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LIBERTINISM IN ENGLISH RESTORATION DRAMA: A CONGNITIVE-PRAGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

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"Leave this gaudy guilded stage,
From custom more than use frequented,
Where fools of either sex and age
Crowd to see themselves presented.
To Love's theatre, the bed,
Youth and beauty fly together,
And act so well it may be said
The laurel there was due to either.
Twixt strifes of love and war, the difference lies in this:
When neither overcomes, love's triumph greater is".
John Wilmot, earl of Rochester
(Vieth, 2002, p. 85-86)

Olena Marina. Libertinism in English Restoration drama: a cognitive-pragmatic perspective. This paper aims to explore LIBERTINISM as a discourse-generative concept of the English Restoration and its manifestations in the 17th century drama. In the focus of attention are: the dramatic discourse of the seventeenth century and social and historical conditions that predetermined the origin and development of libertinism in the Restoration drama. In this article, I argue that during the Restoration LIBERTINISM thrived along with such concepts as EMPIRE, HONOUR, LOVE, MODE, SCIENCE, TRADE, and WIT. It is stated that after years of bans and prohibitions libertinism began to develop as a reaction against an overly religious dominant worldview that was imposed on the English people during the Interregnum. It is confirmed that libertinism was widely disseminated in the play-houses which were reopened by Charles II after almost a twenty-year break. In this article, I argue that libertinism takes its ideas from the teachings of René Descartes and Thomas Hobbes; it is viewed as extreme hedonism and rejection of all moral and religious dogmas. Charles II himself set an example which was emulated by his courtiers and therefore libertine modes of behaviour were demonstrated to the general public as role models by the aristocracy which regained power with the Restoration. I also claim that as during the English Restoration many play wrights either were libertines or wrote about libertine behaviour and adventures in their plays, the dramatic discourse of the seventeenth century gave rise to a new type of English identity–the English Restoration libertine-aristocrat. Accordingly, the dramatic discourse and dramatic performances of the seventeenth century were the means of establishment, reiteration, and dissemination of the libertine ethos.

Key words: concept, dramatic discourse, English Restoration, identity, libertine, libertinism.

О. В. Маріна. Лібертинізм у драматургії часів англійської Реставрації: когнітивно-прагматичний аспект. Метою статті є дослідження LIBERTINISM / ЛІБЕРТИНІЗМУ як дискурс-генеруючого концепту часів англійської Реставрації та його проявів у драматичних творах сімнадцятого століття. Увагу зосереджено на драматичному дискурсі сімнадцятого століття і соціально-історичних умовах, що зумовили походження і розвиток лібертинізму в драматичних творах часів англійської Реставрації. У статті стверджується, що у період англійської Реставрації LIBERTINISM / ЛІБЕРТИНІЗМ розвивався разом із такими концептами, як EMPIRE / ІМПЕРІЯ, HONOUR / ЧЕСТЬ, LOVE / ЛЮБОВ, MODE / МОДА, SCIENCE / НАУКА, TRADE / ТОРГІВЛЯ, WIT / ДОТЕПНІСТЬ. Після років заборон і обмежень лібертинізм почав розвиватися як реакція на

надмірно релігійний домінуючий світогляд, що був нав'язаний англійцям під час Міжцарювання.У статті стверджується, що лібертинізм широко розповсюджувався в театрах, які були знову відкриті Карлом II після майже двадцятирічної перерви. У статті доведено, що лібертинізм бере свої ідеї з вчень Рене Декарта і Томаса Гоббса; його тлумачать як екстремальний гедонізм і відмову від усіх моральних і релігійних догм. Карл II сам надавав приклад поведінки, який копіювали його придворні, а тому моделі поведінки лібертінів широко демонструвалися широкому загалу аристократією, яка знову набула впливу із Реставрацією монархії. Я також стверджую, що через те, що багато драматургів часів англійської Реставрації або були лібертінами, або писали про поведінку і пригоди лібертінів у своїх п'єсах, драматичний дискурс XVII століття породив новий тип англійської ідентичності – ідентичність лібертіна-аристократа часів англійської Реставрації. Відповідно, драматичний дискурс і театральні вистави сімнадцятого століття були засобом встановлення, ствердження і поширення лібертинського етосу.

Ключові слова: англійська Реставрація, дискурс драми, ідентичність, концепт, лібертін, лібертінізм.

Е. В. Марина. Либертинизм в драматургии времён английской Реставрации: когнитивно-прагматический аспект. Целью статьи является исследование LIBERTINISM / ЛИБЕРТИНИЗМА как дискурс-генерирующего концепта времён английской Реставрации и его проявлений в драматических произведениях семнадцатого века. Внимание сосредоточено на драматическом дискурсе семнадцатого века и социально-исторических условиях, обусловивших происхождение и развитие либертинизма в драматических произведениях времён английской Реставрации. В статье я утверждаю, что в период английской Реставрации LIBERTINISM / ЛИБЕРТИНИЗМ развивался наряду с такими концептами, как EMPIRE / ИМПЕРИЯ, HONOUR / ЧЕСТЬ, LOVE / ЛЮБОВЬ, MODE / МОДА, SCIENCE / НАУКА, TRADE / ТОРГОВЛЯ, WIT / ОСТРОУМИЕ. После многих лет запретов и ограничений либертинизм начал развиваться как реакция на чрезмерно религиозное доминирующее мировоззрение, которое навязывалось англичанам во время Междуцарствия. В статье утверждается, что либертинизм широко пропагандировался в театрах, которые были вновь открыты Карлом II после почти двадцатилетнего перерыва. Доказано, что либертинизм черпает свои идеи из учений Рене Декарта и Томаса Гоббса; его трактуют, как чрезмерный гедонизм и отказ от всех моральных и религиозных догм. Карл II сам показывал пример поведения, который копировали его придворные, и поэтому модели поведения либертинов широко демонстрировались общественности аристократией, которая вновь приобрела влияние с Реставрацией монархии. Я также утверждаю, что так как многие драматурги времён английской Реставрации либо были либертинами, либо описывали поведение и приключения либертинов в своих пьесах, драматический дискурс XVII века породил новый тип английской идентичности – идентичность либертина-аристократа времён английской Реставрации. Соответственно, драматический дискурс и театральные представления семнадцатого века были средством установления, утверждения и распространения либертинского этоса.

