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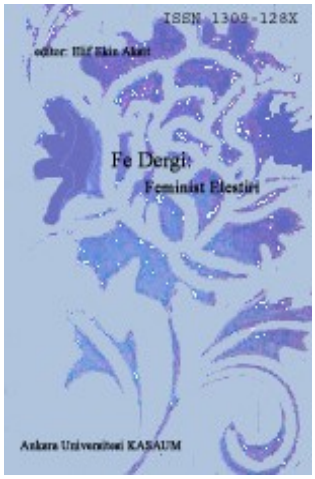

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Repositioning the Representation of Femininity in H.D.'s "The Garden"

Tuğba Karabulut

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Repositioning the Representation of Femininity in H.D's "The Garden"*

*Tuğba Karabulut***

Hilda Doolittle, an American poet, playwright, and novelist known by the initials H.D., was one of the few female figures of the male-dominated early modernist era. Her early works are of crucial importance as they are associated with Imagism, the literary movement shaped by Ezra Pound as a reaction to the wordiness, indirectness, and sentimentality of Victorian and Romantic poetry. H.D. played an important role in Imagism. Ezra Pound, who suggested that Hilda Doolittle append the signature "H.D., Imagiste" to her works, introduced her as the leader of Imagism. Her first poetry collection, Sea Garden (1916), which includes twenty-seven poems, is a paragon of Imagist poetry. The poems were composed in free verse without thematic boundaries and with the use of harsh and impersonal style and diction, natural imagery, a melodious rhythm, and economical word choice. However, H.D.'s "The Garden," an image-focused poem from this collection, goes far beyond Imagism. It is not simply a nature poem; the narrator glorifies fierce natural objects such as hard roses, rigorous winds, and thick air to represent women's potential strength, resilience, and productivity. It also subverts the stereotypical representation of femininity and female vulnerability by displacing dominant patriarchal myths. The poem is brimming with encoded images that metaphorically reconstruct female imagery and representation. This paper investigates how "The Garden" unfolds hidden and disregarded concepts of femininity to reposition the female figure in the ideal imaginary "Garden" by saving her from the confinement of the man-made "Garden" in order to suggest a new representation of femininity, mirroring Pound's call to "Make It New!"

Keywords: Hilda Doolittle (H.D.), "The Garden", imagism, representation of femininity, female vulnerability

H.D.'nin "Bahçe" adlı Şiirinde Kadınlık Temsilinin Yeniden Konumlandırılması

İsminin baş harfleri olan H.D. olarak bilinen Amerikalı şair, oyun yazarı ve romancı Hilda Doolittle, erken modernist dönemin erkek egemen dünyasındaki birkaç kadın figürden biri olarak karşımıza çıkar. İlk yapıtları, Viktoryen ve Romantik şiirin sözlük çokluğu, dolaylılık ve duygusallığına tepki olarak ortaya çıkan ve Ezra Pound ile şekillenmiş olan İmgecilik akımı ile ilgisi açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır. H.D., İmgecilik akımında önemli bir role sahiptir ve yazdığı şiirleri "H.D., Imagiste" kısaltmasıyla imzalamasını isteyen Ezra Pound, onu bu akımın lideri olarak ilan eder. 1916'da yayınlanan ve yirmi yedi şiirden oluşan ilk şiir kitabı Sea Garden, İmagist şiire örnek teşkil eder. Bu şiirler, tema kısıtlaması olmaksızın, serbest ölçü ve sert ve kişisel olmayan bir biçem ve söyleyiş ile ve aynı zamanda da doğa imgeleri, ahenkli bir ritim ve hesaplı sözcükler kullanılarak yazılmıştır. Ancak, H.D.'nın bu seçkideki "Bahçe" adlı imge odaklı şiiri, İmgecilik akımının ötesine gider. Basit bir doğa şiiri olmayan bu şiirde anlatıcı, baskın ataerkil mitleri devirmek ve basmakalıp kadınlık temsili ve kadın kırılganlığını yıkmak için, sert güller, vahşi doğa objeleri ve ağır hava imgelerini kullanır ve kadının güç, dayanıklılık ve üretkenlik potansiyelini yüceltir. Bu şiir, kadın imgesi ve temsilinin mecazi olarak yeniden inşa edildiği çeşitli kodlanmış imgelerle doludur. Bu makale, H.D.'nin "Bahçe" adlı şiirinin, kadını erkek-yapımı mahkumiyet bölgesi olarak tartışılan "Bahçe"den kurtararak, hayal edilen ideal "Bahçe"de yeniden konumlandırmak için, kadınlığın gizli ve göz ardı edilmiş kavramlarını nasıl açığa çıkardığını incelemektedir. Ayrıca bu şiir, yeni bir kadınlık temsili kavramını ortaya atarak Pound'un "Yenile" adlı özdeyişini de yansıtmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hilda Doolittle (H.D.), "Bahçe", imgecilik, kadınlık temsili, kadın kırılganlığı

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Introduction

"H.D. wrote about women...[As a] woman writing about women,
[she] explored the untold half of human story."
(Friedman 19755, 803)[1]

