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Istanbul University, Faculty of Letters,
Department of Western Languages and Literatures
34134, Laleli, Istanbul - Türkiye
Phone / Telefon: +90 (212) 455 57 00 / 15900
e-mail: litera@istanbul.edu.tr
<http://litera.istanbul.edu.tr>

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The Wife of Bath's Sexual Poetics and Politics of Food and Drink

Oya BAYILTIŞ ÖĞÜTCÜ¹ 



¹Associate Professor, Adıyaman University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Department of English Language and Literature, Adıyaman, Türkiye

ORCID: O.B.Ö. 0000-0002-3312-956X

Corresponding author:

Oya BAYILTIŞ ÖĞÜTCÜ,
Adıyaman University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Department of English Language and Literature, Adıyaman, Türkiye
E-mail: oyabayiltmis@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

In contrast to the predominant misogynistic discourse of medieval English society, Chaucer's *Wife of Bath* in *The Canterbury Tales* is renowned for her arguments in favor of sexuality and female authority, which depicts her as a woman who was years ahead of her time. Chaucer uses food and drink imagery to have the *Wife of Bath* contest the patriarchal impositions on sexuality in the prologue to "The Wife of Bath's Tale". Accordingly, this article aims to analyze how the *Wife of Bath* makes use of this imagery, which forms her sexual poetics and politics, in order to subvert the Nurturing Mother image. Therefore, this article will, in the first part, analyze the *Wife of Bath's* use of food and drink imagery through a discussion of how Chaucer undermines the social and religious implications to encode the *Wife of Bath's* arguments for sexuality. In the second part, based on the *Wife's* use of such imagery, Chaucer's presentation of the *Wife of Bath* as a sexual nurturer will be analyzed as a reflection of her subversion of the Nurturing Mother image. Hence, the article aims to contribute to the discussions on the gendered conception of food, food production, and food consumption in the Middle Ages.

Keywords: Chaucer, The Wife of Bath, Sexuality, Food and Drink Imagery, Nurturing Mother

Introduction

Apart from having been regarded as material and symbolic means to display people's socio-economic statuses and religious practices, food and drink have also been associated with female sexuality via the consumption metaphor.¹ In Chaucer's "Prologue to the *Wife of Bath's Tale*," this association is shaped and reflected by the food and drink references presented throughout the text. Through the consumption metaphor, Chaucer establishes the *Wife of Bath's* "feminine poetics" (Cox, 1997, p. 19) to contest the material

1 See, for instance, W. W. Allman and Dorrell Thomas Hanks's "Rough Love: Notes Toward an Erotics of the *Canterbury Tales*" (2003, pp. 55-56) for a study of the use of consumption as a metaphor for female sexuality in *The Reeve's Tale* and the "Prologue of the *Wife of Bath's Tale*".



and discursive limitations placed on the female body at the time, through “material-discursive” (Barad, 2007, p. 153) food and drink references. Following Karen Barad’s assertion of the “ontological inseparability” of the material and the discursive because of their “intra-action” and “entanglement,” the term “material-discursive” will be used rather than using “material” and “discursive” as distinctive terms throughout the article (2007, p. 128). The references to food and drink are material-discursive practices which contribute to the Wife of Bath’s arguments for female sexuality, not only materially, but also discursively. The arguments for female sexuality are conveyed through the use of food and drink references which manipulate the signification process of the Wife of Bath’s listeners in the fictional world of the Canterbury pilgrimage (the Canterbury pilgrims) and her medieval and modern readers.² Thus, the Wife’s body, associated with food and drink, exemplifies the semantic power³ of the female body. The female body represented as food and drink highlights “the *possibilities* provided by fleshliness” (Bynum, 1987, p. 6), which paves the way for Chaucer to mold the Wife’s poetics and politics to delineate a female sexuality which was subversive to the patriarchal discourse of gender at the time.

I claim that Chaucer’s food and drink references in the Wife’s “Prologue” are material-discursive practices which constitute the Wife’s poetics and politics of food and drink and unveil her view of female sexuality. Food and drink, thus, register as significant images for secular women in the Middle Ages, as exemplified by Chaucer’s Wife of Bath and also within the writings of religious women, as argued by Caroline Walker Bynum in her *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (1987). Therefore, following Bynum’s arguments regarding how food mattered for medieval women, drawing upon the social and religious significance of food, an analysis of food and drink references in the “Prologue of the Wife of Bath’s Tale” will contribute to the discussions regarding the gendered poetics of Chaucer. This was also argued by Carolyn Dinshaw in her seminal work, *Chaucer’s Sexual Poetics* (1989), where she explicates how the Wife speaks for feminine desire and sexuality.

Accordingly, the sexual poetics and politics of food and drink in the “Prologue of the Wife of Bath’s Tale” will be analyzed across two sections within the present study. In the first part, I will explicate the use of food and drink references in the Wife’s “Prologue” to display how they evoke not only the materiality of food and drink, but also the

2 Cox defines this as a reflection of “polysemy” and “figurative multiplicity” (1997, p. 30).

3 Gail Weiss defines this power as “semantic impertinence” (2003, p. 32).

discursive traditions about such materiality, to challenge these material-discursive traditions via the Wife's own ends. Based on the Wife's use of food and drink imagery, I will propound in the second part how Chaucer enables the Wife to contest the Nurturing Mother image by exposing her as the sexual nurturer of her husbands. These two parts will reveal the Wife's sexual poetics and politics regarding food and drink. I will discuss the significant space and place of food and drink references in the Wife of Bath's arguments for sexuality, as well as her subversion of the misogynist society in general and the exegetical/clerical authorities in particular. Then, I will elucidate how Chaucer utilizes food and drink to disseminate the Wife's arguments for sexuality by associating the female (and in one instance, the male) body with food and drink.

Chaucer introduces the Wife's use of food and drink for the development of her discourse about sexuality with a seed metaphor (III (D) 71-76).⁴ Contending the necessity of marriage, the Wife says, "And certes, if ther were no seed ysowe, / Virginitee, thanne wherof sholde it growe?" (III (D) 71-72). Chaucer's handling of this metaphor of sowing seeds enhances the sexual overtones in the Wife's argument, as she compares the female body with land that is waiting for the male seed to grow. In other words, seeds are the first example of food metaphors the Wife uses to develop her understanding of sexuality. Through this metaphor, which was incorporated into the context of the Wife's emphasizing the necessity of marriage, Chaucer establishes the almost essential sacrificial sowing of some seeds (women to marry) to propagate some other seeds (women to remain virgin). The Wife alludes to how "unsown seed represents unused" and thus "wasted potential," in contrast to the multiplication commanded by God (Cox, 1997, p. 30).⁵ Hence, the Wife does not care much about the wasted, that is, the seeds which are not sown: "The dart is set up for virginitee; / Cacche whoso may, who renneth best lat see" (III (D) 75-76). Rather, to flaunt how she has chosen to not waste her potential for procreation and sexuality, or metaphorically speaking, how she is ready to be sown, the Wife employs food and drink references⁶ to reject the material-discursive limitations on the female body and sexuality.

4 All the references to Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* will be taken from *The Riverside Chaucer* (2008), 3rd ed., Larry Benson (ed.), (Oxford: Oxford University Press). The references will indicate the relative fragment and line numbers.

5 See also the Wife of Bath's arguments against virginity (III (D) 26-29).

6 It is interesting to note that the Wife does not refer to any children in her prologue, which might imply her being a childless wife. Still, she takes advantage of the argument for procreation to speak about sexuality.

The Wife of Bath's Use of Sexualized Food Imagery

Food has long been a means to convey religious messages, as in the cases of feasting and fasting, as well as being a basic human need and of nutritional significance. Additionally, religion brings with it miscellaneous repercussions of food on human life as demonstrated, especially in the Fall and the Eucharist.⁷ Eve is the cause of the fall of man for eating the forbidden fruit (Genesis 1-3). Furthermore, God becomes food in the Eucharist. Similarly, Caroline Walker Bynum states that “[f]ood was a multifaceted symbol in medieval spirituality” (1987, p. 250). This multi-layered interpretation of food in medieval culture is similar to Roland Barthes’s consideration of food as “a system of communication, a body of images, a protocol of usages, situations, and behavior” since “food serves as a sign not only for themes but also for situations,” as in the case of the Eucharist (2013, pp. 24, 28). Situated in this religious context, food imagery also helps construct binaries and thus “social groupings” (Anderson, 2005, p. 109), such as the moral, the reconstructive, the revitalizing (Jesus), the immoral, the destructive, and the deadly (Eve). Food is thus used as a means of material and discursive communication through the symbolic connotations the imagery evokes.

Accordingly, the Wife’s food imagery evokes not only the material significance of food, but also the discursive traditions regarding food. Actually, throughout her “Prologue,” the Wife of Bath has several food-related references, some of which do not have direct sexual connotations. For instance, she reveals her interest in feasts by going “[t]o vigilies and to processions” to look for her fortune (III (D) 556) and through her demand from her husband for “a feeste” (III (D) 297) on her birthday. In another case, while revealing her personal secrets which allowed her to manipulate her old husbands, she chooses the adjective “sweete spiced” to describe their “conscience” (III (D) 435). Likewise, while talking about how she arouses anger and jealousy in her fourth husband, she states that “in his owene grece I made hym frye / For angre, and for verray jalousie” (III (D) 487-488). Evidently, food-related adjectives (“sweet spiced”), idioms (“fry in his grace”), events (vigils and feasts), and significations (“fruits”) become means for the Wife’s display of her interest in food. It is for this reason that although it is not a direct food reference, the Wife’s reference to “flesh” also immediately evokes food. The Wife declares her husband as her “detour” and “thral” (III (D) 155) who shall “have his tribulacion withal / Upon his flessch, whil that I am his wyf” (III (D) 156-157). A similar connotation

7 See Angel F. Méndez Montoya’s *Theology of Food* (2009, pp. 77-156).

is also implied by the Pardoner in his intervention into the Wife's argument: "I was aboute to wedde a wyf; allas! / What sholde I bye it on my flesh so deere? / Yet hadde I levere wedde no wyf to-yeere!" (III (D) 166-168). In both cases, the use of "flesh" refers to the male body. Yet, considering that flesh also evokes "meat," the uses of "flesh" by both the Wife and the Pardoner when referring to the male body do not seem coincidental, or at least innocent, drawing attention to its physicality and materiality. However, built upon the sowing of seeds metaphor, there are several food images, including bread, bacon, flour, and bran, used by Chaucer to enable the Wife to advocate for sexuality, which recalls the religious significance of food in medieval culture.

Beginning with the bread imagery, employed to present the material-discursive difference between married women and virgins, the Wife uses bread as "a sexual metaphor for the comparison" (Wilson & Makowski, 1990, p. 155). She depicts the female body as bread through her wheat and barley bread imagery: "Lat hem be breed of pured whete-seed, / And lat us wyves hoten barly-breed" (III (D) 143-144). Through this imagery, Chaucer evokes and re-interprets Jerome's references to wheat bread (virginity), barley bread (marriage), and cow dung (fornication) in *Adversus Jovinianum* 1.7.⁸ The wheat and barley bread imagery becomes functional for the Wife to materialize "the two sexual states" of the female (Hall, 2007, p. 60). She says that virgins might be white wheat bread while married women are brown barley bread. White wheat bread was considered the most nutritious and best type of bread, since it was better for humoral health compared to the darker and coarser barley or rye bread.⁹ In addition to its nutritional value, wheat bread had a great religious significance as well because, according to manuals, wheat bread should be preferred during the Mass rather than

8 See Jill Mann's *Feminizing Chaucer* (2002, p. 59). For a discussion of Jerome's letter to Pammachius, not his *Adversus Jovinianum* (I, 7), as the source of wheat and barley bread imagery, see Katharina Wilson's "Chaucer and St. Jerome: The Use of 'Barley' in the *Wife of Bath's Prologue*" (1985, pp. 245-251). Warren S. Smith (1997) also traces the origins of the Wife of Bath's barley bread imagery to Jerome's letters and his citing Ambrose's *De Viduis*. According to Jerome, Ambrose, and the Wife of Bath (Chaucer), barley bread was the metaphor for marriage, which was allowed by exegetical authorities for those who were not capable of staying virgin for the sake of preventing their perpetration of bigger sins, such as fornication. Thus, Christ's distributing barley bread to many a man (John 6:9) can be interpreted as a reflection of His permission for marriage. See Warren S. Smith's "The Wife of Bath Debates Jerome" (1997, p. 140).

9 See Melitta Weiss Adamson's *Food in Medieval Times* (2004, pp. 1-14, 227); J. C. Drummond and Anne Wilbraham's *The Englishman's Food: A History of Five Centuries of English Food* (1991, p. 74); Kate Colquhoun's *Taste: The History of Britain through its Cooking* (2007, p. 49); Maggie Black's "Medieval Britain" (1993, p. 98).

darker and coarser barley bread.¹⁰ However, wheat bread was expensive at the time and could only be consumed by those with the means to afford it (Adamson, 2004, p. 91). Accordingly, the economic, social, and religious differences between wheat and barley bread become the means for the Wife of Bath to subvert the dominant patriarchal discourse on female sexuality by undermining the difference in the social and religious significance attributed to virgins against married women. The Wife accepts, as a married woman, the superior position of the virgins in the binary opposition, exposing and utilizing the material-discursive discrepancy between wheat and barley bread.

Chaucer fuses the material distinction between the two types of bread (wheat and barley) with their discursive distinctness in religion and sex. Despite being a false reference to Mark (which should have been John 6:9), there are two remarkable aspects of this subversion. Firstly, the Wife subverts the Eucharistic ideals. Secondly, the Wife presents herself, a married woman, as the distributor of barley bread (her sexually experienced body) to many men (her husbands, with the emphasis on the *quantity* being crucial). The Wife claims the authority and expertise to convey the clerical discourse, which “underscore[s] the gender of official speaker” (Hansen, 1998, pp. 29-31). She offers herself as a refresher providing “both spiritual and bodily comfort,” which can also be defined as “transubstantiating women” (Allman and Hanks, 2003, p. 55). The Wife says that “[a]nd yet with barly-breed, Mark telle kan, / Oure Lorde Jhesu refreshed many a man” (III (D) 145-146). Hence, apart from presenting the female body as food to be consumed by men, the Wife’s bread imagery also draws attention to her subversion of Eucharistic ideals and Transubstantiation.¹¹ Her consumption image reminds the reader of the Eucharist, which depicts the bread, the transformed body of Christ, as food which would feed the congregation, not only physically, but also spiritually. The bread, credited as Christ’s body, signifies an “edible and visible” Christ (Adamson, 2004, p. 184). This manifests the religious significance attributed to bread, in that, the “edible”

10 See Miri Rubin’s “Popular Attitudes to the Eucharist” (2012, p. 453). Peasants were able to afford cheaper, darker, and less nutritional barley or rye bread, see C. Anne Wilson’s *Food and Drink in Britain from the Stone Age to Recent Times* (1973, p. 215). Barley bread was used as a trencher, and in poor houses, it was also eaten after dinner (Adamson, 2004, p. 2; Wilson, 1973, 219; Black, 1993, p. 99). As David E. Sutton states, this is in accordance with the idea that the type of food one eats signifies “food as a source and marker of social distinction” (2010, p. 213).

11 For the “eucharistic overtones,” see Thomas A. Van’s “False Texts and Disappearing Women in the *Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale*” (1994, p. 181). The doctrine of Transubstantiation announced at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 that the body of Christ turned into bread, and his blood into wine, and the true followers of Christ should participate in consecration annually by eating bread and drinking wine (Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:25 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-29). Also see Adamson (2004, p. 184); Gary Macy’s “Theology of the Eucharist in the High Middle Ages” (2012, pp. 365-398).

Christ is the embodiment of the “edible” God that is transformed into bread. Therefore, by sharing bread with his congregation, a priest endows the congregation with “the chance to eat God” (Rubin, 2012, p. 458). Hence, *eating* Christ/God in the Holy Communion suggests “[b]ecoming part of and entering into the body of Christ as world, being entered and incorporated by the unique and universal body that is given for all, is captured and accomplished in the act of eating and drinking the Eucharistic body and blood of Christ” (Davies, 2004, p. 161). The Wife transforms bread from representing the body of Christ into bread that represents the female body. Accordingly, the material-discursive barley bread in the Eucharist is transformed into the barley-bread body of married women and also requires the transformation of the associated religious connotations to sexual connotations.

Eliciting the material-discursive religious associations of barley bread, Chaucer also contests the authority of the priest in the Mass. He uses the Wife to target the subconscious of the male audience in the Canterbury pilgrimage group, and also of her husbands in particular and the male in general. She subverts the religious connotations of the bread as the body of Christ/God and offers the female body as bread. On the one hand, Chaucer thus fashions the female body as Eucharistic bread. The Wife of Bath imitates Transubstantiation and depicts the female body as food for her husbands as Christ offers His body as bread to the congregation. On the other hand, Chaucer fashions the Wife of Bath as a priest offering *her bread to her congregation*. In the unification with God through eating bread (and drinking wine), the priest was of great significance because only a properly ordained priest could perform this rite during Mass, which contributed to the power of priests in the Middle Ages (Macy, 2012, pp. 365-370; Rubin, 2012, p. 458; Counihan & Kaplan, 1998, p. 5). In her subversion, the Wife of Bath claims to be a proper expert and authority in sexual affairs, which she has attained through several marriages (III (D) 1). Through her expertise, she unveils “the feminized sexuality of food” or “feminized sexualization of food” (Henry, 1992, p. 257). The Wife of Bath distributes her body-food to her husband-congregation in the sexual communion and, hence, attributes a central position to the female body that is contrary to the misogynist tradition.¹²

Moreover, the Wife of Bath takes the bread imagery of the Eucharist one step further and transforms the religious connotations into sexual connotations. As Caroline Walker Bynum indicates, “[c]ommunion was consuming, i.e., becoming a God who saves

12 Hence, Alastair Minnis refers to the Wife’s use of barley bread imagery as a reflection of her thinking “of the *auctoritee* out of context” (2008, p. 256).

through physical, human agony" and thus "to eat is to join with food – and God is food, which is flesh, which is suffering, which is salvation" (1987, p. 250). In the Eucharist, "[t]o eat was to consume, to take in, to become God" (Bynum, 1987, p. 250). The Wife of Bath adjusts this spiritual transformation to a sexual context through her bread imagery, and "the [E]ucharist as suffering and bleeding flesh" (Bynum, 1987, p. 252) is thus totally transformed into sensuality. Her husbands, who eat the Wife's body as food in their sexual communion, are *becoming* the Wife by taking in her body-food. She is almost penetrating them. According to the Wife, only married women can *achieve* this. In other words, only married women can be sexually transubstantiated as barley bread to be distributed to and eaten by men. She is there to sexually nourish her husbands; yet, she intends to provide more than refreshment. She states that her husbands will have "that" both in the morning and the evening, which turns out to be a "forced" reception for the husbands through "an erotization of the Pauline marriage debt that [...] imagines agency as a fearsome means of erotic control" (Allman and Hanks, 2003, p. 55). The Wife appears to be keen on transforming her husband-congregation and making them consume her bread-body in their sexual communion both day and night.

The multiplication process of the barley bread is also of great significance because the process found in the Bible is now proclaimed by the Wife to refer to the multiplication of sexual desire in (un)married life. At first, the assumption is that this might be associated with procreation in marriage, which has already been advocated by the Wife of Bath (III (D) 26-29). However, she does not refer to any children that she has *produced* in her marriages. The Wife says that she "wol bistowe the flour of al myn age / In the actes and in fruyt of marriage" (III (D) 113-114). The "fruits" of marriage refer, within the context of the Wife's arguments for married sexuality, not specifically to children but to sexuality. However, she cannot pick the desired fruits. She felt deep disappointment because she was married to three old men when she was young, and to young men when she was older. Still, it appears that instead of children, her marriages and desires multiply. As a woman who has married, or metaphorically speaking *eaten up*, five husbands and is now waiting for, or *hungry for*, the sixth one, the Wife of Bath refers not to the augmentation of spirituality, but to the boosting of female sexuality. Accordingly, her multiplying barley-bread-body can be regarded as the manifestation of the multiplication of her sexual desires and corporeal pleasures.

Hence, although the Wife of Bath likens both virgins and married women to bread, Chaucer encodes the message that wheat bread (virgins) could be eaten less despite

their superior economic, social, and religious status, as reflected in the wheat bread of the Mass, while barley bread (married women) could be eaten more owing to their *availability* to greater numbers of people as the cheaper type of bread. In this respect, wheat bread-virgins are not available for the *feeding of many* men. Additionally, even if wheat bread was preferred in the Mass, it was not with wheat bread, but with barley bread, that Christ fed thousands of men, which justifies, according to the Wife's perspective, the value of married women. Although she accepts the superiority of virgins, the Wife of Bath still emphasizes the utility of married women for more men (III (D) 146).

To depict the Wife's disregard for such superiority of the virgins, Chaucer also regulates the linguistic choice in the Wife's bread metaphor. The Wife notes "[l]at hem be" (III (D) 143) while referring to white wheat bread virgins, implying her disregard for and disinterest in them. Yet, she states "lat us wyves hoten" (III (D) 144) while referring to barley bread-married women through which she accents the external forces that put "a duff label" (Davis, 2012, p. 68)¹³ on married women due to their sexual status. Virgins are regarded to *be* the superior seed, with married women being *called* inferior compared to them. Yet, in the Wife's argument, the seeds of virgins are in vain since they can neither refresh "many a man" nor procreate, as the seeds of married women can. This can also be regarded as the Wife's justification for why she has chosen St. Paul's advice that it is better to marry than to burn (III (D) 52; 1 Corinthians 7:20).

Through bacon imagery, Chaucer also allows the Wife to benefit from material-discursive food imagery in her sexual discourse. Unlike her other examples of food imagery, such as bread or flour, that only signify the female body, bacon is the symbol of both the male and the female body. In the first case, bacon is the metaphor for the old and aged female body. Since she married her three old husbands while her body was young, the Wife foregrounds that her husbands were not served bacon in the way other men were served in Essex:

I sette hem so a-werke, by my fey,
That many a nyght they songen 'Weilawaye!'
The bacon was nat fet for hem, I trowe,
That som men han in Essex at Dunmowe. (III (D) 215-218)

13 Beryl Rowland also argues that "hoten" might allude to "heat" as well, in which case, the Wife's argument becomes "let us wives heat [bake] barley bread," signaling a reference to "Priapic" barley bread as "a kind of erotic necromancy which, according to the Church, merited a two-year punishment 'per legito mas ferias' (1972, p. 202).

In the second case, bacon is the metaphor for “old meat, aged and dry” (Cox, 1997, p. 22), allowing her to represent the bodies of her three old husbands through her dislike of bacon: “For wynnynge wolde I al his lust endure, / And make me a feyned appetit; / And yet in bacon hadde I nevere delit” (III (D) 416-418). Bacon, thus, stands for both the male and the female body. In the first case, bacon, representing the body of an old woman, becomes a counter-image of the Wife's young and fresh body. In the second case, bacon, representing the body of an old man, becomes the “food” served to the Wife by her husbands, which signals their failure in appeasing the Wife's sexual hunger. Her old husbands can hardly pay their marriage debt to her young and fresh body (III (D) 197-202). Because of the then tasteless condition of her husbands' bodies which contrasted her young body, the Wife had to perform “a feyned appetit” (III (D) 417), which refers to the agency of the Wife's body that is enhanced by her performance of feigning. The performance of a feigned appetite empowers the Wife against the discourse of the “phallic power” (Straus, 1988, p. 537). In this performance, the Wife undertakes the role of the active participant in sexual intercourse, although her husbands do not recognize this. She pretends that her husbands are potent, as imposed by the misogynist patriarchal tradition. Hence, the Wife unveils the potential failings of the phallic discourse, which is enhanced by the bacon imagery. She *appears* to be aroused by her old husbands' bodies, for which she has no interest or sexual appetite. As Cox states, “language is the medium of eros for her, and the excitement she does not find in active sexuality as she finds in language, its substitute. The Wife participates in an erotization of the letter, for the erotic sense of language holds for the Wife far greater appeal than does participation in the activities to which the language refers” (1997, p. 22). She satisfies herself linguistically since she does not have the means to satisfy herself sexually, not only because of the physical limitations of her husbands' bodies, but also because of the patriarchal and misogynist limitations on her body (Cox, 1997, p.22).¹⁴ Accordingly, appetite here also refers to the sexual appetite that governs the Wife.¹⁵ She follows her appetite with no discretion (Pugh, 2003, p. 127):

14 Hence, Cox associates the Wife's textual pleasure with *jouissance* and argues that “she imposes connotations not only according to her pleasure but *for* her pleasure as well.” Therefore, emphasizing the importance of her appetite, “the Wife calls attention to her desire as a desire to consume, be it sexually, textually, or otherwise. In effect, as she “glosses” she consumes both partners and texts, appropriating them for her own use and deriving from them whatever satisfaction she can find” (Cox, 1997, p. 23).

15 This is defined as a reflection of “her egalitarian nature in the pursuit of men” which “is specifically directed to white sexual agency” (Pugh, 2003, p. 127).

I ne loved nevere by no discrecioun,
 But evere folwede myn appetit,
 Al were he short, or long, or blak, or whit;
 I took no kep, so that he liked me,
 How poore he was, ne eek of what degree. (III (D) 622-626)

Governed by her sexual appetite, which was not pleased with the “bacon” served, the Wife turns to mill and grinding imagery to emphasize her domestic authority: “Whoso that first to mille comth, first grynt; / I pleyned first, so was oure werre ystynt” (III (D) 389-390). Although she first employs this imagery while referring to how she has manipulated her old husbands by beginning to complain, the mill is traditionally associated with woman, the miller with man, and grinding with sexual intercourse (Rowland, 1965, p. 21). This association can be related to the Wife’s declaration of “her acceptance of the promptest lover” (Rowland, 1965, p. 23) and her readiness for “grinding.” Hence, the mill and grinding imagery, used within the context of domestic authority, also adds to the Wife’s use of food imagery within the context of sexual authority.

Another food imagery discloses how the Wife misses this sexual authority when she gets older. She presents her old female body as bran: “The flour is goon; ther is namoore to telle; / The bren, as I best kan, now moste I selle; / But yet to be right myrie wol I fonde” (III (D) 477-479). The Wife argues that as she ages, the flour (youth, young body, beauty) is gone and she has only bran (old age, aged body, material gain). By “[m]erchandizing her sexual favors” (Oberembt, 1976, p. 292), the Wife presents herself selling her “*bele chose*” (III (D) 447, emphasis original). As well as reflecting the mercantile tone of selling her “*bele chose*,” which “depicts conjugal sexuality as part of the wider market economy” (Desmond, 2006, p. 128),¹⁶ these lines also contribute to the Wife’s sexual poetics and politics of food imagery and her arguments for sexuality. While her mercantile attitude underlines the difference between flour and bran, the use of flour and bran imagery also helps the Wife to represent her body as food in both cases. Either as flour or as bran, her body is there to be consumed by men.

In this consumption process, confronting the groaning of her husbands which reflects their desire to have control over her body, the Wife’s reference to the role of the “tooth” is also remarkable:

16 Dinshaw argues that declaring “al is for to selle” (III (D) 414), the Wife “assumes her position as a female in the marketplace” (1989, p. 118.) For widows in the medieval marriage market, see Barbara A. Hanawalt’s *The Wealth of Wives* (2007, pp. 104-111). For the Wife’s “sexual economy in marriage,” see Paul Strohm’s *Hochon’s Arrow* (1992, p. 141).

And sith a man is moore resonable
 Than womman is, ye moste been suffrable.
 What eyleth yow to grucche thus and grone?
 Is it for ye wolde have my queynte allone?
 Wy, taak it al! Lo, have it every deel!
 Peter! I shrewe yow, but ye love it weel;
 For if I wolde selle my *bele chose*,
 I koude walke as fressh as is a rose;
 But I wol kepe it for youre owene tooth. (III (D) 441-449)

The “tooth” of her husbands, for which her “*bele chose*” is spared, signals the consumption process of the Wife’s body as food. Without explicitly referring to the mouth, the Wife implies the central position of her husbands’ mouths as the starting point through which she enters the body of her husbands. Transgressing the physical and sexual impositions of the misogynist society, food imagery, hence, provides the Wife with both the material and discursive means to undermine those impositions on the female body and sexuality. Thus, food imagery should not be regarded as a means to present the Wife of Bath as a product of misogynistic discourse through the depiction of how her body is consumed in the transactions of the market economy of marriage. It rather endows her with the means to speak against that misogynistic discourse by the use of its own means.

The Wife of Bath’s Use of Sexualized Drink Imagery

The Wife also employs material-discursive drink imagery in her “Prologue.” As in the case of the asexual food references, there are some asexual drink-related references as well. For instance, the Wife says she will tell her tale and tell the truth as if she has drunk wine or ale (III (D) 193-195). While talking about her three old husbands and revealing her secrets of manipulating them, she accuses them of coming to the house “as dronken as a mous” (III (D) 246) and she reveals their accusations of her “in hir dronkenesse” (III (D) 381). As Theresa Tinkle states, “[t]he simile makes the men irrational rodents, subject to their own sensuality—as unruly as the wife they seek to control” (2010, p. 41). The reference to drunkenness, thus, helps the Wife draw a parallelism between men and women, directing men’s accusation of uncontrollability of women towards them. In short, as in the case of food-related references, drink references (wine and ale) and drink-related comparisons (“drunken as a mouse”) display the Wife’s interest in drink.

However, the Wife of Bath employs drink imagery to argue for sexuality as well. For instance, when she is interrupted by the Pardoner in her “Prologue,” she presents her body as “tonne” to drink from:

“Abyde!” quod she, “my tale is nat bigonne.
 Nay, thou shalt drynken of another tonne,
 Er that I go, shal savoure wors than ale.
 And whan that I have toold thee forth my tale
 Of tribulacion in mariage,
 Of which I am expert in al myn age –
 This is to seyn, myself have been the whippe –
 Than maystow chese wheither thou wolt sippe
 Of thilke tonne that I shal abroche.
 Be war of it, er thou to ny approche;
 For I shal telle ensamples mo than ten. [...]” (III (D) 169-179)

The “tonne” suggests largess and excess. Her barrel (body) is full of ale (her tale of suffering in her marriages). She lets her audience choose whether they would like to “sippe” from the same “tonne” that she will “abroche.” Although she associates her sufferings with ale, which makes ale imagery asexual as it is used outside the context of sexuality, the ale is, metaphorically speaking, to be drunk from her body. Her body, hence, stands out like a fountain to refresh the thirsty. The verb “abroche,” thus, also bears sexual overtones, signaling the Wife’s agency in performing her desire and courage. Following the depiction of her large body in the “General Prologue,” “her large hips, bold face, and gap teeth [which] also recall the carnival body’s excess and openness” (Crane, 1994, p. 129), the Wife enhances the image of largess with her barrel imagery, underlining her corporeality. The ale imagery endows the Wife with the means to offer her body as drink, ready to be drunk by the Canterbury pilgrims and also by the medieval and modern readers who read her “Prologue.”

Wine is the next image used by the Wife to represent sexuality. While talking about her fourth husband, the Wife indicates that she can sing and dance when she drinks a draught of wine (III (D) 457-459). Referring to the Bible and Ovid regarding women who drink wine, she confronts her listeners, saying:

[a]nd after wyn on Venus moste I thynke,
 For al so siker as cold engendreth hayl,

A likerous mouth moste han a likerous tayl.
 In women vinolent is no defence –
 This knowen lecchours by experience. (III (D) 464-468)

As Fleming puts it, she nearly unveils herself as a “thirst expert” (qtd in Blamires, 2006, p. 145). She knows how to appease both her own thirst and the thirst of her husbands. Since she associates drinking wine with ease, a “likerous” mouth, and “tayl,” the expertise she references can relate to her know-how of appeasing sexual thirst. Furthermore, as Cox notes, the fact that the Wife puts “likerous mouth” and “likerous tayl” in the same line can be regarded as a signal of the association between eating/drinking and “licking,” since “the mouth is the point of intake for excesses of food and drink, and it is a vehicle for her excess of words, most of which are associated with her ‘tayl’” (1997, p. 25). Accordingly, the mouth, together with the tongue, stands out as an instrument for not only the consumption of food and drink, but also sexual and textual consumption (Cox, 1997, p. 25). The drink imagery found in the “Prologue of the Wife of Bath’s Tale” adds to the food imagery the Wife employed, revealing that she contests the material-discursive food and drink imagery by representing herself as food and drink for men. In this way, Chaucer uses the Wife of Bath to transform the socio-economic and religious significance of food and drink into a sexual significance, by the Wife disclosing that she is a provider of food and drink and that her body is food and drink to be consumed by her husbands and other men.

Moreover, Chaucer allows the Wife to act as a provider of food and drink for the males in the tale, which stands out as a reflection of the gendered food practices in the Middle Ages. As Caroline Walker Bynum argues, throughout the Middle Ages, there was a prevalent gendered association of certain food practices with men/women during the period. In terms of men, the monastic tradition and satire associated gluttony with food as symbols of men. On the other hand, miracles related to food, food abstinence, food provision through religious motivation (such as the distribution of food to the poor), and the Eucharistic feeding were associated with women (Bynum, 1987, pp. 79-87). Accordingly, food provision and feeding became the means of establishing a space specific to women. Furthermore, Bynum notes that “[w]omen’s bodies, in the acts of lactation and of giving birth, were analogous both to ordinary food and to the body of Christ, as it died on the cross and gave birth to salvation” (1987, p. 30).¹⁷ In sum,

17 Bynum also regards lactation as “a food practice” (1987, p.75). Additionally, the bodies of women are food also during pregnancy feeding the fetus.

as Bynum states, “food equals [female] body” (1987, 251).¹⁸ Hence, food became a means for religious women to manipulate the gender dichotomy and become closer to God/Christ by presenting themselves as food providers in the Middle Ages (Bynum, 1987, p. 296). Yet, Chaucer’s *Wife of Bath* reveals that food was also significant for secular women in speaking against the misogynistic discourse of the era.

Furthermore, as Counihan and Kaplan express, “the exchange of food is a most profound way of making social connection” (1998, p. 3), which conjures images of the charity of Christ as a nurturing figure as well. Medieval iconography represents Christ as a preparer, distributor, and server of food (Bynum, 1987, p. 285). In other words, he nurtured his followers, both physically and spiritually. Therefore, the religious significance of food that was customary in medieval culture, and was repeatedly illustrated in the writings of/on religious women, provided women of the time with the means to deconstruct the gender hierarchy and distinctions of social status. It is this religious significance of food and drink that is subverted by the *Wife* to speak against the misogynistic discourse and to present herself as an authority on the matters of sexuality.

Evoking and Subverting the Nurturing Mother Image

The concept of nurturing in the image of God/Christ also evokes the image of the Nurturing Mother.¹⁹ This image of the Nurturing Mother was dominant in medieval iconography, as exemplified by the lactating Virgin and the allegorical figures, Charity and Ecclesia, as “nursing mother[s]” (Bynum, 1987, p. 270). As Caroline Walker Bynum states, “[w]oman was food because breast milk was the human being’s first nourishment – the one food essential for survival” and this required “a new acceptance of [the female] body” as the source of life (1987, pp. 269-270, 254). Subverting the religious and domestic connotations of the Nurturing Mother image, the *Wife of Bath* stands out as a subverted nurturing figure exhibiting a very big difference: the religious context of the nursing Mary, or nursing Charity, and the domestic context of a nursing mother, are transformed by Chaucer’s sexual depiction of the *Wife*, who stands out as a *nursing wife*. The *Wife* subverts the images of the multiplying bread and God’s body as bread, which is not only “something familiar and simple” but also “domestic” (Rubin, 2012, p. 457). She takes the domestic imagery one step further and presents herself as *the* nurturer of her

18 Furthermore, “[i]t is a fact cross-culturally that food is particularly a woman-controlled resource. In the majority of cultures, food preparation is a woman’s role” (Bynum, 1987, pp. 189-190).

19 See Rubin (2012, pp. 465-467).

husbands. This nurturing can be defined as sexual nurturing and the Wife of Bath's challenge, "[i]n wyfhod I wol use myn instrument / As frely as my Makere hath it sent" (III (D) 149-150), can be seen as the manifestation of how she will nurture her husbands (and maybe other men), which is functional in disclosing her sexual charity.

Accordingly, based on the metaphor of consumption and its sexual overtones, imagery of food and drink enables Chaucer, through the Wife, to both evoke and contest the Nurturing Mother image. Her barley bread-body feeds "many a man" (III (D) 146), her mill-body is set for being ground by men, and her flour and bran-body is ready to serve men. Her ale-body is to be drunk by men. Although her appetite is not triggered by her husbands' old bodies, as revealed by her bacon imagery, she succeeds in triggering the appetite of both the husbands she married at the church and many other men. As a nurturing figure, she offers her body as food and drink to be consumed by her husbands. The Wife of Bath's subversion of the Nurturing Mother image might, at first, be regarded as the objectification of her body, since she compares her body with something to be eaten or drunk by men. However, if this objectification of her body is linked with her material-discursive food and drink imagery and associated with social and religious connotations (for instance, the influence of the bread of the Eucharist on society), the Wife's main concern appears to be to influence her husbands.

The Wife of Bath, as a subverted nurturing mother, who evokes the charity of Jesus, Mary, and other miraculous charitable saints, such as St. Elizabeth who was famous for distributing food to the poor, reveals, as McGowan asserts, that "food is always a matter of production, distribution, and exchange and hence of power" (1999, p. 1). Thus, even though she states that "I nam nat precius" (III (D) 148) like wheat bread, the Wife willingly distributes whatever *food* and *drink* she has. As a result, while Bourdieu argues that "the body is the most indisputable materialization of class tastes" (1984, p. 190), Chaucer displays through the Wife that the body is also the materialization of sexual tastes which are experienced by "her much-married" body (Weil, 1995, p. 31). Accordingly, remembering what Michel Foucault argues about the transformation of sex into discourse in the Middle Ages under asceticism and monasticism (1990, p. 20), it would not be wrong to claim that Chaucer establishes the Wife of Bath's discourse of sexuality by presenting "women as sexual 'food'" and drink (Henry, 1992, p. 257). Hence, what multiplies as a reflection of the Wife of Bath's charity in her marriages is not children, which would have been very decent according to the impositions of the patriarchal and misogynist society, but her sexuality, which gives her an authority on the matter.

Moreover, the Biblical passage John 6:9 evoked by her bread imagery does not refer to any female among the 5,000 people who were fed with barley bread, but as the Wife of Bath also notes, refers to “many a man” (III (D) 146). This sounds controversial because, as a woman speaking for female sexual liberation, the Wife appears to be incapable of avoiding the patriarchal notion of consumption by presenting her body as something to be eaten and drunk. However, this consumption provides the Wife of Bath with control over her husbands through sexual consumption experience, which signals the intrusion of sensuality into spirituality. As Mikhail Bakhtin indicates, in the process of eating

the body transgresses [...] its own limits: it swallows, devours, rends the world apart, is enriched and grows at the world’s expense. The encounter of man with the world, which takes place inside the open, biting, rending, chewing mouth, is one of the most ancient, and most important objects of human thought and imagery. (1984, p. 281)

Similarly, the Wife of Bath draws attention to the encounter of men with women by presenting herself as a subverted version of the “Nurturing Mother” and by likening the female body to food and drink to be consumed by men. The consumption process is also noteworthy since it is supposed to refer to being eaten up or drunk, which means a sort of death for the thing being eaten or drunk. The eaten food or swallowed drink *dies* to refresh the stomachs of men. Therefore, the female body, metaphorically presented as food and drink to be consumed by men, can be analogized to “dead” food and drink, whose function is to satisfy the *hunger* and *thirst* of men.

Not disregarding that “[c]onsumption is a traditional figure for female sexuality” (Allman and Hanks, 2003, p. 55), Chaucer allows the Wife of Bath to sustain her “auctoritee” (III (D) 1) in not only the domestic sphere of marriage, but also in the public, sexual, and textual sphere by using the dominant social and religious discourse on food and drink. By *eating and drinking* the Wife of Bath in sexual intercourse, her husbands will appease their hunger and thirst and meet her as a *sexual* nurturer. Thus, her use of food and drink imagery evokes the idea that “food [and drink can] be thought of as a fuel of eros” (Méndez Montoya, 2009, p. 2). Rather than following the *eros* of religion, which could have been decent for a pilgrimage setting, Chaucer displays that the Wife of Bath is a follower of the *eros* of sexuality. Her body is ready to appease the sexual hunger and thirst of her husbands (and maybe other men). She is like an always-multiplying

barley-bread, ever ready to appease the hunger and thirst of the male. It is this readiness that gives her authority in her marriages as the whip over her husbands, evoking the mounted Aristotle image. Hence, Chaucer constructs a "bodily economy of piercing men and pierced women" in the Wife of Bath's "attempt to construct the erotic" (Allman and Hanks, 2003, p. 59) through the images of food and drink she employs. Just like the multiplying bread, the more she is pierced and swallowed to nurture her husbands, the more she (or her sexuality) multiplies. The Wife of Bath satisfies, justifies, and glorifies her sexual appetite while satisfying the sexual hunger of her husbands. Hence, the subverted Nurturing Mother image helps the Wife develop subversive female sexuality, operating against the patriarchal misogynist discourse.

Conclusion

The Wife of Bath's sexual poetics and politics of food and drink in the imagery she employs consolidates female sexuality, which has been defined as a component of "peripheral sexualities" along with "the sexuality of children, mad men and [...] criminals" (Foucault, 1990, pp. 38-39). The food and drink imagery of the Wife of Bath reveals that "[t]he meaning of food [and drink] is [...] while contingent, not arbitrary but rather highly purposeful" (McGowan, 1999, p. 9), not only in the religious, but also in the secular contexts. Her images of bread, mill, flour, bran, barrel, and ale provide the Wife of Bath with the means to contest the Nurturing Mother image. These images become the reflection of how the Wife of Bath subverts the material-discursive food and drink culture to advocate her sexuality. Her imagery undermines the misogynist discourse on the female body and sexuality, challenging it through the dominant Nurturing Mother image of the time. Her use of food and drink imagery thus becomes not only the materialized reflections of the socio-economic values and religious doctrines revealed in the Biblical context, but also a discourse about the Nurturing Mother image, which discloses the material-discursive female body, and hence, an alternative perspective on the female body.

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The Moral Economy of English Country Houses in Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst" and Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall*

Şebnem DÜZGÜN¹ 



¹Associate Professor, Ankara Science University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of English Translation and Interpretation, Ankara, Türkiye

ORCID: Ş.D. 0000-0002-0467-1018

Corresponding author:

Şebnem DÜZGÜN,
Ankara Science University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Department of English Translation and Interpretation, Ankara, Türkiye
E-mail: duzgunsebnem@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Country estates in early modern England served as significant economic centres for the gentry and nobility, whose wealth was based on agriculture and landownership. However, the country house was idealised in country house poems, which were popular in the early seventeenth century, as a symbol of moral economy based on the paternalistic ethos of feudal society, lauding hospitality, modesty, and simplicity. Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst" (1616) praises the moral economy of old English country houses epitomising feudal values to criticize brutal, dehumanising capitalist enterprises embodied by modern prodigy houses. Although Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall* (1762) is aligned to the principles of early country house poems, it differs from Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst," which has a paternalist discourse, by offering a maternal model of moral economy that is more inclusive and heterogeneous as it includes the disadvantaged groups, like the old and the disabled. Moreover, the feminised moral economy proposed in *Millenium Hall* is more progressive, enabling socio-economic and territorial changes in accordance with high capitalism associated with industrialisation. This study examines Jonson's "To Penshurst" and Scott's *Millenium Hall* to show that although the two works praise the moral economy of country estates, they provide respectively patriarchal and matriarchal versions of moral economy. **Keywords:** "To Penshurst," Sarah Scott, *Millenium Hall*, moral economy, English country houses



Introduction

Country estates were large tracts of land with grand and lavish houses, and they had an economic aspect as country houses of the gentry and nobility were "working communities whose owners' wealth was derived from land and agriculture" (Barton, 2021, p. 329). Therefore, country houses were not just ostentatious homes for wealthy families, they were also "power houses-the houses of a ruling class," or landowners, whose authority depended on land ownership and "the tenants and rent that came with it" (Girouard, 1978, p. 2). From the Medieval Age to the nineteenth century the ownership of land and country houses were "not just the main but the only sure basis of power" as England's population and wealth were concentrated in the countryside rather than in the cities (Girouard, 1978, p. 2). Although country houses served to empower rich families, country house poems, which were popular in the early seventeenth century, tended to idealise and romanticise the country house as an emblem of moral economy based on the paternalistic values of feudal society, like "hospitality, thrift, lack of artifice, and so forth" (McLeod, 1999, p. 77). Country house poets, including Jonson and Carew, praised country house owners like William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle, who were their patrons, "with a vision of a moral economy which, however idealising, finally ratified the social position of the landowner" (Williams, 1973, p. 94). Hence, country houses eulogised in estate poems represented "the ordered moral economy," which was a hierarchical economic system where "all classes and all people lived in right relationship with each other and with the rest of creation" (Baucom, 1999, p. 166; McBride, 2001, p. 1). According to McRae (1992), the moral economic structure of country estates in early modern England was "static" and "hierarchical" because the landlord had a central position in this structure, but he was "a paternal figure: a steward of the land and its dependants" whose main goal was to manage his manor properly to achieve "a comfortable self-sufficiency" (p. 35). McBride (2001) maintains that the idealised, paternal image related to the country house became important during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as it fortified "English male aristocratic hegemony" (p. 4). Accordingly, the country house was a powerful means of constructing Englishness, gender, and class.

The country house also signified the transformation of "manorialism in its various manifestations to the agrarian capitalism" and "from the medieval ideas of 'tree orders' [aristocrats, the clergy, and peasants] to a society dominated both economically and politically by the middle class" (McBride, 2001, p. 1). This socio-economic reform, in

turn, paved the way for the emergence of country house discourse which “drew on idealized feudal social and economic relationships, represented most conspicuously through the theory and practice of hospitality, invoking a utopia of mediaeval nostalgia that stood as a rebuke to all that was new while, paradoxically, accommodating the very change it excoriated” (McBride, 2001, p. 2). Country house discourse which put the landed class and aristocrats into the centre, showed that “the estate was not simply a source of income but also an expression of lordship, a means of local influence and a mark of social position” (McBride, 2001, p. 3; Bush, 1984, p. 4). On the other hand, Klein claims that aristocrats’ leading position was established “through both their own practice and their patronage, most conspicuously visible in their country houses,” which displayed their “local paternalism” that aimed to contribute to the local economy by supplying work for local people (Klein, 2018, p. 282).

As the studies suggest, scholars focus on the paternal moral economy of country estates. However, there are studies on female country house poets and the role of women in the early estate poems, like Lewalski’s “The Lady of the *Country-House Poem*” (1989) and “Imagining Female Community” (1993), Fowler’s *The Country House Poem* (1994), and Young’s “The Country House in English Women’s Poetry” (2015). Nicole Pohl (1996, 2008), on the other hand, studies the country-house ethos in Sarah Scott’s *Millenium Hall* (1762) and the role of feminine utopias in the work of Sarah Scott and Sarah Fielding, arguing that female utopian communities challenge the dichotomous, hegemonic image epitomised by country houses to offer alternative spaces in which women are emancipated from the inferiorising definitions of patriarchy. However, the previous studies do not provide a substantial discussion of the feminised moral economy of country estates. This study aims to examine the maternal moral economy of the English country house discussed in Sarah Scott’s *Millenium Hall*. It argues that the novel borrows the principles of conventional country house poems, praising the moral economy of the old English country houses. Scott, like traditional country house poets, inculcates the owners of *Millenium Hall*, a country estate which merges moral economy with the feudal values of hospitality, modesty, and simplicity to ensure the well-being of their communities. However, *Millenium Hall* deviates from the traditional paternalism of country house poems by providing a maternal version of moral economy, which is more progressive in that it enables, social, economic, and physical expansions, adjusting to high capitalism associated with industrialisation. Moreover, the maternal moral economy of the Hall is more inclusive and heterogeneous as it includes the feminised and infantilised groups, including the old and the disabled. Since Ben Jonson’s “To

Penshurst" (1616) is generally "used as the standard by which the topics, characteristics, and moral values pertaining to the genre are defined" (Lewalski, 1989, p. 262), the following sections examine "To Penshurst," which praises the paternal moral economy of Penshurst, and *Millenium Hall*, which portrays a feminised version of moral economy, to demonstrate that although the two works eulogise the moral economy of the country estates mingled with gentle capitalism and feudal patrimonialism as a means to humanise modern, brutal capitalist enterprises, they provide different models of moral economy.

Moral Economy and Paternal Protection in Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst"

Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst" (1616) is a country house poem that inculcates the moral economy of the owner of Penshurst, a country estate. In the poem, country estate embodies a feeling of nostalgia for feudal country virtues, like charity, responsibility, "paternal kindness and grateful loyalty" (Stafford, 1989, p. 43). The "organic" feudal life was characterised by "simplicity," "naturalness and integrity" since "men and women, in touch with the soil and the seasons" worked for the well-being of the whole society (Stafford, 1989, p. 43). The solidarity between the lords and vassals enabled the formation of a medieval society which was "less exploitative than capitalist" since "[t]he purpose of the medieval economy was to produce subsistence goods, not commodities for sale," and thus "[f]eudal lords did not have the passion for extracting ever more surplus value," or forcing their labourers to overwork (Stafford, 1989, p. 36). The feudal society also included such ideal qualities as "an agricultural economy without city life" and "a form of political authority based on the traditional domination and rule by notables" (Morrison, 2006, p. 438). Malcolm Chase and Christopher Shaw (1989) argue that the nostalgia for ancient times is incorporated by antiquarian images, objects, and buildings, which "become talismans that link us concretely with the past" (p. 4). This fact explains the growing interest in the study of medieval artefacts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which "promoted the expansion of antiquarianism" (Ortenberg, 2006, p. 237). Nostalgia for the pre-industrial world of the Middle Ages, which was managed by the rules of moral economy, creates an idealised image of feudal society as "reality was never so rosy" although there was "reduction in luxury, greed and corruption" (Stafford, 1989, p. 43). The English Middle Ages were a period of unrest and discontent since the Great Famine of 1315-17, the Hundred Years War, and the Great Plague imposed hardship on poor working classes, who suffered from high taxation and starvation (Cohn & Aiton, 2013, p. 23). While poor labourers experienced the ill effects of socio-political unrest,

the nobility had “a generally increasing desire for comfort and luxury” (Given-Wilson, 1996, p. 96). In the hierarchical feudal system luxury goods were unequally possessed by wealthy and powerful classes (Astarita, 2022, p. 194). The corruption and extravagance of the privileged classes increased the dissatisfaction of the poor classes, which resulted in The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381, a rebellion against King Richard II and his “attempts to collect extra taxes” (Kelly, 1991, p. 58). As such, the medievalism of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries was not realistic but idealistic.

The complexity of nostalgia as related to the feudal country life is observed in Jonson’s “To Penshurst,” which enacts the paternalistic vision of moral economy because it “represents the good stewardship and social virtue of Robert Sidney who nurses an organic, self-sufficient, but . . . still hierarchical community” (Pohl, 2008b, p. 229). In the poem, country estate functions as an artefact associated with “a pre-commercial economy” in which “[e]xploitation of the labourer was not severe; the lords were charitable and has a sense of responsibility” (Stafford, 1989, p. 43). Jonson starts his poem by emphasising the distinguishing qualities of Penshurst Place, which was originally built between 1341 and 1350 for Sir John de Pulteney (Nash, 1874, p. 8). The house seems modest, unpretentious, and simple, compared to prodigy houses of the seventeenth century, which are ostentatious, showy, and pretentious:

Thou art not, Penshurst, built to envious show,
Of touch or marble; nor canst boast a row
Of polished pillars, or a roof of gold;
Thou hast no lantern, whereof tales are told,
Or stair, or courts; but stand’st an ancient pile, (Jonson, 1870, lines 1-5)

Penshurst, unlike prodigy houses, is not built to display the wealth and social distinction of its owner through an impressive façade, having “marble,” “polished pillars,” “a roof of gold,” or flashy stairs, courts, and lanterns (Jonson, 1870, lines 2-3). The estate is portrayed as “an ancient pile” joined by “soil,” “air,” and “water” to emphasise its connection to traditional, modest country houses of paternalistic, feudal society governed by the principles of moral economy (Jonson, 1870, lines 5, 7-8). The poet’s interpretation of Penshurst within the context of medievalism “are inevitably colored by [his] culture, biases, and purposes” (Carroll, 2018, p. 8) to segregate it from the modern world suffering from economic and moral corruption, which can be observed in his descriptions of the ancient estate. According to Jonson, Penshurst is a complete Edenic place inhabited

by figures from Ancient Greek mythology, like "the dryads" and "Pan and Bacchus," who are associated with nature (Jonson, 1870, lines 10-11). The use of ancient, mythological characters related to the natural world is functional in that it enables the poet to crown Penshurst as an antique estate venerating the beauties and bounties of nature. The estate is, thus, a symbol of the reverence of its owner towards nature since it is surrounded by various trees, like "the broad beech," "the chestnut," and "lady's oak" (Jonson, 1870, lines 12-18), and its lands are "[f]ertile of wood" and they are used to feed "sheep, ... bullocks, kine, and calves," as well as to breed "mares and horses" (Jonson, 1870, lines 26, 23-24). Sidney, the paternal owner of Penshurst, creates "cultured Nature" through cultivating the natural world without exposing it to a brutal exploitation (Marcus, 1993, p. 147). He applies culture to the natural landscape by building the estate, "[a] copse," "ponds, that pay [them] tribute fish," "orchard fruit," and "garden flowers" (Jonson, 1870, lines 19, 32, 39). Accordingly, Sidney creates a balance between nature and nurture, and Penshurst, which is praised for its fertile, natural landscape, appears as an ancient site of moral economy, which is temporally and physically dislocated from modern-day capitalist society that justifies the exploitation of nature for the individual profit of monied classes.

Penshurst is also distinguished from the modern prodigy houses, whose ostentation rests on the tyrannical manipulation of the labour of workers: "And though thy walls be of the country stone, / They're reared with no man's ruin, no man's groan; / There's none that dwell about them wish them down" (Jonson, 1870, lines 45-47). Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst" was written during the early capitalist era, which lasted from the mid-thirteenth century to the mid-eighteenth century (Ghodke, 1985). In the early capitalist period "the old economic institution of agriculture was still continuing" and landlords, state leaders, and bureaucrats, who "control[ed] the means to power," had an important role in the organisation of capitalist economy (Tamura, 2002, pp. 113-114). In "To Penshurst" Sidney is involved in early, agrarian capitalism, gathering wealth through land and agriculture, but he is idealised as a benevolent proto-capitalist landlord, who does not tyrannise the agricultural labourers working his lands, or exploit their labour. In parallel with moral economic principles, he fulfils his paternal responsibilities for the poor, who work for him, by saving them from starvation. The labourers are allowed to visit Penshurst, enjoy the abundance and hospitality supplied by Sidney and his family. However, the paternalistic, moral economy of Sidney is oppressive as the role of working-class labour in the construction and development of Penshurst is ignored and concealed beneath the Arcadian landscape of the estate. Agricultural workers are not depicted

as producers, or active participants in the cultivation of the lands of Penshurst, but it is as if Penshurst's cultivated, fertile lands are a gift of God since it is inhabited by mythological divine figures. Nature is also portrayed as a self-sustaining body that does not need the labour of workers. It contributes voluntarily to the moral economic order that prevails at Penshurst:

The painted partridge lies in every field,
 And for thy mess is willing to be killed.
 And if the high-swollen Medway fail thy dish,
 Thou hast thy ponds, that pay thee tribute fish,
 Fat aged carps that run into thy net,
 And pikes, now weary their own kind to eat,
 As loth the second draught or cast to stay,
 Officiously at first themselves betray;
 Bright eels that emulate them, leap on land,
 Before the fisher, or into his hand. (Jonson, 1870, lines 29-38)

It is as if animals are not cared by the labourers, but they just enjoy the peace and order in Penshurst and pay their tribute to the kind, hospitable owner of the estate by voluntarily sacrificing themselves to feed him. Accordingly, the workers are stripped off their identities as producers, and they are reduced to be consumers of Sidney's wealth since they are not depicted "as subjects with political agency but as natural emblems of the estate's bounty" (Brayton, 2016, p. 33).

Although the socio-economic order of Penshurst is oppressive, the paternal master and workers form a quasi-family whose members are united by mutual responsibilities to contribute to the common profit of their community. The landowner, who is the head and governor of his community, makes sure that his labourers, who are the real producers of his properties, do not suffer from hunger, and lets the labourers take part in his "open table" where they can share his "beer and bread," "meat," and "wine" (Jonson, 1870, lines 27, 62-63). Therefore, as in pre-capitalist society, where peasants had "direct access to the means of their own reproduction and to the land itself" (Wood, 2002, p. 95), the socio-economic relationship between the landowner and labourers is organised in a paternalistic, harmonious way. Moreover, Sidney, who is idealised as a responsible landowner, is praised for using his wealth properly to contribute to the order and well-being of his community. Instead of spending too much money to have one of the

ornamental, prodigy houses that are "proud ambitious heaps, and nothing else," he employs his money to ensure that not only his family but also his tenants and labourers enjoy a life of abundance and plenitude (Jonson, 1870, line 101). Jonson shows the promising results of Sidney's economic approach while praising his wise and moral governance. Appreciating the paternal governance of their landlord, lower classes feel no grudge or envy for him or his family, but they show their respect and gratitude for their master through supplying him with such presents as "nuts," "apples," and "cheeses" (Jonson, 1870, lines 52-53). As the poor are happy to give their lord both their labour and the products they gain through their labour, Sidney is able to have a surplus of provisions, which he shares with the workers. Therefore, the moral economic system of Penshurst, which relies on the mutual responsibility between the landlord and peasants, increases not only Sidney's wealth but also the peace and order of his society. As such, the paternalistic moral economy of Penshurst, consolidated with gentle agrarian capitalism, is provided as a better alternative to the brutal, callous capitalist economy of contemporary prodigy houses.

Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall*: Moral Economy in a Maternal Terrain

Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall* (1762), like "To Penshurst," proposes moral economy as an alternative to servile capitalist economy that favours the self-interest of monied classes. Millenium Hall, which is established by six upper-class women, is a Neo-Palladian English country house that merges classical virtue, "which was to be directed for the benefit and enhancement of civic life," and the simplicity of classical architecture with elegance and order (Tavernor, 1991, p. ix). In parallel with the principles of moral economy, the ladies of Millenium Hall consider the common goodness of their matriarchal society rather than exploiting poor people's labour to increase their personal wealth. An old woman living in their community emphasises the difference between the moral economy of the virtuous ladies and the dehumanising capitalist economy of their former manipulative capitalist masters, who "grew rich, because they had [their] work, and paid [them] not enough to keep life and soul together" (Scott, 1986, p. 13). She explains that she and other poor people joining the women of the Hall used to suffer from abusive capitalist system, where they were devastated by poverty and "hard labour" (Scott, 1986, p. 121). Therefore, the old woman maintains that it is mean capitalist landowners who are responsible for the sufferings of working classes since they do not give labourers the money they deserve for their hard work. The female founders of Millenium Hall, on the other hand, do not usurp the labour of their workers, but they

attempt to establish a fair and efficient economy. The ladies also share the surplus of their earnings “for [their] design being to serve a multitude of poor destitute of work, [they] have no nice regard to profit” (Scott, 1986, p. 205). In this respect, they are distinguished from capitalist masters who are engaged with “inhumanity,” and “self-indulgence” to maximise their individual profit (Scott, 1986, p. 177).

Like Jonson’s “To Penshurst,” Sarah Scott’s *Millenium Hall* uses country estate as a symbol embodying the landladies’ utopic project to create a community based on modesty, virtue, and order, which were inculcated as the reminiscences of patrimonial feudal moral economy. Millenium Hall attracts the attention of the anonymous male narrator and his young companion Lamont, who take refuge in the Hall after their coach is broken down in a stormy weather:

We approached the house, wherein, as it was the only human habitation in view, we imagined must reside the Primum Mobile of all we had yet beheld. We were admiring the magnificence of the ancient structure, and inclined to believe it the abode of the genius which presided over this fairy land, when we were surprised by a storm, which had been some time gathering over our heads, though our thoughts had been too agreeably engaged to pay much attention to it. (Scott, 1986, p. 6)

The narrator is impressed by the façade of the house, which he describes as “[an] ancient structure” (Scott, 1986, p. 6). Putting the Hall and its owners at the centre, the male narrator describes the ladies as “the Primum Mobile,” an ancient Greek notion explained by Dante as the largest and swiftest sphere that includes “the other eight lower spheres and sweeps them along in its daily revolution around the Earth” (Chiarenza, 2010, p. 711). The narrator argues that the ladies of Millenium Hall, like the Primum Mobile, control and direct other people living in the buildings contained by the Hall. When he and his young friend enter the estate, they come across a women’s school that is like “[an] Attic school,” namely an ancient Athenian school, where they are involved in such artistic endeavours, like “painting,” “drawing,” and “carving” (Scott, 1986, pp. 6, 7). The male narrator’s tendency to draw a relationship between the Hall and antiquity, which is associated with order and simplicity, is apparent also in his depiction of the country adjunct:

The morning dew, which still refreshed the flowers, increased their fragrance to as great an excess of sweetness as the senses could support.

Till I went to this house, I knew not half the charms of the country. Few people have the art of making the most of nature's bounty; these ladies are epicures in rural pleasures and enjoy them in the utmost excess to which they can be carried. All that romance ever represented in the plains of Arcadia are much inferior to the charms of Millenium Hall, except the want of shepherds be judged a deficiency that nothing else can compensate; there indeed they fall short of what romantic writers represent, and have formed a female Arcadia. (Scott, 1986, pp. 178-179)

The narrator portrays the pastoral lands of the ladies as "a female Arcadia" (Scott, 1986, p. 179), referring to ancient times to form a kinship between the Hall and the old, Arcadian country estates symbolising pre-capitalist economy based on nature's bounty. The apparent nature-based economy of Millenium Hall, like Penshurst, is aligned to agrarian capitalism as its beauty and bounty are produced by the workers employed by the landladies of the Hall. As an example, the wood belonging to Millenium Hall, is crafted by "the commonest labourers in the country," under the supervision of the ladies who, akin to capitalist masters having the means of production, organise the labour (Scott, 1986, p. 16). However, the agrarian capitalist economy of the mansion is not callous since it is redeemed by the principles of moral economy. The workers have the opportunity to enjoy the pastoral lands of the Hall, whose moral economy enables them to live in "rural simplicity, without any of those marks of poverty" (Scott, 1986, p. 5). Like Ben Jonson, who praises the simple, yet elegant taste of Sidney, both the narrator and Lamont observe and scrutinise the ladies' lands that reveal their good taste, which is a part of their moral economy. The two men cannot suppress their admiration for the wood designed by the ladies which "is laid out with much taste" (Scott, 1986, p. 16). The ladies create a nurtured landscape where "art had lent her assistance to nature" without exposing nature to brutal destruction (Scott, 1986, p. 16). In line with the principles of feudal moral economy consolidated with gentle agrarian capitalism, they are kind towards nature, which is a source of their wealth, and they cultivate wilderness and turn it into a productive economic body to increase the wealth of their community: "The wood is well peopled with pheasants, wild turkeys, squirrels and hares Man never appears there as a merciless destroyer, but the preserver, instead of the tyrant, of the inferior part of the creation" (Scott, 1986, p. 17). Accordingly, the Hall functions as an emblem of moral economy connoting socio-economic order as it enacts "[the] careful balance between court art and country 'nature,'" which is observed in early country house poems (Marcus, 1993, p. 146).

Although the Hall, like Penshurst, is managed according to moral economy based on hospitality and socio-economic order, its maternal moral economy is distinguished from the paternalism of Penshurst. The feminised economic model of the ladies is more advanced as it alternates between unfree labour and free wage labour, which are respectively associated with pre-capitalist and capitalist economies. Pre-capitalist economy is related to unfree, or forced, labour as peasants were forced to give their "surplus labour" to the appropriators "by means of direct coercion, exercised by landlords or states employing their superior force, their privileged access to military, judicial, and political power" (Wood, 2002, pp. 95-96). Free wage labour, on the other hand, operates according to the principle in which labourers "sell their labour-power and drawn voluntarily into the process of capitalist production" and "capitalists can appropriate the workers' surplus labour without direct coercion" (Brass, 1994, p. 96). Although Sidney's moral economy is imbued with a gentle, paternal capitalism, it is closer to pre-capitalism because workers are exposed to the socio-political hegemony of the male landowner, and they receive the food and care of their master for their labour instead of earning wage, as in feudal society. However, the feminised moral economy of the Hall is shaped by both pre-capitalist and capitalist values. As in pre-capitalist economy, workers are allowed to access to the lands of the Hall and to the means of their own labour, and they are exposed to the control and oppression of their landladies, who appropriate their labour through monopolising extra-economic socio-political power. The ladies have "[the] full power" to order and manage everything in their community "with great economy," and they use their socio-political superiority to set rules for workers, moulding them into the moral economy of Millenium Hall, where they are supposed to be "pure," "sincere," virtuous, and efficient labourers (Scott, 1986, pp. 111, 114). Nonetheless, the ladies redeem their oppressive economic model through establishing a moral economy, which has feudal values emphasizing the duties of agrarian masters. Within this scheme, they use some money to provide the poor with "a most comfortable place" where "[they] have everything [they] want and wish," and they establish "a fund for the sick and disabled from which they may receive a comfortable support" (Scott, 1986, pp. 12, 205). The ladies also display the hospitality of a responsible feudal landowner towards their labourers and host them at "[their] hospitable mansion," where they can listen to family concerts, or attend the balls conducted to celebrate the weddings of couples from labouring classes (Scott, 1986, pp. 6, 10). Moreover, they hire "nurses for the sick" and improve the lives of the workers by establishing almshouses, schools, and modest cottages, which are neat, "new and uniform" (Scott, 1986, pp. 111, 12). Since the female proprietors care for the poor and sick, they appear to be maternal

figures, who call themselves as "stewards" of their property and labourers, rather than an abusive and tyrannical landowner (Scott, 1986, p. 201). Nevertheless, the Hall's feminised moral economy is also characterised by capitalist norms. The founders of the Hall establish a self-reliant agrarian capitalist economy to isolate their community from the outer world. Specifically, they direct agricultural workers to be indulged in dairy to produce their own milk products (Scott, 1986, p. 59). Furthermore, they initiate a factory for crafting rugs and carpets, where workers, dressed "in a condition of proper plenty," earn their own money and exude "the appearance of general cheerfulness" (Scott, 1986, p. 201). In this way, the ladies help the labourers to lead a prosperous life in "[a] heavenly society" and deter them from looking for another gentle capitalist master to whom they can sell their labour (Scott, 1986, p. 200). However, the moral economy of Millenium Hall is oppressive since the female landlords monopolise the labour market, forming a closed agrarian capitalist economy, in which the labourers have hardly any commercial connection with the outer male-oriented capitalist world. In this tightly closed economy, the ladies have no rivals since they keep the agricultural labour force and "the distribution of the money entirely in their own hands" (Scott, 1986, p. 201). Although the ladies are authoritative, they do not make their workers feel coerced, but pay good wages to the producers of labour, considering their age and performances:

[T]hey prevent the poor from being oppressed by their superiors, for they allow them great wages and by their very diligent inspection hinder any frauds. ... As the ladies have the direction of the whole, they give more to the children and the aged, in proportion to the work they do, than to those who are more capable, as a proper encouragement and reward for industry in those seasons of life... (Scott, 1986, p. 201)

Since the workers exchange their labour for wage as in capitalist societies, they, unlike their counterparts in Penshurst, do not completely depend on the benevolence of their landowners. The labourers procure their essentials without being restricted to provisions supplied by their masters. Accordingly, the maternal economic system of Millenium Hall "adjust[s] to developing capitalism" and employs a semi-free wage labour system (Johns, 2000, p. 39).

The moral economic framework of the Hall, unlike Penshurst, is progressive and expansionist since the ladies try to expand their agrarian economy by moving towards

high capitalism. The novel was written after the mid-eighteenth century, a period which witnessed the transition from “Early capitalism” to “High capitalism (from 1760 to 1914)” (Ghodke, 1985, p. 156). In the high capitalist period economy was no longer controlled by aristocrats, or state authorities, but by “the capitalistic entrepreneur,” and the period witnessed the emergence of industrial society “characterized by big business and the dynamic business cycle” (Tamura, 2002, p. 115). Allying with emerging high capitalism, Millenium Hall undergoes economic, physical, and territorial expansions because the ladies continue to build new settlements in their lands to increase the wealth of their society. They invest an agreeable amount of their capital to the establishment of a house for gentlewomen, who agree to join their fortune to the economy of Millenium Hall to seek refuge in the ladies’ lands. Since this capitalist enterprise “cost[s] [them] a trifle” and the interest of money given by the gentlewomen is “appropriated to the use of the community,” the female landlords decide to buy and restore an old mansion for another group of gentlewomen to make extra profit (Scott, 1986, pp. 205, 65). The Hall’s agrarian economy is further enhanced by the establishment of “[the] manufacture of carpets and rugs which has succeeded so well as to enrich all the country round about” (Scott, 1986, p. 201). The introduction of this factory is a socio-economic reform in *Millenium Hall* as it brings about a change in traditional agrarian economy and signals a transition to industrial economy. The manufacture becomes a great economic success because “it has much more than paid its expenses” (Scott, 1986, p. 205). However, Mrs Morgan, a landlady of the Hall, explains that they, unlike industrial capitalists, do not use the surplus of their capitalist enterprises for their own benefit but for the poor and the dependent so that “they may receive a comfortable support” (Scott, 1986, p. 205). Since the ladies benefit from developing capitalism to contribute to common goodness of their community, their maternal, progressive moral economy heralds a gradual humanisation of harsh, brutal capitalist economy managed by self-interested, patriarchal masters. The intended gradual economic reform is epitomised by the transformation of the male narrator. The narrator, who is a tradesman symbolising modern-day patriarchal capitalism, praises the ladies’ moral economic system, which is open to progress and expansion. As he is impressed with the moral economy of the ladies, which ensures the socio-economic order of the Hall, “[his] thoughts are all engaged in a scheme to imitate them [the ladies]” (Scott, 1986, p. 207).

Since the ladies’ moral economy is progressive, Millenium Hall, unlike Penshurst, does not appear as a finished, paradisiacal place belonging to the Arcadian tradition. Sidney’s Penshurst is a static and idealised Edenic place inhabited by mythological figures associated

with antiquity. Moreover, in parallel with Arcadian tradition, Penshurst's natural bounty seems to be granted by divine forces without any visible human agency. On the other hand, Millenium Hall and its lands are inhabited by real, visible people, who are depicted as the active subjects of labour rather than the consumers of the benevolence of their landowners, as in "To Penshurst." The workers, including elderly and disabled members, actively contribute to the moral economy of Millenium Hall by working on the lands, in the factory, or within the estate of the ladies. As such, the ladies' maternal moral economy is more inclusive and heterogenous than Sidney's paternal, homogenous moral economy, in which peasants' "ripe daughters" who are "in plum or pear" are the only visible bodies belonging to labouring classes (Jonson, 1870, lines 54, 56). The ladies expect all their labourers to be economically efficient and productive by working, "serv[ing] others," and "do[ing] good to many" (Scott, 1986, p. 13). Therefore, they turn the unproductive bodies excluded in the paternal moral economy of Penshurst into productive bodies to be regained into the economic system. The old woman, who complains about her former capitalist masters, informs the male narrator about the responsibilities of disadvantaged groups, which have been assigned by the ladies of Millenium Hall:

Susan is lame, so she spins clothes for Rachel; and Rachel cleans Susan's house, and does such things for her as she cannot do for herself. The ladies settled all these matters at first ... Thus neighbour Jane who, poor woman, is almost stone deaf, they thought would have a melancholy life if she was to be always spinning and knitting, seeing other people around her talking, and not be able to hear a word they said, so the ladies busy her in making broths and caudles and such things, for all the sick poor in this and the next parish, and two of us are fixed upon to carry what, they have made to those that want them; to visit them often, and spend more or less time with them every day according as they have, or have not relations to take care of them ... (Scott, 1986, pp. 13-14)

While Jonson displays the success of the economic scheme of Sidney through depicting the ripe and healthy bodies of labourers, consuming the wealth of the paternal master, the ladies of the Hall expand the borders of paternal moral economy of Penshurst by integrating the deformed bodies of the old and disabled into their economic system. Consequently, the ladies re-evaluate "the contractual relationships of England's mercantile and industrial economy to include ... those otherwise disadvantaged and excluded" (Johns, 2000, p. 41).

The ladies' inclusive and progressive moral economy also promises social progress towards a more equal society. Having a rigid socio-economic structure fostering the hegemony of its male owner, Sidney's Penshurst does not herald any change in the hierarchical relationship between the master and his labourers. However, the progressive moral economy of the ladies provides a potential for the re-evaluation of the stratified social order within Millenium Hall. Although the female founders of the Hall maintain the hierarchical structure of moral economy, they do not view this stratified system as rigid and definite. They perceive socio-economic hierarchy as a means granted by God to support those in lower social strata, acknowledging that the integrity of this hierarchical system may be distorted if people of upper ranks lose their "temperance, humility and humanity" (Scott, 1986, pp. 202, 203). Therefore, Miss Mancel contends that although they are socio-economically privileged, they regard themselves "only a steward" to poor, dependent people "whose interests [they] ought to be as careful as of [their] own" (Scott, 1986, p. 203). Moreover, she contemplates the possibility of the abolishment of social hierarchy, claiming "as for the future, there may probably be no inequality" between upper and lower classes (Scott, 1986, p. 203). Speculating about a future socio-economic structure without social inequality, Miss Mancel challenges the paternalist moral economy of country estates which is static and based on the strict authority of the male owner.

Conclusion

Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst" and Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall*, have nostalgia for old, country houses that are managed according to the principles of moral economy and feudal system resting on the mutual responsibilities between the master and his tenants. Jonson's "To Penshurst" praises the moral economy of Sidney's country estate, which is a static Arcadian place epitomising the virtues of paternalistic, medieval society. Although Sidney is a landlord involved in agrarian capitalist economy by appropriating the labour of his farmers, who are not depicted as the real subjects of labour, he compensates for his capitalist enterprises by employing the rules of traditional paternalistic moral economy. Unlike self-interested capitalist masters, who condemn their workers to starvation, Sidney is lauded as a benevolent landowner, who shares his provisions with his labourers, allowing them to partake in the paternal hospitality of Penshurst to establish an ordered and peaceful community operating through mutual responsibilities.

Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall*, like Jonson's "To Penshurst," offers a moral economy infused with feudal values. Millenium Hall, an old country house that stands for the modesty and simplicity associated with feudal culture, is distinguished from ornamental, prodigy houses since it embodies the practical moral economy that favours communal well-being rather than individual profit. Moreover, the refined artistic taste of the female founders of the Hall which combines nature with nurture marks the mansion as a harmonious community which is segregated from the self-serving ethos of capitalist culture justifying the exploitation of nature for the benefit of affluent capitalist masters. Although the ladies of Millenium Hall are involved in capitalist economy, they, unlike self-interested capitalist owners, do not dehumanise their workers or subject them to harsh manipulation to increase their individual profit. Their maternal moral economy, unlike the paternalistic moral economy of Penshurst, includes the disadvantaged workers, like the old and deformed. In *Millenium Hall*, labourers are also regarded as the subjects of labour who actively contribute to the moral economy of the Hall, thus they are not depicted as the consumers of the benevolence of their landowners, as in "To Penshurst." Furthermore, unlike Penshurst, which is a finished, paradisiacal place, the ladies' matriarchal society is progressive because it undergoes socio-economic and territorial changes, cooperating with the tenets of high capitalism inherent in industrial society. Accordingly, "To Penshurst" and *Millenium Hall* offer different versions of moral economy though both idealise feudal past to argue for a hybrid economy amalgamating capitalist economy with feudal moral economy to redeem the inhumane capitalist ventures of their contemporary societies.

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“and now we’re here: the Plasticene”: Ecological Awareness in Margaret Atwood’s Recent Poetry Collection, *Dearly*

Merve ALTIN¹ 



¹Assistant Professor, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of English Language and Literature, Çanakkale, Türkiye

ORCID: M.A. 0000-0002-2129-7347

Corresponding author:

Merve ALTIN,
Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University,
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences/
Department of Western Languages and
Literatures / Department of English
Language and Literature, Çanakkale, Türkiye
E-mail: mervedemirtas@comu.edu.tr

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ABSTRACT

Dearly, first published in 2020, is the latest poetry collection of the acclaimed writer, Margaret Atwood. In *Dearly*, Atwood revisits some of her favourite themes and subjects such as love, loss, time, ageing, sexuality, gender, nature, and environment. The book is divided into five sections, and the poems grouped in the same section revolve around a common theme. In section IV, the poems grouped under the title of “Plasticene Suite” discuss the increasing amount of plastic waste as the distinctive anthropogenic marker of our age. Accordingly, each poem focuses on a different aspect and consequence of this environmental problem. The primary objective of this study is to analyse *Plasticene Suite* poems, namely “Rock-Like Object on Beach”, “Faint Hopes”, “Foliage”, “Midway Island Albatross”, “Editorial Notes”, “Sorcerer’s Apprentice”, “Whales”, “Little Robot”, and “The Bright Side” from *Dearly* through the lens of eco-poetry to reveal Atwood’s criticism of the anthropogenic factors contributing to the current ecological crisis, particularly the ever-increasing generation of plastic waste, and to comment on contemporary poetry’s awareness of and power to address the pressing environmental issues. The study also contends that eco-poetic readings of *Plasticene Suite* poems can help raise awareness about the rise in plastic waste during and after the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. In that sense, the eco-poetic readings of *Plasticene Suite* poems can urge us to reconsider our dependence on plastic and encourage us to adopt sustainable practices and habits by promoting consciousness about this pressing environmental problem.

Keywords: Eco-poetry, Margaret Atwood, *Dearly*, Plasticene Suite, Plastic Waste



1. Introduction

It is an undeniable fact that our good-old planet is grappling with ever-growing environmental problems and that a wide range of anthropogenic activities such as air and water pollution, depletion of natural resources, deforestation and habitat destruction, generation of large amounts of waste and improper waste disposal, the use of harmful chemicals, pollutants emitted by industrial facilities and vehicles have negative impacts on human health as well as the health of other living organisms, eventually contributing to global warming, and thus, to a climate change. There is a growing sense of urgency to comprehend, appreciate, and protect our environment as we are confronted with the consequences of environmental degradation and climate change. As our planet faces escalating challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion, it has become evident that the study of literature can offer valuable insights and contribute meaningfully to the discourse surrounding these issues. In this context, ecocriticism, an interdisciplinary field, emerges as an influential and critical framework that can be used to analyse literary texts to explore the complex relationship between human beings and nature.

This study aims to analyse *Plasticene Suite* poems, namely "Rock-Like Object on Beach", "Faint Hopes", "Foliage", "Midway Island Albatross", "Editorial Notes", "Sorcerer's Apprentice", "Whales", "Little Robot", and "The Bright Side", from Margaret Atwood's latest poetry collection, *Dearly*, through the lens of ecopoetry. Atwood's first collection in over a decade, *Dearly*, was first published in 2020. The book is divided into five sections, and each section is entitled with Roman numerals. The poems grouped in the same section revolve around a common theme. In her foreword to the collection, Atwood argues that "[p]oetry deals with the core of human existence: life, death, renewal, change; as well as fairness and unfairness, injustice and sometimes justice. The world in all its variety. The weather. Time. Sadness. Joy" (Atwood, 2020, para. 5). As befitting this statement, each section of the collection centres around a different theme. This study, however, will specifically focus on the poems that are sub-grouped under the title of "Plasticene Suite" in section IV. *Plasticene Suite* poems discuss the ever-increasing amount of plastic waste as the distinctive anthropogenic marker of our age. Accordingly, each poem focuses on a different aspect and consequence of this environmental problem. An ecopoetic reading of *Plasticene Suite* poems will reveal Atwood's criticism of the anthropocentric aspects of the current ecological crisis and contemporary poetry's awareness of and power to address environmental issues. It is

concluded that the *Plasticene Suite* poems not only discuss the detrimental impact of unregulated plastic waste on the environment, oceans, plants, and animals but also scrutinise our failure to recycle this material effectively. Resonating with such terms and concepts as the Anthropocene, the Plasticene, the Capitalocene, the Plastisphere, empirical ecocriticism, blue ecocriticism, post-human ecocriticism, and material ecocriticism, the poems offer a multifaceted exploration of a major environmental issue, thereby contributing to the contemporary discourse on the intersection of environment, literature, and ecological consciousness.

This study also contends that the eco-poetic reading of the *Plasticene Suite* can help raise awareness about the rise in plastic waste during and after the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to recent studies, the use of disposable items like masks, gloves, and food and other product packaging has led to a rise in plastic waste throughout the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic.¹ For instance, the pandemic has specially produced a substantial amount of medical waste, including protective types of equipment, medical gloves, and other single-use medical items. As a result of the lockdowns and layoffs, the pandemic also had a negative impact on trash management and recycling procedures, which has led to a rise in plastic garbage around the world. Additionally, there has been a rise in the amount of packaging material utilised for home delivery as more individuals purchase online while staying home. Though not specifically written to address the increase in plastic waste during the recent pandemic, Atwood's *Plasticene Suite* poems explore the environmental ramifications of our plastic consumption which is increasing daily. Therefore, eco-poetic readings of these poems can urge us to reconsider our dependence on plastic and adopt sustainable practices and habits by promoting consciousness about this pressing environmental problem.

1 On COVID-19 pandemic-associated plastic waste see: Benson, N. U., Basse, D. E., & Palanisami, T. (2021). COVID pollution: impact of COVID-19 pandemic on global plastic waste footprint. *Heliyon*, 7(2), e06343. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e06343>; Peng, Y., Wu, P., Scharup, A. T., & Zhang, Y. (2021). Plastic waste release caused by COVID-19 and its fate in the global ocean. *PNAS*, 118(47), e2111530118. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2111530118>; Rizan, C., Reed, M. & Bhutta, M. F. (2021). Environmental impact of personal protective equipment distributed for use by health and social care services in England in the first six months of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 114(5), 250-263. DOI: 10.1177/01410768211001583

2. "understanding of human / human (she said) impact"² on Environment Through Ecocriticism and Ecopoetry

The word "ecology" is derived from the Greek word *oikos*, meaning house, household, or dwelling (Howarth, 1996, p. 69; Buell, 2005, p. 13; Hass, 2013, p. xlvi), and refers to the study of the relationships between organisms and their environment. William Rueckert is reputed to have coined the term "ecocriticism" in 1978 (Glotfelty, 1996, pp. xv-xxxvii; Love, 2003, p. 4; Buell, 2005, p. 13). Rueckert (1996, p. 107) attempts to "[...] generate a critical position out of a concept of relevance [...]" and defines ecocriticism as "[...] the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature [...]". He combines ecology "as a science, as a discipline, as the basis for human vision" (Rueckert, 1996, p. 107) and literature to examine how literature reflects and shapes our understanding of the natural world and human-nature interactions.

It is argued that "[...] any literary criticism which purports to deal with social and physical reality will encompass ecological considerations" (Love, 2003, p. 1), and ecocriticism can be used as an umbrella term "by which literary-environmental studies is best known" (Buell, 2005, p. viii). Cheryll Glotfelty (1996, p. xvii), a prominent figure in the field of ecocriticism, defines it as "[...] the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment". Glotfelty's definition highlights the interdisciplinary nature of ecocriticism as it foregrounds the notions of literature and literary analysis that incorporate ecological, geographical, and environmental perspectives. By expanding on Rueckert's relevance, William Howarth (1996, p. 69) defines an ecocritic as "a person who judges the merits and faults of writings that depict the effects of culture upon nature, with a view toward celebrating nature, berating its despoilers, and reversing their harm through political action". Howarth's definition suggests the idea that an ecocritic is someone who assesses literary pieces that depict the influence of culture on nature, and the purpose of an ecocritic, as per Howarth, is to appreciate nature, condemn those who cause harm to it and endeavour to inspire political action to restore and protect the environment.

Ecocriticism explores how literature reflects and shapes our understanding of the natural world, human-nature interactions, and the moral and ethical dimensions of

2 Atwood, M. (2020b). Editorial Notes. In *Dearly* (p. 87). United Kingdom: Chatto & Windus.

these connections. Ecocriticism can be argued to have a “[...] capacity to speak to new readers in their own terms on issues which, nowadays, are unavoidably ecological” (Love, 2003, pp. 11-12). Considering the urgent environmental problems that the world is currently facing, such as climate change, habitat destruction, and depletion of natural resources, it is becoming increasingly important to include environmental considerations in literature. This will help raise awareness about the significance of the natural world and the impact of human actions on the environment. According to Glen A. Love (1990, p. 213), “[t]he most important function of literature today is to redirect human consciousness to a full consideration of its place in a threatened natural world”. Love contends that literature can play a significant role in addressing environmental challenges as well as influencing cultural attitudes and values in that regard. Participating in the continuing environmental debate and inspiring readers to reexamine their relationship with nature should be among the goals of contemporary literature. This can lead to a greater understanding of the environment and a sense of responsibility for preserving it.

In his introduction to *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* (1996), a significant collection that played a crucial role in establishing ecocriticism as a legitimate field of study, Glotfelty (1996, p. xv) notes that in the latter half of the 20th century, the majority of literary studies were preoccupied with issues of race, class, and gender but they neglected “[...] the most pressing contemporary issue of all, namely, the global environmental crisis”. Since then, ecocriticism has gained significant recognition and prominence in literary and cultural studies and has evolved and diversified in its theoretical approaches and interdisciplinary intersections such as ecopoetry, ecofeminism, postcolonial ecocriticism, deep ecology, and material ecocriticism. This study argues that, among these intersections, ecopoetry holds profound significance as it can evoke powerful emotions and connect readers deeply with the natural world. In his seminal work *The Song of the Earth* (2000), Jonathan Bate (2001, p. 283) argues that “[i]f mortals dwell in that they save the earth and if poetry is the original admission of dwelling, then poetry is the place where we save the earth”. Bate suggests that poetry is a powerful medium through which individuals can understand and relate to their existence and environment, and therefore, through poetry, individuals can foster deeper connections with their environment, thereby contributing to the preservation of the earth.

It is imperative to distinguish between nature poetry or what is called “ecophenomenological poetry” which concentrates on “descriptions and appreciation

of non-human nature with roots in Romantic and deep ecology traditions" (Lidström and Garrard, 1996, p. 27) and the kind of poetry that engages with complex environmental issues and human-environment relations. There are several terms used interchangeably with ecopoetry such as green poetry, environmental poetry, and post-pastoral. Terry Gifford (1996, p. 27), for instance, propounds the notion of "green poetry" to define "[...] those recent nature poems that engage directly with environmental issues". In a similar vein, Neil Astley (2017, p. 15) argues that "[e]copoetry goes beyond traditional nature poetry to take on distinctly contemporary issues, recognizing the interdependence of all life on earth, [...]". In his influential book *The West Side of Any Mountain* (2005), J. Scott Bryson (2005, p. 2) defines ecopoetry as "[...] a mode that, while adhering to certain conventions of traditional nature poetry, advances beyond that tradition and takes on distinctly contemporary problems and issues, [...]". Considering these arguments, it can be contended that ecopoetry is a literary genre that merges the notion of conventional nature poetry with contemporary environmental concerns. Though it still incorporates the elements of traditional nature poetry, ecopoetry has differentiated itself from nature poetry by expanding its scope and addressing the present-day environmental challenges. Thus, it serves as a means of expressing ecological awareness and advocating for the importance of nature and sustainability in the modern world.

Although poetry cannot literally save the earth, it can raise awareness, effectively call for sustainable practices, and help build a deeper bond between humans and nature by engaging in discussions about environmental issues. "The idea is that poetry – perhaps because of its rhythmic and mnemonic intensity – is an especially efficient system for recycling the richest thoughts and feelings of a community" (Bate, 2001, p. 247). Poetry has long been acknowledged as a kind of artistic expression that has the innate capability to arouse strong feelings, provoke introspection, and persuasively communicate complicated concepts. Poets can explore the effects of human actions on the environment while simultaneously capturing the beauty and fragility of the natural world using vivid imagery, metaphors, and symbolism. "Poems are a verbal equivalent of fossil fuel (stored energy), but they are a renewable source of energy, coming, as they do, from those ever generative twin matrices, language and imagination" (Rueckert, 1996, p. 108). By provoking readers' emotions and imagination, poetry provides a sense of empathy and urgency, which, in return, can motivate individuals to take action to protect the environment.

3. *Dearly Beloved World Wrapped in Plastic*

Margaret Atwood is known for her thought-provoking oeuvre in which she explores a range of issues including gender, identity, religion, myth, and power politics. Many of her most famous and well-known themes are brought to life by her latest poetry collection, *Dearly*. Though Atwood has always seamlessly incorporated environmentalist stances within her narratives, thereby highlighting the complex relationship between humanity and the natural world, *Dearly* explicitly focuses on the destruction of the environment by humans. Particularly, part IV and “[...] the poem cycle- The Plasticene Suite reflects the intrusion of plastics everywhere in the natural world, from the branches of trees to the stomachs of dead baby whales” (McMillan, 2020, para. 3). These poems explore the unsettling fact and one of the most pressing environmental concerns of our age that plastics have invaded ecosystems on a global scale, appearing in a variety of forms and locations.

Atwood argues that “[...] poetry does not propose solutions. It creates, instead, evocations” (qtd. in Andrew, 2020, para. 4). The purpose of poetry is not to provide a step-by-step guide for solving ecological problems but rather to evoke emotions, provoke thought, and encourage readers to reflect on the issues at hand. Poetry can convey ecological issues through vivid imagery, metaphors, and symbolism, allowing readers to engage with these issues on a profound level. Likewise, the poems in the *Plasticene Suite* bring forth striking images of plastics entwined around the branches of trees, washing into the seas, sprouting up everywhere, appearing in such unexpected places as inside the barebones of birds and the belly of a dead baby whale. Although we come across these images daily and quite frequently, they remain unrecognised as we often fail to contemplate them adequately. Therefore, we remain oblivious to these images because we have already internalised them. Such poems as the ones in the *Plasticene Suite* cycle, written with ecological awareness and consciousness, serve as influential instruments to make us recognise, comprehend, and, in this regard, question our “contributions” to the pervasive yet still unperceived environmental issues and concerns, and urge us to strive for more sustainable practices to protect the environment.

I. Rock-Like Object on Beach

"The Paleocene the Eocene / the Miocene the Pleistocene / and now we're here: the Plasticene" (1-3)³ reads the first stanza of the first poem of the *Plasticene Suite* cycle. In the first two lines, the speaker refers to the different epochs, each of which is characterised by different climatic, biological, and geological conditions and represents different periods in the Cenozoic Era, the most recent era in Earth's geological history. In 2002, Paul Crutzen, an atmospheric scientist, and Eugene Stoermer, a biologist, proposed a new term, the Anthropocene, as a new interval of geologic time (Crutzen and Stoermer, 2000). The Anthropocene refers to the period where the collective activities of humans significantly altered the ecosystems on Earth. In the context of the Anthropocene, the first stanza sets the tone for the entire cycle by highlighting human impact on the environment.

Plastic is argued to be one of the most distinctive anthropogenic markers of our age, and it is claimed that "[p]lastics are a clear indicator of the Anthropocene and can be considered the marker of the upper subdivision of this stage: the Plasticene" (Rangel-Buitrago et al., 2022, Abstract section, para. 1). Likewise, the third line of the poem aligns with this argument, and it suggests that we are living in the Plasticene, the Age of Plastics. It is argued that "[p]lastics are relatively easily recognizable, without the need for sophisticated analytical equipment, as is the case for the detection of radionuclides. They may, therefore, be widely effective stratigraphic markers for Anthropocene strata" (Zalasiewicz, 2016, p. 5). Developed in 1907 and patented in 1909 by Leo Baekeland (Davis, 2015, p. 348), Bakelite is the first synthetic polymer. In response to the emergence of anti-colonial resistance that made consumer goods like ivory and silk increasingly expensive and difficult to get, Bakelite was created to meet the growing demand for these commodities. Accordingly, in the immediate aftermath of WWII, plastics proved to be an affordable substitute and the perfect material for the emerging consumer culture (Davis, 2015, p. 348). This leads us to the notion of the Capitalocene, proposed by Andreas Malm, and later, taken up by Jason W. Moore, and popularised by Donna Haraway. According to Moore, "[...] The Capitalocene signifies capitalism as a way of organizing nature – as a multispecies, situated, capitalist world-ecology" (Moore, 2016, p. 6). The notion of the Capitalocene is designed to draw attention to the role of capitalism in environmental issues, including climate change, deforestation,

3 Atwood, M. (2020a). Rock-Like Object on Beach. In *Dearly* (p. 83). United Kingdom: Chatto & Windus. All the subsequent references to the poem are cited from this source and in parentheses by line number(s).

and pollution. In this context, it can be argued that “Rock-Like Object on Beach” exemplifies the notion of the Capitalocene, as it discusses the fact that plastic waste, the production and consumption of which mostly serve capitalist purposes, has begun to damage nature to an irreversible extent.

