

Peter V. Brett's Demon Cycle: A Feminist
Reading

By

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Abstract

Peter V. Brett's *Demon Cycle* series features several compelling themes and issues. Brett's series can be used to raise awareness of feminist issues. Furthermore, he has worked to achieve this. His attempts are not limited to this series. This paper will examine pervasive issues from a feminist perspective. This will begin with an introduction to Brett and his background. Details of his fanbase and online resources will be provided. This will include my own experiences with fans. Reasons for choosing this genre and series will be given. Furthermore, the goal of this paper will be established. Additionally, a brief summary of Brett's series will feature here. Finally, works containing similar themes and issues will be identified. This will include fictional and factual examples.

Subsequently, Brett's series shall be discussed in detail. This will include character and setting introduction. Furthermore, the main themes and issues in Brett's series will be identified and outlined. This will involve identification of common characteristics of sci-fi/fantasy literature. Examples will be used to support this. Literary techniques used by Brett will also be discussed here.

Pursuant to this, feminist perspectives on Brett's series will be discussed. These will be applied to themes and events in Brett's series. Catherine MacKinnon's views on pornography will feature here. Brett's series will be shown to resemble pornography in some ways. Additionally, the nature of objectification will be discussed. Martha Nussbaum's types of objectification will be covered. Furthermore, the issue of whether objectification is always negative will be addressed. These will be illustrated in the context of Brett's series. The significance of these conceptions in Brett's series will also be discussed. The merits of Brett's series will be subsequently be examined.

Ultimately, Brett's series will be assessed regarding positive and negative aspects. Conclusions will be based on development, or the lack thereof, of characters and cultures throughout the series.

Introduction

Peter V. Brett is an American author primarily known for the Demon Cycle series of novels (Brett, 2018, About). This series concluded last year (Brett, 2017). This is a science fiction/fantasy series. Brett's novels have sold millions of copies and are available in multiple formats and language across several continents (Brett, 2018, About). Furthermore, Brett has visited numerous countries, including Ireland, in his capacity as an author, and has scheduled appearances in Europe and the US for this year (Brett, 2018, Appearances).

Regarding his fans, I have introduced several people to the series. These range in age from early 30's to 60+. I have not interacted with fans in any other circumstances. Brett's communication with his fans is done primarily online. This includes his website, and social media. Material such as fanart regularly appears here (Brett, 2018, Peephole). Fan contributions range from cosplay pictures to illustrations to dioramas (Brett, 2018). Competitions and prize giveaways are regularly run through his website (Brett, 2018). Multiple book covers have been created for some of the series (Brett, 2018). Examples include *The Skull Throne*, and *The Core*. Rojer features on the UK cover of *The Skull Throne* (Brett, 2016). Renna appears on the US cover (Brett, 2016). Similarly, the UK cover of *The Core* features a mind demon (Brett, 2017). Leesha is on the cover of the US version (Brett, 2017). These details give some insight into Brett's fanbase.

My intention is to explore Brett's novels from a feminist perspective. I have chosen this genre and series for several reasons, such as ways in which science fiction mirrors reality, regarding societal structures for example. Women are consistently treated as commodities and property in Brett's series (Brett, 2011, P64, 2016, pp. 117-118). This mirrors a case from Ireland in the 1970s (Boyne, 1998). Details will be provided as this essay progresses.

Events in Brett's novels mirror second-wave feminism, as women strive to increase their influence and affect the balance of power. Several of the civilisations in Brett's novels are patriarchal in nature. Although these societies regulate women through different means, they share common characteristics. This is most obvious in Krasia, Miln, and Angiers,

three rival cities in Brett's novels. Krasian women are regularly sold into harems, officially for breeding purposes. While this is considered an honourable duty, and men are required to produce multiple offspring with these women, there is also an aspect of pleasure, for men, in this task.

Power and objectification are key themes in Brett's novels. Krasian marriage is also primarily a transaction, often arranged between powerful men. Despite cultural differences, primarily regarding religious attitudes, there are similarities between the treatment of women in Krasia and Miln. Women have greater freedom regarding marriage, but Mothers in Miln are given opportunities denied to other women, including influencing state policy. Furthermore, there are similarities between women in Angiers and Krasia. There are powerful women in both cities, although they exercise their power in different ways. However, to retain their power, these women are required to conceal it from most men. It is important to note that these attitudes toward women are not limited to urban environments.

Violence against women is another prominent aspect of Brett's novels, one which is present in various contexts. During their conquest of foreign civilisations, the Krasians use violence to subdue and dominate women, including rape, and subsequently force these women to wear Krasian clothing, leaving only their eyes visible. Their religious beliefs also prohibit female warriors, which results in conflict with one civilisation, leading to the attempted rape of one woman by three men. Violence in Krasian society is not merely physical as even powerful women are forbidden from ascending above less suitable male rulers. Additionally, men can have multiple wives simultaneously, yet women are only permitted one husband at a time.

The nature of women is also a significant feature of Brett's novels. Renna, a female character in a rural area, is wrongly convicted of murder and sentenced to death, despite being comatose and unable to testify. Additionally, Krasians consider women inferior to men. This is evident in some of the examples listed above, but also in the Krasian language. Their word for homosexual men translates as false woman, a derogatory term.

Brett's novels, as shown above, feature several characteristics of pornography which have been discussed by Gloria Steinem and Andrea Dworkin, among others. Moreover, there is a lack of secondary literature on Brett's novels. However, there are parallels between his work and novels such as *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Thus far, Brett's *Demon Cycle* series has been introduced. Additionally, other works containing similar themes have been discussed. Evidence for the above statements will appear in the next chapter. Moreover, Brett's series will be discussed in detail. This will include a general overview of Brett's series. This will include characters, locations, and cultures. Pursuant to this, themes in the series will be identified and discussed.

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Genre and Series Overview

Prior to discussing *The Demon Cycle* series, possible alternatives will be addressed. Although I have chosen to focus on Brett's series, there were other options. Various works exist which contain similar themes. This is not limited to the sci-fi/fantasy genre. Louise O'Neill's *Only Ever Yours* is one such example. Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* is another. However, these novels revolve around feminist issues (O'Neill, 2014, Atwood, 1986). There are similarities between these and Brett's series. These will be shown later. Despite this, the plot of Brett's series is quite different. O'Neill's and Atwood's novels focus on environments hostile to women (O'Neill, 2014, Atwood, 1986). Brett's series focuses on a war between humans and demons (Brett, 2009-2017). I have chosen sci-fi/fantasy because feminist issues regularly feature in this genre. Examples will now be provided.

Other noteworthy sci-fi/fantasy authors include J. R. R. Tolkien, Brent Weeks, and G. R. R. Martin (Jackson, 2016, pp. 2-3). Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, Weeks' *The Night Angel* series, and Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* have much in common with Brett's series. Similar weapons are used in each (Brett, 2011, P82, Tolkien, 1995, P316, Weeks, 2011, pp. 90-91, Martin, 2011, P3). Magic also features in each of these series (Brett, 2013, pp. 51-52, Tolkien, 1995, P322, Weeks, 2011, P317, Martin, 2011, pp. 686-687). Women are also objectified in some of these (Brett, 2011, P5, P76, Weeks, 2011, P357, P417, Martin, 2011, P29, P35). Consequently, there are other sci-fi fantasy novels which could be examined.

These examples indicate some common characteristics of this genre. I have chosen Brett's series for several reasons. Unlike Weeks' novels, feminist issues arise often in Brett's series. Additionally, Brett examines these in greater detail. Examples will be provided in character and culture introductions. Furthermore, Brett's series concluded last year (Brett, 2017). Martin's series is not yet finished (Jackson, 2016, P3). Consequently, it is easier to get an overall sense of Brett's series. Significantly, there is not much secondary literature on Brett's series.

Brett also includes a map at the beginning of each novel. One of these is included at the end of this chapter. Additionally, the majority of them contain a Krasian dictionary (Brett, 2011, pp.751-761, 2013, pp. 792-803), 2016, pp. 740-751). These dictionaries are useful regarding primary Krasian characters and phrases. Brett also includes Jardir's family tree in *The Daylight War* (2016, pp. 738-739). This is included at the end of this chapter. These elements combine to make *The Demon Cycle* series more accessible. Brett's use of literary devices is also intriguing. These influenced my decision as well. These will be discussed after the primary characters and settings are introduced. Proceeding in this way will help regarding clarity.

Peter V. Brett's *The Demon Cycle* is a sci-fi/fantasy series (DuBois, 2017, P1). The series takes place in a world where demons rule the night (Brett, 2018, Creations). These demons are also called corelings (Brett, 2018, Creations). Humans depend on magical wards to protect them from the demons (Brett, 2018, Creations). Legends speak of a Deliverer, Kaji, (Brett, 2013, pp. 797-798), a man who united all humanity and defeated the demons (Brett, 2018, Creations). Krasians believe the Deliverer will return to wage war against demonkind (Brett, 2011, P107, pp. 759-760). Kaji had many wives, Inevera being the first (Brett, 2013, P26). This is key to Brett's series, as will be shown in the character introductions.

Brett's series takes place in a region called Thesa (Brett, 2009, P254). Thesa consists of numerous cities and hamlets, as shown on the map below. Information regarding primary characters and locations will be provided. Brett uses various techniques throughout the series, which will also be outlined. Furthermore, some of the themes and issues of the series will be discussed. Additionally, I will specify why I have chosen to examine the series from a feminist perspective/regarding feminism.

Brett's series consists of 5 novels and 2 novellas (Brett, 2008-2017). The novellas are naturally shorter than the novels. Additionally, they do not address issues present in the novels. Thus, the primary focus will be on the novels. The novels are titled as follows: *The Painted Man*, known as *The Warded Man* in America, *The Desert Spear*, *The Daylight*

War, The Skull Throne, and The Core. Regarding the novels, each cover features one main character. These will be discussed in detail later.