Hilda Doolittle (1886-1961), an American poet, playwright, and novelist known by her pen name, H.D., was a vibrant female figure and a precursor of the Imagist movement. For those who have read and analysed her works, she is a genius of avant-garde literature, but she still remains one of the least-known and undervalued female Modernists. H.D. is primarily known as a poet, but she also wrote memoirs, novels, and essays and produced several translations from Greek. Doolittle's career stretched from 1909 to 1961, but her reputation as a poet was mainly based on her earliest works, which she published during the Imagist period in 1910-1917. H.D.'s experimental works[2] are original and unique in responding to the literary and artistic avant-garde movements of her time, such as Imagism and Vorticism.[3] Producing and publishing in the pivotal moments of the avant-garde movement, H.D. created a wide range of literary works in different genres and generated significant interest in the avant-garde community with her use of unique language, vivid imagery, and unusual themes.

H.D. engaged with many of the canonical figures of the early 20th century[4] who were pioneers in the artistic and literary awakenings in Paris and London and admired her for her innovative and experimental poetry, such as Wyndham Lewis, William Carlos Williams, James Joyce, Man Ray, and Ezra Pound. However, it was obviously Ezra Pound, American poet, critic, and founder of Imagism, who led her to become a precursor of Imagist poetry. Pound labelled Hilda Doolittle as "*H.D., 'Imagiste'*"[5] and introduced her poetic works to the avant-garde literary circles of the time. One late afternoon in September 1912, in the British Museum's tea room, "Hilda Doolittle showed her poems to Pound and he, impressed with what he read, signed them '*H.D., 'Imagiste'* and sent them off in October to *Poetry*" (Zilboorg, 1998, 24). Upon editing her poems "Epigram," "Hermes of the Ways," and "Priaprus" (later titled "Orchard"), Pound sent them to Harriet Monroe to be published in the 1913 issue of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*[6] under the byname "*H. D., Imagiste*"[7] and soon proclaimed her as the leader of Imagism. Thus, H.D., like her contemporaries Marianne Moore, Mina Loy, Amy Lowell, and Gertrude Stein, who were also writing for and about women, joined the literary milieu as a female poet.

At the start of her career, H.D. worked as an editor of *Egoist.*[8] Her early poems, assembled in *Sea Garden*[9] and published in *Poetry* in 1916, exhibit her feminist and gender-focused ideas and possess the features of Imagism: harsh and impersonal style, diction, and structure; a melodious rhythm; and the use of natural imagery, free verse, and an economical style without thematic limitations.

In early verses, H.D.'s narrator uses natural objects, such as flowers, as metaphors by associating them with women so as to question and displace domesticity, submissiveness, and the conventional perception of female beauty. However, she distinctively glorifies fierce natural objects and events such as hard roses, rigorous winds, heavy air, and wild waves and storms to characterize women's strength, power, and resilience and suggest a new feminist phenomenon. Therefore, H.D. rejected not only the stereotypical values of the male-dominated Victorian milieu but also its tame, traditional literary style. To illustrate, her poems from the *Sea Garden* collection, such as "Sea Rose," "Orchard," "Sheltered Garden," "Sea Lily," and particularly "The Garden," the latter of which will be closely analysed in this article, depict natural scenery and portray intense human feelings; they are filled with encoded images that imply resistance against stereotypical femininity, female vulnerability, and patriarchal order. The narrator's immense desire to identify femininity lies behind the metaphorical and sylleptic use of a rich and vivid variety of natural imagery. H.D.'s poems "Palimpsest" (1921) and "Hedylus" (1928) also problematize and discuss women's value in a patriarchal literary tradition.

H.D. later moved away from the Imagist movement to produce more biographical works, war poems, translations, mythical Greek works, and psychoanalysis. Fascinated by Greek mythology, she wrote "Helen" (1924), published a work of verse tragedy named *Hippolytus Temporizes* (1927), chronicled a war-torn society in her *Trilogy* series (1945-46), and wrote the memoir entitled *Tribute To Freud* (1956) based on her own interviews with Sigmund Freud. She also wrote various autobiographical novels, such as *Bid Me To Live* and *HERmione*. In 1961, just before her death, she produced "Helen in Egypt," a long epic poem composed with a feminist viewpoint to restore the image of women in male-dominated Greek works. Through a close analysis from semiotic, sylleptic, aesthetic, and intertextual perspectives, this paper investigates how the narrator in

H.D.'s "The Garden" problematizes the conventional representation of female beauty and vulnerability in society to displace patriarchal myths and unveil hidden and disregarded concepts of femininity, with an emphasis on the ways in which she repositions the female figure in her ideal imaginary "Garden" by saving her from the confinement of the existing "Garden" of a man-made landscape. This paper also argues that H.D.'s narrator suggests a new representation of femininity, which reflects Pound's oft-cited maxim of "Make It New!"[10] (1934).

H.D.: Modernist, Imagist, Vorticist, and Feminist

Modernism was a special era between the two world wars. As an umbrella term, it encompasses various movements, theories, and practices including Imagism, Cubism, Vorticism, Dadaism, Surrealism, and Feminism. In agreement with Pound's call to "make it new," the modernist period witnessed the development of diverse avant-garde and experimental styles in philosophy, literature, the visual arts, architecture, and cinema, and it opened new paths of thinking and implementation.

