surroundings

³¹ William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, 'Richard III.' Project Guttenberg, 1994, E-book.

³² Shakespeare, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, 'Richard III.'

³³ Benjamin V. Beier, "The Art of Persuasion and Shakespeare's Two Iagos." *Studies In Philology* 111, no. 1 (Winter2014 2014): 34-64.

as Richard, yet gives impression of being even more evil. While Richard III aims to gain sympathy of the audience and establishes a connection with them, openly sharing his plans, there is something more enigmatic and sinister about Iago. In the final part of the play, he says: "Demand me nothing: what you know, you know: From this time forth I never will speak word."³⁴ His motivation for the destruction he causes is a mystery, or is Iago truly driven by the slight the Moor put on him by promoting Cassio? It seems to be another lie, simply a deflection to gain a little sympathy from the audience—after all, as Beier states: "His lies are meant to convince viewers to be on guard against those dangerous and unjust speakers who seek to 'appear good' when they are in fact vicious."³⁵ While in fact the truly dangerous and vicious one is only Iago himself. His obvious ruthlessness and element of mystery adds to Iago's quality as an evil character and makes him appealing to audience just the same as Richard's plight for sympathy puts him into more favorable light.

2.3 Jekyll's White and Hyde's Black

The last character selected for this thesis is doctor Henry Jekyll and his darker counterpart Edward Hyde. In this case, the comparison—and subsequently, a contrast—is not to be drawn only between the character traits, but also between the behavioral patterns and the likeness of situation that connects Jekyll/Hyde with other villains. By these words are meant secrets and the double life and the impact of leading it on the character.

Jekyll, who himself cannot be marked as a pure villain, is unable to face his darker side, he represses it and rejects it with dire consequences. He is caught between a constant struggle of his two personas, and despite the fact that he is aware of his less than favorable other self cravings, he still "springs headlong into the sea of liberty"³⁶ when he transforms into Hyde. He seeks deliberation, wants to be free of the shackles of conventions, and uses Hyde as means of escape from the proper and prim society. As Donahy states: "Dr. Jekyll loses his social standing as a result of his indulgence of his desires and

³⁴ Shakespeare, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, 'Othello.'

³⁵ Beier, "The Art of Persuasion and Shakespeare's Two Iagos."

³⁶ Robert Louis Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, (Mattituck, N.Y.: Aeonian Press, 1978), 80.

inhabits a working-class body to seek gratification of unseemly appetites.”³⁷ Jekyll simply assumes the body of Edward Hyde to do evil and at the same time, presents his other amiable self to his friends and colleagues until he is unable to control the situation. It is in this moment when Jekyll’s conscience and fear leads him to fully face his other self, and this is the moment that marks his end.

³⁷ Martin Danahy, "Dr. Jekyll's Two Bodies." *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 35, no. 1 (February 2013): 23-40.

3. Hannibal the Cannibal: A Comparison

3.1 Outward Appearances and True Nature

First impressions and maintained appearances are a daily necessity for all individuals participating in any kind of human interaction. Hannibal Lecter is capable of hiding his true nature with ease and it raises a perplexing question. How does he do it? How can Lecter and the other villains commit crimes and do evil without anyone noticing and stopping them before they perform these acts? Secrets and secret identities are a part of entertainment industry that cannot be simply dismissed—for example all the superheroes and super villains, or spy novels and films—therefore literature is no exception. Outward appearances are the answer—the villains rely on the simple fact that their neighbors and people in their vicinity see what they want to see; the carefully crafted and cautiously maintained image supported by truth, partly true facts or outright lies. Do the selected villains share any outward appearances with Hannibal Lecter?

Starting with the obvious, an aristocratic origin is the first trait that represents a part of such an image, it is a trait which Richard III. and Dracula both had and used. Harris begins the first chapter of *Hannibal Rising* with a history lesson: “Hannibal the Grim (1365-1428) built Lecter Castle in five years, using for labor the soldiers he had captured at the Battle of Zalgiris.”³⁸

Mentioning that his ancestor is a warrior creates another link between him and Dracula, and it creates an analogy between the warlike legacy of Lecter’s family and his own actions—Hannibal Lecter is the eighth bearer of the same name, and he symbolically continues with the family tradition, fulfilling the true meaning of the predicate Grim.

