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Deconstructing Masculinity: A Comparative Analysis of David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross* and Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*

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Abstract

This paper analyses the crafting and deconstruction of masculinity in both David Mamet (2014) in *Glengarry Glen Ross* (1984) and Jacques Derrida (2014) in *Sweat* (2015), by means of a dialectic theory of G.W.F. Hegel and deconstruction theory of Jacques Derrida. Based on the three-step form of argument, thesis-antithesis-synthesis, proposed by Hegel, the paper explores how dichotomies like success and failure, dominance and impotence, and external appearance and internal truth, are harnessed in the ideological and affective conflicts that men characters in each of the two plays engage in. These tensions are the dialectical motors of the story and of the characters. Derrida reflects upon and undermines dualisms such as power/weakness, solidarity/ isolation, and success/failure. It is shown that hegemonic masculinity is a performative and non-fixed entity in the milieu of late capitalism. Hegel's model makes redress with a dialectical synthesis (*Aufhebung*), Derrida's *différance* does not close the issue, it reveals that masculine identity is not static, revealing constant postponing and disease of male identity. Through the logic of Hegelian resolution alongside Derridean undecidability, the book shows how the masculine subjectivity of each play is determined by economic instability, the performance of language, and systemic forces that make it inherently unstable. The work raises the following questions: What does the representation of masculinity look like in *Glengarry Glen Ross* and *Sweat* through the lenses of Hegelian dialectics and Derridean deconstruction? What inconsistencies between societal notions of maleness and characters' inner lives arise in dialectical conflict? Parallel to the continuation of the Marxist contention that we bear the duality of looking and doing as subjects and workers, we can lead to (2) then: In what way do performative modes of language and ideological fissure the crisis and transformation of masculine masculinity in capitalist labor processes? The study concludes that both plays portray masculinity not as a stable identity, but as a fractured, performative construct shaped by capitalist pressures and



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social expectations. In *Glengarry Glen Ross*, masculinity is revealed as a fragile performance of dominance tied to material success, while in *Sweat*, it emerges as a contested site of racialized and class-based struggle. Through deconstructive analysis, the thesis reveals how masculinity is produced, destabilized, and ultimately undone by the very systems that claim to define it.

Keywords: deconstruction, Hegel, Derrida, masculinity, Mamet, Nottage, Glengarry Glen Ross, Sweat, binary opposition, dialectics, Aufhebung, différance

1. Introduction

Masculinity, neither a natural nor a fixed notion to begin with, arises as a result of dialectical relations and interactions which construct, but may also deconstruct traditional notions of gender. This research is focused on the dialectics of Hegel, in relation with Derrida's deconstruction of masculinity in David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross* and Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*.

2. Theoretical Framework

The concept of *Aufhebung* is one of the most complex and powerful features of Hegel's dialectics. The German term, as scholars have observed, has a triple meaning of its own that is well adapted for dialectical analysis. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy describes "Hegel says that *aufhebung* has a doubled signification: it means both to cancel (or negate) and to preserve at the same time" (Stewart, 2000, p. 113). To this dual motion must be added a third -- that is, elevation or raising, so we have the triadic movement of dialectical theory: negation, preservation, and transformation. This idea is complicated when considered in operation within Hegel's larger system. Ryan Krahn's indicates *Aufhebung* "should therefore be grasped not just as a dialectical unification of a term and its antithesis, i.e., a unifying third term, but as a fourth, that treats such terms as no longer united but in their difference, held apart as oppositional" (Krahn, 2014, p. ii). This fourfold form shows sublation not to be a mere mechanical overcoming of contradictions, but a process remaining invested in its contradictions and allowing them to evolve.

The philosophical importance of this process is more than merely formal-logical and also concerns identity formation. For indeed, once one starts probing into Hegel's method of dialectic, a roll of the eyes that says, if we only try to communicate Hegel's logic, that is, simply what puts a philosopher and his thought into substantive motion, the response proves easily arrived at,



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as the initiator of philosophical dialectic guides us, forcing us to move from one concept to another (Krahn, 2014, p.1), that when one who knows virtually nothing about the history of German Idealism... asks what is dialectic or gives a cursory account of what Hegel is all about, the most natural response takes us right back through his logic and shows how it is that we would be moved (simply made to move) from thinking one philosophical concept over/against another. Krahn (2014, p. 1). It is, indeed, this critical mechanism that renders *Aufhebung* a helpful concept for understanding the constitution and reconstitution of identities, including gender identities. It is in the nature of the dialectical *Aufhebung* to crystallize in a peculiarly pure form in Hegel's treatment of the fundamental categories. When we study the dialectical relationship between Being and Nothing, we observe how "the content of the concept of Being is 'the absolute abstraction'. This is because if one were to take Being in its rawest state, it would have to be cleansed of all of its physical properties. And there is something more too on life." "But when such attributes fall away from existence, what remains? Nothing" (Singh, 2024). But how it seems to collapse into nothing is a "nothing" that is itself not the question end of the dialectic; for it creates "das Sein" - not the static, quite dead 'Being', but the dynamic category of "Becoming," which sublates preserves and overcomes these two concepts (Singh, 2024, para. 10). This case is a good model to show that oppositions, as they seem, are not only oppositions but points of transformation rather than annulment.

Through the dialectic approach to gender analysis adopted by Hegel, it is possible to view that man has falsely created an identity called nature due to multifaceted processes of relations. Not only does the race for manhood idealism style display this unity, but it also shows that being a man is being put in the position of opposing femininity. According to Boise (2012): Rationality, as language system and legitimating structure has always granted some groups of men symbolic and material privileges. Moreover, although such rationality is synonymous with happiness among men, it is also one that causes physiological distress, sorrow and alienation (Boise, 2012, p. iii). This self-contradiction of the manhood recalls the dialectic contradictions that Hegel in his logical categories, as indicated by Boise, found in manhood: This paradoxical structure implies that the masculine identity is an alienated conflict, or to put it another way around the masculine subject defines itself through non-femininity and at the same time requires the Feminine Other to be defined and to exist. In terms of the master-slave dialectic as a paradigm



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of comprehending this process, we may observe that psychoanalysis begins with a sonnet of contrasting nonpsychoanalytic theory in the process of selfnegation, (Hegel refers to this phase as self-alienation). In fact, however, it abolishes that abolition in its own operation of becoming, and recaptures the part of alienation thus lost in its own operation of becoming, reabsorbs it. (Peri Herzovich, 2021, p. 1).

This dialectical structure has a big effect on how to perceive masculinity. Masculinity does not show a permanent identity; instead, it shows what could be called a "failed Aufhebung," a dialectical process that tries to attain synthesis by excluding its other instead of truly integrating it. Feminist philosophers have called this exclusionary dynamic the main reason why masculine identity is so unstable. It needs to be constantly reinforced by making femininity less important.

