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## **JOMOPS**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Editors' Preface and Acknowledgements I

REDEFINING THE ORIENT: EDWARD SAID AND BUCHI EMECHETA'S *SECOND CLASS CITIZEN*  
*DOĞUYU YENİDEN TANIMLAMA: EDWARD SAID VE BUCHI EMECHETA'NIN İKİNCİ SINIF*  
*VATANDAŞ'I*

**ELÇİN AYAKAN 1-21**

MCEWAN'IN *AMSTERDAM'DA DÜELLO* ROMANINDA AHLAKİ İKİLEM VE İNTİKAM DUYGUSU  
*MORAL DILEMMA AND THE FEELING OF REVENGE IN MCEWAN'S AMSTERDAM*

**ERCAN GÜROVA 22-34**

DEHUMANIZATION IN SARAH KANE'S POSTMODERN PLAYS  
*SARAH KANE'İN POSTMODERN OYUNLARINDA GAYRİ-İNSANİLEŞTİRME*

**GÜL KURTULUŞ 35-56**

DINO BUZZATI – *TATAR ÇÖLÜ* İSİMLİ ESERİNDE İŞLENEN GERÇEKÜSTÜ TEMA  
*DINO BUZZATI – THE SURREALISTIC ITEMS IN THE TATAR DESERT*

**İLHAN KARASUBAŞI 57-64**

HETEROTOPIA AND ALIENATING LIMINAL SPACES IN *ULYSSES* DUBLIN  
*ULYSSES'İN DUBLIN'İNDE HETEROTOPI VE YABANCILAŞTIRAN LİMİNAL MEKÂNLAR*

**MARYAM NAJAFİBABANAZAR 65-79**

WAS THERE A POSTMODERNISM?  
*BİR POSTMODERNİZM VAR MIYDI?*

**MEHMET ALİ ÇELİKEL 80-95**

THE REPRESENTATION OF HUMOUR IN WOMEN'S TRAVEL WRITING: RODRIGUEZ'S *THE KABUL BEAUTY SCHOOL*, GRIMSHAW'S *FROM FIJI TO THE CANNIBAL ISLANDS* AND SELECTED HAREM NARRATIVES  
*KADINLARIN SEYAHAT YAZINLARINDA MİZAHIN TEMSİLİ: RODRIGUEZ'İN KABUL GÜZELLİK OKULU, GRIMSHAW'IN FIJI'DEN CANNIBAL ADALAR'A VE SEÇİLMİŞ HAREM ANLATILARI*

**MİNE SEVİNÇ 96-109**

HAUNTOLOGICAL CRISES OF IDENTITY, MEMORY, AND PERSONAL HISTORY IN TOM STOPPARD'S *ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD*  
*TOM STOPPARD'IN ROSENCRANTZ VE GUILDENSTERN ÖLDÜLER ADLI OYUNUNDA KİMLİK, BELLEK VE KİŞİSEL GEÇMİŞE DAİR HUNTOLOJİK KRİZLER*

**NESLİHAN ŞENTÜRK UZUN 110-124**

THE ETERNAL RESURRECTION OF MODERNITY

*MODERNİTENİN SONSUZ DİRİLİŞİ*

**RACHAD CHAFİK ELIDRISSI 125-134**

RECONFIGURING BOURDIEU'S CONCEPT OF THE 'FIELD': ANTHOLOGIES AS A CASE STUDY

*BOURDIEU'NUN 'ALAN' KAVRAMINI YENİDEN YAPILANDIRMAK: BİR VAKA ÇALIŞMASI OLARAK ANTOLOJİLER*

**RANA ELBOWETY 135-150**

UNDER THE SAME ROOF: RECONCILIATION OF THE OPPOSITE ENDS IN E. M. FORSTER'S

*HOWARDS END*

*AYNI ÇATI ALTINDA: E. M. FORSTER'İN HOWARDS END ADLI ESERİNDE ZİT KUTUPLARIN UZLAŞMASI*

**SEÇİL ERKOÇ 151-163**

AFFIRMATIVE BIOPOLITICS THROUGH THE ANALYSIS OF HOLOCAUST NARRATIVES: A LOOK AT FOUCAULT AND AGAMBEN

*OLUMLAYICI BİYOPOLİTİKA TANIMININ SOYKIRIM ANLATILARI ÜZERİNDEN İNCELENMESİ: FOUCAULT VE AGAMBEN'E BAKIŞ*

**SEL ERENSAL 164-175**

REINTERPRETING THE DILEMMA OF THE FUTURIST-MODERNIST NARRATOR IN MINA LOY'S "APHORISMS ON FUTURISM"

*MINA LOY'UN "FÜTÜRİZM ÜZERİNE AFORİZMALAR" ADLI ŞİİRİNDE FÜTÜRİST-MODERNİST ANLATICININ İKİLEMİNİN YENİDEN YORUMLANMASI*

**TUĞBA KARABULUT 176-198**

ANALYSIS OF FORMULAIC EXPRESSIONS FORMED BY RELIGION IN THE CONTEXT OF BİR BAŞKADIR TV SERIES

*DİNİN ETKİSİYLE OLUŞMUŞ KALIP SÖZLERİN BİR BAŞKADIR DİZİSİ BAĞLAMINDA İNCELENMESİ*

**ZEYNEP ALTUN 199-214**

**BOOK REVIEW / KİTAP DEĞERLENDİRMESİ:**

*MODERNİTEDEN POSTMODERNİTEYE KAVRAMSAL BİR YOLCULUK ADLI ESERE GENEL BİR BAKIŞ*

*AN OVERVIEW OF A CONCEPTUAL JOURNEY FROM MODERNITY TO POSTMODERNITY*

**FATMA NUR YILMAZ 215-227**

## **Editors' Preface and Acknowledgements**

We are glad to announce the publication of the Volume 2, Issue 1 of international *Journal of Modernism and Postmodernism Studies (JOMOPS)*, a double-blind peer-reviewed open access e-journal published by the Modernism and Postmodernism Studies Network (MPSN) in July and December. MPSN is an academic network dedicated to promoting international scientific collaborations in the field of modernism and postmodernism studies. We believe that the articles submitted to the current issue will be of interest to the readers especially in the fields of Literature, Philosophy, Sociology, Fine Arts, Linguistics and many others. We congratulate the authors of the articles published in this issue for their splendid contribution.

*JOMOPS* is a production of great endeavour by the members of the Executive Board of the Network and Editorial/Advisory Board of the Journal. We are very grateful and honoured to have the opportunity to work with Prof. Dr. Mehmet Ali Çelikel, who is the honorary chair of the Network and has been illuminating our path so far. The members of the Board have had a continuous exchange of ideas during the founding of the journal publication by-laws and peer-review procedures. We would like to express our warmest appreciation and sincere gratitude to the referees and the members of the Editorial/Advisory Board for reviewing abstracts and later manuscripts submitted to the journal and for their support, encouragement and patience.

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**REDEFINING THE ORIENT: EDWARD SAID  
AND BUCHI EMECHETA'S *SECOND CLASS  
CITIZEN*****DOĞUYU YENİDEN TANIMLAMA: EDWARD  
SAID VE BUCHI EMECHETA'NIN *İKİNCİ  
SINIF VATANDAŞI*****Elçin AYAKAN<sup>1</sup>****Abstract**

Throughout history, it can be seen that the Western countries have had imperial concerns in order to be the colonialist powers of the world. It won't be wrong to state that the expansion of the West resulted in the East's being dominated and oppressed by the Western countries to create a powerful domain for themselves by destroying the freedom of the Eastern countries. In this sense, it can be pointed out that the suppressing and isolating practice of orientalism comes to the fore as an influential term by means of its power of forming a perspective about the East under the Western eyes. In relation to that, literature can be regarded as one of the most important instruments in the creation of the Orientalist West. As it is the Western discourse that lies behind the term orientalism, it can be said that the Westerners wanted to describe their colonial subjects in an imaginative and discriminative way as Edward Said supports in his *Orientalism* (1979). In *Orientalism*, Said sheds light on the discriminative and influential orientalist discourse by the Eurocentric stance and emphasizes that the Easterners should get rid of such a biased discourse by creating their own discourse. It is known that the Easterners became successful in the post-colonial era in terms of reflecting their cultures, voices, and the racial problems that they had to struggle with. Buchi Emecheta's well-known post-colonial novel, *Second Class Citizen* (1975), shows these struggles with a conscious narration. For this reason, the novel can be regarded as an example of the Eastern discourse. In this article, Edward Said's *Orientalism* will be examined in terms of his views on the Western discourse and will be adapted into Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen*.

**Keywords:** Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Western discourse, Buchi Emecheta, *Second Class Citizen*.

**Öz**

Tarih boyunca Batılı ülkelerin dünyanın sömürgeci güçleri olabilmek için emperyal kaygıları olduğu görülmektedir. Batı'nın genişlemesinin, Doğulu ülkelerin özgürlüğünü yok ederek, kendilerine güçlü bir nüfuz alanı yaratmak için, Doğu'nun Batılı ülkeler tarafından hüküm altına alınmasına ve ezilmesine neden olduğunu belirtmek yanlış olmayacaktır. Bu anlamda, oryantalizmin baskıcı ve soyutlayıcı uygulandığını, dünyanın gözünde Doğu hakkında bir bakış açısı oluşturma gücü anlamında etkili bir terim olarak öne çıktığı belirtilebilir. Bununla ilişkili olarak, edebiyat, Batı oryantalizm söyleminin yaratılmasındaki en önemli araçlardan biri olarak kabul edilebilir. Oryantalizm teriminin arkasında Batı söylemi olduğu için, Batılıların sömürge unsurlarını Edward Said'in *Oryantalizm* (1979) adlı eserinde de savunduğu gibi, varsayımsal ve ayrıştırıcı bir şekilde tanımlamak istedikleri söylenebilir. *Oryantalizm* adlı eserde Said, Batı oryantalizm söyleminin ayrıştırıcı ve tesirli yaklaşımına ışık tutmakta ve Doğuların böylesine önyargılı bir söylemden kendi söylemlerini yaratarak kurtulmaları gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır. Doğuların, sömürge sonrası dönemde kendi kültürlerini, seslerini ve mücadele etmek zorunda kaldıkları ırksal sorunları yansıtmaları açısından başarılı oldukları bilinmektedir. Buchi Emecheta'nın sömürge sonrası dönemi ünlü romanı *İkinci Sınıf Vatandaş* (1975), bu mücadeleleri farkındalıkla bir anlatımla göstermektedir. Bu sebeple bu roman Doğu söyleminin bir örneği olarak kabul edilebilir. Bu makalede Edward Said'in *Oryantalizm* adlı eseri Batı söylemine ilişkin görüşleri açısından incelenecek ve Emecheta'nın *İkinci Sınıf Vatandaş* adlı romanına uyarlanacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Edward Said, *Oryantalizm*, Batı söylemi, Buchi Emecheta, *İkinci Sınıf Vatandaş*.

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## 1. Introduction

The power and hegemony produced with regard to the orientalist discourse of the West can be linked to the historical, political, and cultural suppression of the East and the Eastern people, which is elaborately discussed by Said in his *Orientalism* by giving various references to Oriental images in the Western perspective. Accordingly, it has stated in the article '*Orientalism is a Partisan Book*': *Applying Edward Said's Insights to Early Modern Travel Writing* that the way how the Easterners were reflected through orientalism reinforces the superiority of the Westerners as Said thinks that the Europeans believe in the idea that they represent the Orient since the Easterners were incapable in terms of reflecting themselves (Roddan 169). It can be said that the Westerners reflected the East just by relying on their observations without having a friendly purpose of knowing about the Easterners. Due to the fact that the Easterners did not have the opportunity to speak for themselves in the colonial period, a redefinition of the Orient became necessary as supported by Said. This redefinition can be seen as the Eastern discourse. The author of *Second Class Citizen*, Buchi Emecheta can be regarded as one of the epitomes of the non-Western literary figures of the 20th century since she has contributed to the redefinition of the discourse of orientalism by depicting the racial and gender struggles of her main character, Adah, as a kind of a resemblance of the very own struggles of Emecheta who comes to the fore as a non-Western author in English society (Sidiki and Aboubacrine 967-8). In this regard, it is proper to state that Emecheta presents the problem of otherness in England in her novel and highlights that it is possible to gain a voice in the society of the former colonisers. It can be emphasized that she gains her voice and mirrors her immigrant experience through her novel.

Considering the points stated above about the Westerners' point of view on the Orient which can be regarded as the Orientalist discourse of the West along with the perspective of Edward Said's orientalism, this paper aims to analyse and describe the Orient from an Eastern perspective through the novel of Buchi Emecheta and it also aims to shed light on Said's well-known work, *Orientalism*. It is a work that supports the Orient's creating its own freedom via discourse which can be regarded as a solution to the problem of Western discourse of orientalism. The work also reveals the power of the Western orientalism to oppress the voice of the East. In relation to Said's work and thoughts, Emecheta's novel shows the Eastern point of view in terms of the lives and struggles of the Easterners which will be pointed out in this study. It is a novel that has

the capacity of echoing the importance of an Eastern discourse. It can be said that an Eastern discourse means Easterners' having a discourse of their own in order to represent themselves freely against the Western discourse of orientalism which monitors the Easterners presumptively.

## 2. A General Overview of Orientalism

It can be generally accepted that the West, or in other words, the Western societies had imperial policies which have led to the rise of colonialism in history. What can be broadly indicated about the West's performing colonialism in terms of gaining power on the world scene, is the expansion of the Western countries in order to rule various parts of the world, especially the Eastern parts which leads to the domination of the West over the East. In relation to this really outstanding and problematic reality, pointing out some facts concerning imperialism in the following lines would be worth discussing. Although the term imperialism dates back to the times before Christ, it is known that in modern times imperialism through colonialism began in the 15th century and continued till its decay after World War II, however, the impact of imperialism changed its form in a new period called post-colonialism as it includes the struggles of the Eastern people who were trying to gain a voice and identity in the countries of the formerly white colonisers (Habib 737-8-9). As it is obvious in these lines, it is an undeniable fact that the supreme one did not hesitate to show power over the inferior one in order to be a significant actor in the world. It can be interpreted that this very well-known superiority of the West can be seen as penetrating into the nature of the East and the Eastern people. At this very moment, it would be proper to mention Edward Said's famous book, *Orientalism* which will be analysed in the following parts of this paper. M.A.R. Habib states that Said who is "known as a literary and cultural theorist" wanted to show the underlying meaning of orientalism as a Western discourse defined by the West and supported the idea that the Easterners should create their own discourse (744-7). It can be indicated that Said supports this idea since he is aware of the problematic and dangerous nature of orientalism, as he explains in the lines below:

[...] so authoritative a position did Orientalism have that I believe no one writing, thinking, or acting on the Orient could do so without taking account of the limitations on thought and action imposed by Orientalism. In brief, because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action. This is not to say that Orientalism unilaterally determines what can be said about the Orient, [...]. (3)

It is seen that Said in his *Orientalism* aims to take the attention to orientalism as a damaging term. -The term's being a Western presumptive creation signifies that the West did not really try to know the East to be fully able to reflect them. As Said believes, the West only wanted to determine everything about the East in order to control it by all means. That is why it can be said that orientalism is an intentional creation. In this regard, it can be pointed out that in terms of the European definition of the Orient, the Orient contains "the threats of its 'monstrous mysteries' and 'absurd religions' hailing from its 'stagnant past', and is a "dominion of hordes and despots or spiritual mystics and exotic sensuality" (Wani 43). According to that approach of Europe towards the East which sounds clearly discriminative and highly harsh, one can deduce the reason why Edward Said criticised the Oriental discourse of the West in his *Orientalism* considering the prejudiced perspective of the West. In a way, it can be said that in accordance with Said's aforementioned Western approach of orientalism, the East should not be contented with being voiced by the West imaginatively and should create its own discourse. The following lines of Said's *Orientalism* can be regarded as an attention-grabbing example in order to comprehend the Western discourse:

There is very little consent to be found, for example, in the fact that Flaubert's encounter with an Egyptian courtesan produced a widely influential model of the Oriental woman; she never spoke of herself, she never represented her emotions, presence, or history. He spoke for and represented her. He was foreign, comparatively wealthy, male, and these were historical facts of domination that allowed him not only to possess Kuchuk Hanem physically but to speak for her and tell his readers in what way she was 'typically Oriental.' My argument is that Flaubert's situation of strength in relation to Kuchuk Hanem was not an isolated instance. It fairly stands for the pattern of relative strength between East and West, and the discourse about the Orient that it enabled. (Said 6)

The critical approach of Said towards Gustave Flaubert's representation of the Oriental woman shows that Said did not like such a stereotypical representation made upon Eastern women. This representation can affect the understanding of the Western people who read Flaubert from a narrowed point of view since this representation can shape the minds of the Western people. In this regard, Hans Bertens indicates that "Said examines how" oriental texts "construct the Orient through imaginative representations [...] through seemingly factual descriptions (in journalist reports and travel writing). (203)

It can be said that Flaubert's *Kuchuk Hanem* is one of these texts. In the case of Flaubert, such a title like 'Kuchuk Hanem' has the power of affecting the French people with the Western discourse of orientalism by destroying the Easterners' chance of reflecting themselves as important identities. Because of that reason, it will not be wrong to indicate that the Westerners like Gustave Flaubert paved the way to the Western discourse of orientalism. It was an intentional and limited way of interpreting everything about the East. In a way, Flaubert's speaking for the 'Egyptian courtesan' summarizes the coloniser and the colonised relationship as being reflected through the power of language and literature. As a result of Said's example, one does not have any difficulty understanding the need for a redefinition of orientalism, not as a Western discourse, but as an Eastern discourse considering the fact that the term is about the East and its people. Post-colonialism demonstrates the necessity of this change. In this period, the Eastern people got the opportunity of reflecting their cultures with "the desire for cultural self-determination" along with reflecting their problems in "their immediate cultural environment" referring to the Western countries that they have immigrated to (Bertens 194). In this sense, it can be asserted that the purpose of the Easterners, as Said supports, should be voicing what is their own as the native members of the Orient, just like the way Emecheta did in her *Second Class Citizen*.

### 3. Edward Said's Understanding of Orientalism

Edward Said, who is known as "one of the most prominent public intellectuals of recent decades" and "an influential literary critic and theorist", was born in 1935, and was an outstanding theorist since his understanding of orientalism was highly different and opposed from the general meaning and function of the term (Leitch 1986). In a way, it is proper to say that Edward Said has an anti-orientalist view for the term and performance of orientalism as a discourse. According to the article of Necla Mora, orientalism is a field of research of the Western people which includes the studies of language, people, and culture of near and far East from a Eurocentric point of view and was formed by the capitalist understanding of Europe (419). Although, on the surface, the term seems like an area of study and research of a continent that attempts to discover and observe an unfamiliar part of the world, the underlying reason and way of performing this attempt can be found in Said's perspective of the Western orientalism. Edward Said takes an opposite stand against the Eurocentric view of orientalism which was functioning in terms of oppressing and dominating the Orient. In this regard, the East has been labelled as the other and the alien. The following words stated by Said in his *Orientalism* prove this

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opposite stand:

The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience [...] Orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles. (1-2)

As Said explains in a very clear and explicit manner, the fundamental purpose of the Western discourse of orientalism is building a structure of the Orient in the eyes of both the Western and the Eastern people in order to preserve the stability of the East as the weak and the needy-indigent one in the name of restoring civilization. Accordingly, what may come to one's mind can actually be the West's being in need of the East. Because one cannot claim superiority without the existence of a less privileged group of people. To put it in another way, it can be stated that the West was able to show itself as the maker of civilization thanks to the East. In this sense, it can be stated that Western colonialism was a highly preferred way of reflecting their superiority via discourse especially by the people "of nineteenth-century and the early twentieth-century European colonialism" with a "high-handed executive attitude" of these times (2). That is why, in relation to the creation of the Orient by the occident intentionally, it is right to indicate that the East and the Eastern people were regarded with an isolating, discriminating, and othered image because of the Western discourse's power to create such an image. Considering that the West is the civilized one compared to the East, the East becomes automatically the other and powerless. It is clear that the East as a whole turns out to be the oppressed one by all means by the West, in other words, by the coloniser. Accepting the Orient as the other can be regarded as the construction of the West which appeared through the Western discourse in terms of creating "myths about the laziness, deceit and irrationality" of the Easterners in order to represent the East as inferior (Selden, Widdowson, and Brooker 220). In a way, the Western discourse can be viewed as a sort of a justification for labelling the Easterners as the other based on presumptive assumptions. The following lines of *Orientalism* shed light on a subjective representation of the East practised by the West:

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Additionally, the imaginative examination of things Oriental was based more or less exclusively upon a sovereign Western consciousness out of whose unchallenged centrality an Oriental world emerged, first according to general ideas about who or what was an Oriental, then according to a detailed logic governed not simply by empirical reality but by a battery of desires, repressions, investments and projections. If we can point to great Orientalist works of genuine scholarship like Silvestre de Sacy's *Chrestomathie Arabe* or Edward William Lane's *Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, we need also to note that Renan's and Gobineau's racial ideas came out of the same impulse, as did a great many Victorian pornographic novels (see the analysis by Steven Marcus of "The Lustful Turk"). (8)

What takes attention in the extract above can be indicated as a kind of a fact that the Westerners created their own 'detailed logic' of orientalism depending on imaginative representations reflected through discourse. It seems that this is the point criticised by Edward Said in *Orientalism* which makes him noteworthy and still remembered. Considering people like Gustave Flaubert whose oriental perspective serve the function of the Western discourse of orientalism, Edward Said proves his thesis on how this discourse dominates the East. Also, it can be said that even the title of the novel mentioned above seems effective in terms of representing the East as immoral. It can also manipulate the picture of the Eastern people in the eyes of the world. On the other hand, it is not so hard to think about the reason behind the 'Western consciousness' in terms of creating the discourse of orientalism which is nothing but a racial and discriminative one. Accordingly, the long-lasting political power of the West in the Eastern regions deserves to be mentioned. Because of that power, the Westerners felt highly free to produce such works which degraded the Easterners. Due to the reason that the West embodied an 'unchallenged centrality' in the Orient, it can be implied that the Westerners did not bowdlerise their literary works and did not mirror the orient as it is. Instead of representing the orient impartially, they have chosen to reflect the Easterners as lesser beings with an 'imaginative examination' as referred by Said in the extract above.

On the other hand, as an outstanding Western figure, Richard Burton is worth mentioning in this article since he was one of the people who employed the Western discourse very effectively. In *Orientalism*, Said refers to Burton as an oriental and he also indicates that in Burton's writing, the readers are indirectly "given the Orient" and



“everything about it” through his “knowledgeable (and often prurient) interventions,” so it shows his ability in over and over again letting the readers know about his taking over “the management of the Oriental life,” which gives Richard Burton “a position of supremacy over the Orient” (196). Here, it can be highlighted that Said indicates how systematic and clever the Westerners can be through discourse. Later on, Said gives a significant example from Burton with a reference to Burton’s personal narrative of *Pilgrimage* in the lines below:

And it is this fact -for in the *Pilgrimage* it is a fact- that elevates Burton's consciousness to a position of supremacy over the Orient. In that position his individuality perforce encounters, and indeed merges with, the voice of Empire, which is itself a system of rules, codes, and concrete epistemological habits. Thus when Burton tells us in the *Pilgrimage* that "Egypt is a treasure to be won," that it "is the most tempting prize which the East holds out to the ambition of Europe, not excepted even the Golden Horn," we must recognize how the voice of the highly idiosyncratic master of Oriental knowledge informs, feeds into the voice of European ambition for rule over the Orient. (196)

Once again, the feeling of superiority of the West is clear in the light of its representation via the Western discourse of orientalism. Edward Said examines how the West’s aim of ruling and dominating the East comes to the fore by means of language and literature. It seems like the East was waiting for them ‘to be won,’ to be colonised or to be civilized with so-called goodwill. Also, one can sense the traces of pride within the lines of Burton referred by Said above. It can be interpreted that anything or anyone valuable or tempting deserves to be possessed according to the Western mind, which reminds the relationship of Kuchuk Hanem and Gustave Flaubert as mentioned in the previous part. It would be proper to assert that it is not so interesting to come across with the representation of Richard Burton considering his being an Orientalist traveller, writer, and explorer who is known for his being a “committed imperialist” in the 19th century, in addition to his mostly known translation of an Arab text, *The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night and Supplemental Nights?* - with its highly referred name *The Arabian Nights*- along with his other “obscene translations of Indian and Arab texts” (Colligan 31). It will not be wrong to say that Burton really loved representing the Eastern people as sexually lustful and active beings. This is why his version of *The Arabian Nights* is highly open to criticism because of the way how it is reflected by Burton. What makes the



translation of Richard Burton outstanding is his translation's having eye-catching footnotes in which he gives information about the so-called Arabian sexual practices "such as bestiality, sodomy, eunuchism" and also his translation includes "awful scenes of sexual violence" (32). Yet again, it can be seen that the Eastern people were represented with a morally questionable and humiliating role. It appears to be a sort of a role that makes the East famous only with sexuality. It can be deduced that this is the reason why the West defines itself as the mind and defines the East as the heart. Translating an Eastern originated work with lots of exaggerated lustful knowledge seems very intentional in terms of portraying the East as the different, the other, and the unfamiliar one. A Western reader who does not have any idea about the East and the Eastern lifestyle might assume that it is something cultural or natural for the Eastern women or men to live a highly pornographic life as described in *The Arabian Nights* by Burton. This shows the power of the Western discourse. Due to these reasons, it would be proper to highlight that the example of the well-known *The Arabian Nights* becomes much more note-worthy and crucial especially as examined in relation to Edward Said's *Orientalism*.

In accordance with the discriminative representation of Burton's *The Arabian Nights*, another renowned production of orientalism deserves to be noticed in this study which is *Aladdin* of Disney from 1992 (Scurry 26). It can be said that even in the very late 20th century, the Western discourse of orientalism has continued to influence the public opinion about the East and the lifestyle of the Eastern people through American cinema. In this sense, it is necessary to mention Edward Said's *Orientalism*:

One aspect of the electronic, postmodern world is that there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which the Orient is viewed. Television, films, and all the media's resources have forced information into more and more standardized molds. So far as the Orient is concerned, standardization and cultural stereotyping have intensified the hold of the nineteenth-century academic and imaginative demonology of "the mysterious Orient." (26)

It can be deduced from the extract above that Said refers to a kind of a shift from the written literature to media in terms of the practice of the Western discourse. This is a change that can be observed by means of media tools like films or tv shows which can be linked to Disney's cartoon *Aladdin*. According to Said, the media of the postmodern times contributes to the nineteenth-century Western discourse of orientalism's engraving

uniformed types of the Eastern people. To Said, this needs to be demolished by way of the East's gaining its own voice through a self-definition as seen in Buchi Emecheta's novel *Second Class Citizen* which will be examined in the following part. The example of *Aladdin*, in addition to what Said mentioned in the lines above, demonstrates that the West did not give up on voicing and illustrating the Orient according to its own imagination. It is highly threatening for the Eastern cultures in terms of the representation of their cultures. This kind of a cultural threat for the Eastern people can be seen as evident in the opening song of Disney's *Aladdin* as follows: "Where the caravan camels roam / Where they cut off your ear / If they don't like your face / It's barbaric, but hey, it's home" (Scurry 27). In these Western-made lyrics, the level of belittlement and discrimination is undeniably clear. Moreover, these can raise a necessary question which is why a cartoon made for children contains such brutal words as if such lyrics are totally normal, ordinary, or amusing for underage people. Creating such an isolating and discriminating cartoon especially for little children who are open to being quickly influenced by the images and figures that they watch or hear is absolutely unacceptable and obviously reminds the warnings of Edward Said concerning the media's power of stereotyping the Eastern people. It can be said that such stereotypical representations can be related to the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure's concept of signified and signifier. Concerning Saussure's concept, Stuart Hall asserts that "if the relationship between a signifier and its signified is the result of a system of social conventions specific to each society and to specific historical moments - then all meanings are produced within history and culture" (*The Work* 32). It would be proper to indicate that the meaning in which the signifier signifies can intentionally be formed by human beings. In this regard, the East and the Easterners signify negative and insulting terms such as inferiority, brutality, or weakness since the Western discourse of orientalism intentionally represented the Easterners as secondary beings. Hall also emphasizes that "the media play a part in the formation, in the constitution, of the things that they reflect [...]" The reality of race in any society is, to coin a phrase, 'media-mediated'" (*Race* 15). As it is obviously stated by Hall and seen in the orientalist example of Disney's *Aladdin*, the media has a great influence in the formation of the orientalist discourse in terms of representation and racial stereotyping.

Last but not least, the background of Edward Said deserves to be examined in terms of comprehending his anti-orientalist view, along with his referring to the necessity of the East's need for a redefinition. In this regard, he refers to his Eastern origins in the following lines which can be seen as a reason why Said has come up with such known

and outstanding work:

Much of the personal investment in this study derives from my awareness of being an "Oriental" as a child growing up in two British colonies. All of my education, in those colonies (Palestine and Egypt) and in the United States, has been Western, and yet that deep early awareness has persisted. In many ways my study of Orientalism has been an attempt to inventory the traces upon me, the Oriental subject, of the culture whose domination has been so powerful a factor in the life of all Orientals. (25)

As it is reflected by the author himself, his Eastern origin turned out to be effective in the creation of *Orientalism*. It can be said that he himself has felt the influence of Western domination as being a Palestinian. Accordingly, it is highlighted by Robert Young in his *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* that Edward Said is the one who turned post-colonial studies into "an academic discipline," thanks to his having lots of experiences while growing up in the British colonies (383). In other words, his Eastern background gave him a chance to cultivate an understanding and an awareness to criticise the unequal and unfair representations of the Easterners and let him gain an independent voice and be successful especially in the West as a non-Westerner. Hence, *Second Class Citizen* of Buchi Emecheta who has voiced herself, her culture, and the struggles of the immigrants in the post-colonial world will be touched upon and analysed in the following part through Said's *Orientalism*.

#### **4. Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* in the Light of Edward Said's Idea of Orientalism**

In this last part of the paper, the aim is to portray and examine Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* with the help of Edward Said's *Orientalism* and his views on the othered position of the Easterners. Born in 1944, Emecheta has produced note-worthy literary works in English in the post-colonial period and reflected the struggles of the non-Westerners in England through her main character Adah's being othered because of the "colonial discourses dominant in the contemporary Nigerian and British societies" (Öğünç 35). It would be proper to indicate that Emecheta put forward the isolated position of the Easterners in terms of the complicated relationship between the East and the West by using literature as a vehicle. Considering that, both Emecheta and Said put emphasis on the social struggles between the West and the East. In this regard, it can be asserted that the othered and the isolated position of the East comes from the East's being culturally and racially different from the West. The following lines of Berna Köseoğlu stated in her

Ph.D. thesis in which she has analysed two novels of Buchi Emecheta including *Second Class Citizen* in the light of Said's *Orientalism*, demonstrate the connection between Said and Emecheta by way of adapting Said's theory into Emecheta's novel:

Said, in *Orientalism*, points out his identity crisis in America and underlines the difficulty to adapt into the culture of the host country. Since he feels as a guest in the US, he cannot regard the country as his home, so he thinks that he is the 'other' due to his Arab Palestinian heritage, [...] Similarly, Emecheta also deals with the clash between the West and the Others in her novels. Particularly in *Second Class Citizen*, the female protagonist Adah, who is also the fictional character in *In the Ditch*, as a Nigerian, is the representative of the African nation and her struggles with both her own cultural notions and her identity crisis can clearly be recognized. (89)

As the lines above obviously express, one can observe that Buchi Emecheta understood the feeling of being othered by the Westerners similar to Said and reflected it in her *Second Class Citizen* in a comprehensive manner. It can be noted that Emecheta's novel turns out to be a kind of an applied version of Said's *Orientalism*. Emecheta as an author and Said as a critic are aware of the secondary position of the Easterners which was attributed by the Westerners and they support the importance of voicing the problems caused by being labelled as secondary. In this sense, it is clear that Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* deserves to be mentioned and analysed in this paper. the novel proves Said's emphasis on the significance of "a critical consciousness" that he has "tried to maintain" through *Orientalism* (26). This is the reason why Buchi Emecheta's outstanding novel constitutes an example of the Eastern discourse since the novel which is about the Easterners is reflected by an Eastern writer and helps the reader to comprehend the perspective of Said's *Orientalism*. In this respect, it is proper to quote from the autobiographical work of Emecheta, *Head Above Water* in the lines below:

As for my survival for the past twenty years in England, from when I was a little over twenty, dragging four cold and dripping babies with me and pregnant with a fifth one- that is a miracle. And if for any reason you do not believe in miracles, please start believing, because my keeping my head above water in this indifferent society, which is probably succeeding in making me indifferent and private too, is a miracle. (5)

As it is very clear in the extract above, Emecheta was aware of the problem of racial discrimination and was strong enough to fight against it even though it was very hard to

do. It can be interpreted that her challenging life in England at a very young age did not stop her from being successful as an Eastern woman living in London. She managed to represent herself as an Easterner within her writing. That is why it can be pointed out that Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen* establishes a ground for getting rid of the Western discourse of orientalism. Also, it will not be wrong to note that the novel shows the close relationship of the Easterners with the Western discourse. There is no doubt that the Western discourse highly influenced the Easterners as the following lines from *Second Class Citizen* highlight:

They danced happily at the wharf, shaking their colourful gourds in the air. The European arrivals gaped at them. They had never seen anything like it before. The climax of it all was when an Englishman took their photographs. He even singled out women with babies behind their backs and took several shots of them. Ma and her friends were really happy to have their pictures taken by Europeans! These were the days before Nigerian independence [...]. (15)

As it is seen in the extract above, despite the fact that Nigeria that was once colonised gained its independence, the continuous effect of the Western discourse of orientalism can be observed in the relationship between the Westerners and the Easterners. Buchi Emecheta refers to the insulting and colonialist approach of the British people towards the Easterners in her novel. She can be viewed as a conscious person who is aware of the importance of being independent and the negative effects of the Western discourse. In addition to that, what takes attention in these lines above can be regarded as the questionable 'happy' reaction of Adah's family as native people. It is questionable because such a positive reaction can be interpreted as improper since the English visitors disrespect the Nigerian folk by taking their photographs without even asking their permission. This unacceptable attitude of the English shows that the Easterners are still inferior according to the Westerners. It can be said that these visitors just find the folk exotic and highly different from themselves. The Westerners employ their own creation of discourse and treat the Easterners as beings beneath the Westerners. The attitudes of them seem like they are visiting a zoo full of different species of animals. They are not aware of the fact that the Easterners are actually human beings just like them and most importantly, they all have free identities. Because of that reason, the visitors mentioned in the extract above should not take photographs of the Nigerian folk. Instead of this, they should meet the folk first to establish a friendly and equal environment. On the other

hand, the positivity of the Easterners towards the Westerners shows that they still want to be accepted by the Westerners in order not to be othered or isolated since the Western discourse has still an influence on them. The validity of the Western discourse in the post-colonial era highlights that even if it is the time after colonialism, the impact of early colonialism can be observed through the actions and attitudes of the Westerners and the Easterners. In addition to that, similar to the positive reaction of her family for the Westerners, Adah also overestimates England and the Western civilized lifestyle in order to be able to live in the West to have a bright future as the lines below put forward:

So she said special prayers to God, asking Him to make Pa agree to their going to the land of her dreams, the United Kingdom! Just like her Pa, she still said the name United Kingdom in a whisper, even when talking to God about it, but now she felt it was coming nearer to her. She was beginning to believe she would go to England. (127)

Once more, the influence of the colonial discourse by means of the West's being shown to the East as a kind of heaven of civilization and prosperity can be obviously observed. As indicated by Marie Gisele Martine Raphael in her thesis, *Second Class Citizen* demonstrates the validity of the "margin/centre phenomenon" even after the independence of Nigeria in "the 1960's" (7-8). This proves that Britain was considered a dream country by the natives in the post-colonial period. It can be interpreted that such an admiration comes from the Western discourse employed by Western countries. They were successful at showing and defining themselves as supreme beings. It is significant to note that this admiration works really well for the natives of Nigeria in the novel who did not experience the West yet, just like the main character of *Second Class Citizen*, Adah who is so willing to lead her life in England. In other words, the once colonised answers back to the Western discourse by paying respect to the supremacy of the West and to the idea of going to a Western country (Öğünç 40). Adah's looking forward to the idea of living in England demonstrates the necessity for an Eastern discourse in order not to remain under the cultural pressure and domination of the West. This is what Emecheta did by being aware of such a necessity which is reflected by Said in *Orientalism*. On the other hand, it will not be wrong to state that Buchi Emecheta as a Nigerian originated author shows her reader the perspective of the West in the eyes of her own people. By doing so, she portrays a picture of the real East reflected by an Easterner. That is why such novels written by the Easterners can be considered as powerful ways of reflecting the actual identities of the Eastern countries and people. In other words, it is a chance

for the Easterners to be able to tell their own cultures, social lives or racial struggles of the post-colonial era.

In the following parts of Emecheta's novel, the protagonist Adah Obi who has really flourishing ideas and dreams about moving to Britain experiences life in England as an immigrant in a harsh way. The following lines below demonstrate the inhumane treatment performed on the formerly colonised and this treatment shocks Adah unexpectedly:

Nearly all the notices had "Sorry, no coloureds" on them. Her house-hunting was made more difficult because she was black; black, with two very young children and pregnant with another one. She was beginning to learn that her colour was something she was supposed to be ashamed of. She was never aware of this at home in Nigeria, even when in the midst of whites. Those whites must have had a few lessons about colour before coming out to the tropics, because they never let drop from their cautious mouths the fact that, in their countries, black was inferior. (70)

As Emecheta explicitly explained the situation waiting for the native immigrants in the country of the formerly coloniser above, Adah experiences discrimination, isolation and marginalization day by day. It is pretty obvious that the British people still assume that they are colonisers although it is the era of post-colonialism. It is stated by Paul Gilroy that "race remains the self-evident force of nature in society. Our being resigned to it supports enabling analogies and provides legitimation in a host of historical situations where natural difference and social division are politically, economically, and militarily mediated" (8). According to this view, it can be said that the racist approach of the British people leads them to establish a discriminating gap between themselves and the Easterners. In this regard, it will not be wrong to indicate that the Westerners have internalised their own discourse of orientalism so much so that they kept imposing superiority in the post-colonial period as well. Also, it is stated by Edward Said in his *Culture and Imperialism* that many English people "miss the good old days" referring to the colonial times (17). This shows the reason why discrimination was employed by the British in the post-colonial era. On the other hand, it is seen in the novel that the immigrant life of Adah in post-colonial England is highly stressful since the English people do not want the non-Westerners to be a part of the life in this Western society and make sure that they are isolated and humiliated. On the other hand, in the extract above, Adah emphasises that the whites in Nigeria do not pay attention to their dark skin colour which is seen as a big problem in England because all the natives are black in Nigeria which is



something the whites are familiar with. The whites in Nigeria know about the physical and racial differences that existed between the Easterners and the Westerners. But, the situation swiftly changes in the motherland of the British. They put a straightforward distance between themselves and the native immigrants whom they label as inferior. In this regard, the extract below can be seen as another example of immigrant struggle in London:

Whenever she went into big clothes stores, she would automatically go to the counters carrying soiled and discarded items, afraid of what the shop assistants might say. Even if she had enough money for the best, she would start looking at the sub-standard ones and then work her way up. This was where she differed from Francis and the others. They believed that one had to start with the inferior and stay there, because being black meant being inferior [...] The result was that she started to act in the way expected of her because she was still new in England, but after a while, she was not going to accept it from anyone. She was going to regard herself as the equal of any white. (70-71)

As it is clearly emphasized by Adah, being a non-Western immigrant in London means being marginalized and othered by the English society. Buying whatever they want is not an option for the non-Westerners since they are not even allowed to look at the high standard clothes. As a non-Westerner who is aware of this inequality, Adah criticizes her husband, Francis who accepts his secondary position unlike his wife. Regarding the extract above, it can be said that Adah does not accept discrimination and comes to the fore as a person who is ready to bring change to her secondary position. She is conscious in terms of leading her life as an independent woman who is able to overcome Western oppression. In addition to that, it can be indicated that Adah never stops fighting for what she dreams of against all the unexpected and disappointing experiences. In this respect, her personal development to be a strong woman in England can be seen in the novel. It is proper to state that she aims to create a voice for herself as an Easterner in order to get rid of the Western discourse and discrimination. The extract below reveals an important piece of her development:

She had asked Francis to bring her the one with "Nigerian Independence, 1960" written all over it. She was going to show people that she came from Nigeria and that Nigeria was an independent republic. Not that the other women did not know, but Adah felt that she would like them to remember



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it always, that she came from Nigeria, and that Nigeria was independent.  
(124)

It can be observed that Adah becomes an encouraged Easterner who expresses herself as an independent woman. She cultivates a sort of self-awareness. This attempt of Adah appears to be a huge step for her as she shows how brave and proud she is for being a free Easterner living in the West. Emecheta, through her character Adah Obi, mirrors Edward Said's stress upon the vitality of "self-awareness in any literary approach to the Orient" (Raphael 5). Adah's self-awareness begins in England where she sees that the West is not a kind of heaven. The self-awareness of Adah is also Emecheta's awareness. It can be said that her novel can be regarded as one of the proofs which shows the importance of the existence of an Eastern discourse. In this respect, it is proper to refer to the post-colonial critic, Frantz Fanon who indicates that "the conscious and organized undertaking by a colonized people to re-establish the sovereignty of that nation constitutes the most complete and obvious cultural manifestation that exists" (245). It can be said that Fanon, similar to Said, underlines the importance of being conscious in terms of creating a new discourse. Regarding Fanon's words stated in the previous line, it can be emphasized that Adah has the consciousness to defend her nation's free identity. As being a conscious non-Westerner, Emecheta creates her protagonist Adah as a conscious character who is proud of being a Nigerian. Additionally, it can be interpreted that Emecheta wants the Easterners to believe in themselves so that they can disprove the Western discourse which views the Easterners as incapable and inferior beings. Besides that, Adah struggles as a woman in the novel and reflects the problems of the female immigrants whose Eastern background restricts them in the social life. In this sense, Adah challenges her narrow-minded and patriarchal husband in order to turn out to be a successful and known author:

Then Francis said, "You keep forgetting that you are a woman and that you are a black. The white man can barely tolerate us men, to say nothing of brainless females like you who could think of nothing except how to breast-feed her baby." "That may be so," cried Adah, "but people have read it. And they say that it is good. Just read it, I want your opinion. Don't you know what it means to us if in the future I could be a writer?" Francis laughed. Whatever was he going to hear next? A woman writer in his own house, in a white man's country? "Well, Flora Nwapa is black and she writes," Adah challenged. "Flora Nwapa writes her stuff in Nigeria," Francis rejoined. "I

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have seen her books in all the libraries where I worked.” (167)

It can surely be said that the dialogue above is really irritating as Adah's husband Francis does not hesitate to insult her own wife. But, against Francis's unacceptable attitude, Adah seems courageous enough to defend herself. She is in a sort of a metaphorical fight with all the struggles that she has to bear as a black immigrant woman and her husband comes to the fore as one of her struggles. It is seen that not only the British racial discrimination she has to deal with but also the oppression of her husband is a vital problem for her. In this regard, it is proper to say that there is not a huge difference between the Easterners and the Westerners since they both insist on performing humiliation and discrimination over human beings whom they consider inferior and irrational. Also, it is significant to note that Emecheta's husband did not welcome her wife becoming a writer just like Francis and burned her first book (Gündüz 66). Francis, too, burned the manuscript of Adah's novel in *Second Class Citizen* which emphasizes the resemblance between the life of Adah and Emecheta (Emecheta 169). On the other side, it can be observed in the extract that Emecheta foregrounds the Nigerian writer Flora Nwapa whose works can be found on the shelves of the British libraries. In this regard, it is proper to note that Emecheta “in her fiction, [...] pays tribute to her female predecessors, especially to her Igbo compatriot Flora Nwapa whom she identifies as a role model” (Stratton 108). Emecheta's paying respect to Flora Nwapa shows that she was aware of the significance of being self-conscious in terms of representing herself as an Easterner. In addition to that, it is an important detail to see how the Eastern discourse flourishes especially in the West considering the extract above. It can be asserted that Emecheta's novel can also be regarded as a kind of a guide for people to learn about the problems of the Easterners in the post-colonial era reflected by an Easterner. Such works may even change the discriminative ideas of people related to the Western discourse. Despite the fact that people like Francis internalise their attributed inferiority, people like Adah and Emecheta fight for what they believe is true and do not accept this inferiority by reflecting their voice through writing. These strong and independent people express their power by rewriting the Western discourse and turning it into an Eastern one as it should be. They do it with self-consciousness and awareness just like the way Edward Said supports and advises the Eastern societies. Therefore, *Second Class Citizen* becomes an effective representative of Said's *Orientalism* as the novel presents an example of an Eastern discourse in the time of post-colonialism and also voices the struggles of the Eastern immigrants in the West.

## 5. Conclusion

All in all, it is analysed and proved in this paper that the West has created a Western discourse of orientalism that only reflects imaginative and presumptive provisions in the name of exploring and reflecting the East. The negativity of the Western discourse is analysed by the critic Edward Said whose work *Orientalism* is the focus of this study. Through the examples examined from Said's *Orientalism*, it is propounded in this article that the famous Western writers such as Burton and Flaubert did practice the Western discourse in order to contribute to the domination of the West over the East by using literature as a vehicle. In other words, they represented the East as the other, inferior, and dependent one. It is analysed in this paper that Edward Said comes to the fore with the fact that the discourse of orientalism is the construction of the Westerners and it needs to be redefined. Said emphasizes the necessity of an Eastern discourse created by the Easterners so that they can gain a self-conscious voice. Thus, the post-colonial novel of Buchi Emecheta, *Second Class Citizen* is analysed as a crucial and significant novel in this study in the light of Said's *Orientalism*. It is examined in this paper that Emecheta creates an Eastern voice on behalf of herself and the people of her own nation as an independent Eastern woman. Through the journey of the protagonist Adah Obi in the novel, Emecheta contributes to the Eastern discourse just like the way Edward Said suggests the Easterners have a discourse of their own because having a discourse can be seen as an effective solution to the problem of being imaginatively represented with the Western discourse of orientalism.

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## MCEWAN'IN *AMSTERDAM'DA DÜELLO* ROMANINDA AHLAKİ İKİLEM ve İNTİKAM DUYGUSU

## MORAL DILEMMA AND THE FEELING OF REVENGE IN MCEWAN'S *AMSTERDAM*

Ercan GÜROVA<sup>1</sup>

### Öz

Çağdaş İngiliz yazar Ian McEwan'ın 1998 tarihli romanı *Amsterdam'da Düello* iki eski dostun karşı karşıya gelmesine yol açan ahlaki ikilemleri merkezine almaktadır. Ortak bir tanıdıklarının kaybı ile açılan anlatıda ölüm, yokluk, ötenazi temaları karakterlerle içkin bir şekilde sunulur. Bir gazetenin genel yayın yönetmeni olan Vernon Halliday ile İngiltere'nin en başarılı bestecilerinden piyanist Clive Linley arasında gelişen gerilimli olaylar ilke ve ahlaki anlayış kavramlarını sorgular. Romanın iki önemli karakterinin yaşadığı ahlaki ikilem *faedacılık* ve *deontolojik* ahlak yaklaşımlarını gündeme getirmektedir. Yazar, iki ana karakter üzerinden iki farklı ahlak anlayışını örnekendirerek bir çatışma yaratmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra, *intikam* duygusu adı geçen karakterlerin ve olay örgüsünün ayrılmaz bir parçası olarak okuyucuya gösterilir. Bu çalışma romanın merkezindeki ahlaki ikilem konusunu *faedacılık* ve *deontolojik* yaklaşımlarla inceleyecek; bunu yaparken Vernon karakterinin yaşadığı çıkmazda *faedacılık* ve Clive karakterinin yaşadığı açmazda *deontolojik* yaklaşımı esas alacaktır. Ayrıca, intikam duygusunu ve bunun anlatıyı nasıl şekillendirdiğini Scheller, Adler ve Klein gibi çağdaş felsefeci ve psikologların yaklaşımlarıyla göstermeye çalışacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ian McEwan, *Amsterdam'da Düello*, Ahlaki ikilem, İntikam

### Abstract

Contemporary British author Ian McEwan's 1998 novel *Amsterdam* focuses on the moral dilemmas that lead to the confrontation between two old friends. In the narrative that begins with the loss of a common acquaintance, the themes of death, absence and euthanasia are immanently presented through the characters. The tensional events between Vernon Halliday, the editor-in-chief of a newspaper, and the pianist Clive Linley, one of Britain's most successful composers, question the moral principles and understanding. The moral dilemma experienced by two of the characters of the novel bring up morality approaches of *utilitarianism* and *deontological* understanding. The author creates a conflict by exemplifying two different moral conceptions over two main characters. In addition, the sense of revenge is shown to the reader as an integral part of the aforementioned characters and the plot. This study will examine the moral dilemma at the center of the novel in the light of *utilitarianist* and *deontological* approaches; in doing so, *utilitarianist* approach will be used to explain Vernon's predicament, on the other hand *deontological* approach will be employed in order to analyse Clive's predicament. Furthermore, how the feeling of revenge has shaped the narrative will be manifested with the help of contemporary philosophers and psychologists such as Scheller, Adler and Klein.

**Keywords:** Ian McEwan, *Amsterdam*, Moral dilemma, Revenge

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## GİRİŞ

Çağdaş İngiliz yazar Ian McEwan'ın 1998 tarihli romanı *Amsterdam* iki eski dostun karşı karşıya gelmesine yol açan ahlaki ikilemleri merkezine almaktadır. Romanın iki önemli karakterinden biri *The Judge* adlı gazetenin genel yayın yönetmeni Vernon Halliday'dir. Bir yandan tirajı sürekli düşen gazete için bir çıkış yolu arayan, öte yandan içinde sürekli büyüyen yokluk ve ölüm hissi ile çarpışan Vernon başına buyruk, haris ve ceberut kişilik özellikleriyle kendini gösterir. Vernon'un eski dostu, romanın bir diğer önemli karakteri Clive Linley ise İngiltere'nin en başarılı bestecilerindendir. Milenyumla yetiştirmesi gereken senfoniden başka gözü bir şey görmeyen ve bu süreçte yaratıcılık buhranları yaşayan Clive de bir sanat adamı olarak kendini fazla önemsemekte ve boş gurur ve kendini beğenme zaatlarıyla öne çıkmaktadır.

Roman bu eski dostun farklı zamanlarda sevgilisi olmuş Molly Lane'in cenaze sahnesi ile açılır. Kırk altı yaşında hayata veda eden Molly, restoran eleştirmenliği ve fotoğrafçılık hünerlerinin yanı sıra son derece zeki ve alımlı bir kadın olarak tanıtılır. Hali hazırda görevde olan Dışişleri Bakanı'nı da kendine âşık etmeyi başarmıştır. Bütün bu hız ve heyecan dolu serüvene gölge düşüren tek trajik gelişme ise Molly'nin aklını yitirmesi olur. Vücutta uyuşma, bellek kaybı, bedensel işlevleri kontrol edememe, agresiflik ve çığlık nöbetleri Molly için sonun başlangıcı olur.

Molly'nin ölümü sadece bir açılış sahnesi olarak kalmayacak; hem ölüm, yokluk, ötenazi gibi temaları gündeme getirecek hem de Vernon ve Clive'i geri dönülmez bir şekilde karşıt noktalara taşıyarak her ikisinin de ahlaki ikilemlerini gözler önüne serecektir. Bu çalışma romandaki iki önemli karakterin yaşadığı bu çıkmazları *faydacılık* ve *deontolojik* yaklaşımlarla mercek altına alacak ve karakterler arasındaki antagonizmayı biçimlendiren *intikam* duygusunun kökenine inmeye çalışacaktır. Bunun için de Scheller, Adler ve Klein gibi felsefeci ve psikologların yaklaşımlarından yararlanılacaktır.

## VERNON HALLIDAY YA DA SERBEST DÜŞÜŞ

*The Judge* adlı gazetenin beşinci genel yayın yönetmeni olarak düşen tirajları tersine çevirmek için çareler arayan Vernon, 1974 Paris'inde bir sene beraber yaşadıkları Molly'nin zamansız kaybından beri içinde büyüyen yoklukla mücadele etmektedir. Bir ölümün hatırlattığı etrafındaki nice kayıplar Vernon'un içinde "sürekli ve tanımlanamaz bir his" bırakırken farkında olmadan büyüttüğü boşluğu da görmesini sağlamıştır (32).

Bu boşluğu büyüten yaşamından eksilenler kadar genel yayın yönetmeni koltuğunda oturan birini bekleyen baş döndürücü hız ve uyum sorunudur. Kültür kuramcısı Byung-Chul Han'ın özetlediği “hiperaktif ve hızlanmış bir yaşam, ölümün kendini hissettirdiği o boşluğu doldurma çabası...” Vernon'un iş ve özel yaşamını tarif eder niteliktedir (30).

Molly gibi zeki, alımlı ve başarılı bir kadının sahip olduğu profile adeta hiç de yakışmayacak şekilde, aklını yitirerek ölmesi Vernon'u hem kaygılandırmış hem de bu konuyla ilgili tedbir almaya itmiştir. Tolstoy'un (1828-1910) *İvan İlyiç'in Ölümü*'ndeki (1886) gibi yavaşça ve ıstırap çekerek ölmek Vernon gibi güç tutkunu ve haris birinin isteyeceği en son şeydir. Bu olasılığı ortadan kaldırmak için Vernon'un bulduğu çözüm eski dostu Clive'den destek almaktır:

Diyelim ki ben de Molly gibi ağır bir hastalığa yakalandım ve gittikçe kötüleşmeye, yanlışlar yapmaya- yani aklımı kullanamama, eşyaların adlarını bilememe, kim olduğumu unutmaya gibi. Bu durumda bana bu gidişi sona erdirmek konusunda yardımcı olacak birisinin varlığını bilmek isterdim... Yani ölümüne yardım edecek birisinin... En eski arkadaşım olarak senden, bunu yapmanın doğru olduğunu gördüğün noktaya gelirim, bana yardım etmeni istiyorum... (45)

İmadan uzak bu ötenazi talebi dostu Clive'i hem şaşırtmış hem de kafasını karıştırmıştır. Buna rağmen bu konuyu düşünmek için zaman ister. Romanın ileriki bölümlerinde Clive'in bu talebe yanıtı olumlu olacaktır ancak bir şartla: aynı durumda kalırsa Vernon da benzer şekilde hareket edecektir! Yaşamda bu iki insanı bir araya getiren dostluk, ölüm veya ölmek söz konusu olduğunda da ortak bir noktaya taşımıştır. “Bedensel kötüleşme ve çöküş”, “kendi kaderini kontrol edemeyerek” faillikten uzaklaşma ve “salınımlı bir süreç” olarak tükeniş bu iki dostu ortak bir paydada buluşturmaya yine başarmıştır (Kellehear, 19-39).

Bu tuhaf teklif sonrasında dostluklarının muhasebesini yapan Clive, Vernon'un arkadaşlıklarının değerini yeterince bilmediğini, kendisinden faydalanmasına rağmen karşılığında çok az şey yaptığını, ortak noktalarının sadece “Molly, birikmiş yıllar ve arkadaşlık alışkanlıkları” olduğunu dehşet içinde fark eder ve bütün bu parçaları birleştirdiğinde büyük resmi görür: “Vernon'un ilkesizliği” (58).

Dostluklarının zeminindeki dengesizliğin ayırdına varan Clive, Vernon'un bir sonraki hamlesiyle hem vardığı yargıyı teyit etmiş olacak hem de eski dostu ile karşı karşıya gelecektir. Tirajı gün geçtikçe düşen gazeteyi kurtarma planı yapan Vernon'un bulduğu çözüm Clive'i dehşete düşürecektir. Dostunun evine uğrayan Vernon, Clive'e



mevcut Dış İşleri Bakanı ve ileride de başbakan olması muhtemel Julian Garmony'nin Molly tarafından çekilmiş bir fotoğrafını gösterir. Fotoğrafı ilginç kılan ise Dış İşleri Bakanının saçından makyajına, duruşundan kıyafetine kadar kadın kılığında olmasıdır.

İki eski dostu çatışma noktasına taşıyan bu gerilim Vernon'un bu fotoğrafı gazetesinde yayımlamak istemesi, Clive'in de buna ahlaki gerekçelerle karşı çıkmasından kaynaklanmaktadır. Vernon'a göre bu fotoğraf ikiyüzlü bir politikacının ifşa edilmesiyle Clive için bu durum "bir erkeğin özel yaşamı ve içsel karmaşasına" dair şeyler söylemektedir (62). Vernon'a göre bu fotoğraf ortak düşmanlarının cisimleşmiş halidir ve yapılacak şey intikam almaktır. Öte yandan Clive meseleyi ilke temelli ele almayı tercih eder: "Sonunda, bana şunu söyle dedi: İlke olarak erkeklerin kadın giysileri giymelerinin doğru olmadığına inanıyor musun?...Sen de bir zamanlar cinsel devrimin savunucusuydun. Eşcinsellerin yanındaydın" (63).