Brett's series begins in *Tibbet's Brook*. This is an isolated hamlet (Brett, 2009, P174), divided into multiple villages (Brett, 2009, P7). This is home to Arlen Bales and his parents, Silvy and Jeph (Brett, 2009, pp3-5). Following a demon attack, Arlen's mother is injured (Brett, 2009, P50) and dies (Brett, 2009, P72). Arlen flees *Tibbet's Brook* (P73). Arlen's plan is to locate Ragen, a Messenger, and travel to the Free Cities (Brett, 2009, P75). Arlen cuts the arm from a demon but is wounded himself (Brett, 2009, P80). Fortunately, he is cured by Ragen (Brett, 2009, P171) and taken to Miln. Arlen wants to become a Messenger (Brett, 2009, P200). Messengers deliver supplies and news from place to place (Brett, 2009, P12). However, becoming an apprentice proves complicated (Brett, 2009, pp201-202). Arlen thus becomes an apprentice to Cob, a Warder and friend of Ragen's (Brett, 2009, P208). Warders use magic to repel demons (Brett, 2009, P35). Warders earn money by warding property and selling wards (Brett, 2009, pp. 214-215). Despite attempts to dissuade him (Brett, 2009, pp.308-316), Arlen becomes a Messenger (Brett, 2009, pp. 321-323). Arlen's path eventually leads him to Krasia (Brett, 2009, pp. 327-376). After offending the Krasians, he is left in the desert to die (Brett, 2009, P391). His determination to survive leads him to the Oasis of Dawn (P394). Although he finds weapons, Arlen lacks the materials to ward them adequately (Brett, 2009, P395). Therefore, he is forced to ward his body (Brett, 2009, pp. 395-402). Consequently, he becomes known as the Painted Man (Brett, 2009, pp. 459-465). Arlen is later reunited with a childhood acquaintance. She will be introduced now.

The next character only appears briefly in *The Painted Man* (Brett, 2009, pp. 62-70). Arlen and his father shelter at Harl Tanner's farm (Brett, 2009, pp. 61-62). During their stay, Arlen is promised to Harl's daughter Renna (Brett, 2009, P67, P71). Promising is a practice similar to engagement. It is commonly arranged between parents (Brett, 2009, P67, 2011, pp. 571-572). This plan is derailed when Arlen flees *Tibbet's Brook*. Renna's next appears in a self-titled chapter in *The Desert Spear* (Brett, 2011, P284). Approximately 15 years after Arlen leaves (Brett, 2009, P35, 2011, P284), Renna becomes involved with Cobie Fisher (Brett, 2011, pp. 293-295). She wishes to leave home, like her

sisters (Brett, 2011, P447). This is because their father secretly treated his daughters like wives (Brett, 2011, P447). Unfortunately, Harl catches Renna and Cobie together (Brett, 2011, pp. 294-295). Both Harl and Garric, Cobie's father, disapprove of the relationship (Brett, 2011, P423). Renna attempts to flee to Cobie soon after, but they are found by Harl (Brett, 2011, P430). Consequently, both men are killed (Brett, 2011, P431) and Renna flees to Jeph's farm (Brett, 2011, pp. 432-433). Ilain, Renna's sister, married Jeph after Silvy's death (Brett, 2011, P435). Renna is unresponsive following her ordeal (Brett, 2011, pp. 434-435). Despite this, she is imprisoned (Brett, 2011, P442) and put on trial for murder (Brett, 2011, P456). Renna is still unable to speak for herself (Brett, 2011, pp. 455-56). Ilain and Beni, her sisters, refuse to speak on Renna's behalf (Brett, 2011, pp. 450-451). Renna is convicted of murder and sentenced to death (Brett, 2011, pp. 460-461). Arlen returns to Tibbet's Brook to find Renna bound for the demons to slaughter (Brett, 2011, P582). Arlen rescues Renna (Brett, 2011, P585). Despite his changed appearance (Brett, 2011, P584), Renna recognises him (Brett, 2011, pp. 591-592). Arlen and Renna leave Tibbet's Brook together (Brett, 2011, P608). They become promised once again (Brett, 2011, P750) and later soon marry (Brett, 2013, P514). Two other primary characters are prominent in *The Painted Man*. Leesha appears first (Brett, 2009, P88). Thus, she will be introduced first.

Leesha lives with her parents in Cutter's Hollow (Brett, 2009, pp. 88-90). Almost 13, she is promised to teenager Gared Cutter and longs to live with him (Brett, 2009, pp. 89-90). Leesha's life changes dramatically after a coreling attack (Brett, 2009, pp. 94-97). After saving Bruna, a local healer (Brett, 2009, P104), Leesha becomes Bruna's apprentice (Brett, 2009, P150). Additionally, she is no longer promised to Gared after he betrayed her (Brett, 2009, pp. 150-151). These events lead Leesha to Angiers (Brett, 2009, P279). She remains here for approximately 7 years (Brett, 2009, P430) until disease hits Cutter's Hollow (Brett, 2009, P440). During this time, she meets and befriends Rojer (Brett, 2009, pp. 435-439). They leave Angiers together (Brett, 2009, P445). Leesha and Rojer are attacked and Leesha is raped multiple times (Brett, 2009, pp. 449-451). They are left for the corelings as night falls (Brett, 2009, pp. 455-456). Like Renna, they are saved by the Painted Man (Brett, 2009, pp. 457-460). They befriend the Painted Man as the series progresses.

Despite meeting Leesha in Angiers, Rojer hails from Riverbridge (Brett, 2009, P154). However, corelings attack and Riverbridge is destroyed (Brett, 2009, pp. 164-167). Rojer and Arrick, a visiting entertainer, are the only survivors (Brett, 2009, P167). Although Arrick tries to abandon Rojer (Brett, 2009, pp. 164-165), they become companions (Brett, 2009, P290). Rojer ends up in Angiers (Brett, 2009, P290) as Arrick's apprentice (Brett, 2009, P294). Facing becoming homeless, Rojer performs without Arrick (Brett, 2009, P297), as Arrick is drunk (Brett, 2009, P297). Consequently, Rojer begins building a reputation as a musician (Brett, 2009, P296, P303). This leads Arrick and Rojer to the hamlets to boost their reputation (Brett, 2009, P378, P420). During their trip, Rojer discovers that his music can influence corelings (Brett, 2009, pp. 382-384). This significantly affects his future. Additionally, he begins to attract female attention (Brett, 2009, P385). Soon, a drunk Arrick fights with Rojer (Brett, 2009, pp. 386-387). Arrick is killed saving Rojer from a coreling (Brett, 2009, P388). Rojer subsequently becomes something of a womaniser (Brett, 2009, P413, 2016, P299), much like Arrick was (Brett, 2009, P296, P303). Eventually, Rojer returns to Angiers (Brett, 2009, P417) and finds a new master, Jaycob (Brett, 2009, pp. 423-424.) Unfortunately, Rojer and Jaycob are attacked and beaten by a rival (Brett, 2009, pp. 424-425). Rojer survives, but Jaycob does not (Brett, 2009, pp. 435-436). This leads to Rojer meeting Leesha, as shown above. Rojer will be discussed again at a later point, as will Arlen, Renna, and Leesha. Prior to this, it is necessary to introduce other characters.

Although Krasia features in *The Painted Man*, it is described from an outsider's perspective (Brett, 2009, pp. 328-329). The title *The Desert Spear* comes from an alternate name for Krasia (Brett, 2009, P345). Two key Krasian characters feature in *The Painted Man* (Brett, 2009, P348, pp.357-358). These are Abban, and Ahmann. They are connected throughout the series, but the latter is the main Krasian character. Although Abban has a self-titled chapter, it is seen primarily from Ahmann's perspective (Brett, 2011, pp. 9-69). Despite being a prominent character, Abban is not a primary one. His main role is to introduce or develop other characters. This is evident in his interactions with Ahmann and Arlen. Abban enables Arlen to obtain a map to Anoch Sun (Brett, 2009, P351, 2013, P768). Anoch Sun was Kaji's home (Brett, 2011, P752). Kaji was the first

Deliverer (Brett, 2011, P756). Here, Arlen finds the Spear of Kaji (Brett, 2011, P199). This causes Ahmann to betray him (Brett, 2009, pp. 369-372, 2011, pp. 202-204). Ahmann Jardir is the Sharum Ka of Krasia and a friend to Arlen (Brett, 2009, P357, P359). This title translates as 'First Warrior' but also has religious significance (Brett, 2009, P357, 2011, P760). He is usually called Jardir. However, Jardir betrays Arlen and leaves him to die (Brett, 2009, pp. 391-392). The consequences for Arlen have been outlined above. Meanwhile, Jardir uses the spear he took from Arlen (Brett, 2009, P372) to become ruler of Krasia (Brett, 2011, pp. 206-216, 2009, P544). Jardir takes the title Shar'Dama Ka (Brett, 2011, P206), a Krasian term for the Deliverer (Brett, 2011, P759). *The Desert Spear* explores Jardir's and Abban's journey from children to adults (Brett, 2009, pp. 9-69, P92). It also introduces Inevera, who becomes Jardir's First Wife (Brett, 2011, pp. 23-25, pp. 106-108, P756). The significance of Inevera and *inevera* will now be demonstrated.