While in Lecter’s case his nobility is otherwise treated as nothing more than a passing comment, a background information not truly relevant to the stories of the first three books and as a starting point for the fourth book, in the making of the character as a quality, it is remarkably curious; it might even reinforce Lecter’s sense of self-importance and the notion that he is, actually, above the law—or more precisely, that he can create his own laws.

³⁸ Thomas Harris, *Hannibal Rising: A Novel*, (New York: Delacorte Press, 2006), 9.

The notion of nobility commands respect, it is a deep-seated tradition more or less imprinted in the consciousness of people to these days, and the eager willingness to spill blood unhesitatingly evokes fear. Combined together, these two create a control tool: power.

“Power is a social construct, involving a relationship between two or more individuals,” and “the experience of having power makes one feel confident and optimistic, whereas lacking power makes one feel doubtful and uncertain”³⁹ Based on Lecter’s experience as a child, it is possible to say that seeking power would be his aim—it is an objective pursued by not only evil characters in fiction, but by humans in general. The article provides an answer which states: “People typically do not feel good about lacking power.”⁴⁰

Doctor Lecter is portrayed both as a man commanding respect and evoking fear—the latter accompanies him through the actual novels and films when his true nature is exposed. However, the former is part of Lecter’s life before his apprehension—he is a psychiatrist and despite his imprisonment, the contributor to “The American Journal of Psychiatry and The General Archives.” Frederick Chilton summarizes his efforts to study and catalog his most prized asset with these words: “It’s impossible, of course, to tell what he’s holding back or whether he understands more than he’ll say.”⁴¹

Lecter is at a disadvantage during his imprisonment, therefore he relishes the little power he has, and refuses to relinquish it; he is the one in control of the delegation of information others have about him and the information on the cases the FBI needs him to help solve, because “the powerless are more careful and systematic in their processing of information.”⁴²

The fear he instills in others is uncanny—he acts as a beast, a wild creature when it suits him, and attacks without warning while he still remains perfectly in control of the situation and his own reactions. He calmly plays

³⁹ Derek D. Rucker, Hu Miao, and Adam D. Gakunsky, "The Experience versus the Expectations of Power: A Recipe for Altering the Effects of Power on Behavior." *Journal Of Consumer Research* 41, no. 2 (August 2014): 381-396.

⁴⁰ Rucker, Hu, Gakunsky, "The Experience versus the Expectations of Power: A Recipe for Altering the Effects of Power on Behavior."

⁴¹ Thomas Harris, *Red Dragon* (New York: Putnam, 1981), 74.

⁴² Rucker, Hu, Gakunsky, "The Experience versus the Expectations of Power: A Recipe for Altering the Effects of Power on Behavior."

people around him. This could be seen in the depiction of the mutilation of a nurse he attacks. Chilton narrates that Lecter behaved perfectly and gave the appearance of cooperating with attempts at therapy and that as a result, his security was relax. When Lecter complained of chest pain, his restraints were removed and he attacked the nurse. Chilton emphasizes Lecter's brutality by adding that the nurse was left with one functional eye and by saying that Lecter's pulse "Never got over eighty-five, even when he tore out her tongue."⁴³

This extract also indicates that Lecter does not feel remorse or hesitancy for his actions, not a tremor of compassion for the nurse. He does it to demonstrate his superiority, to put it simply, he makes a point. However, the ruthlessness of villains will be discussed further in the following subchapter.

Another layer of the villain outward appearance is wealth and influence, and both aspects Lecter have in common with Richard III and Dracula, and these originate in—or are interconnected with—their high social status and reputation. The film *Red Dragon* opens with a quick exposition of Lecter's standing depicting him as a prominent member of Baltimore society, and *The Silence of the Lambs* film adds to it with several newspaper extracts Starling studies which further emphasize Lecter's previous position.

