

BLURRING THE DICHOTOMOUS LOGIC OF MODERNITY IN JEANETTE WINTERSON'S *SEXING THE CHERRY*¹

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Abstract

Jeanette Winterson's *Sexing the Cherry* (1989) is a novel which narrates the story of a woman called the Dog-Woman, her adopted son Jordan, tales of Twelve Dancing Princesses who live happily ever after they marry but with a difference. The characters in the novel transgress gender boundaries in different ways. In this line of thinking, *Sexing the Cherry* explores the constructed nature of gender roles and lays bare the epistemic violence done to the lower leg of the binary logic, namely women. This study approaches the text from a feminist perspective, since a woman without a name, a boy without an origin object to the dichotomous logic of Cartesian ideology and the conscious subversion of the Twelve Dancing Princesses' tales reveal the fluid dynamics of gender construction. The way the characters cherish the multiplicity invites the reader to give a feminist hearing of the text. In order to display how gender roles are subverted and how the characters transgress the boundaries of patriarchy, this paper will mainly dwell on the Dog-Woman, Jordan, and Twelve Dancing Princesses by laying bare how they each challenge to the dichotomous logic of modernity in different ways. Toward this objective, the present paper elaborates on the Dog-Woman's fight against the epistemic violence, Jordan's lack of origin, and Twelve Dancing Princesses' narrating their own stories; and argue that they all pose a different challenge the logic of patriarchy. To that end, this study explores how these characters defy patriarchal authority and subvert the constructed gender roles.

Keywords: *Sexing The Cherry*, Modernity, Binary Logic, Gender Roles, Rewriting.

JEANETTE WINTERSON'IN *VIŞNENİN CİNSİYETİ* ROMANINDA MODERNİTENİN DİYALEKTİK MANTIĞININ BULANIKLAŞMASI

Öz

Jeanette Winterson'ın *Vişnenin Cinsiyeti* (1989) romanı Köpekli Kadın, onun evlat edindiği oğlu Jordan ve evlendikten sonra bir farkla mutlu mesut yaşayan Dans Eden On İki Prensesin öyküsünü anlatır. Romandaki karakterler cinsiyet sınırlarını farklı şekillerde aşmaktadır. Bu bakış açısıyla, *Vişnenin Cinsiyeti* romanı cinsiyet rollerinin kurgulanmış olan doğasını keşfeder ve ikili düşünme biçiminde 'öteki' olana yani kadına uygulanan epistemik şiddeti açığa çıkarır. Bu çalışma romanı feminist bir perspektiften ele alır, çünkü ismi olmayan bir kadın ve kökeni olmayan bir çocuk Kartezyen ideolojiye meydan okur ve Dans Eden On İki Prensesin öykülerinin bilinçli bir şekilde değiştirilmesi kurgulanmış cinsiyetin akışkan dinamiklerini ortaya çıkarır. Karakterlerin çeşitliliği beslemesi okuyucunun metne feminist bakış açısından yaklaşmasına imkan tanımaktadır. Cinsiyet rollerinin nasıl dönüştürüldüğünü ve karakterlerin ataerkilliğin sınırlarını nasıl aştığını göstermek için bu çalışma temelde Köpekli Kadın, Jordan ve Dans Eden On İki Prensesin modernitenin ikili düşünme sistemine farklı şekillerde nasıl karşı çıktıklarını açığa çıkarmaya odaklanacaktır. Bu amaçla, bu çalışma Köpekli Kadının epistemik şiddete karşı duruşunu, Jordan'ın kökeninin olmayışını ve Dans Eden On İki Prensesin kendi hikayelerini anlatmasını detaylı olarak incelemekte ve bu karakterlerin ataerkil mantığa karşı farklı duruş sergilediklerini savunmaktadır. Bu amaçla, çalışma bu karakterlerin ataerkil otoriteye nasıl karşı durduğunu ve kurgulanmış cinsiyet rollerini nasıl altüst ettiğini inceler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Vişnenin Cinsiyeti*, Modernite, İkili Düşünme, Cinsiyet Roller, Yeniden Yazma.

¹ This article is produced from the paper that I presented in "Modernism and Postmodernism Studies Conference 2020".