Ключевые слова: английская Реставрация, дискурс драмы, идентичность, концепт, либертин, либертинизм.

1. Introduction

This paper investigates manifestations of the concept LIBERTINISM in the dramatic discourse of the English Restoration. Libertinism has been the object of cultural, historical, and literary studies. Yet, no attempt has been made so far to consider it from a cognitive-pragmatic perspective. It is important to note that both words 'libertine' and 'libertinism' are firmly rooted in the world culture and therefore arouse constant interest. Suffice it to mention the song "Libertine" by Mylen Farmer released in 1986, "The Libertine" film starring Johnny Depp issued in 2005, the British Rock Band "The Libertines" or even "The Libertine" play by Jeffreys published in 2016. In this article, I go back to the origin and expansion of the term 'libertinism' in the British linguistic culture of the Restoration period. First and foremost, the semantics of the term is learnt from a thesaurus source. According to *Online Etymology Dictionary:*

> *the meaning of the term 'libertine' as 'freethinker' is first recorded in 1560s, which in its turn comes from the French word 'libertin' (1540s) that was originally used to denote pantheistic Protestant sects in France and the Low Countries. This sense partakes more of 'liberty' and 'liberal' than of the classical meaning (in Old French, 'libertin' meant "Saracen slave converted to Christianity"). The meaning "dissolute or licentious person, man given to indulgence of lust" is first recorded in 1590s; the darkening of meaning being perhaps due to misunderstanding of Latin 'libertinus' in Acts vi:9. For "condition of being a libertine" the English people in the 17th century tried libertinage; libertinism (from French 'libertinisme').*

As it becomes clear from the explanation above, libertinism is a rather complicated notion the meaning of which will be elaborated further in this article.

Therefore, **the object** of this study is the dramatic discourse of the English Restoration. In this article, I argue that the concept LIBERTINISM is a discourse-generating concept of the English Restoration drama. Therefore, **the aim** of this study is to reveal the characteristics of the concept LIBERTINISM as one of the basic discourse-generating concepts in the period of the English Restoration. In light of this, I set the following **objectives**: to specify historical and social conditions that predetermined the development of libertinism in the period of the English Restoration; to single out basic concepts of the English Restoration discourse; to define the notions 'libertinism' and 'libertine'; to trace the origin of libertinism in the English literary discourse; to characterize the English dramatic discourse of the seventeenth century; to trace the construction of a libertine-aristocrat's identity and its transformation over the Restoration period. This paper provides a discursive analysis of the dramatic discourse of the English Restoration, proves that the identity of the English Restoration libertine-aristocrat was constructed in and through it, and shows that the dramatic discourse of the English Restoration was influenced by and in its turn shaped the discourse of the seventeenth century.

2. Method

In this study, I use methods of discourse analysis ("the analysis of language as it is used to enact activities, perspectives, and identities" (Gee, 1999, p. 4) and cognitive-discursive interpretation "to establish how much of the directly available or inferable knowledge must be at least or at most presented in a text" (van Dijk, 1983, p. 278). The material for analysis includes 23 excerpts that verbalize the concept LIBERTINISM in the dramatic discourse of the seventeenth century, namely, from the plays written and staged during the Restoration period 1660–1700: "The Way of the World" by Congreve, "The Country Wife" by Wycherley, "The Libertine" by Shadwell, "The Man of Mode; or, Sir Fopling Flutter" by Etherege, "The Rehearsal" by Villiers, "The Relapse; or Virtue in Dancer" by Vanbrugh. The excerpts from the plays are quoted from (Villiers et al., 1953) and (Shadwell, 1676).

Structurally, the paper consists of four sections: introduction, method, results and discussion with subsections: historical and social background for the dissemination of libertinism in the English Restoration drama; basic concepts of the English Restoration discourse; the origin and evolution of libertinism from 1540s to the English Restoration; an English Restoration libertine-aristocrat's identity; playhouse as a means of disseminating the libertine ideology. Finally, I provide some conclusions and draft prospects for a further analysis.

3. Results and discussion

In this chapter, I will study the origin of libertinism and factors that influenced its popularity in the dramatic works of the period, mention basic concepts that dominated in the Restoration discourse, characterize an English Restoration libertine-aristocrat's identity, and trace how libertinism was spread and popularized in the theatre of the English Restoration.

3.1. Historical and social background for the dissemination of libertinism in the English Restoration drama

With the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, England entered a new age of its development, or more precisely an "old and new" age. This conclusion can be made on the basis of the fact that sermons and tracts that were an integral part of the Puritan life style accounted for sixty percent of the literary material which was published in England during the years between 1660–1680 (Neagle, 1989). The old elements of the Puritan regime and the new elements of the Restoration existed side by side for a long time. The cue of one of the characters in the play "The Way of the World" by Congreve speaks in support of this observation:

(1) *LADY WISHFORT: There are books over the chimney – Quarles and Prynne, and The Short View of the Stage, with Bunyan's works, to entertain you.* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 549).

The main character of the play mentions the well-known personalities of that time, who had opposing views: Bunyan and Prynne preached Puritan ideas, while Quarles was famous for his Royalist sympathies. Therefore, we may state that two ideologies coexisted in the minds of the people during the English Restoration.