Both Modernism and Imagism opposed the conventional forms of the Victorian era and aimed to reconstruct past values with modernist trajectories. However, while Imagism employed images to minimize linguistic abstraction and highlighted simplicity in order to reveal what a concrete object literally meant, in Modernism, abstraction was applied to do the opposite. It took the viewer away from reality by deconstructing the traditional human form and gave the reader opportunities for independence in interpreting signs.

Clive Bloom noted that modernist poets intended to use a language that should be "both individual and universal; poetic and vernacular" (1995, 1). H.D. not only experimented with the Imagist and Vorticist movements but also combined and synthesized them with modernist and feminist practices in her literary works. Her works comprised both universal and individual features and sought to rediscover the ideal femininity and female representation within the scope of feminism. To illustrate, her famous short poem "Oread," published by Ezra Pound in the first-edition copy of *Blast* in June 1914, epitomizes Vorticist poetry: "Whirl up, sea— / Whirl your pointed pines, / splash your great pines / on our rocks…" (Doolittle, 17). This poem demonstrates H.D.'s Vorticist identity through her narrator's depiction of a whirl as a turbulent force like a vortex and it embraces dynamism and motion, absorbing the reader into the focal point of the vortex.

H.D.'s poetry stands out as unconventional Imagist poetry. Her narrative voice goes beyond the boundaries of Imagism by recontextualizing the representation of femininity to dislodge existing conventional perceptions of women's potential, beauty, and vulnerability in society. In this sense, her works reposition the female gender with its distinctive qualities in her ideal "Garden" and metaphorically utilize an expansive variety of natural imagery to construct allegories for the controversial themes that interested H.D., such as femininity, female vulnerability, types of women, and male dominance, and they can be viewed as heralding first-wave feminism and modernism.

Poundian Imagism and "*H.D., Imagiste*"

> *An 'Image' is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time… It is the presentation of such a 'complex' instantaneously which gives that sense of liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; that sense of sudden growth, which we experience in the presence of the greatest works of art.*
>
> (Pound, "A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste," *Poetry*, 1903, 200-201)

Imagism was a short-lived but influential literary and aesthetic movement that emerged in the early Modernist era. The roots of Imagism are also seen in the Romantic period in *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), a prominent work by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who attributed intense human feelings to natural objects. It also appeared in the poems of T.E. Hulme, whose two particular poems "Autumn" and "A City Sunset," published in 1909, were composed with an economy of words and the use of pure and clear images, an uncommon approach at that time.

The concept of "*Imagisme*" was initially coined by Ezra Pound and introduced in the 1910s as a reaction to wordy, discursive, indirect, and sentimental Romantic and Victorian poetry. Pound's *Des Imagistes: An Anthology,*[11] published by *The Glebe*[12] in February 1914, was the first anthology of Imagism, containing diverse poems with the Imagist principles from poets like H.D., William Carlos Williams, Amy Lowell, and Richard

Aldington. Burton Hatlen defined this group of Imagists as "the first important literary fellowship of the new century" (Hatlen, 2005, vii).

As Ezra Pound conceptualized it, objects in Imagism are "luminous details"; they are transmitted to the reader vividly and swiftly. Michael A. Bernstein noted that Pound "fashion[ed] an epistemology that…permitted him to think that the most fundamental truths could be grasped by means of individual and even fragmentary 'luminous details' (Bernstein, 1980, 37) and that "it is better to present one Image in a lifetime than to produce voluminous works" (Pound, 374).

In his "A Retrospective," Pound listed the three main criteria for Imagism, in agreement with H.D. and Richard Aldington:

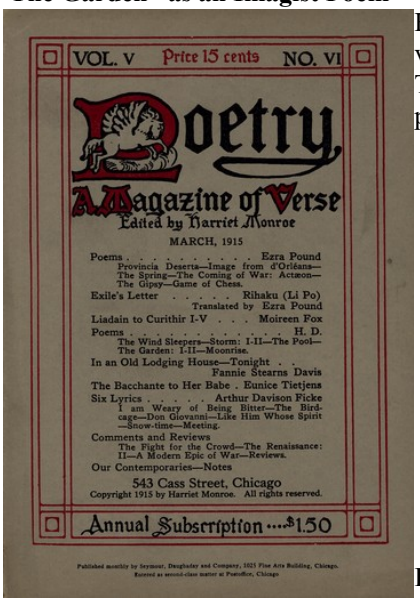
1. Direct treatment of the "thing" whether subjective or objective.
2. To use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation.
3. As regarding rhythm: to compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in the sequence of a metronome (Pound, 1918, 104).

Imagism is considered a separation from the traditional, discursive, sentimental, ethical, and linear poetry that was common in the late 19th century. Removed from the traditional poetic approach and moralistic teachings of the previous century, Imagist poems embraced purity and abstained from redundant and excessive use of language. For Pound, the image was the speech itself; he aimed to present one image that would reflect the compression and concentration of meaning.[13] Hence, Pound's call to "make it new" asserted his revisionist desire to renovate the past and renew it within modernist and avant-garde trajectories, not only for Imagism but also for Vorticism.[14] He was closely affiliated with the pioneering Vorticists[15] and his slogan led the charge into the modernist era, paving the way for his successors.