Hegel's views on gender in his book *The Philosophy of Right* (2008) show how limited his historical view is and how functional his dialectical approach may be for criticism. Hegel notoriously argued that:

Man has his actual substantial life in the state, in learning, and so forth, as well as in labour and struggle with the external world and with himself... Woman, on the other hand, has her substantial vocation in the family, and her ethical disposition is to be imbued with family piety.

(Hegel, 2008, pp. 168-69)

This allocation of distinct spheres illustrates what Laura Werner identifies as Hegel's formulation of gender distinction, evident in Hegel's natural philosophy, where he delineates disparities between male and female bodies, and in his social philosophy, where he articulates differentiated domains of activity for men and women (Werner, 2006).

However, feminists have argued persuasively that these gendered assignments represent not logical necessities but rather "the ghosts of 'nineteenth-century sexual stereotypes' from the text so that Hegel would speak to both sexes"(Lemke, 2001, p. 2). The arbitrariness of Hegel's gender assignments becomes apparent when considering that gender does no philosophical work for Hegel, especially in the *Philosophy of Right* (Kane, 2014), suggesting that his sexist conclusions are imposed upon rather than derived from his dialectical method. More significantly, feminist critics have identified how Hegel's treatment of the feminine within his system reveals structural problems with his dialectical approach. Kelly Oliver argues that "woman gets left behind as the 'unconsciousness of the family upon which all



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subsequent dialectical movements of the conceptualization of Spirit rest; she is never resuscitated or preserved in the later stages of the dialectical movement of consciousness" (Stewart, p.19). This exclusion represents what can be called a "pseudo-Aufhebung," a dialectical movement that claims to sublimate its other while abandoning it.

However, the same dialectical process that Hegel uses to support traditional gender norms also gives us the tools to criticize them. One philosopher says that "the ethical-political structure of this bond... makes it necessary to leave it exposed to a never-ending interrogation concerning the best order and the preferable choices, a problem that the contractarian notion of legitimacy has made invisible" (Rustighi, 2020, p. 16). This means that real Aufhebung in gender relations would not mean leaving out the feminine but fully integrating it as an equal partner in the dialectical process. The most important thing about Aufhebung for breaking down masculinity is that it may show the contradictions inside identities that seem stable. The dialectical technique shows how male identity depends on what it leaves out, which makes it possible for it to change when used correctly in gender analysis. There are a number of ways that this deconstructive potential works together. First, Aufhebung shows that identity is formed through relationships. Dialectical analysis shows that both abstract and determinate negation work at the level of sublation as such. This means that the concept should be seen not only as a synthesis that combines a term with its opposite, but also as a fourth that looks at these terms in their difference (Krahn, 2014). In the case of gender, this would imply that we cannot know what it is to be a man without as well knowing to what extent it is connected to femininity. This is contrary to the notion that men are self sufficing which is central to the hegemonic male ideology. Second, because Aufhebung has an aspect of time, the identity is never fixed and it is constantly shifting.

According to the dialectical approach of research as put forward by Hegel, it is necessary that two transitions be made not only of a determinate into another but also of this other into this first, its returning into it (Radnik, p. 194). Such a two-fold movement demonstrates that gender identity is not simply having one thing as better than another, but rather about compromising between them all the time. Third, the preservative element of Aufhebung provides us with the means to think about gender relations in different ways that do not merely reverse or eliminate them. This concept demonstrates the fact that a sublated thing is defeated, whereas the saved and



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retained thing is the reverse of this concept. It implies that when masculinity is decomposed, it will not be necessary to discard all of the male features; rather, it will be necessary to transform the relationship between them and power and exclusion.

Aufhebung has a deconstructive role in particular, which is particularly evident in examining certain paradoxes within hegemonic masculinity. Research shows that adherence to mainstream and dominant masculinities may have a negative impact on the mental health of men. The difference between the idealized and real experiences can cause anxiety (Boxer and Gill, 2021). Such incompatibility creates a dialectical crisis of masculine identity a contradiction between the ideal and the real that permits deconstruction.

Another, but related, way to think about gender is presented by Jacques Derrida in his deconstructive approach that is premised on his neologism *différance*. *Différance* is a French term, which combines the French words difference and deferral. It implies that both spatial difference and time deferral give meaning. According to Derrida, (1997), meaning is not based on signs, but on the relationship of the sign with other signs. This process is continuous because the signs are in opposition to the preceding and the succeeding signs. In other words, concepts such as masculinity acquire their significance not as such, but rather, when they lack it. Besides, meaning is never complete, there is always an infinite series of signifiers that defer it. Due to this constant deferral, ideas do not have definite, final meanings; they are always vulnerable to new meanings and modifications.

The binary oppositions that form the Western thinking, such as male/female and masculine/feminine, are examined using the approach of Derrida. These oppositions are not neutral or natural but hierarchical structures in which one term is superior to the other. Therefore, language and words are not the same with the meaning they represent. They receive meaning only insofar as they do not resemble other words and signs; meaning emerges out of the distinction between words of each other, and the resulting production of dichotomies and hierarchies. The deconstruction, however, shows that these oppositions are precarious as every word relies on, has tinkers of, its so-called opposite. The dominant term (e.g., masculinity) is plagued by what it denies (e.g., femininity, vulnerability), and it generates imminent instabilities in categories that are supposed to be stable.

Derrida challenges this "the metaphysics of presence", meaning that an immediate and direct meaning is at our fingertips. Instead, he argues that all



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meaning is filtered through a logic banking of differences. Meaning is deferred. This critique includes gender distinctions, proposed that masculine identity is not the direct presence it appears but a complex construction sustained through an ongoing process of differentiation against what it is not. As Derrida (1997) writes: "At that juncture where the idea of différance and the chain following from it enter in, all the conceptual oppositions of metaphysics (signifier / signified; sensible / intelligible; writing / speech; passivity / activity; etc.) become nonsensical" (p. lix). Applied to gender, then, this suggests that the opposition between masculinity and femininity "ceases to be pertinent" in light of what is revealed as their artificiality by différance.

The relationship between Derrida's critique of logocentrism and questions of gender becomes explicit in his analysis of what feminist theorists have termed phallogocentrism. 'From Derrida's viewpoint, this concept refers to a Western bias of not only centering the logos but also the phallus. It reveals a closely intercourse between masculinity and language' (Gandi, 2024, p. 1). The philosophical tradition that Derrida deconstructs has consistently privileged masculine symbolic authority through its emphasis on presence, identity, and rational discourse. This phallogocentric structure operates by establishing hierarchical oppositions where masculine-coded terms consistently occupy the privileged position over feminine-coded alternatives. The operation of phallogocentrism creates what Derrida identifies as a system where man the archetype on which society is founded, placing his supremacy in the natural order, defining power relations, and nailing pre-established categories (Gandi,2024). This "being-nailed" produces what appear to be natural gender categories but are actually discursively constructed identities that conceal their own production. The apparent naturalness of masculine authority derives from its successful concealment of the discursive processes through which it is produced and maintained. Derrida's analysis reveals that man has convinced himself that he can speak for all humanity, becoming the logos through which he excludes the rest. This universal claim depends precisely upon the suppression of différance and the maintenance of metaphysical illusions of presence and identity.