The play-house and the monarchy were "inseparably suppressed and inseparably restored, and for much of the 1660s the twin restorations remained ostentatiously linked" (Hughes, 1996, p. 1). The king enjoyed all pursuits of artistic and cultural value, but "it is really the theatre that defines the age" (Grant, Kay & Kerrigan, 2011, p. 181). Kavernik (1995, p. 1) metaphorically describes the revival of the English drama: "Late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British drama was public art whose lifeblood was the cash paid at the box office by Londoners prepared to be entertained, stimulated, soothed, and sometimes even enlightened by what they saw on stage".

Under the Puritan regime theatres in England had not operated for 18 years, during which time any performances were held in secret, and if discovered, the participants were seriously punished (Grant, Kay & Kerrigan, 2011). In fact, the Puritan regime limited or banned all kinds of entertainment:

> *No swearing, no dancing, no drinking, no horseracing, no sliding on ice, no fornication: there was hardly anything for them [the English] to do. The violence of the reaction against Puritanism at the Restoration of Charles II was due to the fact that for many years the Puritans had bored, beyond the possibility of further endurance, those not of their way of thinking.* (Bruce, 1974, p. 14).

Charles II demonstrated a keen interest in the management of play-houses, in the writing and acting, and in performers and garments. So, at the beginning of the Restoration, Puritanism was exposed with disdain and its adherents became an object of ridicule in plays and performances, now "not casually as before the rebellion, but with a *vengeance*" (Schneider, 1971, p. 40-41). However, the influence of Puritans remains deeply felt in the spirits and thoughts of the people during the English Restoration, who still regarded theatre-going and similar changes as risqué activities.

(2) *LADY WISHFORT. I warrant you, or she would never have borne to have been catechised by him; and have heard his long lectures against singing and dancing, and such debaucheries; and going to filthy plays, and profane music-meetings, where the lewd trebles squeak nothing but bawdy, and the basses roar blasphemy. Oh, she would have swooned at the sight or name of an obscene play-book! – and can I think, after all this, that my daughter can be naught? What, a whore? And thought it excommunication to set her foot within the door of a playhouse! O dear friend, I can't believe it, no, no! as she says, let him prove it, let him prove it!* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 584).

Under the restored king the country gradually moved away from the rigid Puritanism (Brockett, 1977, p. 272). In the times of the Restoration a new repertoire, lavish scenery, female actresses, flying machines, mood music and dances were demonstrated to the Restoration audience (Neagle, 1989). Many theatre machines and sound-producing devices that enjoyed popularity during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I passed as a heritage to the Restoration theatres (Summers, 1934, p. 191). The literary thought of that time was distinguished by a great diversity and difference in aim and method of men of letters, e. g., the backward-looking Milton, the moralistic Bunyan and the risqué Rochester (Neagle, 1989).

When the theaters were reopened, only two persons held the royal patents: Davenant and Killigrew. Both men understood that "they were in the process of either resuscitating a drama that had been comatose for almost twenty years or creating something completely new" (Neagle, 1989, p. 54). The majority of dramatists mixed old and new elements in their plays, borrowed liberally and created anew whenever they could. The theatre-going public was reduced to Charles II, his court, some officials and idlers who surrounded him due to the fact that only two theatres operated in London, and because citizens did not at first attend the revived performances (Neagle, 1989). The degree of the king's involvement in theatre management becomes clear from the following examples: "Charles himself lent his precious coronation vestments to Betterton for Davenant's staging of "Love and Honour" (Gonzàlez Treviño, 2013, p. 116). Similarly, Hayden and Worden (2019) noted that Charles II was an active supporter of the theatre and even sent Betterton, a famous leading male actor of the Restoration stage, twice to France to study French scenes and machines. "In further marked contrast to the recent Puritan past, new plays appearing on the London stage were typically satirical, witty, bawdy" ("History of Britain and Ireland", 2013, p. 181), the fact that was acknowledged by the playwrights themselves. The example from the play: "The Relapse; or Virtue in Dancer" by Vanbrugh illustrates this idea:

(3) *These people have regal'd you here to-day*
(In my opinion) with <u>a saucy play…</u> (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 513).

In the preface to the play "The Relapse; or Virtue in Dancer" Vanbrugh writes:

> *But my modesty will sure atone for everything, when the world shall know it is so great I am even to this day insensible of those <u>two shining graces in the play (which some part of the town is pleased to compliment me with) blasphemy and bawdy</u>. For my part, I cannot find 'em out: <u>if there was any obscene expressions upon the stage here they are in the print…</u>* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 415).

Restoration stage represented an abundance of genres and their combinations. The study of dramatic genres in the period of the English Restoration can be the object of a separate research. However, I think it important to mention the audience's preference of comedies. Matito (2013, p. 639) notes:

> *During the 17th century, comicity is significantly more abundant on the stage. This fact can be interpreted as an effect of the intensification of the baroque culture, which in addition to being very familiar with the coexistence of beauty and ugliness is also increasingly more prone to extravagance as a result of its break with reality and social codes.*

Corman (2000) in his study of the Restoration comedy confirms the above stated argument. The author emphasizes the prestige of tragedy for both playwrights and critics, but notes that Restoration playwrights, who expected longer runs of plays and, correspondingly, financial profits,

more willingly created comedies: "performance records demonstrate that comedy was by far the preferred theatrical genre with audiences" (Corman, 2000, p. 56).

Summers (1934) notes that although the costumes of Restoration actors in most cases were not exact, anyway, the main characters' garments demonstrated richness, and further marked that "upon the stage an ornate sumptuousness of apparel is often far more effective than the nicest details of an historical pedantry" (Summers, 1934, p. 254). Baroque and rococo style dresses prevailed. Summers (1934) also mentions that a dress for the character of Cleopatra in "All for Love" by Dryden was bought from the Princess of Wales which she had worn on her birthday. A true princess the actress must have looked on the stage. In a nutshell – everything was expensive, luxurious and sumptuous. I argue that such an apparel accurately conveyed the spirit and mood of the King who had spent much of his lifetime in poverty and exile. Besides, such 'spectacles' provided the viewers with an opportunity to get a glimpse of the rich and courtly lifestyle in a play-house, if not in reality.