The geologic time scale is determined through the changes observed in sedimentary rocks. According to the poem, along with the rocks made of sand, lime, and quartz, one may come across a strange rock that defies the conventional classifications. It is “[...] black and striped, and slippery” (7), and it looks like “petrified oil” (11). Embedded within this peculiar rock, one may also observe “[...] a vein of scarlet,” (11) which is reminiscent of a bucket fragment. According to the speaker, future alien visitors who seek to decipher the remnants of our civilisation might be intrigued by such an unusual formation. Yet, this “petrified oil” will not only be the evidence of the presence of humans here on earth but also, be the evidence “Of us: of our too-brief history, / our cleverness, our thoughtlessness, / our sudden death?” (16-18). It is an acknowledged scientific fact that “[p]lastic pollution can alter habitats and natural processes, reducing ecosystems’ ability to adapt to climate change, directly affecting millions of people’s livelihoods, food production capabilities and social well-being” (Andersen, n.d., para. 3), and accordingly, the last stanza of the poem envisions a catastrophic event related to the natural environment that would be the end of the world and the cause of human extinction. The opening poem of the *Plasticene Suite* cycle, therefore, identifies the current geological epoch as “The Plasticene” to refer to such a critical stage in human history in which mankind must adopt sustainable practices to face global environmental challenges and preserve our planet for future generations.

2. Faint Hopes

“Faint Hopes” is about the ineffective strategies that have been adopted to recycle plastic waste, including turning plastic waste into oil by cooking it (1-4)⁴, banning the use of plastics and drinking straws in some supermarkets (5-8), the discovery of the microbes that eat plastic (9-12), pressing it into fake lumber and building blocks (13-15), and scooping the material out of rivers before it reaches out to the sea (16-17). Nevertheless, all these methods have been proven to have significant drawbacks. The poem suggests that cooking the plastic waste to turn it into oil releases an unfavourable

4 Atwood, M. (2020c). Faint Hopes. In *Dearly* (p. 84). United Kingdom: Chatto & Windus. All the subsequent references to the poem are cited from this source and in parentheses by line number(s).

odour into the surrounding air (1-4). Likewise, for the microbes to be able to consume the material the temperature must be very high, and this is known to harm the North Sea (9-12). Pressing plastic waste into fake lumber and building blocks is also ineffective since only some kinds of plastic can be used for this process (13-15). The poem, thus, creates a compelling depiction of the difficulties we encounter in dealing with waste generation and management.

According to the UN Environment Programme, 7 billion tonnes of plastic waste have been generated globally so far, and less than 10 per cent has been recycled (UN Environment Programme, n.d., Single-use plastic section, para. 2). We are producing about a million tonnes of plastic waste every year, and by 2050, it is predicted that the global plastic output will have reached 1,100 million tonnes, provided that historical growth rates persist (UN Environment Programme, n.d., Our planet section, para. 1). By musing on this pressing environmental problem, the poem foregrounds the intricacies and predicaments involved in addressing such a great environmental crisis. It is because there is not a single effective method at our hands to recycle plastic, and as the poem claims, plastic waste is an "overwhelming", "ongoing", and "never-ending" (19-20) problem. The poem appears to suggest that we are incapable of addressing plastic waste-related problems, and it encourages readers to muse on the complex nature of waste management and environmental sustainability. In that sense, while the first poem sets the theme of plastic use, an anthropogenic and capitalist marker of our age, as the main subject of the whole cycle, "Faint Hopes" emphasises that our inability to control how we produce, consume, and dispose of the plastic we use is the main cause of plastic-related environmental disasters. The damage caused by plastic waste to nature will later be exemplified in later poems, namely "Foliage", "Midway Island Albatross", "Sorcerer's Apprentice", and "Whales".

3. Foliage

"Foliage", the third poem of the cycle, begins with a quotation, "a scrap of black plastic – the defining foliage of the oil age" (qtd. in Atwood, 2020d, p. 85), from Marck Cocker, an author and environmental activist. The epigram underlines the main argument of the *Plasticene Suite* poems: Plastic is emblematic of our age, the Plasticene. Accordingly, the poem posits that the true foliage of the natural world has been replaced by human-made black foliage, plastic. The poem portrays the presence of plastic waste in natural areas such as trees, marshes, ponds, and beaches through simple yet emotive imagery. This foliage is

“rootless” (10)⁵, and “sprouts everywhere” (1), “up in the trees, like mistletoe, / or caught in the marshes” (2-3). It is blooming “[...] in the ponds like waterlilies” (4). One can see “[...] torn bags, cast wrappers, tangled rope” (8) washing onto the beaches. Unlike a traditional romantic poem in which the speaking persona looks around him and celebrates the natural beauties of his environment such as the trees, clouds, lakes, rivers, and flowers, as in the case of Wordsworth’s famous poem, “I wandered lonely as a cloud”, the speaker in this poem reflects an uneasiness regarding the human-nature relationship. It is not a mistletoe or a waterlily, or a beautiful flower, or a green plant that is “sprouting”, “blooming”, “rippling”, being “caught in the marshes” or being “washed onto the beach”, it is just a black plastic. In that sense, Atwood’s word choices are striking and thought-provoking. The proliferation of black plastic is described with verbs that can easily be associated with vegetation growth, thereby highlighting the fact that humans influence the earth’s natural processes.

The poem recalls the idea of the Plastisphere, first termed by Eric Zettler et al. in 2013. The Plastisphere refers to a new marine microbial habitat formed by plastics and microplastics (Zettler et al., 2013). The concept of the Plastisphere is significant as it shows the extent of human potential to modify ecosystems. In that sense, the poem compares plastic to foliage, mistletoe, and waterlilies, foregrounding the striking contrast between the life-giving natural world and the intrusive synthetic material. Contrary to natural foliage which supports life by contributing to the ecosystem, this “rootless” (10) plastic foliage which “[...] gives nothing back / not even one empty calorie” (11-12) has no ecological and life-sustaining value. The last stanza of the poem consists of three rhetorical questions, “Who plants it, this useless crop? / Who harvest it? / Who can say Stop?” (13-15). These short and direct questions urge readers to think about their role in addressing this environmental issue by emphasising the lack of accountability for the widespread use of plastic and man’s failure to do anything to stop it. The concluding stanza, therefore, emphasises the pressing need to take accountability and collaborate to reduce the adverse effects of human actions on the environment through an image of the pervasive and intrusive presence of plastic waste in nature.

4. Midway Island Albatross

Like the previous poem, “Midway Island Albatross” deals with the impact of unregulated plastic consumption and waste on the environment, particularly on wildlife.

5 Atwood, M. (2020d). Foliage. In *Dearly* (p. 85). United Kingdom: Chatto & Windus. All the subsequent references to the poem are cited from this source and in parentheses by line number(s).

The poem begins with a description of the things found “inside the barebones” (1)⁶ of something. There are such colourful materials as tags, ribbons, balloons, silver foils, springs, wheels, and coils (3-6). In the second stanza, it is acknowledged that these materials are found “inside the dead bird child” (10). Then, the poem asks a very moving question: “What should have been there” (7) inside the dead body of this Midway Island albatross? The answer is that it should have been the necessary things that could have helped the bird grow, the bird should have had strong wings to be able to fly over a clean sea (11-13).

In one of her interviews, Atwood argues that “[i]f you follow birds, it allows you to get a pretty global view of what’s happening to the planet” (qtd. in Leber, 2019, para. 3). In this statement, Atwood refers to the idea that the numbers and/or behaviours of animals like birds can serve as indicators of environmental health. Accordingly, the poem portrays an image of a bird killed by plastic pollution. The poem also gives us a picture of what should have been, a healthy and beautiful bird soaring over the sky, and what is at present, “[...] glittering mess, / this festering nestwork” (14-15). The concept of “nestwork” is important because it describes how plastic waste has become intertwined with nature, much like a bird’s nest made of various materials. However, in this case, it is a harmful and toxic “festering nestwork”, which implies that this interconnectedness, instead of providing protection and care, is detrimental to the environment. The image of a healthy bird flying across the skies contrasts sharply with the reality that is figuratively represented as a “glittering mess” and a “festering nestwork”, which alludes to the current status of the ecosystem, because of the overabundance of plastic garbage.

5. Editorial Notes

“Editorial Notes” depicts an imaginary conversation between the speaking persona in the poem and “she” (1)⁷, the editor. The editor advises the speaker to refrain “from exhortation and despair” (3). It means that the editor wants the speaker to refrain from urging people to act on environmental issues and being oppressive in that matter. The editor wants the speaker to end “exhortation” (3), forced persuasion, and “despair” (3), overwhelming negativity while contemplating the human-nature relations and the

6 Atwood, M. (2020f). Midway Island Albatross. In *Dearly* (p. 86). United Kingdom: Chatto & Windus. All subsequent references to the poem are cited from the same source and in brackets by line number(s).

7 Atwood, M. (2020b). Editorial Notes. In *Dearly* (p. 87). United Kingdom: Chatto & Windus. All the subsequent references to the poem are cited from this source and in parentheses by line number(s).

human impact on the earth. Instead, the editor recommends that the speaker adopt a kind of approach that provides a profound and experiential understanding of how human behaviour affects the rest of the planet. More importantly, the editor suggests that the speaker should allow people to come to their own conclusions (12-13) regarding environmental matters. The speaker, however, contends that “[t]here is some danger in this” (16). Although the poem does not explicitly state the potential dangers involved in the approach proposed by the editor, it is apparent that the poem pictures two differing views and discourses surrounding how environmental problems should be approached.

Scholars and critics have begun to incorporate such cognitive tendencies as “psychic numbing”, “pseudoefficacy”, “the prominence effect”, and “the asymmetry of trust” (Slovic & Slovic, 2015b, p. 170) used by social scientists in ecocritical studies to refer to the social and psychological impediments against cultivating compassion in the face of catastrophic events and humanitarian challenges, namely genocide, climate change, extinction of species, and feminine. The aim is to generate new communication skills to mitigate these cognitive tendencies. It is argued that “[...] when faced with the need to empathize with numerous beings worthy of our concern, the human ability to feel compassion tends to diminish” (Slovic & Slovic, 2015a, p. 9). “Editorial Notes” appears to address the complexities inherent in communicating and understanding environmental concerns and advocating for change. The poem, therefore, underlines the importance of environmental narratives as well as the scientific arguments, statistical facts and numbers. This is one of the arguments of empirical ecocriticism which aims to study the impact of environmental narratives “[...] to expand our understanding of the psychological, social, and political work of environmental narratives through synergy by integrating the environmental humanities and environmental social sciences” (Scheider-Mayerson et. al., 2023, p. 8). In that sense, the conversation between the speaker and the editor in “Editorial Notes” serves as a compelling example of the fact that assessing the impact of environmental narratives is an equally important but often overlooked issue.

6. Sorcerer’s Apprentice

“Sorcerer’s Apprentice” explores the effects of unregulated human acts and the consequent challenges of preventing and reversing the process by drawing on the motif of the Sorcerer’s Apprentice tale. The first half of the poem tells the story of “a

machine made by the Devil" (2).⁸ As a Devil's machine, it can grant any wishes, "and some idiot wishes for salt" (5). The machine fulfils his wish, but because he is unable to turn it off, too much salt is produced. To stop it, the Devil's machine is thrown into the sea, "and that's why the sea is salt" (10).

The Devil's machine in the poem can be defined as "[...] an emblem of the artificial, of the unfeeling utilitarian spirit, and of the fragmented, industrial style of life that allegedly follows from the premises of the empirical philosophy" (Marx, 2000, p. 18). In that sense, the image of a magic machine serves as a symbolic representation of a powerful and artificial force. The lack of ethical considerations and the sense of responsibility leads to a destructive outcome, emphasizing the potential dangers of utilitarian approaches divorced from ethical considerations. The machine, thus, can be associated with an industrial lifestyle resulting from "the premises of the empirical philosophy", to use Marx's phrase. The machine, according to the poem produces a "mountain of whatnot" (20), and "[...] we throw it all into the sea / as we have always done" (21-22), emphasising the environmental consequences of unchecked technological progress and the lack of control and responsibility in that regard. Even if we are aware of the detrimental consequences of our actions, we persist in discarding the consequences, much like tossing objects into the sea, without even addressing the initial problem. The poem also criticises man's tendency to dump industrial waste into the sea. For instance, the Japanese government's controversial decision to release Fukushima's so-called diluted nuclear wastewater into the ocean is one of the latest examples of such a tendency.⁹

The poem argues that "it's the same story: *Go* is easy, / *Stop* is the hard part" (12-13, emphasis in original), implying that people frequently begin processes without fully understanding the long-term repercussions and that as time passes, reversing or halting those processes becomes progressively more challenging. When read as a kind of commentary on the previous poem, it can be concluded that the poem prophecies

8 Atwood, M. (2020g). *Sorcerer's Apprentice*. In *Dearly* (p. 88). United Kingdom: Chatto & Windus. All subsequent references to the poem are cited from this source and in parentheses by line number(s).

9 On the Japanese government's controversial decision to release Fukushima's so-called diluted nuclear wastewater into the ocean. See: Yamaguchi, M. (2023, August 24). Fukushima's radioactive wastewater is being released in the Pacific. Here's what you need to know. In *Associated Press News*. Retrieved from: <https://apnews.com/article/japan-fukushima-nuclear-radioactive-wastewater-release-fdaed86a7366f68c70eca0397b71b221>; Murakami, S. (2023, August 24). Fukushima wastewater released into the ocean; China bans all Japanese seafood. In *Reuters*. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/japan-set-release-fukushima-water-amid-criticism-seafood-import-bans-2023-08-23/>

that “[...] this will not end well” (24), serving as a cautionary reflection on the results of uncontrolled human activity and the necessity of taking the long-term ramifications of our decisions into account.

7. Whales

The seventh poem of the *Plasticene Suite* cycle, “Whales”, deals with the dumping of plastic wastes into the sea as in the cases of the previous poems, namely “Sorcerer’s Apprentice”, “Faint Hopes”, and “Foliage”, from a different perspective through concentrating on the detrimental effect of this action on marine life. Indeed, there are multiple references to land-based plastic leakage entering waterways not only in these three poems but also throughout the entire cycle to change “[...] the conversation from land-based imaginaries, discourses that root the human in soil and earth/Earth toward the oceanic” (DeLoughrey, 2019, p. 135). The poem portrays an image of a mourning mother whale carrying her deceased child who died of plastic pollution (1-6).¹⁰ Then, it explores the pain and remorse that one has after watching such a horrible event on television. By asking “how did we do this by just living / in the normal way” (10-11), the poem urges readers to consider their involvement in this issue by engaging in “routine” behaviours like using plastic packages and wrapping. Accordingly, the poem underlines the fact that “[...] the plastic crisis stands at the forefront of oceanic environmental concerns and, thus, as predominant site of potential for blue ecocriticism” (Dobrin, 2021, p. 162). The poem’s discourse foregrounding the “oceanic environmental discourse”, to use Dobrin’s phrase, is significant as it is one of the gravest yet neglected problems of our age. It is because, “[d]espite current efforts, it is estimated that 75 to 199 million tonnes of plastic is currently found in our oceans” (UN Environment Programme, n.d., Rivers and lakes section, para. 1). The poem, therefore, questions why mankind stopped using more sustainable materials like “[...] paper and glass and tin / and hemp and leather and oilskin” (20-21) and has begun to use plastic instead. The final lines of the poem ask a very crucial question: “It will be! Will it be? / Will we decide to, finally?” (26-27). This question emphasises how urgent the issue is and prompts readers to think about their accountability in the context of the ecological disaster.

The main idea of this poem recalls Harold Fromm’s arguments that “[...] modern Western man’s comfortable life amidst the conveniences of technology has caused

10 Atwood, M. (2020i). Whales. In *Dearly* (pp. 89-90). United Kingdom: Chatto & Windus. All the subsequent references to the poem are cited from this source and in parentheses by line number(s).

him to suffer a spiritual death, to feel alienated, empty, without purpose and direction" (Fromm, 1996, p. 32) and "[...] he is mostly unaware of a connection with Nature that has been artfully concealed by modern technology" (33). Fromm suggests that technology has completely changed the way we live by providing a plethora of conveniences and improvements that have increased our level of comfort, yet the convenience and comfort offered by technology make it easier for individuals to forget the importance of the natural environment and the impact it has on their overall well-being. The poem, therefore, can be argued to highlight the discrepancy between the modern way of living, which is based on technological conveniences like plastics, and the impact of such a lifestyle on spirituality and morality. It illustrates the audience's response to witnessing dead whales on television, exposing their ignorance towards the detrimental effects of technology on the environment. In that sense, the poem questions whether modern man can truly sympathise with the demise of the other living beings on the planet and begin to feel responsible, or whether our anthropogenic worldview and lifestyle prevent us from recognising our "contribution" to environmental issues.

8. Little Robot

The subject of "Little Robot" is quite different from the other poems examined in this cycle. In this poem, the high technology level that humanity has reached and the intricate relationship between technology and humanity are discussed through the image of an artificial intelligence robot "[...] designed to learn like a child" (6).¹¹ Recently, the notion of the Anthropocene has begun to be criticised as it ignores the relationship between humans, non-humans, and technological agents alike. It is because, with technology evolving rapidly, the relationship between humans and technological agents has become intricate and uncertain.

As Ursula K. Heise argues "[s]cience, in one form or another, has formed a central part of ecological debates to date, [...]" (1997, p. 4). The image of a hi-tech robot in the poem, emulating humans, blurs the boundaries between human and non-human. In that sense, the poem recalls the relationship between posthumanism and ecocritical studies. Accordingly, "[...] posthuman ecocriticism becomes a way of reading the biosphere and technosphere transversally in the variations of matter, and interpreting

11 Atwood, M. (2020e). Little Robot. In *Dearly* (pp. 91-92). United Kingdom: Chatto & Windus. All the subsequent references to the poem are cited from this source and in parentheses by line number(s).

ecologically the ethical and social implications of existence beneath the carbon-based life embedded in agential intra-actions with the biotic forms" (Oppermann, 2016, p. 283). Transcending anthropocentrism, such an approach focuses on how human and non-human entities coexist and influence each other within the context of ecological relationships.

This can be regarded as a mirror of the larger discussion about the effects of unregulated technological advancements on the environment. It is becoming more important to think about how human advancement and reliance on cutting-edge technology could affect the environment, including in terms of energy use, pollution, and habitat destruction. As Atwood (2014, para. 23) claims "[e]very technology we've ever made has also altered the way we live", implying that if we reshape the world to supply the demands of robots such as cheap energy, when "[...] the energy disappears, so will the robots. And, to a large degree, so will we, since the lifestyle we have built and come to depend on floats on a sea of electricity". Accordingly, the poem asks crucial questions: "what will you make of yourself / in this world we are making?" (22-23) and "What will you make of us?" (24). Atwood reminds us that non-human matters also have creative agencies, and thus, we should be "[...] ecologically aware of the crisscrossing strands of their stories" (Oppermann, 2016, p. 288). These questions, therefore, delve into the complex and unpredictable relationship between technology and humanity's future, urging the reader to contemplate further issues regarding technological advancement, existential and moral considerations, and the ecological impact of human actions.

9. The Bright Side

"The Bright Side", the last poem of the *Plasticene Suite* cycle, incorporates irony and sarcasm to provide a concluding commentary on the root cause of plastic waste generation. The poem highlights the fact that plastics are so durable and long-lasting materials that they have become an integral part of our culture of convenience, and, in pursuit of convenience, mankind turns a blind eye to the disastrous effects of plastics on nature. The poem juxtaposes the perceived advantages of plastic with its potential drawbacks. The speaker questions whether the benefits of plastic truly outweigh its negative impact by using sarcasm to highlight the absurdity of such claims.

The opening line of the poem, "But look on the bright side," (1)¹², is a sarcastic beginning indicating an effort to draw attention to the ostensible advantages of plastic in our lives. Yet, from the second line onwards, "you say" (2), the speaker explicitly foregrounds a difference of opinion. The second line implies that someone else, referred to as "you" has a positive view of plastics being a crucial part of our convenience culture. This line also distinguishes the speaker's perspective from that of "you". It means that the speaker simply quotes what "you" is saying or arguing, and therefore, the speaker sets the tone for irony and critique simply by quoting "you".

A set of rhetorical questions that represents the arguments of "you" in the poem, "Has there ever been such brightness?" (3), "Has there ever been a flower as bright" (4), "Has there ever been red as red, / a blue as blue?" (7-8), and "Has there ever been a bucket / as light as this to carry water" (10-11), "Why should we use the heavy one / so easily broken?" (13-14), brings attention to the artificial vibrancy of plastic products through emphasising their visual appeal while subtly highlighting their inauthenticity. The arguments in favour of using plastics often revolve around their durability, attractiveness, affordability, and lightweight properties, which make them an attractive option compared to heavier and more fragile alternatives. However, this perspective fails to consider the fleeting and deceptive nature of convenience in a consumer-driven culture that values immediate satisfaction over long-term sustainability.

The poem also invokes images of simple everyday objects, and the objects of leisure and adventure such as plastic flowers, a plastic bucket, and a plastic ice-cube tray. One can argue that the poem highlights the frivolous and frequently unnecessary use of plastic in situations where other materials could be more appropriate to expose a culture that is dependent on the convenience of plastic solutions. For instance, the final stanza of the poem, "(And the beloved twistable / pea-green always dependable / ice-cube tray . . .)" (22-24), represents how people are driven to items (beloved ice-cube tray) that claim to make their lives simpler (twistable ice-cube tray), often at the sacrifice of sustainability, and the appeal of convenience (always dependable). Items such as plastic flowers, plastic bottles, and plastic ice-cube trays are trivial and disposable household items that contribute greatly to plastic waste. Through irony and rhetorical inquiry, the poem muses on the influence of plastic on our convenience-driven world. It encourages readers to ponder the apparent benefits of plastic against the long-term

12 Atwood, M. (2020h). The Bright Side. In *Dearly* (pp. 93-94). United Kingdom: Chatto & Windus. All the subsequent references to the poem are cited from this source and in parentheses by line number(s).

environmental consequences, thereby promoting a rethinking of social values and objectives.

This last poem of the *Plasticene Suite* cycle along with the preceding poems alludes to the “power of matter to build dynamics of meaning in and across bodies” (Iovino, 2012, p. 136). Relocating human life and culture in a wider web of connection, *Plasticene Suite* poems align with the premise of material ecocriticism that “[a]ll matter, [...], is a ‘storied matter’. It is a material ‘mesh’ of meanings, properties, and processes, in which human and nonhuman players are interlocked in networks that produce undeniable signifying forces” (Iovino & Oppermann, 2014, pp. 1-2). Through highlighting various ways in which plastic is prevalent in the environment, from plastic continuing its existence in the oceans and on the soil to plastic contaminating animals, other living beings, and thus, human life, Atwood accentuates its material cycle. In *Plasticene Suite* poems, plastic as a durable and affordable material has an impact on other ecosystems, bodies, and cultures as well.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the *Plasticene Suite* poems not only discuss the detrimental impact of unregulated plastic waste on the environment, oceans, plants, and animals but also scrutinise our failure to recycle this material effectively. Resonating with such terms and concepts as the Anthropocene, the Plasticene, the Capitalocene, the Plasticsphere, empirical ecocriticism, blue ecocriticism, post-human ecocriticism, and material ecocriticism, the poems in the cycle offer a multifaceted exploration of a major environmental issue and contribute to the contemporary discourse on the intersection of environment, literature, and ecological consciousness. These frameworks provide unique perspectives on understanding the relationship between humans and the environment, as well as the ways in which literature reflects and engages with environmental issues.

The eco-poetic reading of *Plasticene Suite* poems, therefore, highlights the significant effects of human actions and convenience-driven lifestyles on the environment by foregrounding “the role of our cultural activities in the ways we produce, reproduce and consume this embodied text we call the world” (Iovino & Oppermann, 2012, p. 460). In that sense, *Plasticene Suite* poems foreground the fact that contemplating our consumption patterns and understanding our responsibility to preserve the environment

is crucial. The recent pandemic, for instance, has led to a heightened dependence on single-use plastic materials, resulting in plastic waste emerging as a major environmental concern. The ecocritical reading of the poems, therefore, urges readers to reflect on the impact of their choices and emphasise the significance of sustainability in our everyday lives. Accordingly, it can also be contended that these poems explore the intricate relationship between time and the environment in the sense that they impel readers to consider the transitory nature of human life itself in the face of the long-term consequences of our actions on the planet. Thus, by analysing Atwood's poems through an eco-poetic lens, we can gain a deeper understanding of the growing problem of plastic consumption in our world, and at the same time, appreciate the effectiveness of contemporary poetry in addressing this pressing environmental issue.

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Representation of Feelings in *Two Books: The Anatolikon/To the City* by John Ash

Emre ÇAKAR¹ 



¹Assistant Professor, Manisa Celal Bayar University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of English Language and Literature, Manisa, Türkiye

ORCID: E.Ç. 0000-0003-2288-9261

Corresponding author:

Emre ÇAKAR,
Manisa Celal Bayar University, Faculty
of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Department of English Language and
Literature, Manisa, Türkiye
E-mail: emre.cakar@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the representation of emotions in the poetry of John Ash with a focus on his collection entitled *Two Books: The Anatolikon/To the City* (2002). Through an in-depth analysis of selected poems, the study explores Ash's encounters with ancient Greek cities, the impact of migration, and the use of metafiction. The study also considers Ash's portrayal of historical events and the attribution of emotions to ancient cities and highlights his role as a semihistorian. Furthermore, it examines the relationship between emotions and thoughts and traces its origins to the emergence of Romanticism and the shift in the literature from strict rationality to the reliance on emotions. Within these compositions, his personas manage the preservation and history of ancient cities that pose historical significance in the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman empires and Armenia in poetry. Intentionally obfuscating the differentiation between reality and history, Ash invites readers to navigate the dynamic interplay between the plain present and the echoes of an ancient era. Positioned within the history of British poetry, Ash is recognized as a contemporary postmodern poet. A dualistic approach characterizes his poetic works in which one facet is marked by the emotive expressions of his speakers, particularly regarding the antiquated urban landscapes they visit. His philosophical musings on poetics, history, and poetry mark the other facet of his poetry. This study aims to examine Ash's postmodern inclinations in light of his utilization of emotions and ideas in the poems of *Two Books: The Anatolikon/To the City*.

Keywords: John Ash, Feelings, Postmodern poetry, *Two Books: The Anatolikon/To the City*, metafiction



Introduction

Exploring the embodiment of life in literature has been a prominent topic throughout the history of arts and letters. In his influential work, *The Great Tradition*, Leavis (1950) discusses the relationship between life and literature by examining the novels of George Eliot, Henry James, and Joseph Conrad. The importance of novelists, as highlighted by Leavis in his book, lies in their transformative impact on the art of literature and human consciousness. He emphasizes their ability to expand the boundaries of artistic expression and to deepen the understanding of life's possibilities (p. 2). Leavis's argument focuses on the notion of a "sense of life," which he posits as essential for authors in accurately reflecting life. This sense of life encompasses an interest in the complexities of existence and a refined aesthetic sensibility. According to Leavis, the fusion of profound insight into life with an appreciation for its aesthetic dimensions distinguishes great literature.

The origin of the relationship between emotions and thoughts can be traced back to several centuries ago, particularly during the emergence of Romanticism, which marks a departure from Enlightenment. In *The Struggle of the Modern*, Spender (1963) claims that Keats and his fellow Romantics notably revisited Shakespeare's concept of the imagination "as an independent sovereign activity centered in the poetic genius, and owing allegiance to no superior intellectual authority" (p. 11). This notion marked a departure from the approach of Augustan poets who utilized imaginative talents to support established theological, aristocratic, and rationalist ideologies. However, Spender contends that poets of the 18th century, similar to Pope, regarded the imagination as a servant of the rational thought of their era and determined to harmonize divine and scientific reasoning (1963, p. 11). In contrast, the Romantics viewed poetry as a realm independent of such intellectual creation and prioritized the free expression of individual creative vision over attempts to unite different philosophical realms. The key notion they posited was that poetry, if confined solely to conveying truth, would cease to be poetic. This concept reached its zenith with Wordsworth's declaration in the "Preface" of *Lyrical Ballads* (1802): "For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of feelings" (pp. x-xi). This sentence became the motto and the "Preface" became the manifestation of Romanticism. Consequently, poets shifted their focus from objects and actions to emotions and, thereby, emphasized the divergence of feelings from thoughts within the realm of poetry.

In *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition*, Abrams (1971)

evaluates the intricate relationship between poetry and science. During the 18th century, a widespread belief is that poetry and science were diametrically opposed and mutually incompatible, which was encapsulated by the notion that “if science is true, poetry must be false” (p. 299). Elucidating this dichotomy through an episode involving Newton and Keats, Abrams recounts that Newton discovered that light passing through a prism transforms into a spectrum of colors—a rainbow. Years later, Keats accused Newton of dismantling “all the poetry of the rainbow by reducing it to the prismatic colors” (Abrams, 1971, p. 303). This discord between poetry and science is deeply connected to the issue of *given reality*. Western philosophers typically found themselves in conflict with the inherent nature of reality, as articulated by Kateb (1997) who stated that they were frequently “at war with given reality.” Because the world was disliked in its given form. This opposition mainly stemmed from the fact that the world was disliked simply because it existed, which leads to discontent, anger, and, ultimately rebellion (p. 1241). Alienated with the established reality, the Romantics directed their focus toward nature: “Nature is alive and, for the artist to be intensely alive, he or she must fuse with that world and attain a highly individualized mystical experience that digs down into the core of reality” (Peer, 2011, pp. 1–2). Consequently, the Romantics underscored the potency of emotions in relation to the profound significance of nature.

The tension between reason and emotions paved the way for the French Revolution, which emerged as a seminal event within the tapestry of Romanticism. Despite its initial promise, the aftermath of the Revolution did not align with optimistic expectations and left a disillusioned populace in its wake. The reason is that “from the creation of political and intellectual freedom it turned to tyranny, slaughter, and imperialist expansion” (Peckham, 1951, p. 16). This disappointment was particularly poignant for intellectuals and poets, such as Wordsworth and Coleridge, who were fervent proponents of the Revolution. The disillusionment ran deep; a number of critics posited that Wordsworth experienced a “spiritual death” shortly after witnessing the discouraging outcomes of the Revolution (Peckham, 1951, p. 16). The loss of equilibrium between emotions and reason left these intellectuals unable to reconcile with the stark new reality, which ultimately consigned them to a fate of spiritual demise. Thus, after losing the balance between emotions and reason, they could not compete with the new reality, and they were destined to spiritual death.

Certain postmodern poets confronted a parallel challenge when facing the veracity of truth and accepting the given reality because “truth for postmodernists is an effect

of discourse," that is, "truth is always contextual" (Flax, 1992, p. 452). The exploration of truth and reality by postmodern poets signifies the interplay among discourse, context, and perception in shaping one's understanding of the world. Similar to the rebellion of Romantics against the rational constructs of Enlightenment, postmodernists did against the *so-called* given reality of modernity. In this context, Peer (2011) asserts the significance of Romanticism in understanding modernism and postmodernism and emphasizes its crucial role in comprehending Romanticism (p. 1). Contrary to the romantic archetype of the solitary seeker of meaning in nature, John Ash, a postmodern poet, diverges in his approach. His personas express a yearning for ancient cities and cultures, yet he skillfully avoids surrendering to melancholy. Operating within the postmodern ethos, Ash employs an ironic and cynical style when addressing the world around him. Acheson (1996) comments on Thom Gunn, a poet associated with the Movement, by noting that his poetry "admires the art of imitation" and "involves the abjuration of romantic individualism and quests for pure originality or autonomy" (p. 168). Although indefinitely classified as a postmodernist, Gunn's poetry exhibits early aspects of postmodernism. Similarly, Ash's characters neither seek meaning in nature as do their romantic counterparts nor aspire to transcend the world. Instead, Ash engages with cities and people in a cynical manner, which distinguishes him from the romantic poets. This cynicism is evident in the interactions of his characters with city life and in their attitudes toward human relationships and cultural events.

Examining the relationship between Romanticism and postmodern poetry, Acheson's assertion holds significance: "The poet is no longer, like Yeats, the romantic agonist fighting the 'filthy tide' of modernity nor, like Larkin, the disillusioned sufferer of a debased world where communality is simply banality, but the servant of an essential humanity that derives from shared community" (1996, p. 368). This quotation implies a departure from the individualistic and adversarial stances of earlier poets and underscores the evolving responsibilities and perspectives of poets regardless of changing social dynamics and challenges. In this context, Ash's language consistently carries a mocking and ironic voice, which distinguishes it from the somber and melancholic romantic tradition. This divergence reflects the evolution of poetic sensibilities and perspectives in response to changing cultural and philosophical landscapes.

The concept of interest in life is associated with realism to a certain extent. Sauerberg claims that:

[p]ostmodernist writers tend to focus either on “reality” in a state not to be processed because already edited or processed before the literary imagination gets to work, or on the act of writing itself, and to problematize any authorial or textual authority. (1991, p. 2)

By exploring the manifestations of postmodernist tendencies in prose, Sauerberg’s analysis highlights the challenge to traditional textual authority within the realm of prose literature, which reveals the complex interplay between reality and writing and the nature of artistic expression.

The relationship between realism and poetry changes its stance in postmodernism and focuses on unsteadiness. According to Gregson (1996), a collision occurs between postmodernism and realism in contemporary British poetry, which produced instabilities (p. 238). In this collision, the instabilities not only challenge the conventional notions of representation but also drive the dynamic exploration of diverse perspectives and poetic techniques. Although instabilities disrupt traditional literary frameworks, the concept of realism persists as a powerful force, which functions as a standard for portraying the unvarnished truths of human experience. A few critics evaluated the characteristics of stimulating the writing of novelists in poetry, which paved the way for an in-depth understanding of the instabilities that originated from the complex relationship between reality and postmodern poetry. Building on the persisting power of realism, Kennedy (1996) analyzes the perspectives of postmodern poets and elucidates their challenging conventional notions of textual authority. In *New Relations*, Kennedy also examines several characteristics that are unique to British postmodernist poetry. These characteristics are “the dialogue with realism,” “the ghosts of politics,” and “aesthetic practice versus social reality” (1996, p. 86). Expanding on the examination of the engagement of postmodern poetry with realism, Kennedy conducts an in-depth examination of the intricate relationship between reality and postmodern poetry. He explores the unconventional notions of realism in poetry and argues that “[c]onventional realism may be frustrated in its desire for mimetic precision but the world is still describable: the difference is that description has no responsibility except to the logic of the imagination” (Kennedy, 1996, p. 100). Thus, conventional realism encounters certain challenges in capturing the intricacies of reality; nevertheless, it remains valuable in describing the world through the lens of imagination in which precision is not the fundamental element of postmodern poetry.

As Gregson states, instabilities are “the premise of the most radical postmodernists ... like John Ash” (1996, p. 34). Born in Manchester in 1948, Ash is one of the minor but eccentric poets of contemporary British poetry. Ash proceeded to spend one year in Cyprus and subsequently returned to Manchester before relocating to New York. Ultimately, he resided in Istanbul from 1996 to the time of his passing in 2019. The Introduction section of *The New Poetry* claimed that John Ash is “fascinated ... with the excitements of senses, and with social bizarrerie” (Hulse, Kennedy & Morley, 1993, p. 23). Blended with senses and social strangeness, Ash’s poetry is frequently set in an urban background to underline the inseparable relationship between the two. While portraying various scenes from city life, Ash benefits from the possibilities of postmodern poetry, that is, he rarely locates “a stable self in his work” (Hulse, Kennedy & Morley, 1993, p. 23). In his book, *To the City*, Ash handles several places. For example, in his poem “Some Places I Know and Do Not Know,” Ash speaks about cities as follows: “I suppose I wanted to tell you about these places/because I find them beautiful and interesting” (Ash, 2002, p. 88). However, a few of these places are unattractive to Ash, for example, “they often turn out to be a lot smaller than you expected” (2002, p. 88). The problem lies in the representation of these places, which does not reflect the place for real. Therefore, he claims, “[t]hey look like reproductions of themselves” (2002, p. 88). In the meantime, these places transform into their pulp replicas without any elements of authenticity, which he criticizes in his poetry. Ash frankly states that he does not intend to write about such places; he says, “I could tell you about my trip to *Albania*, / except that I have not yet been to *Albania*” (Ash, 2002, p. 88). Employing an unstable self in his poem, Ash creates the idea that the unstable self is reliable. Thus, apart from cities with copies of their images, the unstable self also finds a place in Ash’s poetry, which diverts Ash’s writing away from traditional realism.

Typically employing the city as a background, Ash reflects his experiences of the cities he lived in and visited in his poetry. The author’s poetry collection namely *Two Books: The Anatolikon/To the City* (2002) evinces his preoccupation with urban centers, particularly those located in Türkiye. He employs the antique cities of the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman empires and Armenia. However, Ash deliberately blurs the distinction between the real and the historical by representing various emotions through the speakers of his poems. The feelings of people in those cities with vast historical backgrounds vary; however, the poet’s emotions about the cities and the people living therein remain on the page. A few critics claim that “John Ash is fascinated by the sweeping gestures of purple, elevated styles, with the excitements of the senses,

and with social bizarrerie. He has rarely found it possible to locate a stable self in his work" (Hulse, Kennedy & Morley, 1993, p. 23). Ash, who is considered one of the British postmodern poets, follows a two-sided path. The first reveals the process how his speakers feel in these old cities, while the second examines the significance of poetry, history, and meaning of life. This study analyzes selected poems by Ash, in *The Anatolikon* and *To the City*, with a focus on the utilization of emotions and ideas about ancient cities and the poetry featured in these works.

Whispers of the Heart, Echoes of the Mind

Poets and critics Morrison and Motion (1982) edited *The Penguin Book of Contemporary British Poetry* and defined the poetry of the 1970s as impersonal; Morrison and Motion claimed that the young poets of the period were "not inhabitants of their own lives" (1982, p. 12). In other words, the poetry of the period reports the lives of other people from the perspective of poets who are only spectators. As it turns out, these poets were "intrigued observers, not victims but onlookers" (1982, p. 12). Being an observer enables the poet to consider events from a vantage point in which he/she can interpret certain behaviors and emotions of people. The role of the poet-observer is to closely examine the lives of individuals and subsequently craft narratives based on their observations. In fact, while playing this role, they benefit from the effects of space on emotions in their poems. Lynch (1976) discusses the correlation between emotions and concepts and their contextual placement within the environment in the "Foreword" of *Environmental Knowing* and states:

Feelings and ideas are not merely troublesome intervening variables that must be passed through in order to understand visible behavior. Good behavior is by no means a reasonable motive for improving the environment. Feelings and ideas, and the actions and sensations that are part of them, are what it is like to be alive, and the goodness or badness of that experience is the why of policy. (p. viii)

In this quotation, Lynch emphasizes the importance of feelings and ideas, and, importantly, he defines the fundamentals of being alive. For Lynch, to be alive, one must be aware of one's emotions and ideas. It is the interchange between people and their environment, which "encourages them to grow into fully realized persons" (1976, p. v). Hence, the poet must possess a vivid sense of life to reflect the colorful aspects

of life, especially by pondering on emotions. The literature calls this notion “the embodiment of life,” which can also be traced in Ash’s *The Anatolikon*.

The Anatolikon includes a collection of poems that explore various aspects of life in Türkiye, a country where the poet resided for a while. According to Scannell (2002), these poems “effectively evoke the otherness of an alien culture and its ambience as it becomes more familiar yet always retains the mystery and allure of the exotic” (p. 51). Moreover, the introductory poem of the book sets the stage as a captivating narrative similar to a diary, which enables the reader to embark on a fascinating journey through various cities and locations in Anatolia. “The Anatolikon,” the first poem of the book, is set as if it were a diary of the speaker in Anatolia; thus, the reader accompanies the journey of the narrator in several cities and places. At the same time, the reader witnesses emotional changes in the speaker throughout the poem. The speaker opens the poem, “They said: ‘Why do you want to go that place? There is / nothing to see’” (Ash, 2002, p. 9). The initial verses of the poem suggest that the location lacks interest or appeal. Nevertheless, the speaker still wants to see the place, because he likes its name, which means *opium* and *fortress*, that is, Afyonkarahisar in Turkish. Although Afyon is considered an uninteresting place, the speaker reports original stories that he encounters during his trip, such as “two young salesmen from Uşak ... sang for [them] on / the summit / Of the fortress rock” (Ash, 2002, p. 9). Eventually, he learns that “all the kilims had been stolen / from the mosque,” which made him very sad (p. 9). While the reader knows the geography where the events occur and witness them, they share the feelings of the narrator.

In the middle of the poem, the poet–speaker asks himself, “what was I looking for?” (Ash, 2002, p. 12). Amid the feeling of psychological perplexity, the poet–speaker hints that he does not know what he is looking for; therefore, he continues to wander in the cities. After seeing the walls of İznik, the ancient Greek city of Nicaea, he visits another ancient Greek city, Sinasos, that features “many fine many fine Greek / houses / With balconies and sunrooms falling slowly into ruin” (Ash, 2002, p. 12). In Sinasos, a village in the Cappadocia region, “three charming girls” invited the speaker, and he recounted the story as follows:

In an upper-room, where no one lived, they showed me
 paintings
 In which the painter had evoked the orthogonal boulevards

Of European cities he had never seen, and here a tale of exile
 And expulsion lay concealed like a sharp pin in the folds of
 a blanket,
 For, of the family who built the house, or their descendants,
 or neighbours,
 Or the descendants of those neighbours, not one remained
 in Sinassos. (Ash, 2002, p. 13)

In these lines, the poet–speaker overtly refers to the population exchange between Türkiye and Greece in 1924, which underlines one of the simple truths of human experience, namely, migration. Is it migration? Following World War I and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, Türkiye underwent a period characterized by policies that affected the Rum and Turk societies. In response to ethnic and religious tensions that were prevalent in Turkish and Greek regions, the respective states determined a population exchange initiative within these territories. This exchange compelled thousands of Turkish people residing in the Greece and Rum communities in Türkiye, whose roots in these lands spanned centuries, to relocate to various regions (Metintaş & Metintaş, 2018, p. 2).

According to the Lausanne Peace Treaty, The Government of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye and the Greek Government reached an agreement that encompasses the following provisions. A compulsory exchange of Turkish citizens shall be enforced following the Greek Orthodox faith residing within Turkish territory, and Greek citizens practicing the Muslim faith residing within Greek territory (*Lausanne Peace Treaty VI*). As per the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne, the populace of Sinassos who were of Greek origin were required to migrate to Greece. Consequently, the Turkish residents of Greece were obligated to migrate to Türkiye. Here, the speaker neither feels that he is a part of the exiled village nor forms intimacy with the girls. The poet–observer perceives the feeling of exile and expulsion in the ancient village by directing attention to objects around him but does not allow himself to shoulder the burden of exile. At the end of the poem, the speaker says, “O distances and ghosts!” (Ash, 2002, p. 13), which refers to people that were forced to leave their places. He goes on, “O the descent of the sun in places where forgotten names / are written” (2002, p. 13). Through the sunset, the poet–observer remarks on the gloom created by the end of the day and reminds the reader of the names of the *forgotten* people. Lastly, he finishes his poem by saying, “The road is lovely as if there were no death” (2002, p. 13). Thus, the observant

narrative of the poet captures the profound impact of migration and exile and draws attention to the historical population exchange between Türkiye and Greece in 1924. While describing the weight of exile and expulsion in the ancient village as evidence of the simple truth of human experience, Ash challenges the traditional textual authority through the documentary-like statements of the poet–observer.

Ash further explores the representation of personal reality by combining the reflections of the poet–observer with plain emotions. According to Campion (2004), Ash’s portrayal of emotions in his poetry originates from his *lonerhood*, which results in a sense of “conversational openness” within his poems (p. 141). Campion also argues that Ash skillfully intertwines “absence and presence, dream image and naturalistic reality,” which creates a captivating blend of elements (Campion, 2004, pp. 141–142). The first poem of “A Short Divan” sequence *To the City* entitled “The Gloom of Turkish Music” begins with the introduction of the feelings of the speaker about Turkish music. Here, the gloomy tone of Turkish music reminds him of the death of his mother. After such death, the speaker feels devastated and says, “I thought when my mother died / I would be inconsolable, that it would be ‘the end of me,’ / but it was not” (Ash, 2002, p. 79). However, he reveals that his mournful state disappeared within some time: “It felt strange, but sad and regrettable only in the sense / that everything is sad and regrettable, or potentially so” (Ash, 2002, p. 79). The speaker regards his state as relatively strange; however, it eventually turns out to be normal. From an alternative viewpoint, Ash initially highlights the emotional distress experienced by a lonesome individual in an unfamiliar cultural setting, which subsequently draws a parallel between this sentiment of despondency and the bereavement of the speaker of his mother.

In postmodern writing, the concept of history has transformed into *histories*, which emphasizes the existence of multiple perspectives and interpretations of history, due to the challenges against the idea of a single historical truth. White (1978), a prominent historian and theorist, points out the plurality of historical truth and of readings and analyses and notes as follows:

no historical event is intrinsically tragic; it can only be conceived as such from a particular point of view or from within the context of a structured set of events of which it is an element enjoying a privileged place. For in history what is tragic from one perspective is comic from another”. (p. 47)

White emphasizes the plurality of historical truth, which highlights that different interpretations are contingent on the contextual framework in which events are situated. This notion of diverse perspectives is reflected in Ash's poems in which he focuses on historical events and cities from various angles. This notion is true for the two abovementioned poems. Building on the representation of diverse perspectives in postmodern writing, Ash (2002) employs his personal analysis of different historical events once again in "The Displeasure of Ruins." The poet-observer depicts various antique cities, each of which elicits a different emotion from the reader. The poem begins with, "How must it feel to be exhumed / after centuries of living peacefully / under the earth, to be exposed to harsh sun ... [and] to be stared at by ignorant crowds / dressed in unsightly leisure-wear?" (Ash, 2002, p. 126). In this poem, Ash focuses on the remains of the antique cities viewed by ignorant people to represent the feeling of grief. The second stanza of the poem reads as follows:

In Sardis there is grievance,
 in Ephesus a chorus of angry complaints,
 and at Sebaste the theatre is wounded
 by the removal of its orange grove;
 likewise the theatre of Nyssa mourns for
 its uprooted olive trees, which gave it
 such welcome shade. (Ash, 2002, p. 126)

These lines illustrate Ash's use of personification to attribute emotions and characteristics to ancient cities, which makes Ash a semihistorian. In this regard, historians are known to attribute meaning to historical events by providing descriptions when creating a narrative in the context of a storyline. According to White (1978), "the emplotments of the history of 'society'" presented by Marx in his *Manifesto* and Freud in *Totem and Taboo* embody this classification. However, in postmodern poetry, poets, such as Ash, occasionally act similar to a historian while portraying a historical event. For instance, Sardis in Manisa is personified as embodying a sense of complaint, while Ephesus in İzmir is personified as representing an angry complaint. The theater of Sebaste in Uşak is wounded and that of Nyssa in Antalya laments for its displaced olive trees. The context that Ash observes from these cities is the "air of serenity / of damaged glory," and he employs the image of "Castrated Apollo" to define the crippled state of these cities (Ash, 2002, p. 126). Apollo, the god of music, poetry, and the sun, represents order and beauty; however, the perfect image of Apollo is interrupted through castration, which causes sadness in those cities.

Therefore, Ash uses emotions and historical elements, which is similar to a historian, in his description of the ruins of the ancient cities he visits.

In his analysis, Corcoran (1993) handles the intricacies of postmodern theory and its inevitable link to the uncertainties, worries, and claims that “[i]f postmodern theory is an attempt to write the history of the contemporary, then its uncertainties, anxieties and discursive fractures are hardly surprising” (p. 203). As asserted by Corcoran, each poet assumes the role of a semihistorian who endeavors to examine and interpret historical events from unique and subjective perspectives. In this sense, Ash’s subjectivity functions as a catalyst for the combination of the elements of city life and personal feelings. In “Nervous Poems,” from *To the City*, in which he exemplifies several representations of tension due to different events in city life, Ash concentrates on the feeling of anxiety along with the emotions of gloom and confinement. In the beginning, the poet–observer states, “I climbed the steep street of music / past ouds, and guitars, and gleaming pianos, / and I felt nervous” (Ash, 2002, p. 128). The statement of the speaker suggests that they attempted to play various musical instruments, including the oud, guitar, and piano. Thus, it is likely that they were unsuccessful in their attempts, which resulted in the feeling of nervousness. Subsequently, the reader is presented with additional vignettes from the daily routine of the speaker, including the purchase of a newspaper and the experience of unexplained nervousness, and the lunchtime activities of the speaker, which are similarly accompanied by the feeling of anxiety. Afterward, he returns to his apartment, which is “an obvious trap”; thus, he feels nervous once again (Ash, 2002, p. 128). This relatively lengthy poem embodies other incidents of anxiety; in the end, the speaker addresses his love as follows:

Then I thought of writing to you,
nervous poems, and my hand moved freely.

Nervousness,
we cannot go on like this. But will. (Ash, 2002, p. 129)

Although Ash does not give up elaborating on the tension of living in an urban landscape, he changes the course of the poem in the abovementioned lines by referring to his love. Thus, “Nervous Poems” is revealed as a manifestation of Ash’s innermost sentiments. However, the metapoetic dimension of the poem introduces an intriguing ambiguity by leaving the reader perplexed regarding whether the voice derives from the poet,

Ash, or that of a fictional counterpart. This context induces a sense of anxiety in the reader. As Steven Connor argues within the context of *Postmodernist Culture* (1989), “subjectivity gives way to textuality” (p. 125). McHale (1987) also remarks that reality “more than ever before is plural” (p. 39), and this plural reality confuses the mind of the reader (McHale, 1987, p. 269). Consequently, Ash engages the contemplations of the reader by employing metapoetic circumstances throughout his verses.

In addition, Ash expresses his thoughts and ideas in his *The Anatolikon* and *To the City*; for example, in his “My Poetry,” the first poem of *To the City*, Ash mentions the criticism of his poetry. The poem begins, “Because they didn’t get it, and wanted to be polite / critics used to call my poetry ‘experimental’” (Ash, 2002, p. 73). Ash reveals that the critics denounce his poetry as *experimental*, only because they do not understand his poetry. Thus, Ash presents a metafictional poem. The utilization of metafiction can be analogously compared to the transparency of a car engine: it openly displays its system of inner workings, including all mechanics and elements; however, it also retains an element of enigma. Regarding the working of metafiction, Hutcheon (1988) remarks that “art forms parodically cite the intertexts of both the ‘world’ and art and, in so doing, those art forms contest the boundaries that many would unquestioningly use to separate the two” (p. 127). According to Hutcheon, “postmodernist art offers a new model for mapping the borderland between art and the world, a model that works from a position within both and yet not totally within either” (1988, p. 23). This technique matches that of Ash and his poetry, as he addresses the profound criticism directed at his verses. Ash ascertains to perceive the reason underlying their harsh criticism of his poetry. While seeking to comprehend the reasons behind such harsh criticism, Ash examines the liminal space between art and reality. The speaker expresses as follows:

This always puzzled me. Was I some kind of scientist?
Was I planning to clone Mallarmé or an ox?
What did they mean? Uh, I always thought
it was just my heart talking about the things
I loved and hated, hated and loved, like Scriabin. (Ash, 2002, p. 73)

These lines suggest that Ash mocks the critics through their ideas that his poetry is experimental but not in a scientific manner. His poetry is experimental in its own way, which occasionally makes understanding his poetry difficult for the critics. Currently, the lack of compatibility of the poet with literary circles evidently exists. In these lines,

one can well observe that Ash employs certain elements derived from thoughts and emotions. He defines his poetry as such. He distinctly claims that his heart talks about the things he loved and hated, which is similar to the Russian composer Scriabin “who was a very strange person” (Ash, 2002, p. 73). Indeed, Scriabin was a strange person who transcended traditional tonality; therefore; critics also loved and hated him. Similarly, in terms of the critiques he received, Ash claims that he feels sadness and freedom at the same time. At the end of the poem, he says that “In truth, I care little / about either of these composers. Ah, sadness and freedom!” (Ash, 2002, p. 73).

In this perplexing interplay of literary allusions to various composers and novelists, Ash’s poetry functions as a thought-provoking machine of metafiction in which references to figures, such as Mallarmé, serve as stepping stones for transgressing the boundaries of traditional subject matters. In this context, the poem “Mallarmé” signifies a discerning journey into the essence of poetry, which unravels the notion that the true subject of poetic expression lies within poetry. At the beginning of the poem, the poet–speaker claims that, “I am sick of hearing that / ‘The only true subject of poetry is poetry’” (Ash, 2002, p. 80). However, to defend his poetry, Ash sincerely claims that a poem “can be about anything or nothing” (2002, p. 80). Here, the poet feels that he is free to talk about anything, because he is the poet–creator.

Conclusion

In summary, John Ash’s poems address the complex interplay among emotions, observations, and historical elements, which renders him a distinctive poet–observer in contemporary British poetry. In his collection entitled *The Anatolikon/To the City*, he displays the interplay between people and their environment and unveils the impact of emotions on one’s understanding of life. Performing an action similar to Janus, Ash’s poetry exemplifies the poetics of postmodern British poetry. On the one hand, Ash’s speakers act similar to poet–observers, while perceiving the feelings of the ex-centric people around him. For example, in “The Anatolikon,” he focuses on the feeling of sadness and expulsion, which reminds the reader of the people that had been forced to immigrate, through the image of exile.

By infusing historical events with human-like characteristics and addressing their grievances, Ash illuminates the sense of loss and disrupted order experienced by these cities by inviting reflection on the complexities of their past and present states. As analyzed

in “The Displeasure of Ruins,” Ash also represents diverse perspectives that provide various interpretations of ancient cities and historical events along with the representation of emotions of people, which renders him a semihistorian in his own right. Thus, his poems blur the line between historical events and personal realities and leave the reader to meditate on the interplay between subjectivity and textuality, as reflected in “Nervous Poems.” In contrast to the principles of Romanticism, John Ash, as a poet of postmodernism, takes a different approach. His poetic personas convey a longing for ancient cities and cultures; however, he refrains from yielding to melancholy. Within the framework of postmodernism, Ash utilizes an ironic and cynical style to engage with the world.

Moreover, Ash concentrates on thoughts by referring to the metapoetic aspects of postmodern poetry and the interplay between reality and art. In postmodern literature in which historical truths are plural, the postmodern poetry of Ash portrays a diverse representation of feelings and experiences in historical events and, thus, abandons the reader amid different potential interpretations. His poems question traditional textual authority using the documentary-like accounts of the poet–observer. Through his poetic remarks, Ash reminds people of the instabilities that stem from the complex relationship between reality and postmodern poetry. Employing the elements of metafiction in his poems, such as “My Poetry” and “Mallarmé,” Ash refers to literary critics and poets, such as Mallarmé, to transgress the limits of traditional subject matters and to glorify the freedom of poetic expression. By abandoning conventional realism, Ash also represents an experience with the reproductions of cities and components of city life. However, he remains unsure whether or not it is real. Ash’s concern for the poetic role of the representation of the real and metafiction distinguishes his poetry as essentially postmodern. In his collection, *The Anatolikon/To the City*, Ash traces the alternative portrayal of historical and contemporary cities and illustrates people dwelling in these places with their emotions and thoughts. Finally, John Ash’s poetry encompasses a poetic spirit that invites the reader to celebrate the possibility of artistic exploration and the power of introspection in his postmodern odyssey.

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Existential Anxiety and Spatial Reconstruction in Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*

Baturay ERDAL¹ 



¹Assistant Professor, Adnan Menderes University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of English Language and Literature, Aydın, Türkiye

ORCID: B.E. 0000-0002-3630-9152

Corresponding author:

Baturay ERDAL,
Adnan Menderes University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of English Language and Literature, Aydın, Türkiye
E-mail: baturay.erdal@adu.edu.tr

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ABSTRACT

Existentialists, while seeking meaning within the depths of human existence, examine human freedom, responsibilities, and choices. As individuals are responsible for every choice they make, a state of anxiety emerges as an intrinsic part of their existence during these choices. Meanwhile, space serves as the stage upon which human beings exist and navigate their existential journey, marked by these very responsibilities and decisions. In his novel *Exit West* (2017), British Pakistani writer Mohsin Hamid addresses the issue of migration, which has become a global problem today, rendering the existential journeys of the protagonists Nadia and Saeed to produce a literary solution to this global issue. He invites his readers to witness not only a story of migration but also an existential journey through the magic doors he opens by using magical realism in the novel. He problematizes borders as the greatest locus of the age and facticity in the existential sense. Consequently, he attempts to demonstrate how this anxiety can be transcended in various spaces constructed using the magical realism technique. Each space reconstructed by the author promises new opportunities for the characters to make sense of their existence on the path to authenticity. Thus, the anxiety-inducing boundaries of geographical borders become an existential issue in the novel, while the imaginary line between ontological space and physical place disappears.

Keywords: Existentialism, Ontology, Anxiety, Mohsin Hamid, Space



Introduction

"The anxiety of our era has to do fundamentally with space, no doubt a great deal more than with time." (Foucault, 1986, 23).

Can doors serve as portals not for simply entering physical buildings but for transcending existential anxieties? In Mohsin Hamid's novel *Exit West* (2017), generally approached through the lenses of migration and postcolonial studies, an extraordinary existential journey unfolds, offering different perspectives on the concept of space, an enduring source of anxiety since Foucault's exploration of it. Amidst this narrative, the author constructs four main spaces in the existential journey of Nadia and Saeed, the protagonists. Through the magical doors that interlink these spaces, Hamid illustrates that spatial transitions extend beyond mere physical relocation. These constructed spaces intricately shape the characters' inner worlds and their relationships with others as they struggle with existential anxieties. Serving as both catalysts for existential anxieties and ontological realms, these spaces are reimagined by the author through the enchantment of magic doors, providing the characters with avenues to transcend these anxieties.

While proponents of existentialism offer several ontological approaches to exploring the nature of being, the existence of a human being, unlike that of inanimate objects, is uniquely shaped by a series of moments comprising individualized and concrete experiences. Thus, rather than adhering to a comprehensive ontological philosophy, certain existential concepts, such as "facticity," "thrownness," "abandonment," "authenticity," and "bad faith," find resonance in literary works through the lived experiences of fictional characters. Likewise, human beings mold their identities through interactions with others and engagement with the physical environment. In this sense, the novel illustrates how the deconstruction of physical boundaries via magic doors blurs the distinction between ontological space and physical place.

As a comprehensive philosophical approach encompassing experiential, ethical, theological and temporal dimensions, existentialism is examined in this study within the framework of anxiety along with the relevant existential concepts based on individual experiences. To ensure coherence, the inclusion of existentialist philosophers is restricted to those whose philosophical heritage significantly influences the discourse. Specifically, this study explores existential thoughts originating from Soren Kierkegaard's

phenomenology, subsequently evolving in the arguments of Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre, albeit with minor spatial variations, and analyzes how these concepts intersect with Nadia and Saeed's existential journeys toward authenticity in the novel. Simultaneously, this study attempts to reveal how the existentialist ideas manifested in the novel serve Hamid's intention to address a universal issue, facilitated by his utilization of the magical realism technique.

On Existentialism and Existential Anxiety

Existentialism stands as a philosophical movement that elaborates on fundamental issues such as responsibilities, choices, and individual freedom regarding human life. It endeavors to comprehend the inner anxieties inherent in an individual's existence. Proponents of this movement grapple extensively with human concerns regarding existence, free will, and freedom. Within existential philosophy, anxiety emerges as a fundamental aspect of human existence, leading to specific insights on how to understand and navigate the existential worries that individuals face as they contemplate the significance of their lives. Sarah Bakewell (2016) endeavors to delineate the common tenets of existential philosophy through the story of existentialism in her book:

Existentialists concern themselves with individual, concrete human existence.

— They consider human existence different from the kind of being other things have. Other entities are what they are, but as a human I am whatever I choose to make of myself at every moment. I am free —

— and therefore I'm responsible for everything I do, a dizzying fact which causes

—an anxiety inseparable from human existence itself. (p. 34)

Bakewell (2016) concludes her all-encompassing definition by emphasizing that human existence, despite its constraints, is transcendent and exhilarating. She asserts that existentialists aim to awaken individuals to live more authentically (p. 34). According to Bakewell, the absence of a systematic existentialist approach suggests the presence of a collection of existential thoughts rather than a specific existential philosophy. However, there are similarities in various aspects, such as the rejection of traditional philosophical notions characterized by rationalism and positivism, a shared perspective on methodological approaches, and the centrality of human existence. Hence, when

examining this philosophical approach within the context of emotions such as anxiety, fear, and insecurity, it becomes pertinent to examine the conceptual approaches of existentialists such as Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Sartre.

Emerging as a beacon of inspiration for subsequent existentialists, Kierkegaard's philosophy is shaped by concepts such as free will, self-determination, and individual experience. Although these concepts do not inherently offer a transparent system, when intertwined with ontological notions such as freedom, anxiety, despair, existence, and subjectivity, they lay the foundations of an existential approach in the modern sense. Kierkegaard posits that existence, as he defines it, is inherently tied to the human condition, urging individuals to strive toward their authentic selves. In this sense, the self emerges as a synthesis of limiting finite and expansive infinite polarities (Kierkegaard, 1989, p. 60). The concept of the infinite is characterized by the process of reconstruction or recreation, self-transformation, and the act of choosing among potential options. Conversely, the finite represents necessity and the facticity that arises from it. If viewed as a voyage, the journey toward selfhood necessitates balancing these opposing tensions in a manner that is personal and individualistic. Moreover, individuals are called upon to demonstrate qualities such as awareness, consciousness, effort, and courage throughout this process. Ontological anxiety emerges as an essential component of the path toward selfhood, constituting a crisis that is anticipated as individuals transition from mere existence to becoming.

In his unique philosophical approach, which bears traces of phenomenology and influences postmodern and poststructuralist perspectives, Heidegger ascribes distinct meanings to existential concepts. Central to Heidegger's philosophy is the notion of *Dasein*, which he defines as "being there." David West (1997) interprets *Dasein* as follows: "*Dasein* is from the beginning both 'Being-in-the-world' and 'Being-with-others' [...] *Dasein* thus bears no resemblance to the detached and contemplative consciousness or '*theoria*' of the western philosophical tradition" (p. 101). *Dasein*, therefore, embodies a being-in-the-world that exists concerning others, presenting a relational model of existing. Heidegger further links the ontological structure of *Dasein* to the concept of thrownness, which signifies being thrown into a particular lifeworld and being born into a specific geography or family that *Dasein* did not choose. *Dasein* is inherently intertwined with its environment and exists perpetually in relation to the world. Anxiety, according to Heidegger, arises as a fundamental response to this environment. It is confronted with a sense of not feeling at home or feeling unhomey in the world with

which one is connected, a state he refers to as “unheimlichkeit” meaning uncanniness or “not-being-at-home” (2001, p. 233). Additionally, anxiety emerges from the condition of facticity by Dasein. Facticity encompasses the existential definiteness of Dasein and the concreteness of life shaped by preceding historical conditions that restrict human capability for self-awareness and self-realization. Thus, facticity is associated with the state in which the thrown Dasein finds itself unable to exercise free will.

Sartrean existentialism introduces the concept of transcendence to overcome the limitations associated with facticity. Despite being limited by the situational facts of facticity, humans possess the faculty of decision-making, which operates based on personal preferences and enables them to chart new alternatives to attain freedom. This idea is described in the maxim of Sartre’s existential philosophy: “Existence precedes essence” (2007, p. 22). According to Sartre, this principle is foundational to existentialism, as it posits that individuals first exist and then create their essence. The essence or nature of a human being is not predetermined; hence, “man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world – and defines himself afterwards” (2007, p. 22). This sequencing suggests that essence emerges after existence, fostering a process in which individuals become the architects of their identities to build an essential sense of self. Throughout this process, individuals encounter various stages that trigger and alleviate existential anxiety depending on their actions or inaction. Initially, individuals must face their responsibility resulting from being thrown into the world, a concept Sartre terms abandonment. Since humans find themselves abandoned, they must recognize that there are no predetermined sets of values, social institutions, norms, or signs to guide them. According to Sartre, “such abandonment entails anguish” (2007, p. 34). Humans must navigate life by making decisions and defining themselves through these decisions. The weight of this responsibility following abandonment burdens their existence, accompanied by despair, grief, and dread, a state Sartre describes as anguish. Once the mood of anguish triggers individuals to consciously realize their freedom, they begin to question the possibility of other options. Refusing to acknowledge that other options exist and could be considered for changing and improving one’s life amounts to blocking those options. This not only denies the truth but also freedom, sharply contrasting with the notion that essence follows existence. Simply put, reducing existence to a single possibility, for Sartre, indicates bad faith. In his preface to *Being and Nothingness*, Richard Eyre (2003) contends that “we evade responsibility by not exploiting the possibilities of choice; in short, by not being fully human” (p. ix). Eyre implies that avoiding the truth or engaging in self-deception impedes authenticity

and stimulates inauthenticity, hindering individuals from fully realizing their humanity. Therefore, authenticity, as Sartre asserts in a footnote, entails avoiding bad faith and represents a form of "self-recovery of being" (2003, p. 94, note 9). In this context, authenticity can be attained through transcendence, which liberates individuals from the constraints of facticity.

On Existential Spatialization

In contemplating existential spatialization, it is crucial to examine various theosophical perspectives that have shaped our understanding of space over time. Alongside an Aristotelian preoccupation with the unity of place, which Edward Casey (1997) interprets as a finite and independent topos (p. 52), Cartesian thought introduces a new dimension to spatiality by conceptualizing it as a geometrical and volumetric extension (Casey, 1997, p. 161). It is essential to understand Descartes's thesis, which aims to separate the *res extensa* from the *res cogitans*, thereby establishing human beings as independent subjects distinct from the physical space surrounding them.

Contrary to Cartesian belief that has governed modern conceptualizations of space, Heidegger, with his deconstructionist perspective, posits that space is an integral aspect of human existential experience. He describes Dasein's existential spatiality through the concept of being-in-the-world, signifying Dasein's existence as an indivisible whole concerning its interaction with space (2001, p. 78). Consequently, the process of spatialization entails a totality of ontological contents that are not mutually exclusive but rather all-encompassing. This formulation suggests that humans exist within the world, along with their comprehension of the world and their experiences, that they significantly contribute to the reconstruction of the world as a distinctive space: "In every understanding of the world, existence is understood with it, and *vice versa*" (2001, p. 194). Heidegger (2001) also defines "environment" as "a suggestion of spatiality" emphasizing the connection with being-in-the-world (p. 94). Departing from the traditional context, Heidegger emphasizes that the environment, as a field imbued with both physical and existential significance, shapes the existential experience concerning the relationship between humans and space. Moreover, Heidegger (2006) distinguishes between building and dwelling in the environment. He contends that "to dwell is to be set at peace, to remain within the free sphere that safeguards each thing in its nature" and the essence of dwelling lies in the act of "this sparing and preserving" (p. 69). By considering Dasein's reciprocal with the world, wherein, as Richard

Polt (1999) argues, “Dasein happens to be” through “dwelling in it” (p. 64), Heideggerian existentialism challenges the conventional understanding of space not necessarily through the ontological structure of Dasein but also through the emotions that arise in its connection to the outside world.

Sartre’s perspective also considers space as an arena where human reality intersects with other beings and shapes itself, positing that individuals freely navigate the possibilities of coexisting within this space. The model Sartre presents through the relationship of humans with other existences highlights that individuals and their sentimentality, which directly impact their authenticity, are embedded in a space where they occupy positions as both subjects and objects. Sartre’s elaboration on the distinction between the subject and object in spatial terms warrants further discussion. He argues that the socio-cultural environment, with its diverse realities, including “hodological space,” interactively shapes human existence. Over time, human becomes “a product of his product, fashioned by his work” and “at the same time exists in the milieu of his products” (1963, p. 79). Edward Soja (1989) clarifies this Sartrean spatiality, asserting that the most significant existentialists focus on this undeniable connection in their primary studies. According to Soja, Sartre’s and Heidegger’s philosophies are underpinned by “situated” or “regional ontology,” wherein the fusion of existence and spatiality is explicable through the inherent actions of being-in-the-world and its relations with other entities. This combination grants individuals a space in life, termed “emplacement,” which denotes a comprehensive linkage between “subject and object, Human Being and Nature, the individual and the environment, human geography and human history” (pp. 133–134). Consequently, phenomena such as time, space, geography, history, nature, and the environment emerge as factors that both influence and are influenced by human existence.

Echoes of Being in a City with No Name

In “Echoes of Being in a City with No Name,” the author introduces the first fictional space in the novel as an unnamed city, initially portrayed as predominantly peaceful. However, this city, to which Nadia and Saeed are involuntarily thrown, foreshadows the impending impact of the place on them very soon. Hamid (2017) characterizes the city as “mostly at peace,” suggesting that it is “at least not openly at war ... teetering at the edge of the abyss” (p. 3). This introductory depiction of the unnamed city underscores the start of spatial displacement. In a similar vein, the author prompts readers to confront

an ontological reality, touching on the inevitable trial of human existence: "That is the way of things, with cities as with life, for one moment we are pottering about our errands as usual and the next we are dying" (Hamid, 2017, p. 4). In alignment with the ontological relationship among being, space, and death, Hamid indicates that upon their existence, Nadia and Saeed are immediately confronted with a high likelihood of death. In this unnamed city, where the characters often grapple with the fear of death, the author does not perceive death as a static end that awaits experience. As Jacques Choron (1963) articulates, death, in the Heideggerian sense, is a dynamic phenomenon that is inseparable from life (pp. 234–235). Hamid (2017) echoes this perspective in the novel, stating that in cities on the brink of collapse, "our eternally impending ending does not stop our transient beginnings and middles until the instant when it does" (p. 4). By implying that death, as a dynamic force, permeates the unnamed city, the author also provides an initial portrayal of space through the lens of the fear of death, which emerges as a central component of existential anxiety. This existential anxiety intensifies as the characters are reminded of their mortality, particularly when Nadia's cousin, an immigrant doctor, is "blown by a truck bomb to bits" (2017, p. 31), and Saeed's mother is killed by "a stray heavy-caliber round passing through the windshield of her family's car and taking with it a quarter of [her] head" (2017, pp. 74–75). The recurrence of such reminders, when coupled with their anxiety about facing death, reinforces their awareness of their existence as mortal beings, thus contributing to their being-in-the-world.

As Hamid introduces the first fictional space, he also presents the relationships between the main characters, Saeed and Nadia, within a framework that aligns with the concept of being-with-others. The initial encounter between Nadia and Saeed holds particular significance because it illustrates how the space shapes individual identity formation and interpersonal relationships. In the novel, the unnamed city is depicted as a place where radical religious groups enforce their ideologies, leading to anxiety regarding the acceptance of individuals' identities and values by others. Nadia's first reaction to Saeed carries weight within this context. The first question she poses to Saeed, who seeks to meet her, revolves around whether he will partake in the evening prayer (2017, p. 4). This question highlights the centrality of religious choice in the unnamed city, especially in terms of how it may impact individuals' acceptance within the community. In their first interaction, Saeed experiences this anxiety more than Nadia. As he attempts to express his thoughts, he touches on the issue of freedom in accordance with an existentialist explanation: "I think it's personal: "Each of us has his own way. Or... her own way. Nobody's perfect. And, in any case—" (2017, p. 5). Saeed's concerns stem from the possibility that

Nadia's beliefs may align with the prevailing conservative view in the city, posing a potential obstacle to his responsibility in choosing his religious practices.

Nadia and Saeed's residing in the unnamed city, alongside their families, serves as a significant determinant influencing their authentic individuality. The author portrays Saeed as a character who adheres to patriarchal traditions and finds contentment within familial norms. In contrast, Nadia is depicted as rebellious, forging an identity that defies societal norms and traditions. These norms and traditions within the family, as argued by Selçuk Şentürk (2020), create a "gendered space" where "men and women are expected to follow rigid gender specific roles that are prescribed as ideal" (p. 164). Consequently, the rules and traditions governing her family environment, similar to those of the city where she resides, limit her journey toward personal freedom. The challenges Nadia faces in reconciling her differences with her family's expectations alienate her from this space, prompting her quest for a new home. Essentially, the expectations of her family and the societal norms containing her existence provoke Nadia's existential anxieties, necessitating the reconstruction of both her space and identity to assert her authentic individuality. Despite the significance of her decision to move out and live alone, thereby demanding spatial change and revealing her ontological free will, her anxieties persist. Her experiences in the unnamed city as a single woman present additional obstacles to maintaining her authentic individuality. She faces loathsome and perilous events as well as encounters with aggressive men, necessitating her constant vigilance (2017, pp. 22-23). In a poignant passage where Nadia rides a motorcycle at night, the author highlights the heightened sense of insecurity experienced by women within the unnamed city, even in times of peace: "A burly man [...] turned to Nadia and [...] began to swear at her, saying only a whore would drive a motorcycle, didn't she know it was obscene for a woman to straddle a bike in that way" (2017, pp. 42-43). These biological facts, social norms, and gender issues prevalent in the unnamed city are depicted as facticity, encapsulating realities that can limit freedom. Nadia must grapple with whether she transcends these sources of existential anxiety after confronting them. The various spaces she inhabits, from her workplace to her home and the unnamed city itself, can also be considered manifestations of Simone de Beauvoir's ontological concept of facticity:

Every time transcendence lapses into immanence, there is degradation of existence into "in-itself," of freedom into facticity [...] if this fall is inflicted on the subject, it takes the form of frustration and oppression [...]. But

what singularly defines the situation of woman is that being, like all humans, an autonomous freedom, she discovers and chooses herself in a world where men force her to assume herself as Other: an attempt is made to freeze her as an object and doom her to immanence. (2011, p. 16)

Beauvoir highlights the confinement of women in predominantly masculine spaces, wherein facticity remains beyond Nadia's ability to change or control as a woman. However, she consistently takes decisive actions, transcending bad faith instead of succumbing to it. Despite her protective stands, Nadia encounters existential anxieties throughout decision-making. The heightened anxiety experienced by Nadia in navigating choices within the unnamed city, particularly influenced by gender norms, underscores her entrapment with facticity. Unlike Saeed, Nadia grapples with anxieties stemming from societal expectations, elucidating the impact of societal structure on autonomy. Her resilience amidst these challenges underscores her ongoing quest for authenticity.

The spatial transformation of the unnamed city, depicted in a negative sense, unveils another outstanding point that promotes existential anxiety among the characters. This transformation unfolds in two ways. First, as the city shifts from its familiar and authentic appearance to embrace a more capitalist structure, it triggers emotional states, particularly among the older inhabitants. The author draws a contrast between Saeed's family's past lifestyle in the city and its current state to underscore the anxieties created by the transforming environment. Once vibrant places like the cinema where Saeed's parents first met, their favorite bookshops, restaurants, and cafes have disappeared, replaced by modern edifices such as neon-lit shopping arcades selling computers and electronic equipment (Hamid, 2017, pp. 12-13). This city, once the cherished home of Saeed's parents, now feels unfamiliar and unhomely, a place they no longer recognize as their own, evoking feelings of not belonging. Hamid adds that "when walking by the arcade, and seeing that old name on its new neon sign," Saeed's parents would smile or pause, upon remembering how they used to live in that same place (2017, p. 13). Each time they see this building, they are reminded of the comfort, security, and significance it once held in their lives. Now, they find themselves appreciating the sense of comfort and security that they experienced earlier. The second, which is the most significant transformation, occurs with the devastation wrong upon the unnamed city due to war, exposing the characters to scenes previously unimaginable. The author portrays the nameless city not only merely as a physical space with defined boundaries but also as a space where Nadia and Saeed are required to initiate their existential journey. The scenes of the bloody and devastating

war within the city lead them to be lost between the destruction of their past and the uncertainty of their future. As the author reveals the spatial metamorphosis of the city, it becomes evident that now, “only death await[s] Nadia and Saeed in this city” (Hamid, 2017, p. 97). Stemming from the effects of alienation and insecurity on their emotional well-being, an existential form of anxiety is now intensely felt in their little cubicles walled by the refugees lying on the streets, the sounds of helicopters and gunfire, destroyed houses, bombs falling from the sky, and dead human bodies hanging like ornaments.

Nadia and Saeed’s reliance on their mobile phones, coupled with their experimentation with psychedelic mushrooms, leads them to experience social disconnection and isolation from the unnamed city, where they struggle with existential anxieties posed by its spatial transformation. Before the author constructs a new city for them through magical realism, this mode of escape evokes “the feeling of awe” (Hamid, 2017, p. 46). However, within an ontological context, it lacks the elements of individual choice and responsibility essential for authenticity. Furthermore, it fails to serve as a means of transcending the existential anxieties rooted in spatial dimensions; instead, it merely offers temporary respite, delaying the inevitable confrontation with these anxieties. Thus, Hamid employs an unconventional fictional technique, reshaping spaces to provide her characters with an alternative means of dealing with their existential anxieties. By revealing Nadia and Saeed’s desire to assert their authenticity as individuals, the author highlights their intention to leave the city at the earliest opportunity (Hamid, 2017, p. 95). However, they find themselves embroiled in an ontological process, navigating through a sense of nothingness and anxiety. Saeed, for instance, constantly entertains leaving the city, yet this contemplation fills him with profound sorrow due to his allegiance to his home. Conversely, Nadia appears more excited about the prospect of her departure, yet she is also “haunted by worries” stemming from the possible threats they might encounter (Hamid, 2017, p. 95). Caught in the tension between the facticity of their past, from which they remain trapped, and the uncertainties of the future, the characters are reminded of their agency as free beings, compelled to make decisions regarding the spatial upheaval unfolding around them. This predicament engenders existential anxiety, which is characterized by the revelation of nothingness when Dasein confronts its being.

The-Rebirth-of-Being: Mykonos and London

Mykonos emerges as an intermediate space meticulously constructed by the author, serving as the inaugural step in the characters’ existential journeys, thereby

preventing them from being captivated in a state of bad faith. Within Mykonos, the perception of space undergoes a profound transformation, fascinating Nadia and Saeed in both shedding their past and embracing a new existential journey. The jarring images of tanks, bombs, and firearms are replaced by the tranquil expanse of the sea and the inviting allure of the beach, which make these characters aware of the beauty of the space and the reasons why people prefer to visit here (Hamid, 2017, p. 113). Mykonos is also a reconstructed space in the novel where they can recognize the outcomes of their choice in giving different meanings to their existence. Thus, the author places the significance of choice, or the condemnation of bad faith resulting from its absence, through the character of Saeed's father, who accepts his fate by staying in the unnamed city. Despite the existence of a two-dimensional option, one that promises freedom, his inability to depart, driven by his lingering attachment to his deceased wife, encapsulates self-deception or bad faith as a type of determinism. As noted by Thomas Anderson (1993), "the individual in bad faith denies one of these dimensions of his or her reality and identifies his or her self with the other [...] what makes such denial bad faith [...] is that the individual is lying to him" (p. 15). Saeed's father does not take responsibility for embracing his authentic selfhood and maintains daily practices in the unnamed city, engaging in what existentialists call "everydayness." He still visits his surviving relatives, with whom he drinks tea and coffee, and discusses the past (Hamid, 2017, pp. 86-87). The biggest issue challenging authenticity is everydayness. As Joanna Handerek contends, "It is in everydayness that the whole world of man, with his culture, activities, phenomena, material and intentional events is enclosed" (1988, p. 191). Thus, while death serves as a supplementary principle of life for existentialists, the death of Saeed's father due to pneumonia in the unnamed city is related to the situation of a man who abandons himself to death in a state of bad faith.

Unlike Saeed's father, who denies his responsibility and freedom and is trapped in bad faith, the departure of Nadia and Saeed from the unnamed city indicates the rebirth of an ontological being with a sense of self-consciousness and a capacity to project into the future. As elucidated by Johannes Fritsche (1999), authentic Dasein perceives "the present" considering "today," and understands that it faces "a dangerous situation, "which tends to produce"the separation between the Daseine that have fate and those that do not" (p. 67). In the novel, Hamid aligns the transformation of Nadia and Saeed with a rebirth, symbolized by their passage through the magical doorway leading to Mykonos:

It was said in those days that the passage was both like dying and like being born, and indeed Nadia experienced a kind of extinguishing as she entered the blackness and a gasping struggle as she fought to exit it, and she felt cold and bruised and damp as she lay on the floor of the room at the other side, trembling and too spent at first to stand, and she thought, while she strained to fill her lungs, that this dampness must be her own sweat. Saeed was emerging and Nadia crawled forward to give him space. (2017, p. 104)

The author describes both the rebirth of existence and the reconstruction of space, where the concepts of being-in-the-world and being-with-others take on new dimensions within Mykonos. This process of reconstruction introduces new existential anxieties, accompanied by security concerns in this intermediate space: "Decent people vastly outnumbered dangerous ones, but it was probably best to be in the camp, near other people, after nightfall" (Hamid, 2017, p. 107). However, despite the presence of others, Saeed finds himself grappling with a sense of hopelessness as their being-in-the-world fails to establish a relational symbiosis with other beings. Furthermore, the limited access to opportunities in Mykonos leaves them with a sense of transience, lacking belonging or permanence in this new environment.

Upon traversing through the magical doors once more, Nadia and Saeed find themselves in the bustling metropolis of London, embarking on yet another iteration of the thrownness process. These magic doors essentially offer them the opportunity to re-engage with their existential journey, with London serving as a space that the author reconstructs for the protagonists so that they can make sense of these experiences in their existential journey. Compared to their arrival in Mykonos, the characters, although holding the responsibility for making decisions about the replacement in the thrownness stage, continue to have anxieties about what they will encounter as they do not know where they are being thrown. Nadia and Saeed, on the other hand, strive to lead a new life in London and integrate into the new society formed due to demographic changes in the city. In fact, their search for space is an existential battle for them, and these spaces are a battleground where they struggle to leave with victory. In other words, the comfort and peace they long for is "about being human, living as a human being, reminding oneself of what one was" and it is "worth a fight" (Hamid, 2017, p. 126). Consequently, the characters are forced to confront phenomena such as violence, hunger, the problem of coexistence, and the fear of death on these battlefields. In this sense, while the author

opens a space of freedom for the characters in London, he also underlines the limits that a new space brings to them. One of the reasons that prompt Nadia and Saeed's existential anxieties here is that they have to live not in "light London," but in "dark London," where these boundaries and barriers are intensely felt among refugees. Food shortage (Hamid, 2017, p. 133), attacks from nativist extremists (Hamid, 2017, p. 135), and attempts of operation by British regiments (Hamid, 2017, p. 162) have become new threats.

The narrative takes a sudden turn as the author explicitly articulates the idea that the true essence of coexistence can flourish within reconstructed spaces devoid of boundaries. As government officials come to recognize this existential reality, they acknowledge that "the denial of coexistence" would ultimately lead to the obliteration of one party (Hamid, 2017, p. 166). Consequently, they sanctioned the construction of housing developments to accommodate immigrants in the newly christened cities of London Halo (Hamid, 2017, p. 169). This shift in the narrative, symbolized by the construction of houses and the newfound tolerance toward immigrants, suggests the potential for a secure and peaceful environment conducive to the characters' existential journeys. However, Hamid seems to highlight the ideational difference between building and genuine dwelling, which is in line with Heidegger's ideas. According to Heidegger (2006), not all building equates to true dwelling, as "building is not merely a means and a way toward dwelling" (p. 67). Building houses may provide "shelter," but it does not "guarantee" dwelling for an existential being (Heidegger, 2006, p. 66). Thus, while Hamid portrays the availability of housing opportunities in London for the characters, he also underlines the lack of emotional and psychological conditions essential for true dwelling. The London Halo project gives Saeed the feeling that they are "remodeling" the world (Hamid, 2017, p. 178). However, the author remarks that the existence of the characters here undergoes a dramatic transformation: "the shades we reflect depend much on what is around us. So it was with Nadia and Saeed, who found themselves changed in each other's eyes in this new place" (Hamid, 2017, p. 186). The existential perceptions of the characters, whose presences have contributed much to each other from the outset of the novel, begin to evolve into different dimensions. Rather than drawing an elaborative description of this new space, the author, throughout the chapter, mostly emphasizes that the existential crisis aroused in them due to the spatial change gives them pain and sorrow. As Gaston Bachelard remarks in *The Poetics of Space*, this approach could be argued as evidence illustrating the author's affinity with a phenomenologist perspective. According to Bachelard (1994), a geographer or an ethnographer describes the forms of dwellings. However, a phenomenologist surpasses

the limitations of superficial descriptions to understand “the germ of the essential, sure, immediate well-being it encloses,” in an attempt to attain the “original shell” (Bachelard, 1994, p. 4). Consequently, Bachelard prioritizes emotional nuances and the picture of a “psychological phenomenon” rather than superficial additions (1994, p. 4). Hamid’s attempts to transmit existential anxiety are re-triggered by highlighting Nadia and Saeed’s alienation from each other as a psychological phenomenon, which indicates that the characters have not completed their existential journey. Thus, he compelled the characters to take responsibility and choose again between bad faith and authenticity, entering into the process of constructing a new space where Nadia and Saeed, who are “filled with hope,” expect that “they would be able to rekindle their relationship, to reconnect with their relationship, as it had been not long ago, and to elude, through a distance spanning a third of the globe, what it seemed in danger of becoming” (Hamid, 2017, p. 189). The desire for reconnection on the brink of physical separation fosters a tendency to seek new spaces.

The Beginning of the End: Marin

In his depiction of Marin, the author portrays it as a city imbued with a “less violent” temperament and scenic beauty, possessing “a spirit of at least intermittent optimism” (Hamid, 2017, p. 194). Within this setting, the characters are involved in the socioeconomic structure. The author gives the impression that, in Marin, the characters are very close to resolving the conflicts between existence and essence that they have experienced thus far. Nadia and Saeed, in particular, exhibit notable progress in making sense of their existence in each place that the author has reconstructed. This latest spatial creation assumes an important role in shaping the fate of the characters’ existence. The situation can be expressed more clearly with the concept of ontological temporality, which points to a rhizomatic structure of the dynamic process of being in their becoming and changing (Röck, 2017, p. 42), since, in the novel, temporarily, along with space, is one of the most important factors that directly determines the independence of the authentic self after confronting its existential anxieties. Correspondingly, Professor Joseph Fell (1979), in his *An Essay on Being and Place*, sees Sartre’s concept of temporality as a “synthetic totality” and emphasizes that the past, present, and future are not separate dimensions in terms of shaping the consciousness of humans as being-for-itself (pp. 86–87). At this point, the experiences of the characters in the unnamed city, Mykonos, and London affect their responsibilities and choices in Marin and become a factor that determines their future states of freedom.

Saeed's growing interest in religion and Nadia's disclosure of homosexual tendencies in Marin lead to the characters' distancing from each other and eventually their separation. Although it may seem like a separation, it shows that they have taken the most important step in terms of existential freedom. The most important point that the author attempts to reveal in Marin is that Nadia and Saeed's love is now an emotional state that prevents them from being their authentic selves. According to Sartre (2003), the relationship between love and the freedom of the individual is conflictual because practical love limits freedom. For an individual, a relationship based on love carries the risk of transitioning from being a subject to being an object. Thus, he/she conforms to the expectations and desires of the lover, which undermines their autonomous choices (Sartre, 2003, pp. 388–394). The love that provides emotional support for Nadia and Saeed in prior spaces now appears to turn into existential anxiety in revealing their identities and claiming their freedom in Marin. In other words, the characters evolve into lovers who objectify each other in Marin. The author, for example, draws attention to the uneasiness between them just before they separate and become the individuals they desire to be:

Jealousy did rear itself in their shanty from time to time, and the couple that was uncoupling did argue, but mostly they granted each other more space, a process that had been ongoing for quite a while, and if there was sorrow and alarm in this, there was relief too, and the relief was stronger. (Hamid, 2017, p. 204)

As Sartre manifests in his views on love, the characters experience a conflict between freedom and a sense of ownership. When the act of restriction disappears by creating a field of freedom, the mood of anxiety is replaced by tranquillity.

On the one hand, the author opens magical doors to the spaces he reconstructs using magical realism, which provides the characters with the possibility of overcoming their existential anxieties. However, he interrupts the story at regular intervals by applying another postmodern method, a fragmented narrative, and reinforces the existential messages he attempts to convey through the lives of other people. In this last part of the novel, the author invites his readers to engage in an ontological question through the choices and responsibilities of two different people. Unlike Nadia and Saeed, the characters in these stories display the traits of an inauthentic self that cannot escape bad faith. With the story of a woman who lives "in the same house her entire life" in Palo Alto (Hamid, 2017, p. 207), the author underlines that resisting spatial change

in the novel is incongruent with the dynamics of existence now: “when she went out it seemed to her that she too had migrated, that everyone migrates, even if we stay in the same houses our whole lives, because we can’t help it” (Hamid, 2017, p. 209). Particularly, Hamid’s story of a maid in Marrakesh bears considerable resemblance to Sartre’s example of a café waiter. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre (2003) makes an analogy concerning a café waiter whose actions and behaviors reflect an excessive embodiment of the stereotypical waiter persona. By displaying a quick and exaggerated manner, the waiter dedicates himself to satisfying the needs of the customers. Sartre claims that he impersonates the role of a waiter, a person he does not inherently want to be. Thus, he portrays himself as an object within that place and consciously engages in self-deception (Sartre, 2003, pp. 82-83). Just like Sartre’s waiter, Hamid’s maid in the novel plays a rigidly defined role, acting like a maid, which renders her passively detached and oblivious to all the possibilities that free will may present to her. The occupation of the maid, who does not even know her age, seems to be akin to merely aging and exchanging “the magic of months for bank notes and food (Hamid, 2017, p. 225). Even though the maid’s daughter offers her to change her fate through the magic doors, the maid always says “no” because she has “a sense of the fragility of things” and feels like “a small plant in a small patch of soil held between the rocks of a dry and windy place” and thinks she is “not wanted by the world” (Hamid, 2017, p. 224). Using these stories that exemplify the concepts of bad faith and being-in-itself to vindicate Nadia and Saeed’s situations, the author reveals that Nadia and Saeed’s being in Marin, the final space constructed to present the alterations in an ontological dimension, saves them from being inanimate objects. Referring to the modes of being, e.g., being-for-itself as inanimate objects and being-for-itself as conscious human beings, Sartre (2003) claims that “the waiter in the café can not be immediately a café waiter in the sense that this inkwell is an inkwell, or the glass is a glass” (p. 83). In this sense, Nadia and Saeed function as “being-for-itself,” while the women in the stories reduce themselves to “being-in-itself” and are, consequently, in bad faith.

During their reunion at the end of the novel, when they revisit their place of birth, the emphasis on an intended visit to “the deserts of Chile” (Hamid, 2017, p. 230), which was mentioned as a dream earlier in the novel, shows that they continue their existential journey and that Marin is constructed as a new beginning for the characters. Marin is portrayed as the final setting in the novel; however, it serves as the pivotal space where Nadia and Saeed appear to reconcile the conflict between essence and existence and come closer than ever before to achieving the authentic self. Thus, the final remarks of

the novel gather the past, present, and future dimensions, which are interconnected and essential for each other's existence. In this sense, the author emphasizes that being-for-itself, characterized by facticity, anxieties, relationships, choices, and so on, is always tied to its past. However, at the same time, being-for-itself remains separate from its past until it falls into an ongoing moment in which being derives from its past and orients itself toward its future. This is an escape from the being he is now. In other words, it represents an escape from the being it is now to the being it will be. Being-for-itself is its past, and from now on, it will be its future. The future is a direction toward which being-for-itself must be oriented (Bozkurt, 1984, p. 146). Therefore, revisiting the unnamed city after Marin and implying that Nadia and Saeed will continue their existential journey, the author considers the existential dimensions of the spaces when reconstructing them through magical realism.