Inevera is both a name and a revered Krasian word. The name Inevera has religious significance in Krasian society, as does the word *inevera* (Brett, 2011, P25, 2013, P796). These translate as "Everam's will" or "Everam willing" (Brett, 2011, P755). It is believed that Inevera will return "to find the next Deliverer" (Brett, 2013, P27). Inevera was First Wife to Kaji (Brett, 2013, P18), the original Deliverer (Brett, 2011, P756). Krasians also believe that she provided Kaji with the tools to defeat the demons (Brett, 2013, pp26-27). Thus, she was vital to his success (Brett, 2013, pp26-27). Jardir's First Wife also bears the name Inevera, as shown above. She first appears in *The Desert Spear* (Brett, 2011, P25). This focuses on Inevera's teenage and adult years. *The Daylight War* reveals Inevera's age, during her self-titled chapter (Brett, 2013, pp. 1-36). This chapter focuses on Inevera's childhood and family history. During this time, Inevera undergoes *Hannu Pash* and becomes nie'dama'ting, a trainee (Brett, 2013, pp. 16-23). This begins when Inevera is 9 years old (Brett, 2013, P1). *Hannu Pash* means life's path in Krasian (Brett, 2013, P796). It refers to a training period for boys and girls (Brett, 2011, pp. 9-69, pp. 75-101, 2013, P796, pp. 157-197). After completing her training, Inevera becomes *dama'ting* (Brett, 2013, pp. 228-230). *Dama'ting* are Krasian Holy Women and are highly respected (Brett, 2013, P795). Ultimately, Inevera becomes the most powerful woman in Krasia (Brett, 2013, P274, P795). Despite this, she is subject to a patriarchal system (2013, P708, 2016, P33, P40-45). This will be discussed after the character and place introductions.

Brett's series also contains chapters named after secondary characters. Many of these chapters are insignificant to my chosen topic. However, some of them contain relevant information. There are too many to discuss in detail. Thus, I will focus on one such chapter, Abban's. Abban's chapter highlights divisions between Krasians. This is demonstrated in multiple ways. Abban's father was *khaffit*, the lowest Krasian caste (Brett, 2011, P14, P34, P757). However, *khaffit* men are generally considered superior to women (Brett, 2011, P91, P189). Additionally, there are brief references to tribal conflicts (Brett, 2011, P14, P22, P33). Krasian attitudes towards *chin* are also revealed here (Brett, 2011, P33, P753). *Chin* means outsider in Krasian (Brett, 2013, P794). Krasians consider outsiders cowardly and weak (Brett, 2011, P6, P345). Furthermore, Jaridir learns the truth about *jiwah 'Sharum* (Brett, 2011, P64, P756). The concept of *jiwah 'Sharum* will be expounded upon later. Several of the themes of Brett's series feature here. These include gender, class, and alienation. Examples of these are mentioned above.

Some obstacles faced by women have been mentioned above. This discussion will now turn to various power structures. These structures cause and preserve inequality, as will be shown. Practical examples will also be provided. I will begin with the Krasian hierarchy.

Krasia is an isolated city, reached by crossing a vast desert (Brett, 2009, P31, P342). Therefore, few outsiders travel there (Brett, 2009, P342). Krasian society is highly ritualised and traditional. Regulations govern everything from clothing (Brett, 2009, pp. 345-348) to eating (pp. 542-543) to death (Brett, 2011, pp. 83-84, P90, pp. 97-98). Krasian women wear black clothing from head to toe (Brett, 2009, P346). This resembles Islamic practices. There are other similarities between Krasian and Islamic cultures. There is a regular call from the temple in Krasia (Brett, 2011, pp. 27-28), much like Islam. Krasians are divided into 12 tribes (Brett, 2011, P761). The Kaji tribe is the largest and most powerful of these (Brett, 2011, pp. 13-14, 2013, P23). Crucially, men are superior to women in Krasia (Brett, 2009, P347, 2011, P91). Women are considered expendable property (Brett, 2009, P347, 2016, pp. 117-118). There are chains of command for both men (Brett, 2011, pp. 77-78, 2013, pp. 793-801) and women (Brett, 2013, pp. 22-23, pp. 795-800). A summary of these will now be provided.

Officially, the Andrah rules Krasia (Brett, 2011, P122, P752). This changes when Jardir becomes Shar'Dama Ka (Brett, 2011, P206, pp. 215-216). Consequently, the role of Andrah is abolished (Brett, 2013, P707). The Andrah is served by the Sharum Ka and tribal ministers (Brett, 2011, P122, P753). The Sharum Ka rules the *kai'Sharum* at night (Brett, 2011, P760). These are military captains who command *dal'Sharum* (Brett, 2011, P753). *Sharum* serve the *Damaji*. Additionally, they are divided into smaller groups (Brett, 2011, P753). Each group serves a *dama* and a *kai'Sharum*.

The female command structure also contains multiple layers. *Damaji'ting* are the ranking females in Krasia (Brett, 2011, P753). *Damaji'ting* lead the *dama'ting* (Brett, 2011, P753). These are the most respected women in Krasia (Brett, 2011, P753). Inevera is trained as *dama'ting* (Brett, 2013, pp. 228-230). Jardir, as previously shown, becomes Shar'Dama Ka. Inevera, as his First Wife, becomes the Damajah (Brett, 2013, P795). The Damajah is the most powerful women in Krasia (Brett, 2013, P274). Krasian women are also divided into castes. These include *dal'ting* and *nie'ting* (Brett, 2013, P794). *Dal'ting* are fertile or have given birth (Brett, 2013, P794). Fertile women from poor families are often sold (Brett, 2011, P64). These become *jiwah'Sharum* (Brett, 2011, P64). *Jiwah'Sharum* are available to their tribes' warriors to impregnate (Brett, 2011, P756). This is considered an honourable duty (Brett, 2011, P756). However, such women are discarded once they cannot reproduce (Brett, 2011, P64). *Nie'ting* are barren and below all other Krasians (Brett, 2013, P800). Krasian women are inferior and subservient to men (Brett, 2011, P91, 2009, P347). These examples demonstrate Krasian attitudes towards women.

Krasian language also highlights this, as do some character names. Everam is the Krasian deity (Brett, 2011, P754), whom they believe to be male (Brett, 2011, P20). Nie is the opposite to Everam (Brett, 2011, P758). Nie is the Krasian name for the female Uncreator (Brett, 2011, P758). Thus, there is an association between women and evil. Nie has additional meanings also. Its' meaning depends on the context in which it is used. Literally translated, it means nothing or none (Brett, 2011, P758). This is most obvious regarding barren women. These are known as *nie'ting* in Krasian (Brett, 2011, P758). The

literal translation of this is ‘not woman’ (Brett, 2011, P758, P761). Use of the term *nie* is not limited to women. *Jardir*, for instance, becomes *Nie Ka* as a child (Brett, 2011, P42). Unlike *nie’ting*, this is an honourable position (Brett, 2011, P758). Additionally, the Krasian word for homosexual is derogatory to women. Krasians use the term *push’ting* to refer to homosexual men (Brett, 2013, P800). This translates as ‘false woman’ (Brett, 2013, P800). Homosexuals are tolerated provided they produce children (Brett, 2013, P800). Such relationships exist among Krasian women as well (Brett, 2013, P160). However, it is never stated whether this is widely known. Consequently, there is not much information provided about these. There is a brief reference to a similar relationship in *Tibbet’s Brook* (Brett, 2017, pp. 331-332). This will be discussed at a later point. Discrimination between Krasian men and women becomes more evident with age. *Jiwah’Sharum*, for example, are discarded when they can no longer become pregnant (Brett, 2011, P64). Such women have no means of keeping or gaining honour once this happens. This contrasts with the treatment of Krasians males. Crippled or elderly warriors often volunteer as Baiters (Brett, 2017, P120). This allows them to die with their honour (Brett, 2017, P120).

There are multiple character names in *The Demon Cycle* which reflect attitudes towards women. Most of these are Krasian names, such as *Manvah* and *Amanvah* (Brett, 2016, P738). *Vah* is Krasian for ‘daughter of’ (Brett, 2016, P751). Thus, the name *Amanvah* means daughter of *Ahmann* (Brett, 2016, P751). Similarly, *Manvah* literally translates as daughter of man, although this is not directly stated. The latter is worth noting as it suggests ownership. *Manvah’s* relationship with her husband reflects this (Brett, 2013, P3, pp. 5-7). This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. There is one other character whose name is significant, *Selia* from *Tibbet’s Brook*. She is informally called *Selia Barren* (Brett, 2009, pp. 11-12). *Selia* is a tough, well-respected woman (Brett, 2009, P5). Despite being childless (Brett, 2009, P5, P14), she is an authority figure in *Tibbet’s Brook* (Brett, 2009, P14, 2011, pp. 437-438, P454). These will be explored in further detail in the next chapter.

Miln and *Angiers* are also cities in *Thesa* (Brett, 2009, pp. 17-18, P30, 2011, P375). *Miln* resembles *Krasia* in one key way. *Krasia* is a caste-based society, as shown above. A

similar system exists in Miln. Thus, Miln will be discussed first. Milnese citizens are ranked by class (Brett, 2009, P29). These include Merchant, Servant, and Beggar (Brett, 2009, P29). Trade between cities is key to Miln's survival (Brett, 2009, P184). Miln cannot produce food for its' entire population (Brett, 2009, P184). Merchants have the means to purchase food (Brett, 2009, P184). Those below Merchants are Servants and Beggars (Brett, 2009, P184). Servants are often hired by Merchants (Brett, 2009, P184). Royals and Holy Men are above Merchants (Brett, 2009, P184). Thus, Royals and clerics are privileged (Brett, 2009, P184).

Regarding women, Mothers are highly respected and powerful in Miln (Brett, 2009, P14, pp. 190-191). Married women without children are called Daughters (Brett, 2009, P14). Mothers have more influence than Daughters (Brett, 2009, P14). Additionally, Mothers have greater job prospects (Brett, 2009, P28). Daughters become vulnerable if their spouse dies (Brett, 2009, pp. 28-29). Potential consequences are shown regarding Jenya, a minor character. Jenya began life as a Beggar (Brett, 2009, P186). Fortunately, she married Graig, a Messenger (Brett, 2009, P185). This brought her family from Beggars to Merchant class (Brett, 2009, P186). Unfortunately, Graig dies (Brett, 2009, P12). Jenya, a childless widow (Brett, 2009, P28), faces a difficult situation. Her job options are limited (Brett, 2009, P28). Thus, her income decreases significantly (Brett, 2009, P186). Additionally, Graig died at home (Brett, 2009, P28). Thus, Jenya receives no death-price from the Messengers guild (Brett, 2009, P28). Her circumstances are worse because she is not a Mother. Jenya faces difficulty in remarrying, having failed to reproduce (Brett, 2009, pp. 28-29). This puts her at risk of becoming a Servant or Beggar (Brett, 2009, pp. 28-29, P186). Furthermore, Jenya's parents are completely dependent on her (Brett, 2009, P187). This places further restrictions on her job options (Brett, 2009, P187). Jenya's situation demonstrates the obstacles faced by women in Milnese society.