It is essential to note, that published plays enjoyed great popularity among the readers after the closure of the theatres during the years between 1642–1646. Plays were aimed at readers rather than viewers and were increasingly being written by men of letters of aristocratic origin.

> *Play writing as a profession was not re-established until the 1670s, changing the perception and status of authorship. Play writing came to be viewed as a refined pursuit and in the politically charged atmosphere of the times the writing and reading of plays became an accepted expression of Cavalier resistance; indeed, the sense of an inextricable link between the monarchy and the stage, both sharing the same fate, was forged at this time* (Keenan, 2016, p. 48).

The king's return heralded a number of changes, among them the establishment of *a libertine ethos* [*emphasis added* – O. M.] at court, which McKimpson (2016, p. 137) calls *"an ethos of bodily license and the sovereignty of the royalist upper class"* [*emphasis added* – O. M.]. The new ideology changed the discourse of that time, which Potter (1999) defines as *"socio-philosophical discourse of libertinism"* [*emphasis added* – O. M.] (Potter, 1999, p. 169). While Zimbardo (1998, p. 46) describes this period as "a zero point" and calls the discourse of the time *"the deconstructive discourse of zero point"* [*emphasis added* – O. M.] which called all constructs, all laws, all values, all concepts – like "reason of mind," or 'truth' – into doubt", which, in our point of view, is fairly true as libertines openly questioned the existing values, ideologies and beliefs.

3.2. Basic concepts of the English Restoration discourse

Before proceeding to the discussion of libertinism it is necessary to mention other concepts that either originated or underwent historical and linguistic transformations during the period under consideration to better understand the environment which fostered the development of libertinism. Zimbardo (1998) singles out such dominant concepts in the Restoration discourse as TRADE, SCIENCE and EMPIRE. The scholar calls them "the discursive centers around which the new 'constructive' language revolved" (Zimbardo, 1998, p. 9). In Zimbardo's (1998, p. 9) point of view, these 'centers' were realized in:

> *1) the newly constructed Board of Trade of 1696 (the plan for which was designed by Locke) under the direction of such macroeconomists as Charles Davenant and Josiah Child; 2) The Royal Academy and the Oxford academicians who inspired its founding, like Robert Boyle, John Wilkins, and the naturalist John Ray; and 3) a new nationalism which envisioned not Christ but the English Nation as the natural "Head" of a new world order and English "natural reason" as the originary from which that order should be mapped.*

Bruce (1974) points to HONOUR and MODE as dominant concepts of the time. "Honour is regarded as a traditional and native quality; Mode as something new fangled and Frenchified" (Bruce, 1974, p. 177). The scholar believes that fame and acknowledged superiority are achieved through the possession of literacy, wit and grace, and are subject only to "the fierce and inexorable requirements of Honour. There is no reverence for the possession of money" (Bruce, 1974, p. 60). I argue that to this far from accomplished list of dominant concepts we can add the concept WIT which at the end of the seventeenth century was a forerunner of the Age of Reason and LOVE as an integral part of both the courtly circle and the dramatic discourse of the time. While one can account for the circulation of the concepts HONOUR and MODE as concepts which were inherent to the discourse of aristocracy, EMPIRE, SCIENCE, TRADE and WIT, as I argue, became characteristic of the new age in the origin and growth of the British empire.

3.3. The origin and evolution of libertinism from 1540s to the English Restoration.

The words *libertinage* or *libertinism* originally described the execution of inappropriate freedoms that were considered negative, excessive, dangerous, in all spheres, first of all, in religious and moral, but also in political, in fact in all social relations that required compliance with or submission to norms (Vanhaesebrouck & Dehert, 2012, p. 2-3).

Corpus linguistics proves wide usage of the words *libertine* and *libertinism* in the category "Early English Books Online 1470s–1690s" which comprises 755 million words in 25368 texts (Davies, 2017). In the tables below I deliberately reduced the search results to the years when the words begin to occur. The search results are represented in the tables below:

Table 1

The frequency of usage of the word *libertine* in Early English Books

years	1540s	1550s	1560s	1570s	1580s	1590s	1600s	1610s	1620s	1630s	1640s	1650s	1660s	1670s	1680s	1690s
frequency of usage	1		12	3	25	20	58	41	48	53	106	103	71	78	115	190

Table 2

The frequency of usage of the word *libertinism* in Early English Books

years	1640s	1650s	1660s	1670s	1680s	1690s
frequency of usage	6	40	48	69	54	90

As it becomes clear from these tables, the heyday of libertinism was the seventeenth century, in particular – the period of Restoration. Although I did not set an objective to work with corpus linguistics in the article, I argue that the results obtained from the corpus "Early English Books Online 1470s–1690s" may speak in support of my findings.

Cavaillè (2012, pp. 12-13) argues that both terms – 'libertinism' and 'libertine' should be used in the plural since "historiography has established diachronic distinctions and has drawn very clear dividing lines among the "spiritual libertinism" of the sixteenth century stigmatized by Calvin, the 'philosophical' or 'erudite' libertinism of the seventeenth century, and libertinism in the *mores* and in the literature of the eighteenth century". The scholar provides an example from the "Hamlet" by

Shakespeare, when Ophelia instructs her brother not to be "*a puff'd and reckless libertine*" who dishonours young ladies. Cavaillè (2012, p. 17) argues that the word signifies the adoption of a relaxed lifestyle, as well as incivility of speech, and the lack of obedience to and respect for authority.