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Introduction

Sexing the Cherry (1989) is Jeanette Winterson's third novel which starts with an 'ugly' woman who discovers a child on the river bed of Thames. She has forgotten her name for a long time and she calls herself 'the Dog-Woman'. She gives the child a river name, Jordan, and she raises him together with her dogs. When he grows up, Jordan leaves London for new and exotic places and searches for exotic fruits. Throughout his journeys, he meets *Twelve Dancing Princesses* who explain their stories which are far from the traditional versions of these fairy tales.

The novel is mainly set in the seventeenth century around the beheading of Charles 1st and the book's present time, namely the second part of the twentieth century. Throughout the novel, time is not in a linear flow, instead it changes in line with the changing narration of the novel. There are multiple narrators, showing that the reader will be able to see from different angles at the same time. Rather than expressing the names of the characters to indicate the narrator, fruit symbolism is used to indicate the change in narration which is something extra-linguistic.

There are three different parts in the novel. In the first part, which is an unnamed part, the narrators are Jordan (which is signified by using a pineapple motif) and the Dog-Woman (which is signified by using a half peeled banana motif). The second part tells us the civil war and ends when Jordan brings a pineapple with himself to present to the king and the last part witnesses the great fire of London and hosts characters from the second half of the twentieth century. In this part, the reader encounters with Nicholas Jordan and an activist woman who can be taken as the extensions of Jordan and the Dog-Woman. These two new figures are signified with a pineapple and a half peeled banana which are both sliced into two. Using a banana motif for a female character can be taken as a conscious endeavour, since usually banana is related with masculinity. According to Mihalea Lazar Christina, "The fruit symbolism of each chapter serves the purpose of gender reversal: Jordan and Nicholas Jordan's discourses are identified with the pineapple, a female fruit, while the Dog-Woman and her alter ego, the ecologist are associated with the banana, a phallic fruit par excellence" (4). The usage of a phallic figure for a female character is a sign showing the implied author's conscious attempt all through the text.

Sexing the Cherry is a work of fiction which has an agenda of feminist discourse within its narrative. According to Nancy Armstrong: "fiction became a far more complex and interesting phenomenon when seen through the lens of feminist ideology" (102). Feminist discourses employ deconstructionist strategies and problematize the logos as the master signifier which regulates the signifiers. In logocentrism, everything depends on the transcendental signified or the master signified and its correspondence in the master signifier. Within this system, the master signified regulates the floating signification. Therefore, the binary oppositions operate in this system, by acknowledging that the foregrounded leg of binary oppositions refer to this master signified. Hélène Cixous, as a feminist thinker, points out patriarchal binary thought and she aims to unravel the working mechanisms of this binary hierarchical thinking. In her book *The Newly Born Woman* (1975) Cixous states that "thought has always worked through opposition" (349). Within this dualist way of thinking, the subordinate leg is associated with the 'other' of the logos. Patriarchy works through these binary oppositions and woman is always associated with the subordinate leg whereas man is associated with the master signified. In this line of thinking, man needs woman to define himself ontologically, as man becomes man only in relation to woman, yet woman does not need man to define herself as a woman which enables woman to be superior ontologically.

Feminist agenda tries to deconstruct this hierarchical way of thinking. If feminist discourses can go beyond binary logic, they can go beyond the hierarchies and the patriarchal discourse. In this way, feminisms offer a rereading of empirical reality. If they just reverse the hierarchy in traditional binarism which will lead us to have a form of inverted Platonism, they will still be trapped in, therefore they try to go into a new space of signification in which these binarisms do not operate. Accordingly, feminisms refrain from totalizing the discourse, instead they suggest plurality which annihilates the idea of a telos. In order to relate feminist discourse with *Sexing the Cherry* and to show

how the text deconstructs the norms of the patriarchy that is a product of modernity, I aim to focus on main characters and the way they subvert the patriarchal binary thought.

Fighting Against the Epistemic Violence

The characters in the novel are woven in a way to undermine the linearity and patriarchy, which are all products of modernity. By using a woman who does not have a name, the implied author goes against the naming process. The Dog-Woman introduces herself by stating that: ‘I had a name but I have forgotten it. They call me Dog-Woman and that will do it’ (Winterson 11). Her name indicates that in fact she denies her assigned position in the patriarchal discourse along with its functioning logic, since being named implies being given an identity which positions the individual within the society. According to Toril Moi, the naming process is actually ‘a desire to regulate and organize reality’ (160), since she has no intention of being organized in monolithic thinking, she doesn’t feel the necessity to have a name to be designated, instead she creates her own telos.