Conclusion

In his novel *Exit West*, Hamid emphasizes the emergence of borders as today's paramount facticity, stimulating the existential crisis that causes unprecedented loneliness and despair among individuals. Consequently, navigation through this crisis and the pursuit of authenticity are contemporary concerns. From an ontological perspective, individuals find strength and independence in their struggle to preserve their existence against all odds, an inherent trait within them. In illustrating the activation of this drive, the author employs magic doors to reconstruct spaces whenever Nadia and Saeed encounter seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Thus, the existential anxieties portrayed transcend beyond borders, becoming emblematic of a universal human experience. Within each reconstructed space, the characters undergo transformative existential shifts. Notably, the novel distinguishes itself by portraying the act of reconstructing spaces as a means of enabling transformation rather than resigning to despair.

The deliberate omission of naming the first space symbolizes thrownness, depicting it as "any city" in which characters find themselves involuntarily placed. The protagonists construct their own phenomenal spaces based on their anxieties and subsequent choices, with the reconstructed spaces in the narrative offering opportunities for transcendence and the realization of authentic selves in their existential journeys. As existential anxieties individuate the characters, the author remains subjective regarding Nadia and Saeed's ultimate choices, embracing postmodern pluralism.

In *Exit West*, the characters' migration signifies more than a mere change in geography; it embodies a universal suggestion of creating an authentic self by delving into the depths of existence through a postmodern fictional technique. This suggestion echoes existentialist themes spanning from Kierkegaard to Heidegger and Sartre, emphasizing the ontologically basic in their thoughts, which is the notion that man is condemned to an inescapable freedom. The relocation of the characters constitutes the foundational dynamics of the novel, both in attaining this freedom and in confronting unprecedented anxieties as inherent necessities of existence. Hamid's novel serves as an attraction to delimitation and self-emancipation, thereby acting as an antidote to essentialist notions that rigidly categorize and confine human existence to immutable properties.

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Haunting Words, Fluid Moods: Affect in Samuel Beckett's *Mercier and Camier*

Selvin YALTIR¹ 



¹Lecturer, Ph.D., Boğaziçi University, School of Foreign Languages, İstanbul, Türkiye

ORCID: S.Y. 0009-0003-5613-2504

Corresponding author:

Selvin YALTIR,
Boğaziçi University, School of Foreign Languages, İstanbul, Türkiye
E-mail: selvin.yaltir@boun.edu.tr

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ABSTRACT

Originally written in French in 1946 and translated by the author himself, Samuel Beckett's *Mercier and Camier* tells the story of a pseudo-couple wandering through an unnamed city. Despite the narrator's mocking tone, this quest narrative gradually reveals a search for meaning, punctuated by crises and revealed through the nonsensical dialogues between characters. By means of the disjunctions, verbal irrelevancies, and gaps in thought found in these dialogues, the narrative registers affective transitions and passages of feeling. This kind of narrative disjunction is determined, produced, and reproduced within a particularly affective milieu where social encounters become catalysts for emotional disorientation. This paper will examine how the novel's use of casual conversation explores affect's infiltration into ways of acting and speaking in everyday encounters. The novel's investment in an excessive amount of random talk solicits a host of questions around the idea of affect not only as state of mind but also as a narrative mood determining the conditions of meaningfulness. Focusing on theories of affect, I will explore the link between affective experience and verbal expression in *Mercier and Camier*, particularly in the absence of narrative logic and reflective coherence.

Keywords: Samuel Beckett, *Mercier and Camier*, affect theory, dialogue, narrative



Introduction

Ever since the notion of affect became widely popular in various fields of thought, it has been mostly used to define the unrepresentable aspects of human sensibility, distinct from the representational and physiological power of standard emotions. Gregg and Seigworth wrote about affect as being a “passage of forces and intensities... [those] visceral forces beneath, alongside or generally other than conscious knowing, vital forces insisting beyond emotion - that can serve to drive us toward movement, thought and extension, that can likewise suspend us” (2010, p. 1). These “vital forces insisting beyond emotion” refer to imperceptible bodily changes and passings over that occur in relation to an environment of causes and catalyzers. In this context, affect designates “the felt passages of transient existence - of ‘going over’ or ‘passing away’” (Pethick, 2015, p. 72), namely the elusive mental imprints of what is felt in the body.¹ When dealing with affect, one therefore is not dealing with determinate emotional changes, psychologies, or the recognizable ideas that embody them.² Rather, affect points toward a site of transition that not only registers the body’s experience of continuous change by way of thresholds that can only be felt but also incites a series of ideas that attach themselves to these sites of feeling. As such, affects constantly reorganize the ways in which the body acts. I will be drawing upon this definition of affect as a force that drives or inhibits subjects, suspends frames of thought, and mystifies meaning in Beckett’s *Mercier and Camier*.

The Affective Framework

A point common to several theorizations of affect is its fundamental resistance to representation, especially language. Given the autonomy ascribed to bodily affect in the contemporary conceptions of affect, the causal relationship ascribed to affects (bodily behavior) and subjective attitude becomes questionable. In “The Autonomy of Affect” Massumi (1995) claimed affect to have an autonomous character and to operate autonomously through the body. In other words, it is not defined in terms of recognition

1 In his study on Nietzsche and affects, Pethick described affectivity in terms of a transitional relationality: “... affects also describe various moods or attitudes that again betray some kind of transitional relationality (or pathos), although this should not be strictly identified with psychological emotional states in the sense of happiness or despondency” (2015, p. 72).

2 Affect solicits a revision of the mind-body dichotomy in such a way that by doing so, it also re-examines the role of the body for human emotion. Whether they celebrate it or dismiss it, affect theorists ranging from Spinoza to William James, dealt with some bodily feeling or change that precedes cognition and reflection to the extent that the subject endures these lived passages of feeling.

and can only be felt. What Massumi calls “intensity” is the duration of the affect that is felt in the body, and it has a different order than that of emotion, which is the “insertion of intensity [*sic*] into narrativizable action-reaction circuits” (1995, p. 88). In this sense, affect is “a non-conscious, never-to-conscious autonomic remainder” felt in the body and is “disconnected from meaningful sequencing” (1995, p. 85). Affect marks the autonomous force of a passing through in the body beyond human will and cognition. Based on this distinction between emotion and affect, affect appears as an impersonal, or rather pre-personal, force of life whose perception continually escapes recognition but whose presence is felt paradoxically through this escape in the sense of a continual passage of felt intensities. This kind of autonomy gives a special quality to the relationship between affect and linguistic expression. Massumi argued (1995, p. 96) that affect can be said to be enclosed in a structure (i.e., an emotion that belongs to the individual) to the extent that what escapes cognitive understanding can be re-registered in a semantic framework. According to Massumi, because affect is beyond conscious perception, what constitutes narratable emotional orientations in the subject is the potentiality of affect, the fact that it cannot be captured as a consciously perceptible feeling of the subject. In Patricia T. Clough’s words, “It is its participation in the virtual that gives affect its autonomy-its escape from the particular thing that embodies it” (2010, p. 210). Paradoxically, affective escape conditions emotional orientations, which then become the basis of individual behavior. Between the body’s participation in affective experience and the individual’s physical and verbal behavior, however, lies a relationship of indeterminacy. This kind of indeterminacy conditions many of the verbal and social behaviors in the novel in the absence of cognitive understanding. In this sense, not only are narrative context and setting problematic in the novel, but Beckett’s compulsive preoccupation with what is famously called “absurdist” dialogue also points to obscurities, irrelevancies, blockages, and automatisms as a re-registering of affect. In contrast to the cognitive explanation of affect, which focuses on emotional content and determinable psychological states, the autonomy theory of affect emphasizes the “ignored questions of what role and aesthetic impact form, genre, or style might have in presenting emotion in a distinctly literary way” (Houen, 2020, p. 5). This paves the way for an understanding of language as an irreducibly affective notion entangled in the various ways in which this escape from felt change can be expressed.

One of the ways in which affect’s escape from consciousness informs language and verbal moods is related to what Spinoza calls a “bondage” to the body (Spinoza & Curley, 1994, p. 197). The autonomy ascribed to affect gives rise to the idea of the body as an

indeterminate field. In Spinoza's words, "the body itself, simply from the laws of its own nature, can do many things which its mind wonders at" (1994, p. 156). Accordingly, the human body's ways of affection can either diminish or increase its power to act. Spinoza also writes, "By affect I understand affections of the body by which the body's power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and at the same time, the ideas of these affections" (1994, p. 154).³ These modifications with their capacity to either increase or diminish the power to act give way to two polar moods of joy and sadness, and the subject finds himself in continuous variation between these two mental states. In this sense, a specific relationship exists between one's capacity to act (and speak) and the complex ways in which one's body is triggered by the changes one goes through. Deleuze (1978) argued in his notes regarding Spinoza's concept of affect that the body's way of manifesting motion, what Spinoza termed the continuous variation, is generated by an encounter. Deleuze wrote, "When I have an encounter such that the relation of the body which modifies me, which acts on me is combined with my own relation, with the characteristic relation of my own body, [*sic*] I would say that my power of acting is increased" (1978, para. 27). Similarly, if the object of the encounter does not agree with one's body, then the power of acting is decreased. If affect registers a felt passage as part of the body's set of responses to some encounter (i.e., a change in the body itself), it equally designates the idea attached to these changes. For Spinoza as well as Deleuze, then the idea of an affection is what either increases or diminishes the power to act.⁴ Indeed the quintessence of affective experience is the fact that one is taken hostage by ideas of affection and that "we are completely enclosed in this world of affection-ideas" (Deleuze, 1978, para. 38). Regardless of whether one's power to act is increased or diminished, as long as one experiences these passions, or in Deleuze's words, "pass[es] by all these continuous variations," one is separated from one's own power to act: "I am not the cause of my own affects, and since I am not the cause of my own affects, they are produced in me by something else: I am therefore passive, I'm in the world of passion" (para. 38). This seems akin to Heidegger's explanation of moods in *Being and Time* as "disclosed prior to cognition and volition and beyond their range of disclosure" (2008, p. 175). According to Heidegger, one finds oneself in

3 Spinoza claimed that when subjects experience these modifications without cognition, without strict awareness of what they are, where they come from, or what they are caused by, then these should be called "passions" (1994, p. 154). In fact one is passive with respect to what goes through the body and mind when one is not the sole cause of one's acts

4 Deleuze explained affection as follows: "It's a state of body insofar as it is subject to the action of another body" (1978, para. 38). In other words, it is the effect of bodies on bodies through which the continual variation between the two affects of sadness and joy take place.

a mood because “when we master a mood, we do so by way of a counter-mood; we are never free of moods” (2008, p. 175). Whether because of the enigmatic character of a mood or ideas of affection, subjects are continually invested in these modifications. Because one continually finds oneself in moods (i.e., the varying dispositions of the body), one simply experiences them, and the transitions they bring out, even if they are imperceptible, have a profound impact on how one acts.

Given the entanglement of affective experience, subjective mood, and language, that a feedback loop occurs between the unknowing feeling body and the speaking body/mind is a fair suggestion. Rather counterintuitively, one could also argue that affect not only escapes understanding but also that affect’s escape from understanding is inescapable. Will, intention, belief, freedom, speech, thought, and action are in this sense all informed by the ideas, moods, passages, and intensities of affect. In this regard, the study of affective experience leads to a reconsideration of the relationship between mind and language, as it points to the fact that the activities of the mind are also irreducibly linked to the degree of vitality felt by the body. For Spinoza these bodily changes which in turn affect one’s power to act also determine the ways in which one express oneself through language. Spinoza went on to write, “And then I believe everyone has found by experience that the mind is not always equally capable of thinking of the same object, but that as the body is more susceptible to having the image of this or that object aroused in it, so the mind is more capable of regarding this or that object” (1994, p. 156). In saying this, he problematized the causal connection ascribed to the mind-body relationship. The actions of the body, including speech, cannot be said to copy the mental content of the mind. Rather, the degree of the body’s susceptibility to a particular mental image is what causes the mind to think of that object. Therefore, the dictates of the body’s ways is what determine the will to think or speak about things. In separating the human mind from the primacy of agency and free will, Spinoza claimed that one’s actions and products of the mind are in fact driven by what they called “appetites,” (i.e., passions and desires) and cannot be thought independently of the ways of the body: “the decisions of the mind are nothing but the appetites themselves, which therefore vary as the disposition of the body varies.”

Through affect’s resistance to representation, affect resultantly signifies formlessness, escape, and evasion; the openness to affect keeps the body in a state of “yet-ness” (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010, p. 3), which is a continuation of Spinoza’s famous statement “No one has yet determined what the body can do” (1994, p. 155). Another aspect of

this bodily indeterminacy, however, is the troubling presence of the “affection-idea,” and it is precisely from this presence, from the idea that “the mind cannot control the passions of the body,” that bondage arises (Lord, 2010, p. 87). Spinoza reminds readers of the casualness of this situation, of how mental states and affects manifest in the body and in the mind not in causal relation to each other but as attributes of the same substance, because, as Nadler explains “passions come about not through the logical order of thought but from the common order of nature” (Nadler, 2006, p. 194). This lack of logical order between passion and thought, body and mind, and affect and speech allows for a rethinking of speech in close relation to the question of bodily and affective indeterminacy, in which speech emerges as the result of the way the body is affected. I believe that this tension between escape and bondage proves fruitful for the study of the relationship between affect and language in *Mercier and Camier*, as it points to the paradoxical effects of the mostly passive affects in the characters’ relationships with their encounters. These interrelated aspects are what guide this study of the connections between affect and everyday speech in the novel. This particular resonance between the body (and hence the states of mind associated with it) and language has tremendous implications for the subjects’ power not only to transform through various moods but also to digress and dissipate verbally, psychologically, and socially in the novel. In what follows, I will first analyze how out-of-context dialogues imply affective transitions before considering the ways in which Mercier and Camier’s relationship to random things can lead to an idea of narrative meaning that is primarily affected by passages, moods, and indecision.

Affect’s Escape in *Mercier and Camier*: Idle talk, Misconstruction, and Violence

Despite the novel’s exhaustive use of dialogue, *Mercier and Camier* seems to undermine the motivation for conversation by articulating the redundancy of the whole act. The novel opens with the self-assured words of the narrator: “The journey of Mercier and Camier is one I can tell, if I will, for I was with them all the time” (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 3), though the fact that the narrator is far from reliable soon becomes clear. Almost nothing of what is said between the two parties is sufficiently or accurately remembered, but minute details, irrelevancies and divergences are recorded consistently throughout the narrative. This is obvious from the first episode in which Mercier and Camier arrive at their meeting place, a public garden, without really knowing much about either the place or their choice of the place: “Mercier and Camier did not know

the place. Hence no doubt their choice of it for their meeting. Certain things shall never be known for sure" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 5). Forgetting the point and evading the subject at hand are ironically common components of Mercier and Camier's dialogues, and this inability to retrieve the truth in a Platonic sense helps in generating another kind of truth, or rather an extra-truth, an unpronounced truth transmitted by clichés, idioms, and formulaic expressions. This paradox is particularly important for exploring how the dialogues function affectively, assuming they fail to introduce a common ground or resolve an issue in the traditional sense.

One such dialogue takes place in Chapter Seven. In the scene where Mercier and Camier encounter the grave of an Irish nationalist, the narrator recounts a long and tedious dialogue filled with a ridiculous amount of politeness. Even if memory fails, the implication that the grave is some sort of political symbol is clear: "'I once knew,' said Mercier, 'but no longer.' 'I too once knew,' said Camier, 'I'm almost sure.' But he was not quite sure. It was the grave of a nationalist, brought here in the night by the enemy and executed, or perhaps only the corpse brought here, to be dumped" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], pp. 81–82).⁵ They seem to be captured by a commonplace responsibility to say a few words about the tragedy; however, in the awkwardness of the scene, they are at a loss for words:

Pardon, said Camier, what was that you said? No, no, said Mercier, you.
 No no, said Camier, nothing of interest.
 No matter, said Mercier, let's have it.
 I assure you, said Camier.
 I beg of you, said Mercier.
 After you, said Camier.
 I interrupted you, said Mercier.
 I interrupted you, said Camier.
 Silence fell again. Mercier broke it, or rather Camier. Have you caught a chill, said Mercier. (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 82)

The linguistic redundancy signifies that something inaccessible in a narrative sense must have happened in this encounter. Mercier and Camier seem indifferent to the nationalist's grave, to say the least. Yet, such indifference is manifested too obviously

5 In her biography on Beckett, Deirdre Bair (wrote, "Irishmen with longer memories than Mercier and Camier will recall that the patriot was named Noel Lemass: his family, though now Catholic, are of Huguenot descent. The unpretentious monument is now a familiar landmark to those who walk over the Dublin Mountains" (1990, p. 721).

considering the ridiculous interruption here. Through this obvious indifference, the novel intimates a disturbing historical encounter divorced from context and meaning. This form of decontextualization emerges as a narrative preference by which the novel installs and then inverts historical references and social and emotional meanings. This is an important paradox that the novel plays with. Dialogue serves to signal both a blockage that prevents the characters from acting properly or as expected, as well as an escape from narrative stability that heightens suspense and demands more meaning in a meaningless narrative universe. When the characters find themselves in places such as the grave, the effect of their found-ness not only confuses their sense of place and time but also governs the body's desire to move on aimlessly, both physically and verbally. This bondage to the body's whims manifests itself through idle talk, drowning the characters in a pool of affective associations, verbal currents, and "affection-ideas" that "know things only by their effects" without knowing the causes (Deleuze, 1978, para. 20). The nationalist's story is implicated neither in the form of a revelation of truth nor by commentary but by the detour of an affective escape within a dialogue, in the form of a tension veiled by verbal redundancy. Unable to detect the cause of this halt followed by empty talk, both the characters and the readers remain under the influence of an indeterminacy. If a passive affect mostly takes place in the absence of the "active conceptual grasp of a changing body under the influence of an encounter" (Protevi, 2020, p. 69), then the novel uses verbal redundancy and automatism as a resistance to the conceptual as well as narrative grasp of situations such as this, blurring the lines between meaningfulness and meaninglessness by resorting to superficial and everyday uses of language. What seems easily signifiable and graspable further complicates the interpretation of the scene. The descriptive passage before this scene is telling of a tension between distance and closeness: "All seems flat, or gently undulating, and there at a stone's throw these high crags, all unsuspected by the wayfarer" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 81). Everything in the landscape seems visible, and yet they are too far to really discern. This tension makes the characters hesitate to speak when the object of the encounter seems too intimate and yet too fragile because its idea is vague. In Massumi's words, "An emotional qualification breaks narrative continuity for a moment to register a state - actually re-register an already felt-state (for the skin is faster than the word)" (1995, p. 86). Often, this re-registration takes the form of redundant speech and allows one to locate and extrapolate affective tones where semantic gaps occur.

Mercier and Camier's loss for words also manifests a sense of temporal delay found in affective experience. Even if they change places or even if the encounter is new, the

experience seems to linger on. In this way they find themselves in moods: "They spoke, fell silent, listened to each other, stopped listening, each as he fancied or as bidden from within" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 16). In fact, throughout the novel, any kind of engagement for Mercier and Camier requires a certain passivity that goes to such outrageous lengths as to make situations incomprehensible for them. One is able to discern a temporal delay in words because "What happens to the body is not immediately decided upon" (Colebrook, 2020, p. 430). Affectivity is "not the simple effect of what is outside the body but a registering of that effect without the body yet taking action or generating a specific emotion" (Colebrook, 2020, p. 430). For Mercier and Camier, this delay is mostly embodied in verbal automatism as a form of compensation. They appear as if they are continually forced to find words. Their contact with things and places inscribes in them an appetite for speaking awkwardly and a desire to fill the gaps, which implies a profound disturbance with silence and self-reflection. Verbal automatism emerges as a way in which the characters seek a sense of solace by distraction.

These gaps and shifts of attention often occur in such a way that the emotional content produced by an affective experience seems profoundly misinterpreted. In such cases, affective experiences lead not only to verbal automatisms but also to eruptions of physical and verbal violence that gradually become commonplace. Violence is a significant sign of mental confusion, and the violent mood manifests itself in relation to the misinterpretation. For instance, the encounter with the grave is preceded by a murder scene, in which the characters kill a constable by "[clubbing] the defenseless skull with [all his] might" because of a misunderstanding (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 76). These two experiences with two different authority figures influence each other in such a way that the violent mood of the death scene carries over into the melancholy mood of the grave scene. Mercier and Camier leave the scene of the crime in the after-effects of the violence they have inflicted on the constable's body. They walk "through a tumult of shadow and clamour, stumbling on the cobbles strewn already with black boughs ..." (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 76). Their hesitant physical movement continues through the grave scene. In both scenes, an emotional processing remains yet to be done, and an affective transition occurs when different encounters keep alive a lingering idea of melancholy and even nihilism. In the context of a misunderstanding, the affective experience can be identified in terms of what Freud (1963, p. 126) called "unconscious emotion [in which] an affect or an emotion is perceived but misconstrued. By the repression of its proper presentation, it is forced to become connected with another idea." This kind of misjoining of affect and idea differs both from the notion of the ideas

of affection as well as from the fundamental resistance of affect to content. The body may manifest the presence of an affect through verbal digressions or the sensation of some bodily disturbance, such as trembling or coughing (what actually breaks the silence at the end of the first dialogue is unclear), but the cognitive value of actions, thoughts, and speech is missing. Freud (1963, p. 126) seems to suggest that not only does a simple delay in the construction of content for the felt affect occur but also and more importantly so does the construction of false content. In this sense, affective content is mostly phenomenally present in the subject's relationship to the world, but it is inhibited in the process of misconstruction. Although this explanation points to the presence of emotional content whose essence is constantly overlooked, it does not deny the perception of affect itself. For Freud, the idea of affect (i.e., what it stands for) may be unconscious, but the affect is consciously felt. Freud's emphasis on the misconstrued ideas of consciously felt affects helps one to consider the self-conscious aspect of Mercier and Camier's affective experience. Even though they attach false ideas to their affective experiences, even though they are at a loss for words to describe the effect that is happening to them, and even though they misunderstand things, they are equally driven by an inexorable urge to understand what is happening to them. As the narrator keeps reminding the reader, this journey is futile and yet seems imbued with the possibility of meaning: "... now exposed to the full fury of the wind, now through zones of calm, Mercier striving to grasp the full consequences for them of what had chanced ... But they strove in vain" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 77). This sense of delay and misunderstanding simultaneously marks the presence of an unfulfilled desire to grasp the affective experience, why they feel the way they do. This self-conscious urge to understand the inaccessible marks the Beckettian gesture par excellence, as it also points to the peculiarity of Beckett's construction of an affective and reflective narrative, full of potential for transformation and meaning, yet equally arrested by banality, silence, and anxiety.

Narrative Mood and Communicational Failure: Affect's Unsociability

If this type of blabbering functions as an unconscious urge that shows itself in a resistance to cognitive and emotional meanings, it produces a type of speech in which communication continually fails. It eliminates the social character and function of feelings in a literary universe dominated by random occurrences and the indeterminacy of affective experience. As Mercier and Camier drift through moods

and tensions, their social relationships open tensions that also lead to violence. For example, Mercier has an emotionally difficult experience after encountering two children who claim to be his. They appear in the middle of one of his broodings. Mercier seems embittered by the children's presence and is vicious to them because of their apparent dependence on him. Whether the children are his or just a vision, this particular encounter makes Mercier sentimental, giving him a sense of self-containment: "There are days,' said Mercier, 'one is born every minute. Then the world is full of shitty little Mericers. It's hell. Oh, but to cease!" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 24). This intensely dramatic scene is muted because it overlaps with another tragedy. After this scene when he sees a woman killed in an accident, Mercier feels a strange sense of catharsis, saying, "I feel a new man already," and the narrator claims Mercier is "in fact transfigured" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 25). Just like the absurd dialogue that allows them to deviate from the intensity of the scenes, the satisfaction of another body being destroyed distracts Mercier from the implied heavy impact of the encounter with the children. Tragic affect is kept at bay first by Mercier's mock-soliloquy and then by the pseudo-cathartic experience. In both instances, fear is veiled in a ridiculous retort. However, Mercier's emotional outburst is unwarranted, exaggerated, and confusing, to say the least. Even more confusing is the fact that no real context is found by which the narrator can refer to the presence of the children. Persons appear and disappear at dream-like intervals in the novel; they trigger affects and arouse moods before dissolving into the voids of the narrative. These random appearances and disappearances act in the manner of idle talk, as the sudden outburst of a seemingly pent-up energy that reveals itself through its escape from narrativization.

According to Nussbaum, "we learn how to feel [*sic*] from our society," and these social constructs called emotions do not come directly to someone in the form of "propositional claims about the world [but] they are taught through stories" (1990, p. 287). Stories allow the subjects to understand, interpret, narrate, and express emotions. This defines the way in which subjects escape the bondage implied by affect. Paradoxically, Beckett makes use of several representations of interaction in the form of dialogue only to problematize this social character of emotion, compromising meaningfulness altogether. Resistance to narration in the novel stems from a compulsion to focus on distractions, sudden emotional eruptions, and hovering ideas of affection, with narrative disjunction ultimately emerging as the resistance to tell a story. This is the sense in which the articulation of affect and style of speech are irrevocably linked in the novel. The characters' random responses fail to operate in relation to a "mechanism of mediation" that opens the way

for self-reflexivity and self-understanding (Redding, 1999, p. 135).⁶ Through this escape from self-reflexivity in a profoundly human sense, affect comes to dominate social interactions in the novel. In the rest of the scene before the accident, Mercier crushes the cake Camier had brought him through his fingers. As in the grave scene where a random physical sign breaks the silence at the end, here too attention is focused on a physical act that takes place between two objects or two bodies that affect each other. The cake gushes between Mercier's fingers, and the tears "flow, overflow" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 24). These images point to misconceptions in a universe where random bodies affect one another in most unexpected ways. Objects and bodies communicate, or rather miscommunicate, by means of their effects on each other. Unable to turn these affects to personal codes for self-understanding in a meaningful relation to the world, the characters speak a language that is semantically empty and yet over-coded with affective meanings. Failed social interaction further contributes to this sense of disintegration, in which objects and people disappear into oblivion, psychic processes are subordinated to physical ones, and conscious mental content seems indefinitely delayed. Mercier and Camier's social interactions are seemingly rooted in apathy and indifference while being irrevocably affected by the unrecognizable effects of the things that happen to them, and their whimsical journey is replete with chance encounters with "a long line of maleficent beings" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 8).

In fact, Mercier and Camier are often disturbed by the feeling that they "[do not go] unobserved" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 13). This tension is most manifestly articulated by Mercier in the grave scene: "Strange impression,'said Mercier,'strange impression sometimes that we are not alone. You not?'" (2010 [1946], p. 83). With the reference to a haunting third party, Beckett points to a very specific risk that pertains to oral communication. Michel Serres (1982, p. 66) calls this the "risk of losing meaning in noise" (1982, p. 66). "To minimize this risk, two interlocutors in dialogue" are considered as united against the phenomena of interference and confusion... [and t]o hold a dialogue is to suppose a third man and to seek to exclude him" (1982, p. 67). A common enemy is sought and defeated through dialogue. This maxim also describes the purpose of dialogue, which is consensus. But consensus does not define agreement between one and another. For Serres, it instead defines a "coupling," an alliance against a third party. The sensed presence of a third party

6 Tomkins wrote, "While biologically grounded, affect is freed from the determinacy of the biological: by means of the feedback that the feeling subject receives in the affective responses of others as well as its own further response to this feedback, a child comes to have affective responses to its own first-order affects (as when, for example, one feels shame at one's fear). It is by such mechanisms of mediation that the child is induced into existing patterns of socially codified 'ideo-affective postures'" (as cited in Redding 1999, p. 135).

is indeed the enemy (of affect) whose presence the characters cannot help but feel throughout the novel. It is a haunting, a disturbance generated by unspoken anxieties and non-narratable affective relations expressed in terms of random signs and random talk throughout the novel. In fact, this air of enigma that threatens the possibility of communication can easily be attributed to the study of affects with regard to Beckett. Beckett's narrators often play with the limits of emotional communicability by withdrawing from obvious elements of communication such as speech as the very factor of readability. As Piette argued in his study of Beckett's *Ill-Seen Ill-Said*, what Beckett's writing captures is not affect but "unreadability of affect – inscrutability, not clear affect-signals" (2011, p. 290). This haunting is articulated as a threat to the possibility of emotional readability and resonates in Mercier's words as he is plagued by the presence of a parrot, whose eyes, the narrator recounts, are "filled with unspeakable bewilderment and distress" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 20) and who seems to remain in a leaning position as if he were listening in. Another cathartic moment ensues the description of the haunting parrot where Mercier is once again seized by a longing for annihilation: "The longing will take me to throw myself out of the window but I'll master it" (2010 [1946], p. 20). Disguised as the parrot, the enemy is the dubious authority of the narrator, the perplexed reader who enjoys the violence of language and the automatism caused by affect all at once. These veiled anxieties reveal themselves not only through such transferences but also through the fact that Mercier and Camier are followed by a third party in the form of Mr. Conaire, a detective who is on the hunt for them. And their desire for either escape or dissolution ends in total blunder, opening the narrative to further miscommunications and mishaps. Despite their seeming rhetorical efforts to avoid cacophony, the risk of meaninglessness haunts them. This risk itself registers in the characters as "an indefinite fear of nothing in particular, [anxiety] allows no escape through avoidance, just as it impels no specific course of action; it is a tension in which one remains free, but entangled in one's freedom: oscillating, vacillating, powerless to act" (Smith, 2010, p. 202). The power of affect not only diminishes the power to act but also the power to cognize, organize, and structure. Perhaps also in this regard is why the novel's humor is quite disturbing in a world full of chance encounters. It is the humor of something missing, something forgotten or irreversibly gone, such as the complete erasure of identity and story or loss of emotional expression.

Rambling: An Affective Terrain

That *Mercier and Camier's* narrative underscores the role of affect in everyday encounters by presenting idle talk as a mark of inescapability from such an affective

world and by subordinating the power of the subject to the affections of the body seems fair to suggest. But can this lack of escape still be transformative, still be empowering? Although the novel is imbued with the tension of understanding and making sense in the face of oblivion, the act of talking about random things also allows the characters to distract themselves from who they are, from their personal tragedies and fears of abandonment: "Looking back on it ... we heard ourselves speaking of everything but ourselves" (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 97). They become ridiculously preoccupied with random things in the terrain after their encounter with the grave: Will you look at that heather, said Camier. Mercier looked with ostentation at the heather and whistled incredulously. Underneath there is turf, said Camier. One would never think so, said Mercier. Camier coughed again. Do you think there are worms, said Camier, the same as in the earth? Turf has remarkable properties, said Mercier. But are there worms? said Camier. Shall we dig a little hole and see? said Mercier. Certainly not, said Camier, what an idea. He coughed a third time. (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 83)⁷

The furtive sign of coughing and the repetitive mention of turfs and worms further complicate the humorously exaggerated appreciation of the landscape expressed by the characters. The tense mood is expressed through obvious bodily signs such as coughing as if to almost spit out the truth. Landscape is not just something to be appreciated in small talk but also a territory burdened with a pent-up tension that reveals itself through random signs; it marks untranslatable affects that simply become comical. Once again, empty talk provides a form of distraction from the seeming intensity of the grave scene. In the end, this kind of randomness seems to signify nothing more than a comic escape. This escape, however, appears not only as a flight from fear and anxiety but also as a flight from cultural symbols, emotional orientations, and reactionary language. Although Mercier and Camier become masters of a language that at times seems to elude mental content, in such instances their language demonstrates a certain resistance to the cultural past's demand for a dialogical

7 Will you look at that heather, said Camier.
 Mercier looked with ostentation at the heather and whistled incredulously.
 Underneath there is turf, said Camier.
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 Turf has remarkable properties, said Mercier.
 But are there worms? said Camier.
 Shall we dig a little hole and see? said Mercier.
 Certainly not, said Camier, what an idea.
 He coughed a third time. (p. 83)

relationship. As they traverse what appears to be Dublin, they are confronted with memories, symbols, traditions, and mannerisms that are irrevocably charged with confused associations. They further confuse these associations by responding ambiguously to their surroundings. The nationalist's grave turns out to be yet another empty sign that inspires a flow of speech whose subject matter ranges from turfs to worms. Something genuinely disengaged is present in Mercier and Camier's speech, a speech overcome by the literal pleasure of imitating the speech of anonymous crowds, taking on the desire to verbally regurgitate in such feigned expressions as "how aggravating" uttered at the sight of the grave (Beckett, 2010 [1946], p. 82).

What kind of power might lie behind this flow of language? For Deleuze and Guattari (2005), such a flow requires a certain relation to the outside; in other words, a certain vulnerability to being affected.⁸ They find in the figure of the nomad a certain relation "with the forces of the outside, ... an exteriority of thought [that serves to destroy the] model of the True, the Just or the Right" (p. 377). As such, they quote Artaud saying "[thought operates] on the basis of a central breakdown, ... [and on an] incapacity to take on form" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2005, p. 378) or a constant capacity to scatter and digress into many forms. This is the language of pathos, not yet organized or signified but in direct resonance with exteriority, a form of affection manifested in the fluctuating forces of the body. With regard to Beckett, a genre historically associated with good thought and synthesis is literally misused as the material for disjunctive or otherwise immaterial thought. One sees this breakdown not only in the characters' resistance to or misinterpretation of conscious mental content but also in their affected language, which seems to be controlled by their chance encounters and mixed with associations coming from the environment. As Mercier and Camier's speech breaks down, disintegrates, and moves farther away from its intended meaning, it becomes more vulnerable to expressing what escapes expression. This paradox becomes empowering when nothing is actually found to say, and yet using the famous Beckettian formula, the body drives itself to speak in the disruption of the mind's cognitive capacity.⁹ This paradox allows the characters to relate to cultural symbols nonetheless, to resist authority figures and

8 In the chapter "A Treatise on Nomadology: The War Machine" in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari explored the relationship of the state, or more generally of authority and (self)disciplined subjectivity, to what they called "the [established] image of thought", which they argue has an immediate relationship to historical, ideological, canonical, and scientific ways of thinking about mental activity (2005, p. 376).

9 In Beckett's "Three Dialogues," where he is in conversation with art critic Georges Duthuit, he expresses the necessity of expression in the absence of its possibility in the modern world: "... there is nothing to express, nothing with which to express, nothing from which to express, no power to express, no desire to express, together with the obligation to express" (2001 [1949], p. 139).

to invent forms of speech in the absence of relation or meaning. The paradox of language lies in the way it reveals itself as “a lighting that withdraws from understanding as it finds the very possibility of understanding” (Bourassa, 2002, p. 62). This happens specifically through the body’s pre-reflective tendency to speak, which gradually removes the burden of not only being conscious of one’s mental content but also of the cultural symbols that are burdened with heavy meaning. In this way, Mercier and Camier resign themselves to the undisciplined fluidity of their tongues. Through awkward speech and behavior, Mercier and Camier are able to transform the implications of affection into proper moments of action, even if that action is idle talk that lacks coherent structure and meaning.

Conclusion

Through representations of idle talk, verbal mannerisms, and rambling, *Mercier and Camier’s* narrative registers affective transitions and inarticulate passages of feeling in the form of narrative discontinuity and indeterminacy. The novel shows how language is entangled in affective experience and how everyday forms of speech can be determined by unjustified desires, urges, and bodily affects, especially in the absence of secure forms of interaction. In this context, everyday language serves to reveal positive and negative affects that lead to tensions and diminutions of power, as well as liberations from expectations, established identities and cultural history, even if this sometimes ends in violence and self-destruction. In line with the idea of affect as an unrepresentable form of thought caused by a bodily affection, Beckett explores in *Mercier and Camier’s* ridiculous, outrageous retorts and dialogues the power of flows of speech as a way of making sense when all recourse to meaningfulness fails. The novel does this by exploiting small talk, by presenting social communication as an irretrievably failed act, and by using empty talk to blur the boundaries between humor and tension and between meaning and meaninglessness. Affectivity appears as “a registering of that [external] effect without the body yet taking action or generating a specific emotion” (Colebrook, 2020, p. 430). This moment of indecision seems to last indefinitely in the narrative, disintegrating the narrative form to the extent that the story itself seems disjunctive and inessential. In this sense, the novel represents a peculiar form of affected language characterized by delays, repetitions, cycles, and automatisms. Failed social interaction further equivocates the notion of communicability and emotional readability, in which conversations simply suggest a map of affective signs, redundancies, evasions, and passages registered through

irrelevant language.

Contrary to its historical meaning, dialogue is not a remedy for epistemological uncertainty, noise, violence, and narrative incoherence in the novel, but it does open an affective milieu that provides ground for escape from dominant meanings in the form of both misinterpretation and detachment. In the absence of a sense of sociality and self-reflexivity, the meanings of failed interactions, displaced emotions, and overwhelming affective relations point to transformations of meaning. If participating in social situations involves “an embodied ‘being there’ [and] a plurality of affective relations, perceptions and perspectives” (Pethick 2015, pp. 96–97), the novel continually draws attention to this kind of plurality by inscribing a web of affective relations and signs where meaningful communication should be. An affective reading of *Mercier and Camier’s* ambiguous absurd dialogues allows one to reconsider Beckett’s early language as a form of experimentation that informs the quick-fire language of his later plays. More importantly, it points to Beckett’s use of idle talk as a way of exploring the conditions of meaning in terms of its problematic relationship to emotional representation. Thus, far from being meaningless, *Mercier and Camier’s* mostly digressive and elusive dialogues point to specific intersections that might offer insights into the ways in which everyday speech carries more affective motives and disturbances than one might think.

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An Anti-Transhumanist Reading of Stef Smith's *Girl in the Machine*

Yalçın ERDEN¹ 



¹Lecturer, Ph.D., Gendarmerie and Coast Guard Academy, School of Foreign Languages, Ankara, Türkiye

ORCID: Y.E. 0000-0002-6790-6486

Corresponding author:

Yalçın ERDEN,
Gendarmerie and Coast Guard Academy,
School of Foreign Languages,
Ankara, Türkiye
E-mail: YALCIN.ERDEN@jsga.edu.tr

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ABSTRACT

It is an undeniable fact that transition periods are painful processes that are difficult for society to embrace, regardless of the novelty or convenience they offer. Indeed, such circumstances arouse doubt and anxiety among the affected people due to their unpredictable nature. As a result, society has adopted a mostly hesitant attitude toward the process, with such hesitation being reflected in the literary works of the current age, in which exponential technological progress is experienced and human agency is questioned. Although the utopian optimism of transhumanist philosophy cannot be ignored, the rising number of dystopian works in all walks of contemporary literature signifies humanity's current anxiety about rapid technological changes and digital transformation. Stef Smith, a promising Scottish playwright, also questions automation technology, addiction to mobile devices, human microchipping, uploading, and the impact of artificial intelligence on humans through her play *Girl in the Machine* (2017). The playwright focuses on the daily interactions between Owen and Polly, a passionate couple. In the play, she demonstrates a world order in which not only human values are distorted but also the lives of the characters are devastated after a specific device with artificial intelligence, Black Box, becomes a part of their family. In this way, she reveals her doubts about the transhumanist anticipation of human enhancement through technology. Accordingly, this paper aims to interrogate the anxiety about unrestrained technological developments and transhumanist ideals by analysing Smith's play from an anti-transhumanist perspective. Most importantly, it attempts to highlight that the play, as a dystopian work, functions to caution humanity against an impending existentialist crisis in the shade of digitalisation.

Keywords: Transhumanism, technological progress, artificial intelligence, uploading, Stef Smith



Introduction

Transitions and transformations are undoubtedly painful processes that trigger scepticism, anxiety, and fear in society. An obvious reflection of this can be observed in 19th-century British society during the transition from the pre-industrial age to the industrial period. For instance, various works of Gothic fiction, such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), manifest ambivalence and fear under the shade of scientific and industrial developments. Likewise, it can be argued that concerns about the devastating impact of technological progress intensified following the World Wars in the 20th century, giving rise to the proliferation of dystopian novels such as Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and George Orwell's *1984* (1949). The dystopian visions also appeared in various theatrical adaptations of well-known dystopian novels like *Frankenstein* and *Fahrenheit 451* in the 20th century. Additionally, the number of dystopian plays that manifest technological concerns has increased remarkably since the beginning of the current century. Several plays can be taken as a concrete proof of this fact, including: *A Number* (2002) by Caryl Churchill, *Mr. Burns, a Post-Electric Play* (2012) by Anne Washburn, *The Nether* (2013) by Jennifer Haley, and *The Children* (2016) by Lucy Kirkwood.

Humanity has been experiencing a dazzling digital transformation in the 21st century with the rise of the internet, mobile technologies, and artificial intelligence. Smartphones function as indispensable assistants of contemporary humans, self-driving cars are currently on the road, the use of microchips is being discussed to track human health, an alternative digital world called the metaverse has been introduced, humanoid robots with artificial intelligence such as Ameca are being produced, and various chatbots with artificial intelligence like ChatGPT have been released. Most importantly, the futurist Ray Kurzweil (2005) underlines that humanity is heading towards a new phase called the "singularity" in which humans will be able to upload themselves into machines, overcome all sorts of physical limitations, and control their destiny (p. 9). As can be observed, humanity is amidst inconceivable technological and digital breakthroughs. Despite the benefits that have been acquired or are likely to be acquired thanks to technological advances, there is a growing concern about the unintended consequences of technological progress in today's world. This uneasiness in society reveals itself in visual arts and different genres of contemporary literature, including the novel and drama. As a playwright renowned for her dystopian plays, Stef Smith also projects the probable negative effects of the current and imminent technological progress, which

is mostly disregarded in transhumanist philosophy, on humans through *Girl in the Machine* (2017). Accordingly, this study aims to question the devastating impacts of the transhumanist determination “to improve the human condition” (More, 2013, p. 3) with the help of technology on humans and society by examining Smith’s play. In other words, it seeks to read *Girl in the Machine* as a critique of transhumanism and unrestricted technological progress.

This study firstly elucidates the main philosophy and principles of transhumanism. Next, it demonstrates in what ways transhumanism has been criticised. After briefly examining the impact of mobile technology and microchipping on humans, the study primarily discusses the unintended consequences of the dramatic technological advances, such as improved artificial intelligence and virtual immortality, from an anti-transhumanist perspective by examining the interactions between the characters and the catastrophic incidents that occur due to Black Box in *Girl in the Machine*.

Transhumanism and Anti-Transhumanist Voices

Transhumanism is a movement that regards technological developments as an opportunity to drive humanity forward. The movement aims to overcome inherent human limitations arising from human biology, such as weak memory and mortality, through science and technology (Bostrom, 2005, p. 8; More, 2013, p. 4). In this respect, various technologies ranging from nanotechnology to artificial intelligence are regarded as indispensable vehicles (Vita-More, 2019, p. 49). Furthermore, according to several transhumanists (Esfandiary, 1970, p. 82; Bostrom, 2005, p. 4; More, 2013, p. 4; Lee, 2019, p. 38; Vita-more, 2019, p. 59), the evolution of humankind has not yet been completed, with technology still being able to make a considerable contribution to the evolutionary process. Hence, transhumanism strives to accomplish human evolution from human to posthuman or superhuman through technological revolutions. Accordingly, in transhumanism, technological progress is not only an opportunity to alleviate the daily problems of humanity but also a highly valuable instrument to actualise the great transhumanist dream.

While transhumanism and posthumanism both reposition “humans” in the shade of technological developments, their perspectives are diametrically opposed. In fact, as Ađın (2020) wittily notes, although these are often confused isms due their immersion with technology, transhumanism is the “dark twin” of posthumanism (pp. 281-283). The

basic mentality behind the use of technology in transhumanism is to perfect human beings. Hence, transhumanism maintains "liberal humanist discourse" and all sorts of "dichotomies" that elevate humans (Ağın, 2020, pp. 285-286). On the other hand, "posthumanism is a radical critique of humanism and anthropocentrism" (Ferrando, 2019, p. 3). In this movement, as Hayles (1999) illustrates, "humans may enter into symbiotic relationships with intelligent machines (already the case, for example, in computer-assisted surgery); they may be displaced" (p. 284). Correspondingly, there is an attempt to close the gap between humans and technological devices in the posthuman movement, whereas technology is merely a favourable tool to maintain human dominance and excellence in the transhumanist movement.

Additionally, transhumanism and posthumanism both employ the term "posthuman;" nevertheless, it harbours "different connotations" in these movements (Ağın, 2020, p. 281). Hayles (1999) clarifies what posthuman means as follows:

"Post," with its dual connotation of superseding the human and coming after it, hints that the days of "the human" may be numbered. Some researchers. . . believe that this is true not only in a general intellectual sense that displaces one definition of "human" with another but also in a more disturbingly literal sense that envisions humans displaced as the dominant form of life on the planet by intelligent machines. (p. 283)

Hayles's explanations, then, reveal that the term posthuman is used to signify a sort of decentred and non-dominant human that is not likely to be superior to all beings in posthumanism. However, the term posthuman signifies a sort of superhuman or "Human 2.0" (Ağın, 2020, p. 284) in the transhumanist movement. Bostrom (2013), for instance, defines posthuman as "a being that has at least one posthuman capacity" (p. 28) and elucidates "posthuman capacity" as "a general central capacity greatly exceeding the maximum attainable by any current human being without recourse to new technological means" (pp. 28-29). As can be seen, the transhumanist conception of posthuman is completely different from what posthumanists refer to. Therefore, the term posthuman in this article has nothing to do with the term employed in posthumanism.

Although the imminent negative consequences of unprecedented technological developments are articulated by some prudent transhumanist critics such as Joan L. McGregor and Nick Bostrom, "an optimistic flavour . . . permeates transhumanism"

(More, 2013, p. 14). Transhumanism does not totally disregard the negative consequences of technology. Nevertheless, much more emphasis is placed on the merits that are likely to be acquired through technological progress than the destructive impact of it on humanity. Thus, there is currently a heated controversy regarding the use of technology for transhumanistic goals.

Several critics from diverse fields are sceptical about the merits of human enhancement through technology, and they are concerned that it is likely to have a negative influence on human values negatively. For instance, Fukuyama (2002) indicates that dramatic developments, particularly in biotechnology, might result in “los[ing] our humanity” (p. 101). Likewise, Winner (1978) indicates that “the meaning of being” is likely to be sacrificed for the sake of “the promise of perfect machine function” (p. 146). Technological progress is, then, considered to pose a menace to human nature in the long term.

Transhumanism strives to achieve the goal of being posthuman or superhuman with “much greater cognitive capabilities, and more refined emotions” (More, 2013, p. 4). In this sense, the movement attempts to eradicate the negative aspects of being human, such as pain, suffering, and grief, through technology. Nevertheless, such a perfection strategy is likely to pose a threat to the meaning of being human because, as anti-transhumanist specialists note, what gives meaning to human existence is not only the positive traits, but also our negative attributes (Fukuyama, 2004, p. 43; Cohen, 2011, p. 209; Leonhard, 2016, p. 143). Most importantly, mortality, which transhumanists view as one of the giant limitations of humankind on its evolutionary path, is considered to be an essential quality that makes human life desirable and valuable (Fukuyama, 2004, p. 43; Hoffmann, 2011, p. 285). Hence, anti-transhumanist specialists challenge the idea of perfecting the human condition and life.

Additionally, transhumanist ideals are criticised for impairing the meaning of being a human. As Fukuyama (2002) notes, while robots or machines with artificial intelligence can imitate human behaviours, they “are unlikely to acquire human emotions” (p. 168). He considers emotions to be a quality that differentiates humans from machines because “the distinctive human gamut of emotions . . . produces human purposes, goals, objectives, wants, needs, desires, fears, aversions, and the like and hence is the source of human values” (Fukuyama, 2002, p. 169). Accordingly, the attempts of transhumanists to refine human emotions or to perfect humans through technology are regarded as a direct threat to human existence. Additionally, it is argued that some

positive traits such as happiness cannot be acquired through hedonistic pursuits or the eradication of sorrow as transhumanists believe, since happiness relies more on subjective expectations than experiencing pleasant conditions (Hoffman, 2011, p. 283; Harari, 2017, p. 40). Anti-transhumanist specialists are, hence, concerned about trimming emotions, believing that transhumanist convictions are likely to pose an existential risk to humans.

It is also argued that the use of technology to evolve human beings into untainted beings will engender severe social and ethical problems in the anti-transhumanist approach. Contrary to transhumanists who mostly focus on the advantages that can be established by technology, anti-transhumanist specialists endeavour to indicate unintended social and economic problems, ranging from inequality to unemployment (Fukuyama, 2004, p. 42; Hayles, 2010, pp. 217-218; Peters, 2010, p. 159; Tennison, 2012, p. 406). It becomes difficult to disagree with these experts when acknowledging that transhumanism is based on the rationalist Enlightenment philosophy (Bostrom, 2005, p. 4; More, 2013, p. 10).

Transhumanism can be viewed as the grandchild of the Enlightenment philosophy. As Ferrando (2019) writes, "transhumanism seeks its origins in the Enlightenment, and therefore does not expropriate humanism" (p. 3). The ecclesiastical and monarchical power of the medieval age has become subordinated to human reason and progress with the rise of the Enlightenment philosophy. The concept of human is positioned at the centre in this philosophy. Furthermore, rationality and science are regarded as the keys to welfare and happiness. Nonetheless, the utopian optimism and the valorised rationality of the Enlightenment have not lessened suffering around the world. Although scientific progress propelled by the Enlightenment philosophy has enabled convenience in many fields, ranging from agriculture to medicine, it has indirectly led to several global issues, such as the worsened class divide and environmental crises. Furthermore, the ideologies that are liable for the current crises, such as anthropocentrism, capitalism, and Eurocentrism, are interrelated to rationalism. In fact, they are the outcomes of the Enlightenment philosophy. Likewise, "rationality and progress are at the core of the transhumanist postulation" (Ferrando, 2019, p. 3). It valorises science and technology, positions humans at the centre of the universe, and disregards the nonhuman world, much like Enlightenment philosophy. In this regard, the utopian conviction of transhumanists that technology will enhance the human condition and eradicate social problems is likely to be nothing more than bitter disillusionment.

In short, transhumanism exalts technological progress for the sake of perfecting humans and overcoming the obstacles that restrict typical humans such as mortality without sufficiently pondering upon the unintended consequences. It differs from posthumanism remarkably, maintaining humanistic principles. It attempts to establish a flawless human form, disregarding the negative impact such a result would have on both humans and nonhumans alike. When taking the nuclear wars and ecological disasters triggered by the uncontrolled use of science and technology into consideration, it becomes evident that the world has already suffered severely from the human-centred perspective. Therefore, the overdependence of transhumanism on technology at the cost of destroying human nature raises reasonable concerns. As a result, anti-transhumanist critics and experts approach transhumanist ideals with discretion, striving to be conscious of the drawbacks of perpetual technological progress and cautioning society against probable existential and social problems.

The Anti-Transhumanist Voices in *Girl in the Machine*

Stef Smith also focuses on the imminent negative impacts of recent technologies on humans in *Girl in the Machine* by dragging the audience into a technology-driven future in which citizens are addicted to mobile devices, get microchipped, and start to use devices with artificial intelligence called Black Box. The playwright enables the audience to witness the daily life of a couple in their 30s called Polly and Owen, who are depicted to have a troubled relationship. She employs the interaction between Polly, a successful solicitor who enjoys using cutting-edge devices, and Owen, a nurse who is sceptical about the widespread use of and dependence on technology, to demonstrate opposing approaches to technological progress. Nevertheless, the playwright's depiction of the insurmountable problems caused by Black Box reveals her reservation about uncontrolled technological advances, particularly about the dominance of artificial intelligence.

Critical reception of the play has remained relatively limited. There are no academic studies which focus on this play, except for an article written by Reid (2019), which mentions *Girl in the Machine* as one of the examples of contemporary dystopian plays that focus on technological transformation, and the dissertation written by De Simoni (2021), which examines the play as one of the "manifestations of dystopian theatre" (i). The play, first staged at the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh, has also been deprived of

varied professional critical reviews, except for Mark Fisher's succinct review in *The Guardian*. Fisher (2017) describes Smith's play as "a piece of dystopian sci-fi in the manner of Charlie Brooker's *Black Mirror*" (para. 2). Nevertheless, considering the fact that this brand-new technological device, Black Box, has the ability to arouse fear and anxiety among the audience instead of fascination, it can be said that the dystopian tone of the play is more dominant than its science-fiction leanings.

Black Box represents the main technological threat, eventually becoming uncontrollable and responsible for various incidents, such as the torrent of the uploaded citizens' dead bodies. However, before going into the details regarding the destructive impact of Black Box, the playwright prefers to demonstrate that technology is excessively dominant in the characters' daily lives. Such a dominance reveals itself even in the language and the attitudes of the characters. To illustrate, Polly and Owen's next-door neighbour expresses his complaints about noise via a text message rather than knocking on their door. While gossiping about their neighbour with Owen, Polly describes the man's face by likening it to "a smashed circuit board" (Smith, 2017, p. 1). Moreover, smartphones are excessively used by the characters (as is the case in today's world), with the use of smartphones being implied to have caused an alienation between the couple. For example, Owen is shown as being extremely irritated by his wife's addiction to her mobile phone, expressing his feeling as follows: "I can't remember the last time I had a conversation with my wife without her simultaneously checking her messages" (Smith, 2017, p. 27). It is implied that meaningful communication between the couple was already disrupted before Black Box came into their lives due to the excessive use of mobile phones. Furthermore, the characters, who are microchipped without their consent through a program called "Citizen Chip," are supposed to update their profiles and data. More importantly, none of the citizens have freedom of choice, as can be seen in Owen's complaints:

POLLY: I don't feel well.

OWEN: What sort of unwell

Silence.

Why don't you just...

Silence.

They said it can make you feel unwell... the update. It just made my forearm itch for a while.

POLLY: I didn't know they could do that... automatically update our Citizen

Chip...

OWEN: They can track us now- online and offline, and block people from requesting the headset, stop people uploading. It's the biggest update in a decade... a reactive measure, if you ask me. But maybe reactive measures are all we have left? (Smith, 2017, p. 10)

Owen's comments about tracking humans reveal that within the play, human autonomy is at risk due to the restricting impact of newer technologies. Accordingly, the dialogue between the couple highlights some potential problems that might result from technological progress, such as alienation, surveillance, and loss of freedom in the near future. This simple but functional conversation, then, enables Smith to draw the audience's attention to the risks of unrestrained technology through the character Owen even before the catastrophic effects of artificial intelligence on humans are depicted.

Artificial intelligence, whose roots date back to Turing Machine of British mathematician Alan Turing who is renowned for decoding the Enigma Machine during World War II, is a major breakthrough of the 21st century, akin to the steam engine of the 19th century. Different from the majority of mechanical devices of the previous century, software and hardware that use artificial intelligence are capable of processing data, learning, and solving problems. Thus, they not only carry out orders given to them by humans, but also become self-controlled agents that have faster learning and decision-making processes than the humans who designed the algorithms. On the one hand, they can be used as great assistants to help alleviate the sufferings of humanity, but on the other hand, they, as self-learning "beings," might become the trouble itself that humanity suffers from.

Artificial intelligence promises inconceivable innovation, and its utilisation in many walks of life, ranging from e-commerce websites to social networking sites, household appliances to smartphones, and self-driving vehicles to autonomous robots, has already provided ample benefits to humanity. Nevertheless, there exists considerable discomfort regarding the dominance of artificial intelligence. For instance, Steven Hawking underlines in an interview with Rory Cellan-Jones (2014) that "the development of full artificial intelligence could spell the end of the human race" (para. 1). He signifies the likelihood of artificial intelligence getting out of control, cautioning humanity against such a threat. Despite remarkably benefiting from advances in artificial intelligence,

Elon Musk is also concerned about the use of artificial intelligence. He states in an interview with Maureen Dowd (2020) that if artificial intelligence continues to improve at this rate, "things [will] get unstable or weird" within a couple of years (para. 73). A future projection in which "things get . . . weird" (para. 73) due to artificial intelligence meets the audience in Smith's play, too, which causes the audience to adopt a precautionary attitude towards artificial intelligence and its imminent impact on humans. Although Smith does not depict artificial intelligence as a power that can eradicate humanity as once foreseen by Hawking, she leans on the problems likely to be experienced both on the individual and social plane by employing Owen as her spokesperson and displaying apocalyptic turmoil towards the end of the play.

At the very early stage of the play, Black Box, a device with artificial intelligence, is introduced as a sort of gift brought by Owen to Polly who is understood to be in search of an escape or "distraction" (Smith, 2017, p. 5). Although Owen is not quite sure about the working principle of the device, he clarifies that the device manipulates brainwaves, syncs to the individual's heartbeat, and enables him or her to "have visions" (Smith, 2017, p. 5). In this sense, the device offers an alternative world similar to the metaverse that enables users to enjoy the things they cannot achieve in the real world. Therefore, the device is implied to be an opportunity to minimise human suffering, which is one of the fundamental ideals of the transhumanist movement. As More (2013) points out, providing humans with "more joy, less anger, or whatever changes each individuals prefers" is one of the ultimate goals of transhumanism (p. 4). Accordingly, the audience witnesses a world order in which the transhumanist dream of seamless "joy" appears to be actualised through a technological device called Black Box.

At first, Black Box is demonstrated to be a useful device. For example, Polly, who suffers from depression, benefits greatly from it. Black Box helps her relax by offering a specific relaxation program after detecting her stress level. It even reduces her dependency on medications for depression and enables her to lose weight. In this way, it is displayed in the play that transhumanists' everlasting trust in technological progress is likely to bear positive results. Nevertheless, Black Box gradually becomes indispensable to Polly, with her being portrayed as addicted to it towards the end of the play. Although Polly considers Black Box to be a temporary solution to depression, it becomes an irresistible device that occupies most of her time. This addiction also negatively affects the couple's already troubled relationship. Polly is neither willing to have a proper conversation with her husband nor enjoys doing common activities with him, such as

watching TV. Eventually, Polly becomes alienated from her husband by preferring to maintain a highly individualised life within the world that Black Box provides her. As can be observed, although the device offers some advantages on the surface, it gradually leads to major problems, such as extreme addiction and alienation, which have already been present in human society to some extent since the release of more common technological devices such as TV and the Internet. Thus, contrary to the expectations of such transhumanists as Bostrom (2005) to More (2013), the play indicates that technological progress will not in fact move humanity forward. As Smith demonstrates through the negative effects of Black Box on Polly and Owen, artificial intelligence (and technology in general) has the potential to deteriorate familial relationships and cause social alienation. Therefore, such technological developments cannot be welcomed as a saviour of humanity without examining the negative effects such technology would have on humans and nonhumans, as is the case in the transhumanist movement.

After a while, the benefits of Black Box that were presented at the beginning of the play become outnumbered by its drawbacks: Black Box leads to an insurmountable addiction, it becomes an unstoppable invader that breaches the firewalls of mobile devices, its application cannot be deleted by the technicians, and even the government is unable to stop it. To compound the problem, “there is no known maker of Black Box” (Smith, 2017, p. 31), which means that nobody is accountable for the turmoil it causes. These details indicate potential risks that technological innovations harbour, despite transhumanists being convinced that humans can transform into superhumans “by responsible use of science, technology, and other rational means” (Bostrom, 2005, p. 4).

Transhumanists view technological progress as an opportunity to actualise the transhumanist goal of improved humans who would be able to rid themselves of negative feelings. This transhumanist dream is likely to eradicate or diminish negative feelings or traits harboured in humans. Nevertheless, anti-transhumanist specialists are concerned about actualising such a dream. Eradicating negative feelings cannot move humans forward, with Fukuyama (2004) explaining the reason for this by emphasising the interconnectedness of humans’ “good characteristics” with their “bad ones” (p. 43). He indicates that although eradicating some seemingly negative feelings can bear positive consequences for humans, this might have a negative impact on human nature.

The transhumanist insistence on equipping humans with merely positive feelings

is also questioned in Smith's play through a dialogue between Owen and Polly. Polly's addiction to Black Box raises significant concerns within Owen about her ability to feel. When Owen visits Polly in her office, he finds her connected to Black Box, with his concerns being revealed in the following conversation:

OWEN: That fucking thing. Enough.

POLLY: But/I

OWEN: I said enough! No more.

POLLY: How much wine/

OWEN: Oh fuck off. I'm not the one who spends every evening attached to a fucking thing. And I don't care. I don't care if it makes you feel light and warm or whatever the fuck you said... take a bath, light a candle or whatever the fuck women are supposed to do to relax enough of that.

Because I watch you. I watch you numb yourself.

And trust me... I've treated enough junkies to know feeling something is better than feeling nothing at all.

So. No. More.

Please

No more. (Smith, 2017, p. 25)

As can be discerned from the conversation, artificial happiness and relaxation that Black Box provides alienates Polly from the real world, and, as Owen notes, she becomes more "numb" than happy. Therefore, this technological innovation makes her feel nothing rather than feel better. Owen is thus afraid of his wife becoming "numb" under the guise of technological support. Like Fukuyama (2004) who highlights the significance of human feelings whether they are positive or negative, Owen highlights how the ability to feel is essential to human existence. John the Savage in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* demands the right to be "unhappy" and "lousy" (Huxley, 1968, p. 163) in order to exist as a real human. Likewise, Owen desires to retain that right. Therefore, he attempts to save his wife from losing her human nature, offering her various activities that have the ability to relax her in the manner of Black Box. In a broader sense, Owen, then attempts to hamper the imminent world order in which humans transform into happy robots. The anti-transhumanist voice that challenges the transhumanist obsession with perfection resonates powerfully thanks to Owen's objections.

Owen's endeavours make sense because happiness which is not countered by the

risk of unhappiness loses its inherent value. After all, a concept or thing becomes valuable and meaningful as long as the opposite of it exists: a day becomes valuable as long as a night exists; success becomes meaningful as long as failure is experienced. Thus, Owen's statement "feeling something is better than feeling nothing at all" (Smith, 2017, p. 25) is a significant detection that complies with anti-transhumanist critics. Owen implies that the ability to feel, whether something negative or positive, makes a human a complex being which differentiates them from robots with artificial intelligence.

Black Box, which caused addiction and alienation despite providing relaxation at first, offers a permanent escape into a digital world upon receiving an update in the eighth scene. Polly describes this recent innovation as follows: "your mind gets reproduced on a network and you leave behind your body... your mind, soul, consciousness digitally lives on... a new way of living, a type of consciousness that is unimaginable to us" (Smith, 2017, p. 28). Polly's statements indicate a process of digital immortality envisioned by Ray Kurzweil (2005) in *The Singularity Is Near*.¹ Most importantly, she demonstrates a world order in which one of the most prominent transhumanist goals is accomplished: the body, which is viewed by transhumanists as for a cause of human limitation, is "left behind," and the mind, which is valorised in transhumanism as it was the case in the rationalist Enlightenment philosophy, is secured. Eventually, Polly's mind is implied to be uploaded onto Black Box.

Uploading is regarded as a great opportunity to attain immortality and "the ability to transmit oneself at the speed of light" (Bostrom, 2005, p. 7). However, mortality, which transhumanists consider to be an obstacle on the path of evolution from human to posthuman, is a characteristic that should be welcomed according to the anti-transhumanist specialists. Fukuyama (2004) states that "even our mortality plays a critical function in allowing our species as a whole to survive and adapt" and he adds that "modifying any one of our key characteristics inevitably entails modifying a complex, interlinked package of traits, and we will never be able to anticipate the ultimate outcome" (p. 43). In this regard, while uploading oneself onto a digital plane might appear fascinating, the consequences of such an act would be totally unexpected. Thus, such technological advances are approached with utmost prudence in the anti-

1 Polly's description of uploading is not different from Kurzweil's explanation on the topic. According to Kurzweil (2005), "uploading means scanning all of its salient details and then reinstating those details into suitably powerful computation substrate. This process would capture a person's entire personality, skills, and history" (pp.198-199).

transhumanist movements.

Several unanticipated impacts of uploading, which is estimated to be possible within this century by futurists like Ray Kurzweil, are also envisioned in Smith's play. Polly provides further details about uploading and demonstrates how the dreams of transhumanists are about to be actualised in the play:

Uploading. Using Black Box. It's evolved. If it used to be a momentary escape, now it offers a permanent one.

It asks you 'Do you want to live forever- Yes? Or No?' And if you say yes- apparently-it begins to scan your brain, capturing not just the shape of your brain but the content too...somehow (Smith, 2017, p. 28)

Polly's depiction of the updated Black Box reveals that it is capable of providing digital immortality by "creating" an alternative world that promises eternal happiness for the users after scanning their memories. Nevertheless, whether eternal happiness and life are essential or not is questioned through the objections of Owen, as will be analysed further in the following paragraphs. Furthermore, it is highlighted that the device copies your mind and memories. However, it is argued in the anti-transhumanist movement that the uploaded mind cannot represent the real characters of a person because humans are sophisticated beings with physical, psychological, and emotional complexity (Hoffman, 2011, p. 293). Accordingly, the transhumanist ideal of uploading is also regarded as problematic in Smith's play. Despite Polly's optimism about the use of Black Box to upload herself, Owen's objections and rightful questions make the anti-transhumanist tone to dominate the play. In this way, the audience is made to reconsider transhumanist ideals integrated with technology.

The offer made by Black Box gradually becomes reasonable, and Polly is tempted to upload herself by using Black Box. The device imitates both her and Owen's voices in a dream-like conversation and promises her to reach "bliss" with her beloved ones without a limited body and understanding (Smith, 2017, p. 53). Even though Polly strives to avoid the idea of being uploaded by destroying the device and its headset, Black Box manages to renew itself and restore Polly's data. Towards the end of the play, she becomes inclined to answer Black Box's question "Do you want to live forever?" (Smith, 2017, p. 55) positively. At this stage, the playwright employs a conversation between Polly and Owen to question the dehumanising aspects of uploading:

OWEN. Stop this. You're risking/

POLLY. Wouldn't you risk it all to make it better? Why don't you join me?

Silence

OWEN. No...Polly. It's not worth the risk...Because I want to bleed...I want to feel pain and I want to cry and laugh and make love and die...I want to be able to die, Polly. Because if we remove death...we remove our humanity. Because the most animal, the most basic thing we have is death and want makes us wonderful...what makes us so exceptional is our ability to survive...to live beyond hope...to live beyond the impossible...to live despite death. I want life and you cannot have life without death. I want to live. (Smith, 2017, p. 55)

The dialogue above functions to highlight a major controversial issue that transhumanists and anti-transhumanists approach rather differently. Transhumanists are enthusiastic about trying new technologies, such as uploading, by taking risks in the manner illustrated by Polly, whereas anti-transhumanists are of the opinion that such choices might have unintended, and worst of all, irreversible consequences for humans. Therefore, they adopt a precautionary and doubtful attitude towards uploading. Owen, as a spokesperson of the playwright, is also concerned about using the technology in this way like anti-transhumanists and attempts to stop Polly from uploading by reminding her the meaning of being human and informing her about horrific scenes that he witnessed after Black Box is used by numerous people.

Most importantly, Owen's reaction to Polly in the dialogue above demonstrates why humans need negative emotions and death. Owen challenges the artificial happiness that is valorised in transhumanism just as anti-transhumanist experts such as Fukuyama (2004) and Hoffman (2011) do. Therefore, he rejects uploading like John the Savage rejecting "soma" which provides artificial happiness. Similar to John who thinks that this substance is a sort of "poison to soul as well as body" (Huxley, 1968, p.143), Owen considers uploading to be a sort of poison. John the Savage desires the right to be a genuine human by "claiming the right to be unhappy" (Huxley, 1968, p. 163). Likewise, Owen does not desire to be a posthuman in transhumanist sense but to enjoy life with what it offers to him as a human. Furthermore, Owen's desire to have opposite traits such as crying and laughing concurrently implies that the value of human life is hidden beneath this contradictory situation. As Cohen (2011) highlights, "we devalue the

valuable things we have if we keep them only so long as nothing even more valuable come along" (p. 210). Similarly, Owen's meaningful objection to uploading makes the audience comprehend that human life will lose its value without hope for better or risk of death. Uploading seemingly enables humans to overcome intrinsic limitations, yet these limitations render humans unique and "exceptional." Owen's objections, then, reveal the risks awaiting humanity beneath the cloak of perfecting the human condition through technology.

One of the most significant concerns of anti-humanists is the unintended impacts of technology on human autonomy and freedom. A similar concern can also be observed in Smith's play when the depictions of a techno-apocalypse in which artificial intelligence with the ability to upload its users are taken into consideration. Towards the end of the play, artificial intelligence cannot be controlled, and it is thought to be producing headsets that cause an increasing number of people to upload themselves. Although authorities attempt to stop Black Box by temporarily cutting the electricity and making citizens' microchips incompatible with it, uploading cannot be prevented. Black Box, as a device with artificial intelligence which has better problem-solving skills than humans, is able to defy all the restrictions. Thus, Smith portrays a future forecasted by Bill Joy (2000) in which machines with artificial intelligence are "in effective control" (para. 7) rather than humans and thereby prompts the audience to consider whether it is worth risking human autonomy for the sake of digital immortality.

More concise examples related to the loss of human autonomy and freedom are also provided through the interaction between Owen and Black Box. After Polly successfully uploads herself onto Black Box, Owen endeavours to upload himself as well to meet his beloved in the digital world. Owen hears Polly saying goodbye from within Black Box and attempts to upload himself in every possible way, including pulling out the chip, which is incompatible with the device, from his body. Nevertheless, Black Box claims to have no capacity for more users. It informs Owen that they merely deal with the ones who are "dissatisfied" and ready to "believe" in uploading (Smith, 2017, p. 57). Owen's access is denied, and he cannot reunite with his wife in the digital world. Eventually, Black Box contributes to a tragic separation between Owen and Polly rather than a sort of bliss for them. Through this tragic incident, Smith reveals the transhumanist claim of "morphological freedom" which can be defined as "the ability to alter bodily form at will through technologies such as surgery, genetic engineering, nanotechnology, [and] uploading" (Vita-More, 2019, p. 57) is not possible to be actualised when artificial

intelligence goes beyond the control of humans. Although Sandberg (2013) argues that “technology enables new forms of self-expression, creating a demand for the freedom to exercise them” (p. 58), it is indicated in the play that unrestrained technology might hamper human freedom. Black Box, as an improved but uncontrollable artificial intelligence, restricts humans’ choices. The transhumanist optimism regarding technological progress is, then, rejected throughout the play, and the likelihood that humans will be subordinated to artificial intelligence is underlined through these details.

Several anti-transhumanist specialists also draw attention to the social problems that are likely to be induced by such technological developments as “digital immortality.” For instance, Tennison (2012) points out that transhumanist obsession with technology is likely to worsen social inequality (p. 406). Likewise, Fukuyama (2004) draws attention to the risk of inequality among individuals and points out that the theoretical convictions of transhumanists for a better world or more improved humanity might fail in practice by providing examples from American democracy (p. 42). Peters (2010) also challenges transhumanism by highlighting the human tendency to abuse technological power and the probability of the manipulation of technology by capital owners (p. 159, p. 170). A great unease about the unfavourable social consequences of technology exists despite transhumanists’ emphasis on its favourable aspects.

In the play, there are no direct references to either a sort of social inequality triggered by technology or manipulative capital owners. Nonetheless, this does not mean that the imminent social problems are overlooked in *Girl in the Machine*. After the excessive use of Black Box and the update which enables user to upload themselves onto Black Box, authorities note that thousands of people attempted to upload after breaking the law, the bodies of the uploaded cannot be buried but are burned in hospitals due to the excessive number of suicides, people are protesting in the streets to regain their freedom from Black Box, and politicians are eventually attacked because they are deemed responsible for not taking enough precaution (Smith, 2017, p. 44, p. 48). As can be observed, although uploading, which is one of the technological breakthroughs desired by transhumanists, has been actualised in the play, neither individuals nor communities have become more peaceful. On the contrary, the act jeopardises social peace. To illustrate, the innovation causes a social problem because it enables some individuals to commit a crime without the fear of prosecution and offers them a chance to live eternally by being uploaded. Furthermore, it loads unmanageable burden on

the existing health system. It also triggers security problems and social unrest among citizens since their privacy and autonomy are at risk due to Black Box. In short, the promise of digital immortality leads to a massive social turmoil, which is mostly overlooked by transhumanists. In other words, the existing social order is destroyed when a technological device with artificial intelligence goes out of control. These details, then, make the audience ponder on the unintended but possible social problems that may result from perpetual technological innovations.

Conclusion

Technology has the potential to ease humans' lives, with recent technological developments already providing numerous benefits. Nevertheless, there are several drawbacks of these developments, such as alienation and the loss of human values. Accordingly, several different approaches have arisen regarding the use and impacts of technology on humans. For instance, posthumanists regard technological developments as an opportunity to disrupt human dominance over other beings. On the other hand, transhumanists deem technology to be a key that will open the doors that will allow us to escape human limitations. Apart from these two perspectives, anti-transhumanists attempt to draw attention to the unintended consequences of excessive reliance on technology and are concerned about its irreversible effects on human nature and existence. Despite the fact that there is a huge body of critical articles examining literary works either from posthumanist or transhumanist perspectives, the anti-transhumanist perspective is the less preferred one. As we live in the posthuman age in which human agency is heavily questioned, posthumanist voices resonate more powerfully. Likewise, as we live amidst unprecedented technological breakthroughs, transhumanist perspectives are also employed particularly while examining works of science fiction. The critical studies about the meeting point of humanity and technology are, then, mostly stuck between these two poles. Nonetheless, the hoarse voice of the anti-transhumanists, who are more conservative than posthumanists and transhumanists in terms of fostering human-machine interaction, has been raised in this article.

The perspectives of anti-transhumanist specialists ranging from Fukuyama to Hoffman have been analysed, and the manner in which they oppose transhumanist optimism about unrestricted technological developments has been discussed throughout the article. Next, Stef Smith's *Girl in the Machine*, which has not been studied from an anti-transhumanist perspective so far, was examined to unearth imminent

problems that may result from overdependence on technology both in individual and social planes. Various details, such as the disproportionate number of technological terms in characters' everyday language and the implantation of microchips in citizens without their consent, enable the audience to comprehend the excessive dominance of technology in our lives. They function to display some early stages of the path of technological "progress" that ultimately results in artificial intelligence-related disasters. Moreover, as these given details are likely to happen in the near future, it is implied that the catastrophic moments that will be experienced by the characters Owen and Polly are not far away from the audience. Thus, the audience is encouraged to sympathise with the characters, and is subjected to interrogate transhumanists' trust in technological progress.

Owen's statements and attitudes towards his wife using artificial intelligence have provided a reasonable voice within the play. Therefore, the dialogues between Owen and Polly have been carefully analysed to reveal that his voice corresponds with the anti-transhumanist reservations. Artificial intelligence has been welcomed by several layers of society recently. Nonetheless, each technological breakthrough can only be embraced after calculating the risks they harbour, as anti-transhumanists claim. Such imminent risks as AI's getting out of control, engendering addiction, numbing individuals, worsening social alienation, and hampering human autonomy are also envisioned in the play. While Black Box offers short-term benefits such as relaxation, it brings about several other problems. Consequently, contrary to the claims of transhumanists, this article highlights the fact that it is not worth burdening humanity with more problems for the sake of "progress."

More destructive impacts of uncontrolled or unrestrained technology are discussed by focusing on the incidents that occur after Black Box provides its users with the chance to upload themselves and reach a sort of digital immortality that transhumanists dream of. Unlike Owen, Polly renounces her body in the hopes of eradicating her negative feelings in an eternal digital world, and she eventually loses the meaning of being human, as the device only offers is a limited copy of her mind and memories. Uploading, then, can be regarded as a threat to human nature because what makes a human real is his or her imperfections and shortcomings. In this regard, technological advances like uploading, which are thought to move humanity forward by transhumanists, constitute an existential threat to the meaning of being. Black Box acts as an autonomous agent, deciding who is able to upload themselves. As a result, human autonomy

becomes subordinated to machine autonomy, with nothing being able to affect its decisions. The negative impacts of Black Box on humans and their relations depicted in a techno-dystopian atmosphere, then, can be read as cautionary visions that function to shock the audience and help them comprehend the risks awaiting humanity in a broader sense unless the pros and cons of the imminent technological developments are calculated wisely. It is concluded in this study that although technological progress cannot be slowed down or stopped under current circumstances, it is vital to become conscious of the probable risks of exponential technological growth. Otherwise, what appears to be a sort of "progress" in the transhumanist narrative may turn out to be a catastrophic "regression" that cannot be reversed, as the dystopian frame of Smith's play successfully displays.

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An Exile of the Black Forests: Characterising Bertolt Brecht as an Intellectual Through His Theatrical Practice

Yeliz BİBER VANGÖLÜ¹ , Yavuz PALA² 



¹Associate Professor, Atatürk University, Faculty of Letters, Department of English Language and Literature, Erzurum, Türkiye

²Research Assistant, Ph. D., Atatürk University, Faculty of Letters, Department of English Language and Literature, Erzurum, Türkiye

ORCID: Y.B.V. 0000-0002-2117-7812;
Y.P. 0000-0003-2691-6706

Corresponding author:

Yavuz PALA,
Atatürk University, Faculty of Letters /
Department of English Language and
Literature, Erzurum, Türkiye
E-mail: yavuzpala@hotmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Bertolt Brecht's is a name associated with both intellectual and practical involvement in twentieth-century theatre. This essay focuses on Brecht's intellectual identity as well as his views on intellectualism and ultimately his role as a political artist in transforming society. Brecht's experience of inequality and oppression throughout his life played a significant role in shaping his intellectual and artistic identity, which is marked by a feeling of not belonging and restlessness. The essay delves into his intellectual approach in general alongside his critique of intellectuals that surfaces in his plays, *Life of Galileo* (1938-43) and *Turandot or Whitewashers' Congress* (1953). Additionally, Brecht's short story, *Socrates Wounded* (1938-39), exemplifies his emphasis on practical philosophy and critical engagement with the material world. Brecht's critique of intellectuals, epitomized in the concept of 'Tui', further underscores his disdain for those who align with oppressive powers. This essay explores Brecht's intellectual legacy, emphasising his commitment to social transformation through art, philosophy, and relentless questioning. Through a comprehensive analysis of his life and works, this discussion illuminates Brecht's profound impact on the realm of intellectualism and his enduring influence as a political artist, challenging individuals to confront social complexities and engage in transformative intellectual endeavour. **Keywords:** Bertolt Brecht, Intellectual, Life of Galileo, Turandot or Whitewashers' Congress, Theatre



Introduction

“I, Bertolt Brecht, come from the black forests.
My mother carried me into the cities
As I lay in her body. And the cold of the forests
Will be in me till I die.”

Bertolt Brecht, *Of Poor B. B.*

While what defines an intellectual may be debatable from different viewpoints, Bertolt Brecht's is a name that would certainly appear on a list of the twentieth century's most remarkable intellectuals. Having lived through a series of catastrophic events and disturbing times such as the First World War, the Great Depression, the failure of the Weimar Republic, the rise of Nazis in Germany, McCarthyism, and the Second World War, Brecht encountered and endured various acts of inequality, despotism, and exploitation throughout his life, spending a considerable part of it in exile. The chaotic atmosphere of his age was nevertheless instrumental in forming his intellectual and artistic identity producing in him a discernible difficulty to belong to the world immediately surrounding him. As the lines of his poetry above demonstrate, to Brecht, his origins were to be found not at the heart of civilisation but in the black forests; he felt a strong sense of un-belonging in the world immediately surrounding him. Black forests seem to have an abiding influence over Brecht, an influence he identifies as a sense of coldness. Whether it was a sense of wildness and aggressivity or a feeling of distance which characterises this influence, it is possible to argue that it also is the source of his intellectual strength and tough temper.

Despite being the son of a well-to-do middle-class family, Brecht seems to have spent his life as an exile of the black forests and harboured a sense of restlessness in a world made essentially of class divisions and injustice, which turned him into an aloof figure, a non-conformist, and a Marxist rebel before the established systems. To Brecht, the proletarian class was “reinforced to a negligible and uncertain extent by the renegade intellectuals” (2001, p. 189). He thought the intellectuals of his time connived with the capitalist scheme against which he positioned his intellect. Moving from this premise, the objective of this essay is to form a comprehensive discussion about Brecht's intellectual identity and his views on intellectualism by merging several aspects of the practitioner's life and profession. While his acclaimed approach to theatre is quite crucial

in giving a general idea about his understanding of intellectualism and his critique of the intellectuals of his age noteworthy in this regard, two of his plays, *Life of Galileo* (1938-43) and *Turandot or Whitewashers' Congress* (1953) should also be closely examined as they are centred around intellectual figures. Moreover, Brecht's short story *Socrates Wounded* (1938-39)¹ also provides remarkable insight into Brecht's notion of intellectualism as he portrays the philosopher in a certain way which is connected to his own belief system. Therefore, this short story will serve as an introductory piece in opening up the discussion. The assumption on which this essay is pillared is that a multi-layered discussion of intellectualism, where a diverse practitioner like Brecht is concerned, will prove more illustrative and encompassing.

Theatre, Dialectics and Transformation: Brecht's Intellectual Legacy

For Brecht, known early on for his anti-exploitation writings, art, especially his political theatre, was a means of educating and thereby changing society. In order to achieve this purpose, he leaned on Marxist theory and challenged the conventional heritage of dramatic theatre, which he thought was comfortably static. In doing so, he positioned his understanding of theatre against a centuries-long tradition of theatrical practice. Brecht structured his epic theatre by meticulously experimenting with novel techniques of representation. His theoretical writings often disclose a fervent spirit as he expresses his firm belief in transforming the world by awakening in the minds of the audiences the possibility of change. He was not only an exceptional theorist but a visionary in that his theatrical practice was completely on a par with his aim to transform the world. One of the main strategies he employed was to disable empathy by removing the fourth wall that separated the actors from the audience in the theatre building. He aimed for a forceful theatre that would initiate critical thinking by requiring an alienating level of involvement. In epic theatre, art as a form of political activity, proved to be a direct method of pedagogy for the oppressed. Pushing his audiences to see beyond the blinding restrictions of the regimes surrounding them and reminding them of the possibility of transformation on various levels of theatrical representation, Brecht's epic

1 While other plays by Brecht, such as *Mother Courage and Her Children* (1939), *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (1941), and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1944), undoubtedly offer valuable insights into the thematic concerns of this article, the works under scrutiny here distinguish themselves through their sophisticated exploration of intellectual engagement with power, ideology and social change. By concentrating on these specific texts, this study aims to maintain a focused and coherent trajectory, facilitating a comprehensive exploration of Brecht's perspectives within the defined parameters of the article's scope.

theatre served as a space of rebellion, and from this viewpoint, it remains one of the most tangible examples of artistic intellectuality being put into action.

Brecht's anti-Aristotelian approach to theatre is also marked by a return to Socrates' dialectical method.² His theory is firmly established upon a dialectical method which is instrumental in delivering epic theatre's central idea of transformation through its emphasis on development. All his literary and theatrical work aside, Brecht deserves credit as he is the foremost theatre practitioner who noted the link between dialectics and theatre and introduced the dialectical method to theatre both as a principle of progress and by means of techniques such as the 'not-but' and interrupting the narrative to debate the issues at hand with the audience. His development of aesthetics based on this method appears, in itself, to be a tribute to his intellectual capacity to lead and to reform.

As Anthony Squiers notes, if Brecht turns to Socrates in dark times, it is also "in hopes of seeing the un-foreclosed possibilities, liberating possibilities which are rendered through a willingness to perplex and a practical attitude toward philosophy" (2019a, p. 3). Brecht's purpose as a revolutionary thinker in revisiting the method of teaching popularised by Socrates is to encourage society to ask uncomfortable questions and to get them ready for even harder answers in line with Socrates' motto, "The unexamined life is not worth living". To Brecht, philosophy is the instrument that allows us to realise this. As a Marxist intellectual, he associates being involved in philosophy with being engaged with the material world, that is, being a philosopher of praxis. To understand Brecht's goal, Antonio Gramsci's definition of the philosophy of praxis would be helpful:

It [the philosophy of praxis] is consciousness full of contradictions, in which the philosopher himself, understood both individually and as an entire social group, not only grasps the contradictions, but posits himself as an element of the contradiction and elevates this element to a principle of knowledge and therefore of action. (1999, p. 747)

The contradictions of social life, for Brecht, are not mastered by keeping silent about them; on the contrary, one should endeavour to expose them. Thus, one must first be

2 As Brecht used dialectics as mainly a method of debate and furthering thought, it seems to be more appropriate to relate his dialectical approach to Socrates rather than Hegel or Marx despite the obvious Marxist basis of his theatre.

able to depict the empirical realities of the present day in order to expose the social contradictions. Only when social realities are grasped is it possible to alter social relations. Being a philosopher of praxis requires both knowledge and action.

Squiers observes that “Brecht’s willingness to perplex is an intellectual inclination to confront social life in all its complexity” (2019a, p. 3). He goes on to explain that understanding this complex system is a difficult task that requires looking at it from multiple perspectives, asking complicated questions and persistently seeking answers. “The willingness to perplex compels one to venture into foreign intellectual terrain, to transgress disciplinary boundaries” (Squiers, 2019a, pp. 3-4) which Brecht did frequently. Brecht emphasises the importance of critically and analytically engaging with the apparatuses that generate knowledge and experience in order to alter them. He believes that intervening in the material world through artistic representation is a requirement to effect social change. In his assessment of Brecht’s theatre, Jean-Paul Sartre points out that theatre had been dominated by a singular ideology serving the political interests of the bourgeoisie. By portraying reality as immutable in its representation of life through art, the bourgeoisie managed to convince the working class that the exploitative system in which they lived was natural. This resulted in a neutralisation of their ability to question and criticise the system, which then made it difficult for them to acquire a sense of class consciousness. Sartre argues that Brecht’s epic theatre emerged as a counterforce to this prevailing trend (1961, p. 5) and thus had a revolutionary character. Brecht criticised the bourgeois theatre of his time for inducing a sense of witchcraft or hypnotism in its audience, thereby reinforcing the status quo (2001, p. 38). Consequently, he sought to challenge this ideology through a new theoretical and practical approach to theatre. Thus, his epic theatre is intended to undermine hegemonic ideology and produce cognitive ambiguities that would lead people to conclude that humans are largely responsible for constructing their ideological and material realities.

In addition to being an intellectual, Brecht was also a tenacious critic of the intellectuals of his generation. In many of his works³, he expressed his disapproval of the intellectuals for their unwillingness, neglect, and inability to encourage social transformation. This seems to inform his short story *Socrates Wounded* which illustrates the importance of willingness to perplex as well as the readiness to engage in the material world, which, to him, is an intellectual requirement. He depicts Socrates in this story as a practical philosopher—a

3 Brecht’s notable works in which he criticises intellectuals are: “Intellectuals and Class Struggle” and *Tui Novel* (an unfinished satire on intellectuals).

man of action: “His [Socrates’s] skepticism in many spheres led to credulity in many others; he was against speculative thought and in favor of practical experience; so he did not believe in the gods, but he did believe in onions” (2015, p. 192). Socrates’s disbelief in the gods but belief in something as ordinary as onions can be seen as an example of his practical and materialistic approach. He believed in verifying ideas and theories via real experience rather than relying primarily on abstract reasoning or faith. This approach corresponds with Brecht’s emphasis on critical thinking and practical action in the face of social and political challenges. Thus, Brecht sees in Socrates a model for intellectual independence and critical thinking, which he believed was essential for social and political change. The story is briefly about Socrates, who witnesses the paradoxes of war and is hailed as a hero due to coincidental events that occur while he tries to flee the battlefield. He then unveils the truth despite all the negative consequences that might befall him. Although the story touches upon general moral codes, Brecht portrays Socrates as a man in action, as Squiers puts it: “Brecht prioritizes Socrates’s actions over his thoughts. It is what he does, not what he thinks that is important. This idea becomes even more apparent later in the story as Brecht’s Socrates struggles to choose a course of action” (2019b, p. 108). Despite all his internal contradictions and the possibility of being humiliated and punished by the authority in public, Socrates performs a noble act by speaking the truth.

In stark contrast with Socrates’s honourable attitude, however, Brecht suggests that the intellectuals of his generation have opted to work with power in a way that promotes their interests. In order to emphasise such treason of intellectuals, Brecht coined a new concept, ‘Tui’, which characterises a person who sells their talents and ideas as a commodity on the market or uses them to support the ruling ideology of a repressive society. Tui is an abbreviation for ‘Tellect-Ual-In’, which, as a strange pun on the concept of ‘intellectual’, seems to emphasise the failure of the intellectual’s role in society through its jumbling and shortening of the word. Brecht coined this term and employed it in a variety of critical and artistic initiatives, including the material for his so-called Tui-Novel—an unfinished parody on intellectuals—in the mid-1930s. Even though he could not complete his Tui-novel, Brecht was able to present some powerful plays based on his criticism of intellectuals.

Galileo and the Ethical Responsibilities of Intellectuals

The first play under discussion here is an excellent illustration of how Brecht uses historical events and characters to shed light on contemporary issues in an intellectual

way. In *Life of Galileo*, Brecht portrays the life of the famous scientist, Galileo Galilei, and his conflict with the Church⁴ over his discoveries and theories about the heliocentric model of the universe. This is a play that explores themes of scientific advancement and power struggles as well as the ethical responsibilities of intellectuals. There are three versions of *Life of Galileo*. The first version (Danish) was written in 1938-43 when Brecht was an exile in Denmark after the triumphs of Hitler in Germany. It was first performed in 1943 in Zurich. The plot of the play is more or less the same as that of the following two versions, which is basically the struggle between Galileo and the authorities. The major difference in the following versions lies in Brecht's attitude towards Galileo who cunningly retracts and accepts the authority of the Church so that he can complete his masterpiece, the *Discorsi*. The second version (American) was written in 1944-47 during the Second World War in collaboration with the English actor Charles Laughton. Shorter than the Danish one, in this version it looks like Brecht felt a need to change Galileo and a few minor characters in the aftermath of the Hiroshima bombing. Galileo, who initially outwits the Inquisition, eventually turns into a coward who betrays his people out of the fear of physical pain in these later versions. While Brecht seems to have praised Galileo's recantation which permits him to continue his work and propaganda in the first version, he now sees his act of recantation as the 'original sin' (1980, p. 126) and curses him in the following versions as a result of his disillusionment with the Second World War and the dropping of the atomic bomb. As Brenda Murphy notes: "Overnight the biography of the founder of the new system of physics read differently" (1999, p. 189). Brecht's evolving perspective reflects his broader views on science, politics, and power and how these intersect in society. His epic theatre was a way to challenge existing power structures and encourage audiences to engage critically with the world around them. His own restless and ever-evolving worldview is also reflected in his work, which seeks to push the boundaries of what is possible in theatre and encourage the audience to question their assumptions. In this sense, Brecht's theatre was not only a reflection of his own life but also a call to action for the audience to engage with the world in a critical and questioning way. Brecht, feeling dissatisfied with the American version of the play, later collaborated with Elisabeth Hauptmann, Benno Beson and Ruth Berlau to revise it (Berlin) in 1953. This new version, which restored many of the materials that Laughton had cut from the Danish version, was first performed by the Berliner Ensemble in 1957. Despite the restorations, Galileo's character in the Berlin version remains the same as in the American version.

4 In his notes on the play, Brecht specifically emphasises that the Church in the play is presented as a secular authority rather than solely a religious one. He suggests that the Church's ideology is interchangeable with that of many other secular authorities, implying that the Church is not fundamentally different from other institutions that wield political power. (Brecht, 1980, p. 125)

In all versions of the play, Galileo informs the Church that he recants his studies in which he challenges the doctrine of religion with his newly developed theory of heliocentrism but he continues his studies in secret. He continues to work on his masterpiece, *Discorsi*, which he smuggled out of the country with the help of his pupil, Andre, who praises this act of Galileo. In the first version, through the words of Andrea, Brecht defines this as a moral act to protect and promote the truth in oppressive civilisations: “You gained the leisure to write a scientific work which could be written by nobody else. If you had ended up at the stake in a halo of flames the other side would have won” (1980, p. 106). With this clever act, Galileo, thus, seems to shed light on truth in the age of scholasticism. Brecht delivered this interpretation of his play in the original version written in the 1930s in an effort to uplift intellectuals persecuted by Nazi tyranny. At the time, he believed that any means was justified to protect the truth, which apparently included lying in the name of the truth. After the Second World War and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, however, Brecht’s attitude towards Galileo changed radically: he no longer regarded Galileo’s recantation as a clever strategy to uphold the truth, but rather as a betrayal and a shameful submission to conservative forces. He changes the end of the play in the following versions where Galileo interrupts his pupil’s hymns of praise to prove that his recantation was a crime and could not be absolved by the significance of his latest work (1980, p. 131). He also admits that when he recanted, he did not really do so to continue his work, but rather out of fear of physical pain:

Galileo: Presumably for the principle that science’s sole aim must be to lighten the burden of human existence. If the scientists, brought to heel by self-interested rulers, limit themselves to piling up knowledge for knowledge’s sake, then science can be crippled and your new machines will lead to nothing but new impositions. You may in due course discover all that there is to discover, and your progress will nonetheless be nothing but a progress away from mankind. The gap between you and it may one day become so wide that your cry of triumph at some new achievement will be echoed by a universal cry of horror. – As a scientist I had unique opportunity. In my day astronomy emerged into the marketplace. Given this unique situation, if one man had put up a fight it might have had tremendous repercussions. (Brecht, 1980, pp.108-109)

Galileo admits that he betrayed his profession by not defending and fighting for his beliefs when astronomy became popular in the markets. He believes that if he took a

stand and fought for his beliefs, it could potentially have far-reaching consequences and change the course of history. He also acknowledges that failure to do so allows the authorities to misuse its expertise for their own purposes. Despite his failure, Galileo's admission that something would have changed if he had stood firm is important in sending a message to the audience, potentially activating in them the ideal of transformation.