To be able to gain such an influence, one has to possess a certain amount of credibility—or a semblance of it, alternatively a trust of those who are to be influenced—regardless of the genuineness and intentions of the person manipulating them.

Lecter's credibility prior to his incarceration is based on how he is perceived by his surroundings which is of course based on his gentlemanly behavior, charisma and education—in *Hannibal Rising* he gets his medical training and even secures an internship at Johns Hopkins Medical Center in Baltimore, America, thus gaining the opportunity to enter the United States and start his successful career as is stated in the chapter 57 of *Hannibal Rising*.

It is a familiar notion once more; a young man with a good name, popularity, charming and friendly to those around him—there is not a sliver of doubt about his upstanding moral qualities and integrity. Of course, Dr. Lecter is an artist himself capable of sketching very detailed drawings from memory, and does not have any need for magical portraits—he manages to mask his

⁴³ Harris, *Red Dragon*, 75.

deeds due to his cautious nature and intelligence; both these traits seem to be something akin to a required necessity in a life of an evil character.

3.2 A Compulsory Set of Qualities

The outward appearance of a young and brilliant medic and later an admired and sought-after specialist conceals Lecter's true character, the traits hidden deeper under the persona he presents to the world. Creating an image is one thing, but maintaining it is something quite different; concealing a monster under the façade of an outstanding citizen requires other considerable talents.

Those almost compulsory qualities of evil characters which enable them to live the lives they live lead back to the Shakespearean villains. Successfully keeping one step ahead of other characters requires a certain amount of intelligence, wit and eloquence, as well as observation skills, a proneness to scheming and planning and at least a minimally developed ability to anticipate reaction of others—in other words, an insight into human psyche.

In an article on verbal intelligence is stated that “the popular idea that psychopathic offenders have higher levels of intelligence is somewhat inconsistent with scholarly research that has produced mixed results on their interrelationship.”⁴⁴ These words contradict the notion of dangerous individual possessing superior intelligence in reality, fortunately. Such an idea seems to be more acceptable in fiction, and proves to be even appealing due to its implausibility. It is therefore harmless to be entertained by the safely fictional happenings.

In the case of Lecter—and as it appears villains—intelligence is linked back to the notion of power and the ability to manipulate the others as was partly discussed previously. Dr. Lecter is described as a sophisticated and knowledgeable man possessing a surprising amount of intelligence, and since “verbal ability and knowledge are closely related,”⁴⁵ it is even safe to assume that he is more than well equipped in the department of verbal intelligence.

⁴⁴ Matt DeLisi,, Michael G. Vaughn, Kevin M. Beaver, and John Paul Wright, "The Hannibal Lecter myth: psychopathy and verbal intelligence in the MacArthur violence risk assessment study." *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment* 32, no. 2 (2010): 169-177.

⁴⁵ Stefan Schipolowski, Oliver Wilhelm, and Ulrich Schroeders. "On the nature of crystallized intelligence: The relationship between verbal ability and factual knowledge." *Intelligence* 46, (September 2014): 156-168

His psychiatric training enables Lecter to read his surroundings well, it gives him a truly deep understanding of human psyche, human nature. It could be seen in his first confrontation with Starling, almost similar in both book and film version:

“You’re so ambitious, aren’t you? Do you know what you look like, with your good bag and your cheap shoes? You look like a rube. A well-scrubbed, hustling rube, with a little taste. Good nutrition’s given you length of bone, but you’re not more than one generation from poor white trash, are you?”⁴⁶

This demonstrates that Lecter uses his knowledge to his advantage with the aim to ultimately control others through agitation or discomfort, to manipulate them. He wields his tongue as one would wield a sword—cutting and sharp, and with fatal consequences. The power at his disposal with words alone is terrifying. In chapter nine of *Hannibal*, Mason Verger describes how Lecter came over and gave him the piece of glass. Looking Mason in the eyes, Lecter suggested that Mason might like to peel off his face with the shard and then to feed the dogs with his face. Another example is Lecter’s inmate Miggs. Lecter is believed to suggest him that he should swallow his tongue which Miggs does as in stated in chapter seven of *The Silence of the Lambs*.