Elissa, like Jenya, also suffers because of Milnese custom. Elissa is married to Ragen (Brett, 2009, P188). She dropped from Noble to Merchant class when she married him (Brett, 2009, P191). Therefore, becoming a Mother is her only chance to serve the Duke (Brett, 2009, P191). Margrit, a Servant and Mother, discusses this with Arlen (Brett, 2009, P191). Milnese men may also seek to reproduce elsewhere (Brett, 2009, P191). Possibilities include leaving their wives or impregnating servants (Brett, 2009, P1991).

Although Angierian women have more freedom than Krasians, they still face restrictions. Araine is the main female Angierian character. She is an Angierian duchess (Brett, 2011, P377). Araine was forced to surrender power when her husband died (Brett, 2011, pp. 401-402). Her son, Rhinebeck, then took the throne (Brett, 2011, P402). However, the royal family rely primarily on Janson (Brett, 2016, P348). Janson is the duke's first minister (Brett, 2009, P365). The duke relies on Janson and Janson answers to Araine (Brett, 2016, P395). Thus, Araine is still powerful, though this is a closely guarded secret. There are hints that Thamos knows her secret (Brett, 2013, P124, pp. 551-552). However, her power has its' limits. This is revealed after Rojer is arrested (Brett, 2016, P532). Araine claims to be able to free Rojer and his wives (Brett, 2016, P553). Amanvah reveals this to be beyond Araine's power (Brett, 2016, P553). Araine admits that she cannot prevent a trial (Brett, 2016, P553). However, she is capable of pardoning Rojer (Brett, 2016, pp. 553-554).

Angierian men have derisive attitudes towards women in general. Leesha's first encounter with Angierian guards demonstrates this. The guards express surprise at the freedom women enjoy in the hamlets (Brett, 2011, P359). Leesha is an ambassador for the Hollow (Brett, 2011, P370). This offends the Angierian royals (Brett, 2011, pp. 370-371). Araine expresses a similar view when she meets Leesha (Brett, 2011, P378). Janson follows suit (Brett, 2011, pp. 384-385). This is later revealed as a pretence (Brett, 2011, pp. 388-389). Their attitude towards Wonda is similarly dismissive (Brett, 2013, P460). This reveals a similarity between Krasia and Angiers. Women cannot be soldiers in either civilisation (Brett, 2011, pp. 401-402, pp. 530-532, 2013, P460). Eventually, Hollowers and Krasians interact. Leesha and Jardir bond (Brett, 2011, pp.). Jardir invites Leesha to Everam's Bounty (Brett, 2011, P572). Leesha travels there, with her choice of escort (Brett, 2011, P620). This includes Wonda, a female warrior (Brett, 2011, P620). Abban advises Jardir against allowing Wonda to come (Brett, 2011, P620). Jardir ignores Abban's advice, as Leesha chose her (Brett, 2011, P620). This is problematic at first (Brett, 2011, P637, pp. 643-648). Ultimately, it contributes to significant changes in Krasian culture (Brett, 2011, pp. 662-665, 2013 pp. 689-696). The introduction of female soldiers is one of these (Brett, 2013, P689, P696). Angierian women also have no official political influence (Brett,

2011, P378, pp. 389-390). These events indicate how women are treated in the cities. Attention will now turn to the hamlets.

Women have more freedom in the hamlets. Leesha and Wonda's time in Angiers shows this. This has been discussed above. Despite this freedom, some issues arise. These will now be outlined. Tibbet's Brook and Cutter's Hollow are the main hamlets in Brett's series (Brett, 2009, 2011). Both are governed by a town council (Brett, 2011, P440, P618). Both Renna and Leesha become pariahs in their homeland. Renna is judged by the council and sentenced to death (Brett, 2011, P460). Renna's trial has previously been discussed in detail. Thus, it will be mentioned only briefly here. The purpose of this is to highlight Renna's condition at the time. She is unable to speak for herself (Brett, 2011, P439, P456). Despite this, the trial and punishment proceed (Brett, 2011, pp. 456-461, P582). Cutter's Hollow also has a town council. This plays less of a role than the council in Tibbet's Brook (Brett, 2011, P618). However, some members are identified (Brett, 2009, P91). Leesha's ordeal, although less extreme, resembles Renna's. Leesha's boyfriend, Gared, claims to have slept with her (Brett, 2009, pp. 127-130). Some locals subsequently turn against Leesha (Brett, 2009, pp. 133-134). This includes Leesha's friends (Brett, 2009, P127). Some who condemn her have committed adultery (Brett, 2009, P113, pp. 137-138). Prior to Leesha's ordeal, Klarissa, another local, gave birth (Brett, 2009, P113, P102). The father is never identified (Brett, 2009, P102). This leads locals to believe that he is married (Brett, 2009, P103). Klarissa is shunned and leaves town as a result (Brett, 2009, P103, P113). Fortunately for Leesha, her name is cleared (Brett, 2009, P151). However, not everyone believes her. Marick, an Angierian Messenger, believes the rumour (Brett, 2009, P444). He tries to force himself on Leesha twice (Brett, 2009, P288, P444). Leesha is forced to drug him the first time (Brett, 2009, P288). Subsequently, she hits him after he insults her (Brett, 2009 P444). This occurs the second time he assaults her (Brett, 2009, P444).

Brett's series features a non-linear timeline (Brett, 2009, pp. 279-327, 2011, pp. 148-207, 2013, pp. 128-157, 2016, P54, P66, P99). Additionally, events are told from multiple perspectives. These tactics, while intriguing, could divide readers. The time-jumps regularly breakup characters' stories. This is most obvious in *The Daylight War*. This

opens with Inevera as a child (Brett, 2013, P1), then skips to Arlen and Renna (Brett, 2013, P37). We next see Inevera as an adult (Brett, 2013, P152) before returning to her childhood (Brett, 2013, P157). This may deter some readers. However, it allows Brett to develop multiple characters simultaneously (Brett, 2009, pp. 3-173, pp. 290-304). Additionally, Brett uses this to revisit key events. These include Jardir betraying Arlen (Brett, 2009, pp. 370-376, P390, 2011, pp. 203-205), and Inevera's use of the Andrah (Brett, 2011, pp.137-147, 2013, P267, P275). Both events are portrayed from different perspectives, often revealing key information (Brett, 2011, pp. 155-161, 2013, pp. 438-446). This reveals Inevera's contributions to Jardir's rise to power (Brett, 2011, pp. 146-147). During this, Inevera is forced to use her body as a weapon (Brett, 2011, pp. 143-147). Inevera is one of the most powerful Krasian women (Brett, 2011, P145, P755). Despite this, she is subject to a patriarchal system, as shown above. Additionally, her influence over Jardir's actions is demonstrated (Brett, 2011, pp. 112-113, P751). This relates to the issue of free will in Brett's series.

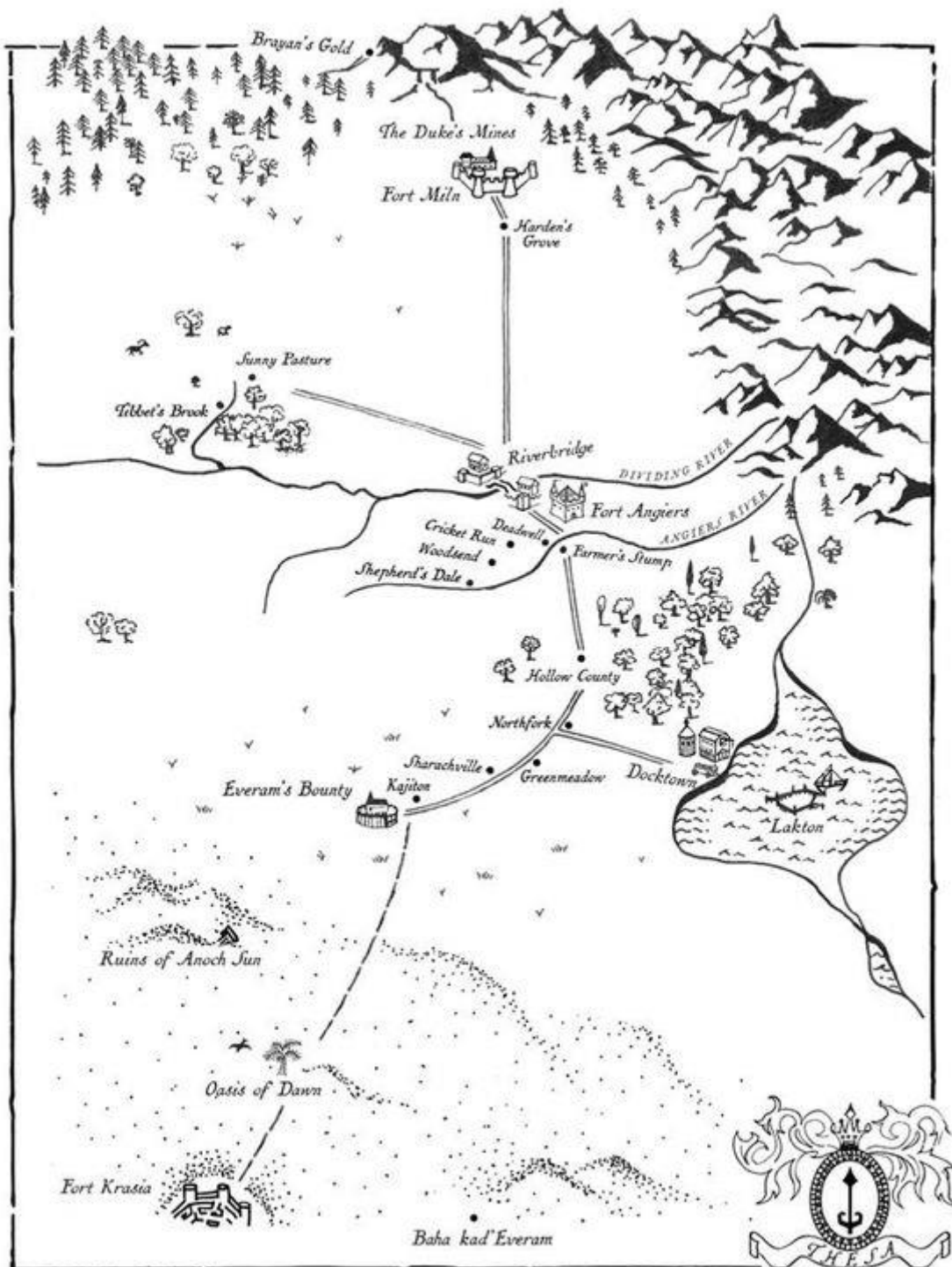
Multiple perspectives also feature in Brett's series. *The Desert Spear* alone contains eight POVs (Brett, 2011, Acknowledgements). Some have been discussed previously. Others include Jardir's youth (Brett, 2011, pp. 86-88, pp. 91-101, 2013, pp. 238-244). This technique is not limited to revisiting events. Examples include Rojer becoming an orphan (Brett, 2009, pp.164-165) and the demon attack on Silvy and Arlen (Brett, 2009, pp. 50-51). These events are key to said characters' development, as previously shown. This technique may challenge readers due to the complexity of the series. Furthermore, the series contains many key characters. These aspects may create challenges for readers. Personally, I find them compelling. This is one of the reasons I chose this series.