For Doolittle, Imagism was a pivotal experience in shaping her literary development and Pound obviously played the most crucial role in the construction of her poetic identity. As for the uniqueness of H.D. in modern poetry, Robert Duncan, in his *The H.D. Book*, noted: "The image and the voice or dramatic persona [of H.D.] provided a nexus in poetry corresponding to the outer and inner worlds in which she worked towards higher and finer modes" (Duncan, 1967, 10). H.D.'s earliest poems are prime examples of this movement. Produced both in the invigorating and lively pre-war ambiance and the destructive atmosphere of World War I, they were written in free verse with harsh diction and melodious rhythm without thematic boundaries and with the use of clear natural imagery. However, H.D. took Imagist poetry one step further with a feminist lens in "The Garden."

"The Garden" as an Imagist Poem

H.D.'s "The Garden" is an image-focused poem that contains a large variety of natural imagery. The poem was published in *Poetry* in 1915. The cover page of the issue of that magazine including "The Garden" is provided in Figure 1:


VOL. V Price 15 cents NO. VI

Poetry

A Magazine of Verse

Edited by Harriet Monroe

MARCH, 1915

Poems . . . . . Ezra Pound
Provincia Deserta—Image from d'Orléans—The Spring—The Coming of War: Actæon—The Gipsy—Game of Chess.
Exile's Letter . . . . . Rihaku (Li Po)
Translated by Ezra Pound
Liadain to Curithir I-V . . . Moireen Fox
Poems . . . . . H. D.
The Wind Sleepers—Storm: I-II—The Pool—The Garden: I-II—Moonrise.
In an Old Lodging House—Tonight . . .
Fannie Stearns Davis
The Bacchante to Her Babe . Eunice Tietjens
Six Lyrics . . . . . Arthur Davison Ficke
I am Weary of Being Bitter—The Bird-cage—Don Giovanni—Like Him Whose Spirit—Snow-time—Meeting.
Comments and Reviews
The Fight for the Crowd—The Renaissance: II—A Modern Epic of War—Reviews.
Our Contemporaries—Notes

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Figure 1. Cover Page of *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, March 1915.[16]

On the surface, "The Garden" is an example of Imagist poetry; however, it goes far beyond Imagism. It is not simply a nature poem depicting natural elements and events. Rather, it embodies a more complex narrative structure actualized in multiple layers of perception through the figurative employment of images hidden behind their apparent meanings. The narrator's allegorical representations of femininity are full of encoded signs. Natural objects and events such as hard roses, rigorous winds, and thick air are characterized to metaphorically represent both the existing and ideal representations of women in order to resist stereotypical femininity and female vulnerability. Through the use of natural images, the narrator seeks to problematize the dominant patriarchal myths connected to female representation in society and draw attention to women's strength, endurance, and productivity, which can only be deciphered through a sylleptic and metaphorical interpretation of the title, "The Garden."

Social and Gendered Polarization in the "Garden" Image

"The Garden," as both the title and the inclusionary setting of the poem, literally refers to a landscape incorporating plants and other forms of nature. However, I would argue that the meaning of "Garden" is multiplied to reveal the social and gendered polarization of male and female figures in society. Therefore, on the figurative level, this image can be interpreted as a trope of syllepsis having two different meanings implied beyond the image.

Michael Riffaterre, a renowned literary critic and structuralist dealing with semiotics, suggests that:

> [Syllepsis is] the trope that consists in understanding the same word in two different ways at the same time, one meaning being literal or primary, the other figurative. The second meaning is not just different from and incompatible with the first: it is tied to the first as its polar opposite or the way the reverse of a coin is bound to its obverse… (Riffaterre 1980, 629).

On the one hand, "The Garden" is metaphorically an imaginary space representing the narrator's desire for an autonomous place where women can manifest their potential and attain individual and intellectual independence and strength outside of the stereotypical restrictions of society. However, from a figurative perspective, this image symbolizes a man-made space where women are underestimated and perceived as vulnerable, weak, and traditionally beautiful. This perception echoes female sexuality; thus, it signifies the community to which the speaker belongs. In this respect, the "Garden" image manoeuvres between the existing and the imagined space in the narrator's critical process and it invites the reader to reconsider and reposition social and gendered norms.

Alternatively, the antiphrastic use of "Garden" echoes biblical hermeneutics. In its simplest biblical sense, "Garden" evokes the Garden of Eden as both the symbolic setting of the narrator's imaginary paradise, an idyllic place where absolute strength, peace, and equality reign with perfect harmony, and an infernal space where women are perceived as fragile, weak, and sexual objects by patriarchal society.