Derrida's work shows that gender categories that seem natural are actually the result of complicated discursive processes that may be studied and questioned. According to one researcher, the "rigid and hierarchical categories that precede and define each person, prescribing 'consonant' ways,



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rhetorically assumed as 'human nature'" (Gandi, 2024, p. 1), the identities of men and women seem to be fixed. Derrida's idea of *différance*, on the other hand, shows that these categories that seem natural are actually made up of ongoing processes of differentiation and deferral. Derrida refers to the process of the so-called difference as the nature of being a man or woman. It is not of monolithic essentialisms, but of movements of meanings which are related. Such realization gives space to reform and transformation that is closed by essentialist solutions to gender.

The political stakes of this account are evident insofar as phallogocentric structures wield their power precisely by repressing *différance* and perpetuating metaphysical hallucinations. The binary oppositions informing the intelligibility of western thought always favour expressions associated with masculinity (« logos/pathos, âme/corps, même/autre, bien/mal, culture/nature, homme/femme, intelligible/sensible, dedans/dehors, mémoire/oubli, parole/écriture" (Lucie Guillemette 2006, p.2).

Such oppositions are not neutral descriptive categories but relations of power that institute and reproduce masculine domination. Through something like Derrida's deconstruction, it is evident that these hierarchies are not inevitable or naturally given, but the results of certain kinds of discursive operations that we can dissect and change.

In relation to gender analysis, Derrida is attentive to how women's relation to phallogocentric structures differs from men's; this might inaugurate the possibility of resistance, but in ways that do not merely invert relations of power as they currently exist. In his examination, Derrida asserts that "women's power resides in their capacity to avoid and penetrate masculine constructs at the woman's pleasure but always be free from them" (Chaplin, para. 5, and Almaarouf & Jaber, 2023). Indeed, this formula would tally at least if women inhabited a differed structural position concerning the discourse of phallogocentrism, one that is perhaps more subversive precisely in its non-coincidence. Instead of wanting to be included in masculine power, we should work with our structural exclusion from that power to form new modes of agency and resistance.

The tactical pleasure of the estranged female position lies in the fact that according to Derrida, this estrangement is what makes women their or her contribution to the logic of identity and presence which organizes masculine dominance. He notes that women have no single location in phallogocentric structures i.e. there is no single place where women belong, and this implies



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that women can freely weave both inside as well as outside of structures (Chaplin, para. 5). This mobility is not an indication of powerlessness but is instead another kind of power that functions via a sort of dance that Derrida calls the dance. This movement does not imply powerlessness or frailty but is an empowering way (McDonald and Derrida, 1982, p). 69) that operates by evasion and infiltration and not confrontation. The dance metaphor proposes some kind of agency that is dynamic, and it cannot be encapsulated in fixed positions or identities.

Deconstruction, according to Derrida, opens the possibilities for political change beyond conventional forms of gender politics. In exposing the discursive construction of seemingly natural hierarchies, deconstruction makes room for contesting the origin of patriarchal authority rather than merely its effectuation. The analysis of *différance* points towards the fact that 'differences are "produced"', deferred, by *différance* (Derrida, 1982, p. 13) and thus that gender differences are not self-identical facts, but productions and re-productions which may be changed through other practices of discourse.

Deconstruction has the potential to render visible and disentangle the contingency of what appear to be necessary structures. Thus, "*différance* 'hypostasizes the motion of signification in the possible present, since it accounts for the relation of the elements of the present to something other than itself by entangling with the past and vitiating the future. In this analysis, existing arrangements of gender and power are not static but perpetually renewed through processes that are amenable to change. Realizing that the present cannot be presented provides space for unhomely forms that do not rely on metaphysical underpinnings.

It is with the feminist theorist Bell hooks that can be seen in this regard a persistent analysis of how patriarchy informs the formation of both men and women, an analysis which complements and fills in the abstractions of both Hegel and Derrida. In "The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love," Hooks (2004) defines patriarchy as "the single most life-threatening social disease assaulting the male body and spirit in our nation"(p. 29). Patriarchy, she further expands, is "a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence" (Hooks, 2004, p. 30).



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Hooks argues that most men do not think about patriarchy or utilize the phrase in their daily lives. She says, "Men who have heard and know the word usually associate it with women's liberation, feminism, and therefore dismiss it as irrelevant to their own existences" (Hooks, 2004, p. 29). People who don't know how the system develops male identity show how deeply ingrained patriarchal norms have become. One of the main points of hooks' analysis is that she sees masculinity as a kind of mask that males are encouraged to wear, which can have a lot of negative effects on their mental health. She writes:

Learning to wear a mask (that word already embedded in the term 'masculinity') is the first lesson in patriarchal masculinity that a boy learns. He learns that his core feelings cannot be expressed if they do not conform to the acceptable behaviors sexism defines as male. Asked to give up the true self in order to realize the patriarchal ideal, boys learn self-betrayal early and are rewarded for these acts of soul murder. (Hooks, 2004, p. 139)

This masking process makes men hide their feelings and weaknesses, which leads to what hooks calls "emotional heart attacks," which are the systematic deadening of emotional life that patriarchy demands of men. Because of this, the masculine image is that real men don't experience pain, even while they are in a lot of suffering.

Despite her indictment of patriarchy, hooks contends we should resist falling into the trap of blaming men for inheriting and sustaining it. According to her, "Blaming will not end dominator thinking since it is dominator thinking" (Hooks, referred in Edwards,2023, para. 6). Instead, she encourages a more subtle and realistic view that acknowledges how both men and women can perpetuate patriarchal thought and behavior. Hooks emphasizes the fact that women may be as married to patriarchal thought and action as men (Hook, 2004, p. 34). This fact contradicts the neat dichotomy of men-as-oppressors and women-as-victims, yet it leads fruitfully to the multifaceted aspects of the ways in which patriarchy is a mode of thought and action that can be assumed by people of either sex.

Such Hegelian approach is associated with the model of male change by hooks. She does not demand that men renounce their manhood, but reclaim the sentimental bits of themselves that can love and relate. In one way men save themselves when they learn the art of loving (Hooks, 2004, p). 28) is just to raise up and not just negated. According to this opinion, the signifier of masculinity is not constantly determined, but lives in deferral and



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fluctuation, as it enters into relation with other social situations and other types of identities. Masculinity as something bearing the trace of what it rejects (femininity, emotionality, vulnerability) and in constant danger by those of the past and future, numberless others, as Derrida would say.

