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### Kuzu Kadınlar Aslan Kadınlara Karşı

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#### Özet

Angela Carter'ın eserlerinde karşımıza iki kadın türü ortaya çıkıyor. İlki kukla vari karakterinden, toplum tarafından baskılanmasından ve bir birey olarak hareket edebilme kabiliyeti olmamasından ötürü 'kuzu kadın' olarak adlandırılabilir. Fakat ikincisi tam tersi yönde davranarak kendi hayatına kendisi yön verebildiği ve kendi kurallarına göre yaşadığı için 'aslan kadın' olarak adlandırılabilir. Türkiye gibi oldukça ataerkil bir toplumda, Carter'ın da anlatımlarında kullandığı 'kuzu kadın' türünün 'aslan kadın' türüne oranla daha fazla olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Dahası bu 'kuzu kadın' tiplerini aynı Carter'ın romanlarındaki gibi, her yıl aşırı şiddete maruz kalıyor ve ölüyorlar. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Carter'ın belirli yazılarında ortaya çıkardığı kadın karakterlerin Türkiyede namuslarını korumak adına erkekler tarafından öldürülen kuzu kadın türleriyle olan benzerliklerini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Bu çalışma kapsamında, Carter'ın *The Passion of the New Eve* (1977) adlı romanı ve *The Sadeian Woman and the Ideology of Pornography* (1979) adlı düz yazısı seçilmiştir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** kuzu kadın, aslan kadın, Carter, Türkiye, namus cinayetleri

### Lamb Women vs. Lion Women

#### Abstract

In Angela Carter's fictions, there are two kinds of women: the first can be named as a "lamb woman" who has a puppet like character, is repressed by the society and cannot act as an individual; however, the other one is utterly the opposite: This kind of women can be named as a "lion woman" since she takes the strings into her own hands and lives her life according to her own rules and ideas. In a very patriarchal society like Turkey, it can be stated that Carter's lamb type of woman exists more rather than the lion type. Besides, these lamb women are subjected to extreme violence and die every year in Turkey like the passive female protagonists in Carter's novels. The purpose of this paper is to analyse Carter's portrayal of femininity in selected examples of writings with the aim of demonstrating the similarities between Carter's puppet like lamb women and women in Turkey who are slaughtered by men to reclaim their honour. Within the scope of this study, Carter's novel *The Passion of the New Eve* (1977) and her non-fiction *The Sadeian Woman and the Ideology of Pornography* (1979) were chosen.

**Keywords:** lamb woman, lion woman, Carter, Turkey, honour crimes

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## INTRODUCTION

The representation of female identities in Angela Carter's novels is so disturbing that most of the time it is not easy to continue reading them. Carter is radical in that sense and her novels are not gentle since they include excessive violence. In her fictions, we encounter two female characters who could not be more different. They are two types of women who are worlds apart. In other words, they either provoke, surprise, shock or stir pity and open readers' eyes to problems around them. One thing is clear: it is nearly impossible to forget Carter's female protagonists. The first type of woman can be labelled as a lamb woman and the second type as the lion woman. The most striking feature of a lamb woman is her passivity and denial of her own power. On the other hand, lion woman is self-confident and self-assured. Carter names the lamb woman as Justine and the lion woman as Juliette. In addition, she supports Juliette type of women rather than victimized Justine in her texts. Oddly enough, it is easy to find the instances of these two kinds of women in Turkish society where honour crimes are prevalent. Turkey is home to many lamb type pacified sleeping beauties and they are being killed mercilessly by the society in which they are living. Their life is full of violence and what they wear, where they go, whom they contact to and so on are thoroughly inspected by their family members. For these women, any communication with a male except close relatives might be regarded as a sign of perversity or embarrassment demanding punishment.