Vernon'u dostu ile karşı karşıya getiren bu olaydaki davranışını ve ısrarını daha iyi anlayabilmek için sonuçsalcı (consequentialist) ahlak teorilerinden  *faydacılık* (utilitarianism) geleneğine bakmak doğru olacaktır. Geç 18.yy'da Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) tarafından ileri sürülen  *faydacılık* yaklaşımı, en doğru eylemin ve iyinin en fazla kişiye yarar sağlayan eylem olduğunu ve çoğunluğun esenliği ve yararı uğruna az sayıda insanın zarar görmesini makul karşılayan bir ahlak anlayışını içerir (1781). Sonuçsalcı alt kategorisinde olmasından da anlaşılacağı üzere eylemlerin doğruluğu ve yanlışlığı aynı eylemlerin sonuçlarına bakılarak belirlenir. İlgili eylemin sonuçları olabildiğince sayıda ve en yüksek düzeyde mutluluk getiriyorsa o eylem doğru addedilir (Anderson 162). Daha sonra John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) tarafından da derinleştirilen  *faydacılık* anlayışı faydayı en yüksek mutluluk ilkesi olarak görüp faydayı "eylemleri haz sağladıkları oranda doğru-iyi, acıya neden oldukları oranda yanlış-kötü olarak kabul eden ilke"den hareketle tanımlamaktadır (Mill 11).

Clive'in ilke temelinde karşı çıktığı Dış İşleri Bakanı'nın travesti kılığındaki fotoğrafının yayımlanmasını Vernon  *faydacılık* gerekçesiyle ateşli bir şekilde savunmaktadır. Öncelikli olarak amaç Bakan'ın "ikiyüzlüğü"nü gözler önüne sermektir: "Bu adam herkesi asıp kesen biri; aile değerlerinin savunucusu, göçmenlerin, akıl hastalarının, yolcuların, marjinal insanların korkulu rüyası" (64). Vernon, fotoğrafın yayımlanmasının kişisel bir husumet sonucu veya basit bir gazete satış taktiği olmadığına Clive'i ikna etmeye çalışır. Clive'in gözünde esas mesele "ırkçı olma" konusudur ve eğer biri hesap verecekse davranışları ve söylemleri bu gerekçeyle sorgulanmalıdır. Cinsel kimliği veya özel yaşamından dolayı bir günah keçisine

dönüştürülmemelidir. Tam bu noktada Vernon en büyük kozunu oynar ve fotoğrafın gazetede yayımlanması ve Dış İşleri Bakanı'nın gizli yaşamının ifşa edilmesi halinde olacaklar ile bu eylemin yapılmaması durumunda ülke insanının başına gelecekleri kıyaslar. Sonuçları karşılaştırarak olabildiğince sayıda ve en yüksek düzeyde mutluluk ve iyilik getirecek olan seçeneğin ilki olduğunu örneklendirir:

[...] Garmony şimdi durdurulamaz ve kasım ayında başbakan olursa gelecek yıl büyük olasılıkla seçimi kazanırlar. Beş yıl daha böyle geçer. Yoksulluk sınırının altında yaşayan çok daha fazla sayıda insan olur, hapishanelerde çok daha fazla sayıda insan olur, çok daha fazla evsiz insan olur, suç oranı artar, geçen yılı gibi isyanlar daha da artar. Ulusal hizmetten söz ediyor bu adam. Küresel yakınlaşma anlaşmalarını imzalayacağına, iş arkadaşlarını hoşnut etmeyi tercih edeceğinden çevreye zarar verecek. Bizi Avrupa'dan çekip çıkarmak isteyecek. Ekonomik yıkım... (64)

Vernon'un verdiği yanıtta *fydacı* bakış açısını ve Clive'in ilkedden hareket eden tepkisini daha iyi anlayabilmek için *fydacılık* yaklaşımına getirilen itirazları bilmekte yarar vardır. Mark Dimmick ve Andrew Fisher *Ethics for A-Level* kitabının birinci bölümünde *fydacılık* yaklaşımının yol açtığı sorunları şu şekilde listeler: 1-ilgili kişiler sorunu, 2-talepkarlık itirazı, 3-çoğunluğun tiranlığı, 4-yanlış niyet sorunu, 5-kısmilik sorunu, 6-bütünleşmişlik/dürüstlük sorunu (10-13).

Sorunlardan ilki olan “ilgili kişiler”de, alınan karardan başkalarının etkilenip etkilenmemesi dikkate alınmaz. Örneğin, Julian Garmony'nin fotoğrafının gazetede yayımlanmasının ne ailesine ne de yakınlarına vereceği hasar göz önünde bulundurulur. Talepkarlık itirazı ise vereceğimiz kararın üzerimizde yarattığı baskın talep ve çekiciliğinin kararı almamızda oynadığı rolden bahseder. Vernon'u bu “skaldal” fotoğrafı yayımlatmaya iten “kışkırtma” veya “ayartıcı” duygu ne olabilir? Gazete tirajları ile birlikte düşen itibarını kurtarmak mı? Yoksa bir zamanlar sevmiş olduğu kadınının şu anki kocasının (George) bu fotoğrafı kendisine temin etmiş olması mı? Bir diğer deyişle basit bir kıskançlık krizi veya aşağılık kompleksi mi Vernon'u bu kararı almaya iten? Talepkarlık itirazı bu tür soruları akla getirmektedir. Üçüncü sıradaki çoğunluğun tiranlığı sorunu, çoğunluğun azınlığı daha fazla mutluluk ve iyilik getireceği düşüncesiyle istismara açık hale getirmesidir. *Fydacılık* ahlaki anlayışı “mutlak haklar” konusunu göz ardı ettiği (insan hakları veya yasal haklar gibi) ve mutluluğun maksimize edilmesine odaklandığı için eleştirilmiştir. Clive'in fotoğrafın yayınlanmasına itiraz ettiği nokta da bunun “özel yaşam”ın bir parçası olması ve bu eylemin bir insan hakkı ihlali olacağıdır.

*Faydacılık* yaklaşımının bir başka zayıf noktası ise “yanlış niyet sorunu” özelliği taşımasıdır. Yapılan eylemlerin arkasında yatan niyetleri görmezden gelerek sadece sonuca odaklanması, yaklaşımın bir zaafı olarak değerlendirilebilir. Vernon'un sadece fotoğrafı yayımlayarak elde edeceği sonucu ve onun getireceği kamu mutluluğunu düşünmesi; fotoğrafın Molly tarafından, hangi bağlamda ve ne için çekildiğinin bilinmemesi yaklaşımın bu zaafına örnek olarak verilebilir.

Yaklaşımın yol açtığı bir diğer konu ise “kısmilik sorunu”dur. *Faydacılık* bizden olaylara yansız bir gözlemci gibi bakmamızı talep eder. Bir diğer deyişle, alınacak kararlara dair hiçbir “duygusal bağ” kurmamızı istemez. Fotoğrafın yayımlanmasının neden olacağı sonuçların insani tarafını vurgulayan Clive'in bu konudaki düşünceleri şöyledir: “Garmony'i biz sevmiyorduk belki ama o [Molly] seviyordu. Garmony ona güveniyordu, o da bu güvene saygı duyuyordu. Bu aralarında özel bir şeydi. Bunlar Molly'nin fotoğrafları; seni, beni, okuyucularını hiç ilgilendirmiyorlar” (65).

*Faydacılık* ahlak anlayışına dair son eleştiri ise kısmilik sorunu ile bağlantılı “bütünleşmişlik/dürüstlük” konusudur. Bireyin en samimi, dürüst ve derin bağlılıklarını yok sayan; bireyi bütünsel olarak değerlendirmeyip sadece bir eyleme indirgeyen yaklaşımın sakıncalar doğuracağından bahsedilebilir. Dış İşleri Bakanı'nın özel bir anını paylaştığı ve Molly'nin rızası dışında el değiştirmiş bir karenin o kişinin bütün söylem ve eylemlerine genelleştirilmesi yaklaşımın zayıf noktalarından bir diğerini işaret etmektedir.

Alman filozof ve kültür eleştirmeni Nietzsche (1844-1900) de *İyinin ve Kötünün Ötesinde* (1886) adlı eserinde *faydacılık* ahlaki anlayışına sert eleştirilerde bulunmuştur. Filozofa göre, yaklaşımın en büyük zaafı içsel tutarlılığının olmaması, bir tür “sürü ahlakı” veya “köle ahlakı” özellikleri taşıyor olması ve bir “evrensellik”ten bahsedilemeyecek durumda olmasıdır (Anomaly 2-9). Garmony'nin fotoğrafının yayınlanmasını meşru göstermek için *The Judge* (gazetenin ismindeki ironiyi de hatırla tutarak) misyonunu “iyi bir amaç uğruna savaşılan düzgün bir gazete” şeklinde takdim ederken bile *faydacılık*ın temel esaslarından hareket etmektedir: çoğunluğun iyiliği! (83). Haberin gazete çalışanları arasında yayılmasıyla uyuşmayan bazı görüşler bir kenara bırakılırsa ortak bir kanı oluşacak ve Garmony haberi çoğunluğun (sürünün) gözünde kabul edilir hale gelecektir.

Gazete yayın yönetmeni Vernon Halliday'in büyük bir titizlikle planladığı, bir taşta birkaç kuş vuracağı kağıttan kule hiç beklemediği bir biçimde çöker. Haberin yayınlanmasından bir gün önce bayan Garmony kocası ile birlikte kameralar önüne

geçerek kocasını görevden uzaklaştırmayı amaçlayan kumpası ifşa edip tuzağı boşa çıkarır. Bayan Garmony'nin son sözleri Vernon'un etik anlayışına ağır bir darbe gibidir: "Bay Halliday, siz bir şantajcının kafa yapısına ve bir pirenin ahlak anlayışına sahipsiniz" (100).

Gazete tirajlarını artıracak bomba haberin zamanından evvel yanlış yerde patlaması gazete çalışanlarını da özeleştiri yapmaya itmiştir. Zamanın ruhunu yakalayamamak temelinde getirilen eleştiriler bir çeşit günah çıkarma biçimini alır:

Yaşadığımız on yılın bir öncekinden farklı olduğu *The Judge*'ın gözünden kaçmış gibi. O zamanlar kendimizi geliştirmek en önemli sözcüktü ama hırs ve açgözlülük kötü gerçeklerdi. Artık daha mantıklı, sevecen, anlayışlı bir çağda yaşıyoruz, artık kişilerin özel ve zararsız seçimleri her ne kadar kamuya duyurulsa da onların kendilerini ilgilendiren bir konu olarak kalıyor. (101)

*Faydacılık* yaklaşımının somut örneğini sergileyen Vernon'un tutumunda bu ahlaki yaklaşımın bütün yıkıcı etkilerini görmek mümkün olmuştur. Beşinci genel yayın yönetmeni olarak görevine son verilmesi, en yakın arkadaşının ihanetine uğraması ve fotoğraf haberini geri çekmeyerek bütün gazete çalışanları ile birlikte kamuoyunun gözünde düştükleri konum bunlardan öne çıkanlardır. Gazetenin ön sayfası "utanç sayfası" olarak nitelenir; "dünyadan uzak, çarpık yargılar" üretmekle itham edilirler (112).

### CLIVE LINLEY VE SANATSAL ÖNCELİKLER

Ülkenin önde gelen bestecilerinden Clive Linley, Molly'i ilk tanıyan isim olup 60'lı yılların sonunda ikisinin de öğrenci olduğu bir dönemde tanışmışlardır. Son zamanlarda tek düşündüğü milenyuma yetiştirmesi gereken senfonidir ancak ilham perileri ortada gözükmemekte ve Clive bestenin teslim tarihini sürekli geciktirmektedir. Londra'daki stüdyosunda kaldığı sürece istediği ezgiyi bulamayacağına kanaat getirip çareyi şehrin çoraklığından uzaklaşmakta bulan Clive soluğu Penrith bölgesindeki gölleri ve dağlık yapısıyla meşhur Lakeland veya Lake District denen yerde alır.

Kendini esin gücünün etkisine rahatça açabileceği uzun bir yürüyüşe çıkan besteci bir müddet sonra kendini iyi hissetmeye başlar ve aradığı ezginin ilham kaynağını kocaman bir gri kuşun çığlığında bulur. Coleridge'in (1772-1834) yarım kalan "Kubka Khan" eseri gibi bir akıbetle uğramak istemeyen Clive hemen not almaya başlar ancak notaları yazma işlemi duyduğu insan sesleri ile kesintiye uğrar. Kayanın arkasındaki yamacın aşağısına bakan Clive tartışan bir kadınla erkek görür. Bulduğu ezgiyi kayda geçirmek için çiftin tartışmasını önemsemeyen besteci kadın sesinin ani çığlığı ile irkilir.

Bestesi için aradığı ezgiyi kayda geçirmek ile kavgaya müdahale edip kadına yardım etmek arasında ahlaki bir ikilem yaşayan Clive'in seçimini daha iyi anlayabilmek için *deontolojik* yaklaşıma yakından bakmak gerekir. *Deontolojik* ahlaki anlayışa göre eylemler yol açtıkları sonuçlarına göre değerlendirilmezler; bunun yerine eylemlerin veya davranışların kendileri ölçüt alınır ve değerlendirilir. Bir diğer deyişle eylemler yol açtıkları belirli sonuçlardan bağımsız olarak ahlaki veya gayri ahlaki olarak nitelendirilirler (Gips 247).

*Deontolojik* ahlak anlayışının en önde gelen ayırt edici özelliği edimlerin veya eylemlerin sonuçlara göre değil ilkelere göre değerlendirilmesidir. En çok tanınan deontolojist düşünür ve filozof Immanuel Kant'tır (1724-1804). Kant "kategorik zorunluluk" kavramını *Ahlak Metafizikinin Temellendirilmesi* (1785) adlı çalışmasında ileri sürerek "ilke"den yola çıkan bir evrensel etik anlayışa ulaşmayı amaç edinir. Kavramını en iyi özetleyen ifade şu şekilde verilebilir: "[...]maksimimin aynı zamanda genel bir yasa olmasını isteyebileceğim şekilden başka türlü davranmamalıyım" (15). Kategorik zorunluluk kavramına göre eyleyicinin ortaya koyduğu her maksim (eylem planı) ilke doğrultusunda sınanmalı ve değerlendirmeye tabi tutulmalıdır (Powers 466).

Clive'in karşı karşıya kaldığı ahlaki ikilemde yaptığı seçim "kategorik zorunluluk" kavramının özü ile bağdaşmaz. Dostu Vernon'u ilkesel davranmayıp sırf kendi itibarı ve gazetesinin tirajı uğruna hareket etmekle itham eden Clive, benzer bir durumla karşılaştığında kendisi de "ilkesel" davranmayacaktır. Çılgılığını duyduğu, yardıma ihtiyacı son derece belirgin gözüken kadınının varlığını yok sayacak ve bunun için türlü bahaneler üretecektir. Bütün bu saldırı esnasında bencilce tek düşündüğü kaybolmakta olan esin gücüdür:

[...] Araya girmeli miyim? ... Adam kaçabilir, kadın kendisini borçlu hissedebilirdi, birlikte Seatoller'ın yanından ana yola inebilirlerdi. Bu en düşük olasılık bile Clive'in o kolayca incinecek esinini yok ederdi. Daha yüksek bir olasılıkla adam saldırganlığını Clive'e yönlendirir ve kadın da çaresiz bakakalırdı. Ya da bu durumdan hoşnut olarak birbirlerine kenetlenir ve olaya karışma kabalığında bulunduğu için Clive'e saldırabilirlerdi. (73)

Duyduğu esin kaynağı kuşun çılgılığı kadının yardım çılgılığından ağır basan Clive "kendi yazgısı"nın yolunu izlemekteydi ve bir sanatçı olarak onu ilgilendiren en önemli şey müziği ve bitirmesi gereken bestesiydi. Esin gücünün verdiği ezgiyi tamamen kaybetmemiş olmanın "çoşku"sı ile gönül rahatlığı içinde şehre geri dönebilecekti. Olayı daha sonra dostu Vernon'a anlatacak ve bir süre sonra kadına saldıran adamın daha önce sekiz kadına daha saldırmış ünlü Lakeland tecavüzcüsü olduğu ortaya çıkacaktır.

Vernon ile yapacağı telefon görüşmesinde Clive “ilkesel” davranmaya davet edilir. Vernon dostuna karakola gidip gördüklerini anlatmasını, adamın kimliğinin belirlenmesi için ifade vermesini ve böylece adaletin yerini bulması için yardımcı olmasını ister. Bu tam da Kant’ın “kategorik zorunluluk” kavramıyla formüle ettiği her edim ve eylemin genel bir yasa/kuraldan hareket etmesi ve bunlar tarafından sınanması esasına dayanmaktadır. Vernon bu kuralı “Polise git Clive. Bu senin ahlaki görevin” sözüyle vurgular (97).

Clive’in kendini savunma şekli sanatsal yaratımın öncelikli ve daha acil olduğu gibi bir yanılsama üzerinde şekillenir: “Ben bir senfoniye bitirmeye uğraşıyorum” (96). Polise gidip tanıklık etmesinin “ahlaki bir görev” olduğu hatırlatması üzerine de savunmadan karşı saldırıya geçer ve Vernon’un fotoğraf haberindeki tutumunu bir koz olarak kullanır: “Bana ahlaki görevden mi söz ediyorsun? Sen mi? Dünyada bu kadar insan varken sen?” (97). Karşılıklı suçlamaların havada uçuştığı bu telefon konuşması Vernon’un kendisini ihbar edeceği ve tecavüz girişimine suç ortaklığı etmiş olacağı tehditleriyle sona erer. Husumet ve intikam tohumlarının ekildiği bu konuşma iki eski dostun ilişkilerinde bir dönüm noktası olacaktır.

### **DOSTLUKTAN DÜŞMANLIĞA: BİR İNTİKAM HİKÂYESİ**

İki eski dostu karşı kutuplara taşıyan ve aralarındaki gerilimi artıran olaylar ikisinin de yol açtığı ahlaki ikilemlerle ilintilidir. Vernon’un Dış İşleri Bakanı’nın mahrem fotoğrafını yayımlamadaki ısrarı ve dostunun kendisini “ilkesizlikle” suçlaması, ardından Clive’in bir başka “ilkesizlik” örneği olarak yardıma muhtaç birinin çılgınlığını duymazdan gelmesi ve hatta bu konuda daha sonra polisle işbirliğine yanaşmayı reddetmesi iki karakter arasındaki antagonizmayı artırmıştır. Çatışmanın şiddetlenmesi ise Clive’in mahrem fotoğrafla ilgili bilgiyi sızdırmış olması ve Vernon’un arkadaşını tehdit etmesi ile vücut bulmuştur.

Bu noktadan sonra ikili arasındaki çatışma kıskançlık, haset, boş gurur, harislik gibi duyguların eşlik ettiği bir intikam döngüsüne girecektir. Anlatının son bölümüne damgasını vuran ikili arasındaki bu intikam duygusunu daha iyi çözümleyebilmek için etik alanında da çalışmalar yapmış Alman filozof Max Scheller’in (1874-1928) *Hınç* (2015) adlı eserinde serimlediği intikam duygusunun belirlenimlerine bakmak yerinde olacaktır.

Scheller, *hınç* duygusunu irdelediği bölümde bu duygunun beslendiği kaynaklar olarak “intikam isteği, nefret, kötü niyetlilik, haset, kara çalma dürtüsü ve

değersizleştirici kin”den bahseder (24). Ardından intikam duygusunun belirlenimlerini sıralar. Bunlardan ilkinde göre “öncesinde her zaman bir saldırı veya incinme vardır” (24). Clive’in Vernon’u fotoğrafları gazetede yayımlatarak hem Molly’nin mezarda kemiklerini sızlattığı iddiası hem de “ilkesizce” davranmakla suçlaması bir saldırıdır. Benzer şekilde Vernon’un Clive’i “ahlaki görevi”ni yerine getirmemek ve tecavüz girişimine suç ortaklığı etmekle itham etmesi de bir saldırıdır. Dolayısıyla her iki kişisel saldırının yol açtığı bir incinme ve içlerimeden söz edilebilir.

İntikam duygusunun bir diğer belirlenimi ise bir “kısasa kısas bilinci” içermesidir (Scheller 25). Vernon’un tehditleri karşısında Clive’in yolladığı kartta “Bana gözdağı vermen beni dehşete düşürüyor. Gazeteciliğin de öyle. Kovulmayı hak ediyorsun” yazması ve fotoğraf haberi ertesinde Vernon’un yöneticilikten kovulması bu bilincin yerleşmesinde etkili olacaktır (110). Genel yayın yönetmenliğinden kovulmuş beşinci isim, çalışanları tarafından yüz üstü bırakılmış ve kamuoyu önünde itibarı zedelenmiş biri olarak Vernon’un yapacağı karşı saldırıya geçmektir: “Kin doluydu. Bu, savaş demektir. Peki öyleyse. Hiç duraksamadan savaşı başlatmalıydı” (117).

İntikam duygusunun bir başka niteliği ise kendisine özgü nesnelere sahip olmasıdır. Bu nesnelere yöneltilen cezalandırma arzusu aracılığıyla oluşturulan intikam duygusu nesne de ortadan kalktığında kendiliğinden kaybolur (Scheller 27). Clive’in eski dostu yeni düşmanına yolladığı, kovulacağı öngörüsünü de içeren kart “uğradığı irili ufaklı bütün hakaretlerin simgesi” durumunda bir nesneye dönüşür (118). Bu kart ikilinin başlayan husumetlerinin cisimleşmiş halini temsil etmekte ve Vernon’da uğradığı ihanet ve mağduriyet karşısında öç alma hissi uyandırmaktadır.

Scheller’e göre intikam duygusunun meydana gelmesinde “aşırı alınganlık”, “güçlü bastırma eğilimleri” ve “toplumsal konumla eşleşmiş büyük bir kibir” etkin rol oynamaktadır (30-31). İkilinin birbirlerine ahlaki görev ve sorumluluklarını hatırlatma yarışına girdikleri diyalogda kullanılan sert ifadeler iki eski dostun birbirlerine içlerimemesine yetecektir. Clive’in Vernon’a yönelik “Bir adamı işinden etmek. Ucuz gazetecilik yapmak. Kendinle nasıl yaşıyorsun sen?” sözü veya insanların yaşamının gazete tirajlarından daha önemli olduğu yönündeki ifadesi alınganlığın bir cephesini oluştururken Vernon’un “Bazı şeyler senfonilerden daha önemlidir. Bunlara insan denir” sözüyle Clive’in yaptığı işi önemsememesi alınganlığın diğer cephesini meydana getirmektedir (97).

Bir “yaratıcı” olmanın sağladığı ölümsüzleşme duygusuyla kendine üstünlük atfeden Clive anlatıdaki büyük kibrin somut bir örneğidir. Alfred Adler’in (1870-1937)

saldırgan karakter özelliklerinden bahsederken sıraladığı niteliklerden “boş gurur ve harislik”te öne sürdüğü gibi “gerçeklik duygusunu yitirmiş”lik bu tür bireyler için tanımlayıcıdır (167). Clive’in gözünde Vernon aniden bir düşman figürüne dönüşür ve her türlü olumsuz çağrışımla eş tutulur: “Yaratmanın ne olduğunu bilmeyen, çünkü yaşamı boyunca asla iyi bir şey yapmamış ve yapanlara karşı yalnızca nefret besleyen Vernon Halliday!” (110). Yaşamı boyunca yaptığı yanlışlar ve kusurları peş peşe sıralanır ve hakkında kesin bir hüküm verilir: “O bir kaçıkta, hastaydı, var olmayı hak etmiyordu” (110). Clive’in kendini ve yapacaklarını haklı çıkarmaya yönelik bu akıl yürütmesi gerçeklerle bağının zayıfladığını, bir sanatçı olarak kendi *persona*’sının küçümsenmesi sonucunda bir yanılsama içine düştüğünün belirtisidir. Benzer bir yanılsamanın izlerini Vernon’un tepkisinde de görmek mümkündür: “Clive kesinlikle aklını yitirmişti ve bu konuda bir şey yapılması gerekiyordu” (118-119).

Aralarındaki şiddetlenen çatışmaya rağmen Vernon’un hiçbir şey olmamış gibi kendisini Amsterdam’daki konser provasına davet ettirmesi ve Clive’in bu daveti yaparak eski dostunu lobide şampanya kadehi ile karşılayıp sohbet etmesi her iki karakterin de alacakları intikam öncesi “güçlü bastırma eğilimleri” olduğuna dair kuvvetli bir kanıttır. Konser provasından önce lobideki buluşmalarında her ikisinin de ayrı ayrı birbirlerinin içkisine zehir karıştırması ve zehirli kadehleri değiş tokuş etmeleri intikam duygusunun kökeninde yatan bir “varoluşsal eşitlik” halinin arzu edildiğinin dışavurumu gibidir (Fromm 349). Her ikisi de diğeri tarafından haksızlığa uğradığını düşünmekte, kendisine ait mutluluğun elinden alındığını hissetmektedir ve bu durumun yol açtığı intikam hırsı bir tür “yükümlülük duygusu” ile karışmaktadır (119). Aslına bakılırsa en ilkel topluluklardan günümüze kadar pek çok kültürde mağdurların haksızlık karşısında öncelikli tepki verme şekli intikam olagelmıştır ve öç alma örtülü veya açık bir şekilde hep bir ahlaki yükümlülük olarak görülmüştür (Barton 1). Hissedilen kaybı ve haksızlığı gidermenin tek yolu karşı tarafla eşitlenmektir. Arzulanan mutluluğun başka birinde olduğunu görmek ve karşı tarafa haz verirken diğer tarafta kızgınlığa yol açan duygu hasettir ve intikam hissiyle iç içedir (Klein 24). Bir yandan Vernon’un yitirdiği genel yayın yönetmenliği koltuğu, itibarı, kariyeri ve saadeti; öte yandan Clive’in küçümsenen sanatçı kişiliği, aşığılanan akıl sağlığı ve dostuna ihanet etmesi iki eski dostu birbirlerine ölüm tuzağı hazırlayacak noktada bir haset duygusu ile kuşatmıştır.

## SONUÇ

Mcewan *Amsterdam’da Düello* romanında iki ana karakter üzerinden iki farklı ahlak anlayışını örneklendirerek bir çatışma yaratmaktadır. En büyük mutluluk ve iyiliğin



sonuçlara bakılarak değerlendirilebileceğini iddia eden *faydacı* ahlak anlayışı ile “kategorik zorunluluk” esas alınarak ilkedden yola çıkan *deontolojik* ahlak anlayışı Vernon ve Clive arasındaki antagonistik ilişkinin temel katalizörünü oluşturmakta ve anlatıyı bir “ahlaki ikilem” zemininde geliştirmektedir. Romandaki çatışma ve ahlaki ikilem “intikam duygusu” ile desteklenmekte ve karakterlerin gözünde bir ahlaki yükümlülük düzeyine indirgenmektedir. İki karakterde de benzer zamanlarda şekillenen intikam duygusunun belirlenimleri olan “incinme belirtisi, kısasa kısas bilinci, kendine özgü nesne, aşırı alınganlık, güçlü bastırma eğilimleri, kibir” gibi nitelikler anlatı boyunca gözlemlenebilmektedir. Mcewan, insanlığın en ilkel adalet anlayışı ve arayışı olan “intikam” duygusunu ona eşlik eden haset, kıskançlık, boş gurur ve harislik duyguları ile Vernon ve Clive kişileri üzerinden somutlaştırmış ve farklı eylem ve edimlerin saiki olan ahlak anlayışlarını çatıştırarak sorgulamaya açmıştır.

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DEHUMANIZATION IN SARAH KANE'S  
POSTMODERN PLAYSSARAH KANE'İN POSTMODERN  
OYUNLARINDA GAYRİ-İNSANİLEŞTİRMEGül KURTULUŞ<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

Postmodernism explores society's perspective on stereotypes and ways in which cultural aspects evolve in a globalized world. It focuses on human experience in different forms by taking its motives from historical and societal issues. Postmodernism in drama is based on postmodern philosophy which originated in Europe in the twentieth century. Postmodern theatre, also known as the new theatre, is a reaction against modernist drama. It makes the audience question and evaluate the differences between reality and art. It dwells on the idea that there is no ultimate truth. Plays written in this mode of drama involve images and allusions, and the audience plays an important role, involving in the performance. Moreover, postmodernist drama is innovative in terms of its technique and in defying social conventions. This paper aims to discuss Sarah Kane's plays *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love*, *Crave*, and *4.48 Psychosis* as postmodern plays in relation to dehumanization employed as a recurrent theme in the plays. Violence, rapture, alienation, exploitation, and frustration are some of the themes Sarah Kane explores in the above-mentioned plays. This paper argues that Kane considers theatre an instrument to exhibit the ugly images of life. Kane's plays portray hideousness of life in tandem with the use of postmodern theatrical elements.

**Keywords:** Postmodern Theatre, Sarah Kane, Dehumanization, Violence, Love, Death.

## Öz

Postmodernizm küresel dünyada toplumun klişelerle ve kültürel olaylarla ilgili bakış açısındaki değişimi ve dönüşümü yakından izler ve keşfeder. İtici gücünü tarihi ve toplumsal olaylardan alan postmodernizm insanın deneyimlediği olayları farklı şekillerde ele alır. Tiyatroda postmodernizm yirminci yüzyılda Avrupa'da ortaya çıkan postmodern felsefeye dayanır. Postmodern tiyatro yeni tiyatro olarak da tanımlanır ve modernist tiyatroya bir tepki olarak doğar. Seyirciye gerçeklik ve sanat arasındaki farklılıkları sorgulatan ve düşündürülen bir tiyatro akımı olan postmodern tiyatro, mutlak gerçeğin olmadığını savunur. Bu tarzda yazılan tiyatro oyunları imgelerden ve imlemelerden oluşur. Seyirci performansla katılarak önemli bir rol üstlenir. Öte yandan, postmodern tiyatro kullanılan teknikler açısından da son derece yenilikçidir ve toplumsal geleneklere ve yerleşik düzene meydan okur. Bu çalışmanın amacı Sarah Kane'nin *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love*, *Crave* ve *4.48 Psychosis* oyunlarını postmodern oyunlar olarak ele almak ve oyunlarda tekrar tekrar vurgulanan gayri-insanileştirme temasını incelemektir. Zorbalık, insanlıktan çıkma, kendinden geçme ve kendini kaybetme, yabancılaşma, istismar ve hayal kırıklığı yazarın yukarıda belirtilen eserlerinde ele aldığı temalardandır. Bu çalışmada savunulan görüş, Kane'nin tiyatro sahnesini yaşamın çirkin görüntülerini sergilediği bir mecra olarak gördüğüdür. Kane'nin oyunları postmodern tiyatronun öğelerini kullanarak hayatın çirkinliklerini resmeder.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Postmodern Tiyatro, Sarah Kane, Gayri-insanileştirme, Şiddet, Aşk, Ölüm.

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## Introduction

Sarah Kane's plays are contradicting the qualities of the modernist theatre and they represent theatre of violence and In-Yer-Face drama, questioning moral norms, which is primarily dehumanization of the characters. As a distinctive trend in British theatre history, the theatre of violence appears as an anomalous mode among other forms of drama since it presents a "disruptive brutality" on stage (Jordan and Weitz 263). The theatre of the absurd, epic theatre, and the theatre of cruelty employ elements that form the firm ground of postmodern theatre, sharing similar concerns of meaninglessness, futility, and helplessness of human existence. Samuel Beckett and Bertolt Brecht pioneer in establishing a strong bond between modernism and postmodernism. Sarah Kane, one of the leading female playwrights of the 90s with her controversial plays, carries the mentioned disturbingly and uncomfortably presented brutal and wild themes onto the stage in a unique way. As a practitioner of novelty in theatre, Kane utilizes satirical themes and violent imageries to raise ethical questions. The practice of this mode of drama offers a unique experience for the audience as it "is capable of haunting its audience's dreams while simultaneously bringing them a sense of political truth and social understanding" (263). *Blasted* is one of her plays that exemplify brutality, inhumanity, and insolence. The protagonist Ian seduces and attempts to rape Cate, the hotel Cate leaves is blown up by a bomb and a soldier finds Ian to rape him. Then sucks out his eyes and eats them, which is followed by the soldier's suicide. The soldier says, "He ate her eyes. / Poor bastard. / Poor love. / Poor fucking bastard" as soon as he gets done with Ian (*Blasted* 48). Even though it is quite understandable that the audience is overwhelmed with the rape, cannibalism, death and suicide scenes; the key point that Kane aims to reach with these scenes is much more humane. Her object is to emphasize the globally concerning issues such as human rights and genocide in Bosnia, using shocking images. As the play reflects the relation between the oppressor and the oppressed, namely Ian and Cate and the soldier, the social satire begins to make itself apparent. In addition, the painful acts in each scene, from the explosion to the painful anal sex, provide a critical reference to the world history which has witnessed numerous genocides, wars, and destructions. Therefore, the play is not only a portrayal of the contemporary world but also "an experience of 'dehumanization and disconnection'" (Eckersall, Grehan, and Scheer 168). The disturbing and shocking imageries are used in combination with dehumanization as a way of questioning and criticizing the moral issues and violation of human rights in the theatre of cruelty and In-

Yer-Face theatre and excelled in postmodern theatre. Kane's theatre involves the social concerns in a global context, exposing dehumanization with sex-centred and violence-centred plots in her plays. Through exposure of vulgar language, sexual assault, cannibalism, and suicide, the playwright reveals the undeniably wicked side of humans.

Sarah Kane is seen as one of the most important representative playwrights of In-Yer-Face theatre. Oxford English Dictionary defines the term 'In-Your-Face' as "blatantly aggressive or provocative, impossible to ignore or avoid." Kane's plays offer extreme examples of violence, exploitation, frustration, and dehumanization and In-Yer-Face theatre makes it impossible for the audience to ignore or avoid the performance on stage but become a part of it. Sarah Kane's plays also comprise different themes by using violence as the main force. In *Blasted* and *Phaedra's Love*, violence is the major component of the events, characters and their traumas. However, in *Crave*, which is the fourth play of Kane, the situation is different. The script contains less violence, yet, dehumanization is prevalent. Instead of using violence as a main theme and making the characters as animal-like figures, she completely erases the identity of the characters in *Crave*. There is very limited information about the characters, which only includes their nation. In fact, there is no exact information about their gender and names. While hiding their gender and names, Kane illustrates very traumatic acts in the play such as rape and pedophilia. Even though violence is not the main theme, the play is still too provocative for the audience to overlook manifestations.

*Phaedra's Love* is based on a Greek tragedy and violence takes place on stage. The cruelty of human beings is one of the main topics of the play. Kane makes the audience question the essence of humanity and the unexpectedly high propensity for violence. The play starts with *Phaedra's* unrequited love for *Hippolytus*, her stepson. Although *Phaedra* is warned against the vanity of her affair and possible destructive consequences of the relationship, she turns a blind eye to all warnings. At the end of the play, the audience witnesses the incestuous relationships between *Phaedra's* family members. However, the most barbarous scene is presented after *Phaedra's* suicide. After learning the incest relationship between her husband, daughter, and stepson, *Phaedra* commits suicide and blames *Hippolytus*. At the end of the play, *Strophe* and *Hippolytus* are brutally killed:

*Theseus pulls Strophe away from Woman 2 who she is attacking.*

*He rapes her.*

*The crowd watches and cheer.*

*When Theseus has finished he cuts her throat.*

*...*

*She dies.*

*Man 1 pulls down Hippolytus' trousers,*

*Woman 2 cuts off his genitals.*

*They are thrown onto the fire. The children cheer.*

*A child pulls them out of the fire and throws them at another child, who screams and runs away.*

*Much laughter...*

*He [Theseus] cuts Hippolytus from groin to chest. (Phaedra's Love 95-96)*

Kane uses the "acts of violence and sexuality to force the audience into recognizing their own complicity in the violence of the contemporary world, even if it is simply through their complicity as passive spectators" (Cole 67). The act of violence is essential to recognize the dehumanizing actions in the world. As a female British playwright, Sarah Kane employs the elements of postmodern theatre which involves several innovative theatrical modes such as In-Yer-Face and theatre of cruelty/violence that comprises subversive themes and concepts. Sarah Kane is known for reflecting controversial topics in her plays and producing them boldly on stage. This paper will offer a reading of Kane's *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love*, *Crave*, and *4.48 Psychosis* in terms of the way they embrace dehumanization and alienation, reinforcing the use of the elements of postmodern theatre.

### **Postmodern Theatre and its Attributes**

The term "postmodernism" emerged after the Second World War. It challenges traditional structures and ideas of modernism. Postmodernism may not be considered as a reaction to modernism, but it puts forward what is not presented by modernism. The interrogation of beliefs and values connected with modernism ensues in postmodernism. Postmodernism is the transitional period that the viewpoints of modernism are being entreated into an enigma. It is a movement characterized by broad scepticism, subjectivism, and relativism in the late twentieth century. It can be defined as a general mistrust of reason and an intense sensitivity to the position of ideology in

claiming and retaining economic and political control. “Central to postmodernism is the recognition that ‘reality’ is itself a construction, a representation. Human subjectivity makes sense of its world, imposes upon it a meaningful design using those conceptual tools culture provides” (Counsell 207). Postmodern art and literature show the self as being detached from society’s traditions. The result of its influence on drama is seen as a change that does not try to build the vision of reality the way it is perceived in the past. Postmodern drama aims to create an abstract, distorted world and it holds a specific type of power. The audience acknowledges that the created world cannot be described in reality.

With the effects of postmodernism in theatre, performance becomes the focus and the concentration has moved from sense to interpretation and the effect performance produces. The fusion of media and related technologies, and the scepticism of meta-narratives lead to the challenge of the substantive link between dramatic devices and remove the strategy that treats theatrical instruments such as acting, music, stage props, and costume as elements that only clarify the text. Technology and media tools replace all traditional theatrical objects.

Postmodernist drama gets rid of the strict limitations of modernism regarding style and ideology. Postmodern plays have no rigid structure, storyline, and style. Moreover, minimalism, distortion, breaking the fourth wall, and the overabundance of the theatrical signs become the elements of postmodern drama. Indeed, postmodern drama is a reaction and a critique of modern drama. The term “postmodern” questions what is not questioned before in modern but “still exists with some kind of reference to it,” in fact it is still a part of “modern” (Lehmann 27). “Despite the fact that Lehmann opts for the term ‘postdramatic’ instead of ‘postmodern’ to describe the new theatre, his theory of postdramatic theatre is of course resonating with many aspects of postmodernist thinking” (Karen Jürs-Munby quoted in Lehmann 13). Postmodern drama does not attempt to create an illusion for the reality but to create a deformed world on stage to reflect the isolated, postmodern individual. It explores human beings in the postmodern world. “The attempt to stimulate appearance was fundamentally flawed, and the early twentieth century was marked by a series of artistic movements which sought to figure out the world in new, non-realistic ways” (Counsell 207). New theatre emerges and creates a continuing association and exchange between actors and audience. The new theatre that encompasses postmodern drama, is the new, modern way of theatrical

expression which is no longer dramatic. The dramatic theatre has embraced the use of the subjective "I" and presented an outlook of life in a setting familiar to the audience. However, postmodern theatre as Lehmann considers it a subfield within postdramatic theatre rejects the simple, logical, and causal sense of life that the traditional dramatic forms portray. Postmodern theatre in its core disputes that the world is not as plain as the dramatic theatre presents and shows that theatre should exhibit the challenges and the multiple reasonings of life. Life is not coherent, compassionate, and deferential; it is chaotic, cruel, and ruthless like the postmodern theatre.

Postmodernism in drama flourished in late twentieth century and it is against the ideas, techniques, and strategies of modernism. The rooted ideas in modernism have changed due to the incidents during the twentieth century. Through a scrutiny and comparison between modernism and postmodernism in drama, it is evident that modernist drama focuses more on the structure of the play. Postmodernist drama examines the plays in terms of content rather than structure and it deals with a range of topics from poverty, inequality, violence, rape, and dehumanization to alienation. With postmodernism in drama, the relationship between the audience and players has shifted dramatically. Postmodern drama creates an environment for the audience to realize that they are part of the performance. Significantly, postmodernism in drama leads to developments and increase in new types of drama, practicing new methods that have not been used before, involving technological developments and the emergence of film industry. Ursula Martinez's show called O.A.P directed by Martin Whitelaw, and the reaction of the audience when Martinez appears on the stage disguised as an old woman and asks if anybody would like to kiss her are illustrative of the stylistic traits in postmodern performances. Martinez evokes the reaction and the question that indicates the audience's anxieties and the paradoxes they face with, through her question. "We were left to decide whether it was just the distance to the performer on stage or the image of old people as non-sexual beings that prevented us from volunteering to kiss her" (Lehmann 5). The impact of media on postmodern performances uncovers the capacity of technologies and in what way they are related to our lives. "The impact of media manifests itself not in the use of high-tech 'multimedia' on stage, however, but sometimes also in its very opposite: theatre on a bare stage with minimalist, pared down aesthetics, which nevertheless can only be understood by being related to life in a 'mediatized' society" (10). The impact of media mentioned above emphasizes that postmodern performances are an inseparable part and also a reflection of society. As society evolves, a need arises about a change in the elements, subjects, and role of



audience in postmodern drama which eventually and permanently relates back to the impact of media.

Innovations in drama involve change in the audience's role from being passive receivers to integrating in the performance. Unfinished sentences emerge as an invitation to fill in the blanks in the dialogues; the narrative is fragmented, and not necessarily complete. According to Radu Teampău, metanarrative in postmodern theatre has an important effect on the structures of plays: "The postmodern emphasis on metanarrative had as a secondary, deliberate or not, effect the apparent pulverisation of narrative itself and not just of narrative structures" (191). There is not necessarily a coherent plot in postmodern plays and conclusions are not required. The aversion of the truth could be seen as the reason for the disinterest in conclusions.

Postmodern drama does not simply eliminate the traditional elements of drama, but also changes and develops them to evoke different emotions and ideas that do not conform to the understanding and the acceptance of the conventional drama. Postmodern drama thrives in its questioning. According to Kerstin Schmidt, postmodern drama entertains the conventions of the mode of modernism as "a communal ritual" (11) while also undermining and excelling modernist values in the process. This undermining might occur in many ways such as engaging in a metadramatic retelling of another work of drama that concerns itself with the play rather than the text of the play or engaging in out-of-text and unexpected changes in a performance. These examples of postmodernism in drama find their roots in several concepts from postmodern discussions playing out in drama. "Self-referentiality" (16) is one such concept, which is the text being aware of its fictitiousness. Postmodern drama presents itself in a manner that questions itself while also allowing the audience to question the meaning, or the lack of meaning.

In postmodern theatre, performance is the main subject to be dealt with and the text will only be an element mentioned. Theatre always deals with "ethical, moral, political and legal questions" (Lehmann 18). Enthusiastic, admirable, and intriguing state of the theatre has been coalesced with new experiences and categories such as Avant-garde, In-Yer-Face, and Fringe Theatre. In all these genres, expression and depiction of the written text constitute the staging and making the audience active participants and receivers of the performance. Even in times when music and dance are the most prominent and effective elements, audience has always been decisive. Illusions

have always been the cornerstone of theatre, because creating a whole new world of fiction and fitting it into a scene is nothing more than an illusion. The audience is subjected to “the theatrical impact of the shocking new plays which exploded onto the London theatre scene in the 1990s” (Sierz 20).

### **Subhuman Characters in *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love*, *Crave*, and 4.48 *Psychosis***

In *Blasted* (1995), *Phaedra's Love* (1996), *Crave* (1998) and 4.48 *Psychosis* (1999), Kane demonstrates the repulsiveness of human interaction. Four plays under discussion assume the theme of oppression that puts pressure onto the individuals drawing them to reflect a portion of themselves that they do not intend to show. Pressuring impact of the oppression forces individuals to react inherently primitive and hence personal. Kane uses the theme of violence as an instrument to explore the nature of the oppressed, and violence carries importance in *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love*, *Crave*, and 4.48 *Psychosis*. Furthermore, violence induces the confusion of humanity to animality unveiling the concept of dehumanization in the plays. Sarah Kane's selected plays *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love*, *Crave* and 4.48 *Psychosis* present major traumatic events which dehumanize the characters. The audience witness anger, frustration, and depression as the side effect of these traumas, yet lack of information about the characters turn them into obscure individuals and therefore their traumas lose their disparaging effect.

In postmodern theatre, the text of a play moves away from its traditional aim and structure of being in the center and becomes a conducive part of the play. This enables more flexibility in the plays and creates an opportunity to bring performances close to reality. The problem of dehumanization appears on stage with the questioning of reality and human existence. Sarah Kane reflects the meaninglessness of life, and questions human existence through the characters in *Blasted*, *Crave*, 4.48 *Psychosis*, and *Phaedra's Love*. The characters' purposelessness in life and suffering dehumanizes them. Kane reflects this by not specifying the characters and stage directions. Lack of stage directions reflects the complicated condition of the characters' mind, and the stage becomes the mind of the characters, in a sense. As Marvin Carlson declares, “the same space is shared by audience and performance and the focus is variable and flexible. All production elements speak for themselves, and none is necessarily subordinated to the rest. This includes the text, which has no necessary primacy and in fact may disappear altogether” (479). One of the most important features common to all the above-mentioned plays is the use of language. Sarah Kane uses language as a tool to present the psychology of the characters. She develops the themes of violence, death,

lack of love and affection, in relation to dehumanization with the use of language. “While images were central to her previous plays, these final pieces contain the images within the language of the plays, and she does this through the creation of a distinctly poetic style. Both plays *Crave* and 4.48 *Psychosis*] are performance texts, with no stage directions, and in the case of *Psychosis*, no speaker designations” (Urban 43). The process of meaning making for the audience depends on the use of language, as the themes are transmitted in the dialogues.

C. I’m evil, I’m damaged, and no one can save me.

A. Death is an option.

B. I disgust myself.

C. Depression’s inadequate. A full scale emotional collapse is the minimum required to justify letting everyone down. (*Crave* 3)

In *Crave*, most of the time, it is hard to understand whether characters are in a dialogue with each other or just elaborating on their psychologies in a verbal discourse.

In Kane’s debut play *Blasted*, the interaction between Cate and Ian showcases the repressive structure of the oppressed and the oppressor. Ian’s manipulative approach to Cate is an indication of his primitive need to assert dominance. In the first act of the play, Ian attempts to seduce Cate, gets undressed and says, “put your mouth on me” (*Blasted* 7), however, Cate’s reaction humiliates Ian. Confronting such a humiliation, Ian feels exposed and runs away to recover. “He gathers his clothes and goes to the bathroom where he dresses” (7). The bathroom signifies the safe place where he cannot be seen by anyone else. This resonates behaviours of an animal seeking shelter after facing a threat. Ian’s attempt to seek shelter suggests that he failed to assert his power over Cate and hence he lost his dominance over her. After he dresses, he tries to acquire the dominance he lost by posing a question that can shake Cate’s self-esteem. “You got a job yet?” (7) Ian continues his pressure on this topic and draws the conversation to Cate’s incompetence and her lack of intelligence. Due to the pressure asserted on her, Cate faints, and consequently Ian acquires his dominant place in the interaction. Ian’s desperate need for power is displayed in this scene and his primitive instincts are exposed. More importantly, this scene portrays Ian’s animal-like instincts to run away, recover and attack again and again, which alludes to the concept of dehumanization where Ian is depicted to be a predator. As the play progresses, Kane reflects the

competitive aspect of human nature through Ian's characterization.

Ian's attempt to suppress Cate and force her to satisfy him through his manipulative manners displays one of the most prominent aspects of patriarchy. In a society that is shaped by patriarchy, the oppressor uses his power to subject the oppressed into a role that benefits the oppressor. Even though Ian's oppressive manners fit the stereotypical patriarchal oppression, in the following scenes it becomes evident that Ian's existentialist thoughts cause him to *Crave* affection and power, and hence make him violent against mostly himself. Ian's words concerning life and living shed a light on his standpoint in violence and humanity. Ian states that he cannot stand "Death, Not being" (*Blasted* 10). Nevertheless, later it is revealed that he is not scared of the idea of dying. When the Soldier states that he will kill Ian, he simply answers "fine" (46) as an indication of his indifferent standpoint. Even though Ian's answers to the phenomenon of death draws a conflicting portrait, "Not being" is a different take on existence. Indeed, Ian does not resent the idea of dying, he rather resents the idea of death and the aftermath of death where the human becomes a corpse, an inanimate object. Ian's bitterness about death reveals one of the fears of humankind that is the state of being insignificant or having no value. Dying carries a value within itself, it represents the looping process of life and death. Kane, through Ian's existentialist crisis over death, poses questions that are hard to digest answers. While this accomplishes Kane's aim to depict the unspoken truths of life, it also alludes to the concept of dehumanization that centralises its core to the dilemma of humanity and animality.

*Blasted* reveals the impact of violence on oppression and how violence is interconnected with primitiveness. Sarah Kane draws the readers' attention to the overwhelming pressure imposed on human beings. Kane's depiction of human interaction puts emphasis on the power dynamic between individuals and how this power dynamic reveals the primitive instincts within them. Ian's most violent self and dehumanized self becomes most prominent when he faces intense emotions. He feels scared when Cate faints and consequently, he reveals his fear of death. The play makes it evident that primitiveness and violence are interconnected, and they both allude to the concept of dehumanization that Kane utilises to show the importance of oppression in human interactions. Kane offers the audience "a world of catastrophe" (Urban 43). Sarah Kane relates that, "there isn't anything you cannot represent on stage. If you are saying that you cannot represent something, you are saying you cannot talk about it, you are denying its existence. My responsibility is to the truth, however difficult that truth happens to be" (Urban 45). In other words, Sarah Kane argues that the truth is brutal

and dehumanizing; however, it is her intention as a playwright to reveal the truth to the audience in her plays. She is against ignoring the violence and dehumanizing outcomes of wars. At the beginning of the play, Ian rapes Cate. Then a soldier comes to the hotel room and brings more violence to the play and brutally rapes Ian:

*(He kisses Ian very tenderly on the lips.*

*They stare at each other)*

*You smell like her. Same cigarettes.*

*He guts up and turns Ian over one hand.*

*He holds the revolver to Ian's head with the other.*

*He pulls down Ian's trouser, undoes his own and rapes him- eyes closed and smelling Ian's hair.*

*The Soldier is crying his heart out.*

*Ian's face registers pain but he is silent. (Blasted 47)*

An unpleasant scene that creates disgust and annoying feelings follows with more violence and merciless scenes. The soldier sucks Ian's eyes and eats them. Furthermore, Ian eats a baby after its death. Kane's main intention is to characterize the truth that nobody dares to acknowledge. According to her, the existence of violence should not be avoided. By using elements not very frequently used before, Kane provokes the audience to come out from their safe zone to question the violence in the world.

*Blasted* is an example of In-Yer-Face theatre that challenges the audience with unpleasant imagery and filthy language of the unbearable truth. Kane's attitude toward experimental theatre involves changing the spectator's passive role to active participation by engaging them in performance. "They may experience [the patterns of action] isomorphically as a kind of psychic echo. Their detailed empathetic response will be determined by associated factors, the 'ground,' and the pure 'experience' itself will be further conditioned by an inescapable element of meaning" (Carlson 486). *Blasted* examines violent nature and society's understanding of war by using three individuals who perform violent acts to each other. Throughout the play, the audience is exposed to vulgar language, sexual assault, cannibalism, and suicide; therefore, the grotesque imagery shakes the audience's consciousness to stand up against the patriarchal, racist,

and bigot politics. In *Blasted*, Kane indicates violence in modern society by suggesting that violence's essence is unvarying whether it is in the domestic or public sphere.

In *Blasted*, violence in domestic sphere is represented by Ian and Cate's relationship. While Ian humiliates Cate mentally and physically, Cate tries to look after him by telling him to stop smoking and drinking and providing him food. Ian is suffering from cancer, and as he is not ready to accept the fact that he is dying, he behaves self-destructively and aggressively toward everything, including Cate. Ian insults Cate by using a filthy language for her fashion sense, and her relationship with her mother and disabled brother. Ian's sexist and racist comments dehumanize his character as he objectifies people. Cate exhibits a more humane attitude during this conversation by telling him to stop calling people names, yet her naive manner only signifies inferiority in his eyes. Ian hates feeling victimised and ill; therefore, he rapes Cate to reinforce his power and superiority over her. Ian's attempt to rape objectifies Cate, and by sexually assaulting her, Ian is dehumanizing both himself and Cate since it now turned them into the perpetrator and the victim, sharing the same roles. The rape scene uncovers the domestic violence and shows the audience that danger is never far away. Elaine Aston declares, "Kane aims to make us see and feel the effects of violence not as a world outside of ourselves, othered and neutralised, but as inside our lives, value systems, choices and behaviours" (578). The mental and physical violence in the rape scene flings violence's essence up in the spectator's face in a rather grotesque way, yet brutal stage imagery is essential to In-Yer-Face theatre. In-Yer-Face theatre raises consciousness with shocking and brutal scenes.

Violence in public sphere is presented in the subplot with Ian and the Soldier's encounter. The Soldier's attempt to rape changes Ian's role of the perpetrator to the victim and challenges gender roles about sexual assault, therefore, the Soldier's rape represents the connection between violence in the domestic sphere and the public sphere. Ian's superiority lasts a short time, and he turns back to being powerless, therefore, Ian's new role as a victim illustrates patriarchal society's effect on the weak and the helpless. Cate comes back with a baby after this incident, yet the infant dies, and Ian eats its flesh. Cannibalism on the stage is associated with the theatre of cruelty and the grotesque imagery used for disturbing the audience and shaking them with the unbearable truth as all the intolerable activities performed by dehumanized characters reflects society's position against reality. The Soldier's sexual assault shows war's dehumanizing impact on everyone since it is implemented by a war hero in a patriotic perspective. Furthermore, the Soldier's attempt to rip Ian's eyes out represents media's

blindness to the Bosnian war since Ian is a journalist. In *Blasted*, Ian says, “I write... stories. That’s all. Stories. This isn’t a story anyone wants to hear” (Kane 47). The metaphorical blindness becomes more striking when Ian objects the Soldier’s request about the news by suggesting that nobody wants to hear their story. Society’s indifference toward global issues is displayed by ripping Ian’s eyes out in the play, and thus, it is intended to make the audience feel guilty and dehumanized.

*Blasted* points out the issue of violence in the world and people’s apathy toward the incident. While Ian’s abusive language and his attempt to rape Cate reveals violence of an individual, the Soldier’s sexual assault of Ian is a criticism of organized violence that sets light to the subject of raping as a war crime. The metaphor of ripping eyes out shows media and society’s blindness to social and political matters, and the infant’s death symbolises Kane’s hope for the future. Kane also refuses gender roles in the subject of rape and points out that there is only the perpetrator and the victim. The disturbing imagery and language throughout the play is a part of In-Yer-Face theatre and it aims to affect the audience’s point of view and shake them up. “This kind of assault on the audience is experientially purposeful in its attempt to break the inability to feel a responsibility for the sufferings of others” (Aston 583). Alluding to the play’s title, the audience witnesses both a sexual explosion and an explosion in a real war scene, as well as a ruthless battle between not only men and women, but also between men and men, and as a result, the defeat of human beings. The rape scene turns into a war scene and the surreal change enables the audience to feel frustration as a result of the exasperated experience presented on stage. The critical awareness, which is caused by dehumanization, proves to the spectator that the play reflects dehumanization via both the rupture and violence. It is very critical indeed to present reality on stage, as it creates unpleasant feelings that the audience never enjoys watching but the playwright boldly conveys.

In *Crave*, Kane introduces the audience with four voices without specifying their sexes, ages or ethnicity. They do not communicate with each other most of the time, yet the fragmented voices combine and create one whole body. Kane’s writing style persists in her last play 4.48 *Psychosis*, in which an unnamed woman who has psychotic condition struggles and questions the meaning of her existence. Kane uses the aspects of postmodern theatre in *Crave* and 4.48 *Psychosis*, and reflects the dehumanized individuals in the modern world through the themes of alienation and frustration.

Alienation appears as a theme in the plays as she approaches the minds of the individuals who are disconnected from the outside world and even from their own body. As the characters are both alienated from the outside world and themselves, they are dehumanized. They lack what makes them human; body-soul wholeness, and interaction with others. In *Crave* and 4.48 *Psychosis*, the audience observes idle “minds” that lost their purpose in life. In *Crave*, Kane looks “to a wider concept of performance” than her previous works, which focuses on an “intense connection with the spectator” (Singer 141). The spectator becomes connected with those minds and also realizes the truth in between the speeches. The characters, A, B, C and M, are dehumanized voices in *Crave*. In one of the scenes, B says that “If I lose my voice I’m fucked” (*Crave* 43). Characters’ alienation from the outside world is observable in the speeches of M, “I mustn’t get attached” (15) and C, “I’m evil, I’m damaged, and no one can save me” (21). Their traumas and pains of love, rape and incest are the core matter in their speeches. Alienation that develops to a state of self-alienation appears in Kane’s 4.48 *Psychosis* with a single protagonist this time. In 4.48 *Psychosis*, dehumanization begins by not giving a name to the character who constantly suffers from the disharmonious state of her body and soul invariably disconnected. She is reflected as a voice like the characters in *Crave*, “a disembodied voice speaks. The question of ‘who’ is speaking is only partially answered” (Kaplan 122). The disconnectedness of the character’s body and soul leads her to purposelessness. Gradually, her existentialist sufferings create discomfort in the audience as they also start to question reality with her. She is alienated from herself and says, “It is myself I have never met” (4.48 *Psychosis* 43). Her speech appears as a monologue in the play which expresses the themes such as “disruption of communication and the isolation of the individual” (Lehmann 128). The failure of communication mostly appears in dialogues “while a monologue as a speech that has the audience as its addressee intensifies communication” (128). The character’s pain and struggles that push her to alienation are delivered more powerfully in 4.48 *Psychosis* than *Crave*’s fragmented style.

