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## THE POWER MESSAGE OF THE DON JUAN FIGURE

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*Don Juan, one of the most popular cultural figures in the Western civilization, has deserved the attention of philosophers relatively recently. Postmodernist reflections on the character of Don Juan refer to it as a ready-made construct whose implications are well-established. It indicates that the Don Juan figure represents a certain cultural phenomenon in social consciousness. That image is an instrument of reflection on the social perception of human sexuality in general and attempts to systematize and govern it in particular. The article suggests a reading of the Don Juan figure in the light of Michel Foucault's theory of power, claiming that the meaning of the character of Don Juan lies in its power-based relations with his environment. Don Juan's domination over the society, over the women whom he violates, and over his own discourse are analysed in order to explore the methods of regulation that society applies on the sexuality of its members, and limits of individual freedom.*

*The article concludes that Don Juan is a political power-figure, because he acts as an instrument of surveillance over the social male-female relationship. The seduction process performed by Don Juan launches the inner surveillance apparatus of every individual – the female victim, her male protector (father, brother or any other), other members of Don Juan's society, as well as male and female members of his audience (i.e. the spectators, or the readers). That is, the article suggests, namely the power message that the Don Juan figure broadcasts to the culture it acts in.*

**KEY WORDS:** *Don Juan, power, Michel Foucault, cultural message.*

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### Introduction

Few characters born of human imagination have enjoyed the degree of popularity that could equal that of the figure of Don Juan. Almost every writer of Western and Eastern Europe has contributed to the theme on the subject, the most important works belonging to Tirso de Molina, Moliere, Mozart, Hoffmann, Byron, Baudelaire, Pushkin, Kierkegaard, Georges Sand, Bernard Shaw, Albert Camus, Ortega Y Gasset, to mention only a few.

Scholarly investigations into the legend of Don Juan may be very roughly categorized into two types: comparative studies, comparing various variants of the Don Juan legend in different cultures, and analytical studies of a single version, within the frames of one or another theoretical approach. Comparative criticism studies the changes in the Don Juan legend, regarding the first version – that of the Spanish dramatist Tirso de Molina – as the

‘original’, as well as the development of the Don Juan character. Among the most authoritative belong the studies by Leo Weinstein (*Metamorphoses of Don Juan*, 1959), Ian Watt (*Myths of Modern Individualism: Faust, Don Quixote, Don Juan, Robinson Crusoe*, 1996), etc. Don Juan studies that analyse one version of the legend tend to look into a work of one author, and sometimes investigate various influences that that particular work had on a certain literary tradition. Among these should be mentioned *Don Juan and the Point of Honour: Seduction, Patriarchal Society, and Literary Tradition* (James Mandrell 1992), *Byron’s Don Juan and the Don Juan legend* (Moyra Haslett 1997), *The Don Giovanni Book: Myths of Seduction and Betrayal* (ed. Jonathan Miller 1990).

The most recent tendency in the literary criticism on the subject of Don Juan is a certain combination of the two mentioned above. Recent scholarly works present the development of one version of the Don Juan legend within the limits of a particular culture, i.e. the influence of Tirso’s *El Burlador* on further Spanish variants of Don Juan story<sup>1</sup>; the followings of Moliere’s *Dom Juan* on the French explorations of the subject, etc.; or within the limits of one genre (the operatic genre dominating in this type of study)<sup>2</sup>.

It must be noted, however, that certain scholars are strictly against Don Juan’s voyages outside the frame of his original dramatic genre, especially against turning him into an archetype or a human type in general. J. W. Smeed, for instance, disclaims such attempts by arguing that such writers treat the name of Don Juan “as a label and [...] a framework for [theirs] and the readers’ convenience” (Smeed 1990, p. 119). The critic acknowledges what should be treated as one of the major problems with Don Juan: whenever the figure is spoken of without specific reference, it is not clear which Don Juan is meant: Tirso’s, Molière’s, Mozart/da Ponte’s, etc.? From the traditional literary studies point, this problem is impossible to overcome and all analysis of the Don Juan figure should focus on a comparison of various authors and their treatment of the theme.