Discrimination in Brett's series is not restricted to gender. Some examples have been outlined previously. Several aspects of Brett's series warrant discussion. Thus, a brief outline of these will now be given. Homosexuality, racism, and free will all feature in Brett's series. The relationship between church and state is also significant (Brett, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2016).

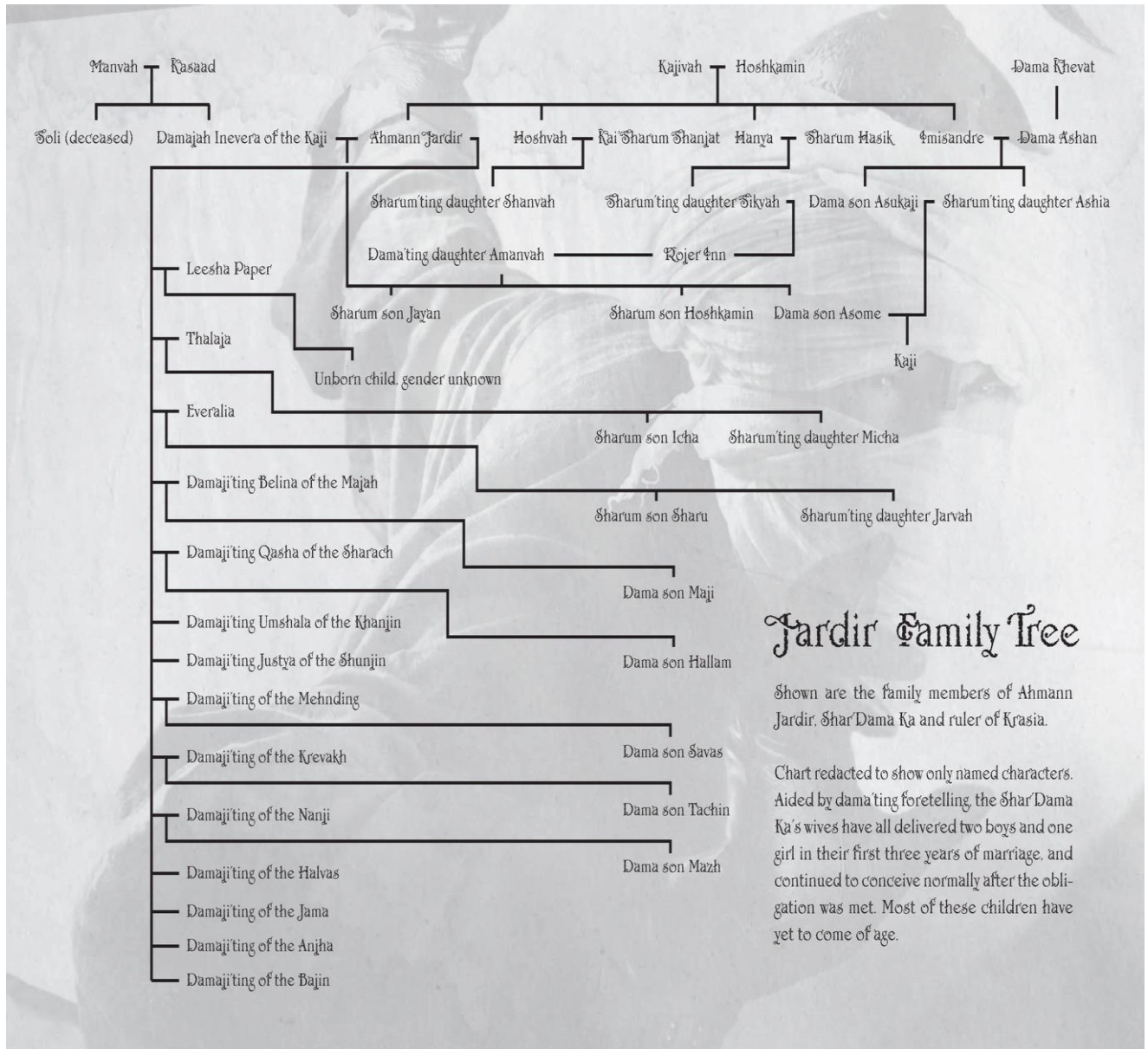
Homosexuality is permitted in Krasia (Brett, 2013, P800). However, homosexual men are required to produce offspring (Brett, 2013, P800). Some of them even marry women (Brett, 2015, P94). Ashia is a victim of such an arrangement, forced to bear Asome's son (Brett, 2013, P691, 2015, pp. 96-98). The issue of homosexuality also appears briefly in Tippet's Brook (Brett, 2017, pp. 331-332). There is a suggestion of stigma here. Additionally, the Krasian word for homosexual literally translates as false woman (Brett, 2011, P758). Racism also features in Brett's series. This is shown by Krasian attitudes towards *chin* (Brett, 2011, P6, 2009, P345). The issue of free will is significant in Krasian culture. *Dama'ting* use demon bones to predict the future (Brett, 2011, P753). This affects multiple aspects of Jardir's life. His actions can be the difference between having a son or daughter (Brett, 2011, pp. 112-113). Foretelling also enables Jardir's rise to power (Brett, 2011, P128). However, Jardir also feels enslaved by this (Brett, 2011, P158). Consequently, the bones may interfere with free will. This issue is not the focus of this paper. Thus, it will not be discussed further. The connection between religion and the law is particularly evident in Krasia and Angiers (Brett, 2013, pp. 146-148). Renna's trial and sentencing also highlights this (Brett, 2011, pp. 457-458). These events have previously been discussed. Additionally, since this issue is not the focus of this paper, it will not be discussed further. Furthermore, several of these affect women more than men. This has been demonstrated above. Examples of the main issues in Brett's series have been provided above. Thus, the majority of these themes can be examined from a feminist perspective. In the next section, these will be analysed from a feminist perspective.

Many cultures undergo significant attitude shifts as the series progresses. This is most evident in Krasian culture. As the series progresses, alienated Krasians gain more rights. This includes the introduction of *Sharum'ting* (Brett, 2013, P689, P696) and *kha'Sharum* (Brett, 2011, pp. 233-237, P757). These, along with changes in other cultures, will be discussed in the next chapter.

Map of Thesa from *The Daylight War*



Jardir Family Tree from *The Skull Throne*



Jardir Family Tree

Shown are the family members of Ahmann Jardir, SharDama Ka and ruler of Krasia.

Chart redacted to show only named characters. Aided by dama'ting foretelling, the SharDama Ka's wives have all delivered two boys and one girl in their first three years of marriage, and continued to conceive normally after the obligation was met. Most of these children have yet to come of age.

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Thematic Analysis

Brett's series resembles pornography in numerous ways. Prior to demonstrating this, characteristics of pornography will be provided. Issues such as sexuality, conditioning, and objectification will thus be discussed. Catherine MacKinnon has approached these issues from a feminist perspective (1989, pp. 314-344). Her discussion covers themes such as domination, conditioning, and objectification (MacKinnon, 1989, pp. 315-330). These regularly appear in Brett's series. Examples will be provided as this discussion continues. MacKinnon views pornography as a means of creating and reinforcing male power (1989, P327). Patriarchal systems are, in her view, sexual (MacKinnon, 1989, P315). This creation and reinforcement occur in several ways. In pornography, sexuality is socially constructed (MacKinnon, 1989, P327). Thus, pornography turns women into objects for male use (MacKinnon, 1989, P327). Those who consume pornography want to possess and use women (MacKinnon, 1989, P327). Thus, they want women who desire possession and objectification (MacKinnon, 1989, P327). Consequently, MacKinnon views women in pornography as desiring violation and domination (MacKinnon, 1989, P327). This can be applied to a variety of media. This range from visual, such as films, to written works such as novels (MacKinnon, 1989, P327).

