

Individual and systemic factors as the cause of emotional alienation in Dutch novels of the millennial generation

Abstract

This bachelor thesis deals with individual and systemic factors that cause emotional alienation in Dutch novels of the millennial generation. It is based on the theory of the book *Affectieve crisis, literair herstel* by Hans Demeyer and Sven Vitse, where the cause of alienation is identified as the dysfunctional world and late capitalist society. This work complements the theory by defining another category of causes, namely individual factors that affect the characters on a personal level. It uses novels representing the Dutch generation of millennials, *Gebreuk is een groot woord* by Nina Polak and *De avond is ongemak* by Marieke Lucas Rijneveld, the latter having been awarded the International Booker Prize 2020. These novels appear in the corpus of Demeyer and Vitse but their interpretation needs to be supplemented by individual factors. The study analyzes the causes of emotional alienation on systemic and individual levels and points to the importance of interpreting the motifs of the text, which would not be considered if one were to follow only the theory of Demeyer and Vitse. This work thus draws attention to the complexity of the individual's experience, who faces both the consequences of late capitalism and metamodernism as well as deeply personal experiences and traumas. Together, they cause emotional alienation, which takes on a different form with each individual.

*Key words:* affective alienation, Dutch millennial literature, affective dominant, metamodernism