3. Literature Review

David Mamet has made his breakthrough with his unique play called *Glengarry Glen Ross* (1983) that has gained much scholarly attention due to its sharp criticism of capitalist society, its typical language, and its depiction of the image of masculinity in American society. This is a review of the key discussion and discoveries in the scholarly literature on the play.

Initial critical reviews of *Glengarry Glen Ross* highlighted its place as an attack on the predatory spirit of capitalist business. The play reveals a moral grayness of the sales world as scholars like Biederman (1985) argue that the capitalist needs compromise moral conduct in the sale world in the quest of profit. Subsequent criticism has enlarged and extended this area by looking into how Mamet uses salespeople in *The Way Thing* to indicate bigger social issues about the American Dream (Jones, 2005). The portrayal of immorality and insensitivity toward people in commercial dealings has made some scholars indicate that the work of Mamet is reflective and critical to the current economic realities.

The performance history of *Glengarry Glen Ross* has been also discussed by academics. The analyses of the numerous productions point to the manner in which the challenging language and subjects of the play are addressed by the directors and the actors. There is a conflict between realism and theatricality in the performances, which critics have remarked as being characteristic of the play itself: a hyperrealistic representation of capitalist pressures couched in stylized, almost operatic dialogue (Rodgers, 1990).

It is in this dynamic relationship between text and performance that the play holds as a subject of research in the theory of adaptation and performance studies in relation to the changes in its production between the production of the play in its early stage, and its adaptation into film.

The language is one of the most popular aspects of *Glengarry Glen Ross* that Mamet uses. Rodgers (1990) points out the distinctive conversation, which is rhythmic, cadenced and reinforced and undermined the conventional structures of power. The language techniques of the characters under consideration are the instruments of the negotiation of power and creation of identity in a place where the language is a means of persuasion and a weapon



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of control. Moreover, the interaction of colloquialism and professionalism in language use brings more cultural conflicts of authenticity versus artificiality in the endeavors of succeeding.

The themes of masculinity and social relations in the male dominated occupations are also abundant in the play. There is a strong competitive nature in the world of real estate sales that Mamet presents and critics have pointed out that the traditional male and female norms are supported by the highly competitive atmosphere portrayed by the author. According to Smith (2001), the actions of the characters portray a crisis of masculinity in late twentieth-century America, a trend which has been created by economic forces and the shift of societal expectations. More current studies have solidified This view by focusing on how the weakness and violence of men in the play provide information on how the culture at large is changing in terms of gender relations. (Jones, 2005).

As for the writer, many critics praise Mamet himself and his plays. For example, Harold Bloom (2004) likens him to Marlowe, while Christopher Bigsby likens him to Arthur Miller. He believes that Miller and Mamet wrote plays about American business due to the financial difficulties their families faced (Kalay,2018).

Kalay adds that Mamet is a distinctive figure in American film and literature. His use of the American context, which includes his community and those who aspire to achieve the American Dream, is highly successful. Despite his use of derogatory slang and his plays being replete with profanity, he intends to portray reality as it is .

Regarding the *Sweat*, Lynn Nottage's play (2015) has received widespread scholarly attention for its nuanced exploration of the decline of American industrial societies under the rise of neoliberal economic policies. Set in a Rust Belt town, the play not only exposes the economic and social fractures caused by deindustrialization but also addresses issues of race, gender, and class. This review summarizes evolving critical perspectives on "race," tracing debates from early economic critiques to more recent discussions of identity and the disintegration of community.

Mohler et al. (2016) assert that Nottage transforms intimate testimonies and meticulous research into the social and economic hardships faced by the people she interviewed in Reading, Pennsylvania, one of the nation's poorest cities, into a personal drama that explores the human costs of the contradictions of late neoliberal capitalism. The tragedy that *Sweat* embodies



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is grounded in a kind of "exaggerated nostalgia," as literary critic Linda Hutcheon puts it. The painful and bleak scenes set in 2008 invite us to reflect on our own nostalgia for those moments in 2000.

Sweet's depiction of class reproduction seems complex to Fişek (2019), on the one hand, the generational reproduction of manual labor seems to align with what Paul Willis, in his seminal book *Learning to Work: How Working-Class Kids Get Working-Class Jobs* calls the "curse" (3), making the possibility of upward mobility "so remote as to be meaningless" (126). On the other hand, Nottage is concerned with the interplay between the political processes that perpetuate class inequality and the everyday practices through which that inequality is modified, or contested. Indeed, in interviews, Nottage makes clear that her play does not confront the innocent with bad faith: "Everyone on stage is guilty in some way," she notes, "and bears responsibility for the outcome. Some more than others, of course, but I think that's what I was interested in" (Brown, 2016). Sweet's characters thus embody key concerns of social theory and tragic drama: their shared investment in the interplay between structure and individuality, or prophecy and agency.

However, Hadaegh (2021) argues that racism and ethnocentrism are among the most significant problems of our contemporary world, requiring sustained critical study. This study examines Lynn Nottage's Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Sweat* (2015), as a dramatic representation of how racism and ethnocentrism are reproduced and communicated as social concepts. To achieve this goal, the study employs knowledge-based discourse analysis, focusing on specific aspects of racism as social concepts rather than abstract historical phenomena. The discussion by the play in its sociohistorical context also suggests the more recent dramatic works by Lynn Nottage that skillfully portray the intersections of race, class and political economy to give us the actual meaning of the word diversity and inclusion in the modern America.

According to Homilton Saya (2020), the ability of the play to be accessible and attract audiences in Iowa City can be considered among the strongest aspects of the play. The Iowa manufacturing and agricultural workers in Reading, Pennsylvania find the frustration of the economy of the town in its treatment of industry. Reading and Iowa City are distant by over a thousand miles, but empathy and particularity of *Understanding Sweat* proves that the point that people of the two places share is more than that which severs them.



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Besides being a topical source, it is a Pulitzer Prize winning piece of drama (2017) which makes it a good selection of the college season.