The notion of womanliness is a telling category that should be paid attention to explain the way the Dog-Woman goes against the system. The monstrosity constructed through an external incoherent and monstrous body of the Dog-Woman threatens the distinctions between femininity and masculinity which are socially constructed patterns. In order to look beneath the surface of her transgressing the norms set for the woman in society, it is necessary to question the working mechanisms of the norms. This discrepancy between the roles that evacuates the essentialism in gender reminds us of Simone de Beauvoir’s dictum; ‘‘One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman’’ (273). The Dog-Woman’s ironically stating; ‘‘I am gracious by nature’’ when she goes to the circus makes it apparent that she is far from having ‘womanly’ features. She is a challenge to the ideals of the female body in various respects since her body offers a challenge to the traditional representation of the female body. The Dog-Woman does not care about her appearance or her body. In contrast, she uses it as a threat against men. When Thomas Johnson, a herbalist, comes to London to show banana for the first time, he doesn’t let them see it at once. She threatens him; if he doesn’t let them see it, she would cram his face so hard into her breasts that he would wish he has never been suckled by a woman. Upon his resistance, she states; ‘‘I grabbed him and started to push him into my dress. He was soon coughing and crying because I haven’t had that dress off in five years’’ (Winterson 12). Here by not caring about her bodily hygiene, she defies the common perception that women smell nice. Moreover, she explains that she is even heavier than an elephant. When she goes to the circus, she makes a bet on her being heavier than an elephant. She narrates that part by stating:

I took a deep breath, filling my lungs with air, and threw myself at the seat with all my might. There was a roar from round about me. I opened my eyes and looked towards Samson. He had vanished... It is a responsibility for a woman to have forced an elephant into the sky. What it says of my size I cannot tell, for an elephant looks big, but how am I to know what it weighs? A balloon looks big and weighs nothing. (Winterson 25)

Her body and code of conduct go beyond the traditional understanding of the female body which is usually associated with passivity, beauty, and purity. Since her size and behavior bring her closer to masculinity, it can be taken as a debunking of the traditional representation of the female body. In order to display her bodily strength, she narrates that she is ‘‘strong enough to hold a man from the ground at arm’s length by using only one hand’’ (Winterson 24). Having a monstrous bodily strength lays bare a woman on the margin who ‘‘refuses to be selfless, acts on her own initiative, who has a story to tell in short, a woman who rejects her submissive role patriarchy has reserved for her’’ (Moi 57). The Dog-Woman’s monstrous body in a way enables her to get heard, to be taken seriously. Her not being concerned about being dirty shows her confidence and also her living by the river alone demonstrates her independence as a woman. That independent woman is a way of rewriting the role of the woman from a different perspective. Her body speaks more than any other character, since ‘‘Dog-Woman’s body is everything that the female body is not supposed to be. It is an absolute escape from the image of the proper feminine body’’ (Haslett 42). It is possible to deconstruct the norms on beauty with the Dog-Woman figure who does not need a man to define herself. By combining the features

that are unlikely to have as a woman, she goes against the grain and establishes herself in a different frame.

The Dog-Woman's rejecting the submissive role that society has reserved for her is also exemplified when she kills her Puritan neighbors Firebrace and Scroggs upon finding them in a brothel where they are about to have sexual intercourse. She narrates this event cold-bloodedly by stating: "Then I picked him up by the neck, the way a terrier does a rat and dropped him senseless on the block. That he was unconscious was better for him, my axe having lost its edge so that I was obliged to use two strokes before I could fully sever the head" (Winterson 88-89). Her act of killing her neighbours is totally the opposite of what Hester Eisenstein points as the suitable code of conduct "for the stereotypical woman was passive or weak, non-aggressive and dependant; thus, resulted in her being understood as essentially incapable of a strong, independent and autonomous existence" (59). The submissive woman is far from the Dog-Woman who has an axe in her hand to punish her Puritan neighbours in the novel. She does not acknowledge the authority of the Puritans, since she does not share their opinions. She thinks that "the Puritans who wanted a rule of saints on earth and no king but Jesus forget that we are born into flesh and in flesh we must remain" (Winterson 67). Also, she states that: "Puritans hated everything that was grand and fine and full of life. They closed down every theater in London" (Winterson 26). The vantage point of the Puritans creates a dichotomy in which they acknowledge themselves as the superior leg and the others' as the subordinate leg. The Dog-Woman's understanding of life does not overlap with the Puritans.