The manifestation of frustration in Kane’s plays appears as an outcome of alienation and dehumanization of the characters. The characters are captured and isolated, especially in their mind, that they cannot do anything to free themselves. In one of the productions of *Crave* in Hampshire College, they experimented with a physical representation of the captivity of the characters. Their “design consisted of a human-sized cage, which contained the actors. The cage imprisoned the actors, and also aggressively contained the audience in uncomfortable proximity to the stage, up against



the cage itself" (Kaplan 123). This postmodern representation of captivity and isolation end up as frustration as the characters do not have the freedom to get out. In the play, the characters try to become whole with the words to escape from this captivity: B. Let / C. Me / M. Go. (*Crave* 37) They become frustrated as seen in the line C utters, "I'm much fucking angrier than you think" (37), and find themselves in an uncontrollable state as B says, "it's out of control" (33). The manifestation of frustration also appears with Kane's use of repetition in both *Crave* and 4.48 *Psychosis*. In *Crave*, C repeats "What have they done to me?" (39) several times, which is both a realization of and a reaction to the situation. Likewise, in 4.48 *Psychosis*, the woman repeats the same patterns, "How do I stop?" (24), which reflects her despair and anger. Lehmann states that "the reality of the voice itself is thematized. It is arranged and made rhythmic according to formal musical or architectonic patterns; through repetition...separated from the figures as disembodied and misplaced voices" (149). The repetition reflects the separation of the voices from their source and dehumanizes the characters. In 4.48 *Psychosis*, "a conversation between patient and therapist becomes clear" sometimes and at other times, we witness "the conflicted, racing, fastidious thoughts of a suicidal mind" (Singer 160). The character's frustration is visible in both the conversations and her monologues laden with repetitions.

Consequently, dehumanization in Sarah Kane's *Crave* and 4.48 *Psychosis* appears as a central theme that continues throughout the plays. It is supported with the aspects of postmodern theatre, beginning with alienation that later leads to frustration of the characters. The characters' disconnectedness from life and their body leads them to a never-ending cycle of existentialist suffering and pain. Through repetition and silence, Kane creates distorted voices that are not unified. She questions reality by creating a metaphorical mirror on stage in which characters reflect the spectators. Kane's plays are the pinnacle of suicidal tendencies and depression as requisites of the postmodern world. A bond is built between the depression and melancholy that the characters and the audience experience. The provocative and exhilarating plays of Sarah Kane mirror the harsh realities of human life in a shocking way. Mostly dealing with the disturbing aspects of life, such as violence and cruelty, Kane makes the audience visualize the unspoken aspects of the evil in human nature.

When the recurrent themes of the plays such as suicide, murder, mental disorder, drug addiction, pedophilia and rape are taken into consideration, they are challenging

for the actors and the audience, but Kane makes the topic of brutality casual with its repetition in the play. In *Rape and Rape Mythology in the Plays of Sarah Kane*, Ian Ward explicates how many sociologists and scholars see the rape as the perfect act of the male sexuality in patriarchal culture and the ultimate metaphor for domination and violence (226). However, in *Crave*, the act of rape is not about social behaviours of women and men and there is no political criticism as well. Ian Ward states that “Kane had no interest in subscribing to any particular feminist position on rape” (229). The hidden identities of the characters can be related to this argument since Kane does not want to highlight any topic but isolation and dehumanization. That’s why she makes the characters C, B, M and A abstract figures, and both their feelings and traumas are not related to their gender:

M: You think I’m going to rape you?

C: Yes.

A: No.

B: Yes.

M: No.

A: Yes.

B: Yes.

C: Yes.

M: Is that possible?

C: I see no good in anyone anymore.” (*Crave* 11)

Their conversation comprises of depression and sadness, and the only background information provided about their personal identity is their nationality. The remorse that they feel because of the dehumanization can be observed in their dialogues no matter where they belong to and where they come from. While referring to some of the dehumanization crimes, their dialogue deprives of the features of an eloquent exchange and turns into a heart-searching. In “An Ethics of Catastrophe: The Theatre of Sarah Kane,” Ken Urban states,

While the narrative suggests the pain of individuals, the play has a distinctly international consciousness; B’s use of Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, and German takes the personal and places it in a global context. The speakers’s stories, as a result, become almost superfluous to the concatenation of

images. Yet, the roles of the speakers have the power to complicate the language's ornate images again placing the viewer in a space of moral uncertainty. (43)

Since Kane aims to illustrate the isolation and futility of life, she is implying that immorality is everywhere and acts of violence, rape, pedophilia are not related to any social background including where people were born or live. In the play, people from different places narrate stories but their nationality does not add anything to the stories. All embracing elements in Kane's plays point to the denial of humanity in others. The audience cannot find common or different values which will separate people according to their moral sense.

In the play, the theme of dehumanization and isolation can also be explained in terms of symbols and colours. In the play, there is an emphasis on whiteness and lightness. In 'White on White and Black': The Terror of Whiteness in Sarah Kane's *Crave*, Meg Peters states, "lightness and whiteness are potentially hopeful concepts in a colourful, unknowable project and the silence of the characters allows more light to sleep through the cracks of their utterances. At the same time, we might also view this lightness and whiteness as forms of terror, if we view it through hooks' framing" (109). White colour and whiteness illustrate isolation and terror but characters have complicated relationships with these elements. For instance, some characters want to be black, yet others state they will not settle for a life in the dark and the audience observes repetition of white and light throughout the play. References to whiteness and lightness illustrate the confusion of the characters. Repetition of white and black makes these terms less meaningful as well and the text eventually tells that there is a vague line between moral and immoral.

Like in her other plays, Sarah Kane claims the losses of society and the individual are not different from each other. The process of depriving someone from positive human qualities can be valid for both an individual and a larger group. The dehumanizing consequences of sexual violence are exposed as different kinds of traumas. Characters of the play are isolated and unstable. Even though there is no actual violence in *Crave*, the audience sees major struggles of the characters such as frustration, shame, mental disorders, suicidal thoughts, and even the denial of depression and madness. Furthermore, by not giving the characters an essential form as humans such as avoiding giving them names and presenting an everlasting fluidity about their gender, Kane

clearly draws a realistic picture of the consequences of immoral actions and how both victims and abusers lose their sense of humanity as discussed earlier in the analysis of *Blasted*.

Like *Blasted*, in *Phaedra's Love*, Sarah Kane expresses the theme of violence through the phrase "I love you" (15). In *Blasted*, the expression of this phrase in Ian's speech is followed by his raping of Cate. Later in the play, after the Soldier rapes Ian, love is invoked by the Soldier in a pitying manner as seen in his last words. Similarly, in *Phaedra's Love*, Phaedra states the phrase "I love you" (77) to Hippolytus, which is followed by her suicide and accusation of rape towards Hippolytus. Both plays alter the expected into the unexpected, utilize the phrase as an indication that violence and conflict will follow it, unlike making use of the traditional associations of bliss and happiness with the phrase. In *Blasted*, Cate grows uncomfortable through Ian's suggestions, and she stammers, making it clear that she is not receptive to him at that moment. This is followed by Ian's statement of the phrase in question in a way that is supposed to excuse him from his own behaviour: "Sorry. Pressure, pressure. I love you, that's all" (*Blasted* 15). Prior to this statement, Ian constantly belittles Cate, claiming that she is unintelligent, making fun of her clothing by comparing her to a lesbian in a way that is supposed to be derogatory towards lesbians (7). Ian is not sincere in his love expression which is supposed to be an excuse for his abuse of Cate to make her more receptive to him. After a flurry of racist insults to a man who Cate likes, Ian says, "Cate, love. I'm trying to look after you. Stop getting hurt" (16). After his dehumanization of a black man because of his own jealousy, Ian claims that he is trying to be protective of Cate, saying, "I love you" (16) again. Ian passionately avoids forming empathy with other people because of their ethnicity, while claiming to be compassionate towards Cate. This combination of hate and love is ingrained in Ian as he later states the following words about his ex-wife: "I loved Stella till she became a witch and fucked off with a dyke, and I love you, though you've got the potential" (17). Likewise, Ian blames his own failings as an individual to be a good person on his former spouse, prematurely blaming Cate for having the potential to do the same. Ian's statement of the phrase continues as Cate repeatedly rejects him, which ends in his raping of Cate. This is followed by Ian himself getting raped by the Soldier. Ward compares Ian's rape with that of Cate in the following excerpt: "It is not as such a domestic environment. But it is an environment in which a species of rape familiar in domestic environments can take place" (230). The luxurious hotel room turns into a scene of a battlefield, and the rape that occurs at home is followed by a rape that occurs in a place at war, by a soldier carrying a rifle in a

battlefield. The rape of Cate is preceded by the pretence that there is love, an illusion which veils the fact that he is violently using Cate's body. This is compared with Ian's own rape which is without this pretence. In his last words before committing suicide, the Soldier pities Ian: "He ate her eyes / Poor bastard / Poor love" (*Blasted* 48). Similar with Ian's proclamations of love, the Soldier uses the word "love," albeit in a more pitiful manner than an excusing one. In both instances, love is taken out of its original connotations and placed into relationships that are defined by violence and abuse.

Love has a similar position in *Phaedra's Love*. Insinuating that her mother has feelings for Hippolytus, Strophe states the following:

Strophe: You're in love with him.

Phaedra: (laughs hysterically) What are you talking about?

Strophe: Obsessed. (*Phaedra's Love* 65)

Strophe equates love with obsession, mystifying the meaning of love. Similar with the use of love in a manner that justifies violent and abusive behaviour in *Blasted*, it is used interchangeably with obsession in *Phaedra's Love*. Phaedra's obsession with Hippolytus manifests itself in her insistence of having a sexual encounter with him, which occurs with the reluctant consent of Hippolytus. Her obsession contrasts with Hippolytus' indifference:

Phaedra: I did it because I'm in love with you.

Hippolytus: Don't be, I don't like it. (77)

As a result of Phaedra's obsession not being satisfied by Hippolytus, she commits suicide and accuses him of raping her, causing the death of everyone in the Royal family. Done in the name of love, it shows the way the term is used without echoing its well-known connotations. The portrayal of Hippolytus, like the concept of love, is quite fluid. "That vertiginous sense we experience, fluctuating between disgust and tenderness for Hippolytus, is a trademark of Kane's theatrical universe, one that the reading conveyed palpably" (Urban 42). Hippolytus is in contrast with Phaedra in his lack of concern, which leads to the allowing of his own execution. *Blasted* makes use of symbols and change in environment, as well as a general unravelling of rational progression throughout the play, becoming more absurd as the play nears its end. Similarly, *Phaedra's Love* is also quite absurd in its depiction of the Royal family, which could evoke mixed feelings in the

audience based on their own opinion with regards to the Royal family in the United Kingdom. The absurd and “the experiential became a byword for ‘In-Yer-Face’ theatre” (Aston 580). In this sense, *Phaedra's Love* challenges the institution of monarchy while *Blasted* subtly invites the audience to question the difference between the metropolis and the periphery, melding them in the same setting with two instances of violence and abuse, “the way it ‘blasts’ postemotionalism” (582).

### Conclusion

Sarah Kane's *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love*, *Crave*, and *4.48 Psychosis* are examples of postmodern theatre with their unique structures, shaped according to the essentials of the postmodernist theatre. Not the text, but the performance is at the core of these plays. In addition to their similar structures, they also have common themes, such as dehumanization, violation, exploitation, pain, depression, and the lack of love. Kane displays and highlights these themes in tandem with the features of postmodern dramatic structure. Postmodernism in performance art provides a new perspective and role to the audience, focusing on the relationship between the audience and performance in which the audience becomes a participant. As Lehmann indicates, “antiquity, pain, violence, death” have been common to theatre (165). In Sarah Kane's plays, pain, violence, and death indicate the dehumanized world of the twentieth and twenty first centuries. Kane probes the audience into perceiving the violent world around them, encouraging the audience to reach their own individual understanding. Kane's representative plays of postmodern theatre raise questions rather than attempting to offer answers. She employs the elements of violence and dehumanization to capture the audience's attention. Dehumanization is a crime against humanity, it is the process of ignoring morality and the adverse outcomes of it are generally psychological, examples of which can be observed via the characters in Kane's capturing plays which aim at shocking the audience. The theme of dehumanization is employed in alliance with the aspects of postmodern theatre. In Kane's dramas, nothingness, futility, alienation, frustration of the characters depicted in a substantially bold manner on page and on stage. Their disconnectedness from life leads them to an iteration of existentialist suffering and pain. Through repetition and silences in her plays, Kane creates inaccurate and inarticulate voices that are not coalesced.

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**DINO BUZZATI – TATAR ÇÖLÜ İSİMLİ  
ESERİNDE İŞLENEN GERÇEKÜSTÜ TEMA****DINO BUZZATI – THE SURREALISTIC  
ITEMS IN *THE TATAR DESERT*****İlhan KARASUBAŞI<sup>1</sup>****Öz**

Dino Buzzati'nin gazetecilik yönü, yazarın romanlarını zenginleştiren en önemli faktörlerden biridir. Böylece yazar okumanın yanında birçok yeri görme deneyimi yaşamış ve bu durum edebiyat becerisine de katkı sağlamıştır. Buzzati'yi diğer yazarlardan ayıran en önemli özellik, ılımlı bir başkaldırı olmasının yanında, İtalya'nın faşist döneminde var olan baskı havası altında eserlerini özgür ve dengeli bir şekilde ortaya koymayı başaramış olmasıdır. Bu çalışmada Dino Buzzati'nin *Tatar Çölü* romanındaki gerçeküstü öğelerin ele alınması amaçlanmıştır. *Tatar Çölü* romanı yalnızca ulusal değil, aynı zamanda uluslararası alanda da dikkat çeken gerçeküstü öğeleri içeren bir roman olmuştur. Gerçeküstücülük akımı Dino Buzzati'nin izlediği akımlardan yalnızca biridir. Buzzati'nin takındığı yumuşak ve ılımlı üslubun getirdiği esneklik, yazarın hayatı boyunca kişilerin iç dünyasına verdiği önemin bir yansıması olmuştur. Gelecek kuşaklara Buzzati'nin bu yaklaşımın örnek olup ışık tutacağı bir gerçektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Buzzati, *Tatar Çölü*, Gerçeküstücülük.

**Abstract**

Dino Buzzati's work as a journalist is one of the most important factors that enrich the author's novels. Thus, the writer had the experience of seeing many places besides reading, and this contributed to his literary skills. The most important feature that distinguishes Buzzati from other writers, besides being a moderate rebel, was his ability to present the works he produced under pressure during the Fascist period of Italy in a balanced way. In this study, the aim is to deal with the surreal elements in Dino Buzzati's novel *The Tatar Desert*. The novel, bearing many surreal elements attracted attention not only nationally but also internationally. Surrealism is just one of the trends Dino Buzzati followed. The flexibility brought by the author's soft and moderate style has been a reflection of the importance that Buzzati gave to the inner world of people throughout his life. It is a fact that Buzzati's approach will set an example and shed light on future generations in this respect.

**Keywords:** Buzzati, *Il Deserto dei Tartari*, Surrealism.

**GİRİŞ**

İçinde bulunulan dönemin gerçeklerinden kaçış veya eleştiri amacıyla kullanılan fantastik öğeleri edebiyatında benimseyen, Faşizm döneminin önemli İtalyan yazarlarından biri olan Dino Buzzati yalnızca bir ülke ya da yaşamını sürdürdüğü dönemde değil, eserleri ile tüm dünya genelinde ilgi uyandırmış bir yazardır. *Tatar Çölü* romanı da yazarın akla gelen ilk eserlerinden biridir. Eserlerinde gerçekleri olduğundan farklı bir şekilde anlatmayı hedefleyen ve insanlar üzerinde farkındalık duygusu

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uyandırmayı amaçlayan Buzzati, eserlerinde sıklıkla yer verdiği fantastik öğeler ile gerçeği eksik gören sert bir akımı, ılımlı bir üslup ile okuyucuya aktarmaktadır. Yalnızca edebiyatla uğraşmayan, aynı zamanda resim ve gazetecilik alanlarında da çalışmalar yapan Buzzati, eserlerinde kullandığı sade dil ile okuyucuyu farklı dünyalara götürme becerisine sahiptir. Bu özelliği, Buzzati'yi yaşadığı dönemin yazarlarından ayıran en önemli öğelerin başında gelir.

Buzzati, yapıtlarında kendine özgü simgesel üslubu ile olay ve nesnelerin ardındaki gizemi fantastik öğeler kullanarak ortaya çıkaran bir yazar olmuştur. Bu çalışmada Tatar Çölü isimli romanındaki gerçeküstü simge ve öğeleri ortaya çıkarıp içlerindeki gizem ve ironiyi yorumlayarak, yazarın topluma vermek istediği mesajlar üzerinde durmak amaçlanmıştır.

### 1. Gerçeküstücülük

Sürrealizm, düşünsel akımın orijinal adı olarak ifade edilirken, yorumsuz şekilde çevrilmiş hali "üstgerçekçilik"tir. Türkçe'ye "gerçeküstücülük" olarak geçen sürrealizm, "gerçeğin varlığını yitirmeye başlaması" ya da "gerçeği aşması" anlamını taşımaktadır. Dolayısıyla gerçeküstücülükte gerçeğin etkisinden bahsetmek mümkündür (Biber Vangölü 872).

Gerçeküstücülük çoğunlukla bilinç dışına dayanan aklın egemenliğinden arınarak, duygu, içgüdü ve rüyalara önem verip başkaldırıların kutsal bir değer olduğunu savunan bir sanat ve edebiyat akımı olarak kabul edilmektedir (Breton 22).

Genellikle birbiri ile karıştırılan Dada hareketi ve gerçeküstücülük, birbirlerine çok benzeyen iki akımdır. Gerçeküstücülüğünün kökenini oluşturan Dada hareketi, I. Dünya Savaşı sırasında meydana gelirken etkisi kısa süre sürmüş, fakat Andre Breton gibi Dada hareketini kendi çalışmalarıyla şekillendirmeyi hedefleyen yazarların ortaya çıkmasını sağlamıştır. Bu şekillendirmeler sonucunda gerçeküstücülük ortaya çıkmıştır. Gerçeküstücülük, Dada hareketi gibi, hem akla hem de kalıpsal değerlere karşı çıkarken, varlığı bir bütün olarak ele almayı istemektedir. Akıl, din, batı uygarlığı, gelenek, örf-adet, geçmiş ve geleceğin insana kan, acı, yıkım ve gözyaşından başka bir şey vermediğini savunan gerçeküstücüler, içinde bulundukları gerçeğin farkındadır. Ancak bu gerçeği beğenmedikleri için baskı ortamından çeşitli yollarla uzaklaşmayı hedeflemektedir. Gerçeküstücülük akımının kurucusu olarak kabul edilen Andre Breton, bir dönem daha Dada hareketinde yer alırken, I. Dünya Savaşı sırasında Freud'un çalışmalarına göz gezdirmiş ve sonrasında Freud'un düşünceleri ile Dada hareketini tek bir akımda toplamayı düşünmüştür (Baskıcı & Şölenay 40).

Özgürlük, insanların var oluşundan bu yana arayışta olduğu en önemli değerlerden biri olarak kabul edilmektedir. Gerçeküstücülüğün temelinde yatan özgürlüğün insanların düşünde çok daha fazla olduğu savunulmaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu yaklaşıma göre gerçek kötüdür ve her zaman kişilerin kontrolü altında değildir. Ancak düş, kişilerin kontrolü altında olup istenildiği zamanda istenilen yere yönlendirilmesi mümkündür. İnsanların düşleri kadar özgür olduğunu savunan gerçeküstücülük de bir gerçektir. Ancak alışılmış gerçeğin yanında bilinçaltı dünyasının sıradan unsurlarını da gözler önüne sermektedir. Evren içerisinde gerçek kadar gerçeküstücülük de vardır. Önemli olan eldeki verilerin değerlendirilerek bir sonuca varılabilmesidir. Gerçeküstücülükte herkesin kendi gerçeğini kabul etmesi nedeniyle gerçeğin birden fazla olduğu savunulmaktadır (Biber Vangölü 873).

## 2. Dino Buzzati'nin Tatar Çölü İsimli Romanı

Buzzati'nin en önemli romanlarından biri olarak kabul edilen Tatar Çölü, iki dünya savaşı arasında, faşizm baskısı altında kaleme alınmıştır. Tüm bu zorluklara karşın insanların ders çıkarabileceği önemli bir umut kaynağı sunan romanda yazar, her insanın kendini düşündüğü dönemde, yaşamından izler aktararak okuyucuya kendini sorgulama imkânı sağlamaktadır. I. Dünya Savaşı sonrası beklentilerin boşa çıkması, insanları büyük bir hayal kırıklığına uğratarak edebiyat dünyasını da etkilemiştir. Bu dönem içerisinde en az baskı uygulayan ülkelerden biri olan Fransa'da aydınlar diğer baskıcı ülkeleri gözlemleyerek içinde bulundukları özgürlük havasından yararlanıp gerçeküstücülük akımını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bu durum Dino Buzzati gibi yazarları da etkisi altına almıştır.

Baskı altında yaşamını sürdüren yazarların kendinden daha özgür durumda olan ülkeleri takip etmesi oldukça doğaldır. Özellikle gerçeğin acı ve yıkıcı olduğu bir dönem içerisinde böyle bir yol izlemek oldukça olağan karşılanırken, Buzzati de böyle bir yol tercih etmiştir. Gerçeküstücülük gibi gerçeği beğenmeyerek bir eylemin önünü ve ardını düşünmeden hareket eden bir akıma bakıldığında, yazarın ılımlı bir yol izleyerek gerçeğe yumuşak bir başkaldırı ile yaklaşabilmesi oldukça zordur. Başkaldırı ve ılımlılık birbirleri ile zıt kavramlardır. Bu nedenle, sözcük seçiminin bu akım içerisinde kolay olmadığını söylemek mümkündür. Buzzati'nin de edebiyat alanındaki başarı sırrı burada dikkat çekmektedir. Faşist dönem içerisinde kaleme alınan yapıtlar bu mücadelenin en önemli örneklerini oluştururken Buzzati insan ruhunu içinde bulunduğu düzenden daha ön planda tutmuştur. Böylece kişi, baskı altından olma hâinden kaçarken, kendi iç dünyasına çekilme imkânı yakalayarak içinde bulunduğu yıkıcı faktörlerden uzaklaşır.

Roman içerisindeki başkarakter olan Drogo, bu baskı ortamı içerisinde kendini Bastiani Kalesi'ne atar. "Giovanni Drogo, bir eylül sabahı, subay çıkar çıkmaz ilk atandığı göreve Bastiani Kalesi'ne gitmek üzere kentten ayrılıp yola koyuldu" (Buzzati 5). Tatar Çölü'nden bu alıntı ile Buzzati'nin betimleme yapmaksızın kitabı oldukça hareketli bir şekilde başlattığı dikkat çekmektedir. Daha kitabın giriş cümlesinden Buzzati'nin farklı bir roman yarattığını anlamak mümkündür. Okuyucuyu faşist dönemin baskısı altında kurtarmayı hedefleyen Buzzati, bu nedenle betimlemeden uzak durmayı seçmiştir. Aynı zamanda roman karakteri Drogo'nun okulunu bitirdiği gibi hemen atanmış olması, sistemin bireyin ruh durumunu hiç önemsemediğini göstermektedir. Sanayi toplumunun kişiler üzerindeki yıkıcı etkisi, askeriye'nin bile içinde kendini hissettirmektedir. Tarihin eylül olarak seçilmesi de kişinin moralini bozan başka bir faktör olarak okuyucunun karşısına çıkmaktadır. Kişinin kendine ait bir zamana sahip olamaması nedeniyle kendini ifade edecek fırsatı da olmadığı anlaşılmaktadır. Zamanı elinden alınan bireyin hayatını yaşamasına fırsat verilmemektedir. Satır aralarında bireyin her zaman başkaları için yaşamaya zorlandığı mesajını veren romanda kişinin ruhunu bu durumun olumsuz etkilediği görülmektedir. Yeni dünyanın hızlı düzeni insanı içerisine çekerken, hiçbir şeyin eskisi gibi olmadığı aşikârdır. İnsanlar kısıtlı bir süre içerisinde kapasitelerinin üzerinde çalıştırılmakta, sistem bünyesinde görünen amacın ötesinde çok daha farklı menfaatler barındırmaktadır. Gerçeküstücülüğün temelinde yatan en önemli unsurlardan biri, insanların bu gerçek ötesinde farkındalığı yaşamaları ve bakış açılarını çeşitlendirmeleridir (Camus).

### **2.1.Dino Buzzati'nin Tatar Çölü İsimli Romanındaki Gerçeküstü Öğeler**

Buzzati, gerçeküstücülüğün ortaya çıktığı coğrafyadan farklı bir coğrafyada dünyaya gelmesine karşın, ortaya koyduğu eserlerle sadece İtalya edebiyatına değil, dünya edebiyatına da önemli katkı sağlamıştır. Aslına bakılırsa faşist dönemde yaşamını sürdüren çok sayıda İtalyan yazar, dünya edebiyatına önemli derecede katkıda bulunmuştur. Elio Vittorini gibi yazarlar bu kapsamda ele alındığında, dünya edebiyatında sahip oldukları önemli yer anlaşılır. Faşist dönemde kaleme aldığı eserler ile ılımlı bir başkaldırı gösteren Dino Buzzati, edindiği tecrübeler, okuduğu yapıt ve teoriler ışığında dönemin getirdiği baskı ortamına yumuşak bir tepki göstermektedir. İtalya'da, yaşadığı dönemde, oldukça sıkıntılı bir süreç olan edebiyat ve sanat üretiminde Elio Vittorini gibi çok keskin, net ve aşağılayıcı bir üslupta eserleri kaleme almak ciddi sorunlara neden olabilecektir. Durumun farkında olan Buzzati, siyasi polemiklerden uzak dursa da, bütünüyle dünyadan soyutlandığını ifade etmek doğru değildir. Yaşamının bir bölümünü

askerlik yaparak ve savařlara tanıklık ederek geiren Buzzati'nin asıl mesleęi gazeteciliktir. Gazetecilięin verdięi merak duygusu ile yazmayı seen Buzzati'nin Tatar ölü, gerekilik aısından ele alındığında, sonu gelmeyen umutsuzluęu okuyucu ile buluřturmaktadır. Gereküstüçölük aısından bakıldığında ise seraplara rastlanan orak bir arazi olarak deęerlendirilmektedir. Bu nedenle, kiřilerin morallerini bozmak yerine yalnızca anı yařayarak geleceęi ya da gemiři düřünmeden iinde bulundukları durumun farkına varabilecekleri kabul edilmektedir. Gereküstüçölükte kiřiler ilerlerken ařılması gü engellerde aceleci davranmamaktadır (Korunmaz 135).

Sömürgeci ve fařist bir dönem iinde bulunan Avrupa'da kaleme alınan Tatar ölü eserinde Tatarlar Avrupa'dan üstün görölerek evrensellik iin bir adım atılmaktadır. Gemiřten bu yana Avrupa'yı tehdit eden toplumların oęunun Doęu'dan geldięi bilinmektedir. Kavimler göüyle birlikte Hunlar, sonrasında Moęollar ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin ele geirdięi topraklar onlardan bir kaıdır. Tatarları dięer toplumlardan ayıran en önemli özelliklerden biri, büyük acımasızca yaptıklarıdır: 14. yüzyılda Kafka'yı kuřatma altına alan Tatarlar veba nedeniyle vefat eden insanların cesetlerini řehir sularının ierisine atarak salgını yaymayı hedeflemiřtir (Akova 250). Tatarlar, Ortaaę'daki en kötü hastalıklardan biri olarak kabul edilen vebanın Avrupa'da salgın hâline dönüşmesinin baş sorumluları olarak görölür. Zira Avrupa'da milyonlarca insanın ölümüne neden olan vebanın yayılma sürecinde, Tatarlar tarafından iřgal edilen kalelerin ok daha kolay ele geirilmesi iin mancınık aracılığıyla vebalı cesetler kale ierisindeki askerlerin üzerine atılmıřtır. Zamanla veba, kervanlar ve ticaret gemileri ile Avrupa'ya kadar ulařmıřtır. Bu nedenle hastalık, senelerce insanlara acı ektirmiřtir. Tatarlar izledikleri bu yol ile esasen tarihteki ilk biyolojik silahın temelini atmıřtır. Biyolojik silah tarihi ierisinde önemli bir yeri olan bu olay doęal olarak edebiyat dünyasına da yansımıřtır. Avrupa'nın karıřık olduęu söz konusu dönemde İtalya ve Almanya, Avrupa'nın iki güçlü devleti konumundadır. Böyle bir zamanda eřitli baskılara karřın kendi duygu ve düřüncelerinden uzaklařmayarak insanların evresinde görünen tehlikelerden ok daha büyükleri ile karřı karřıya olduęunu anlatmaya alıřan Buzzati, zamanın yıkıcılığına da dikkat ekmektedir. Savař sonrası fařist dönemde insanların gelecek zamanını sabırla beklemesi, doęal bir durumdur. Her bekleyiř, sonrasında meydana gelecek bir eylemin habercisi niteliğindedir. Bu dönemde insanların hayalini kurduęu, daha iyi günlerdir. İnsanların gerekleřtirdięi bu eylemler onların düř dünyalarının da gelişimini desteklemiřtir. Gereküstüçölüęün temelini oluřturan en önemli hususlardan biri de düřtür. Aynı zamanda 20. yüzyılın ilk yarısı ele alındığında, düř dünyasında bilimin önemini kaybettięi dikkat ekmektedir. İcatlar ile yařamı kolaylařtıran rasyonalizm

zaman içerisinde kişilerin düşüncelerine kadar inerek insanı doğadan koparmış ve ruh durumunu olumsuz etkilemiştir. Savaş ve egonun, bilimle birleştiğinde ölüm dağıtan bir makineye benzediği bir gerçektir. İnsanların akıl ve mantıktan kaçarak çözüm aradığı bu durum Buzzati tarafından eleştirel bir bakış açısı ile ele alınmıştır. Tatar Çölü'nün kaleme alındığı döneme ve alıntıya bakıldığında, zamanın ne kadar değişken olduğunu görmek son derece doğaldır. Gerçeküstücülüğün İtalya'da ortaya çıkışının baş nedeni, belki de bu baskı ortamıdır. Çünkü gerçeküstücülüğün ortaya çıktığı ülke olan Fransa'da da savaş sonrası siyasî ve toplumsal baskı söz konusudur (Biber Vangölü 875).

İnsan yaşamı içerisindeki kısıtlamalar ve baskıların insan ruhunu ele geçirmesi mümkün değildir. Sistem ise bu durumun tam tersini savunduğu için insana bu şekilde davranarak bütün eylemlerde insanın ruhunu göz ardı etmektedir. Bu durumun sonucunda insanın içinde bir yıkım yaşadığı bir gerçektir. Tatar Çölü romanındaki karakter Drogo'nun içinde bulunduğu durum da kapalı bir ortamda senelerce süregelen sonsuz bir arayış, umutsuzluk ve yaşam mücadelesidir. Tatar Çölü romanında Drogo bir çölde hayal edilebilirken, okuyan bir kişi Drogo'yu orman içerisinde de düşünebilmektedir. Okuyucuyu kendi iç dünyasına çekilmeye zorlayan, sistemdir. 14. yüzyılın ikinci yarısında işçi sınıfı tarafından çekilen sıkıntılar edebiyatın şekillenmesinde önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Bu durum özellikle Buzzati ile benzetilen Franz Kafka'da da görülmektedir. Fiziksel ve ruhsal şartların zorluğu, bireyi iç dünyasına çekilmeye zorlar. Kuşkusuz bu durum bireyin ruhunu derinden etkilemektedir (Aydemir 114).

Gerçeküstücülük içerisinde Tanrı'nın olmadığı kabul edilirken insanların bir arayış içerisinde olduğu ifade edilmektedir. İnsan yaşamının rastlantı ile ilerlediği düşünülmektedir. Alınan önlemlerin kısa ve uzun vadede insanlara olumlu yansımaları bulunmaktadır. Ancak önlemler kişilerin yaşamlarının ertelenmesine neden olmaktadır. Tatar Çölü eserinde ise Drogo, Bastiani Kalesi'ne girdiğinde bir haç dikkatini çekmektedir. Burada askeriye'nin dinsel öğelere verdiği öneme vurgu yapılır. Ancak romanın sonunda Hristiyanlığın kötüye gittiğinden ve Batı uygarlığının olumsuz yönlerinden bahsedilmektedir. Eserinde yer ve yön bilgisi vermeyen Buzzati, Drogo'nun ait olduğu ülkeyi "Kuzey Krallığı" olarak ifade etmektedir. Coğrafi açıdan ele alındığında Avrupa'nın doğusunda yer alan Tatarlar'ın tehlikeli topraklar içerisinde bulunduğu bilinmektedir. Bu tespitler doğrultusunda Tatarların doğudan geleceği aşikârdır. Gerçeküstücülerin Hristiyanlık ve Batı uygarlığını reddettiği açıklanırken, Tatarların burada gerçeküstü bir rol üstlendikleri de görülmektedir. Gerçeküstücülerin baskıyı ve aklın egemenliği doğrultusunda icat edilen değerlerin benimsendiği Hristiyanlık ve Batı

uygarlığına karşı Tatarların yanında durmayı yeğlediği görülmektedir (Korunmaz 139).

## SONUÇ

Buzzati'nin en önemli eserlerinden biri olarak kabul edilen Tatar Çölü, yalnızca İtalyan edebiyatında değil, tüm dünya edebiyatı içerisinde önemli bir yere sahiptir. Faşist dönemde ele alınan bu eser, ortaya çıktığı dönemin zor koşulları ile toplumun sosyal, ekonomik ve politik durumunu çok ılımlı ve sade bir üslup ile okuyucu ile buluşturmuştur. Romanı içerisinde tek bir topluma hitap etmeyen Buzzati, aslında Tatar Çölü isimli eseriyle tüm toplumlara yönelik bir içerik sunmayı hedeflemiştir. Böylelikle gerçeküstücülüğün en önemli hususlarından biri olan evrensellik de eserin dikkat çeken özelliklerinden biri olmuştur. Buzzati, romanlarıyla okurların ufkunu açtığı dönemsel konuları işlemekle kalmamış, aynı zamanda insanoğlunun tarihini de ele almıştır.

Akıl denetiminde kalan insan bilinci ve bilinçaltı kişinin bu ikisi arasında sıkışıp başkaldırmasına neden olmaktadır. Geçmişten bugüne, döneme bağlı olarak ortaya çıkan romantizm, anarşizm ve sürrealizm gibi sonrasında sanatı, edebiyatı ve politikayı şekillendiren akımların doğmasına tanıklık edilmiştir. Gerçeküstücülük akımında kişilerin başkaldırısı, onların bilinçaltında başlangıç göstermektedir. Başkaldırının gerçeküstücülükte kutsal olarak nitelendirilmesinin en önemli nedeni, kişinin ruhu ile ilgili olmasıdır. Kişinin ruhsal açıdan özgürlüğü, hem moral ve motivasyon gibi soyut değerlerle hem de sanat ve edebiyat gibi somut değerlerle mümkündür. Gerçeküstücülük akımında bu durum farklı bakış açıları ile değerlendirilmektedir.

Yanlışın doğru, kötünün iyi olarak kabul edildiği haksız bir düzende iyiliğin ve doğrunun bulunmasının çölde iğne aramaya benzetildiği Tatar Çölü romanında, dünyanın tükenen, hiçbir şeyden memnun ve tatmin olmayan insanlarla dolu olduğu ve bireylerin günden güne yaşamdan koparıldığı, çıkarları gereği onursuz ve saygısız bir yaşam sürdükleri aktarılmaktadır. Makinenin zaman içerisinde insanın önüne geçmesinin amaçlandığı bu sistemde, "gelişme" adına insanın yok sayılmasına göz yumulmaktadır.

Buzzati tarafından insana verilen değer, eserlerinde aşikâr bir şekilde görülmektedir. Baskı altındaki bir dönem içinde olmasına rağmen insana sarılmaya devam eden Buzzati, bu hususta ödün vermemiş yazarlardan biridir. Yaşam içerisinde yer edinmeyi miras bıraktığı eserler ile başaran yazar, insan ilişkilerinin ve insanların maruz kaldıkları dış etkenleri bilinçaltı gerçekler ile okuyucuya aktarmıştır. Buzzati'nin yapıtlarıyla gerçek yaşamın insana verilen en güzel hediye olduğunu söylemek mümkündür.

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HETEROTOPIA AND ALIENATING LIMINAL SPACES IN *ULYSSES* DUBLIN<sup>1</sup>Maryam Najafibabanazar<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

The main focus of this article is to analyze how physical spaces and landscape are employed to reflect and represent alienation and isolation of individuals in *Ulysses* and to specify how alienation is textually encoded in the form of the novel through the places and spaces which mostly are liminal. The protagonists of *Ulysses* are reflecting a deep sense of spatial alienation in their own descriptions of physical spaces. It is noticeable that in this novel the idea of alienation is encoded in all of Dublin's places and spaces, and this use of places as markers of, or embodiments of alienation, shapes the form of the novel as alienating, too: the form of *Ulysses* has been shown to be molded around the unhomed wanderings of Stephen and Bloom around Dublin. Joyce's representation of alienation is multiplex and more predominantly a social alienation, where, although there is an active social life in Dublin, the individuals lead alienated lives within an isolated city in a marginalized and colonized island. These people's psychological alienation comes along with their historical, political, cultural, and physical isolation and exilic states. Thus, it is possible to claim that Joyce projects his sense of alienation and all the Dubliners' sense of estrangement in Stephen's and Bloom's dislocation and loneliness in their hometown.

**Keywords:** Alienation, Liminality, *Ulysses*, Liminal Spaces, Heterotopia, James Joyce.

## Liminality and Alienation

There are many different ways in which the main characters of *Ulysses* (1922) are shown as alienated from their societies, and how the protagonists in the novel directly and indirectly communicate and express their senses of isolation and disconnection from their communities. This article examines what is modernist about the places and (urban and non-urban) spaces in *Ulysses*, and investigates in what ways they are alienated or alienating, and how this alienation is encoded and reflected in this modernist novel by the Irish novelist, James Joyce. This article will thus start with a discussion of spatial alienation and urban life in the city which is significant in studying modernist literature. Then, because the spaces in *Ulysses* are very frequently liminal spaces, particular attention is paid to liminality. Liminality by definition talks about two sides, one leading in, and one leading out. Thus, familiarity

<sup>1</sup> This article is a brief excerpt of a chapter in my Ph.D. thesis titled: "Literary Encoding of Modernist Alienation in The Language and Spaces of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Sadeq Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*", METU, 2018.

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and integration, as well as alienation and possible rejection or exile are studied and analysed. Both of them are indicated by the spaces dominant in the novel of this study. It is also possible to observe Dublin in terms of liminal stages and transitional spaces that exist in between being modern or non-modern. The novel represents this state of in-between-ness and uncertainty as causing alienation and a sense of separation from their surroundings in the characters as a result of the peripherality of their geographical situation.

Before diving into the discussions about liminality and alienation, it is important to note that, this article does not focus on the debates about precise definitions of space and place. For the purpose of this research, a definite distinction is made between the notion of place as a physical entity like city, building, house, room, kitchen, a “static sense of location, of being, of dwelling,” and space, which usually refers to something more abstract (Thacker 13). Space, and liminal spaces, in this study, refer to the conceived spaces rather than a concrete concept. Liminal spaces like the thresholds of windows and doorways, as well as spaces like heterotopias are, oftentimes, mentally constructed.

The focus on city, urban life, and urban consciousness is part of the common characteristics of modernist literature and modernist fiction in particular (Childs 19). Whitworth also states that “modernist literature depicts modern life, especially urban life,” (11) and, according to Simmel, it is in the metropolis that “a different amount of consciousness” (184) of the human being is extracted when compared to rural life. In other words,

the metropolitan type of man – which, of course, exists in a thousand individual variants – develops an organ protecting him against the threatening currents and discrepancies of his external environment which would uproot him. He reacts with his head instead of his heart. In this an increased awareness assumes the psychic prerogative. Metropolitan life, thus, underlies a heightened awareness and a predominance of intelligence in metropolitan man. (Simmel 184)

Thus, when the focus is on the consciousness of the individuals in modernist fiction in a modern (urban) location, studying how urban places would or could reflect the alienation of the characters is a suitable strategy for the study of texts like *Ulysses* which is set in Dublin. On the other hand, the places in the novel, regarding whether they are urban, as what we see in Dublin, or they are partly urban and partly rural,

could reveal political and social characteristics of the novel as we will observe. These social and political characteristics- the colonial conditions in Ireland for instance- are themselves alienating and have estrangement effects on the individuals in the novel. The significant issue in studying place, space, and individuals' consciousness in modernist literature would be to state that "considerations of the city and modernism have increasingly been framed by the idea that space does not have an independent existence, but is socially constructed" (Simmel 199). These social constructions cause alienation for the characters, as we will see in *Ulysses* and through the focus on the textual representations of alienation and how Joyce has embedded alienation in the text.

Liminality embodies ambivalence and ambiguity and thus complicates any sense of purpose or direction, and in this, it resembles some characteristics of modernism, for "[a] tendency towards ambiguity, paradox and an uncertain surface structure is also peculiar to some of the characteristic aims of modernist literature" (Drewery 48). Experiencing this state of uncertainty, feeling embedded or trapped in a liminal space, can cause a sense of alienation and isolation. The state of liminality having a multidirectional relationship, each direction feeding off each other, could be the primary reason for the perplexity and emotional dangling of characters; thus belonging to all or no "sides" in itself causes a situation that demonstrates a kind of alienation. Liminality relates essentially to a transitory state, a threshold, and something at a boundary, a state of in-between-ness. The uncertainty that is embedded in the concept of liminality is what makes it related to the modern experience as also to postmodernity. This is cogently summarized by Thomassen, who writes that "there are evident reasons that discussion of liminality in contemporary [literature] almost inevitably leads to the core of the modern project which is one of constant overcoming of boundaries and questioning of authorities and the taken-for-granted" (3). Thus, boundary-transgressing issues, which are central in liminality and liminal situations, are also encountered in the modern context. Thomassen further states that liminality in essence deals with "dissolving any fixity of position, dissolving the modern into permanent hybridity" (8). Considering the general agreement that being modern is "essentially about rationalizing, measuring, and categorizing" (9-10), being modern can be seen to value boundaries. That may be why liminality is so particularly alienating in modernist fiction; this is quite different from the conception of liminality in postmodernity and its fiction, which is concerned with "the liberation of genres and

going beyond the boundaries" (9). For modernists, what we now perceive of as liminality (a word and concept they, themselves, did not theorize)<sup>3</sup> is thus about the problem of leaky and fuzzy boundaries that are perceived as necessary for "rationalizing, measuring, and categorizing (9), and therefore in spite of the blurriness of in-between spaces, they are often represented in concrete images such as entrances and exits, borders and crossings, which in fact relate to their etymological origins (from Latin *limen*, "threshold"). The state of liminality and instability that causes dislocation, displacement and alienation of the individual in a modern/modernist context has also been incorporated in a postmodern worldview, where it is dealt with an unavoidable state of flux, of going backwards and forwards across boundaries.

Making a distinction between some phrases which connote ambiguity, uncertainty and in-between-ness, in different contexts, prevents misconceptions of the notions of liminality and liminal situations, as they will be referred to in this article, and for this purpose, Drewery's explanation below can be defined as sufficient. Drewery indicates a distinction between marginality, inferiority, and liminality by stating that marginality is

a condition of being peripheral or minor, exists at the edges of social structure, whilst inferiority implies disempowerment and is situated beneath it. Liminality differs in that it exists *within* social structures itself, but in its interstices; the cracks falling between pre-existing social norms, classifications, and conventions. (3)

What will be dealt with in this article is the idea of liminal situation and characters which are falling in nowhere category in the novel. Some common liminal images and spaces usually include doors, windows, mirrors, candles, curtains, gateways, shorelines and the tomb (Drewery 11). These liminal spaces and images are the ones which will be encountered and analysed in the novel of this study and the focus will be on how these images of liminality and alienation are reflected textually by the author.

In addition to the liminal spaces in *Ulysses*, which powerfully indicate a modern sense of alienation and a sense of not, or not fully, belonging to the spaces

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<sup>3</sup> Although T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* could be argued to be the Modernist poetic analysis of liminality in most of its aspects.

and locations of Dublin, there are many enclosed spaces in the novel that perform the same functions. The examination of places encoding alienation (and related states) in the novel now turns to the enclosed spaces of *Ulysses*, like its houses, hospitals, post offices, newspaper bureau and advertisement offices, and shops. It will be argued that not only the protagonists but most of the characters in *Ulysses* are separated from enclosed spaces in Dublin, even though they commute to these places. Stephen Dedalus is alienated from and physically leaves his father's house and his rented tower. He also feels isolated and detached from the school he teaches in during working hours. On the other side of Dublin, Leopold Bloom is similarly disconnected from his house and family life, although he has not left them permanently. Although he and his wife Molly share the same house and bed, it is understood that they have difficulty in communicating their emotions toward each other and at every level of their relationship they are alienated from each other.

In *The Poetics of Space*, Bachelard studies how enclosed sites like homes may provide the space, ignite the imagination, and prepare the mind for daydreaming, introspection, and self-analysis. In his analysis of space, Bachelard, as noted by Thacker, focuses upon spaces that "have been turned into places of pleasurable belonging, the transformation of house into home, where the rooms and corridors of the house articulate the topography of our intimate being" (Thacker 5). Furthermore, when a person feels isolated in a place, that person may start daydreaming and use that daydreaming, nevertheless, as an alternative space of refuge and living. Bachelard believes that "all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home" (Bachelard 5). John R. Stilgo in the introduction to this book also states that Bachelard's purpose is to show that "the house is a nest for dreaming, a shelter for imagining" (viii). For Bachelard, a house is perceived as "place-world, a world of places" (Casey 291), and it is a place "where the exploration is not so much geometrical or architectural as imaginative or poetic" (Thacker 15). Thus, for Bachelard situated daydreaming has connotations for imagining, memories, and inspirational moments because the imaginative part of the mind is close to the unconscious. Besides this, he argues that the mechanism for daydreaming comes into existence naturally when the subject is in a suitable space. According to Bachelard this happens as a process in which the imagination

functions in this direction whenever the human being has found the slightest shelter: we shall see the imagination build "walls" of impalpable

shadows, comfort itself with the illusion of protection-or, just the contrary, tremble behind thick walls, mistrust the staunchest ramparts. In short, in the most interminable of dialectics, the sheltered being gives perceptible limits to his shelter. He experiences the house in its reality and in its virtuality, by means of thought and dreams. (5)

Thus, the necessary ingredients or components for a daydream are a shelter or any space functioning somehow like a nest, and a solitary person. In other words, an alienated person may use an enclosed space for daydreaming and introspection – whether it is a home or only somewhere that slightly resembles a home. This daydreaming can occur when a person is comfortable in that space or on the contrary when s/he feels alienated and separated from that place. Similarly, daydreaming may well be used in comfortable places or as a retreat for an alienated person from his surroundings. For Bachelard, “the house is one of the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories, and dreams of mankind” (6). Many characters in Joyce’s *Ulysses*, such as Stephen, Dilly, and Simon Dedalus, and Leopold Bloom, are wandering and daydreaming outside of houses. Therefore, Bachelard’s notion of the functional role of a house as a place for daydreaming underscores the alienation represented by characters who are daydreaming “out of place,” as it were, and whose daydreams are thus, in some ways, detached from the necessary surrounding and nurturing environments. The ‘unhomed’ characters of *Ulysses*, like Stephen and Bloom, who are nevertheless daydreaming, present a poignant contrast to these preconditions of Bachelard’s daydreamer, and in this way their alienation is all the more evident. They still daydream, but outside of the spaces, that (as Bachelard would claim) are normal, and nurturing and, in a way, protective of daydreamers.

### **Heterotopia and Alienation**

The idea of heterotopia as the place of otherness is also studied in this article and it also presents an examination of enclosed spaces as loci of speculation and daydreaming, and these issues are discussed in terms of the alienation and isolation of individuals in *Ulysses*. By referring to Foucault’s ideas about places of otherness which he names heterotopia (and also utopia which is not relevant to the main ideas and aims of study), alienating situations and the alienation of characters in Joyce’s novel will be studied. Foucault states that heterotopia’s role “is to create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours

is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled” (8). Characters like Bloom create their own heterotopias to compensate for their senses of isolation and alienation. Bloomusalem and the brothel in *Ulysses* are good examples of heterotopias of compensation where social and psychological alienation of Bloom is embedded and depicted in other spaces he builds in his mind/hallucination and parallel to Dublin’s real places and spaces. It is through the scene in the brothel and the surreal dreams in “Circe” Chapter that Bloom’s and, to some extent Stephen’s, alienation is represented and revealed. Bloom builds and employs parallel spaces in his mind and dream to, at least temporally, take control and exert power on his surroundings.

All the main characters in Dublin’s streets are walking in outwardly familiar places and spaces; however, there is a sensibility of isolation and alienation in their wanderings. For Bloom, some streets are still pleasing and amiable. One very important street for him is Eccles Street, where he lives at No. 7. For Bloom, Eccles Street, and in a way, all of Dublin’s streets can be considered liminal and transitional. This liminality is related to Bloom’s longing for a “hurrying homeward” (Joyce 73) and at the same time his pleasure in leaving and avoiding his house and wandering around Dublin. Bloom’s sense of existential alienation is observable in his doubts and longings for another place to live. His desire to live in an imaginary promised land is an example of “obstacle[s] to individuals’ ability to understand the world as their own” (Jaeggi 9-10). Bloom is wandering in the streets of Dublin, in between his home and the rest of Dublin, and he is, both mentally and physically, alienated and isolated. Thus, Eccles Street is a house but not a home, and Dublin is part of his country, but it is not the ideal home of his fantasies. It appears to be a powerfully liminal space for Bloom, representing his alienation and his possible incorporation into a household and family life.

Bloom’s job of doing “some canvassing for ads” (Joyce 134), which refers to advertising that has been seen as a symbol of the modernization of the 1904 Dublin (Hayward 663), is also closely related to his wandering and moving freely in Dublin city. “The heart of Hibernian metropolis” (147) is Bloom’s transitional space; even so, while he is living in Dublin, he very frequently daydreams about his other homeland, Israel, and about his dreamland, that he (in somewhat Joycean fashion) calls “Bloomusalem” (Joyce 606). This daydreaming about another homeland, this mental inhabiting of another space, creates a sense of alienation and separation from his physical space of living. According to Foucault, such parallel places are

called heterotopias. He claims that

there are . . . probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places-places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias. (3-4)

In Foucault's notion, heterotopias have two functions, they either "create a space of illusion" or they exist as "compensation" (Foucault 8). Bloom creates his heterotopias as both an illusory space and a compensatory one, as one can claim, to escape the state of alienation he experiences in the social and external spaces in Dublin. For Bloom, Dublin and its streets are thus a liminal space lying between his fantasized sense of (be)longing to/for another homeland and another city, and his real sense of alienation in his present location. Nonetheless, Bloom is shown to be more willingly associated with the places and spaces in Dublin than Stephen is; for Bloom, there are still some warm and pleasant streets, such as Eccles Street where his house is located. This has its correlate in the Dublin of his emotions, for even though he is constantly daydreaming about other places and spaces, Bloom retains some ties and attachment to his frail and problematic family life and to the onetime love (Molly) he has in Dublin.

Bloom's experience of heterotopia, his desire for another imaginary place, in addition to his freedom and ease of movement in Dublin and out of Dublin in his daydreams, may well reflect his social alienation (Schacht's notion of lack of interpersonal relationships (157) fits Bloom's sense of alienation) in Dublin, where some Dubliners like the "Citizen" state that they "want no more strangers" in their house and country (Joyce 719-20). Bloom is still considered a converted Jew and a stranger in his hometown and far from "experiencing a crystallized totality" based on theories of social alienation (Kalekin-Fishman 6). "Is he a Jew or a gentile or a holy Roman or a Swaddler or what the hell is he? Says Ned. Or who is he? ... we don't want him" (Joyce 438). For Dubliners like the "Citizen" Bloom is a "perverted Jew" as Martin says when he describes Bloom (Joyce 438) from somewhere in



Hungary. In spite of all the seeming nets and borders- like him being considered a converted Jew and a foreigner from Hungary claiming to be an Irishman (Joyce 430)- existing around Bloom's identity, he can and will daydream about where he desires to live. The Bloomusalem in Bloom's mind is constructed as a result of the liminality of his status and the alienation he feels in Dublin. He even visualizes the shape and details of Bloomusalem, as a space of illusion as well as a compensation for his present site of living, which will be discussed, in more detail, in the following part about enclosed edifices.

However, there are images and textual representations of liminality, marginality, and alienation in the scenes where tramlines pass or do not pass. For instance, in Chapter 15 "Circe", which can be considered as the chapter occupying the most marginal and liminal space of the city, the Nighttown of Dublin, the narrator mentions that the tramline passes by the area and not through it. This is a direct reference to the political and ideological schemes that lay behind the building of the tramline in a colonial city like Dublin. Lanigan records that it was mapped in order to prevent the tramline from passing through problematic or poor neighborhoods. Exclusion from the tramway system also, of course, rendered these places even more liminal and marginal in terms of access, as well as of status. In other words, the tram-lines were designed not to pass through poverty-stricken areas or areas such as the red district of Dublin at the time; thus, it can be said that the tramline in itself created a sense of isolation for the residents or the commuters to those estranged areas.

The trams were often too expensive for Dublin's working classes to use, and their routes frequently skirted or avoided the areas of greatest poverty. . . . on the north side of the city, . . . trams ran on Talbot Street, Summerhill, and Sackville Street; that is, three sides of the red light district, but at no point through it. The tram system, then, was removed from areas of the city that were problematic, and also served to reduce the propensity for random encounters with the urban environment through which ideological views of the city as the locus of progress could be called into question. (Lanigan 41)

This is a liminal space where Bloom and Stephen's repressed desires are unleashed in the shape of hallucinatory dreams. A brothel, in Foucault's terms, is a perfect example of heterotopia, which "exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory (perhaps that is the role that

was played by those famous brothels of which we are now deprived)" (Foucault 9). The brothel frequenters, whether visitors or workers, are also liminal and alienated in that space. They are not part of the formally mapped space of the city life, however, they have their own life on the margins of the city. In Foucault's heterotopias, as alternative spaces in relation to real places, "power is implied since heterotopia inverts and contests real sites" (Thacker 29); thus, it is possible to say that heterotopias are spaces of at least partial freedom and, as in the cases of Stephen, Bloom, and the brothel, they are examples of the spaces of resistance to the "dominant socio-spatiality, found in marginal places and locations" (Thacker 29).

In his book, Bachelard introduces his concept of "topoanalysis," which he defines as the systematic psychological studying of the sites of our intimate lives. The house, the most intimate of all spaces, "protects the daydreamer" and therefore understanding the house is for Bachelard a way to understand the soul.<sup>4</sup> In this way, the characters in *Ulysses*, reveal their souls and their senses of alienation or integration in the most intimate aspects of their lives when they daydream or talk about their homes.

Even outside of the domestic space, there are some strong images, like Bloom's imaginary Bloomusalem, functioning and operating like heterotopias as a space of compensation, in each one of our imaginations. These "successfully separate the daydreamer[s] from the restless world, and give [them] an impression of domination at little cost" (Bachelard 173). This is what is applicable to the main characters in *Ulysses*; Bloom and Stephen frequently get distracted and fall into the daydreaming world, that is "the world of high solitude" (173). Thus, the enclosed spaces in *Ulysses* may well initiate the daydreaming and reveal part of the psychological and social alienation of the characters.

As mentioned in Bachelard's theory of space, not only personal homes but any enclosed place that inspires the sense of home allows space for dreaming and introspection. Both Stephen and Bloom have their own series of daydreaming in *Ulysses*. It is partially because of their solitude and social alienation that these spaces, whether it is their homes, school, or a brothel, provide them with and shape daydreams, through which they distinctly reflect the alienation of their minds. Stephen Dedalus chooses an isolated and liminally positioned tower as an escape

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<sup>4</sup> <http://culturalstudiesnow.blogspot.de/2011/06/gaston-bachelard-poetics-of-space.html>

and residence. The tower could have embodied the notion of a home; but Stephen is deprived of having or he deprives himself of having this nest-like space. He deliberately, alienates himself from his father's house and rejects to live with his father and other siblings. Stephen also decides not to return to the rented tower (the old tower on Sandymount where Stephen's friend Buck Mulligan forces himself on Stephen's privacy and self-chosen isolated home. Stephen, as understood from the novel, will not go back to work for the school he used to teach there. He chooses to alienate himself from every enclosed space that may give him the sense of a house. He chooses the physical and spatial isolation that appears to be what he feels in his mind and sensibility while professing his "non serviam" ideology. Even though Stephen states he does not have any place to sleep in, he rejects Bloom's offer of a place to stay overnight, for instance. Stephen needs spaces for introspection and self-analysis, but he alienates himself from suitable places and, specifically, from his living spaces. When he starts daydreaming about his artistic ambitions, the uncertainty and ambivalence in his ambitious ideals are what could be called his modern sensibility. Stephen does not feel the sense of belonging to the liminal and enclosed places he is living in. Or in other words, the liminal spaces he inhabits are depicted so as to convey his senses of non-belonging and alienation.