Lynn Nottage has dedicated her career to researching and telling the stories of Black individuals and communities who have demonstrated a clear concern for working people, defending their autonomy, humanity, and legacy. *Sweat* embodies Nottage's tireless efforts to employ playwriting as activism and to stand in solidarity with those whose stories she chooses to tell. As a constant theme in her work, Lynn Nottage's stories align with the efforts and histories of marginalized workers, linking the pride of factory workers in *Sweat* to the dignity of Mama Nadi in *Destroyer*, the skill of women and men in *Intimate Apparel*, their resilience and determination in *Industrialization*, and the determination of the main character in *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*. All of these workers demonstrate a determination to survive amid devastating conditions and dwindling resources. —*Racism* is another revolutionary act designed to defend working people's lives, meet changemakers where they are, call for compassionate dialogue, and work to mitigate the human cost of the economic policies of the past quarter-century (Buckner, 2023:9)

In general, both *Glengarry Glen Ross* and *Sweat* are strong dramatic texts that challenge social and economic realities of their time and provide some valid understanding about how economic forces intertwine the human identity. The destructive implications of unchecked capitalism were first articulated in *Glengarry Glen Ross* which examined the moral compromise and brutal selling out but later it became a critical discourse describing in-depth observations about the language, power, and masculinity in the contemporary business environment. Simultaneously, *Sweat* by Nottage has a painful human cost of deindustrialization and neoliberal policies by demonstrating that a decrease in the economy augments social disparities on the basis of race, gender, and community identity.

4. Analysis

4.1. David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*

In the play *Glengarry Glen Ross* by David Mamet the setting of the American capitalism turns into the place where masculinity is shown in all its unpolished, desperate glory. Its all-male setting of competitive, vicious real estate salesmen battling to be the top dogs offers an abundant setting in which to examine how masculinity is constructed, acted, challenged, and potentially transformed. Using these frameworks on the text, we are able to draw into



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view the complex mechanisms in operation of masculinity in the play and how this is not only how patriarchal power structures can be harmful to even the men who take advantage of them but how masculine identity is always and ever in a state of flux, always experienced but also always subject to change.

The play portrays a universe of men only, where masculinity is commensurate with professional achievement. This play is about men acting as they believe men ought to act. Masculinity is associated with work in Glengarry Glen Ross. If a man is just good at his job, he's a good man. If he's no good at his job, then he might not even be a man. To leave out women entirely (they are mentioned but never seen) is to create a kind of hothouse environment in which masculinity can be examined in isolation. The limited women we do hear about, Shelly Levene's daughter, James Lingk's wife, and Harriet Nyborg, are either ignored, scorned, or ridiculed. When Lingk's wife does come up, she's spoken of as a domineering presence in his life, the one who holds the power in the family. This, to the salesmen, appears a sort of foreign language. The play takes place in a real estate office where salespeople battle for leads, commissions, and awards. This is a small-scale version of capitalism itself. The salesmen's worth is based only on how well they can "close" deals, and their place on the sales board is a big part of their masculine identity. In the early 1980s, the play brought attention to toxic masculinity,

was just known as masculinity, and people stopped recognizing that there were forms of masculinity that weren't dependent on constantly seeking power over others, inflating your strengths so others can't see your weaknesses, competing with others even when there's nothing to win, and equating the domination of others with 'success' or 'winning.'

(Potter, 2023, para: 7)

The play illustrates the Hegelian dialectical process through the characters' conflict for status and recognition. The sales board illustrates a tangible hierarchy in which male value is measured and exhibited. The thesis of successful masculinity, represented by Roma, the leading salesman, opposes its antithesis, the underperforming salesmen such as Levene and Aaronow, in a contest for supremacy. This dialectical tension is most apparent in Levene's fervent effort to restore his previous status. Previously referred to as "The Machine" for his exceptional sales abilities, Levene has now dropped to the



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lowest position on the board. His appeal to Williamson for improved leads illustrates the thesis-antithesis dynamic:

LEVENE: John. John. Okay. John. John. Look: (Pause.) The Glengarry Highland's leads, you're sending Roma out. Fine. He's a good man. We know what he is. He's fine. All I'm saying, you look at the board, he's throwing... wait, wait, wait, he's throwing the leads away. (Mamet, 1983, p. 15)

Levene attempts to overcome this contradiction through what may be considered as a type of *Aufhebung*, striving to both keep his identity as a great salesman, "Nineteen eighty, eighty-one... eighty-two... six months of eighty-two... who's there? Who's up there?" (p. 15) while transcending his current failure by securing new leads that will allow him to close transactions and restore his status. Another dialectical tension in the play emerges between past and contemporary representations of masculinity. Levene frequently recalls his prior accomplishment as a juxtaposition to his current failure:

LEVENE: Bullshit. John. Bullshit. April, September 1981. It's me. It isn't fucking Moss. Due respect, he's an order taker, John. He talks, he talks a good game, look at the board, and it's me, John, it's me...

(Mamwt, 1983, p. 16)

Levene wants a dialectical resolution that lets him keep his prior accomplishment while getting over his current failure. This is *Aufhebung* in action: trying to cancel certain parts of contradictory states while keeping others to make a higher synthesis. At the end of the play, Levene has a brief moment of synthesis when he closes a big deal with the Nyborgs and proudly says, "I closed 'em!" I shut the cocksucker down. Get the chalk and write my name on the board. I'm heading to Hawaii! "Williamson, put me on the Cadillac board!" (Mamet, 1983, p. 68) This seeming victory is a dialectical resolution that keeps Levene's self-image as "The Machine" while moving beyond his recent setbacks. But this combination doesn't last because Williamson says that the Nyborgs are "nuts" and their check isn't worth anything. Levene's fleeting victory falling apart shows how weak a man's identity may be when it is based on professional success.

The salesman and office manager Williamson have a dialectical conflict in their interaction. Williamson has institutional influence over the salesman because he controls access to the important Glengarry leads. However, the salesman show their dominance through their selling abilities and "street



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knowledge." When Roma tells Williamson off for ruining his contract with Lingk, he shows this dialectic:

ROMA: You stupid fucking cunt. You, Williamson... I'm talking to you, shit-head.... You just cost me six thousand dollars. (Pause.) Six thousand dollars. And one Cadillac. That's right. What are you going to do about it? What are you going to do about it, asshole. You fucking shit. Where did you learn your trade. You stupid fucking cunt. You idiot. Whoever told you you could work with men? (Mamet, 1983, p. 96)

Roma's attack on Williamson attempts to make sense of the conflict between Williamson's institutional power and Roma's belief that he is a better guy. Roma wants a dialectical solution that lets his macho sales skills beat Williamson's bureaucratic dominance.

In the play, masculine identity is never really present. Instead, it is always put off by an infinite chain of signs, closed agreements, board position, verbal superiority, and financial rewards like the Cadillac. The play starts with Levene feverishly trying to get stronger leads from Williamson, who are promising him greater and higher percentages of his commissions. This negotiation shows that masculine worth is always put off. Levene wants leads to create sales, needs sales to be on the board, needs to be on the board to prove his manliness, and so on, in an infinite chain:

LEVENE: I need the leads. I need them now. Or I'm gone, and you're going to miss me, John, I swear to you.

WILLIAMSON: Murray...

LEVENE: ...you talk to Murray...

WILLIAMSON: I have. And my job is to marshal those leads...