## Don Juan figure as an idea

Despite that, many postmodern and post-structuralist thinkers (Ortega Y Gasset, Foucault, Camus, etc.) have expressed their ideas on the issues related to the Don Juan theme, and specifically his character, referring to the figure as a ready-made construct whose implications and meanings are well-established. It indicates that the Don Juan figure *does* evoke a certain cultural image in social (and philosophical) consciousness. That image is an instrument of reflection on the social perception of human sexuality in general, and attempts to systematize and govern it in particular.

It was Søren Kierkegaard who spoke of the ‘idea’ of Don Juan trying for the first time to resolve the mystery of his appeal. Though it was particularly Mozart/da Ponte’s Don Juan who was at the focus of Kierkegaard’s attention, the philosophical analysis itself raised

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Tirso’s *Don Juan: The Metamorphosis of a Theme*, 1988. Eds. Joseph M. Sola-Sole and George E. Gingras. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. *The Don Giovanni Book: Myths of Seduction and Betrayal*, 1990. Ed. Jonathan Miller. London: Faber and Faber Limited.

the figure onto a new, conceptual level of existence. After Kierkegaard many philosophers have reflected on the figure of the ‘archetypal seducer’, adding to the creation of a new – philosophical – dimension of the figure.

### **Don Juan in the light of Foucault**

Michel Foucault views Don Juan as “the great violator of the rules of marriage“, and also an individual “driven, in spite of himself, by the somber madness of sex.“ (Foucault 1998, p. 39). Foucault proclaims him a libertine and a pervert who deliberately breaks the law, but at the same time “something like a nature gone awry transports him far from all nature“ (ibid). The figure of Don Juan overturns the two great systems of the West for the governing of sex: the law of marriage (society, man-made, artifice) and the order of desires (individual, natural, nature). Foucault does not develop his ideas further leaving it for psychoanalysts to decide whether Don Juan is homosexual, narcissistic, or impotent. Yet his theory of sex suppressed under the discourse of sexuality is a way of reflecting on the figure of Don Juan.

Foucault has the conception of power as the central part of his work, yet it experiences a certain development from an emphasis on institutional power to a later exploration of individual power and the power of government. In his early work, Foucault is interested in the “disindividualization” of power, in how the institutions of modern disciplines, with their principles of order and control, make it seem as if power inheres in the prison, the school, the factory, and so on. “...Power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up” (Foucault 1976, p. 202). The effect of this tendency to disindividualize power is the perception that power resides in the machine itself (the “panoptic machine”; the “technology” of power) rather than in its operator.

In his later work, however, Foucault makes it clear that power ultimately does inhere in individuals, including those that are surveilled or punished. It is true that contemporary forms of disciplinary organization allow ever larger number of people to be controlled by ever smaller numbers of “specialists”; however, as Foucault explains in “The Subject and Power,” something called Power, with or without a capital letter, which is assumed to exist universally in a concentrated or diffused form, does not exist. Power exists only “when it is put into action” (Foucault 2001, p. 340). Foucault therefore makes clear that, in itself, power “is not a renunciation of freedom, a transference of rights, the power of each and all delegated to a few” (ibid). Indeed, power is *not* the same as violence because the opposite pole of violence “can only be passivity” (ibid). What brings power relations into play is neither violence nor consent, although it does require one or another, rather it is a structure of actions brought to bear on other actions. It is a way of acting on acting subjects – prescribing, inscribing, desiring, and seducing. The exercise of power is the way in which certain actions structure the field of other possible actions termed “governmentality” (Foucault 2001, p. 345). Thus the most important interest in Foucault’s later

work is the internalization of power, the inner power apparatus that functions inside an individual, the personal censor who performs the inner surveillance. This means that power is not a structuring feature functioning from above – it works within the society and its social networks. Indispensably, power can only exist when it is put into action – it cannot exist in a void.