It is essential to note, that libertinism and its controversy about free choice and unrestricted freedom of religious and moral beliefs developed in Europe, namely in France, and took its roots from the rationalism of Descartes and, in England, from the materialism of Hobbes. Ungerer (1990, pp. 227-228) explains the origin and development of libertine ideas in the following way:

> *The emergence of the libertine or rake was one of the most remarkable social and cultural phenomena of the Restoration. The King himself set an example which was emulated by the Court Wits. Their prophet of libertinism was Hobbes whose theory of human nature appealed to them and seemed to free them from all inhibitions. Hobbes develops his theory by beginning with the senses. He considers them as basic to knowledge and as governing the will. The sense perceptions are the means whereby the brain receives the impressions, hence ideas and understanding. Upon these passions depend, and all the nature of man is subject to them. From this theory the court rakes derived the one-sided view that the gratification of the senses was the only purpose of life.*

Fisk (2005) notes that being an intellectual movement libertinism does not easily yield a consistent body of thought or doesn't have a single point of origin. Concepts like LIBERTINISM require more than intellectual force for their dissemination: there should exist amenable social conditions. Traditionally interpretations of the Restoration period mention the 'relief' felt by citizens too much pressed by the limitations and prohibitions of the Interregnum (1649–60). Years of austerity made people strive for more self-expression (including sexual freedom) and the English welcomed the restoration of a merry monarch famous for his sensual nature (Fisk, 2005).

3.4. An English Restoration libertine-aristocrat's identity.

In this article, I argue that an English libertine-aristocrat's identity was constructed at the beginning of the English Restoration and that "their (*libertines'*) attitudes were characterized by a reputed skepticism of public institutions combined with a need for public attention" (Webster, 2005, p. 2). This is also the time when the term 'libertine' was extensively used to indicate violations of all socially accepted norms. The example from the play "The Way of the World" by Congreve confirms my conviction:

(4) *MRS. MARWOOD. Certainly. To be free; I have no taste of those insipid dry discourses, with which our sex of force must entertain themselves, apart from men. We may affect endearments to each other, profess eternal friendships, and seem to do at like lovers; but 'tis not in our natures long to persevere. Love will resume his empire in our breasts, and every heart, or soon or late, receive and readmit him as its lawful tyrant.*
MRS. FAINALL. Bless me, how have I been deceived! Why, you profess a libertine. (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 534).

Tindemans (2012, p. 135) argues that "at the moment when Charles II regained his throne in 1660, the intertwining of political renewal, as was expected from his reign after the Civil War, sexual energy, as exemplified in the libertine conduct of his court, was considered a positive sign".

Throughout Charles II's reign, the libertine was a well-known personality – a sexual adventurer who openly, even radically, questioned social, political, and moral values (Webster, 2005). The main character of the play "The Country Wife" by Wycherley tells the readers / viewers about the new perception of love during the Restoration:

(5) *MRS. SQUEAMISH. For Love is better known by Liberality than by Jealousy.* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 144).

The words of the main character of the play "The Way of the World" by Congreve support the statement above:

(6) *MILLAMANT. Why, one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases: and then if one pleases, one makes more.* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 543).

"The stereotypical Restoration man-about-London became a witty, dandish, carousing, theatre-going womanizer" (Grant, Kay & Kerrigan, 2011, p. 181). Libertines were known as debauchees, wits, and scoundrels (Webster, 2005, p. 12). Such notions as vows, honour, piety and friendship meant nothing to these rakes, were "artificial barriers to be surmounted, challenges to their ingenuity" (Kavernik, 1995). Suffice it to quote Shadwell's play "The Libertine" and the author's description of the "persons represented":

(7) *Don John. The Libertine; a rash fearless Man guilty of all Vice.* (Shadwell, 1676).

Libertines' 'sins' were not only forgiven, but also encouraged as the majority of them were men of importance of one kind or another:

> *Often called the Court Wits, the performers of libertinism belonged to an elite circle of men centered on the court of Charles II. The members of this circle formed a loose fraternity, a coterie of artistic (John Wilmot, earl of Rochester; Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst; Sir Charles Sedley; Sir George Etherege; Sir Carr Scroope; and William Wycherley), political (George Villiers, duke of Buckingham; John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave; and Henry Guy), and social figures (Henry Savile; John, Lord Vaughan; Henry Bulkeley; and Fleetwood Shepherd), who craved for importance and power that accompanied fame.* (Webster, 2005, p. 12).

Webster (2005) argues that *libertinism was performed in at least three ways: the libertines were actors* [*emphasis added* – O. M.] who intrigued the viewers with shameful spectacles, *the libertines were playwrights* [*emphasis added* – O. M.] who embodied their own reputations in their libertine protagonists, and, through their activities and plays, *the libertines were themselves texts to be analyzed, interpreted and evaluated* [*emphasis added* – O. M.] (Webster, 2005, p. 3).

Greenblatt (2012) maintains that identity is a theatrical invention that must be reiterated if it is to endure. While I choose to agree, I argue that the identity of a Restoration libertine was reiterated in a play-house as libertine playwrights based their libertine protagonists like Horner, Dorimant, and Manly, on their own infamous acts; as a result of their actual and theatrical reputation and fame, these playwrights became celebrities for public evaluation and interpretation. As Webster (2005, p. 3) claims, "libertinism's blurring of public and private acts challenged the political strategies of Charles II and many of his ministers, helped to shape the direction of Restoration drama, and expanded the possible sexual roles and identities available to late-seventeenth-century men and women".

He also adds:

> *Examining Restoration libertinism as a series of performances suggests that libertinism was itself an enactment upon the surface of the body that gave rise to a distinct social identity. The libertine became an identifiable role played by men in Charles II's court through dress, sexual performance, and the repetition of their deeds and the stories and literary texts based on these deeds. Through the reiterative performance of libertine acts via gossip and drama, a*

vision of a certain kind of aristocratic masculine identity, the libertine, was perpetuated in Restoration society. (Webster, 2005, p. 30).