The enclosed places and edifices within this novel are, in fact, another way in which the places of *Ulysses* textually embody and encode the concept of alienation. The creation and construction of "the new Bloomusalem in the Nova Hibernia of the future" (Joyce 606) in Bloom's daydreams, with all the details of the immensity of the place, could thus stand for the hugeness of his sense of isolation in Dublin. Besides, in Foucault's theorization, Bloomusalem is a compensation heterotopia where its "role is to create a space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled" (8). Bloom depicts this fantasy place as

a colossal edifice, with crystal roof, built in the shape of a huge pork kidney, containing forty thousand rooms. In the course of its extension several buildings and monuments are demolished. Government offices are temporarily transferred to railway sheds. Numerous houses are razed to the ground. The inhabitants are lodged in barrels and boxes, all marked in red with the letters: L.B. several paupers fall from a ladder. (606)

This daydreaming, as Bachelard also states, allows and creates another

space. It is one in which Bloom feels that he is the dominant and most powerful figure, and all the places and people that make him feel alienated in his experienced Dublin are now marginalized or re-enclosed in different spaces where they are no longer threatening to him. What Bloom has in mind is not so much a Promised Land, but a Promised Palace. It is significant that his memory-dream, in which he will no longer feel alienated and isolated, and which is formed by his needs for compensation, takes the form not of a country or city, but an enclosed (sheltered), if enormous, place. This idea of daydreaming of other places is another typical sign of alienation and isolation in Bloom's case. The depth of solitude in Bloom's life is reflected in his isolation and alienation from the urban space he is wandering around. Thus, he has to dream about another place, a sheltered heterotopia in which he feels more at home and where he has marginalized or imprisoned (in boxes and barrels) all the elements that most cause his sense of alienation. In his daydream-created space, he feels recognized and accepted. It is in this heterotopia of compensation that he is accepted and he is strong; he is attributed such power that he is given the keys to Dublin and becomes the ruler of the city (Joyce 606); he is introduced to the people of the city as: "that's the famous Bloom now, the world's greatest reformer. Hats off!" (Joyce 604), "he's a man like Ireland wants" (Joyce 606). Besides, it is in this heterotopia that Bloom feels strong enough to have "repudiated" his "former spouse" and tragi-comically enough he has "bestowed" his "royal hand upon the princess Selene, the splendour of night" (Joyce 605). It is only in this space of heterotopic compensation and strength that the Citizen who earlier in the day had degraded Bloom and insulted him, is now praising him as the reformer of Ireland: "Citizen: (*Choked with emotion, brushes aside a tear in his emerald muffler*) May the good God bless him!" (Joyce 608-9). This heterotopia of compensation with all its details thus, through having created a complete opposite to what distresses him, embodies Bloom's sense of social and psychological alienation and his isolation throughout the text. Blades declares that Bloom's alienation is in fact the focus of the novel and "the central chapters of the novel emphasize this impression of his alienation amidst the teeming life of the city" (140).

Another lonely space for Bloom is the enclosed space of his house, his kitchen, and more significantly, his bedroom. He seems to create other places, i.e. heterotopias alongside his house, too. He has a secret correspondence, under a pen name (Henry Flower), with some other woman. He creates a parallel space for love and his sexuality. He even starts masturbating at the Sandymount shore, while he is

gazing at Gerty MacDowell. Furthermore, remembering Bachelard's notion that enclosed and "inhabited" places ignite the daydreaming sense (5), the enclosed space of the Blooms bedroom, reveals Molly Bloom's depth of alienation and she expresses her desires and concerns, through interior monologue, and when she is in her bedroom and the reader meets her in the closing Chapter of the novel. Her sexual desire and her frustration concerning her relationship, her son's death, and her daughter's life in another city are all revealed in her interior monologue. She has that comfort to open up her mind and heart in her bedroom. The bedroom is the place in which she returns to her marriage and marital life. One may well claim that her soliloquy is a kind of daydreaming in which she reflects what is happening in her mind while she has been excluded from the dialogues and absent during Bloom's wandering in Dublin. Then she brings to center the bedroom that was kept at the periphery all along the story and all along that day in *Ulysses*.

The main idea behind the researched topic in this article has shown that, when it comes to the notion of separation, mental alienation and liminality, the senses of separation, isolation, and alienation are embedded in the text of *Ulysses* and are reflected in the explanations of the space, provided by the characters. Alienation of the characters and marginality of locations are encoded and embodied through the places and spaces of Dublin, rather than just through the themes or the isolated mental and social state of the protagonists. Joyce's type of alienation, is multiplex and more predominantly a social alienation, where, although, there is an active social life in Dublin, the individuals lead alienated lives within an isolated city in a marginalized and colonized island. These people's psychological alienation comes along with their historical, political, cultural, and physical isolation and exilic states. Thus, it is possible to claim that Joyce projects his sense of alienation, and all the Dubliners' sense of estrangement in Stephen's and Bloom's dislocation and loneliness in their hometown. There is also, however, an argument to be made that it is Dublin's alienation that dominates and pervades the novel; after all, Joyce had always intended to write about Dublin, as he stated "because if I can get to the heart of Dublin I can get to the heart of all the cities of the world. In the particular is contained the universal."<sup>5</sup> This article has shown that the representation of the physical spaces in and around the sites of *Ulysses* makes the novel as much about the city alienated within the modern context of the setting of the novel as they are

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<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 1965 Edn., p.520, citing interview with Arthur Power, Dec. 1953

about the alienated characters that inhabit them.

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## WAS THERE A POSTMODERNISM?

## BİR POSTMODERNİZM VAR MIYDI?

Mehmet Ali ÇELİKEL<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

Postmodernism as a cultural term has been in use since the mid-twentieth century. While a common use of the term refers to multiple cultural and economic conditions, it also suggests new artistic and literary forms. On the one hand, postmodernism is commonly considered as a reaction towards modernist movement in arts and literature, it is also regarded as an intensified version of modernist narrative techniques in literature. This article analyses and compares the various definitions of postmodernism and its literary forms to question whether or not there was a postmodernism before it began to be talked about. The article also reads the modernist texts of writers and poets such as James Joyce and Allen Ginsberg as the early examples of postmodernist tropes in literature in order to compare them with the narrative styles of postmodernist writers like Salman Rushdie.

**Keywords:** Modernism, Postmodernism, Joyce, Ginsberg, Rushdie.

## Öz

Kültürel bir terim olarak postmodernizm yirminci yüzyılın ortalarından bu yana kullanılmaktadır. Terimin yaygın kullanımı birçok kültürel ve ekonomik koşulu nitelerken, aynı zamanda yeni sanatsal ve yazınsal biçimlere de işaret etmektedir. Bir yandan postmodernizm yaygın bir biçim- de sanat ve edebiyatta modernist akıma bir tepki olarak değerlendirilirken, öte yandan edebiyatta kullanılan modernist anlatı tekniklerinin daha da yoğunlaşmış bir hali olduğu da tartışılmaktadır. Bu makale postmodernizmin çeşitli tanımlarını ve onun yazınsal formlarını analiz ederek karşılaştırmasını yapmayı; ve postmodernizmin yaygın olarak konuşulmaya ve tartışılmaya başlamasından önce de var olup olmadığını sorgulamayı amaçlamaktadır. Makale aynı zamanda James Joyce ve Allen Ginsberg gibi modernist romancı ve şairlerin eserlerini edebiyatta postmodernist özelliklerin erken örnekleri olarak okumakta ve onları Salman Rushdie gibi postmodernist yazarların anlatı teknikleriyle karşılaştırmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Modernizm, Postmodernizm, Joyce, Ginsberg, Rushdie.

## INTRODUCTION

Answering the question in the title reveals further questions. What is postmodernism? Is it a period? How and when did it begin? Or did it really begin? Is it a moment or condition? What differentiates it from modernism? What is it like? To understand postmodernism, the condition(s) of the world should be reconsidered. Modernism, which began in the last decade of the nineteenth century and lasted through the first two decades of the twentieth century, consisted of innovations, changes, developments and tendencies that were often controversial. It was in literature, art and all fields of science. In the course of the twentieth century, there have been changes in all

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sciences, arts, literature and life styles of the peoples of the world. All the innovations and progresses against the conventions gave rise to globalisation and consumerism. The liberal, free market economy introduced especially in the early 1980s generated a philistine middle class that valued its own benefits. The hegemonic values formed by this globalized economic model began to dominate the cultural and literary world too. These cultural phenomena brought about the end of the Iron Curtain.

The developments in the telecommunication technology shortened the distances. The earth is no longer a big, vast planet. While it is possible to see Western products, values, cultural forms in the Eastern countries, it is not impossible to meet people from Eastern cultures that fully practice their cultural forms, beliefs and lifestyles living in Western Europe. By the same token, Eastern and Western cultures have begun to confront with each other. As it will be seen below in the following pages, this confrontation turns out to be one of the causes of postmodern condition. The main emphasis here will be the reflection of this postmodern condition in literature which may be called postmodernist literature. The literature of postmodernism is a collage, because the postmodern culture is a collage due to the confrontations mentioned above.

While consumerism is at its highest point in the technologically modernised parts of the world where people live a higher standard of living than the people in the other parts of the world, the chain of fast food restaurants reaches the poorest countries. In a poor, totally traditional and ethnic surrounding, a technologically equipped branch of a fast food chain can be seen. The view is a collage. This collage can be observed in the postmodern art, but as far as literature is concerned, what is the literature of postmodernism like? Is it a result of the collage caused by globalisation and consumerism?

### **Definitions of Postmodernism(s)**

Postmodernism is defined as a general term “used to refer to changes, developments and tendencies” appeared in literature, art music, architecture “since the 1940s or 1950s” by J. A. Cuddon (734). It is different from modernism. It is even a reaction against modernism. It is not right “to imply that modernism is over and done with” to talk about postmodernism according to Cuddon who points out that there is not a “demarcation line” (734). In general, the movements in literature were originally modernist. Avant-garde influences continue. Despite the impossibility of giving exact dates and the demarcation so as to consider postmodernism an era like modernism, Cuddon claims that it is possible “to descry certain in postmodernism” (734). For instance, the literature of postmodernism

“tends to be non-traditional and against authority and signification” (Cuddon 734). In fiction, “experimental techniques” may be cited “as displayed in the nouveau roman and the anti-novel”, and there are also other experiments what is called “concrete poetry”, eclectic approach, aleatory writing, parody, pastiche that are “other discernible features of post-modernism” (Cuddon 734).

Raman Selden, Peter Widdowson and Peter Brooker mention that postmodernism, which has been debated by critics and cultural historians during the last twenty years or more, is seen as “simply the continuation and development of modernist ideas” (200). On the other hand, some see it as “a radical break with classical modernism” (Selden et. al. 200). Some authors and texts of past literature, such as de Sade, Borges, the Ezra Pound of *The Cantos* are considered already postmodern. In the contemporary age, “the ‘grand narratives’ of social and intellectual progress initiated by Enlightenment are discredited” (Selden et. al. 200). Political grounding of the Enlightenment in “‘history’ or ‘reality’ is no longer possible”, because they have become “textualised in the world of images and simulations” characterising the contemporary “age of mass consumption and advanced technologies” Selden et. al. 200).

Selden et al. make the distinction between the terms postmodern, postmodernity and postmodernism, which are often used “inter- changeably”, in order to periodize “post-war developments in advanced media societies and capitalist economies” and to describe “developments within or across the arts” (201). Employing the term postmodern or postmodernity for general developments within the post-war period and reserving “the term ‘postmodernism’ for developments in culture and the arts” appear to be a solution to the problem that lies in the uses of the term postmodernism as both a descriptive and an evaluative term (Selden et. al. 201). However, because postmodernism is perceived as to denote “either a continuation of, or radical break with, dominant features in an earlier modernism or the movements of the avant-garde”, a further problem of definition arises, and thus, Selden et al. draw attention to that there is also much debate “about the identity and boundaries of this earlier movements” (201).

What are the boundaries of those earlier movements? By 1929, modernism was “drawing to a close”, as suggested by Randall Stevenson (*A Reader’s Guide* 50). None the less, certain outstanding modernist novels were published in the thirties. Among them *Finnegans Wake* by James Joyce, which “marks a terminus or consummation of modernist energies and initiatives”, helped develop these initiatives to postmodernist writing

(Stevenson, A Reader's Guide 50). If the term modernism is taken to mean the relinquishment of conventions of storytelling during first few decades of the twentieth century, which is called 'the Modernist era', the term postmodernism seems to refer to the period that comes after modernism - which is difficult to claim. The term 'postmodernist' does not make any sense, according to Brian McHale, because if "modern" means "pertaining to the present", then "post-modern" can only mean "pertaining to the future". McHale suggests that "post" here "does not mean what the dictionary tells us it ought to mean" (4). It only intensifies it. Therefore, postmodernism does not refer to a period. Literature of postmodernism carries on extending the innovations brought into literature by modernism. As claimed by Brenda K. Marshall, it is about language; it is about how language "controls, how it determines meaning" (4). It is about "how 'we' are defined within that language, and within specific historical, social, cultural matrices" (Marshall 4). Postmodernism is about "race, class, gender, erotic identity and practice, nationality, and ethnicity", it is "about difference" and "does not refer to a period or a movement", but "more movement in logic than in time" (Marshall 5).

As well as the difficulties of determining a classification and a chronological demarcation for postmodernism, there is much difficulty of defining it too, due to the debates about it today. Even more, it is still difficult to put forward a clear distinction between modernism and postmodernism. Since it is what may be called a condition rather than a movement or an era in a specific period of the literary history, some authors within the literature of modernism are possible to be considered already postmodern. Umberto Eco believes that "postmodernism is not a trend to be chronologically defined, but, rather, an ideal", and it could be claimed that "every period has its own postmodernism" (226). Eco draws attention to Joyce:

*The Portrait* is the story of an attempt at the modern. *Dubliners*, even if it comes before, is more modern than *Portrait*, *Ulysses* is on the borderline. *Finnegans Wake* is already postmodern, or at least initiates the postmodern discourse: it demands, in order to be understood, not the negation of the already said, but its ironic rethinking. (Eco 227)

As pointed out by Frederic Jameson, "one of the most significant features or practices in postmodernism", which is not "widely accepted or even understood today", is pastiche (1992: 164-5). This assertion evaluates the relevance of Eco's claim, since pastiche is widely accepted to be one of the characteristics of Joyce's fiction, particularly in *Ulysses*

and *Finnegans Wake*, and of modernism in general. From Christopher Nash's point of view, it is true that "post-Modernists acclaim Modernists among their favourite influences, and we can find them objecting to Modernism only in terms of those characteristics which it shares with realism" (33). Modernists have never "participated, at the level of fundamental issues, in the 'struggle against' Realism" (Nash 33). It is possible to come up with the idea of confronting Eco's and Nash's claims. When Eco's assumption is considered, the answer to the question 'was there a "postmodernism"?' is yes, there was a 'postmodernism' even before the invention of the term 'postmodernism', because Joyce's fiction was already 'postmodern'. On the other hand, when Nash's assumption is thought of, another question comes into being: Is postmodernism not realist, or, is it less realist than modernism? Is it because Joyce was 'struggling against' realism that his fiction is considered 'already postmodern'?

### **How 'Postmodern' was Joyce?**

Modernist fiction, according to Randall Stevenson, rarely abandons the story telling. However, "it does resist as far as possible the arrangement of 'events in their time sequence'" (Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction* 87). In the table where the distinctions of modernism and postmodernism are made by Peter Brooker, it is observed that in modernism there is form, creation, totalisation, synthesis, hierarchy, semantics, whereas in postmodernism there is rhetoric instead of semantics, anarchy instead hierarchy, antithesis instead of synthesis, deconstruction and decreation instead of creation and totalisation. Brooker suggests that postmodernism, which "splices high with low culture" and "swamps reality in a culture of recycled images" (1992: 11). It displays "a quite different 'knowledge' from the way modernism is 'known'" and, additionally, "the more usual understanding [of] postmodernism came into being as a reaction to an institutionalised modernism" (Brooker 12). Postmodernism functions "to further 'undefine' its supposed unitary identity," and it often collaborates "in the construction of that very identity as fit only for deconstruction" (Brooker 12). In Joyce's fiction, certain departures from the accepted characteristics of modernism might be observed. If *Ulysses* is considered in terms of deconstruction, it is apparent that almost every chapter of the novel is written differently, "and many of them appropriate and mock some specific style of literature", such as journalism, ordinary speech or officialdom (Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction* 167). In *Ulysses*, "stylistic variation and exaggeration make the nature of language impossible to ignore" (Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction* 193). There is a central significance for "Joyce's mode of representation, as well as for what is represented" (Stevenson,

*Modernist Fiction* 193). Joyce leaves deliberately “the habits of the novel form,” and particularly in *Finnegans Wake*, “the inaccessibility of ordinary meaning is a necessary condition” which in *Finnegans Wake* goes further than *Ulysses* “in exploiting and celebrating aspects of language other than the semantic” (Stevenson, *Modernist Fiction* 193).

In this respect, if Brenda K. Marshall’s assumption is remembered again, it will be more convenient to claim that Joyce was already postmodern in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*; postmodernism is about language, about how it controls and determines meaning. An autonomy of language is found in *Finnegans Wake*, as suggested by Stevenson (*A Reader’s Guide* 113). This helps make *Finnegans Wake* “not only a kind of grand finale of modernist innovations, but also a redirection of some of their potential for the later twentieth century” (Stevenson, *A Reader’s Guide* 114). It is the prophecy of postmodernity, and this prophecy helps to justify terms such as postmodernity or postmodernism, which extend the innovations of modernism. Stevenson continues to evaluate *Finnegans Wake* as postmodernist, since its language and representation have become “the distinguishing characteristic of postmodernism” (*A Reader’s Guide* 114).

*Finnegans Wake*, which is the last and most problematic of Joyce’s works, belongs to a genre of mythological anatomies from Frank Kermode and John Hollander’s points of view. Joyce made up new words that might be called “portmanteau” words in *Finnegans Wake* which he himself called “funferal”, a word made up out of funeral and fun for all (Kermode & Hollander 303-4). Joyce’s creation of new words is outstanding:

- I apologise, Shaun began, but I would rather spinooze you one from the gasts of Jacko and Esaup, fable one, feeble too. Let us here consider the casus, my dear little cousis (husstenhasstencaffincoffintussemtosemmd[-] amandamnacosaghcusaghghobixhatouxpeswchbechoscashlcarcarcaract) of the Ondt and the Gracehoper. (Joyce 878)

In the above paragraph, Joyce’s use of language again draws attention to the role of language in postmodernism. Joyce determines meaning beyond the context. He creates new meanings by aiming the limits of storytelling, by extending the limits of word formation. His new words are the description of new concepts. They possess new meanings. He plays with history, philosophy, science by playing with words. In the interpretation of the above paragraph, Kermode and Hollander point out that Shaun is the tight, crafty son who “would indeed ‘guise’ an apology”, hence the verb “apologuise” is created. Spinoza is the first

philosopher of time and space, good and evil. To refer to Spinoza, Joyce forms “spinooze” also to “ooze” a tale. Grimm’s fairy tales, actually called *geste*, become “grimm gests”. And a hundred-letter word, indicating the voice of thunder, marks a “cyclical progression in the vision of phased history” (Kermode & Hollander 304).

Brian McHale sees postmodernist allegory in *Finnegans Wake*. Everything is potentially allegorical in *Finnegans Wake*. It invites the reader to read it allegorically. According to McHale, the allegories in *Finnegans Wake* are overdetermined, because they have too many interpretations. Joyce establishes “the dominant mode of postmodernist allegory” (McHale 141-2). As well as postmodernist allegory, *Finnegans Wake* has other postmodernist characteristics. Since collage and language are what postmodernism is about, it proves to be postmodern due to the fact Joyce “builds up his vertical collage not merely from the registers and discourses of the English language, but from other national languages as well” (McHale 171).

McHale points out the differences between *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. These differences are the distinctions of modernism and postmodernism (233). The text in *Ulysses* is the representation of mind. It has the direct interior monologue technique. The story is told through the “represented consciousness of the character” (McHale 233). The represented world is “stable and reconstructable, forming an ontologically unproblematic backdrop against which the movements of the characters’ minds may be displayed” (McHale 234). This is, in short, modernist fiction. There is an interior discourse of Anna Livia Plurabelle represented in the end of *Finnegans Wake*, too. But her discourse, as McHale suggests, is “not a consciousness like Gabriel Conroy’s or Molly Bloom’s, not ‘an ordinary mind on an ordinary day,’ but more like a collective consciousness” (234). Molly Bloom’s monologue, on the other hand, represents the ‘stream of consciousness’, whereas Anna Livia is the thing itself. She is the personification of the River Liffey, for instance. She ‘literalizes the metaphor “stream of consciousness”’, as claimed by McHale:

There is no stable world behind [her] consciousness, but only a flux of discourse in which fragments of different, incompatible realities flicker into existence and out of existence again, overwhelmed by the competing reality of language.

Postmodernist fiction, in short. (McHale 234)

Joyce was postmodernist if *Finnegans Wake* is taken into consideration. This also proves the impossibility of putting a chronological demarcation line for postmodernism.

Thinking of *Finnegans Wake*, it might easily be said that there was a “postmodernism” in the time of modernism. But as there is more than one modernism according to Brooker, (1) “there are many possible constructions of postmodernism, however, this does not mean that all constructs are equally interesting or valuable”, suggests McHale who acknowledges that “postmodernism is the posterity of modernism” (234). Postmodernism, as the descendant of modernism, has reached today in various forms in various genres.

### **Is There a Postmodernism?**

Is there a postmodernism today? Does postmodernity still continue? Postmodernism is a new avant-garde. It is still happening according to J.A. Cuddon (1991: 734). Contemporary world is postmodern. Eclecticism, which is also one of the certain features of postmodernism, is the degree zero of contemporary general culture, according to Jean-Francois Lyotard:

One listens to reggae, watches a western, eats McDonald’s food for lunch and local cuisine for dinner, wears Paris perfume in Tokyo and “retro” clothes in Hong Kong; knowledge is a matter for TV games. It is easy to find a public for eclectic works. (Lyotard 76)

Although the term was used earlier, a general cultural phenomenon crystallised in the 1970s, as suggested by Dennis Brown (1). And the term is used to refer to the changes dating back to 1940s and 1950s. Changes brought into the twentieth century life and society are represented in many literary texts. Many of these changes were brought by the post war developments.

Allen Ginsberg and Salman Rushdie are the two literary characters of the second half of the twentieth century. Although they appeared in different decades in different cultures, what they have common is that they both collide different worlds. They both make use of eclecticism of the twentieth century. Brown finds Ginsberg’s style agglutinative. His “democratic, all-inclusive rhetoric implications of ‘End of History’ thesis” within the “grotesque torsions of the Cold War”, “scenarios of nuclear exchange”, “pollution” of the earth, “repression of sexual and spiritual desire”, his “paratactical, alogical, comprehensive, insistently rhythmic, laid back, dialogical, ironic and passionate” discourse are the assessments of his representation of the postmodern (Brown 30):

America I’ve given you all and now I’m nothing.

America two dollars and twentyseven cents January 17, 1956.

I can't stand my own mind.

America when will we end the human war? Go fuck yourself with your atom bomb.

...

America after all it is you and I who are perfect not the next world. Your machinery is too much for me.

...

I smoke marijuana every chance I get.

I sit in my house for days on end and stare at the roses in the closet.

...

I'm addressing you.

Are you going to let your emotional life be run by Time Magazine? I'm obsessed by Time Magazine.

... (Ginsberg 262-264)

According to Brown, "America" constitutes a "peculiarly postmodern conjunction of textual and oral modes" (31). The oral modes it constitutes are within an "electronic culture" (Brown 31). The design of the poem allows itself to be read aloud. In Brown's interpretation of the poem, it is also suggested that "the mandatory voices of the Jewish Major Prophets" lie behind the poem (Brown 31). It is possible to feel the shimmering "video images of pop electronics and the sonorous tonalities of the electric guitar" and the poem "registers a reemergence into print textuality of the repressed rhythms of oral culture" (Brown 31). Therefore, as it seems, it is impossible to reevaluate the lyrics of Bob Dylan, John Lennon or Van Morrison without the Ginsbergian background.

Ginsberg creates an alternative discourse which might be classified in the alternative literature. Although J.A. Cuddon admits that whether or not an alternative literature really exists is open to doubt, in the 1950s, "it might have referred to the poetry of the Beat generation, much of whose best work has long since been 'mainstream'" (32). Writers of Beat generation were influenced by jazz, Zen Buddhism, and their lifestyle was associated with drugs, free sex (Cuddon 84). In "America", Ginsberg uses "comedic sexual transgression as a way of getting in the last word", and this is long before the "recognised construction of a Gay Rights movement" (Brown 32). According to the definition of Beat generation by Cuddon, this is a typical example of its kind:



I smoke marijuana every chance I get. (Ginsberg 264)

However, Ginsberg's poetry is less important for being Beat than being postmodern. There are a number of relevant qualities to consider Ginsberg's literature postmodern. By "Howl", for instance, he intentionally breaks with "both formal metrics and High Culture anti-formality" and to make it available to the public, he uses "psalmic parataxis" and "hypnotic linear repetition" (Brown 42). His works have the "moral sincerity" or "incisiveness of critique", although they appear to be "depthless" and "non-serious" (Brown 43). Ginsberg's work's "verbal and linear freedom" through fluency, and the "unique combination of self-deprecating comic buffoonery and radically-engaged personal and political passion" constitute his particular significance for postmodern poetry (Brown 43).

After Beat generation in which Ginsberg's poetry is chronologically categorised - chronologically, because his postmodernism has become more important than his 'Beat'-ness -, nineteen eighties were the years when argument of postmodernism was in its peak. While Ginsberg provided his examples of postmodern poetry in the 1950s in the USA, Salman Rushdie is among the writers who are invariably discussed as postmodernist in 1980s, on the other side of the Atlantic (Selden 203). Ian Ousby suggests that Rushdie's interests are "in reshaping the history of his time" and his novels are important examples of magic realism, which is a postmodern quality (Ousby 804). In *Midnight's Children*, he "succeeds in matching a grand subject, the multitudinousness of India itself" and is "concerned with the creative process", rewriting "the history of a country founded in the year of his birth" (Ousby 804).

Postmodern writers used and abused the modernist tradition of the more "open" endings, as suggested by Linda Hutcheon (1988: 59). Postmodern writers have converted the open endings of postmodernism to "self-consciously multiple endings or resolutely arbitrary closure" (Hutcheon 59) which Rushdie uses in *Midnight's Children* where the ending is open:

One empty jar ... how to end? Happily, with Mary in her teak rocking-chair  
and a son who has begun to speak? Amid recipes, and thirty jars with  
chapter-headings for names?

...

Or with questions: now that I can, I swear, see the cracks on the backs of

my hands, cracks along my hairline and between my toes, why do I not bleed?

...

Or dreams: because last night the ghost of Reverend Mother appeared to me, staring down through the hole in a perforated cloud,

...

No, that won't do, I shall have to write the future as I have written the past, to set it down with the absolute certainty of a prophet.

...

Yes, they will trample me underfoot, the numbers marching one two three, four hundred million five hundred six ... they will trample my son who is not my son ... until a thousand and one children have died, because it is privilege and the curse of midnight's children

... to forsake privacy and be sucked into the annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes, and to be unable to live or die in peace. (Rushdie 462-463)

The contradiction of being unable "to live or die", discontinuity, uncertainty, hybridity, heterogeneousness are typical of postmodernism (Hutcheon 59). Edward Said sees *Midnight's Children* as a brilliant work which is "based on the imagination of independence itself" (260). Rushdie's effort is conscious to "enter into the discourse of Europe and the West, to mix it, transform it, to make it acknowledge marginalised or suppressed or forgotten histories" (Said 260). In Rushdie's fiction, periphery is an important aspect. He draws attention to the contradiction of peripheral and the central. In *Shame*, Omar Khayyam, the Shakil sisters' child, is a peripheral man who has no haircut, no circumcision and God's name is not whispered into his ears in a Muslim society. Three of the Shakil sisters claim to be his mother, but neither the mother nor the father is known. The Shakil sisters, who give a magic birth to a child, are leading a life closer to English sahibs. The mysticism and magic realism of the Eastern world are together with the Western life style full of parties, receptions, Christian ayahs and "an iron mortality that was mostly Muslim" (*Shame* 13). This is also a postmodern characteristic which "does not move the marginal to the centre" (Hutcheon 69). Marginal remains marginal, but it is often presented in a collision. In *Shame*, everything happens in the fourteenth century of the Hegiran calendar:

All this happened in the fourteenth century. I'm using the Hegiran calendar, naturally: don't imagine that stories of this type always take place longlong ago. Time cannot be homogenised as easily as milk, and in those parts, until quite recently, the thirteen-hundreds were still in full swing. (Rushdie 13)

There is a numeric contradiction here. The fourteenth century of the Hegiran calendar refers to the twentieth century. So the stories of fourteenth century are "still in full swing" in the twentieth century. Neither the calendar nor the stories are converted. Postmodernism does not "invert the valuing of centres into that of peripheries and borders, as much as use that paradoxical doubled positioning to critique the inside from both the outside and the inside" (Hutcheon 69). The narration in *Midnight's Children* is "excentric", and its male narrator is manipulative foregrounding the process of the production or constraints, which often occurs in postmodern texts (Hutcheon 81).

*Midnight's Children* is, in many ways, a postmodern text. It is suggested by Brian McHale that, according to *Midnight's Children*, Indian history is "supernaturally linked to the fates of the children born at the same time as the state itself" since independence (McHale 95). Each of the supernatural beings in the novel possess "some miraculous power or talent" which represents the power that enables them "to read minds, to change shape, to pass through looking-glasses", and so on (McHale 96). Through telepathy, Saleem, the novel's narrator, make the midnight's children become aware of each other. According to his secret history of supernatural India, "Indira Gandhi's declaration of the State of Emergency in 1976" was, in fact, "to flush out the midnight children and expunge their powers" (McHale 96). Rushdie's falsification of history in order to imply that "history itself may be a form of fiction", because "postmodernist apocryphal history is often fantastic history" (McHale 96). In discussing history in Hutcheon's terms, Baysar Taniyan asserts that "postmodern theories posit history as a 'discursive construct'" emphasizing that "history and historiography" stage conflicting sites where "multiple discourses compete for power and claim to knowledge" (244). In Rushdie's fiction, history, then, functions as one of the materials of his plot rather than the source of information by being falsified, thus empowering the author to claim to a kind of knowledge relevant in his own fictional universe.

Relationship with cinema is what postmodernist fiction shares with classic modern fiction. however, for modernist fiction cinema is a source of new representational

techniques, whereas for postmodernist fiction cinema is not a repertoire of representational techniques. In postmodernist fiction, movies and television appear as an ontological level. In *Midnight's Children*, a "film vocabulary" is distinctive (McHale 128-9): "in short: my grandfather was holding a pamphlet. It had been inserted into his hand (we cut to a long- shot - nobody from Bombay should be without a basic film vocabulary) as he entered the hotel foyer" (Rushdie 33).

As seen overall, there has been a postmodernism in the twentieth century. James Joyce was postmodern even before the invention of the term postmodern. As it is understood today, postmodernism is a condition. It is a moment. It is crucial to understand that it is not a historical period or an era like modernism. Forming of the word must not be mistaken, since the prefix "post-" does not convert the word into a term referring to a period that follows modernism. Postmodernism is "an awareness of being-within a way of thinking" and "an awareness of being-within, first, a language, and second, a particular historical, social, cultural framework" (Marshall 3-4). Postmodernism cannot exactly be defined because "we begin our definition with "Postmodernism is..." and we are already in trouble. We cannot get very far without "is". Language lays a trap: it says something must be, always be. Thus, by attempting to define post- modernism, it is given primary ontological status" (Marshall 4).

Another danger, according to Brenda K. Marshall, is to use the term synonymously with "contemporary". It is then understood that anything in the contemporary culture is postmodern, but, as Marshall suggests, we are not living in a period "identified 'totally' as postmodern". For instance, Marshall sees nothing postmodern about *Newsweek*. However, she draws attention to difference, race, class, gender, erotic identity and practice, nationality, age, ethnicity which postmodernism is all about (Marshall 2-3). Placing different worlds in confrontation, foregrounding their respective structures and the disparities are underlying principles of ontological poetics in postmodernist fiction from McHale's point of view (60). If today's world is thought to be a ground where different nationalities, ethnic origins, classes, sexual identities are confronted, then it is possible to claim that the world is in a postmodern condition. People from different traditions and ethnic origins may be found leading conventional lives despite being in confrontation with each other. This is the condition of contemporary culture. There may not be anything postmodern about the individuals who are, within their reality, leading conventional lives, although they constitute a postmodern condition. There may be nothing postmodern about Rushdie's Pakistan and its people in *Shame* in the sense that they live in conventions and

do not represent a postmodern society, but they are a part of a postmodern view. Their existence within industrial plan that can produce no “refrigerators” but “atom bombs” is the representation of postmodern condition, for collision of worlds is a postmodern quality.

### **Will There Be a ‘Postmodernism’?**

Today, postmodernism is “recognised as an international phenomenon not only in the sense that its characteristics appear in art world-wide,” but in that many of them are fostered by “increasing pluralism in cultural vision”, as suggested by Randall Stevenson (A Reader’s Guide 135). Contact with other cultures and literatures creates for writers “a sense of the character and limitations of their own” (Stevenson, A Reader’s Guide 135). Awareness of languages and cultures other than their own “encourages the self-conscious questioning, reshaping and coalescence of forms characteristic of postmodernism” for writers anywhere (Stevenson, A Reader’s Guide 135). Awareness of foreign cultures in other words adds to the authors’ vision of form and nature of writing itself. As innovations and technological developments of the contemporary world continue, it will always be possible to be aware of foreign cultures. Globalization as a result of this awareness leads to new nations, new states, new settlements and orders in which further collisions take place.

Peter Brooker asks what is outside or beyond postmodernism? The key affect of a politicised, “worldly”, deconstructive postmodernism, according to Brooker,

has been to disarticulate dominant narratives, traditions and ideologies. In this way it has questioned the universalising assumptions of the male self, the super monoagency of the traditional working class, the power of the United States and the ethnocentrism of Western capitalist nations, intellectual debate and media. Postmodern technologies and theory have helped bring the marginal, the repressed and unvoiced into view and into hearing. (Brooker 25)

Frederic Jameson makes a similar assertion. He believes that “the emergence of postmodernism is closely related to the emergence of this new moment of late, consumer or multinational capitalism” (1992: 164). For one major theme, Jameson shows that “namely the disappearance of a sense of history”, has begun to live “in a perpetual present and in a perpetual change that obliterates traditions of the kind which all earlier social formations have had in one way or another to preserve (164). Umberto Eco suggests that postmodernism revisits the past ironically, not innocently (227). Although it is not a total

departure from the past, it is not a total preservation of the past, either.

In the course of the history, it seems that mass consumption and multi-national capitalism will expand its limits and literature will have new forms, not to preserve the perpetually changing shape of the world, but to represent it. At least, “the last part of this century and the beginning of the next - like the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries” will be a “particularly interesting one for literature” (Stevenson, *A Reader's Guide* 141-2).

Will there be a postmodernism? The question must be left open. However, it has been proved by the debates of postmodern theorists that worlds in collision, difference, rapid switches from high culture to low culture, ethnic origins in confrontation, traditional versus modern or the other way round are the major qualities by which the postmodern moment is created. The fact that the future will probably bring more of these is a matter of concern when rapid changes the world is undergoing are taken into consideration. One hundred years ago there was no television. Today, there is a phenomenon called internet through which people from all parts of the world can meet and even get married. Despite this amazing invention, the world is a small planet where arranged marriages are “still in full swing”.

The difference between opposite cultures to be confronted gets bigger everyday as the postmodern developments get faster, which will lead more collisions. So, the reflection of these collisions in literature will be inevitable. As there is one postmodernism which is too complex to define, there will probably be a more complex literary concept in the future. There will probably be more debates about the possible concepts.

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THE REPRESENTATION OF HUMOUR IN  
WOMEN'S TRAVEL WRITING: RODRIGUEZ'S  
*THE KABUL BEAUTY SCHOOL*,  
GRIMSHAW'S *FROM FIJI TO THE CANNIBAL*  
*ISLANDS* AND SELECTED HAREM  
NARRATIVES

KADINLARIN SEYAHAT YAZINLARINDA  
MİZAHIN TEMSİLİ: RODRIGUEZ'İN *KABUL*  
*GÜZELLİK OKULU*, GRIMSHAW'IN *FIJI'DEN*  
*CANNIBAL ADALAR'A* VE SEÇİLMİŞ HAREM  
ANLATILARI

Mine SEVİNÇ<sup>1</sup>

Abstract

Travellers are "the cultural other" in diverse destinations, observing the indigenous culture. They share their impressions and experiences by accounts of cross-cultural differences and develop intercultural communication. In some settings, women travellers may be admitted to some spaces that are forbidden to men. Indeed, women's travel narratives may reinforce the binary opposition between the West and the East, turning their gaze on the Orient as exotic, eccentric and open to be examined. Typically, women writers' narratives locate their identities through interaction with other cultures. Although women do not claim authoritarian voices, they make use of satire while drawing a line between the host culture that of 'the other' and their own. As such humour becomes the means through which the Western women travellers gain an imperial authority over the Orient. This article discusses how women's travel writing may employ humour as a way of deprecating the indigenous culture and of strengthening imperial authority with a specific focus on Deborah Rodriguez's *The Kabul Beauty School* (2007) and Beatrice Ethel Grimshaw's *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* (1907) and selected harem narratives. The paper concludes that travel writers demonstrate the travelled places as exotic and eccentric that contrast with their own social norms.

**Keywords:** Orient, Travel Writing, Harem Narratives, Imperial Authority.

Öz

Gezginler, ziyaret ettikleri farklı mekanlarda yerli kültürü gözlemleyen "kültürel öteki"dir. İzlenimlerini ve deneyimlerini kültürler arası farklılıklardan yola çıkarak paylaşırlar ve kültürler arası iletişimi geliştirirler. Bazı durumlarda, kadın gezginler, erkeklere yasak olan bazı alanlara kabul edilebilir. Gerçekten de kadınların seyahat anlatıları, Batı ile Doğu arasındaki ikili karşıtlığı pekiştirerek, bakışlarını egzotik, eksantrik ve incelemeye açık olarak Doğu'ya çevirebilir. Genellikle, kadın yazarların anlatıları, kimliklerini diğer kültürlerle etkileşim yoluyla konumlandırır. Kadınlar otoriter seslere sahip olmamalarına rağmen, ev sahibi kültür ile kendi kültürleri arasına bir çizgi çekerken hicivden yararlanırlar. Böyle bir mizah, Batılı kadın gezginlerin Doğu üzerinde emperyal bir otorite kazanmalarının aracı haline gelir. Bu makale, Deborah Rodriguez'in *The Kabul Beauty School* (2007) ve Beatrice Ethel Grimshaw'ın *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* (1907) adlı eserlerine ve seçilmiş harem anlatılarına özel olarak odaklanarak, kadınların seyahat yazılarının mizahı yerli kültürü küçümsemenin ve imparatorluk otoritesini güçlendirmenin bir yolu olarak nasıl kullanabileceğini tartışıyor. Bu makale, seyahat yazarlarının seyahat edilen yerleri kendi sosyal normlarıyla çelişen egzotik ve eksantrik olarak gösterdikleri sonucuna varıyor.

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Women travellers have had the potential to access spaces that have been inaccessible to the male gaze. Accordingly, they may develop more personal relationships, which allows them to offer rather intimate and unique images of the travelled culture. Sara Mills argues that women travel writers often present texts that engage with individuals from the other culture rather than characterising an entire race (Mills 5). This is what distinguishes them from the colonial and imperial framework, while empowering them as colonial authorities in offering poignant descriptions and critiques of that culture. In women travel writers' texts, humour potentially offers imperial superiority over colonial achievement. Having this in mind, this paper explores the ways in which humour functions in Deborah Rodriguez's *The Kabul Beauty School*, Beatrice Grimshaw's *From Fiji to the Cannibal Islands* (1907) along with a number of selected harem narratives. This paper will also demonstrate that humour in women's travel writing is directed towards the traveller's society, whereas women travellers tend to employ humour in contradiction to culture, customs, and manners of the travelled destination. The overarching argument suggests that these travel writers employ humour to humiliate the visited culture, depicting it as exotic, and in turn empowering the narrator as a cover for femininity. Accordingly, Rodriguez relates the foundation and development of a beauty school in Kabul, which provides a haven for Afghan women remote from spousal violence. Along similar lines, Grimshaw records her travel to Fiji as a woman in the "Cannibal Islands". Other women authors narrate their experiences, travelling in Turkey, Egypt, Arabia and India. They write their observations about the visited culture of harems in letters, illuminating the facts about spaces forbidden to men.

Women travel writers employ humour in their texts to indicate their knowledge about the visited place for their affiliations. They draw images of cultural contradictions, which can only be understood by those who are familiar with these differences. Mills proposes that much of the travel writing is limited in scope as they focus on the idea of difference. She suggests that "one of the striking features in all of the descriptions of other countries is that objects are presented only in terms of their difference to objects in Britain" (Mills 86). Thus, humour covers issues that apply contradictorily in women's native culture. They narrate scenes in their own words so that readers can thoroughly grasp the content. Rodriguez demonstrates her position as superior in society by presenting her knowledge of both cultures. She entertains her Muslim customers with a CD of Christmas Carols and then suggests that they will not understand them (Rodriguez

7). She also provides out-dated magazines for her customers, as she knows they will not criticise them for being out of fashion (8). The travelled culture is unable to understand this contradiction because it has no information of the other culture. Music also differs in meaning and function between the two cultures as described by Rodriguez; Afghanistan is totally foreign to these cultural places, and since they do not know the difference, they are not amused by the situation. The humour is directed against the addressee from the other culture creating entertainment out of their inferiority.

Rodriguez mocks the other culture by drawing denigratory images in her work. She gives an insight into the possible influence of those pieces on the Western people. She creates an image of traditional Afghan wedding ceremony, and critiques some of the traditions of high cultural importance such as the bride's appearance. While aiming to help brides escape from the cultural expectations they are confined to, she also compares them to drag queens, painted up with their stage makeup. She is not after achieving her purpose by transforming them into more attractive characters. Rodriguez rather creates a satirical effect by describing brides to her readers through a Westernised language. This depiction enables readers to visualise the bridal tradition and ironically presenting the West in a superior position for having the power of knowledge on both cultures.

Similarly, Grimshaw draws the image of a ridiculous jail for her readers. She satirises the penal system, the situation in the prison, and the naivety of the prisoners in Fiji. Prisoners are convicted of minor crimes such as tax evasion or swearing in public. Grimshaw is surprised at the low levels and the nature of the crimes. The concept of prison is that of "a toy to be set on the mantelshelf", which is formed of only three walls "leaving the back completely open to the bush and the hills [...] to look pretty" (Grimshaw 6). There is another shock for Grimshaw when she learns that hardly any prisoners are inclined to escape from the prison. They do not feel any disgrace at being incarcerated, simply alluding to the incarceration as "being in the King's service" (7). The image of prison is narrated jokingly to the reader when discussing why prisoners do not simply walk out. Grimshaw shares the joke within her narrative because she feels the urge to reflect upon the inferiority and simplicity of the host culture. The penal system is amusing to the outsider gaze, given that penal systems in other areas of the world take a harsher view of incarceration. However, Fijians do not report any inconvenience while in prison as a matter of their culture. It is understood that women travel writers ridicule the situations they encounter when they travel outside the margins

of their own societies. In doing so, they raise up their own culture whilst ridiculing the alternate, because the differences appear amusing when viewed through a different cultural lens.

Harem narratives are likewise intended for the consumption by other cultures. By its very nature, the harem forbids the visits from men, and until women visited the harem, it was viewed as an oriental fantasy; thus, women travellers filled in the information gap regarding the harem. By writing on the harem, these writers gained powerful positions in their own cultures. The location of the Orient contributed to the binary opposition of the West and the East, whilst supporting Western colonial and imperial power (Lewis 3). For instance, Anastasia Valassopoulos suggests that such writings aims to offer the Western reader “an overwhelming [...] knowledge about the Orient” (134). Therefore, during their visits, women travellers boosted their sense of superiority within the colonial binary. The harem is sometimes depicted as a reference point for the Western readership. While women travel narratives satisfied curiosity about the secrecy of harem culture, they also narrated it as inferior and far from Western progress and rationality. For instance, Anne Elwood ridicules the curiosity of the harem women concerning the Western clothing. She writes:

They were amazingly struck with my costume, which they examined so minutely, that I began to think I should have had to undress to satisfy their curiosity; but what most amused them, was, the circumstance of my gown fastening behind, which mystery they examined over and over again, and some French tucks at the bottom seemed much to astonish them, as they could not discover their use. (Elwood 33)

It is clear from the quote that Elwood enjoyed being the focus of attention in the harem. The Eastern women attempted to examine her clothes carefully and in curiosity. Elwood mocks that the harem women did not understand the use of French tucks on her costume, evoking the perceived backwardness of the East. The narrative in this excerpt also highlights the superior and progressive aspects of the Western culture. Women travellers enjoy the privilege of having knowledge they hold within the matrix of Western imperialism. They create the images of the travelled places for their readership in their own knowledge and terms, making the Orient a focus of objectification and entertainment. Edward Said considers this Oriental gaze, that which is constructed by the women travellers, as a construction of the East in a confined space (Said 207). Here,

the Oriental gaze of women travellers, such as Elwood's, produces knowledge of the self in contradiction to the Oriental culture. In defining the Orient as confined, they offer the West a temporally and spatially frozen image of the Orient while they position themselves outside of that space and time (Ramakrishnan 134). Michael Harris similarly argues that "the European social body had to be defined in contradistinction to the foreign body; at the same time, it had to be protected from the contamination and disease signified by that of the alien body" (Harris 23). Judging from Harris's argument, Western women travellers sought to redefine their identity in contradiction with the other's body. They both examined the host culture and tried to keep their distance from being absorbed into that culture to avoid the contamination of the self.

### **Fashion Sense**

Women's travel humour further consists of jokes about the customs and manners of the Orient, the eccentricity of which contradicts Western culture. John Mcleod debates the cultural clash of the customs and manners, which "[is] considered evidence enough of the Orient's inferiority" (44). Topics related to humour mainly point to the inferiority of the Orient in terms of fashion and table manners, examples of which are used to support the perceived backwardness of the travelled cultures. Oriental clothes heavily occupy travelogues as subject matters. Rodriguez underlines the general acceptance of clothes in Afghanistan, which sometimes degrades the use of the burqa. As mentioned, the fashion of brides was discussed in the American context and seen as a comedic factor when spoken of in reference to other Afghan clothes. She draws a connection between the dullness of the country and the people who wear "mostly drab, [and] dark clothing" (Rodriguez 4). The country is criticised for its monotony through the exposure of people in public places:

The clothing was almost always the same, either close to white or close to black. The only clothes that seemed to stand out were the blue burqas covering the women. These were just a whisper of color—soft, fluid ripples that moved through the black and white and gray and tan stream of men, usually with a few children attached to their blue fringes. (Rodriguez 36-7)

As represented in Rodriguez's travelogue, the sameness of society in terms of clothing stands for the hidden inferiority that constitutes a target for humour. What is also questioned here is the originality of the travelled culture. The culture is disparaged because of the totality of the culture without any antagonist voices. In reference to

colour, the presence of women's burqas, in the social sphere is additionally discussed to underline the problem of a lack of opposition within the society. People are compared to whispers of colour rather than autonomous individuals. They are accepted as "fluid ripples" as the writer mocks the individuality of society pointing out how they move. People are seen as inferior due to their clothing preferences, which are seen as barely there "whispers" compared to the writer's culture. Dressing comes to represent the culture, and it is used to substantiate not only the inferiority of the travelled cultures but also the perceived subordination of the women. Women travel writers used the power of humour to further stereotype the Oriental women. Stuart Hall states that "stereotyping is a key element in the exercise of symbolic violence, [...] the power to represent someone or something in a certain way" (Hall 259). Thus, women travellers employ symbolic violence as they violate the right of the Orient to remain intact whilst undermining the voice of the Oriental women to "whispers" and their existences to phantasmic burqas.

Likewise, Grimshaw uses images of Fijian people to mock with their sense of fashion. Fijian fashion is provided as evidence of the inferiority that underlies the humour of travel narratives. Grimshaw writes that "the hair of these islanders is so extraordinarily thick, stiff and wiry, that it can hardly be dressed after any European fashion, and many heads may be seen in the mountains [...], uncultivated and undressed" (13). Their hairstyle is ridiculed in the text, as the writer compares it to the Western coiffure styles. Fiji is proven to be inferior in relation to Western culture as shown through evidence of fashion backwardness. The characterisation of the Orient as the inferior exotic relieves the traveller from the responsibility of correcting the so-called inferior behaviour because it implies an innate unsuitability for development. They are seen as "uncultivated and undressed" much like the mountains, likening them to the forces of nature. Fashion therefore becomes the very means through which their inferiority is confirmed, and further evoking a sense of humour.

Harem narratives also reveals several interesting scenes about clothing. They variously depict the pride of the harem, or indicate the inferiority of the Orient. Emilia Bithynia narrates their experience in the harem and their fear of people within the harem:

The slaves laughed and clapped their hands, and two or three of the principal ones rushed out of the room. We could not think what they were about, and poor Madame de

Souci became very nervous. 'I hope to goodness they won't undress us', said she, colouring up, and every ringlet shaking with fright; [...] 'Never mind if they do', said I [...] 'we must look out though that they do not divide our garments among them, and that they turn out these black men'. (Foster and Mills 49)

Here Madame de Souci worries about being undressed by the Oriental women; a situation Bithynia takes one-step further to ridicule women in the harem. They are frightened of the Orient because they view the women as mysterious and inferior. Bithynia implies that harem women might steal their clothes because they are deprived of such Western belongings. Bithynia also suggests that harem women may turn into black men referring to their outwears. She criticises the way that the women dress in public, making them undistinguishable from other people. While the veiled/covered women's bodies are a source of entertainment for Madame de Souci, they are also a source of intimidation. Meyda Yeğenoğlu argues that the veil in an Oriental context was a way to "prevent the colonial gaze from attaining such a visibility and hence mastery" (12). Hence, the excerpt also indicates the woman traveller's frustration at the inability to observe and "master" over the Oriental women's bodies.

### **The Orient's Table Manners and Western Etiquettes**

Oriental eating habits are also described and mocked in women's travel writing. The Orient is depicted as unmannerly and uncultured compared to the standards in Western culture. Women travel writers make fun of the native population's table manners that lack politeness and aristocracy of the Western service. Grimshaw underlines the fact that Fiji used to be cannibal before the missionary activity. She complains about the preoccupation of English people about the security of Fiji Islands. She aligns the progress made in their eating habits with that of missionary settlers, who provided improvement and "a better state of civilisation" in public (Grimshaw 4). She suspects one woman of being a cannibal that remarks about Grimshaw as "vinaka na kakana! – what good food" (12). She is "a young woman, shoebrush-haired, wild-eyed, and long of tooth" (12). Grimshaw describes the women here as uncivilised, still according to their "hereditary" customs. She takes it as a compliment of her British skin, a fact that is intentionally funny and indicates her superior position in Fijian society. The Fijian woman symbolises the island's continuing inferiority to the West. The woman's appearance and actions lead the traveller to doubt her cannibalism. Thus, eating habits are linked to the culture's colonial situation. In this case, cannibalism stands for Fijians'

inferiority and is a target of humour in Grimshaw's travel writing.

Harem writing also includes Oriental eating habits, contradicting Western manners. Emilia Bithynia observes the table manners of the harem she visited, and draws attention to the cultural inferiority of the harem presenting an image of the dinner service. She states:

I was curious to see if they really seemed to like the modern innovation of knives and forks. For the first few minutes they used them, - evidently to do as we did; but the Circassian beauty [...] threw those incompetent auxiliaries down, and grubbed successfully [...] with her fingers. (Foster and Mills 54)

Bithynia specifically observes their eating habits to deduce whether the Orient can cope with modern inventions. However, this scene offers the western readership an image of the harem people who are neither educated, nor modern enough to keep pace with the western innovations. They fall behind in terms of the progress of the West and are labelled as inferior because of their incompetence in the modern world.

### **Femininity and Sexuality in the Orient**

Humour allows women writers to offer an escape from the restrictions of femininity in colonial discourse in some issues. McLeod states that the position of Western women have been defined in a sexual hierarchy in relation Western men, similar to how the Orient is defined in a racial hierarchy (McLeod 49). The discourses of femininity and colonialism contradict one another because of distinct demands (Mills 21). Alongside their humour, women travellers are able to exist in an imperial sphere wherein they are also restricted due to the male preserve (Mills 58). Humour gives them the freedom to be superior in the travelled culture as they are not limited by the Western male gaze. Mills states that "the narrator is shown to be in control, and also to be in a position of knowledge, superior to that of the inhabitants of the country" (79-80). Women travel narrators often claim the power of knowledge by acknowledging both their own culture and the travelled culture with the earlier one being superior to the local inhabitants.

Western women travel writers also rely on humour to reformulate their sexuality, claiming authority and disassociating themselves from feminine weakness. Sexuality was once seen as a male preserve, and it is highly prevalent in men's harem narratives. However, men could not be admitted to the harems, which western women could freely

attend. Sexuality was a topic that privileged men over women. However, the employment of humour in harem narratives by women writers create the ways in which male authority on sexuality could be dislocated.

Rodriguez eliminates restrictions of femininity with the images of sexuality that were once forbidden to disclose. She feels authority due to her Western position and knowledge about Afghan society. The writer freely narrates her experiences in reference to her Afghan friend's consummation of marriage. Advising on sexuality for both men and women in Afghan society earns her a superior position over the Oriental men, subverting constraints before her femininity. She instructs the groom to touch the bride "like the way you'd pat a dog if it's scared" (28). In this way, Rodriguez subverts established sexual norms to her own benefit, strengthens her own position over men and disempowering and mocking the Oriental woman with the metaphor of the bride's fear about sexuality. It is held, as an understanding of virginity and purity is that the bride is not notified of anything about consummation process. Thus, her fear represents her lack of knowledge. Nonetheless, Rodriguez finds this practice cynical since the brides demonstrate terror.

She increases her power with the advice she gives to the bride, "so many women who don't really like sex cling to—just lean back, open your legs, and try to think of something else. [She] tell[s] her that it won't hurt after the first few times, that she might even find it as pleasurable as [she] do[es]" (Rodriguez 30). It could be read as an implicit insult on the femininity of the Orient, as she implies that they may not find pleasure in it because they do not take sexuality in the same way as the Westerner women do.

Rodriguez also narrates her experiences with Afghan men during her visits. She depicts them as immature as little children who like playing games. She shows her readers that the men, whom the world is afraid of, are indeed childish. She writes that "Daud and Muqim would let themselves fly off the swings at the high point, tumble on the grass, and joke about who had gone the farthest. I'd have to laugh, remembering that these were those scary Afghan men half the world was afraid of" (42). The writer presents this naivety and childlike games to the enjoyment of Western world. In this way, she deconstructs the myth of Oriental masculinity within the Western ideology. While the hierarchy between the Orient and the West tends to construct the Orient as feminine, the Oriental man is portrayed as a horror icon and that who shall be avoided



due to the scare of rape (Fanon 120). However, Rodriguez unsettles this myth and further feminises the Oriental men with her depictions. She opens herself an imperial window from Afghan society to deconstruct the norms of masculinity and femininity of the Orient. Sam Vasquez discusses on the topic:

Humorous representations of native populations as simple-minded and childlike were combined with depictions of these places as out-of-civilisation amusement parks for the hardworking, conscientious, and responsibility burdened European or North American subject. Images of sometimes servile, sometimes savage blacks, as well as depictions of unintelligent, unattractive, primitive, animalistic individuals, typified tourist representations, often to comic effect. (Vasquez 81)

Vasquez clearly demonstrates that Western readership takes the native populations as “simple-minded” and childlike. This positions a degrading influence on the native country. They are belittled into little amusement representations. Specific images of blacks or natives are used to convey the message that they are primitive and unintelligent. These representations give way to the “hardworking, responsibility burdened” Western addressee to exert power on the primitive subject in order to develop them.

Grimshaw deconstructs the boundaries of femininity of her time by travelling alone to Fiji, which was deemed as a cannibal island at a time when women were mostly allowed to leave the house only with a chaperone. She narrates most of her assumed dangerous experiences on the island as funny and harmless events. She shows courage as she jumps into several adventures and adopts a semblance of masculinity. She uses the image of a woman who pretends to bite her arm, as a compliment to her nationality. She dares to go to the island, ‘certainly not a spot where any sane man would either travel for pleasure or emigrate for profit’ (Grimshaw 3). She feels the power of for being a Western subject among the indigenous people. Her stance justifies perceived Western superiority and influence on others. Similar to Rodriguez’s experience of liberated position as a Western woman in the Orient, Grimshaw also feels free from gender constraints, relying on a colonial authority that defines and controls the indigenous. Mills discusses how femininity is belittled through the narrator’s relations and behaviour towards others because the narrator is never shown as being disobeyed (Mills 22). Grimshaw also depicts how she is respected and obeyed by the natives. They address

her respectfully as “sir”, a term also used for respectable women in Fiji. She is given Fijian convicts to serve her, and they move so femininely before a masculine woman traveller that she suggests there might be confusion about their gender and colonial positions. Therefore, Grimshaw gains imperial power free of her gender identity in Fiji, where she is distanced from the clash of discourses between femininity and colonialism. As a woman traveller, Grimshaw crosses the border set before her feminine identity with her courage to visit places where “a sane man” would not go.