The Dog-Woman's attempt to fight against the patriarchy is actually an attempt to create herself in a frame that is free from the violence exerted upon her as a woman. As a result of the dichotomous logic, the lower leg of the hierarchy is exposed to epistemic violence in various ways. By epistemic violence, I mean the violence exerted towards the woman via knowledge formation systems, since it is known that the discourse is determined in accordance with power. That is to say, the woman as the one who constitutes the lower leg of this hierarchy is defined in reference to man. Therefore in feminist discourses, the woman writes herself in a way that does not take the man as 'the measure of all things'. With this aim, in the aforementioned novel, the implied author portrays a character that goes against the notion of womanliness in several ways and I read this conscious attempt as the Dog-Woman's fighting against the norms of the patriarchy that are constructed as a result of epistemic violence.

The notion of womanliness is a telling concept to analyze the novel from a feminist perspective. Joan Riviere's article "Womanliness as a Masquerade" which was published in 1929, implies that a certain understanding of womanliness is fiction since womanliness is something that can be worn as a masquerade. Using womanliness strategically for practical ends is found appealing by feminists such as Judith Butler who theorizes gender as performance. Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) suggests that there is no natural connection between male bodies and masculine gender identity or female bodies and feminine gender identity which undermines the relationship between sex and gender. Butler makes a distinction between biological sex and culturally coded gender. If gender is a performance, then it is not possible to find an inherent core or substance, which means that gender is constructed and can be rewritten and performed. Without a doubt, Butler's undermining of the sex-gender relation can be exemplified by the Dog-Woman as she does not internalize social scripts, instead by her reversing the roles as a woman, the implied author highlights the constructed nature of these roles. The Dog-Woman transgresses gender boundaries in varying instances in the novel, as she does not play the role of a submissive woman who obeys the rules of the patriarchy. On the contrary, she stands alone as a fearless woman who finds a way to solve the problems lying beneath her.

The nameless woman who opposes the factory's polluting the river can be taken as the double of the Dog-Woman living in the twentieth century. She camps alone to draw attention to the use of mercury by factories which has a terrible effect on nature. That part of narration takes place at the book's present time. She states that:

I had an alter ego who was huge and powerful, a woman whose only morality was her own and whose loyalties were fierce and few. She was my patron saint, the one

I called on when I felt myself dwindling away through cracks in the floor or slowly fading in the street. Whenever I called on her I felt my muscles swell and laughter fill up my throat. Of course it was only a fantasy, at least at the beginning... (Winterson 125).

The nameless woman who is symbolized by a split banana has the intention of creating an affirmative possibility for the future of nature before it becomes too late to take measures. Her part seems to be short when compared to the Dog-Woman's part, but it is clear that the implied author signals a possibility of reincarnation in displaying characters in different centuries but having a similar attitude towards life. The possibility of reincarnation can be taken as an unseen line which binds these characters in varying time and place together. I approach the theme of reincarnation as a cloud metaphorically, which floats through the air by colliding with other clouds in different times and places. That is why the implied author uses the Dog-Woman and the reincarnated version of her in another century. A similar attempt can also be seen in the character of Jordan who also has unseen ties with different centuries.

The Lack of Origin in Jordan's Journey

Jordan is named by the Dog-Woman since he has no mother and father. Instead, he is found on the river bed of Thames. His narration is symbolized by a pineapple which is actually 'a female fruit' (Christina 4). As soon as he starts his narration, he states:

Every journey conceals another journey within its lines: the path not taken and the forgotten angle. These are journeys I wish to record. Not the ones I made, but the ones I might have made, or perhaps did make in some other place or time...For the Greeks, the hidden life demanded invisible ink. They wrote an extraordinary letter and in between the lines set out another letter, written in milk. The document looked innocent enough until one who knew better sprinkled coal dust over it was the life flaring up undetected...I discovered that my own life was written invariably, was squashed between facts (Winterson 10).