In Scene II, Brecht portrays Galileo as a man who is driven by a passion for scientific discovery but who also recognises the need to earn a living and comfort by selling his knowledge to those who can pay for it: "Today a world-famous scholar is offering you and you alone, a highly marketable tube [telescope], for you to manufacture and sell as and how you wish" (Brecht, 1980, p. 20). This might be understandable when it comes to creating a space for a scientist to focus on their studies. It also seems that Brecht was not at odds with this idea in the first version of the play. However, as Brecht discovered during the Second World War, the outcome of handing knowledge to an authority is disastrous:

The bourgeois single out science from the scientist's consciousness, setting it up as an island of independence so as to be in practice to interweave it with *their* politics, *their* economics, *their* ideology. The research scientist's object is 'pure' research; the product of that research is not so pure. The formula $E = mc^2$ is conceived of as eternal, not tied to anything. Hence other people can do the tying: suddenly the city of Hiroshima became very short-lived. The scientists are claiming the irresponsibility of machines. (1980, p. 121)

The quotation appears to be a critique of the way science is often treated as an isolated and independent entity when it is strongly intertwined with politics, economics, and ideology. Brecht argues that while the object of scientific research may be pure, the product of that research can be used for either positive or negative purposes. The example given of Einstein's formula highlights this point, as the formula itself is neutral and independent, however, the way it was used in the development of the atomic bomb had devastating consequences for the people of Hiroshima. Brecht contends that scientists cannot claim the same level of irresponsibility as machines because they are conscious agents capable of understanding the social and political implications of their work. Assuming a machine-like quality by simply focusing on bringing out scientific

novelties, scientists abdicate the ethical responsibility for how their work may be utilised. Since the knowledge produced by scientists is ultimately disassociated from the social environment in which it is created, scientists, like other workers, are alienated from their products under capitalism. Their work is frequently focused on profit and technological advancement rather than meeting the needs of society as a whole since they operate in a system that privileges efficiency and productivity over human needs and moral considerations.

The example of Galileo illustrates the conflict between the pursuit of knowledge and the pressures of society. Galileo's desire for recognition and funding led him to compromise his principles and ultimately recant his views under pressure from the Church. Brecht regards this as a betrayal of the scientific ideals of seeking the truth and advancing knowledge as well as the beginning of the corruption of modern natural sciences. That is why he considers Galileo's recantation as the "original sin of modern natural sciences" (Brecht, 1980, p. 126). According to Brecht, this compromise represents a turning point in the history of science, as it marks the point at which scientific inquiry became subordinated to the interests of the authorities rather than serving human liberation and progress. Thus, as Frederic Ewen notes: "The hymn to the new age at the beginning is balanced by the sad confessional at the end" (1970, p. 345). All the great technologies and discoveries of the day, according to Brecht, have come to pose an even greater threat to humankind since innovators and explorers have handed over their labour to the governments. Brecht believed that art should not simply entertain but also challenge the audience's worldview and inspire them to take action. By historicising Galileo's life and presenting his struggles against the authorities, Brecht aims to show that intellectuals like Galileo have a social responsibility to use their knowledge for the welfare of society rather than serving the interests of the ruling class.

At the beginning of the play, Brecht presents Galileo as a strong and dedicated individual who is willing to risk his life for his research. This is especially noticeable in his behaviour during the plague in Chapter Five, where he is fiercely committed to continuing his research despite the ongoing grave peril. However, as the play progresses, Galileo's courage begins to wane, and he becomes more susceptible to fear and weakness. This change in Galileo's character seems to be an intentional artistic strategy employed by Brecht to challenge the audience's perceptions of historical heroes, inviting them to scrutinise the flaws and weaknesses of human nature. Brecht's approach to the play

is also notable for its use of epic theatre techniques. Rather than creating an illusion of reality on stage, Brecht interrupts the flow of the play and frequently employs an alienating use of light and props to disrupt the audience's immersion in the play. By breaking the organic unity of dramatic theatre, he is able to present the play as a series of episodes that explore various moral concerns and contemporary social realities.

One of the central concerns of the play is the relationship between truth and power, which is a recurring theme in Brecht's work. Through Galileo's struggles with the Church and his eventual recantation, Brecht exposes the ways in which power structures can distort and suppress the truth. By urging his audience to think critically about the arguments of all characters and form their own conclusions, Brecht encourages them to question the validity of dominant power structures and to seek out alternative perspectives. Brecht also attempts to draw a link between Galileo's failure and the intellectuals of his time through the play. As Clarks puts it:

For Brecht there had been only one type of intellectual in the past: the 'reactionary' or bourgeois intellectual 'who blended into the ruling class', was committed only to art for art's sake, and served only the interests of the elite [...] As he saw it, intellectuals - at least those who had corrupted and misused the intellect - were largely responsible for the decline of the Weimar Republic and the victory of the Nazis. (2006, p. 455)

Brecht criticised the intellectual and creative establishments of the day, stressing that they had ignored social and political realities. In a time of political unrest and social upheavals, he contended, the traditional role of the intellectual as an objective and disinterested observer of the world was no longer viable. Instead, it was the responsibility of the artist and intellectual to engage with the world and employ their skills to affect social change. Brecht was particularly critical of bourgeois intellectuals since he thought they were to blame for the rise of fascism and the fall of the Weimar Republic. According to him, the bourgeois intellectuals were corrupted by their proximity to authority and thus became disconnected from the needs and aspirations of the common people. Although Brecht portrays the betrayal of intellectuals in *Life of Galileo*, he thinks that the situation in the play can well be reversed. In his article, "Intellectuals and Class Struggle", which was originally written in German approximately in 1926 and translated by David Bathrick into English in 1973, Brecht writes:

It was precisely in wartime that *the commodity character of the intellect* revealed itself unfavorably. On the other hand, the behavior of German intellectuals proved that when their feelings are involved in something, they are able to place their own 'ideas at the service of the cause,' or even the ideas of others - for example, of dead intellectuals; and if greater effort is needed, then they will 'serve the cause' for just a modest increase in pay. (p. 19)

In his critique of 'the commodity character of the intellect,' Brecht makes the implication that intellectuals are driven more by a desire for financial gain than by a passionate belief in their positions. However, he also asserts that intellectuals can be very helpful when they are motivated by their emotions and willing to put their ideas to work for a cause because it shows that ideas can serve as the basis for action and that intellectuals can have a significant impact on influencing public opinion and political action. As a result, he argues that the proletariat may employ intellectuals in a number of ways as long as they are motivated by an appropriate cause and adequately paid.

***Turandot* and the Intellectual in the Marketplace**

Brecht draws a parallel between Galileo's downfall and the modern-day intellectuals in his relatively lesser-known play, *Turandot or Whitewashers' Congress*, which focuses on intellectuals selling their ideas in marketplaces. Even though this play appears to be anti-intellectual, here Brecht reverses the intellectual breakdown he depicted in *Life of Galileo*. This time he makes a distinction among intellectuals and pits a revolutionary intellectual character against the reactionary intellectuals who offer their ideas for sale. The play consists of ten major scenes and the story opens with a scarcity of cotton in China due to the cotton monopoly being held by the emperor and his brother Yao Yel. As the common people suffer from the scarcity of cotton and hence the increasing prices, the emperor and his brother expect the prices to increase even more, allowing them to make greater profits. This leads the clothesmakers and people without clothes to unite in protest against the emperor. Kai Ho, a former Tui, organises an uprising and informs the people about the reason for the cotton shortage. The emperor calls a meeting of intellectuals, known as the Tui Congress, and offers a reward for the best explanation (whitewashing) for cotton prices. Turandot, the emperor's daughter, is the reward for the Tui providing the most convincing justification to strengthen the authority of the emperor and alleviate the unrest in society. However, several competitors, who

are Tuis, cannot provide credible justifications and are executed as a result. At that point, Gogh comes up with a plan to quell the uprisings, instructing his men to burn half the cotton while blaming the Tuis for it. This strategy not only undermines the Tuis' credibility but also reinforces the emperor's reliance on Gogh and his gang for protection. Gogh also tortures Tuis and forces Turandot to marry him. He also tries to take control of the palace, but he fails when Kai Ho's followers break in. Brecht's central critique in the play seems to be of the role of European intellectuals in shaping public opinion. Intellectuals have traditionally served as the representatives of the people, using their knowledge and education to advocate for the common good. This appears to have changed over time. Instead of serving the people, intellectuals had become self-serving, manipulating public opinion whenever it suited their interests. This, according to Brecht, was a hazardous trend since it permitted tyrants and dictators to rise to power. These intellectuals might establish a false feeling of consensus by manipulating public opinion, making it easier for authoritarian leaders to grab control and hold power by silencing disagreement and crushing resistance.

The Tuis' domination of the public sphere, according to Brecht, undermines its fundamental emancipatory role, namely the advancement of welfare. The Tuis, like European intellectuals, constantly engage in speeches and actions that obscure class relations. The clearest example of this in the play is the competition to justify the lie of the emperor hoarding cotton to raise prices. The congress, attended by the emperor, the Tuis, the union of clothesmakers, and Sen (a peasant), representing the public, is therefore nothing more than a mechanism of oppression. As Munka Du, one of the chief Tuis, says: "Just as there is always a tennis court for people who want to play tennis, so there is always an explanation for people who want to believe" (Brecht, 2004, p. 148). His words reveal that the Tuis can manipulate public opinion in support of the status quo mainly because people are willing to believe. Henry J. Schmidt also notes: "Public debate within the Congress of Whitewashers is thus an opiate, not a productive interchange" (1980, p. 291). The reference to the Whitewashers' Congress suggests that public debate is often a sham used to placate the public rather than engage in productive discourse. Brecht saw this kind of discourse as an opiate serving to pacify the public rather than to inspire them toward action. Munka Du also talks about culture, ethics, virtue and patience, tactfully remaining clear of any mention of poverty, which is the main issue that arises due to the monopoly of the emperor: "Your Imperial Majesties, Gentlemen! Let us speak no more of cotton, but instead of the virtues which a people needs in order to go without cotton" (Brecht, 2004, p. 163). This statement mirrors

Brecht's critique of the Frankfurt School intellectuals, who, he believed, used culture and discourse to maintain their power and prevent meaningful social change (See Schmidt, 1980, pp. 296-97). His critique of the Frankfurt School intellectuals including Thomas Mann, Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Schoenberg, Theodor W. Adorno, and Max Horkheimer, suggests that they commercialised culture and promoted works that were formulaic, unchallenging, and ultimately unengaging. Brecht saw this as a dangerous trend, as they were more concerned with abstract theoretical ideas than with addressing the concrete realities of social inequality and oppression. By focusing on cultural and philosophical issues, they avoided addressing the structural and economic causes of social injustice.

For Brecht, the betrayal of the intellectuals of his time consisted of a series of intellectual tricks that would mislead people and divert their attention from the real problem instead of exposing the root of social exploitation. In the play, *Munka Du*, like other great Tuis, also focuses on irrelevant issues and abstract formulations rather than addressing the root causes of the shortage of cotton. Thus, it seems that their rhetoric becomes an end in itself. It appears to provide answers, while in reality its abstract formulations obscure the truth and excuse the arbitrary and unjust exercise of power. By putting on a linguistic mask, the Tuis isolate themselves from the common people and exaggerate their own importance (Schmidt, 1980, p. 292). According to Brecht, the discussion of morality, virtue, and equality without considering economic conditions is a technique that employs hegemony over the lower classes. As Louis Althusser points out in his book *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (1970), the state employs various organisations such as schools, the media, religion, and culture to maintain its dominant ideology and exert control over society. Intellectuals, as creators and disseminators of ideas, play a critical part in this process. By creating a false narrative of the emperor as a hero who is saving the people from corruption and disorder, the Tuis and the Tui Congress vividly demonstrate how the ideological state apparatuses function in Brecht's play as they use their power and influence to manipulate public opinion.

Althusser also argues that intellectuals are classified either as ideological professionals working for the ruling authority or as revolutionary intellectuals taking responsibility for the ideological struggle of the proletariat under the Marxist ideology. Similarly, Brecht's play features a revolutionary intellectual named Kai Ho who fights for a just redistribution of the land. Although Kai Ho does not have any dialogue in the play, his

actions, and their impact on the people of China are reported by the Tuis. Kai Ho serves as a symbol of the revolutionary struggle and the importance of the working class in achieving social change. By organising and leading the people of China, Kai Ho raises their consciousness and inspires them to fight for their rights and interests. In doing so, he embodies Brecht's Marxist ideology and the idea of revolutionary intellectuals working for the proletariat. Schmidt suggests that "Kai Ho remains unseen because he personifies the goal itself, whereas Brecht focuses upon the historical progression toward that" (1980, p. 296). While Kai Ho represents the ideal of social justice, Brecht's focus on historical progression emphasises the importance of understanding and challenging the structures that prevent this ideal from being realised in the present. Overall, the presence of Kai Ho in the play reflects Brecht's belief in the importance of the alliance between intellectuals and the working class in the struggle for social change as outlined in his article "Intellectuals and Class Struggle".

As a micro illustration of capitalism, the Tui community denies the existence of class conflict in order to maintain their privileges in the free market where they sell their ideas. The worth of their ideas is directly proportional to their ability to numb society. Kai Ho and his comrades, on the other hand, distribute leaflets that expose all the facts of the class conflict and the real cause of the cotton shortage. In other words, the Tuis, as ideological professionals, serve to maintain the dominant ideology and the interests of the ruling class, while Kai Ho and his comrades, as revolutionary intellectuals, seek to challenge and subvert the dominant ideology in the interests of the proletariat. From this point of view, the leaflets distributed by Kai Ho and his comrades and Brecht's epic theatre have similar purposes: to raise awareness and mobilise the public.

Sen, a peasant, who visits the city to become a Tui but witnesses the frauds and contradictions of the Tui at the conference he attends and gives up being a Tui, is another positive intellectual character in the play. Sen serves as a bridge between the two worlds of the play. His transformation from a supporter of the Tuis into a revolutionary thinker highlights the importance of critical thinking and the potential for change in the face of oppression. Brecht presents Sen as an example of an individual who experiences a shift in consciousness as a result of exposure to revolutionary ideas, proving that intellectual transformation is possible even for those who have internalised the ideals of the ruling class. In this perspective, Sen represents the potential for individuals to become intellectuals and agents of social change, questioning the status quo and striving towards a more just society. Sen's following speech also emphasises

how the Tuis use their intellectual power to uphold the ruling class and perpetuate the cycle of exploitation, rather than using their knowledge to challenge and change the system:

The thoughts you can buy here stink. The whole country is governed by injustice, and in the Tui Academy all you get to learn is why it has to be that way. It's true, they can build stone bridges over the widest rivers. But the powerful are carried over them into indolent luxury, while the poor are herded into slavery. It's true, they have medicine. But the few are restored to health so they can commit injustice, while the rest are made fit in order to sweat on their behalf. Opinions are bartered like fish and, thought itself has fallen into disrepute. (Brecht, 2004, p. 189)

Sen's experience of witnessing the corruption and hypocrisy of the Tuis leads him to reject their philosophy and embrace Kai Ho's revolutionary ideas, which advocate land reform and social justice. Sen's rejection of the Tui ideology is a pivotal moment in the play as it marks the beginning of his transformation into a revolutionary intellectual who aligns himself with Kai Ho's ideas of social justice and class struggle. Through his speeches, we see the contrast between the stagnant and oppressive intellectualism of the Tui community and the dynamic and liberating intellectualism of Kai Ho and his comrades. Sen proclaims the truth and exposes the lies of the Tuis. Moreover, Sen's presence is a reinterpretation of the classical definition of an intellectual who is only engaged in mental activity. As a peasant, Sen overcomes the polarity between mental and muscular labour. In other words, Brecht combines action and knowledge in Sen. By breaking down the distinction between mental and muscular labour, Sen embodies Gramsci's theory of praxis.

The failure of the Tuis to persuade the public causes the state's repressive apparatus to come into play. In the second scene, the conversations between Turandot and Nu Shan about Gogher Gogh, a bandit who wants to become a Tui, show how the Tui, the state and Gogh's gang work together as mechanisms of oppression. According to Nu Shan, there is no distinction between being a Tui and being a bandit. In both cases, the goal is to gain personal advantage while oppressing the society at the same time. As the Court Tui also puts it, there is a similarity between paying tribute to bandits to prevent them from harming people and paying taxes to avoid police repression:

Nu Shan: By his gang. You see: as long as they pay, they don't get attacked.

The Court Tui: (cynically) Just like the state. Pay your taxes, and you get no trouble from the police. (Brecht, 2004, p. 135)

As Althusser notes, the mechanisms of the state operate in two dimensions. Where the ideological apparatuses are ineffective, the repressive apparatuses come into play (2014, pp. 74-75). With the support of the emperor, Gogh, who is a foolish bandit and fails the Tui test twice, gets a stronger position than the Tuis who represent the ideology of the state. For Schmidt, the Bandit, Gogh, represents the inevitable end of Tui-dominated Weimar republicanism in the historical background (1980, pp. 293-94). Brecht claims that intellectual betrayal led the Weimar Republic to turn into a fascist regime. He believes that intellectuals of the Frankfurt School were too eager to reconcile with capitalism through their theories. Thus, the Tuis appear to be a parody of these people in the play. Gogh, on the other hand, might be seen as a parody of Hitler (Schmidt, 1980, p. 290). According to Brecht, Gogh does not constitute a significant threat because, despite his threats, he is too foolish to be a Tui and too ignorant to speak for the people. In fact, he also fails to defend the emperor and suppress the uprising. Clark argues that *Turandot* is also a criticism of intellectuals of Brecht's time as well as serving as self-criticism: "Brecht surely recognised that he, too, had become a Tui, that he, too, had whitewashed the actions of Ulbricht's regime" (2006, p. 473). The main reason behind this claim is Brecht's attitude towards the workers' uprising during the Ulbricht regime. Although he always stated that he was a supporter of the proletariat, his failure to support the workers' uprising in the German Democratic Republic in 1953 and on top of that, supporting the crackdown of the Ulbricht's regime by writing a letter are enough to raise questions about his intellectual identity:

History will pay its respects to the revolutionary impatience of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany. The great discussion [exchange] with the masses about the speed of socialist construction will lead to a viewing and safeguarding of the socialist achievements. At this moment I must assure you of my allegiance to the Socialist Unity Party of Germany. (qtd. in Clark, 2006, p. 466)

As a matter of fact, Brecht penned this letter to emphasise his belief that efforts to develop contact between the masses and socialist ideology would be good for

understanding socialist achievements. On the other hand, he expresses his commitment to the regime, believing that fascist forces opposed to the socialist regime were also involved in the uprising. However, Clark notes that what the Ulbricht regime published in the newspaper was only the last paragraph of the letter in which Brecht declared his support; the publication was never approved by Brecht (2006, p. 467). Ignoring the suggestion of a debate about the mistakes committed and instead highlighting his involvement had damaged Brecht's intellectual reputation. Although Brecht's actions raised doubts about him because of the circumstances of the time, his intellectual identity did not allow him to accept anything without questioning. He ideologically supported the socialist regime but there was always a distance between him and the party. It was quite normal that he did not see the workers' uprisings only as a class conflict because he was aware of the shortcomings of the socialist regime, as well as the existence of fascistic elements that had not yet completely lost their influence and the provocations of West Germany. *Turandot* was written in the days following the workers' uprising of 1953. Thus, there are clear connections between the play and the workers' uprising. In his play, Brecht aimed to show what difficulties and injustices can arise when the great order of a socialist ideology is established too quickly and inorganically. The working class, unified and revolting under the leadership of Kai Ho, who symbolises the socialist philosophy in the play, finally overthrows the emperor. Contrary to the critiques, the idea that it is possible to change the world around us seems to be Brecht's unequivocal message in support of the working classes.

Conclusion

As a result, *Turandot* remains a strong critique of the system, but it would be far too speculative to take it as Brecht's self-criticism as suggested by Clark. In the difficult times through which Brecht lived for most of his life, he too had to make some important decisions that led some to question the intellectual that he was. However, despite the difficulties that presented themselves as he was trying to formulate a politically conscious form of theatre and the occasional setbacks, one should note that Brecht was indeed a strong-minded and stubborn intellectual who never lost his ideal of reforming the theatre of his time. By raising the consciousness of the public, he aimed to revolutionise not only the theatre as an art form but also society and ultimately the system. As he discusses both in *Galileo* and *Turandot*, the intellectuals, in whom resides the intellect and the will to rise above ideas by means of action, must be able to shoulder the full responsibility of their ideas and inventions. As an intellectual who, from birth onwards,

always bore the coldness from the black forests inside him, Brecht was a misfit in the capitalist order, an intellectual who could not accept, nor naturalise how the system exploited the working classes and therefore fought against it throughout his life by using theatre as his form of attack. There is no doubting the influence he had on theatrical and political philosophy in general, regardless of how one chooses to interpret his works. His ideas still challenge and inspire us now as he remains an important figure in the history of both art and activism. As our world continues to struggle with issues of inequality, injustice, and oppression, Brecht's works still have a strong impact today both through the theatre practitioners, philosophers, and writers he continues to inspire and as a reminder that each of us can contribute to the development of a society that is more just and equitable.

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Nibelungen-Adaptionen im Rechtsextremismus

Nibelung Adaptations in Right-wing Extremism

Georg SCHUPPENER^{1,2} 



¹Prof., University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava Department of German, Trnava, Slovakia

²Prof., Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem, Department of German, Ústí nad Labem, Czech Republic

ORCID: G.S. 0000-0002-8945-4601

Corresponding author:

Georg SCHUPPENER,
Univerzita sv. Cyrila a Metoda v Trnave,
KGER FF, Nám. J. Herdu 2, SK-917 01
Trnava, Slovakia
E-mail: georg.schuppener@ucm.sk

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ABSTRAKT

Vor dem Hintergrund der Tatsache, dass Rechtsextremisten im deutschsprachigen Raum gerne die Kulturgeschichte für ihre Zwecke vereinnahmen, betrachtet die vorliegende Untersuchung die Frage, in welchen Formen Bezugnahmen auf das Nibelungenlied in der rechtsextremen Szene nachweisbar sind. Dazu werden vornehmlich rechtsextreme Internet-Domänen ausgewertet. Hier finden sich Referenzen vornehmlich in drei Bereichen rechtsextremer Lebenswelten, nämlich im Kampfsport, in der Bekleidung und in der Musik. Daneben lassen sich vereinzelt auch noch weitere Bezüge zu den Nibelungen in anderer Hinsicht nachweisen. Es zeigt sich dabei, dass die rechtsextreme Adaption des Nibelungenstoffes sich im Wesentlichen auf die zwei Figuren Siegfried und Hagen von Tronje konzentriert. Andere Gestalten aus dem Nibelungenlied spielen in der rechtsextremen Aneignung keine Rolle. Neben der reinen Referenz in Namen werden speziell in Songs verschiedener rechtsextremer Bands auch (geringe) Teile des Inhalts des Nibelungenliedes verarbeitet. Betont werden dabei vor allem die Aspekte von Krieg und Kampf, besondere Beachtung und Wertschätzung erfährt überdies die so genannte Nibelungentreue. Alle Zugriffe auf die Nibelungen werden im Sinne der rechtsextremen Weltanschauung instrumentalisiert, und zwar sowohl zum Propagieren sozialdarwinistischer Vorstellungen der Durchsetzung des Stärkeren als auch für die rechtsextreme Identitätsstiftung. Insgesamt wird deutlich, dass es weniger um eine vertiefte Auseinandersetzung mit dem mittelalterlichen Werk geht als um eine oberflächliche und gewaltzentrierte Vereinnahmung.

Schlüsselwörter: Nibelungenlied, Rechtsextremismus, Instrumentalisierung, Germanenrezeption, Propaganda

ABSTRACT

This study examines the forms in which references to the Nibelungenlied can be found in the right-wing extremist scene because right-wing extremists in German-speaking countries frequently hijack cultural history for their own purposes. This evaluation focuses on far-right Internet domains. Here, references are primarily found in three areas of right-wing extremist life: martial arts, clothing, and music. In addition, there are several isolated references to the Nibelungen. The right-wing extremist adaptation of the Nibelungen material focuses primarily on the two characters: Siegfried and Hagen. Other characters from the Nibelungenlied play no part in right-wing extremist appropriation. In addition to the name references, (small) portions of the Nibelungenlied's content are manipulated, particularly in songs performed by various right-wing extremist bands. The aspects of war and battle are emphasized, with special attention and appreciation given to the Nibelungs' alleged loyalty. All



approaches to the Nibelungen are instrumentalized in the right-wing extremist worldview to propagate social Darwinist ideas of survival of the fittest as well as to shape right-wing extremist identities. All in all, it becomes clear that the emphasis is on a superficial and violence-focused appropriation rather than an in-depth examination of the medieval work. This bears striking similarities to the reception and instrumentalization of Nordic-Germanic mythology in the right-wing extremist movement.

Keywords: Nibelungenlied, right-wing extremism, instrumentalization, Germanic reception, propaganda

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The right-wing extremism in German-speaking countries frequently exploits cultural history for political purposes. This is especially relevant to Germanic history and culture, particularly Nordic-Germanic mythology. The present study examines the forms of Nibelungenlied references in the right-wing extremist scene in light of this. Unsurprisingly, right-wing extremists would turn to the Nibelungenlied, the most important epic of the Middle High German era and contains elements of Nordic-Germanic mythology frequently used in right-wing extremism. Furthermore, the Nibelungenlied has been mentioned numerous times in the past from a national and nationalist perspective. Loyalty to the Nibelungen, in particular, was politically exploited at the turn of the twentieth century, and it played an important role in the Third Reich.

This study analyzes and assesses right-wing extremist Internet domains. Full text analysis of the most popular right-wing extremist online encyclopedia Metapedia revealed these domains. In addition, extensive preliminary research from other publications on the reception of Nordic-Germanic mythology in right-wing extremism was considered.

The references found on the Internet pages examined are primarily in three areas of right-wing extremist life: martial arts, clothing, and music. Other references to the Nibelungen can be found in isolated cases.

In the field of martial arts, an annual event called "Kampf der Nibelungen" ("Battle of the Nibelungen") is especially noteworthy, as it is prominently anchored in the right-wing extremist scene and had an increasing number of participants in the years preceding the corona pandemic. Here, the Nibelungen references are specifically focused on violence and combat. An associated online mail-order company sells various products related to the Nibelungen.

The clothing sold in the right-wing extremist scene includes T-shirts, sweaters, jackets, and other fashion items referring to the Nibelungen, especially to Siegfried and Hagen von Tronje, through inscriptions and symbols.

In the field of music, some numerous songs and CDs deal with the theme of the Nibelungenlied. This music is available through various right-wing extremist online stores. Reviews clearly show the importance of this music for the right-wing extremist scene.

Finally, references to the Nibelungen can be found in other right-wing extremist areas. Names of right-wing extremist comrades, names of online senders, and even pseudonyms of individual right-wing extremists all refer to the Nibelungen.

Overall, right-wing extremist adaptations of the Nibelungen material appear quite common. The adaptation of this material focuses primarily on the two characters Siegfried and Hagen von Tronje. Other figures from the Nibelungenlied play minor roles in right-wing extremist appropriation. In addition to the name references, various right-wing extremist bands use passages from the Nibelungenlied in their songs. Violence, war, and combat are all heavily emphasized. The so-called loyalty to the Nibelungen receives special attention and appreciation. All access to the Nibelungen is used in the spirit of the right-wing extremist worldview, both to spread social Darwinist ideas about survival of the fittest and to shape right-wing extremist identity. There is a very narrow and one-dimensional reception of the Nibelungen material, which only selects appropriate elements of the topic for ideological analysis.

Overall, it becomes clear that it is less about a thorough examination of the medieval work and more about a superficial and violent appropriation in the spirit of extremist ideology. This results in clear parallels with the reception and instrumentalization of Nordic-Germanic mythology in the right-wing extremist scene.

1. Hintergrund, Fragestellung und Material

Rechtsextremisten im deutschsprachigen Raum greifen gerne auf die Geschichte zurück.¹ Neben Bezugnahmen auf den Nationalsozialismus ist vor allem die Referenz auf die Germanen² und die frühe deutsche Geschichte beliebt. Adaptionen der germanischen Geschichte und Kultur und insbesondere der nordisch-germanischen Mythologie sind daher im Rechtsextremismus weit verbreitet.

Da das Nibelungenlied eines der wichtigsten literarischen Werke des deutschen Mittelalters, wenn nicht gar das wichtigste ist, liegt es daher nahe, dass Rechtsextremisten auch auf dieses monumentale Epos zugreifen, nicht zuletzt auch deswegen, weil es zahlreiche Elemente der germanischen Geschichte literarisch überformt und verarbeitet und sich in ihm zudem auch Spuren der nordisch-germanischen Mythologie finden lassen. Ferner haben Bezüge auf die Nibelungen in der deutschen Geschichte immer wieder in prominenter und in einer vor allem das Nationale betonenden Weise eine wichtige Rolle gespielt. Dies gilt nicht nur für Kunst und Kultur – man denke nur an die Opern Richard Wagners –, sondern auch für die Politik:

Das bekannteste Beispiel dafür ist die Beschwörung der Nibelungentreue, erstmals gebraucht im Jahre 1909 in einer Reichstagsrede von Fürst Bernhard von Bülow, dem damaligen Reichskanzler, um die Bündnistreue des Deutschen Reiches zu Österreich-Ungarn zu betonen. (Frembs, 2001, S. 44f.) In der Weimarer Republik wurde vor allem im Zusammenhang mit der von der politischen Rechten suggerierten Dolchstoßlegende implizit und explizit auf das Nibelungenlied Bezug genommen. (Lobenstein-Reichmann, 2002) Auch im Dritten Reich und im Zweiten Weltkrieg wurde auf die Treue der Nibelungen rekurriert, so dass Graf-Stuhlhofer „Hitlers Politik als Ausdruck einer Nibelungen-Mentalität“ bezeichnete. (Graf-Stuhlhofer, 2005)

Dennoch war die Nibelungen-Rezeption im Nationalsozialismus keineswegs eindimensional, sondern geprägt von Inkonsistenzen und unterschiedlichen

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- 1 Rechtsextremismus ist ein Sammelbegriff, der sehr unterschiedliche Strömungen und Erscheinungsformen subsumiert. Hier sei darauf hingewiesen, dass die nachfolgend untersuchten Bezüge auf das Nibelungenlied nicht in allen Bereichen des breiten rechtsextremen Spektrums gleich ausgeprägt sind.
 - 2 Der Begriff der Germanen wird in der Wissenschaft kontrovers diskutiert. Die Diskussion kann hier auch in Grundzügen nicht wiedergegeben werden. Für einen ersten Überblick über das breite Spektrum der Zugänge beachte man beispielsweise die Sammelbände Beck (1999) oder Pohl (2004). Im Rechtsextremismus hingegen wird das Konzept des Germanentums nicht hinterfragt, sondern weitgehend einschichtig als historisches Faktum stillschweigend vorausgesetzt.

Vorstellungen und Konzepten der ideologischen Rezeption und Instrumentalisierung. (Krasser, 2019, S. 21ff.) Die Literatur zur politischen Rezeption des Nibelungenliedes, insbesondere mit Blick auf den Nationalsozialismus, kann hier allerdings nicht wiedergegeben werden, da sie „längst beträchtliche und kaum noch überschaubare Ausmaße angenommen“ hat. (Schöller, 2023, S. 18)³

Im Folgenden soll vor diesem Hintergrund näher betrachtet werden, ob und wie der aktuelle Rechtsextremismus in Deutschland konkret auf Teile der Nibelungensage und des Nibelungenliedes zugreift. Dabei soll insbesondere untersucht werden, wie Rechtsextremisten das Nibelungenlied bzw. ausgewählte Details rezipieren und ausdeuten.

Grundlage dieser Untersuchung sind die jüngst vorgelegten Monografien zur Germanenrezeption im Rechtsextremismus (Schuppener, 2021; Schuppener, 2022), eine thematisch einschlägige Master-Arbeit (Krasser, 2019) sowie authentisches Material aus der rechtsextremen Szene, das eigens für diese Studie auf einschlägigen Internet-Seiten erschlossen wurde. Die betreffenden Internet-Domänen wurden durch eine Volltextsuche in der rechtsextremen Internet-Enzyklopädie Metapedia⁴ ermittelt.

2. Befunde

2.1. Kampfsport

In der jüngeren Vergangenheit spielt Kampfsport in der rechtsextremen Szene eine zunehmend größere Rolle, gehört doch der Sozialdarwinismus und damit die Vorstellung von der Durchsetzung des Stärkeren zum ideologischen Fundament des Rechtsextremismus.

Betrachtet man die Verfassungsschutzberichte der letzten Jahre, so wird im Zusammenhang mit den Aktivitäten von Rechtsextremisten wiederholt eine Kampfsportveranstaltung namens „Kampf der Nibelungen“ erwähnt. Diese sehr populäre Veranstaltung wurde erstmals im Jahre 2013 durchgeführt und zog in den Folgejahren stetig steigende Teilnehmerzahlen an, im Jahre 2018 waren es 850 Personen.⁵

3 Einen Überblick zum Stand der Forschung gibt der Sammelband Plotke, Schöller & Büchli (2023).

4 <https://de.metapedia.org> [30.10.2023]

5 Im Jahre 2018 fand die Veranstaltung sogar zwei Mal statt.

(Bundesministerium des Innern für Bau und Heimat, 2020, S. 61) Der „Kampf der Nibelungen“ (zuvor auch „Ring der Nibelungen“⁶) fand in der Vergangenheit an verschiedenen Orten in Deutschland statt, davon zwei Mal als Teil des „Schwert und Schild Festivals“ im sächsischen Ostritz. Die Veranstaltung galt als die größte Kampfsportveranstaltung der rechtsextremen Szene, hatte einen internationalen Teilnehmerkreis und diente auch zur Rekrutierung von Sympathisanten rechtsextremer Gruppen.⁷

Auf Grund der Bedeutung der Veranstaltung für die rechtsextreme Szene waren die Sicherheitsbehörden bestrebt, diese Zusammenkünfte zu unterbinden: Die Veranstaltung des Jahres 2019 wurde verboten. Der Verfassungsschutz NRW führt dazu u.a. aus: „Am 12. Oktober 2019 sollte die siebte, jährlich wiederkehrende Kampfsportveranstaltung Kampf der Nibelungen (KdN) stattfinden. Als Veranstaltungsort war Ostritz (Sachsen) vorgesehen. Wie in den Vorjahren organisierte der Rechtsextremist Alexander Deptolla, der zugleich eine Führungsrolle im Dortmunder Kreisverband der Partei *Die Rechte* einnimmt, den KdN. Erstmals nach sechs bereits durchgeführten Veranstaltungen der rechtsextremistischen Kampfsportreihe gelang es den zuständigen Polizei- und Ordnungsbehörden, das Turnier zu verbieten.“ (Ministerium des Innern des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, 2020, S. 131)

6 Hier wird mit der Polysemie von „Ring“ gespielt, gemeint ist die Kampfsportarena.

7 <https://www.bpb.de/themen/rechtsextremismus/dossier-rechtsextremismus/279552/der-extrem-rechte-kampfsportboom/>, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kampf_der_Nibelungen [30.10.2023]



Abb. 1. Aufruf zur Teilnahme am „Kampf der Nibelungen“
 (Quelle: <https://www.facebook.com/kampfdernibelungen/photos/a.359159277780493/1166093637087049/?type=3&theater> [13.6.2022])

Im Jahre 2020 wurde die Veranstaltung in Magdeburg-Rothensee vorzeitig von der Polizei aufgelöst. (Ministerium für Inneres und Sport des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt, 2021, S. 36f.) Im Jahre 2021 fanden auf Grund der Corona-Pandemie keine nennenswerten Aktivitäten der rechtsextremen Kampfsportszene statt, eine Ersatzveranstaltung im Ausland konnte verhindert werden. (Bundesministerium des Innern und für Heimat, 2022, S. 50) Im Jahre 2022 wurde wiederum ein Verbot der Veranstaltung ausgesprochen, was in der rechtsextremen Publizistik entsprechend prominent diskutiert wurde (beispielsweise in der Zeitschrift *N.S. Heute*, Nr. 32 [Nov./Dez. 2022]).

Die Namenwahl ist eindeutig durch eine Rezeption des Nibelungenliedes motiviert, die gerade jene Teile des Epos fokussiert, die den Kampf gegen die Hunnen thematisieren. Im Sinne völkischer Ideologie stehen die Nibelungen für das Germanen- bzw. Ariertum, die gegnerischen Hunnen hingegen für die fremdrassige Bedrohung. Auf diese Weise werden die Teilnehmer der Kampfsportveranstaltung zu Protagonisten des germanischen Helden- und Kämpfertums stilisiert. Entsprechend martialisch setzten sie sich auch in Szene (Abb. 2):



Abb. 2. Teilnehmer der Veranstaltung „Kampf der Nibelungen“
(Quelle Recherche Nord⁸)

Mit der Kampfsportveranstaltung eng verknüpft ist ein Online-Versand, der ebenfalls den Namen „Kampf der Nibelungen“ trägt. Er ist sowohl mit einer eigenen Internetseite⁹ als auch mit einem Auftritt im sozialen Netzwerk Facebook¹⁰ online präsent. Darüber hinaus gibt es einen eigenen Telegram-Kanal. (Bundesministerium des Innern und für Heimat, 2022, S. 59) Dieser Versand vertreibt diverse Modeartikel, vornehmlich Oberbekleidung, beispielsweise T-Shirts, die meist auf der Vorderseite die Aufschrift „Kampf der Nibelungen“ und auf der Rückseite eine programmatische Botschaft tragen, wie im folgenden Beispiel erkennbar ist:

8 Der Verfasser dankt dem Journalisten-Netzwerk „Recherche Nord“ für die Überlassung von Bildmaterial.

9 <https://www.kampf-der-nibelungen.com/> [30.10.2023]

10 <https://de-de.facebook.com/Kampf-der-Nibelungen-421921034642735/> [29.6.2022]



Abb. 3. T-Shirt aus dem Online-Shop „Kampf der Nibelungen“
 (Quelle: <https://www.kampf-der-nibelungen.com/produkt/shirt-willen/> [30.10.2023])

Die Produkte richten sich nicht nur an Erwachsene, sondern es werden auch Modeartikel für Kinder angeboten.¹¹ Darüber hinaus sind verschiedene Merchandising-Produkte, wie z.B. Tassen, Bandagen oder Taschen, mit einem Bezug zum „Kampf der Nibelungen“ erhältlich. Bemerkenswert ist überdies ein T-Shirt aus dem Sortiment des Versenders mit der Aufschrift „Nibelungentreue“, das als „Solishirt“ vertrieben wurde und dessen Erlös für den Wiederaufbau eines von der rechtsextremen Szene genutzten Fitnessstudios in Schmölln bestimmt war, das in der Nacht vom 11. zum 12. April 2021 durch einen Brandanschlag zerstört wurde. Passend dazu lautet die Aufschrift der T-Shirt-Rückseite: „Wir halten Stand in Sturm und Brand“. Zugleich kann dieser Slogan aber auch bezogen werden auf den so genannten „Saalbrand“ im Nibelungenlied in Aventure 36: Obgleich Kriemhild den Saal anzünden lässt, überstehen die Nibelungen vereint diese Bedrohung.

¹¹ <https://www.kampf-der-nibelungen.com/produkt-kategorie/kleidung/kinder/> [30.10.2023]

Dies wird somit als Parabel für den überstandenen Brand im genannten rechtsextremen Szene-Treff ausgedeutet.



Abb. 4. T-Shirt „Nibelungentreue“ (Vorder- und Rückseite), im Hintergrund ausgebrannte Räumlichkeiten (Quelle: <https://www.kampf-der-nibelungen.com/produkt/shirt-nibelungentreue/> [30.10.2023])

Bemerkenswert ist das Logo der Veranstaltung, aber auch des Versandhandels: ein Lindenblatt. Dieses erinnert an die fast vollständige Unverwundbarkeit Siegfrieds. Eine ebensolche schreiben sich – zumindest dem Wunsch nach – auch Rechtsextremisten zu.

Es zeigt sich insgesamt, dass der Bezug zu den Nibelungen hier eindeutig und ausschließlich über das Thema Kampf und Krieg erfolgt. Die Nibelungen stehen in der rechtsextremen Rezeption für Männlichkeit und Stärke, für Treue auch in schwerer Zeit. Heldentum und Kampf bis zum Letzten, also in extremer Form, sind Aspekte, die sich im Selbstverständnis von Kampfsportveranstaltung und gleichnamigem Versand widerspiegeln. Der Behauptung von Krasser (2019, S. 49), dass der Bezug der Veranstaltung zum Nibelungenlied lediglich rein formal bestehe, kann hier deshalb nicht gefolgt werden.

2.2. Musik

Blickt man über diese Kampfsportveranstaltung und ihr näheres Umfeld hinaus, so zeigt sich, dass zahlreiche weitere Bezugnahmen auf die Nibelungen im Rechtsextremismus nachweisbar sind:

Während Kampfsport und Kampfsportveranstaltungen erst seit einigen Jahren große Bedeutung für den Zusammenhalt, die Identitätsstiftung, aber auch für die Außenwirkung der rechtsextremen Bewegung besitzen, gilt dies anerkanntermaßen für die rechtsextreme Musikszene schon seit langem. (Landesamt für Verfassungsschutz Sachsen, 2008) Die verschiedenen Erscheinungsformen rechtsextremer Musik umfassen ein breites Spektrum unterschiedlicher Genres von Liedermacher-Balladen über verschiedene Formen des Rechtsrocks bis hin zum Rap.¹² Auf diese Weise können in ganz unterschiedlicher Form propagandistisch-rechtsextremistische Inhalte, aber auch ein rechtsextremistisches Lebensgefühl transportiert werden. Angesichts dieser differenzierten und weitreichenden Ausgestaltung rechtsextremistischer Musikstile ist es wenig verwunderlich, dass sich zahlreiche rechtsextreme Referenzen auf die Nibelungensage gerade im Bereich der Musik finden lassen. Hier sollen einige Beispiele genannt werden:

Der rechtsextreme „Nervengas-Versand“ führt eine CD der Band „Siegfried“ mit dem Titel *Nibelung*. Die CD, die als „fester Geheimtipp in der Szene“ qualifiziert wird, adaptiert inhaltlich das Nibelungenlied bzw. dessen ersten Teil.¹³

12 <https://www.bpb.de/themen/rechtsextremismus/dossier-rechtsextremismus/41229/rechtsextreme-musikszene/> [30.10.2023]

13 <https://www.nervengas.com/Tontraeger/CDs/Q-T/Siegfried-Nibelung-CD::1324.html> [25.10.2023]

Die CD *Parsifal* der Band „Blutzeugen“ aus dem Jahre 2020 enthält neben Titeln wie *Helm ab zum Gebet*, *Dolchstoß* oder *Fahneneid* auch einen Song, der der *Nibelungentreue* gewidmet ist.¹⁴ Im Jahre 2022 veröffentlichte die Band diese Titel in überarbeiteter Form auf dem neuen Album „*Quamvis bannum, non mortuum*“, das inzwischen auch im rechtsextremen Versandhandel angeboten wird. Dass die enthaltenen Musikstücke propagandistisch zur Gewalt aufrufen, wird in einer Rezension deutlich: „[...]so erschallen diese Kampfhymnen in aller Reinheit und dürften einige Volksempfänger zum explodieren bringen.“¹⁵

Die Band „Xerum525“¹⁶ veröffentlichte im Jahr 2021 ein Album mit dem Titel *Hort der Nibelungen*, auf dem auch ein gleichnamiges Lied zu finden ist.¹⁷ Zugleich ist der CD-Titel *Hort der Nibelungen* auch als Metapher für den Reichtum der auf dem Album vertretenen Stile zu verstehen, denn im Ankündigungstext des Labels heißt es unter anderem:

„Geboten werden zehn Lieder, die zwischen Rechtsrock, Punk, Rock'n'Roll und melodischem Oldschool-Hardcore angesiedelt sind. Das Ganze kommt mit einer brachialen Stimme daher und die Abmischung ist sehr gut, aber nicht überproduziert. Textlich ist die Scheibe hochpolitisch. Man besingt viele Themen, die es so noch nicht gegeben hat. Schon alleine, *Sklaven der Industrie*, *Die Händler des Tods* oder, *Europa Erwache* ballern in die Fresse. Dieses Album ist auf alle Fälle nichts Alltägliches und auch keine Stangenware. Knallt euch die Hörprobe rein. Ihr werdet überzeugt sein. Das ist wahrer Reich'n'Roll.“¹⁸

Der Interpret Jan-Peter veröffentlichte beim rechtsextremen Musiklabel „PC Records“ ein Album mit dem Titel *Hermannsseele, Siegfriedgeist*.¹⁹ Wie nicht nur der Titel, sondern auch das Cover zeigt, wird hier ein Zusammenhang zwischen Arminius (= Hermann dem Cherusker) und Siegfried hergestellt. Hierbei wird auf die seit dem frühen 19. Jahrhundert zirkulierende und im 20. Jahrhundert u. a. von Otto Höfler (1961) wieder aufgenommene spekulative These referiert, dass Arminius die historische Vorlage für die Figur des Siegfrieds im Nibelungenlied sei.²⁰

14 <https://www.discogs.com/de/release/16429278-Blutzeugen-Parsifal-> [30.10.2023]

15 <https://www.druck18.de> [25.10.2023]

16 Der Name der Band nimmt Bezug auf eine vermeintliche Substanz eines Wunderwaffen-Projektes des Dritten Reiches namens „Die Glocke“, das in der esoterischen Literatur vielfach verarbeitet wird.

17 <https://www.discogs.com/de/release/21358165-Xerum-525-Hort-Der-Nibelungen> [30.10.2023]

18 z.B. https://deutsches-warenhaus.net/product_info.php?info=p5001266_xerum-525--hort-der-nibelungen.html [30.10.2023]

19 <https://pcrecords.net/contents/de/p5067.html> [30.10.2023]

20 Ausführlicher hierzu und insbesondere auch zur Rezeption dieser Gleichsetzung im Nationalsozialismus bei Wichert (2018, S. 79ff.).



Abb. 5. CD-Cover *Hermannsseele, Siegfriedgeist*²¹
(Quelle: <https://precords.net/contents/de/p5067.html> [30.10.2023])

Ebenfalls auf Siegfried bezieht sich die Band „Kategorie C“ auf ihrem Album *Einer für alle* mit dem Titel *So wie Siegfried*.²²

Nach Siegfrieds Schwert benannte sich die Wiking-Rock-Band „Balmung“. Die antifaschistische Online-Plattform Belltower führt dazu aus:

„Die Wikinger, skandinavische Seefahrer und Eroberer des Mittelalters, stehen in der heidnischen und neonazistischen Szene synonym für die ‚nordischen Urahnen‘ und Kämpfer gegen das Christentum. Unter der Zuhilfenahme entsprechender Symbole und Klischees versuchen Neonazi-Bands den so genannten Wiking-Rock als eigenes Genre zu etablieren. Tatsächlich ist Wiking-Rock der Versuch, dem Neonazi-Rock einen moderaten Anstrich zu geben, um auch außerhalb der Szene Anhänger (und Käufer) zu erreichen.“²³

Auf dem Album *Auf der Suche nach Thule* präsentiert die Band als ersten Titel das Lied *Balmung*, danach eine Mischung von Liedern mit diversen Germanen-Bezügen.

21 Zur Bildgestaltung Krasser (2019, S. 85).

22 <https://www.druck18.de> [25.10.2023]

23 <https://www.belltower.news/lexikon/wiking-rock/> [30.10.2023]

Insgesamt erkennt man auch hier eine bunte Mischung von Zugriffen auf Elemente der Geschichte, Mythologie und Literatur. Das Lied selbst hat folgenden Text:

Finster warn die Zeiten, verschlossen Asgards Tor
 Endlich hat es sich geöffnet, und die Heere stürmen vor
 Vereint unter Odin ziehn wir in die Schlacht
 Mit Thor an unsrer Seite führt uns des Hammers Macht
 Wenn die Erde bebt, weil der Himmel sich erhebt

Kehrr reim:

Thor! Odin! Dies soll für euch der Tag der Rache sein
 Mit eurem Heer kehrt das Schwert der Vergeltung
 Zurück an den Rhein
 Thor! Odin! Dies soll für euch der Tag der Rache sein
 Blutstahl! Balmung! Schicksalsgewalt
 Wird Germanien befreien

Der Winter des Verderbens wird endgültig gebannt
 Und seine dunklen Knechte von hellem Licht verbrannt
 Wir führen das Schwert der Rache nach göttlichem Gebot
 Gegen alle dunklen Mächte, für ein Ende unsrer Not
 Wenn die Erde bebt, weil der Himmel sich erhebt.²⁴

Das Schwert Balmung wird hier in eine mythologische Vergeltungsfantasie eingebunden, in der die von Rechtsextremisten gerne vereinnahmten germanischen Götter Odin und Thor (Schuppener, 2021) eine zentrale Rolle spielen, die mit ihrem Heer Germanien von dunklen Mächten befreien sollen. Dies weckt Assoziationen zu der Ragnarök, dem Endkampf der Götter und der Einherier aus Walhall auf der einen und der Weltfeinde (= dunkle Mächte) auf der anderen. Die Ragnarök wird im Rechtsextremismus vielfach als Chiffre für die sogenannte Nationale Revolution genutzt, d.h. für die geplante gewaltsame Beseitigung von Demokratie und Pluralismus und die Machtergreifung durch Rechtsextremisten. (Schuppener, 2017, S. 43f.) Ein direkter Bezug zum Nibelungenlied lässt sich im Text über den Hinweis auf den Rhein und den Namen Balmung hinaus aber nicht erkennen.

24 <https://www.lyrix.at/t/balmung-balmung-cb2> [30.10.2023]

Auf Hagen von Tronje bezieht sich offensichtlich der Name „Tronje“ einer Rechtsrock-Band, die nicht nur ein Lied (auf einer Single) mit dem Titel *Hagen von Tronje* produzierte, sondern auch mehrere Alben mit ideologisch eindeutigen Namen wie *Deutschtum* (2016), *Zerfall* (2021) oder *Stahl mit uns* (2021).²⁵

Eine wichtige Rolle im Vertrieb rechtsextremer Musik spielte der „Nibelungen Versand“. Unter diesem Label bzw. dem Sublabel „Blood & Honour Deutschland Records“ wurden in den Jahren 1997 bis 2000 zahlreiche Alben und ein Sampler von einschlägig rechtsextremen Bands publiziert, u.a. von „Oithanasie“, „Schwarzer Orden“, „Panzerdivision“, „Kraftschlag“ und „Proissenheads“.²⁶ (Steimel, 2008)

Schließlich gab sich auch eine in der deutschen rechtsextremen Musikszene sehr aktive schwedische RAC-Band²⁷ den Namen „Nibelungen“. (Steimel, 2008)

Insgesamt sind somit im Bereich der rechtsextremen Musik-Szene durchaus relevante Bezugnahmen zum Nibelungenlied belegbar, wobei auch hier selektiv die martialische Aura des Stoffes in den Vordergrund der Adaption gestellt wird.

2.3. Bekleidung

Einen weiteren wichtigen Bereich rechtsextremen Lifestyles stellt die Bekleidung dar. Über diese lässt sich nicht nur Zugehörigkeit zur Szene signalisieren und Gruppenidentität stiften, sondern sie dient auch der Außendarstellung und insbesondere dem Transport rechtsextremer Ideologie, insbesondere in eine ansonsten politisch nicht involvierte Öffentlichkeit. Es gibt daher zahlreiche politisch einschlägige Mode-Versender, die ein breites Repertoire an Bekleidung aller Art anbieten, mit der durch Symbolik,²⁸ Bildlichkeit und Aufschrift die rechtsextreme Weltanschauung transportiert wird:

Dazu zählen nicht nur die verschiedenen T-Shirts und anderen Bekleidungsartikel, die beim bereits oben behandelten Online-Versand „Kampf der Nibelungen“ vertrieben werden, sondern auch andere Versender aus der Szene haben in ihrem Sortiment

25 <https://www.discogs.com/de/artist/5015853-Tronje> [30.10.2023]

26 <https://www.discogs.com/de/label/185802-Nibelungen-Versand> [30.10.2023]

27 RAC = Rock against Communism

28 Hierzu gehören u.a. auch Farbwahl, Farbkombination oder auch der Zuschnitt der Bekleidung.

Textilien mit Nibelungen-Bezug.²⁹ Das gilt beispielsweise für den in der rechtsextremen Szene bekannten Versand „PC Records“. Dieser bietet ein T-Shirt „Siegfried“ an, das auf der Vorderseite Siegfried mit gezogenem Schwert in der Rechten und den abgeschlagenen Drachenkopf in der Linken hinter sich herziehend vor Eisernem Kreuz darstellt. Bezug genommen wird auf das gleichnamige Lied der amerikanischen Rechtsrock-Band „Bound for Glory“, wie an der Überschrift erkennbar ist. Diese Referenz wird auch in der Produktbeschreibung explizit erwähnt.³⁰



Abb. 6. T-Shirt „Siegfried“ (Vorder- und Rückseite)
(Quelle: <https://pcrecords.net/contents/de/d31.html#p7029> [30.10.2023])

Auch der rechtsextreme „Wikingerversand“ bietet diverse Bekleidung (T-Shirts, Kapuzensweatjacken, Freizeitjacken) mit Nibelungen-Bezug an. Auf der Vorderseite findet sich der Schriftzug „Nibelungen“ (in der Schrifttype Textura), darunter ein Schwert mit der Aufschrift „Drachentöter“ (in Runen). Auf der Rückseite werden die ersten Verse des Nibelungenliedes in Mittelhochdeutsch vor ornamentalem Muster wiedergegeben. Links oben ist ferner ein Lindenblatt abgebildet. Ohne den Namen zu erwähnen, wird hier also eindeutig auf Siegfried referiert.³¹

29 Es sei darauf hingewiesen, dass die im Folgenden angeführten Produkte in der Regel bei mehreren Versendern aus der rechtsextremen Szene im Angebot sind.

30 <https://pcrecords.net/contents/de/d31.html#p7029> [30.10.2023]

31 <https://www.wikingerversand.de/maenner/t-shirts/wikinger-u.-heidentum/22375/nibelungen-t-shirt> [17.6.2022]



Abb. 7. T-Shirt „Nibelungen“ (Vorder- und Rückseite)

(Quelle: <https://www.wikingerversand.de/maenner/t-shirts/wikinger-u.-heidentum/22375/nibelungen-tshirt> [17.6.2022])

Die rechtsextreme Modemarke „Ansgar Aryan“ hat ein T-Shirt mit dem Namen „Hagen von Tronje“ im Programm. In der Produktbeschreibung heißt es u.a.: „Das Nibelungenlied hat auch heute noch nichts von seiner mystischen Aura verloren. Mit diesem neuen T-Shirt setzen wir Hagen von Tronje in Szene. Er gibt der ‚Nibelungentreue‘ ein Gesicht.“³²



Abb. 8. T-Shirt „Hagen von Tronje“ (Vorder- und Rückseite)

(Quelle: <https://www.stolzgermane.de/Bekleidung/Ansgar-Aryan/Fuer-Maenner/T-Hemden/Ansgar-Aryan-Hagen-v-Tronje-TS::9164.html> [14.6.2022])

32 <https://www.stolzgermane.de/Bekleidung/Ansgar-Aryan/Fuer-Maenner/T-Hemden/Ansgar-Aryan-Hagen-v-Tronje-TS::9164.html> [14.6.2022]

Der „Nation und Wissen-Versand“³³ vertreibt ein ähnliches T-Shirt (in der rechtsextremen Szene „T-Hemd“ genannt) mit dem Titel „Nibelungen“, das auf der Rückseite die ersten Verse des Nibelungenliedes in Mittelhochdeutsch³⁴ anführt, auf der Vorderseite ist wiederum Hagen von Tronje abgebildet.³⁵

Der auf der Rückseite des betreffenden T-Shirts abgebildete Flügelhelm ist das Wappenzeichen der 38. SS-Grenadier-Division „Nibelungen“, die in den letzten Wochen des Krieges aufgestellt wurde und deren Name wohl auch an den Kampf bis zum Letzten erinnern sollte. (Gentry, McConnell, Müller & Wunderlich, 2011, S. 310)

Abgebildet ist er u.a. auch auf einem Hoody/Sweatshirt mit dem Namen „Nibelungen“, erhältlich beim rechtsextremen „Werwolf Wear Shop“:



Abb. 9. Hoody/Sweatshirt „Nibelungen“
(Quelle: werwolfwearshop.com)

33 Offenbar handelt es sich bei diesem Namen um eine Dissimilierung des DDR-Verlagsnamens „Volk und Wissen“, ist doch dieser Versand seit 2011 in Riesa (Sachsen) ansässig. (<https://www.verfassungsschutz.sachsen.de/vertrieb-rechtsextremistischer-produkte-5084.html> [30.10.2023])

34 Die Produktbeschreibung spricht fälschlicherweise von „in althochdeutscher Sprache“.

35 <https://www.nuw-versand.de/de/bekleidung/comrade-couture/t-hemd-nibelungen-s>

An diesem Bezug auf das Dritte Reich wird auch wieder deutlich, dass es sich bei den rechtsextremen Bezügen auf die Nibelungen nicht um eine Adaption von Kulturgut handelt, sondern dass damit zugleich auch der Bogen zum Vorbild Nationalsozialismus geschlagen wird.

Vorbild für die Darstellungen Hagens auf den T-Shirts von „Ansgar Aryan“ sowie beim „Nation und Wissen Versand“ ist jeweils das Wormser Hagendenkmal:



Abb. 10. Hagendenkmal in Worms („Hagen versenkt den Nibelungenhort“)
(Quelle: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=24456621> [30.10.2023])

2.4. Sonstige Nibelungen-Bezüge

Doch nicht nur in den Bereichen Musik und Bekleidung wird im Rechtsextremismus auf das Nibelungenlied bzw. die Nibelungensage referiert, sondern Bezugnahmen lassen sich allerorten in der rechtsextremen Szene nachweisen, sogar international: So besaß die spanische Faschistengruppe CEDADE eine eigene Druckerei, die von Neonazis aus ganz Europa genutzt wurde,³⁶ zu der Wagner in den 1990er Jahren ausführt:

„Die Druckerei heißt Nothung nach Siegfrieds Schwert in der Nibelungen-Sage. Dort wird auch die Remer-Depesche, in Deutschland mehrmals beschlagnahmt,

³⁶ <https://www.antifainfoblatt.de/artikel/spanien-neonazifuehrer-varela-verurteilt> [30.10.2023]

gedruckt.“ (Wagner, 1994, S. 260) Hierbei wird allerdings an Richard Wagners Nibelungen-Rezeption angeknüpft, denn im Nibelungenlied heißt das Schwert bekanntlich „Balmung“.

Ein Militaria-Versandhandel in Bad Honnef, dessen Inhaber der rechtsextremen Szene angehört und dessen Angebot sich vor allem auf Reenactment zur Wehrmacht und auf Material zum Dritten Reich und zum Zweiten Weltkrieg konzentriert, nennt sich „Balmung Ausrüstungen“.³⁷ Laut Einschätzung des Innenministeriums Nordrhein-Westfalen vom 6.9.2007 weist das Angebot allerdings keine strafrechtlich relevanten Inhalte auf.³⁸

Im Angebot des „Nordwelt-Versandes“ findet sich eine Deko-Waffe, die als „Siegfrieds Drachenblutdolch“ bezeichnet wird. In der Produktbeschreibung wird dementsprechend auch kurz die Rolle Siegfrieds als Drachentöter erläutert.³⁹



Abb. 11. Deko-Waffe „Siegfrieds Drachenblutdolch“

(Quelle: <https://www.nordwelt-versand.de/waffen-und-ruestungen/messer-phantasie/1556/siegfrieds-drachenblutdolch> [30.10.2023])

Auch bei rechtsextremen Selbstbezeichnungen wird in einzelnen Fällen ein Nibelungen-Bezug hergestellt: So nannte sich eine Kameradschaft „Nibelungensturm Odenwald“ (NSO); diese war bis Juni 2006 aktiv. (Steimel, 2008, S. 636, Hessisches

37 <https://www.balmung-online.com/> [30.10.2023]

38 <https://www.juramagazin.de/199414.html> [29.10.2023]

39 <https://www.nordwelt-versand.de/waffen-und-ruestungen/messer-phantasie/1556/siegfrieds-drachenblutdolch> [30.10.2023]

Ministerium des Innern und für Sport, 2007, S. 85) Daneben erwähnt der Hessische Verfassungsschutzbericht für das Jahr 2006 noch eine Skinhead-Kameradschaft „Nibelungensturm Mümlingtal“ (NSM), (Hessisches Ministerium des Innern und für Sport, 2007, S. 96) wobei nicht gänzlich klar ist, ob es sich hierbei nicht um dieselbe Organisation handelt.

Als Deckname diente „Hagen von Tronje“ dem Musiker und bekannten Rechtsextremisten Hendrik Möbus, der unter diesem Pseudonym im Fanzine *RockNord* schrieb. (Pötsch, 2002, S. 124; Peise, 2015, S. 82f.)

Verbreitet sind schließlich auch diverse ideologisch passende Publikationen zu Nibelungenlied und Nibelungensage:

Der rechtsextreme „Forsite-Verlag“ beispielsweise bietet zahlreiche Bücher aus der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts im Nachdruck an, die in esoterischer Form auf die Nibelungensage zurückgreifen, wie beispielsweise die *Theozoologie* des völkisch-esoterischen Vordenkers Jörg Lanz von Liebenfels oder die *Sage vom Heiligen Gral* des Esoterikers Guido von List, der ebenfalls zu den ideologischen Wurzeln der nationalsozialistischen Germanen-Rezeption gehört.⁴⁰ Daneben existieren einige jüngere Publikationen aus dem Rechtsextremismus, die sich mit dem Nibelungenlied auseinandersetzen, darunter auch literarische Adaptionen. Hier wird zum Teil eine Ausdeutung des Nibelungenstoffes in einem nordisch-germanischen mythologischen Sinne gepflegt. (Krasser, 2019, S. 51ff.)

3. Fazit

Wie die hier angeführten zahlreichen Beispiele zeigen, greifen Rechtsextremisten auf unterschiedliche Elemente aus der Nibelungensage bzw. aus dem Nibelungenlied zu. Dabei sind die Zugriffe ebenso wie auch andere Referenzen auf die germanische Geschichte und Kultur meist oberflächlich, stereotyp und auf wenige Details beschränkt. Vor allem wird auf die Aspekte Kampf, Krieg, Stärke, Macht und das Ideal der Treue fokussiert, die für die rechtsextremistische Ideologie passend sind und dementsprechend instrumentalisiert werden. Diese selektive auf Kampf und Krieg ausgerichtete Sicht ist im Übrigen typisch für die rechtsextreme Rezeption von germanischer Geschichte und Kultur. (Schuppener, 2021; Schuppener, 2022) Eine tiefere und differenziertere Auseinandersetzung mit den

40 <https://forsite-verlag.de> [30.10.2023]

Inhalten oder Hintergründen des Nibelungenstoffes findet hingegen nicht statt, da dies für die angestrebte Nutzung auch gar nicht notwendig ist.

Bemerkenswert ist, dass Hagen von Tronje als Figur aus dem Nibelungenlied im Rechtsextremismus eine höhere Popularität besitzt als Siegfried. Dies mag zunächst erstaunlich sein, ist doch Siegfried als Drachenbezwinger der Prototyp des Helden, während Hagen als Meuchelmörder agiert. Doch gerade Hagen zeichnet sich durch skrupelloses Handeln, Tapferkeit, Mut, Treue bis in den Tod aus. Insbesondere auf diese unverbrüchliche Treue, die „Nibelungentreue“, wird im rechtsextremen Kontext explizit verwiesen. Die Charakteristik der Person passt damit zu dem Bild, das Rechtsextremisten von sich selbst haben (wollen). Insofern ist es plausibel, dass die Gestalt Hagens als Vorbild für Rechtsextremisten dienen kann.

Dass andere zentrale Figuren des Nibelungenliedes (Gunther, Kriemhild, Brünhild) in der rechtsextremen Rezeption keinerlei Rolle spielen,⁴¹ liegt an der Vielschichtigkeit des Werkes, die der einschichtigen Ausdeutung im Rechtsextremismus entgegensteht. Dies zeigt das Beispiel von Kriemhild: Zwar ist sie einerseits eine tapfere, kriegerische Frau, die dem germanischen Ideal entspräche, doch andere Faktoren wie die Heirat mit (dem aus rechtsextremer Perspektive fremdrassigen) Etzel oder auch ihre christliche Prägung passen nicht in eine rechtsextremistische Aneignung. (Krasser, 2019, S. 38)

Ähnlich wie bei der rechtsextremen Rezeption der germanischen Götterwelt, die sich weitgehend auf Odin und Thor beschränkt, (Schuppener, 2017; Schuppener, 2021) konzentriert sich damit die rechtsextreme Adaption der Nibelungen weitgehend auf zwei Figuren, nämlich auf Siegfried und Hagen, und bleibt so selektiv und vereinfachend.

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41 Brünhild wird zwar im Song *Die Idee ist unbesiegt* der rechtsextremen Band „Stahlgewitter“ (Album *Das Hohelied der Herkunft*, 2013) erwähnt, ein konkreter Bezug zum Nibelungenlied fehlt aber.

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Naturelemente und ihre Metaphorik in der Poesie von Ingeborg Bachmann

Natural Elements and Their Metaphors in the Poetry of Ingeborg Bachmann

Özge ASLAN¹ , Habib TEKİN² 



¹M.A./ DAAD-Lecturer, Turkish-German University, School of Foreign Languages, Istanbul, Türkiye

²Associate Professor, Marmara University, Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, Department of German Language and Literature, Istanbul, Türkiye

ORCID: Ö.A. 0000-0002-7558-6005;
H.T. 0000-0002-2650-8801

Corresponding author:

Özge ASLAN,
Türk Alman Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller
Yüksekokulu, İstanbul, Türkiye
E-mail: ozge.aslan@yahoo.com

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ABSTRAKT

Ingeborg Bachmann, eine österreichische Autorin und Dichterin des 20. Jahrhunderts, hat durch ihre tiefgehende und introspektive Auseinandersetzung mit dem menschlichen Zustand in der Nachkriegszeit einen nachhaltigen Einfluss auf die Literatur ausgeübt. Ihre Werke, die von intellektueller Tiefe und einem nuancierten Verständnis für komplexe zwischenmenschliche Beziehungen geprägt sind, haben sie zu einer bedeutenden Figur in der zeitgenössisch deutschsprachigen Literatur gemacht. Ein faszinierender Aspekt von Bachmanns Dichtung ist ihre Verwendung von Naturmetaphern, insbesondere die symbolische Darstellung von Feuer, Wasser, Luft und Erde. Diese natürlichen Elemente dienen als komplexe Metaphern, die tiefe emotionale Zustände, den menschlichen Zustand und die Verbindung des Einzelnen mit der natürlichen Welt kunstvoll einfangen. Bachmann schafft durch jene metaphysischen Verknüpfungen eine poetische Welt, in der Leser:innen wertvolle Einblicke gewinnen und nach Bedeutung sowie Identität durch die Interpretation der Natur suchen können. Die Symbole von Feuer, Wasser, Luft und Erde vermitteln intensiv emotionale Erfahrungen und existenzielle Fragestellungen. Oft rufen sie Erinnerungen an Kriegszeit und die komplexe Beziehung der Menschheit zur Umwelt hervor. Diese Studie bietet daher ein tiefes Verständnis für Bachmanns Dichtung und ihre fortwährende Suche nach Verbindung zur Welt. Sie beleuchtet die innere Welt von Bachmanns literarischer Identität, die auch heute noch zeitgenössische Leser:innen durch die Kunst der Sprache, geprägt von Kriegserinnerungen, fasziniert und in ihren Bann zieht. Bachmanns Werk wird somit zu einem wichtigen Fenster, das einen Einblick in die menschliche Existenz und deren Verwebung mit der Natur gewährt.

Schlüsselwörter: Ingeborg Bachmann, Natur, Symbolik, Wasser, Erde

ABSTRACT

Ingeborg Bachmann was an outstanding Austrian author and poet of the 20th century who exerted a lasting influence on literature through her profound and introspective exploration of the human condition in the post-war era. Characterized by intellectual depth and a nuanced understanding of complex interpersonal relationships, her works have positioned her as a significant figure in contemporary literature. One captivating aspect of Bachmann's poetry is her skillful use of nature metaphors, particularly the symbolic representation of fire, water, air, and earth. These natural elements serve as complex metaphors, artfully capturing deep emotional states, the human condition, and the individual's connection to the natural world. Through these



metaphysical connections, Bachmann created a poetic world in which readers can gain valuable insights and seek meaning and identity through the interpretation of nature. The symbols of fire, water, air, and earth convey intensely emotional experiences and existential questions, often evoking memories of wartime and the complex relationship between humanity and the environment. Consequently, this study provides a profound understanding of Bachmann's poetry and her ongoing quest for connection to the world. It illuminates the inner world of Bachmann's literary identity, which through her powerful language marked by memories of war, continues to captivate contemporary readers. Bachmann's work thus becomes an important window offering insight into human existence and its interweaving with nature.

Keywords: Ingeborg Bachmann, nature, symbolism, water, earth

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Ingeborg Bachmann was a luminary among the writers of her era and left an indelible mark on literature through her profound poems and literary works. Her poetic persona and philosophical acumen significantly influenced her prolific output. This paper delves into the unique role that nature plays in Bachmann's works, not merely as a backdrop but as a refuge intricately intertwined with her ideas. The study aims to uncover and elucidate the nature metaphors in some of Ingeborg Bachmann's poems, focusing on the interplay between her personal style and her connection to the natural world.

The paper centers on the analysis of such selected literary symbols as sun, sea, wind, and tree. The examination employs metaphor and symbolism to highlight the expressive means the author employed as well as their significance in the broader context. While emphasizing the meaninglessness of life, Bachmann guides readers to both havens of hope and confrontations with life's darkness, portraying life itself through the words of nature as a safer harbor.

Born in 1926 in Klagenfurt, Ingeborg Bachmann embarked on a diverse academic journey, studying philosophy, law, psychology, and German literature between 1945-1950. Her early poems found their way into publications in 1948-1949, and she later earned a doctorate in philosophy with a particular focus on Heidegger's philosophy. 1953-1957 saw Bachmann residing in Italy, specifically Naples and Rome where she immersed herself in the cultural richness of the region. In 1959-60, she assumed the role of a professor of lyric poetry at the University of Frankfurt, making significant contributions to the academic landscape. Her remarkable literary journey culminated in the reception of the Georg Büchner Prize in 1964 and the Grand Austrian State Prize for Literature in 1968. However, Bachmann's life met a tragic end on October 17, 1973 in a house fire in Rome.

Bachmann's use of metaphor in her poetry is characterized by the strategic placement of metaphors within a contextual framework, allowing them to convey multiple

meanings. Her metaphors often rely on contrasting elements, contributing to the complexity of her poems. While her verses may exhibit contradictions, the underlying principle of contrast becomes a carrier of meaning itself.

The examination of autobiographical elements in Bachmann's works becomes particularly intriguing due to her deliberate restriction of private information. Bachmann's rhetorical strategy involved a conscious withholding of information, reflected in her evasive responses to questions. Her interviews were marked by cautious language, which suggests that she may have used her poetry to express what she preferred not to disclose explicitly. Critics have argued that her silence served as a means to attract attention, especially from the opposite gender, but Bachmann's careful language usage in her poetry implies a more profound intention. The nature conversations in her poems hint that she perceived nature as a place of escape, perhaps even a secure haven within herself, far removed from external influences.

This study illuminates the previously unexplored connection between Bachmann's poetic expression and her use of nature symbolism. The analysis of selected poems reveals the depth of this relationship, providing valuable insights into the understanding of her works and the myriad connections within them. Bachmann's legacy as a poet and the significance of nature symbolism in her poetry continue to captivate readers and scholars alike, inviting ongoing exploration and interpretation.

As we navigate through the verses that Bachmann crafted with meticulous attention, we find her words to become more than mere expressions: They transform into portals leading to the intricate landscapes of her thoughts. The chosen literary symbols of sun, sea, wind, and tree serve as vessels carrying profound meanings, their significance extending beyond the immediate visual or sensory representations. The interplay of these symbols forms a poetic tapestry that weaves together the threads of nature, philosophy, and personal introspection.

The nature conversations embedded in Bachmann's poems provide a glimpse into her perception of nature as more than an external backdrop; it becomes a realm of escape, a secure haven within herself, shielded from external influences. Her careful choice of words laden with symbolism invites readers to explore not just the physical landscapes but also the internal topography of her thoughts and emotions.

The autobiographical dimension adds yet another layer to the intricate tapestry of Bachmann's works. Her reluctance to unveil personal details during interviews and her strategic use of silence hint at a deliberate choice to let her poetry speak on her behalf. The nature symbolism in her poems, far from being a mere artistic device, becomes a means of navigating the internal landscapes shaped by experiences, emotions, and philosophical reflections.

1. Einleitung

Ingeborg Bachmann, eine renommierte Persönlichkeit im Pantheon der Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts, zeichnet sich nicht lediglich durch ihre außergewöhnliche lyrische Produktion aus, sondern manifestiert sich zudem als eine singuläre Erscheinung in der Zeitperiode, innerhalb derer sie lebte und literarisch kreierte. In der Rolle einer der prägnantesten literarischen Stimmen ihrer Generation exkuriiert sie mittels ihrer poetischen Virtuosität und intellektuellen Präzision nicht bloß das Gefüge der literarischen Szenerie ihrer Epoche, sondern hinterlässt zudem nachhaltige Spuren im weitreichenden Gefüge der Literaturgeschichte. Ihr Schaffen ist von einer tief verankerten Emotionalität geprägt, die sie in den Kreis bedeutender Dichter:innen ihrer Zeitspanne emporhebt. Demgemäß betont sie die Rolle der Dichtung wie folgt:

Natürlich kann man durch ein Gedicht nicht die Welt verändern, das ist unmöglich, man kann aber doch etwas bewirken, und diese Wirkung ist eben nur mit dem größten Ernst zu erreichen, und aus den neuen Leid Erfahrungen, also nicht aus den Erfahrungen, die schon gemacht worden sind, von den großen Dichtern, vor uns. (Koschel&Weidenbaum, 1983, S. 139)

In den literarischen Werken von Ingeborg Bachmann nimmt die Naturmetaphorik eine besondere Position ein. Sie fungiert als Kulisse für die Handlung, und ebenso als Zufluchtsort für Bachmann selbst, in engster Verbindung zu ihren eigenen Vorstellungen, welche sie auf ihre Weise in Schriften reflektiert. In der vorliegenden Arbeit wird das Augenmerk auf ihren schriftstellerischen Stil und ihre Verknüpfung mit der Naturmetaphorik gerichtet, denn in ihren Werken manifestiert sich eine höchst ausgeprägte Affinität zwischen ihrer Persönlichkeit und der Natur. Diese symbiotische Verbindung ist in ihren Ausdrucksweisen manifest und potenziert sich, sobald wir die darin verschlüsselten Botschaften zu enträtseln vermögen. Die Einsatzbereitschaft der Naturmetaphorik in Bachmanns Schaffen erweist sich demnach als höchst aufschlussreich, um ein besseres Verständnis für ihre Werke und die darin verwobenen Vielschichtigkeiten zu erlangen.

Obschon Bachmann in ihren Gedichten eine Vielzahl von Natursymbolen einsetzt, konzentriert sich dieser Artikel auf Naturbegriffe, welche die Autorin symbolisch beladen hat, da die Prämisse verfolgt wird, dass nicht jedes Wort in ihren Gedichten im Kontext der Symbolik zu interpretieren ist. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit wird den literarischen

Symbolen wie „Sonne“, „Meer“, „Wind“ und „Baum“ gewidmet, deren Analyse auf der Betrachtung von Metaphorik und Symbolik fußt. Im Zentrum dieser Überlegungen stehen die stilistischen Elemente der Autorin und ihre Rolle in diesem Kontext.

Während Bachmann die Allgemeingültigkeit der Lebensabsurdität hervorhebt, geleitet sie gelegentlich ihre Leserschaft in kleine Oasen der Hoffnung, und zu anderen Zeiten deckt sie die Dunkelheit des Daseins auf. In der Tat fungiert sie als eine Verkörperung des Lebens selbst und knüpft somit eine innige Verbindung zwischen dem Leben und den naturreichen Begriffen, die sie als sicheren Hafen erachtet. Obgleich die individuelle Interpretation dieser Natursymbole variieren mag, bleibt unangetastet, dass Ingeborg Bachmann durch ihre symbolische Darstellung der Natur einen expansiven Raum erschafft, welcher ihre Gedanken und Ideen auf faszinierende Weise verkörpert.

Die vorliegende Arbeit widmet sich im Wesentlichen einer eingehenden Untersuchung der Naturmetaphern („Sonne“, „Meer“, „Wind“ und „Baum“) in der Poesie von Ingeborg Bachmann, wobei die vier grundlegenden Naturelemente – Feuer, Wasser, Luft und Erde – im Zentrum stehen und somit auch den Rahmen der Arbeit bilden. Insbesondere werden die vielschichtigen Ausdrucksmöglichkeiten jener Metaphern im Werk von Bachmann analysiert. Dabei richtet sich das Augenmerk auf die „Sonne“ als Symbol für das Element „Feuer“ das „Meer“ für das Element „Wasser“, den „Wind“ für das Element „Luft“ und den „Baum“ für das Element „Erde“. Diese Naturmetaphern durchziehen ihre Gedichte und verleihen ihnen eine symbolische Bedeutung, die es zu entschlüsseln gilt. Die Untersuchung der Elemente in Bachmanns Dichtung wird einen Einblick in die Komplexität ihrer poetischen Sprache und die tiefgehenden Themen bieten, die sie in ihren Werken anspricht.

2. Ingeborg Bachmann als Dichterin und die Naturmetaphorik in ihren ausgewählten Gedichten

Ingeborg Bachmann, im Jahr 1926 in Klagenfurt geboren, absolvierte ein Studium der Philosophie, Jura, Psychologie und Germanistik zwischen den Jahren 1945 und 1950 an den renommierten Universitäten Innsbruck, Graz und Wien. Während dieser akademischen Jahre vertiefte sie ihre philosophischen Kenntnisse unter der Anleitung namhafter Professoren wie Leo Gabriel, Hubert Rohrer und Viktor E. Frankl. Ihre literarische Karriere nahm ihren Anfang mit der Veröffentlichung ihrer ersten Gedichte in den Jahren 1948-1949. Von besonderer Bedeutung ist ihre Promotion, in der sie

Heideggers Philosophie untersucht und vertieft. In den Jahren 1953-1957 lebte Bachmann in Italien, genauer gesagt in den Städten Neapel und Rom, bevor sie im Zeitraum von 1959 bis 1960 als Professorin für Lyrik an der Universität Frankfurt am Main lehrte.¹ Ihre literarische Exzellenz wurde 1964 durch die Verleihung des Georg-Büchner-Preises anerkannt, gefolgt von der Ehrung mit dem Großen Österreichischen Staatspreis für Literatur im Jahre 1968. Ab 1965 nahm sie ihren Wohnsitz in Rom, wo ihr Haus tragischerweise einem verheerenden Feuer zum Opfer fiel. Sie erlitt schwere Verletzungen infolge des Brandes und verstarb am 17. Oktober 1973 (Bachmann, 2021, S. 84ff).

Der Einfluss von Ingeborg Bachmann auf die literarische Welt erweist sich als facettenreich und widersprüchlich. Auf der einen Seite zählt sie zweifellos zu den bedeutendsten Autorinnen in der deutschsprachigen Literatur. Auf der anderen Seite gerät sie oft aufgrund ihrer Beziehungen zu prominenten Schriftstellern mehr in den Vordergrund als durch ihre eigenen literarischen Werke. Insbesondere die ältere Generation sieht sich rasch mit Vorurteilen gegenüber ihr konfrontiert und sie wird regelmäßig Gegenstand von Kritik. Bis in die späten 70er Jahre hinein erfuhr Bachmann als Autorin nur begrenzte Anerkennung, und wenn, dann oft in einem stark sprachphilosophischen Kontext.

Über eine gewisse Zeitspanne hinweg wurden vor allem ihre persönlichen historischen Erfahrungen und ihre feministische Perspektive als ihre hervorstechenden Merkmale betrachtet. Ihre Werke thematisieren wiederholt das zentrale Problem der Weiblichkeit in einer von patriarchalen Strukturen geprägten Gesellschaft (Bartsch, 1997, S. VII). Durch die kunstvolle Verwendung von Metaphern in den Werken der Dichterin werden sie in erster Linie durch ihre Position im Kontext dazu befähigt, auf mehrere Bedeutungsebenen hinzuweisen. In ihren Gedichten basieren Metaphern häufig auf kontrastierenden Elementen. Obgleich viele ihrer Gedichte eine inhärente Ambiguität aufweisen, wird deutlich, dass dieses Prinzip selbst zu einem Träger von Bedeutung wird (Mauser, 1981, S. 56).

Die folgenden Begrifflichkeiten wie etwa „Stadt“, „Meer“, „Golf“, „Strand“, „Wolken“, „Winden“, „Schnee“, „Wellen“, „Sonne“, „Himmel“, und „Erde“ benutzt sie in ihren Gedichten

1 Siehe für ausführliche (Auto)Biografien Bachmanns: Bachmann, H. (2023): *Ingeborg Bachmann, meine Schwester: Erinnerungen und Bilder*. München; Degner, U. (2023): *Ingeborg Bachmann: Spiegelungen eines Lebens*. Darmstadt; Hartwig, I. (2018): *Wer war Ingeborg Bachmann?: Eine Biographie in Bruchstücken*. Frankfurt am Main; Bachmann, I. (2011): *Die Wahrheit ist dem Menschen zumutbar: Essays, Reden, Kleinere Schriften*. Münster und München.

häufig; die Begriffe wie „Land“, „Berge“, „Hügel“, „Küsten“, „Inseln“, „Haus“, „Seen“, „Ströme“, „Horizonte“ und „Kontinente“ gehören auch zu diesen Ausdrücken. Es erweist sich demnach als bemerkenswert, dass viele dieser Terminologien in den Gedichten in der Pluralform verwendet werden, was die Kraft der Aussagen verstärkt. Dies führt zu einer Verallgemeinerung und Abstraktion, wodurch die Vorstellungskraft des Lesers nicht auf eine einzelne konkrete Entität beschränkt wird. Die Verwendung von Metaphern in ihren Gedichten offenbart keinen unmittelbaren Bezug zur natürlichen Landschaft, sondern bezieht sich auf grundlegende Aspekte des menschlichen Daseins. Mithilfe dieser Worte übermittelt die Dichterin dem/:r Leser:in eine unkonventionelle Botschaft. Da sie dem/:r Leser:in nicht die gesamte Palette von Bildern darbietet, sondern lediglich einen Teil davon, ermutigt sie die Leser dazu, die Ausdrücke nicht nur wörtlich zu deuten (ebd., S. 57).

Häufig ist es der Fall, dass ein Autor bzw. eine Autorin erst posthum die gebührende Aufmerksamkeit erfährt. Erst zu diesem Zeitpunkt neigt das Publikum dazu, sich intensiver mit seinen/ihren literarischen Werken zu beschäftigen. Dies bietet die Gelegenheit, einen umfassenden Überblick über das Gesamtwerk zu gewinnen und einen Urteilsschluss herbeizuführen, insbesondere, wenn das vorhandene Material des Autors bis dato unzureichend war. Diese Phase erlaubt die Bestätigung oder Korrektur bisheriger Wertungen. Themen- und Stilwechsel, die zu Lebzeiten des Autors kritisiert wurden, treten in den Hintergrund. Im Falle von Ingeborg Bachmann manifestiert sich dieser Trend ebenfalls. In jüngster Zeit wurde eine vierbändige Gesamtausgabe ihrer Werke veröffentlicht, die dazu einlädt, sich erneut mit der zweifelsohne renommierten österreichischen Dichterin des 20. Jahrhunderts zu befassen (Probst, 1979, S. 325).

Die Analyse der autobiografischen Elemente in Ingeborg Bachmanns Werken gewinnt besondere Relevanz, da die Autorin bewusst die Grenzen ihrer privaten Sphäre in ihr literarisches Schreiben einbettet. Ihr beständiges Ausweichen und ihre Antworten auf Fragen eröffnen einen Einblick in die Natur und ihre Naturmetaphorik in der Dichtung. Ihre rhetorische Strategie ist vielschichtig, jedoch zeichnet sich eine übergreifende Taktik ab: Die gezielte Zurückhaltung von Informationen. Ihre Antworten offenbaren eine konstante Zurückhaltung, die den Eindruck erweckt, dass sie keine persönlichen Einzelheiten preisgeben möchte und sich gegen jegliche Enthüllungen sträubt, „denn im Sprechen bleibt man ja [- Bachmann zufolge -] hinter dem Schreiben zurück und tappt tolpatschig in den Gegenden herum, in denen man sich schreibend schon einmal zurechtgefunden hat.“ (Koschel&Weidenbaum, 1983, S. 64)

Möglicherweise hat sie in ihren Gedichten bereits das ausgedrückt, was sie mit Worten sagen wollte, aber es vorgezogen, in ihren Interviews zu schweigen. Angesichts der Höhen und Tiefen in ihrem privaten Leben sowie ihrer Beziehung zu bedeutenden Schriftstellern der Zeit wird von Kritikern angemerkt, dass ihr Schweigen als ein Mittel dient, die Aufmerksamkeit des anderen Geschlechts auf sich zu ziehen (s. Reich-Ranicki, 2011).

Jedoch manifestiert Ingeborg Bachmann in ihren Gedichten durch die sorgfältige Wahl ihrer Worte, dass ihre Intentionen weit über das Offensichtliche hinausgehen. Obgleich viele ihrer naturbezogenen Passagen in den Gedichten den Anschein erwecken, als habe sie versucht, ihre Gedanken durch die Sprache der Natur zu vermitteln, wird deutlich, dass Bachmann die Natur in erster Linie als Zufluchtsort und sogar als einen abgeschiedenen Hafen in ihrem eigenen Selbst betrachtet, fernab von allen äußeren Einflüssen.

In ihren Gedichten unternimmt Bachmann den Versuch, das Destruktive und Tödliche der Ordnung, die bedrohliche Banalität des Alltags, zu thematisieren und die Leerstellen zu füllen. Dies dient dazu, den Blick für die möglichen Potenziale zu schärfen, die diese Leerstellen noch bergen. Es entsteht ein Gegenbild zur selbstgefälligen Gesellschaft des aufstrebenden Wirtschaftswunders, gezeichnet durch Darstellungen des Fremdartigen und Unbekannten, oft aus einer elementaren, jedoch geschädigten Natur. Die beschriebene Landschaft erscheint erstarrt, menschenleer, unfruchtbar und winterlich, wobei die Naturereignisse als allegorische Darstellungen historischer Ereignisse fungieren. Gleichzeitig stellen diese Darstellungen von Erstarrung, erlöschendem Licht, zunehmender Kälte und Abschied Metaphern für ein allgemeines Bewusstsein dar, das die Zeit als eine Art Endzeit empfindet. Bachmann kehrt jedoch das übliche Bewusstsein der Katastrophe ins Gegenteil um und interpretiert es als ein Zeichen verzweifelter und absurder Hoffnung: Die verstrichene Zeit wird zur Mahnung, die noch verbleibende Zeit zu nutzen (Svandrlík, 1984, S. 29).

3.1. Die Bedeutung der flammenden Symbolik: „Feuer“

In der literarischen Tradition wurde die Metapher des „Feuers“ in der Poesie und zahlreichen schriftlichen Werken auf vielfältige Weise konzeptualisiert. Das Feuer dient als Symbol für verschiedene Repräsentationen, darunter göttliche Macht, Auflehnung, Reinheit und Läuterung, Zerstörung, Vernunft und Kreativität, Leben und Leidenschaft.

Die Symbolik des Feuers wird maßgeblich von seinen Eigenschaften beeinflusst, wie etwa die Wärme und das Licht, die es ausstrahlt, sowie seine wandelbare und farbenprächtige Erscheinungsform. Des Weiteren spielt seine Tendenz zur schnellen Ausbreitung eine bedeutsame Rolle in der Symbolbildung (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 119).

Ingeborg Bachmann verwendet in ihren Gedichten häufig die Metapher des Feuers. Diese Metapher dient dazu, bestimmte Stimmungen, Gefühle und Konzepte bildhaft darzustellen. In ihrem Gedicht *Lieder von einer Insel* (1961, S. 56) lassen sich einige Beispiele anführen, wie Bachmann die Feuermetapher einsetzt:

Es ist Feuer unter der Erde,
und das Feuer ist rein.
Es ist Feuer unter der Erde
und flüssiger Stein.

Den vorstehenden Versen ist zu entnehmen, dass Ingeborg Bachmann das Motiv des Feuers eng mit der Leidenschaft und dem inneren Begehren verknüpft. Das Feuer, das in dem Gedicht beschrieben wird, manifestiert sich in seiner Mächtigkeit unter der Erdoberfläche, in Form von flüssigem Magma. Es kann metaphorisch die Vorstellung der Hölle im religiösen Kontext repräsentieren. Dies verweist auf die Vorstellung, dass das innere Feuer, das in der Seele der Dichterin lodert, ebenso intensiv und zerstörerisch ist wie das infernalische Feuer der Hölle selbst. Diese allegorische Darstellung impliziert, dass das Feuer in der Lage ist, alles in seiner Umgebung zu verzehren und sogar einen an sich festen Stein in flüssige Form zu verwandeln.

Das innere Unbehagen akzentuiert die österreichische Schriftstellerin in einem Brief an Paul Celan:²

Ich versuche, nicht an mich zu denken und mit geschlossenen Augen hinüberzukommen zu dem, was eigentlich gemeint ist. Sicher stecken wir alle in der grossen Spannung, können uns nicht lösen und machen viele Umwege. Aber ich bin manchmal so krank davon, dass ich fürchte, es wird einmal nicht weitergehen. (Badio u.a., 2008, S. 10)

² Siehe für die ausführliche Liebesbeziehung zwischen Bachmann und Max Frisch: Bachmann, I., Frisch, M. (2022): »Wir haben es nicht gut gemacht.«: *Der Briefwechsel*. München, Berlin, Zürich; Bachmann, I., Henze, H. W. (2013): *Briefe einer Freundschaft*. München; Gleichauf, I. (2015): *Ingeborg Bachmann und Max Frisch: Eine Liebe zwischen Intimität und Öffentlichkeit*. München.