The concept of power may open some insights into the character of Don Juan, the ideology behind his figure, and the popularity of the Don Juan legend.

As a matter of fact, treating the Don Juan character in terms of power theory is a quite fruitful exercise. It has already been attempted in 1973 by an American sociologist David G. Winter, who explored various aspects of the Don Juan legend in the light of male sexual power over women and the figure of Don Juan as an expression of it.

At the beginning Winter says that “To be sure, the terms „donjuanism“ and „donjuan-  
esque“ are used in clinical practice to denote a type of man who practices (or who attempts) serial seduction”. (Winter 1973, p. 168). The author further provides a psychoanalytical reading of the Don Juan legend (namely, its ‘original’ version by Tirso de Molina) ending it with a claim that “the legend in its most basic and primitive meaning is an assertion of male power and strength against women who are both desired and feared“, adding that “the theme of male power against female incorporation seems to run through both the early and the more recent versions of the Don Juan legend“ (Winter 1973, p. 176). Winter distinguishes several links to the motive of power in the Don Juan legend, namely, seduction; disguise and concealment; indifference to time, risk and death; illusions; confining (i.e. marriage); background; colours of power; other European versions of the legend; and the Spanish setting of Tirso’s play. Among other interesting observations that the scholar makes, I would like to quote the final paragraph of his chapter on Don Juan: “Don Juan lives out the secret ideal of many men, and has a career of glorious conquest – until his courage and energy drive him to destruction. In an analogous way, perhaps, the legend is an imaginative treatise on the very nature of power and the power motive. Power is a form of conquest; arising from an ambivalent fear of a powerful and binding mother, and symbolized by the sexual degradation of women. Yet in the end power is a fleeting illusion, because in death it inexorably ends with the swallowing up of even the most powerful man. Power is everything; yet it is nothing, for man can never escape “the encircling arms“ [of death]“ (Winter 1973, p. 200).

In this way, the scholar discerns the two most important motives in the Don Juan legend linked to what may be termed as the power message of the Don Juan figure: the social power, and the power of the transcendence (or the Other world, or Death). Both motives are closely intertwined in the character of Don Juan, yet they have received unequal attention by various authors. The absolute majority of later<sup>3</sup> versions of the Don Juan legend focus on Don Juan’s character, motives of his behaviour, and his relation to the seduced women, i.e., the social moments of the story. There are several reasons for such emphasis, the decline in the authority of religion and the Church being just one of them.

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<sup>3</sup> I.e. produced after 1630 when Tirso de Molina’s *El Burlador de Seville* was published, which is considered to be the very first, authentic version of the Don Juan legend.

The emerging concept of an individual, and his opposition to his society as a system built on obedience and duty, is seen by some scholars as another very important reason for the interest in Don Juan as first of all a socially 'engaged' character<sup>4</sup>.

### Motives of power in the Don Juan legend

Seen in the Foucauldian light, Don Juan is an instrument of the system of surveillance over the 'law of marriage', to quote Foucault; he is the one who disobeys the discipline of the social system, and seems to have the privilege of being exempt from its requirements (even when he is caught at the spot of his crime, right after the seduction has just been accomplished, he manages to escape, because his uncle, the Spanish ambassador to Naples, allows him to run away). With regard to this, I would like to point out three power-based motives in the Don Juan legend: his relationship with his society, his relationship with women, and his reputation, or the Don Juan discourse.

Don Juan dominates his society, due to his social and financial position (he is the nephew of the Spanish ambassador to Naples, and comes from a wealthy aristocratic family). He is not afraid of punishment, because he will easily escape it, either with the help of his quick feet and the cover of the night, his sword, or his connections. The very idea of the Don Juan character and his end in Hell was intended as criticism and warning to Tirso's contemporary society that was of notoriously lax morals. Don Juan differs from his friends only because he has tricked a greater number of women, and has the intention of tricking still more. His social status, his appearance and manners, his bravado allow him to be afraid of no-one and act freely. His own perception of his superior position makes him arrogant, yet he remains attractive nevertheless.