Objectification is widespread in *The Demon Cycle* series. Numerous examples have been mentioned in the previous chapter. Some of these will be examined in more detail. Prior to this, an account of objectification shall be provided. Objectification is generally seen as a demeaning act (Nussbaum, 1995, P249). This is because it dehumanizes and harms people (Nussbaum, 1995, P249). Objectification is a key feature in pornography (Nussbaum, 1995, P249). Women are often victims of objectification in pornography (Nussbaum, 1995, P249). The term objectification is also used in more general circumstances (Nussbaum, 1995, P249). This relates to discussion of people and events (Nussbaum, 1995, P249). From a feminist perspective, male objectification of women is a serious worry (Nussbaum, 1995, P250). Nussbaum emphasises some negative aspects of objectification (1995, P250). These include the pervasive nature of objectification (Nussbaum, 1995, P250). Objectification happens to all women (Nussbaum, 1995, P250). Indeed, some view women as reliant upon this phenomenon (Nussbaum, 1995, P250).

Traditionally, objectification is seen as a negative occurrence (Nussbaum, 1995, P250). However, it has been argued that the term objectification is not always negative (Nussbaum, 1995, P250). Nussbaum emphasises the fact that some authors have expressed conflicting opinions at different times (1995, pp. 250-251). Therefore, it is possible that objectification is not entirely negative. This suggests that objectification is a divisive topic. It also reveals the importance of context regarding objectification (Nussbaum, 1995, P251). Moreover, Nussbaum indicates that objectification has not been adequately defined (1995, P251). Conceptions of objectification can vary depending on circumstances (Nussbaum, 1995, P258). She raises a question regarding sufficient conditions for objectifying persons (Nussbaum, 1995, P258).

Nussbaum introduces seven potential means of objectifying people (1995, P251). Nussbaum states that all occurrences of objectification share a common characteristic (1995, P256). According to her, objectification must involve the treatment of one thing as another (1995, P256). Essentially, it involves treating a human as an object (Nussbaum, 1995, P257). These are her seven categories of objectification: instrumentality, denial of autonomy, inertness, fungibility, violability, ownership, and denial of subjectivity (Nussbaum, 1995, P257). Nussbaum outlines the characteristics of these notions (1995, pp. 257-258). Objectification requires infliction of at least one of these on a person (Nussbaum, 1995, P258). Additionally, she emphasises that all relate to feminist accounts of objectification (Nussbaum, 1995, P258). Each of these categories is present in Brett's series. Examples will be given upon returning to the novels. According to Nussbaum, all may be regarded as objectifying behaviour (1995, P251). Additionally, while these are connected, coexistence of these is not required (Nussbaum, 1995, P251). These factors indicate the complexity of objectification.

Regarding her seven factors, she ponders whether each alone is sufficient (Nussbaum, 1995, P258). She also considers the possibility that multiple factors may be necessary (Nussbaum, 1995, P258). However, Nussbaum avoids attempting to answer this question (1995, P258). She believes there is no clear universal answer (Nussbaum, 1995, P258). Nussbaum views each condition as sufficient in certain circumstances (1995, P258). Thus, for Nussbaum, objectification requires at least one of these criteria (Nussbaum, 1995, pp.

257-258). However, this does not mean that these conditions cannot coexist. Nussbaum states that, more often than not, multiple conditions of objectification coexist (1995, P258). There is a key distinction between things and persons regarding objectification. This distinction will now be shown.

Nussbaum's list of features is designed with animate beings in mind (1995, P257). Thus, only some are relevant to mere objects (Nussbaum, 1995, P258). This features in Brett's series as well. Jardir and Abban travel to Baha kad'Everam in *The Desert Spear* (Brett, 2011, P41). Here, pottery is used to prepare the battleground (Brett, 2011, P51). Instrumentality and fungibility are particularly relevant to this. The pottery is used for the purposes of the people present (Brett, 2011, P51, pp. 64-65). Additionally, most of the pottery is interchangeable with other pieces. There are exceptions, such as pieces too small to be useful (Brett, 2011, P65). Thus, the pottery pieces are fungible instruments. There are no objections to using the pottery for this purpose. In fact, it will significantly increase the value of the objects (Brett, 2011, P65). Abban takes advantage of this (Brett, 2011, pp. 64-65). Around the same time, Jardir and Abban discuss the fate of *jiwah 'Sharum* (Brett, 2011, P64). There is an obvious contrast regarding perception of these. Abban gladly uses the pottery for his own purposes (Brett, 2011, pp. 64-65). He plots to sell them (Brett, 2011, pp. 64-65). Consequently, the pottery is subject to ownership as well. *Jiwah 'Sharum* are sold, something Abban voices an objection to (Brett, 2011, P64). This shows the distinction between things and persons in Brett's series.

Regarding *jiwah 'Sharum*, several of Nussbaum's classifications apply. *Jiwah 'Sharum* are never individually identified in Brett's series. Thus, they are interchangeable with each other. They are also used as tools for pleasure and reproduction (Brett, 2011, P105, P756). Only their attractiveness and fertility matters (Brett, 2011, P64, P756). Violability is the only category which does not apply to *jiwah 'Sharum*. This applies in a physical sense, at least. It is possible that they suffer mental violation. However, Brett does not examine this in detail. Regarding these women, their purpose is to produce children (Brett, 2011, P756). Mistreating them would therefore be counterproductive. This resembles Nussbaum's ballpoint pen example (1995, P259). However, the repercussions would be much more serious regarding *jiwah 'Sharum*. Although active in bearing children,

jiwah 'Sharum are passive in sexual interactions (Brett, 2011, P76). Additionally, *jiwah 'Sharum* are not taken by force because they do not resist (Brett, 2011, P76). Perhaps, if they did, violability would apply to an extent. The use of the pottery as tools reflects the lives of *jiwah 'Sharum*. The details above show this.

Nussbaum agrees that objectification can be positive or negative (1995, P251). Context is key in this regard (Nussbaum, 1995, P251). Additionally, some characteristics of objectification may be necessary or desirable (Nussbaum, 1995, P251). *Jiwah 'Sharum*, as previously shown, are sold. Although this likely hurts those involved, there are advantages. Poorer families receive money for their daughters (Brett, 2011, P64). This, together with the reduction of their expenses, benefits said families. Nussbaum provides numerous examples of objectification to support her position (1995, pp. 252-254). These are not restricted to men objectifying women (Nussbaum, 1995, P252). This occurs in *The Demon Cycle* as well, when Jardir is assaulted by Hasik (Brett, 2011, P86). Nussbaum's examples of objectification occur within the context of a sexual relationship (1995, P254). While this is present in *The Demon Cycle* series, it is not the only context present. This will be seen as the discussion progresses. Nussbaum also highlights the connection between objectification and morality (1995, P249, P255). This may occur in a sexual context, although it is not required (Nussbaum, 1995, P249). This is also observable in Brett's series, as will be shown.

Another important point made by Nussbaum is concerned with individual actions (1995, P255). She highlights the distinction between acts in a text and the text itself (Nussbaum, 1995, P255). It is possible to disapprove of an act without disapproving of the text (Nussbaum, 1995, P255). This is crucial regarding literary reviews and criticism (Nussbaum, 1995, P255). From an ethical standpoint, it is possible to criticise specific aspects of a text (Nussbaum, 1995, P255). This does not require criticism of the entire text or the author (Nussbaum, 1995, P255). This is key to *The Demon Cycle* series. Brett's novels contain positive and negative aspects. This is shown by the discrimination in the novels, as previously shown. However, the text is not entirely negative. The triumph of good over evil demonstrates this (Brett, 2017, pp. 844-845). There are also numerous

examples of sacrifice, love, and courage (Brett, 2009, pp. 523-532, 2011 P433, 2017, pp. 293-294).

Furthermore, as the series progresses, there are significant attitude shifts. This is shown when women and *khaffit* earn rights and respect (Brett, 2013, P689, P696, 2011, pp. 233-236). Moreover, Brett has shown an interest regarding female agency and feminism (Brett, 2018, Appearances). He recently participated in a panel on this topic (Brett, 2018, Appearances). This, along with attitude changes over the course of his novels, are significant. They highlight Brett's attempts to raise awareness of feminist issues. These attitude changes will be discussed. Prior to this, objectification in Brett's series will be elaborated upon.

There are numerous examples of objectification in Brett's series. This has been shown in the previous chapter. Some will now be examined in greater detail. This will begin with a discussion of Ashia's marriage. Ashia's brother Asukaji plays a key role in her marriage. He declares that one candidate is unworthy (Brett, 2016, P67). He then suggests Asome, Ashia's cousin, as an alternative (Brett, 2016, P69). Asukaji appears to be doing his sister a favour (Brett, 2016, P68). However, he has selfish motives for doing this (Brett, 2016, pp. 97-98). Following arrangements between their fathers (Brett, 2016, P94), Asome and Ashia marry (Brett, 2016, P96).

Ashia soon discovers that Asome is *push'ing* (Brett, 2016, P97). Furthermore, he and Asukaji are lovers (Brett, 2016, P97). This realisation devastates Ashia. She realises that she is merely a tool to them (Brett, 2016, P97). Ashia is therefore objectified even before her marriage begins. Despite being unaware of it, she is a victim of instrumentality (Brett, 2016, P69, P97). Ashia does not even get a moment alone with her husband. Ignoring Ashia, Asukaji arouses Asome until he is ready (Brett, 2016, P97). Moreover, Asukaji watches them together, and his jealousy is obvious (Brett, 2016, P97). Asukaji forces them apart once Asome climaxes (Brett, 2016, P97). The two men immediately embrace each other, again ignoring Ashia (Brett, 2016, P97). Thus, Ashia's experience and feelings are irrelevant to them. She is objectified in two ways: treated as a tool and denied

subjectivity. Ashia is so distraught she considers killing both of them (Brett, 2016, P97). Instead, she leaves, unnoticed by the men (Brett, 2016, P97).