Ein etabliertes und traditionelles Symbol, das Feuer, fungiert als Veranschaulichung für die unvermeidliche Auseinandersetzung mit Schmerz, fortwährenden Fehlern und belastenden Erfahrungen. Dieses Motiv wird besonders hervorgehoben, indem Bilder aus dem Kontext der Liebe und des Feuers miteinander in Verbindung gebracht werden, wie es beispielsweise in dem Gedicht *Mein Vogel* (1961, S. 22) der Fall ist. Die symbolische Verknüpfung findet ihren Ursprung in der intensivsten Form menschlicher Lebenserfahrung und bildet die Grundlage für eine authentische Interpretation der vermittelten Botschaft:

Wenn ich befeuert bleib wie ich bin
und vom Feuer geliebt,
bis das Harz aus den Stämmen tritt,
auf die Wunden träufelt und warm

Emotionen, innere Konflikte und die menschliche Existenz spiegelt Bachmann demnach in einem weiteren Brief an Celan:

Aber nichts ist zur Bindung geworden, ich bleibe nirgends lang, ich bin unruhiger als je und will und kann niemandem etwas versprechen. Wie lange wohl unser Mai und unser Juni hinter all dem zurückliegen, fragst Du: keinen Tag, Du Lieber! Mai und Juni ist für mich heute abend oder morgen mittag und noch in vielen Jahren. (Badio u.a., 2008, S. 15)

In ihrem weiteren Gedicht *Im Zwielicht* aus dem ersten Band gelingt es damit der Autorin, die Erfahrung der Intensität der Liebe und die damit verbundene Unruhe durch das Feuer zu erweitern:

Ich aber bin schon des Augenblicks
gewärtig in Liebe, mir fällt der Scherben
ins Feuer, mir wird er zum Blei,
das er war. [...] (Bachmann, 2021, S. 26)

Das Motiv des Feuers wird mit Auflehnung und Emanzipation in Zusammenhang gebracht. Die mythologische Erzählung von Prometheus ist ein Symbol für den Diebstahl des Feuers durch Prometheus von den Göttern, um es den Menschen zu bringen. Es handelt sich um eine allegorische Darstellung des Feuers und der damit verbundenen

Rebellion gegen Zeus. Der Gedanke des Leidens wird thematisiert, indem Prometheus und die Menschen von Zeus bestraft werden. Die Interpretation des Diebstahls des Feuers als Akt der Rebellion wird in Frage gestellt, da die Götter auf die Opfer des Feuers durch die Menschen angewiesen sind. Hierbei wird betont, dass das Feuer die Fähigkeit besitzt, die Natur zu transformieren und Neues zu schaffen, was auf die zunehmende Unabhängigkeit des Menschen vom göttlichen Willen hinweist (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 120).

Bei Bachmann sehen wir das bereits erwähnte Phänomen der Rebellion in einer Verbindung mit ihren Kriegserinnerungen, die wiederum in ihrem Gedicht *Früher Mittag* (2021, S. 32) mit folgenden Versen dargestellt wird:

Wo Deutschlands Himmel die Erde schwärzt,
sucht sein enthaupteter Engel ein Grab für den Haß
und reicht dir die Schüssel des Herzens.

Eine Handvoll Schmerz verliert sich über den Hügel.
Der Krieg in Deutschland

In diesen Versen der Dichterin wird die Verwüstung in Deutschland nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg metaphorisch mit dem Element des Feuers in Verbindung gebracht. Innerhalb des Gedichts wird das Feuer als eine mächtige Entität dargestellt, die sogar in der Lage ist, den Himmel zu schwärzen.

Insbesondere Künstler:innen werden durch die Eigenschaften des Feuers mit Fähigkeiten ausgestattet, die denen der Götter ähneln. Das Feuer symbolisiert die kulturelle Überlegenheit und es manifestiert sich als ein Sinnbild für geistige Emanzipation und Aufklärung (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 120).

In Bachmanns Gedicht *Mein Vogel* (1961, S. 22f.) steht sodann die „Feuermetapher“ für Verwandlung und Erneuerung. Mit dem Feuer wird der Prozess des Erwachens im Sinne der zuvor erwähnten geistigen Emanzipation dargestellt. Es ist ein Symbol des geistigen Neubeginns:

Wenn ich vom Rauch behelmt
wieder weiß, was geschieht,

mein Vogel, mein Beistand des Nachts,
wenn ich befeuert bin in der Nacht,
knistert's im dunklen Bestand,
und ich schlage den Funken aus mir.

Der Vogel wird im vorliegenden Auszug als ein nächtlicher Begleiter porträtiert, der wiederum die geistige Unterstützung impliziert. Das Feuer, welches die Dichterin in der Dunkelheit hegt, mag als Metapher für innere Stärke und den Willen zur Veränderung sowie zum Durchbruch in anspruchsvollen Zeiten interpretiert werden. Die Verwendung des Begriffs „Funken“ vermittelt die Vorstellung der Autorin, dass Augenblicke der Dunkelheit und der Unsicherheit durch Erkenntnis und Transformation in etwas Neues verwandelt werden können.

3.2. Die Sonne als Symbol des Feuers

Bachmann wurde in einem Interview vom 05. November 1964 darauf angesprochen, dass in ihren Gedichten die häufigsten Wörter „Nacht“, „Licht“, „Auge“, „Wind“, „Land“ und „Sonne“ seien, die auch als „Standardworte der konventionellen Naturlyrik“ gelten. Sie wurde gefragt, ob sie die Natur in ihren Gedichten wiedergeben möchte. Daraufhin antwortete Bachmann: „Die Natur oder was man im Zusammenhang mit Lyrik unter Natur versteht, interessiert mich überhaupt nicht. Ich glaube nicht, daß ich zu den Gräserbewisperern gehöre - ich glaube, das ist ein Wort von Benn. Ich kann kaum drei Blumensorten auseinanderhalten“ (Koschel&Weidenbaum, 1983, S. 45). Dieses Zitat impliziert, dass Ingeborg Bachmann nach ihren eigenen Angaben ihre Worte nicht bewusst für eine Naturdichtung verfasst hat. Behauptungen über ihr vermeintlich geringes literarisches Interesse an der Natur sind ebenfalls Gegenstand einer Überprüfung der vorliegenden Arbeit. Nichtsdestotrotz verleiht uns jede Passage in ihren Gedichten, in der sich Worte über die Natur wiederholen, einen Schlüssel, der es ermöglicht, an bestimmten Stellen in Bachmanns prosaischer Lyrik Einblick in ihre eigene Welt zu erhalten.

Ingeborg Bachmann verleiht dem Begriff „Sonne“ in ihrem Gedicht eine Konnotation, die sich von ihrer Verwendung in ihren anderen literarischen Werken unterscheidet. In ihrem Gedicht mit dem Titel *An die Sonne*, welches im Gedichtband *Anrufung des Großen Bären* (1956) von Ingeborg Bachmann enthalten ist, erlangt das Wort „Sonne“ – eines der am häufigsten von Bachmann verwendeten Begrifflichkeiten – eine besonders

signifikante Wirkung. Dieses Gedicht, ebenso wie die gesamte Gedichtsammlung, erfuhr eine enthusiastische Rezeption. Ein zentraler Fokus liegt auf der Struktur des Gedichts, die durch die anfängliche Reduktion und anschließende Erweiterung der Zeilenanzahl eine symmetrische Form aufweist und um die isolierte Mittelzeile zentriert ist: „Nichts Schöneres unter der Sonne als unter der Sonne zu sein...“ (ebd.).

Das vorrangige Thema, welches in dieser Zeile behandelt wird, fokussiert sich auf die Beziehung zwischen dem Inneren und dem Äußeren, zwischen dem Akt des Sehens und der Bedeutung des Lichts. Diese zentrale Zeile in sich selbst ist ebenfalls von symmetrischer Struktur geprägt, wobei sie sich um die konjunktive Partikel „wie“ zentriert, welche in tautologischer Weise auf die Sinnhaftigkeit und die Realität der Existenz unter der Sonne selbst verweist (Burdorf, 2002, S. 244).

Peter von Matt (1997) äußert die Überlegung, ob das Gedicht *An die Sonne* möglicherweise zu ästhetisch gestaltet ist. Dabei zieht er einen Vergleich zwischen diesem Gedicht und dem Gesang der drei Erzengel am Beginn von Goethes *Faust* und zitiert Goethe in einem Kontext, der die Begriffe „Auge“ und „Sonne“ gegenüberstellt. Matt analysiert die elementare Realität, die im Gedicht dargestellt wird, als den zentralen Inhalt und geht davon aus, dass sich in diesem Gedicht eine Liebesbotschaft versteckt, die zu offenbaren gilt. Das „Du“ in diesem Kontext bleibt jedoch namenlos, und somit ergibt sich die Frage, an wen sich der Appell richtet.

Schöner als der beachtliche Mond und sein geadeltes Licht,
Schöner als die Sterne, die berühmten Orden der Nacht,
Viel schöner als der feurige Auftritt eines Kometen
Und zu weit Schönrem berufen als jedes andre Gestirn,
Weil dein und mein Leben jeden Tag an ihr hängt, ist die Sonne. (Bachmann, 1961, S. 68)

Bereits zu Beginn des Gedichtes nimmt Ingeborg Bachmann den/ie Leser:in mit auf eine astronomische Reise, die ihn/sie zum Mond und zu den Sternen führt. Dabei rückt die „Sonne“ als das Höchste von allem in den Mittelpunkt. Innerhalb dieses Kontexts offenbart das Wort „Sonne“ in Bachmanns Gedicht vielschichtige Bedeutungsebenen. In dieser Darstellung wird die „Sonne“ als primäres Element hervorgehoben, während ihre vielfältigen Assoziationen im Hintergrund verbleiben. Zum Beispiel kann der Mond nicht eigenständig leuchten, sondern erhält sein Licht

von der Sonne, wodurch er von der Position und dem Stand der Sonne abhängig ist. Demzufolge findet sich in Bachmanns Gedicht eine Verwendung von Steigerungsformen des Schönen, die in kosmologischen Vergleichen verankert sind und ihre Wurzeln in der barocken Rhetorik haben (vgl. Burdorf, 2002, S. 244).

In der literarischen Symbolik erweist sich das Wort „Sonne“ demnach als vielschichtiges und reichhaltiges literarisches Symbol, das – ebenfalls analog hierzu – verschiedene Bedeutungsebenen umfasst. In seiner primären Bedeutung repräsentiert die „Sonne“ das Symbol des Lebens. Das Licht der Sonne wird häufig mit dem Leben gleichgesetzt, wohingegen der Tod oft als das Verlassen des Sonnenlichts verstanden wird. Aufgrund ihres täglichen Wiederaufgangs wird die Sonne in nahezu allen Kulturen als positives Symbol betrachtet. Sie symbolisiert beispielsweise die kontinuierliche Wiedergeburt des Lebens oder die Idee der Auferstehung (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 406).

In diesem Kontext vernehmen wir in der folgenden Verszeile, dass das Sonnenlicht eine zunehmende Strahlkraft erhält. Es transformiert sich zu einem wahrhaft bemerkenswerten und wunderbaren Element, das Wärme spendet. Folglich wird die Sonne zu einer Quelle, durch die das Leben selbst gefühlt werden kann, wodurch das Leben als das vitalste Element im Gedicht hervortritt. Die Sonne fungiert als Initiator des Lebensprozesses:

Schönes Licht, das uns warm hält, bewahrt und wunderbar sorgt,
Daß ich wieder sehe und dass ich dich wiederseh!
Nichts Schöneres unter der Sonne als unter der Sonne zu sein ... (Bachmann,
1961, S. 68)

Wenn die Sonne als ein literarisches Symbol für göttliche Erkenntnis betrachtet wird, ergibt sich die Interpretation, dass der Sonne, ähnlich wie dem Mond, ein Auge zugeschrieben wird oder sie selbst als Auge bezeichnet wird. In dieser Perspektive fungiert die Sonne als allsehender und allhörender Gott, repräsentierend das strahlende Auge des Universums. Aufbauend auf dieser Vorstellung entwickelte Johann Wolfgang von Goethe die Idee der Sonnenhaftigkeit des menschlichen Auges. Demnach könnte das menschliche Auge als ein zweiter Gott betrachtet werden (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 406).

Vom Lande steigt Rauch auf.
Die kleine Fischerhütte behalt im Aug,

denn die Sonne wird sinken,
ehe du zehn Meilen zurückgelegt hast... (Bachmann, 2021, S. 11)

Diese Verse suggerieren eine Szenerie auf dem Land, wo Rauch aus einer kleinen Fischerhütte aufsteigt. Dies könnte auf die Wichtigkeit oder den Wert des Ortes hinweisen. Auf die Frage, wie wichtig es ist, wo Bachmann lebt, antwortet sie, dass das keine Bedeutung mehr für sie hat und fügt folgendes hinzu:

Es kommt mir nur noch darauf an, ein ruhiges Zimmer zu haben, mit zwei Tischen womöglich und vielen Büchern an der Wand. Das Suchen nach immer neuen Orten hat unversehens aufgehört für mich. [...] Berlin hat eine so gute Luft. Rom — mit dieser Architektur, und zehn Monate lang die Sonne obendrein. (Koschel&Weidenbaum, 1983, S. 39)

Die Erwähnung der Sonne, die bald untergehen wird, vermittelt den Eindruck, dass die Zeit knapp ist. Der/:ie Leser:in wird darauf hingewiesen, dass die Sonne, die als Symbol für den Tag und das Leben steht, bald verschwinden wird. Dies kann als eine Metapher für die Endlichkeit oder Vergänglichkeit des Lebens interpretiert werden. Darüber hinaus kann das überwältigende Licht der Sonne in dieser Darstellung eine relativ göttliche Qualität erlangen. Ihre Herabsetzung, wenn die Sonne untergeht und der Tag der Nacht weicht, unterstreicht die Macht der Sonne, den Tag in die Nacht zu verwandeln.

Schreib mir bald, bitte, und schreib, ob Du noch ein Wort von mir willst, ob Du meine Zärtlichkeit und meine Liebe noch nehmen kannst, ob Dir noch etwas helfen kann, ob Du manchmal noch nach mir greifst und mich verdunkelst mit dem schweren Traum, in dem ich licht werden möchte. (Badio u.a., 2008, S. 14)

In selber mentaler Auffassung ist ebenfalls das unten aufgeführte Gedicht zu lesen, in der Bachmann folgende Verse erscheinen lässt:

Unten im Dorf standen die Eimer leer
und trommelreif im Hof.
So schlug die Sonne zu
und wirbelte den Tod. (Bachmann, 2021, S. 31)

Jene Verse zeigen eine eindrucksvolle Verwendung der Sonnensymbolik in Form einer Repräsentation göttlicher Gewalt, um die extremen Auswirkungen von Hitze und Dürre auf das Leben im Dorf darzustellen. Die Sonne wird hier als eine übermächtige und gnadenlose Kraft dargestellt. Der erste Vers „Unten im Dorf standen die Eimer leer“ vermittelt den Eindruck einer Wasserknappheit. Die leeren Eimer weisen darauf hin, dass die Wasserversorgung erschöpft ist, was auf eine anhaltende Dürreperiode hinweisen kann. Dies deutet ebenso auf eine Lebensbedrohung für die Dorfbewohner hin. Die Beschreibung der Eimer als „trommelreif im Hof“ verdeutlicht die extreme Hitze, die von der Sonne ausgeht. Die Sonne hat die Eimer nämlich so stark erhitzt, dass sie wie Trommeln klingen, wenn man auf sie schlägt. Jene Darstellung Bachmanns betont die unerträgliche Hitze und die Trockenheit, die das Dorf quälen. Die Verse „So schlug die Sonne zu und wirbelte den Tod“ personifizieren die Sonne und verleihen ihr die Fähigkeit, den Tod zu verursachen.

4.1. Die symbolische Tiefe von „Wasser“

Die Integration der Wassermetaphorik in Bachmanns Werken dient dazu, ihre sprachlichen Konstruktionen zu verstärken und diesen eine tiefere Bedeutungsebene zu verleihen. Die umfassende Analyse ihrer Werke offenbart erst die nuancierten Dimensionen der von Bachmann genutzten Wassermetaphorik. Das „Wasser“ tritt in der Literatur häufig als ein vielseitiges Symbol in Erscheinung und kann verschiedene Konnotationen verkörpern, darunter den Ursprung des Lebens und des Todes sowie das Unbewusste. Wasser hat sowohl in seiner lebensspendenden und lebenserhaltenden als auch in seiner potenziell lebensbedrohenden und veränderlichen Natur eine reiche symbolische Bedeutung. Es wird oft als Manifestation des Unbewussten betrachtet, was auf seine grundlegende Dynamik und Wandlungsfähigkeit hinweist. Die von Goethe in seinem Gedicht *Gesang der Geister über den Wassern* beschriebene Verbindung zwischen Wasser und menschlicher Seele verdeutlicht jene symbolische Tiefe. Die literarische Tradition, den Wasserspiegel als Symbol des Unbewussten zu nutzen, findet sich auch in Werken von Autoren wieder (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 475f.).

Wasser fungiert in Bachmanns Poesie als ein bedeutungsvolles Symbol, das dazu dient, innere Suche, emotionale Tiefen und den facettenreichen menschlichen Zustand darzustellen. Bachmann nutzt die Metaphorik des Wassers als kraftvolles bildliches Element, das die Ausdruckskraft und emotionale Intensität ihrer poetischen Sprache steigert. Laut Bachmann ist beispielsweise das Meer ein unbekannter Ort. Wasser wird

folglich als Sinnbild des Unbewussten interpretiert, das metaphorisch für die Tiefen der menschlichen Psyche steht. Sie findet die Kraft einer Rettung in sich selbst, indem sie metaphorisch auf abstrakter Ebene ein Schiff (der Rettung) für die andere Person baut:

Bitte glaub daran, dass ich eines Tages komme und Dich zurückhole. Ich sehe mit viel Angst, wie Du in ein grosses Meer hinaustreibst, aber ich will mir ein Schiff bauen und Dich heimholen aus der Verlorenheit. Du musst nur selbst auch etwas dazutun und es mir nicht zu schwer machen. Die Zeit und vieles ist gegen uns, aber sie soll nicht zerstören dürfen, was wir aus ihr herausretten wollen. (Badio u.a., 2008, S. 10)

Analog zu den physikalischen Eigenschaften des Wassers nimmt die Tiefe und Dunkelheit dieses Symbols zu, je weiter man sich in seine metaphorische Bedeutung begibt. In dieser symbolischen Tiefe offenbart sich eine zunehmende Unsicherheit, die proportional zur Eintauchtiefe in das Wasser wächst. Dieser Gedanke wird in Ingeborg Bachmanns Gedicht *Römisches Nachtbild* (1961, S. 60) aufgegriffen, in dem sie die Vorstellung des Eintauchens „ins finstere Wasser“ verwendet. Für Bachmann befand ihre Unsicherheit „zwischen Rosen und Schatten in einem fremden Wasser“ (1961, S. 65). Inmitten der Schönheit existiert der Verfremdungseffekt und ihr „Schatten“.

In Ingeborg Bachmanns Poesie wird mehrfach auf die reinigende Qualität des Wassers hingewiesen, wie etwa in den Zeilen „das weiche Wasser löst den Kalk“ (1961, S. 47) oder „[d]as geklärte Wasser in den Händen“ (1961, S. 67). In dieser Darstellung spiegelt sich das christliche Sakrament der Taufe wider, bei dem das Wasser in seinem ursprünglichen symbolischen Kontext als Leben spendendes Element gesehen wird. Es symbolisiert Reinigung und Wiedergeburt, vergleichbar mit dem Akt der Geburt. Insbesondere in europäischen Volksmärchen findet sich die an diese christliche Bedeutung anknüpfende Vorstellung vom „Wasser des Lebens“. Wasser wird hier als heilendes Element verstanden, mit Gesundheit und Jugendlichkeit verbunden und verheißt ewiges Leben (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 475).

4.2. Das „Meer“ als Symbol des Wassers

Unter Bezugnahme auf die Metapher des Wassers wird im Folgenden die symbolische Darstellung des Meeres in der Lyrik von Ingeborg Bachmann aufgezeigt. Die Terminologie Meer nimmt in Bachmanns poetischem Werk eine bedeutende Stellung ein, ähnlich

wie andere Begriffe aus der Natur. In diesem Zusammenhang wird versucht, die Verwendung dieses Begriffes, der in der Literatur vielfältige Bedeutungen annimmt, anhand ausgewählter Gedichte zu erläutern.

In der literarischen Verwendung wird das Wort „Meer“ typischerweise als ein Symbol für verschiedene Konzepte interpretiert, darunter Herausforderungen und Bewährung, Weiblichkeit, Regression, den Zyklus von Geburt und Tod sowie das Unbewusste und die Erinnerung (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 268).

In dieser Betrachtung kann das Wort „Meer“ in den Werken von Ingeborg Bachmann als ein Symbol für das Weibliche, die Regression und den Zyklus von Geburt und Tod interpretiert werden. Seit dem späten 18. Jahrhundert wurde das Meer oft mit mehrdeutigen und weiblichen Konnotationen sowie Vorstellungen vom Tod in Verbindung gebracht. Dennoch nimmt Bachmann das Meer, insbesondere in ihrem Werk *Anrufung des Großen Bären*, positiv wahr, als einen Raum der Erinnerung an Geburt und die Erfahrungen der kindlichen Einheit, das mit Lebenskraft assoziiert wird (ebd., S. 269).

Neben dem Bezug zum Weiblichen in einer Szene mit „nacktem Oberkörper“ drückt Bachmann auch eine Art Geborgenheit in ihrem Gedicht *Das erstgeborene Land* (1961, S. 51) aus:

In mein erstgeborenes Land,
in den Südenzog ich und fand,
nackt und verarmt und bis zum Gürtel im Meer,
Stadt und Kastell.

Im Gedicht *Toter Hafen* (Bachmann, 1961, S. 45) fungiert das Meer als Symbol für das Unbewusste und die Erinnerung. Es veranschaulicht eine mysteriöse Unheimlichkeit, die sich unter der Oberfläche des Meeres verbirgt. Die Tiefe des Meeres symbolisiert gleichzeitig die Schöpferkraft der Seele. Seit der Romantik steht das Meer zudem für die ambivalenten Aspekte der menschlichen Seele (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 269).

Drunten blättern Wasser in den Bibeln,
und die Kompaßnadel steht auf Nacht.
Aus den Träumen wird das Gold gewaschen,
und dem Meer bleibt die Verlassenschaft.

Gerhard Probst beschreibt Bachmanns Poesie als durch Entfremdung poetisiert. Diese Entfremdung erreicht bei Bachmann nie eine lächerliche Ebene. Den poetischen Effekt der Entfremdung erzielt sie vielmehr durch subtile Verschiebungen von Bildern, durch die Verschmelzung von zwei oder mehreren Bildern und ihre nicht unmittelbar einleuchtende Gemeinsamkeit (Probst, 1970, S. 19f).

In Bachmanns Gedicht *Böhmen liegt am Meer* (1964) wird dieses Phänomen deutlich veranschaulicht. Das Wort „Böhmen“ ist in diesem Kontext zwiespältig, da es einerseits gemäß dem Duden-Wörterbuch (1989, S. 274) aus dem Französischen „bohème“ abgeleitet wird und „ungebundene, ungezwungene Künstlerschaft; unkonventionelles Künstlermilieu“ bedeutet, während es andererseits auf eine historische Region und ein Gebiet im heutigen Tschechien verweist. Hier wird die Natur, wie es in Bachmanns Gedichten typisch ist, symbolisch verwendet. Diese Symbolik verweist auf eine intertextuelle Beziehung zu Shakespeares Werk *The Winter's Tale* (1623). Shakespeares „Böhmen“ ist in *The Winter's Tale*. Dort gibt der englische Autor im Nebentext zu Akt III, Szene III den Schauplatz mit „A desert country near the sea“ an.

Grenzt hier ein Wort an mich, so laß ich's grenzen.
Liegt Böhmen noch am Meer, glaub ich den Meeren wieder.
Und glaub ich noch ans Meer, so hoffe ich auf Land.

In diesem Gedicht verdeutlicht Bachmann wiederholt, dass das Wort „Meer“ in Verbindung mit Böhmen in ihrem Werk eine Utopie und somit einen Zufluchtsort darstellt, da die Realität als wenig erfreulich empfunden wird. In den Worten von Bachmann: „Wie ich nach Prag gekommen bin, habe ich gewusst, doch Shakespeare hat recht: Böhmen liegt am Meer. [...] Und Böhmen bedeutet nicht für mich, dass es Böhmen sind, sondern alle, wir alle sind Böhmen. Und wir hoffen auf dieses Meer und auf dieses Land“ (Bartsch, 1997, S. 127).

5.1. Die Bedeutung der windigen Symbolik: „Luft“

Das Element „Luft“ hat in Naturphilosophie, Mythologie, Symbolismus und anderen kulturellen Zusammenhängen einen hohen Symbol- und Metaphernwert. Diese symbolische Bedeutung wird in Literatur und anderen Bereichen auf unterschiedliche Weisen ausgedrückt und verwendet. In der literarischen Darstellung steht „Luft“ oft als Symbol für Freiheit und drückt den menschlichen Drang nach Freiheit aus, was sich in

der freien Bewegung des Windes widerspiegelt. Somit symbolisiert das Element Luft die uneingeschränkte Bewegung der Gedanken und die Freiheit des Geistes. Die Luftmetapher kann auch als Sinnbild für Veränderung und Erleuchtung betrachtet werden, da Luft ein Element ist, das sich schnell verändert und dadurch neue Einsichten ermöglicht. In gewisser Weise kann Luft auch das Leben repräsentieren, da die Atmung und die Luft für unsere Existenz von entscheidender Bedeutung sind. Wir sind auf die Existenz von Luft angewiesen, um zu überleben. Luft ist untrennbar mit der Natur und ihren Kräften verbunden und spiegelt das Gleichgewicht in der Natur wider.

In Bachmanns Werken wird nicht nur über vergangene Zeit gesprochen, sondern sie wird auch künstlerisch dargestellt und durch Rhythmus betont. Die Natur wird als ein Ort dargestellt, an dem Geschichte stattfindet, und sie wird scharfsinnig und bewusst betrachtet. Dieser scharfe Blick auf die historische Situation ist verbunden mit der tiefen Ernsthaftigkeit des individuellen Handelns, wenn man auf sich selbst gestellt ist (Albrecht&Göttsche, 2020, S. 75).

Der Wind, der oft mit dem Element Luft in Verbindung gebracht wird, hat in der Literatur eine symbolische Bedeutung gewonnen. Ingeborg Bachmann hat diese Symbolik geschickt in ihren Werken eingesetzt und die Kraft des Elements in ihren Schriften und Gedichten mit verwandten Begriffen verknüpft. Im folgenden Abschnitt wird eine tiefere Einsicht in die symbolische (Be)deutung des Windes und ihre Verwendung in Ingeborg Bachmanns literarischen Arbeiten präsentiert.

Neben dem veränderten Ich-Begriff ist es vor allem der Utopismus, der in Abgrenzung zum ersten Gedichtband genannt wird, denn im Bildarchiv der *Anrufung des Großen Bären* finden sich utopische Zeichen aus Natur, Kunst, Religion und Märchen versammelt (Albrecht&Göttsche, 2020, S. 86).

5.2. Der „Wind“ als Symbol der Luft

Eines der häufig verwendeten Termini, welchen Ingeborg Bachmann in ihren Gedichten in reicher Frequenz einsetzt, ist das Wort „Wind“. Dieses vielseitige Symbol manifestiert sich häufig als reflektierender Indikator innerer emotionaler Zustände und externer Geschehnisse, die die Dichterin erfahren hat. Mit Begriffen wie Gegenwart, göttlicher Zorn und Vergänglichkeit des Lebens ist die Bedeutung des Windes vielschichtig. Er steht auch für Poesie. Der Wind wird durch verschiedene Faktoren wie seine Richtung, seine

Intensität (von einer Brise bis zu einem Sturm), seine Unberechenbarkeit und seine Vieldeutigkeit charakterisiert. Die Verbindung von Wind, Geist/Seele und Atem/Hauch verstärkt seine Symbolik, insbesondere in religiösen Kontexten, wo Gott sich oft durch den Wind manifestiert. Die poetische Bedeutung des Windes entstand aus seiner orakelhaften Rolle und entwickelte sich zur Symbolik der Inspiration, insbesondere in der romantischen Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 485).

Im Lichte dieser konzeptionellen Grundlage könnte der „Wind“ in Bachmanns Dichtung die Freiheit und Veränderung symbolisieren. Die Natur des Windes, die frei und unkontrollierbar ist, verweist auf die Unsicherheiten und unvorhersehbaren Metamorphosen im menschlichen Lebensweg. Diese Symbolik dient dazu, die inneren Konflikte der Figuren in Bachmanns literarischen Werken sowie die Auswirkungen externer Faktoren auf diese Charaktere zu ergründen und zu dechiffrieren.

Von einem, der das Fürchten lernen wollte
und fortging aus dem Land, von Fluß und Seen,
zähl ich die Spuren und des Atems Wolken,
denn, so Gott will, wird sie der Wind verwehn! (Bachmann, 1961, S. 9)

In diesen Versen, die eine metaphorische innere Reise skizzieren, wird der Wunsch, die Furcht zu überwinden und zu lernen, zuerst formuliert. Dieser Ausdruck manifestiert die Bereitschaft, mutig und entschlossen Schwierigkeiten anzunehmen und Schritte zu unternehmen, die dem individuellen Wachstum dienen. Ingeborg Bachmann bedient sich erneut der Symbolik des Windes, um diese Idee zu veranschaulichen. Der Wind symbolisiert hier die Entschlossenheit, sich ins Unbekannte zu begeben und das Vertraute und Bekannte hinter sich zu lassen. Dabei werden die Aspekte der Ungewissheit und der mangelnden menschlichen Kontrolle über den natürlichen Wandel betont. Alles unterliegt einem unaufhaltsamen, natürlichen Prozess, und der Wind verkörpert diese Metapher des Wandels. Die Handlung, die nur durch den Willen Gottes geschehen kann, verdeutlicht die omnipotente Macht des Göttlichen.

Diese Verse betonen außerdem die Vorstellung von Veränderung und Vergänglichkeit, da die Spuren und der Atem durch den Wind davongetragen werden können. Es drückt die Idee aus, dass nichts von Dauer ist, und dass die Naturkräfte, hier symbolisiert durch den Wind, letztendlich alles verwehen und verändern. Dies weist auf die Unvermeidbarkeit des Wandels und der Vergänglichkeit im Leben hin.

Im Dunkel flattern lange die Girlanden,
 und das Papier treibt schaurig übers Dach.
 Der Wind räumt auf in den verlassnen Buden
 und trägt den Träumern Zuckerherzen nach. (Bachmann, 1961, S. 17)

Die vorliegenden Verse konzentrieren sich auf eine nächtliche Szene, in der die Sprache und die Bilder verwendet werden, um eine düstere und ruhige Atmosphäre zu vermitteln, die von Melancholie geprägt ist. In diesen Zeilen ist Ingeborg Bachmanns Neigung zur Mehrdeutigkeit erkennbar. Die Erwähnung von „Girlanden“ in der ersten Zeile lässt an festliche Spuren denken, doch die düstere Umgebung unterdrückt jegliche Freude. Das Schweben von Papier in der Dunkelheit erzeugt eine geheimnisvolle und ungewisse Stimmung. Die Wiederherstellung der Ordnung in den verlassenen Läden durch den Wind erinnert an die Stille dieser Orte, an Erinnerungen und Spuren der Vergangenheit. Bachmann betont, dass der Wind ausreicht, um diese Erinnerungen wiederzubeleben. In der abschließenden Zeile drückt sie aus, dass der Wind süße Träume denjenigen schenkt, die träumen, und beschreibt sie als „Zuckerherzen“. Dies vermittelt Hoffnung, dass der Wind die Fähigkeit hat, alles wieder ins Gleichgewicht zu bringen.

Um dieses Land mit Klängen
 ganz zu erfüllen,
 stieß ich ins Horn,
 willens im kommenden Wind
 und unter den wehenden Hahnen
 jeder Herkunft zu leben! (Bachmann, 1961, S. 27)

Die vorliegenden Verse von Bachmanns Poesie offenbaren eine bemerkenswerte symbolische Tiefe und einen kraftvollen Ausdruck. Auf den ersten Blick scheint sie eine malerische Landschaft zu erschaffen, jedoch tragen die Verse eine tiefere Bedeutung in sich. Die Vorstellung vom „Erfüllen dieses Landes mit Klängen“ reflektiert die Schönheit der Natur und der Umwelt sowie die transformative Kraft der Poesie und der Künste. Die Formulierung drückt im übertragenen Sinne den Wunsch des Künstlers oder Dichters aus, die Welt mit kreativer Schönheit und kultureller Fülle zu bereichern. Die Zeile „willens im kommenden Wind“ veranschaulicht mithilfe des Symbols des Windes den Wunsch nach Veränderung und den zeitlichen Kontext der Entfaltung. Der Wind dient hier als Vorläufer der Veränderung und Zukunft. Möglicherweise drückt sich in dieser

Sehnsucht nach Erneuerung Bachmanns Streben nach Vielfalt und der Verschmelzung unterschiedlicher kultureller Wurzeln aus. In der abschließenden Strophe wird die Zukunft als durch den Wind ermöglicht dargestellt, was mit Bachmanns Bestrebung zur Vereinigung kultureller Diversität und Herkunft in Einklang steht.

[D]ie politische und kulturelle Eigenart Österreichs — an das man übrigens nicht in geographischen Kategorien denken sollte, weil seine Grenzen nicht die geographischen sind — scheint mir viel zu wenig beachtet zu werden. Dichter wie Grillparzer und Hofmannsthal, Rilke und Robert Musil hätten nie Deutsche sein können. Die Österreicher haben an so vielen Kulturen partizipiert und ein andres Weltgefühl entwickelt als die Deutschen. Ihre sublimen Serenität erklärt sich daraus; aber auch ihre Trauer und manche unheimliche Züge — die manchmal vernünftig, manchmal wahnsinnig aussehen und ihren Grund in tragischen Erfahrungen haben. (Koschel&Weidenbaum, 1983, S. 11f.)

Aktuelle gesellschaftliche Diskussionen und neu aufkommende Interessen in der Erkenntnis können sich beispielsweise von Bachmanns Betrachtung über Interkulturalität und dem Aufbau europäischer Identität inspirieren lassen. Ebenso können sie sich mit den ethischen Herausforderungen auseinandersetzen, die im Verhältnis zwischen Privatsphäre, Öffentlichkeit und der digitalen Medienöffentlichkeit auftauchen und von Bachmann thematisiert werden. Besondere Schlagwörter sind hierbei das „Briefgeheimnis“ und die „Diskretion“, die im digitalen Zeitalter der sozialen Medien eine neue Dringlichkeit erhalten (Albrecht&Göttsche, 2020, S. VIII).

6.1. Die Wurzeln der Symbolik: „Erde“

In der Welt der Literatur stellt das Element „Erde“ ein weitverbreitetes und vielseitiges Symbol dar. In der poetischen Darstellung von Ingeborg Bachmann tritt dieses Symbol ebenfalls auf, insbesondere im Kontext ihrer Erinnerungsreise in die Vergangenheit, wo es mit Konzepten von Sicherheit und Beständigkeit verknüpft wird. Die Symbolik der „Erde“ in der Literatur umfasst verschiedene Bedeutungen wie Lebenskraft, schöpferische Kraft, Stabilität, Sicherheit, nationale und individuelle Identität, aber auch Tod und Vergänglichkeit. Die fruchtbaren Eigenschaften der Erde, die Pflanzenwachstum und Nahrungsmittelproduktion ermöglichen, ihre Widerstandsfähigkeit gegenüber anderen Elementen und die Umwandlungsprozesse

im Boden durch Mikroorganismen prägen diese Symbolik (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 98). Ein Beispiel für Bachmanns Verwendung dieser Symbolik findet sich in ihrem Gedicht *Von einem Land, einem Fluss und den Seen* (1961, S. 14), in dem sie der Erde Hoffnung zuschreibt.

Wo anders sinkt der Schlagbaum auf den Pässen;
hier wird ein Gruß getauscht, ein Brot geteilt.
Die Handvoll Himmel und ein Tuch voll Erde
bringt jeder mit, damit die Grenze heilt.

Die allegorische Darstellung einer „Handvoll Himmel und ein Tuch voll Erde“, die von jedem Individuum mitgebracht wird, kann als Metapher für die kulturellen und spirituellen Aspekte verstanden werden, die Menschen aus ihren Herkunftsländern mitbringen. Als Versuch, die heilende Lebenskraft der Erde nach den Verwüstungen des Krieges wiederherzustellen, kann der symbolische Beitrag jedes Einzelnen zur Überwindung von Grenzen und zur Förderung eines harmonischen Zusammenlebens gesehen werden. Da die Erde Nahrung und die Grundlage für das Leben bietet, ist sie in vielen Kulturen traditionell weiblich konnotiert. In den polytheistischen Religionen wird die Erde oft als mütterlich und als nährende Kraft dargestellt. Dieselbe Kraft, die den Menschen ernährt, kann ihn aber auch erdrücken. In Goethes *Faust* wird die Hoffnung auf die lebensspendende Kraft des Erdgeistes enttäuscht (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 99). Die Erde wird auch mit Begriffen wie Widerstandsfähigkeit und Stärke in Verbindung gebracht, da sie schwierige Bedingungen überstehen kann, ähnlich wie ein Baum, der gegen widrige Umstände standhält.

6.2. Der „Baum“ als Symbol der Erde

In der Ära der Empfindsamkeit wurde die ästhetische Wertschätzung des Baumes entdeckt, und gleichzeitig manifestierte sich der „Aufstieg“ des Baumes als eine neuartige literaturhistorische und ästhetische Dimension, die während der Epoche der Empfindsamkeit auftrat und im Kontext der Krise der humanistischen Rhetoriktradition des Barocks aufkam. Erst während der Aufklärung, als die Landschaft, das Ambiente und die Umwelt als Lebensraum des Menschen anerkannt wurden, wandelte sich der Baum von einem langen etablierten emblematischen Topos, der den Baum in moralischer und symbolischer Hinsicht interpretierte, zu einem frei interpretierbaren Kernsymbol der Natur. Dabei könnten biblisch-christliche Baumsymbolik und allegorische Konzepte

in der Genealogie und Wissensgeschichte zusätzliche Hürden für die Entwicklung einer freien poetischen „Baumsprache“ dargestellt haben (vgl. Wolfzettel, 2007, S. 7,18). Das Symbol des Baumes steht in seinen verschiedenen Aspekten für die Welt, für die Natur, für den Menschen als Individuum und als Gemeinschaft, aber auch für den idealen Zustand des menschlichen Daseins und für seine Gefährdung. Wesentliche Elemente dieser Symbolik sind die Stabilität des Baumes, seine tiefe Verwurzelung in der Erde, seine ehrliche Ausrichtung und seine Fruchtbarkeit (vgl. Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 41).

In Anbetracht dieser Informationen kann festgestellt werden, dass Ingeborg Bachmann durch den Einsatz metaphorischer Sprache und poetischer Ausdrucksweise in der Lage ist, starke Emotionen zu vermitteln. In ihrem Gedicht *Fall ab Herz* (2021, S. 16) drückt sie durch die Erde-Metapher des Baumes und der fallenden Blätter den Verlust und den Abschied auf poetische Weise aus.

Fall ab, Herz, vom Baum der Zeit,
 fällt, ihr Blätter, aus den erkalteten Ästen,
 die eins die Sonne umarmt,
 fällt, wie Tränen fallen aus dem geweiteten Aug!

Bachmann prophezeit, dass die Bäume ihre Blätter abwerfen und somit den Herbst symbolisieren. Das Abwerfen der Blätter durch den Baum kann metaphorisch mit dem Vergießen von Tränen durch den Menschen in Verbindung gebracht werden. Denn der Baum fungiert als ein Symbol, das die Welt in ihrer Gesamtheit repräsentiert. Als das Zentrum der Welt verbindet er Himmel sowie Erde miteinander (Butzer&Jacob, 2012, S. 41f.).

Hinter der Welt wird ein Baum stehen,
 eine Frucht in den Wipfeln,
 mit einer Schale aus Gold.
 Laß uns hinübersehen,
 wenn sie im Herbst der Zeit
 in Gottes Hände rollt! (Bachmann, 1952, S. 41)

Bachmann verknüpft das symbolische Motiv des Baumes „hinter der Welt“ mit dem Baum im Garten von Eden, der in der biblischen Geschichte von Adam und Eva vorkommt. In dieser Strophe wird eine Parallele zu der Erzählung gezogen, in der Gott Adam das

Essen der Früchte vom besonderen Baum verbietet und ihn davor warnt, dass er sterben würde, wenn er die verbotenen Früchte kosten sollte.

In ihrem Gedicht *Wie soll ich mich nennen?* (1952, S. 35) präsentiert Bachmann eine metaphorische Darstellung, die diese Verbindung verdeutlicht:

Einmal war ich ein Baum und gebunden,
dann entschlüpft ich als Vogel und war frei,
in einen Graben gefesselt gefunden,
entließ mich berstend ein schmutziges Ei.

Der Text beginnt mit der Baummetapher, die oft Beständigkeit, Wachstum und Verankerung andeutet. Aus dem Baum wird ein Vogel, Symbol für Freiheit und Unabhängigkeit. Diese Wandlung zeigt den Übergang von einem Zustand, der fest und möglicherweise beschränkt war, zu einem Zustand der Freiheit und Öffnung. Durch den Kontrast von Baum (gebunden) und Vogel (frei) wird die Dichotomie von Begrenzung und Freiheit, von fester Struktur und flexibler Beweglichkeit dargestellt. Die Sehnsucht nach Freiheit und der Wille zur Veränderung werden dadurch unterstrichen.

7. Abschließende Bemerkung

Die kritische Betrachtung und eingehende Analyse von Naturelementen wie Feuer, Luft, Erde und Wasser innerhalb der poetischen Werke erweisen sich als von erheblicher Signifikanz. Dies beruht auf der Tatsache, dass diese Elemente nicht nur in ihrer physischen Manifestation existieren, sondern ebenso als vielschichtige Quellen symbolischer Bedeutungen fungieren. Das tiefgehende Studium von Naturmetaphorik in der Poesie bereichert unser Verständnis der menschlichen Existenz, der emotionalen Bande zur natürlichen Umgebung und den komplexen Wechselwirkungen zwischen Mensch und Natur. Eine solche Analyse sollte dazu beitragen, unser kulturelles Bewusstsein zu erweitern, unsere Fähigkeit zum metaphorischen Denken zu schärfen und neue Sichtweisen auf die natürliche Welt um uns herum zu erschließen. Darüber hinaus soll die intensive Auseinandersetzung mit Naturmetaphorik in der literarischen Form die Möglichkeit eröffnen, ein gesteigertes Umweltbewusstsein zu entwickeln, welches wiederum den Schutz und die Bewahrung unserer Umwelt fördert. Dieser Prozess betont die intrinsische Bedeutung sowie die ästhetische Schönheit der Natur.

Aus der vorliegenden Arbeit geht hervor, dass in der Dichtung von Ingeborg Bachmann beispielweise die Symbolik des „Feuers“ eine eminent wichtige Rolle spielt. Des Weiteren wurde in diesem Rahmen dargestellt, wie die Verbindung zwischen dem Feuer und den Themen Leidenschaft, Auflehnung, Erneuerung und Leben in ihren Gedichten umfasst sind. In den Gedichten von Bachmann wurde das Feuer häufig als Metapher für Leidenschaft und inneres Verlangen herangezogen. In ihren lyrischen Werken wird das Feuer als eine mächtige und destruktive Kraft beschrieben, die unter der Erdoberfläche brodelte.

Bachmann verwandte diese Darstellung, um die Fähigkeit des Feuers zu betonen, alles in seiner Umgebung zu verzehren und zu transformieren. Ein weiteres bedeutsames Thema, das eng mit der Feuersymbolik in Bachmanns Dichtung verknüpft ist, ist die Auflehnung und Emanzipation. Dies wurde besonders mit der mythologischen Erzählung von Prometheus dargelegt. Diese Rebellion gegen die Götter symbolisiert die Unabhängigkeit des Menschen von göttlichem Willen und betont die transformative Kraft des Feuers. Das Feuer repräsentierte in weiteren Gedichten Bachmanns den Prozess des Erwachens und der geistigen Emanzipation. Es symbolisierte den Willen zur Veränderung und die Möglichkeit, Dunkelheit und Unsicherheit in etwas Neues zu verwandeln. Hier wurde das Feuer als Mittel zum Ausdruck des inneren Wandels und der geistigen Befreiung verwendet.

Als zweites untersuchtes Naturelement hat die Bedeutung von „Wasser“ und seine metaphorische Verwendung in der Poesie von Ingeborg Bachmann gezeigt, wie die Autorin das Wasser als kraftvolle Metapher nutzt, um tiefgehende und komplexe Emotionen, Erinnerungen und menschliche Erfahrungen in ihren Werken auszudrücken. Die Wassermetapher diente in Bachmanns Poesie dazu, ihre Sprache zu intensivieren und eine tiefere Bedeutungsebene zu vermitteln. Das Wasser repräsentiert bei Bachmann auch die Reinigung und Erneuerung, ähnlich dem christlichen Taufsakrament. Hier diente das Wasser als Symbol für die Möglichkeit zur inneren Klärung und Erneuerung. Die Verwendung des Begriffs „Meer“ in Bachmanns Lyrik zeigte darüber hinaus verschiedene symbolische Bedeutungsebenen. Das Meer konnte das Weibliche repräsentieren, die Regression, den Zyklus von Geburt und Tod, das Unbewusste und die Erinnerung. Es wurde oft als Raum der Erinnerung an Geburt und kindliche Erfahrungen interpretiert, der mit Lebenskraft verbunden war. Gleichzeitig konnte es eine mysteriöse Unheimlichkeit und die Tiefen des Unbewussten symbolisieren. Hier diente das Meer als Medium für die Erforschung der menschlichen Psyche und der Verbindung zur eigenen Vergangenheit.

Die symbolische Bedeutung von „Luft“ und deshalb Wind in der Poesie von Ingeborg Bachmann hingegen standen ebenfalls im Mittelpunkt der Analyse. Es wurde ausführlich erläutert, wie Bachmann die Symbolik des Windes in ihren Werken geschickt einsetzt, um die literarische Darstellung als Symbole für Freiheit, Veränderung und Erleuchtung zu gewährleisten. Luft symbolisierte die Freiheit des Geistes und die uneingeschränkte Bewegung der Gedanken. Der Wind, der oft mit dem Element Luft in Verbindung gebracht wurde, trug eine symbolische Bedeutung, die von der Naturphilosophie bis zur poetischen Inspiration reichte. In Bachmanns Poesie wurde der Wind als Metapher für Veränderung, Vergänglichkeit und den göttlichen Willen verwendet. Der Wind fungierte als Symbol für Veränderung und den Wandel im menschlichen Leben auf der einen Seite und betonte die Unberechenbarkeit und Unkontrollierbarkeit des Windes auf der anderen Seite, was die Unsicherheit im menschlichen Lebensweg widerspiegelt.

Als letztes zu analysierendes Naturelement galt die „Erde“. Ingeborg Bachmann nutzte das Erdsymbol in ihren Gedichten, um Konzepte von Sicherheit, Beständigkeit und Identität darzustellen. Der Baum als Symbol der Erde spielte ebenfalls eine wichtige Rolle in Bachmanns Poesie. Sie verwendete die Metapher des Baumes, um die Verbindung zur Natur, zur Welt und zur menschlichen Existenz darzustellen. Dieses Symbol veranschaulichte die tiefe Verbundenheit zwischen Mensch und Natur.

Aus der vorliegenden Arbeit geht zusammenfassend demnach hervor, dass Ingeborg Bachmanns subtile und vielschichtige Verwendung der Naturmetaphorik in ihren literarischen Werken sich als ein erhabener Ausdruck ihres tiefen Verständnisses für die menschliche Natur und des Menschseins an sich offenbart. Ihre Fähigkeit, die Natur als Spiegel für die Reflexion der menschlichen Seele zu nutzen, ermöglicht es ihr, die vielfältigen Aspekte des menschlichen Daseins zu beleuchten. Es wurde dargelegt, wie dieser metaphorische Reichtum es Bachmann erlaubt, die Themen der Entfremdung und Isolation in all ihrer Komplexität darzustellen und die Tiefe der menschlichen Sinnlichkeit sowie die Vielzahl der Sinneseindrücke in ihren Werken zu verankern. Zugleich gelingt es ihr, die Dualität von Kontinuität und Veränderung in einer Welt, die von Gegensätzen geprägt ist, auf subtile Weise zu verknüpfen. Die Naturmetaphorik erweist sich demzufolge als ein mächtiges Instrument zur Darstellung von Emotionen, da sie den Leser dazu anregt, die Verbindung zwischen inneren Empfindungen und äußerer Umwelt zu erkennen und zu reflektieren. Nicht zuletzt ermöglicht diese künstlerische Technik Bachmann, das Thema der Vergänglichkeit und des zyklischen Wandels in all seiner Schönheit und Tragik zu erforschen. Auf diese Weise erhebt sie

die Naturmetaphorik zu einem integralen Bestandteil ihrer literarischen Meisterwerke, die tief in das Gewebe des menschlichen Daseins eindringen und in ihrer faszinierenden Vielschichtigkeit einen bleibenden Eindruck hinterlassen.

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Écriture de Soi et Autofiction Dans *Juste la fin du monde* de Jean-Luc Lagarce

Self-Narration and Autofiction in Jean-Luc Lagarce's *Juste la fin du monde*

Gülseren ŞEN DAĞTEKİN¹ 



¹Research Assistant, Gülseren Şen Dağtekin, Galatasaray University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Department of Comparative Linguistics and Applied Foreign Languages, Istanbul, Türkiye

ORCID: G.Ş.D. 0000-0002-8563-7195

Corresponding author:

Gülseren ŞEN DAĞTEKİN,
Galatasaray University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Department of Comparative Linguistics and Applied Foreign Languages, Istanbul, Türkiye
E-mail: gsdagtekin@gsu.edu.tr

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RÉSUMÉ

Juste la fin du monde de Jean-Luc Lagarce est une pièce qui met en scène un rendez-vous familial dominical à l'occasion du retour du fils aîné, qui, longtemps éloigné de sa famille, revient avec l'intention d'annoncer sa mort prochaine à ses proches. Pour un lecteur (et spectateur) familier de la biographie de l'auteur, le texte de la pièce contient un nombre important de similitudes avec la vie de Lagarce, et le personnage principal, Louis, lui ressemble par bien des aspects. Quelle est la nature des éléments de l'écriture de soi dans la pièce ? Comment les catégoriser ? Quels sont leurs enjeux et leurs fonctions ? Notre analyse des éléments de l'écriture de soi basée sur une définition de ses différentes catégories nous a permis de mettre en avant le fait que la pièce se trouve à la limite entre l'autofiction et l'autonarration, car elle met en scène une dramatisation d'un épisode de la vie du narrateur, tout en exploitant les trois procédés évoqués par Gasparini pour définir l'autonarration : « la fragmentation, le métadiscours, l'altérité » (Gasparini, 2009). Nous avons ainsi déterminé la possibilité que l'écriture de soi ait ici une fonction de rétrospection, de « reconstitution » du soi de l'auteur et qu'elle soit une tentative de mettre des mots sur l'indicible de son existence.

Mots clés: Théâtre, Lagarce, Autofiction, Écriture de soi, Littérature contemporaine

ABSTRACT

Juste la fin du monde [It's Only the End of the World] by Jean-Luc Lagarce is a play that portrays a family gathering on a Sunday to mark the return of the eldest son who, long estranged from his family, has come back with the intention of announcing his imminent death to his loved ones. For a reader (and spectator) familiar with the author's biography, the text of the play contains significant similarities to Lagarce's life, and the main character, Louis, resembles Lagarce in many aspects. What is the nature of the elements of self-writing in the play? How can they be categorized? What are their functions? This analysis of the elements of self-writing based on a definition of its various categories has allowed this article to identify that the play lies on the boundary between autofiction and autonarration. This is because it stages a dramatization of an episode from the narrator's life while employing the three processes Gasparini (2009) mentioned for defining autonarration: fragmentation, metadiscourse, and alterity. Thus this study has determined the possibility that autonarration in this context serves a retrospective function, a reconstruction of the author's self as an attempt to articulate the unspeakable aspects of his existence.

Keywords: Theater, Lagarce, autofiction, self-writing, contemporary literature



EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Juste la fin du monde [*It's Just the End of the World*] by Jean-Luc Lagarce (1990) is a play that depicts a family gathering on a Sunday to mark the return of the eldest son, who, having been distant from his family for a long time, has come back with the intention of announcing his imminent death to his relatives. For a reader or spectator familiar with the author's biography, the text of the play contains numerous similarities to Lagarce's life, and the main character, Louis, bears many resemblances to Lagarce. However, one cannot categorize this play as autobiographical because the author does not claim such an approach and has emphasized some clearly fictional elements. Nevertheless, through the play's narrative and scenic techniques, it evidently offers elements of self-writing. Thus, this study attempts to address the following questions: What is the nature of the elements of self-writing in this play? How can they be categorized? Can autofiction be mentioned? What are the stakes involved? To answer these questions, this article initially focuses on the play itself, its author, its writing context, and its basis while considering the novelty and specificity of the theatrical forms highlighted by Lagarce. Subsequently, the article explores the self-writing revealed in the play, first by attempting to define the genre and its subgenres (i.e., autobiography, autofiction, autonarration, and autofabulation) and then by determining which elements in the text related to this writing belong to which categories. Lastly, the article seeks to understand the stakes and functions that underlie the use of these specific techniques. *Juste la fin du monde* is a complex work with multiple dimensions and readings that are challenging to summarize while conveying the substance of the text. This play is one of Lagarce's most well-known, especially due to its recent adaptation to film by Xavier Dolan, and can perplex readers and spectators with its innovative use of theatrical structures and the distinctive style of its dialogues. If reading is a moment of laborious pleasure, watching the play adds to this pleasure and the dimensions of the work, especially because the director has contributed to constructing meaning by filling the gaps the author left regarding the direction of the play on stage. *Juste la fin du monde* creates a sense of blurred lines between fiction and reality: One hesitates between the presence and absence of the author in the work, and determining to which type of self-writing it belongs has been challenging. This analysis of the elements of self-writing based on a definition of its various categories has led to identifying the play as being on the border between autofiction and autonarration because it stages a dramatization of an episode from the narrator's life: the attempt to return and express imminent death. However, the play also employs the three processes Gasparini (2009) mentioned

for defining autonarration: fragmentation, metadiscourse, and alterity (Gasparini, 2009). Fragmentation occurs because, similar to the formal structure of the play, the elements of self that are scattered throughout the work are disparate and only enunciated through fragments and pieces of memories evoked by different characters, sometimes contradicting each other. This gives rise to otherness due to the presence of different perspectives proposed for the same facts over which the quasi-spectral presence of the author's heteronym, Louis, introduces a metadiscursive discourse that never aims to explain or unravel the complex situation represented in the play. This study has thus determined the possibility of self-writing here to have served a retrospective function, a reconstruction of the author's self as an attempt to articulate the unspeakable aspects of his existence. The works of Lagarce, both through his diaries and the staging of his heteronyms and doubles, has constantly employed various techniques of self-writing as tools for the quest of the past, the quest for understanding and self-expression in the most tragic aspects of existence.

Introduction

Juste la fin du monde de Jean-Luc Lagarce est une pièce qui met en scène un rendez-vous familial à l'occasion du retour du fils aîné, qui, longtemps éloigné de sa famille, revient avec l'intention d'annoncer sa mort prochaine à ses proches. Pour un lecteur (et spectateur) familier de la biographie de l'auteur, le texte de la pièce contient un nombre important de similitudes avec la vie de Lagarce, et le personnage principal, Louis, lui ressemble par bien des aspects. On ne peut cependant parler pour cette pièce d'œuvre à caractère autobiographique car l'auteur ne revendique pas une telle démarche et parce qu'elle met en avant certains faits ouvertement fictifs. Cependant, il reste néanmoins évident que la pièce propose, à travers des procédés diégétiques et scéniques, des éléments d'une écriture de soi. Nous essayerons donc de répondre aux problématiques suivantes : Quelle est la nature des éléments de l'écriture de soi dans la pièce ? Comment les catégoriser ? Quels en sont les enjeux ? Peut-on parler d'autofiction ?

Afin de répondre à ces questions, nous nous intéresserons tout d'abord à la pièce en elle-même, à son auteur ainsi qu'à son contexte d'écriture et à son ancrage, tout en abordant la question de la nouveauté et de la spécificité des formes théâtrales mises en avant par Lagarce. Puis, nous nous interrogerons sur l'écriture de soi que révèle la pièce, en essayant d'abord de définir le genre et ses sous-genres (l'autobiographie, l'autofiction, l'autonarration, l'autofabulation) pour ensuite déterminer quels éléments dans le texte ayant trait à cette écriture appartiennent à quelles catégories. Enfin nous essayerons de comprendre quels enjeux et fonctions peuvent revêtir l'emploi de ces dispositifs particuliers.

Jean-Luc Lagarce

Auteur, dramaturge, metteur en scène français, Jean-Luc Lagarce a aujourd'hui conquis, de manière posthume, une figure de classique du XXe siècle¹ et est l'un des auteurs contemporains les plus joués en France². Ses œuvres les plus connues sont ses pièces, au nombre de vingt-cinq, dont deux (parmi lesquelles *Juste la fin du monde*) ont été ajoutées en 2012 au programme d'agrégation de lettres modernes, consécration

1 Voir notamment l'ouvrage collectif pédagogique qui lui est consacré : *Lire un classique du XXe siècle : Jean-Luc Lagarce* (Ryngaert, 2007).

2 Affirmation que l'on peut trouver sur la page qui lui est consacrée sur le site théâtre contemporain.net : <https://www.theatre-contemporain.net/biographies/Jean-Luc-Lagarce/ensavoirplus/idcontent/1320> (Date de dernière consultation : 15/10/2023).

importante dans le champ littéraire français qui a fait gagner une audience élargie à son œuvre. Mais Jean-Luc Lagarce a aussi tenu et publié des journaux intimes et rédigé trois récits et un livret d'opéra. Né en 1957, il est mort prématurément, à 38 ans (1995) du Sida, virus qui a alors décimé un grand nombre d'intellectuels, notamment appartenant au milieu homosexuel.

***Juste la fin du monde* : contexte et particularités de l'œuvre**

Cette pièce de théâtre est le fruit d'une résidence d'auteur à Berlin en 1990 où Lagarce se trouve dans le cadre d'une bourse Léonard de Vinci. Elle a été montée pour la première fois par Joël Jouanneau en 1999 et son succès ne s'est jamais démenti depuis, la pièce ayant fait l'objet de nombreuses adaptations. Traduite en plus de quinze langues, *Juste la fin du monde* est la première des pièces de Lagarce à entrer dans le répertoire de la Comédie Française en 2007 (Adam-Maillet, 2018, p. 25). Michel Raskine voit sa mise en scène récompensée par le Molière du meilleur spectacle. L'adaptation au cinéma de Xavier Dolan une décennie plus tard obtient elle aussi un franc succès ; en 2016, elle reçoit le Grand Prix au Festival de Cannes et l'année suivante trois Césars : celui du meilleur réalisateur, du meilleur acteur et du meilleur montage.

Juste la fin du monde est une pièce qui met en scène le retour chez lui de Louis, écrivain de 34 ans, dont on sait peu de choses, si ce n'est qu'il a quitté sa famille il y a des années pour vivre seul dans une ville et qu'il n'est jamais revenu. Louis, qui n'a pas communiqué avec sa famille depuis qu'il est parti, à part par le biais de brèves et impersonnelles cartes postales, fait le voyage pour leur annoncer sa mort « prochaine et irrémédiable » (Lagarce, 1999, p. 8). Arrivé sur place dans la maison où il a grandi et malgré son intention première, il est reçu par sa famille au complet, mais il reste assez passif et n'arrive pas à ébaucher un début de confession ; à la place, ce sont les autres personnages, sa sœur Suzanne, sa mère (dont on ne connaît pas le prénom), son frère Antoine et sa belle-sœur Catherine qui prendront la parole pour lui faire part des choses qu'il a manquées (la naissance de ses neveux, l'adolescence de Suzanne) ou des choses qu'ils ont en tête depuis son départ. Les dialogues s'attardent sur des sujets de la vie quotidienne assez banals, les enfants d'Antoine et Catherine, les souvenirs d'enfance racontés par la mère. Très vite les dialogues se transforment en querelles, des malentendus s'installent... Et Louis se décide précipitamment à rentrer, sans n'avoir rien pu dire. Suzanne insiste pour qu'il reste au moins pour dîner, mais Antoine veut l'accompagner à la gare, ce qui est à l'origine d'une dernière dispute, où Antoine, qui pourtant ne veut

pas être « brutal », s'énerve contre tout le monde, au point que Catherine demande à Louis de partir. Enfin, Antoine se calme et, dans un dernier monologue, parle de son enfance passée à l'ombre d'un grand frère qui avait été trop choyé par sa famille car il se sentait toujours mal-aimé. Sans plus d'action, la pièce se termine sur un épilogue où Louis fait une ellipse de quelque mois - « une année tout au plus » (Lagarce, 1999, p. 77) - pour annoncer sa propre mort, puis raconte le souvenir d'une marche la nuit, dans la forêt, le long d'une voie de chemin de fer, durant laquelle il avait voulu crier dans la vallée, évoquant ainsi le remords de ne pas l'avoir fait : « Ce sont des oublis comme celui-là que je regretterai » (Lagarce, 1999, p. 78).

Selon Catherine Brun, qui s'est penchée sur « la poétique du détour » dans le théâtre Lagarzien, il existe une « légende qui entoure le théâtre de Lagarce, celle d'un théâtre de paroles, d'un théâtre presque clos à force de se désintéresser du monde, d'un théâtre hanté par la seule menace de la mort, d'un théâtre de la perte, avant tout » (Brun, 2009, p. 184). Cette remarque s'applique également à *Juste la fin du monde*, dans laquelle le spectre de la mort prochaine traverse toute la pièce mais n'est jamais convoqué dans les paroles des personnages. La perte la plus flagrante est celle du temps, celui du passé, que les personnages essayent parfois maladroitement de faire revivre en l'évoquant à travers les souvenirs, mais aussi celui de l'avenir surtout pour Louis dont les jours sont comptés. Un autre motif, que l'on peut qualifier de réécriture intertextuelle d'une parabole biblique, est lui aussi récurrent dans l'œuvre lagarzienne : celui du retour de l'enfant prodigue, que l'on retrouve également dans cette pièce. Louis, bien qu'il soit l'aîné de deux frères (dans l'Évangile selon Luc, chapitre 15, c'est le cadet qui part), revient d'un « pays lointain » après avoir quitté la maison paternelle. Comme lui, il a quitté le foyer pour mener « grande vie », mais il a dilapidé non pas son héritage mais les jours de son existence. Il revient, mais il n'est pas accueilli comme le père de la parabole accueille son fils, les bras ouverts ; son retour provoque un malaise dans la famille, tant et si bien que Louis décide d'écourter son séjour. Dans le texte biblique, le frère qui est resté fidèle au père est jaloux de la fête que ce dernier fait à son cadet : on retrouve cette même jalousie chez Antoine qui a toujours souffert de rester dans l'ombre de son frère aîné et dont la douleur et la rancœur sont exposées au grand jour au retour de son frère.

Littérature du sida, Nouveau Roman, Théâtre de l'absurde

Si *Juste la fin du monde* n'est pas explicite sur la raison de la mort du personnage de Louis, qui représente peut-être un « double fictif » de l'auteur, le caractère « irrémédiable

» de cette mort fait inévitablement penser à celle de Lagarce, qui a appris qu'il était condamné, car il était séropositif, en 1986. En effet, à cette époque où le VIH a fait son apparition, aucun traitement vraiment efficace n'existait et beaucoup de personnes, dont des auteurs, des intellectuels comme Hervé Guibert ou Michel Foucault sont morts prématurément pour l'avoir contracté. Du fait du caractère récurrent de ce thème dans les pièces de Lagarce écrites après 1986, Lagarce est parfois associé à la « Littérature du Sida ». Mais concernant l'influence d'un mouvement, Lagarce revendiquait volontiers celle du Nouveau Roman (notamment de Michel Butor et de son roman *Degrés*³) dont il reprend certains des thèmes et des procédés narratifs et les applique au théâtre : ambiguïté dans l'utilisation du temps, l'absence « d'action » ou d'évènements en tant que tels, ou encore de personnages « consistants ». Enfin, on peut parler aussi de l'influence du Théâtre de l'Absurde et de « ses écrivains majeurs Ionesco et Beckett » (Zobenbulla, 2016, p. 67) sur les œuvres de Lagarce dont la lecture fait ressentir la filiation par la présence de certains points communs. *Juste la fin du monde* signe notamment son appartenance au théâtre novateur en venant révolutionner les codes et les schémas du théâtre classique, ce qui peut à premier abord désarçonner un lecteur/spectateur non familier du genre.

Une pièce à rebours des codes du théâtre classique

Juste la fin du monde est une pièce avec très peu de personnages (cinq) et d'actions : bien que novatrice dans sa forme elle obéit aux règles classiques d'unité de temps, d'action et de lieu puisque la pièce se déroule principalement dans une maison familiale, le même jour (un dimanche) et autour d'un même sujet, on a affaire à : « un drame en apparence statique (...) où rien ne se passe, où la notion même d'évènement perd toute pertinence » (Brun, 2009, p. 184). L'unité de temps est cependant remise en question par la didascalie initiale qui propose une alternative entre une journée et une année : « Cela se passe dans la maison de la Mère et de Suzanne, un dimanche, évidemment, ou bien encore durant près d'une année entière » (Lagarce, 1999, p. 5).

Cependant, à part cela, la pièce n'a pas grand-chose en commun avec le théâtre classique, n'en respecte presque aucun code voire les réinvente ; car en effet, comme le souligne Arzu Kunt, professeure à l'Université d'Istanbul : « Les auteurs contemporains imposent de nouvelles structures théâtrales : les dispositifs énonciatifs et scéniques,

3 Agathe Zobenbulla, dans sa thèse de doctorat, cite les journaux de Lagarce qui laissent transparaître l'admiration de Lagarce pour Butor (Zobenbulla, 2016, p. 65).

le statut du personnage, le traitement de l'espace et du temps se libèrent bien nettement des conventions dramatiques classiques. L'œuvre de Jean-Luc Lagarce est située dans la lignée de ces textes novateurs qui réinventent les formes du drame » (Kunt, 2015 p. 59). La structure de la pièce reprend des structures classiques (prologue, intermède, mais aussi la figure de Louis dont les monologues évoquent ceux des chœurs classiques, seuls face au public et commentant la pièce) tout en apparaissant comme différente et dénuée de logique interne apparente. Elle est constituée d'un prologue (monologue d'entrée de Louis), d'une première partie (l'auteur préfère le terme « partie » qu'on retrouve plus dans le roman à celui « d'acte » réservé au théâtre) composée de onze scènes avec quatre monologues, d'un intermède un peu « décousu », composé de neuf scènes courtes, d'une deuxième partie comportant trois scènes et d'un épilogue.

Ce type d'œuvre théâtrale, parfois critiqué pour sa complexité, nécessite du lecteur une lecture différente, plus attentive ; selon Jean-Pierre Ryngaert, « Il faut (...) changer de focale et au lieu de s'apprêter à capter au grand angle la fresque ou l'épopée, commencer à saisir au cœur même du texte tous les indices qui aideront à construire du sens » (Ryngaert, 1993, p. 22) car il n'y a pas selon lui de texte illisible du moment que l'on y consacre assez d'effort. Ces textes nécessitent également selon lui un niveau d'analyse différent : « Face à des textes complexes il est important d'échapper à une trop grande hiérarchisation de l'analyse, celle qui privilégie justement les réseaux narratif ou thématique au détriment de structures proprement théâtrales (le dialogue et ce qu'il révèle des relations entre les personnages, le système spatio-temporel) » (Ryngaert, 1993, p. 23). Les dialogues dans la pièce sont en effet fondamentaux : en l'absence de didascalies, ce sont par eux que nous apprenons les mouvements, les gestes, les réactions des personnages : « Tu lui serres la main ? » (Lagarce, 1999, p. 9), « Où est-ce que tu vas, qu'est-ce que tu fais ? » (Lagarce, 1999, p. 26). La liberté du metteur en scène et des comédiens est immense, et on se le figure mieux quand on assiste à des mises en scène de la pièce, car les choix du metteur en scène peuvent être très différents de ce que le lecteur peut avoir imaginés pendant la lecture.

Déroutant également, le style proprement linguistique de l'auteur, très différent de ce à quoi le lecteur est habitué : les répétitions, hésitations, rectifications des personnages qui viennent imiter le langage oral naturel peuvent parfois paraître dérangeantes à l'écrit mais prennent sens une fois que l'on voit la pièce jouée, car les dialogues gagnent en naturel. A ce sujet, Christine Lebrun souligne le caractère vivant du style de l'auteur, critiquant au passage le caractère figé de la langue normative des œuvres classiques : « la langue de Lagarce mime les errements, les bégaiements, les fourvoiements de l'oral

que le passage à l'écrit tend dans son usage normatif à effacer pour ne retenir que les formulations « définitives » (Brun, 2009, p. 194).

» Ryngaert définit, dans *Théâtre du XXe siècle*, ce style de « quête de l'infinie précision et insiste sur le rôle de l'écriture des dialogues, essentielle dans l'œuvre.

La pièce ne délivre aucun message, et pourtant elle frôle et évoque toutes ces questions avec une sorte de légèreté distraite, d'élégance palpable et de demi-sourire qui trouble les points de vue. Lagarce fait le choix de l'implicite, de l'à peine dit, plutôt que la formule définitive, et le texte repose entièrement sur la qualité des échanges. Le secret est au cœur même de l'écriture, dans la façon dont les personnages prennent la parole et partagent la même quête de l'infinie précision puisqu'ils parlent tous la même langue, celle de leur auteur. La cohérence naît du rythme commun, des jeux du partage et de la reprise, et d'une recherche infinie de l'exactitude. (Ryngaert, 2012, p. 27)

Une écriture de soi particulière et à la marge des frontières du genre : une difficile définition

L'écriture de soi est un genre très étendu et qui concerne un grand nombre d'œuvres contemporaines, pourtant, la distinction entre ses sous-genres reste à l'origine de débats et de controverses. Même la notion d'autobiographie, pourtant bien solidement ancrée dans le paysage littéraire, voit ses limites et définitions remises en cause, notamment du fait de l'essor d'un genre assez nouveau : l'autofiction. L'autofiction semblait d'abord, dans ses premières définitions, ressembler à l'autobiographie (avec notamment l'homonymie de l'auteur et du narrateur) tout en s'en distinguant (par le non-respect du pacte de vérité et le recours à la fiction).

La définition de la notion d'autofiction, d'abord créée par Serge Dobrovsky dans la préface de son livre *Fils*, avait d'abord un caractère très étroit qui s'est élargi au fur et à mesure que des théoriciens se sont penchés sur la question ou que des auteurs se sont approprié la notion. Les théoriciens qui ont le plus réfléchi à la question de ce genre, dont Dobrovsky, à qui il doit sa paternité, Philippe Lejeune (qui a théorisé l'autobiographie et à qui on doit la notion de pacte autobiographique), Vincent Colonna (dont la thèse, dirigée par le narratologue Gérard Genette, traite de l'autofiction), Philippe Gasparini

(auteur de l'ouvrage *Est-il Je ?* sur le roman autobiographique et l'autofiction), Arnaud Schmitt (qui a mis en avant la notion d'autonarration) mais aussi Marie Darrieussecq, (qui, avant d'écrire des romans, a consacré son mémoire et des articles à la question de l'autofiction) sont loin de s'accorder sur la définition du genre et de ses sous-genres.

Philippe Gasparini dénonce le caractère trop large qu'a pris la notion d'autofiction, au détriment de celle d'espace autobiographique, notion plus large avancée par Gérard Genette :

Force est de constater qu'“autofiction” est maintenant le nom de toutes sortes de textes en première personne. Fonctionnant comme un “archi-genre”, il subsume tout “l'espace autobiographique” : passé et contemporain, narratif et discursif ; avec ou sans contrat de vérité. Victime ou bénéficiaire de cette confusion, il commence à être employé pour valoriser ou dévaloriser non seulement des livres de tous genres, mais aussi des albums de bande dessinée, des films, des spectacles, des œuvres d'art contemporain. (Gasparini, 2009)

Awatif Beggar, qui s'est penchée sur la question dans un article très bien documenté, souligne le caractère flou et transgressif des œuvres désignées sous le terme d'autofiction : « Comme son nom l'indique, l'autofiction est un mode de passage entre fiction et autobiographie, un mode qui introduit la part de brouillage, de l'imaginaire, des fantasmes et, parallèlement, réinvente de nouveaux protocoles d'écriture et de lecture » (Beggar, 2014, p. 124).

L'introduction de nouveaux protocoles ou procédés d'écriture est un critère de l'autofiction qui semble faire l'unanimité chez la plupart de ceux qui ont essayé de la définir. Gasparini, qui a longtemps suivi les débats autour de la notion et y a participé, met en avant dans un article visant à établir la définition de l'autofiction une hiérarchisation de l'espace autobiographique autour de trois sous-genres : l'autofabulation, l'autofiction, et l'autonarration. Cette « tripartition » ferait désormais selon lui « consensus » parmi les chercheurs. L'autofabulation correspond selon Gasparini à des événements inventés de toute pièce, voire fantasmagoriques auquel prend part l'auteur-narrateur. Il cite ici Genette, dont l'ironie est sensible : « Moi auteur, je vais vous raconter une histoire dont je suis le héros mais qui ne m'est jamais arrivée » (Genette, 1991, p. 86 cité par Gasparini, 2009). L'exemple type serait ici *La Divine Comédie* de Dante. Le champ de l'autofiction

doit être resserré autour d'une certaine catégorie particulière selon Gasparini, correspondant à celle des romans autobiographiques : « le terme d'autofiction devrait être réservé aux textes qui développent, en toute connaissance de cause, la tendance naturelle du récit de soi à se fictionnaliser. Une situation, une relation, un épisode, sont mis en récit, scénarisés, intensifiés et dramatisés par des techniques narratives qui favorisent l'identification du lecteur avec l'auteur-héros-narrateur » (Gasparini, 2009). Enfin, Gasparini cite le terme d'autonarration attribué à Arnaud Schmitt et le définit en termes de différence par rapport à l'autobiographie classique « sur trois points au moins : la fragmentation, le métadiscours, l'altérité. Ces auteurs ne prétendent pas retracer toute leur vie, ni l'expliquer, ni la justifier, ni même en donner une image fidèle. Ils travaillent sur des fragments de souvenirs, qu'ils exhument, questionnent, interprètent, mettent en relation ou en contradiction avec d'autres fragments » (Gasparini, 2009).

Cet intérêt pour l'écriture de soi et l'autobiographie des écrivains contemporains est considéré par certains comme un fil directeur, un axe permettant la transition entre la littérature moderne et la littérature contemporaine et représentant une continuité avec la fin des dernières grandes avant-gardes littéraires tels que le Nouveau Roman. En effet, même certains nouveaux romanciers (Claude Simon et Sarraute notamment) se sont détournés des procédés formels et de la littérature expérimentale pour renouer avec une forme plus traditionnelle de l'écriture qui est l'autobiographie:

l'autobiographie, nous semble caractériser d'une manière extrêmement intéressante à la fois la continuité et la transformation de l'avant-garde littéraire après le tournant des années 80. Il est bien connu que l'autobiographie – et plus généralement les écritures de soi – rencontrent un succès grandissant auprès du public et des écrivains depuis 15 ou 20 ans. (Kranker et Veivo, 2009, p. 123)

En 2007, un article de Donald Morrison, « A la recherche du temps perdu », du numéro du Times titré « La mort de la culture française ? » met en avant le déclin de la culture française, et, notamment, de sa littérature : « Nulle part cette tendance est plus apparente que dans la fiction qui souffre encore du mouvement introspectif du Nouveau Roman. Beaucoup des romanciers français les plus révévés aujourd'hui par la critique écrivent une fiction avec un style dépouillé et élégant qui voyage mal » (Morrison, 2007). Le journaliste tourne également en dérision l'autofiction, la taxant de narcissisme : « D'autres pratiquent ce que les Français appellent l'autofiction - des mémoires à peine

«voilées qui dissimulent mal qu'elles ont été conçues par une absorption du moi profond (Morrison, 2007). Cette critique n'est pas uniquement adressée outre-Atlantique puisque Mohamed Razane et Karim Amellal du collectif « Qui Fait La France ? » adressent ce même reproche à la littérature française : « on considère qu'on peut dire que la littérature française est par trop nombriliste, gangrenée par l'autofiction, par l'égotisme, par les passions bourgeoises, par un certain nombre de choses qui paradigmatiquement l'entrée dans le littéraire et la fuite dans le réel » (Vitali, Razane et Amellal, 2010, p. 126).

À la lumière de ces éclaircissements, à quels types d'écriture de soi peut-on dire qu'appartient *Juste la fin du monde*, sachant que les catégorisations citées sont souvent propres au roman et que nous avons ici affaire au théâtre ? En effet, la question de l'homonymie narrateur-acteur ne peut se poser ici car, comme le souligne Alexandra Balcersek dans sa thèse sur l'existence d'une expression autobiographique au théâtre : « dans la littérature théâtrale, le narrateur est absent. En lieu et place de ce dernier, c'est la voix des personnages qui construit la fiction dramatique » (Balcersek, 2014, p. 31). On peut cependant parler d'autobiographie (Alexandra Balcersek le fait dans sa thèse) voire d'autofiction ou d'autonarration (nous allons le faire plus bas pour Lagarce) pour le théâtre, dès qu'il s'agit de « désigner toute utilisation de sa biographie par l'auteur dramatique, toute incursion de son vécu dans la fiction, toute référence à son parcours réel, toute utilisation de ses expériences personnelles comme d'un matériau à l'écriture » (Balcersek, 2014, p. 13).

Éléments de l'écriture de soi et de l'autofiction ou autonarration dans *Juste la fin du monde*

Nous avons déjà souligné plus haut certains des points communs entre Jean-Luc Lagarce et Louis, assez significatifs pour qu'on puisse parler pour ce personnage de double, voire d'« hétéronyme » (Parisse, 2015, p. 101) de l'auteur. En effet, et comme le souligne Balcersek, « comme Jean-Luc Lagarce, Louis a une sœur et un frère et son métier est d'écrire. Il a grandi en province, les dimanches que raconte la mère rappellent ceux que Lagarce raconte dans le texte *1957-1997* au début du journal, tandis que l'importance de la voiture familiale rappelle le lien de toute la famille (et même toute la région) avec l'usine Peugeot » (Balcersek, 2014, p. 119). Les parents de Lagarce étaient ouvriers et travaillaient pour le constructeur automobile. La situation autour de laquelle tourne la pièce, l'impossibilité de dire la maladie et la mort prochaine est aussi une expérience tirée de la vie de l'auteur, puisqu'il semble que Lagarce n'avait pas pu non plus se

confesser à sa famille en 1990, année de l'écriture de la pièce : « Journal (20 avril 1992): Dimanche de Pâques en famille. Effrayant. Les larmes aux yeux. Et eux qui ne veulent jamais rien voir. Et un jour, il faudra leur dire que je suis en train de mourir. Me colleter ce malheur-là » (Lagarce, 2008, p. 119). Une différence notable serait ici l'absence du père, déjà mort dans la pièce, alors que le père de l'auteur étant encore vivant lors de la rédaction de la pièce.

Juste la fin du monde donne la même sensation de brouillage entre fiction et réalité que la plupart des œuvres autofictives : on hésite entre la présence et l'absence de l'auteur dans l'œuvre. Sa présence est d'ailleurs énigmatique, et il semble parfois (comme dans les monologues du prologue et de l'épilogue) nous parler de l'outre-tombe : « Plus tard, l'année d'après, j'allais mourir à mon tour » (Lagarce, 1999, p. 7) et « Je meurs quelques mois après » (Lagarce, 1999, p. 77). Alexandra Balcerek qualifie le personnage de « nazaréen » ou de « spectre » : « Bien qu'interagissant avec les membres de sa famille (qui apparaissent, eux, ancrés dans le réel), il apparaît comme hantant la pièce de sa présence solitaire, et anonyme (il ne parle finalement que très peu de lui-même, laissant les autres le définir, et n'annoncera pas sa mort prochaine) » (Balcerek, 2014, p. 71). Si l'on devait tenter néanmoins de catégoriser cette pratique de l'écriture de soi selon la hiérarchisation vue plus haut, il semblerait que la pièce soit à la frontière de l'autofiction et de l'autonarration, tout en appartenant davantage à l'autonarration. En effet on a affaire ici à la dramatisation et à la scénarisation d'un épisode ou d'une situation qui, somme toute, existe dans la vie de l'auteur : la tentative du retour et de l'expression de la mort imminente. Cependant cette dramatisation se fait à travers les trois procédés évoqués par Gasparini pour définir l'autonarration : « fragmentation, le métadiscours, l'altérité » (Gasparini, 2009). Fragmentation car comme la structurelle formelle de la pièce, les éléments du moi disséminés dans l'œuvre sont disparates et ne sont énoncés qu'à travers des bribes et des morceaux de souvenirs qu'évoquent différents personnages et qui parfois se contredisent, donnant place à une altérité du fait de la présence des différentes perspectives proposées sur les mêmes faits, sur lesquels la présence quasi-spectrale de l'hétéronyme de l'auteur, Louis, vient implémenter un discours métadiscursif mais qui ne vise jamais à expliquer ou à démêler l'écheveau que représente la situation complexe qui se noue dans la pièce. De la même manière, Lydie Palisse évoque une « construction-déconstruction de l'image de l'auteur », employée « comme une tentative de constituer un passé par le biais d'une mémoire fluctuante – essentiellement trouée – et multiple, puisque de nombreux personnages sont les dépositaires de celui qui joue le rôle de l'écrivain » (Palisse, 2015, p. 99).

Quels sont les enjeux ou les fonctions de l'autofiction dans la pièce ? On peut formuler ici plusieurs hypothèses : tout d'abord, l'écriture de soi peut avoir une fonction de rétrospection, comme le souligne Arzu Kunt : « Lagarce construit son univers fictionnel en laissant à son lecteur/spectateur le soin de reconstituer à travers les bribes d'espace-temps, le parcours d'une vie bien souvent soumis à une rétrospection » (Kunt, 2011, p. 40). Cette rétrospection peut prendre la forme d'une « reconstitution » de soi, « vouée à l'échec » selon Balcerek, « car les traces du passé ne sont pas déchiffrables en elles-mêmes, mais viennent se superposer les unes aux autres » (Balcerek, 2014, p. 53).

On pourrait même supposer ici que l'auteur ait essayé de déterminer par l'écriture fictive d'une possibilité de sa vie, quel serait le résultat s'il menait à bien son projet d'avouer à sa famille son état de santé et la cause de sa maladie, faisant ainsi une sorte de « simulation ». Nadia Setti, qui a rédigé un article dans un ouvrage collectif sur la littérature du Sida, met en avant une fonction où le texte viendrait remplacer les paroles qui n'ont pas pu être prononcées dans la réalité de l'existence de l'auteur : « L'enjeu est donc de réussir à dire l'indicible et par rapport à cet indicible, mort et homosexualité en viennent à se télescoper. Comme si l'annonce du sujet homosexuel « de son vivant » s'avérait impossible, ou possible à condition de se déclarer mourant. Cela signifie aussi faire face à l'insoutenable et pour ceux qui écrivent, nous mettre face à face avec cet insoutenable » (Badin, Genetti, Libasci, et Roulin, 2016).

Le fait que Louis n'y parvienne pas est révélateur du blocage et de la crainte que cette situation crée chez l'auteur. Elle sera d'ailleurs reprise dans *Le pays lointain*, réécriture de *Juste la fin du monde* et dernière pièce de l'auteur, publiée en 1995. Marie-Hélène Boblet considère que cette pièce vient parachever le projet qu'a conçu l'auteur à travers ses différents ouvrages : « Cette œuvre ultime consacre l'entreprise de Jean-Luc Lagarce. Drame du retour sur soi et sur sa vie, elle opère aussi un retour réflexif sur l'écriture, à la faveur duquel le personnage dramatique s'érige paradoxalement en identité narrative et morale, qui témoigne de ce qu'il fut et répond de ce qu'il fit » (Boblet, 1995, p. 422).

Selon Awatif Beggar, « l'autofiction permet à l'auteur d'approcher la complexité de son moi, de tracer les contours de tout ce qui échappe à la transparence lucide et naïve, de saisir une identité dans son intimité la plus profonde » (Beggar, 2014, p. 133) et c'est bien cet aspect de l'autofiction qui joue un rôle dans cette introspection menée par l'auteur, confronté à sa mort prochaine, face à l'urgence de comprendre qui il est et a

été. L'œuvre de Lagarce, aussi bien à travers les journaux que la mise en scène de ses hétéronymes et de ses doubles, n'a eu cesse d'employer différents procédés de l'écriture de soi comme outils de la quête du passé, quête de la compréhension et de l'expression de soi, dans les aspects les plus tragiques de l'existence.

Conclusion

Juste la fin du monde est une œuvre complexe, aux dimensions et lectures multiples qu'il est même difficile de résumer en réussissant à transmettre la substance du texte. Cette pièce, l'une des plus connues de Lagarce, notamment du fait de son adaptation récente au cinéma par Xavier Dolan peut déconcerter le lecteur/spectateur par son utilisation novatrice des structures théâtrales ou par le style des dialogues, très particulier. Si la lecture est un moment de « plaisir laborieux », le fait de voir la pièce jouée ajoute encore à ce plaisir et aux dimensions de l'œuvre, notamment parce que le metteur en scène participe à la construction du sens en remplissant à sa guise les vides laissés par l'auteur concernant la direction de la pièce sur scène. Tout lecteur connaissant un peu la vie de Lagarce reconnaît à la lecture que c'est une œuvre comportant des éléments biographiques mais le fait de déterminer à quel type d'écriture de soi ces éléments appartiennent est une tâche plus difficile. Nous avons opté pour l'autonarration mais ce n'est qu'un constat étayé par des justifications personnelles, et il est possible de tirer d'autres conclusions à partir d'autres argumentations et justifications. Ce qui nous a également intéressé ici était de se demander quels enjeux représentaient cette écriture autofictive, et si nous avons tenté d'apporter notre propre réponse à cette question en considérant que Lagarce tentait peut-être par ce moyen de « dire l'indicible » ou de « reconstituer le soi », de « construire-déconstruire » son image (Setti ; Balcerek ; Parisse), il faut toutefois souligner que le dramaturge y répond peut-être lui-même dès le prologue, à travers les paroles de Louis : « me donner et donner aux autres une dernière fois l'illusion d'être responsable de moi même et d'être, jusqu'à cette extrémité, mon propre maître » (Lagarce, 1999, p. 8).

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Roman Djebarien en Tangage: Autobiographie et Autofiction dans *L'Amour, La Fantasia* d'Assia Djebar

Oscillating Djebarian Novel: Autobiography and Autofiction in Assia Djebar's *An Algerian Cavalcade*

Fatma AKBULUT ÜÇYILDIZ¹ 



¹Assistant Professor, Pamukkale University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of French Language and Literature, Denizli, Türkiye

ORCID: F.A.Ü. 0000-0002-2230-8562

Corresponding author:

Fatma AKBULUT ÜÇYILDIZ,
Pamukkale University, Faculty of
Humanities and Social Sciences,
Department of French Language and
Literature, Denizli, Türkiye
E-mail: fatmaakbulut@pau.edu.tr

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RESUME

Il ne serait pas faux de dire que la définition la plus simple de l'autobiographie est l'histoire d'une personne écrite par lui-même. Cependant, ce genre, appelé également « l'écriture de soi » ou le récit en « je » dans le monde littéraire, fait l'objet d'un débat permanent depuis de nombreuses années. Des théoriciens littéraires récents ont fait valoir que l'écriture autobiographique n'est peut-être plus tout à fait possible en raison de changements inconscients qui peuvent se produire, parfois involontairement, dans la mémoire, c'est-à-dire l'oubli, et parfois consciemment - censure, changements conscients, etc.- Les changements conscients et inconscients qui risquent fort de se produire dans l'œuvre de l'auteur nous conduisent aujourd'hui vers un nouveau genre, celui de l'autofiction. Ce terme, utilisé pour la première fois par l'écrivain français Serge Doubrovsky dans les années 1970 pour décrire son roman *Fils*, peut simplement être résumé comme la narration fictionnalisée de l'auteur sur sa propre vie. Dans d'autres mots, l'autofiction, qui n'a pas encore de définition courte et claire, est en réalité une autobiographie écrite d'après les codes romanesques. Le but de cette étude est de montrer comment les codes du récit autofictionnel fonctionnent dans le roman de la célèbre romancière algérienne et professeure d'histoire Assia Djebar qui s'intitule *L'Amour, La Fantasia*, dans lequel le récit historique et le récit individuel s'entremêlent au sein du cadre des concepts d'autobiographie, de roman autobiographique et d'autofiction.

Mots-clés: Autobiographie, roman autobiographique, récit autofictionnel, autobiographie collective, roman Djebarien

ABSTRACT

To say that the simplest definition of an autobiography involves a person writing about their own life would not be wrong. However, this genre, which is also referred to as "writing about one's own life" or as an "I" narrative in the literary world, has been the subject of ongoing debate for many years. Recent literary theorists have argued autobiographical writing to perhaps not be completely possible due to reasons such as unconscious changes that may occur in memory (i.e., forgetting), as well as the occasional voluntary censorship or conscious changes that can also occur. The conscious and unconscious changes that are likely to occur in an author's work is



currently leading toward the new genre of autofiction. This term, first used by French writer Serge Doubrovsky in the 1970s to describe his novel *Fils* [Son], can simply be summarized as the author's fictionalized narration of his own life. In other words, autofiction may not yet have any short or clear definition but is in reality an autobiography written according to romantic codes. The aim of this study is to show how the codes of the autofictional narrative function in the novel by the famous Algerian novelist and history professor Assia Djebar titled *L'Amour, La Fantasia* in French and *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade* in the English translation, in which the historical and individual narratives intertwine within the framework of the concepts of autobiography, autobiographical novel, and autofiction.

Keywords: Autobiography, autobiographical novel, autofictional story, collective autobiography, Assia Djebar

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

To say that the simplest definition of autobiography involves a person writing about their own life would not be wrong. However, this genre, which is also referred to as "writing about one's own life" or as the "I" narrative in the literary world, has been the subject of ongoing debate for many years. Recent literary theorists have argued autobiographical writing to perhaps not be completely possible due to reasons such as unconscious changes that may occur in memory (i.e., forgetting), as well as the voluntary censorship and conscious changes that can occur. The aim of this study is to show how the codes of autofictional narrative function in the novel by the famous Algerian novelist and history professor Assia Djebar titled *L'Amour, La Fantasia*, in which the historical and individual narratives intertwine within the framework of the concepts of autobiography, autobiographical novel, and autofiction.

The cultural codes one is born into and grew up with obviously also influence the writings of a literary person. When considering the situation of the famous Algerian novelist Assia Djebar, the act of writing and saying "I" are a feature of a male-dominated field in Muslim-Arab societies. Clearly the role of women in such societies remains outside of social life, and women completely stay away from the act of writing, which exists only in environments where women are present. In Assia Djebar's novel *L'Amour, La Fantasia*, translated into English as *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade*, she undertakes rewriting Algerian colonial history from a new, female perspective. The main reason for this act of historical rewriting is that the work of historiography has been monopolized by men in a Western masculine field. While Assia Djebar carried out the act of reconstructing the Algerian colonial history from the perspective of an Algerian Muslim Arab woman, she included titled and numbered chapters in her novel. In the titled chapters of the novel, Assia Djebar appears as a girl starting primary school, while the numbered chapters describe the first French siege that had taken place in 1830. Thus, the historical narrative and the self-fictional narratives the author constructed based

on her own life story follow one another in the novel. Therefore, while Assia Djebar's act of writing was considered a violation of the male-dominated literary field, one meanwhile also observes how women have become subjects after having been in the position of object in Maghreb literature for many years.

This genre of literature, in which Assia Djebar has put women at the center, consciously abandons the harmony and equality of "author, narrator, and person," as mentioned by the French theorist Lejeune (1996) in his book *Pacte autobiographique*. In this regard, mentioning a new concept that another theorist, Serge Doubrovsky (1980), mentioned in the preface of his novel *Fils* would be appropriate: This concept is autofiction, where reality and fiction are intertwined. Autofiction is actually an amalgam of the strategies used for autobiographies and novels. According to Doubrovsky, because no autobiographical narrative can build a real life, no narrative can possibly be complete and real from beginning to end due to gaps in memory, forgetfulness, and censorship (i.e., conscious and unconscious reasons). The purpose of the autofictional narrative is not to reconstruct a holistic and complete real life; on the contrary, its purpose is to give the impression that the life being told is real. In short, any text, being a field of referential reality, requires autofiction for reconstructing one's life, a reinvention of an individual journey. Assia Djebar also used the autofictional narrative because of the patriarchal structure of Arab Muslim society, the reprehensible writing of women, the prohibition of the "I" with regard to Islam, and the lack of mastery regarding the Arabic language.