The idea that the hidden life demanded an invisible ink stresses the point that a new space of signification is needed. To write in milk can be taken as a reference to the feminist discourse which also aims to open up a new space of signification that will be freed from patriarchal and normative patterns. Helene Cixous in her work 'Laugh of the Medusa' asks the women why they don't write since they have the material already. Writing has been the occupation for men, since writing is a search for origin, so it is reserved for men. Now, according to her, women return from eternity. They return from the non-linear. Women are frigidified as they are cut off from their desire. They have been codified from earlier ages. Origin implies the monolithic logic and this logic is associated with men. She advises women to write themselves, to give voice to the repressed psychic material. In order to achieve this, she advises women to discover themselves by writing. According to Cixous, the novel can be taken as a struggle for women to raise their voices in the patriarchal discourse because Toril Moi states; 'For Cixous feminine texts are texts that struggle to undermine the dominant phallogocentric logic, split open the closure of the binary opposition and revel in the pleasures of open ended textuality' (Moi 106). In this respect *Sexing the Cherry* is a feminine text which subverts the dominant phallogocentric logic by making use of characters such as the Dog-Woman, Jordan, and Twelve Dancing Princesses.

The language that women use and its difference from the language that men use is given in Jordan's experience as a woman on a fish stall 'I noticed that women have a private language. A language not dependent on the constructions of men but structured by signs and expressions, that uses ordinary words as code-words meaning something other' (Winterson 31). This point exactly exemplifies one of the main arguments of the feminist agenda that women should create new horizons of hope for themselves and this one should go beyond the patriarchal discourse. Irigaray's concept of womanspeak or speaking(as)woman which defines woman's speech as polymorphous and complex which rejects a monolithic regime of maleness can be taken as an explanation in this respect. Since woman's speech is not based on the monolithic logic of patriarchy, man is unable to understand

woman's language though he thinks that he is the master of the situation. Toril Moi defines womanspeak as:

Irigaray's analysis of femininity is closely bound up with her idea of a specific woman's language which she calls 'womanspeak'. 'Womanspeak' emerges spontaneously when women speak together, but disappears again as soon as men are present. This is one of the reasons why Irigaray sees women only groups as an indispensable step towards liberation, though she does warn against these groups becoming simple reversals of the existing order: If their goal is to reverse the existing order even if that were possible history would simply repeat itself and return to phallogocentrism, where neither women's sex, their imaginary, nor their language can exist. Otherwise the first thing to be said about it: 'I simply cannot give you an account of 'womanspeak': one speaks it, it cannot be meta-spoken', she once declared in a seminar. She nevertheless provides a definition of woman's style in terms of its intimate connection with fluidity and sense of touch. (Moi 144)

In the novel, Jordan's experiencing the language that women use which is different from the one that is constructed within patriarchal discourse is an example of 'womanspeak' which makes use of fluidity, as in the novel it is possible to see that Jordan acknowledges gender as a burden after his working as a woman with prostitutes. He states: 'I have met a number of people who, anxious to be free of the burdens of their gender, have dressed themselves men as women and women as men' (Winterson 31). This point once again demonstrates the constructedness of gender from Butler's perspective which draws our attention to the point that gender is something seen and imitated, appropriated, and parodied. Witnessing many characters who dress themselves men as women or vice versa actually lay bare that gender is something that is learnt in a social environment, quite similar to Jordan's working as a woman for some time. The gender reversal issue is made of use in many different parts of the novel to unveil the constructed nature of gender.

The use of language and the way it is treated in the novel enables the readers to question it. Jordan as a character questions both the language and time at varying points in the novel. He states: "language always betrays us, tells the truth when we want to lie, and dissolves into formlessness when we would most like to be precise... The inward life tells us that we are multiple, not single, and that our existence is really countless existences holding hands like those cut-out paper dolls, but unlike the dolls never coming to an end" (Winterson 89). In the semantic system of women, there are images just like Winterson's using fruit symbols to indicate the shift in narration. Actually, the implied author creates or aims to create a new language to go beyond patriarchal logic, since language bears the traces of patriarchy. Toril Moi in her *Sexual/Textual Politics* states that; "it is not the empirical sex of the author that matters, but the kind of writing at stake" (106). That is to say, the sex of the author does not define the sex of the writing and in this aforementioned novel, it is seen that the sex of the writing is a reference to Cixous's concept of *écriture féminine* to unchain the language from its chains and to offer a possibility of multiplicity against the logocentrism of patriarchy.