The syllepsis of "The Garden" is seen in the use of particular images. While the narrator's paradisical "Garden" is depicted with the distinctive delineation of the "rose," the "heat" as an opposing image suggests the infernal "Garden." Metonymically, "The Garden" is a dynamic place for women, threatening the border zones of the traditional ideology of femininity and female representation. The narrator gives women a new voice and space by endowing them with strength, endurance, and productivity. In line with Poundian tenets, H.D.'s narrator characterizes two polar images in this poem: the "rose" in the first part and the "heat" in the second, along with a side image, the "wind."

A Critical Analysis of "The Garden"

Stylistically, the poem comprises two parts with seven stanzas of varying length and revolves around three metaphorical images: the "rose," "heat," and "wind." The narrator addresses these particular images not only imperatively but also in a dialogical form, turning to the "rose" in the opening stanza and the "wind" in the second. In the narrative structure, the second-person pronoun "you" is occasionally used in a didactic form to address women. On the other hand, the narrative structure also gives the sense of a self-dialogue; the narrator converses with herself to resolve the incongruity and discomfort in her thought processes. "The Garden" has a unique style and typography. It proceeds with unpredictable em dashes to stress particular words and steers the

reader towards consideration of the implied meanings behind the images. These stylistic and narrative styles reflect the dynamism present in the poem.

"Rose" as an (Un)Traditional Female Image

"Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose."
("Sacred Emily," Stein, 177-188, 1913)[17]

The poem opens with the speaker addressing a "rose," a plant that literally cannot respond to her:

You are clear
O rose, cut in rock,
hard as the descent of hail ("The Garden," lines 1-3).

As an intriguing image, the "rose" awakens graphical perceptions in the reader; its implicit personification is a female image. Although the call of the narrative voice seems to be a self-dialogue, the narrator actually interacts with the female and invites women to self-realization. She admires their potency and resilience as they constantly continue to grow within a "rock" in her ideal "Garden." Thus, the narrator stresses that, like the image of the "rose," women are far more powerful than they think: "hard as the descent of hail."

On a literal level, the "rose" is a sweet-smelling flower known not only for its beauty but also for its thorns in nature. In many cultures since ancient times, roses have been associated with beauty, vulnerability, sensuality, and, in particular, the female gender. In medieval and Renaissance Christian art,[18] they also symbolized the concept of virginity. Moreover, different colours of roses have been attributed different meanings; for instance, red roses evoke passion and romance while white roses symbolize purity, innocence, and chastity.

Contrary to these stereotypical conceptions of "roses," I would argue that, in "The Garden," the "rose" is colourless, genderless, and far beyond a mere beautiful plant or scented flower. This makes the image impersonal in the eyes of the reader. Here, the narrator attempts to recontextualize the stereotypical perception of the female figure. On the literal level, the most common attributes of "roses" are purity, beauty, and vulnerability. However, in "The Garden," H.D.'s narrator does not emphasize sweetness, beauty, or delicacy. Rather, she focuses on the harshness, strength, and endurance of the "rose," which, to her, would truly make women beautiful. In that sense, this image in "The Garden" portrays women as "hard," unbreakable ("cut in rock"), and unsentimental ("clear"). Thus, the image of "rose" existing as an object in the patriarchal "Garden" becomes subject in the narrator's imaginary "Garden."

Symbolically, the meaning of "rose" could be explored from various angles to uncover the hidden meanings behind the words of the narrative voice. In *Dictionary of Symbols*, Chevalier and Gheerbrant defined "rose" as "the most commonly used floral symbol in the West" and noted that "roses symbolize the chalice of life, the soul, the heart and love" (1996, 813). When considered as a circular symbol, "rose" might also refer to the continuous cycle of life.

Additionally, the narrator's words "cut" and "hard," which evoke wildness and violence, trigger the visual perception of the reader and lead the reader to visualize the sharp thorns of a rose. Biblically and in Christian scripture and history, the thorns of a rose bring to mind Christ's crown of thorns, representing the sufferings of the crucifixion. Alternatively, with an opposite meaning, the thorns of the rose can also be linked to the corporeal and mental endurance and strength that Christ possessed during the crucifixion. Thus, considering the "rose" as an image signifying the female, the narrator implies dualism to depict both the strength and suffering of women.

In the second stanza, the narrator relates herself to the "rose" and imagines breaking through her weakness and stillness, invoking her potential:

I could scrape the colour
From the petals
Like spilt dye from a rock ("The Garden," lines 4-6).

Here, the shift of the addressee from the "rose" to the narrator herself reveals the narrator's complex thought process. While the collective voice of the speaker interacts with the implied reader, this narrator also addresses herself. The hidden potential of the "rose" is depicted through an aesthetic image of "colour," which could be "scrap[ed]" "from [its] petals" by the narrator. The words "colour" and "dye" also give an aesthetic impression of sculpture and painting, which evokes the art movements of that time, such as Cubism. From an alternative perspective, "scrap[ing] the colour" might refer to the clarity and simplicity of Imagist language refined from decorative and fanciful words.