### **Exotic and Eccentric Oriental Woman**

Another purpose of humour in women’s travel writing is to humiliate the travelled place by presenting parodied images of the host culture as exotic. As discussed earlier, women travellers use figures and images that substantiate the inferiority of the travelled culture by evoking humour. Thus, humour sometimes used to create effects that humiliate the host culture and demonstrate its eccentricity. Rodriguez shows the differences between the host and guest cultures, employing humiliating terms while describing them. She writes:

She has left her parents’ house under cover of burqa and will emerge six hours later wearing her body weight in eye shadow, false eyelashes the size of sparrows, monumentally big hair, and clothes with more bling than a Ferris wheel. In America, most people would associate this look with drag queens sashaying off to a party with a 1950s prom theme. Here in Afghanistan, for reasons I still don’t understand, this look conveys the mystique of the virgin. (Rodriguez 4-5)

Here Rodriguez critiques the process and tradition of the wedding ceremony and Afghan’s bride styles according to her Western norms. Firstly, the bride leaves her parents’ house in a burqa. She is freed from the burqa when she puts on her wedding dress and makeup. The sanction power of the burqa is paused for the wedding ceremony, and reinstated thereafter. Marriage, likewise, is supposed to free her from the control of her parents. However, the writer evaluates this process as a fake freedom. The woman steps into a false appearance of freedom for her wedding. The bride’s appearance is compared to “drag queen”. “Drag queen” consists of gender performance but a purified gender identity. Similarly, the bride undergoes a performance, which does not give her a purified identity. The bride’s appearance is considered as intrinsically unoriginal denying her, as Rodriguez implies, a chance for self-expression. The bride’s

external appearance is socially constructed and performative. The bride gains no solid identity or voice with the marriage, thus, remaining generically female even when they get married. This performance is also connected to another traditional performance, the proof – mystique – of the bride's virginity. Drag queens have alter ego aside from their appearances, which normally do not correspond to purity. Rodriguez implies that this mystery is ironically made extremely public by means of the theatrical wedding performance. The bride's "stage makeup", which is compared to that of drag queens, undermines the reliability of innocence and virginity. Therefore, Rodriguez ridicules the traditions of Afghan culture with the metaphor of a drag queen while depicting the ceremony as eccentric to her readership.

Rodriguez also mocks the traditions of the wedding ceremony while also interfering in her friend's consummation process. She accepts her marriage to a native man, but she mocks the rituals and routines of the native culture such as dowry negotiations with the groom. The narrator then also mocks the process stating that she would only adhere to the Western ways in terms of being able to speak up for herself. She establishes clear limits for her marriage, ignoring what the housework traditionally meant for women. Rodriguez does not pay attention to the officials. She tricks the judge who interrogates about her marital status. While asking for a proof of her single status, she shows them the "single entry" on her passport, where there is only one entry. Likewise, she interferes in the wedding ceremony of her friend, Roshanna. The consummation ceremony and the mystique of virginity are very important in Afghan culture, since the groom's family maintains the right to terminate the marriage if the bride is not a virgin. Aware of the fact that Roshanna was not a virgin, Rodriguez seeks to help her friend obviously by violating the Afghan folklore. She bleeds herself and wipes her blood on a handkerchief, which is supposed to be Roshanna's proof of virginity exclaiming that her virginity is already protected before the wedding. She circumvents the sanction of falsity and deception of virginity. The play on traditions of a culture that Rodriguez does not belong to implies that she is not in favour of respecting Afghan's folk culture on its own terms, but rather and degrading the family and ceremony with her imperial actions. The Western traveller initially observes and introduces that culture to be "backward" and "inhuman". Here the West becomes the norm according to which these traditions are defined. Then, it is not surprising that the narrative empowers the traveller as she takes a responsibility to save her friend against that culture.

## Conclusion

This article has discussed the role of humour in women's travel writing, demonstrating how the Western images presented Orient as inferior. The harem narratives produced on different cultures at different times have demonstrated that humour is central to women's travel writing. However, the satire is particularly addressed to the Western reader who has a knowledge of both cultures. They gain power over the host culture with their knowledge of both Western and Oriental culture, often acting as they wish disrespectful of the local culture. Indeed, these cultural differences constitute the basis of humour and mocking created. For example, Rodriguez mocked the heavy makeup of Afghan brides, Grimshaw draws attention to the old tradition of cannibalism in Fiji, and Bithynia references the harem's inability to utilise Western innovations, such as knives and forks. Grimshaw and Bithynia satirise the travelled culture's eating habits that are given as evidence of their lack of civilisation. Grimshaw strictly informs her readership about the safety of Fiji Islands where cannibalism ended sometime after the arrival of missionaries. The indigenous population is believed to have made a progress as shown by the transformation in their eating habits from cannibalism. However, Grimshaw highlights the fact that the Orient culture differs from theirs in terms of eccentricity. Fiji is demonstrated as inferior and uncivilised with its traditions. Similarly, Bithynia humiliates the host culture with their table manners as stated by mocking their inferiority. They are exotic because they eat with their hands instead of accomplishing modernisation with the innovations of the West. The travel writers demonstrate the travelled places as exotic and eccentric that contrast with their own social norms. Therefore, they are presented as subservient for Western readership. This article concludes that humour gives Western women an imperial power and control over the Orient, either men or women. In this way, Western women are released from the very restrictions of their femininity in their own cultures.

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## HAUNTOLOGICAL CRISES OF IDENTITY, MEMORY, AND PERSONAL HISTORY IN TOM STOPPARD'S *ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD*<sup>1</sup>

## TOM STOPPARD'IN *ROSENCRANTZ VE GUILDENSTERN ÖLDÜLER ADLI OYUNUNDA KİMLİK, BELLEK VE KİŞİSEL GEÇMİŞE DAİR HUNTOLOJİK KRİZLER*

Neslihan ŞENTÜRK UZUN<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

First staged at the Edinburgh Festival fringe in 1966, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* by Tom Stoppard garnered acclaim by presenting an inverse play in which the two peripheral Elizabethan courtiers in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, remain the focus whereas the characters in *Hamlet* have only minor roles, make brief appearances and enact fragments from the original play in scenes where the two plays converge. The crux of this existential comedy revolves around the misadventures of the duo, who were summoned by the king to "glean what afflicts" the Prince of Denmark, and whose tragic deaths go unnoticed amidst the chaotic turmoil at the end of the original play. Stoppard's absurdist text expands against the backdrop of *Hamlet* and lays bare the mishaps of the two childhood friends of *Hamlet* off the stage. This article is committed to exploring the central conflicts in Stoppard's play such as identity, memory, and personal history through the lenses of Derridean "spectres", and to investigating how far the characters' conception of the past, present and future accord with the Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as a narrative of "hauntology".

**Keywords:** Tom Stoppard, Postmodern Play, Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Spectres, Derrida, Hauntology.

### Öz

İlk olarak 1966'da Edinburgh Festivali'nde sahnelenen Tom Stoppard'ın *Rosencrantz ve Guildenstern Öldüler* adlı eserinde, William Shakespeare'in *Hamlet* adlı trajedisi içinde kıyıda kalmış iki Elizabeth dönemi saray mensubu Rosencrantz ve Guildenstern, odak noktası olarak alınır. Stoppard'ın oyunu, *Hamlet*'teki diğer ana ve yan karakterlerin iki metnin birleştiği kısımlarda küçük roller, kısa sahneler ve orijinal oyundan parçalar ile yer alabildiği, *Hamlet*'in ters çevrilmiş bir anlatısı olarak beğeni toplamıştır. Bu varoluşsal komedinin can alıcı noktası, Danimarka Prensi'nin "neden acı içinde olduğunu bulmak" amacıyla kral tarafından çağrılan ve orijinal oyunun sonundaki kaotik kargaşanın ortasında trajik ölümleri fark edilmeyen ikilinin maceraları etrafında dönüyor olmasıdır. Stoppard'ın absürt metni, *Hamlet*'i arka plana alarak öne çıkar ve *Hamlet*'in iki çocukluk arkadaşının talihsizliklerini ortaya koyar. Bu makalenin amacı, Stoppard'ın oyunundaki kimlik, bellek ve kişisel tarih gibi temel çatışmaları Derrida'ya özgü "hayaletler" mercekleri aracılığıyla keşfetmek ve karakterlerin geçmiş, şimdi ve geleceğe dair kavrayışlarının bir huntoloji anlatısı olarak Shakespeare'in *Hamlet* adlı oyunuyla ne kadar örtüştüğünü araştırmaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tom Stoppard, Postmodern Oyun, Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Hayaletler, Derrida, Huntoloji.

<sup>1</sup> In the study of this paper, the ideas and arguments present in the author's MA thesis titled "Political Authority and Spectral Stories from the Margin in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Oğuz Atay's *The Disconnected* and Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*" (Boğaziçi University, 2013) were partially utilized.

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Hauntology, a neologism introduced by Jacques Derrida in *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International* (1993), is a portmanteau of the words “haunting” and “ontology” and refers to the study of apparition of events or figures from the past that destabilize the supposed centrality of historical discourses or narratives about the past. Although ontology opposes itself to hauntology “in a movement of exorcism”, Derrida asserts that the former itself is “a conjuration” (201-2). As Colin Davis in “Hauntology, Spectres and Phantoms” also agrees, hauntology “supplants its near-homonym ontology, replacing the priority of being and presence with the figure of the ghost as that which is neither present nor absent, neither dead nor alive” (373). The concept seeks to undermine the wedge between “being” and “not being”, and Derrida argues that it is already present in *Hamlet*’s thinking through the encounter in his famous soliloquy between “to be” and “not to be”. *Hamlet*’s dilemma “already began with the expected return of the dead King” and the revenant “figures both a dead man who comes back and a ghost whose expected return repeats itself, again and again” (Derrida 10). What we call a ghost, Derrida adds, comes into view once we recognise the “effectivity or the presence of a spectre” even though it appears to “remain as ineffective, virtual, insubstantial as a simulacrum” (10). He then calls this theory “hauntology”, the study of spectres, which foregrounds the out-of-joint mediums that are not necessarily present but have a distinguished effect on the time and setting they haunt. These ghostly figures or places lay bare for their subjects a nonlinear but spatio-temporal realm where those elements of the past, which might formerly have been marginalised or omitted altogether in the name of stability, linger tenaciously in the present.

As spectres enable a proper discussion of what is present or absent, visible or invisible, they can evoke a strong impression that what we call “present” is integrally embedded in the realm of spectres of the past and the future. This idea, by implication, not only denotes a potential conflict between the past and the present; it also raises the issue that the past and the present are bound to be haunted by the spectral futures. It is therefore of utmost significance to recognise that what is considered as “now” is an unstable ground that is profoundly bound up with the past, and it is always in the process of being defined and re-defined vis-à-vis what is yet to come. Ghosts therefore play a vital role since they do not only shatter those current delusions by means of their unexpected hauntings, but also have the potential to make their subjects remember and

even speak of the events that have gone unnoticed under trauma-like circumstances in the past. The spectre is hence a deconstructive medium “hovering between life and death, presence and absence, and making established certainties vacillate” (Derrida 376) and it necessarily evades belonging to the deep-rooted realm of knowledge. This haunting requires the spectre to continue its visitations from beyond the graveyard at all costs, and taken as a whole, hauntology has direct consequences for human beings as agents (and receivers) of certain narratives belonging to the past. However, Derrida’s argument revolves around the haunted persona of *Hamlet*. He was already given a central presence in Shakespeare’s play and thanks to his father’s ghost, he is able to twist the course of events. Then how about those with the peripheral existence in *Hamlet*? Were they granted a similar central position within a narrative, what would their hauntings be like – if at all?

Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* presents such an alternative setting in which the marginal story of two attendant lords in *Hamlet*, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (hereafter Ros and Guil), is rewritten. The title is a quotation from *Hamlet*. After the tragic deaths of the main characters in the play, when the ambassador announces “Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead” (Shakespeare 253), the news of their execution gets lost in the shuffle vis-à-vis the deaths of other central characters. Stoppard takes on what seems to be a minute detail in the original text, and names his play after the two minor characters in the margin. Stoppard in this respect creates a sense of the duo’s alternative experience in the wings of *Hamlet* and radically shifts the centre of the stage. As Katherine E. Kelly states, in his practice of “min[ing] the ‘imaginary museum’ of western art” by recycling classic texts, Stoppard presents the reader and the spectator “with familiar literary language (and visual imagery) made strange by an unfamiliar dramatic context” (10-11). Stoppard’s play indeed offers a new perspective and defamiliarizes the reader and audience alike since, even though they are familiar with the master text or play, they probably do not give a profound thought to subordinate characters in the play, Ros and Guil. In this sense, Derrida’s approach to hauntology and spectre is convenient to analyse the Stoppardian universe and to address the abovementioned questions.

Ros and Guil’s misadventures and musings are recounted in the form of a tragicomedy. At the beginning of the play, the two well-dressed Elizabethans merely pass time “in a place without any visible character” (Stoppard 1). The characters suddenly find themselves in an unintelligible world of which they hardly have any idea or reminiscence. As the play progresses, Ros and Guil, who have interchangeable and ambiguous



personalities, are thoroughly confused about the events which take place onstage in *Hamlet* without them. They get increasingly agitated when they find that it is impossible for them to attain any hands-on experience of, or direct information other than a pile of fragments provided by the others about the events. Ros and Guil are simply bound to accept what piece of information is granted to them by the characters in the original play. Here, the reader is left to wonder whether Ros and Guil could be the ghost figures in Stoppard's play.

Sonya Freeman Loftis in Shakespeare's Surrogates underlines that "*Hamlet* is the quintessential haunted play, and Stoppard's comic response is an equally haunted adaptation" (97). Indeed, Ros and Guil are long dead, as per the original play. As Bernard Benstock in his discussion of "The Spectres in the Tales" points out, the readers of Shakespeare's text already know that the courtiers are ghosts "through death"; and the auditors learn from Stoppard's play that they are ghosts "through absence" (32). In the surrogate universe created by Stoppard, the duo in fact has no bodily existence at all. In addition, even though they literally are the ghosts, Ros and Guil cannot be characterised as the Derridean ghosts that haunt the present and overwrite narratives of the past. In this alternative universe, the duo's inability to act as actively as a ghost stems from the fact that their fate has already been "written" by Shakespeare, and it is beyond the later playwright's reach to undo it. Stoppard does put the already deceased Ros and Guil in the centre of the play, but characters are not even remotely capable of breaking free of the narrative captivation they face, let alone determining their own narrative.

Not much further in the play, therefore, both the characters and the reader come to recognise that there is no other way out, "every exit as being an entrance somewhere else" (Stoppard 19). As Jonathan Bennett in "Philosophy and Mr. Stoppard" also sees it, "whenever Shakespeare writes 'exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern' we follow them off Shakespeare's stage on to Stoppard's" (9). The spokesman of the troupers in the play openly concedes his almost dogmatic subscription to the script and underscores the textual limitations of mere actors as follows:

Player There's a design at work in all art – surely you know that? Events must play themselves out to aesthetic, moral and logical conclusion.

Guil And what's that, in this case?

Player It never varies – we aim at the point where everyone who is marked for

death dies.

Guil     Marked?

Player Between ‘just desserts’ and ‘tragic irony’ we are given quite a lot of scope for our particular talent.

Generally speaking, things have gone about as far as they can possibly go when things have got about as bad as they reasonably get. (He switches on a smile.)

Guil     Who decides?

Player (switching off his smile) Decides? It is written...

We’re tragedians, you see. We follow directions – there is no choice involved. The bad end unhappily, the good unluckily. That is what tragedy means. (Stoppard 71-72)

Ros and Guil simply end up succumbing to their pre-determined fate and to the lines already written ages ago. On the other hand, the Derridean spectre in Stoppard’s play turns out to be nothing other than Shakespeare’s master narrative, *Hamlet*. Much as Ros and Guil are ghosts themselves, their ghostly potential is surpassed and invalidated by this former text. *Hamlet* haunts Ros and Guil (as well as the play itself) in terms of predetermining their life-in-death condition, sense of identity, personal history and existence in the temporal realm.

First of all, Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* not only predetermines Ros and Guil’s life-in-death condition in the play, but also haunts them in a way that perplexes the characters and enables the duo to vaguely catch a glimpse of their murdered condition or eventual persecution. As Ramona Mosse in “From Corpse to Corpus” discusses, the issue of having a ghost on the stage is an uncanny phenomenon, “given the breathing phenomenal body of the actor that is standing in for its own annihilation” (60). At the beginning of Act 2, when they attempt to inveigle *Hamlet* into revealing what he is so afflicted with, Ros and Guil end up being bitterly mocked and outwitted by the prince. Offended and humiliated, they comment on the situation afterwards and say:

Ros(simply) He murdered us.

Guil             He might have had the edge.

Ros           (roused) Twenty-seven-three, and you think he might have had the edge?! He murdered us. (Stoppard 48)

In their dream-like state, Ros and Guil come to a vague awareness that they have already been killed by *Hamlet*'s trick. Apparently, Ros and Guil do not belong to the realm of the alive and, hence, are exempt from the bodily needs. Consider, for example, the fact that although they do not eat through the course of the play, they do not starve to death:

Ros   They sit facing front. Are you hungry?

Guil   No, are you?

Ros   (thinks) No. (Stoppard 61)

Neither do they feel any kind of sleeplessness. At one point they feel obliged to sleep only to comply with the mandatory directions of the play:

Ros   It'll be night soon. This far north. (dolefully.) I suppose we'll have to go to sleep.

(He yawns and stretches.)

Guil   Tired?

Ros   No... (Stoppard 90-91)

Moreover, it occurs to the two Elizabethans that their fingernails and beard continue to grow, which they think might be indicative of their beyond-the-grave appearance on the stage:

Ros   (cutting his fingernails) Another curious scientific phenomenon is the fact that the fingernails grow after death, as does the beard.

Guil   What?

Ros   (loud) Beard!

Guil   But you're not dead.

Ros   (irritated) I didn't say they started to grow after death! (Pause, calmer.) The fingernails also grow before birth, though not the beard.

Guil What?

Ros (shouts) Beard! What's the matter with you? (Stoppard 8-9)

They cannot but defer the direct implication of this “scientific phenomenon” through what seems like a chain of idle misunderstandings. Ros continues to give away yet another clue about their state of death in the following:

Ros (reflectively.) The toenails, on the other hand, never grow at all.

Guil (bemused) The toenails on the other hand never grow at all?

Ros Do they? It's a funny thing – I cut my fingernails all the time, and every time I think to cut them, they need cutting. Now, for instance. And yet, I never, to the best of my knowledge, cut my toenails. They ought to be curled under my feet by now, but it doesn't happen. I never think about them. Perhaps I cut them absent-mindedly, when I'm thinking of something else. (Stoppard 9)

As fictional characters, their fingernails and beard might be seen by the audience and they need cutting; on the other hand, because Ros and Guil are created fully-clothed by the playwright, their toenails need not grow – or maybe do not exist at all. This is because in the case of the ghosts on stage, “Life no longer activates the body from within but permeates its boundaries from without” (Mosse 60). That is, they only show what seems like vital signs when they are instructed by the playwright from without. No sooner do they come close to having a sense of their death than either Ros or Guil find a way to evade this feeling and divert their thoughts, awkwardly attempting to convince each other that they are alive:

Ros Do you ever think of yourself as actually dead,  
lying in a box with a lid on it?

Guil No.

Ros Nor do I, really... It's silly to be depressed by it. I mean one thinks of it like being alive in a box, one keeps forgetting to take into account the fact that one is dead...

which should make a difference... shouldn't it? I mean,  
you'd never know you were in a box, would you? It  
would be just like being asleep in a box. Not that I'd like  
to sleep in a box, mind you, not without any air – you'd  
wake up dead, for a start and then where would you be?  
Apart from inside a box. That's the bit I don't like, frankly.  
That's why I don't think of it...

(...)

Guil (jumps up savagely) You don't have to flog it to death!

Pause.

Ros I wouldn't think about it, if I were you. You'd only get depressed.

(Stoppard 62-63)

Because they are reluctant to acknowledge that they passed away, Guil philosophises on their current situation, concluding that they may be within the realm of “un-, sub- or supernatural forces” (Stoppard 7), and the attempts to make sense of true nature of their condition is to fail because of these factors.

Despite the courtiers' inability to come to realise their spectral wanderings and utterances within the ethereal domain of the play, they seem to be so weary of their fragile condition that the idea of death, from time to time, is not so daunting, yet even alluring for the duo. Their perpetual struggle to isolate themselves from the hustle and bustle of the characters around contributes to the exhaustion they experience, depriving them of “a moment's peace” (65). On top of this, their attempts to interfere with the course of events contribute even more to their exhaustion, leaving them with a bitter feeling of uselessness. For instance, when in search of Polonius's corpse, Ros and Guil feel useless and have had enough when *Hamlet* shows up himself, not through their efforts:

*Again there is a fractional moment in which Ros is  
smug, Guil is trapped and betrayed. Guil opens his  
mouth and closes it.*

*The situation is saved:*

*Hamlet, escorted, is marched in just as Claudius leaves.*

*Hamlet and his Escort cross the stage and go out,  
following Claudius.*

*Lighting changes to exterior.*

Ros (moves to go) All right, then?

Guil (does not move; thoughtfully) And yet it doesn't seem enough; to have breathed such significance. Can that be all? And why us? – anybody would have done. And we have contributed nothing. (Stoppard 84)

They seem to act as non-functional characters barely having any wilful influence on the incidents around them since they are the passive and aerial agents acting as per the pre-written script. They would probably rather be resting in peace than be concerned with deceased bodies, including their own. As Ros clearly reveals, “Eternity is a terrible thought. I mean, where’s it going to end?” (Stoppard 63).

Shakespeare’s text also haunts Ros and Guil’s constant yet hopeless search for their identity. When Derrida at one point problematises the identity of the ghost (175), he asserts that even though it does not have “a pure identity to itself” (136), it is neither a “lifeless body” or a “cadaver”, nor a figure “without identity” (51). On the other hand, in Stoppard’s play Ros and Guil are by no means allowed to get hold of consistent information as to who exactly they are. The only information Ros and Guil acquire about themselves and their identity comes from the other characters in *Hamlet*, and it is decidedly a construct par excellence. Ros and Guil struggle to bring together pieces of the puzzle of their identity due to the bits of vague information provided to the duo by the others. They cannot choose but internalize others’ account of who they are and what their principal purpose on stage is. Gertrude and Claudius, for example, tell them that *Hamlet* is ill and that they must somehow find out what afflicts the prince. Without providing further information, they order that it is Ros and Guil’s duty, as being childhood friends of the prince, to find out the reason for “*Hamlet’s* transformation” and moodiness (Stoppard 27). Unable to remember that far back in their personal histories, Ros and Guil cannot but seem to assume the roles they have been instructed. Therefore, despite having no clue

whatsoever, they pretend to remember being childhood friends of *Hamlet* in the royal presence. However, when alone, they cannot help but be immersed in disbelief and start questioning the awkward situation they are in:

Ros We're his friends.

Guil How do you know?

Ros From our young days brought up with him.

Guil You've only got their word for it.

Ros But that's what we depend on.

Guil Well, yes, and then again no. (Stoppard 101)

In the last sentence, the immediate utterance of "yes" with "no" is significant since it indicates that the duo is obliged to take the monarch's word for granted whereas an underlying feeling of disapproval does perpetually prey on their mind. Were they Derridean ghosts, they would be able to speak up for themselves and even make a spectral impact on the series of events in this alternative play. However, because Shakespeare did not elaborate on the personality of Ros and Guil in the first place, they are too constrained to construct it any longer.

Ros and Guil, therefore, peevishly face the nasty truth that their identity is pre-determined by the playwright and they are included, albeit reluctantly, into the world of the play. The unwilling compliance of the duo can be seen in their childish confusion with regard to a fact as simple as their names:

Ros My name is Guildenstern, and this is Rosencrantz.

*(Guil confers briefly with him.)*

*(without embarrassment)* I'm sorry – his name's

Guildenstern, and I'm Rosencrantz. (Stoppard 13)

However, one can rest assured that their respective names are merely trivial minutiae; what really matters is their role in the stagecraft, as instantly revealed by the leading actor in the play:

Player I recognized you at once –

Ros And who are we?

Player – as fellow artists.

Ros I thought we were gentlemen.

Player For some of us it is performance, for others,  
patronage. They are two sides of the same coin, or, let us  
say, being as there are so many of us, the same side of two coins.  
(Stoppard 13)

The Player recognises Ros and Guil as he is also created by the playwright. Although Ros tries to learn who they are and relies on the Player's reply, the latter does not know anything further than the information that Ros and Guil are "fellow artists". Therefore when the duo pass time offstage, it does not mean that they are exempt from the world onstage; conversely, they can catch a vague glimpse of their identity solely by means of taking part in the narrative that is not their own creation.

In addition to lacking proper identities, Ros and Guil's crises on stage stem from being the displaced characters that seem to have lost their grasp of individual history and sense of an origin in Stoppard's play. Their recollections about a place called "home" as such is also blurred and it turns out that "home" for them is a non-existent dreamy entity:

Guil And a syllogism: One, he has never known anything  
like it. Two, he has never known anything to write home  
about. Three, it is nothing to write home about... Home...  
What's the first thing you remember?

Ros Oh, let's see... The first thing that comes into my  
head, you mean?

Guil No – the first thing you remember.

Ros Ah. (Pause.) No, it's no good, it's gone. It was a long  
time ago.

Guil (patient but edged) You don't get my meaning. What  
is the first thing after all the things you've forgotten?

Ros Oh I see. (Pause.) I've forgotten the question. (Stoppard 6-7)



The more they force themselves to get in touch with their origin, which would also inform their sense of identity, the more hopeless they grow. That they still feel an urge to remember home – which has the connotations of security, belonging, identity and personal history – is indicative of the precariousness of their condition on and off the stage. This can visibly be tracked in their forgetfulness, or amnesia, when it comes to even the most basic and vital elements in the lives of people subject to the “natural” forces of temporal and spatial linearity. Guil’s following question is intrinsically bound up with the loss (or lack) of memory:

Guil Has it ever happened to you that all of a sudden and for no reason at all you haven’t the faintest idea how to spell the word – ‘wife’ - or ‘house’ - because when you write it down you just can’t remember ever having seen those letters in that order before...?

Ros I remember –

Guil Yes?

Ros I remember when there were no questions. (Stoppard 29)

Whereas Guil rapidly utters the words for fear that he will forget what he has to say, Ros seems to remember something for a brief moment, yet it is a non-existent realm. They are indeed bound to forget even the things and activities in which they were engaged a very short while ago:

Ros You remember that coin?

Guil No.

Ros I think I lost it.

Guil What coin?

Ros I don’t remember exactly. (Stoppard 61)

Apparently, along with having an “unremembered past” (Stoppard 6), neither courtier is able to make connections between their present and the recent past. That they are unable to recollect anything about a place or time of origin suggests that Ros and Guil are like rootless entities that spend their time in a location that is alien even to

themselves, without any intelligible features or rules. At one point Ros pulls himself together to “go home”, but collapses immediately after the realisation that he has lost his “sense of direction” (Stoppard 31). They have nowhere to go in the strictest sense of the word, and are confined with the “lack of” an environment (Stoppard 2).

Another oddity that runs throughout the play is the fact that the notion of time is cloudy for Ros and Guil and they are haunted by the temporal realm of *Hamlet*. At the beginning, stage directions attract our attention to this point: “Then they repeat the process. They have apparently been doing this for some time” (Stoppard 7). Being dead entities in the play, they cannot comprehend the passing of time due to their condition of being out of time:

Guil We have been spinning coins together since –

*(He releases him almost as violently.)*

This is not the first time we have spun coins!

Ros Oh no – we’ve been spinning coins for as long as I remember.

Guil How long is that?

Ros I forget. (Stoppard 5)

Their conception of time is visibly constrained by the playwright, and because “time has stopped dead” (Stoppard 6) for Ros and Guil, they have been out of time all along. The courtiers are destined to obey the orders of King Claudius and to eventually be sent to death by *Hamlet*; as Ros also recognises, “there’s only one direction, and time is its only measure” (Stoppard 63). Time exists as long as they follow the stage directions; otherwise, Ros and Guil face their ghostly existence and timeless surroundings off the stage. On the boat scene in Act Three, they confront this reality as follows:

Ros We drift down time, clutching at straws. But what  
good’s a brick to a drowning man?

Guil Don’t give up, we can’t be long now.

Ros We might as well be dead. Do you think death could  
possibly be a boat?

Guil No, no, no... Death is... not. Death isn’t. You  
take my meaning. Death is the ultimate negative. Not-

being. You can't not-be on a boat.

Ros I've frequently not been on boats.

Guil No, no, no - what you've been is not on boats.

Ros I wish I was dead. (Stoppard 99)

As it turns out, the only temporal reality the characters are granted is here and now, beyond the limits of which they cannot venture to trespass. Consider the following conversation:

Guil ...one must think of the future.

Ros It's the normal thing.

Guil To have one. One is, after all, having it all the  
time... now... and now... and now...

Ros It could go on for ever. Well, not for ever, I suppose. (Stoppard 62)

It is not surprising that they have no clue. Again, Ros and Guil succumb to a predetermined design, and, once they understand that they have no freedom to go beyond the temporal limits drawn for them, they not only "drift down time" but disappear.

Considering the aforementioned hauntology argument, Derrida's ghosts, and the spectral presence of the two courtiers in Stoppard's play, it remains to be concluded that neither Ros nor Guil have the prospect of future existence because, even though they are ghosts themselves, the duo is simultaneously haunted by the textual spectre of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Even though Stoppard attempts to give voice to their off-stage condition, the playwright cannot save their lives. Moving to and fro, afflicted with a life-in-death condition, without a proper sense of identity, personal history or time, Ros and Guil inevitably succumb to Shakespeare's script. They do from time to time question their situation just to end up with a mere tautology or deference of attaining any possible solid reality about themselves and their delimited world on stage. Their attempts to break free can yield no results at all; there is no actual world assigned to them in a so-called alternative universe. Already dead in the previous play, they are only the ghostly replicas of original Ros and Guil in *Hamlet*, with barely any choice of an alternative ending.

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## THE ETERNAL RESURRECTION OF MODERNITY

Rachad Chafik ELIDRISSI<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

In this paper, I reflect on the intertwined, shifting relationship among modernity, postmodernity, and liquid modernity by drawing from texts on philosophy, sociology, and theology. I present and argue three statements: 1) postmodernity is at once a rupture and continuity of modernity, 2) postmodernity is an epoch bridging the shift of society's conditions from solid to liquid form, and 3) liquid modernity characteristics overlap with hypermodernity rather than postmodernity. Within the consideration devoted to these statements, I posit that modernity is a concept that has an outstanding potential to perpetuate by relentlessly resurrecting itself under different forms.

**Keywords:** Neo-solidification, Liquid Modernity, Metanarratives, Fragmentation, Ambivalence, Demystification, Hypermodernity, Postmodernity.

### Introduction

With the desire and permanent dynamic to go beyond the past, modern societies mark a “maelstrom of perpetual disintegration and renewal” (Berman 15), and forge an everlasting “new” which almost immediately ceases to be “new” once generated, and so forth. It is a relentless change, a restless form of thinking which does not proceed from or expect to reach a transcendental or transcendent ground or principle. The very essence of modern societies is what prevents them from settling and reaching stability. Their progress is always asymmetrical and unsteady, which is, hypothetically, due to the failure of humans to create a predictable and demystified world. Under the ungratified promises of emancipation and enhancement, what defines the modern remains changeable with continual alternatives that perpetually negate the ideologies of the past and carry on creating new ones. Against this background, societies have been on a rollercoaster of change, moving from modern to postmodern, and liquid modern conditions. This article finds its impetus in this intertwined, shifting relationship of these societal conditions. In the opening section, I will outline some characteristics of modernity in light of the sacralisation of man's idea and the concepts of grand narrative and metanarrative. I will proceed by declaring the fall of modernity and its resurrection into postmodernity and how these two narratives are connected. Next, I will discuss the

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main points of convergence and divergence between “postmodernity” and “liquid modernity,” and how this latter comes to overlap with the concept of “hypermodernity.” Throughout the paper, I will emphasize the exceptional potential of modernity to strive by consistently resurrecting in various forms.

### **The Shift in God’s Status: The Nest of Modernity<sup>2</sup>**

The concept of modernity has been long debated by a wide range of scholars. In Frederic Jameson’s words, “modernity is not a concept but rather a narrative category” (Jameson 94). It is at once a historical phase, a human-led movement for continuous progress and an ontological rupture. It is the result of an emancipatory impulse, a revolutionary rupture intended to be empowering and liberating within a tradition in decline. At its simplest, modernity is the rejection of traditional values, in particular the holistic pre-modern faith, driving the society gradually away from an omniscient and almighty God to absolute atheism. This negation of God’s existence has, consequently, brought forth an unassailable belief in the physical world which will mark the beginning of decadence, moral decline, and inevitably the crisis of the modern world and meaning.<sup>3</sup>

God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers? What was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it? (Nietzsche 181)

Nietzsche’s prominent declaration of “God’s death” is a commentary and criticism of the age of Enlightenment, together with the rise of industrial capitalism and the modern nation which emphasized science and reason over faith and superstition. Casting “God” aside and putting the “man” at the center of everything, “there arises a

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<sup>2</sup> The famous Christian theologian Anselm of Canterbury (1033—1109) said: “I believe (in God) so that I may understand” (*credo ut intelligam*). This saying emphasizes the premodern dominant philosophy to the effect that God is the basis for absolute moral and rational truths, the origin and the starting point for knowledge and wisdom, and the supreme being through which the “man” can accurately interpret his world.

<sup>3</sup> Owing to the scientific discoveries and technological advances of the modern world, the “man” has gradually been bewitched and blinded by the achievements of his own made society and has, inevitably, begun to lose both interest and understanding of God and the spiritual self. In this sense, Frederic Nietzsche (1974) argued that the death of God was not the appearance, but rather the disappearance of man, that man and God have a dependency relationship, by the death of the creator (God) the creation (man) could not help but disappear as well.

new faith, faith in humanity or liberty. For the individual's God, the God of all, namely, 'man', is now exalted; 'for it is the highest thing in us all to be man'" (Stirner 129).<sup>4</sup> The modern age was the period when humans ceased turning toward the supernatural realm and began to root their faith in the concept of "man," as the master of his destiny, creating by that a new stage in human existence rationalized and (almost) demystified through which the man has become some mythical hero.

This enlightened anthropocentric view can be traced back to the Renaissance, wherein humanism thrived in identifying what distinguishes humans from other beings to support the principle of man's singularity. In the fifteenth century the Italian philosopher and theologian Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494) wrote: "O great and wonderful happiness of man! It is given him to have that which he chooses and to be that which he wills" (5). With this representation of the "Renaissance man," Pico was the pioneer of the humanist myth of "self-made man," a man inclined to refine and elevate himself to transcendency, especially through the revival of ancient literature, philosophy, rhetoric, philology, etc.

### **Skepticism Toward the Metanarratives: The Fall of Modernity**

The philosopher Merold Westphal (1995) sees that modernity is characterized by the search for an absolute certainty (in reference to René Descartes' philosophy), which is an uninterrupted quest to demystify the nature of existence and relentless research for answers to humankind existential angst and problems in every epoch (Danilo qtd. in Watfa 2011). Against this background, the modernists tried to invent metanarratives<sup>5</sup> and grand narratives<sup>6</sup> – without referring to God – to teach the principles of human dignity, freedom, morals, and progress.

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<sup>4</sup> René Descartes (1596-1650) in his pursuit of knowledge has dived into a skeptical journey, determined to question everything He asserted that "skepticism" was a form of thinking: "I am thinking, therefore I am" (*Cogito, ergo sum*). Unwarily, Descartes' philosophy has replaced God's omniscience with human knowledge, a philosophical perception that will soon be fundamentally reflected in the Enlightenment movement, a period in which humankind was both optimistic about its potential and reason, but also skeptical about the authority of the Church and Christian principles.

<sup>5</sup> According to Lyotard, metanarratives are "a set of rules that determine the legitimacy of a particular form of narrative, [...] and provide the criteria that allow one to judge which ideas and statements are legitimate, true and ethical for each different form of narrative" (Malpas 37).

<sup>6</sup> Modernity's grand narratives, on the other hand, "produce systematic accounts of how the world works, how it develops over history, and the place of human beings within it" (Malpas 37). It introduces the progress of knowledge as an instrument to demystify the world to improve the human condition and emancipate him from prejudices, enslavement and superstitions.

The account mentioned above suggests that the humanistic conception of the world was the same as the religious one. When religion has alleged man's nature to be divine, the humanists have alleged man's nature to be rational. Religion believes in the soul, afterlife, spirits, and immaterial things, while the humanists have faith in the state, society, common good, and material things. Hence, humankind has merely traded one fixed idea for another. In this sense, it was a question of time before the conflict between promises and results in modernity came to the surface; rather than emancipation, enhancement and progress, modernity become often associated with totalitarianism, oppression, and terror; just like Horkheimer and Adorno in their famous book *Dialectic of Enlightenment* wrote: "Enlightenment [...] has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters. Yet the wholly enlightened earth is radiant with triumphant calamity" (1). That is to say, the emancipation of man has only been accomplished in conjunction with violence and domination: totalitarian regimes, World Wars, and a global capitalist system.

In its quest for a rational, technological, progressive, and governable social order, modernity has failed. Modernity was meant, through the development of knowledge, to help humankind understand the essence of its existence, improve its conditions and emancipate it from ignorance, enslavement, and inequality. However, rather than emancipation, it has brought slavery, and rather than liberation, we got alienation, a state of unfulfillment where the traditional social relations has been weakened and disintegrated – becoming predominantly and structurally based upon economics – reduced to relations between things, and inevitably the relation between things has been elevated to the status of social relations. From this point of view, we are reminded of Ulrich Beck's definition of "modernization" in which he emphasized that it was a process not just limited to "technological rationalization and changes in work and organization," but it goes beyond that to include "the change in societal characteristics and normal biographies, changes in lifestyle and forms of love, change in the structures of power and influence, in the forms of political repression and participation, in views of reality and in the norms of knowledge" (Beck 50).

After a series of historical events, trust in science, human progress and emancipation were crushed on the rocks of mass atrocities crimes. The grand narratives of Marxism, scientism, or rationality tyrannized the "other." The metanarrative of science and technology unveiled its lack of humanity when put at the service of political ideology (e.g., the use of atomic bombs during WWII and the spray of dioxins during the Vietnam



War). Thus, these grand narratives and metanarratives have proven to be total failures. The disastrous consequences of modernity have caused a general state of confusion and disorientation and unleashed a wave of uncertainty – humans have become hopelessly and desperately searching for alternatives – marking the beginning of a postmodern climate and giving rise to pluralism and fragmentation of narrative in the West.

### **Modernity shed its skin: Postmodernity**

There is not a specific time in history that we can point to as a separating line between the two eras (modernity and postmodernity), and that is the nature of historical changes as all social conditions are the results of a succession of interrupted steady antecedents and prophetic historical events. Thus, the term “postmodernity” which Lyotard (1984) simply defines as skepticism towards metanarratives, remains until now as a concept highly debated, hard to understand, and even harder to define.

The positioning of “postmodernity” has been long debated as to whether it is a rupture of continuity of modernity. The prefix ‘post-’ can signify a “process of historical succession in which modernity and postmodernity follows on from and replaces the modern,” or an entirely “cut off from everything that might have led up to it” (Malpas 42). In his essay “Note on the Meaning of ‘Post-’” (1985), Lyotard brings forward three explanatory statements on the relationship between the modern and the postmodern:

- (1) as a new period, style or fashion that supersedes earlier ones; [...]
- (2) moment at which innovation and development can no longer be equated with progress; [...]
- (3) the postmodern does not simply replace the modern, but rather performs a continual rereading and critique of modern values and projects. Postmodernity is not a new age, but rather the name for a collection of critiques that seek to challenge the premises of those discourses that have shaped modern experience. (Malpas 42-44)

In light of this analysis, postmodernity cannot be naively defined as a rupture or a continuity. Postmodernity is the consequence of modernity performance. It is at once a rupture and a continuity: (1) a rupture with the traditional discourses (rationality, science, progress) in opposition to which modernity establishes itself as a narrative to emancipate mankind from all subjugation, (2) and a continuity as postmodernity is not something isolated or separated from modernity. It is a concept that comes from

modernity's womb and rises from the ashes of its failure. It can be said to be a rupture only if it stands on its self-constructed ideas, which is existentially and rationally impossible in a world where nothing can be created out of nothingness. Thus, the concept of postmodernity along with postmodernism exists because of the anterior existence of its predecessor, "modernity." They "incorporate that which they aim to contest by incorporating and remoulding the modernity within themselves" (Hutcheon 3). This suggests that postmodernity is a consequence of modernity (Giddens); it is at once a deviation from and a perpetuation of modernity.

All things considered, if modernity marked the triumph of metanarratives and grand narratives, postmodernity has dethroned them, giving place to an era of fragmentation and pluralism of narratives in which no single idea prevails and where a variety of ideas, however divergent and heterogeneous, can exist side-by-side. In one of his dialogues, Plato mentioned the Protagoras thinker "[t]hat as each thing appears to me, so it's for me, and as it appears to you so it's for you" (qtd. in Williams, Levett, and Burnyeat 14), his words encapsulate the postmodern philosophy wherein the one true ideology no longer rules.

### **The Radicalism: Toward a Liquid Modernity or Hypermodernity**

Just as its precursor, the postmodern philosophy came to emancipate humankind, liberate it from the western mythology based on hegemony, exploitation, and westernization, by unveiling ideological delusions and undermining authoritarian rhetoric. This restless obsession with breaking free from the metanarratives and grand narratives of modernity has driven the human into an intensified fragmentation of narratives, giving place to a shift in society from a solid to a liquid form. In light of this, postmodernity can be evaluated and perceived as a phase of breathlessness and a starting point towards a total radicalism, which will unleash what Bauman terms "liquid modernity" (2006), a concept to which I stay true to its meaning but reevaluate its position as to what predated it historically.

As an alternative to "postmodernity," Bauman uses, equivalently, the term "liquid modernity," wherein he criticizes the modern trajectory stemming from the enlightenment philosophy, to show the impotence of societies to find in modernity a satisfactory balance for veritable emancipation. Liquid modernity defines and describes the condition of societies without a stable benchmark in which individuals are constantly brought to adapt to change, and it is a concept derivative of the era of globalization and

the postmodern world wherein we witnessed the proliferation of doubt and confusion, the mushrooming of consumerism and mercantilism, and the demolition of social mores.

Through his work, Bauman puts “liquid modernity” in contrast to “solid modernity,” in which stable and well-defined social forms exist. Prior to modernity, there were solid thoughts rooted mostly in the sacralization of the church, kings, and the supernatural world. Under these circumstances, modernity came as a movement to liquefy these solid thoughts by bringing the man out from its iron cage of tradition. However, this liquefaction was the starting point for a new moulding of the society, what I prefer to call “neo-solidification” with a reason as a means and perfection as a goal.

In light of the foregoing, postmodernity came as a counter-philosophy against this “neo-solidification,” just as modernity did with the solid form of pre-modern traditions, postmodernity has, in its turn, appropriated “liquefaction” as a destructive weapon against the solid forms of modernity, marked by that the commencement of a relentless liquefaction. Historically speaking, if postmodernity was more or less unleashed post to World War II, I would roughly position the visibility of liquid modernity post to the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the appearance of the twenty-first-century political grand narrative ‘War on Terrorism.’ This historical positioning represents the “pivotal moment,” the moment that indicates the debut of a new era, a new world order, and marks the world’s entrance into a novel and radical phase, a liquid phase characterized by a “perpetual aspect of continuous and continuing, compulsive and obsessive modernization” (Bauman 31).

It is against this background that the idea of postmodernity can neither serve as an interpretation of our contemporary social conditions nor as an equivalent concept to liquid modernity. Towards this end, a repositioning of ‘liquid modernity’ concept can align with the emergent concept of ‘hypermodernity’ which defines a modernity “qualifiable as radical in its no longer having any sufficiently organized counter-powers, nor offering any credible alternative model” (Charles and Lipovetsky qtd. in Charles 392), and characterizes societies of excessiveness deprived of any alternative model and “built around the notion of risk” (Charles 390).

If the prefix “post-” can signify a process of historical succession, the prefix “hyper-” encapsulates this impression that “we live in societies marked by a climate of immoderation, exacerbation, and forward-fleeing” (Charles 392). In this context, another key fact to remember is that similarly to postmodernity, hypermodernity is at once a

rupture and a continuity of modernity. Sébastien Charles wrote, “if modernity is a system founded on the individual, democracy, the market, and science, who does not see these four principles still making up the heart of our societies today?” (392); however, inversely to the modernity’s promises of happiness, progress, prosperity, emancipation, equality, and universal harmony, hypermodernity delivers us modernity deprived of those ingredients of excellence, impuissant to justify or control its own doings, a “radical modernity” characterized by:

the exacerbation and intensification of that modern logic by which human rights and democracy have been made into mandatory values, by the market having become a global economic reference system reaching the remotest places on the planet and invading every sphere of our existence, and by science as an only partly controllable instrument that now throws even the notion of humanity itself into question by opening the possibility of human cloning (Charles 392).

Simply put, hypermodernity is postmodernity suffocating under an excessive speed by technology and consumption, which typifies late-stage capitalism. This liquefaction and superfluity in all areas elucidate why instability, insecurity, and uncertainty are the terms that fittingly represent and portray hypermodern societies, societies that favor “competition, flexibility, mobility, and adaptability” instead of “permanence and stability” (Charles 393), all which characterize the Baumanian concept of liquid modern societies.

## **Conclusion**

The birth of modernity, postmodernity, and liquid modernity was a revolutionary break, advocating emancipation under the tyranny of a tradition in putrefaction. Wherein modernity promoted utopianism, postmodernity popularized skepticism which inevitably unleashed uncertainty and consequently gave birth to liquid modernity. Thus, humankind sailed away from a rigid categorization (metanarratives and grand narratives) to fragmentation of narratives, leading to a restless interdependent process of solidification and liquefaction wherein narratives ended up being radically liquified. Throughout this process, modernity has proven itself to be a concept that has an outstanding potential to perpetuate by relentlessly resurrecting itself in different forms.

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## RECONFIGURING BOURDIEU'S CONCEPT OF THE 'FIELD': ANTHOLOGIES AS A CASE STUDY<sup>1</sup>

Rana Elbowety<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

The second half of the twentieth century gave rise to poststructuralism, one of several movements that played a central role in liberating the literary canon from the confines of hegemonic Western-centrism. By transcending the limitations of systematic inquiry and calling for a dialectical approach to literary studies, poststructuralism contributed to revolutionizing the domain, impacting the process of canon formation in the last two decades of the century. French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's development of the concept of the field had a profound impact on the study of literature and actively contributed to redefining the literary canon and expanding its boundaries. Such expansion and its repercussions can be traced by examining collections such as anthologies. By tracing the hierarchy of the agency of anthologies, their editors, and literary texts through a reinterpretation of Bourdieu's concept of the field, this article examines how this concept remains relevant to understanding the dynamics of power players in the subfield of anthology-making.

**Keywords:** Poststructuralism, Bourdieu, Cultural Capital, Agency, Field, Anthology.

"When a new literary or artistic group makes its presence felt in the field of literary or artistic production, the whole problem is transformed, since its coming into being, i.e. into difference, modifies and displaces the universe of possible options; the previously dominant productions may, for example, be pushed into the status either of outmoded [déclassé] or of classic works."

(Bourdieu, *The Field* 32)

In the above lines, French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu succinctly articulates the core of the literary canon's ongoing process of reformation through the influence one group can have on the literary field. Poststructuralism<sup>3</sup>, particularly the work of Bourdieu,

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<sup>3</sup> Poststructuralism is not hyphenated throughout the article to avoid confining the prefix "post" to the status of a temporal marker. In avoiding hyphenation, 'poststructuralism' becomes more than a mere chronological development of the term 'structuralism' and implies its capacity to not only transcend the tenets of its predecessor but also subvert them.

is the gateway to understanding how the second half of the twentieth century had a momentous impact on the opening up of the literary canon and, consequently, on the importance of the selection criteria in literary anthologies. While postmodernism is a challenging concept to define, given how it permeates an array of disciplines, poststructuralism – stemming from the umbrella of postmodernism – has established its capacity to create a dialectic mode of thinking that goes beyond the limitations of the dichotomies and binary thinking patterns propagated by structuralism. Poststructuralism's importance to the discipline of literature manifests itself in a number of ways. Chief among them is its contribution to expanding the canon – especially as a result of the canon wars that raged in the United States in the 1980s – beyond its Eurocentric focus. One of the ways in which poststructuralism has significantly impacted the literary field is redefining the agency of literary anthologies and their creators. To examine this impact in tangible ways, this article delineates how the work of Bourdieu in poststructuralist thought is central to examining variations in the agency of anthologies and their editors, both of whom have the capacity to (de)-canonize works of literature. Bourdieu's development of the concepts of habitus, field, and cultural capital in sociology can be utilized to examine the multi-layeredness of the subfield of anthology-making as part of the broader literary field and the agents occupying these different layers. This article reconfigures Bourdieu's theory of the field of cultural production and examines the positionality of agents in relation to each other within the context of anthologizing works of literature. It illustrates how Bourdieu's concept of the field provides a relevant framework to understand the multiple layers of agency played by different actors in the process of creating an anthology.

Poststructuralism is not a mere natural evolution of the structuralist movement. It is rather the product of several structuralists stepping away from the structuralist trend of the 1950s and 1960s, which advocated reliance on systems that analyze the relations within and between structures: “[S]tructuralism maintained that in order to fully understand a system, whether it is language or some other system, the entirety of its relations needed to be simultaneously considered in order to ‘see’ what was hidden from view” (Lundy 72). Classical structuralism, of which Claude Lévi-Strauss was founding father, propagated “scientificity, synchronicity, ahistoricism, universalism, and a withdrawal from the immediately preceding political climate” (Lundy 72). The move towards what was yet to become poststructuralism was inadvertently spearheaded by Roland Barthes when he began relying on subjecting everyday objects to a structuralist



analysis (see *Elements de Semiology*, 1964), which propagated structuralism yet simultaneously pulled it away from the clear linguistic parameters within which it functioned (cf. the works of Claude Lévi-Strauss).

Bourdieu's *The Field of Cultural Production, or the Economic World Reversed* (1993) is an attempt to bypass the schisms present in objective and subjective approaches to art and in the dichotomy of these approaches. That culture plays a role in reproducing social structures is a tenet of Bourdieu's work that marks his transition from structuralist notions in which he detected limitations for both objectivism and subjectivism to a more encompassing approach that transcends those limitations. Bourdieu's theory of practice brings together three concepts central to his analysis of culture: the field, the habitus, and the (cultural) capital. Bourdieu defines capital as "accumulated labor ... which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor" ("The Forms" 241). Capital is a force to be found in everything and is acquired over time. Bourdieu delineates three forms of capital:

in the *embodied* state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematics, etc.; and in the *institutionalized* state, a form of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee. ("The Forms" 243)

Within the literary field, cultural capital – a symbolic form of capital – dominates. Bourdieu maintains that power in the social sphere, i.e., social classes, is directly proportional to an individual's cultural capital. Cultural capital, manifest in what Bourdieu calls the habitus, is intrinsic, subtly present, and informally acquired through one's family and its social standing, upbringing, education, among other factors. As John Lechte illustrates, "*(h)abitus* is a kind of expression of the (unconscious) investment social actors have in the power stakes so implied" (68). Habitus is directly proportional to the 'power' an individual might wield in varying facets of social life and interactions, and it is also closely linked with the hierarchical structure of people in different contexts. Lechte explains how "[t]he boundaries between one habitus and another are always

contested because they are always fluid – never firm” (Lechte 69).

Despite the connection of Bourdieu’s work in sociology to literature and its relevance to explaining contemporary phenomena in the literary field, Bourdieu’s work endured considerable criticism, which this article briefly alludes to. Several scholars contend that Bourdieu’s attempt to escape the subjectivism-objectivism dialectic inevitably leads to another form of objectivism. Richard Jenkins argues that Bourdieu “fails to operationalize in his own practice his acknowledgement that the ‘objective’ structures of society are only objective inasmuch as they are perceived as such by actors ... and that the ‘subjective’ actions of individuals contribute towards the reproduction of ‘objectivity’ for those actors” (272). One of the criticisms also directed towards Bourdieu’s work is that despite his extensive use of the term ‘capital,’ employing it when distinguishing between economic and symbolic forms of capital, he hardly provides an in-depth theorization of what ‘capital’ denotes in his sociological constructions. According to Göran Bolin, what capital means for Bourdieu is actually value. In delineating the three forms of capital mentioned above, Bourdieu actually means value: “the acquired abilities and dispositions that form a person’s habitus ... is value rather than capital” (Bolin 40). Another criticism Bourdieu’s work has endured is that “the concept of the field is not without its difficulties for it refers to objective structures of power and material inequality” (King 425-26). The concept of the habitus also received its fair share of criticism. Although it is praised for its capacity to give an account of social reproduction, it fails to explain how social change actually occurs (King 429). The habitus was also criticized because its definition “prevents it from doing anything other than effacing the virtuosity of social actors and the intersubjective nature of social reality” (King 426). While Bourdieu defends the habitus and calls for looking at the use of the term rather than its definition (King 423), the arguments posited by critics remain meritorious. However, this article attempts to look beyond the criticism Bourdieu received and explore the potential in borrowing Bourdieu’s model and reconfiguring it to adapt to the literary field, particularly to what I call the ‘subfield’ of anthology-making.

In *The Field of Cultural Production*, Bourdieu reintroduces the notion of the agent by developing the concepts of ‘habitus’ and ‘field’ because “symbolic aspects of social life are inseparably intertwined with the material conditions of existence, without one being reducible to another” (Johnson 4). The habitus is the “systems of dispositions ... characteristic of the different classes and class fractions” (Bourdieu *Distinction* 6). Those dispositions are solely shaped in and function within a field (Bourdieu *Distinction*

94). Since agents constantly act within social spheres and situations where objective social relations rule, Bourdieu thus developed the concept of the 'field' to "account for these situations or contexts, without ... falling into the determinism of objectivist analysis" (Johnson 6). The field is a "structured space with its own laws of functioning and its own relations of force" and is "relatively autonomous but structurally homologous" with other fields, and its structure is determined based on "the relations between the positions agents occupy in the field." Not conforming to fixities, fields occupy a status of relative autonomy and partial dependence on other fields; they cannot exist without any connection to other fields and simultaneously enjoy particular merits independent of other fields (i.e., literature is partially autonomous but remains dependent on markets and politics). The field thus is a dynamic notion; "a change in agents' position necessarily entails a change in the field's structure" (Johnson 6).

Agents are thus vying for power to control interests and resources within the field through their occupation and creation of positions, yet the interests and resources of certain fields are oftentimes immaterial, resulting in the form of power that Bourdieu considers symbolic. When examining the cultural/literary field, "competition often concerns the authority inherent in recognition, consecration and prestige" (Johnson 7). These are the agents who occupy positions with enough power to elevate a text to the ranks of the canonical. It should be heeded that "[a]ll relations among agents and institutions of diffusion or consecration are mediated by the field's structure" (Bourdieu, *The Field* 133). Within this field, multiple agents come into play: academics (and their syllabi), critics, theorists, general readers, publishers, translators, prize-granting committees, and editors of anthologies. Within the literary field, the dynamic among those agents is in a state of flux; the field is constantly impacted by the emergence of new texts that vie for power themselves or seek consecration and prestige to be conferred upon them. The position of literary texts themselves is flexible, subject to changes instigated by all agents listed above.

Göran Bolin elaborates on the interconnectedness of the consecrating power of agents and the capital or value they either have or are able to bestow: "A field is relational, and the consecration of the value at stake in the field and the positions achieved are dependent on the consecrating power of the individuals and institutions with legitimacy to appoint these positions" (Bolin 35). The field is also impacted by the simultaneous active involvement of multiple agents. Agents are not present in a void; they act within tangible social situations (Johnson 6). Those agents are concurrently

influencers and influenced entities. Agents are influencers by virtue of their power and authority, which they draw upon from their habitus, namely the cultural capital they acquire and the system of dispositions that gave rise to this cultural capital, which enables them to occupy the position they are in. At the same time, they are influenced entities by virtue of the fact that multiple factors (such as publication, market, circulation, translation, to only name a few) markedly affect the work of these agents and the scope within which they can move and exercise their authority.