Introduction Théorique

L'écriture de (m)/soi, l'expression du je, sont inévitablement et abondamment présentes dans les journaux intimes, mémoires, ou alors autobiographies y compris autofictions. La catégorie générique à laquelle appartiennent tous ces genres a toujours été discutée dans le cadre de théories incluant le récit du « je », ces récits à la première personne sont inclus dans les limites du champ littéraire. Cette écriture du « je » dont la littérarité est mise en cause au cours des années surtout après que ce genre s'est répandu dans la littérature occidentale à partir du XVI^e siècle, et les frontières des genres littéraires qu'elle peut en inclure sont également variables et ambiguës. Le point principal qui rend l'auto-écriture problématique est que le récit de soi, de nature rétrospective, aboutit à des lacunes et à des failles mnémoniques vu qu'il repose en grande partie sur l'évocation et la mémoire, comme conséquence prévisible, la méthode utilisée pour les colmater serait une création interstitielle entre la réalité et la fiction, à tout prendre entre le factuel et le fictionnel. Puisque la littérature autobiographique est largement rétrospective, commençant souvent dès l'enfance ; il est possible que certaines dates, lieux ou noms de personnes soient oubliés ou qu'il y existe des perturbations dans la chronologie des événements. Les nouveaux éléments narratifs, tantôt fondés sur l'oubli mnémotechnique, tantôt consciemment insérés dans le récit en « je » par les auteurs, entraineraient le récit vers la fiction. Pour cette raison, il ne serait pas faux de dire que le récit de soi oscille entre *autobiographie* et *autofiction* en fonction de certaines procédures narratives sur le plan théorique. Les récits de soi, qui appartenaient à priori à la culture occidentale dans le passé, ont été un domaine d'intérêt et de préférence pour les écrivains d'autres cultures à travers l'histoire. De ce point de vue, il ne serait pas faux de commenter que le récit à la première personne, celui de « je/moi » est strictement lié au patrimoine culturel, héritage de la littérature traditionnelle. Comme disait Sarra Rouabhia :

(...) d'un auteur à l'autre, l'utilisation du 'je' varie selon les cultures car elle est bien 'liée à un héritage culturel, à une certaine vision du monde et des arts', selon les temps mais aussi selon les milieux sociaux dans lesquels on vit car 'la société soutient, enserme, pénètre la vie privée. (Rouabhia, 2017, p. 58)

De ce point de vue, nous avons l'impression que les codes culturels dans lesquels nous sommes nés, avons grandi et avons été témoins sont des facteurs prépondérants

qui déterminent également les codes littéraires. Surtout compte tenu du contexte de l'étude et considérant qu'Assia Djébar est une écrivaine qui a grandi dans la culture arabo-musulmane mauresque ; prendre parole y est à l'apanage des hommes dans les espaces publics tandis que la fonction narrative féminine est réduite à l'entourage familiale avec sa « fonction de la transmettrice de la mémoire tribale et familiale – dans le domaine privé » (Geys, 2006, p. 278). Or, il demande beaucoup de courage à une femme pour oser dire « je » alors qu'elle n'a pas le droit de faire entendre sa voix dans la société. Assia Djébar dans son *L'Amour, La Fantasia*, un roman qui se fait une réécriture de l'histoire des siens pendant la colonisation française évoque ce que l'écriture de soi signifie pour sa culture en disant que :

Comment une femme pourrait parler haut, même en langue arabe, autrement que dans l'attente du grand âge ? Comment dire 'je', puisque ce serait dédaigner les formules-couvertures qui maintiennent le trajet individuel dans la résignation collective ? Comment entreprendre de regarder son enfance, même si elle se déroule différemment ?... Parler de soi-même hors de la langue des aïeules, c'est se dévoiler certes, mais pas seulement pour sortir de l'enfance, pour s'en exiler définitivement. Le dévoilement, aussi contingent, devient, comme le souligne mon arabe dialectal du quotidien, vraiment 'se mettre à nu'. (Djébar, 1995, p. 224)

Assia Djébar est une écrivaine féministe qui mentionne souvent que les codes sociaux sont construits par les hommes et qu'il est impossible pour les femmes de parler, cependant, elle associe le « discours intérieur » à la nudité féminine. Dans cette étude, *L'Amour, La Fantasia*, l'un des romans les plus célèbres de d'Assia Djébar, l'une des écrivaines les plus importantes du monde littéraire francophone, sera évalué dans le cadre des concepts d'autobiographie, de roman autobiographique et d'autofiction. Tout en faisant cette étude sur le roman, nous essaierons tout d'abord d'expliquer des concepts tels que l'autobiographie et le roman autobiographique en nous servant du livre théorique intitulé *Le Pacte Autobiographique* de l'écrivain français Lejeune, spécialiste de la littérature autobiographique. Dans la seconde étape importante de notre étude, nous proposons de discuter du passage de l'écriture autobiographique à l'écriture autofictionnelle à la lumière des ouvrages théoriques de l'essayiste français Philippe Gasparini et de l'écrivain français Serge Doubrovsky. Dans ce contexte, à partir des théoriciens que nous avons évoqués et de leurs théories, les codes autofictionnels seront tentés de se concrétiser avec des exemples tirés du roman d'Assia Djébar intitulé *L'Amour, la Fantasia*.

Autobiographie, Roman Autobiographique et Autofiction

Maints débats sur ce phénomène littéraire qui tanguent entre une reconstruction attestée de passé et celle de fictionnalisée se déclenche dans *Le Pacte Autobiographique* de Philippe Lejeune où il élabore minutieusement la théorie d'un pacte implicite ou non entre le lecteur et l'auteur. Dans son œuvre théorique, il se met en route en se posant « Est-il possible de définir l'autobiographie ? » (Lejeune, 1996, p. 13). C'est ainsi qu'il transmet une définition claire, concise et succincte de l'autobiographie : « Récit rétrospectif en prose qu'une personne réelle fait de sa propre existence, lorsqu'elle met l'accent sur sa vie individuelle, en particulier sur l'histoire de sa personnalité » (Lejeune, 1996, p. 14).

La définition de l'autobiographie mise au point par Lejeune dans son *Pacte Autobiographique* doit répondre aux critères des quatre catégories qu'il a énumérées dans son livre :

En premier lieu, la forme du langage en serait le récit en prose, deuxièmement le sujet traité devrait être la vie individuelle, histoire d'une personnalité, le critère avant dernier est intimement lié à la situation de l'auteur, à savoir l'identité de l'auteur (dont le nom doit renvoyer à une personne réelle) et du narrateur, dernièrement, la position du narrateur confirmerait l'identité du narrateur et du personnage principal ainsi qu'une perspective rétrospective du récit ». (1996, p. 14)

Bien que ces quatre catégories soient les éléments de base du genre autobiographique, le point clé de la définition de Lejeune est l'identité de l'auteur, du narrateur et du personnage principal. A ce stade, une des premières contradictions qui vient à l'esprit est sans doute le fait que les auteurs utilisent des pseudonymes et comment cela peut être évalué dans le cadre du genre autobiographique. La réponse du théoricien est immédiate :

Le pseudonyme est un nom d'auteur. Ce n'est pas exactement un faux nom, mais un nom de plume, un second nom, exactement comme celui qu'une religieuse prend en entrant dans les ordres... Le pseudonyme est simplement une différenciation, un dédoublement du nom, qui ne change rien à l'identité. (1996, p. 24)

Selon la théorie d'autobiographie de P. Lejeune, le moment auquel la croyance du lecteur dans la vérité complète du récit qu'il lit est brisée se fait le premier élément qui dissout le pacte. Pour qu'un lecteur admette qu'un récit en tant qu'une « fiction voire autofiction », Lejeune soumet qu'« il faut qu'il perçoive l'histoire comme impossible ou incompatible avec une information qu'il possède déjà » (1996, p. 26).

La principale distinction entre autobiographie et roman autobiographique découle de cette idée, lorsqu'un seul maillon de la chaîne de vérité du récit est rompu, la fiction est incluse dans le récit, l'identité onomastique entre l'auteur, le narrateur et le protagoniste principal s'y disparaît. Le fait qu'au moins une partie de cette triple homogénéité du récit qui nous rapproche au roman autobiographique ait été coupée, crée une ambivalence profonde autour du personnage principal. Un autre théoricien français, Philippe Gasparini, spécialiste de l'écriture de soi, dans son livre intitulé *Est-il je ? : Roman autobiographique et autofiction* affirme que :

Le romancier autobiographe ne réalise donc pas une impossible synthèse des codes antagonistes, mais il les confronte, il les fait co-exister. Il respecte et dénonce alternativement les clauses des deux contrats, il les discute, il les négocie, sans jamais choisir. (Gasparini, 2004, p.13)

La théorie autobiographique de Gasparini s'appuie donc sur l'idée de la distinction entre lesdits genres littéraires qui se met en évidence par la notion de pacte autobiographique, parce qu'il insiste sur l'idée qu'un véritable autobiographe, contrairement au romancier, c'est quelqu'un qui s'identifie au narrateur et au protagoniste du récit, car, comme nous l'avons mentionné plus haut en expliquant la formation théorique de P. Lejeune, le critère de base en autobiographie est l'équivalence entre ces trois ; l'auteur, le narrateur et le héros.

Entre La Réalité et La Fiction : Autofiction, Roman Autofictionnel

Nous sommes ainsi face à des récits dans lesquels la réalité et la fiction coexistent, s'entremêlent et s'alternent pour diverses raisons, soit volontairement, soit inconsciemment et qui nous mènent vers une nouvelle approche romanesque de l'écriture de soi. Dans les années quatre-vingt à travers un prière d'insérer dans son roman intitulé *Fils* par Serge Doubrovsky, qui est un auteur et critique français, un terme littéraire a été créé, *autofiction*, et cette précédente mettait au point cette nomination

comme l'amalgame de l'autobiographie et les stratégies romanesques. L'autofiction est donc un tiers espace littéraire où s'entremêlent la fiction et la réalité ayant un « narrateur autodiégétique », (un narrateur qui raconte sa propre vie avec toutes ses propres expériences) comme Genette l'appelle dans sa théorie de narratologie dans son *Figures III* pendant qu'il fait référence à l'œuvre proustienne : « *La Recherche* est fondamentalement un récit autodiégétique, où le héros-narrateur ne cède pour ainsi dire jamais à quiconque, nous l'avons vu, le privilège de la fonction narrative » (Genette, 1972, p. 304). Dans une autobiographie classique occidentale, il est possible de trouver un narrateur-adulte autodiégétique qui transmet un récit rétrospectif, son passé, son enfance ou plus exactement, il les reconstitue, réinvente par l'intermédiaire du mémoire en corrodant les codes de la vraisemblance et de la fiction. Dans le prière d'insérer qu'il a rédigé, Serge Doubrovsky met en exergue sa nouvelle approche romanesque, qui superpose la réalité et la fiction, comme suit : « Autobiographie ? non, c'est un privilège, réservé aux importants de ce monde, au soir de leur vie, et dans un beau style. Fiction, d'événements et de faits strictement réels ; si l'on veut, autofiction, d'avoir confié le langage d'une aventure à l'aventure du langage... » (Doubrovsky, 1980, p. 90).

C'est ainsi que cette nouvelle stratégie romanesque qui « fonctionne dans l'entre-deux, en un renvoi incessant... » (Doubrovsky, 1980, p. 90) désigne un procédé narratologique où ni le roman ni l'autobiographie (ni le réel, ni la fiction) ne prédomine. La raison en est que, aucune œuvre de générique soit autobiographique, soit autofictionnel ne peut reproduire une vie ou sert à découvrir le sens de la vie. D'après toujours Serge Doubrovsky, le but de l'autofiction n'est pas de décrire une vie dans tous ses détails, sans en sauter un seul, ce qui semble déjà peu probable, mais sa prétention est plutôt ce qu'elle raconte est bien vrai mais pas holistique et complet. D'ailleurs, il s'exprime, en bref :

Un curieux tourniquet s'instaure alors : fausse fiction, qui est histoire d'une vraie vie, le texte, de par le mouvement de son écriture, se déloge instantanément du registre patenté du réel. Ni autobiographie, ni roman, donc, au sens strict, il fonctionne dans l'entre-deux, en un renvoi incessant, en un lieu impossible et insaisissable ailleurs que dans l'opération du texte. Texte/vie : le texte, à son tour, opère dans une vie, non dans le vide. Son partage, sa coupure, son écartèlement sont ceux-là même qui structurent et rythment l'existence du narrateur, son suspens indéfini entre deux pays, deux métiers, deux femmes, deux mères, deux langues, deux prénoms, gémellité dissymétrique, moitiés non superposables, dualité insurmontée. (Doubrovsky, 1980, p. 90)

Puisqu'il est peu possible, pour diverses raisons, de raconter une vie dans son entier avec de minuscules détails, ce qu'une autofiction met en évidence, c'est qu'à travers et par moyen d'un texte, essayer de reconfigurer, de refaçonner, recréer des expériences vécues lors d'une vie qui ne sont qu'une réinvention en réalité. A la lumière de ces informations, il est possible de dire que le texte a une priorité absolue dans les récits autofictionnels et il faut souligner avec insistance ce qui suit : « on ne lit pas une vie, mais un texte », puisque le défi autobiographique est fallacieusement référentiel. D'ailleurs, Serge Doubrovsky, dans son article *Autobiographie/Vérité/ Psychanalyse*, souligne de faire un choix entre vivre ou raconter sinon « ces deux domaines se sauraient être mélangés sans danger ... : Par fiction, il faut entendre, à ras de sens, une 'histoire' qui, quelle que soit l'accumulation des références et leur exactitude, n'a jamais 'eu lieu' dans la 'réalité', dont le seul lieu réel est le discours où elle se déploie » (1980, p. 93).

Pour cette raison, au lieu d'accepter l'autofiction comme une méthode qui construit la réalité, il serait plus approprié de la voir comme une méthode psychanalytique permettant à l'homme du monde moderne de mieux se connaître, de se découvrir et de mieux connaître son monde intérieur. Isabelle Grell, dans son *Autofiction*, affirme que : « Dès l'origine, l'autofiction est conçue comme l'autobiographie revisitée par la psychanalyse, impliquant que toute image de soi est une construction plus ou moins fictive dont il faut essayer de comprendre les raisons d'être » (Grell, 2014, p. 10).

L'Amour, la Fantasia d'Assia Djebar : Un Roman Entre L'Histoire/ La Réalité et La Fiction

Lorsque la France a occupé la ville d'Alger en 1830, l'Algérie était un pays arabo-berbère dominé par la culture arabo-islamique pendant de nombreuses années. Il est possible de voir clairement que le mouvement colonialiste initié par la France en 1827 a été systématisé dans toutes les régions et institutions du pays, et la culture arabo-berbère qui régnait dans ce pays a été contrainte de décliner de manière significative à la suite de l'anéantissement de la langue et de la culture françaises. La formation d'une structure sociale multilingue et multiculturelle était inévitable dans ce nouveau pays de « l'Algérie française ». Assia Djebar, écrivaine française d'origine algérienne, de son vrai nom Fatma Zohra Imalhayène, est née en 1936 au cœur même de l'Algérie française et a grandi dans son pays, Algérie, mais à une époque où la colonisation, la langue et la culture françaises étaient assez dominantes. Son père, étant professeur de français dans une école primaire arabe, l'a initiée à une formation occidentale, elle a

commencé à recevoir une éducation en langue française dès l'école primaire, mais elle n'a jamais rompu avec les langues arabe et berbère, qui continuent d'être utilisées à l'entourage et dans la vie familiale, où la plupart du temps les femmes dominent. Assia Djebar ayant écrit des dizaines de romans tout au long de sa vie tels que *Ombre sultane* (1987), *Vaste est la prison* (1995), *Femme sans sépulture* (2002), *La disparition de la langue française* (2003), *Nulle part dans la maison de mon père* (2008), et étant l'une des plus importantes représentantes de l'écriture féminine dans la littérature maghrébine, est une écrivaine considérable dont les œuvres ont une place très importante dans la littérature postcoloniale/francophone. Dans ses romans, comme *Ombre sultane*, *Vaste est la prison*, *Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement* ou *Loin de Médine*; Djebar a également abordé la situation de la femme arabe musulmane, dont l'altérité s'est approfondie du fait du regard discriminatoire appliqué à la femme arabe voilée par le système colonial français, avec pour effet la séparation du fanatisme islamique que les femmes arabes subissent pendant de nombreuses années, ainsi que les problèmes posés par le multilinguisme et le multiculturalisme. Les œuvres de tous les autres écrivains francophones, tels que ceux de Kateb Yacine (*Nedjma*), Mohammed Choukri (*Le pain nu*), Mohammed Dib (*Infante maure*), Yasmina Khadra (*Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*), Malek Bennabi (*Vocation de l'Islam*) ou Nina Bourai (*La voyageuse interdite*), dont les vies correspondent à la période coloniale ou à la période postcoloniale et qui ont en quelque sorte été témoins de la culture coloniale se composent de la vie de l'auteur et parfois d'histoires fictionnelles. Cependant, nous voyons que la plupart des livres comme dans ceux ci-dessus entre parenthèses inclus dans ce domaine de littérature sont soit un processus de réécriture historique – *L'Amour, la Fantasia* d'Assia Djebar – soit des récits contenant de larges sections de leur propre vie. Parfois, ces deux types d'écritures s'entremêlent dans le récit, et voilà c'est le cas du roman djebarien. Djebar vise à réécrire l'histoire coloniale de l'Algérie en présentant des extraits de son autobiographie. Ce faisant, sa motivation principale est de ne pas réfléchir l'historiographie que d'un point de vue «occidental», puisque l'historiographie est vue comme une action extrêmement «occidentale». Mireille Calle-Gruber, elle aussi, dans son étude sur Assia Djebar confirmant la sensibilité de Djebar à cette exigence, elle écrit:

L'histoire des guerres, écrite par les militaires français, le discours colonial tenu par les politiciens et archivé dans les journaux et actualités filmées de l'époque, les regards volés, des images volées à l'intimité des femmes par les peintres, les photographes, les reporters occidentaux. (Calle-Gruber, 2006, p. 22)

Les écrivains maghrébins écrivent l'histoire de leur pays à partir de leur propre vie pour de nombreuses raisons différentes - principalement pour aborder et critiquer les problèmes causés par le colonialisme et pour développer un «contre-discours». Dans ses romans, pour la plupart du temps, Assia Djébar suit le procédé de juxtaposition, et là il nous est possible de voir que le récit historique *et le récit autobiographique* s'entremêlent dans sa narration. Cette imbrication forme un ensemble de chapitres successifs qui se déroulent indépendamment les uns des autres dans le roman. Dans *L'Amour, La Fantasia*, pour Assia Djébar, professeure d'histoire née au carrefour de deux cultures et de plusieurs langues, il était inévitable d'écrire l'histoire coloniale de l'Algérie en fondant son écriture sur des documents historiques avec un nouveau regard sur l'historiographie qui était longtemps sous le monopole du «maître occidental». Dans son *L'Amour, la Fantasia*, lors qu'Assia Djébar réalise ce style d'alternance, son écriture nous donne l'impression que le récit dépasse de l'échelle personnelle à l'échelle collective et exprime la vie sociale sous des titres numérotés focalisés sur le récit historique. En revanche, dans les chapitres titrés, nous retrouvons Assia Djébar en fillette arabe dès le tout premier chapitre pendant lesquels elle nous fait témoigner des tranches de sa propre vie. Le fait que le récit autobiographique soit raconté dans un décalage temporel, loin du souci de chronologie, et l'oscillation du narrateur entre l'état de petite fille arabe et l'état d'adolescente, est une indication que le pacte de P. Lejeune est ébranlé et le récit bascule vers l'autofiction où il se trouve souvent des ruptures temporelles. Le principe selon lequel l'auteur-narrateur et le personnage sont la même personne, qui est le principe de base de la théorie du pacte autobiographique mis en avant par P. Lejeune, est volontairement abandonné dans les romans de Djébar. Pourtant, Assia Djébar a aussi consciemment poussé son récit vers la fiction pour diverses raisons - oubli, censure, etc. - alors qu'elle écrivait ce roman historique. Dans son entretien avec Lise Gauvain, elle le dirait de manière suivante : « la langue de l'autobiographie, quand elle n'est pas la langue maternelle fait que presque inévitablement, même sans le vouloir, l'autobiographie devient une fiction » (Gauvain, 1996, p. 78).

Comme nous venons de le dire, « écrire » dans les sociétés arabo-musulmanes sous domination masculine est un domaine avec lequel les femmes n'entrent presque jamais en contact du fait qu'elles sont majoritairement analphabètes. Cependant, la raison principale pour laquelle les femmes ne sont pas incluses dans le domaine de l'écriture dans ces sociétés est que, outre leur analphabétisme, le silence est considéré comme louable tandis que parler, s'exprimer ou écrire sont considérés comme une transgression en termes religieux, sociaux et moraux. Les codes culturels traditionnels arabo-

musulmans présumant que « le pronom 'je' est comme un signe de vanité et de préoccupation égoïste ; caractéristiques qui s'opposent aux enseignements islamiques prônant la disparition de l'individu dans la collectivité (...) » (Ali, 2019, p. 1). Par conséquent, l'acte d'écriture des femmes dans ce contexte devient encore plus problématique. Ainsi, la femme-écrivaine met le pied dans le champ de transgressions à plusieurs niveaux : d'une part, elle envahit un domaine dominé par les hommes, et d'autre part, elle devient « sujet » dans un domaine d'action dont elle fait « l'objet » depuis de nombreuses années. Comme disait Hafid Gafaiti dans son étude sur Assia Djébar et son autobiographie plurielle :

L'œuvre de Djébar porte entier en soi le problème du rapport de la femme à l'écriture. Si l'écrivain-homme est confronté avec ce qu'il a dire, l'écrivaine-femme fait face, en plus de cela, à la transgression fondamentale qu'est le seul fait d'écrire, de prendre la parole. (Gafaiti, 1999, pp. 119-128)

A travers la petite Fatima, que nous retrouvons devant nous en tant que fillette de cinq-six ans sur la première page du roman, *L'Amour, la Fantasia*, Assia Djébar décrit la riposte sociale des filles qui vont à l'école et apprennent à lire et à écrire, et ce que l'écriture peut causer :

Dès le premier jour où une fillette sort pour apprendre l'alphabet, les voisins prennent le regard matois de ceux qui s'apitoient dix ou quinze ans à l'avance : sur le père audacieux, sur le frère inconséquent. Le malheur fondra inmanquablement sur eux. Toute vierge savante saura écrire, écrira à coup sûr la lettre. Viendra l'heure pour elle où l'amour qui s'écrit est plus dangereux que l'amour séquestré. (Djébar, 1995, p. 11)

Dans ces sociétés où l'écriture des femmes est considérée comme un viol multidimensionnel, où le silence est honoré alors que la voix tentée d'être enterrée, il était crucial pour Assia Djébar et les autres écrivaines similaires de se créer un espace d'écriture, ce qui les a menées vers l'autofiction ou autrement dit vers une autobiographie plurielle voire collective au sens Lejeunien du terme. Ainsi, Assia Djébar adopte dans la plupart de ses romans une méthode de discours pluriel, agrémentée d'oscillations entre réalité et fiction. Ce nouveau champ d'existence littéraire est un champ d'anonymat où la réalité historique ou individuelle et la fiction se perdent l'une dans l'autre. Cet anonymat littéraire donne non seulement un espace à l'auteur, mais aussi apporte avec

lui la liberté. En tant que femme-écrivaine, la tendance d'Assia Djébar à écriture qui viole tous les codes culturels, religieux et sociaux est d'une importance vitale pour choisir sa propre voie et faire simultanément ses propres choix. Dans l'un des chapitres autofictionnels de son roman *L'Amour, la Fantasia*, où elle relate sa première jeunesse, elle s'exprime au nom de toutes les jeunes filles nées dans cette culture et dans cette géographie de manière suivante:

Écrire en langue étrangère, hors de l'oralité des deux langues de ma région natale – berbère des montagnes du Dahra et l'arabe de ma ville-, écrire m'a ramenée aux cris des femmes sourdement révoltées de mon enfance, à ma seule origine. Écrire ne tue pas la voix, mais la réveille, surtout pour ressusciter tant de sœurs disparues. (Djébar, 1995, p. 285)

Autofiction Instrumentalisée Pour Une Auto-écriture

Pour Djébar, qui considère le silence comme *une prison irrémédiable*, l'écriture est une action de rigueur, pourtant les œuvres djébariennes sont d'une part individuelles et autofictives, d'autre part, elle a un discours collectif perdu dans la pluralité. Assia Djébar, dont la situation entre-deux du point de vue culturel et linguistique engendré par le système colonial français qui a duré une centaine d'années, entreprend ainsi avec ardeur son autobiographie dissimulée dans l'anonymat des femmes ensevelies dans un mutisme lancinant. Dans *l'Amour, la Fantasia*, c'est grâce aux femmes, dont elle a été témoin des histoires de résistance, de souffrances et de pertes ainsi qu'elle se fait l'intercesseuse, elle parvient à griffonner à la fois un autoportrait et mosaïque d'une communauté. Dans son roman, structuré en trois parties principales, la troisième, intitulée *Les Voix Ensevelies*, représente la section la plus volumineuse. Au sein de cette partie, l'autrice se consacre à l'écoute des témoignages des femmes maquisardes, avec une attention particulière portée à Chérifa, l'une des voix asphyxiées du Mont Chenoua. En tant que lecteurs, nous percevons que les narrations de deux femmes algériennes se fusionnent harmonieusement ; leurs voix s'entremêlent au point de ne former qu'une seule entité, mettant ainsi en lumière une profonde intégralité et unicité:

Chérifa ! Je désirais recréer ta course : dans le champ isolé, l'arbre se dresse tragiquement devant toi qui crains les chacals. Tu traverses ensuite les villages, entre des gardes, amenée jusqu'au camp de prisonniers qui grossit chaque année... Ta voix s'est prise au piège ; mon parler français la déguise

sans l'habiller. A peine si je frôle l'ombre de ton pays ! (Djébar, 1995, p. 202)

Ainsi, le récit nous permet d'observer comment le ton narratif du roman oscille entre autofiction et autobiographie plurielle à travers le niveau historique. Hafid Gafaiti, professeur, journaliste écrivain algérien qui est intéressé par le thème des femmes dans les romans des écrivains francophones postcoloniaux décrit la reconstruction par Djébar, elle-même, de sa propre vie à travers la structure polyphonique de cette façon:

Et c'est à partir de l'écriture conçue comme jonction entre l'individuel et le collectif qu'elle se sentira investie en tant qu'une Algérienne pour reparcourir son histoire et l'Histoire de son pays et en tant que femme pour la réécrire d'un point de vue féminin, avec et pour les autres femmes. (Gafaiti, 1999, pp. 119-128)

Dans les chapitres numérotés et intitulés du roman d'Assia Djébar, nous sommes face à l'écriture historique dominée par les hommes, aux témoignages des femmes anonymes d'Algérie, ainsi qu'aux chapitres dans lesquels sont également inclus les récits extrêmement intimes de la vie personnelle de la romancière, tels qu'une lettre envoyée par un jeune homme, qui deviendra plus tard son époux, déchirée et jetée par son père pendant ses années de lycée. Ils évoquent également des événements comme le soir de son mariage, sa première tentative de suicide dans sa jeunesse, et bien d'autres. La succession des chapitres, alternant entre récits personnels et discours historiques polyphoniques, révèle le chevauchement de ces différentes couches narratives. L'intervention du « je » dans les récits historiques à maintes reprises nous le prouve. Dans le chapitre numéroté I, où elle se fait la transmettrice de l'histoire de la colonisation de l'Algérie, pendant qu'elle retrace *la première face à face*, elle s'insère dans le récit tout d'un coup:

A mon tour, j'écris dans sa langue (dans la langue française), mais plus de cent cinquante ans après. Je me demande, comme se le demande l'état-major de la flotte, si le dey Hussein est monté sur la terrasse de sa Casbah (...) Je m'imagine, moi, que la femme de Hussein a négligé sa prière de l'aube et est monté sur la terrasse. (Djébar, 1995, pp. 15-16)

Afin d'affirmer cette dialectique entre deux discours, -à savoir discours du niveau historique et celui du personnel qui nous conduit vers l'autofiction- Mildred Mortimer,

à partir du reportage qu'elle réalise avec Assia Djébar conclut ainsi : « Elle rattache l'histoire coloniale occultée de l'Algérie à son histoire personnelle » (Mortimer, 2013, p. 223).

Il serait également impertinent de ne pas mentionner « l'écriture en français » dans l'écriture autofictionnelle d'Assia Djébar. L'écriture en français a toujours été problématique dans la vie littéraire d'Assia Djébar, née au carrefour de plusieurs langues - arabe, berbère, français - et cultures. Pour Assia Djébar, qui maîtrise le français, mais qui boîte en arabe classique et en berbère, langues qui font entendre la voix de ses ancêtres, qu'elle n'a jamais complètement appris, écrire dans la langue du colonisateur faisait aussi partie de son aventure littéraire autofictionnelle. La romancière, qui est allée dans une école française avec le soutien de son père et y a bien appris le français, a voulu apprendre l'arabe classique, mais n'y est pas parvenue. Lorsqu'elle veut apprendre l'arabe classique comme deuxième langue étrangère, le directeur de l'école rejettera cette demande sous prétexte de ne pas avoir assez d'élèves : « Juste pour vous ! Vous, une seule élève ! s'est exclamée avec une pointe d'indignation la directrice qui s'était déplacée parce que je m'étonnais tout haut, après avoir levé, le doigt (...) » (Djébar, 2008, p. 121). En raison de telles impossibilités, Assia Djébar ne pourra jamais apprendre l'arabe à un niveau suffisant pour produire une œuvre littéraire. Pourtant, dans cette écriture autofictionnelle de Djébar, le français et l'arabe sont à la fois très proches et nettement séparés l'un de l'autre, ce qui paraît assez contradictoire. D'une part, le français, la langue dans laquelle elle a écrit ses œuvres, est la langue du colonisateur, du sang et d'autre part, il se fait la langue de la pensée, de l'intellectualité, de l'émancipation et de la liberté. L'arabe, en revanche, est toujours resté la blessure incurable d'Assia Djébar, le chant de ses ancêtres, la langue de l'amour, de l'affection et de la prière. Comme l'auto-écriture signifiait pour Djébar ouvrir le voile sur la voix et le corps, écrire « je » dans sa propre langue, à savoir l'arabe classique, signifiait briser les tabous islamiques. Il est inacceptable pour une femme arabo-musulmane de dire « je » en langue arabe alors que même dans le Coran, qui est le livre saint de l'islam et transmet le discours de Dieu à l'humanité, le pronom sujet au pluriel « nous » est utilisé au lieu de « je ». Pour citer afin de montrer le langage du Coran : « Et lorsque nous demandâmes aux anges de se prosterner devant Adam, ils se prosternèrent à l'exception d'Iblis qui refusa, s'enfla d'orgueil et fut parmi les infidèles. Et nous dîmes ... »¹

1 <https://quran.com/fr/la-vache/34-37> Consulté dernièrement: le 11 juillet 2023.

Comme nous venons de le mentionner, le rapport de l'écrivaine à la langue française semble assez complexe et contradictoire. L'interdiction de dire « je » dans sa propre langue l'a également empêchée de s'exprimer dans sa propre langue. Lesdites raisons ont poussé Assia Djebar à écrire à la fois en français, la langue du colonisateur, langue de *l'Autre* et à fictionnaliser son histoire intime. D'autre part, il convient de souligner que la langue française, qui a joué un rôle fondamental dans la systématisation de l'histoire coloniale qui a duré de nombreuses années, est devenue un domaine d'existence important pour Assia Djebar sur le chemin de l'émancipation. C'est dans cette langue qu'elle a créé un espace d'expression libre interstitiel pour se décrire, le lien essentiel qui se tisse entre le français et la romancière s'instrumentalise pour une autofiction. : « J'écris donc et en français, langue de l'ancien colonisateur, qui est devenue néanmoins et irréversiblement celle de ma pensée, tandis que je continue à aimer, à souffrir, également à prier (quand parfois je prie) en arabe, ma langue maternelle »² (Djebar, 2000). Dès lors, le français devient la langue dans laquelle elle se sent bien plus libre que l'arabe, et dans laquelle elle a déchiré le voile sur la voix ensevelie féminine que l'islam imposait aux femmes. Tout en reconstruisant l'histoire coloniale de l'Algérie d'un point de vue féminin dans cette langue adverse, elle parvient à instaurer son parcours individuel et ose dire « je » et écrire ses souvenirs intimes fictionnalisés, le champ linguistique qui rend possible l'autofiction est donc le français. De ce point de vue, tout en accédant à la conscience collective de la femme algérienne grâce au langage du colonisateur, elle peut aussi descendre au plus profond d'elle-même.

L'Amour, la Fantasia, s'achève sur une image frappante qui interpelle profondément la conscience du lecteur, constituant une remise en question percutante et incontestable : l'image d'une main coupée d'une algérienne inconnue. A la fin du roman, Assia Djebar relate que l'écrivain-peintre français Eugène Fromentin a visité Laguat, une ville algérienne occupée par les forces françaises après un terrible siège en juin 1853. Elle mentionne un détail horrible qu'Eugène Fromentin a rencontré dans la ville, où la puanteur des cadavres s'est élevée même six mois après le massacre : « Fromentin ramasse, dans la poussière, une main coupée d'Algérienne anonyme. Il la jette ensuite sur son chemin » (Djebar, 1995, p. 313). Assia Djebar prend la main coupée de cette femme, que Fromentin a retrouvée dans une ville détruite d'Algérie et jetée sur la route : « Plus tard, je me saisis de cette main vivante, main de la mutilation et du souvenir et

2 <https://remue.net/Assia-Djebar-Idiomes-de-l-exil-et-langue-de-l-irreductibilite> Discours d'Assia Djebar pendant qu'elle recevait le Prix pour la Paix, Idiome de l'exil et la langue de l'irréductibilité, Consulté dernièrement: le 11 juillet 2023.

je tente de lui faire porter le 'qalam' » (p. 313). Assia Djébar fait référence à l'acte d'écrire avec cette grande métaphore de la main qu'Eugène Fromentin a trouvée et tendue vers elle, car la main est l'organe qui tient le crayon (el qalam) et cette main est représentée comme appartenant à une femme anonyme algérienne. Elle prend cette main mutilée et perdue dans l'anonymat par l'intermédiaire de laquelle elle fait entendre la voix de ces femmes muettes occultées dans un silence holistique, et à travers cette reconstruction historique au féminin, elle rend cette main à ses aïeules. Grâce à ce 'qalam' qu'Assia Djébar exprime avec la métaphore de la main, elle est capable de reconstituer l'histoire de son propre pays au pluriel et d'écrire sa propre vie à un niveau fictionnel tout en recréant une spatio-temporalité fictive où il est possible de restaurer la voix féminine dans l'ombre.

Conclusion

L'autofiction est un domaine littéraire important préférée par les écrivains où l'écriture autobiographique n'est pas toujours possible pour diverses raisons. Lorsque le contexte des écrivains francophones est pris en compte, les écrivains qui ne peuvent pas écrire leurs propres histoires de vie fusionnent la réalité et la fiction dans des romans autofictionnels, tel est le cas d'Assia Djébar. La romancière est devenue l'une des écrivains qui a marqué ce domaine avec ses œuvres littéraires dans le domaine de la littérature francophone. La romancière, qui n'entend que l'arabe classique à l'entourage familial auprès des siens et ne réussit jamais à apprendre suffisamment cette langue pour la maîtriser, finit par s'exprimer en français, langue adverse pour les Algériens. Puisque le patriarcat islamique considère l'expression de soi en tant que transgression, Assia Djébar donc s'écrit en relâchant les liens avec la réalité à une échelle micro, tandis qu'elle devient porteuse de la voix des femmes du mont Chenoua à une échelle macro. Dans la société patriarcale arabo-musulmane, les voix des femmes ont déjà été supprimées et elles n'ont reçu aucun espace de vie dans la société, tandis que l'écriture des femmes, c'est-à-dire montrer leur existence dans un domaine dominé par les hommes, et même dire « je » est le niveau de transgression le plus avancé et sans frontières. Ainsi, Assia Djébar, comme beaucoup d'autres écrivains francophones, s'oriente vers l'autofiction et le récit fragmenté, comme l'appelle Serge Doubrovsky plutôt que vers l'écriture autobiographique. Donc, le moi d'Assia Djébar doit être considéré comme un je-nous, outre sa propre voix, il est possible d'y entendre aussi la voix des ancêtres féminins de la résistance, ce roman est un roman autofictionnel qui se fait également la porte-parole des siennes.

Dans son *Pacte Autobiographique*, Philippe Lejeune disait que l'autobiographie est un récit inévitablement rétrospectif qui doit s'adapter aux certaines catégories et qui se focalise sur la vie individuelle d'une personne. Ce faisant, il souligne l'existence d'un pacte entre l'auteur et le texte, qui ne doit pas être rompu pour qu'il y ait l'autobiographie. Gasparini, un autre théoricien, a soutenu l'idée que la réalité et la fiction ne doivent pas être considérées comme des antagonistes, dans un contexte autobiographique ce qu'un auteur doit effectuer, c'est qu'il confronte la réalité et la fiction en les faisant coexister dans son récit, ce qui nous pousse simultanément à l'autofiction. De l'autre côté, Serge Doubrovsky met l'accent sur l'impossibilité d'une reconstruction d'une vie à travers l'autobiographie. Il disait que la vie se vit dans le corps ; l'autre, c'est un texte, l'idée avec laquelle se cristallise l'exigence de la coexistence de la réalité et la fiction, autrement dit la réalité fait basculer le récit vers la fiction. Par conséquent, selon Doubrovsky, chaque texte est de toute façon un champ de réalité référentielle, il soutient que le pacte autobiographique de Lejeune ne sera jamais pleinement valide en raison de trous mnémoniques, du besoin de censure, de l'aphasie conscient ou de changements à la demande. En bref, chaque texte, en tant que domaine de réalité référentielle, requiert l'autofiction pour la reconstruction d'une vie et la réinvention d'un parcours personnel. L'écrivaine francophone reconnue, Assia Djebar, a également recouru au récit autofictionnel en raison de la structure patriarcale de la société arabe musulmane, de la répression de l'écriture féminine, de l'interdiction du pronom personnel 'je' dans un contexte islamique, et de son manque de maîtrise de l'arabe, bien qu'elle ait été élevée dans un milieu bilingue et biculturel. En tant que romancière algérienne mais s'exprimant en français, Assia Djebar n'avait d'autre choix que d'utiliser la langue du colonisateur, ce qui l'a poussée à rompre intentionnellement avec le pacte autobiographique de Philippe Lejeune.

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Eko-Çeviribilim Bağlamında Edebî Eser Çevirisi Üzerine Betimleyici Bir Çalışma

A Descriptive Study on Literary Translation in the Context of Eco-Translatology

Nesibe ERKALAN ÇAKIR¹



¹Assistant Professor, Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Translation and Interpretation, Karaman, Türkiye

ORCID: N.E.Ç. 0000-0002-5437-6076

Corresponding author:

Nesibe ERKALAN ÇAKIR,
Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University,
Faculty of Letters, Department of
Translation and Interpretation,
Karaman, Türkiye
E-mail: nsb.erkalan@gmail.com

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ÖZ

Çevirmenin, çeviri sürecinin merkezinde olduğu ve buna bağlı olarak çeviri metnin ekolojisinden sorumlu kişi olarak görüldüğü eko-çeviri anlayışı, son zamanlarda araştırmacıların ilgi duyduğu konulardan biri hâline gelmiştir. Eko-çeviri anlayışında çeviri, bir yandan kaynak metinde yer alan ekolojik unsurları ön plana çıkarırken, diğer yandan da erek metin okuyucusunda ekolojik farkındalık oluşturmaktadır. Çin asıllı çeviribilim araştırmacıları Gengshen Hu ve Youlan Tao'nun (2016) bahsettiği eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımı ise çeviri eyleminin ekolojik bir bakış açısıyla incelenmesi ve bu nedenle çeviri sürecinde ekolojik unsurların ön planda tutulması bakımından diğer çeviribilim yaklaşımlarından ayrılmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, bu yaklaşımın dilbilim, edebiyat, kültür, iletişim veya sanat gibi çeşitli alanlardan farklı olarak çeviriyi eko-holizm ışığında yorumladığını belirtmek mümkündür. Bu çalışmada amaç, çeviribilim alanında nispeten yeni bir çalışma konusu olan eko-çeviri yaklaşımını Türkiye'de yürütülecek çeviri çalışmalarına katkı sağlaması açısından edebî eserlerin çevirisi ile ilişkilendirerek yorumlamaktır. Bu bağlamda öncelikle Yaşar Kemal'in *Yılanı Öldürseler* adlı eserinde geçen benzetme ifadeleri belirlenmiştir. Belirlenen bu benzetme ifadeleri, Fransızca çevirileri ile eşleştirildikten sonra Hu ve Tao'nun eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımı çerçevesinde önerdiği denge ve uyum ilkesi, çoklu eko-entegrasyon ilkesi, ortak yaşam (simbiyoz) ve çeşitlilik ilkesi ile çevirmenin sorumluluğu ilkesi olarak isimlendirilen dört ilke dikkate alınarak analiz edilmiştir. Analiz sonucunda, Türkçe metinde geçen benzetme ifadelerinin büyük çoğunluğunun Fransızcaya eko-çeviribilim ilkelere uygun bir şekilde çevrildiği görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eko-çeviribilim, Eko-çeviri, Edebî Çeviri, Türk edebiyatı, Yaşar Kemal

ABSTRACT

The eco-translatology approach, in which the translator is at the center of the translation process and, accordingly, has the responsibility for the ecology of the target text, has recently become a topic of interest to researchers. In the eco-translation approach, the translation process not only highlights the ecological elements in the source text but also creates ecological awareness for the reader of the target text. The eco-translatology approach was put forward by Chinese translation studies researchers Gengshen Hu and Youlan Tao to examine the act of translation from an ecological perspective. Therefore, this approach brings ecological elements to the forefront in



the translation process and in this respect differs from other translation approaches. Therefore, this approach can be said to interpret translation in light of eco-holism, unlike various fields such as linguistics, literature, culture, communications, or art. The study aims to interpret literary translation in the context of the eco-translatology approach. In this context, I have first identified the simile expressions in Yashar Kemal's book, *Yılanı Öldürseler* and I compared these simile expressions with their French translations in light of the eco-translatology approach. For the analysis, I've taken into account the following fundamental four principles Hu and Tao (2016) proposed within the framework of their approach: the principle of balance and harmony, the principle of multiple eco-integration, the principle of symbiosis and diversity, and the principle of translator responsibility. As a result of the analysis, the simile expressions in the source text are observed to have mostly been translated into French in accordance with the principles of eco-translatology.

Keywords: Eco-translatology, eco-translation, literary translation, Turkish literature, Yashar Kemal

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Ecological consciousness has in fact been becoming more and more important in many fields around the world, and the increasing awareness in ecological issues encourages people to protect the environment. Correspondingly, many in the world today are willing to adopt new eco-responsible practices (George & Faurite, 2020, p. 6). In translation studies, this awareness stands out with the term *eco-translation*. In this approach, translation not only highlights the ecological elements in the source text but also creates ecological awareness in the readers of the target text.

The eco-translatology approach was proposed and named by the Chinese translation studies researchers Gengshen Hu and Youlan Tao (2016, p. 116) in their study titled "Eco-Translatology: A New Paradigm of Eco-Translation- A Comparative Study on Approaches to Translation Studies." Their study presented this new approach in the context of eco-translation, and this approach comprises the theoretical basis for the current study.

This study sets out to interpret literary translations in the context of eco-translation, which is a relatively new field of study among translation research. In this framework, the study first explains the eco-translation approach Hu and Tao (2016) proposed alongside its philosophical and theoretical background. The study then identifies the simile expressions in *Yılanı Öldürseler* written by Yashar Kemal (2016) and analyzes the French translations of these simile expressions in accordance with the eco-translatology approach. Yashar Kemal is a Turkish author who has attached great importance to ecology and skillfully reflects his attitude in almost all of his works.

In the process of collecting data, the study found 42 simile expressions in *Yılanı Öldürseler*. Before analyzing these expressions and their translations, they were classified as follows:

- a) Translations that are both formed with the basic simile structure and compatible with the principles of eco-translatology. This group has 19 examples.
- b) Translations that are formed with the basic simile structure but are not compatible with the principles of eco-translatology. This group has four examples.
- c) Translations that are not formed with the basic simile structure but are compatible with the principles of eco-translatology. This group has 17 examples.
- ç) Translations that used no simile expression at all. This group has two examples.

Apart from this classification, the analysis takes into consideration the following four principles Hu and Tao (2016, pp. 127–128) proposed in the context of the eco-translatology approach:

- 1) The principle of balance and harmony,
- 2) The principle of multiple eco-integration,
- 3) The principle of symbiosis and diversity,
- 4) The principle of translator responsibility.

As a result, the study has found the translations for five of the 42 simile expressions in the source text to be incompatible with the principles of eco-translatology, whereas the translations of the other 37 simile expressions are compatible with these principles. Taken together, these results suggest the simile expressions in the source text to have mostly been translated into French in accordance with the principles of eco-translatology.

This study has addressed the eco-translatology approach in the context of literary translation. In today's world where ecological issues are becoming more and more important in many fields, not only producing new studies in the field of eco-translation or eco-translatology but also conducting new research by interacting with other disciplines will both contribute to the field of translation studies as well as provide researchers with a different perspective. In this respect, two aims of this study have been to inspire new studies in this field and to raise awareness on this issue.

Giriş

Türk çeviribilim literatüründe eko-çeviri olarak isimlendirilen çalışma alanı, çeviri pratiklerinde ekolojik farkındalığın göz önünde bulundurulduğu anlayışı temsil etmektedir. Bu anlayışa dair Türkiye’de henüz yeterli bilimsel çalışma bulunmasa da dünya genelinde çeviribilim araştırmacıları tarafından her geçen gün daha fazla ilgi görmektedir. Bu konu bağlamında şimdiye kadar Türkiye’de yayımlanmış üç bilimsel makale ve bir kitap bölümü çalışması tespit edilmiştir. Bunlardan biri, Emine Bogenç Demirel ve Fulya Marmara tarafından 2020 yılında yayımlanmış olan *Müdahil Bir Çeviri Örneği Olarak Eko-Çeviri* başlıklı çalışmadır. Araştırmacılar söz konusu çalışmada müdahil çeviri kavramına odaklanarak eko-çeviriyi türcülük karşıtı (anti- speciesist) bağlamda değerlendirmeyi amaçlamışlardır (Bogenç Demirel ve Marmara, 2020). Eko-çeviri bağlamında tespit edilen bir diğer çalışma, Gökçen Hastürkoğlu tarafından 2020 yılında *A study on the relationship between translation ecology and food translation* başlığı ile yayımlanmıştır. Hastürkoğlu bu çalışmasında, kültürel bir unsur olarak yemek konusuna odaklanarak çeviri ekolojisi ile yemek ekolojisini ilişkilendirmiş ve bu bağlamda çevirmenlerin çeviri süreçlerinde benimsedikleri yöntemleri yorumlamıştır (Hastürkoğlu, 2020). Türkiye’de eko-çeviri konusunu ele alan diğer bir çalışma, Selen Tekalp tarafından 2021 yılında *Ecocriticism and Translation: A Descriptive Study on Elif Shafak’s Bit Palas* başlığıyla yayımlanmıştır. Tekalp çalışmasında eko-kritik ve eko-çeviri konusuna dair geniş bir literatür bilgisine yer verdikten sonra, eko-eleştirel bir metnin çeviri yoluyla yeni bir kültürel ve ekolojik ortamda nasıl yeniden var edildiği konusunu tartışmıştır (Tekalp, 2021). Eko-çeviri konusunda tespit edilen diğer çalışma, Esra Çimen Karayürek tarafından 2022 yılında kitap bölümü olarak yayımlanan *Ekoçeviri Bağlamında Çizgi Roman Çevirileri: Zener’in Laneti Örneği*’dir. Araştırmacı bu çalışmada, Jean-Christophe Grangé’nin *Zener’in Laneti* adlı çizgi roman serisini ele alarak söz konusu serinin Fransızcadan Türkçeye yapılmış çevirilerini eko-çeviri konusunda ileri sürülen yaklaşımlar çerçevesinde yorumlamıştır (Çimen Karayürek, 2022).

Bu çalışmaya kuramsal açıdan ışık tutan yaklaşım ise Gengshen Hu ve Youlan Tao’nun (2016) öne sürdüğü eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımıdır. Çin asıllı çeviribilim araştırmacıları Hu ve Tao, eko-çeviri bağlamında 2016’da yayımladıkları *Eco-translatology: A new paradigm of Eco-Translation- A Comparative Study on Approaches to Translation Studies* (Eko-Çeviribilim: Yeni Bir Eko-Çeviri Paradigması- Çeviribilim Yaklaşımları Üzerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma) başlıklı çalışmada, eko-çeviri bağlamında yeni bir yaklaşım öne sürmüşler ve bu yeni yaklaşımı Eco-Translatology (Eko-Çeviribilim) olarak isimlendirmişlerdir (2016,

s. 116). Kuramcılar, Dođu ve Batı arasında eviribilim teorileri aısından var olduđuna inandıkları dengesizliđin bu yaklařım vesilesiyle ortadan kalkabileceđine inanmaktadırlar (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 116). Sz konusu yaklařımı diđer eviribilim yaklařımlarından farklı kılan zellik, eviri eyleminin ekolojik bir bakıř aısıyla incelenmesi ve dolayısıyla ekolojik unsurların eviri srecine dair bir tartıřma konusu olarak ele alınmasıdır. Bu bađlamda eko-eviribilim yaklařımı; dilbilim, edebiyat, kltr, iletiřim veya sanat gibi eřitli alanlardan farklı olarak eviriyi eko-holizm iřıđında yorumlamaktadır (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 123). Eko-holizm kavramı, genel ekolojiye btncl bakıř olarak yorumlanabileceđinden, eviri eylemine eko-holistik aıdan yaklařımı; kaynak metin yazarının, kaynak metnin, evirmenin, eviri metnin, okurun ve yayınevinin bir btn olarak eviri srecine dhil olduđu ekolojik ortamın vurgulanması olarak dřnmek mmkndr. Bu aıdan, eviri srecinin merkezinde evirmenin yer aldıđını belirtmek gerekmektedir (Bo, 2014, s. 708). Dolayısıyla evirmen, eviri metnin ekolojisinden sorumlu olan kiřidir.

Bu alıřmanın amacı, eviribilim alanında nispeten yeni bir alıřma konusu olan eko-eviri yaklařımını Trkiye’de yrtlecek eviri alıřmalarına katkı sađlaması aısından edeb eserlerin evirisi ile iliřkilendirerek yorumlamaktır. Bu erevede nceliklerle Hu ve Tao’nun ne srdđ eko-eviribilim yaklařımı, felsefi ve kuramsal alt yapısıyla aıklanmıřtır. Ardından, Trk yazar Yařar Kemal’in kaleme aldıđı *Yılanı ldrseler* (2016) adlı eserde geen benzetme ifadeleri tespit edilmiř ve bu benzetme ifadelerinin Fransızca evirileri eko-eviribilim yaklařımına gre analiz edilmiřtir. Yařar Kemal, ekoloji konusuna verdiđi nemle bilinen ve ekolojiye verdiđi nemi neredeyse her eserinde ustaca hissettiren bir yazardır.

Veri toplama srecinde, sz konusu eserde toplam kırk iki benzetme ifadesine rastlanmıřtır. Trke eserde yer alan kırk iki benzetme ifadesinin evirileri analiz edilirken řu řekilde sınıflandırılmıřtır:

- a. Benzetme yapısı kullanılan ve eko-eviribilim ilkelerine uygun olan eviriler,
- b. Benzetme yapısı kullanılan ancak eko-eviribilim ilkelerine uygun olmayan eviriler,
- c. Benzetme yapısı kullanılmayan ancak eko-eviribilim ilkelerine uygun eviriler,
- . Benzetme ifadesinin hibir řekilde kullanılmadıđı eviriler.

Bu sınıflandırmada; benzetme yapısı kullanılan ve eko-eviribilim ilkelerine uygun olan on dokuz, benzetme yapısı kullanılan ancak eko-eviribilim ilkelerine uygun olmayan drt, benzetme yapısı kullanılmayan ancak eko-eviribilim ilkelerine uygun

on yedi, benzetme ifadesinin hiçbir şekilde kullanılmadığı iki çeviri tespit edilmiştir. Tespit edilen bu çeviriler Türkçe metinde geçen hâlleri ile karşılaştırmalı olarak analiz edilirken Hu ve Tao'nun eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımı bağlamında önerdikleri şu dört ilke dikkate alınmıştır:

- Denge ve uyum ilkesi
- Çoklu eko-entegrasyon ilkesi
- Ortak yaşam (simbiyoz) ve çeşitlilik ilkesi
- Çevirmenin sorumluluğu ilkesi (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 127-128)

Eko-Çeviribilim Anlayışının Temeli ve Kapsamı

Eko-çevirinin felsefi temeli çağdaş ekolojiye dayanmaktadır. Ekoloji, ilk kez Alman zoolog Ernst Haeckel tarafından bir bilim dalı olarak önerilmiştir. Haeckel ekolojiyi, "organizmalar ve bu organizmaların çevreleri arasındaki ilişkileri inceleyen" bilim dalı olarak tanımlamıştır (aktaran Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 123). Çeviri ekolojisi konusunun, ekolojinin çevirmenlerin çeviri sürecinde karar alma ve bu kararları uygulamalarındaki etkileri üzerine incelemeler yapan Çinli akademisyenler tarafından gündeme getirildiği bilinmektedir. Bununla birlikte, "eko-çeviri" terimini ilk kez Clive Scott isimli bir araştırmacı 2015 yılında, Exeter Üniversitesi'nde verdiği bir derste kullanmıştır (Cronin, 2017, s. 2). Hu ve Tao (2016) ise "eko-çeviribilim" terimini kullanarak yeni bir anlayış ortaya koymuşlardır.

Quirong Wang (2023), eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımı üzerine yaptığı bir çalışmada, bu yaklaşımın 2001 yılında şekillenmeye başladığını belirtmiştir (s. 312). Eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımının felsefi arka planında Çin geleneksel kültürünün ve düşüncesinin yer aldığına vurgu yapan Wang, "doğa ve insan arasındaki uyum", "uyumlu bir arada yaşama" ve "ölümsüz yaşam" gibi birtakım prensiplerin ekolojik çevirinin özünü oluşturduğuna dikkat çekmiştir (Wang, 2023, s. 313). Çeviri sürecini ekolojik bir bakış açısıyla ele alması nedeniyle eko-çeviribilimi çeviribilim alanında özel bir yaklaşım olarak tanımlayan Ting Bo, *Theory of Translation as Adaptation and Selection (Uyarlama ve Seçme Olarak Çeviri Kuramı)* isimli eserin yazarı olan Çin asıllı araştırmacı Gengshen Hu'yu eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımının öncüsü olarak tanıtmıştır (2014, s. 709). Bo'ya (2014) göre, Hu söz konusu eserde çeviriyi çevirmenin rehberliğinde yapılan bir uyarlama ve seçme işlemi olarak nitelendirmiştir. Hu, eseri boyunca çevirmenin üstlendiği rolün altını çizmiş, eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımı çerçevesinde çevirmenin yaptığı işin temelde eko-ortama uyarlama

işlemi olduğunu söylemiştir (Bo, 2014, s. 709). Burada Hu'nun kullandığı eko-ortam terimi; dilin, kültürün, toplumun, yazarın ve okurun bir bütün olarak bir araya geldiği ortak payda gibi kaynak metin, dil ve sözcüklerin yansıttığı dünyayı kapsamaktadır (Hu, 2010, s. 283). Dolayısıyla eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımına göre çevirmen, çevirinin ekolojik ortamına uyum sağlayarak kaynak metni erek metne dönüştürmektedir.

Dil açısından dönüşüm; çevirmenin sözcükler, cümle kalıpları ve çeşitli dil biçimleri arasından tercihler yaparak çeviri kararı almasını işaret etmektedir. Bu süreç doğal olarak çevirmenin her iki dilin ortamı, dil sistemi ve ifade biçimleri gibi özelliklere hâkim olmasını, böylece kaynak metinde geçen yan anlam da dâhil olmak üzere metnin bütününe doğru anlayarak yorumlamasını gerektirmektedir (Guo ve Ma, 2022, s. 642). Dil unsurlarının yanı sıra, eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımına göre çevirmen, kaynak ve erek olmak üzere her iki dilin kültürel çağrışımlarını da göz önünde bulundurarak bu çağrışımların erek dile doğru bir biçimde aktarımına ve yorumlanmasına dikkat etmelidir (Wang, 2023, s. 313).

Eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımında söylem sistemi, eko-akıl rehber alınarak oluşturulmaktadır. Bu bağlamda çeviri metinlerde şu altı aşama temel alınmaktadır:

1. Bütünlüğün ve bağıntının vurgulanması,
2. Canlılık ve dengenin aranması,
3. Eko-estetiğin yansıtılması,
4. "Çeviri topluluğu"nın belirlenmesi,
5. Çeviri etiğine bağlı kalınması,
6. Birlik ve çeşitlilik konularının vurgulanması (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 123).

Dolayısıyla eko-çeviri anlayışında çeviri, kaynak metinde yer alan ekolojik unsurları ön plana çıkarmakla kalmamakta, aynı zamanda erek metin okuyucusunda ekolojik farkındalık oluşturmaktadır. Nitekim çeviri, Clive Scott'a (2015) göre ekolojik bilincin oluşmasına katkı sağlayacak özelliklere sahiptir (s. 286).

Hu ve Tao'ya (2016) göre eko-çeviribilimde üç tema temel alınmaktadır. Bu temalar; ekoloji, yaşam ve hayatta kalmadır. Eko-çeviribilim bağlamında sıralanan ekoloji başlıklı tema, çeviri ekolojisini işaret etmekte; çevirinin ekolojik sistemi ve çeviri ortamı gibi

1 Çeviri topluluğu ifadesi; çevirmenler, okurlar, yazarlar, sponsorlar, yayıncılar ve yorumcular gibi çeviri sürecine dâhil olan "kişileri" kapsamaktadır (Wang, 2023, s. 313).

konuları kapsamaktadır. Yaşam başlıklı tema, çeviri sürecinin gerçekleştiği metinleri işaret etmekte ve metinlerin bağlamlarını veya türlerini kapsamaktadır. Hayatta kalma teması ise çevirmenleri işaret etmektedir (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 125). Eko-çeviri yaklaşımında çeviri sürecinin bütünlüğüne vurgu yapıldığından, çeviri sürecine dâhil olan ekoloji, yaşam ve hayatta kalma temaları arasında sürekli bir etkileşimin olduğu varsayılmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, söz konusu temalardan herhangi birinde değişiklik olduğunda diğer temalar da bu değişiklikten etkilenmektedir. Örnek olarak, bir çeviri sürecinde yayın evi değiştiğinde çeviri politikasında birtakım değişiklikler olabilmekte ve buna bağlı olarak çeviri metnin üslubu da değişebilmektedir (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 125).

Eko-çeviri yaklaşımında benimsenen temel anlayış, çeviri metinde denge, tutarlılık ve bütünsel uyumun gözetilmesi üzerine kuruludur (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 125). Hu ve Tao (2016) bu bağlamda dört temel ilke önermişlerdir (s. 127- 128). Bunlar:

Denge ve uyum ilkesi: Burada, kaynak metin ekolojisi ile hedef metin ekolojisi arasındaki dengenin ve uyumun korunması amaçlanmaktadır. Dolayısıyla çevirmenin görevi, kaynak metnin dilsel, kültürel ve iletişimsel ekolojisini koruyarak çeviri sürecini tamamlamaktır. Öte yandan, kaynak metnin dilsel, kültürel ve iletişimsel ekolojisinin erek metinde de “varlığını sürdürmesi” için çevirmenin bir diğer görevi, kaynak metnin ekolojik ortamını erek metnin ekolojik ortamına uyarlama yoluyla çevirmektir (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 127).

Çoklu eko-entegrasyon ilkesi: Çoklu eko-entegrasyon ilkesi, temel olarak çeviri ölçütlerini ifade etmektedir. Bu bağlamda ön görülen ölçütler yalnızca kaynak metne sadakat veya erek okuru memnun etmekle sınırlı olmaktan ziyade kaynak metnin ekolojisinin erek metinde de sürdürülmesine işaret etmektedir (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 128).

Ortak yaşam (simbiyoz) ve çeşitlilik ilkesi: Bu ilke, çeviri kuramları ve farklı erek metinler üzerine yapılan çalışmalardaki ortak yaşam çeşitliliğini (simbiyotik çeşitliliği) ifade etmektedir. Daha açık bir ifadeyle, çeviribilim alanında üretilen çalışmalardaki çeşitlilik ve pratik anlamda ortaya çıkarılan farklı erek metinlerin “bir arada bulunması” çeviribilimin açısından normal bir durum olarak görülmektedir (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 128).

Çevirmenin sorumluluğu ilkesi: Çeviri eko-çevresi ile çeviri ürün arasındaki ilişkinin koordinasyonunda çevirmenin tüm sorumluluğu üstlenmesi olarak açıklanan çevirmenin sorumluluğu ilkesinde; çevre, kaynak metin ve erek metin arasındaki etkileşim ile ekolojik denge ve uyumun belirgin hâle getirilmesi amaçlanmaktadır (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 128).

Eko-eviribilim Yaklaşımının Edebî Eserlerdeki Görünümü

İnsan ve doğa arasındaki ilişkiler üzerine yapılan arařtırmaları kapsayan çağdař ekolojik anlayıř, ekolojik konuları doğa bilimleriyle sınırlandıran çerevenin genişletilmesi ve bu konuların sosyal ve beřerî bilimlerle de ilişkilendirilmesi görüřünü temel almaktadır (Hu ve Tao, 2016, s. 123). Böylece ekoloji, toplumların hayatta kalması ve kültürlerle dillerin sürdürülebilirliğini etkileyen merkezî bir mesele olarak görülmeye başlanmıřtır (Cronin, 2017, s. 2). Bu yeni anlayıřın karřılık bulduėu alanlardan biri de kuřkusuz, edebî metinlerdir. E. H. Rick Jarow (2021) doğanın, insanlık tarihinden ve insanın kaygılarından ayrı olmadığının altını çizerek edebî metinlerde anlatımın, doğal dünyanın ötesinde veya üzerinde deėil; doğayla iç içe gerekleřtiėine dikkat ekmiřtir (s. 92).

Edebî Sanat Olarak *Benzetme*

Doėan Aksan'ın, *Türkenin Gücü, Türk Dilinin Zenginliklerine Tanıklar* başlıklı eserinin en başında dikkat ektiėi gibi, diėer söz varlıklarına benzer şekilde benzetmeler de bir toplumun dili, kültürü ve düşünce yapısı hakkında fikir vermektedir (1999, s. 14). Pek ok dilin kendine özgü benzetme kurma biçimi olduėu gibi, bazı benzetmeler ise her dilde belirli bir kalıp hâlinde karřımıza çıkmaktadır (Aksan, 2020, s. 77). Örneėin, Türkede birinin ok güzel olduėu "ay parası gibi" ifadesiyle, benzetme yoluna başvurularak belirtilebilir. Benzer şekilde Fransızcada da aynı anlam, benzetme yoluyla, "belle/ beau comme un astre" biçiminde ifade edilmektedir.

Bir ifade biçimi olarak benzetmenin edebî yönüne değinilecek olursa, bu söz sanatının dilde anlatımı güçlendirmek ve canlı kılmak gibi amalar taşıdığını belirtmek mümkündür (Aksan, 2020, s. 77). İřaret edilen bir nesnenin niteliğinin veya belirli bir durumun özelliğinin daha etkili bir biçimde aktarılması amacıyla daha belirgin nitelikleri olan bir nesne veya durumdan faydalanılması yoluyla kurulan benzetmeler, Türkede yaygın olarak kullanılmaktadır (s. 139).

Yöntem açısından Türkede benzetmeler, temelde dört ana unsurun bir araya getirilmesiyle kurulmaktadır. Bunlar; benzeyen, benzetilen, benzetme yönü ve benzetme edatı olarak sıralanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda "pamuk gibi yumuřak eller" ifadesi incelendiğinde, benzeyen; yani benzetmeye konu olan varlığın "eller" olduėu görülmektedir. Bu ifadede kendisine benzetilen "pamuk", benzetme yönü "yumuřak" ve benzetme edatı ise "gibi" şeklinde açıklanabilir. Bununla birlikte, "pamuk eller"

ifadesinde olduğu gibi, söz konusu unsurlardan birkaçı olmadan da benzetmenin kurulabileceğini belirtmekte fayda vardır.

Yaşar Kemal'in *Yılanı Öldürseler* Adlı Eseri ve Fransızca Çevirisi Üzerine

Jean Pierre- Deleage, fikir ve eserleriyle Yaşar Kemal'in çağdaş edebiyat tarihinde önemli bir yere sahip olduğunu işaret ederek (Deleage, 1998, s. 7) onun eserlerine dair yapılacak çalışmalarda sosyolojik ve etnografik unsurların da göz önünde bulundurulması gerekliliğine dikkat çekmiştir. Nitekim eserlerin çoğunlukla geleneklere ve Orta Anadolu insanının hafızası ile diline kök salmış bir görünüm sunduğu belirtilmektedir. Bununla birlikte Deleage'a (1998) göre Kemal'in eserlerinde folklorik ve efsanevi motifler ona özgü bir üslupla işlenmiştir (s. 9). Yazarın; roman, deneme ve öykü türünde hatırı sayılır miktarda eseri bulunmaktadır.

Yaşar Kemal'in 1970'li yıllarda kaleme aldığı ve ilk baskısı 1976 yılında yapılan *Yılanı Öldürseler* adlı eser, Türk okuru tarafından ilgiyle karşılanmış ve belki de bu ilgi nedeniyle eserde geçen hikâye daha sonra Türk sinemasına uyarlanmıştır (Bakıcı, 2022, s. 36). Söz konusu eserle yazarın genel olarak töre kavramını somutlaştırmayı amaçladığı ve masum bir insanın öldürülmeye çalışılması gibi yanlış bir olay karşısında toplumun sessiz kalması ve hatta bu olayı onaylamasının ayıplandığı görülmektedir (Aminova, 2002, s. 164). Gerek *Yılanı Öldürseler* adlı eserde gerekse yazarın diğer eserlerinde toplumsal olayların yanı sıra doğa, doğadaki dönüşüm ve insanın doğayla ilişkisi rahatlıkla okunmaktadır. Bu bağlamda Kemal'in eserlerinde işlediği doğa kavramını Aziz Şeker, eko-sosyolojik açıdan iki gruba ayırmıştır (2019). Bunlardan ilki, eserlerde geçen ve bitki türlerini, dağları, nehirleri ve hayvanları içine alan fiziksel çevredir. Benimsediği bu fiziksel çevre odaklı yöntem ile Yaşar Kemal'in, ekolojik dengenin önem ve işlevini gözettiği yorumunu yapmak mümkündür. Şeker'in dikkat çektiği gruplandırmanın ikincisi ise üretim ve kentleşmeye bağlı ekosistemin olumsuz etkilenmesine ilişkindir (2019, s. 158). Başka bir deyişle Yaşar Kemal eserlerinde, bir yandan doğal ortamı tasvir ederken diğer yandan da insanın müdahalesi sonucunda değişen ekolojiye dair farkındalık oluşturmaya çalışmaktadır.

Yılanı Öldürseler adlı eser Türkçeden Fransızcaya (Celile) Münevver Andaç tarafından, *Tu écraseras le serpent* başlığıyla çevrilmiş ve bu çeviri eser 1982 yılında Gallimard yayınevi tarafından basılmıştır.

Eko-eviribilim Yaklařımı Baęlamında *Yılanı ldürseler*

Bu alıřmada, *Yılanı ldürseler* adlı eserde yer alan benzetme ifadeleri tespit edilerek bu ifadelerin Türkeden Fransızcaya evirileri eko-eviribilim yaklařımı ışığında karşılařtırmalı olarak analiz edilmiřtir. Eserde, otuz yedi cümlede, otuz altısı farklı olmak üzere kırk iki benzetme ifadesine rastlanmıřtır. Tespit edilen benzetme ifadelerinin Türke özgün hâlleri ile Fransızca evirilerinin analizleri, bu alıřmanın *Eko-eviribilim Anlayışının Temeli ve Kapsamı* başlığı altında sıralanan dört ilke çerevesinde yapılmıřtır. Bu dört ilke ışığında; denge ve uyum baęlamında kaynak metnin dilsel, kültürel ve iletişimsel ekolojisinin erek metne ne kadar yansıtıldığı, oklu eko- entegrasyon baęlamında kaynak metin yazarının iletmek istedięi mesajın eviri metin okuruna benzer şekilde aktarılıp aktarılmadığı ve evirmenin sorumluluęu baęlamında ise evirmen kararının, metinler (kaynak metin ve eviri metin) arasındaki ekolojik dengeyle ne kadar uyumlu olduęu konuları tartıřılmıřtır. Hu ve Tao'nun (2016) önerdikleri "ortak yařam ve eřitlilik ilkesi" başlıklı ilke, aynı metnin birden fazla yapılmıř evirilerini ele aldığından ve bu alıřmada incelenen eserin yalnızca bir evirisi olduğundan, söz konusu ilke analize dâhil edilmemiřtir.

Benzetme yapısı kullanılan ancak eko-eviribilim ilkelerine uygun olmayan eviriler: alıřmada yapılan analiz çerevesinde, *Yılanı ldürseler* adlı eserde tespit edilen ve alıřmanın inceleme nesnesi olarak belirlenen kırk iki benzetme ifadesinden üçünün Fransızcaya yapısal açıdan benzer şekilde evrildięi görölmüřtür. Fransızcaya yapısal açıdan benzer şekilde evrilmiř olan bu üç benzetme ifadesinin, kaynak metnin dilsel, kültürel ve iletişimsel ekolojisini yansıttığını söylemek mümkünse de bu ekolojinin erek metinde de varlığını sürdürdüğünü belirtmek pek mümkün görünmemektedir. Dolayısıyla, söz konusu üç benzetme ifadesinin evirilerinin eko-eviribilim baęlamında denge ve uyum ilkesine uygun olmadığı; buna baęlı olarak kaynak metin yazarının okura iletmek istedięi mesaj eviri metne tam olarak aktarılmadığından, oklu eko-entegrasyon ilkesine de uygun olmadığı ve evirmen kararının, metinler arasındaki ekolojik dengeyle uyumlu olmadığı saptanmıřtır.

Örnek 1:

Kaynak Metin: "Halilim **Binboęa kartalı gibiydi**. Halilim **Düldül řahini gibiydi**, Halilim **Aladaę doęanı gibiydi**." (Kemal, 2016, s. 33)

Çeviri Metin: “Toi, tu es le fils de mon cher Halil, Halil qui était **semblable aux aigles des Mille Taureaux, aux faucons du Mont Duldul! À l'épervier du Mont Aladag!**” (Kemal, 1982, s. 50)

Örnekte geçen üç benzetme ifadesi, Fransızca erek metne sözcüğü sözcüğüne olmasa da benzer bir şekilde çevrilmiştir. Çeviri metin okunduğunda kaynak metnin dilsel, kültürel ve iletişimsel ekolojisi anlaşılmaktadır ancak bu ekolojinin erek dilde varlığını sürdürüp sürdürmediği, tartışmaya açık bir konu olarak karşımızdadır. Nitekim, çeviri metin okuru açısından, çeviri metinde geçen yer isimlerinin tam olarak ne açıdan benzetilen konumunda olduğu pek de anlaşılır değildir. Bu ifadelerin çevirilerinde dipnot kullanımı, çeviri metin okurunun soru işaretini giderebilecek bir yöntem olarak düşünülebilirdi. Örneğin, çeviri metinde geçen “- Aussi vaillant que Zaloglou Rustem!” (Kemal, 1982, s. 105) cümlesine çevirmen bir dipnot ekleyip, “Zaloglou Rustem” in tarihî veya efsanevi bir şahsiyet olduğunu belirtmiştir.

Benzetme yapısı kullanılan ve eko-çeviribilim ilkelerine uygun olan çeviriler:

Bu çalışma kapsamında yapılan analiz için *Yılanı Öldürseler* adlı eserde tespit edilen yirmi benzeme ifadesinin, tıpkı Türkçede olduğu gibi Fransızcaya da benzetme yapısı kullanılarak çevrildiği görülmüştür. Tespit edilen bu yirmi ifadenin çevirisinde hem benzetme yapısı (benzeyen, benzetilen, benzetme yönü ve benzetme edatı) kullanılmış ve böylece kaynak metnin dilsel, kültürel ve iletişimsel ekolojisi erek metne aktarılmış hem de anlamsal açıdan bu ekolojinin erek dilde de varlığını sürdürdüğü sonucuna varılmıştır. Dolayısıyla, analiz edilen yirmi benzetme ifadesinin çevirisinde gerek denge ve uyum ilkesine gerek çoklu eko-entegrasyon ilkesine gerekse çevirmenin sorumluluğu ilkesine uygun bir yöntem izlendiğini belirtmek mümkündür.

Örnek 2:

Kaynak Metin: “Üstelik de **gül gibi yavrusunu** bırakıp da evlenecekmiş.” (Kemal, 2016, s. 23)

Çeviri Metin: “De plus, on raconte qu'elle se prépare à abandonner son **enfant beau comme les roses** pour se remarier.” (Kemal, 1982, s. 34)

Bu örnekte, “gül gibi yavru” ifadesinin karşılığı olarak çevirmenin tercih ettiği “enfant beau comme les roses” ifadesi, Hu ve Tao'nun eko-çeviribilim kapsamında önerdikleri çoklu eko-entegrasyon ilkesine gösterilebilecek en iyi örneklerden sayılabilir. Nitekim

kuramcılar söz konusu ilkeyi açıklarken çevirmenin hem kaynak metnin dilsel, kültürel ve iletişimsel ekolojisini koruması hem de erek dilin ekolojisine uygun bir çeviri süreci yürütmesi gerektiğini işaret etmektedirler. Türkçe metinde geçen “göl gibi” ifadesinin anlamı Fransızcada “beau, belle comme un ange” şeklinde ifade edilmektedir (Dictionnaires Le Robert, 2017). Bununla birlikte, çevirmenin sözcüğü sözcüğüne çeviri kararı, kaynak metnin dilsel, kültürel ve iletişimsel ekolojisini çeviri metne aktarmasını sağlamıştır. Böylece, kaynak metnin ekolojisi ile kaynak metin yazarının mesajının erek okur tarafından algılanması ihtimalinin arttığını düşünmek mümkündür. Buna bağlı olarak çevirmen sorumluluğu ilkesine göre de uygun bir çeviri sürecinin yürütüldüğü söylenebilir.

Örnek 3:

Kaynak Metin: “Ustura gibi kayalıkta uçurumun kıyıcığında, bir ayağı kayıverse, aşağıda, paramparça...” (Kemal, 2016, s. 99-100)

Çeviri Metin: “À l’extrême bord de l’abîme, sur les rochers acérés **comme des lames de rasoir.**” (Kemal, 1982, s. 148)

“Ustura gibi” benzetme ifadesinin yer aldığı bu örnek, “Benzetme yapısı kullanılan ve eko-çeviribilim ilkelerine uygun olan çeviriler” kategorisinde değerlendirilmiştir. Nitekim kaynak metinde geçen “ustura gibi” ifadesi, kayalığın keskin oluşunu işaret etmektedir. Bu ifade Fransızcaya “comme des lames de rasoir” şeklinde çevrilmiştir. Çevirmenin çeviri metinde kullandığı “comme des lames de rasoir” ifadesi, Fransızca sözlükte “sur la lame d’un rasoir” şeklinde geçmekte ve figüratif bir ifade olarak nitelendirilmektedir (Dictionnaires Le Robert, 2017). Çeviri metinde geçen söz konusu ifade hem benzetme yapısı hem de anlam açısından kaynak metnin ekolojisini yansıtmaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu çeviride, çevirmenin sorumluluğu ilkesi kapsamında uygun bir çeviri kararı verildiğini belirtmek mümkündür. Dahası çevirmen, kaynak metnin ekolojisinin erek metinde de varlık göstermesi dolayısıyla denge ve uyum ilkesine ve kaynak metinde yer verilen benzetme yapısı aracılığıyla kaynak metin yazarının iletmek istediği mesaj erek metne de aktarıldığından çoklu-eko entegrasyon ilkesine uygun bir çeviri ürün ortaya koymuştur.

Benzetme yapısı kullanılmayan ancak eko-çeviribilim ilkelerine uygun çeviriler: *Yılanı Öldürseler* adlı eserde tespit edilen on yedi benzetme ifadesinin, kaynak metinde kullanılan benzetme yapılarından farklı olarak çevrildiği görülmüştür. Bu on yedi benzetme ifadesinin çevirisinde benzetme yapısı kullanılmamış olmasına rağmen,

kaynak metnin kültürel ve iletişimsel ekolojisi erek metne aktarılmış ve bu ekoloji erek metinde varlığını sürdürmüştür. Dolayısıyla kaynak metin yazarının iletmek istediği mesaj erek metin aracılığıyla aktarılmıştır. Böylece çevirmenin sorumluluğu ilkesine uygun çeviriler gözlemlenmiştir.

Örnek 4:

Kaynak Metin: “Anasına **düşman gibi** bakıyorlardı onlar.” (Kemal, 2016, s. 25)

Çeviri Metin: “Eux qui regardaient sa mère **avec des yeux pleins de haine.**” (Kemal, 1982, s. 37)

Örnek 4’te, kaynak metinde geçen şekliyle bir benzetme yapısının kullanılmadığı görülmektedir. Öte yandan “kin dolu gözlerle” anlamına gelen “avec des yeux pleins de haine” ifadesi kaynak metnin kültürel ve iletişimsel ekolojisini erek metne yansıtmakta ve varlığını erek metinde sürdürmektedir. Buna ek olarak, söz konusu ifade her ne kadar yapısal açıdan kaynak metinde geçen yapıyla aynı olmasa da kaynak metin yazarının mesajı erek metin aracılığıyla anlaşılmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, bu örnekte yer alan çevirinin hem denge uyum ilkesine hem çoklu eko-entegrasyon ilkesine hem de çevirmenin sorumluluğu ilkesine uygun olduğu görülmüştür.

Örnek 5:

Kaynak Metin: “Lütfi karşısına geçti, **yağmur gibi** indiriyordu sövmeleri çocuğun suratına.” (Kemal, 2016, s. 19)

Çeviri Metin: “Les injures **pleuvaient** sur l’enfant.” (Kemal, 1982, s. 28)

Çalışmanın bu örneğinde, kaynak metin yazarının “yağmur gibi” şeklinde ifade ettiği benzetme ifadesinin Fransızca çevirisi ele alınmıştır. Fransızcada “Yağmur yağmak” anlamına gelen “pleuvoir” kelimesi herhangi bir benzetme yapısı içermemektedir. Bununla birlikte söz konusu Fransızca kelime, kaynak metnin içerdiği anlamı yansıtmaktadır. Bu nedenle, kaynak metnin ekolojisinin denge ve uyum ilkesi çerçevesinde erek metinde de varlığını sürdürdüğü belirtilebilir. Kaynak metinde geçen anlamın erek dilde de benzer bir biçimde yansıtılması dolayısıyla çeviri metnin çoklu eko-entegrasyon ilkesine uygun olduğu görülmekte; çevirmenin, kaynak metin ekolojisini erek metin ekolojisine yapı açısından olmasa da anlam açısından uyarlaması nedeniyle çevirmenin sorumluluğu ilkesine uygun bir çeviri ürün ortaya çıkardığı görülmektedir.

Benzetme ifadesinin hiçbir şekilde kullanılmadığı evriler: Eserde geen iki benzetme ifadesi Fransızcaya evrilmemiştir. Bahsi geen iki ifadenin evirisi yapılmadığından, Trke metinde geen dilsel, kltrel ve iletiřimsel ekolojinin erek dile yansıtılmadığı; kaynak metin yazarının iletmek istediđi mesajın erek okura aktarılmadığı ve evirmenin her iki metin arasındaki ekolojik dengeye uygun karar almadığı yorumunu yapmak mmkndr.

rnek 6:

Kaynak Metin: “Bu hallerini, ađıtlarını, **dađ gibi** bir ođlu ldrlmřse de yadırgıyordu.” (Kemal, 2016, s. 23)

eviri Metin: “On lui avait tué **son fils**, bien sr, mais tout de mme...” (Kemal, 1982, s. 34)

alıřmanın altıncı rneđinde, yazarın kaynak metinde yer verdiđi “dađ gibi” ifadesinin eviri metne aktarılmadığı; yalnızca “Ođlu ldrld.” řeklinde evrildiđi grlmektedir. Edebî eserlerde benzetme ifadelerinin daha ok dilde anlatımı glendirme amacını tařıdıđı grř dikkate alındığında, kaynak metinde yer alan benzetme ifadesinin eviri metne aktarılmamıř olması, yazarın iletmek istediđi mesajın eviri metne eksik bir biimde aktarıldığına dair bir iřaret olarak kabul edilebilir. Dolayısıyla, evrilmemiř bir ifadenin bulunduđu eviri metinde kaynak metnin dilsel, kltrel ve iletiřimsel ekolojisinin yansıtılmadığı ve yazarın mesajının eviri metne aktarılmadığı sonucuna ulařmak mmkndr.

rnek 7:

Kaynak Metin: “Kalkıp orada, uurumun **ustura gibi** tam kıyıcıđında yrmek istiyordu.” (Kemal, 2016, s. 90)

eviri Metin: “Il n’avait qu’une ide en tte: se remettre à marcher **au bord de l’abıme**, il tait persuad qu’il mourrait s’il ne le faisait pas.” (Kemal, 1982, s. 135)

alıřmanın son rneđinde, kaynak metinde ikinci kez geen “ustura gibi” benzetme ifadesinin eviri metne aktarılmadığı grlmřtr. evirmen “ustura gibi” ifadesini eviri metne aktarmayıp yalnızca “uurumun [...] kıyıcıđında” ifadesini aktarmayı tercih etmiřtir. Sz konusu benzetme ifadesi eviri metne aktarılmadığından, kaynak metinde vurgulanmak istenen anlam eviri metne eksik olarak yansıtılmıřtır. Dolayısıyla bu

örnekte kaynak metnin dilsel, kültürel ve iletişimsel ekolojisinin çeviri metinde varlığını sürdürmediği ve kaynak metin ekolojisinin çeviri metin ekolojisine uyarlanamadığı yorumu yapılabilir.

Sonuç

Bu çalışmada, çeviri pratiklerinde ekolojik farkındalığın göz önünde bulundurulduğu anlayışı temsil eden eko-çevirinin, edebî eserlerin çevirisi ile bağdaştırılarak yorumlanması amaçlanmış ve Yaşar Kemal'in kaleme aldığı *Yılanı Öldürseler* adlı eser, çalışmanın inceleme nesnesi olarak seçilmiştir.

Dünyada çeviribilim araştırmacıları tarafından gün geçtikçe daha fazla ilgi gören eko-çevirinin, edebî eserlerin çevirisi özelinde yorumlanmasını amaçlayan bu çalışmada, *Yılanı Öldürseler* adlı eserde geçen benzetme ifadeleri tespit edilmiş ve tespit edilen bu benzetme ifadeleri, Fransızca çevirileriyle Gengshen Hu ile Youlan Tao'nun (2016) öne sürdüğü eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımı ışığında karşılaştırmalı olarak analiz edilmiştir. Bu bağlamda, incelenen eserde geçen kırk iki benzetme ifadesinin çevirileri; benzetme yapısı kullanılan ve eko-çeviribilim ilkelerine uygun olan çeviriler, benzetme yapısı kullanılan ancak eko-çeviribilim ilkelerine uygun olmayan çeviriler, benzetme yapısı kullanılmayan ancak eko-çeviribilim ilkelerine uygun çeviriler ve benzetme ifadesinin hiçbir şekilde kullanılmadığı çeviriler şeklinde sıralanabilecek dört maddelik bir sınıflandırmaya göre analiz edilmiştir. Sınıflandırmaya dâhil edilen bu dört maddede bahsedilen ilkeler, Hu ve Tao'nun (2016) eko-çeviribilim yaklaşımı bağlamında önerdiği denge ve uyum ilkesi, çoklu eko-entegrasyon ilkesi, ortak yaşam (simbiyoz) ve çeşitlilik ilkesi ve çevirmenin sorumluluğu ilkesidir. Daha açık bir ifade ile bu çalışma çerçevesinde yapılan karşılaştırmalı analiz, Hu ve Tao'nun (2016) önerdiği dört ilke dikkate alınarak yapılmıştır.

Analiz sonucunda; hiç çevrilmeyen ve dolayısıyla eko-çeviribilim ilkeleriyle uyumlu olmayan iki benzetme ifadesi; benzetme yapısına uygun olan ancak eko-çeviribilim ilkeleriyle uyumlu olmayan üç benzetme yapısı tespit edilmiştir. Öte yandan, kaynak metinde geçen yirmi benzetme ifadesinin Fransızca çevirilerinin hem yapısal açıdan hem de eko-çeviribilim ilkeleri açısından uygun çeviriler olduğu; on yedi benzetme ifadesinin Fransızca çevirisinin ise benzetme yapısıyla çevrilmemiş olmasına rağmen eko-çeviribilim ilkeleriyle uyumlu olarak yapıldığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Böylece, kaynak metinde tespit edilen kırk iki benzetme ifadesinden beşinin çevirisinin eko-çeviribilim

ilkeleriyle uyumlu olmadığı, buna karşılık otuz yedi benzetme ifadesinin çevirisinin ise eko-çeviribilim ilkeleriyle uyumlu olduğu görülmüştür.

Bu çalışmada eko-çeviribilim anlayışı yalnızca edebî eser çevirisi özelinde değerlendirilmiştir. Ekolojik konuların pek çok alanda giderek daha da önem kazandığı günümüzde, eko-çeviri veya eko-çeviribilim alanında yeni çalışmaların üretilmesi ve diğer disiplinlerle etkileşim kurularak yeni araştırmaların yürütülmesi hem çeviribilim alanına katkı sağlayacak hem de araştırmacılara farklı bir bakış açısı kazandıracaktır. Bu çalışmanın amaçlarından biri de söz konusu alanda yapılacak yeni çalışmalara ilham olmak ve bu konuya dair farkındalık oluşturmaktır.

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1939 İspanyol Göçünde Sürgün ve Kimlik Kavramlarının Alınlanması*

Reception of Exile and Identity in the Spanish Migration of 1939

Zeynep ÖNAL¹ 



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¹Associate Professor, İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, İspanyol Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı, İstanbul, Türkiye

ORCID: Z.Ö. 0000-0002-7758-7204

Sorumlu Yazar/Corresponding author:

Zeynep ÖNAL,
İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi,
İspanyol Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı,
İstanbul, Türkiye
E-posta: ezeayneponal@gmail.com

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öz

1936-1939 yılları arasında hüküm süren İspanya İç Savaşı'nın sonunda İspanya'yı ardında bırakarak sürgüne gitmek zorunda kalan İspanyol aydını on yıllar boyunca yabancı topraklarda var olma savaşını verir. Cumhuriyetçi İspanya'nın aydınlarının büyük bölümü, sürgündeki İspanyol halkına kapılarını açan ve İspanyol göçündeki en yüksek sayıda sığınmacıyı ülkesine kabul ederek bir anlamda sürgünün başkentine dönüşen Meksika'da bir araya gelir. İspanyol aydınının bakış açısından zorunlu sürgünde varılan yurt bir ara duraktır; bu geçici dönemde İspanyol kültürünü ve kimliğini korumak esastır. İspanyol aydınının politik ve yazınsal etkinliklerini sürdürürken kullandığı dil, yurdunu ve insanını savaşta kaybeden bir halkın acısını ortaya koyar; sürgünde korumaya çalıştığı İspanyol kimliğini, özünü, kültürünü, geleneğini yansıtır. Çocuklar da bu zorunlu sürgüne aileleriyle birlikte giderler ve iki kültür arasında büyürler. Büyüklerinin gözünde ulusal kültürün devamlılığının güvencesi olarak görülürler. İçlerinden bazıları büyüklerinin izinden giderek edebiyatçı olur. Ne var ki büyükleri gibi bakmazlar sürgün ve kimlik kavramlarına. Sürgün onlara büyüklerinden miras kalmış bir kavramdır; kimliklerini de iki kültür arasında yetiştikleri ara bölgede oluştururlar. Bu çalışma, 1939'da halkıyla birlikte sürgüne giden İspanyol aydınının sürgün ve kimlik kavramlarına bakışını, aileleriyle birlikte sürgüne giden ve zaman içinde büyükleri gibi yazın yaşamına atılan kuşağın üyelerinin sürgün ve kimlik kavramlarına bakışını, ve bu kavramların alınmasında iki kuşak arasındaki farkı ortaya koymayı amaçlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İspanya İç Savaşı, 27 Kuşağı, *Nepantla* Kuşak, Sürgün, Kimlik

ABSTRACT

At the end of the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), Spanish intellectuals were forced into exile. Leaving Spain behind, they struggled for decades to survive in foreign lands. Most of the intellectuals of Republican Spain went to Mexico which became in a way the capital of exile accepting the highest number of refugees. The new land of obligatory exile would be a temporary stop; what was essential was to protect Spanish culture and identity. The language used by the Spanish intellectuals in their political and literary activities revealed the pain of the lost country and people and reflected Spanish identity, essence, culture, and traditions which they tried to protect in exile. Children also went into exile with their families and grew up between two cultures. They were seen by their families as a guarantee for the continuity of the



national culture. In time, some became scholars like their elders. However, they did not see the concepts of exile and identity as their fathers did; exile was a concept they inherited and their identities were shaped in an intermediate zone where they grew up between two cultures. This study aims to reveal the perception of the concepts of exile and identity by Spanish intellectuals in exile and by their children who later stepped into literary life and the difference between these two generations in the perception of both concepts.

Keywords: Spanish Civil War, Generation of '27, *Nepantla* Generation, Exile, Identity

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The Spanish Civil War began on July 17, 1936, and ended on April 1, 1939. The war ended with the victory of the rebels and the breakdown of the Republican regime. This was the beginning of a long-lasting dictatorial period in Spain that would come to an end in 1975, with the death of Franco. The consequences of the war were severe. Spain was ruined; hundreds of thousands of people died; hundreds of thousands of people went into exile; Spain lost the representatives of the culture of the country who also went into exile with their people. After several months had passed in very painful circumstances in the concentration camps in France, Spanish exiles dispersed all over the world. Most of them went to Mexico, which became, in a sense, the capital of exile. At first, the exiles thought they would return home one day in the not-too-distant future. However, their existence in foreign lands lasted for decades. Most of them died in exile without having the chance to see their homeland before they passed.

Spanish intellectuals soon gathered, at the beginning of the exile, to fight for their country. They gave lectures to tell the tragedy of Spain; they published literary journals and expressed in their writings their grief, anger, and hopes for saving the country. The political and literary activities continued without interruption. The Republican politicians of Spain were organized to help Spanish refugees on their arrival in Mexico. Spanish people were united in solidarity to keep alive the spirit of the country in exile. Life in a foreign land was, in the eyes of the exiles, an interval and they would soon return home. Meanwhile, they would try hard to keep and continue Spanish identity, culture, and traditions in exile. The language they used in their literary works was the manifestation of a deep sorrow for their lost country and loved ones and also a rebellion against those who took possession of the country with violence. The task was hard—the continuity of the culture and identity in exile. The language of political activities and literary works was shaped in the first decade around this goal.

Children also went into exile with their families. The youngest were two or three years old and the eldest were fifteen or sixteen years old. They went through some

difficulties at the beginning of the exile. The families sent them to Spanish schools where they learned the culture of their country from the best teachers from Spain. The common themes spoken of at home were mainly those that revealed the pain of loss; but there was another life in the street, free from sorrow. The children grew up between two cultures and their identities were shaped in an intermediate zone between Spanish life and Mexican life. The families saw the children as a guarantee of continuity; however, they were not the main figures of the exile but they had inherited an obligatory situation. They learned about Spanish culture when they were young and about Mexican culture and other countries' cultures at university. In time, they became respected engineers, medical doctors, historians, lawyers, anthropologists, and scientists in Mexican life. Some of them preferred to step into the life of literature. In their writings, they freed themselves from the obligations of an imposed language shaped by the pain of exile. Exile was an experience they carried but it did not shape their identities either in their social life or in their literary life. They were born in Spain and grew up in Mexico; the Spanish people did not see them as Spanish because they grew up in Mexico and the Mexican people did not see them as Mexican because they were born in Spain. In a way, they were both Spanish and Mexican but at the same time, they were neither Spanish nor Mexican. The last representatives of the Spanish exile of 1939 were called in Mexico the Hispanic-Mexicans or the Generation Nepantla, which meant a generation in between.