(Mamet, 1983, p. 17)

The Cadillac award for the best salesman is like a "transcendental signified," which is an ultimate source of meaning that would purportedly keep the system of signifying stable. But for most people, this reward is always out of reach, and Roma's claim to it is even more at risk because she lost the Lingk contract.

In the play, the notion of "closing" a deal is a significant representation of a man's strength, but its meaning is always changing and depends on the situation. The play's famous phrase "Always be closing" (p. 7) means that closing is both an ongoing process (always be) and an end point (close). Roma's long speech to Lingk in Act One, Scene Three shows how this



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meaning is put off. Instead, than immediately proposing a real estate deal, Roma talks about the uncertainty of life:

ROMA: ...all train compartments smell vaguely of shit. It gets so you don't mind it. That's the worst thing that I can confess. You know how long it took me to get there? A long time. When you die you're going to regret the things you don't do. You think you're queer...? I'm going to tell you something: we're all queer. (Mamet, 1983, p. 47)

This oblique tactic puts off the actual "closing of the deal" providing Roma an opportunity to make a connection that will eventually help him seal the deal. What his overtures to Lingk actually mean is postponed, deferred until the closing actually happens offstage between scenes. Deconstruction, in Derrida's terms, means uncovering binary oppositions and undermining them. At the center of the play are a series of key binaries that structure the characters' sense of what it means to be a man: Success/Failure: The sales board makes success and failure visible. But the play breaks down this binary by proving that the one (success) is temporary and illusory (Levene's seeming victory with Nyborgs) and that the other (failure) could be universal (as the office break-in clouds the job prospects of every last one of them). Second, Speech/Silence: The salesmen are made and unmade through the use of language, but characterization is also brought down to the level of inability to speak and silence. When Roma doesn't show up when Lingk calls to cancel his contract, his always persuasive speech deserts him:

LINGK: She wants her money back.

ROMA: We're going to speak to her.

LINGK: No. She told me "right now."

ROMA: We'll speak to her, Jim...

LINGK: She won't listen. (Mamet, 1983, p. 92)

Third, knowledge/ ignorance, the salesmen are proud of how much they "know" about human psychology and how to sell things, but they don't know important things (like the break-in at the office) that make them feel bad about themselves. Williamson's admission that he knew Levene was the thief shows how information can be a kind of power:

WILLIAMSON: How did you know that contract was on my desk?

LEVENE: You're so full of shit.

WILLIAMSON: You robbed the office. (Mamet, 1983, p. 103)

Through these deconstructive moments, the play reveals how masculine identity is built upon unstable oppositions that constantly threaten to collapse.



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Hooks believes that men must discover the desire to change so that they can escape the emotional cage of patriarchy. But in *Glengarry Glen Ross*, there is a society in which this form of change appears to be near impossible as capitalism is built in favor of the patriarchal ideologies. Moss disapproves this approach when he discusses the sales competition:

LEVENE: John: John: ... my daughter...

WILLIAMSON: Fuck you. (Mamet, 1983, p. 105)

This small reference to his daughter, swiftly swept away by Williamson, is Levene holding back of his own emotional issues, which can never be fitted in the hypermasculine world of the office. Hooks believes that men should discover the will to change so that they can free themselves out of the emotional prison of patriarchy. In *Glengarry Glen Ross* however, the world is shown to be such that such transformation is virtually impossible since the institutions of capitalism support the ideals of patriarchy. Moss also expresses a criticism of this system when he complains about the sales contest:

MOSS: "Somebody wins the Cadillac this month. P.S. Two guys get fucked."

AARONOW: Huh.

MOSS: You don't ax your sales force.

AARONOW: No.

MOSS: You...

AARONOW: You...

MOSS: You build it! (Mamet, 1983, p. 33)

This criticism assumes a different possible vision in which cooperation is an alternative to the competition, but when Moss devises an extravagance to steal the leads, it is revealed just how entrenched he still remains in the competitive paradigm he is ostensibly leaving. It is an excellent indicator that toxic masculinity does not exist but is a cultural construct taught. This opinion will enable us to perceive the characters in the play not as basically predatory but as the leftovers to a system that rewards predatory conduct.

4.2. Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*

Sweat by Lynn Nottage is set in the city of Reading, Pa., and traces the time period of year 2000 and 2008, the period before and after the economic crash. The play explores and studies the lives of factory employees and consequences of deindustrialization, outsourcing, and the disintegration of a small close-knit community. The characters are males who represent different elements of male working-class masculinity: Jason and Chris (two young friends living in a neighborhood, one white and one Black, having different



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aspirations but facing economic realities), Stan (an older bartender who has also suffered an injury at his workplace), Brucie (a father of Chris, who fell into addiction after the lockout at the textile mill where he worked) and Oscar (a Colombian-American busboy struggling to make a living). The play being put together in between 2008 and 2000 gives us a chance to witness the consequences of economic displacement and we learn nothing of the causes, causing the dramatic friction which also replicates the flailing attempts of the characters to identify what the hell has occurred. This chronotopic structure additionally facilitates a dialectical approach to the way in which masculinity changes over time in certain new circumstances.

By using Hegel's dialectical method to interpret *Sweat*, it becomes evident that the masculine is put through as it were a thesis, antithesis and synthesis during the play. Initially with the male characters, the 'mad- darkness is situated around industrial work, which ensures economic well-being, social status and personal worth. Jason is a great example of this and he makes it sound good when he states, ringing with pride, what he has worked out for himself: "I plan on retiring from the plant when I'm like fifty with a killa pension and money to burn, buy a condo in Myrtle Beach, open a Dunkin' Donuts and live my life" (Nottage, 2017, p. 31). In this statement we find the thesis of industrial masculinity: secure employment, economic stability and the promise of a future. The contradiction emerges when these men are faced with deindustrialization and the end of their economic security. And the antithesis of this, Brucie, expresses it in the following way:

I been on the hustle for how many years? Worked hard. Right? Had the family. Now, I'm forty-nine... I gotta do this for the next, what? fifteen-twenty years. You know this! Worrying. The hustle, man, my pop didn't go through this shit. (Nottage, 2017, p. 47)

Here, the conventional masculine discourse of hard labor resulting in stability is being challenged in its nullification, hard labor with nowhere to go and one faces an existential crisis of masculine identity. The synthesis takes different forms to various characters. In the case of Chris, it is trying to rebuild masculinity by using education instead of manual work: I got aspirations. There it is. And I will not be sorry" (Nottage, 2017, p. 31). In the case of Brucie the synthesis is more destructive where he resorts to addiction as a response to his failure to perform traditional masculine roles. The synthesis in the case of Jason finally manifests itself through the form of white supremacist tattoos and rage where the aggressive elements of masculinity



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are used in the direction of racial others instead of being used in productive work. Stan is another version of synthesis. Having already felt the loss of industrial work because of his injury; he has rebuilt his masculinity on his work as a bartender and elder in society: "Getting injured has been the luckiest thing that has ever happened to me. Got me out of that vortex" (p. 47). Still, although he still identifies with working-class ideals, Stan has gone beyond factory work to have the sense of self.