The main character of the play "The Country Wife" by Wycherley accentuates the fact that viewers often competed with the actors in their performing skills:

(8) *SPARKISH: Gad, the reason why we are so often louder than the Players is because we think we speak more wit, and so become the Poet's Rivals in his audience…* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 94).

A libertine was not only a popular character in the dramatic works and poetry of that time, but he was also a frequent subject of conversation in all public places such as coffee shops, parks, drawing rooms etc. Thus, the libertine was constantly performing for an audience – either in actual deed or in reported tale (Webster, 2005, p. 2).

Libertines shocked the public with sexual scandals and profane mimicry. In fact, libertinism existed as a set of performances as nearly every aspect of the libertine's personal life was displayed for public consumption (Webster, 2005, p. 10). The example from the play "The Country Wife" by Wycherley speaks in support of this observation:

(9) *SPARKISH: Come, you bubbling rogues you, where do we sup? – Oh, Harcourt, my mistress tells me you have been making fierce love to her all the play long, hah, ha! But I ...*
HARCOURT: I make love to her!
SPARKISH: Nay, I forgive thee, for I think I know thee, and I know her; but I am sure I know myself. (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 93).

While the main character of the play "The Way of the World" by Congreve evidently expresses her, in my view, Puritan opinion about theatre-going:

(10) *MRS. MARWOOD. Or what think you of the playhouse? A fine gay glossy fool should be given there, like a new masking habit, after the masquerade is over, and we have done with the disguise. For a fool's visit is always a disguise; and never admitted by a woman of wit, but to blind her affair with a lover of sense.* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 554).

Due to the fact that such acts of liberty continued and the libertines persevered in their attempts to shock or rather – 'épater' the public, I argue that this was exactly what the public wanted to see on the stage. The words by Esslin (1987, p. 116) confirm my persuasion: "…the action will become interesting to the audience only insofar as the characters involved in it arouse the audience's sympathy or emotions, negative as well as positive. Only what characters *do* tells the audience what they are like. Thus it must be the action of the people within the plot which develops character, while that character of the individuals involved in turn *motivates* the action and makes the plot interesting to follow". Thus, I conclude that the audience went to the theatre to see the shows of which the libertines provided plenty.

An ordinary hero (in this context I talk about a typical libertine, as the distinction between a hero and a libertine in Restoration plays will be explained later) of Restoration libertine plays is usually a man pursuing the pleasures of drink, play, and love, with a complete disregard for the well-being of others; and the heroine is a woman whose scruples, if she has any, are based on prudence rather than virtue. Great emphasis is laid on repartee for its own sake, and upon epigrams propounding an elaborate and systematic code of immorality (Krutch, 1949, p. 23). In fact, such famous men as Evelyn and Pepys interpreted the Great Fire of London in 1666 as divine retribution

for the nation's sins, the foremost of which was shameful promiscuity at court (Webster, 2005, pp. 68-69).

Libertine performances thrived between the poles of the two great political events of Charles II's reign: his Restoration in 1660 and the exclusion crisis of the late 1670s and early 1680s (Webster, 2005, p. 19).

The libertine plays written and performed during the period are characterized by a certain set of attitudes: skepticism; defiance against socially accepted norms, rules and institutions; commitment to a life of hedonism (as opposed to a professed desire for a particular man or woman) (Fisk, 2005). In the preface to the play "The Relapse; or Virtue in Dancer" Vanbrugh writes:

> *But my modesty will sure atone for everything, when the world shall know it is so great I am even to this day insensible of those two shining graces in the play (which some part of the town is pleased to compliment me with) blasphemy and bawdy.*
> *For my part, I cannot find 'em out: if there was any obscene expressions upon the stage here they are in the print…* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 415).

The change in the attitudes and manners, which became characteristic of the period under consideration, becomes evident through the discourse of the aristocracy which also changed considerably. Play characters draw the viewers' / readers' attention to this fact by mentioning these changes. Namely, among the aristocrats it became popular to use bad language and to curse, which is confirmed by the words of Medley, the main character of the play "The Man of Mode; or, Sir Fopling Flutter" by Sir George Etherege:

(11) *MEDLEY: Whoring and swearing are vices too genteel for a shoemaker*. (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 165).

Under the Puritan regime, politeness, restraint, and reticence were among generally accepted norms, while during the Restoration manners, formula of address and topics of conversations underwent crucial changes, which is demonstrated in the example from the play "The Way of the World" by Congreve:

(12) *SIR WILFULL WITWOUD: The fashion's a fool; and you're a fop, dear Brother. 'Sheart, I've suspected this. By'r Lady, I conjectured you were a fop, since you began to change the style of your letters, and writ in a scrap of paper gilt round the edges, no broader that a subpoena. I might expect this when you left off "Honoured Brother" and "hoping you are in good health", and so forth – to begin with a "Rat me, knight, I'm so sick of a last night's debauch" – Od's heart, and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a whore and a bottle, and so conclude.* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 559).

Thus, we may conclude that the style of correspondence also changed just like the style of real-life communication. It became closer to colloquial style and low language.

Indeed, the song sung by all the actors on the stage in "The Man of Mode or Sir Fopling Flutter" by Etherege can be regarded as a hymn of libertinism:

(13) *The pleasures of love and the joys of good wine*
To perfect our happiness wisely we join.
We to beauty all day
Give the sovereign sway,
And her favourite nymphs devoutly obey.
At the plays we are constantly making our court,

And when they are ended we follow the sport,
To the Mall and the Park,
Where we love till 'tis dark;
Then sparkling champagne
Puts an end to their reign;
It quickly recovers
Poor languishing lovers,
Makes us frolic and gay, and drowns all our sorrow;
But, alas! we relapse again on the morrow.
Let ev'ry man stand
With his glass in his hand,
And briskly discharge at the word of command.
Here's a health
to all those
Whom to-night we depose:
Wine and beauty by turns great souls should inspire.
Present altogether, and now, boys, give fire! (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 216).