The ability to react immediately to a changing situation and to read the reactions of the others in order to be able to sway them, this ability to say and do precisely what the others need to hear and see, that is a part of the art of persuasion. Dr. Lecter is master of it, just like Richard III and Iago.

I would say that the character of Iago corresponds more with the portrayal of Dr. Lecter which can be found in the TV show rather than Dr. Lecter found in the books and film adaptations. Iago’s position of a trusted advisor to Othello is quite similar to the initial position Lecter holds with the FBI and Graham—both villains skillfully maneuver people as if they were chess pieces, and sacrifice their allies seemingly without the slightest hint of remorse or hesitation. Iago slowly poisons Othello with his lies and his foisted proofs of Desdemona’s unfaithfulness and turns him against her, in the same manner Lecter poisons Graham and plants doubts about his sanity and innocence not

⁴⁶ Jonathan Demme, *The Silence of the Lambs*, DVD, Bontonfilm. 2010.

only into Graham's own mind, but to the minds of others. Lecter and Iago gain more and more trust of the protagonists only to ultimately betray them.

On the other hand, Iago's evil for evil's sake, his unwillingness to reveal his motivation for the deeds he does can correspond with the film and book version of Lecter in the sense that both characters simply are the way they are without any explanation.

The shroud of secrecy surrounding Lecter's true motivation for his killing is during the first three novels and films equally impenetrable. When Starling mentions her curiosity about what happened to Lecter, he answers: "Nothing happened to me, Officer Starling. I happened. You can't reduce me to a set of influences."⁴⁷ Regrettably, the sinister appeal of not being to assign any reason to his actions is debased with the fourth installment of the series where Lecter is, in fact, reduced to a set of influences.

A childhood trauma such as Lecter's explains why the character developed into the 'monster' he is described as by those who attempt to study him. It is not therefore surprising that a person traumatized in such a manner later finds it hard to empathize with others or lacks understanding of the same moral and ethical standards of normal society. In order to be able to operate with an easy conscience while ignoring these conventions, one has to be ruthless and "to be ruthless is to be merciless, to lack compassion and remorse: to lack serious distress or guilt about one's own callous behavior."⁴⁸

For the sake of brevity, I will refrain from listing every single instance which demonstrates such behavior of Lecter and the selected villains who are discussed in this work—without ruthlessness, acts of evil cannot be committed. This quality is the one that cannot be ignored, denied or pardoned. Acting in full possession of one's faculties to harm others while be aware of the consequences of such an action goes against every principle of what we understand of humanity. Yet it is this disregard for moral principles and boundaries that is the most essential trait of a villain.

⁴⁷ Harris, *The Silence of the Lambs*, 30.

⁴⁸ Smith, "Ruthlessness and Art-Making."

3.3 Personal Peculiarities and Redeeming Values

In the previous subchapters, I discussed the characteristics Shakespearean villains appear to share with Lecter, at least to some extent. However, the aim of this work is to find the essence of modern villains. Even though there are certain similarities, something which could be regarded as the necessary make-up of any evil character, it is inevitable that the ones who happen to be impressive enough to become unforgettable are in possession of traits that are unique only to them. The villains who are created so masterfully that they become even likeable are characters possessing a certain amount of redeeming value. This part of my thesis is therefore focused more on finding a contrast rather than similarities between the selected evil characters.

“Hannibal the Cannibal” is a nickname that leaves little room for misinterpretation of what is Lecter’s most memorable trait. While in modern western society cannibalism is a despicable and horrifying act, in other cultures it is viewed as a sacred ritual with spiritual value. It could be even pardoned if it serves as crucial means of survival in certain situations when one finds themselves stranded in a hostile environment facing harsh conditions Lecter’s first experience with cannibalism ensures that his view on the matter is unorthodox, and his continuous habit of eating people while not connected with the need to survive serves as an instrument of punishment for those he finds lacking. Cannibalism could be at first seen as something that connects Lecter and Dracula, both characters prey on humans, but it is cannibalism that ultimately differentiates them. The vampire’s existence depends on the blood he consumes but Lecter’s consumption of human flesh is a manifestation of his disdain for the individuals he despises and considers offensive and therefore beneath him.