The deconstructionist reading as practiced by Derrida reveals the way the male characters in *Sweat* are constructed by the difference, and the way it is deconstructed. Male identity, according to the play, is not something intrinsic but constructed through the definition of other differences: the woman, people of color, management, and even younger or older men. Even the factory is a *différentiel* place where masculinity is defined and suspended. It does indeed flower after a stabbing experience on the part of Stan when he is hopping around Olstead: "They do not know it is human decency that makes the world go around We none of us want to go anywhere. However, in the real sense, you do not believe that you are alone (Nottage, 2017, p. 47). The meaning of what it is to be a working man, in this case, is continually delegated - never wholly present in any one man, but diffused into the social life of work in general.

The racial dynamics in the play further illustrate the notion of *différance*. Part of what makes up white masculinity is being against people of other races, as shown by Jason's racist statements regarding Oscar: "Fuck that fucking spic" (p. 104). But this construction has the seeds of its own destruction, as the economic pressures that threaten all workers show that these racial differences are not set in stone.

The structure of the play, which alternates between various time periods, is a type of *différance*, in which the meaning of what happens is deferred to a later point. Being a man in 2000 is not the same as being a man in 2008 where the characters have transformed due to the crashing economy. The transformation that Jason undergoes is particularly sensational; he transforms into a former convict with white supremacist tattoos instead of a confident young man who works in a factory. His masculine action has shifted the confident behavior to the ashamed behavior, as seen in his statement in 2008, when he states, It took a lot of nerve to ring the bell (Nottage, 2017, p. 72). It is the most dramatic undermining of the masculine identity in the play that in the second act, the sixth scene breaks out in a violent confrontation between



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وتحت شعار

(البحث العلمي والاشراف التربوي رؤى مشتركة لبناء عملية تربوية ناجحة)

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Jason and Chris or Jason and Oscar. This dismantles the masculine performance dependence on an audience and the speed with which there becomes a crash down between one form of masculine performance and another where economic unease results into violence: I can't. I do not know why, I cannot see him walking outta here (p. 105). The fact that Jason has a hard time trying to articulate his need to see Oscar depicts how masculine ego does not operate in a discursive manner, but instead, in a ritualized way.

The relationship between Chris and his father Brucie demonstrates that patriarchy wounds men across generations. Brucie's addiction and abandonment of his family stem partly from his inability to fulfill the patriarchal role of provider after being locked out of his job. Chris observes this failure with a mixture of judgment and fear: "I see my dad and—" (Nottage, 2017, p. 93), unable to complete the thought but clearly recognizing his father's decline as a cautionary tale about masculinity's fragility. When Tracey complains about losing her job, she adds a racial dimension: "I betcha they wanted a minority. I'm not prejudice, but that's how things are going these days" (p. 56). This comment reveals how white working-class anxiety becomes racialized, creating divisions among workers who might otherwise recognize their shared class interests. The contrast between Chris and Jason further illustrates hooks' intersectional approach. Both young men face similar economic challenges, but their racial identities shape different responses. Chris considers education as an alternative path: "I kinda wanna do something a little different than my moms and pops" (p. 31). Jason, however, mocks this ambition: "You got aspirations? What is this, Black History Month?" (p. 32). This exchange demonstrates how race influences the available expressions of masculinity, with Chris seeking transformation while Jason clings to traditional industrial identity.

Oscar, a Colombian-American busboy who ends up crossing the picket line and taking a job at the factory, adds another layer to hooks' analysis. His: "If they don't see me, I don't need to see them" (p. 100), illustrates the reciprocal invisibility between peoples living with racial and class differences. Tracey accuses him of stealing work, to which Oscar replies, "I've been trying to get in that shop for two years. But ev'ry time I asked any one of 'em I'm getting nothing but pushback" (Nottage, 2017, p. 99). This discussion shows that systems of domination do ally marginalized populations, if possible, by generating hierarchies among them.



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A powerful example that synthesizes all three theoretical perspectives appears when Brucie reflects on his experience of being accused of taking jobs:

Last week, I was at the union office signing up for some bullshit training and this old white cat, whatever, gets in my face, talking about how we took his job. We? I asked him who he was talking about, and he pointed at me. ME? So I said, if you ain't noticed I'm in the same fucking line as you.

(Nottage, 2017, p. 48)

This passage illustrates the dialectical tension between racial division and class solidarity, the deconstructive instability of categories like "us" and "them," and the insight about how systems of domination create false oppositions among the marginalized.

The violence which erupts in the beating of Oscar and Stan is what Hooks describes as the necessary outcome within patriarchy of masculine socialization. When men are no longer able to exert their power through economic means, they use physical violence as another medium to enact masculinity. The way Jason uses a baseball bat is the most raw manifestation of this dynamic that hits you in the face, a last-ditch effort for the men in question to reclaim a form of masculinity through sheer violence once all other options are spent. Yet, the play also exposes the great cost of this patriarchal performance, no more so than in father-son relationships. When Brucie cannot support his family because he has lost his job, he becomes emasculated in his own eyes and his family, driving Cynthia and Chris away. His admission that "I got enough of that in my marriage" (Nottage, 2017, p. 49) when discussing blame exposes how his patriarchal masculinity, which represses emotional vulnerability, hinders him from dealing with his trauma. The play leaves us with the sense that Brucie's drug habit is not just a sign of personal failure but the inevitable result of a masculine script that has no language for vulnerability or mutual aid. Chris also demonstrates the most positive model of what Hooks describes as 'revolutionary masculinity', in which masculinity can stand against traditional masculinist stereotypes for emotional openness, community cooperation, and non-violent conflict resolution. He did not convert to Christianity in prison as a kind of regression into conservative patriarchy, but as an experiment with new forms of masculinity. His leaning "against the wind" is another sense of masculine power, one that does not deny but affirms vulnerability: "Reverend Duckett said, 'Lean on God for forgiveness. Lean on God to carry you through the



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awful storm.” “I’m leaning against the wind, I’m fuckin’ leaning” (Nottage, 2017, p. 26). Chris and Jason’s final reconciliation represents love as political opposition, the revolutionary choice of bond over force, of healing over revenge. Chris’s ability to accept Jason despite their mutual violent past is a new kind of strength in masculinity, one that no longer plays out the old patriarchal motifs of competition and dominion, but is looking for mutual partnership.