To give an example, academics are oftentimes specialized in one or two research areas and teach a limited range of courses to students. Their authority is undoubtedly powerful; they select what is and is not to be taught in lecture halls. They are part of the process of text diffusion and, thus, of the introduction of texts to the academic scene, the assertion of the status of other texts, and the exclusion of others from the syllabus. Inclusion of all texts in a particular field in a syllabus or any list of sorts is an impossibility, and some might argue – unless that list is meant as a referential list, in which case it might also be impossible to put together *all* published texts. However, the nature of the texts included and excluded – within the larger context of academia on a global scale, what has been regularly taught and what has systematically been marginalized or overlooked – is an indicator of the status of canonical literary texts. Classrooms and lecture halls are also one effective way of introducing a new work of literature to an academic setting. Therefore, professors of literature are agents with the capacity to bring new texts into a classroom and relegate others to the sidelines (of the canon) or even exclude them altogether.

However, it is essential to avoid reducing academics to mere agents with purchasing power. Academics are strong agents because they contribute to not only the purchase and dissemination of anthologies but to the (re)shaping of their value as symbolic capital. The combination of the two allows academics to have a hand in both economic and cultural spheres. On the one hand, the decision to read or to select and teach – therefore disseminate – a particular anthology contributes to furthering economic capital in the literary field. On the other hand, the choice made ultimately adds to the expansion of a given anthology's symbolic or cultural capital. Therefore, academics enjoy a powerful position as an agent in terms of their curatorial authority.

When it comes to anthology-making, from among all agents, anthology editors perhaps have a broader range of authority in the process of anthology-making; they

oversee text selection and inclusion/exclusion in texts that are considered referential on a global scale. Anthologies as products are designated reliable references in their own respective areas. As references for academics and students, and even for non-specialists, they are collections that enjoy a certain level of authority. Anthology editors are, therefore, a major player with enough agency to contribute to literary texts' inclusion and exclusion from the literary canon, which is – by default – an elastic field with porous borders.

This article proposes that the literary field in its entirety is composed of multiple subfields that are superimposed (see Figure 1<sup>4</sup>), and each subfield consists of a varying number of layers (See Figure 2). The model is as follows: Within the literary field, there is a limitless number of subfields; the ways in which we can construct subfields are limitless. Subfields can be representations of time periods, literary genres, national literatures, theories, etc. They can be intersections between genres and time periods or between authors and genres; the forms which subfields can take are endless. Every subfield can comprise a changing number of layers. Within a given subfield, every layer is a mini-field in itself with its own agents, who – in turn – acquire a habitus that they bring with them to their respective fields. For purposes of this article, where the main focus is anthologies, I interpret Bourdieu's field theory liberally and propose examining anthologies as one subfield with its own dynamics and agents, a subfield that contributes to reshaping the global literary canon. In my analysis, I maintain that there are three layers that together constitute the subfield of anthologies. The first layer in the subfield will be labeled (L1), the second (L2), and the third (L3). Agents in each respective layer will be referred to as agents of layer 1 (AL1), agents of layer 2 (AL2), and agents of layer 3 (AL3).

The hierarchy of the subfields is directly proportional to the agency of its players. That is to say, the top subfield (L1) is the one where players have the utmost level of agency players in this field have. The subfield below that (L2), which occupies the middle, is one which less powerful players, who nonetheless still acquire agency within the literary field, occupy, while concurrently remaining connected to the subfield above (L21) and its agents (AL1). The lowermost subfield (L3) is where the least powerful players (yet still with some level of agency) reside. I argue that all three layers or fields are connected, and all agents occupying those fields are interconnected as well, with

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<sup>4</sup> Figures 1 and 2 are the author's creation. They are not taken or copied from an external source.

the totality of this figuration creating what has come to be known as one subfield of the literary field, i.e., the field of anthologies. While Bourdieu maintains that “each field is relatively autonomous but structurally homologous with the others” (Johnson 6), I argue the same could be applied to layers within a given subfield. Any field/subfield is expandable by default, capable of taking on any number of agents, which further develops the complex web of relations between those agents and, as I argue, between the layers which those agents occupy.

It is worth noting that another set of agents exists within the topmost layer: readers and buyers that constitute an effective purchasing power. The topmost layer [L1] (where anthology editors are agents) is also where readers/buyers, who are mostly academics, are agents as well: distanced but intricately connected to editors and anthologies. As Barbara Mujica puts it, “they influence the process [of the canon reformation] through their purchasing power” (208). The division of the subfield into layers is essential to my interpretation of Bourdieu to explicate how agents who do not acquire the same capital cannot be equated with each other, and it thus becomes essential to place them hierarchically.

Anthology editors belong to the milieu Bourdieu calls “agencies of consecration” or consecrating authorities, which he defines as “not only academics and salons, but also institutions for diffusion, such as publishers and theatrical impresarios whose *selective* operations are invested with a truly cultural legitimacy even if they are subordinated to economic and social constraints” (*The Field* 112; emphasis added). Bourdieu argues that “every position, even the dominant one, depends for its very existence, and for the determinations it imposes on its occupants, on the other positions constituting the field” (*The Field* 30). At the same time, positions are occupied – and shape the (sub)field – based on the capital of the agents occupying those positions. This is why anthology editors are at the topmost, i.e., most powerful, layer within the subfield. The editors – who occupy the dominant position – draw upon their strength from its relationship to other occupants of other layers. Without canonical texts, without the existence of anthologies, the editors of these anthologies would neither acquire the level of agency they do have nor occupy the topmost layer of the subfield.

Anthology editors are creator-as-agent. Unlike literary works, which are aesthetic (a passive, somewhat static quality), anthologists have a consciousness, which makes them active, dynamic agents. If we temporarily cast aside our understanding of copyright

and originality, the status of an anthologist almost amounts to that of an author (Kuipers, 123). Anthologists are empowered by virtue of the power they wield in wide academic and educational circles and by the fact that they are on the creator end, not the reader or receiver end. Their capacity to create entails an artistic process which – while different from that of authors – allows a new amalgam of works to emerge with a distinct purpose. Christopher M. Kuipers divides this artistic process into three stages: the selection of material, the arrangement of this material, and their final presentation (Kuipers, 123). It is in this artistic procedure that anthologists are akin to authors. Selection is often based on varying criteria pertaining to the tendencies of their editor(s) and their purpose for compiling the volume. Kuipers maintains that selection not only entails great artistry but is also a creative endeavor in itself for its involvement of the necessity to 'locate' works or unearth them, particularly if they have been neglected or are no longer published and in circulation (Kuipers 124).

First, it is essential to understand why anthologies make for an excellent case study. Barbara Mujica presents anthologies as "historical surveys of literature, that is, compilations of canonical texts" (203). She maintains that at the core of the criteria used to include texts is careful selection; an anthology, by definition ("from the Greek word 'selection of flowers'") and by default, dictates the necessity for selection (203). Literary anthologies are always created with a sense of purpose. They are derived from a need to preserve, illuminate, juxtapose, and even critique past and present paradigms in the literary field. While anthologizing is an act of literary curation, anthologies should also be created with a solid function or purpose. Since making anthologies involves multiple layers of work, editors often are required to deal with several issues as they arise, including length, copyrights, permissions, and publisher requirements. Thus, despite the power they wield, anthology editors should be flexible and "let the picture unfold as well as keep reining it in to [their] original intention or idea" (Gale 81). Bringing an anthology to life is as rewarding as it is a laborious work requiring intensive effort, making editors more than mere collectors. As Kuiper puts it, "[e]ven the gathering of selections under a relatively limited rubric can be a process fraught with intellectual difficulties" (124), which makes it an intellectual task with economic dimensions. Roger Brubaker refers to the distinction between material and symbolic goods: "cultural or symbolic goods differ from material goods in that one can 'consume' them only by apprehending their meaning" (757). Looking at the status anthologies occupy, they exist where both the cultural and economic conflate; in other words, they simultaneously have economic and

symbolic capital.

Literary anthologies are always created with a sense of purpose. They are derived from a need to preserve, illuminate, juxtapose, and even critique past and present paradigms in the literary field. While anthologizing is an act of literary curation, anthologies should also be created with a solid function or purpose. An anthology that particularly spans history and culture should “have a cultural or pedagogical objective” (Gale 81). Adding to Gale’s argument on the need for such culture- or academia-oriented objectives, Barbara Mujica also illustrates that anthologies are capable of conveying both “evolution (the succession of literary movements) and hierarchy (the recognition of masterpieces)” (203). This implies that a process of transformation continuously occurs in order to reshuffle and update the position of literary texts within the greater body of existing works, which is one facet of (re)forming the canon. Anthologies inherently propagate the notion of a canon. The continuous rise of anthologies and the circulation and accessibility of new literary texts contribute to canon formation because the canon is dynamic (Mujica, 209).

While anthologies may not always be the go-to for many instructors, Martha Banta defends the use of anthologies and claims they “have the right to stand and be tested as a legitimate means to the intended end of placing before the student a wide variety of texts to compare, one against another” (332). Anthologies are often compiled with texts that complement or juxtapose each other with a bigger purpose that is merely stringing together a number of texts. One of the major functions of anthologies in classroom settings is their “juxtaposition of texts – canonical, noncanonical, and neocanonical” (Banta 332). Such juxtaposition makes room for a critical understanding of (non)canonical texts as well as texts that have the potential to join the ranks of the canonical. When anthologies are used in teaching, instructors usually tend to highlight their favorites and may indicate gaps in the anthology, which “contribute[s] to the process of the reformulation of the canon” (Mujica 208).

However, for academics reliant on anthologies in teaching, there is a covert danger to using anthologies in courses they teach. Many anthologies are designed in such a manner that their pattern and structure are best followed closely. This implies a need to cover the texts in the anthology in the order they are presented in so as to maximize the impact of relying on it, which consequently means that the instructor realizes that “selection implies an agreement to follow the pattern” (Hook 109). Even if the pattern is



not closely followed, there is – in selecting the anthology in the first place – a subtle push towards the pattern suggested by the anthology. Instructors should thus be conscious of their choices when selecting an anthology; instead of merely browsing the content selected, they should be wary of ‘where’ the anthology is pulling them and the general direction it proposes: “Anthologies are useful, but the teacher must exercise care in choosing the one which both in the selections and editorial assistance offered best fills his particular need” (Hook 109). This understanding of anthologies and the methodology of their structuring emphasizes the importance of the role academics play not only in terms of their purchasing power but also in terms of their curatorial ones. Instead of merely marketing anthologies by using them in classrooms, they significantly contribute to the textual curation of selected bodies of works, highlighting the multiple roles they are capable of playing.

Anthologies thus make for an excellent case study because they straddle the line between the literary and the economic fields. They are a literary creation in their own way and a production that takes the market demands into consideration. They are the outcome of the tension between the need to collect, reorder, and juxtapose texts on the one hand and the market at large on the other (Gale, 80). In the proposed reconfiguration of Bourdieu’s field theory, anthologies occupy the middle layer (L2) of three layers that constitute the literary field within the area of anthologies. My rationale for the placement of anthologies in the middle layer is that the agency of players is directly proportional to the hierarchy of layers; the higher the layer, the more agency a player/agent has. Since the topmost layer is occupied by anthology editors for agents (thus constituting the most powerful agent within the whole field), the second most powerful agent is an anthology as the product of the editor, particularly one that enjoys wide recognition and circulation, because “[t]hey create and reform canons, establish literary reputations, and help institutionalize the national culture which they reflect” (Mujica 203-04).

Anthologies thus occupy the middle layer of the literary field, simultaneously connected to the layer above, agent-as-creator (editors), and the layer below (literary texts). Anthologies draw their power from their status as referential texts by default. However, as agents of L2, the extent of their authority is drawn by editors (who are agents that play the role of creators). Anthologies are, therefore, what I call created-as-agent, as opposed to anthologists who play the role of creator-as-agent. Instead of looking at anthologies as standard collections with a minimal amount of innovation, we can look at them as potential “sites allowing considerable editorial innovation” (Kuipers

130). The question of readership has always been central to the literary canon and, by extension, to anthology-making. John Guillory points out the equal importance of *who* reads and *what* they read (18). This has created a resurgence of interest in anthologies on academic and commercial levels in the twentieth century that has extended until the present moment. Theo D'haen maintains that anthologies of world literature, to give an example, “primarily serve education, preservation, and profit purposes” (552). Within this triangle, anthologies are simultaneously a product geared towards certain markets and a producer contributing to canon formation.

Given the editors' and anthologies' occupation of L1 and L2, literary texts themselves occupy L3 in the subfield of anthologies. “The work of art is an object which exists as such only by virtue of the (collective) belief which knows and acknowledges it as a work of art,” which necessitates taking into account “everything which helps constitute the work as such” (Bourdieu, *The Field* 35). Literary texts are intricately connected to their makers and readers, their publishers and circulators, their applauders and censors. In the multi-layered division of the subfield of anthologies, texts occupy the lowest rank, not for lack of agency but for the simple fact that the two other players who function within the context of anthology-making as a literary subfield, namely anthologies and their makers, have more agency – in terms of consecration capacity and canon formation – by virtue of the positions they enjoy. The position a text occupies, and consequently the meaning and value it takes on, changes with any change in the field, whether from producers or consumers, or even with the appearance of new texts on this plane: “The meaning of a work (artistic, literary, philosophical, etc.) changes automatically with each change in the field within which it is situated for the spectator or reader” (Bourdieu, *The Field* 30-31).

Works of art are symbolic objects only when recognized and received by readers as such. Thus, both material and symbolic production matter to the sociology of art. Symbolic production is a “belief in the value of the work” (Bourdieu, *The Field* 37). When a given literary text is widely applauded in the right circles (i.e., among academics, critics, prize-awarding bodies, etc.), its status is elevated. With a limited number of texts, they acquire the potential to become canonical, and a percentage of those texts acquire this status. This grants the texts themselves partial authority, making them agents (albeit without full autonomy) that are *partially* independent of other individual agents (such as publishers, academics, anthology editors, etc.). When anthologized, texts become more powerful, yet they remain connected to editors and their choices. Under

the collective power of all agents, when these texts are removed from later editions of a given anthology, they can potentially be stripped of their partial agency and demoted once again to below-canonical ranks, joining what world literature scholar David Damrosch calls the “shadow canon” (45).

Consecrated literary texts and those seeking consecration play (as opposed to editors who are creator-as-agent) the role of created-as-agent, which is already what anthologies do. Texts are agents for the aesthetic worth they hold and often for the historical and cultural value they represent, but they are also passive and static. Anthologies, however, are more dynamic than individual works of literature in how they pitch texts against one another and create dialogue through intertextuality, which is why I place them in the middle layer of the subfield in my interpretation of Bourdieu's notion of field. Bourdieu argues that the field of power is “a battlefield which can be seen as a game” where “trump cards are the habitus” (*The Field* 148-50). Agents compete, engaging in a battle for power, which is the main stake in any given field. In doing so, they demonstrate whether they acquire the basic and most essential dimension of the habitus: “the determination to succeed” (*The Field* 150). Within this context, literary texts in L3 are players with a limited agency yet relative autonomy, still connected to agents in the two layers above. The “determination to succeed,” the most fundamental of all features of the habitus, is arguably a text's capacity for consecration, be it aesthetics, style, content, or language. A literary text is never fully autonomous, yet it can demonstrate potential for canonicity, thus calling attention to its habitus as a distinguished text in a field teeming with many texts that are often ‘too commercial’ or ‘too popular’ to be considered for consecration. That is not to overlook such texts' interconnectedness with their authors on the one hand and institutions of consecration or diffusion on the other.

To conclude, Bourdieu's understanding of the field can be expanded in a way that allows for a broader understanding of the literary field's composition. Acknowledging the criticism of some of Bourdieu's concepts, my aim is to illustrate that despite the limitations of some of these concepts, Bourdieu still manages to remain relevant in today's world when looking at consecrating authorities such as academics and anthology editors. Bourdieu's concept of the field can be reconfigured to examine power dynamics in the literary-economic field. In that sense, a field is not a one-dimensional flat plane; it is a complex web of subfields, each consisting of a number of superimposed, homologous layers. As Göran Bolin writes, “[o]ne of the benefits of field theory is its

insistence on the empirical grounding of theory” (34). Provided that we “modify the model and differentiate between several fields of power in society, rather than one singular field of power” (Bolin 40), the concept of the field thus remains relevant in providing new, critical sociological interpretations of the functions and roles of agents. The literary field, as any other field, encompasses a practically inexhaustible number of subfields, and these subfields offer a diverse array of agents, each of whom occupies a particular position in a given layer of that subfield, that is dependent on its relation to other agents. Given that agents play an active role in constructing the dynamics of the space they occupy, the relations between agents are dependent on the cultural capital they acquire. Anthologies and their editors make for a case study that illustrates how this new reconfiguration of the field asserts the contemporary relevance of Bourdieu’s concepts in deconstructing power dynamics in the literary sphere.

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## Appendix 2



Figure 1

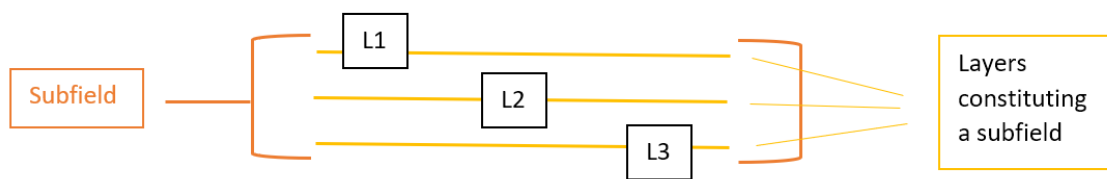


Figure 2

## UNDER THE SAME ROOF: RECONCILIATION OF THE OPPOSITE ENDS IN E. M. FORSTER'S *HOWARDS END*

## AYNI ÇATI ALTINDA: E. M. FORSTER'İN *HOWARDS END* ADLI ESERİNDE ZIT KUTUPLARIN UZLAŞMASI

Seçil Erkoç<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

The twentieth century marks the beginning of a new period in England during which the norms and the traditions pertaining to the Victorian age start to be questioned. While the echoes of this change have been audible from the 1890s onwards, they reach their climax with the death of Queen Victoria in 1901 because it announces not only the physical death of the Queen but also the symbolic death of the Victorian mindset. With the reign of King Edward VII, therefore, the literary texts of the period illustrate a liberal outlook that questions the outdated ideals of the previous era. Within this context, this article examines E. M. Forster's *Howards End* (1910) by foregrounding and analysing the clash between the ideals of the past and those of the present, which in the wider perspective demonstrates Forster's modernist agenda to go beyond the strict dualities and to introduce a totally fresh synthesis. Epitomising the cultural inheritance of the country, *Howards End* is more than a house; it represents the future of England. Thus, it is important that *Howards End* should function as a unifying force that will bring these opposite ends together – as represented through different socio-economic classes embodied through three families whose lives get connected to one another at the end of the novel. Thereby, Forster aptly weaves the stories of the Schlegels, the Wilcoxes, and the Bast family by counterbalancing the intellectual and the material; the spiritual and the physical; the feminine and the masculine; the past and the present, and he presents a modern synthesis that, he believes, will shape England in the future.

**Keywords:** E. M. Forster, *Howards End*, Reconciliation, Opposite Ends, Social Class, Cultural Inheritance.

### Öz

Yirminci yüzyıl İngiltere'si, Viktorya dönemine ait norm ve geleneklerin sorgulanmaya başlandığı yeni bir sürecin başlangıcına işaret eder. Her ne kadar bu değişimin yankıları 1890'lardan itibaren duyulmaya başlanmış olsa da İngiltere Kraliçesi Victoria'nın 1901 yılında vefatı ile en üst seviyesine ulaşır, çünkü kraliçenin vefatı sadece fiziksel bir kayıp değildir; onun temsil ettiği değer yargılarının da yok oluşu anlamına gelir. Dolayısıyla, Kral VII. Edward'ın tahta çıkması ile, dönemin edebi eserlerinde bir önceki yüzyılın modası geçmiş ideallerini sorgulayan özgürlükçü bir tavır sergilendiği görülür. Tüm bunlardan hareketle, bu makale, E. M. Forster'in *Howards End* (1910) adlı eserini, geçmişin ve şimdinin temsil ettiği ideallerin çatışması üzerinden incelemeyi ve Forster'in bu zıtlıkların ötesine geçmek ve tamamen yeni bir sentez ortaya sunmak için benimsediği modernist tutumu sergilemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ülkenin kültürel mirasını temsil eden *Howards End* bir ev olmanın ötesinde, romanda İngiltere'nin geleceğini yansıtan bir öge olarak sunulur. Dolayısıyla, romanın sonunda farklı sosyal sınıflardan gelen üç ailenin yaşamlarının birbirlerine eklemlenmesinden hareketle, *Howards End*'in zıt kutupları bir araya getiren uzlaştırıcı bir güç olarak görülmesi gerektiği ele alınmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, Schlegel, Wilcox ve Bast ailelerinin hikayelerini birbirine dokuyarak, Forster düşünsel ile maddeselin, ruhsal ile fizikselin, dişil ile erilin, geçmiş ile bugünün dengelenişi üzerinden, gelecekte İngiltere'yi şekillendireceğine inandığı modern bir sentez ortaya koyar.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** E. M. Forster, *Howards End*, Uzlaşma, Zıt Kutuplar, Sosyal Sınıf, Kültürel Miras.

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Published in 1910, E. M. Forster's (1879-1970) *Howards End* provides an insight into England, which was passing through significant changes in relation to the social, historical, and political dynamics of the early twentieth century. Despite having been interpreted by various scholars, *Howards End* continues rendering different interpretations possible – thanks to its embodiment of the ongoing dialogue between the seemingly 'opposite' ends represented through three families from different socio-economic classes in the novel: the conservative and the materialist Wilcox family; the liberal and the intellectual Schlegels; and finally, the Bast family from the lower-middle-class. To a Victorian mindset, it is not difficult to draw sharp distinctions between these three families, for the Victorians tend to compartmentalise everything into strict boxes. Nevertheless, with the turn of the century, it is to be realised that what has been embraced as solid and fixed for too long is, in fact, bound to change and flow in accordance with the evolving dynamics of the new century. Within this perspective, in his attempt to bring all these three families under the roof of *Howards End*, Forster addresses much beyond his time, and he offers an alternative to the stagnant and passive standpoint of Victorian England. Hereby, it should also be noted that as “[a]n Edwardian, Forster is not a modernist in the strict sense, but rather a central figure in the transition from Victorianism into Modernism” (8). Therefore, it is not surprising that “Forster breaks with customary family values of the early 1900s,” and his work posits an ultimate possibility for the creation of “an unconventional family” that challenges either/or dualisms of the previous era (Olson 351). Besides, Forster's existence as a timeless writer can also be validated through British author Zadie Smith's (b. 1975) novel *On Beauty* (2005), which is loosely modelled on *Howards End*. In her novel, Smith uses “the archetypal story of the liberals versus conservatives” and moves the setting “from Edwardian England to George W. Bushian Boston” (Gray 48). The conservative family in Smith's novel finds its parallel in the Kippses – a family of black Caribbean origin; and the Schlegels find their reflection in the Belseys – a family of African Americans. Though a century apart, the dilemma and the conflict between these two families remind the readers that the harsh dualities embodied through people belonging to different socio-economic backgrounds can never be limited to a certain time and space in history. Forster's resolution to bring all these clashing opposites together reveals an optimistic and unifying attitude that explains the reason why *Howards End* continues appealing to numerous scholars and readers in the twenty-first century. In this manner, the aim of this paper is to analyse the connection between the inner/personal and the outer/impersonal and to show the ways in which the dualities pertaining to spiritual and



the physical, the feminine and the masculine, the past and the present can intermingle within the bounds of *Howards End*.

Marked as a period of transition from the ideals of the Victorian era to the liberal nuances of Modernism, the early decades of the twentieth century elucidate the need to find a stable position that would ideally make it possible to hold on to the traditional set of values represented by Queen Victoria (1819-1901) and her cultural legacy. Following the death of the Queen, however, King Edward VII (1841-1910) comes to the throne, and it marks the beginning of the Edwardian era – lasting from 1901 to 1910. As a reaction to the conservative mindset which goes hand in hand with the notions of control and repression that are mainly associated with the Victorian age; it is not surprising that the Edwardian era foregrounds the dissolution of such oppressive attitudes that tend to marginalize certain segments of the society, including the women and the labourers. In addition, as opposed to his mother, who is largely withdrawn from public life, the new king is known as a pleasure-seeking person whose manner of fashion, speech, and amusement are set as an example to be imitated. As a result, the luxury and ostentation replace the moderate, dull, and duty-oriented lifestyle of the previous era. Together with the technological advancements such as the development of the automobile industry, the introduction of electric lighting and communication systems, the physical borders between distant places get nullified, and these changes find their socio-economic reflections in the expansion of the opportunities that enable people to increase their income during this period. Therefore, the social borders between classes also begin to lose their sharp edges, because by taking the advantage of social mobility, the individuals can create wealth for themselves. In this regard, as Caserio states, “King Edward VII’s reign is a rebellious era, establishing a libertarian agenda for subsequent decades” (83). Hence, it is possible to argue that the writers of the Edwardian period tend to display this “libertarian agenda” in their works, and they pursue “artistic freedom” and “experiment with literary forms and genres” (83) – which, in the wider perspective, imbues their works with the hues of modernist echoes.

Although it would be wrong to limit E. M. Forster to a certain period as he led a long life and “witnessed social and cultural changes on an unprecedented scale” (Page 1); to be able to scrutinise *Howards End* from a broader perspective, it is significant to analyse his position as an Edwardian writer. Also, as Crews argues, “Forster’s literary activity since 1924 [the publication date of his last novel, *A Passage to India*] can strike us only as a series of footnotes, however brilliant, to a career whose real center lies in the first

decade of the twentieth century” (3). In this light, Forster is “an Edwardian in point of time, and he is equally so in spirit” (3). Exploring the rebellious common platform that Caserio has indicated above, Forster belongs to “the liberal tradition,” and he complies with its tenets by attacking the manners and morals of the British moral class, supporting spontaneity of feeling, as well as the virtues of sexual fulfilment and intelligence (Trilling 13-14). However, as Trilling elaborates further on, Forster, on the other hand, goes against the premises of liberalism because he does not support the simple logic that is strongly withheld by the liberal mind: “[G]ood is good and bad is bad” (13). For Forster, such a limited interpretation would mean turning a blind eye to the existence of good-and-evil (14). Hence, by establishing his autonomous position, as well as developing a more comprehensive approach, Forster tries to shed light on the inner lives of the characters in *Howards End*. He does not simply paint his characters as rational beings, but he portrays their actions by referring to the interaction between the mind and the body – that is, the emotional and the physical – which, in a broader context, links Forster the Edwardian with Modernism. In other words, in his novel, Forster depicts the inner world of the characters by emphasising their insights and impressions and, thus, releases himself from the limited perspective of the conventional realist style.

Howards End is a Hertfordshire country house, “inspired by Rooksnest where Forster lived from 1883 to 1893. The choice of the name too is associated with this childhood home, for it once belonged to a family called Howard” (MacDonogh 37). In the novel, the house belongs to Ruth Wilcox, who is a Wilcox by marriage as her maiden name is Howard. Representing the past of England, she turns out to be a misfit in her own family. Unlike her husband, who stands for the emergent business class and is mainly motivated by financial interests, Ruth is deeply rooted in the earth, and she has traditional wisdom that is carried through generations. Just like her husband, Ruth’s children Charles, Paul, and Evie have long been disconnected from the earth and from the ideals that nature epitomizes. To illustrate, Charles is too occupied with his motor car; Paul has turned into a colonial administrator working in Nigeria, and Evie is a breeder of puppies who systematically controls the regenerative capacity of nature by intervening in the process. Hence, Ruth Wilcox sets out to look for a spiritual heir for the house because if it falls into the hands of any of her family members, it is quite likely that it will literally bring an end to Howards End. As Rose states, “Howards End signifies more than a house in the country; it becomes a symbol of personal freedom and hope for the future. It is to belong to those who can cherish it” (68). Accordingly, “the plot of *Howards End* is about the rights of property, about a destroyed will-and-testament and

rightful and wrongful heirs. It asks the question, ‘Who shall inherit England?’ (Trilling 102).

Forster develops the central tension of the novel by offering the Schlegel family as a counter rival to the Wilcoxes because the former can lay a spiritual claim to the house. As opposed to the materialistic and pragmatic stance of the Wilcoxes, the Schlegel family signifies the intellectual and cultural aspect of England. Lacking the paternal and the maternal figure(s), as they died years ago, the family consists of two sisters Margaret, Helen, and their brother, Tibby. Counterbalancing the highly masculine quality of the Wilcoxes, the Schlegels are predominantly feminine, and it makes the interaction between these two families easier – as it is first illustrated in the attraction between Helen and Paul, and then between Margaret and Henry in the novel.

In parallel to the way Ruth Wilcox is in search of a spiritual heir to *Howards End*, the sisters are also “looking for a new home, literally and symbolically” (Hodge 44). Their house in Wickham Place is a leasehold property left to them by their father, so at the expiration of the lease, the family will have to lose their thirty-year-old home, as well as their memories related to the place. The house also faces the threat of being demolished to make space for the construction of new blocks of flats. Now, therefore, it is a matter of finding the connection points between the two families so that they will be able to merge into one another, and out of this harmony, Ruth Wilcox’s wish to pass the traditional wisdom of her ancestors and to secure the continuation of *Howards End* will be realised.

While *Howards End* is usually interpreted to be a novel about England’s fate and the struggle of the classes to take control over it, it should not be forgotten that it is also a novel about the struggle between men and women. Represented by the male members of the Wilcox family, the masculine principle is depicted as a domineering power that is mobile and has the capacity to impose its own rules on nature. The motor car functions as an important symbol signifying the industrial and the practical characteristics of new England, whereas traditional England mainly depends on personal relations that operate on a deeper level of associations as conveyed through the bond between Margaret and Helen, Ruth and Margaret, Miss Avery and Ruth/Margaret. In other words, it is the female solidarity and agency that connect people to one another, thereby foregrounding empathy rather than indifference.

The connection between Margaret and Ruth Wilcox develops following Helen’s and Paul’s failure to form an enduring bond during Helen’s stay at *Howards End*. Impulsive

in her actions, Helen assumes to have fallen in love with the youngest son of the family, Paul Wilcox, or to express it more precisely, with the Wilcox way of life:

The energy of the Wilcoxes had fascinated her, had created new images of beauty in her responsive mind. To be all day with them in the open air, to sleep at night under their roof, had seemed the supreme joy of life, and had led to that abandonment of personality that is a possible prelude to love. (Forster 24)

However, as Trilling argues, “it was not a set of ideas that Helen was admiring—it was sex. It was with masculinity that she had fallen in love” (108-109). Having immersed herself in intellectual discussions for too long, at *Howards End*, Helen realises that she also exists as a body, and she forms a physical connection with Paul – through the kiss that he gives her under the wych-elm tree. However, soon enough, she gets disillusioned, for she witnesses Paul’s frightened reaction concerning the money issues at the breakfast table the next morning. Here, Paul shatters the image of the all-powerful masculine character that Helen has constructed in her mind. As a result, she starts questioning the reality behind the appearance: “I felt for a moment that the whole Wilcox family was a fraud, just a wall of newspapers and motor-cars and gold-clubs, and that if it fell I should find nothing behind it but panic and emptiness” (Forster 26).

Just like Helen, who feels torn between the ideals which she held close to and their sudden dissolution, Margaret, too, is having questions in her mind. Associated with the intellectual and the idealistic world, that is the inner life; Margaret starts to wonder whether she is missing out on the practical life that stands out there:

The truth is that there is a greater outer life that you [Helen] and I have never touched—a life in which telegrams and anger count. Personal relations, that we think supreme, are not supreme there. There love means marriage settlements, death, death duties. So far I’m clear. But here is my difficulty. This outer life, though obviously horrid, often seems the real one—there’s grit in it. It does breed character. Do personal relations lead to sloppiness in the end? (Forster 28)

Unlike her sister, however, who impulsively admires and then condemns the outer life, thus cancelling out the opportunity to bring the personal and the impersonal side by side, Margaret is more perceptive in her approach because she can assess the idealistic and the materialistic simultaneously. Hereby, she manages to form a connection both with Ruth Wilcox and Henry Wilcox, respectively. As mentioned above, her friendship

with Ruth Wilcox starts following Helen's disillusionment with Paul. Uprooted from the earth – yet only in appearance – Ruth moves to London with her family and begins to live in one of the apartment flats opposite to Wickham Place where the Schlegels reside. Since Helen is leaving for Germany with her cousin; and Paul for Nigeria, Margaret and Ruth Wilcox are able to visit each other without any reservations. Not bothered by the fear that her sister might be offended by the visit, as Paul is abroad now, Margaret is able to invite Ruth Wilcox to a lunch party in her house. In order to increase the effect of Margaret's and Helen's attempts to get together – not only on a physical but also on a spiritual level – Forster, in a sense, purifies the atmosphere from the influence of the remaining members of both families. Hence, he enables the formation of a much purer connection between Margaret and Ruth so that they can be totally exposed to each other, which in the end makes Margaret realise the illusionary life that she is leading – that is devoid of any down-to-earth connection with people around:

They left the dining-room, closing the door behind them, and as Mrs Wilcox buttoned up her jacket, she said: "What an interesting life you all lead in London!"

"No, we don't," said Margaret, with a sudden revulsion. "We lead the lives of gibbering monkeys, Mrs. Wilcox—really—We have something quite and stable at the bottom. We really have. All my friends have. Don't pretend you enjoyed lunch, for you loathed it, but forgive me by coming again, alone, or by asking me to you." (Forster 84)

It is Margaret's ability to see beyond the appearance and her tendency to develop a self-reflexive approach concerning her position in life – without falling into the trap of over-idealisation – that nominates her as a spiritual heir to *Howards End*. Having witnessed Margaret's insinuated search for a root, and her desire to form a connection with the tangible, just before her death, Ruth Wilcox writes a note indicating that she wants the house to be left to Margaret: "To my husband: I should like Miss Schlegel (Margaret) to have *Howards End*" (Forster 104). The surviving Wilcoxes, on the other hand, are represented to be much concerned about their daily lives in the novel: Charles starts inquiring about his motor-car on the day of his mother's funeral (Forster 109); Henry Wilcox feels regretful not because he was unable to see through his wife's deteriorating health, but because she hid it from them all (Forster 109), and he chooses to ignore his wife's bequest by naming it as a flimsy appeal: "It was not legal; it had been written in illness, and under the spell of a sudden friendship; it was contrary to the dead

woman's intentions in the past, contrary to her very nature, so far as that nature was understood by them" (Forster 106-107). As it is implied between the lines here, the Wilcoxes can never understand the ideal represented through Ruth Wilcox. Hence, by leaving her house to a young woman who is not literally related to her, Ruth chooses to neutralise her position both as a wife to her husband Henry and as a mother to her eldest son Charles who – under the normal circumstances – are entitled to lay claim on Howards End.

As Crews argues, "Margaret is temporarily cheated of what is hers, but in a deeper sense she is justly denied a role she has not yet earned" (111) because Ruth's note is demolished by the remaining members of the Wilcox family and Margaret does not have any knowledge about Ruth's ultimate wish at this point. Considering the end of the novel, since Howards End eventually falls into the hands of its true spiritual heir, it is functional that Margaret 'seems' to have been denied her true position. In this way, the reader is able to witness Margaret's spiritual maturation, for she is a character who has the capacity to evolve for the better in the novel. She has a questioning mind that does not take everything at face value. She is aware of her limitations, as well as of her positive sides. Therefore, she functions as a kind of mouthpiece for Forster, who "is content with the human possibility and its limitations" (Trilling 21). In other words, Forster "is one of the thinking people who were never led by thought to suppose they could be more than human and who, in bad times, will not become less" (23). Accordingly, it is possible to say that Margaret is the one who is able to understand both good-and-evil, spiritual-and-physical, intellectual-and-material, and on a broader scale, her marriage to Henry Wilcox epitomises her struggle to construct a bridge between the inner and the outer worlds:

It did not seem so difficult. She need trouble him with no gift of her own. She would only point out the salvation that was latent in his soul, and in the soul of every man. Only connect! That was the whole of her sermon. Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted and human love will be seen at its height. Live in fragments no longer. Only connect, and the beast and the monk, robbed of the isolation that is left to either, will die.

Nor was the message difficult to give. It need not take the form of a good "talking." By quiet indications the bridge would be built and span their lives with beauty. (Forster 202-203)

While Margaret's connection with Ruth Wilcox operates on a spiritual level, her marriage to Henry Wilcox proves functional since it completes the missing part of the picture – that of the physical. In this way, Margaret is able to develop a much more comprehensive approach, and she justifies her rightful position as a spiritual heir to *Howards End*. Just like Helen, whose idealisation of the Wilcox family has been shattered to the ground, Margaret, too, is gradually brought to see through the shallowness, hypocrisy, and self-deception of the Wilcoxes. During this process, she encounters various tests that allow Margaret to put her principles and conscience into practice. For this aim, Forster designates Leonard Bast whose “function is to disturb the social conscience of the other characters and the reader” in the novel (Brander 146).

The Schlegels, situated between the upper-middle-class represented by the Wilcoxes and the lower-middle-class represented by Leonard Bast, have access to both ends. Accordingly, Trilling states that “each of these intellectual sisters has reached out to the mysterious extremes of the middle class, Margaret upward to the Wilcoxes, Helen downward to Basts” (105). Leonard Bast, the poor clerk who tries to improve himself through art and literature, “is placed at the centre of the story and powerfully affects all their middle-class lives, wrecking their security and so emphasizing the function of *Howards End* in restoring a sense of peace” (Brander 146-147). He stands in deep contrast to the Schlegels in his search of a “useless intellectualism” and to the Wilcoxes “in being poor and proudly honest in an area in which doublethink has led them to wealth” (147). At the concert, Helen carelessly picks up Leonard's umbrella and ignores the existence of its owner up until the moment he comes to Wickham Place and exposes himself. Leonard is denied the right to secure himself a distinct place in society. He is treated as a material good, whose feelings and aspirations are bound to be ignored by the members of the upper-middle-classes, especially by Henry Wilcox, who had an affair with Leonard's wife in the past – when she was a prostitute. Just like the umbrella, which is picked up and exchanged between hands, Henry Wilcox objectifies the female subject in his sexual intercourse with Jacky Bast and cheats on his wife, Ruth Wilcox. Moreover, though indirectly, he also meddles with the life of Leonard Bast. Hearing from Henry Wilcox that the company where Leonard is working is unsound and will soon collapse, Margaret and Helen, try to help the young man by advising him to change his job. However, all their attempts prove catastrophic as Leonard ends up losing his job. Although he has been able to regain his umbrella from the Schlegels, he cannot get an alternative job offer from Henry Wilcox because, as a capitalist businessman, Henry Wilcox is too blind to see the connection between Leonard's tragedy and his having a



hand in its implementation. In this light, Leonard functions as a figurative litmus paper that illustrates the extent of the selfishness and indifference that afflicts the English economy and the social life, which are highly influenced by the *laissez-faire* system. Hence, as Page also argues, “Leonard’s is not a fully realised individual tragedy but only a convenient occasion for the debate between two well-defined value-systems: humanistic concern and capitalistic indifference” (88).

Totally infuriated by Henry’s indifferent stance and Margaret’s ineffectual reaction concerning the matter, since rather than talking to him face to face, Margaret simply chooses to write a letter to Leonard and announces that Henry Wilcox has no vacancy for him; Helen, in return, desperately tries to connect herself to the poor man by sleeping with him. It may be interpreted as Helen’s attempt to relocate what is lost in Leonard back to its place – which is his dignity – but, as she is to admit later, she can never love a man; therefore, she uses Leonard as a tool to ease her conscience. This can be interpreted as a form of impersonal connection on the part of Helen – which proves fatal for Leonard, as it causes him to lose his life. It is significant that he dies at the hands of Charles Wilcox, who beats Leonard with the Schlegels’ family sword, thereby also implying the Schlegels’ ironic contribution to his death. Again, it is paradoxical that Leonard gets smashed by the books that tumble over his body – the very means by which he has tried to improve and educate himself. The system, in a way, digests Leonard and gets rid of him eventually. Nevertheless, the intimacy between Helen and Leonard, though lacking the personal and affectionate aspect, brings about the birth of a child who is to inherit the Howards End. Leonard may be dead, but he continues to live through his son. Moreover, the child also functions as an important figure enabling Margaret to see through Henry’s selfish and indifferent attitude that threatens the sisterly connection between her and Helen. Having learned about Helen’s pregnancy, Henry quickly condemns her behaviour – which he interprets as a sinful act – and he does not want Margaret to spend the night with Helen in Howards End. He even uses Ruth as an excuse to make Helen sleep in a hotel instead of Howards End because he does not want the memory of his late wife and the house to be defiled – which shatters Margaret’s remaining belief in the possibility that Henry may, one day, learn to connect:

“Not any more of this!” she cried. “You shall see the connection if it kills you, Henry! You have had a mistress—I forgave you. My sister has a lover—you drive her from the house. Do you see the connection? Stupid, hypocritical, cruel—oh contemptible!—a man who insults his wife when



she's alive and cants with her memory when she's dead. A man who ruins a woman for his pleasure, and casts her off to ruin other men. And gives bad financial advice, and then says he's not responsible. These, man, are you. You can't recognize them, because you cannot connect. I've had enough of your unweeded kindness. I've spoilt you long enough. All your life you have been spoiled. Mrs Wilcox spoiled you. No one has ever told you what you are—muddled, criminally muddled. Men like you use repentance as a blind, so don't repent. Only say to yourself: 'What Helen has done, I've done.'" (Forster 335)

Accordingly, Crews contends that "[a] believer in sowing wild oats, he [Henry] refuses to distinguish between unchastity and infidelity, that is, between technical 'sin' and the violation of his wife's trust" (115). He is unable to feel empathy, so he cannot form a personal relationship that does not stigmatise people. In the same vein, Margaret also experiences a kind of spiritual awakening because, at this point, she reaffirms her sisterly connection not only to Helen but also to Ruth Wilcox. Even though she has decided to ignore Henry's infidelity "[for] it was not her tragedy: it was Mrs. Wilcox's" (Forster 253), now she realises the real connection between herself and Ruth – that they are not separate but related, they are both a Mrs. Wilcox.

Finally, it can be said that *Howards End* acts as an amalgamation point where the Schlegels – represented by the sisters; the Wilcoxes – represented by Henry Wilcox, who undergoes a nervous breakdown due to Charles' imprisonment, and now needs his wife Margaret's affection and empathy; and the Basts – represented by Leonard's son, all come together and form a harmonious unity. Negating the dualistic agenda of Victorian England, which tends to introduce sharp distinctions between the intellectual and the material, the spiritual and the physical, the feminine and the masculine, the past and the present, the good and the bad, *Howards End* illuminates the path leading to a more welcoming and modernist attitude in terms of implying at the need to question the 'unshakeable' status of the long-established values and ideas. Epitomising the dynamic interaction between all these seemingly opposite ends, this paper has attempted to underline Forster's position as a modern writer who is able to read through the dualistic mindset of the period out of which he has sprung out and who has also achieved to turn these binaries upside-down. In this manner, as Bradbury also elucidates, "[i]t is thus possible to read the novel as a dialectical work moving towards *synthesis*, which is spiritual completeness" (par. 3, emphasis added). At *Howards End*, the past connects

with the present, the dead wife with the alive, the masculine with the feminine, and the outer life gets reconciled with the inner life. Under its roof, “[t]here is room for her [Margaret] father’s books—the life of the mind—in the library; there is room for Helen and her sisterly love; but there is also an upstairs, a physical life, which must be brought into concert with the rest” (Crews 113). In order to reach such a peaceful state, what is needed to be done is simple enough: *Only connect!* (Forster 202, emphasis added). In this respect, E. M. Forster goes beyond the restrictive regulations of the Victorian era and embraces a modernist vision that challenges the either/or dualities and welcomes a much egalitarian and unified perspective.

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## AFFIRMATIVE BIOPOLITICS THROUGH THE ANALYSIS OF HOLOCAUST NARRATIVES: A LOOK AT FOUCAULT AND AGAMBEN

## OLUMLAYICI BİYOPOLİTİKA TANIMININ SOYKIRIM ANLATILARI ÜZERİNDEN İNCELENMESİ: FOUCAULT VE AGAMBEN'E BAKIŞ

Sel ERENSAL<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

As one of the main components of the modern state, biopolitics appears to be a stable element behind each process of government. From early social contract theories to contemporary theories biopolitics has been a subject of various studies. Although it appears to be a fixed structure, it is possible to change the way it processes. Taking the theories of Foucault and Agamben, we arrive to the concept of the affirmative biopolitics. The affirmative biopolitics, a concept constructed by changing the destructive power of biopolitics to sustain human life, offers ways to overcome bio-power within the existing governmental structures. As it might come as a rather complex theory, it is a good idea to study affirmative biopolitics through the well-known narratives, for better illustrative examples. Nazi regime is one of the most intense periods of biopolitical governance, thus, Holocaust narratives serve as a good point of departure for study. There are various examples of non-violent resilience against bio-power in these narratives. The common point of these narratives is re-establishing humanity, and, the first step for re-gaining a voice is through language. In terms of storytelling and testifying, language constructs a voice for the ones who were forced to silence. It is not testifying to the official truth but to the personal truth that alters the historical ground and shakes the bio-power. Then it is the comic attitude against the terror of destruction that might change the impact it leaves on people. It is possible to expand the branches of the affirmative biopolitics, yet these are effective practices that we can simply adopt to make an impact on the social processes around us.

**Keywords:** Foucault, Agamben, Affirmative Biopolitics, Holocaust Narratives, Non-violent Resilience.

### Öz

Biyopolitika, modern devletin yapı taşlarından biri olarak, devleti oluşturan her tür mekanizmanın değişmez bir unsuru olarak karşımıza çıkıyor. İlk toplum sözleşmesi yasalarından çağdaş teorilere kadar türlü şekillerde bahsedilmiş biyopolitika, görünenin aksine kaçınılmaz bir gerçeklik olmak zorunda değil. Foucault ve Agamben'in teorilerini temel alarak olumlayıcı biyopolitika tanımıyla karşılaşırız. Olumlayıcı biyopolitika, biyopolitikanın yıkıcı gücünün insan yaşamını sürdürecektir doğrultuda değişmesi ile ortaya çıkmış, biyogücün mevcut iktidar sistemi dahilinde alt edilmesine işaret eden bir terimdir. Terime aşina olmak nispeten karmaşık olabileceğinden, olumlayıcı biyopolitikanın tanımı bilinen anlatılar üzerinden örneklenmesi doğru bir yaklaşım olacak. Bu çalışma için en uygun kaynak, biyopolitik yönetimin en sert olduğu Nazi dönemi olduğundan çalışma soykırım anlatıları üzerinden yürütülebilir. Bu anlatılarda biyogüce karşı gelen pek çok sessiz direniş örneği görebiliriz. Bu eylemlerin ortak noktası baskılanmaya çalışılan insanlığın yeniden inşa edilmesidir. Kişinin sesini, söylemini geri kazanmasının ilk yolu dilden geçer. Hikaye anlatıcılığı ve şahitlik gibi kollardan, dil, baskılanmış kişiler için yeniden bir ses oluşturur. Biyogücü sarsan bir diğer etken ise hakikattir. Kişinin, resmi gerçekliğe karşı kendi hakikatini dile getirmesi bilinen tarihi de etkileyerek, yeni bir tarih algısı oluşturur. Son olarak ise takınılan mizahi tavır, yıkımın insanlar üzerinde bıraktığı dehşeti yumuşatarak önemli bir silah haline gelebilir. Olumlayıcı biyopolitikayı daha da genişletmek tabii ki mümkün. Ancak bahsedilen eylemler, kolayca benimseyerek insanlığı çevreleyen bu gidişata karşı uygulayabileceğimiz davranışlar olabilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Foucault, Agamben, Olumlayıcı Biyopolitika, Soykırım Anlatıları, Pasif Direniş.

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In Roberto Benigni's movie, *Life is Beautiful*, we enjoy the happy ending. The scene freezes as the kid shouts in his mother's arms: "We won!" (min. 112) and the relief of the audience is supported by the feeling of victory. However, there is a problem at this point. Should we approach this as a happy ending or not? Not only at the final picture, but also at the final scenes, something does not fit right and requires further analyses. In the picture before the last, we see an American soldier riding a tank, following the survivors of the camp. In the next scene, as the camera angle changes, we watch the prisoners in front of a barrel. A question arises, is something really won? Are we talking about the end of an era and the beginning of another one, or do we need to look for more complex structures?

Labor camps of which the movie drags the audience right in the middle can be considered as the solid, physical space of *biopolitics*. Foucault mentioned the term for the first time in his lectures<sup>2</sup>. Later, expanding Foucault's concept, Agamben constructed the theory of biopolitics. However, it is possible to see traces of the concept of *biopolitics* in the earlier social contract theories<sup>3</sup>. Referring to the way humans and human lives become subject to governance policies, the concept constitutes the core of political debates in the modern state. Biopolitics, in other words, points out how the governing body controls human life for the profit of the state. Yet, there is another concept, which is bound to the same idea that drops a hint on a more optimistic future: *affirmative biopolitics*. It is the power that transforms destruction and ruling over human life through new forms of living. While biopolitics holds the law, race and human life as weapons against humanity, affirmative biopolitics uses humor, storytelling and discourse as weapons that give the excluded a voice against the sovereign power. It is the reversal of the biopolitical power, a stance against spendable lives and re-inventing human subjectivity. Primo Levi's autobiographical novel *If This is a Man* and Roberto Benigni's movie *Life is Beautiful* are two of the instances that we can witness this transformative power. These works will be referred to visualize the theories of Foucault and Agamben.

The ending of Roberto Benigni's movie *Life is Beautiful* requires deeper analysis rather than simply interpreting its ending as a happy ending. This may be an ending

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<sup>2</sup>See: Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the College de France, 1978-79; On The Government of The Living: Lectures at the College de France 1979-1980*. In his earlier works, he was concerned with the bodies and pleasures, which set the ground for the development of the concept. See also, Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*.

<sup>3</sup> See: Hobbes, *Leviathan*. Considering Foucault's direct reference to Hobbes' theory, it is possible to take Hobbes' state of nature as a base for further conceptions of 'bare life,' sovereign power and 'state of exception' in the biopolitics jargon.

according to the linear conception of history. The scene then would signify the end of an era and the beginning of another. However, through a Foucauldian perspective of history<sup>4</sup>, it suggests a transformation of the existing power structures into new forms. As they continue their existence, the idea of a radical change becomes questionable. In his lecture dated 17 March 1976, Foucault mentions a shift in the sovereign power, which affects the idea of biopolitics in relation to this approach to history ("Society" 61-82). In the essay, Foucault mentions the difference between the two types of powers that the sovereign holds in ancient and modern democracies. While this power aimed to discipline the individuals in the pre-modern period, with modernity, it turns to society. The sovereign now aims to regulate the society instead of controlling the individuals (67). This way, Foucault defines the basis for modern sovereignty; people's right to live turns into the hegemon's right to "*let live or expose to death*" (Campbell and Sitze 33-34, emphasis added). In the modern state, we face a sovereign who holds the power of exposing lives to death. This is not a direct act of killing that we are talking about here. "Sovereign power's effect on life," says Foucault, "is exercised when the sovereign can kill" (62). What it means is that the right to kill in the modern government does not refer to *death*, which is a natural process of life. It rather controls *mortality*. It is the opposite of death because the only way to establish its dominance is to show that it can manipulate this process: "Death was the moment of the manifestation of the obscure power of the sovereign" (Foucault "Society" 68). Consequently, in the modern state, the biopolitical structure, which claims a right on humans right to live, is still present in the center. Looking back to the movie through this perspective, the end of the Camps, the incident that symbolizes the end of World War II cannot be a victory or the end of an era. It just refers to a transformation of the existing dynamics. In this new order, the one who appears as the "bearer of rights" is the new hegemon, according to Foucault, who will exercise his power on other individuals (150). Practices of the previous regime are disguised under the structure of the modern state. Agamben also claims that we cannot see rapid, radical changes in between political structures. Therefore, a demolishment in the biopolitical order is not possible, we can only mention subtle changes and transformations (Agamben "Politicization" 147).

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<sup>4</sup> See: Foucault, *Archeology of Knowledge*, 3-23. Foucault approaches history as transformation and continuation, rather than change and rupture. To reveal how and in which forms does the past continues in the present should be the main concern of a historical reading.

With the outlined structure of the modern state, the idea of a social change might seem in deadlock. Does this motive of diminishing human subjectivity lie under each and every action of the modern sovereign? How can it be affirmative then? Agamben, through expanding Foucault's notes on the matter, provides a clearer view. What he finds missing in Foucault is a concrete theory, so he first aims to build one by depending on Foucault's idea of the power shift. He describes the Nazi regime and labor camps as the embodiment of biopolitics while depending on Walter Benjamin, and re-works his theories<sup>5</sup> in order to address *affirmative biopolitics*.

First, the main point where Agamben parts from Foucault is where he separates biopolitics from the regulative institutions, human sciences, and capitalist processes in *Sovereign of the Bare Life* (Mills 59). Thus, biopolitics, which we see as a normalization mechanism in Foucault, operates through exclusion. It works to create a division in Agamben as he says that the "original activity" of biopower<sup>6</sup> is the "production of biopolitical body" (in Mills, 59). To be able to do that, he distinguishes the biological and political lives of humans and defines *bare life*, a life stripped from all political rights and humane qualities, as the main object of this system. Another concept that differs between Foucault and Agamben is the notion of the *law*. The regulative notion of the law in Foucault becomes a force that creates the *state of exception*<sup>7</sup> (62). Catherine Mills refers to this state where biopolitics operates as a "paradox" (62). It is included in the law as its creation, but the law does not apply to this sphere. State of exception is created through the "suspension of law" in which the legal orders does not process (62). This state is created by the law, when it is not regulated and the sovereign decides who will be excluded from the legal order and who will be treated in this state (61-62). For Agamben, *homo sacer*<sup>8</sup> is the subject of this exclusion process and belongs entirely to the state of exception. As law does not operate to cherish or protect his/her rights, *homo sacer* can be killed or used in any way for the sake of the state. He/she is the ultimate

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<sup>5</sup> See: Benjamin, *Towards the Critique of Violence*, 1921 and, Agamben, *On the Limits of Violence*, 1970.

<sup>6</sup> See: Rabinow. It is the result of the politicization of the human body and human species. The human body becomes an "object of manipulation and control" as well as fertility, death or health. Sovereign power then turns in "administration of bodies and calculated management of life" (17; 262).

<sup>7</sup> Carl Schmitt is also a substantial name on the 'state of exception'. He takes it as a rather broad term. There aren't any determinants to suggest what is the 'exception' and when to 'suspend' the law. Thus, the sovereign power first determines what is the danger, the exception, and how the regulations should be suspended to eliminate this danger. It is through the creation of we/them conflict. See: Schmitt, *Political Theology*.

<sup>8</sup> See: Agamben, *Homo Sacer*. "...who *may be killed and yet not sacrificed*..." (8). Who is recognized by the state only for his/her "capacity to be killed" (8).

figure that reveals the most fundamental political connection between the state and the human as it “recalls the memory of the exclusion that found in the juridico-political sphere” (72).

Agamben refers to the labor camps as the embodiment, the physical reality of the biopolitical world. Camps, for him, were the prototypes of the concept (*Homo Sacer* 2-8). Even before we come to Agamben, race politics appears in Foucault. In *Society Must Be Defended*, he questions the destructive nature of biopolitics by asking how an order that claims to favor human life operates through concepts such as death and exclusion (“Society” 73). Race politics becomes significant at this point. Biopower that functions to regulate the society through birth, death, health and such requires distinctive groups in order to build a dominance structure. It needs to emphasize the *normal* and the *abnormal*. Race makes it possible to make this division. Race politics, therefore, separates society into genders, races, and species according to biological codes. Then the sovereign can decide which group will be normalized and who needs to be regulated through the law. Thus, race politics works as a justification and as a motivation for the sovereign’s right to kill. It is the “precondition for exercising the right to kill” (“Society” 75). It builds a life-death relationship between the sovereign and the society suggesting: “if you want to live the other must die” (74). After all, race politics provides sufficient ground for biopolitical order to function. Likewise, race politics depends on the biopolitical state. Making it possible to “exposing a whole race to death” (79) in the Nazi regime, biopower is spread among all the members of the society along with the sovereign. Practices that claim a right over the other lives could be performed not only by the sovereign but by a group of people. Camps were the “materialization of the state of exception” (Agamben “Politicization” 147) because they were the physical places where the *homo sacer* was held captive. In the camps, binary oppositions, friend-enemy, good-bad, and so on, were created and actualized. This is a point we can extract from Benigni’s movie. At the beginning of the movie, we see a communication, a relationship between Guido Orefice and Doctor Lessing. However, when they encounter again later in the camp, we see a clear limit in between their relationship. While they were equals in their previous encounters, now in the camp, the doctor is in the position of the master. He is willing to reciprocate Guido’s attempt to communicate, however, he is banned through the law (min. 80-83). The friendship is banned through the laws that operate in this state of exception and a relation of power dominance is established



instead. People thrown in *state of exception* are stripped from their human rights to live, to be equals and such, and degraded into *living beings* only. Their right to live is undermined and the practices of the power figures determine the life processes. Through this deprivation of rights, the sovereign builds dominance and total control over the captives in the camps. What Agamben expresses in the *Sovereign of Bare Life* is Nazi biopolitics, eugenics, practices of the biopolitical power on certain groups and certain people. In the modern state, however, everyone becomes a potential *homo sacer*, biopower can apply to every people in the society.