Asome later witnesses his wife fighting demons (Brett, 2013, pp. 689-690). Female soldiers are, at the time, not permitted in Krasian culture (Brett, 2013, pp.690-691). This soon changes (Brett, 2013, P696). Asome is ashamed and angered by Ashia's actions (Brett, 2013, pp. 690-691). During their conversation, Asome rages about Ashia defiance (Brett, 2013, P691). Once again, Ashia is objectified. Asome attempts to control her (Brett, 2013, P691), ignoring her feelings and autonomy (Brett, 2013, P691). This interaction also demonstrates his perception of Ashia as an inert object (Brett, 2013, P691). Furthermore, Asome attempts to reinforce Ashia's role as an instrument (Brett, 2013, P691). Ashia refuses to be victimised, asserting that she is more than a womb (Brett, 2013, P691). She also emphasises the fact that Asome and Asukaji ignored her feelings (Brett, 2013, P691). Jardir is also guilty of objectification, albeit briefly. Shanvah also fought with Ashia (Brett, 2013, P689).

Jardir consults numerous others before acknowledging either of the women (Brett, 2013, P695). Jardir only consults the women at Inevera's suggestion (Brett, 2013, P695). Eventually, Jardir agrees to make them soldiers (Brett, 2013, P696). Asome immediately asks for a divorce (Brett, 2013, pp. 696-697). Thus, the irrelevance of Ashia's feelings is demonstrated again. Asome eventually recognises the consequences his actions had for Ashia (Brett, 2016, P100). Subsequently, the two reconcile (Brett, 2016, pp. 101-103). This shows the beginning of Asome's change in perspective. Consequently, their relationship improves.

Asome's support of Ashia, and other women, demonstrates this (Brett, 2016, pp. 113-115). Asukaji also changes his views regarding women (Brett, 2016, pp. 114-115). However, this is only because he supports Asome (Brett, 2016, P114). Later, Asome and Asukaji later plot to kill Inevera and Ashia (Brett, 2016, pp. 719-727, pp. 707-712). Consequently, Ashia leaves Everam's Bounty with her son (Brett, 2017, pp. 193-194, P287). These events suggest that the men's perspective shift did not last (Brett, 2017,

P178). Jardir is forced to intervene to restore the balance (Brett, 2017, pp. 283-288). However, it is never stated whether Ashia's relationship with them is repaired.

Inevera and Manvah, her mother, are also regularly objectified. This begins with Inevera's father, Kasaad (Brett, 2013, pp. 3-4). During his first appearance, Kasaad ignores Manvah's feelings. He forces Manvah to give up her seat (Brett, 2013, P3). Thus, Manvah is denied subjectivity. Kasaad's behaviour is rendered even more unfair for one key reason. Prior to this, their son Soli respectfully declined the seat (Brett, 2013, P1). Kasaad also ignores Inevera (Brett, 2013, P4). Additionally, he attempts to stop Soli from helping Manvah make baskets (Brett, 2013, P4). This is because he thinks such work is beneath himself and Soli (Brett, 2013, pp. 4-5). It is also apparent that Kasaad considers himself superior to women (Brett, 2013, P5). He attempts to force Manvah to go and purchase couzi (Brett, 2013, P5).

However, Manvah is awaiting a customer and cannot leave (Brett, 2013, P5). Instead, Soli goes (Brett, 2013 P6). Subsequently, he attempts to seduce Manvah (Brett, 2013, pp. 6-7). Manvah is seen as a tool in this case (Brett, 2013, pp. 6-7). Additionally, he attempts to manipulate her into attending to him (Brett, 2013, P7). Thus, Manvah is subjected to instrumentality, and denial of autonomy and subjectivity by Kasaad. This affects the family in several ways. First, they are attacked, and their merchandise destroyed (Brett, 2013, pp. 8-11). Thus, they lose income. Inevera and Manvah are both hurt in the attack (Brett, 2013, P8).

Inevera later recounts some memories of her father. Each of these contains objectification of some kind. Kasaad fails to attend Inevera's *Hannu Pash*. This demonstrates his ignorance of her feelings (Brett, 2013, P16). Additionally, he was regularly accompanied home by other *Sharum* (Brett, 2013, P6). Both Manvah and Inevera are victims of unwanted attention from the *Sharum* (Brett, 2013, P157). Cemal, one of these, attempts to grope Inevera (Brett, 2013, P157). He is stopped by Soli (Brett, 2013, P157). Kasaad treats this as a joke, ignores Inevera, and keeps inviting Cemal (Brett, 2013, P157).

Inevera's next encounter with Kasaad takes place after Soli is injured (Brett, 2013, P214). Kasaad strikes Inevera and kills Soli, ignoring the wishes of others present (Brett, 2013, P216). Thus, he objectifies Inevera once again. Kasaad is crippled in return (Brett, 2013, pp. 217-218). Inevera shows her strength here by ordering Kasaad to serve Manvah (Brett, 2013, P218). Subsequently, the dynamic of Manvah's and Kasaad's relationship changes for the better (Brett, 2013, P233). Thus, like Asome, Kasaad changes his attitude towards women. Jardir later meets Inevera's family and helps repair their relationship (Brett, 2013, pp. 748-751). This, along with Asome's story, shows a trend in Brett's novels. However, Asome's life contains positive and negative examples of objectification. The ending of his story is ambiguous in this regard. This has been shown above.

Jiwah 'Sharum, as previously stated, are objectified in numerous ways. Examples of these will now be given. Prior to this, Nussbaum's classifications of objectification will be outlined. Nussbaum divides objectification into seven categories (1995, P257). These are instrumentality, denial of autonomy, inertness, fungibility, violability, ownership, and denial of subjectivity (Nussbaum, 1995, P257). Most of these are inflicted upon *jiwah 'Sharum*. This will now be shown.

Instrumentality involves the use of a thing for personal purposes (Nussbaum, 1995, P257). This is clearly present in *The Demon Cycle* series. *Jiwah 'Sharum* exist for two reasons: to produce children and for others' pleasure (Brett, 2011, P64, P76, pp. 84-86, P104). They have value only while able to fulfil these roles. *Jiwah 'Sharum* are discarded once this changes (Brett, 2011, P64). The pottery used in Baha kad'Everam (Brett, 2011, P51, P54) may be viewed as a metaphor for *jiwah 'Sharum*.

Jiwah 'Sharum are also denied autonomy. They are completely submissive to the will of others (Brett, 2011, P76). Thus, their lives and actions are highly restricted. This begins from the time they are sold (Brett, 2011, P64). They have no choice in the matter, as their families are unable to support them (Brett, 2013, P14). Furthermore, they are often illiterate (Brett, 2013, P14). Thus, they lack the means to decide their own fate.

Similarly, *jiwah 'Sharum* are treated as inert (Brett, 2011, P64, P76). Inertness resembles denial of autonomy. The former involves perception of an object as lacking agency and activity (Nussbaum, 1995, P257). The latter involves lack of agency and activity. This features in Brett's series regarding Krasian women in general, and *jiwah 'Sharum* in particular. Examples of the former include treatment of wives as property (Brett, 2016, pp. 117-118). Regarding *jiwah 'Sharum*, they are passive when interacting with men. *Jiwah 'Sharum* exist to serve and pleasure others (Brett, 2011, P76). This is not restricted to sexual interactions. They also serve food to warriors (Brett, 2011, P76).

Jiwah 'Sharum are also considered fungible. This refers to them being interchangeable with similar objects (Nussbaum, 1995, P257). This can also be applied to objects of various types (Nussbaum, 1995, P257). However, the latter is not relevant to Brett's series. All *jiwah 'Sharum* dress identically (Brett, 2011, P76). Additionally, none are named or otherwise identified in Brett's series. Consequently, there is no discernible difference between *jiwah 'Sharum*. They all exist for the same purposes (Brett, 2011, P76). Thus, they are interchangeable with each other. This is also shown regarding the rape of *chin* women (Brett, 2011, P5). The act itself matters more than the victim.

Violability is Nussbaum's next categorisation of objectification (1995, P257). Unlike the other means of objectification, *jiwah 'Sharum* are not subject to this. Given their purpose, treating *jiwah 'Sharum* like this would be counterproductive. Violability involves ignoring boundaries and using force on objects (Nussbaum, 1995, P257). *Jiwah 'Sharum* need to be healthy to endure pregnancy and childbirth. Thus, this characteristic of objectification does not apply to them. However, it is possible that this would apply in *jiwah 'Sharum* attempted to resist their objectification.

Nussbaum also discusses the connection between ownership and objectification (1995, P257). This requires acting as if objects are possessed by another (Nussbaum, 1995, P257). Additionally, it relates to the buying and selling of objects (Nussbaum, 195, P257). Since *jiwah 'Sharum* are sold (Brett, 2011, P64), this clearly applies to them. They are assets to their families, who are paid for selling them (Brett, 2011, P64). Consequently, their families benefit financially. They receive money for their daughters. Moreover, they have less people to support. Thus, their expenditure is reduced. It is unclear whether

jiwah 'Sharum return to their families at any time. However, it seems unlikely that they would return to those who sold them. Furthermore, it is never stated whether such women remember their families.

Nussbaum's final classification of objectification is denial of subjectivity (1995, P257). This involves acting as if the experience and feelings of an object are irrelevant (Nussbaum, 1995, P257). This likely applies to *jiwah 'Sharum* in multiple ways. Their feelings are possibly ignored by their families. These families often cannot support children, as shown above. Thus, they are forced to ignore their children's feelings. The buyers' attitude is probably similar. While it is never specified, these women are likely assets in a transaction. The families need the money, while the buyers want them to produce warriors. Warriors themselves are shown to have such a perspective (Brett, 2011, P76). Thus, most of Nussbaum's categorisations are applicable to *jiwah 'Sharum*.