Lecter’s victims can be divided in two categories. He simply kills those in his way to freedom, for example the tourist his identity he assumes for his escape at the end of *The Silence of Lambs*, and they are incidental victims; a collateral damage one could say. Then he purposefully kills those who he finds distasteful and undeserving of life. Most of his victims would belong to this category: his patients—such as Mason Verger who is a child molester; those who betray him—like Rinadlo Pazzi; those who harm or affront someone Lecter cares for—the murderers of his sister, Paul Krendler or Miggs; or those he finds just

offensive for some reason—like the unlucky census taker. They are “free ranged rudes.” (Hannibal movie)

As was already mentioned, evil characters disregard the standard moral code, however Dr. Lecter creates his own value system and a unique sense of morality which dictate that his freedom and survival are his essential priority and his distinctive morals are to be upheld; with the second category of his victims in mind, it is possible to assume that he kills in retribution for violating his personal ethical standards.

The “an eye for an eye” principle reaches far back in human history and even to the beginnings of civilization (*Code of Hammurabi*) and the notion of retribution in literature starts long before Christ (*Iliad*, *Medea*). Revenge is unquestionable part of our world and culture and as Gower observes, in some regions “one may be expected to perform brutal acts of revenge or face being an outcast (perhaps even a dead one).”⁴⁹ It is therefore surprisingly easy to view his actions in an agreeable light and to be sympathetic to him, to see Lecter as a character with which the majority of us can indentify to some extent; the most natural reaction to being hurt is to retaliate in kind.

Lecter values courtesy and sincerity highly which could be considered as a respectable trait. He even praises Starling: “You’d been courteous and receptive to courtesy, you’d established trust by telling the embarrassing truth about Miggs.” He even says that discourtesy is unspeakably ugly to him.⁵⁰ However, he speaks with startling bluntness and often uses expressions not entirely acceptable in polite company himself. He does it for his own entertainment, to shock his surroundings and to force them out of their comfort zone, as demonstrates for example one of his dialogues with Starling:

“Do you think Jack Crawford wants you sexually? I’m sure he’s very frustrated now. Do you think he visualizes... scenarios, transactions... fucking with you?’

‘That’s not a matter of curiosity to me, Dr. Lecter, and it’s the sort of thing Miggs would ask.’

‘Not anymore.’”⁵¹

⁴⁹ Maxine Gower, "Revenge: Interplay of Creative and Destructive Forces." *Clinical Social Work Journal* 41, no. 1 (March 2013): 112-118.

⁵⁰ Harris, *The Silence of the Lambs*, 35.

⁵¹ Harris, *The Silence of the Lambs*, 64.

Frankness such as this indicates that Lecter is self-aware of his nature and is comfortable with what he is, that he revels in the fact that he is free to speak—and subsequently do—as he pleases. It is a noteworthy quality that deserves recognition, especially when compared with characters that are unable to deal with their less than admirable traits. That leads to the last comparison of this thesis,, the one between Lecter and Jekyll.

As it was already mentioned, Jekyll ultimately loses his social standing because of his darker nature and Lecter loses his social standing for the same reasons. However, there is a difference. Jekyll uses Hyde to ‘hide’ his sins and to free himself, but Lecter simply uses caution to mask what he is. Hannibal Lecter kills as Hannibal Lecter, while Henry Jekyll assumes the body of Edward Hyde to do evil. Lecter appears to be perfectly comfortable with what he is and even satisfied with his true nature, and at present time, that seems to be a characteristic which many people could envy. It is probably the most appealing feature of villains, this freedom to escape the monotony of the modern restricting society with clear conscience and subsequently this ability to control the course of their lives.