Intertextually, H.D.'s 1916 poem "Sea Rose" provides an analogy to "The Garden" with regard to the delineation of a single object, the "rose," to destabilize traditional gendered descriptions of femininity:

> Rose, harsh rose,
> marred and with stint of petals,
> meagre flower, thin,
> sparse of leaf,
>
> more precious
> than a wet rose…
> single on a stem—
> you are caught in the drift ("Sea Rose," 3, lines 1-8).
>
> Can the spice rose
> drip such acrid fragrance
> hardened in a leaf? ("Sea Rose," 3, lines 14-16).[19]

"Sea Rose" depicts the classical "rose" through two main images, namely a "wet rose" and a "spice rose," and compares those with the "harsh rose" in a natural setting. From a literal perspective, she speaks to an actual rose, offering a verbal depiction of a real or imagined visual image. However, when analysed more deeply, it can be suggested that this comparison is an outcry against the archetypal perception of female beauty in society; the narrator distorts traditional female representation by underestimating sexual attractiveness. She resists society's perception of women as sexual objects. Here, H.D.'s narrator's "rose" does not grow in an ordinary garden; the inclusive setting of a "Garden" is converted into the "Sea," which incorporates both types of roses. The "sea rose" is "more precious than a wet rose," subverting conventional fragile female beauty.

In H.D.'s "The Garden," the third and fourth stanzas of the first part illustrate the narrator's fantasy about changing the existing situation:

> If I could break you
> I could break a tree.
>
> If I could stir
> I could break a tree—
> I could break you ("The Garden," lines 7-11).

The narrator imagines breaking the "rose," using "if" as an interactive fictive word. Essentially, she seeks to reveal its strength. The repetitive use of the words and phrases "break you" and "break a tree" convey the narrator's fantasy of making a change. Her repressed state of mind leads her to introduce the next image: the "wind."

"Heat" as a Polar Opposite of the "Rose" Image

In the second part of "The Garden," the narrator's addressee shifts from the "rose" to the "wind" to break the "heat":

O wind, rend open the heat,
Cut apart the heat,
Rend it to tatters ("The Garden," lines 12-14).

While the "rose" serves as a clear image implying the potency and power of the female gender in the narrator's imaginary and paradisical "Garden," the "wind" symbolizes her dream of a great change in the current oppressive society. She calls women to action: "rend open [and] cut apart the heat." Both the "wind" and the "heat" are abstract signs communicating vividness and detail in readers' minds. On a semiotic level, Chevalier and Gheerbrant suggested that "when winds occur in dreams, they herald the imminence of some important event or change about to take place" (1996, 1112). Thus, "wind" signifies the action to be taken, which the narrator longs for and which symbolizes a break in the existing "heat," the latter of which invokes fire, torment, and misery in an inferno. Thus, the "wind" is a metaphor of forthcoming social change in an oppressive society. From a feminist perspective, "heat" might be interpreted as an infernal place, referring to an oppressive society in which women are perceived as powerless, weak, and immobile.

In the second stanza, H.D.'s narrator focuses on women's potential for productivity and portrays the "heat" as a deterrent in that process:

Fruit cannot drop
Through this thick air—
Fruit cannot fall into heat
That presses up and blunts
The points of pears
And rounds the grapes ("The Garden," lines 15-20).

When analysed metaphorically, the "thick air" might be interpreted as a social event, not a natural event; it represents the existing social atmosphere. Hence, it can be associated with a malicious image blocking women, "press[ing] up and blunt[ing] the points of pears and round[ing] the grapes." It paralyses everything in the narrator's imaginary "Garden" and impedes even the simplest act of fruits "fall[ing]," or the productivity of women.

In the final stanza, the narrator's voice shifts back to the imperial form with a didactic tone:

Cut the heat—
Plough through it,
Turning it on either side
Of your path ("The Garden," lines 21-24).

In these lines, the narrator's tone is more determined and passionate in contrast to her pleading tone while conversing with the "rose" and the "wind"; she directly and provocatively addresses women, calling on them to realize their potential and attain self-consciousness, which would mobilize them against society's observations of femininity: "Cut the heat— / Plough through it." The agricultural term "plough" is used as a binary metaphor to reverse the acts of "press[ing] up," "blunt[ing]," and "round[ing]" that were previously mentioned.

Another intriguing aspect of the final stanza is the use of an em dash following the first line, creating the impression that the narrator is pausing before continuing to speak to women in a particularly serious tone after calling on them to "cut the heat." This stylistic choice evokes the idea that there are more things to be done, and so H.D. invites women to self-awareness and calls them to action to discover their fullest capacity as well as their natural endowment of strength, resilience, and production. This would enable them to turn to "either side of [their] path" in the ideal society: the imaginary "Garden." This is what would make them look truly beautiful.

From Text to Image

From a visual angle, drawing upon W.J.T. Mitchell's *Picture Theory*, which connects textual and visual disciplines by suggesting that images are indeed "imagetexts" (Mitchell, 1990, 9) and that texts are indeed living pictures, it is argued that, in "The Garden," H.D.'s narrator combines the textual genre with the visual in the

scope of Mitchell's image-text relationship. The narrator uses visual language to construct eidetic imagery that stimulates the graphic perception of the reader. Thus, it is also suggested that H.D.'s byname "*Imagiste*" evokes "imagery" and emphasizes the "visual" as if poetry were a kind of artwork.