## DISCUSSION

### The Lamb Woman

In her *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir supports the idea that, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman", which implies the difference between biological sex and culturally determined gender (Beauvoir, 1997, p. 273). Like Simone de Beauvoir, Carter is against the notion of an inherent and natural gender identity and emphasizes that being female and male are the acts that are performed. In other words, for Carter bodily sex and gender are two different concepts. One's gender identity becomes real only if it is performed. Carter believes that if someone wants to acquire a gender identity, he or she has to play their roles accordingly. As she stresses in her non-fiction, Carter believes that "There is the unarguable fact of sexual differentiation; but separate from it and only partially derived from it, are the behavioural modes of masculine and feminine, which are culturally defined variables translated in the language of common usage to the status of universals" (Carter, 1979, p. 6). To put it simply, according to Carter, gender is a cultural and social invention; therefore women are not born as obedient or docile creatures since they are thought to act lamblike in the society they are residing. Carter demonstrates this by showing how Evelyn (later becomes Eve) acquires womanhood after his forced sex change operation through the socio-cultural situation in the establishment of Zero and in the love affair of Eve with Tristessa. In this process, New Eve learns to act as a perfect woman. This confirms Beauvoir's theory: One is not born but rather becomes a woman in Carter's dystopia the *Passion of the New Eve* (1979) (Zirange, 2012).

Carter creates two opposing figures in the novel. The first is named as Leilah and she is the typical example of a lamb woman. Leilah is the black erotic dancer. Unfortunately enough, she is both woman and black. In the eyes of Evelyn, who is a

young Englishman, she is nothing more than a sexual object with her “shiny black leather high-heeled shoes, black fishnet stockings and... a fox fur” (Carter, 1979). In accordance with the novel’s phallogocentric classification, Leilah’s duty is to play prostitute while Evelyn becomes the master who is teaching her some tricks. Evelyn keeps herself tied to the bed for hours and strolls around the streets. He even beats her for insubordination if she has excreted on the sheets after his return from long walks. He says that “If she fouled the bed, I would untie her and use my belt to beat her. She seemed to me a born victim and she submitted to the beating and the degradations with a curious, ironic laugh... Isn’t irony the victim’s only weapon?” (Carter, 1979, p. 28). It is made very clear that for Evelyn, Leilah is just a victim or an animal waiting her master. In that case, she demonstrates all the patriarchal stereotypes of femininity. After a period of time, Eve impregnates Leilah and all the sexual feelings he feels for her disappears when he is presented with her fecund body.

She undergoes an illegal abortion. She has haemorrhages in the back of a taxi on the way to her home and the bad-tempered Englishman is compelled to take her to a health clinic. All the way to the clinic, he wonders how he will pay for her treatment there and which moment might be appropriate for him to escape. At this point in the narrative, Evelyn has plumbed the depths of his egocentric masculinity, but his actions figuratively and literally unman the man (Welby, 2014). Evelyn is the one who freely exercise the male power on her. She is the very representation of the lamb woman. She accepts the assigned role of her gender and plays along. She even lets Evelyn use her and throws her like a piece of trash when he learns about her pregnancy. He does not care about her health or the baby and abandons her in the middle of nowhere. He sees her like a victim or a lamb waiting to be sacrificed for the purpose of Evelyn’s manly pleasures.

The second example of lamb woman is discussed by Carter thoroughly in her non-fiction *The Sadeian Woman and the Ideology of Pornography* (1979). Justine is the typical angel in the house created by the phallogocentric society she is residing in. She confronts a series of misfortunes that all end in disappointment. She is raped and condemned to death. The irony is that she does not even commit a crime and her only crime is being a woman: “Always the object of punishment, she has committed only one crime and that was an involuntary one; she was born a woman, and, for that, she is ceaselessly punished. The innocent girl pays a high price for the original...” (Carter, 1979, p. 39). She is the typical woman character in a man’s world. She possesses all the qualities a lamb has and just playing the part assigned to her by doing what is told. However, Carter proposes that Justine is defined as the “virtuous” woman therefore “perfect” by the society because of “her incompetence, her gullibility, her whining, her frigidity, her reluctance to take control of her own life”. That is, Carter believes that Justine follows her heart without making any reasoning therefore her virtue is a sentimental one “not the continuous exercise of a moral faculty”. Moreover, Carter claims that Justine is doomed to be “at the mercy of any master” since it “is the nature of her own definition of goodness”. Basically Justine “always hopes her good behaviour will procure her some reward, some respite from the bleak and intransigent reality which surrounds her and to which she cannot accommodate herself” (Carter, 1979, p. 55).

Carter believes that Justine is the best example of a repressed passive woman hence; her death is an inevitable one. Justine does everything automatically like the typical lamb woman does instead of holding the strings of her life in her hands. She internalizes the traditional role models and subconsciously accepts them without questioning their rightness. Carter says that "Justine demands punishment even before she has been accused. She does not take advantage of Gernande's confusion to destroy the incriminating letters she carries" (Carter, 1979, p. 52-53).