Giriş

1936-1939 yılları arasında İspanya'yı kana bulayan İç Savaş'ın sonunda yüz binlerce insan ölür, yüz binlercesi de yurdunu terk ederek sürgüne gitmek zorunda kalır. Göç hareketi 1937'de başlar, 1939'un ilk aylarında hızlanır. İspanya'nın Cumhuriyetçi kesimi, Franco İspanyası'nda ölümden, hapisten, eziyetten kaçmak için yollara düşer, yüz binler dalga dalga ülke sınırları dışına çıkar. İspanya'nın yazarları, bilim adamları, sanatçıları, düşünürleri de halkıyla birlikte sürgüne gider. Kanlı savaşta birlikte mücadele ederler ve yenilirler; savaşın sonunda da birlikte göç yollarına düşerler.

Göçün ilk durağı Fransız topraklarıdır. Fransa'da toplama kamplarında çok ağır koşullarda geçirdikleri ayların ardından dünyanın dört bir yanına dağılırlar. İspanyol halkının büyük bölümü Meksika'ya göç eder. İspanyol araştırmacı-yazar Avel-lí Artís-Gener'e göre (1976), 1939 ve 1940 yılları boyunca Meksika'ya gemilerle 7.302 İspanyol göç eder. Meksika'nın politik göçün bittiğini ilan ettiği 1950 yılında bu sayı 32.705'e ulaşır (s. 217). Politik ve toplumsal bir olgu olan göçü herkes farklı yaşar; acıda ve ve ülküde birleşirler. Dayanışma ruhu içinde İspanyol kültürünün ve kimliğinin devamlılığını sağlamak esastır. İspanya'nın yöneticileri ve aydınları bu amaçla Meksika'ya vardıkları andan itibaren örgütlenirler ve ilerleyen zamanda ülkeye gelen İspanyol sığınmacılara ev bulurlar, iş imkânı sağlarlar, para yardımı yaparlar.

Carlos Blanco Aguinaga, toplu göçü yaşayanların sayısı hesaplanacağına, yetişkinlerle çocuklar arasında ayırım yapılmadığını söyler (2006, s. 183). İç Savaş'ın sonunda çocuklar da aileleriyle birlikte sürgüne gider. En küçükleri iki üç en büyükleri on beş - on altı yaşlarındadır. 1939-1950 arasında Meksika'ya göçmüş olan 32.705 kişinin 13.438'ini çocuklar oluşturur (Artís-Gener, 1976, s. 217). İspanyollar çocuklarına ülkelerinin kültürünü öğretmek için kendi okullarını kurarlar; bir gün yurda dönecekleri umuduyla İspanya'nın en iyi öğretmenlerinden ders almalarını sağlarlar. Çocuklar ailelerinden ve öğretmenlerinden yurtlarının kültürünü ve geleneklerini öğrenirken, sokakta da yaşadıkları ülkenin kültürünü ve toplumunu tanır. Yetişkinlerin gözünde çocuklar davanın sürdürülmesinin güvencesidir ve alacakları eğitimin içeriği de bu yüzden çok önemlidir. Ne var ki, Meksika'nın gündelik yaşamının sunduğu çeşitlilikle zenginleşen çocukların dünyası, yurtlarını ve sevdiklerini kaybetmenin ve sürgünde yaşamının acısıyla baş etmeye çalışan ailelerin dünyasından çok farklıdır. Sürgün, yetişkinler için ülkenin tarihinden kopuş anlamına gelirken, çocuklar açısından büyüklerinden onlara miras kalan bir durumdur. Kendilerini iki yaşam, iki kültür arasında bölünmüş halde

bulan çocuklar ilk yıllardan başlayarak bazı sorunlar yaşarlar. Var oldukları ara bir bölgede yollarını bulmaya çalışırken, sürgünün ilk yıllarında doğdukları yurdun kültürünü, zaman içinde de vardıkları yurdun kültürünü özümserler ve kendi kimliklerini bulma mücadelesi verirler.

1939 İspanyol Sürgünü

1939 İspanyol sürgünü politik ve askeri koşulların zorlamasıyla gerçekleşir; gönüllü bir sürgün değildir. Franco iktidarında yaşadıkları koşulda yaşam hakları tehlikeye girecek 500.000 İspanyol'un hayatta kalmak için yurdunu terk etmek ve yeni bir yaşama başlamak zorunda bırakıldığı bir toplu göç hareketidir söz konusu olan. İspanyol sürgününü tarihteki göçlerden farklı kılan özelliği, yarım milyon İspanyol vatandaşıyla birlikte İspanya'nın aydınlarının da toprağından ve geride bıraktığı halkından sürülmesi ve dünyanın dört bir yanına dağılması gerçeğidir. İspanyol halkı toprağından ve halkından vahşice koparılıp yeni bir yaşam arayışı içinde başka yurtlara sürüldüğünde vatansız kalır ve vatandaşlık haklarını kaybeder. Javier de Lucas'a göre (1996) "Yurttaşlık hakkı olmayan bir millet, insanlık haklarından yoksun kalmış demektir", çünkü "insanın temel haklarını garanti altına alan kurum politik camiadır; temel hak, *hak sahibi olma hakkıdır*. [...] Sığınmacının elinden alınan hak işte budur" (1996, s. 47). 1939 İspanyol göçünde sığınmacılar ait oldukları politik topluluktan yoksun kalırlar, kimliklerinden koparılırlar, toplumsal konumlarını ve ülkelerinin korumasını kaybederler. Bununla birlikte, Meksika'da bir araya gelen İspanya'nın aydınları ve yöneticileri Meksika Hükümeti'nin koruması altında örgütlenerek kendi politik topluluklarını kurarlar ve ülkeleri için politika yapmayı sürdürürler. İspanyollar kimliklerini korumak konusunda kararlıdır; günün birinde yurda dönecekleri umuduyla İspanya'nın geçmişine ve bugününe sıkı sıkıya bağlanırken, Meksika'nın toplumsal yaşamına da uyum sağlamaya çalışırlar.

Meksika bazıları için ikinci vatan olur. José Ortega y Gasset'in öğrencisi ve İspanya'nın en önemli aydınlarından José Gaos Meksika'da ikinci vatanını bulduğunu, İspanyol halkının yurdundan sürülmediğini, "*yurtöte gitmiş*" olduğunu söyler (1954, s. 316). İspanya'nın Meksika'yla tarihsel bağı dikkate alındığında, Gaos Meksika'nın İspanyol halkı için bilinçli bir tercih olduğunu düşünür ve bu zorunlu sürgüne farklı bir açıdan bakar. Ne var ki Gaos'un bu iyimser bakış açısı İspanyol aydınınının tamamının görüşünü yansıtmaz. Sürgüne gidenlerin her biri sürgün gerçeğini farklı yaşar; kimi zorunlu olarak sığındığı ikinci yurda hızla uyum sağlar, kimi günün birinde döneceği umuduyla daha eğreti bir yaşam kurar. Acıda, özlemde ve dönüş umudunda birleşirler. Pedro Garfias

1939'un Haziran ayında Fransa'dan Meksika'ya yol alan Sinaia'nın güvertesinde yazdığı "Entre España y México"¹ –İspanya'yla Meksika Arasında" – başlıklı şiirinde acıyla ve umutla kaybettikleri yurda seslenir; halkının dönüş konusundaki kararlılığını dile getirir: "İspanya, kaybettiğimiz, bizi kaybetme; / yere düşen göğsünde sakla bizi, / kıyıda koru kolla derin boşluğunu / yakıcı yokluğumuzun / çünkü günün birinde döneceğiz, daha hızlı / ağır ve kudretli sırtında / bu denizin, dalgalanan kollarla / ve kalp atışı denizin boğazımızda"² (Garfias, 1996, s. 297).

Sürgüne giden aydınların büyük bölümü 27 Kuşağı üyesidir. Sanatta, yazında, toplumsal ve politik zeminde değişimlerin yaşandığı 1920'lerde yazınsal üretime başlarlar. Ülkelerinden kopmak zorunda kalmadan önce, yazınsal üretimi kendi topraklarında sürdürdükleri yıllarda, kendilerinden önceki 98 Kuşağı'ndan farklı olarak, geleneksel İspanyol kültürü çevresinde yapılan hararetli tartışmalardan uzak dururlar, edebi veya politik hiçbir görüşe karşı çıkmazlar. Ne var ki, İç Savaş patladıktan sonra, on dokuzuncu yüzyıl sonlarından itibaren tartışılmalı geleneksel İspanyolluk söyleminden uzak durmak olası değildir artık. İspanya ve İspanyollukla ilgili konular sürgünde 27 Kuşağı üyelerinin ortak kaygısına dönüşür ve tarihsel koşulların zorlamasıyla sürgün şiiri politik ve toplumsal bir içerik kazanır.

İspanyol göçü militer bir hareketin sonucunda değişen toplumsal politik koşullardan kaynaklanır ama aynı zamanda bir kültür göçüdür: "Çünkü 1931 yılında İkinci Cumhuriyet'i kuran, 1936'da da Halk Cephesi'nin seçim zaferiyle iyiden iyiye kenetlenen milyonlarca İspanyol için 1939'da sürgüne giden İspanyol kültürü, Azaña'nın özgürlükçü metinlerinden Alberti'nin komünist bildirilerine ve Falla'nın giderek dinsel bir içeriğe kavuşan müziğine dek, onların öz kültürüydü" (Blanco Aguinaga, 2006, s. 16). İspanya'nın aydınları yazın dünyasında belli bir yol almışken aniden ve vahşice kesintiye uğrayan yaşamlarını yabancı topraklarda yeniden kurmak zorunda kaldıklarında, alıştıkları ve onları besleyen ekin ortamından ve okurdan yoksun kalırlar. Kültürüne, toplum yaşamına yabancı oldukları bir coğrafyada, köklerinden beslenemedi, sözün gücüne dayanarak zamana ve yaşama tutunmaya çalışırlar. On yıllar boyunca kendilerine ait olmayan bir toplumsal gerçeklik zemininde, zamanın yıpratıcı etkisiyle mücadele ederek, var olma savaşımı verirler. Sürgün acıyla yüklü uzun bir yolun başlangıcıdır ve bu uzun yolda İspanya'nın kültür yaşamını sürdürecekteler de ülkenin aydınlarıdır.

1 Makalede paylaşılan şiirlerin çevirisi makalenin yazarına aittir.

2 España que perdimos, no nos pierdas; / guárdanos en tu frente derrumbada, / conserva a tu costado el hueco vivo / de nuestra ausencia amarga / que un día volveremos, más veloces, / sobre la densa y poderosa espalda / de esta mar, con los brazos ondeantes / y el latido del mar en la garganta.

İspanyol aydını göç ettiğinde, Franco diktası altında sıkı sansür uygulanan ülkede kültür yaşamı fakirleşerek bitme noktasına gelir: “Mücadelenin sonucunda felakete sürüklenen yazarların büyük bölümü arkalarında doldurulması çok zor bir boşluk bırakarak sürgün yollarına düştü. [...] 1950’ye dek İspanya’da entelektüel yaşam, birkaç istisna hariç, yok denecek düzeydeydi” (Garosci, 1981, s. 30). İspanya’nın kültür yaşamını sürdürmek sürgündeki aydınların görevidir artık. James Valender ve Gabriel Rojo Leyva’ya göre (2006), İspanyol aydını kırklı yıllar boyunca ulusal kültürün devamlılığının güvencesi olarak görülür çünkü Franco İspanyası’ndan yazınsal ve sanatsal anlamda parlak bir ürün çıkmayacağıının farkındadır herkes (s. 18). İspanya’da kalanlar sansürün zorlamasıyla sessizliğe boğuldukları için, İspanya’dan gidenlere düşer İspanya’nın kaybolan sesini duyurmak ve kültürün devamlılığını sağlamak: “Toprağın yuttuklarına, toprağın altına girenlere ve uzak toprakların örselediklerine, toprağından sürülenlere, bir de İspanya’da kalan yaralı şairleri, onlar için ölümlerin en kötüsüyle, sessizlikle yaralanan şairleri eklemek gerek. [...] Toprağından sürülenlere düşüyor şimdi sesini yükseltmek” (Morales, 1943, s. 10-11). Bu görev bilinciyle sürgünde yaşadıkları on yıllar içinde yurtlarını ve sevdiklerini kaybetmenin acısını, ülkelerini kurtarma ve yurda dönme arzusunu yapıtlarına yansıtırlar ve zaman içinde 1939 İspanyol Sürgünü’ne ait devasa bir kültür hazinesi oluşur. José Luis Abellán’a göre (1983), tarihteki pek az göç hareketinde bu denli yüksek bir kültür düzeyi görülür (s. 64).

İspanyol aydını sürgünün başlangıcında nasıl ulusal kültürün devamlılığının güvencesi olarak görüldüyse, ilerleyen yıllarda da gençler İspanyol kültürünü ve geleneklerini yaşatmanın güvencesi olarak görülür. Ne var ki, sürgün, çocuklar açısından ülkenin tarihinden ve politik bağlamından kopuş anlamını taşımaz; bu yüzden de sürgün kavramını büyüklerinden farklı alımlarlar. Sürgün onlara büyüklerinden miras kalmış bir durumdur. Çocukluk yıllarında ailelerinden ve öğretmenlerinden öğrendikleri İspanyol kültürünü, üniversite çağında Meksika’nın kültür yaşamından öğrendikleriyle birleştirirler. Günün birinde kaybettikleri ülkelere dönme umuduyla yaşayan büyükler ilköğretim döneminde çocuklarının İspanyol kültürünü en iyi şekilde öğrenmesini sağlarlar; üniversite çağında da Meksikalı yaşlılarıyla bir arada hem Meksika kültürünü hem başka ülkelerin kültürlerini tanıyıp öğrenirler: “[...] tarihin biçim verdiği bir kültürü benimsiyorduk [...]. Kimimiz felsefe öğrendik, hepimiz varoluşçu akımları tanıdık [...]; iki üç dilde okuyup konuşmayı öğrendik, Fransız, İngiliz, Kuzey Amerikalı yazarları da okuduk, Meksikalı yazarları da okuduk” (2006, s. 185), diye yazar kendisi de ailesiyle birlikte Meksika’ya sürgüne giden çocuklardan biri olan Carlos Blanco Aguinaga.

27 Kuşak üyelerinin izinden gidenler şair olur; içlerinden mühendis, doktor, hukukçu, antropolog, bilim adamı, tarihçiler yetişir ve Meksika toplumunda saygı gören bireyler olurlar. Bu çocuklara Hispanik-Meksikalılar ya da ara kuşak anlamına gelen *Nepantla* Kuşak adı verilir. Meksika vatandaşı olurlar ama “Meksikalı olamazlar”, der Blanco Aguinaga (2006, s. 190). Arafta sürdürülen bir yaşamda ne ayrıldıkları ülkeye ne yerleştikleri ülkeye ait olurlar. “Hem İspanyolduk, hem Meksikalı, ama neticede ne İspanyol olabiliyorduk ne Meksikalı; bu durumda bu karmaşayı uluslararası bir kimlik edinerek çözmekten daha iyi bir yol var mıydı?”, diye sorar Blanco Aguinaga (2006, s. 191). Sürgünde büyüklerinden İspanyol kültürünü öğrenirken, aynı zamanda evrensel bilgiye ulaşarak uluslararası bir kültürü benimserler: “Büyükler İspanya gerçeğini değiştirme, dönüştürme işlevini yerine getiren uluslararası temsilcilerdi. [...] Oysa biz ‘uluslararasıydık’ çünkü ne onlar gibi İspanyolduk ne de Meksikalıydık; aslında nereye ait olduğumuzu kendimiz de bilmiyorduk” (Blanco Aguinaga, 2006, s. 191). *Nepantla* Kuşağın bir başka üyesi Luis Rius da, “Meksika’ya geldiğimizde, babalarımız gibi İspanyol olmak için fazlasıyla erkendi; Meksikalı olmak için de çok geçti”, der (Rivera, 1990, s. 18).

Nepantla Kuşak üyeleri açısından sürgün seçilmiş bir yol değildir; sürgünün sonuçları onlara büyüklerinden miras kalır: “Mirasçiyim ben de çoğu gibi; zenginliklerin değil ama, soyun veya yeteneğin de değil, bir İç Savaş’ın mirasçısıyım”, der Ricardo Estrella; “Benim açımdan, eşimin ve arkadaşlarımdan açısından bakıldığında şunu kesinlikle doğrulayabilirim ki, sürgünün “kutsal ateşini” bize aitmiş gibi ve kavmin damgasıymış gibi sahiplenmek zorunda kaldık”, diye ekler Arturo Souto da (Mateo Gambarte, 1997, s. 17-18). Çocuklar ve gençler büyüklerinin sürdürdüğü davada yer almış değildir, davanın parçası veya tarafı değildir; sürgünü bir miras olarak kabul ederler.

Dil ve Kimlik

İspanya’nın aydınları sürgünün ilk yıllarında güçlü şekilde politize olurlar. Vatani ve sevdiklerini kaybetmenin acısı, yabancı topraklarda kendilerini bekleyen geleceğe duyulan kaygı, ülkeyi sınırsız güç kullanarak kanlı bir savaşla ele geçirenlere duyulan öfke ve isyan şiirin diline yansır. İspanya’nın büyük şairi León Felipe, ülkesinin davasına bağlı bir şair olarak İspanya’nın trajedisini işler kitaplarında. *Español del éxodo y del llanto*’da –*Toplu Göçen Yaslı İspanyol*– toprağını ele geçirenlere seslenir öfkeyle: “Her şey sende kalsın / bana da bu alemde çıplak avare gezmek kalsın... / ama ben de sesini boğuyorum... dilsiz bırakıyorum! / Nasıl toplayacaksın buğdayı? / canlandırıcaksın

yalazı? / türküyü alıp gidersem?”³ (1939, s. 26). Hem bir çaresizliğin ifadesidir bu dizeler, hem de bir başkaldırının. Yokluğun acısıyla öfkesi iç içe geçerek isyana dönüşür. Şair aynı kitapta yer alan bir başka şiirinde bu kez suçluluk ve pişmanlıkla seslenir İspanya’nın ölümünde parmağı olan herkese: “Öldü. Bakın görün! / Bakın görün / [...] / Vatanla oyun olmaz / saklambaç oynar gibi: / şimdi çık / saklan şimdi. / Vatan yok artık. El birliğiyle öldürdük onu”⁴ (1939, s. 53-54). Sürgüne giden aydının belleğindeki en taze anılar savaşın vahşetine ait olanlardır, bu yüzden ölüm, sürgünde ilk dönemde kaleme alınan şiirlerin ortak izleğidir. Rafael Alberti yaşamının yirmi üç yılını geçireceği Buenos Aires’e geçmeden önce Paris’te sürgünde yaşadığı dönemde yazdığı bir şiirinde, yabancı bir toprakta uyanmayı ölüm gibi algılar: “Uyanıyorum. / Paris. / Hayatta mıyım, / öldüm mü? / Sahiden öldüm mü? / Mais non... / C’est la police”⁵ (Alberti, 1990, s. 35). Alberti şiirin devamında kanla yıkanan ülkesine ağlarken, kendisini bekleyen gelecek karşısındaki kaygısını da dile getirir “Ne dehşet, ne dehşet orada, uzakta! / Kan uykuları kaçırıyor, / kan denizin bile uykusunu kaçırıyor. / Hiçbir şey uyuyamıyor. / Hiç kimse uyuyamıyor. / [...] / Sonun sonuna mı geldik / yoksa yeni bir şey mi başlıyor?”⁶ (s. 37). “Ven y que te amortaje entre violetas” – “Gel de Kefene Sarayım Seni Menekşeler Arasında” – şiirinde de, kayıplarına, toprağına, ölümlere ağıt yakar: “Gel de kefeneye sarayım seni menekşeler arasında / bu kederli yıldızlı gecede, / onca şey sonsuza dek yitip gitti / kanlı bir sayı anca enkazın altındaki”⁷ (1941, s. 104).

Ölüm ve sürgün acısına bir de bunca acının, vahşetin nedenini anlamaya çalışan sesleri eklenir şairlerin; anlam vermeye çalışırlar olan bitene. José Moreno Villa “Nos trajeron las ondas” – “Dalgalar Getirdi Bizi” – başlıklı şiirinde, akışında devam ederken aniden kesintiye uğrayan hayatı anlatır, acısını, öfkesini, isyanını dile getirir: “Hayat normaldi: fırınındaydı ekmekçi; / işindeydi bekçi; çoban sürüsündeydi; / denizci teknesindeydi ve ressam işliğindeydi. / Neden bozuldu hepsi? Kim komutan yaptı / genç hancıyı ve yargıç yaptı bostancıyı? / Kim büyükelçi yaptı okuma yazması olmayan

3 Tú te quedas con todo / y me dejas desnudo y errante por el mundo... / mas yo te dejo mudo... ¡Mudo! / ¿Y cómo vas a recoger el trigo / y a alimentar el fuego / si yo me llevo la canción?

4 Está muerta. ¡Miradla! / Miradla / [...] / No se juega a la patria / como se juega al escondite: / ahora sí / y ahora no. / Ya no hay patria. La hemos matado todos.

5 Me despierto. / París. / ¿Es que vivo, / es que he muerto? / ¿Es que definitivamente he muerto? / Mais non... / C’est la police.

6 ¡Qué terror, qué terror allá lejos! / La sangre quita el sueño, / hasta a la mar la sangre quita el sueño. / Nada puede dormir. / Nadie puede dormir. / [...] / ¿Es que llegamos al final del fin / o que algo nuevo comienza?

7 Ven y que te amortaje entre violetas / en esta planetaria noche triste, / final de tantas cosas, para siempre / bajo escombros un número sangriento.

zavallıyı / ve kılavuzu yaptı güdemeyeceği ruhların?”⁸ (1949, s. 39-40). Yaşam gündelik seyrinde akıp giderken yapılan müdahalenin anlamsızlığını gösterir; toplumsal rollerin değişimine vurgu yaparak isyan eder. Savaşın bittiği yıl İngiltere’ye göçen ve Meksika’ya geçmeden önce sürgündeki ilk şiirlerini kaleme aldığı Eaton Hastings adlı köyde birkaç ay geçiren Pedro Garfias da nedenini sorgular bu vahşetin: “Şimdi de neden öldüğünü bilmeden ölenlere ağlayacağım / neden diye soran sesleri yankılanıyor hâlâ / bu duygusuz gergin kubbede...”⁹ (Garfias, 1996, s. 337).

Sürgün edildiklerinde, topraklarından vahşice sökülüp atıldıklarında, köklerini de kaybederler: “Her şeyden sökülüp aldılar beni. / Sürgünü bıraktılar bana. / [...] / Günleri acı / Yaşamın, yaşadıkça / Uzun bir bekleyiş anca / Anıların hatırına”¹⁰ (1974, s. 269), diye yazar Luis Cernuda sürgünün ve kopuşun acılığından bahsederken. Rafael Alberti de “Pensaba el árbol pleno” – “Düşünüyordu Ağaç Bütün Varlığıyla” – başlıklı şiirinde, köklerinden kopmanın acısını şöyle dile getirir: “Düşünüyordu ağaç bütün varlığıyla, / köklerine bakıp / dışarıdan, acıyla, / imkânsız olduğunu düşünüyordu / köklerini yeniden gömmenin / yeni bir toprağa...”¹¹ (1944, s. 103). İspanyol aydını kendisini besleyen toprağından ve sözünü yönelttiği okurundan yoksun kaldığında köklerini de kaybeder. Kendisine ait olmayan bir toprağına kök salmak imkânsızdır şair için. Yine de, bütün bütüne umutsuz değildir İspanya’nın şairleri. León Felipe “Ahora definiré la Hispanidad” – “Şimdi İspanyol Olmanın Tanımını Yapacağım” – başlıklı şiirinde ölümsüzlük izleğini öne çıkararak ülkesinin ebediyette var olacağını söyler: “İspanyol halkı... tahtını alacaksın! / Ama bu dünyada olmayacak tahtın. / [...] / Yeryüzünde yükselmeyecek hiçbir zaman. / Kökleri olmayan bir tutku olacak, taşları olmayan, / Tarih’te yaşayacak bir tutku, tarihi olmayan... / Bir örnek gibi, tek başına”¹² (1943, s. 132). León Felipe bu dizelerde halkına umut aşılar, hak ettiği makamı bu dünyada olmasa da ebediyette alacağını söyler.

8 Era normal la vida: el panadero, al horno; / el guardián, en su puesto; en su ható el pastor; / en su barca el marino y el pintor en su estudio. / ¿Por qué fue roto aquello? ¿Quién hizo capitán / al mozo tabernero y juez al hortelano? / ¿Quién hizo embajador al pobre analfabeto / y conductor de almas a quien no se conduce?

9 Ahora voy a llorar por los que han muerto sin saber por qué / cuyos porqués resuenan todavía / en la tirante bóveda imposable...

10 De todo me arrancaron. / Me dejan el destierro. / [...] / Amargos son los días / De la vida viviendo / Sólo una larga espera / A fuerza de recuerdos.

11 Pensaba el árbol pleno, / viéndose las raíces / de fuera, doloridas, / pensaba en lo imposible / de enterrarlas de nuevo / en nueva tierra...

12 Hispanidad... ¡tendrás tu reino! / Pero tu reino no será de este mundo. / [...] / No se erguirá en la tierra nunca. / Será un anhelo sin raíces ni piedras, / un anhelo que vivirá en la Historia sin historia... / ¡Sólo como un ejemplo!

Sürgündeki aydının ilk dönem şiirlerinin dili, içinden geçtikleri tarihsel dönemin acılığını ortaya koyar. Bir yandan köklerinden kopma duygusuyla ve yabancı bir toplumsal zeminde var olma zorunluluğuyla başa çıkmaya çalışırlar, öte yandan dönüş ve kaybettikleri yurtlarına yeniden kavuşma umudunu canlı tutmaya çabalarlar. İspanyol aydınının İç Savaş'tan önce geleneksel İspanyolluk söyleminden uzak duran dili, savaş sonrasında vatan ve İspanyol kimliği çerçevesinde yeniden tanımlanarak politik ve toplumsal bir içeriğe kavuşur. Sürgünün bekleyiş ve dönüş arzusu içinde geçen ilk on yılının ardından dönüş umutları tükendiğinde, İspanya'nın şairleri onları kuşatan gündelik gerçekliğin içinde kendilerini uzamda ve zamanda sıkışmış hissederler. Artık iradeye bağlı bir yaşam değildir sürdürdükleri; kendi varlıklarında tutsak kalırlar. Ne bir ülkeleri ve geçmişleri vardır dönebilecekleri, ne de kök salabilecekleri bir ülke ve onları bekleyen bir gelecek. Sürgün yaşantısının ilk yıllarında duyumsadıkları yabancılık, yerleştikleri ülkenin toplum yaşamını, kültürünü, insanını tanımamalarıyla bağlantılıdır. Aradan geçen on yıldan sonra ülkeyi de, insanını da, kültürünü de tanırlar. Dönüş umutları tükendiğinde, yazgıya boyun eğme vaktinin geldiğini anlarlar. Ne var ki, 1950'li yıllardan itibaren yabancılık ve yalnızlık duygusu derinleşir; anılar aracılığıyla belleklerindeki İspanya'ya bağlanırlar. Geçmiş yaşamlarını şiirler aracılığıyla günün gerçeğinin içine alırlar. Kendilerine ait olmayan bir yaşamda kendi içlerine yönelirler ve anılarından uzaklaşır, sürgünde üretilen şiire dönüşür. Konular çeşitlenirken, ilk dönemin İspanyol kimliği çevresinde şekillenen izleksel bütünlük kaybolur; yurt sevgisi ve sürgünün acılığı kalıcı olur. Gündelik yaşama uyum sağlamakla birlikte iç dünyalarında bir yoksunluk hali yaşarlar.

İspanyol aydını on yılların ardından sürgünün boşa kürek çekmekle geçtiğini düşünür; yazınsal ürünlerinde isyan eden öfkeli sesleri zayıflar, şairin gücü ve geleceğe dair umutları söner. Sürgün toprağında sonu gelmeyen zorunlu bir varoluşun ıstırabını yaşarlar. Bitmek bilmeyen yabancı bir yaşamda, kendilerine ait olmayan o yaşamın bitmesini beklemeye başlarlar. Şair artık kendisi için akmayan bir zamanda, kök salamadığı bir toprakta, yaşayan bir ölüdür. Kopuş acısı değildir artık duyumsanan, amaçsız bekleyişin acısıdır. Varoluşunun amacını kaybeder şair, ölümden başka bekleyeceği bir şey kalmaz. Zaman kavramını yitirir, kendisini kuşatan dünyanın gerçekliğine dair algısını yitirir, zihinsel netliğini yitirir, yaşarken ölür. Ama dış dünyasıyla iç dünyası arasına indirdiği perde aracılığıyla kendisini yaşamdan soyutlaması da imkânsız gibidir çünkü bir yandan kendi içine yönelerek gerçeklikten koparken, öte yandan fiziksel dünyanın gerçekleri şairin yaşamını şekillendirmeye devam eder. Yabancılaşmanın derinleşmesi ve içe dönüş,

sürgünün kalıcı hale gelmiş olmasının sonucudur. Buna bağlı olarak aydınlar, yaşamlarına biçim veren tarihsel zorunluluklar yüzünden tarihten koparlar ve geçmişe demir atarak, kendi içlerinde kurdukları gerçeklikte yaşamayı seçerler.

1939 İspanyol Sürgünü'nde büyükler bu denli ağır bir tarihsel süreçten geçerken, göçün ilk yıllarında çocuklar ve gençler açısından da bazı ortak sorunlar baş gösterir. Ülkelerinden vahşice koparılıp bilmedikleri bir yaşama atıldıklarında, onların da ülkelerine dair akıllarında kalan en yakın anılar savaşın vahşetiyle ilgili olanlardır. Ayak bastıkları ülkenin yaşamı, kültürü hakkında bilgileri yoktur. Özellikle yaşı küçük olanlar etraflarında olup biteni kavrayacak ve akıl ve duyu dünyalarında doğru yere yerleştirecek değerler sistemine sahip değildir henüz. Eduardo Mateo Gambarte'ye göre (1997) küçük yaşta olanların vardıkları topraklarda tanımaya başladıkları dünya "referans aldıkları ilk sistemdir" (s. 19), çünkü ayrıldıkları ülkeyle vardıkları ülke arasında karşılaştırma yapacak bir değerler sistemi oluşturacak yaşta değildirler henüz; ergen yaştakiler ise akıl yaşının izin verdiği ölçüde tanıyabildikleri ülkelerinden ayrıлып yeni bir ülkeye geldiklerinde "yeni bir referans sistemi" (Gambarte, 1997, s. 19) oluşturmak zorunda kalırlar. Bu nedenle de çocuklarda ilk yıllarda bir güvensizlik duygusu ortaya çıkar.

En büyük problemi kendilerini ifade edecek dili kurmak konusunda yaşarlar: büyüklerinin savaş ve sürgün acısıyla şekillenmiş dilini, kendilerini kuşatan gündelik gerçeklikle kavuşturmak ve kaynaştırmakta zorlanırlar. Dilin kimliğin oluşumundaki rolü düşünüldüğünde, İspanya'nın ve Meksika'nın kültürünün ve tarihinin biçim verdiği aynı dilin iki farklı kullanımı arasında kalan çocuklar, yaşamlarının erken döneminde kimliklerini bulma aşamasında tökezlerler. Ailesiyle birlikte sürgünü Meksika'da yaşayan Angelina Muñiz, sürgün yaşantısında çocukların dilinin nasıl oluştuğunu şu sözlerle açıklar:

Gündelik yaşamda iki dilliydik: Evde, İspanya'nın dilini konuşuyorduk; sokakta, pazarda, Meksika'nın dilini kullanmak zorunda kalıyorduk. Böylece her konuda işimize yarayacak tarafsız bir dil kurmak zorunda kaldık. İspanyollarla birlikteyken İspanyollar gibi konuşuyorduk. [...] her yerde işimize yarayacak evrensel bir dil geliştirdik, ne tam Meksika diliydi ne de tam o günün İspanyol dili (Mateo Gambarte, 1997, s. 20-21).

Meksika'nın toplumsal, tarihsel ve kültürel değerleriyle ve özellikleriyle şekillenen İspanyolca, sürgünlerin yaşantısında yakın zamanın acısıyla şekillenen İspanyolca'dan

farklıdır; bu nedenle çocuklar ve ergen yaştakiler, iki kültür, iki yaşam, iki dil arasında kaldıklarında, tarafsız bir dil geliştirmek zorunda kalırlar. Bu dil onların hem toplum içindeki kimliğini hem ilerleyen zamanda edebiyatçı olarak kimliğini belirler. Kimlik edinme aşamasında büyüklerinin onayına ihtiyaç duyarlar, ama büyüklerin dünyasını oluşturan konular çocukların sorunlarıyla uğraşmayı imkânsız kılar. Böylece çocuklar, kendilerini kuşatan tarihsel gerçekliğin parçası olmakla birlikte, bu gerçekliğin içinde yalnızlaşırlar. Sürgünü varlıklarının bir parçası olarak benimserler ama edebiyat yaşantısına adım attıklarında kendilerine ait dili kurmak konusunda zorlanırlar. Çünkü büyüklerinin kullandığı dil tarihsel gerçekliğin acısıyla yaşam bulan bir dildir; ne var ki, ikinci kuşağın üyeleri açısından bakıldığında yaşayan değil, ölmüş olan bir dildir. Büyükler söz yoluyla, vatanla kopan bağı olabildiğince yeniden tesis etmeye çalışır; çocuklar yazar olduğunda, *sözün* büyüklerinin kullandığı biçiminden özgürleşmek, yazar olarak kendi dünyalarını yansıtacak *söz*ü bularak kendi kimliklerini kurmak isterler.

Büyükler sürgünde geçen yıllar boyunca kaybettikleri ülkelerini düşünerek yaşarlar ve yapıtlarında acıyı ve özlemi yansıtır. Oysa çocukların ve gençlerin yaşamında duvarda asılı resimler, evde sürdürülen gelenekler aracılığıyla yaşayan anılar, Meksika yaşamının sunduğu zenginliklere, ülkenin sanatına, müziğine, tarihine, doğasına karışarak onlara yeni ve etkileyici bir dünya sunar. Edebiyat dünyasına adım atanlar bir zaman sonra etraflarında olan biteni kapsayıcı bir bakış açısıyla görmeye başlarlar: “Bireşimci bir bakış açısıyla [...] ağacı değil, ormanı görmeye çalışıyorduk” (Aínsa ve ark., 2011, s. 41). Zaman içinde, acı verici bir durumun mirasçısı olmayı bıraktıklarında kendi seslerini bulurlar; sürgünü reddetmeden sürgün konusunun ötesine geçerler. Tarihsel belleğe sadık kalmakla birlikte, onları zorlayan ortak bağlardan özgürleşerek, ulusalcı olmaktan çok çağdaş bir bakış açısıyla yazarlar. Sürgün kimliklerinin çok önemli bir parçası olmayı sürdürür, ama yazar kimliklerini tanımlamaz: “Yapıtlarımda sürgünü çalışamazsınız [...] Ulusal şair de değilim, ulusçu şair de değilim; hiçbir kıyıya ait değilim [...] Dünyam hem Meksika hem İspanyol dünyası [...] Beni ilgilendiren, genelde insana dair olan”, der Tomás Segovia (Aínsa ve ark., 2011, s. 207). Ramón Xirau için sürgün, insana dair konuları kavramasını sağlayacak bir araç olur: “Sürgün beni etkiledi, kanıtı da hatırladığım görüntüler, belleğimdeki mekânlar ve oralara duyduğum özlem [...] Şiirim toplumsal bir protesto [...], hatıraları ve özlem duygusunu da taşıyor içinde, ama sürgünün asıl işlevi dünyadaki krizi anlamamı sağlamak oldu” (Aínsa ve ark., 2011, s. 209). Gerardo Deniz kendini hiçbir zaman politik sürgün olarak hissetmez; politikaya yaklaşımında büyükleriyle arasındaki farkı şöyle anlatır: “On beş yaşıma geldiğimde [...] politikanın zararlı etkilerinden bağımsızdım. O sıralarda birçok konuda özgürleştim; hiçbir zaman

politik bir harekete dahil olmadım, dahası, rengi, kokusu, üslubu ne olursa olsun, bütün politik etkinliklere karşı tarif edilmez bir tiksinti duydum” (Sicot, 2002, s. 214). Sürgün hakkındaki düşüncesi sorulduğunda da, kendini İspanya’dan değil, Avrupa’dan sürülmüş gibi hissettiğini söyler (Sicot, 2002, s. 222). Federico Patán da üniversite yıllarını anlatırken, kendini içinde yaşadığı kültürlerin ikisiyle de, Meksika kültürüyle de İspanyol kültürüyle de tanımlamak istemediğini söyler (Sicot, 2002, s. 227). *Nepantla* Kuşak üyeleri kendilerini ne İspanyol ne Meksikalı kimliğiyle tanımlar; yetişkinliğe ulaştıklarında sürgün, vatan, kimlik konularına bakışlarını da, çocukluk ve gençlik yılları boyunca edindikleri çoklu kimlikler belirler. “Darío’dan Unamuno’ya ve 27 Kuşağı’na, İspanyol ve Amerikalı şairleri okuyorduk”, der Blanco Aguinaga kuşağın üyelerinin yetişirken edindiği çok kültürlülüğü açıklarken ve şöyle devam eder: “Onun için José Miguel (“Jomi”) García Ascot’un tezini Baudelaire’in varoluşçuluğu üstüne yazmasında, Manolo Durán’ın İspanyol şiirinde gerçeküstücülük üstüne yazmasında ve Roberto Ruiz’in Saint-Exupéry’nin *Küçük Prens*’i üstüne yazmasında yadırganacak bir şey yoktu” (2006, s. 186).

Üniversiteye adım attıkları dönemden başlayarak dünyanın farklı ülkelerinin kültürlerini, edebiyatlarını çalışan, özümseyen ve yazar kimliklerinin bir parçası haline getiren ve farklı mesleklerde yetişerek Meksika toplumunda saygın bir yer edinen *Nepantla* Kuşak üyeleri, Meksika yaşamının içinde birer sürgün olarak sürdürmez yaşamını; sürgün olma durumu toplumsal ve kültürel bağlam içinde değişikliğe uğrayarak eritilir. Sürgün kimliklerinin bir parçasını oluşturur kuşkusuz çünkü çocuk yaştakiler sürgün olma haliyle başlarlar yaşamlarına etraflarında olan biteni yeni yeni kavramaya başladıkları dönemde ve ergen yaştakiler de çocuklukla yetişkinlik arasındaki aralıkta kimliklerini aradıkları dönemde yaşarlar sürgün olma halini. Bununla birlikte, ilerleyen zamanda kimliklerini bütün bütüne belirlemez sürgün; yazar olanların yapıtlarına damga vurmaz. Kendilerini ne İspanyol ne Meksikalı olarak görürler, bu nedenle sürgün ve kimlik kavramlarına bakışlarını, Meksika’ya geldikleri andan itibaren onları şekillendirmeye başlayan iç içe geçmiş farklı kültürlerin izleri belirler. Kültürlerin birbirine karıştığı ara bir bölgede, ne doğdukları ülkeye ne yaşadıkları ülkeye aidiyet hissederek sürdürürler yaşamlarını. Gündelik yaşamda İspanyol mu Meksikalı mı oldukları sorgulanmaz. Meksika toplumunun parçası olmakla birlikte, kimlik tanımı yapma aşamasında belirsizlik ortaya çıkar: “İspanyollar onları Meksikalı olarak görür ve aslında Meksika’yla daha fazla özdeşleşmişlerdir, ama kökenlerinden dolayı Meksikalı değildirler ve bu nedenle Meksikalılar da onları Meksikalı olarak görmez” (Zelaya Kolker, 1985, s. 248). İspanyol halkı için 1939’da başlayan uzun ve acılı bir sürgün yaşamının son temsilcileridir çocuklar; ne İspanyol ne Meksikalı, hem İspanyol hem Meksikalı olarak sürdürürler yaşamlarını.

Sonuç

İç Savaş'ın sonunda yurdunu ardında bırakarak zorunlu sürgüne giden İspanyol aydını, İspanya'nın kültür yaşamına yön vermiş tanınmış ve saygın isimlerdir. Yurtlarından, yazınsal kimliklerini besleyen topraktan, geride kalanlardan koparıldıklarında köklerini kaybederler. On yıllar boyunca yerleştikleri yeni yurda kök salamadan yaşarlar. Yabancı topraklarda sürdürülen yaşamda en temel gereklilik kimliği korumaktır; İspanyol aydını günün birinde yurda döneceği umudunu taşıdığı güne dek İspanyol kimliğini sürgün topraklarında devam ettirmek konusunda kararlılıkla davranır. Bu kararlılık on yıllar boyunca üretilen eserlerin diline yansır. Sürgünde geçen ilk on yıllık dönemde yenilginin, kaybedilen ülkenin, insanın ve sürgünün acısını yüklenen ve bir ülkü etrafında birleşen yazarlar, dönüş umudunu kaybettiklerinde amaçlarını da kaybederler. Yapıtlarında anılara tutunurlar; anılarında yaşadıkları İspanya'ya bağlanarak kendi içlerine yönelirler. İlk zamanlarda yurda yazılan özlem ve acı dolu dizeler, zaman içinde yerini daha derin bir acıya ve umutsuzluğa bırakır. Sürgünün ilk yıllarında verilen yaşam mücadelesi, geçen zamanın yıpratıcı etkisiyle mücadele etmeye dönüşür. Dönüş umudu tükendiğinde varoluşu bir şekilde sürdürebilmek için mücadele ederler. Geçmişle bugün arasında varlıklarını sürdürdükleri aralıkta, yaşamla ölüm arasında anılara tutunurlar. Kök salamadıkları bir toprakta, okurları olmadan yazmayı sürdürürken yaşamla bağları giderek zayıflar. İlk zamanlar kararlılıkla korunan İspanyol kimliği, geçen zamanın ardından silikleşir; yazılanlar günün gerçeğinden koparak geçmişe, anlam içeren gerçek yaşama, geçmişteki İspanya'ya bağlanır. İspanyol aydınının yaşadığı acı derinleşir, sürdürdüğü dava önemini yitirir.

Çocuklar da köklerinden kopmanın ve sürgün edilmenin açısından kendi paylarına düşeni yaşarlar. Sürgün topraklarına vardıklarında özellikle yaşı küçük olanların İspanya'ya dair deneyimleri yok denecek düzeydedir; ergen yaşta olanların yurda dair akıllarında kalan en yakın anılar savaşın vahşetiyle ilgili olanlardır. Çocuklar büyüme çağında Meksika yaşamının onlara sunduğu kültürel çeşitliliği özümserler. Ergen yaştakiler aileleriyle ve öğretmenleriyle geleneksel İspanya'ya ve İspanyolluk söylemine bağlanırken, üniversite çağında Meksikalı yaşlılarıyla bir arada uluslararası bir kültürü öğrenirler. Kendi yazın yapıtlarını üretmeye başladıklarında büyüklerinin acıyı ve bir dava etrafında buluşan İspanyol kimliğini yansıtan dilinden özgürleşirler. Zaman zaman sürgün de yansır yapıtlarına ancak sürgün içlerinde taşıdıkları bir gerçeklik olmakla birlikte yazar olarak ve insan olarak kimliklerini tanımlamaz. Onlara büyüklerinden kalan bir mirastır; bu kimliği kabullenirler ama yaşamlarını büyükleri gibi İspanyol kimliği etrafında

şekillendirmezler. İspanya'nın kültürünü de öğrenirler, Meksika'nın kültürünü de öğrenirler. İki kültürün ve İspanya'nın tarihiyle Meksika gerçeğinin bulunduğu ara bölgede, ne tümüyle İspanyol ne tümüyle Meksikalı olan yeni bir kimlik edinirler.

Büyükler, çocuklar davayı sahiplensin isterler. Kendi yaşadıkları acılar, verdikleri mücadeleler boşa gitmesin isterler. Ne var ki, büyükleri etkilediği gibi etkilemez sürgün acısı çocukları çünkü aileler bir yandan kayıplarının yasını tutup öte yandan yurtlarını geri almanın umudu içinde örgütlenirken ve sürgünde Cumhuriyetçi İspanya'yı yaşatmaya çalışırken, çocuklar Meksika yaşamının içinde, Meksika'dan öğrendiklerini İspanya'dan yanlarında taşıdıklarına katarak büyürler. Büyükleri tarafından kendilerinin olmayan bir davaya zorunlu olarak bağlı kılınırlar ama zaman içinde kendilerini bu bağdan özgürleştirirler. Politik bir dil kullanmazlar yapıtlarında; acıyı da anlatmazlar. İnsana ve dünyaya dair konuları anlatırlar; kendilerini kuşatan dünyayı geniş bir bakış açısıyla kavrarlar. Tarihsel belleği korurlar ama ulusalcı değil çağdaş bir bakış açısıyla yazarlar. Büyüklerin sürgündeki yaşamı yavaş yavaş sona yaklaşırken, ikinci kuşağın sürgün olma hali Meksika yaşamının içinde zamanla küçülür. İspanya'nın aydınları ellili yıllardan sonra ürettikleri yazınsal ürünlerinde geçmişe, anılarındaki İspanya'ya dönerler; günün gerçeğinden ve zamandan koparak kendi içlerinde ve geçmişte yaşamaya başlarlar. İspanyol kültürünün sürgündeki son temsilcileri olan ikinci kuşak üyeleri yaşadıkları ülkenin toplum yaşamıyla ve kültürüyle bütünleşirler; birey ve yazar kimliklerini de önlerinde açılan yeni ufuklar belirler.

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China Miéville’in *Şehir ve Şehir* Romanında İktidarın İnşası

The Construction of Power in China Miéville’s Novel *The City & the City*

Umut ERDOĞAN¹ 



Öz

İngiliz yazar ve akademisyen China Miéville’in *Şehir ve Şehir* adlı romanı bilim kurgu, tuhaf kurgu ve polisiye türlerinin birleşiminden oluşmaktadır. Roman, Sovyetler Birliği’nin dağılmasından sonra Avrupa’nın içinde bulunduğu iki kutbu yansıtmaktadır. Hayali olarak kurgulanan iki şehir, Beszel ve Ul Qoma, bu iki kutbu temsil etmektedir. Beszel, Doğu Bloğu ülkelerine benzeyen yönetim ve yaşam tarzıyla Batıcı, liberal ve gelişmiş Ul Qoma’dan ayrılmaktadır. Öte yandan mekansal olarak aynı yerde yaşamalarına rağmen iki zıt kutup olan Beszel ve Ul Qoma birbirine yasaktır. İki şehrin vatandaşlarının diğer şehre dair hiçbir şeyi algılamamaları gerekmektedir. Roman, Batı felsefesinde yerleşik düalizmlerin bir eleştirisini sunmaktadır. Yasaklar, dışlamalar ve ayrıştırmalar ile toplumların bilgisi inşa edilmektedir. Metafizik biçimde birbirlerine yasak olarak kurgulanan iki hayali şehrin bilgisi ise iktidarın gücünü göstermektedir. İki şehrin karşıtlığının bilgisi, disipline edici bir söylemle desteklenmektedir. İki şehir arasındaki ayrımı sürekli koruyan ve yeniden üreten toplumsal pratikler ise Beszel ve Ul Qoma’daki gözetimin sürekliliği sayesinde sağlanmaktadır. Romanda yer alan İhlâl adlı örgüt ise iki şehri gözetleyen güçtür. Romanda ayrımın bilgisi, iktidarın bilgisidir. İktidarın kendisini korumak için geliştirdiği söylemler ise hayatta kalmasını sağlamaktadır. Sürekli kontrol edilen ve disipline edilmeye çalışılan iki ayrı toplum olarak iki şehir, romanda modern dönemde iktidarın gözetim yoluyla güçlenmesinin de örneğidir. Bu bağlamda bu çalışmada, *Şehir ve Şehir* romanındaki güç ve gücün bilgisinin inşasına dair bir değerlendirme yapılması amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaçla Foucault’nun söylem ve iktidar üzerine görüşlerinden destek alınarak, iktidarın bilgisinin modern düşünce geleneğinde nasıl inşa edildiğine ve kullanıldığına dair bir değerlendirme sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: China Miéville, *Şehir ve Şehir*, iktidar, söylem, panoptikon

ABSTRACT

The novel *The City and the City* by British writer and academician China Miéville is a combination of science fiction, weird fiction, and crime genres. The novel reflects Europe after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Two imaginary cities, Beszel and Ul Qoma, represent the opposing poles. Beszel differs from the Western, liberal, and developed Ul Qoma with its governance and lifestyle similar to Eastern Bloc countries. Meanwhile, although they exist in the same place spatially, Beszel and Ul Qoma are forbidden to one another. The citizens of the two cities are not allowed to perceive

¹Ph.D. in Sociology, Independent Researcher, İzmir, Türkiye

ORCID: U.E. 0000-0002-5856-3725

Sorumlu Yazar/Corresponding author:

Umut ERDOĞAN,
İzmir, Türkiye
E-posta: erdogan.e.umut@gmail.com

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anything about the other city. The novel offers a critique of established dualisms in Western philosophy. The knowledge of societies is built through exclusions and discriminations. The knowledge of the two cities, constructed metaphysically, is forbidden to one another. The knowledge of the opposition of the two cities is supported by a disciplinary discourse. Social practices that constantly maintain and reproduce the distinction between the two cities are ensured by the continuity of surveillance in Beszel and Ul Qoma. The organization in the novel called Breach is the force that watches over the two cities. In the novel, the knowledge of distinction is the knowledge of power. The discourses developed by the power to protect itself ensure its survival. As two separate societies that are constantly controlled and disciplined, the two cities also serve as examples of the strengthening of power through surveillance in the modern period. In this context, this study aims to evaluate the construction of power and knowledge of power in *The City and the City*. For this purpose, the study presents an evaluation of how knowledge of power is constructed and used in the modern tradition of thought with support from Foucault's views on discourse and power.

Keywords: China Miéville, *The City and the City*, power, discourse, panopticon

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

As a product of social interaction, knowledge is not independent of power relations. Historically constructed knowledge in society is also a tool for control and discipline, as well as a vital necessity for protecting the continuity and reproduction of information. Preserving the knowledge of the government is possible by adopting it in social life. What makes power possible is those who consent and internalize knowledge. In this respect, discourses of power are dependent on preservation and reproduction within the practices of life.

As a discourse, modernity has produced its own knowledge as a means of social control. The knowledge of the modern period has been placed in a superior position through discourses because historical developments have created a need to control and direct people more tightly with information. The audience and interaction area governments can control have expanded. After the Renaissance, the knowledge of the modern period was especially organized in a way that enabled the control of closed spaces. Controlling, confining, and monitoring people has begun to develop bureaucratically alongside modernity. Surveillance has become an integral part of modern societies over time. For this reason, Foucault, from whose thoughts the study benefits, evaluated modern society as a disciplinary society.

In modern society, individuals are in conflict with power. The power actually needs this conflict and tension in order to maintain its existence. The need for power to be opposed is what brings it into being. However, as the tension between individuals and power increases, the power gains more control and discipline. For this reason, power tends to strengthen its own knowledge. This is why dualisms are important in organizing ways of thinking and living in the modern period. Dualistic thought shapes concepts in the modern period in the West and draws the boundaries of thinking and knowledge

by establishing them on the basis of opposition. The system of thought built on opposites is a Western philosophy. Dualities strengthened by opposing concepts also build each side's knowledge.

Contrasts also are found in British author China Miéville's (2009) novel *The City and The City*. Two cities with separate structures are found in opposition to one another. As examples of the founding oppositions of Western metaphysics, the two cities simultaneously exclude and marginalize one another. People living in the cities of Beszel and Ul Qoma, who have to live as two different entities in a common space, are not allowed to see or perceive the other. Otherwise, they would be committing a major crime. These are two cities that are opposite each other in terms of culture, economics, philosophy, and politics. The two cities are also off-limits to each other. Miéville, a Marxist writer, reflects his own ideology in this novel as both a criticism of the modern era and a questioning of the dominance of the global capitalist system in the world order. The work falls under the genre of science fiction genre and has a fiction that also touches on power relations in cities and power struggles in the international arena.

Conflict and tension always occur between the powers that protect the knowledge and the citizens of the two cities. The novel also describes a rupture that occurred after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The city of Beszel is a city that bears the traces of a period that still continues after the Soviet Union. Beszel resembles Eastern Bloc countries in terms of government and lifestyle. Meanwhile, Ul Qoma is a liberal Westernizing city open to globalization.

In *The City and The City*, a murder investigation is underway. Borlú, a detective living in Beszel, is tasked with investigating this murder. The events that begin with the discovery of an unidentified body turn into an interrogation of two cities. The novel questions the knowledge of power with regard to the cities. This process resembles a criticism of the knowledge of the modern period and makes sense of the existence of opposites. A power is found that will exist as long as the two cities are in opposition. The knowledge of the power established through differences and exclusions is also the explanation for the dualist construction of the cities. The novel offers an example of modern thought patterns in the context of power relations and surveillance.

This study has analyzed Miéville's (2009) novel *The City and The City*. The study also offers an analysis of knowledge and power relations in the modern period, benefiting

from Foucault's thoughts on power for this purpose. The study examined how control and discipline have been established in the modern period, as well as the dependence of knowledge on power relations. As a result, the study criticizes the instrumental position regarding how the construction of knowledge of power has transformed in the modern period.

Giriş

Toplumsal yaşamda bilgi, etkileşimler sonucu oluşan temsiller halindedir. Bilgi öznesinin tarihsel inşası ise toplumsal pratiklerin parçası olan stratejilerdir (Foucault, 2011a, 166). Bir bilme ve iktidar düzeneğinin inşasında, eylemlerin, iktidar tarafından belirlenmiş bir hakikât rejimiyle bağlanması ve meşru kılınması gerekmektedir. Bir söylemin varlığı ise tarihsel süreç içinde inşa edildiği toplumdaki iktidar ilişkilerinden bağımsız biçimde ele alınamaz. Modern Batı felsefesi, bilginin iktidarını korumaya odaklanmaktadır (Foucault, 2011b, ss. 303-310). Modernite de bir söylem olarak sosyal kontrol mekanizması olarak akıl, ilerleme, hümanizm, bilim gibi söylemlerle kendisini destekleyerek insanlığın uygarlık gelişimini tek bir çizgiye oturtmayı amaçlamakta, bunun için de denetim ve disiplin stratejileri geliştirmektedir.

Modern dönemde bilgi, kapalı bir mekana göre, kapatma ve sabitleme amacıyla inşa edilmektedir. Gözetleme de bu sürecin önemli bir parçasıdır. Tarih boyunca gözetim varlığını sürdürmüş, yirminci yüzyılın sonlarında da bürokrasinin ötesine geçmiştir. Gözetleme, kurumların ötesine geçerek disiplini toplumun geneline yaymıştır. Modern toplum, iktidar stratejilerinin daima mevcut olduğu bir disiplin toplumdur. İktidar, bir strateji olarak gücünü bireylere yöneltmekte, bu süreç bireyler ve iktidar arasında sürekli bir gerilim ve mücadele yaratmaktadır. Bunun sonucunda ise iktidar daha fazla denetlemeye yönelmektedir.

Düalizmler, birer düzenleme aracı olarak Batı kültüründeki kavramları biçimlendirmektedir. İnsan-doğa, akıl-duygu gibi karşıtlıklarla kurulan düalizmler, birbirleri arasında can alıcı bağlantılara sahip biçimde kurulan ortak yapılardır. Karşıt kavramlardan oluşan düalizmler, bir ayırım ya da ikilik olmanın da ötesindedir. Düalist yapı içinde işleyen ayırım mekanizması, iki unsurun birbirlerine dayattıkları varsayımları da kapsamaktadır (Plumwood, 2017, ss. 65-70). 1972 İngiltere doğumlu yazar ve akademisyen China Miéville'in *Şehir ve Şehir* adlı bilim kurgu ve polisiye türündeki eseri, düalizm egemenliğinde Batı felsefe geleneğinin bir eleştirisini sunmaktadır. Romanda birbirine karşıt konumlandırılmış şehirlerin bilgisi, Batı'daki modern bilgi anlayışına benzer inşa edilmektedir. Romanın eleştirel yönü, yazarın eğitimi ve ideolojisini de yansıtmaktadır. Sosyal antropoloji lisansı sonrası yüksek lisans ve doktorasını uluslararası hukuk alanında yapan yazar, kendisini bir Marksist olarak tanımlamaktadır. Miéville'in bilim kurgu, fantastik kurgu ve tuhaf kurgu türlerine temas eden çalışmalarında ilk romanı *King Rat*'ten (1995) itibaren bu ideolojik duruşunu görmek mümkündür. Yazarın

Şehir ve Şehir adlı eseri de kültürel, politik, ekonomik ve mekansal olarak ayrılmış iki şehrin birbirine yasak olduğu bir çatışma zemininde kurgulanmıştır.

Şehir ve Şehir, mekanın bilişsel, estetik ve ahlâki olarak *ötekiyi* de inşa ederek yaratılmasının bir örneğidir. Mekanın bu üç yaratıcı stratejisi, mekana dair bilginin düşünsel anlamda yayılması ve yaratılmasıyla bilişsel; mekanın deneyimler ve duygularla çizilen sınırlarıyla estetik; son olarak mekanın bireye yüklediği sorumluluk bağlamında da ahlâki bir mekan olarak mekanı inşa etmektedir (Bauman, 2011, s. 179). Romanda öteki, bir yandan her iki şehir için bir diğeri; bir yandan da müphem bir söylenti olan şehir, Orciny'dir.

Şehir ve Şehir bir cinayet soruşturmasıyla başlamakta, ilerledikçe de birbirlerine yasak olan Beszel ve Ul Qoma'yı ayrıştıran iktidar ilişkilerini ortaya çıkaran bir araştırmaya dönüşmektedir. Yasaklarla çevrelenmiş iki şehre dair bilginin inşası, modern dönemin düalizmleriyle kurulmakta, farklılıklar ve dışlamalar üzerinden kurgulanmaktadır. Modern dönemde düşüncüyü biçimlendiren düalist kalıplar, Beszel ve Ul Qoma şehirlerinin ayırımında da mevcuttur. Düzen kurucu karşıtlıklara dönüştürülen iki şehir, varlıklarını korumak için kendilerine dayatılan metafizik anlatıya sadık kalmak zorundadır. Gözetim unsuru olarak iki şehrin de ötesindeki bir güç olan İhlâl'in konumu bu bağlamda iktidarın anlatısını koruma aracına dönüşmektedir.

Çalışmada, *Şehir ve Şehir* adlı romanın bir değerlendirilmesi yapılmıştır. Bu değerlendirme yapılırken modern dönemin bilgisine ve iktidarın inşasına dair bir eleştiri sunabilmek amacıyla özellikle Foucault'nun iktidar ve söylem üzerine temel düşüncelerinden faydalanılmıştır. Bilginin kurucu zemini olarak düalizmin varlığını açığa çıkarmayı amaçlayan çalışmada, iki şehrin bilgisinin olduğu kadar bu bilgiyi kuran denetim ve disiplin mekanizması altında yatan bilgi ve bilme biçimine dair bir değerlendirme sunulmuştur.

Moderniteyi Kuran Karşıtlıklar: Beszel ve Ul Qoma

Gerçekliğin düalist biçimde inşa edilmesi modern düşüncede merkezi bir yerdedir. Düalist düşünce biçiminin egemen olduğu Batı metafiziği, karşıtlıklar kurarak bir hiyerarşi ve epistemolojik ayırım yaratmıştır. Ayrıcalıklı olan unsurun ilk konuma, ötekileştirilen ve dezavantajlı hâle getirilen unsurun ikinci konuma yerleştirildiği karşıtlıklar ile modernite kendi epistemolojisini yaratmıştır. Dolayısıyla karşıtlıklar, yalnızca fikir

sistemleri değildir; tahakküm ilişkisi bağlamında kurulan bu ikili yapılar, kültürel ifadeleri ve gerekçeleri de yansıtmaktadır (Plumwood, 2017, s. 64). Bu bağlamda *Şehir ve Şehir*, karşıt olarak kurulmuş iki şehrin bilgisinin tarihsel inşasının bir örneğidir.

Miéville'in *Şehir ve Şehir* adlı romanında kurucu öge olarak karşıtların varlığı başlangıçtan itibaren mevcuttur. Romanın ana karakteri Ağır Suçlar Birimi müfettişi Tyador Borlú, görmemesi gereken şehri görmemeyi başarmaktadır. Kendisine *yasak olan* şehir, varlığını yadsıması gereken Ul Qoma'dır:

Asfaltta sürüklenerek -Ul Qoma'daki hangi caddeden olduğunu bilmiyorum- Beszel'deki Künic Caddesi'nde mağazalardan birinin duvarına çarpmıştı. Mağazanın vitrinine bakmakta olan bir Besz vatandaşı hayatını kaybetmişti. Ul Qomalı sürücü de ağır yaralanmıştı. İki şehrin insanları çılgık çılgığa bağırıyordu. Ben olayı görmemiştim, ama annem görmüştü ve elimi öylesine sıkı tutuyordu ki ben de acidan bağırıştım. Etrafımdaki gürültüyü sonradan fark ettim. (Miéville, 2009, s. 83)

Modern dönemde karşıtlıklar zemininde kurulan bilgi, karşımıza iki şehri çevreleyen pratikler biçiminde çıkmaktadır. Yasak olan öteki, hangi şehirde bulunulduğuyla bağlantılı olarak, görülmemesi gereken diğer şehirdir. Şehirler, birbirleri karşısında nesneleştirilmekte ve öznenin konumu, nesneyle girdiği ilişkinin sınırlarıyla çizilmektedir. Öznenin bilgisinin tarihsel üretimi, kurumlar ve pratikler üzerinden işleyen bir ağ ile varlığını sürdürmektedir. Bu durum, toplumdaki pratiklerin tamamına sirayet ederek özellikle hukuksal pratiklere yansımaktadır (Foucault, 2011a, s. 263). Bu açıdan, romanın henüz başlangıcında görebileceğimiz üzere, isim seçimine de bu pratiklerin ayrıştırıcı gücü yansımaktadır. *Şehir ve Şehir*; iki aynı yerine romanda iki zıt kutup olarak bulunmaktadır. Modern dönemin bilgisi, iki şehri karşıtlık zeminine yerleştirmektedir:

Kafamı çevirdim, birkaç metre uzaklıktaki tren yoluna baktım. Tren gelene kadar bekledim. Hızla gelip geçerken trenin pencerelerine, içerideki yolcuların gözlerine baktım. Pek azı beni fark etti ve çok şaşırıldılar. Birbirine bağlı vagonlar büyük bir hızla geçip gittiler: Aslında bir suç işlenmişti ama bu onların suçu değildi. Muhtemelen kendilerini suçlu da hissetmediler. (Miéville, 2009, s. 55)

İktidarın toplumsal pratiklere sinmiş ayrım stratejileri, özne üzerindeki yaptırım gücüyle tarihsel olarak sürekli yeniden üretilmektedir (Foucault, 2011a, s. 166). Her iki şehrin insanları, çocukluklarından beri kendilerine yasak olanı algılamamak üzere yetiştirilmektedir. *Öteki* şehre ait koku, gürültü, görüntü ya da yanibaşlarında cereyan etmekte olan bir olay gibi, yasak olanı fark etmemeleri gerekmektedir. Şehirleri birbirinden ayıran görünmez duvarlar olan bu yasaklar, iç içe geçmiş iki şehri birbirine aynı bedende yaşayan iki yabancıya çevirmektedir. Ancak, iki şehrin birbirine olan mesafesi yalnızca yasakların duvarlarından değil, birbirlerinden ayrılmaya başladıkları andan itibaren yaşadıkları ekonomik, kültürel, siyasi değişimlerle de kurulmaktadır. Beszel ve Ul Qoma, İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında değişen dünya düzeninin iki kutuplu yapısını yansıtarak Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılması sonrasında Avrupa'nın yaşadığı yapısal değişimlerin kurgusal bir örneğine dönüşmektedir. Bu bağlamda bilginin düalist kurgusunu yansıtan iki şehir, iki kutuplu dünya düzenini de yansıtmakta, sınırların kurulacağı düzlemi belirlemektedir. Zira Beszel ve Ul Qoma'da sınırların ve yasakların bilgisi, inşa edilmiş bilgidir. Modernitenin hakikât iddialarıyla benzer biçimde, iki şehrin ayrımı doğal bir ayrım gibi kabul görmektedir. Ancak, bilginin icat edilmiş oluşu, onun aynı zamanda kökensizliğini ve yapaylığını da göstermektedir.

Romanın başlangıcında, kimliği belirsiz bir kadın cesedi bulunmasının ardından Borlú cinayet mahalline gider. Soruşturma sırasında ulaşılan görgü tanıkları, cesedin bir minibüsten atıldığını söyler. Kadının kimliğini belirleyebilmek için Borlú, ölen kadının fotoğraflarını şehirde poster olarak astırır. Bu sayede Borlú, isimsiz bir ihbar alır. Telefon Ul Qoma'dan gelmektedir. Arayan kişi, öldürülen kadının adının Marya olduğunu, siyasi faaliyetler sırasında tanıştığı bir yabancı olduğunu söyler. Kadını aradıklarını ise astıkları posterlerden *görmüştür* (Miéville, 2009, ss. 43-50). Romanda yasak olanın görülmesi, büyük bir suçtur. Her iki şehrin vatandaşlarının görmesi ya da görmemesi gereken şeylerin ne olduğu standartlaştırılmış biçimde çocukluktan itibaren öğretilmektedir. Ortak bir mekanı birbirlerine yasak olarak paylaşan iki farklı şehirden birinde asılı posterlerin diğer şehirden görülmesi, ihlâldir:

Beni arayan muhbir o posterleri görmüş olamazdı. Posterleri onun ülkesine götürmemiştik. Bunu bana söylememeliydi. Beni suçuna alet etmişti. Bilgi, Beszel'de sakıncalı bir maddeydi. Aldığım azıcık bir miktar bile beynimde bir travma yaratmaya yetmişti. Suç ortağı olmuştum. Bitmiştim. (Miéville, 2009, s. 51)

Borlú, istihbaratın gelme biçiminden rahatsız olur. İktidar, kendisinden başka kimsenin bilip görmediği bir ihlâlin korkusunu bile Borlú'ya yaşatabilmektedir. Buna rağmen ihbarının kaynağını saklayarak soruşturmaya devam eder. Bu sırada iki şehrin mekansal birlikteliğine karşılık farklılıklarını yansıtan özellikleri okura sunulur:

Budapeşte Caddesi boyunca uzanan eski binalar kelebek çalılılarıyla kaplanmıştı. Bu çalılar Beszel'in simgesi gibidir, ama Ul Qoma'da bulunmazlar, orada bu çalılar yabancı ot diye keserler. (Miéville, 2009, s. 59)

Romanda düalist yapılar birbirlerine dair bilginin kurucusudur. Düalizmler kültür, değer ve yaşam alanları gibi olgular bu yapılar çerçevesinde inşa edilmektedir. Kurulan tahakküm ilişkisi bağlamında ötekileştirilmek istenilen unsurun konumu, bu karşıtlık çerçevesine yerleştirilmektedir. Yoğun, yerleşik ve gelişmiş kültürel ifadeler olarak kurulan düalizmler, aslında doğalmış gibi sunulan ve kültürel olarak yerleşmiş ayrıştırma ve tahakküm ilişkileridir (Plumwood, 2017, 71). *Modern ve yeni* Ul Qoma, Beszel'in simgesini yabancı ot olarak değerlendirmektedir. *Geleneksel ve eski* olan Beszel, küreselleşmiş dünyanın renkli döngüsü içinde Ul Qoma için artık *yabancı* ötekidir. Beszel ve Ul Qoma farkı, buldukları bölgenin mimarisine de yansımaktadır. Geçtikleri caddelerde Beszel'e ait olan binalar çalılarla kaplıdır. Borlú, yirmi, otuz yıl önce aslında harabe olmayan bu sokakların memurlarla dolup taşıdığını, sanayi bölgesindeki hareketi, yük gemilerinin sürekli gidip geldiğini hatırlar. Ancak durum zamanla bir mezarlığa dönmüştür (Miéville, 2009, s. 59):

Ul Qoma şehriyle paylaşılan alan o zamanlar sakindi; sonrasında ise işler tersine döndü. Beszel'in nehir endüstrisi zayıfladıkça Ul Qoma işleri hızlandı. Artık Beszliyelerden çok yabancılarla dolup taşıyordu kaldırımlar. Ul Qoma'nın, etrafı kaleler gibi çevrilmiş, lümpen barok tarzdaki kenar mahalleleri çok önceden yıkılmıştı, sonrasında yenilenmiş ve yerlerine galeriler ve çeşitli binalar yapılmıştı. (Miéville, 2009, s. 60)

Beszel ve Ul Qoma, aslında *ikiz şehirler* olarak modernitenin kentsel bir portresini çizmektedir. Avrupa ve Asya'nın birleştiği bir yerde, sınır konumunda yer alan bu şehirlerin ikisi de Sovyetler sonrasındaki Avrupa şehirlerine benzerdir. Farklılaştıkları hususlar olarak Beszel'in Fordist geçmişine karşılık gerileme sürecinde olması, buna karşılık Ul Qoma'nın neo-liberal politikalar izleyerek finansal bir atılım yaşamamasıdır (Martin, 2013, s. 712). Liberalizmle tanışan Ul Qoma'nın aksine Beszel, yeni dünya düzeni

içinde yerini bulamamıştır. Küresel ticarete dâhil olamamış, kendi üretim ve ticaret gücünü de kaybetmiştir. Bu durum, iki şehrin *gelişmiş-geri kalmış* karşıtlığının göstergesine dönüşmektedir.

Soruşturma ilerledikçe Marya'nın üçüncü bir şehir olan Orciny hakkında bilgi topladığını öğrenirler. Asıl adının Mahalia Geary olduğunu öğrendikleri kadının Amerikalı olduğu, Ul Qoma'da arkeoloji alanında doktora yaptığı, Bol Ye'an adlı bir bölgede kazı araştırmasına dâhil olduğu öğrenilir (Miéville, 2009, ss. 63-82). Davanın İhlâl'e devredilmesi için yapılan görüşmede, bir yetkilinin tavrını İhlâl'e yönelmiş nefret olarak yorumlayan Corwi'ye Borlú'nun verdiği cevap ise kurucu bir unsur olarak İhlâl'in gücünü pekiştirmektedir:

Nefret etmeleri de garip. Bu, nefes aldığın havadan nefret etmek gibi bir şey. Eğer milliyetçiye, İhlâl olmadan Beszel'in de olmayacağını bilmesi gerek. O yoksa vatan da yok. (Miéville, 2009, s. 87)

Bilgi ve bilinebilecek şeyler arasındaki ilişkinin keyfi oluşu, iktidarın uyguladığı şiddetin bir göstergesi olarak bilgi sisteminin merkezindedir (Foucault, 2011a, s. 173). İhlâl'in bilgisi, iki şehrin vatandaşlarının varoluşlarını bağımlı kıldıkları metafizik bir zemin işlevi görmektedir. Disiplinlerin tarihinde yatan yalnızca bireylerin becerilerinin geliştirilmesi değildir; bireyler aynı zamanda inşa edilen sistem içinde daha fazla yararlı ve itaatkâr hâle getirilmeye çalışılmaktadır (Foucault, 1992, s. 170). Dolayısıyla Beszel ve Ul Qoma'nın vatandaşları, İhlâl'in varlığına bağımlı kılan, varlıklarının devamlılığı için İhlâl'e itaat etmekte *fayda* görmektedir. Dolayısıyla İhlâl, her pratikte bir ihtiyaca dönüşerek yeniden meşrulaştırılmaktadır. Anlamın nesnelleşmesi olarak meşrulaştırma, bir yandan bu nesnelleşmeyi bir yandan da öznel anlamlarda makûl hâle gelmeyi sağlamaktadır (Berger & Luckmann, 2020, s. 136). İhlâl'in bilgisi, iki şehrin vatandaşları üzerinden kendisini meşrulaştırmaktadır. Bu bağlamda kurumsal bir yapı olarak İhlâl'in aynı zamanda birbirleriyle iç içe geçmiş anlamlarla da vatandaşların gündelik hayatıyla da bütünleşmesi söz konusudur.

İhlâl'i benimsemiş iki şehrin vatandaşlarının aksine, Mahalia'nın anne ve babası Amerika'dan Beszel'e geldiklerinde İhlâl'in ne olduğunu anlamakta zorlanırlar (Miéville, 2009, ss. 96-97):

İhlâl hakkında ne bildiğinizden emin değilim, Bay ve Bayan Geary, ama o... başka güçlere benzemez. Onun... gücünün sınırlarını tahmin edersiniz. İhlâl'in... kendine has güçleri vardır. Bu güçler... çok esrarengizdir. (Miéville, 2009, s. 97)

İktidar bireyler arasında inşa edilen bir ilişki olarak diğer insanları denetleme gücüne sahiptir. Fakat bu güç, bireylerin isyanlarını bastırma ihtimalinin varlığına da bağlıdır. İktidar, reddetmenin varlığına bağlı olduğundan kendisine yönelik isyanı bastırma gücüne sahip olduğu sürece mevcuttur. Araçsal şiddeti gerektirmeyen iktidar, bir sınıfın diğerleri üzerinde uygulayabildiği güç kapasitesi olarak rasyonelleşebileceği, siyasi rasyonelleşmeyi de içeren bir zemine ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Dolayısıyla devlet iktidarı, siyasi gücün uygulayıcı mevkisi olarak iktidarın rasyonelleşmesine aracılık etmektedir (Foucault, 2014, ss. 55-56). İhlâl, iki şehrin rasyonelleştirilmiş iktidarındır; romanda her şeyin ötesinde bilme ve görme kabiliyeti olan bir güçtür. İhlâl'in iktidarı, gözetimin toplumsal olarak yerleşikleşip vatandaşlarca içselleştirilmesinin bir örneğidir.

Aile, kızlarının Orciny'ye olan ilgisine değinir (Miéville, 2009, ss. 97-98). Borlú, onlara Orciny'nin İhlâl'in gerçekliğinin aksine, bir efsane olduğunu anlatmaya çalışır. Aslında romanda Orciny, bir söylem olarak güç sahibidir. Zira söylem, yalnızca baskı sistemlerini açıklamakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda söylem, ele geçirilmek istenilen güçtür de (Foucault, 1987, s. 24). Karşıtlıklar temelinde kurulan modern düşüncenin iktidarı, sürekliliğini sağlamak için korku yaymak zorundadır. Mitik bir konuma kendisini yerleştiren modernite, kendi metafiziğini mutlak ve zorunlu kılmıştır. *İnsanlık için modernitenin varlığı bir gerekliliktir*. Bu bağlamda İhlâl'in gerekliliği, Orciny'nin müphemliğinden beslenen bir söylem de yaratmaktadır. Üçüncü şehir. Bu bir sır. Efsane. İki şehir arasında. (Miéville, 2009, s. 99).

Modern devletin ötekisi, kimsenin vatani olmayan, müphem ve tartışmalı olandır. İktidarın ötekisi bu bağlamda tanımlanamaz ve bilinemez yapısıyla yasak, huzursuz ve bilinmez olandır (Bauman, 2003, s. 19). Orciny de romanda belirsiz, hayâli ve tehditkâr öteki olarak konumlandırılmaktadır. Orciny'nin fantastik konumu, iki şehrin düalizmi dışında bir "öz" özelliği de taşımaktadır. Kurgunun içindeki kurgu olarak Orciny, müphem ötekidir.

Borlú, Mahalia'nın *İki Şehrin Arasında* adlı bir kitap yazarak iki şehrin benzerlik ve bağlantılarını inceleyen David Bowden ile tanıştığını öğrenir. Bowden, bu çalışmasıyla Orciny'yi yıllar önce gündeme getiren isimdir. Bu sırada Mahalia'nın soruşturmasını İhlâl'in almayacağını öğrenirler. Borlú soruşturma kapsamında Ul Qoma'ya gider. Ul Qoma'lı meslektaş Dhath tarafından karşılanır (Miéville, 2009, ss. 129-153). Borlú, artık *Beszeli fark etmemek zorundadır*. Borlú'nun Ul Qoma'ya girişi romanda yalnızca bir şehirden diğerine geçiş değildir. Ul Qoma'ya giriş için eğitimden geçilmesi gerekmektedir:

Dhatt'ın gösterdiklerine bakıyordum. Görmemeyi öğrenmiştim. (...) Beszel'i görmemeyi başarmıştım. Nasıl bir şehir olduğunu unutmuştum. Hayal bile edemiyordum. Artık Ul Qoma'yı görüyordum. (Miéville, 2009, ss. 154-155)

Borlú'nun Ul Qoma'ya geçişi, düşünme biçimine sızmış iktidarın gücünü göstermektedir. Kendi yaşadığı yeri algılamamayı, yaşadığı şehri gördüğünde onu görmemeyi başarması aslında güce rıza gösterdiğini de kanıtlamaktadır. Bu durum, iktidarın araçsallaştırdığı bilgiyi *doğallaştırmasıyla* bağlantılıdır. Doğallaştırılmadığı müddetçe hakikât iddiaları sorgulanacak bilgi biçimleri, iktidarlarını kendilerini doğal olarak yansıtarak var edebilmektedir.

Borlú, Bol Ye'an'daki kazılarda yer alan Yolanda adlı bir kız öğrencinin daha kaybolduğunu öğrenir. Mahalia'nın dâhil olduğu kazı çalışmasını görmek üzere Bol Ye'an'a giderek Bowden ile tanışırlar. Yolanda, Bowden'in tek öğrencisidir (Miéville, 2009, ss. 162-168). Kazı alanına ziyaretlerinden sonra Dhatt ve Borlú, bir kafeye oturur. Onu bir kafeye oturttum. Aslında çayevi demek gerek, çünkü Ul Qoma'daydık. (Miéville, 2009, s. 177).

Romanda iki şehrin birbirine konumu da benzer biçimdedir; Beszel şehri, Doğu'da, Ul Qoma şehri Batı'da kalmaktadır (Miéville, 2009, 182). Beszel'de konuşulan Beszce, soldan sağa yazılan, Kiril alfabesine benzer alfabeyle sahip bir dildir. Ul Qoma'nın dili olan İlitanca ise Roman alfabesiyle yazılan, görece daha yeni bir dildir (Miéville, 2009, s. 55). Ayrıca Ul Qoma'luların selamlaşma biçimlerinde yanaktan üç kere öpülmektedir (Miéville, 2009, s. 218). Beszel kelimesi daha Doğu Avrupa'lıdır; Ul Qoma ise Arapça'ya benzerdir. Romanda Ul Qoma'ya oryantalist özellikler yüklenmektedir. Borlú karakterinin oryantalistçe ortaya çıkan Doğu ilgisi (Borlú, *aj Tyrko* adıyla Beszel'de satılan Türk kahvesini içmeyi tercih etmektedir), Ul Qoma yemeklerine olan ilgisinde de mevcuttur. Borlú, çalışma arkadaşı Corwi ile Beszel'de bulunan bir Ul Qoma restoranına gittiğinde, restorani tercih etmesinin sebebi olarak Ul Qoma havası almak istemesini belirtmektedir. Ul Qoma yemekleri ise oryantalist bir ayrımı yansıtacak biçimde kokuları ve yoğunlukları ile tanımlanmaktadır; tarçınlı mercimek, şekerli çay gibi tatlı, baharatlı yiyecekler olarak yer almaktadır. Ul Qoma'nın geleneksel çayı tatlı kremalı ve tuhaf baharatlı bir içecektir (Miéville, 2009, 70; ss. 166; 219). Ul Qoma'nın geleneksel içeceği olan çay nedeniyle şehirde *çay evleri* vardır; Beszel'dekiler ise daha Avrupai bir isimle anılan *kafelerdir* (Miéville, 2009, s. 177). Ul Qoma, Batılılaşmaya çalışan bir Doğu şehri imajıyla sunulmaktadır:

Etrafımdaki insanlara baktığımda, Beszel'dekinden çok daha fazla Asyalı, Arap ve Afrikalı olduğunu fark ettim.

"Giriş serbest mi?" dedim.

"Pek sayılmaz," dedi Dhatt. "Ul Qoma'nın insan gücüne ihtiyacı var. Ama gördüğün herkes dikkatle seçilmiştir. Hepsi de tüm sınavları geçmiş, iyi derece elde etmiştir. Bazıları çocuk sahibi bile oluyor." (Miéville, 2009, s. 178)

İki şehir, Sovyetler Birliği'nin yıkılmasının ardından iki farklı yolu seçen Doğu Avrupa şehirleri gibi kurgulanmıştır. Beszel'den farklılaşan Ul Qoma, mekansal olarak küresel kapitalist sisteme uygun bir dönüşüm yaşamaktadır. Ulusal ve uluslararası insan göçünü artıran küreselleşme, Ul Qoma'yı kendi vaatleri doğrultusunda şekillendirmektedir. Hızla gelişen Ul Qoma, ihtiyaç duyduğu iş gücünü dışarıdan temin etme yoluna gitmekte, İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrası Avrupa'nın izlediği yeniden yapılanma yolunun temsili olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Ul Qoma bir yandan yeniden eşitsizlikler yaratacak bir üretim sistemini, bir yandan da Beszel'den daha demokratik görünen siyasal bir düzeni inşa etmektedir. Dolayısıyla Ul Qoma, kapitalizmin dayandığı eşitsizlik temelindeki bir küreselleşme yaşamaktadır.

Romanda, Sovyetler Birliği'ndeki prestroyka ve glasnost planlarına bir gönderme yapan Glasnostrokya sonrasında, önceden tehlikeli bulunan fikirlere ifade özgürlüğü verilmiş, toplantı ve gösteri hakkı sınırlı biçimde de olsa sunulmuştur. Ul Qoma, romanda dışa açılan bir şehirdir; küreselleşen dünyanın bir parçası olması için teşvik edilmektedir. Modernitenin hareket, ilerleme ve canlılık gibi kavramlarla aktarılabilecek karakter dayatması, modern bir şehrin dünyaya açılma çabaları üzerinden Ul Qoma'da okunabilmektedir. Beszel'in aksine gelişmiş bir şehir olan Ul Qoma, reklam panolarıyla doludur ve tüketim toplumunun bir parçasıdır (Miéville, 2009, s. 31). Ul Qoma'nın gelişmişliği, onu aktif, canlı ve hareketli bir şehir haline getirmiştir. Beszel'in sakin sokaklarına karşılık Ul Qoma hareketli, genç ve dinamiktir:

Ul Qoma şehriyle paylaşılan alanlar o zamanlar sakindi, sonrasında ise işler tersine döndü. Beszel'in nehir endüstrisi zayıfladıkça Ul Qoma'nın işleri hızlandı. (Miéville, 2009, ss. 59-60)

Sadece işlerine ve evlerine gidip gelen Beszliler'in sessiz gecelerinin aksine, Ul Qoma'da geceleri sokaklar kalabalıktır (Miéville, 2009, s. 60; 155; 163). Romanda ayrı tarihsel çizgilere sahip iki şehir, gündelik yaşam biçimleri üzerinden de karşı konumdadır.

Tüketim kültürünün boş zaman faaliyetlerini şekillendirme gücü, Ul Qoma sokaklarındaki harekete yansımaktadır. Sanayileşen Ul Qoma'da iş dışındaki yaşama biçimleri tüketim kültürüne uyumlu hale gelmiştir. Beszel'deki durum ise tam tersidir:

Çevremizde gördüklerimiz olağan şeylerdi. Yoksulluk burada da hüküm sürüyordu. Soluk renkli, sıkıcı kıyafetler tam Besz şehrine uygun düşen bir tarzdı. (Miéville, 2009, s. 31)

Ul Qoma, modern ve küreselleşmeye açıktır; parlak renklerle bezeli, hareketli ve canlı sokakları vardır. Gelişmiş finansal yapısı nedeniyle tüketim kültürüne dâhil olmuştur. Beszel ise durağan, soluk, yoksuldur. Soğuk Savaş sonrasında ekonomik, politik, sosyal ve kültürel alanda yaşanan uluslararası bir dönüşüm olan küreselleşme, ülkelerin sınırlarının dışına taşıdığı bir süreç olarak, etkileşimlerin yoğunluğunu ve kapsamını da değiştirerek daha eşitsiz bir düzen yaratmıştır (Holm & Sorensen, 1995, s. 9). Bu eşitsizlik, iki şehrin karşıtlığında mevcuttur. Küreselleşme süreciyle beraber ulusal değer ve özelliklerin çözülerek küresel ağa eklenmesi, özellikle küresel ekonomik sistemin pazar fırsatlarından yararlanmak için ülkelerin dönüşüme yönelmesini beraberinde getirmiştir (Hirst vd., 2009, s. 26). Ul Qoma'nın küreselleşmiş bir şehir olarak tasviri, romanda bu dönüşümün iki uç noktasını yansıtabilmesi açısından Beszel ile kurulan karşıtlıkla güçlendirilmektedir. Beszel'de harap halde, artık çalışmayan ya da yarı kapasite çalışan fabrikalar vardır. Yabancı yatırımcı olarak yalnızca birkaç teknoloji şirketinin faaliyet gösterdiği Beszel'in zaman geçtikçe zayıflayan sanayisine karşılık Ul Qoma hızla gelişme göstermiştir (Miéville, 2009, ss. 27-38). Düzensiz gelişme girişimlerine bozuk yapılaşmanın eşlik ettiği Beszel gittikçe yoksullaşırken, Ul Qoma zenginleşmiştir:

Eski Ul Qoma, bugünlerde artık bir finans bölgesi haline gelmeye başlamıştı. Ahşap çatılar, cam gibi parlayan çeliklere karışmıştı. (Miéville, 2009, s. 155)

Ul Qoma'nın sanayisi hızla gelişmesiyle şehrin yüzü de değişmiştir. Karşıt biçimde geri kalmış öteki konumundaki Beszel ise kendisini yenileyememiştir. Buna karşılık zenginleşen Ul Qoma, dünyaya açılan yüzüyle popüler bir turizm bölgesine de dönüşmüştür. Her iki ülkeye de turistler gelmektedir ancak yenilenen havaalanları ve terminalleri ile Ul Qoma, Beszel'den daha fazla turist çekmektedir (Miéville, 2009, s. 91). Tarihi zenginliğini elden çıkarıp diğer ülkelere satan Beszel'in aksine Ul Qoma, tarihi zenginliğini korumuştur (Miéville, 2009, s. 79). Roman, maddi güç ve güçsüzlük karşıtlığını iki şehrin tüm gündelik pratikleri üzerinden göstermeye çalışmaktadır:

Beszél'in fi tarihten kalma telefon hatları kendini hemen belli ediyordu. Ses yankılanıyordu. (Miéville, 2009, s. 48)

Teknolojik bir geri kalmışlığa mahkûm öteki olarak Beszél, Ul Qoma'daki ulaşım imkânlarına da sahip değildir. İki şehirden yalnızca Ul Qoma'da metro mevcuttur. Ul Qoma'da olduğu süre içinde Borlú'nun brütalist bir yapı olduğuna dair izlenimlerini paylaştığı metro, hiçbir masraftan kaçınılmadan yenilenmiştir (Miéville, 2009, ss. 163-188). Ul Qoma, uluslararası biçimde maddi destek alışıyla aslında Amerika'nın uydulaştırdığı ülkelerden birinin temsiline dönüşmektedir.

Romanın ilerleyen sayfalarında Borlú ve Dhatt, Bowden'ı görmeye gider. Bowden artık Orciny'nin varlığına inanmıyordu. Kayıp öğrenci Yolanda bulunduğu anda ise genç kızın Orciny'den saklandığını öğrenirler (Miéville, 2009, ss. 188-228). Romanda Orciny'nin belirsiz konumu, iki şehrin insanları için de aslında üzerinde çok fazla durmadıkları bir konu olarak yer almaktadır. Müphem olanın tekinsizliğinden kaçmak için onunla yüzleşmekten kaçılmaktadır. Orciny ile ilgilenmek, belirsizliğin tehlikesini açığa çıkarmaktadır:

Mahalia hep bunun peşindeydi. Ama kimseye anlatamadı. Çünkü onlar böyle istiyordu. Orcinyliler. Gerçek olmadıklarına inanılması işlerine geliyordu. Onlar böyle istiyor. İşleri böyle yürütüyorlar. (Miéville, 2009, s. 229)

Müphemlik, toplumsal düzenlemelerin rasyonel inşası için yapı malzemesi niteliğindedir. İktidar aygıtlarının toplumsal organizasyon üzerindeki denetimi, kendi varoluşundaki müphemlikten de beslenmektedir (Bauman, 2011, ss. 20-21). Orciny'nin müphemliğiyle güçlenen iktidarı, iki şehri de romanda kaplamaktadır. İhlâl'in varlığının gücüne karşılık Orciny, emin olunamaz konumuyla adeta İhlâl'in üzerinde yer almaktadır. Yolanda, Mahalia'nın kazı alanından iki şehre de ait olmadığı düşünülen parçaları Orciny'ye ilettiğini söyler. Ancak Mahalia, son zamanlarda Orciny'den korkmaya başlamıştır (Miéville, 2009, ss. 229-232). Müphemlik, tekinsizliğini karşıtlıklar dışındaki bir bilgi olarak Orciny üzerinden romanda göstermektedir:

Bir keresinde, Beszél ve Ul Qoma tarihinin, aslında Orciny ve İhlâl'in mücadelesinin tarihi olduğunu söylemişti. Beszél ve Ul Qoma, bu mücadelede piyon gibiymiş. (Miéville, 2009, s. 233)

İktidar, ancak üzerinde bir mutabakata varıldığı takdirde bilme ve bilgi biçimlerine boyun eğdirmekte, onları kendi çıkar ve amaçları doğrultusunda kullanmaktadır (Foucault, 1993, s. 51). Romanda bir icat olarak iktidarın bilgisi, aynı mekanı birbirine görünmez kılma gücüne sahiptir. İki şehrin vatandaşları tarafından üzerinde mutabakata varılarak karşıt hale getirilmiş iki şehrin bilgisi, İhlâl'in iktidarını inşa etmek ve yeniden üretmek için ihtiyaç duyduğu şeydir. Bu durum, modern bilginin inşasının bir örneğidir:

Biz bilsek de, bilmesek de, Beszel'le Ul Qoma arasında bizi gözleyen, bin yıldan eski bir güç var. İhlâl beni alırsa güvende olacağımı mı sanıyorsunuz? Ben Mahalia değilim. Orciny'yle İhlâl'in düşman olduklarından bile emin değilim (...) Belki beraber çalışıyorlardır. Ya da belki, onlardan yardım istediğinizde, burada oturmuş, birbirinize masallar anlatırken, yüzyıllar boyunca Orciny'nin eline yetki vermiş oldunuz. Bence Orciny, İhlâl'in kendisine taktığı bir isim. (Miéville, 2009, ss. 233-234)

Romanda tehlikenin varlığı, iki şehrin sistemlerinin ayakta kalmasını sağlayacak söylemlerle desteklenmektedir. Söylem, iktidarın gücüyle bağlantılıdır. İktidar, gücünü tehlikeleri önlemekte, düzeni sağlamakta ve bunları yaparken denetleme, ayrıştırma, örgütleme ve yeniden paylaşma yolunda ilerlemektedir. Söylem, bu süreçlerin ayrılmaz bir parçasıdır (Foucault, 1987, s. 23). İktidarın sessizlikle olan ilişkisinde ise Orciny, bir savunma aracı olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Orciny hakkındaki sorular, büyük bir belirsizlik ve sessizlikle karşılaşmaktadır. Müphemlik ve sessizlik, romanda Orciny'yi tehditkar bir konuma yerleştirmektedir. Orciny, aslında iki şehrin üzerindeki iktidarın savunma aracına dönüşmektedir.