In this respect, in connection with H.D.'s narrator's distinctive depiction of women intended to displace the societal representation of female sexuality and centre female strength and potential, the female image is portrayed as strong, complex, and unique in many modern artworks. Similarly, the representation of femininity transforms from depictions of ideal, domestic, and vulnerable women to independent, unique, powerful, and obviously feminist women.

An important example of the distinctive and influential expression of female beauty in modern art can be seen in Pablo Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (*The Young Ladies of Avignon*) in Figure 2:

Figure 2. *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* by Pablo Picasso, June-July 1907, © Courtesy of MoMA.[20]

Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* is an epitome of Cubism. In this painting, Picasso subverts linear and ideal bodies as well as traditional perceptions of gender and female sexuality, displacing the way in which society perceives women. The painting depicts five nude prostitutes in a brothel; the edges of the female bodies are sharp, with unusual shading, which saves them from being perceived as sexual objects and stimulates a sense of sympathy towards them. From a gendered perspective, the two figures on the right are portrayed in African masks, which projects them as powerful beings in masculine outfits, contrary to the conventional representations of women in society. Thus, this modernist artwork upends the traditional feminine-masculine iconography.

As Judith Butler, in her *Gender Trouble*, suggests, "Gender itself becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that man and masculine might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and woman and feminine a male body as easily as a female one" (Butler 1990, 10). Evidently, the image thus displaces gender-based expectations of society. Drawing upon Butler's argument here, the representation of identity is not a stable concept; the performance of gender itself constitutes the gender identity.

In an aesthetic manner, the features of Cubism in this painting, reflected in the irregular and sharp edges of the silhouettes displacing traditional female beauty and sexuality, bear a resemblance to the multi-faceted depiction of women in H.D.'s "The Garden." In this sense, Picasso's painting evokes a female image as viewed from a feminist perspective, just as the poem also investigates the poly-gendered identities that femininity might include. In the poem, H.D.'s narrator reconstructs both female identity and female representation; this is both an individual and a social construction because the images represented are related to both one another and the social community in which they are rooted.

Conclusion

In the pre-World War I climate of the avant-garde with her Imagist poetry, and later during and after the catastrophe of World War II, in the post-Imagist era with her epic and mythologic poetry and prose, H.D.

contributed to the initial wave of Modernism. In a coterie of male Modernists such as Ezra Pound, Richard Aldington, and William Carlos Williams, who pioneered Modernist forms by shattering conventional symbolic and linguistic systems with their literary works and practices, H.D. questioned and displaced stereotypical representations of femininity and conventional female beauty and vulnerability to reconstruct a new female concept. H.D.'s new exclusive woman was untraditional, productive, strong, innovative, and aware of her ability to regenerate herself. Moreover, she performed her femininity through corporeal and mental acts in the circle of life.

The semiotic and intertextual analyses presented in this paper have demonstrated that while H.D.'s poetic persona performed Poundian Imagist principles structurally, she also transcended the semantic boundaries of Imagism by presenting images within the framework of feminism. Therefore, "The Garden" conveys more than it seems; the narrator glorifies natural images to represent women's potential and endows them with the new concept of beauty hidden within their power, strength, and productivity. Images related to vulnerability and violence are juxtaposed together so as to reposition the representation of femininity and critique culturally assigned and gender-related societal perceptions.

In the wake of Modernism, H.D. was ahead of her time, standing out as more than a flag-bearer of Imagism. An important performative characteristic of the poem is that the narrator is not limited to using natural objects to create visual effects in the minds of the readers. Rather, she intends to change the gender-based perceptions of society related to the representation of femininity and stimulate readers' consciousnesses in that way. Through the voice of her narrator, H.D. thus constructed a new form of female representation by synthesizing imagist, modernist, and feminist trajectories, disentangling herself from her male mentors in the process. Therefore, "The Garden" clearly fulfils Pound's famed command to "make it new" by redefining and repositioning the representation of femininity while pledging hope for the future.

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2. Yazarlar tarafından herhangi bir çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir (No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors).

3. Bu çalışma, intihal tarama programı kullanılarak intihal taramasından geçirilmiştir (This article was screened for potential plagiarism using a plagiarism screening program).

[1]Friedman, Susan. "Who Buried H.D.? A Poet, Her Critics, and Her Place in 'The Literary Tradition,'" *College English*, 36(7), (1975): 801-814.

[2]Many of H.D.'s works, including manuscripts, correspondence, photographs, and personal papers, are archived in the digital "H. D. Papers" collection of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University. See https://beinecke.library.yale.edu/collections/highlights/hd-papers. Also see H.D.'s *Scrapbook*, created collaboratively with Kenneth Macpherson in 1920 and containing photographs and collages by H.D., Bryher, Kenneth Macpherson, and others, at https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/2008034 (Call Number: YCAL MSS 24).