I conclude this part of my thesis with words about Hannibal Lecter myth: “‘Popular’ novels generally may have a particular significance; as well as reflecting the historical and cultural character of society, they often operate as strong expressions of society’s own sense of its life and values.”⁵² These suggest that Lecter’s novels present us with a character who displays many evil traits, yet posses certain characteristics the society values—integrity, intelligence, strength. These are also found in the older evil character models to some extent as this thesis hopefully demonstrates. The character of Lecter could be even seen as a darker version of romantic hero and in this notion lies the true appeal of villains. The concept of evil is only a matter of perspective and from their point of view, their behavior is not immoral.

⁵² DeLisi, Vaughn, Beaver, Wright, "The Hannibal Lecter myth: psychopathy and verbal intelligence in the MacArthur violence risk assessment study."

Conclusion

Evil characters play important part in fiction and entertainment industry in general and without a good conflict, stories become tedious and not nearly as interesting as they could be. Therefore, a good conflict requires a worthy villain. The aim of this thesis was to discover answers to questions how are modern villains made, and why does the audience find them so alluring. Hannibal Lecter was chosen as a contemporary example of such an appealing character.

In the first part of this work I introduced Lecter's creator, Thomas Harris, and Lecter's real-life inspiration; 'Dr. Salazar' who was a Mexican doctor Alfredo Ballí Treviño convicted of a murder in 1960s. The similarities between the fictional and real doctor were rather startling, the shared traits easily traceable. I also introduced Dr. Lecter's on-screen versions; all five films and TV show. This part of thesis therefore briefly explores the attention these adaptations bring to the character of Dr. Lecter, who was played by three actors: Sir Anthony Hopkins, Brian Cox and Mads Mikkelsen. Further in the text is also explained the formation of the character of Dr. Lecter and the peculiar problems Harris faced while he was writing the books were introduced. It was suggested that part of Lecter's popularity lies in the fact that he is written so credibly that he could be perceived to have a life of his own.

In the second chapter of this work were very briefly described the selected villains and the traits used in the comparison with Lecter. These characteristics include for example noble origins, intelligence and eloquence

In the first part of the third chapter, outward appearances and true natures of evil characters were discussed. It was noticed that Lecter, Dracula and Richard III all share an aristocratic background and are influential and wealthy men with high social standing—at some point in their lives, at least. It is also suggested that the main goal of villains is to obtain and keep power—which is the aim of humans in general, because we feel uncomfortable lacking it. The villains obtain power through their ability to evoke fear, or due to their careful manipulations.

The art of persuasion—or manipulation—is explored in the second subchapter of the third part. It requires intelligence, wit and eloquence, as well as observation skills in order to be able to successfully manipulate others. This

part was therefore firstly focused on the examples of eloquence of Lecter, Richard III and Iago. It also concluded that it is safe to favor the cunning villains as long as they appear only in fiction. Secondly, this subchapter inspected the notion of mysterious motivation of Iago and Lecter, which is an alluring theme for the audience. Thirdly, ruthlessness of villains was briefly discussed as a truly necessary quality of any evil character.

The third part of the last chapter of this thesis contrasted Lecter firstly with Dracula and then with Dr. Jekyll. It explored the notion of cannibalism and how Lecter uses it not to sustain himself, but to demonstrate a point. It discussed that he despises discourtesy and creates his own personal ethical standards. This part also suggested that Lecter kills in retribution mostly the undeserving characters—like betrayers and child molesters. Revenge is an integral part of our culture, therefore Dr. Lecter can be viewed in a favorable light and we are even able to sympathize with him in regard to these matters. Lastly, it was also argued that while Jekyll hypocritically suppresses his darker side, Lecter exhibits more integrity because he is comfortable with what he is. It suggested that the ability to act freely without remorse in the present-day restricting society could be the reason why are strong willed villains also viewed with sympathy and in the end of the chapter it was also mentioned that evil characters could be perceived to some extent even as heroes, at least from their own perspective.

