Speaking from the Margins: Polyphonic Female Voices in Jennifer Saint's *Elektra*

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Jennifer Saint's *Elektra* (2022) is a contemporary mythological novel that reimagines the story of the House of Atreus by granting narrative authority to three female figures, Elektra, her mother Clytemnestra, and Cassandra, whose voices have traditionally been marginal or constrained within patriarchal mythic structures. This article offers a theoretical reading of *Elektra* through the lens of Mikhail Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism, heteroglossia, and polyphony, arguing that the novel is governed by centrifugal forces that resist narrative and ethical unification under a single authoritative voice. The multi-voiced narration destabilizes authoritative meaning, so the alternating first-person perspectives can be read not simply as a strategy of multiperspectivity, but as genuinely polyphonic voices that retain ideological independence and are not subordinated to a single authorial consciousness. Drawing on Bakhtin's theory of the novel and reading *Electra* within a feminist horizon, the article argues that polyphonic structure of the novel reveals how dialogism operates under conditions of unequal discursive legitimacy, where female voices articulate competing moral positions without achieving authoritative closure. Particular attention is given to heteroglossia as an ongoing struggle between distinct moral languages, i.e. prophetic, maternal, political, and affective, that coexist in tension throughout the narrative. Cassandra's voice, in particular, is examined as a limit-case of dialogism, revealing how truth may circulate without achieving discursive authority. By foregrounding ethical non-closure and the absence of a finalizing narrative voice, *Elektra* affirms Bakhtin's privileging of the novel as a form uniquely suited to plurality, contradiction, and the refusal of a final authoritative interpretation**.**

Keywords: Bakhtinian dialogism, Polyphony, Heteroglossia, Female narrative voice, Electra

Bio: Vahide Metin teaches English literature and conducts research in feminism, gender studies, and literary criticism. Her primary research interest is feminist literary criticism, which she approaches through a range of theoretical frameworks, including Existentialism and psychoanalysis. Grounded in Bakhtin's theory of dialogism, this study adopts a feminist lens to examine how female voices operate within polyphonic narrative structures.