The implied author makes use of fairy elements; one of them is birds' imagining Jordan as a great fish, carrying him up into the air and flying him over the city and out to sea. He faints and falls on the windowsill of a well-appointed house in a town he doesn't recognize. He states: "A young girl came to the window and asking me if I were the sister she had prayed for, courteously invited me to bed with her, where I passed the night in some confusion" (Winterson 33). This implication of a lesbian relationship is sustained later when he narrates that girl's story to us. "A young girl caught incestuously with her sister was condemned to build her own death tower. To prolong her life, she built it as high as she could, winding round and round with the stones in an endless stairway" (Winterson 38). Winterson makes use of fairy tales and she makes her characters narrate the stories of women by rewriting them from a different point of view. Going back to fairy tales to subvert the patriarchal logic is a common endeavor in feminist agenda which can be exemplified in *Sexing the Cherry* apparently. The possibility of a lesbian relationship in a fairy tale is not an ordinary way of writing in the traditional sense, but the implied author has realized the power of writing stories to change the way we think and it is clearly reflected in the novel. That point can be taken as a reaction to

monolithic thinking and it is a way of cherishing multiplicity by welcoming it. According to Paul Kintzele; “Battling against normative heterosexuality, which retains its centrality in modern culture through a massive and multifaceted ideological inertia, Winterson explores a range of oppositional and alternative gender identities as well as the way normative gender categories slip or undo themselves” (2). That is to say, handling a homosexual possibility undermines the heterosexual custom of society in the novel. In this line of thinking the Twelve Dancing Princesses narrate the own stories to show how these tales might look different from another perspective. Offering another perspective opens up the possibility of establishing themselves for these Princesses since in this way they voice themselves, they ‘become’ as a result of narration.

Narration as an Act of Becoming

The implied author’s effort in going back to fairy tales in order to debunk the logic of logocentrism is an influential issue in subverting the historical constructs and to manipulate monolithic thinking. In this way, the implied author establishes a way to deconstruct the logic of modernity. The Twelve Dancing Princesses’ narration contains a powerful source to create their own stories. In this way, the implied author lays bare the working mechanisms of logocentrism and uses deconstruction to defeat it. In this endeavor, the implied author isn’t enslaved in the system that chains these princesses, instead, they have an ‘other’ possibility to narrate their stories in a way in which we can hear their own voice. The princesses narrate their own tales, and they do not rely on the patriarchal logic of language while narrating it. The act of narration earns importance, since who tells the story matters. According to Brian Finney: “the act of narration is in itself a self-liberating act. We can invent stories for ourselves that free us socially, psychologically, and politically from those inherited stories of the past that serve to inhibit and constrain us. I narrate; therefore I become” (173). The act of becoming is made possible by narrating one’s own story, this understanding goes in line with the feminist agenda in which the other wants to hear her own voice in her narration instead of being pacified by epistemic violence.

The Twelve Dancing Princesses part is taken from Grimm Brothers’ fairy tale called “The Dancing Shoes” (Kintzele 9). In this part, the implied author subverts these fairy tales by enabling these princesses to narrate their own stories. As a result of this situation, it can be taken as a way of defamiliarization to challenge the patriarchy and it enables women to invent their own stories by not letting any other person voice them.

According to its original version, the tale narrates the story of a king and his twelve daughters. Although they are locked in their room by their father, every night they find a way to escape from their bedroom and then they return the next morning. Lots of people come and try to solve the mystery about their escape, but they are unable to understand and lose their lives as a result of their failure. One day a soldier can solve the mystery and as a result of his success he is given one of the daughters and he marries the oldest one.

In these fairy tales, Winterson points out a possibility of escape from the burdens of the patriarchal society. At the end of these tales, it is said that; “as it says we lived happily ever after. We did, but not with our husbands” (Winterson 93). This reaction is going beyond the limits set for the women in the tales, as these women live happily ever after, but with a difference. They find a way to undo the dichotomous logic of patriarchy. In this part, the reader is given eleven stories narrated by the princesses who talk about what happens to them after their marriage. Even though each princess is forced to marry a man, each of them gets rid of their husbands in some ways.