It is obvious that Don Juan dominates the women that he violates – according to the existing moral code, they cannot complain, for they would disclose their loss of their female honour and, due to that, the honour of the whole family. Don Juan's women are completely dependent on his discretion – a place in his catalogue means only shame. Also, Don Juan does not take them by force, he is no rapist. They give in to him themselves, even if they have been tricked in one or another way into intercourse with Don Juan. They go with him by their own free will, and what they get is the work of their own hands, so to speak. Interestingly, in the majority of versions of the Don Juan legend, the emphasis is made on the punishment of the seducer – though the women who give in to his seduction break the moral code as well, formally at least. Though, of course, we must not forget that in fact Don Juan is punished not even for his immoral behaviour, but for insulting the dead.

The absence of punishment for the female may root in the inequality between men and women of Tirso's times and until much later. As the woman is not treated as an equal partner, she does not deserve an equally severe punishment. On the other hand, they were all cheated by Don Juan, which adds to the shame and is a sort of punishment on its own.

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<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Ian Watt, 1997. *Myths of Moderns Individualism: Faust, Don Quixote, Don Juan, Robinson Crusoe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Canto edition.

Another aspect of inequality between men and women is related to reputation – though formally most men despise Don Juan, they behave in the very same way that he does (Don Juan's friend de la Mota and others). While the reputation of a 'woman from the Don Juan's list' is always shameful – though she has been cheated, and may be treated as a 'poor thing', her honour would be irretrievably lost. Meanwhile, the honour of Don Juan (and his followers) does not seem to suffer from his profligate affairs – he proclaims to keep his word with men, and that is what matters in the society of his times.

It is in Byron's version of the Don Juan legend that the usual treatment of the subject is reversed. The young man is always not the seducer here, but the seduced. The idea of punishment remains, but Byron punishes his hero less severely than the women who come Juan's way. We do not see his Juan sent to Hell or marriage, which was Byron's intention, as the poem is unfinished. Yet most of the women the young hero encounters end in pain or death: Julia ends up in a convent, Haidee dies, Gulbeyaz suffers an insult to her honour (as Juan refuses her), the sultan's girl has to suffer the misery of escape from the palace and the horror of war; only the Russian Queen Catherine seems to be immune to the fate of a Juan's woman.

The third power-based relationship of Don Juan deals with his reputation. Don Juan seeks to dominate by controlling his own discourse, or his reputation. He is not very eloquent, and we do not see him talk much on stage. Yet he is careful about making his reputation of "the greatest trickster of all Spain" widely known. Though with the ladies of the aristocracy he hides his face under a mask, he leaves enough time to reveal his true identity just before leaving; with women of lower social classes he emphasizes his noble origins. In fact, Don Juan seems to possess a good knowledge of public relations and seems to be acting for the sake of becoming famous rather than for anything else. It is as if the very existence of his reputation of the greatest trickster of all Spain would render him more satisfaction – and power – than the real acts of seduction he has performed. According to Foucault, discourse is created and perpetuated by those who have the power and means of communication. In the case of Don Juan, it works the other way round as well – creating and perpetuating one's own discourse through an adequate means of communication accords power. For Foucault, it is through discourse (through knowledge) that we are created. In the case of Don Juan, he is the only one who is able to create his own discourse: the women involved would not be willing to do it, for that would mean they've had direct experience. In fact, there is no way to find out the truth: the women would not speak freely, even if they wanted to. Thus Don Juan is the only one who creates and spreads his reputation of "the greatest trickster of all Spain".