Resumé

V současnosti se zdá, že záporné postavy jsou pro zajímavý a kvalitní příběh téměř stejně důležité jako ty kladné a je jim proto věnována stále větší a větší pozornost. Svědčí o tom filmové adaptace komiksů jako například *Thor*, nebo televizní seriály, v nichž zločinci a sérioví vrazi pozici hlavních protagonistů zastávají (*Černá listina*, *Dexter*).

Cílem této bakalářské práce tedy je pokusit se najít vlastnosti, které spojují záporné postavy a dokonce z nich v očích diváka či čtenáře vytvářejí postavy, které není nemožné si oblíbit. Z čeho je vlastně taková moderní a oblíbená záporná postava tvořena?

Za příklad moderní záporné postavy v tomto případě posloužil doktor Lecter, jinak též známý jako Hannibal Kanibal. Výtvoru Thomase Harrise se za více než tři dekády od svého vzniku podařilo stát populární ikonou a kromě své knižní podoby se rovněž dočkal několika filmových a jednoho seriálového zpracování.

Lecterovy povahové vlastnosti a schopnosti jsou v této práci srovnávány s vlastnostmi předem vybraných záporných postav ze starší anglické literatury. Konkrétně se jedná o Shakespearova Richarda III. a Jaga, Stokerova hraběte Drákulu a Stevensonova doktora Jekylla. Vlastnostmi, které tyto postavy tedy sdílí, jsou aristokratický původ a finanční zázemí, inteligence, výmluvnost a schopnost manipulovat ostatní, společně také s bezcitností a touhou po moci a převaze nad ostatními. Především s posledním jmenovaným se drtivá většina populace může snadněji identifikovat, jelikož lidé obecně se neradi cítí bezmocí; touha po kontrole nad vlastním životem je vlastní nám všem.

Nicméně aby si záporná postava získala oblibu mezi diváky, aby si získala pozornost, trocha tajemnosti, která vyvolává zvědavost, taktéž neuškodí. Jestliže taková záporná postava jako v případě doktora Lectera získá sympatie také svým do jisté míry obdivuhodným charakterem a vlastním morálním kodexem, není už tak těžké na ni pohlížet jako spíše na hrdinu než ‚padoucha‘.

Do jisté míry jsme schopní pochopit, jak silnou motivaci pro něčí zabití může představovat pomsta, která je jedním z hlavních hnacích faktorů Lecterových vražd. Odplata jako taková je ostatně silně zakořeněná v naší historii již od doby zrodu prvních vyspělých civilizací. Ostatně definice zla záleží na úhlu pohledu a záporným postavám se jejich činy ani jako zlé nejeví.

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Annotation

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Title of the Bachelor Thesis: The Making of Modern Villains: A Comparison of Hannibal Lecter with Models in Older English Literature

Supervisor: Mgr. David Livingstone, Ph.D.

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Key words: Thomas Harris, Hannibal Lecter, villain, evil, outward appearance, revenge, manipulation, power-play

The main goal of this thesis is to analyze the making of an interesting evil character popular with the audience with Hannibal Lecter from Thomas Harris's works as the main example. In order to do so, several personal traits and patterns of behavior of Doctor Lecter will be compared with the same traits and similar practices of other characters in older English literature—namely with Dracula, Richard III, Iago and Henry Jekyll.

Anotace

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Název bakalářské práce: Zrod moderních záporných hrdinů: Srovnání Hannibala Lectera s příklady ze starší anglické literatury

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Klíčová slova: Thomas Harris, Hannibal Lecter, záporná postava, zlo, pomsta, vnější dojem, manipulace, demonstrace síly

Hlavním cílem této práce je prozkoumat, jakým způsobem vznikají zajímavé a u čtenářů oblíbené záporné postavy. Za hlavní příklad poslouží Hannibal Lecter z knih Thomase Harrise. Několik jeho povahových vlastností je zde srovnáváno s povahovými vlastnostmi jiných záporných postav ze starší anglické literatury, konkrétně s Drákulou, Richardem III., Jagem a doktorem Jekylllem.