Thus far, the primary focus has been on Krasian culture. However, examples exist in other cultures too. Some of these have been shown in the previous chapter. Others have not yet been discussed. Some of each will now be addressed. In *The Desert Spear*, Leesha and several others visit Angiers (Brett, 2011, pp. 357-358). Angierian men are revealed as dismissive of women (Brett, 2011, pp. 358-359, pp. 370-371, P378, pp. 388-389, pp. 401-402). Details of these have been provided in the previous chapter. Thus, they will not be repeated here. However, they are too important not to mention. Objectification primarily features here regarding denial of subjectivity. Nussbaum's definition of this appears above.

These events reveal similarities between Angiers and Krasia. These will now be elaborated upon. Following Leesha's decision to accompany Jardir to Everam's Bounty (Brett, 2011, pp. 572-573), she chooses her personal escort. Wonda is among these (Brett, 2011, P620). Abban advises Jardir against this, as some Krasians will not approve (Brett, 2011, P620). Abban is soon proved correct (Brett, 2011, pp. 643-645). Three men attempt to rape Wonda (Brett, 2011, P645). However, she defeats them, impressing Jardir with her actions (Brett, 2011, pp. 644-645, P648). Thus, Wonda experiences objectification in

several ways. Apart from fungibility and ownership, all Nussbaum's categories apply here. These events reveal similarities between Angierian and Krasian treatment of women. Attention will now turn to Milnese society.

The basics of Milnese society have been outlined in the previous chapter. The focus here will be on some key examples. One of these, Jenya's, has already been described. Regarding Nussbaum's conception of objectivity, Jenya experiences this in multiple ways. Her circumstances will be briefly revisited here. Following Graig's death, she faces financial difficulty. Widowed, childless, and caring for her parents, Jenya's career options are limited. Thus, she risks becoming a Beggar. These aspects of her story are outlined in the previous chapter. The focus here will be on how these affect her, in the context of objectification. Jenya is subject to two categories of objectification: denial of autonomy, and denial of objectivity. She is, as has been shown, reliant on money received from Ragen. This relates to denial of autonomy. Unable to earn enough money for herself and her parents, she cannot make her own way. Thus, Ragen's treatment of her reflects her lack of autonomy. However, the objectification in this case is not negative. Ragen acts as he does because he cares for her (Brett, 2009, P187). This contrasts with the majority of examples of objectification in Brett's series.

Unlike Ragen's behaviour towards Jenya, the following example is harmful. Since Graig died at home, Jenya receives no compensation from the Messenger's Guild (Brett, 2009, P28, P185). This shows that the guild chose to ignore her feelings and experiences. Consequently, she is negatively objectified by them. Aside from Ragen, only Rusco is generous to her (Brett, 2009, P29). This is uncharacteristic of Rusco, as he is generally considered selfish (Brett, 2009, pp. 28-29).

Milnese rulers are also guilty of objectification. Duke Rhinebeck of Angiers wants to ally with Duke Euchor of Miln (Brett, 2011 P500). Thus, Arlen travels to Miln. Euchor sets conditions for this alliance. One of these is that Rhinebeck marries one of Euchor's daughters. Euchor will receive money as a result (Brett, 2011, P500). Although his daughters are married, Euchor is willing to end these (Brett, 2011, P501). Thus, he shows

a lack of consideration for their feelings. This shows that Euchor does not care for their subjectivity. Additionally, he will let Rhinebeck choose which daughter. Euchor's daughters are thus also victims of instrumentality, fungibility, and ownership. Nussbaum's conceptions of inertness and denial of autonomy are also applicable here.

These events show the pervasiveness of objectification in Brett's series. A real-life example will now be examined. This mirrors Brett's series in some ways. This case revolves around Nuala, a teenage girl forced to marry a middle-aged man, Paddy (Boyle, 1998, pp. 11-12). It happened in Ireland in the 1970s (Boyne, 1998, P7). Nuala was sold to the man by her father, Dan (Boyle, 1998, P7, P21). Paddy told Dan that there would be no physical contact (Boyle, 1998, P21). Throughout this story, Nuala is regularly objectified by Dan, and by Paddy (Boyle, 1998, P14, P21, pp. 18-21). Nuala undergoes several traumatic experiences (Boyle, 1998, pp. 9-15, P20), including physical abuse. She also suffers beatings and is raped (Boyle, 1998, P108, pp. 117-120). However, the law at the time did not allow for marital rape (Boyle, 1998, P120). Eventually, Nuala becomes pregnant (Boyle, 1998, P133). During this, she attempts to commit suicide multiple times (Boyle, 1998, P134). This shows the effects Nuala's circumstances had on her. Nuala's father later dies (Boyle, 1998, pp. 154-155). Nuala soon escapes from Paddy (Boyle, 1998, P160).

This story mirrors events from *The Demon Cycle* series. It bears a significant resemblance to Ashia's relationship with Asume and Asukaji. The nature of this has previously been described. Thus, it will not be outlined here. Both Ashia and Nuala experience arranged marriage and bear children. While Ashia is happy to marry Asume, this soon changes. Nuala's story is unhappy from the start. She never wanted to marry Paddy (Doyle, 1998, P15). Ashia, much like Nuala, is traumatised by married life. The nature of the trauma differs significantly. However, both are victims of objectification. Ashia's experience of this has previously been discussed. Nuala's circumstances will now be summarised regarding objectification.

Except for fungibility, all Nussbaum's categories of objectification clearly feature in Nuala's story. It is possible that Paddy would have married another girl. However, he does seem to have a specific attraction towards Nuala (Boyle, 1998, pp. 19-21).

Ownership, and denial of subjectivity have a key connection to Nuala's story. Dan sells her to Paddy, ignoring her wishes in the process. This is indicated above. Furthermore, Nuala is clearly used by Dan, and by Paddy, for their own purpose. This strongly relates to her marriage to Paddy. Nuala is forced into this, as shown above. These events portray Nuala as a tool. Additionally, they indicate her inertness and lack of autonomy. Finally, Paddy's physical abuse of Nuala reveals his lack of regard for her boundaries. Thus, she is treated as violable.

Nuala's emotional reactions also mirror Ashia's. Ashia, as seen above, is desperate once she learns the truth about Asume and Asukaji. Nuala experiences this from the beginning. This highlights correlation between Brett's series and real-life events. This is also visible regarding women forced to prostitute themselves, among other issues. While Brett's series is fictional, it could be considered an attempt to highlight such issues. This applies to his non-literary work as well. Brett, as previously stated, was recently involved in a panel on female agency, and feminism, in fantasy.

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Conclusion

This discussion has identified key aspects of modern life. Since most of the issues in Brett's series relate to feminism, this was the primary focus. However, the discussion is not limited to this area. This essay has also provided evidence of discrimination on the basis of race and class. Furthermore, religious fundamentalism is visible in Brett's series. Evidence for this comes from Krasian culture in particular. Ethnicity, and sexual orientation, also play a key role in Brett's series. Interestingly, while there are restrictions on homosexuals in Krasia, it is permitted. Consequently, it is not particularly subject to stigmatisation. The issue of homosexuality and stigma is most relevant in *Tibbet's Brook*. Selia is concerned that she will be judged for her relationship with Lesa (Brett, 2017, pp. 331-332). This relationship is not explored in detail. This suggests that sexual orientation may be an issue in *Tibbet's Brook*. Alternatively, Selia's concern could also be due to the age gap (Brett, 2017, P331). Religious fundamentalism is also an issue here (Brett, 2017, P331). Thus, there are some unresolved issues in *The Demon Cycle* series. Some may be resolved in future publications.

Regarding objectification, there is evidence that it is not entirely problematic in Brett's series. There are cases where characters use it to their advantage. Objectification is not always negative here either. Inevera is one of these, using it to demonstrate her power (Brett, 2011, pp. 217-218). Through this, her influence grows (Brett, 2013, P448). Despite this, Inevera is still subject to a patriarchal system (Brett, 2013, P439, 2016, pp. 33-34, pp. 40-51).

Jenya's circumstances also indicate this, following Graig's death. Ragen objectifies her, to an extent. However, as shown above, this is done out of affection. This shows some benefits of objectification. This is also an aspect of Leesha's story, although it takes longer to happen. One of Leesha's rapists reappears in *The Core* (Brett, 2017, pp. 553-557). There are several advantages to his presence. First of all, he excels at killing demons (Brett, 2017, P553). Additionally, it allows Leesha to move on from her ordeal (Brett, 2017, pp.556-557). Finally, it facilitates the introduction of sexual education classes to Brett's series (Brett, 2017, P557).

Generally speaking, *The Demon Cycle* series ends on a positive note. Some cases which contrast this have previously been discussed, such as Ashia's. The beneficial aspects will now be outlined. During the series finale, there is massive destruction in Miln and Angiers (Brett, 2017, P566, P648). Araine's last son is killed, along with his pregnant wife (Brett, 2017, P566, P569) and demons control Angiers (Brett, 2017, P571). This is later retaken by the Hollowers (Brett, 2017, P726). Furthermore, Ragen and Elissa become Duke and Duchess of Miln (Brett, 2017, pp. 796-797). Finally, a pact is signed which ends the war between humans (Brett, 2017, pp. 852-853). It also regulates behaviour towards *chin* (Brett, 2017, P853). These aspects are significant as they provide an opportunity for equality.

However, issues such as *jiwah 'Sharum* are not definitively resolved. Additionally, a mortally wounded Sikvah is kept alive by magic until she gives birth (Brett, 2017, pp. 738-741). Sikvah consequently becomes an object. However, the decision was made by people who love her (Brett, 2017, P739). Additionally, her child was valued and cared for (Brett, 2017, P855). Thus, Brett's series has a positive finale, for the most part.

Examples of male privilege are widespread in this essay. This is a key aspect of Brett's series. It could also be examined from Hasik's perspective. Hasik is castrated, on Abban's orders (Brett, 2013, P746). Subsequently, Jardir ends Hasik's marriages and dismisses him from his personal guard (Brett, 2013, P757). He calls Hasik "half a man" (Brett, 2013, P757). This series could be examined regarding numerous issues. This is one potential example for future research.

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