It seems logical to remind here the psychological explanations of the Don Juan character, and the terms that have been attributed to him – serial seducer, psychopath, somebody incapable of real emotional attachment, etc. All of those would be appropriate if we were speaking of a simple case – a womaniser, a ladies' man, or any other man whose interest lie in the number of women defeated. In such cases a simple and easy explanation would be that the man is seeking power in this way, trying to overmaster the female form that

comes his way (every or any) and, by violating her, to experience himself as more powerful. As a matter of fact, we may come across such an explanation of Don Juan as well (e.g. Winter 1973, p.175 mentioned above). Yet in a broader social or cultural context, Don Juan is obviously a challenge to society. Applying Foucault's terms, Don Juan may be seen as an "irritator" of the social morals. Every society needs this kind of irritators – they force it to reflect upon itself, and at the same time he (the irritator) and his treatment is the result of that social self-reflection. Society would problematize something that it sees as highly important. The development of the Don Juan legend reveals the scheme of action of the social order that discerns the relevant behavioural pattern, recognizes it and tries to incorporate it into the legitimate social apparatus.

On the moral plane, Don Juan is a violator – he violates the social taboo of premarital sex, the moral restriction about obligations, responsibilities towards women whom he has had sexual relations with. He also violates the religious requirements about dealings with the dead, and the universal human attitude of respect to the Other world. On the social plane, Don Juan is a challenge to his society. His domination over it is determined by his family's high position in the king's court and his personal qualities of a brave *señor*; nevertheless, his sexual behaviour and his care about his reputation of trickster turn him into a social problem. His lifestyle becomes a kind of test for social tolerance and its limits. In this way, he is allowed to perform the violations that he does, to transgress the limits of moral behaviour. He is more than a mere youngster brimming with self-confidence, or a womaniser who got carried away with his own successes. Don Juan becomes a political figure, because his behaviour is an expression of a policy of the social regime of his time. The story of Don Juan is a story of social regulation of male and female sexuality and the restrictions that society imposes on an individual freedom.

It must be mentioned here that in the times of Tirso, the very idea of an individual challenging the society seemed abhorrent. That is why, in part, Don Juan is sent to the hell. In later versions, and later epochs, the streak of individualism is becoming increasingly important, more emphasis is put on the character itself rather than the moral and religious problems that the original play intended to discuss. This turn, or change of emphasis, may mean that the social challenge of Don Juan has been solved, fitted into the formal cultural pattern, and that the issue of religion has yielded to that of sexual morals and male-female relationships. The figure of Don Juan seems to have turned into a synonym for womaniser. Yet, not every womaniser is a Don Juan. A womaniser is not a problem; Don Juan is. So the question we need to ask then is "when does a womaniser turn into a Don Juan?"

At the conceptual level, a womaniser becomes a Don Juan when he fulfils two conditions: when he poses a challenge to the existing ethic, moral norms about sexual behaviour, and when this challenge is perceived as a threat by the society whose moral or ethical norms of sexuality he challenges. It deals with sexual relations between the two sexes, of course; yet it should not be surprising that the issue of challenge to the norms has been favoured by authors whose personal sexual lifestyle was perceived as a challenge by the society of their times (like Foucault or Georges Bataille).

It must be added that the story of Don Juan communicates one more power problem that has worried every cultural system since it has realised itself as such: the issue of authority and its limits. The age that Don Juan first emerges in – the late Middle Ages – finds itself against yet another problem: the problem of an individual against an authority and the limits of a system as opposed to individual freedom.

## The promise of Don Juan

The concept of freedom is essential for Foucault's understanding of power. "Power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are "free" Foucault explains (Foucault 2001, p. 342). Conversely, "slavery is not a power relationship when man is in chains. (In this case it is a question of a physical relationship of constraint)" (ibid). Indeed, recalcitrance thus becomes an integral part of the power relationship: "At the very heart of the power relationship, and constantly provoking it, are the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom" (ibid).