The first princess murders her husband as he tries to give an end to her hobby of compiling religious items. “She had not minded her husband much more than any wife does until he had tried to stop her hobby” (Winterson 44). In another tale, the husband is in a relationship with another woman, yet he rejects leaving the house as “he is in love with another woman” (Winterson 51). Another tale exemplifies the tendency for a homosexual tendency since the princess states that: “I never wanted anyone but her” (Winterson 48). This couple has perfect bliss in their relationship and she interrogates the heterosexual relationship in which men do not treat women as their equals.

If we start with the princesses' escape from the castle, we can say that it is the first reaction set against the rules of their father, which symbolizes the norms of the patriarchal society. They create a different world for themselves away from any kind of limitations. By giving a different event in each tale, the implied author liberates these princesses after their marriages by reversing the boundaries between man/woman, heterosexuality/homosexuality. It can be inferred easily that *The Twelve Dancing Princesses* is a socially conventional tale which reverses the position of the women in society since those who do not obey the rules are forced to marry the winners of a competition set up by their fathers without their consent, but these princesses are able to undermine the patriarchal norms of the society by finding a way to go beyond the predetermined lives established for them. They can find a way in the system in which they can undermine its working logic. Even the narration itself can be taken as a way to voice the unvoiced, since each princess narrates her tale herself, without letting the others speak for themselves. In the traditional understanding of a fairy tale, the characters are usually not given a voice to narrate their stories, instead, third-person singular is used to narrate the events by using a voice which is outside of the events. That third-person singular narrator is usually outside the events which means that s/he is not affected by the events s/he narrates. Yet, in this example, we have a totally different example of fairy tales in which all the women characters escape from their prisons by leaving their husbands and the imprisonment behind.

The fairy tale part has significance in enabling the women not let them to be erased from history. The act of narration becomes a way of resistance. This resistance can be likened to Shahrazad who tells stories each night in order to survive in *The Arabian Nights*. Her telling a new story for a thousand days can be likened to these princesses' attempt to make their voice heard in order to unveil the fictionality of the tales narrated by others. In this way, they will not be entrapped in patriarchy, since women "need not only critique the dominant culture but also to create alternatives" (qtd. in Michael 177). The implied author reverts and rewrites these texts with the aim of finding a way to transform these tales to open horizons of hope within them.

Conclusion

To sum up, in *Sexing the Cherry*, Winterson cherishes non-linear time together with the plurality in many different areas of life. By rewriting many historical incidents together with fairy tales, she fills her work together with the feminist agenda to give voice to the subordinate leg. We encounter women like men and men like women and there are dissolving gender boundaries which give way to characters that do not have any origins and do not search for an origin, instead, they bear the plurality in themselves which work to liberate them, give them ways so as not to have the tendency to search for an organizing principle. All through the novel, the readers experience the reversal of binary oppositions set by the patriarchal order and there is an explicit celebration of multiplicity in different fields of life.

Under the light of things that have been mentioned about *Sexing the Cherry* until here, a return to the title is necessary, since it draws our attention to the construction of gender in society. 'Sexing the cherry' implies that gender is something given to us after we come to this world as if we inject it into the body of the object. In the novel, Jordan and the Dog-Woman have a dialogue on the sex of the cherry. When Jordan says; 'I tried to explain her that the tree would still be female... but she said such things had no gender and were a confusion to themselves. But the cherry grew and we have sexed it and it is female'' (27) shows that gender is a social script, it is a role that we put on ourselves, it is like a dress that we are worn by the society. The question is the difficulty of explaining 'the more colorful we wear, the more lively the life will be' which can be taken as an outcome of cherishing the pluralism in feminine discourses. The implied author in a way implies all through the book that we do not come to the world as gendered beings, instead, we are gendered as a result of the acculturation process in society. In this regard, to draw our attention to the inauthenticity of this process, the title establishes a perfect ground for the novel. The novel's offering varying voices to narrate in separate parts work for an escape from homogenizing the discourse from a certain perspective.

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