The violence that erupts at the end of the play, leading to the imprisonment of Jason and Chris, represents the ultimate failure of traditional masculinity to adapt to changing conditions. Unable to direct their rage toward the economic forces responsible for their suffering, the characters turn on each other, destroying their community in a final, tragic performance of masculine aggression. Nottage's *Sweat* shows how personal tragedies connect to larger social and economic transformations. Through her nuanced portrayal of working-class masculinity in crisis, she invites readers to consider how gender identity might be reconstructed in more adaptive, less destructive ways.

5. Conclusion

Masculinity in both plays exposes and undermines the inherent contradictions of patriarchal regimes to which the plays have so powerfully drawn our attention. In *Glengarry Glen Ross*, the system of the sales contest stands as a flawed model of dialectical synthesis, but rather than reaching the higher unity toward which *Aufhebung* gestures, the antagonistic structure of masculinity yields only a remote and abstract negation, whereby one man's success depends upon and negates another's sense of value. The characters realize Hegel's definition of “absolute negativity”; something solid and stable is torn down to the very core. Their tired masculine performance becomes a race to the bottom, to see who can more pitifully beg to be reified through the master-slave dialectic. However, Hegel's philosophy of gender exposes the pitfalls of a dialectical approach to masculinity. As feminist critics have demonstrated, Hegel's system reproduces masculine privilege by distributing activity and immediate passivity: men are active agents in developing the dialectic, whereas women are passively immediate. This discrepancy is evident in how both plays grapple with the absence or marginalization of women. *Glengarry Glen Ross* features no female characters; *Sweat*'s women serve as subordinate foils to the men, whose economic concerns are emphasized. A dialectical movement, as indicated by the promise of the



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Aufhebung, can only happen in reality when one-half of humanity is denied access to the process of self-formation, the history of their species.

Derrida's *différance* provides a more thorough deconstruction and is useful here again to suggest the insubstantial nature of masculinity, as something built on an infinitely past meaning that never fully arrives. In both plays, masculinity is not a stable identity but a series of performances that only make sense in relation to femininity, weakness, and failure. The salesmen in *Glengarry Glen Ross* are continually defining themselves by what they are not, they are not women, they are not weak, they are not failures, but this negative definition as Derrida argues is one which involves a spacing and a temporizing, where masculine identity is always put off until the next sale, and the next competition, and the next proof that you are not worthless.

Sweat shows how economic deindustrialization shakes these signifying chains, disrupting characters' access to, and tacit reliance upon, the "constitutive arbitrariness" of their masculine identities. Once the bands of factory employment that tethered their sense of manhood are gone, the characters feel what Derrida would call the shattering of the "transcendental signified," the delusion that they had ever really been referring to some solid, fixed substrate. The racial anxieties that erupt in the play remind us that masculine identity has always been built on exclusion and hierarchy rather than anything naturally essential. Hooks's observation that patriarchy has turned men away from themselves" offers some clues as to why the characters in both plays seem so profoundly estranged from any real relationship or connection to emotions. The poisonous masculinity at work in *Glengarry Glen Ross* is what hooks calls the patriarchal coerciveness that demands that men cut themselves off from their feelings, enabling the manipulation and viciousness that propel the play. In *Sweat*, one sees a glimmer of what hooks refers to as the possibility of feminist masculinity in the play's final scene, which points toward the possibility of healing in the 'fractured togetherness' of Jason and Oscar. These plays show how economic systems mold gender identities and how they can be re-imagined dialectically, not by retaining or abolishing traditional understandings of masculinity and femininity, but by reconstituting them by recognizing their internal contradictions and their relation to other forms of identity. In doing so, both plays provide critiques of toxic masculinity and peeks at how it can be dismantled and perhaps surpassed.



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تفكيك الذكورة: دراسة مقارنة بين مسرحيتي غلينغاري غلين روس لديفيد

ماميت وسويت للين نوتاج

الهام وليد

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جامعة تكريت-كلية التربية للبنات-قسم اللغة الإنكليزية

مستخلص البحث:

تتناول هذه الدراسة تشكُّل وتفكُّك الذكورة في مسرحيتي غلينغاري غلين روس (1984) لديفيد ماميت وسويت (2015) للين نوتاج، من خلال مقارنة نظرية تجمع بين الجدل الهيغلي والتفكيك عند جاك دريدا. بالاعتماد على النموذج الثلاثي للجدل عند هيغل: الطرح – النقيض – التركيب، تبحث الدراسة كيف تُشكَّل الثنائيات مثل النجاح والفشل، الهيمنة والعجز، والمظهر الخارجي والحقيقة الداخلية، الصراعات الأيديولوجية والعاطفية التي يخوضها الشخصيات الذكورية في كل من المسرحيتين. وتُعد هذه التوترات بمثابة المحركات الجدلية خلف تطور السرد وبناء الشخصيات. تُستخدم نظرية دريدا في التفكيك للتأمل في الثنائيات وتقويضها، مثل القوة/الضعف، التضامن/العزلة، والنجاح/الفشل، ويُظهر التحليل أن الذكورة المهيمنة ليست كياناً ثابتاً، بل هي أداء متكرر وغير مستقر في ظل الرأسمالية المتأخرة. وبينما يقدم هيغل نموذجاً جدلياً يُفضي إلى "التركيب" أو "الرفع" (Aufhebung)، فإن دريدا، من خلال مفهوم "الاختلاف المؤجل" (différance)، لا يغلق المسألة بل يكشف عن أن الهوية الذكورية غير ساكنة، وأنها تعيش في حالة تأجيل دائم واضطراب مستمر. من خلال توازي منطق التركيب الهيغلي مع عدم الحسم عند دريدا، تُبين الدراسة كيف أن الذكورة في المسرحيتين تتحدد بعدم الاستقرار الاقتصادي، وأداء اللغة، والقوى النظامية التي تجعل من الهوية الذكورية كياناً هشاً بطبيعته. وتُثير الدراسة الأسئلة التالية: كيف تُصوَّر الذكورة في غلينغاري غلين روس وسويت من خلال عدسة الجدل الهيغلي والتفكيك الدريدي؟ ما هي التناقضات التي تنشأ بين تصورات المجتمع عن الذكورة والحياة النفسية الداخلية للشخصيات في صراعاتها الجدلية؟ وبموازاة الطرح الماركسي القائل بأننا نحمل الازدواجية ما بين النظرة والفعل كذوات وعمال، نصل إلى السؤال التالي: في أي شكل تؤدي أنماط الأداء اللغوي والانقسام الأيديولوجي إلى تفجُّر أزمة وتحول في الذكورة داخل عمليات العمل في النظام الرأسمالي؟

الكلمات المفتاحية: التفكيك، هيغل، دريدا، الذكورة، ماميت، نوتاج، غلينغاريغلين روس، سويت، الثنائية الضدية، الجدل، الرفع (Aufhebung)، الاختلاف المؤجل (différance).