Translated into the context of the Don Juan legend, a seduction may only happen when the seduced gives in by her own free will and is, in fact, willing to be seduced. Don Juan's 'colleague' Valmont, the sophisticated seducer of Choderlos de Laclos's novel *Les Liaisons dangereuses*, puts it this way: "My plan is to have her *feel* thoroughly the value and extent of each of the sacrifices she is going to make for me; not to lead her on so quickly that remorse cannot follow her; to make her virtue expire in slow agony; to fix her attention unceasingly on that distressing spectacle; and to grant her the happiness of having me in her arms only after she has been forced to admit this desire freely." (Letter LXX). The early Don Juan (that of Tirso, or even that of Mozart) is not as refined or as malignant as Valmont; yet women give in quite readily to his seductions, fooled by his vows of eternal love and instant marriage. But there is more. Along with these nice promises, the victims of Don Juan fall for his freedom of attitude, his fearlessness of whatever around, his bursting energy and enthusiasm that seem to sweep away all resistance. Don Juan, the libertine, invites his partners (or victims?) to partake of this liberty, to spend a moment in an unrestricted existence. This invitation, though unconscious, to experience the primeval freedom of self-enjoyment and the inherent human need to transgress the accepted norms, to explore the limits of freedom, cannot but be answered positively – especially by members of the pious, rigid Christian society of the 17th century (as well as the centuries to come) that has only begun to realise the changing relationship between the society and its individuals.

## Conclusion

I believe that seeing the figure of Don Juan in the terms of the theory of power helps to explain his popularity. He dominates over the audience in the same way that he dominates over the society he lives in and the women that he chooses to seduce.

That is the secret of his attractiveness. Apart from the fact that he is young, quite handsome, and comes from a good family, we find no evidence or explanations in the majority versions of the legend why the seducer character is so irresistibly seductive. This feature is

always present, self-evident, but never explained. Therefore, the audience is free to make their own interpretations. Consequently, I suggest that the secret of Don Juan's attractiveness lies in three aspects related to his character: his freedom to ignore the social norms, his ability to get what he wants without any obstructions (it does not even matter what means he employs for the achievement of his aims), and the thrill in the suspense: will he be punished? Or *should* he be? It must be said to Don Juan's benefit that he is very insistent on his aims – his single aim, in fact. This, together with the tool of cheating, and a good deal of mere luck, makes him – no, not irresistible, but unbeatable. He *makes* himself liked, even if he is not at first. Though we do not usually see it (our seducer is not as eloquent as one would expect, and we are *told* about his successes rather than witness them), we take his victories as natural, not even questioning his irresistibility. Like all those women he cheats, we are attracted to him against our own will. Don Juan is an attractive evil. Or is he really evil? What is evil about him? Which part of Don Juan's behaviour is evil? The inconstancy with regard to women, or self-overestimation leading to pride and death? Or the fact that he always gets away with it? Where is that absolute limit that a violator might not cross fearlessly? What is an adequate punishment for the violation of such a limit? How should the society deal with the violator? What does the social regime do for those who disobey it?

It is in these questions that, I suggest, the cultural power message of the Don Juan figure is encoded. Don Juan is a political power-figure, because he acts as an instrument of surveillance over the social male-female relationship. The seduction process performed by Don Juan launches the inner surveillance apparatus of every individual – the female victim, her male protector (father, brother or any other), other members of the Don Juan's society, as well as male and female members of his audience (i.e. the spectators, or the readers). Along with other characters of the legend, we, the audience, explore and test our inner order of desire; the results of the exploration – and the fate of Don Juan – depend on the tension between the outer social and the inner individual censorship on sexuality.