[3]Vorticism was a London-based Modernist movement in art and literature founded by British writer, critic, and artist Wyndham Lewis; it was launched with the publication of "Vorticist Manifesto" in *Blast* in 1914, the first Vorticist journal edited by Lewis with co-founder Ezra Pound. The movement embraced the dynamism and technological advancements of the modern world and focused on the experimental depiction of an image's movement. Linked with the devastating effects of WWI and the mechanizing of society brought about by industrialization, the movement was inspired by Futurism and Cubism; however, unlike the stillness of Cubism, Vorticism favoured motion. Vorticists focused on the centre of the vortex, where thoughts flowed to attain the highest levels of energy. Rejecting the sentimentality of the 19th century and glorifying the energy of machine technology, Vorticism aimed to relate art to industrialization. See the 1912 painting by Wyndham Lewis, *The Dancers*, at https://www.trebuchet-magazine.com/escaping-vortex-wyndham-lewis-approved/.

[4]See the photo of canonical avant-garde icons of the early Modernist era in front of the Jockey Club, Paris, 1923. Front row: Man Ray, Mina Loy, Tristan Tzara, Jean Cocteau; Middle row: Kiki de Montparnasse, Jane Heap, Margaret Anderson, Ezra Pound; Back row: Bill Bird, Curtis Moffat, Holger Cahill, Hilare, Les Copeland. https://www.reddit.com/r/OldSchoolCool/comments/3v743m/ezra_pound_tristan_tzara_man_ray_kiki_ray_mina/.

[5]"*Imagiste*" is a French word meaning "Imagist."

[6]*Poetry* was a leading magazine launched in 1912 by Harriet Monroe; it helped poets such as T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Marianne Moore, and H.D. consolidate their literary careers in the early 20th century. See https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/history.

[7]I would argue that the enigmatic initials of H.D. are also emblematic in recalling Pound's economical usage of words in Imagist poetry.

[8]*Egoist* was an influential literary magazine in the early 1900s.

[9]*Sea Garden* (1916) was later published as *Collected Poems of H.D.* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1925).

[10]*Make It New: Essays by Ezra Pound* contains selected reprints of Pound's prose writings from 1913-1920 (London: Faber and Faber, 1934).

[11]See the full text of Ezra Pound's *Des Imagiste: An Anthology* at https://www.gutenberg.org/files/50782/50782-h/50782-h.htm.

[12]*The Glebe* was a literary magazine edited by Alfred Kreymborg and Man Ray from 1913 to 1914.

[13]In his 1913 poem "In a Station of the Metro," a verbless poem with fourteen words published in *Poetry*, the narrator depicts the appearances of individuals in the metro station: "The apparition of these faces in the crowd: / Petals on a wet, black bough" (Pound, 251). However, the "faces" are not depicted with descriptions, but rather with an equation. The treatment of the subjects' appearances is given by way of the poem's own visuality.

[14]See *The Vorticists at the Restaurant de la Tour Eiffel: Spring, 1915*, a painting by William Roberts. From left to right, seated: Cuthbert Hamilton, Ezra Pound, William Roberts, Wyndham Lewis, Frederick Etchells, and Edward Wadsworth. Standing in the doorway are Jessica Dismorr and Helen Saunders. Joe, the waiter, and Rudolph Stulik, the owner of the restaurant from 1908 to 1937, are also on the right. https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/roberts-the-vorticists-at-the-restaurant-de-la-tour-eiffel-spring-1915-t00528.

[15]Pound played a significant role in Vorticism as the co-founder. He coined the name of the movement and attempted to apply it to poetry. In his well-known essay "Vortex", published in the first issue of *Blast* in 1914, Pound highlighted the relationship of Vorticism with motion by saying: "The vortex is the point of maximum energy. It represents, in mechanics, the greatest efficiency. We use the words 'greatest efficiency' in the precise sense as they would be used in a text book of MECHANICS" (Pound, *Blast* 1, June 1914, 153).

[16]*Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, edited by Harriet Monroe, Vol. 5, No. 6, March 1915. The original manuscript is archived in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University.

[17]An intertextual reference related to the "rose" image can be seen in the tautological line of the poem "Sacred Emily" by American modernist author Gertrude Stein. This phrase is often interpreted to mean "things are what they are." Read the full poem, "Sacred Emily," at https://www.gutenberg.org/files/33403/33403-h/33403-h.htm

[18]Alternatively, and from a biblical perspective, "rose" is also connected as an image with "miracle," and specifically miracles in which roses manifest the activities of God or a saint. Such miracles are depicted in various paintings in different forms. For the best known of these "miracles," see *Rosenwunder* (*Miracle of the Roses*) (1839) by Karl von Blass, illustrating St. Elizabeth of Hungary holding a basket of roses in her hands, at https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-karl-von-blaas-rosenwunder-132820706.html.

[19]H.D.'s "Sea Rose" was published in 1916 in *Egoist*, a London-based modernist literary magazine continued from 1914 to 1919, and in 1916 in *Sea Garden*, her first collection of poetry. See the full poem at https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/48188/sea-rose.

[20]The original of *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* by Pablo Picasso (1907) is at the Modern Museum of Arts (MoMA), New York. © Courtesy of MoMA, https://www.moma.org/collection/works/79766. The artwork was originally titled *Le Bordel d'Avignon* (*The Brothel of Avignon*), but that was soon changed to *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* by the artist. The title refers to a street, Carrer d'Avinyó (Avignon Street), famed for its brothels in Barcelona.

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