Thus far, biopolitics seems like a common structure surrounding human lives and holding rights as a weapon that can be used against humanity at any time. The question raises at this point, is there really no way out of this order, isn't there a way of reconstructing and sustaining human lives within this structure?

Appealing Agamben's understanding of *affirmative biopolitics* we can see possible ways of sustaining life within biopolitics. With the simplest explanation, Agamben suggests that this is possible by removing the distinction between political and biological lives, creating a politics of biological lives (Prozorov "Living" 5). This resolution, however, cannot be presented by a democracy. In a democracy, oppositions are possible. In a biopolitical structure, on the other hand, as people are deprived of all humane qualities, it is not possible to voice any resistance (7). Agamben brings up theories of language and discourse depending on Benjamin's *storyteller*<sup>9</sup>, to make the resistance possible. He suggests that turning *bare life* into *good life* is key to establish affirmative biopolitics (Agamben "Introduction" 139). *Language* is one way of accomplishing so. It is a humane quality as it makes it possible to voice the difference between good and bad, just and unjust (139). According to Benjamin, speech and/or writing mean a non-violent resilience and this works as a "divine power" (Boever 88). Storytelling, in this case, can be the transformative force that Agamben is looking for. Approaching Primo Levi's *If This is a Man* with this understanding, we can say that it affirms the horror of camps by turning his experiences into a narration. Levi, as a witness of the period, is someone who can enlighten what was happened. This way, the narration becomes a "testimony" instead of storytelling (Mills 89). Although the telling of the

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<sup>9</sup> See: Walter Benjamin, *The Storyteller*. Benjamin approaches the art of storytelling in the same way as he approaches his beloved *aura*. It is unique to living beings, yet its importance can only be understood when it is no longer available. Likewise, the storytelling belongs to the witnesses of time and space and, can have value only after that time and space is buried in the past. The storyteller earns a voice within the communal past and writes his or her side of the history.

events cannot change the past, it can be a valuable source that emphasizes injustice and inhumanity. Biopower aims to degrade people from “speaking beings” to bare life. Being able to tell the story of the camps not only explains the experience but also proves that the power was not successful. The survivors are still humans after all. Speech/language converts the bare life into a form of life with a human quality (89). Another important role of language is seen through the pronouns in Levi’s narration. In the novel, he constantly uses the “we” language. Mills mentions the “I” pronoun, as a constructive expression, not an othering language, as it means that the narrator is also the subject of the discourse. The narrator is in the discourse alone. Levi, on the other hand, uses the “we” language. It stresses the fact that he was not alone in his experience and everything he is telling *did happen*. Along with re-humanizing himself, he also claims the humanity of the others as well. Thus, he stresses subjectivity.

Another constructive force within biopolitics is “shame” according to Agamben (Mills 90). Mills suggests that this is not caused by a lack. On the contrary, this is a shame of being “in a vision which one seeks to hide” (90), being exposed in an undesirable way. In *If This is a Man*, we can see that he uses the word “shame” quite often. He describes their clothes as “shameful clothes” while they are waiting for the examination (Levi 119). He says that they “sink into the ground from shame and embarrassment” in front of the girls in the laboratory because of the way they looked (Levi 167). He says how they were “oppressed by shame” (Levi 178). Under the Nazi regime, stripped from their humanity, they are stuck in an identity of being unworthy which they cannot break free. Yes, they may not be able to physically get out of this representation but having shame proves that their humanity is still present. This form of shame is what makes the creation of testimony possible (Mills 93).

The same concept, the importance of storytelling for affirmative biopolitics, can be applied to Roberto Benigni’s movie as well. Although we don’t see the testimonial quality of the movie or its emphasis on shame, it raises resistance against the order we are mentioning. The character Guido Orefice is the figure of the *storyteller*. Mills suggests that Benjamin associates the act of storytelling with concepts such as “law, justice, right” (Boever 87). He puts *myth*, which symbolizes the law, against the story and explains these concepts by revealing their associations with the other elements of the story. As I will be analyzing the movie through this perspective, I will be mentioning the figures of the *youth* and the *fool*. The figure of the *fool* means, “how mankind acts dumb

towards the myth” (Benjamin “Illuminations” 102). In the movie, this figure corresponds to Guido Orefice, as he is constantly in this practice of storytelling. Considering that the myth refers to the law, telling a story works as a resistance against the biopolitical law, which rejects and degrades humanity. It provides a non-violent source of rebellion. Guido, through his stories, undermines the severity of the situations he is in and creates his own reality within the existing order. With his own reality, he manages to keep his humane self. The little kid, Giousé Orefice, according to the same theory, can be identified with the figure of the *youth*. The figure “sets out to learn what the fear is, it shows that the things we are afraid of can be seen through” (102). Giousé manages to survive through the most horrific conditions believing that the surrounding reality is just a game. Guido teaches him not to fear the conditions he is facing; therefore, he approaches everything in a positive manner. This is the most important thing that got him through the camps. Again, we see a failure of biopower in its attempt to dehumanize the individual. As he does not develop a fear of death, the dominant power could not claim a right over his life. Between these two figures, the act of storytelling teaches meeting “the forces of the mythical world with cunning and high spirits” (102). If biopower were a force of the mythical world, the law, adopting a smart, artsy approach to the world would provide safety. It makes it possible to transform the system that operates around death and exclusion to the other way. Being related to narration and language indirectly, humor appears as another way of the affirmative biopolitics. The theme is processed intensely in *Life is Beautiful*. We see Guido in a humorous approach throughout the movie. This comedic sight may have saved his kid’s life in the end. The figure of the fool is a rebellious stance against injustice, as we have said. At the same time, this identity carries a discursive quality to *homo sacer*, whose speech has been taken away. Humor, a cynical style, might make Guido seem unrealistic or careless but the humor in the movie works as a source of alienation. It distracts the audience from the seriousness of the context just to be able to strike with reality more intensely. To exemplify, the race speech Guido gives at the school may look ridiculous. Or when Giousé asks about why Jews and dogs are not allowed, the answer he gives is that it could be anything like Chinese and kangaroos (min.50-51). We may think that he is undermining the reality, however, the central point he is making is that the “race” is something made up, something that relies on abstract assumptions about differences and similarities between people. However, the race is the main reason for all the tragedy happening later in the movie. Humor works in favor of affirmative biopolitics exactly

because of this reason. While it is forbidden to have a speech, humor can disguise the rebellious and makes it possible to raise a voice. Through a cynical approach, people can express themselves freely even when their ability to speak is restricted.

Humor, storytelling, and language are significant for Agamben's affirmative biopolitics. According to Sergei Prozorov, Foucault also mentions this significance in his lecture dated 17 March 1979. Although he does not use the term affirmative biopolitics, he suggests that it is accurate to interpret the passage in this sense. The emphasis is on the way truth is delivered this time and the *Cynics*. He suggests that there is an opposition between biopolitical governmentality and affirmative biopolitics of *parrhesia*<sup>10</sup>. One expresses a lack, exclusion; the other is constructive, productive (Prozorov "Foucault's" 818). If we consider Guido as connected to the Cynic character, we can interpret his humor as a way of *parrhesia*.

According to Agamben, a way of affirming biopolitics was to build a true-life from in the condition of *bare-life*, finding the "power of the powerless" in other words (Prozorov "Foucault's" 817). The aim is to bring a new perspective, a new understanding to the existing order. Prozorov suggests by mentioning the *Cynic practice of parrhesia* that Foucault refers to this issue exactly. His theory emphasizes that expression of the truth can provide power for someone to claim his rights back. Humor, according to Agamben, is a way to save lives from sovereign dominance as it makes it possible to criticize biopolitical structures and their cruelty (Prozorov "Foucault's" 804). However, as I have stated earlier in the essay, *homo sacer* stripped from the use of language is not allowed to do this openly. Thus, a new approach to living and a new discourse to express this new form of living needed to be established. Foucault suggests that Cynics and their way of approaching reality can provide a "biopolitical resistance to biopower" (805). In the order of the sovereignty, telling the truth in a mocking attitude seems like the only possible way of resistance (807-8). Affirmative quality, cynic parrhesia, connects with the movie I am mentioning, and the Nazi regime, in general, is the concept of *bare-life*. In the theory we are mentioning, humans were excluded from the order of law and reduced to the condition of bare-life, where they were considered as animals, not humans. What cynics manage to transform is exactly this sphere. This area is the base to reflect what is real and what is natural (" 810). They aim to create an alternate reality, an alternative way of living within the existing order (812). In *Life is Beautiful*, we can

<sup>10</sup> The art of telling the truth. See Prozorov "Foucault's Affirmative Biopolitics..." for Foucauldian reading of the concept.

see Guido creating his own reality by his way of approaching the harsh reality. He expresses the reality in a way he would like to see. At the caps, at the state of exception, he manages to transform the deathly, destructive forces of biopolitics and saves his son's life. The Cynic figure does not aim to prove his existence, he wants to create his own reality against the governmental one and survive this way (Prozorov "Foucault's" 816). Turning to Levi, his narratives voice the truth in his perspectives. His narrative is not history, it is a biography, it is the reality Levi creates. He reveals his most unsecure moments and transforms them into a source for power by offering the truth against the common history. It is his way of affirming the ordeal, not denying but altering it.

Behind the modern state and each and every one of its power structures, there is biopolitics that claims peoples' rights to live and turns it into a weapon to hold against society. It might appear as a stable component of socio-political life, regardless of the structural changes. The contemporary concept of history, transformative and continuative, suggests that each reformation, each progress build upon the same biopolitical skeleton. Then are we giving up against what feels like an imperious future? I hope this paper served as an indicative of possible steps one can take to transform this conduct. While we would only butter the bread of the sovereign power with mass reactions or with violent responses, there are micro actions to take. It is possible to see that *everything is a weapon if we hold them right*<sup>11</sup>. It is speech to reflect the self, and language to reclaim humanity. Then it is storytelling to rebuild what has been destructed, thus, alter the past. Yet the most important tool to dethrone biopolitical practices is humor. Such subtle resilience is the key to an alternative order that overcomes the exception, reinvents the rights and equality, thus sustains human life. Now, then, what is left for us is to devote to these micro-political<sup>12</sup> practices to affirm the obliteration, to live, and to let others live in a more harmonious future.

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<sup>11</sup> Quoting Ani DiFranco. *My IQ*.

<sup>12</sup> It is not possible to talk about the term more in depth within the scope of this paper. Briefly, micro-politics is about union of opposite poles around the same goals. It is creation of alternate communities, which would shake the stable grounds of opposition and conflict that supports the power systems.

For a brief introduction, see: Anderson, "Hope and Micropolitics".

For more, see: Gilliam, *Immanence and Micropolitics*.

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**REINTERPRETING THE DILEMMA OF THE  
FUTURIST-MODERNIST NARRATOR IN  
MINA LOY'S "APHORISMS ON FUTURISM"<sup>1</sup>****MINA LOY'UN "FÜTÜRİZM ÜZERİNE  
AFORİZMALAR" ADLI ŞİİRİNDE FÜTÜRİST-  
MODERNİST ANLATICININ İKİLEMİNİN  
YENİDEN YORUMLANMASI****Tuğba KARABULUT<sup>2</sup>****Abstract**

The British poet and artist Mina Loy holds an exceptional place in the art and literature of the avant-garde and enlightens the dawn of the Modernist era in the early twentieth century. Loy's poetry is innovative with its unusual and idiosyncratic fragmentary style and shifting narrative voices, while her artworks are unique, maintaining an eclectic approach associated with the canonical artistic movements of her age, such as Futurism, Cubism, Dadaism, and Surrealism. Her creative visual and literary output problematizes the conventions of that time by both opposing and reconciling with them. Loy's manifesto-poem, "Aphorisms on Futurism" (1914), intertextually connects the significations in each aphorism with one another and with her other textual and artistic works. The text creates the chains of signification to reveal the dialogical rhetoric as well as the evolutionary nature of the narrative voice manoeuvring between Futurism and Modernism in relation both to herself and the implied readers. Loy's persona argues for destroying the traditional language forms and proclaims a new form, which is representative of Futurist poetry, by subverting the retrospective ones and constructing new ones. Within this framework, Loy's untitled 1951 New York painting seems to represent the destruction of the traditional art forms to celebrate the concepts of dynamism and deformation, which evokes the features of Futurist, Dadaist, and Cubist aesthetics. In this experimental poem, the arguments of Loy's fictive persona, through shifting between Futurism and Modernism, create complex

**Öz**

Avangart sanat ve edebiyatta özel bir yere sahip olan, İngiliz şair ve sanatçı Mina Loy, yirminci yüzyılın başında erken Modernist dönemin ortaya çıkışını aydınlatan bir figür olarak karşımıza çıkar. Loy'un şiirleri, alışılmadık ve kendine özgü parçalanmış biçemi ve değişken anlatıcılarıyla yenilikçi özellikler taşıırken, sanat eserleri Fütürizm, Kübizm, Dadaizm ve Sürrealizm gibi döneminin başlıca sanat hareketleri ile ilişkili bir şekilde eklektik bir yaklaşım izlemesi açısından özgündür. Yazarın yaratıcı görsel ve yazınsal yapıtları, çağının alışlagelmiş geleneklerini, kimi zaman onlara karşı çıkarak kimi zaman da onlarla uzlaşarak sorunsallaştırır. Loy'un 1914'de kaleme aldığı "Fütürizm üzerine Aforizmalar" adlı manifesto-şiiri hem aforizmalarındaki hem de yazarın diğer görsel ve yazınsal çalışmalarındaki anlamlandırmaları metinlerarası bağlamda birbirine bağlayarak ele alır ve bu anlamlandırmalar, Fütürizm ve Modernizm arasında yön değiştiren ve anlatıcının hem kendisi hem de ima edilen okuyucuları olan diyalogunu ve evrimsel doğasını ortaya çıkaran adeta bir anlamlandırma zinciri yaratır. Eserde Loy'un anlatıcısı, geleneksel dil türlerini yok edip yeni türler oluşturma (Fütürist şiir) ve böylelikle bilinç özgürlüğüne ulaşmayı ele alır. Görsel açıdan baktığımızda ise, Loy'un 1951'de New York'ta resmettiği tablosu, Fütürist, Dadaist ve Kübist sanat akımlarında gördüğümüz dinamizm ve deformasyon kavramlarına övgüler yaparken, alışlagelmiş sanat türlerinin yok edilmesini de temsil eder. Loy'un bu deneysel şiirindeki kurgusal anlatıcının argümanları, Fütürizm ve Modernizm arasında yön

<sup>1</sup> This article is an abridged and a revised version of a chapter in the author's Ph.D. dissertation entitled "Reading Performativity, Gender and the Fragmentation of Narrative Voice in Mina Loy's Texts and Artworks."

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intertextuality between the aphorisms and the narrator's shifting voices. The arguments of the narrative voice illuminate the narrator's Futurist-Modernist project by inviting both herself and the readers to attain the individual consciousness and liberation through a metamorphic journey from being a Futurist to a Modernist.

**Keywords:** Mina Loy, Futurism, Modernism, Intertextuality, Individual Consciousness, Futurist Art.

değiştirerek hem aforizmalar hem de anlatıcının değişken sesleri arasında karmaşık bir metinlerarasılık yaratırken, anlatıcının Fütürist-Modernist projesini de ortaya koyar ve hem kendisini hem de okuyucuyu kişisel bilinç özgürlüğüne ulaşmaya davet ederek, Fütürist kimlikten Modernist kimliğe doğru evrimsel bir yolculuğa doğru götürür.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Mina Loy, Fütürizm, Modernizm, Metinlerarasılık, Kişisel Bilinç, Fütürist Sanat

## Introduction

Produced and published at the focal points of the transnational avant-gardes, Mina Loy joined the Futurists with Marinetti; engaged with Futurism and versions of early twentieth-century feminism; was involved in the commencement of the Dada movement with Tristan Tzara and later shifted to Surrealism, inspired by Andre Bréton and Giorgio de Chirico. Recognition of Loy as an avant-garde poet largely depends on her early writings, which were produced between 1914 and 1920, and centered on Futurist and feminist concerns. Her poetic works were published in various significant New York magazines of the early 1900s, such as *Camera Work*, *The Trend*, *Rogue*, *The Little Review* and *Others*, and her several prose works in *Charm* and *The Blind Man*, before being published in a book. Loy's works usually shift between concepts of Futurism and Modernism and undergo various transformations. These shifts and transformations are performed stylistically through the narrator's use of fragmentation, interruptions of punctuation, and complex juxtapositions of words or images in the literary and artistic forms through which they are expressed: the poem, the aphorism, the manifesto, the assemblage, and the modernist and Surrealist paintings.

"Aphorisms on Futurism" is Mina Loy's first published work; it was penned when she was involved in the Futurist movement in Florence and published in the January issue of photographer Alfred Stieglitz's<sup>3</sup> magazine, *Camera Work*, in 1914.<sup>4</sup> This work of Loy consists of fifty-two aphorisms: it is a collection of fragments that develops an

<sup>3</sup> Alfred Stieglitz (1864-1946) was an American photographer and the editor of *Camera Work* from 1903 to 1917. See, "Alfred Stieglitz (1864-1946) and American Photography." *The Metmuseum*, [www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/stgp/hd\\_stgp.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/stgp/hd_stgp.htm).

<sup>4</sup> "[It was] first published in Alfred Stieglitz's epochal quarterly, *Camera Work* 45 (January [June] 1912,) pp. 13-15." In Roger L. Conover, Roger. Ed. *The Lost Lunar Baedeker: Poems of Mina Loy*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1996, p. 215.

argument about art and life through a series of contrasts and parallels. In her *Becoming Modern: The Life of Mina Loy*, Carolyn Burke, Loy's biographer, notes that "[Loy] was intrigued by Marinetti's *parole-in-libertà* or words-set-free, a poetic form, he claimed, which liberated language from the patterns of linearity. She found herself responding to his writing's dynamism now that she knew what the term meant . . ." (160). In terms of its form and pattern, the language of the text echoes the Futurists' technique used by Marinetti, founder of Futurism, in his "Futurist Manifesto," *-parole in libertà-*: words-in-freedom.<sup>5</sup> Loy's narrator uses this style as a device to express her ideas. Infinitive verbs and upper-case letters used in the aphorisms emphasize ideas in the shape of commandments. The aphorisms are introduced in different lines with a space between each; the first words of each aphorism are written with bold and capitalized letters, which creates the visual impression of graphic artwork.

"Aphorisms"<sup>6</sup> differ from "manifestos": an aphorism makes a concise statement in a witty way, while a manifesto usually takes the form of revolutionary rhetoric, calling the public to action to stop or change something urgently. To illustrate, Franz Kafka's aphorisms written between 1917 and 1918 also serve as canonical collections of aphorisms in the Modernist era. However, Loy's choice represents a combination of both—a manifesto in the form of aphorisms—which makes the text unique and unconventional: a "manifesto-poem."

As regards its narrative style, the persona seems to be addressing an audience: she uses imperative forms—and occasionally the second-person pronoun—the indefinable "you" and "your"—in a didactic tone. However, the narration also gives the impression of being a self-dialogue in which the narrative voice converses with herself and attempts to solve the incompatibilities in her own mind. As Carolyn Burke, who produced essential sources in Loy scholarship, comments, "This idiosyncratic manifesto adapted Futurist practice to a form that was, in essence, a dialogue with herself" (160). This is a variation on the "interior monologue," a form used in modernist literature, in which the narrator expresses her ideas and actions in a thinking process.

The text is satirical in character, shifting between praise and irony by accepting and rejecting established concepts of life. In a superficial manner, it embraces Futurism

<sup>5</sup> See "Italian Futurism: 1909-1944 Reconstructing the Universe." [exhibitions.guggenheim.org/futurism/](https://exhibitions.guggenheim.org/futurism/).

<sup>6</sup> An "Aphorism" is a short phrase that says something true or wise.  
[www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/aphorism](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/aphorism)

in terms of its enthusiasm for dynamism, speed, advanced technology, and urban modernity, as well as the language form which appears in Futurist manifestos. However, the aphorisms contain philosophical, psychological, and revolutionary arguments: they touch upon various themes such as new art forms, regeneration of the individual consciousness, and expansion of the mind from limitedness to immensity within space and time.

In this argument, Loy's narrator takes a number of existing expressions as well as the concepts associated with them and redefines them in the context of her own vision. These expressions include line, future/Futurism/Futurist, the great man, God, egotism, life, time, mind, and consciousness. To date, although various critics have quoted from the aphorisms, the text has not been analysed as a systematically complete and self-contained argument. My close reading performs an analysis through an intertextual interpretation of the text, which makes it possible to group, rearrange and rearticulate the aphorisms, and so create intertextual links between the significations, through conjunctions as well as the voice of the fictive persona shifting between Futurism and Modernism.

### **Aesthetic Production Of The Futurist Artist**

Futurist artists, namely Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, and Gino Severini, depicted the dynamism and speed with their aesthetic artworks by suggesting optimism about technology and industrialization in the Modern Age. This part of the article focuses on the relationship between the aphorisms and the aesthetic production of the Futurist artists.

The argument of the aphorisms begins with a couplet distinguishing the past and the future and relating it to history and tradition. The past is associated with death and the future with life:

**[1]<sup>7</sup>        DIE in the Past**  
**Live in the Future.**

These associations are clearly metaphorical, and Loy's narrator explains the metaphors as the text proceeds. In between them is the present, which represents a

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<sup>7</sup> The numbers referring to the aphorisms in the poem are arranged in accordance with the line sequence appearing in *The Lost Lunar Baedeker*, ed. Roger L. Conover, 1996, pp. 149-152.

starting point (the “velocity of velocities” or the speed of speed, i.e., the conditions of possibility) for the future:

**[2] THE velocity of velocities arrives in starting.**

This suggests that while the past represents slowness, the future represents a speed that has to be reached. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, the founder of Futurism, declares in “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism,” “[w]e affirm that the beauty of the world has been enriched by a new form of beauty: the beauty of speed . . . We have already created velocity which is eternal and omnipresent” (Marinetti 51). Here, the term “velocity” is associated with one of the primary ideas of the Futurist philosophy—dynamism.

The process of getting to the future from the present is described through a series of contrasts. The past (dying) is associated with “material” [3]<sup>8</sup> and visible “form”:

**[3] IN pressing the material to derive its essence, matter becomes deformed.**

**[4] AND form hurtling against itself is thrown beyond the synopsis of vision.**

The focus here is on the relation between “matter” and “essence,” or the difference between form and meaning. While matter and its essence are connected, the essence is not available to us and cannot be accessed unless the external form is modified—“deformed.” It suggests that the essence of objects in the world, in general, cannot be perceived without some action that modifies visible forms. This action may be interpreted as the activity of a visual artist in compressing materials to produce significations, which evokes motion in paintings. As the narrator argues, the matter must be expanded to find the hidden essence in it.<sup>9</sup> While the future holds the essences [3] which are beyond vision, [4] the starting point to get to these invisible essences is possible by “pressing” the material to destroy the external forms.

The argument related to the “deformed” matter brings to mind the abstract forms

<sup>8</sup> The numbers of the aphorisms are indicated in square brackets in the in-text references of the article.

<sup>9</sup> The persona’s characterisation of the matter as “deformed” echoes a statement by the sculptor Constantin Brancusi (1876-1957), who was deeply influenced by Auguste Rodin: “The artist should know how to dig out the being that is within matter.” See “Constantin Brâncuși: French-Romanian Photographer and Sculptor.” *The Art Story*, [www.theartstory.org/artist-brancusi-constantin.htm](http://www.theartstory.org/artist-brancusi-constantin.htm).

used in Futurist artworks. Boccioni's well-known statue, *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* (1913), is considered a precursor example of Futurist sculpture. The motion of the "Futurist man" is depicted in a "deformed" form, which is described as "hideous" [6] in the poem, and human movement is merged into space. (Figure 1):



**Figure 1. Umberto Boccioni, *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913<sup>10</sup>**

The process of the "form hurt[ling] against itself" appears as contradictory, as it destroys itself to the point where it is no longer perceivable and "beyond the synopsis of vision" [4]. Here, the sense of movement suggested by "hurtling" can be explained in terms of the "velocity of velocities" [2]. This phrase can be understood better if we substitute for it a similar phrase: "idea of ideas;" this suggests the underlying concept or conditions under which ideas become meaningful. Thus, similarly, the "velocity of velocities" describes the conditions of possibility of speed; and these conditions are necessary for form to "hurt[le] against itself" as they are the starting point. From these conditions of possibility, specific examples of "velocities" or speeds can be derived. Any example of speed is, therefore, a synecdochic representation of the possibility of speed

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<sup>10</sup> Umberto Boccioni, *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, 1913. The original copy is kept in MoMA, NY. [www.moma.org/collection/works/81179](http://www.moma.org/collection/works/81179).

in general.

From this perspective, the external and visible forms to be destroyed are represented by the line and the circle; they are the foundation of art and are full of possibilities:

- [5] **THE straight line and the circle are the parents of design, form  
the basis of art; there is no limit to their coherent variability.**

All other forms derive from these two forms because they are infinitely variable; they frame the “basis of art.” However, in contrast to the traditional idea that artistic forms should be “beautiful,” the *Aphorisms* argue for such forms to be destroyed in order to access the essence, as they are empty inside and lead nowhere. The destruction of these traditional forms of art—“the straight line and the circle”—is illustrated in an untitled 1951 New York painting by Mina Loy, reproduced in Figure 2:



**Figure 2. Mina Loy, a 1951 New York painting<sup>11</sup>**

The figures in this three-dimensional image are depicted in a straight linear form. However, the deformed human silhouettes are far beyond linearity; their movements are

<sup>11</sup> Mina Loy, a 1951 New York painting. *Flickr*, [www.flickr.com/photos/uknowit/30079675](https://www.flickr.com/photos/uknowit/30079675).

blended with space, and their irregular vertical positions make them dynamic figures as they move and circle around one another. The tones of the colours—yellow, green, and brown—are intertwined with each other and do not represent sharp tonal differences. All these features echo features of Futurist, Dadaist, and Cubist aesthetics. Another striking aspect of this painting is that the way the silhouettes are pinned bears a resemblance to the image of Christ in Loy's 1955-1959 painting, *Christ on a Clothesline*,<sup>12</sup> which could be interpreted in this context as hanging out and disinfecting the external and traditional—Futurist—forms existing in the physical space.<sup>13</sup>

The narrative voice also declares that "there is no limit" [5] to the use of these two external forms—"the line and the circle"—[5], because as they are the "parents of design," all *forms* can be generated from them. However, multiple *materials* can be used in art, a viewpoint which can be interpreted as an echo of Boccioni's ideas: in his "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture," (1912) Boccioni announces the need to

[d]estroy the literary and traditional dignity of marble and bronze. Reject the idea that one material must be used exclusively in the construction of a sculptural whole. Insist that even twenty different types of material can be used in a single work of art in order to achieve its plastic feeling. To mention a few examples; glass, wood, cardboard, iron, cement, hair, leather, cloth, mirrors, electric lights, and so on (Boccioni 118).

In this regard, Loy's narrative voice shifts into a more sympathetic tone; she urges her reader to *love* the things that are opposed to the traditional forms—the ugly [6] and the dilapidated—and "rehabilitate":

[6]       **LOVE the hideous in order to find the sublime core of it.**

[7]       **OPEN your arms to the dilapidated; rehabilitate them.**

Once such external forms are destroyed, this will lead people to the "sublime core" of the essences which represent the future. Since we have been conditioned to appreciate traditional forms of the beauty of the past, our eyes are already open to them:

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<sup>12</sup> See Mina Loy's *Christ on a Clothesline* (1955-1959),  
<http://www.francisnaumann.com/daughters%20of%20dada/Loy.html>

<sup>13</sup> For a detailed analysis of Loy's painting, *Christ on a Clothesline*, see Karabulut, T. "Futurism and Feminist Performativity: Mina Loy's 'Feminist Manifesto,' *Househunting* and *Christ on a Clothesline*." *Women Studies: an interdisciplinary Journal*, vol. 49, no. 1, 2020, pp. 1-30.

**[8] YOU prefer to observe the past on which your eyes are already opened.**

Using the contrast between the past and the present, Loy's narrator only sees the hope in the future and negates the attachment to the "Past" time—*passéism*—this is the most contrasting view of the Futurist philosophy since Futurists reject the past as well as its nostalgia, artistic and political traditions. In order to avoid being stuck on the exterior things in the past that we are fixated on, we have to close our eyes to them and focus on what is beyond them. This may appear to be darkness at the start, [9] but once we *leap* into it, we will find the invisible, internal, and sublime essences "explod[ing] with *Light*".

**[9] BUT the Future is only dark from outside.**

**[10] Leap into it—and it EXPLODES with *Light*.**

This leap from external to internal space can be explained as a change of focus. The narrator implies that instead of focusing on the décor of the house, the person living in it must be centered:

**[11] FORGET that you live in houses, that you may live in your-self—**

People who are fixated on exterior things like the appearance of their house are very limited in their minds:

**[12] FOR the smallest people live in the greatest houses.**

These "smallest people" might refer to small-minded individuals; since they only focus on the exterior products and attach importance to domestic convenience, their minds remain limited. However, by rejecting their external and material focus, even these people can expand their minds:

**[13] BUT the smallest person, potentially, is as great as the Universe.**

The "Universe" represents the immensity and boundlessness of the individual mind, in contrast to the limitedness of the smallest person. Therefore, the mind, previously compressed with fixed thoughts, is now to be released from its limits and expanded.

## **MENTAL EXPANSION OF THE POTENTIAL FUTURIST MIND**



Once the mind of the individual is set free, it can be saved from its limits; this expansion will bring about self-development and psychic liberation of the individual mind:

**[14] WHAT can you know of expansion, who limit yourselves to compromise?**

At this point, Loy's persona clarifies the attitudes of the traditional Futurist man—who is considered as the "great man" and who has looked down on other people throughout history:

**[15] HITHERTO the great man has achieved greatness by keeping the people small.**

Since these people have influenced others with their ideas so far, their attitude can be identified with human selfishness. While subverting the traditional Futurist man, Loy's narrator redefines her own "great man"—the potential Futurist man:

**[16] BUT in the Future, by inspiring the people to expand to their fullest capacity, the great man proportionately must be tremendous—a God.**

Loy's narrator envisages that the "great man" will play a vital role in the prospective process of individual development. She redefines the concept of "God" and glorifies the "great man"—the potential Futurist man who will have the power to expand other people to their fullest capacity and inspire them; it will make him as "tremendous [as] a God." Loy's narrator's definition of man being "as tremendous [as] God" can be associated with the Nietzschean frame of mind. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) notes in his *Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits* that "[you have] to become master over yourself, master of your own good qualities . . . acquire power over your eye and no and learn to hold and withhold them in accordance with your higher aims . . ." (Nietzsche 11). The potential Futurist individual is depicted as powerful, superior, and independent throughout the text, and in this way, can attain his/her psychic liberation.

The narrator then focuses on human relations as well as one's own comfort of mind; she argues that individual self-development cannot be separated from relations

with other people:

**[17] LOVE of others is the appreciation of one's self.**

Self-love is a pre-requisite condition to loving other people; Loy's persona implies that one must first love yourself before one loves other people. This means that a human being becomes a synecdoche for the whole of humanity; one must sympathize or empathize with herself in order to embrace all mankind:

**[18] MAY your egotism be so gigantic that you comprise mankind  
in your self-sympathy.**

The term "egotism" generally describes one's inflated opinions in an imagined self; an egotist places herself at the centre of the universe with no concern for other people. Traditional egotism can be connected with the egotist doctrines of the so-called "great man," [15] which have influenced humanity throughout history. However, Loy's persona redefines this drive as "gigantic" self-love to embrace the whole of mankind. This argument suggests that one must also self-sympathize and be mindful of herself: the individual must look into herself deeply by leaving her ego aside [18]. In this way, a person may comprise all human beings to perceive the whole and reach the "sublime." Thus, the descriptions [17, 18] in Loy's poem suggest a new kind of egotism: one for the individual herself—self-love—which then becomes generalized or universalized to include other people—social relations. The future and the past are sharply contrasted to foreground the absoluteness of the future:

**[19] THE Future is limitless—the past a trail of insidious reactions.**

This characterisation exhibits the impatient vision of Loy's persona towards the arrival of the future, as she describes its infiniteness and immensity. Although the future is "limitless" and immense, the past is limited and finite, which will lead people nowhere but to the route of harmful and deceitful attitudes—"insidious reactions"—such as "egotism" in the traditional sense. The argument of this aphorism is connected to the next aphorism in terms of the mental independence of the individual:

**[20] LIFE is only limited by our prejudices. Destroy them, and you  
cease to be at the mercy of yourself.**

Here, the narrative voice argues that individuals should not conform to the restrictions of society—"prejudices." Rather, the restrictions must be destroyed so that

the individual mind can be expanded to attain its psychic liberation [14]. In these two aphorisms, [19, 20] it is argued that destruction of such judgements is only possible by means of giving up one's self-pity. The individual can, in this way, perceive life and reach mental liberation. Human beings' life experience is itself connected to the concept of time:

**[21] TIME is the dispersion of intensiveness.**

The term "intensiveness" can be interpreted as the individual's focusing on one subject, which can be thought of as the compression of thoughts: "pressing" [3] and "[limit]ing yourselves" [14]. This idea of dispersing compression may echo the narrator's call with regard to the limitlessness of the artists, for them to use multiple forms instead of focusing on a single form [5]. On the other hand, it can be associated with the traditional egotism described previously [15], as it does not "comprise mankind" [18] but focuses on one's own imagined self. So, while the concept of traditional time focuses on one single subject, which limits itself, Loy's narrator argues for timelessness, which is possible through the "expansion" of thoughts [14]. Based on the characterisation of the concept of time in the earlier aphorism, the Futurist poem can now be understood as a timeless and endless form:

**[22] THE Futurist can live a thousand years in one poem.**

The narrative voice argues, apparently paradoxically, for both the eternality or dispersion of the Futurist poet and the limitation and compression suggested by his aesthetic talent:

**[23] HE can compress every aesthetic principle in one line.**

The apparent paradox lies in the fact that the term "line," a form used in the literary genre of the poem, is connected with the aesthetic form of the "line," which was described earlier as one of the external forms to be destroyed—the "straight line" [5]. However, here Loy's narrator redefines it by relating it to the talent of the potential Futurist man. It is suggested that both Futurist poets and artists must use various forms while producing their works. As the potential Futurist can "comprise mankind" by leaving his ego aside, he can abridge all the aesthetic principles in a single form. In the context of the "velocity of velocities," [3] the "line" can also be represented as a condition of possibility, which makes the work open to alternative interpretations. This representation will then save it from its boundaries and make its possibilities an

independent work.

This is based on the “limitless” nature of the individual human mind:

**[24] THE mind is a magician bound by assimilations; let him loose  
and the smallest idea conceived in freedom will suffice to negate  
the wisdom of all forefathers.**

An individual mind has a miraculous capacity to absorb new ideas; however, exterior associations limit it. Therefore, the narrator suggests, the individual mind should be set free from the external “assimilations” [24]—“prejudices” [20]. Even the “smallest idea” [13] formed in freedom would be sufficient to invalidate the established values of “all forefathers”—traditional “great m[e]n” [15]. This means that the free mind has to resist the impulse to conform to the established traditional boundaries of the past automatically and reject the new [1, 8] and instead, embrace and assent to it:

**[25] Looking on the past you arrive at “Yes,” but before you can  
act upon it you have already arrived at “No.”**

In other words, Loy’s persona is critiquing those who blindly look at the “past” [8] and negate everything new—“No”—without questioning it as focusing on the past would lead these people nowhere but to external things. Instead, it is needed to abandon the traditional past and be receptive to the internal things—new ideas:

**[26] THE Futurist must leap from affirmative to affirmative, ignoring  
intermittent negations—must spring from stepping-stone to  
stone of creative explorations; without slipping back into the  
turbid stream of accepted facts.**

This is a clarification of the attitude expected from the potential Futurist. As explained earlier, *Leap*[ing] from external things to internal ones represents the future, which “EXPLODES with *Light*” [10]. Loy’s Futurist individual must change her focus to find the invisible and internal essences in the sublime by arriving at “Yes,” [25] and “*Leap*[ing]” to the positive and creative ideas: the potential Futurist must move forward on the stepping-stone[s] without getting stuck—“slipping back”—in the dark current of the “accepted facts” of the “great man” [15] and the “forefathers” [24]. In short, Loy’s narrator glorifies the eternal infiniteness of the future liberated from “prejudices,” [20]

"assimilations," [24] "negations," and the "accepted facts" [26].

### **THE MARGINAL SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE FUTURIST-MODERNIST INDIVIDUAL**

At this crucial point, following the argument against "accepted facts," Loy's narrator moves on from the potential Futurist perspective to a broader, modernist perspective, considering all these characterisations to be aspects of the concept of the absolute, and she implies that the only truth on which "man may pin his faith" is that there is no "absolute" truth:

**[27]      THERE are no excrescences on the absolute, to which man  
                 may pin his faith.**

From a semiotic perspective, the term "absolute" can be associated with both the concept of totality, where the fragments stand synecdochically for the whole of the universe, and the quality of being unlimited, where the individuals exceed their boundaries and discover themselves. Thus, the concept of absoluteness is manifested as the narrator's revolutionary project for the upcoming modern world. The potential Futurist man, in the wake of modernism, needs to "spring from stepping-stone to stone" [26] to attain the "absolute" as there is no abnormality on the absoluteness. These abnormalities—"excrescences"—can be interpreted as the external things described earlier [3, 11, 20, 24, 26].

The traditional concept of beauty has changed throughout history, but now a new form is necessary since humanity is in a dilemma:

**[28]      TODAY is the crisis in consciousness.**

This new form suggested by Loy's persona is consciousness; the present is in the moment of a subtle crisis. The concept of consciousness is therefore developed in more detail:

**[29]      CONSCIOUSNESS cannot spontaneously accept or reject  
                 new forms, as offered by creative genius; it is the new form for  
                 however great period of time it may remain a mere irritant—  
                 that moulds consciousness to the necessary amplitude for hold-  
                 ing it.**

“Consciousness” is the key for the individual man to change his perception to reach psychic liberation; this argument evokes the narrator of “Feminist Manifesto,” who calls women to the consciousness of femininity: “seek within yourselves to find out what you are” (Loy, *LLB* in Conover, 154). As in the manifesto, the dilemma of “consciousness,” Loy’s narrator employs here invites the ideal readers to self-determination in order to find their own consciousness without limiting their “fullest capacity,” [16] because at present, this new form is in a status of crisis due to the limited understanding of the individual minds who were influenced by the traditional ideas of the “great man” [15]. This change may be considered an “irritant,” in that people are hesitant to absorb new forms because they have restricted themselves to individual development; but individual consciousness is timeless:

**[30] CONSCIOUSNESS has no climax.**

The new form is beyond limited concepts of time and space; it represents mental freedom connected with the interior space of the individual human mind. It is the ultimate form which is free from all its external restraints and leads to the unconditioned totality; it does not depend on any “excrescences” [27]. When the contrast between internal and external spaces is reconsidered, the new form—“consciousness”—semiotically alludes to the typical twentieth-century narrative technique “stream of consciousness,” in which the narrator expresses her subliminal feelings. This new form is subsequently introduced in connection with its limitless capacity in the universe:

**[31] LET the Universe flow into your consciousness, there is no limit to its capacity, nothing that it shall not re-create.**

This aphorism becomes clear if one considers that the fragments signify the totality—the “absolute” [27]. Once the new form of “consciousness” is perceived by humanity, it will also absorb the whole universe. As a result, the universe will be infused into the human consciousness, which has a limitless potential to regenerate society. Now, the *starting* point—“the velocity of velocities” [2]—can be reframed in this context. The phrase describes a synecdochic representation of the future as well as the possibility of speed. In the context of “the idea of ideas,” the “velocity” represents “consciousness” while “velocities” represents the totality—“the Universe.” The narrator connects this argument to the next aphorism to stress the potential of “consciousness,” which will absorb the elements of life:

**[32] UNSCREW your capability of absorption and grasp the elements of Life—*Whole*.**

This is only possible through the absorption of the individual consciousness by the universe; in this way, the key elements of life can be apprehended:

**[33] MISERY is in the disintegration of Joy;  
Intellect, of Intuition;  
Acceptance, of Inspiration.**

Following her characterisation of abstract concepts of life—"LOVE," [17] "TIME," [21] "MIND" [24] and "CONSCIOUSNESS," [29]—Loy's narrator now redefines other essential elements of human life; she considers these concepts necessary for the psychic evolution of mankind. Potential future time is associated with light and happiness while the past represents dark and misery, and at this point, these fundamental elements of life are introduced in contrast with one another. "MISERY" is described as a factor which limits "Joy"; it should be abandoned. The potential Futurist must always look ahead—to the future "EXPLOD[ING] with *Light*" [10]. "Intuition" is related to human consciousness as well as "appreciation of one's self" [17]; it is restricted by "Intellect" [33]—human "wisdom" [24] imposed by the "accepted facts" [26] of "all forefathers" [24]. Here, the emphasis is on the significance of psychic insight rather than on reason and knowing. Finally, "acceptance" and "Inspiration" are contrasted with each other: "acceptance" represents agreeing with the "prejudices" and "accepted facts," while inspiration transforms people, so they embrace and participate in new ideas and forms—"consciousness" which enables them to "find the sublime" [6]. The narrator now reframes the concept of the individual psyche of the modern world and argues for the creation of a healthy personality that has to be purified from the ideas of other people:

**[34] CEASE to build up your personality with the ejections of irrelevant minds.**

The expansion of the individual mind is possible through the elimination of the "accepted facts" and ideas of the "forefathers." In this way, everyone will have his/her own views freed from "prejudices" and other people's ideas. This can be achieved through the individual's own choices:

- [35] NOT to be a cipher in your ambient,  
But to color your ambient with your preferences.**

In this context, Loy's persona discusses the status of the modern individual in the social order. In order not to be a worthless person in society, one should fix up her environment with her own choices not by "accept[ing] the facts" as they are, but furnishing them with her own decisions:

- [36] NOT to accept experience at its face value.**  
**[37] BUT to readjust activity to the peculiarity of your own will.**

Individuals must not believe what they see; instead, they must make their own preferences and distinctive characteristics to find the deeper meaning inside them. All these suggestions are brought up as fundamental principles to achieve psychic liberation:

- [38] THESE are the primary tentatives towards independence.**

Through these characterisations, the individual man is introduced as the source of the problem:

- [39] MAN is a slave only to his own mental lethargy.**

In other words, the traditional Futurist is limited by his attitude of laziness—indifference towards his own individual development. As an apathetic action, it limits the individual and makes the person self-restricted. Loy's narrator implies that it is one's own choice of psychic laziness which results in your limited creativity. Once the individual is rescued from the boundaries in her mind and becomes conscious, she will be free in her own creativity and attain her own mental independence, which will reshape the modern world. This freedom reflects the limitlessness of the individual mind's capacity:

- [40] YOU cannot restrict the mind's capacity.**

Considering the indefinable second-person pronoun, "YOU," Loy's narrator's voice shifts to a different form of dialogue. She interacts directly with the reader and calls the audience to self-realisation. Arguing that individuals must not limit their psychic scope, she critiques the attitudes of human beings who limit themselves:

- [41] THEREFORE you stand not only in abject servitude to your  
perceptive consciousness—**



**[42] BUT also to the mechanical re-actions of the subconsciousness,  
that rubbish heap of race-tradition—**

Drawing on the word's traditional definition, the narrator blames individuals who are despicably limited in their "consciousness." These people perceive the world in their senseless "subconsciousness," which represents a "rubbish heap of race-tradition." The figurative suggestion of the hyphenated "race-tradition" is an ironic perspective on nationalism; this attitude reflects the limited attitudes of individuals—"prejudices" and false, imagined freedoms.:

**[43] AND believing yourself to be free—your least conception is  
colored  
by the pigment of retrograde superstitions.**

The potential individual of the future should set his mind free so that he will be purified from such beliefs in "retrograde superstitions" and from "insidious reactions" [19]. The idea of mental space brings together these characterisations which limit people:

**[44] HERE are the fallow-lands of mental spatiality that Futurism  
will clear—**

These attitudes are "fallow-lands" which the psychic development of Futurism will eliminate, if through it, as the narrator suggests, human beings move towards self-realisation:

**[45] MAKING place for whatever you are brave enough, beautiful  
enough to draw out of the realized self.**

As a consequence of the potential "consciousness," the one who believes in herself and behaves courageously and aesthetically—not traditionally—will be able to attain her self-realisation. The narrator's voice abruptly shifts to a contentious and combative polemic—the most aggressive aphorism in the text:

**[46] TO your blushing we shout the obscenities, we scream the blas-  
phemies, that you, being weak, whisper alone in the dark.**

This is the first time Loy's narrator uses the first-person plural "we," which gives

the impression of a collective voice, recalling the rhetoric of an earlier aphorism—“your egotism” and “you comprise mankind in your self-sympathy” [18] in which she uses the second-person plural “you.” Here, both are used in the same sentence to concentrate on the two polar sides by drawing attention to the distance between them. These “obscenities” and “blasphemies” represent the language the potential Modernist-Futurists use; they are “whisper[ed]” by the anti-Futurists as they feel ashamed and speak among themselves secretly:

**[47] THEY are empty except of your shame.**

Since their minds are limited, the language of the Futurists does not make any sense of them, so they are embarrassed; these sounds are dispersed and lost:

**[48] AND so these sounds shall dissolve back to their innate senselessness.**

These—the “obscenities” and “blasphemies”—will turn into absurdity in the small minds of traditionalists since they do not have conscious awareness. In this way, following the social change, now the aesthetic change will occur; the narrator announces her utopian idea of the revolution of Futurist language:

**[49] THUS shall evolve the language of the Future.**

The narrative voice takes on an enthusiastic tone; she now promises the evolution of the language—a new form she expects to be evolved by the limitless individual minds. The text concludes by envisaging an imagined and respected superior race:

**[50] THROUGH derision of Humanity as it appears—**

**[51] TO arrive at respect for man as he shall be—**

In order for individuals to get the respect they deserve from society, the narrator suggests this solution :

**[52] ACCEPT the tremendous truth of Futurism  
Leaving all those**

**—Knick-knacks.—**

Moreover, it is only possible through the acceptance of the inspiring path of the new “Futurism.” The text ends with the narrator’s rejection of outmoded external forms; the “—Knick-knacks—” represent the traditional limited ways of thinking that are to be

destroyed for the regeneration of a new modernist world.

### THE FUTURIST NARRATOR'S SHIFT TOWARDS MODERNISM

This part of the article elaborates on how the pencilled substitutions of the author in the first appearance of the text reflect the shift of the narrative voice from being a futurist to a modernist. The pencilled alterations the author made on the first published copy of the "Aphorisms" are often connected, through historical and biographical interpretations and based on the historical accounts, with the fragmentation of the author from the Futurist movement (Figure 3):

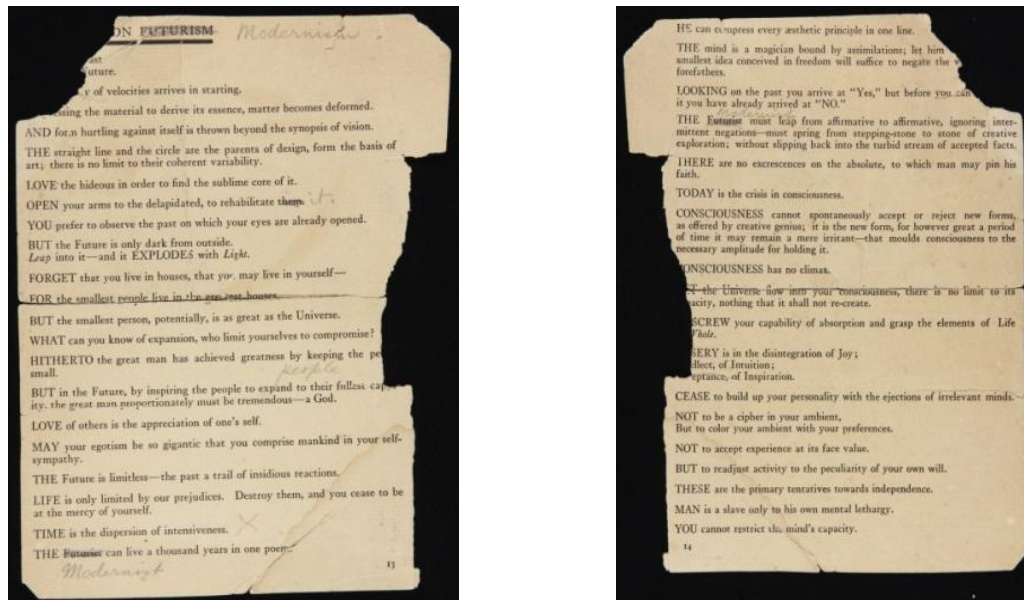


Figure 3. Loy's pencilled substitutions on her "Aphorisms on Futurism"<sup>14</sup>

In the manuscript, the term "Futurism" was crossed out and replaced with "Modernism," "Futurist" with "Modernist," and "Future" with "Modern," in pencil. The title was also altered from "Futurism" to "Modernism," but the rest of the text remained the same. Roger Conover, for example, remarks in his *Editor's Notes* that

[a] printed leaf of the [*Camera Work*] text at Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library bears [Mina Loy's] pencilled substitution

<sup>14</sup> "Aphorisms on Futurism." Published in *Camera Work* 45, 1914 January. The altered copy with the changes is archived at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale Collection of American Literature, Mina Loy Papers MSS 6, Box 6, folder 152. When exactly Loy made these changes is unknown. See [brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3547622](http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3547622).

of the word ‘modern’ for ‘future’ and “Modernism’ for ‘Futurism’ throughout. [Loy] probably made these notes after abandoning her Futurist allegiance; although she might have retrospectively preferred to call this piece ‘Aphorisms on Modernism.’ (215).

However, the reason why I have retained the original title of the poem here is not to base my analysis on the biographical and historical accounts but to shift focus to the narrator’s account and away from the author’s. The chronological course of the aphorisms and the intertextual connections between them embody the shift in Loy’s narrator’s views from Futurism to Modernism, as the narrator diverges from Futurist ideologies to “the new form” [29]: “the crisis in consciousness” [28].

## CONCLUSION

“Aphorisms on Futurism” is a written proclamation in dialogue form; the aphorisms propounded are inflammatory and revolutionary for the upcoming modern world. The text can be considered an aesthetic and ideological assessment of modernity. The narrator of the poem sets forth an argument to mankind; she suggests that the universe is in need of a radical revolution which is only possible through a change and an awareness in the ways individuals think: “human consciousness” for a modern world. The revolution will take place by transcending the limitations of individual minds.

Although there are parallels between Loy’s text and the Futurist manifestos, in particular stylistically, and it is generally thought that Loy’s “Aphorisms on Futurism” is a reproduction of Marinetti’s “Futurist Manifesto,” the style and form of “Aphorisms on Futurism” differ from that of other Futurist texts. Compared to the Futurist manifestos, the fragments are connected to each other and provide a coherent argument. The text focuses on the spiritual evolution of the human consciousness and expansion of the individual mind to “comprise mankind,” contrary to the Futurists’ vision of violence, egotism, and nationalism. In opposition to the Futurists’ fantasy of destroying the traditions of the past, Loy’s text suggests that an individual should reconcile with the retrospective ideas and “rehabilitate” [7] the conventions of the past through love, self-sympathy, and psychic liberation.

Through the argument related to the destruction of the retrospective conventions, Loy’s persona subverts the aesthetic and social traditions of the past, which she sees as insufficient for the modern world. A new form of thinking is needed to perceive “the elements of Life—*Whole*” [32], and this is proposed through the fifty-two aphorisms. The psychic independence of individual minds is urgently needed for the regeneration

of society; this is only possible through the expansion of human minds with an awareness of self-consciousness. The mental expansion and intellectual consciousness of the individual can only be guaranteed through the metamorphic experience of a "cosmic reproductivity" (*The Lost Lunar Baedeker*, Loy 7) actualizing in linguistic and artistic layers. This conception is also developed in Loy's "Parturition" (1914), where the act of childbirth is depicted metaphorically as "cosmic initiation" (*The Lost Lunar Baedeker*, Loy 7) as well as a contact with the "contents of the universe" (Loy 6). The narrator of the text, in this way, takes the concepts of Futurism in another direction and suggests a new form, which can be anticipated as the herald of a new era: Modernism.

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## ANALYSIS OF FORMULAIC EXPRESSIONS FORMED BY RELIGION IN THE CONTEXT OF BİR BAŞKADIR TV SERIES

## DİNİN ETKİSİYLE OLUŞMUŞ KALIP SÖZLERİN BİR BAŞKADIR DİZİSİ BAĞLAMINDA İNCELENMESİ

Zeynep Altun<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

Languages cannot be considered separate from the society in which they are spoken. The customs and traditions, life style, religion of a society and its relationship with other societies affect the vocabulary of the language. When Turkish language is analyzed, it is seen that religious expressions are frequently used. These expressions, which are customary to say in certain situations, are known as "formulaic expressions". In this study, the TV series named "Bir Başkadır", which reaches a wide audience in a short time, is analyzed in terms of formulaic expressions affected by the factor of religion. The words chosen by the characters and their speaking styles are influenced by their lifestyles. Many formulaic utterances in everyday life are included in the series and they serve as a model about the topic of the study. The aim of this study, which carries qualitative research features, is to analyze the formulaic expressions that are affected by religion in Turkish language and to reveal which situations they are used and what they mean in the fiction of a popular TV series. At the beginning, some information about formulaic expressions is given after explaining the relationship between language and culture. Later on the study, the series is examined through observation; the formulaic expressions in the series are analyzed, divided into groups according to their usage and their meanings are tried to be explained. As a result, it is revealed that the formulaic expressions emerge by being influenced by the elements of religion, culture, and tradition and they are inseparable parts of languages.

**Key Words:** Formulaic Expressions, TV Series, Factor of Religion, Language and Religion, Turkish.

### Öz

Diller konuşuldukları toplumdan ayrı düşünülemez. Bir toplumun gelenek ve görenekleri, yaşayış biçimi, dini ve diğer toplumlarla olan ilişkileri o toplumun dilinin söz varlığını etkiler. Türkçe incelendiğinde dinî ifadelerin sıklıkla yer aldığı görülmektedir. Belli durumlarda söylenmesi gelenek olan bu ifadeler "kalıp sözler" olarak bilinirler. Bu çalışmada, kısa sürede geniş bir izleyici kitlesine ulaşan "Bir Başkadır" isimli dizi, din faktöründen etkilenen kalıp sözler açısından incelenmiştir. Dizideki karakterlerin seçtikleri kelimeler ve konuşma tarzları, yaşam şekillerinden etkilenmektedir. Dizide, günlük hayattaki birçok kalıp söz yer almaktadır ve çalışma konusu hakkında örnek teşkil etmektedir. Nitel araştırma özelliği taşıyan bu araştırmanın amacı, Türk dilinde din faktöründen etkilenen kalıp sözleri analiz etmek, bu sözlerin hangi durumlarda kullanıldığını ve anlamlarını popüler bir dizi kurgusu içerisinde ortaya koymaktır. Başlangıçta, dil ve kültür arasındaki ilişkiden bahsedildikten sonra kalıp sözler ile ilgili bilgiler verilmiştir. Çalışmanın devamında dizi, gözlem yoluyla incelenmiş, dizideki kalıp sözler analiz edilmiş, kullanımlarına göre gruplara ayrılmış ve anlamları açıklanmaya çalışılmıştır. Sonuç olarak, din, kültür ve gelenek unsurlarından etkilenerek ortaya çıkan kalıp sözlerin dillerin ayrılmaz bir parçası olduğu ortaya çıkmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kalıp Sözler, Diziler, Din Faktörü, Dil ve Din, Türkçe.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language which contributes to social relationship among people is basically bound with the society itself. The words that people utter and their ways of expressing something actually whisper some clues about their social lives. Akarsu (51-52) states that there is a lot of information in the language of every nation, which is acquired and preserved unconsciously and that the characteristics of the nations are reflected in their language<sup>2</sup>. It is a common belief that language of a nation gives information about the culture of that nation. In other words, most of utterances in daily conversations are the reflection of culture on social life. Many features like life style, traditions, worldview, philosophy of life, beliefs of a society and its contributions to science, technique and art can be observed from the language of that society (Aksan, *Her Yönüyle Dil* 13). Somebody who knows nothing about a society might have an idea about the culture of that society with the help of the words or phrases used. The important events for the society, the relationship with other countries or the changes happening during the period can be understood easily.

If various proverbs, idioms, formulaic expressions in a language are analyzed and grouped according to the subjects they are related to, it is noteworthy that the items in some areas are puffy and more than others. If you pay attention, you realize that the speakers of that language have been most interested in the subjects to which these fluffy phrases belong throughout the history and they have a great place in their lives (65-66).

There is a reciprocal relationship between language and culture. While language is used to maintain and convey the culture and cultural ties (Leveridge), it is also formed through social experience and interaction. Languages don't only carry culture from one generation to the other, but they also create the culture itself (Yıldız39). Languages and culture develop together in the societies to which they belong. People produce various words in accordance with their lifestyles and needs, so these words or phrases enrich their existing language (Okuyan Yazıcı 34). The reason why languages have different features is that culture of every nation is different from each other. The way of thinking, reacting to certain situations and other many features vary from one nation to others, which influences the language they use. Therefore, while a new language is being learned, learners don't only need to learn different vocabulary and grammar but also

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<sup>2</sup> In this study, citations from Turkish were translated into English by the author unless otherwise stated.



need to reconstruct their thinking order and adjust to new language patterns (Fu135).