Canfield (1997) argues that the terms 'libertine', 'rake', and 'trickster' are quite often used to denote the same or different types of identity. However, we side with Ungerer (1990), who claims that there is a considerable difference between the terms and argues that the rake as a stock-figure of the Restoration comedy of manners is sorted into several categories:

> *There is the polite rake, the debauched rake, the extravagant rake, the bisexual rake, the refined rake, the philosophical rake, and there is the Hobbesian rake or libertine. Whether debauched or philosophical, the stage rake invariably assumes the stance of an anti-matrimonialist, for love is the ultimate challenge to his pride and individualism. However, almost all of the rakes are reformable and almost all of them are forced by their self-assertive female partners to renounce their libertine beliefs, to give up the selfish pursuit of pleasure, and to accept the yoke of matrimony.* (Ungerer, 1990, p. 228).

Although we choose to provide the distinction between the terms, in this article, we use the words: libertine, rake and trickster to denote the same type of identity – an English Restoration libertine-aristocrat.

There is a difference between a Restoration hero and an unprincipled rake or libertine in Restoration plays which is particularly evident. A man who has true and lasting feelings to a woman, is not afraid to risk his life, respects and guards his mistress's honor, respects and adheres to socially accepted moral principles and dogmas is a hero of a Restoration comedy (Schneider, 1971, p. 143). While a libertine is a man who neither preaches nor practices the morals that distinguish a true gentleman. Therefore, I argue that a hero and a libertine are two different characters in Restoration plays. Schneider (1971, p. 143) singles out one more important difference: libertines do not marry in the end of the play: "If they did it would be unjust, especially poetically unjust, for them to marry the splendid kind of woman usually matched with the hero of Restoration comedy. For this reason the libertine view of Restoration comedy always overlooks or attempts to discredit as a formula the ending of the plays".

When Buckingham lost his political influence in the early1670s, the wits' political aspirations were dashed, and the theatrical group split into two factions: the aristocrats [emphasis added] (Buckingham, Sedley, and Rochester) who joined the opposition party in the Parliament, and the gentlemen (Etherege and Wycherley) whosided with the king's agenda (Webster, 2005). After this Buckingham could no longer influence Charles's policies and use his personal connections with the

Royal Family to disseminate his views on the dominance of pleasure over duty and responsibility (Webster, 2005, p. 67). Wycherley quickly found a way out of this increasingly hostile situation. He chose to transform the libertine of popular gossip into a comic trickster. Wycherley began to adapt reports of libertines' scandalous performances to make them more palatable to ordinary viewers (Webster, 2005, pp. 67-68). "By making libertine tricksters a productive part of the social order through their homosocial relationships with other men and marriages to socially appropriate women, Wycherley offers his audience a vision of patriarchy and marriage at odds with that of aristocratic and progressive ideologies" (Webster, 2005, p. 89).

3.5. Playhouse as a means of disseminating the libertine ideology

Talebinejad (2013, p. 119) argues, that

> *Drama is a repartee genre and therefore allows a variety of language genres to fit in. In drama, the features which mark the social relations between two persons at the character level become messages about the characters at the level of discourse pertaining between author and reader/audience*.

Being a public art, the drama is particularly sensitive to the contingencies of time and place, it reflects current affairs and conflicts. It emerges through the pooled efforts of managers, playwrights, performers, and depends on rapidly changing social roles and viewers' expectations (Kavernik, 1995).

Restoration theatre provided libertines with ample opportunities to disseminate their ideology (Webster, 2005, p. 19) as theatre-going "was not an occasional rare practice for a lordly few, it was an habitual part of day-to-day living in London or visiting it" (Holland, 2010, p. 5). The characters of the play "The Rehearsal" by Villiers mention theatre-going among their habitual activities:

(14) *SMITH. Well; but how dost thou pass thy time?*
JOHNSON. Why, as I use to do; eat and drink, as well as I can, have a she-friend to be private with in the afternoon, and sometimes see a play… (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 5).

Also, in the play "The Way of the World" by Congreve, theatre-going is mentioned as one of the leisure activities of that time:

(15) *SIR WILFULL WITWOUD Indeed! ha! look ye, look ye, you do? Nay, 'tis like you may here are choice of pastimes here in town, as plays and the like; that must be confessed indeed.* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 567).

Stage, play, and a play-house became house-hold words in the discourse of the aristocracy. The words *play*, *stage* and *playhouse* form metaphors and similies in the dramatic discourse of that time, e. g., in the plays: "The Way of the World" by Congreve and "The Man of Mode; or, Sir Fopling Flutter" by Etherege:

(16) *SIR WILFULL WITWOUD: Hey day! what, are you all got together, like players at the end of the last act?* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 591).
(17) *HARRIET: Beauty runs as great a risk exposed at Court as wit does on the stage, where the ugly and the foolish all are free to censure.* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 209).

Libertines saw the world as their stage and all their infamous performances were aimed at attracting the public's attention (Webster, 2005, p. 29). As Esslin (1987, p. 21) states: "…drama can be more than merely an instrument by which society transmits its behaviour patterns to its members. It can also be an instrument of thought, a cognitive process. For drama is not only the most concrete – that

is, the least abstract – artistic imitation of real human behaviour, it is also the most concrete form in which we can think about human situations". The examples from the play "The Country Wife" by Wycherley support the above cited statement:

(18) *SPARKISH: What then? it may be I have a pleasure in't, as I have to show fine clothes at a Playhouse, the first day, and count money before poor Rogues.* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 101).
(19) *SPARKISH: Pshaw! with your fooling we shall loose the new play; and I would no more miss seeing a new Play the first day, than I would miss sitting in the wits' row. Therefore I'll go fetch my mistress, and away.* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 69).