### **The Lion Woman**

The very opposite of lamb type of femininity is called the lion type of femininity. In Carter's fiction there is a huge gap between a lamb and a lion woman. Lamb types of femininity do not know their rights and how to speak for themselves. They are repressed and cannot act alone without the permission of a male chaperone as opposed to the lion women who are self-confident enough to control their lives. Moreover, lion women like handling their sexuality in an explicit way since they are aware of their sexual needs and desires. This type of woman prefers to be the performer of seduction rather than being its object. Hence, they are good at flirting with men. Furthermore, lion type women get rid of the conventional role models for women and men. They follow their reason and they do not let chance to control their lives.

One of the prototypes of Carter's representations of the lion woman is the "Mother" figure in her novel *The Passion of the New Eve* (1977). Mother is the opposite of the beautiful, charming and passive feminine characters in the book. In the novel, the mother is described as a monster like creature. She lives in the city of Beulah. She is the creator of this city and portrayed as "Great Parricide [...]", "The Castrix of the Phallogocentric Universe [...]" and "Mama" (Carter, 1977, p. 67). Her fertility and femininity is terrifying. She is a "sacred monster" of "personified and self-fulfilling fertility" with a "false beard", "fully clothed in obscene nakedness" and "breasted like a sow" (Carter, 1977, p. 59). Maybe Carter wants to destroy the dumb beauty image of the woman by creating an ugly mother. The Mother is very powerful and she has women soldiers in her service. "Mother is characterized as 'a huge woman, more than six feet tall, Negroid and has multiple breasts artificially constructed'. Evelyn describes Mother as: 'a self- designed goddess' and 'she was so big she seemed, almost, to fill the round, red-painted, over-heated, red-lit cell'" (Carter, 1977, p. 2).

Mother's target is to create a female space free from the intervention of male time. She tries to manage this by impregnating Eve using the preserved seed of Evelyn. She would even have a sperm bank to enable women to be self-sustained, not depending on any man.

The second prototype of Lion woman is Juliette. Juliette is the antithesis of Justine. Carter thinks that she is a "New Woman" or a lion woman since she does not comply with the desire of her heart. On the contrary, she follows the order of her brain. Juliette takes advantage of every inch of her brain in order to reach two things: The first one is money and the other one is sexual satisfaction. According to Carter, the use of heart is the "crippling aspect of femininity" (Carter, 1979).

Carter thinks that Lion woman follows their self-interest. In the case of Juliette, she commits many crimes yet she easily gets away with it. She is never punished for

these crimes; on the contrary she is rewarded since she has sex with the law-makers. She knows very well that sleeping with law makers provides her with the “Mafia –like protection” and the fragile sides of them. She learns how to use her sexuality as a power and through this process she gains her sexual autonomy over men. She steals, sells her body and murders for her self-interest. In the end Juliette transforms herself into a “Nietzschean superwoman” who has “transcended her gender”. Juliette is a complete libertine. For the sake of self-interest she even licks arses and eats faecal matter. Carter thinks that she “liberated herself from the limitations of her femininity” (Carter, 1979). She does not need men since she uses sex toys. Carter describes Justine’s life as “pilgrimage” and Juliette’s life as a “battle campaign with, as its final victory, the conquest of all disgust, horror, superstition, prejudice- and finally humanity” (Carter, 1979, p. 99).

Juliette refuses femininity and mother role by killing her child. She uses contraception techniques, therefore she is sexually active yet deliberately sterile. Carter states that “Juliette is the living proof that biology is not destiny”. By using a variety of contraception techniques as well as anal sex she refuses to be a mother (Carter, 1979, p. 104). In other words, she denies her reproductive function.