## 2. FORMULAIC EXPRESSIONS

There are a lot of different types of lexical items in every language, some of which can be chosen freely by speakers in every use. Similar meanings can be expressed in various ways. For example, someone, who wants to express that there is a new topic to be explained, might prefer different words and consequently different ways for telling the same thing emerge like “I want to tell you something.” or “I have something to tell you.” or “I have some news for you”. If wanted, it can be uttered in other ways. On the other hand, there are other types of lexical items like idioms, proverbs, onomatopoeias, reduplications and formulaic expressions, which are used automatically by speakers as a set in every use. Wood (3) defines formulaic expressions as “multiform strings produced and recalled as a chunk, like a single lexical item, rather than being generated from individual items and rules”. Speakers don’t need to make effort to think and generate a novel expression. It is more efficient and effective to retrieve a prefabricated string than create a novel one (Wray 18). What is intended to be expressed turns into output without any effort or perhaps unconsciously. Pawley and Syder (192) highlight that “the speaker is able to retrieve these as wholes or as automatic chains from the long-term memory; by doing this he minimizes the amount of clause-internal encoding work to be done and frees himself to attend the other tasks in talk-exchange.” Although there are lot of different ways to convey the same meaning, it is seen that certain utterances are frequently preferred by the speakers automatically. Pawley and Syder (196) explain this situation with the following example. The idiomatic “I want to marry you.” is the most frequently used one in contrast to the less idiomatic but equally grammatical “I wish to be wedded to you.”, “I desire you to become married to me.”, “My becoming your spouse is what I want.”, and so on. The sentence “I want to marry you.” has become a traditional way to express this desire and it is heard more often than others. While speaking, formulaic expressions also contribute to the fluency because “a great proportion of the most familiar concepts and speech acts can be expressed formulaically, and if a speaker can pull these readily from memory as wholes, fluency is enhanced” (Wood 7). Speakers don’t need to spend time and effort to understand them or to generate novel expressions; they prefer using these readily-prepared utterances. “As they provide the verbal means for certain types of conventional action, their meanings are conditioned by the behavior patterns of which they are an integrated part”

(Coulmas 241). Gökdıy (106) explains them briefly in these words:

These expressions are formulaic language units with very limited use, which are preserved in a certain form and stored in memory, not reproduced at the speaking time, but used as it is, and if necessary, used with some additions and subtractions. In addition, they can consist of a single or multi words, and help the establishment or continuation of communication by presenting the utterances required in certain situations.

In linguistics, similar to idioms and proverbs, formulaic expressions shed light on culture of the society speaking that language and they reflect beliefs, traditions and customs and the details in human relations of the society (Aksan, *Türkçenin Sözcüğü* 190). Aksan (34) prefers using the term “expressions of relationship” in order to express formulaic expressions. The reason is that these expressions are customary to say during the relations among the members of a society. Similarly, they can be called “culture units” because they are indicators of the extent to which language reflects culture (Yazıcı Okuyan 35). In addition, Sis and Gökçe (1979) argue that existing of formulaic expressions in a language is one of the most important indicators of language-culture intertwining. Formulaic expressions are the products of a common culture that has been created from past to present. Since it is customary to say these expressions in certain situations, people expect to hear them in these situations (Bulut 1121). For example, it is not an obligation to use proverbs in daily conversations. They can be used if speakers want to give an advice in a short and concise way. Aksoy (41) highlights proverbs are often used to learn from an event or a situation, to give a moral advice or to guide someone. On the contrary, speakers feel obliged to use some traditional utterances (formulaic expressions) because their culture requires them to be used (Bilgin 75).

Memorized chunks are often preferred in everyday conversations due to the facilities they provide. They cover a high proportion of the speeches and only a minority of spoken clauses are novel; however, “using formulaic expressions is preferred more than others in some languages” (Davies 79). For example, Tannen and Oztek (517) point out that Greek has fewer fixed formulas than Turkish but many more than English. When Turkish is in question, the factor of religion has an influence on formulaic expressions. Turkish society sticks to God heart and soul in situations that goes beyond themselves or when they need help and they hold God responsible for many situations (Bulut 1122). In Turkish, it is very common to hear a lot of utterances related to Islam, which is the

religion most of Turkish people believe in. Aksan (*Türkçenin Sözcük Varlığı* 191) states that the best example for that formulaic expressions reflect the worldview and beliefs of a society is having so many utterances which include the word “Allah<sup>3</sup>” in Turkish spoken in Turkey. For example, when a baby is born, people are supposed to say “Allah analı babalı büyütsün!” which means “May God let the baby grow up with his/her mother and father!” This expression is expected to be said and heard traditionally in such a situation. While talking about undesired situations, for example, talking about the death of a living person right now, it is heard “Allah gecinden versin!” which means “May God let it be late!” There are much more examples of these types of expressions in Turkish, some common examples of which will be examined in this study in the context of a TV series, namely *Bir Başkadır*.

### 3. ANALYSIS OF FORMULAIC EXPRESSIONS IN BİR BAŞKADIR TV SERIES

*Bir Başkadır* which has become popular in a short time is a TV series that has been broadcasted on Netflix. The series that consists of eight episodes is about the coincidental crossing of the paths of people from different socio-economic backgrounds and different life styles. It includes many main characters representing different personalities rather than especially focusing on a few characters. It cannot be said some characters are good and the others are bad. They all have some suppressed emotions for various reasons and that’s why each of them has conflicts in their own selves. The story consists of *Meryem* wearing a headscarf and not good at expressing her feelings due to being raised in a conservative family; *Peri*, a prejudiced psychologist against conservative people; *Gülbin*, another psychologist consulted by Peri and having some problems with her sister *Gülan* due to having different worldview and lifestyles; *Yasin*, Meryem’s conservative, mostly nervous but pure-minded brother; *Ruhiye*, Yasin’s wife with psychological problems because of a past traumatic incident; *Sinan* whose home Meryem goes to cleaning on certain days a week; *Hodja*<sup>4</sup>, the most respected person by conservative people in the neighborhood where he lives because of his religious knowledge; *Hayrünnisa*, the daughter of Hodja and wanting a life style different from the one that her parents expect; *Melisa*, the famous girl that Peri meets in the yoga class; *Hilmi*, the man with whom Meryem falls in love at the end. In the series, it is clearly seen the differences between these people in a multi-character and multi-venue set up, such

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<sup>3</sup>Allah is Arabic equivalent of the word “God”, is also a loanword for Tanrı in Turkish.

<sup>4</sup>Hodja is said to the people who have religious knowledge and are respected by conservative people in the society.

as the way they think, behave, dress, and speak. Keskin (45) states that mass media have an important place in representing and transferring the elements that society have. When viewed from this angle, *Bir Başkadır* contributes to the field of linguistics because of representing a model of Turkish society. Common examples of formulaic expressions are encountered throughout the series, most of which are used by people living in countryside or raised traditionally in conservative families. The characters, Peri, Sinan, Gülbin, Melisa and the parents of Peri, who don't care Islamic life style are unlikely to use these kinds of formulaic expressions. Throughout the series, the use of the formulaic expressions by them is heard only once or twice. It is considered that the reason of their uncommon usage is the automatic and unconscious selection from the memory due to the reasons discussed at the beginning of the study. Apart from this, it is seen that the word "Amin" is used for irony in two scenes. It is actually an Arabic word and it is said at the end of a pray with the intention that God approves it. On the contrary, Melisa uses it in the yoga class for having fun and kidding when the instructor says "Shavasana"<sup>5</sup>. Similarly, Gülbin says it with the same purpose when her sister Gülan prays for their disabled brother. It is because they judge each other and fight constantly for their beliefs and life styles. In both situations, we understand easily their real intention looking at their facial expressions. It is clear that linguistic styles might vary from one person to another and what people believe has an enormous influence on their speaking styles. These variations don't only provide a way of communicating each other for the members of the community, they also provide a way of identifying who is in each group (Bouma and Clyne 143).

Aksan (*Türkçenin Sözcükleri* 44) argues that many elements not used in standard Turkish exist in Anatolian dialects today. In Anatolian dialects, formulaic expressions are often preferred by speakers. Similarly, daily interactions usually consist of a significant number of formulaic utterances (Lanncker-Sidits and Rallon 218). It is rare to coincide with them in written language. Since they are heard in daily conversations and they don't exist in written language, it is difficult to learn them without living in the society where that language is spoken. They can be learned easier if learners are exposed to them in context within the society.

When formulaic expressions are divided into groups according to what purpose they are used for, the meanings of them are understood better and easier. In the

<sup>5</sup> It is the name of a pose done in yoga classes and often used for relaxation at the end of a session.

continuation of the study, formulaic expressions influenced by religion in the series will be examined in groups and their meanings will be explained in detail.

### **Those used for blessing and good wishes:**

-*Allah razı olsun*: “*May God be pleased with you*” is generally said when something is done in your favor and you are glad to it. In the series, Meryem consults Hodja about something and Meryem feels delighted with his advices and she utters it.

-*Allah başımızdan eksik etmesin*: “*May God let you live with us*” is generally said to someone who is loved and respected. The speaker doesn’t want to lose that person and wants God to give him/her a long life. Meryem says it to Hodja who is a counselor for her and whose words Meryem listens.

-*Allah muhabbetinizi arttırsın*: “*May God bless you with a better rapport*” is said when the speaker wants people speaking right now to have a better relationship. In the series, Ruhiye who has some psychological problems is generally in an unhappy mood and doesn’t keep in touch with anybody in the family. One day, Meryem says it to her and Yasin when they are talking about something happily in the garden.

-*Allah rahatlık versin*: “*May God bless you with comfort*” is generally said to people who are going to sleep. In the series, it is heard several times before going to bed.

-*Allah bağışlasın*: “*May God bless him/her with a long and healthy life*” is usually used when it is learned that the interlocutor has a child. In the series, it is said to Hodja by a stranger who learns that Hodja has a daughter.

-*Allah sabır versin*: “*May God bless you with patience*” is said to someone who is in distress in order to console him/her. If God gives patience, people might stay stronger. In the series, it is said by Meryem who learns that Peri studied at the university for six years to become a psychologist because she thinks having this kind of a job is not easy.

-*Allah korusun*: “*God forbid*” is used when speakers want God to keep troubles or bad consequences of an event away from them. When Yasin talks about the possibility of his wife attempting suicide again, Meryem says it.

-*Allah kabul etsin*: “*May God approve what you’ve done*” is generally said when the listener does something good and suitable for God’s commands and the speaker prays to God for his/her behavior to be accepted. In the series, Meryem uses this expression when she sees Yasin leaving the mosque. She figures out that her brother has prayed

at the mosque and wishes his prayers to be accepted.

-*Allah rahmet eylesin*: “May God rest his/her soul” is said for dead people. In English, it is frequently preferred to say “Rest in peace” in such a situation. It is a kind of wish or pray in the sense of “May God forgive his/her sins, show mercy -if any”. In the series, Hodja says it while he is talking with a stranger that he come across in the camping area after the stranger points out that his wife is dead.

-*Hayır olsun/Hayırdır*: “May God let it be good” is used with the hope that the news will be good when it is encountered an unexpected situation. It is said by Hodja when Yasin calls him to get information about something because Hodja has no idea about why he is called and he hopes that the news will be good.

-*Bismillah(irrahmanirrahim)*: It is an Arabic expression and it means “I start with the name of God (who is the compassionate, the merciful)”. It is said to get God’s approval before starting anything. In Turkish society, it is believed that saying it at the beginning of anything will bring well-being. Meryem says it with the hope that the reason will be good when her aunt suddenly shouts at her.

### **Those used for greeting, welcoming or saying good bye:**

-*Hayırlı akşamlar/Hayırlı akşamlarınız olsun*: “Have a blessed evening/May God bless you with a good evening” is used instead of just saying *Good evening* because it is believed that goodness occurs with the permission of God. While Hilmi is leaving home, he says it to Meryem.

-*Hayırlı günler/Hayırlı günleriniz olsun*: “Have a blessed day/May God bless you with a good day” is used for the same purpose as previous. Only if God allows it to happen, the day will be good. When Yasin calls Hodja, he says it before hanging up the phone.

-*Hayırlı işler*: “Have blessed earnings” is said to a working person with the hope that she/he earns money with God’s approval. Meryem says it to Peri while leaving the psychologist clinic.

-*Hayırlı yolculuklar*: “Have a blessed journey” is said to someone who is going on a journey with the hope that the traveler will return from the journey safe and sound. Hilmi says it to Meryem while she is getting on the bus.

-*Hakkını helal et*: It is generally used in daily conversations to say farewell to a

person who is going somewhere. It simply means “*thank you for everything you’ve done for me and forgive me if I have done something to hurt you consciously or unconsciously*”. In the series, it is heard when Hodja leaves the town.

-*Allah’a ısmarladık*: It is used to say good bye and its meaning is “*I entrust you to God*”. Ruhiye says it to say good bye to her friend at village.

-*Selamınaleyküm/Aleykümselam*: It is a kind of adjacency pairs which is mostly used among Muslims to greet someone and answer it. They are Arabic words and using of the first utterance provokes the second utterance in daily conversations. When Hodja comes across a stranger in the camping area, they greet each other in this way.

### **Those used to glorify interlocutors:**

- *Estağfurullah*: It is an Arabic expression whose meaning is “*I ask excuse of God*”. However, in Turkish society, it is used to glorify the person you are talking to and to receive the compliments humbly. When it is said that you are so beautiful, the answer might be *Estağfurullah* in order to answer the compliment kindly. In the series, Peri thinks that Meryem gets angry with her and Meryem’s answer is *Estağfurullah* since her intention is to glorify Peri and to state that it can’t be suitable to get angry with a doctor.

-*Mübarek insan*: “*Blessed person*” is said to someone who is considered he/she is worthy in the eye of God. In the series, it is said by Yasin for Hodja who comes to ask how Ruhiye is although he has his own problems.

-*Peygamber soyundan*: “*Descendent of the prophet*” is used to state that someone is in God’s way, gives importance to religion and lives morally like prophets. In the series, it is said for Hodja by Meryem while she is talking with Peri.

-*Helal süt emmiş kişi*: It is said to a person born of a mother who follows God’s way and knows the distinction between good and bad. It is heard when Sinan’s mother states that she wants Sinan to get married to a girl in this manner.

-*Allah’ın sevgili kullarıyız*: When God protects people from bad incidents that will happen to them, they think they are “*beloved servants of God*”. It is heard when Hodja is interested in Meryem’s family although he has his own problems.

### **Those used to declare surrender to fate:**

-*Takdir-i ilahi*: When people think there is a “*divine will*”, they admit that good or bad things come from God, there is nothing to do and God knows the best for them. Hodja says it in order to explain that death is coming from God while he is giving advices to his daughter who is crying because of her mother’s death.

-*Nasip/Mukadderat*: In English, the word “*kismet*”, which also exist in Turkish, means literally destiny and it is thought that people have certain roles and blessings assigned by God. When something good or bad happens, they declare surrender to fate by saying this utterance. During the first meeting of Peri and Meryem, Peri expresses that she wants her to see again, Meryem can’t say something certain and she utters it because she thinks that she can do if God allows.

-*Allahın izniyle*: It is believed that the events will happen “*with the permission of God*”. When Yasin decides to go to Ruhiye’s village, he plans to leave the home in the morning and arrive at the village in the evening. He says this expression after explaining his plan because he knows that it won’t come true unless God allows it.

-*İnşallah*: It is an Arabic expression which means “*If God wants*”. It is frequently used in daily conversations to indicate that nothing will happen without God’s approval and permission. It is frequently used throughout the series. *İnşallah* has also the same meaning with *Allah’ın izniyle*. When Ruhiye and his son suddenly disappears, the others hope that the child is with his mother. After this hope is expressed, everybody says it one by one.

-*Allah bilir*: It is used to say that God knows and sees everything. Sinan’s mother says it to her son while she is telling the reason why she invites him.

### **Those used to criticize, threaten or warn the interlocutor:**

-*Yukarda Allah var*: “*There is God above*” is said to state that God sees and knows everything. While Meryem is describing an act of one of the girls Sinan is with (in her opinion this act is wrong), she says it because she thinks that it is God who will see and punish this act.

-*Hiç mi Allah korkusu yok sizde?/Allah’tan kork*: “*Do you have no fear of God?/Be afraid of God*” is said to someone who does or says something wrong in order to warn or threat him/her. It is heard while Gülan is shouting at Gülbin after realizing that an herb (Gülan thinks it shouldn’t have been given) is given to their disabled brother by Gülbin.



-*Allah'ınız kitabınız para olmuş*: “Your God and your holy book is money” is said to someone who cares money so much and it means that all you care about is money. He/she is warned and threatened kindly reminding implicitly God and holy book are more worthy than money. It is heard in the series that Meryem watches on TV.

**Those used to convince the interlocutors:**

-*Allah canımı alsın/Ekmek Kuran çarpsın*: When speakers try to prove that they are trustworthy, they state that they are willing to be punished by God by using these expressions. When the glass of the window is broken by a rock thrown by a stranger, Yasin blames his wife. Ruhiye utters it in order to convince her husband of her innocence.

-*Vallahi*: This Arabic expression is used to swear by using the name of God. It is frequently heard at the end of the sentences in the series. One of the examples is that Meryem says it to Peri who is skilled at controlling the conversation and getting answers. Meryem adds it to the end of the sentence “You know your job.”

**Those used to express trouble:**

-*Allah belanı versin*: It is used to curse someone when something unpleasant happens. Yasin utters it when the phone is out of charge.

**Those used to express confusion or wonder:**

-*Taş yağacak başımıza*: In a surprising or confusing situation, “It will rain stones on our heads” can be said in order to indicate the strangeness of the situation. In the series, Meryem says it when her aunt accepts to have dinner with the family because it is an unexpected situation for them.

-*Allah Allah*: This expression is used for different purposes in Turkish society and it has various meanings according to the context. It occurs telling the name of God twice. In the series it is generally used when the speaker is surprised or confused. In addition, it is also used to express anger. For example, when the window of the home they live in is broken because of a rock thrown by somebody they don't know, Meryem and his brother are surprised and confused. In this situation, it is heard. In another scene, Meryem starts to asking a lot of questions when Yasin explains that they will go to Ruhiye's village next morning. Yasin gets angry with the questions she asks and uses this expression to show his anger.

**Those used to express love:**

-*Kurban olayım*: “*Let me sacrifice myself for you*” is generally said to someone who is loved so much. It is considered that it is the biggest thing to be done (verbally) for a beloved person. In the series, Gülbin says it to her disabled brother who is in a bad situation because she loves him so much and she can do everything for him.

-*Rabbim özene bezene yaratmış*: It is said to someone who is very beautiful and it is believed that the beauty is given by God. It simply means that “*My Lord has created meticulously*”. After Meryem states that Peri is a very beautiful woman, she says it.

**Those used for justice:**

-*Allah’ın tokadı yok ki*: It means that “*God doesn’t have a slap*” but there are other ways for punishment. When someone does something wrong and it is seen that he/she is punished somehow, it is appropriate to use this utterance. While Yasin is shouting at Meryem, Hodja calls him and wants something hard to be done and Meryem says it.

**Those used to request something:**

-*Allah rızası için/Allah’ını seversen/Allah aşkına/Peygamber aşkına*: “*For the sake of God/ If you love God/For the love of God/ For the love of prophet*” is used to get the desired action done by reminding the love of the precious prophet and creator. Yasin feels very desperate about his wife’s situation and uses this expression while begging Hodja to guide him.

**Those used to express patience:**

-*Hasbinallah*: It is an Arabic expression used to calm down by saying “*God is enough for me*” in order not to get angry with the interlocutors in unpleasant situations. Gülan uses this expression after criticizing Gülbin’s lifestyle.

**Those used to express gratitude:**

-*Allah’a şükür/Elhamdülillah*: When something pleasing happens and speakers feel joyful, they think God makes it possible and they say “*Thanks God*”. It is said by Meryem who states that her results of medical examination are good and she doesn’t suffer from a psychological illness.

**Those used to express like:**

-*Maşallah*: When speaker likes something, he/she knows that it exists thanks to God, the creator of everything, and utters this Arabic expression which means “*What God wants will happen*”. This is often heard in daily talk in Turkish society when something is liked by speakers. After talking about the beauty of the flowers, Meryem says it.

**Those used to ask for forgiveness:**

-*Tövbe tövbe*: It is simply used to repent. The person who says something undesirable feels regretful to think or utter it because he/she is afraid that it may come true and he/she asks for forgiveness by using this expression. It is heard when Yasin implies that Meryem’s some behaviors are similar to Ruhiye’s and he realizes that it is an undesirable situation.

As observed above, most of the expressions are Arabic and Turkish society approve and prefer using them as they are, since they respect the language of the holy book of Islam. Many Arabic words or phrases settled in Turkish language have been adopted and preserved owing to the importance of religion in Turkish society.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Languages reflect the culture of the society in which it is spoken. Every language has some words or phrases which are affected by culture of the society, one of which is formulaic expressions that have been examined in this study.

Formulaic expressions simply facilitate linguistic production and interpretation with the help of ready-to-use expressions according to the context. They have been uttered and heard in daily conversations so many times so far. It is very important to know what society expects to hear in some situations. Knowing what to say in certain situations gives an opportunity people to understand and communicate easily. Moreover, they are time-and-effort savers because it isn’t necessary to produce novel utterances for similar situations or there is no need to understand what they mean for every usage.

This study shows that formulaic expressions, especially the ones formed by the influence of religion, exist in Turkish. Having knowledge about them contributes to understanding thinking and life styles of the society. It is concluded that the beliefs of people have an influence on their thinking and speaking styles. Moreover, understanding and using them in daily conversations contribute to the flow of the speech. Even if it is

rarely encountered in the series “*Bir Başkadır*”, some people who don’t believe in Islam also use these expressions. This is mostly because using them in conversations is a part of culture. In the society in which they have been raised, there have been a lot of people who use them, so they are exposed to these formulas and using them has become a habit for them. This inevitably shows the influence of culture on speaking styles. However, it is worth reminding that they also can be used for ironic or metaphoric meanings. They sometimes express them with the purpose of insulting their interlocutors. Indeed, they are not the ones they actually mean, the opposite idea is their real intention.

In the study, it is seen that formulaic expressions used in the series “*Bir Başkadır*” can be divided into groups according to their usage areas and their meanings, which helps people to understand what they mean and in what situations they are used better. In conclusion, they are used for blessing and good wishes, greeting, welcoming or saying good bye, glorifying interlocutors, declaring surrender to fate, criticizing, threatening or warning the interlocutor, requesting, convincing, asking for forgiveness, and expressing love, patience, confusion, wonder, gratitude, like, and justice. As understood here, they are used for different purposes in various meanings and they cover a great deal of proportion of the speeches in daily conversations. Some of them might have different meanings in different contexts. In this study, they are decided according to the contexts in the series.

To sum up, formulaic expressions, formed as a result of culture-language relationship, are inseparable parts of languages. In Turkish language, it is very common to coincide with them. People who don’t know about them might have difficulties in understanding these formulas; thus, it is significant to have some information about them.

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## KİTAP DEĞERLENDİRMESİ: *MODERNİTEDEN POSTMODERNİTEYE KAVRAMSAL BİR YOLCULUK* ADLI ESERE GENEL BİR BAKIŞ

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**Yazar:** Funda KIZILER

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Funda Kıziler, Sakarya Üniversitesi Alman Dili ve Edebiyatı ana bilim dalında doçent olarak görev yapmaktadır. Alman Dili ve Edebiyatı ana bilim dalında imgebilim, karşılaştırmalı edebiyat ve roman analizi üzerine dersler vermektedir. Karşılaştırmalı edebiyat ve imgebilim başta olmak üzere Almanca ve Türkçe olarak pek çok makale yayımlamış olan Kıziler, *Moderniteden Postmoderniteye Kavramsal Bir Yolculuk* ve *Melek İmgesi* adlı eserlerini yazın dünyasına kazandırmıştır.

Bu çalışmanın amacı, *Moderniteden Postmoderniteye Kavramsal Bir Yolculuk* adlı eseri detaylı olarak tanımlayarak, yazarın postmodern kavramı bağlamında eserinde değindiği hususları ve yine postmodern edebiyatın somut örnekleri arasında yer alan Patrick Süskind'in *Parfüm (Das Parfum)* adlı eserinde postmodernizmin izdüşümleri bağlamında saptadığı hususlara ışık tutmaktır.

### A. Önsöz ve Giriş

Yazarın *Moderniteden Postmoderniteye Kavramsal Bir Yolculuk* adlı eseri postmodernizmin tarihsel yolculuğuna değinmekte ve günümüzde de halen oldukça komplike bir kavram olarak algılanan postmodern kavramına ışık tutmaktadır. Eserde kronolojik olarak tanımlanan postmodern kavramı, öncelikle temellerini aldığı modernizm ve modernite kavramlarının detaylı olarak açıklanması ile temellendirilmiş ve böylelikle okurun zihninde postmodern kavramına karşın mevcut karmaşıklıkları giderme amacındadır. Yazarın özgün kaynaklardan yararlanarak hazırlamış olduğu eseri *Önsöz* ile başlamaktadır. *Önsöz* kısmında çalışmanın amaç ve kapsamına özetle değinmiş olan yazar, ayrıca bu bölümde çalışmayı hazırlamasında katkı sağlayan kişilere teşekkürlerini arz etmektedir. *Önsöz* kısmının ardından *Giriş* bölümü ile devam eden eserde bu bölüm oldukça kapsamlıdır. *Giriş* bölümünde, eserde yer alan teorik bilgilerin somutlaştırıldığı *Parfüm (Das Parfum)* eserinin yazarı Patrick Süskind'in yaşamına ve eserlerine değinilmiştir. Yazarın *Parfüm* adlı eserini kaleme alma sürecinin detaylı olarak ifade edildiği bölümde, yazar Kıziler'in *Parfüm* eserine yönelik sunduğu bilgiler ve eserin postmodern bağlamında taşıdığı ehemmiyete değinmesi *Giriş* bölümünde dikkat çekmektedir. Yazar eserin bu bölümünde yalnızca *Parfüm* eserine endeksli kalmayarak, modernizm ve modernite kavramlarına yönelik okurda merak uyandıran kısa tanımlamalara yer vermiş olması, eserin birinci bölümüne hazırlık niteliğindedir. Ayrıca yazar şimdiye dek yapılan çalışmaları üç madde altında kategorize etmiş ve ilgili maddelerden hareketle kendi çıkış noktasını oluşturarak çalışmasını üç madde üzerine yapılandırmıştır. Bu maddeler şunlardır:

- Tarihte modernizmden sonra gelen yeni bir dönem olarak postmodernlik



- Köktenleşen modernlik olarak postmodernlik
- Modernliğin kökten bir şekilde sorgulanması olarak postmodernlik

Görüldüğü üzere eserin *Önsöz* ve *Giriş* bölümlerinde yazar; çalışmasının amacını, özgün değerini ve kapsamını detaylı olarak ifade etmiştir. Yedinci sayfadan başlayarak sayfa kırk beşe kadar devam eden *Giriş* bölümünün ardından eserde teorik bilgilerin sunulduğu birinci bölüm başlamaktadır.

## **B. Birinci Bölüm: Moderniteden Postmoderniteye Kavramsal Bir Yolculuk**

Birinci bölüm, eserin adını aldığı *Moderniteden Postmoderniteye Kavramsal Bir Yolculuk* adlı bölümdür. Birinci Bölüm iki alt başlıktan oluşmaktadır. İlk alt başlık olan *Farklı Açılırlarıyla Modernite ve Modernizme Özet Bir Bakış* on üç alt başlıktan oluşmaktadır. Bu başlıklar şöyledir:

- 1.1.1. Modernitede Gerçekliğin Açınımı
- 1.1.2. Immanuel Kant'a İlişkin Felsefel Bir Arasöz
- 1.1.3. Ussal Eleştirinin Eleştirisi Olarak Romantizm
- 1.1.4. Bilimsel, Ekinse ve Felsefel Paradigma Dönüşümleri
- 1.1.5. Nietzsche'de Estetik Evren
- 1.1.6. Modern Sanat ve Yazın Tartışmaları
- 1.1.7. Gerçeklik ve Doğalcılık
- 1.1.8. Mimesis İlkesinden Kopuş
- 1.1.9. İzlenimcilik (Empresyonizm)
- 1.1.10. Simgencilik- Çöküş Yazını- Yeni Romantizm
- 1.1.11. Modernizmin Tarih Sahnesine Yansıyan Karanlık Yüzü
- 1.1.12. Faşizmin Alacakaranlığı
- 1.1.13. Frankfurt Okulunun Faşizm ve Aydınlanma Eleştirisi

Alt başlıklarda görüldüğü üzere postmodernizme kadar uzanan bu süreçte, yazar tarafından felsefi bir yaklaşım ile tarihsel süreç detaylı olarak betimlenmiştir. Birinci bölüm eserin teorik kısmını oluşturmaktadır. Bu bölümde postmodern kavramının tarihsel arka planı, modernizm ve modernite kavramları ile ne denli içkin olduğu ve günümüz postmodern algısının oluşmasına katkı sağlamış önemli düşünürler ve bu

düşünürlerin ilgili tema çerçevesinde ele aldıkları çalışmalarına değinilmiştir. Modernite kavramının 18. yüzyılın sonlarında toplumsal ve politik dönüşümleri kapsamlı olarak ifade etmek amacıyla ortaya çıktığını vurgulayan Kızılar, ayrıca modernite kavramının modernizm kavramının temellendirilmesinde önemli bir rolü olduğunu vurgulamaktadır. Modernite kavramının aksine modernizm kavramının sanatsal ve kültürel olan olguları ifade etmek amacıyla kullanıldığını, kavramın geliştirilmesinde Nietzsche, Marx ve Freud gibi ünlü düşünürlerin etkin rol aldığını ifade etmiştir. Modernizm kavramı üzerine çeşitli tanımlamalara yer vererek ilgili olgunun çeşitli bakış açıları ile ele alınmasına olanak sağlayan yazar, farklı tanımlamalara eserinde yer vermiş ve modernite ve modernizm kavramları arasında var olan farklılıkları net olarak belirtmiştir. Örneğin; Gencay Şaylan'ın tanımlamasına göre modernite ve modernizm kavramları arasında önemli farklılıkların bulunduğunu yazar Kızılar şu cümleler ile ifade eder:

Şaylan da klasik estetik anlayışın mimetik ırasını yadsıyan modernist sanatçıların, mimetik estetiği özellikle sanatçıya öznellik hakkı tanımadığı gerekçesiyle eleştirdiklerini belirtiyor. Modernist sanatçıların öznelliği ön plana çıkarma çabası, klasik çağın ustalarına öykünmekle sınırlandırılıp edilgenleştirmemek, sanat yapıtlarını salt birer gerçeklik kopyası olmaktan kurtarmak ve yerleşik paradigmaları öznel düşünceleri ve sanatsal yetileriyle değiştirme isteği olarak değerlendiriyor (Şaylan aktaran Kızılar 86).

Bu noktada ilgili tanımlamadan hareketle, modernite ve modernizm bağlamında eserde yer alan çeşitli tanımlamalar eseri güçlü kılmakta ve yazar tarafından aktarılan bilgilerin somutlaştırılmasına katkı sağlamaktadır. Çeşitli incelemeler ve aktarımlar neticesinde, *Moderniteden Postmoderniteye Kavramsal Bir Yolculuk* eserinde modernizm kavramının modernite kavramından doğduğunu, sanatın çeşitli alanları ile son derece ilişkin olarak şekillendiğini ve her iki kavramın birbirinden kesinlikle bağımsız olarak düşünülmemesi gerektiği açıkça saptanmaktadır.

Faşizm kavramının postmodern kavramı üzerindeki etkilerine de yer verilen eserde bu kavram İkinci Dünya Savaşı ve Adolf Hitler'in *Kavgam* eseri ile özdeşleştirilerek ele alınmıştır. İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın ardından değişen toplumsal beklentiler ve ekonomik düzenin yeni varoluşçuluk üzerinde önemli etkileri bulunmaktadır. Bu noktada *Kavgam* adlı eserin faşist ideolojilerin ırasal olduğuna ve bireyi yok sayarak yalnızca devletin üstünlüğünü savunmasının postmodernizmin gerçekçi temelini oluşturduğu ifade edilmiştir.

Bireycilik karşıtı faşizm, devlet için ve devletle uyduğu ölçüde birey için de var. [...] Liberalizm bireyin yararına devleti inkâr ediyor; faşizm, devletin bireyin gerçek realitesi olduğunu açıklıyor. [...] Zira faşistler için herşey devlet içinde var. Hiçbir insanoğlu, hiçbir değer devletin dışında varolamaz. Bu manada faşizm totaliterdir (Langlois-Boismenu-Lefebvre-Regimbald aktaran Kızıler 97).

Bu bağlamda ilgili açıklamada görüldüğü üzere, faşizm anlayışının altında yatan esas ideolojide bireyin tamamen yok sayıldığı, devlet ve devlet ideallerinin her zaman ön planda yer aldığı görülmektedir. Ayrıca İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın ardından metin evreninde dönüşümler meydana gelmiş ve eserlerde hümanist yaklaşımlara rastlanmıştır.

Eserin teorik kısmında yer alan bir diğer alt başlık *Postmodern Evrene İlişkin Soruşturmalar* adlı bölümdür. Bu bölümde bir önceki bölüm ve alt başlıkları ile ilişkili olarak, modernite ve modernizme yöneltilen bilgiler, postmodern kavramı ile içselleştirilmiştir. Bu bölümde on beş alt başlık yer almaktadır. Bu başlıklar şöyledir:

- 1.2.1. II. Dünya Savaşı ve Auschwitz Paradigması
- 1.2.2. Postmodern Evrene Giriş
- 1.2.3. Postmodern Kavramının Soykütüğü
- 1.2.4. Postmodern Durum
- 1.2.5. Postmodern Düşüncenin Açınımı
- 1.2.6. Bir Katilin Doğurganlığı Olarak Postmodernizm ya da Postmodernin Eskatolojizmi
- 1.2.7. Postmodern Düşüncenin Özellikleri
- 1.2.8. XX. Yüzyıl Avangard Sanatlarına Özet Bir Bakış
- 1.2.9. Sanatta ve Yazında Paradigma Dönüşümü
- 1.2.10. Avangarddan Postmodern Sanata
- 1.2.11. Yazında Postmodernizm
- 1.2.12. Modernist Yazının Ölümü ya da Yüksek/Eğlencelik Yazın Ayrımının Çöküşü
- 1.2.13. Yazarın Ölümü/Okurun Doğumu
- 1.2.14. Postmodern Metin, Okur ve Okuma Edinimi

### • 1.2.15. Postmodern Anlatının Temel Özellikleri

Eserin birinci bölümünün ilk kısmında modernite ve modernizm kavramlarına yoğunlaşan ve bu kavramları detaylı olarak ve tarihsel arka planı gözeterek açımlayan yazar, birinci bölümün ikinci alt başlığında postmodern ve postmodernizm kavramlarına yoğunlaşmıştır. Postmodern kavramı ilk olarak Fransız düşünür Jean François Lyotard tarafından felsefi bir terim olarak kullanılmıştır. Lyotard, *Postmodern Durum* adlı eserinde postmodern ve postmodernizm kavramlarını kapsamlıca felsefe ile ilişkilendirerek açımlemiştir. Bu noktada postmodern kavramının ilk olarak Lyotard tarafından geliştirilen bir kavram olmasının yanı sıra, Derrida tarafından kavramın kullanımına yönelik hipotezler bulunmaktadır. Fakat ilgili hipotezler postmodern kavramının devamlılığını sağlayacak nitelikte olmaması nedeniyle kuramsallaştıramamıştır. Yaşam ve us koşulları üzerine çeşitli çalışmalar yapan Lyotard'nın esas amacı, postmodern kavramına dair mevuct pek çok çalışmayı ortak bir noktada buluşturmak ve *Postmodern Durum* adlı eserini postmodern çalışmalarının odağına yerleştirmek olmuştur.

Lyotard'nın çalışmaları eserin bu bölümünde ön planda yer almaktadır. Postmodern kavramının ilk olarak Lyotard tarafından kuramsallaştırılmış olmasının etkileri oldukça ehemmiyetlidir. Bu noktada yazar tarafından postmodern ve postmodernizm kavramlarına dair vurgulanan bilgilerin esas dayanağı, Lyotard ve çalışmaları olmuştur. Eser yalnızca Lyotard'nın çalışmaları ile sınırlandırılmamıştır. Oldukça karmaşık olarak kabul gören postmodern kavramı eserde pek çok düşünür ve çalışmaları bağlamında açıklanarak birçok açıdan tanımlanmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu noktada postmodern kavramına ilgili esas kaynaklardan yararlanarak değinilen eserde 1.2.2 *Postmodern Evrene Giriş* adlı alt başlık eserin odağında yer alan bir başlıktır. *Postmodern Evrene Giriş* adlı başlıkta postmodern kavramını ve bu kavramın ortaya çıkışında etkin rol oynamış faktörler ele alınmıştır. Tüm bu bilgiler ışığında, postmodern kavramı, tarihsel arka plan ile modernite kavramının devamlılığını ve sürekliliğini tanımlayan bir terim olarak kullanılmıştır. Postmodern kavramının ortaya çıkışında etkin olan esas faktörler yazar tarafından başlıklar halinde ele alınarak açımlanmışdır. Bu başlıklar şunlardır:

- Bilimsel ve teknolojik dönüşüm
- Ekonomik ve ekinsel dönüşüm
- Siyasal ve felsefel dönüşüm

*Bilimsel ve teknolojik dönüşüm* adlı başlıkta sunulan bilgilerin esas dayanağı

Lyotard ve *Postmodern Durum* adlı eserdir. 20. yüzyılda özellikle İkinci Dünya Savaşı esnasında ve sonrasında gerek bilimsel gerekse de otomasyon alanında meydana gelen dönüşümler postmodern kavramının ortaya çıkışında payı bulunan esas faktörler olarak tanımlanmıştır.

Bu konuda bir yığın varsayım öne sürülebilir (...) Örneğin yüzyılın devrildiği, son kesin tarihin 1943 olduğuna karar verilebilir. Bu da bir anlamda doğrudur... Son çözüm'le savaşa yeni teknolojilerin girmesiyle, sivil halkı sistemli olarak ortadan kaldırma adetiyle, o tarihte bir değişimin başladığı tartışma götürmez. Bu dönemde modernitenin ülkeleri açıktan açığa ihlal edilmiştir (Lyotard aktaran Kızıler 114).

*Ekonomik ve ekinseel dönüşüm* faktörü ile geleneksel iş gücü ve kapitalizm olgusundan hareket eden Fredic Jameson ve *Postmodern* adlı eserinde değindiği gelişen sanayileşme ve otomasyon gücü açıklanmış ve bu faktörlerin postmodern üzerindeki etkileri tartışılmıştır.

*Siyasal ve felsefel dönüşüm* önemli başlıklardandır. Özellikle postmodern tarihin felsefi gücü devamlı olarak vurgulanmış ve tartışılmıştır. Bu noktada İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra meydana gelen gelişmeler ve dönüşümlerin odağında siyasal ve felsefi faktörler yer almıştır. İlgili gelişmeler sonucunda ise Hegelci ve Marksist düşüncelerin açıkça son bulduğu ifade edilmiştir.

Böylelikle postmodern kavramının nasıl ortaya çıktığını ve bu kavramın doğuşunda etkin olmuş tarihi olaylar ve kavramın oluşum sürecinde önemli rol oynamış faktörler detaylı olarak betimlenmiştir. *Moderniteden Postmoderniteye Kavramsal Bir Yolculuk* adlı eser bu noktada oldukça mühim bir eserdir. Eserde postmodern kavramının tarihsel gelişim süreci kronolojik olarak tanımlanmıştır. Bu noktada her zaman karmaşık olarak algılanmış bir kavram olan postmodern, okurun kolaylıkla anlayabileceği bir forma dönüştürülmüştür. Özellikle eserde yer alan teorik bilgiler orijinal kaynaklardan yararlanılarak aktarılmıştır.

*1.2.15. Postmodern Düşüncenin Temel Özellikleri* adlı alt başlık eserde Patrick Süskind'in *Parfüm* adlı eserinin postmodern bağlamında incelemesinden önce yer alan son başlık olmakla birlikte, bu bölümde postmodern düşüncenin özellikleri başlıklar halinde tanımlanmıştır. Yazar tarafından özelliklerin başlıklar halinde, kavram şemaları oluşturularak düzenlenmiş olması bu özelliklerin kavranılabilir olmasını kolaylaştırmaktadır. Eserde postmodern düşünceye yönelik özellikler şunlardır:

- Belirsizlik ve parçalanma
- Fragmanlaşma ve şizofreni
- Bellek Yitimi
- Derinlik yitimi
- Yapıbozum ve Metinselleşme
- İroni
- Eklektizm
- Olumsuzluk ve ontoloji
- Aporia
- Nihilizm ve kinizm
- Ötekilik
- Retorik ve Hermeneutik
- Çoğulculuk

Olgucu nesnelliğin temelden sarsıldığı *Belirsizlik ve parçalanma* ilkesinde, bütünsellik ve saltlık savlardan tamamen bir kopuşun olduğu; görecelik, çok yönlülük ve kesinsizlik ilkelerinin baş rolde olduğu ifade edilmiştir. *Fragmanlaşma ve şizofreni* ilkesi postmodern düşüncede var olan belirsizlik ve görecelik özelliklerinin özne ile ilişkilendirilmesini açıklamaktadır. *Bellek yitimi* ilkesi, gelişen otomasyon sistemlerinde bireylerde geçmiş kavramının yitimi ve bireylerin anımsamaktan kaçındığı her olgunun bilinç dışına aktarıldığını ifade eden bir ilkedir. Bu noktada postmodern kavramı ile içselleşen görecelik kavramı, detaydan uzak olmakta ve gerçekliği savunan bir ilke olması ile ilişkili olarak metafizik olgularda meydana gelen çöküşler *derinlik yitimi* ilkesi ile tanımlanmaktadır.

*Yapıbozum ve Metinselleşme* ilkesi Derrida'nın çalışmalarından ve teorilerinden hareket etmektedir. Derrida'nın yapıbozum kuramında değindiği her metnin birbiriyle ilişkili olması durumu postmodern algının da esas özelliklerindendir. Postmodern düşüncede öncelikle her şeyin metin olduğu düşüncesi bulunmaktadır. *İroni ilkesi*, postmodern düşüncede gerçekliğin ikinci planda kalarak kurmaca kavramının ön planda olduğunu vurgulamaktadır. Postmodern düşüncenin en önemli ilkesi ise *Eklektizm'dir*. Eklektik düşünce salt düşüncelerden bağımsız bir yaklaşımdır. Eklektik düşüncede çeşitlilik ve disiplinler arası bir yaklaşım olduğu vurgulanmıştır. *Olumsuzluk ve Ontoloji*

ilkesi postmodern düşüncenin sorgulayıcı özelliğini temsil etmektedir. Postmodern düşünce gerçeği arayan ve salt düşünceleri sorgulayan bir olgu olarak tanımlanmıştır. *Aporia*, var olan dünyada bir çıkışın olmadığını savunan bir ilkedir. Bu noktada bireyi kuşkuculuğa sürüklemektedir. Postmodern *Aporia* ilkesi ise, pragmatiktir. Tabuların aşılması gerektiğine ve yalnızca gerekliliklere odaklı olmak gerektiğine dikkat çekmektedir. Bu bağlamda *Nihilizm ve Kinizm*, söz konusu gerekliliklere yönelim konusunda anahtar sözcüklerdir. *Nihilizm ve Kinizm* sorgulmayı ve çok yönlü olarak düşünmeyi sağladıklarından postmodern düşüncenin temel yapı taşı oluşturmaktadır.

*Ötekilik* ilkesi, Foucault ve Derrida başta olmak üzere birçok düşünür tarafından kabullenilmiş ve kullanılmış bir ilkedir. Postmodern düşünce heterojendir. Bu nedenle modernite ve modernizm kavramlarının gelenekselci ve ırksal, ekinel, sınıfsal farklılıkları göz önünde bulundurularak ötekileştirdiği her şey burada kabul görmektedir. *Retorik ve hermeneutik* ilkeleri postmodern düşüncenin sanatsal boyutunu ele almaktadır. Etkili konuşma sanatı olarak ifade edilen Retorik, postmodern düşüncede oldukça önemlidir. Hermeneutik yorumlama tekniklerine bağlı olarak gelişen postmodern düşüncede her şey iç içedir. Parça-bütün ilişkisi yerine postmodern düşüncede bütün-parça ilişkisi söz konusudur. Her şey bütün olarak ele alınarak irdelenir. Son ilke olan *Çoğulculuk* ilkesi ise, tıpkı eklektizm ilkesi kadar önemiyet arz eden bir ilkedir. Bu ilke postmodern düşüncenin çeşitliliğini ve disiplinler arası bir yaklaşım ile çok yönlü oluşunu ifade etmektedir.

Bu bilgiler ışığında, eserin birinci bölümünde yer alan modernite, modernizm, postmodern ve postmodernizm kavramları açıklanmaya çalışılmıştır. Modernite kavramı rasyonel, bilimsel, felsefi ve ussal olanı odak noktasına alır ve politik ve ideolojik olanla ilgilenir. Modernite kavramına karşın modernizm kavramının odağında ekinel ve sanatsal olan yer almaktadır. Modernizm kavramının geliştirilmesinde ise Nietzsche, Freud ve Marx gibi ünlü düşünürler katkı sağlamışlardır. Postmodernite tarih ile bağlantısını koparmadan modernite kavramının devamı niteliğinde, farklı bir formda ve bakış açısı ile gelişen bir kavramdır. Postmodernizm ise tıpkı modernizm gibi sanatsal olan ile ilgilenmektedir. Edebiyat, sanat, heykeltıraş ve mimari gibi pek çok alanın içkin olarak ele alındığı postmodernizm kavramında gerçeklik ve kurmaca iç içedir. Eklektik ve çoğulculuk ilkelerinden hareket eden postmodernizm kült olan her türlü düşünceden arınarak özgün ve kubaşık bir tür olarak günümüzde de varlığını korumakta ve gelişen bir kavram olarak sürekliliğini muhafaza etmektedir.

### C. İkinci Bölüm: Patrick Süskind'in "Parfüm" Adlı Romanında Postmodernist

## Açılımlar

*Moderniteden Postmoderniteye Kavramsal Bir Yolculuk* adlı eserin ikinci bölümü sunulan teorik bilgilerin pratikleştirildiği kısımdır. Postmodern yazına dair aktarılan her türlü bilgi burada 20.yy Almanca yazınında postmodernizm çerçevesinde kaleme alınmış *Parfüm* eseri ile içselleştirilerek somutlaştırılmıştır. *Parfüm* eserine yönelik sunulan bilgiler *Patrick Süskind'in "Parfüm" Adlı Romanında Postmodernist Açılımlar* bölüm başlığı altında sunulmuştur. İkinci bölümde *2.1. Jean-Baptiste Grenouille'in Bebekliği ve Çocukluğu* adlı üst başlık bulunmaktadır. Bu üst başlığın ise beş alt başlığı bulunmaktadır.

- 2.1.1. Jean-Baptiste Grenouille'in Ergenlik Dönemi ve Çıraklık Yılları (Lehrjahre)
- 2.1.2. Jean-Baptiste Grenouille'in Ergenlik Dönemi ve Gezgin Yılları (Wanderjahre)
- 2.1.3. Jean-Baptiste Grenouille'in Toplumsal Yaşama Geri Dönüşü
- 2.1.4. Jean-Baptiste Grenouille'in Ustalık Yılları (Meisterjahre)
- 2.1.5. Sonsöz (Epilog)

*Parfüm* ya da diğer bir adıyla *Koku* 1985 yılında Patrick Süskind tarafından postmodernist açılımlar bağlamında oldukça zengin bir eser olarak kurgulanmış ve Diogenes Yayınevi aracılığıyla okura sunulmuş bir eserdir. *Parfüm* eserinin ana figürü Jean-Baptiste Grenouille'dir. Grenouille doğuştan koku duyusu çok gelişmiş ve annesi tarafından terk edilmiş biri olarak dünyaya gelir. Koku duyarlılığı giderek artan Grenouille, yaşlılarından giderek bu noktada ayrılmaktadır. Özellikle ergenlik döneminde kokulara olan duyarlılığını fark etmiş ve bu duyarlılığı ise sapkınlığa dönmüştür. Kokuları sonsuza dek saklama arzusu ile pek çok cinayet işleyen figür, bu noktada pek çok deney ve yöntem kullanarak kokuları muhafaza edebilmenin yollarını aramıştır. Kokuların muhafaza edilme sürecinde ortaya çıkan pek çok gelişme, yazar Patrick Süskind tarafından postmodernist açılımlar ile zenginleştirilmiştir. *Moderniteden Postmoderniteye Kavramsal Bir Yolculuk* eserinde ise ilgili ana figürün gelişim evreleri adım adım yazar tarafından ele alınmıştır. Her dönemde meydana gelen olaylar yazar tarafından öncelikle en yalın hali ile ele alınmış, ardından özünde barındırdığı özellikler bağlamında postmodernizm ile içselleştirilerek irdelenmiştir. *Moderniteden Postmoderniteye Kavramsal Bir Yolculuk* eseri okura öncelikle ilgili kavramları anlamlandırabilme ve kavramların izdüşümlerini saptayabileceği *Parfüm* eseri ile bilgilerini pratikleştirebilme olanağı tanımaktadır. Birinci bölümde postmodern



kavramına yönelik sunulan birçok tanımlama burada somut örnekleri ile ve eserden alınan örnekler ile analiz edilmiştir.

Örneğin, yazar Süskind tarafından eserde zaman ve mekan olguları açıkça betimlenmiştir. *Reu aux Fers ile Rue de la Ferronnerie* ve *Cimetière des Innocents* adlı mekan isimlerinin açıkça belirtilmiş olması, eserin gerçekçi yönünü ortaya koymaktadır. Yazar Kıziler bu durumu, postmodernizmde gerçek ve kurmaca düzlemlerinin alttan alta birbirinin içine geçecek şekilde yapılandırılması olarak yorumlamaktadır (Kıziler 195). Bu noktada yazar Kıziler, yazar Süskind tarafından parfüm üretim merkezi olarak Fransa'nın belirlenmiş olmasına ve *Parfüm* adlı eserde mekanlar arasındaki mevcut zıtlıklara postmodernizm bağlamında değinmiştir. Örneğin koku dehası Grenouille'in doğum yerinin kentin en pis ve en kötü kokulu yeri olması ve yine aynı sınırlar içerisinde parfüm üreticiliğinin yapılması eserde yer alan zıtlıkların başında gelmektedir. Yazar Kıziler bu durumu şu cümleleri ile özetler:

Bir koku dehasının doğum yerini kentin en pis ve en kötü kokan yeri olarak belirlemesi, yazarın yan yana getirdiği bir başka grotesk karşıtlık olarak karşımıza çıkıyor. Daha önce açıklamalamaya çalıştığımız gibi, birbirine karşıt unsurları yan yana/ iç içe bir arada sergileme eğilimi, postmodernist yazına özgü bir tutumdur (Kıziler 195-196).

Bir başka örnekte koku dehası olduğu kadar aynı zamanda cinayet dehası olan Grenouille'in dayanıklı yapısı ve donuk kişiliği analogiler ile okura aktarılmaktadır. Bu durum ise eserde kene analogisi ile güçlendirilmiştir.

Ya da yaşamın kendisine hep sürüp giden bir kışlamadan başka bir şey vermediği, ağaçtaki kene gibi. Dış dünyaya olabilecek en küçük yüzeyi göstermek için kurşuni gövdesini küre biçimine sokan, dışarıya bir şey sızdırmamak, kendinden bir damla ter bile yitirmemek için derisini dümdüz, kaskatı yapan, çirkin kene [...] (Süskind 28).

İlgili örnekten hareketle, yazarın Grenouille ile içselleştirdiği kene analogisi durumu postmodernizm bağlamında çoğulculuk ilkesi ile örtüşmektedir. Pek çok alanın iç içe geçtiği postmodernizmde yazar Süskind kene analogisi ile aktarımlarını zenginleştirmiştir. Yazar Kıziler ise bu aktarımları postmodern bağlamda şu şekilde yorumlanmıştır:

[...] Yaşamak zorunda olduğu güç koşullara, sürekli terk edilmesini ve hiç kimseden sevgi görmeyişini eklersek, Grenouille'in hala yaşayabilmesi

inanılmaz ya da tansıksıdır. Anlattığı bu öykünün yer yer ‘kurmaca’ olduğunu yer yer anıştıran anlatıcı, adeta okurun böyle düşünebileceğini hesaplayarak, Grenouille’in “ruhu içinse hiçbi gereksinimi yoktu” (s.23) şeklinde ironik bir karşılık veriyor [...] (Kızılar 204).

Verilen örnekler ışığında, çalışmasının tamamında yazar, eserin ilk bölümünde okura teorik olarak sunduğu bilgileri somutlaştırarak, özellikle ana figür Grenouille çerçevesinde bilgileri pratikleştirdiği açıkça saptanmaktadır. Postmodernizm kavramının oldukça kapsamlı olarak ele alındığı eserde, yazar tarafından ilgili bulgular postmodernizm çerçevesinde özetlenmiş ve yine örneklerde aktarılan bilgilerin izdüşümleri ön plana çıkarılmıştır.

#### **D. Sonuç, Kaynakça ve Dizin**

Sonuç bölümü, yazar tarafından inceleme neticesinde elde edilen bulguların ve bu bulguların postmodern bağlamındaki öneminin arz edildiği kısımdır. Yazar Kızılar, burada çalışmanın özgün değerini ortaya koyan hususlara değinmiş, postmodern ve postmodernizm kavramlarının *Parfüm* eserinde yer alan ölçütler ile ilişkilendirdiğini belirtmiştir. Özellikle postmodern kavramının günümüzde pek çok alan ile içkin olarak kullanılmasının yanı sıra, postmodern kavramının edebiyat bağlamında üstlendiği role ve taşıdığı ehemmiyete değinerek *Parfüm* eseri ile ilişkilendirdiğini vurgulanmıştır. Ayrıca postmodern kavramının karmaşıklığı nedeniyle çalışmada öznel yargılardan uzak kalarak, yalnızca objektif ve bilimsel bir üslupla ilgili bilgilerin aktarıldığı yazar tarafından beyan edilmiştir. Eserin *Kaynakça* kısmı alfabetik sıraya göre düzenlenmiş olup; birincil, ikincil ve diğer kaynaklar olarak üç başlıkta düzenlemiştir. *Dizin* kısmı ise alfabetiktir.

#### **Genel Değerlendirme**

Eserde 18. yüzyıldan başlayarak günümüz postmodern çağına kadar uzanan postmodern ve postmodernizm kavramı açıklanmıştır. Uzun yıllar boyunca oldukça komplike bir kavram olarak kabul görmüş postmodern kavramı, yazar Funda Kızılar’ın tercihiyle bağlı olarak kolaylaştırılarak, bireylerde ilgili kavrama dair var olan imgelerin bütünleştirilebilmesi amacıyla basite indirgenerek tanımlanmıştır. Öncelikle postmodern kavramına kadar uzanan bu süreci en temel yapı taşı göz önünde bulundurarak parçadan bütüne doğru bir yöntem kullanarak açıklayan yazar, eserin giriş kısmında modernite ve modernizm kavramlarını postmodern ve postmodernizm kavramları ile ilişkilendirerek açıklamıştır. Modernite ve modernizm kavramlarının kapsamlıca açıklanmasının ardından postmodern ve postmodernizm kavramlarını tanımlayan yazar,

sunduğu bilgileri geçmişte vuku bulmuş tarihsel olaylar ile ilişkilendirmektedir. Böylelikle bahsedilen ‘kavramsal yolculuk’ ifadesi tarihsel süreç ile ilişkilendirilerek tanımlanmaktadır. Eserde ünlü düşünürlerin çalışmalarında kullandıkları yöntemlere ve ifadelerine yer vermiş olması eseri güçlü kılmakta ve bilgilerin objektifliğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu durum ise bilimsel dayanağı olan bilgilerin öznel yargılardan arındırıldığını kanıtlamaktadır. Okura sunulan teorik bilgiler, yazarın tercihinine bağlı olarak öz Türkçe kavramları barındırmaktadır. Birincil kaynaklardan edinilen bilgilerin öz Türkçe ile ifade edilmiş olması çalışmanın özgünlüğünü ortaya koyan temel hususlardandır.

Bilimsel aktarımların ardından eserin ikinci bölümünde *Parfüm* eseri üzerine yapılan analiz çalışmaları, teorik bilgilerin okurun zihninde somutlaştırıldığı ve detaylı olarak irdelendiği bir bölümdür. Çalışmada saptanan hususlar neticesinde, eserin bireylerin zihninde postmodern kavramına yönelik var olan kargaşanın giderilmesine katkı sağlayan bir eser olduğunu söylemek çok da yanlış olmayacaktır. Ayrıca günümüz postmodern çağın metin evreni ile ilişkilendirilen bu eser, postmodern yazın bağlamında yürütülen çalışmalara ışık tutacak niteliktedir.

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