A typical libertine behavior is also described by Vanbrugh in the preface to the play "The Relapse; or Virtue in Dancer":

> *One word more about the bawdy, and I have done. I own, the first night this thing was acted some indecencies had like to have happened; but 'twas my fault.*
> *The fine gentleman of the play, drinking his mistress's health in Nantes brandy, from six in the morning to the time he waddled on upon the stage in the evening, had toasted himself up to such a pitch of vigour, I confess I once gave Amanda for gone, and I am since (with all due respect to Mrs. Rogers) very sorry she scaped; for I am confident a certain lady (let no one take it to herself that's handsome) who highly blames the play for the barrenness of the conclusion, would then have allowed it a very natural close.* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 416-417).

At the play-houses libertines could meet and seduce new women (Webster, 2005, p. 14). This fact is vividly described by Wycherley in his play "The Country Wife":

(20) *HORNER: Tell her, dear sweet little gentleman, for all your Brother there, that you have revived the love I had for her at first sight in the playhouse.*
MRS. PINCHWIFE: But did you love her indeed, and indeed?
PINCHWIFE: (aside) So, so. – Away, I say. (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 103).
(21) *HORNER: Thou art mad with jealousy. I never saw thy wife in my life but at the play yesterday, and I know not if it were she or no. I court her, kiss her!*
PINCHWIFE: I will never be a cuckold, I say; there will be danger in making me a cuckold.
(Villiers et al., 1953, p. 126).

Celebrity statuses that libertines acquired were to a great extend fueled by their proximity to Charles II (Webster, 2005, p. 11). Scholars are certainly right to see libertine performances as expressions of *the rakes' elite aristocratic privilege* [emphasis added] hence our subheading for part 3.4 of this article. Webster (2005, p. 5) accentuates that these men could enact such performances of sacrilege and sedition precisely *because* they were the king's courtiers and friends. As noble men like Villiers and Rochester became playwrights, they widely preached the new ideology in their plays. The example from the play "The Rehearsal" by Villiers speaks in support of this observation:

(22) *BAYES. If I writ, Sir, to please the country, I should have followed the old plain way; but I write for some persons of quality and peculiar friends of mine that understand what fame and power in writing is; and do me the right, Sir, to approve of what I do* (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 11).

I argue that in the example above a reader / viewer can find proof of the co-existence of the passing ideology of Puritanism which Villiers calls *"the plain way"*, and the new ideology of libertinism, which was supported by Charles II and the nobles, who are referred to as *"friends who understand what fame and writing is"* and *"approve of it"*. The example above also serves to support Esslin's

(1987, p. 158) observation, that: "drama establishes subconsciously held assumptions that shape the social mores and the behaviour patterns, implicit standards and role models of society. Drama is a purveyor of ideological and political messages, whether it openly questions the values of its society, or, what is so much more frequently the case…tacitly accepts and serves to reinforce them".

In a witty yet insightful remark Bruce (1974, p. 147) notes that "whilst it would be too much to say that it was a mark of one's loyalty to the crown to fornicate, commit adultery and swear as much as possible, it did at least prove that one was on the right side".

(23) *Spoken by Mr. Fainall: Satire, he thinks, you ought not to expect:*
For so reform'd a town who dares correct? (Villiers et al., 1953, p. 519).

These words spoken by Mr. Fainall, the main character of the play "The Way of the World" by Congreve, herald the beginning of a new era – the time of gaiety, dissipation and free love. In these words, one can also hear the irreversibility of the changes that occurred: the time of austerity gave way to the time of excess.

4. Conclusions

In the period known as the English Restoration, the English linguistic culture of the seventeenth century was enriched with the new concept LIBERTINISM, the meaning of which was discovered for the English people by the discourse of the English Restoration. After years of piety and austerity this discovery at first proved too much for the English people and eventually resulted into the construction of a new identity. Libertinism became a new cultural trend which was disseminated and popularized through plays as theatre-going was one of the most popular entertainments and almost a daily activity of the wealthy aristocrats.

Libertinism of the seventeenth century offers a new look at the English aristocracy which for this time becomes closer to common people by 'borrowing' bawdy modes of behavior and low language formula and which readily shared their debauchery and sexual experiences with the at first shocked but then excited public. Libertinism of the seventeenth century presupposed nihilism, violation and ridicule of the commonly accepted moral norms, authority, and religion. Although the heyday of libertinism in its primary conception was the seventeenth century, it started to occur in the English literature in the 1540s and has its clear diachronic distinctions.

In this article, I see the concept LIBERTINISM as clearly discourse-generating. Its semantics gave rise to a new kind of drama – bawdy and risqué – which in its turn helped construct a new identity – the one of a libertine aristocrat, a theatre-going lady's man, pursuing pleasures of the material world, with no strings attached, no vector of movement and no concrete purposes in life. Although the identity of a libertine in its original form was shaped by the end of the century, the primary conception didn't undergo any radical changes. The analysis that was carried out is qualitatively oriented; it helped to trace some tendencies in British (in particular) and global (in general) identity formation as libertinism continues to exist in different forms in the world linguistic culture.

The prospects for further research lie in tracing the changes in the concept LIBERTINISM and the identity of a libertine from the seventeenth century till nowadays. In addition, the study of the verbal component of manifestation of libertinism in drama may be supplemented by paraverbal (pauses, intonation, accent of performers etc.), non-verbal (gestures, mimicry, body language of actors etc.) and extra-verbal (garments, technical means etc.) components. Also, of special interest is construction of a libertine's identity in other art forms such as music and film as well as in different languages.

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