### **What is Honour Killing?**

An honour killing is just one example of violence against women in Turkey. Today in Turkey it is not very unusual to see women killed by men to reclaim their honour. Men justify these honour killings with excuses such as a woman looking at a man, having a boyfriend, having an illegitimate child or being raped. Furthermore, the concept of honour is mainly related to women’s sexuality, chastity, and knowing one’s duties in accordance with tradition. These crimes are extreme types of violence committed against women and minor girls are also among the victims. It is especially common in rural parts of Turkey. According to the questionnaire conducted among males and female by women NGO workers in the article “The Dynamics of Honor Killings in Turkey” by Filiz Kardam, the perception of honour is mainly associated with woman and her sexuality. For instance, one male police officer states that “horse, woman and gun’; these three things are sacred. Honour is the betrayal of your wife. She starts to have relations with other men... In the event, a person lives for his honour and dignity. And your honour is your wife. If she betrays you, your dignity is trampled” (Kardam, 2005, p. 16-17). To make matters worse, based on this questionnaire 70 percent say that honour is woman even the women themselves (Kardam, 2005). For example, 44.2 per cent of women in urban areas and 64.5 percent in rural areas think that women must obey what their husbands say. Furthermore, 10.6 percent of women in urban areas and 24.9 per cent in rural areas think that sometimes a man can beat his wife as well as 42.7 per cent of women in urban areas. Moreover, 61.2 percent of women in rural areas think that the women’s actions are under the responsibility of men (Unicef, 2016).

The collection of data related to honour crimes and forced suicides is not systematic. In a report on the issue published in 2008, it was put forth that there were over 1,100 cases of ‘ethics and honour killings’. It was claimed in the report that-according to witnesses- ‘honour killers’ were treated with respect even by the prison guards (Unicef, 2016).

### Lamb Women in Turkey

Leilah's and Justine's situations are very similar to the countless of women in Turkey as there are countless of women in the country who act like Leilah and Justine. As well as being second to men, women in Turkey face domestic violence. According to the recent research conducted by UNICEF, as many as 90 per cent of Turkish women experience violence by their husbands or boyfriends (Unicef, 2016). Many women state that their husbands beat them even on the first night of their marriage. "Honour killings" against women are among the most severe violations of human rights. They are particularly common in the south-eastern of Turkey, but they also exist in the major cities such as Istanbul and Izmir. The examples of such crimes can be given as follows:

"23-year-old Rukiye Küçükbirer was killed by her brother returning from military service because it was alleged that she had a relationship with her brother-in-law. Water polo teacher Müjgan Albayrak, divorced from her husband, was shot by her brother whilst she was dining with her boyfriend. Hülya Yakar was killed by her 11-year-old son because she went out a lot. Cezvet Murat killed two of his sisters, Ayten Murat and Gülten Söylemez, because they came home late and he decided that they were prostitutes. Pregnant Ayşe Tarhan was stabbed to death by her husband Behman Tarhan because he suspected that she was having an affair. After killing her, he separated her flesh from her bones and then buried in the stove and so on" (Unicef, 2016).

These so-called "honour killings" have reached record levels in Turkey. The number of such killings equals to half of all the murders committed in the country. In Turkey, the concept of honour is represented by the acts of "purity" or "impurity" and is demonstrated by behaviour of women. This is connected to prestige and status of a man that contradictorily give women the power to preserve and emasculate a man's position of privilege in the society if they prefer to resist the hierarchical order (Tayfur, 2012).

It is not very easy to explain the reasons behind honour crimes since there are many variables such as socio, economic and cultural. In simple terms, it can be said that the first reason is lack of education. In Turkey, honour crimes are the most common in places where the education of women is ignored and girls are not allowed to pursue their basic education because of "namus" (honour) or early marriages. Wollstonecraft (Wollstonecraft, 1993) supports the idea that women should be educated rationally in order to give them the opportunity to contribute to the society. In addition to this, she claims that the education of women to please their husbands leads women to adultery and the society will not be able to see the advantage with the abilities of women (Wollstonecraft, 589). For Wollstonecraft, double standard should not exist in terms of virtue, and moral and intellectual virtue should be the same for men and women. Women's behaviours should be based on the same principles and the same aim as men's (Wollstonecraft, 1993). Similarly, little girls in the south eastern part of Turkey are not sent to schools. They do not have economic freedom. Instead, these girls are sold by their own fathers to any men who pay a bride price. As a result, they do not have the power to control their own lives as their husbands or family controls it for them. There is such as social pressure for them to obey their husbands or family that their lack of power and the social pressure make them vulnerable to violence. They cannot protect their own rights, make their own decisions and object to the system.