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**THE POWER MESSAGE OF THE DON JUAN FIGURE****Summary**

Don Juan, one of the most popular cultural figures in the Western civilization, has deserved the attention of philosophers relatively recently. Postmodern and post-structuralist reflections on the issues related to the character of Don Juan refer to the figure as a ready-made construct whose implications and meanings are well-established. It indicates that the Don Juan figure represents a certain cultural phenomenon in social (and philosophical) consciousness. That image is an instrument of reflection on the social perception of human sexuality in general, and attempts to systematize and govern it in particular. The article suggests a reading of the Don Juan figure within the frames of Michel Foucault's theory of power claiming that the meaning of the character of Don Juan lies in its power-based relations with his environment. Seen in the Foucauldian light, Don Juan is an instrument of the system of surveillance over the 'law of marriage', to quote Foucault; he is the one who disobeys the discipline of the social system, and seems to have the privilege of being exempt from its requirements. The analysis of the three power-based relations (Don Juan's domination over the society, over the women whom he violates, and over his own discourse) leads to the conclusion that Don Juan is a political power-figure, because he acts as an instrument of surveillance over the social male-female relationship. Yet the story of Don Juan also raises the problem of an individual against an authority, and the limits of a system as opposed to individual freedom. Along with being an 'irritator', a certain 'tester' of the limits of the social tolerance to individual violations of the accepted moral laws, Don Juan becomes the symbolical figure that embodies the inherent human need to transgress the accepted norms, to explore the limits of freedom. Don Juan's seduction becomes an invitation to partake of his liberty, to spend a moment in an unrestricted existence, in the primeval freedom of self-enjoyment. At the same time, however, the seduction process performed by Don Juan launches the inner censorship, or the inner surveillance apparatus of every individual – the female victim, her male protector (father, brother or any other), other members of the Don Juan's society, as well as male and female members of his audience (i.e. the spectators, or the readers). That is, the article suggests, the power message that the Don Juan figure broadcasts to the culture it acts in.

KEY WORDS: Don Juan, power, Michel Foucault, cultural message.

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*Moksliniai interesai: kultūrologinės studijos, kritinė teorija, Don Žuano figūra*

**DON ŽUANO GALIOS ŽINIA****Santrauka**

Don Žuanas – viena populiariausių kultūrinių Vakarų civilizacijos figūrų, tačiau filosofų dėmesio sulaukė palyginti neseniai. Postmodernistai ir poststruktūralistai nagrinėja Don Žuaną kaip susiformavusį konstruktą su nusistovėjusiomis reikšmėmis ir potekstėmis. Don Žuanas kaip figūra atskleidžia tam tikrą kultūrinį reiškinį socialinėje (ir filosofinėje) sąmonėje. Šis reiškinys veikia kaip mąstymo apie socialinę seksualumo sampratą ir konkrečius bandymus jį sistematuoti bei valdyti įrankis. Straipsnyje Don Žuanas tyrinėjamas remiantis Michelio Foucault galios teorija, manoma, kad Don Žuano reikšmė slypi galia grįstuose jo santykiuose su aplinka. Analizuojant šiuos domi-

navimu pagrįstus santykius – Don Žuano dominavimas visuomenėje, santykiuose su moterimis ir jo paties diskurso atžvilgiu – siekiama iširti reguliavimo metodus, kuriuos visuomenė taiko savo narių seksualumui ir asmens laisvės riboms apibrėžti.

Straipsnyje prieinama prie išvados, kad Don Žuanas yra politinė galios figūra, nes jis veikia kaip socialinės vyrų ir moterų santykių priežiūros įrankis. Suvedžiodamas Don Žuanas paskatina įsijungti kiekvieno asmens vidinį ‚priežiūros‘ įtaisą: tiek moters aukos, tiek jos gynėjo vyro (tėvo, brolio ar kito), tiek kitų visuomenės narių, tiek vyriškos bei moteriškos lyties auditorijos, t. y. žiūrovų arba skaitytojų. Tai, straipsnio teigimu, ir yra Don Žuano galios žinia (angl. power message), perduodama kultūrai, kurioje jis veikia.

REIKŠMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Don Žuanas, galia, Michelis Foucault, kultūrinė žinia.

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