The second reason is as Simone de Beauvoir claims “woman is taught from adolescence to lie to man, to scheme, to be wily. In speaking to them she wears an artificial expression on her face; she is cautious, hypocritical, play-acting” (Beauvoir, 1997, p. 1411). These are the techniques that women adopt since they are submitted and regarded as second sex. Therefore, the relationship between men and women become master-slave relationship in which the master has the absolute power over the slave. She further claims that women are seen as inessential and the other (Beauvoir, 1997). She also says that women are wanted to be seen as mysterious since mystery belongs to the slaves. She says that in order to be a true woman, she must accept herself as the other (Beauvoir, 1997). Beauvoir thinks that women have been taught to accept the masculine authority. Thus, she gives up criticizing, investigation and judging for herself. A woman who lives for the favour of men is still a prisoner, for her sex imprisoned her. A woman is abject, a feature that belongs to the subject, and this makes her the second sex. In other words, Beauvoir explains women’s persisting passivity by the extraordinary power which the society associates with the male genital organ. For boys, it is external and erect. However, genitals of girls are mysterious, hidden and ambiguous. Since they are not able to become erect, she cannot be powerful like men. Similarly, protection of female virginity has been considered equal to family honour in Turkey and it has been one of the most common reasons of violence committed against women.

As Jane Gallop emphasizes in her text, “Every viewing of the subject will have always been according to phallic standards. Hence, there is no valid representation of woman: but only a lack” (Gallop, 1982, p. 415). As a result, woman becomes desexualized. For Freud woman’s sexual organ terrifies young man since he sees an absence which is the absence of the phallus (Gallop, 1982). Thus, according to Freud, phallus is the measure of value. Since father is the possessor of phallus, he becomes the representative of patriarchal order and woman submits to this patriarchal law to please him or to gain value (Gallop, 1982). In patriarchy, women are always what men are not.

The third reason may be the increasing economic power of women in Turkey. Day by day, more women join the work force. Therefore, they gain their economic freedom and become passionate. Yet this is not welcomed in patriarchal societies like Turkey since as Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar claims in *The Madwoman in the Attic*, passionate women are viewed as monsters or madwoman. She states that “... to be any woman in a society where women are warned that if they do not behave like angels, they must be monsters... patriarchal socialization literally makes women sick, both physically and mentally” (Gilbert and Gubar, 1984, p. 2029). The angel character is always described as pure, dispassionate and submissive- the ideal female figure in a society dominated by men. To the contrary, the monster female character is described as sensual, passionate, rebellious and decidedly uncontrollable- all qualities which cause a great deal of anxiety among men in Turkey.

As in the case of Leilah, masculinity is defined by a person’s ability to establish control over another one. In that case Evelyn controls Leilah and he even beats her. One of the things that is known from the domestic violence movement is that women have many survival strategies and sometimes what is experienced as submission and passivity is of their way of handling life with a violent man. Both Leilah and Justine are

the perfect lamb women since they play the roles that are tagged to them. As Wollstonecraft indicates in her *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*:

“Women are told from their infancy, and taught by the example of their mothers, that a little knowledge of human weakness, justly termed cunning, softness of temper, outward obedience and a scrupulous attention to a puerile kind of propriety, will obtain for them the protection of man; and should they be beautiful, everything else is needless, for at least twenty years of their lives” (Wollstonecraft, 1993, p. 586).

In other words, it is clear that women are taught since their childhood to be soft, powerless, wily and proud only of how beautiful they are. As Wollstonecraft argues, women who are capable of rational and abstract thought are not desired in male dominated societies like Turkey. Passivity and submission to a male sex are the traits of an ideal woman. In addition to this, Elaine Showalter states that “women are greater dissemblers than men when they wish to conceal their own emotions. By habit, moral training, and modern education, they are obliged to do so. The very first lessons of infancy teach them to repress their feelings, control their very thoughts” (Wollstonecraft, 1977). It is very obvious that women are very good at hiding their own feelings.

### CONCLUSION

Accepting gender role does not bring any good to women in Turkey since traditionally women are regarded as second sex. As Judith Butler emphasises in her work *Gender Trouble*, gender is a repeated performance, it is therefore what you do at particular times, rather than a universal who you are (1990:2496). In other words, it is the society or the culture that makes the women so weak in the eyes of men. Domestic violence committed against women in the name of “namus” or honour will continue as long as women are seen as the second sex. Edward Said says that this is because we need the other. Why do we need the other in order to understand ourselves? Said argues that it is by means of the inferior Other that we can establish and justify our own positions. According to Said, the colonies created stereotyped images and texts, such as those of the Orient, in order to secure their power.

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