Romanın sonlarına yaklaşırken, Borlú'nun Yolanda'yı Copula Salonu'ndan yasal ama gizli biçimde Beszel'e geçirme girişimi sırasında bir karmaşa çıkar, açılan ateş sonucu Yolanda ölür. Borlu ise katili bulmaya çalışırken İhlâl yapar ve İhlâl tarafından alınır. Borlú'nun İhlâl ile karşılaşması hakikâte dair bilginin sorgulanmaya açıldığı andır. Borlú, yaşadığı toplumsal gerçeklikten çekip alınır. Artık bir Beszli bile değildir; hiçbir şehre ait değildir. İhlâl'in iktidarınca ele geçirilmesi, yaşamakta olduğu gerçekliğe dair bilgiden onu koparmıştır. Bu durum, toplumsal hayatta insanın sahip olduğu bilginin bir inşa sürecinden ibaret olduğunu yansıtmaktadır. Borlú'nun algılamaya ve görmeye izni olana dair bilgisi, İhlâl'in iktidarı tarafından değiştirilmek zorundadır artık. Özne olarak Borlú'nun bilgisinin sınırları, iktidarın hedefindeki bir nesneye dönüştürülmesiyle çizilmektedir. Modern dönemde öznenin ölümüne benzer biçimde, romanda İhlâl'in Borlú'yu yaşadığı hayattan ve bilgisinden koparması da karakterin sembolik bir ölümüdür.

Borlú bu süreçte Orciny hakkında bilgi edinmek isteyen İhlâl'e yardım eder. Borlú, Mahalia'ya ait notları okuduktan sonra genç kadının Orciny tarafından kullanıldığını fark ettiğini öğrenir. Borlú, Mahalia'nın bu nedenle öldürüldüğüne karar verir (Miéville, 2009, ss. 263-290). Finalde, Mahalia'nın Orciny ilgisinin küresel bir teknoloji şirketi tarafından kendi çıkarları için kullanıldığını öğreniriz. Mahalia ve şirket arasında aracılık yapan kişiyi ise Bowden tutmuştur. Borlú, Mahalia'yı ölüme götüren kişinin Bowden olduğunu anlar. Bowden, şirketin araştırmalarını kendi Orciny tutkusu için kullanmaya çalışmıştır (Miéville, 2009, ss. 292-323). Bowden karakteri, İhlâl'in ürkütücülüğü ya da Orciny'nin müphemliği karşısında, aslında roman boyunca asıl tehlikeli olan unsur olarak daima "görünür" haldedir. Efsaneleştirilen ve ürkülen Orciny'nin bilgisi ve İhlâl'in korkutucu iktidarı karşısında *Şehir ve Şehir*'de kaosun görünen bir karakterden kaynaklanması, iktidarın kırılmasını da göstermektedir. Gözetleyen ve disipline eden söylemlerine karşın iki şehri inşa eden bilgi, apaçık bir karakterin kişisel hırsları karşısında yetersiz kalmış, araçsallaştırılmıştır.

İktidar ve Panoptikon: İhlâl

İktidar için bilgi, disiplin için bir araçtır. Bilginin yer aldığı bağlam, siyasi, ekonomik ya da sosyal yapılar içindeki ilişkilerle, bilginin öznesi üzerinden kurulmaktadır (Foucault, 1996, s. 341). Disiplinin sağlanmasında gözetim de vazgeçilmezdir. Gözetim mekanizması olarak İhlâl, romanda düzen kurucu, disipline edici rolündedir ve modern dönemin bilgisinin bir tablosunu sunmaktadır. İhlâl'in iktidarı, modernitenin düalist mantığı üzerinde kurularak iki karşıtın varlığına bağımlı bulunmaktadır:

İki şehrin de İhlâl'e ihtiyacı vardı. Şehirlerin bütünlüklerini koruyamazsa, İhlâl'in varlığının anlamı neydi? (Miéville, 2009, s. 87)

Modern dönemin bilgisi, yasaklama, yok sayma ve suskunluğa dayanmaktadır (Foucault, 2007, 13). İhlâl *söylemi*, İhlâl'in *bilgisiyle* kurulmaktadır. Her iki şehrin varlıklarının korunması, İhlâl'deki gücün kurucu rolüyle ilintilidir. Söylem ve bilginin, doğru-yanlış gibi sınırları koyabilmesinin gücü buradan gelmektedir (Foucault, 2001, s. 182). İhlâl'in bilgisi, iki şehrin ayrımının tarihsel biçimde kurgulanmasını sağlayan güçtür. *Şehir ve Şehir*'de panoptizm, İhlâl ile iki şehrin ötesinde ancak iki şehrin de üzerinde bir iktidar olarak yer almaktadır. Gözetleme ve fiziksel müdahalenin varlığıyla desteklenen İhlâl, korku ve paranoya da yaratmaktadır. Bunun aracılığıyla iki şehrin insanları, kendiliğinden diğer şehrin insanlarını görmemeyi başarabilmektedir. İhlâl, görünmeden yürüttüğü

İktidarı aracılığıyla kendi gücüne itaati sağlamlaştırmaktadır (Stacy, 2015, s. 231). Çünkü her iktidar, bir amaç doğrultusunda ilerlerken gücünü pekiştireceği alanlarla da eklenmeler ve bağlantılar kurmaktadır. Bu süreçte direnişlerle karşılaşsa da iktidar Foucault'ya göre direnme noktaları olduğu sürece var olabilmektedir. Dolayısıyla iktidara direnme aslında ortadan kaldırılması mümkün olmayan *diğer karşıtlıklar ve bağlantılardır* (Foucault, 2007, ss. 72-74). Karşıtlık zemininde konumlanmış olan Beszel ve Ul Qoma, birbirinin varlığını kabul etmek kaydıyla bu karşıtlığı koruyabilmektedir. Varlığının inkâr edilmediği diğer şehir, bir diğerinin varlığını koruması için *yasak olandır*:

Beszli bir çocuğun, hatta muhtemelen Ul Qomalı bir çocuğun da ilk yılları, işaretleri kavramakla geçer. Giyim tarzı ve kabul gören renkler, hatta yürüyüş ve duruş biçimleri bile öğrenilir. Hem de çok hızlıca. Çocukların çoğu, daha sekiz yaşına bile gelmeden ihlâl yapmanın nasıl utanç verici bir suç olduğunu öğrenmiş olur. (Miéville, 2009, ss. 83-84)

Öznel deneyim, deneyimi kuran söylem ilişkileri bağlamında değerlendirilmelidir. Bu nedenle iktidar ilişkilerinin analizi, iktidar ve özne arasında kurulan bağın öznenin deneyimlerinde doğrudan rol oynadığını da gösterme kabiliyetindedir (Foucault, 2011a, s. 10). Panoptikonun işleyişi de öznel deneyimlerin kontrolüyle doğrudan bağlantılıdır. Söylemler ise bu süreçte dışlama sistemleri olarak da işlemektedir (Foucault, 1987, s. 31). Düalist düşünce biçimi de bu dışlama sistemlerinin kurulacağı mantık zeminini kurmaktadır. Düalizm, farklılıklar inşa ederek iktidarın sistematize edilmiş bir biçimi olarak kurumsallaştırılır ve doğallaştırılır. İktidar, kültür ve yargılardan bağımsız olmayan düalizmler tarihsel biçimde inşa edilerek geliştirilir (Plumwood, 2017). Beszel ve Ul Qoma'da yaşayanlar, biz ve öteki ayrımı temelinde geliştirilmiş düalizmlerle hayatlarını yaşamayı öğrenmek zorundadır. İki şehrin karşıtlığına dayanmış İhlâl'in iktidarı, modern dönemde mekanın iktidarın gözetimine uygun inşasının bir örneğidir. Beszel ve Ul Qoma şehirleri, modernitenin düalist mantığı çerçevesinde kurulmaktadır. Karşıtlıklarla ben ve öteki ayrımını yaratan modernitenin ayırım stratejileri, ontolojik bir ötekileştirme olarak çalışarak iki şehrin varlığını ve bilgisini kurmaktadır.

Bentham'ın (Bentham, 1995) panoptikon planında birbirinden bağımsız hücreler, dairesel biçimde sıralanmıştır. Birbiriyle iletişimi olmayan hücrelerin tamamı gözetleyicinin yer aldığı alana dönüktür. Işığın yalnızca hücrelere vurduğu alanda mahkûmlar görünürken, gözetleyici görünmemektedir. Hücreler görülebilir, aydınlıktır; gözcü ise karanlıktadır. *Şehir ve Şehir*'de de panoptikon mantığı egemendir. İktidar bireylerin

evlerinde dâhi eylemlerini kısıtlayacak kadar içselleştirilmiştir. İhlâl, romanda kameralar aracılığıyla denetlememektedir. Şehirlerde kameralar olmasına karşılık bir ihlâl gerçekleştirildiğinde ortaya çıkan ihlâl, algılanması yasak olan insanlar arasında bir gölge gibi gezmektedir. İhlâl bünyesindeki insanlara aslında yasak yoktur. Romanda İhlâl'in denetimi, vatandaşların içselleştirebildiği kadar mümkündür. İhlâl'i ayakta tutan, ona rıza gösterenlerin fiziksel varlığıdır. Gözetim için yalnızca İhlâl'e yüklenen iktidarın benimsenmesi yeterlidir. Gözünü bir an olsun iki şehirden ayırmayan İhlâl, bir kurum olarak panoptikona benzemektedir.

Gözetlemenin devamlılığında iktidarın gözünün varlığı ve bu bakışın ağırlığı, izlenen herkes tarafından içselleştirilerek kendi kendini gözetlemeye başlar. Gözetleme, panoptikondaki gibi şeffaflığa dayalı bir iktidar amacındadır. Romanda İhlâl'in varlığı da aslında görülebilmektedir; yasaklama pratiklerinde bireylerin gündelik yaşamlarına İhlâl'in iktidarı sinmiştir. İhlâl'in iktidarında tek kişiye verilmiş biricik bir güç söz konusu değildir; iktidar, büyük bir mekanizma olarak etki alanını genişletmiş ve tüm bireyleri kaplayarak toplumun özelliğine dönüşmüştür. Çünkü sanayileşmeyle beraber iktidarın etki alanını genişletmesi, bireylerin bedenlerine, tavırlarına, gündelik yaşamlarına dek sızmasını zorunlu kılmıştır (Foucault, 2012, ss. 91-96). Romanda, sanayileşme, küreselleşme ve liberalizmin etkilerinin bu bağlamda da okunması mümkündür. Liberalizmi benimseyen küreselleşme, iki şehri panoptikon mantığına göre düzenlemektedir. Böylece iki şehri kontrol eden iktidar, aksi bir harekete müdahale edebilecek gücü elinde tutmaktadır:

İki şehir de büyüyüp gelişirken, binalar ve alanlar birbirine karışmış, nerenin hangi şehre ait olduğu konusunda ihtilaf çıkmıştı. İhlâl burada yaşıyordu. (Miéville, 2009, s. 279)

Romanda iktidar, küresel kapitalizmin genişlemesiyle birlikte karşımıza çıkmaktadır. İki şehirde de iş bölümünün kapitalizme uygun ilerlemesi için iktidarın tesisi ve korunmasında panoptikonu desteklemektedir. Bireylerin kapitalizme uygun biçimde eyleyip eylemedikleri daima gözetlenmektedir.

Modern dönemin müphemliğinin yansıması olan İhlâl, bir panoptikon örneği olarak disipline edici güçtür de. Disiplin, söylemin üretimindeki denetleyici bir ilke olarak kuralları daima güncel tutmaktadır (Foucault, 1987, s. 41). İhlâl aynı zamanda iki şehri kuran ilişkisel tanımlama içinde, dışarıda kalan bir üçüncüdür. Kurucu ikiliğin dışındaki bu üçüncü unsur, yabancıdır ve korkulan ötekiye dönüşmüştür.

İhlâl birkaç saniye içinde oradaydı. Etrafta şekiller ve kişiler görüyordum. Bu kişilerden bazıları muhtemelen daha önce de oradaydı ama kazanın ardından, yükselen dumanların arasından ortaya çıkmışlardı. Artık net biçimde görülüyor ve çok hızlı hareket ediyorlardı. O kadar güçlü ve her şeye o kadar hâkimlerdi ki, birkaç saniyelik bir müdahaleyle her şeyi kontrol altına almayı başarmışlardı. Bu güçle baş etmek imkânsızdı. Besz tarafında çıkan bu arbedenin dibinde, Ul Qoma polisleri, kendi şehirlerinin meraklı sakinlerini uzaklaştırmaya çalışıyorlardı. İhlâl hızla hareket etmeye devam ediyor, toparlanıyor, birleşiyor, yeniden yapılanıyordu. Bütün bunlara çocuk yaşta şahit olmak beni çok korkutmuştu. (Miéville, 2009, s. 84)

Modern toplumda iktidar, kendisini *gösteri* üzerinden de inşa eden bir imparatorluk yaratmaktadır (Debord, 1996). İhlâl, romanda denetleyerek gösterisini yapan bir korku imparatorluğu olarak yer almaktadır. Beszel ve Ul Qoma vatandaşlarını birbirleri karşısında görünmez yapan iktidar, eylemlerinin ve kimliklerinin içine yerleşmektedir. Bu ayrışma iki şehrin toplumsal kimliğini de belirlemekte, gözetlemenin birleştirici bir güce dönüşmesinin de örneğini sunmaktadır:

İhlâl'in bizim anlayamayacağımız güçleri vardı, ama bizim için kesinlikle gerekiyordu. (Miéville, 2009, s. 131)

Gözetim ve disiplinin egemenliğindeki modernliğin karakterinde tekinsizlik ve karanlık da vardır. Karanlık, romanda panoptikon olarak İhlâl'in kendisindedir. Panoptikon, özgürlük-tutsaklık karşıtlığına dayanan bir kavrayış olarak birçok toplumsal yapı içinde görünür haldedir. İhlâl'in Beszel ve Ul Qoma'da yaşam üzerindeki denetiminin de kurulmuş olduğu karşıtlık zemini, taraflar arasındaki tüm konumlarda kendisini göstererek bütün toplumsal koşulların tasarlanıp denetlenmesini sağlamaktadır (Bauman, 2015, s. 20). Gözetim mekanizması olarak İhlâl'in iktidarı iki şehirdeki yaşamının denetiminde, bu denetimin içselleştirilmesinde ve şehirlerdeki toplumsal kurumlarda mevcuttur.

Tartışma ve Sonuç

Şehir ve Şehir iktidar olgusunu iki şehrin vatandaşlarının iki ayrı varlık olarak aynı mekandaki yaşamları üzerinden irdelemektedir. Birbirlerini algılaması yasak olan Beszel ve Ul Qoma, mekansal ve ontolojik biçimde ayrıdır. Çatışma, ayrı taraflar ve ayrımı kuran iktidar çerçevesinde gelişmektedir. Romanda yer alan iki şehir benzerliklerine rağmen farklarıyla bölünerek yeniden kurgulanmıştır. Ayrımın kurgulandığı metafizik zemin, Batı

felsefesinin süregelen yapısı bağlamında mutlak bir merkezin varlığına dayandırılarak kurulan bilginin de zeminidir. Romanda bilginin mutlaklığını korumak için ise iki şehrin idaresinde gözetim uygulamaları öne çıkmaktadır. *Şehir ve Şehir*'de iktidarın bilgisi, bireylerin toplumsal hayattaki farklı düzlemlerde algılama ve yaşama biçimlerini doğrudan gözetlemekte ve kontrol etmektedir. Ortak bir mekandaki iki farklı şehir iktidarın mekanın toplumsal üretimini denetlemedeki gücünü yansıtmaktadır. Birer gözetim toplumu örneği olarak karşımıza çıkan şehirler, iktidarın disipline edici uygulamaları ile mekansal bir ortaklığın varlığına karşılık tamamen ayrıştırılmış iki yapıya dönüştürülmektedir. İki şehrin bilgisinin birbirlerini karşıt ve yasak biçimde kurgulanması, İhlâl'in varlığıyla korunmaya alınmış bilginin sınırlarını da çizmektedir. Romanda İhlâl olarak karşımıza çıkan ve panoptikon örneği olan uygulamalar ile iki şehrin iktidarı, denetim gücünü ve bilgisini sürekli korumaktadır. Romanda İhlâl'in ve karşıtlık şehirler dışında bir de Orciny vardır. Orciny, farklı bir kategori olarak şehirler arasındaki karşıtlığın ve şehirlerin İhlâl'le olan geriliminin dışındadır. Orciny, efsaneleştirilerek büründürüldüğü gizemli yapı içinde roman boyunca tehditkâr biçimde varlığını sürdürmektedir. Beszel ve Ul Qoma karşıtlığının ötesinde, yasaklar bağlamında kurulmayan bilgisiyle Orciny, romanda karşımıza müphemlik içinde çıkmaktadır. Orciny'nin bilinmezliği, romanda İhlâl'in iktidarının bir parçası olmaktadır. Orciny, İhlâl'in kontrol kabiliyetini güçlendiren bir araca dönüşmektedir.

Öte yandan romanda, küreselleşmeye eleştirisi de mevcuttur. Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasından sonra yeni dünya düzenine mesafeleri, devletlerin küresel sistemdeki yerini belirlemektedir. İki şehrin uluslararası konumu romanda bu duruma örnektir. Şehirler arasında gelişmişlik-geri kalmışlık karşıtlığında küreselleşme olgusu karşımıza çıkmaktadır. İki şehir arasında küresel sistem adaptasyonları bağlamında da kurulan karşıtlık, yaratılan hiyerarşik bir karşıtlığın da göstergesine dönüşmektedir. Küresel kapitalizme uyum sağlamış Ul Qoma'ya karşıt biçimde köhne bir Doğu Avrupa şehri olarak sunulan Beszel aracılığıyla modernitenin iki yüzünü sunan bir yapı karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bir tüketim toplumu örneği olarak Ul Qoma, Beszel karşısında ihtişamlı bir öteki olarak yer almaktadır.

Makale kapsamında yapılan değerlendirme ile *Şehir ve Şehir* adlı romanda, modern dönemin bilgisinin ve bu bilginin nasıl kurgulandığına dair bir okuma gerçekleştirilmiştir. *Şehir ve Şehir*, Batı metafiziğinin kurucu düşünce geleneğinin bir parçası olan karşıtlıklar bağlamında bilgi inşasının örneğidir. Bu geleneğin bilgi ve bilme biçimlerini düzenleme kabiliyetine dair eleştirel ve edebi bir çalışmadır. Gerçekleştirilen okuma sonucunda bilginin denetim için bir araca dönüştürülmesinde, romanda eleştirisi sunulan düalist düşünce geleneğinin rolü açığa çıkartılmıştır. Çalışmada, Foucault'nun söylem ve iktidar

analizlerinden faydalanılarak romanın değerlendirilmesi yapılmıştır. Romandaki karşıtlıkların kurulması, dışlama ve ayırım stratejilerinin toplumsal pratiklerle desteklenmesi üzerinden iktidarın bilgiyi araçsallaştırdığı görülmüştür.

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James Baldwin'in "Kasvetli Soru"su ve Türkiye'de "Düşenin Dostu" Olmak

James Baldwin's "Somber Question" and "Befriending the Fallen" in Türkiye

Özge ÖZBEK AKIMAN¹ 



¹Assistant Professor, Hacettepe University, Department of American Culture and Literature, Ankara, Türkiye

ORCID: Ö.Ö.A. 0000-0002-8644-044X

Sorumlu Yazar/Corresponding author:

Özge ÖZBEK AKIMAN,
Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Amerikan Kültürü
ve Edebiyatı Bölümü, Edebiyat Fakültesi,
Ankara, Türkiye

E-posta: ozgea@hacettepe.edu.tr

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ÖZ

Afrikalı Amerikalı yazar James Baldwin (1924-1987), ırkçı baskıdan uzaklaşmak için 1948 yılından itibaren ülkesinden ayrılarak 1961-1971 yıllarını aralıklı olarak Türkiye'de geçirir. Baldwin'in Türkiye yaşantısı, 1950'li yılların sonunda New York City'de tiyatro çalışmaları sırasında tanıştığı oyuncu Engin Cezzar'la dostluğu sayesinde gerçekleşir. Baldwin, 1961 güzünde Orta Doğu ve Afrika'yı kapsayacak şekilde ırksal ilişkiler üzerine yazmak amacıyla seyahate çıkar. Sömürü coğrafyasını keşfettikçe, sivil haklar mücadelesi çerçevesinde Afrikalı Amerikalıların ABD içinde ve dünyada tarihsel rolünün ne olduğuna dair, kendi ifadesiyle, "kasvetli soru" ile karşılaşır. Bu soruyu o sırada cevaplayamaz ve İstanbul'a gelir. ABD'nin Soğuk Savaş siyaseti çerçevesinde ekonomik yardım yoluyla Sovyetler Birliği'nden uzak tutmak istediği coğrafyalardan biri olan ülkemizden baktığında Baldwin, demokratik bir ulus imajıyla pazarlanan Amerika ile siyahların deneyimlediği Amerika arasındaki çelişkiye işaret eder. Uzun süreli İstanbul ziyaretleri, Baldwin'in ırkçılık sorununu ABD'deki sivil haklar mücadelesinin ötesinde, sömürgeciliğin tarihsel ve küresel bir bileşeni olarak değerlendirmeye başladığı döneme rastlar. Büyük ölçüde Türkiye'deyken yazdığı *No Name in the Street*'te bu geniş ölçekli eleştiriyi ayrıntılı şekilde ortaya koyar. Ayrıca, Baldwin'in yurdumuzda bıraktığı izler tiyatro tarihimizde gizlidir. 1969-1970 sezonunda Baldwin'in yönettiği ve Sururi-Cezzar Tiyatrosu tarafından sahnelenen *Düşenin Dostu* hem Türk tiyatro tarihi hem de Baldwin'in tiyatroyla ilişkisi ve tüm eserlerine sinmiş olan tutukluluk izleşimini konu etmesi açısından önemli bir yere sahiptir. Bu makale, Baldwin ve Türkiye ilişkisini, *No Name in the Street* ve *Düşenin Dostu* eserleri çerçevesinde inceler. Tiyatro arşivlerinde korunan izin yanı sıra Baldwin, Türkiye'ye her koşulda kazanmaya güdümlü Amerikan politikasına karşı çıkan bir bakış açısını da miras olarak bırakmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: James Baldwin, İstanbul, *No Name in the Street*, *Düşenin Dostu*, Gülriz Sururi-Engin Cezzar Tiyatrosu

ABSTRACT

Departing from the United States in 1948, James Baldwin (1924-1987) lived intermittently in Istanbul between 1961 and 1971. Baldwin's Turkish experience comes into being through his friendship with the Turkish actor Engin Cezzar, whom Baldwin met in the late 1950s in New York City. Commissioned to write about racial relationships on a larger scale, including the Middle East and Africa, Baldwin began to travel in 1961. As he explored the colonized geography, he faced, in his words, a "somber



question" about African Americans' role inside and outside the United States in relation to civil rights struggles. Unable to handle the question, he flew to Turkey. Acknowledging Turkey as a beneficiary of American financial aid against Soviet influence, Baldwin was furiously critical of American claims to freedom and democracy. His stay in Istanbul marks the period in which Baldwin evaluates racism as a historical and global component of colonialism that goes beyond the civil rights struggles in the US. Substantially written in Istanbul, *No Name in the Street* reflects this broadscale critique. Additionally, our theater history bears Baldwin's traces as he directed *Düşenin Dostu*, produced by the Sururi-Cezzar Theater. As an important chapter in Turkish theater, the production manifests Baldwin's interest in the theater and the imprisonment theme. This essay examines the Baldwin-Turkey link with reference to *No Name in the Street* and the production of *Düşenin Dostu*. In addition to the traces preserved in the theater archives, what Baldwin left in Turkey was a critique that counters American triumphalism.

Keywords: James Baldwin, İstanbul, *No Name in the Street*, *Fortune and Men's Eyes*, Gülriz Sururi-Engin Cezzar Theater

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Departing from the United States in 1948, James Baldwin (1924-1987) lived predominantly in France and Turkey, staying in Istanbul intermittently between 1961 and 1971. Due to his alienation and constant mobility, Baldwin called himself a "Transatlantic commuter," instead of an exile. Baldwin's Turkish experience is occasioned by his close friendship with the Turkish actor Engin Cezzar, whom Baldwin met in the late 1950s in the Actor's Studio in New York City as they worked together on the dramatic adaptation of *Giovanni's Room*. Cezzar returned to Istanbul for a short summer vacation, which unexpectedly turned out to be a lifelong commitment to Turkish theater. The two friends remained in touch, informing each other about their work and future projects, and Cezzar invited Baldwin to Istanbul. In the fall of 1961, the *New Yorker* commissioned Baldwin, as the acclaimed Black writer in America, to write on racial relationships on a larger scale, including the Middle East and Africa. Thus, Baldwin travelled East. As he stated in a letter to his editor, Baldwin felt he was encountering a "somber question" about the historical role of African Americans during the civil rights struggle in the US. Unable to handle that question, he flew to Turkey, chancing upon Cezzar's engagement with the actress Gülriz Sururi which they were celebrating with a circle of avantgarde artists. This circle welcomed Baldwin, allowing him freedom from the American type of racism and media attention, so much so that Baldwin enjoyed a prolific decade. He finished writing *From Another Country* and composed much of *No Name in the Street*. Furthermore, he collaborated with the Gülriz Sururi-Engin Cezzar Theater in producing a translation of the Canadian playwright John Herbert's *Fortune and Men's Eyes* [*Düşenin Dostu*], which was already radical in terms of subject matter in Western countries, but even more controversial in a Muslim country that was experiencing its own struggles with democracy, secularism, and liberation.

Neither Istanbul appears in Baldwin's published work nor is there any evidence of his interest in Turkish culture or language. Nevertheless, Baldwin's observations of American containment policy, i.e., providing "strategically important" countries with financial aid to gain political manoeuvre against Soviet influence, as seen from one such country, led Baldwin to scrutinize American claims of freedom and democracy. *No Name in the Street* manifests his critical understanding of racism as a historical and global component of colonialism that goes beyond the civil rights struggles in the US; an internationalism he developed in Turkey. In this work, Baldwin defines the nuanced processes of the racism-colonialism matrix, meditating on the colonized Arab and African subjects in different geographies, such as France and the United States, but the lives of whom fail to matter in similar ways. The striking difference between Baldwin's attitudes reflected in the documentary films, both dated 1970, *Going to Meet the Man: James Baldwin in Paris*, directed by Terence Dixon, and *James Baldwin: From Another Place*, directed by Sedat Pakay, is worth noting. Annoyed by Dixon's blind insistence to capture him in famous Paris settings, Baldwin is most amiable when he is filmed in the Algerian quarter. On the other hand, Pakay's documentary traces Baldwin from the moment he wakes up to his stroll in Istanbul, revealing the handsome visual archive of the artist and the city. It is true that Turkish culture remained opaque for Baldwin; however, the mutual understanding between him and the Turkish artistic scene, and Istanbul's aura as a city of empires shaped by defeats as well as victories led him to believe that there was a potential in Turkish society in fulfilling an extraordinary postcolonial role by continuing to exist as the remains of an empire without yearning to become one. Sketchy it may be, such an assumption rests on an implied comparison with the American empire, which, in Baldwin's view, solves its problems by brutally eliminating them and fails to deal with defeat.

Complementing the previous proposition about defeat, conveniently translated into Turkish to mean "The Friend of the Fallen," Herbert's play, *Fortune and Men's Eyes* proved to be a metaphor for Baldwin's lifelong engagement with imprisonment, the criminalization of African American subjects, and the tyrannical use of power. The event of the play's production not only marks an important chapter in Turkish theater history but also manifests Baldwin's interest in the theater and the imprisonment theme. This essay examines the Baldwin-Turkey link with reference to *No Name in the Street* and the Turkish production of *Fortune and Men's Eyes* and further argues that Baldwin's legacy in Turkey can be understood in the form of a call to "befriend the fallen," a critique that counters American power and triumphalism.

Giriş

İnceleme, roman, hikâye, tiyatro oyunu ve deneme türlerinde eserler vermiş olan Afrikalı Amerikalı yazar ve aktivist James Baldwin (1924-1987), hem Amerika Birleşik Devletleri içinde hem dışında, özellikle de ülkemizde oldukça iyi tanınmaktadır. Edebiyat dünyasında kendinden önceki nesilden dev bir figür olan Richard Wright'ın klasik *Vatan Evladı* (1940) eseri üzerine yazdığı *Vatan Evladının Notları* (1955) adlı cesur incelemesiyle ve erken dönem romanları *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953), *Giovanni'nin Odası* (1956) ve *Bir Başka Ülke* (1962) ile dikkat çeker. Ayrıca 1950'lerin ortasından itibaren Amerikan iç siyasetini belirleyen sivil haklar hareketinin sözcülerinden biri olarak öne çıkar. Yaşadığı derin yabancılaşma sonucunda bir yere bağlanamadığı ve çoğunlukla seyahat ettiği için kendisini sürgün olarak değil "okyanus ötesi yolcu" şeklinde tanımlar. Baldwin'in ülkemizde sevilmesinin en önemli nedeni, oyuncu dostu Engin Cezzar'ın davetiyle 1961 ve 1971 yılları arasında aralıklı olarak İstanbul'da yaşamasıdır. Baldwin, ırkçılıktan ve kendisini sivil haklar hareketinin sözcüsü ilan eden medyanın boğucu ilgisinden kaçabileceği bir yer olarak düşünmüştür İstanbul'u. *Bir Başka Ülke* ile *Ne Zaman Gitti Tren* (1968) adlı romanlarını burada tamamlamıştır. Ayrıca uzun bir deneme olan *No Name in the Street* (1972) de büyük ölçüde İstanbul'da yazılmıştır. Romanların yanı sıra Gülriz Sururi-Engin Cezzar Tiyatrosu'nun sahnelediği, Kanadalı yazar John Herbert'in *Düşenin Dostu* [*Fortune and Men's Eyes*, 1967] adlı oyununu yönetmiştir. Genel hatlarıyla her Baldwin okurunun bildiği bu süreci, yazarın ziyareti sırasında onu meşgul eden konular bağlamında ve *No Name in the Street* ile *Düşenin Dostu* metinlerine gönderme yaparak ele almak Baldwin ve Türkiye bağlantısını daha iyi okumamızı sağlayacaktır. İstanbul'a beklenmedik bir anda gelişinin arka planı, Türkiye'deyken derinleştirdiği küresel çaptaki ırkçılık-sömürgecilik bileşeninin çözümlemesi ve bunların yansıması tarihsel bağlam gözetilerek adı geçen metinler üzerinden incelenecektir. İsrail'in kuruluşu, Kore'de başlayıp Vietnam ve Kamboçya'ya yayılan temsili savaşlar, kamusal alanı ikiye ayıran ırkçı düzenin 1954'te Amerikan yüksek mahkemesince suç sayılmasına rağmen okul yönetimlerinin gözü önünde siyah öğrencilerin beyazlar tarafından aşağılanarak okullardan kovulması, siyahların kiliselerinin bombalanması, Medgar Evers (1963), Malcolm X (1965) ve Martin Luther King Jr. (1968) gibi liderlerin katledilmesine kadar pek çok olay, Soğuk Savaş dönemini şekillendirmiştir. ABD içinde Federal Soruşturma Bürosunun (FBI), dışında ise Merkezi İstihbarat Teşkilatının (CIA) faaliyetleri 1960'lardaki gençlik hareketlerini sekteye uğratmış, aralarında Baldwin'in de bulunduğu sayısız aydını hedefe almıştır. Amerikan hükümetinin kültür elçileri Türkiye, Polonya ve Yunanistan gibi jeopolitik açıdan önemli görülen ülkelere gönderilerek "yumuşak"

strateji ile Amerikan ideolojisinin yayılması tasarlanmıştır. Bu panoramayı İstanbul'dan gözlemleyen Baldwin, kendi hükümetinin ve toplumunun tutumlarını değerlendirdiği eleştirel bir bakış açısı geliştirmiştir.

Baldwin, 1948 yılında yurdundan ilk çıkışında, Wright ve Ralph Ellison gibi Paris'e gider. 1920'lerdeki Harlem Rönesansı'ndan beri Paris, Afrikalı Amerikalı sanatçı ve aydınların haritasında önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Bunun önemli bir sebebi, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Fransa cephesine sevk edilen siyah askerlerin ABD'deki kurumsallaşmış ırkçılığı bir başka Batılı ülkedeki görece demokratik ortamla kıyas şansı elde etmesidir. 1920'lerin siyah ressam, müzisyen, yazar, düşünür ve sahne sanatçıları Paris'te bir "yeraltı modernitesi" oluşturur.¹ Öte yandan Fransa'nın demokrasisi de sömürgeci geçmişinden ve İkinci Dünya Savaşı ertesinde kuzey Afrika ülkelerindeki tahakkümünden kaynaklanan çelişkiler barındırır. Paris'teki Karayıplı ve Afrikalı göçmen öğrencilerin Harlem Rönesansı'ndan etkilenecek 1930'larda edebi, felsefi ve siyasi görüşlerini paylaşmasıyla yeşeren Négritude hareketi 1950'lere kadar görünür kalır. İşte Baldwin, temelleri en az yirmi yıl öncesine dayanan bir sürgün başkentindedir. Paris'te dost belledikleri, Cezayirli Arap göçmenler olur.²

"Kasvetli Soru"yu Bir Başka Ülkeden Cevaplamak

1961 yazının sonunda Baldwin, hükümet davetlisi olarak İsrail'e gider. Bu sırada *New Yorker*'ın editörü de Afrika gezisine çıkıp izlenimlerini bir yazı dizisi haline getirmesini ister. "Letters from a Journey" seçkisinde bahsedilen ama yazılmamış olan "Afrika kitabı"nın arka planında bu koşullar yatmaktadır (Baldwin, 2010, s. 189). Baldwin'in bu seyahatheyken yazdığı 20 Kasım 1961 tarihli mektuptan Türkiye üzerine bir yazı kaleme alma niyeti olduğu anlaşılıyor (2010, s. 194). O sırada eş zamanlı olarak, *Bundan Sonra Ateş'in* (1963) son kısmı ile *Bir Başka Ülke* üzerinde çalışmaktadır. İsrail'de vatan kavramı ve kendi vatani—ya da vatansızlığı—üzerine düşünürken adım başı karşılaştığı, sömürgeciliğin izi olan sınırların, coğrafyayı ve insanları bölmeye devam etmekte olduğunu görür. İrkçilik ve kölelik sorunlarını getto, polis şiddeti ve işgal kavramlarıyla bağdaştırmış bir

1 Bu makalenin sınırları dışında kalsa da Afrika diasporası olarak düşünebileceğimiz Batılı siyahların 20. yüzyıl başı yüksek modernizmine önemli katkıları bulunmaktadır. Detaylı inceleme için bkz. Paul Gilroy (1993); James Smethurst (2011).

2 20. yüzyılın başında Paris'te bulunan siyah Amerikalıların çoğu ABD'deki ve Fransa'daki ırkçı pratikler arasında bir benzerlik görmez ve Araplardan daha üstün konumda olmaktan memnuniyet duyar (Stovall, 2000). Bu duruma istisna oluşturan Baldwin'in Paris'e ilk gidişinde yaşadıklarını en iyi yansıtan yazılar şunlardır: "Encounter on the Seine: Black Meets Brown" (1950), "A Question of Identity" (1954) ve "Equal in Paris" (1955), *Collected Essays* içinde.

düşünür olarak Baldwin, siyahların Yahudilerle kurduğu tarihsel özdeşliği sorgulamaya başlar.³ İkinci Dünya Savaşı ertesinde sömürgecilik sonrası bağımsızlığını kazanma sürecinde olan Afrika ülkeleri üzerine tasarladığı kitabı ise yazmadan bırakır. Seyahatin maddi ve manevi yorgunluğuyla Baldwin, Türkiye'ye döndüğünden beri kendisini evine davet eden Cezzar'ın yanına gelir ve kısa kalır.⁴ Şubat 1962'de Loèche-les-Bains'den (İsviçre) menajerine yolladığı mektubunda şöyle yazar:

Afrika fikrinin İsrail'e vardığımda ne kadar karmaşık hale geldiğini bu mektup diğerlerinden daha net bir şekilde ortaya koyacak. Gazeteciliğin muhaberat yaklaşımıyla üstesinden gelmeyi umabileceğim bir yüzleşme olmadığını anladım bir anda. Bu konuyu ancak uç bir noktadan, hatta tehlikeli derecede kişisel bir yoldan ele alabilir ve her okurun kendi sorusunu sorup değerlendirmesini yapmasını sağlayabilirim. Bu keder, ki keder denebilirse buna, Türkiye'deyken derinleşti; Amerika'nın dünyadaki rolüne ilişkin kasvetli soru, bugün, yeni ve kaçınılmaz bir şekilde yüzüme çarptı ve tabii bu soru da Amerikalı Zenci'nin [American Negro] rolünün ne olduğunu veya olabileceğini beraberinde getiriyor. (2010, s. 197) ⁵

ABD'nin Afrika ülkeleri ve Orta Doğu'nun şekillenmesindeki rolüne bağlı olarak ABD içinde sivil haklar mücadelesindeki kendi öncü rolü Baldwin'in zihnini kurcalamaktadır. Irkçılığın ve tutsaklığın çeşitli şekillerde hâlâ yürürlükte olduğu bir ülkenin Afrikalı Amerikalı vatandaşı olarak dünyaya özgürlük ve eşitlik adına nasıl bir mesaj vereceği ağır ve karmaşık bir sorudur. İstanbul, belki bu sorudan değil ama Amerikan medyasının aşırı ilgisinden kaçabileceği bir yer olmuştur Baldwin için. Yıllardır bitiremediği *Bir Başka Ülke* romanını İstanbul'da kısa sürede tamamlar. İstanbul, bir bakıma huzurlu bir yazıhane olsa da Baldwin'in kendine yönelttiği "kasvetli soru"nun cevabını düşündüğü bir yerdir. Ayrıca Baldwin'in nihai evi, Fransa'nın güneyindeki Saint-Paul-de-Vence'dan kardeşine yazdığı mektuplarda çalışma odasından "işkence odası" ve "zindan" şeklinde bahsettiğini

3 1970 yılında Ida Lewis'e verdiği röportajda Baldwin, Yahudi karşıtı değil, Siyonizm karşıtı olduğunu ve bu eleştirinin de Batı'da bir şantaj konusu olarak kullanıldığını düşündüğünü söyler (1989, s. 85-86). İsrail'in kuruluşunun Yahudilerden ziyade petrole ilgisi olduğu ve İsrail'in Batı'nın Orta Doğu'daki piyonu olarak tasarlandığı görüşündedir. Jeopolitik hakkındaki görüşünü ve Türkiye'ye gelişini şöyle anlatır: "3000 yıldan sonra, kutsal kitabın emri üzerine Batı'nın silah ve bombasıyla o toprakları geri alma hakkı olduğuna inanmıyorum. İsrail'deyken *Bundan Sonrası Ateş*'in tam ortasındaydım sanki. Afrika'ya geçmeye cesaret edemedim. Dolayısıyla yolun tam karşısındaki Türkiye'ye gittim. Ve *Bir Başka Ülke*'yi bitirene dek orada kaldım" (1989, s. 86).

4 Cezzar o sırada askerliğini yapmakta olduğu için Baldwin, Cezzar'ın kız kardeşi Mine Cezzar ve eşi, şair Cevat Çapan'ın misafiri olur.

5 Türkçeleştirilmemiş tüm birincil ve ikincil kaynaklardan yapılan alıntıların çevirisi yazara aittir.

düşünecek olursak, yazmak, düşünceleri tarihsel açıdan muhakeme etmesini gerektirdiği için oldukça sancılı bir edimdir.⁶ Dolayısıyla İstanbul, Baldwin'in çıkarımlarını en dürüst ve etkili şekilde ifade etmenin yollarını aradığı yazıhanesi olmuştur.

Baldwin'in İstanbul dönemini inceleyen en kapsamlı araştırmamanın yazarı Magdalena J. Zaborowska, Baldwin'in uluslar ötesi bakış açısını "dünyasının genişlemesine" bağlar: "İstanbul, [Batı medeniyetinin ezenlerin, ezilenlerin ve bundan nemalananların zihninde inşa ettiği hapishaneleri birbirine zincirleyen ırkçılık illetini] keşfetmesine olanak sağlayan bir mercek ve bunu ifade edebildiği bir konumdu . . ." (2009, s. 218). Batı düşüncesinin ve ekonomik modelinin altındaki ırkçılık ve sömürgecilik ilişkisini Baldwin İstanbul'dayken (ve daha öncesinde Paris'te Arap göçmenlere yapılanlara tanıklık ederken) en çıplak halinde görmüştür. Baldwin'in Türkiye yıllarının en zengin görsel arşivini oluşturmuş olan Sedat Pakay'ın 1970 tarihli kısa metrajlı filmi *James Baldwin: From Another Place*'in [*James Baldwin: Bir Başka Yerden*] fragmanında Baldwin, ülkesinden sık sık ayrıldığı için büyük ihtimalle insanların onu suçladığını, ancak yazabilmek için başka çaresi kalmadığından bu suçlamalardan kaygılanmadığını söyler. Gizli servisi ima ederek, nereye giderse gitsin Amerikan gücünün kendisini takip ettiğini, ama bundan da endişelenmediğini ifade eder. Tüm dikkatini yazmaya verdiği görülür: "Tüm kaygım işimi tamamlamakla ilgili, benim için en iyi yol olan kâğıda dökerek. Umut ederim ki bir gün, birileri için, bir değeri olacak bir kayıt bu... İnsan uzaktan daha iyi görüyor... bir başka yerden, bir başka ülkeden" (1970).

Zaborowska'nın deyişle Baldwin'in dünya görüşünün genişlemesi, İstanbul'dayken yazdığı *No Name in the Street* adlı otobiyografik denemesinde gözlemlenebilir. Paris yıllarının bir değerlendirmesini yapan Baldwin, bu metinde bir diaspora öznesi olarak ideolojik ve tarihsel yakınlıklarının haritasını çizer. Baldwin, Paris'e sonraki gidişlerinde, Cezayir bağımsızlık savaşında gerilimin tırmanması nedeniyle artan polis şiddeti sonucunda önceden tanıdığı kimseyi bulamaz; gittiği kafelerin çoğu kapatılmıştır (Baldwin, 1998, s. 374). Amerikan kimliği onu kısa süreliğine bu şiddete hedef olmaktan korusa da giderek şunun farkına varır: "O zamanlar Paris'te bariz bir şekilde kuzey Avrupalı görünmeyen herkesin Cezayirli olduğundan şüpheleniliyordu ve polis her köşe başında, bazen makineli tüfekle, beklerdi" (1998, s. 376). Bir Amerikalı olarak Paris'te tanık oldukları, Baldwin'i ırkçılığın ve sömürgeciliğin yeni ve değişken yüzlerini tanımaya zorlar. Arapların kaderinin, Afrika kökenli bir birey olarak kendi kaderiyle bağlantılı

6 Baldwin'in evi bellediği ve "Chez Baldwin" adıyla anılan Saint-Paul-de-Vence'deki yazlık hakkında detaylı bilgi için bkz. "House As Archive" ve Zaborowska (2018).

olduğunu saptar ve ırkçı-sömürgeciliğin coğrafi ve tarihsel bağlantılarının sonuçlarını gösteren "cevaplanamaz panorama"yı resmeder (1998, s. 377). İki Afrikalının, sömürgeciliğin farklı coğrafyalarında benzer şekillerde ezildiği bu panoramada, yeşil pasaportunun onu "Avrupa'nın gayri medeni siyah mülklerinden" ayırdığını, ancak aynı pasaportun "okyanusun öte yakasında bir değişime uğrayarak Afrikalı bir prens değil, yerli bir zenci olduğunu, cesedi kanalizasyonu tıkar halde bulunsa bile herhangi bir hükümeti ayağa kaldırmayacağını" gösteren bir belgeye dönüştüğünü söyler (1998, s. 378). Baldwin iğneleyici bir şekilde Fransızların "varoluşçu" olmayı kendilerine hak gördüğünü ama gerçekten varoluşsal bir durumda olan Cezayirliye bu hakkı tanımadığını ifade eder (1998, s. 379). Baldwin'e göre "Cezayir, Avrupa haritasında, ancak Avrupa'nın gücü onu oraya yerleştirdiği sürece olabilir" (1998, s. 379). Bunun da, der Baldwin, adaletle değil kendi kaderini tayin etmekle ilgisi vardır (1998, s. 379).

Baldwin aynı metinde "zamanın yapısına" dair bir düşünce keşfeder. Yazar, bu zaman kavramını şöyle anlatır: "Sanırım zamanın yapısında, doğasında köklü bir değişim meydana gelmekte. Denebilir ki net imgeler yok artık; her şey birbirinin üzerine binmiş ve birbiriyle çatışma halinde. Net görüş kalmamış: geleceğe sürüklediğini sandığımız yol, bizi aynı zamanda geçmişe çekiyor" (1998, ss. 463-464). Zaman kiplerini birbirinin içine ve içinde açan, birbirine bağlayan ve geçmiş-gelecek çizgisini dolandıran karmaşık bir düşünme biçimi geliştirir Baldwin.⁷ Fiziksel düzeyde ve bilinçaltında yer etmiş hapishaneleri inşa eden zihniyeti anlayabilmek için zamanı katmanlı ve döngüsel algılamak gerekmektedir. Batı aydınlanması teknik anlamda mükemmelliğe doğru bir ilerleme göstermiş olsa da barındırdığı ırkçı düşünceler, tarih boyunca insan hayatına mal olmuş, sonuçta sermayeyi ve sürekli savaş hâlini önceleyen bir düzen üretmiştir. Baldwin'ın gözünde bu düzen ahlaki açıdan iflas ettiği için ilerlemeci zaman kavramı da geçerliğini yitirmiştir. Artık demokratik olduğunu iddia eden Batılı düzenin resmettiği imgeler net değildir; bu düşüncenin tanımları iç içe geçmiş, çatışma halindedir. Batı'nın tahakkümünde çeşitli şekillerde varlığını sürdüren (pamuk, kakao, kahve, şeker pancarı gibi) mono kültürel tarım, çokuluslu şirketler, büyük sermaye, kalıcı yoksulluk gibi ekonomik çarklar çağdaş köleliğin üzerini örtmekte ve ırkçılığı sistematikleştirmektedir. Bu karmaşık mekanizmayı *No Name in the Street* denemesinde çözümleyen Baldwin dünyanın her yerinde sömürülenler ve sömürü düzenine karşı mücadele edenlerle aynı eksende buluşmuştur. Diyebiliriz ki, Baldwin emperyalist ekonominin hüküm sürdüğü

7 Bu farklı zaman algısı, eleştirmenlerin bir ileri bir geri gittiği için "baş döndüren" ve taşıt tutması anlamında "bulantı veren" anlatım olarak nitelendirildiği geç dönem edebiyatındaki tekniğini de etkileyecektir (Goldsby, 2015, ss. 34-38).

bir ülkenin vatandaşı olarak kendine yönelttiği “kasvetli soru”yu bu karmaşık çözümlemede cevaplamıştır.

1970 civarında çekilmiş iki belgesel filmi karşılaştırarak Baldwin’in Batılı bir yazar olarak Batı’ya karşı geliştirdiği eleştiri görülebilir. *Meeting the Man: James Baldwin in Paris* (Terence Dixon) ile *James Baldwin: From Another Place* (Sedat Pakay) filmlerinin çizdiği profil arasındaki fark oldukça anlamlıdır. Paris’in Batı medeniyetinin sembolik anıtları önünde röportaj vermeyi reddeden, nedenini açıklamasına rağmen yönetmen Dixon’ın ısrarı ve yer yer küstah tavrı karşısında öfkesini hissettiren Baldwin’e karşılık Pakay’ın filmde uyandırdığı yatak odasını yarı çıplak açan bir Baldwin vardır. Her iki belgesel de Baldwin’in *No Name in the Street*’te görülen eleştirel yaklaşımları geliştirdiği döneme aittir. Yani Baldwin için bu dönemde, yukarıda bahsedildiği üzere, “zamanın yapısı değişmiş,” “net imgeler” kalmamıştır. Emperyalizmin sömürü ve ırkçılık çarkları içinde kendi rolünün ne olduğuna dair “kasvetli soru”ya “tehlikeli derecede kişisel bir yoldan” cevap aradığı bir yerde ve zamandadır. Baldwin’in tepkisi, Dixon’ın kendisini zafer anıtları önünde poz vermeye zorlamasından kaynaklanır. Kendisini “okyanus ötesi yolcu” olarak tanımlayan yazar açısından “Baldwin Paris’te” ya da “Baldwin’in Parisi” gibi romantize edilebilecek bir ilişki yoktur. Paris, turistik çekiciliğin ardında emperyalist çarkların mükemmel işlediği bir başkenttir. İmparatorluklar şehri olmasına rağmen İstanbul ise Batı’dan ayrılan bir karaktere ve kültürel bilgiye sahiptir. Mitik Amerikan masumiyetini cehalet olarak yorumladığı görüşleri neredeyse tüm eserlerinde bulunan Baldwin, büyük ihtimalle kültürel bilgiyi bu masum cehaletin ya da cahil masumiyetin antitezi olarak düşünmektedir.

Baldwin’in modern Türkiye üzerine görüşleri çok ilginçtir. Her ne kadar kültürel birikimin topluma bir olgunluk kazandırdığını düşünse de bazı kör noktalara işaret eder. Ida Lewis ile 1970 tarihli röportajında, Türk toplumunda Amerika’nın “vaat edilmiş ülke” olduğuna dair inancın hâlâ canlı olduğunu söyler. Türkiye’yi “Rus sınırında bir uyduya” ve “büyük güçler arasında gidip gelen bir tenis topuna” benzeten Baldwin, dış yardım politikalarının ne Batılı ne de Doğulu olan bu toplumun günlük hayatına nüfuz edişini kendisi için bir aydınlanma olarak nitelendirir (Lewis, 1989, ss. 86-87). Baldwin’in Türkiye’de verdiği röportajları inceleyen Kim Fortuny’nin yorumuyla, Baldwin’e göre Türkiye’nin dünya için “nadir bir sömürge sonrası rolü vardır. Türkler, imparatorlukların yükselişi ve çöküşüne dair bir bilgi birikimine sahiptir” (2013, s. 449). Bunun jeopolitik stratejiden ziyade “bir nevi kültürel olgunluk, hakimiyet ve yenilginin acılı döngülerine olan bir yakınlık” ile ilgisi vardır (Fortuny, 2013, s. 449). Pakay’ın belgeselinin sonunda Baldwin,

resmi anlamda Batılı güçlerin güdümüne girmemiş olan Türkiye'nin tarihsel deneyimine dayanarak kültürel olgunluğu hayata geçirebileceğine dair inancını ifade eder (Fortuny, 2013, s. 449). Buna ek olarak Begüm Adalet, Baldwin'in Türkiye'deki röportajlarında Amerika'nın yurt dışında çizmeye çalıştığı özgürlükler ülkesi imajını nasıl hedefe aldığını anlatır. Hatta Adalet'e göre Baldwin, bu röportajları özellikle bu noktayı vurgulamak amacıyla değerlendirir (2020, ss. 240-241).⁸ Fortuny ve Adalet, Baldwin'in İstanbul'da yaşarken Türkçe öğrenmediğini ve belirli bir çevrenin dışına çıkmadığını, ayrıca Türkiye'deki Amerikan karşıtlığı, etnik gerginlikler ve sağ-sol çatışması gibi iç sorunlara mesafeli durduğunu kaydeder. Baldwin'in Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ya da Türkiye hakkında derin bilgiye sahip olduğu söylenemez. Baldwin, Türkiye yorumlarını, her koşulda kazanmaya güdümlü Amerikan politikasıyla karşılaştırarak yapmaktadır. Kuruluşunda yerleşimci sömürgeciliğin ve köleliğin olduğu Amerika'nın takındığı (cahil) masumiyetin karşısında Türkiye'nin işgal ve yıkım tanıklığından ve imparatorluğu geride bırakmış olmasının deneyiminden yola çıkmaktadır.

Tutukluluk ve Tutsaklık: Türkiye'de *Düşenin Dostu*'nu Sahnelemek

Baldwin, 10 yıla yaklaşan İstanbul ziyaretlerinin sonunda Türkiye'ye dair bir aşinalık edinmiştir. 1969-1970 sezonunda Cezzar'ın *Düşenin Dostu* oyununun yönetmenlik teklifini sevinerek kabul eder. Son eserinin *The Welcome Table* adlı bir oyun olmasına ve uzun bir süre romanlarını oyuna uyarlamaya çalışmasına bakılacak olursa tiyatronun Baldwin için büyük önem taşıdığı söylenebilir. Frank Leon Roberts ile Ralph J. Poole gibi araştırmacılar "minör frekanslarda" tiyatronun Baldwin'in sanatında merkezi bir yerde durduğunu iddia eder (Roberts, 2019, ss. 244-246). Hatta Poole'a göre, Baldwin ile İstanbul'u bağlayan hatlardan biri "sahne" izleğidir. *Düşenin Dostu*'nu yönetmesi, İstanbul'dayken tasarlamaya başladığı iki eserin de (*Ne Zaman Gitti Tren* ve *The Welcome Table*) tiyatroyla ilgili olması dolayısıyla Baldwin'in deneyiminde İstanbul ve tiyatro gerçekten de bağlantılıdır (Poole, 2022, s. 115).

David Leeming bu oyunu Baldwin'in "otuz yıldır mücadele ettiği trajedi için tam anlamıyla bir metafor" olarak yorumlar ve şöyle devam eder, "Baldwin'e göre oyun Huey

8 Bu yorumlar Baldwin'in kariyerine mâl olur. Edebiyat eleştirmenleri, yazarın güncel siyasi ortamdan fazla etkilendiği için eserlerinin edebi değerini kaybettiğini iddia eder (Scott, 2002, ss. xii-xxxi ve ss. 2-18; Baraka, 2000, ss. 454-455).

Newton, Bobby Seale ve Tony Maynard'ın⁹ hapsedilmelerinin yanı sıra cinsiyet, ırk ve sınıf mitlerinin tutsak ettiği, renk farkı olmaksızın tüm insanlara dokunuyordu" (1994, s. 307). Baldwin'in Paris'teki ilk yıllarında bir yanlış anlaşılma sonucu kısa süreli bir tutukluluk yaşaması dahil tüm romanları, suç, ceza ve tutsaklık hattında ilerleyen bu izlekle örtüşür.¹⁰ Baldwin'in eserlerini ceza hukukunun işleyişi çerçevesinde yorumlayan Quentin D. Miller, konu çeşitliliği dolayısıyla *No Name in the Street*'in geleneksel anlamda bir "cezaevi edebiyatı" olmadığını söyler (2012, s. 128). Ancak Miller'a göre gerek Maynard davasına ayırdığı yer gerekse Afrikalı Amerikalıların deneyimini tutukluluk haline benzetmesi bakımından Baldwin, Amerikan ceza sistemine dair en net tavrını bu metinde gösterir (2012, ss. 128-135). Melinda Plastas ve Eve Allegra Raimon da bu denemeyi 1970'lerde özellikle siyahların özgürleşme mücadelesinde öne çıkan cezaevi aktivizmi çerçevesine yerleştirir (2013, s. 687). *No Name in the Street* ile *Düşenin Dostu*'na işaret ederek Baldwin'in cezaevindeki cinsellik ve iktidar ilişkisini edebiyatta konu eden az sayıdaki yazardan biri olduğunu vurgularlar: Baldwin'in eserleri "erkek cinselliği olanaklarının çeşitliliğini ve bunun cezaevi erotikası ve iktidar ile olan ilişkisini temsil eder" (Plastas ve Raimon, 2013, s. 688). Azareen Van der Vliet Oloomi, İstanbul'daki sanatsal ortamın Baldwin'e Amerikan kültürüne sinmiş olan siyah eşcinsel, siyah Hristiyan, Hristiyan eşcinsel, eşcinsel Hristiyan entelektüel gibi ırksal, dinsel ve cinsel eksende tanımlanan kimlik kalıplarının dışında hareket alanı sağladığını kaydeder (s. 30). Tutukluluk, tutsaklık, işgal ve sömürünün somutlaştığı cezaevi, getto ve toplama kampı gibi mekânlar arasındaki coğrafi ve tarihsel bağlantıları görmek, Amerikan kimlik kalıplarının düşünsel hapishanesi dışında mümkün olmuştur. İstanbul, Baldwin'e bu bağlantıları yazıda ve sahnede ifade edebildiği bir ortam sunmuştur. Oyun için yazdığı önsözde Baldwin, cezaevinin, yani tutukluluk hâlinin fiziki sınırlarını esnetir: "Oyun aslında toplumun kurbanları nerde bir araya tıklımışsa orda geçer" (1970, s. 5). Sözlerine "Çehov'un *Vişne Bahçesi*'nin vişne ağaçları ile ilgisi neyse, *Düşenin Dostu*'nun hapishanelerde homoseksüel ilişkilerle ilgisi odur" şeklinde bir eğretilenle başlayan Baldwin, bu bağlantıyı "insan olanaklarının insan budalalığı ve vurdumduymazlığı ile [vişne ağaçları gibi kesilerek] yok edilmesi"nde somutlaştırır (1970, s. 5). Oyunun gözler

9 Huey P. Newton (1942-1989) ve Bobby Seale (1936-), 1966 yılında Oakland, California'da Black Panther Party for Self-Defense adlı siyasi oluşumu kurmuştur. Her ikisi de çeşitli suçlamalardan hapis cezasına çarptırılmıştır. Baldwin'in asistanı, serbest bırakılması için kamuoyu oluşturmaya çalıştığı William "Tony" Maynard, Jr. ise bir ordu mensubunu öldürmekle haksız yere suçlanarak 6 yıldan fazla hapis yatmıştır. Bu sembolik tutuklulara, Baldwin'in *No Name in the Street*'in son sözü, "Epilogue: Who Has Believed Our Report?" kısmında andığı cezaevi aktivistleri George Jackson (1941-1971) ile Angela Davis'i (1944-) de eklemek gerek (Baldwin, 1998, s. 475).

10 Amerikan cezaevinin ürettiği muhalif alt kültür ve edebiyat hakkında ayrıntılı çalışmalar için bkz. H. Bruce Franklin ve Lee Bernstein.

önüne serdiği ve toplumun görmezden geldiği gerçek, Baldwin'e göre: "İnsanların yarattığı kurumların insanlar üzerindeki etkilerini bu derece yırtıcı bir şekilde göstermesi"dir (1970, s. 5). Görünen odur ki, toplumlar, hemcinsler arası aşkı lanetlemek suretiyle tutsaklık ve baskı süreçlerinin sonuçlarıyla yüzleşmekten kaçınmaktadır.

Başta Gülriz Sururi, Engin Cezzar ve Zeynep Oral'ın otobiyografik eserleri olmak üzere, Baldwin'in önde gelen iki biyografi yazarı James Campbell (1991, ss. 234-236) ile Leeming'in (1994, ss. 307-308) çalışmalarından *Düşenin Dostu* oyununun sahnelenme süreci takip edilebilir. Zaborowska ve Çiğdem Üsekese'in çalışmaları da yabancı literatürde bu süreci inceleyen araştırmaların başında gelir. Baldwin ile dostluğu Actor's Studio'da, romandan uyarlanan *Giovanni'nin Odası'nın* sahnelenmesiyle başlayan Cezzar, 1950'li yılların sonlarında New York City'den İstanbul'a ailesini ziyarete gelmiştir. Planı, bir süre ülkede tatil yapıp Elia Kazan vasıtası ve William Inge'nin onayıyla *Merdivendeki Karanlık* [*The Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, 1957] oyununun turnesine çıkmak üzere ABD'ye dönmektir. Yani genç bir tiyatro oyuncusu olarak Cezzar, ABD'de gelecek vaat eden bir kariyerin başlangıcındadır. Ancak İstanbul'dayken aile dostları Leyla Gencer'in kendisini alarak Tepebaşı Dram Tiyatrosu'nda Muhsin Ertuğrul'u ziyarete gitmesiyle hem planı hem de hayatı değişir çünkü o ziyarette Ertuğrul, Cezzar'a Hamlet rolünü teklif eder. Cezzar, hayran kaldığı tiyatro binasının "efsanevi odasında" Gencer ve Ertuğrul gibi usta isimlerin huzurunda böyle bir teklifi geri çevirmez (Cezzar ve Çalışlar, 2005, ss. 81-83). Böylece, Cezzar'ı İstanbul'a, Türkiye'ye ve çağdaş Türk tiyatrosuna kazandıran adım atılır. 200 kez oynanan *Hamlet*, Cezzar'ın Amerika planlarını bozduğu gibi Baldwin ile mektuplaşmalarını da sekteye uğratır.

Cezzar'a sık ve uzun mektuplar yazan Baldwin de işlerinin düzensizliği ve yoğunluğundan dolayı, uzun süredir söz vermesine rağmen, İstanbul'a gelişini ertelemektedir. Sonunda 1961 güzünde tam da Cezzar-Sururi ikilisinin nikâh kutlamasının ortasında gelir (Cezzar ve Çalışlar, 2005, ss. 85-86; Sururi, 2002, s. 295). Daha önce ifade edildiği üzere Baldwin, Tel Aviv, İsrail'den Afrika ülkelerine geçecekken bu güzergâhtan vazgeçmiştir. Böyle başlayan İstanbul ziyareti uzayacak, sıklaşacak ve Cezzar ile gerçekleşen (ve gerçekleşmeyen) birçok proje tasarlayacaklardır. Türkiye'nin 1961 ve 1972 askeri müdahaleler arasındaki sosyo-politik ortamına denk gelen Baldwin'in İstanbul yılları hem Baldwin hem Gülriz Sururi-Engin Cezzar Tiyatrosu hem de genel anlamda ülkenin kültürel hayatı açısından verimli geçecektir. Gülriz Sururi'nin girişimiyle 1962'de kurulan Sururi-Cezzar Tiyatrosu ilk döneminden itibaren *İttihat ve Terakki*, *Keşanlı Ali Destanı*, *Kurban*, *Midas'ın Kulakları* ve *Teneke* gibi kalabalık ve maliyetli yapımlara

imza atar. Yapımlar başarılı olsa da tiyatronun borçları sürekli bir sonraki oyuna ertelenir. 1960'ların sonlarına doğru, maddi nedenlerden dolayı, Sururi'nin sözleriyle, "Oyun seçerken çok dikkatliyiz, belimizi doğrultmadan riske girmekten korkuyoruz. Büyük yapımlardan uzak kalmak istiyoruz. Ve sonunda toplumumuzun derin yaralarından birine parmak basan *Düşenin Dostu*'nu sahneye koyuyoruz" (2002, s. 410). Cezzar ise şöyle hatırlıyor oyun seçimini: "*Düşenin Dostu*. Her oynandığı ülkede sansür ediliyor, olaylar çıkıyordu. Islahhanede geçen, çocuk mahkûmların nasıl işkence gördüğünü, nasıl ırzlarına geçildiğini anlatan bir oyun. Böyle bir dil görmedim. Korkunç bir oyun. Böyle iddialı işlere de bayılırım" (Cezzar ve Çalışlar, 2005, s. 121). Cezzar, Smitty karakterini canlandırdığı için oyunun yönetmenliğini Baldwin'e teklif eder. Zeynep Oral provalar boyunca Baldwin'in tercümanlığını yapar (Oral, 2018, ss. 122-124 ve 19 Haziran 2020). Provalar sürerken Baldwin, o sırada Okay Temiz ile çalışmak üzere İstanbul'a gelmiş olan caz müzisyeni Don Cherry'ye rastlayınca oyunun müzikleri, muhtemelen John Herbert'in bile tahmin edemeyeceği bir seviyeye çıkar (Sururi, 2002, ss. 414-415; Cezzar ve Çalışlar, 2005, ss. 121-122).

Oyunun adı, William Shakespeare'in "Düşünce kaderin ve insanların gözünden, / Aforozlular gibi yapayalnız ağlarım" dizeleriyle başlayan 29 numaralı sonesinden gelir (Herbert, 1970, s. 80). Dekorun ranza ve parmaklıklardan oluşan iki perdelik oyun, islahevine yeni gelen Smitty'nin ezilmemek için geçirdiği dönüşümü anlatır. Temiz yüzlü, biraz da naif olan 17 yaşındaki Smitty gelmeden önce koğuştta yaşları 18-20 arasında değişen üç hükümlü bulunmaktadır. Hırçın ve yakışıklı Rocky, koğuşun alfa erkeğidir. "Dış görünüşü yumuşaklığın ve sert kuvvetin bir karışımı" olan Prens, güçlü olanın yanında konumlanan kurnaz ve her durumda kazanan bir karakterdir (Herbert, 1970, s. 9). Prens'in müphemliği dolayısıyla Mona diye adlandırdığı Jan, "ilk bakışta infial yaratacak," "cinsiyetler arasında asılı kalmış" neredeyse ilâhi zarafete sahip bir genç ve başlıkta adı geçen "düşenin dostu," aynı zamanda da düşenin kendisidir (Herbert, 1970, ss. 9-10). Meşru otoritenin sembolü olan gardiyan ise zayıf noktalarını caydırıcı üniformasının ardına gizler. İktidarın cinsel suistimal yoluyla ele geçirildiği bu ortamda Rocky, Smitty'yi himayesine alarak, yani onu kendi oğlanı yaparak otoritesini korur. Ancak güç dengesi, Prens'ten aldığı akılla Smitty'nin Rocky'e meydan okuması ve yeni kazandığı iktidara güvenerek Mona'ya yaklaşmasıyla değişir. İlişkilerini çıkarına göre kuran Prens, duruma göre Smitty'yi destekleyecek, Mona ise her durumda ezilecektir. Hem cezaevine düşmeden önce hem de cezaevinde toplu tecavüze uğradığı anlatılan Mona, gardiyan dahil beş karakterin en hassasıdır. Canlı çıkmanın imkânsız olduğu işkence hücrelerinden zaman zaman duyulan çığlıkları bir tek Mona durup dinler.

Oyunun doruk noktası, Noel eğlencesi için hazırlıkların yapıldığı sahnedir. Şiire ve edebiyata yakın olan Mona, Shakespeare'in *Venedik Taciri* oyununda Portia'nın yargıca, bir kudret göstergesi olarak merhamet etmesi çağrısında bulunduğu konuşmasını hazırlamaktadır. Gardiyan, Rocky ve Prens, Mona'nın provasını küçümseyerek izlerken Smitty daha önceden bildiği bu sahneyi can kulağıyla dinler. Mona'nın skecin iptal edilmesi ve diğer herkesin Noel gösterisine katılması dolayısıyla hücrede Mona ve Smitty yalnız kalır. Rocky karşısındaki zaferden sonra kendinden emin bir hamleyle Mona'yla yaklaşan Smitty, reddedilince sinirlenir: "Yahu senin etini mi istiyorum sandın? Delirteceksin beni. Sadece kendime biraz ilgi gösterilmesini istedim. Sebebi de bu fare kapanında tıklılı olmam.. Pis ibne domalmaktan başka ne boktan anlarsın sen... İbne." (Herbert, 1970, s. 79). Tam da bu konuma düşmemek için sevdiği erkeğin yakınlaşmasını kabul etmemiş olan Mona, bu şiddet dolu atmosferi Smitty'nin ranzasından bir kitap seçerek dağıtır. Beden dilinin öne çıktığı bu anların devamında Mona, Smitty'nin 29 numaralı soneyi okumasını ister. Yan yana oturup şiiri kıkırdarak biraz da beceriksizce okurlarken ikili arasında, şiirin "Öyle bir servettir ki sevgini anmak bile, / Sultanlarla yer değiş deseler de nafile" dizelerine karşılık gelen gerçek bir sevgi ortaya çıkar (Herbert, 1970, s. 80).

Bu esnada içeri giren Rocky ve Prens'in Mona'yı dövmeye başlaması ve Smitty'nin de onlara aynı şiddette cevap vermesiyle gardiyan duruma el atar. Mona, "sarkıntılık ettiği" gerekçesiyle, ama aslında Smitty'ye karşı duygularını açık etmesinin sonucu olarak, işkence hüccresine gönderilir. Çıgıllıklarını dinlediği diğer tutsakların konumuna düşecek, duygusal anlamda dürüst olduğu için bedel ödeyecektir. Oyunda tabir edildiği şekliyle, herkesin "üzerinden geçtiği" Mona, cinselliği Prens gibi araçsallaştırmayarak bir irade sergilemiştir. Mona'nın bir İsa figürü gibi hayatını feda etmesine şahit olan Smitty ise bundan sonra kendisine ve Mona gibilere yapılan zulmü Rocky gibilere ödetmek için iktidar oyununu oynayacaktır. "Hepsini ödeteceğim size!" hem oyunun son sözü hem de canavarlaşan Smitty'nin bundan sonrası için andıdır (Herbert, 1970, s. 85). Ölüm ve yeniden doğum döngüsünün sembolü olarak Noel, Mona'nın işkence odasında son bulacak hayatına ve Smitty'nin bir zalim (tecavüzcü, katil, hırsız, vs.) olarak hayatının başlangıcına işaret eder. Şiddet sarmalının Smitty ile kendini yeniden üretmesi rahatsız edici olduğu kadar gerçekçidir. Sonuç olarak, islah etmek için var olan bir kurum yeni suçlular yaratır; şiddet dili ve hapisanenin varlığı perçinlenir. Farklı psikolojik ve ekonomik konumlardaki karakterleriyle bu hücre, toplumun bir alegorisidir. Parmaklıklar seyircinin içerisi ve dışarı algısını alt üst eder. Hücredeki güç dinamikleri toplumdakilerin yansımasıdır. İzleyicinin aslında bu iktidar oyununu dışarıdaki hayatında oynamakta

olduğu ima edilir. İçeride olduğu gibi dışarıda da cinsellik sevginin ifadesi değil; iktidar, baskı ve aşağılamanın bir yöntemidir. Bu ortamda, güç olgusunu sevgi ve merhamet ile harmanlamak isteyen—ve ilhamını da Shakespeare’den alan—Mona ve onun gibiler yok edilecek, meydan şiddet dilini kullananlara kalacaktır. Ancak Plastas ve Raimon, oyunda şiddetin ve kardeşliğin yan yana sunulduğunu ima ederek Smitty ve Mona ilişkisinde cezaevi gibi baskıcı bir ortamda bile erkekler arasında yeni ve özgürleştirici bağların kurulma olasılığını görürler (2013, s. 696). Plastas ve Raimon’a göre, eşcinselliği nedeniyle söyleminin “yumuşak” olduğunu iddia ederek onu hedef alan Amerikalı siyah milliyetçi söylemin son derece farkında olan Baldwin, küresel senaryoların cinsel ve ırksal hapishanelerini yıkan farklılıkları İstanbul’da yaşadığı için dillendirebilmiştir (2013, s. 697).

Homofobi ve cinsiyetçilik nasıl Amerikan toplumunda ve hatta siyah Amerikalıların bağımsızlık söyleminde yer etmişse, Türkiye’de de durum farklı değildir. Bir suç olarak algılanan eşcinselliğin konu edilerek toplumun huzurunu bozdukları gerekçesiyle, oyunun sahnelenmeye başladığı 1970 yılında Sururi-Cezzar Tiyatrosu’na dava açılır ancak mahkeme tiyatrocular lehine sonuçlanır. Valilik emriyle tiyatronun kapatılmaya çalışıldığı dönemi Sururi şöyle anlatır: “Ve ilk kez, savcılığın takipsizlik kararı verdiği oyunu Valilik, yetkisinin ve Anayasa’nın dışına çıkarak kapatmak üzere harekete geçmişti. Valinin yazılı emrine rağmen kapamadık tiyatromuzu. Kanununun ve Anayasa’nın bize tanıdığı direnme hakkımızı kullandık ve savcılığın bilirkişi raporunun olumlu olması karşısında vali emrini geri almak zorunda kaldı” (2002, s. 416). Oyun üzerine medyada hem olumlu hem de olumsuz yorumlar yapılır (Sururi, 2002, s. 416). Sururi-Cezzar Tiyatrosu’nun kendi dergisinde yayımlanmak üzere seyirciler arasında yapılan ankette çoğu seyircinin oyunu son derece dokunaklı bulduğu, kiminin ikinci kez geldiği kiminin de yakın çevresi için bilet aldığına dair görüşler belirtilir (Sururi, 2002, ss. 414-416). Valilik ve kamuoyu arasındaki görüş farklılığı o kadar çarpıcıdır ki *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi, Dün/Bugün/Yarın* bünyesinde, bu oyunu tartışan “sahnedeki cinsi sapıklığın istismar edilmesi mi yoksa topluma bir mesajı olan bir sanat eseri mi” başlıklı açık oturum düzenlenir.¹¹ Özetini Oral’ın kaleme aldığı açık oturuma Baldwin ve Cezzar’ın yanı sıra bilim insanları Selçuk Erez (Dr. Kadın Doğum Uzmanı, Oturum Başkanı), Özcan Köknel (Dr. İstanbul Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi NeuroPsikiatri Profesörü) ve Berent Arınç (Yüksek

11 “Cinsi sapıklık” ifadesi başlıkta geçtiği şekliyle kullanılmıştır. Batılı ülkelerde ve Türkiye’de o dönemde eşcinselliğin bir sapıklık, sapkınlık ve hastalık olarak nitelendirilmesi tarihsel bir olgudur. Bu makalede bu varsayım tartışılmamakta, açık oturuma tarihsel açıdan yaklaşmaktadır. Baldwin’in de çeviri yoluyla bu görüşün farkında olduğu tahmin edilebilir. Buna rağmen terimlerin ideolojik içeriğiyle ilgili bir tartışma başlamamış sadece oyundaki cinselliğin işleviyle ilgili görüşler paylaşılmıştır.

Mühendis ve Felsefe Doktoru) katılır. Köknel'in tiyatrocularından ve tabuların yıkılmasından yana tavrı göze çarpar. Köknel şöyle yorumlar: "Oyunda kullanılan kelimelerin müstehcen gibi görünmesinin bir nedeni de Türkçede bu kelimelere [karşı] çok daha 'affective' – duygusal olmamızdır. Ama oyundaki gibi bir durum patolojisini belirtmek için, bu kelime ve deyimler gerekiyorsa, tiyatro bunu vermeye mecburdur" (Oral, 1970, s. 71). Seyircinin bu dile ve konulara ne kadar açık olduğunun bir kanıtı olarak anketlere atıfta bulunan Köknel şu sonuca varır: "Demek ki tiyatro seyircisinin hazır olduğu an, bu oyunu sahneye koymuş. Yani halkın psikolojisi iyi izlenmiş. Maalesef aynı şeyi şehrin idarecileri için söyleyemiyoruz. . . . Bundan sonra bir tepki olursa, bunun halktan değil, çeşitli baskılarla, zorla getirilmiş bir engelleme olduğu anlaşılacaktır" (Oral, 1970, s. 72).

Erez, Baldwin'e iki önemli soru yöneltir. İlki eserin içeriği ve eleştirisiyle ilgilidir. *Düşenin Dostu* oyununu sosyal ve tarihsel anlamda bir tutsaklık metaforu olarak gören Baldwin, hapisane, suç ve toplum üzerine düşünerek şöyle der: "toplumumuz, suçlu veya 'mahkûm' diye etiketlediği kimseleri gözün görmediği bir yere atmakla, her türlü sorumluluktan kendini uzak tutmaktadır. Seçmiş olduğu bu yol toplum içindeki kötülöklere eğilmekten çok daha kolay ve çıkarıcı bir tutumdur" (Oral, 1970, s. 72). Toplumun kör inançlarına göre belirlediği yasak ve günah tanımlarıyla yüzleşmeden yargılama yoluna gitmesi, yani kendine günah keçileri seçmesi, Baldwin'e göre riyakâr ve çıkarıcı bir yaklaşımdır. Toplum, cezaevi ve getto gibi ayrıştırılmış alanları kendince meşrulaştırıyorsa, bunun sorumluluğunu almak durumundadır. Bu nedenle Baldwin'e göre,

Oyunda homoseksüalite ikinci planda kalmaktadır. Eserdeki kişiler belli şartlar altında, şöyle veya böyle yaşamak zorundadırlar. Nitekim yeni gelen çocuğun (Smitty) nerede olduğunu, ne olduğunu anlaması, bulunduğu duruma bir yön verme gereğesi oyunun eylemini meydana getirmektedir. Hapishanedeki gibi korkunç bir durumda, bu çocuk ezilmemek için canavarlaşmaya mecburdur. . . . Oyunda seyrettiğimiz çocuklar, cemiyetin, bizim yarattığımız canavarlardır. Ve biz onlarla ne yapacağımızı bilemiyoruz. Oyunun son sözü . . . hücre arkadaşlarına değil, onu ve diğerlerini hücreye sokan bizlere, toplumdur. (Oral, 1970, s. 72)

Erez'in ikinci sorusu ise eserin alımlanması ve toplumun kültür seviyesi arasındaki ilişki üzerinedir. Bu gibi oyunlara Batılı ölkelerde gösterilen tolerans ile gelişmişlik seviyesi arasında bir paralellik görüp görmediği sorusuna Baldwin olumsuz cevap verir.

Türkiye’de oyuna tepkinin “çok daha içten, daha kuvvetli ve daha kişisel” olduğunu düşünen Baldwin, gelişmişlik tanımının göreceli olduğu kanaatindedir (Oral, 1970, s. 73). Bu bakımdan okur yazarlık oranının da gerçek bir gösterge olmadığını savunur: “. . . mesela Türkiye, Amerika’ya nazaran az gelişmiş bir ülke diyorsunuz. Onlardan çok üstün yönleriniz var. Türkiye’de halkın büyük bir kısmının okuma yazma bilmediği, bilinen bir gerçek. Bunu hem siz, hem onlar biliyor. Bu sebepten bilmeyenlere öğretme imkânımız var” (Oral, 1970, s. 73). Okur yazarlık teknik bir konudur. Baldwin asıl cehaletin daha derinlerde, kitlelerin eğitim ve medya gibi ideolojik aygıtlarla sistematik bir şekilde yalanlara inandırılmasıyla ilgili olduğunu düşünür. Ülkesinin maddi zenginliğini Tanrının bahşettiği bir hak olarak lanse eden medyanın yol açtığı toplumsal patolojiye işaret eder: “. . . Amerika’nın verdiği bu eğitim *Life*, *Time* gibi belli mecmualar ve televizyon tarafından verilen şartlandırılmış bir eğitimidir. Uyutulmuş insanları kurtarmak pek kolay değildir. Bence gerçek problemi olup insanın bunun varlığını bilmesi, gerçek bir problemi olup da bunu bilmemesinden çok daha olumludur” (Oral, 1970, s. 73). Kendi toplumunu vaat edilmiş toprakların rüyasından uyandırmayı vazife edinen Baldwin, bir Afrikalı Amerikalı olarak tarihsel ve modern köleliğe dair tanıklıklarını paylaşmış ve sanatsal, felsefi ve siyasî öngörüsünü *Düşenin Dostu* yoluyla İstanbul’da Türk seyircisine aktarmıştır. Üsekes de “Baldwin’in farkında olmadan oyunun kusursuz seyircisini bulmuş olabileceği” sonucuna varır: “Ne de olsa [bu seyirci] değişken bir siyasi rejimin hüküm sürdüğü bir ülkede yaşıyordu ve (başbakan Adnan Menderes’in idam edildiği) 1960 darbesi belleklerde tazeliğini koruyordu. Dolayısıyla (kişinin hayatı ve bedeni üzerinde söz sahibi olamaması, otoriter bir sistemde hayatta kalmaya çalışmak gibi) oyundaki konular Türk seyirciyi etkilemişti . . .” (2010, s. 113).

Sivil haklar mücadelesinin toplumda umut edilen dönüşüme yol açmadığını gördükçe Baldwin’in Amerikan demokrasisi ve toplumun geleceğiyle ilgili mesajları sertleşti. 1960’ların sonundan itibaren popülerliğinin düşüşe geçmesiyle son dönem eserlerinde ustalığını kaybettiğine dair eleştiriler çoğaldı; Malcolm X’in hayatı üzerine yazdığı senaryo, *One Day When I Was Lost* (1972), Hollywood yapımcıları tarafından reddedildi; ölmeden önce tamamladığı son eser olan *The Evidence of Things Not Seen* (1985), kendi ülkesinde, uzun süredir çalıştığı yayınevi tarafından basılmadı. Cezzar’a yazdığı 27 Eylül 1974 tarihli son mektubu, öfkesinin ve kederinin derinliği hakkında ipuçları vermektedir (2007, ss. 150-152). 1987’de cenazesinde konuşan Amiri Baraka, Baldwin’in son dönemde hedef olduğu eleştirileri şu şekilde yorumladı: “Ve tabii bu nedenle hayvanlar kralının entelektüel tetikçileri Baldwin’in hakkından gelmeye çalıştı. Nihayetinde şarkısının o nadide hüznü ve duyguya dair o estetik tutkusu, mesajındaki sosyal karabasanı

gizlemiyordu" (1999, s. 454). 1971 askeri müdahalesiyle sosyal ve sanatsal hayatın sekteye uğradığı Türkiye'ye de bu tarihten sonra sadece bir kez geldi. St. Paul-de-Vence'da bir nevi inzivaya çekilen ama hep yazmaya devam eden Baldwin, Orta Doğu'daki bitmeyen savaşları¹² ve çoğu siyah, genç erkeklerin emeğiyle beslenen hapisane çarkını öngördü.¹³ Bu nedenledir ki 2010'lu yıllarda ABD'nin dört bir yanında genç siyahların sokak ortasında gerek beyaz polisler gerekse beyaz siviller tarafından nefsi müdafaa bahanesiyle öldürülmesine tepki olarak ortaya çıkan Black Lives Matter oluşumunda en çok hatırlanan kişi Baldwin oldu. Bu şiddetin kurbanlarından Eric Garner'ın (17 Temmuz 2014) son çırpınıışındaki "Nefes alamıyorum!" çığılı bir slogana dönüştü. Son olarak George Floyd'un (25 Mayıs 2020) son nefesini beyaz bir polisin sırtına çökmüş dizleri altında vermesiyle toplumsal bir isyan başladı. Bu olay üzerine Zeynep Oral, 11 Haziran 2020 tarihli "Arkadaşım James Baldwin 53 Yıl Önce Söylemişti: Nefes A-l-a-m-ı-y-o-r-u-m!" başlıklı yazısında Baldwin'i andı ve yazarın "Güç ve şiddet birleştiği anda, adaletin en büyük düşmanı olur" sözünü hatırlattı.

Hayatının hem sanatsal hem de siyasi alandaki fikirlerinin olgunluğa ulaştığı üretken bir dönemini, ulusal ve uluslararası boyutlarda yakın tarihin en belirleyici toplumsal olaylarının yaşandığı bir dönemde ülkemizde Türk sanatçı dostları arasında geçiren Baldwin savaş, etnik temizlik veya Black Lives Matter gibi insanî kriz durumlarında hatırlanmaya devam etmektedir. Toplumsal adalet ve demokrasi yeşermediği süreç de sanatsal üslubundan ziyade öngörülü siyasî sözleriyle hatırlanmaya devam edecek gibi görünüyor. Baldwin'in zamansızlığı ve güncelliği, kendi yazınında uyguladığı karmaşık ve çok katmalı zaman kavramının bir tezahürü olarak düşünülebilir. *Düşenin Dostu* için yazdığı önsözde bütün insanların kardeş olduğu ve birinin başına gelenin herkesin başına geldiği sözü belki kulaklara içi boşalmış bir ifade olarak gelebilir. Ancak dünya üzerinde durmak bilmeyen katliamlar, savaşlar ve her türlü baskı ortamıyla birlikte düşünüldüğünde—çünkü nihayetinde oyunda cezaevi sembolik bir mekândır—kulağa klişe gibi gelen bu ifadenin tiyatro binasının dışındaki gerçekliği ortaya çıkar. Baldwin bu görüşü temel alarak bireysel ve toplumsal belleğin önemine işaret eder: "Bu oyundaki insanların buldukları yerlere nasıl geldiklerini soğukkanlılıkla düşünmek, kendi bugünkü durumumuza nasıl geldiğimizi düşünmek demektir" (1970, s. 6).

12 "James Baldwin on War with Iran" başlıklı bir Youtube videosunda 1981-1986 yılları arasında çekilmiş bir televizyon röportajında görülen Baldwin, ABD-İran ilişkileri konusunda siyahların nasıl bir tutum takınması gerektiğine dair görüşü sorulduğunda rehine krizinin bir düzmece olduğunu ve büyük ihtimalle Amerikan kamuoyunu yeni bir savaşa hazırlamanın amaçlandığını düşündüğünü ifade ediyor (Poetry & Protest, 2020).

13 2000'lerin başından itibaren öne çıkan araştırma konusu, kitlesel tutukluluk ve "cezaevi-endüstriyel-kompleksi" için bkz. Michelle Alexander (2010).

Sonuç

Paris'te yaşadığı dönemle ilgili düşüncelerini pek çok denemesinde kaleme almış olmasına karşın Baldwin, İstanbul'da geçirdiği yıllarla ilgili herhangi bir değerlendirme yapmamıştır. Somut anlamda, büyük ölçüde Sedat Pakay'ın oluşturduğu görsel arşiv ve Sururi-Cezzar Tiyatrosu'ndaki yönetmenlik denemesi dışında Baldwin tarafında İstanbul'a dair bir sessizlik hakimdir. Bu sessizlik ancak Baldwin'in özel hayatının izlerinin röntgenini çekercesine tarayan yabancı eleştirmenlerin ürettiği literatürle bozulur. Bu makale ise Baldwin'in İstanbul'dayken hangi düşüncelerle meşgul olduğunu bu düşüncelerin ürünü olan metinlerin içinde keşfetmek ve röportajlarında örtük kalan karşılaştırmalı düşüncelerini öne çıkarmak çabasına girişmiştir. *No Name in the Street* ile *Düşenin Dostu* çerçevesinde öne çıkan görüşler, bulgular ve mesajlar, bize hem yazarın İstanbul'dayken hangi düşünce ekseninde bulunduğu kanıtlarını sunar hem de Baldwin'in Amerika eleştirisini neden sadece ülke içindeki ırkçılık ile değil de üçüncü dünya ülkelerini de kapsayacak şekilde uluslararası boyutta "bir başka yerden" yaptığını, Paris'i neden bir sürgün olarak benimsemediğini, neden kendini "okyanus ötesi yolcu" olarak tanımladığını açıklar.

Baldwin gittiği yerlerde, her anlamda 20. yüzyılın imparatorluğuna dönüşmüş olan ülkesinin kanlı ayak izleriyle karşılaştı. Irkçılığın ve kölelik ticaretinin besleyip büyüttüğü imparatorluğun ve kendi zamanına (ayrıca bizim günümüze) kadar değiştirdiği şekillerin sancılarını ve bedellerini hep tanıdı. Kimin sömürdüğü, kimin sömürüldüğü ve kimin bu süreçlere alet olduğu konusunda hiç yanılmadı. Baldwin ve Türkiye ilişkisi günümüzde biraz turistik bir şekilde, yüzeysel bilinmektedir. Yazarın Türkiye'deki en görünür izi ülkemizde özgürlük alanının daralmaya başladığı bir dönemde Sururi-Cezzar Tiyatrosu tarafından sahnelenen *Düşenin Dostu* oyununu, dil bariyerine rağmen yönetmesidir. Cezzar ve Sururi ikilisinin aydın çevresi sayesinde romanları da hiç gecikmeden Türkçede yayımlanmıştır; üstelik kendi ülkesinde sansürlendiği sırada. Baldwin aslında bir Türk karakter yaratmayarak ya da romanlarını bir Türk mekânda geçirmeyerek tam da bir sanatçının yapması gerekeni yapmıştır. Kültürü boş bir göstergeye indirgememiş; bir süs, bir dekor olarak edebiyatına katmamıştır. Kültürün bazı bağlamlardaki opaklığını hem kendi hem de Türk kültürü açısından korumuştur. Kendini Batılı olarak konumlandırıp şarkiyatçılık tuzağına düşmemiş ve Amerikan kültürel kavramlarını Türkiye'ye pazarlamayı düşünmemiştir. Baldwin'in sanatının ve aktivizminin mirasını elbette öncelikle kendi vatandaşının özümsemesi gerekir. Türkiye'ye bıraktığı ise, *No Name in the Street* adlı henüz dilimize çevrilmemiş kitap uzunluğundaki denemesinde yaptığı çözümlemenin

yanı sıra gerek konu gerekse tiyatro tarihimiz açısından önemli olan *Düşenin Dostu* oyununda gözlenebilecek iktidar sorgulaması olarak yorumlanabilir.

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19. Yüzyılda İstanbul'da Yayımlanan İki Yunanca Kurmaca Metinde Kadın Karakterlerin Sunumu

The Portrayal of Female Characters in Two Fictional Texts Written in Greek and Published in Istanbul in the 19th Century

Aslı ÇETE¹ 



¹Assistant Professor, Istanbul University, Faculty of Letters, Department of Contemporary Greek Language and Literature, Istanbul, Türkiye

ORCID: A.Ç. 0000-0002-9677-6502

Sorumlu Yazar/Corresponding author:

Aslı ÇETE,
Istanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi,
Çağdaş Yunan Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim
Dalı, İstanbul, Türkiye
E-posta: asli.cete@istanbul.edu.tr

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öz

Avrupa'da 19. yüzyıl boyunca yükselen cinsiyetçi söylemin yansımaları aynı dönem yayımlanan Yunanca eserlerde de gözlemlenir. Kadının, 'doğası gereği zayıf', erkeğince ekonomik bakımdan yeterli olması koşuluyla 'güçlü' olduğu inancı bu söylemin ana çekirdeğini oluşturur. Bu doğrultuda, 'melek' olarak tasavvur edilen ideal kadının karşısına 'şeytani' olan çıkarılarak ilkinin sahip olduğuna inanılan özelliklerin altı çizilir. Bu çalışmada her ikisi de İstanbul'da yayımlanan iki düzyazı örneğinin, kadın karakterlere yaklaşımını incelenmiştir. Aynı dönemde İstanbul'da yaşamış, biri erkek biri kadın iki Rum yazarın, bir yıl ara ile basılmış iki metninde eril egemen söylem ile dönemin feminist eleştirilerinin ne derece yansıtıldığı araştırılmıştır. Bu kapsamda incelenen metinlerin genelinde, dönemin cinsiyetçi ideolojisinin hâkim olduğu; bununla birlikte bu metinlerin yazıldıkları dönem ve coğrafya göz önüne alındığında, egemen ideolojinin bir parça dışında kaldıkları gözlemlenmiştir. Çalışmanın kadın yazarı D. Thoma'nın hikâyelerinde egemen söylemin ürettiği "benliksiz" kadınlara çokça rastlanır. Öte yandan, dönemin kültürel feminist geleneğinin izleri de metinde gözlemlenir. Çalışmanın erkek yazarı F. İ. Lufakis'in romanında ise başkahraman olarak bir kadının seçilmesi, bu kadına olumlu özellikler yüklenmesi ve 'zayıf' kadın imajının tersine çevrilmesi onu dönemin diğer edebi metinlerinden önemli ölçüde ayırır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: 19. yy. Yunan Edebiyatı, kadın, İstanbullu Rum yazarlar, Domna Thoma, Fotios İ. Lufakis

ABSTRACT

The reflections of the sexist discourse that arose in Europe throughout the 19th century are also observed in works published in Greek in the same period. The core of this discourse is the view that women are weak by nature and that men are strong as long as they are financially sound. In this sense, the demonic woman is positioned directly opposite the angelic woman. This woman is tasked with highlighting the components of identity of the ideal woman that are considered to be good by the dominant ideology and to make them look more polished. This study investigates the portrayal of female characters in two examples of prose that were both published in Istanbul and aims to determine the extent to which the male-dominated discourse and feminist critiques of the period are reflected in the two texts published a year



apart by two Greek authors living in Istanbul, one a woman and the other a man. In the stories by the female author examined in the study, one frequently encounters inessential women created by the dominant discourse. On the other hand, the text also includes traces of the cultural feminist tradition of the period. Meanwhile, the novel by the male author examined in this study deviates from other literary texts of the period in that a woman who is endowed with positive traits is selected as the lead character, reversing the image of the weak woman.

Keywords: 19th century Greek literature, women, Greek writers of Istanbul, Domna Thoma, Fotios I. Lufakis

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The reflections of the sexist discourse that arose in Europe throughout the 19th century are also observed in works published in Greek in the same period. The core of this discourse is the view that women are weak by their nature and that men are strong as long as they are financially sound. Through the images that were separately established for the two genders, men are empowered while women are expected to show a barely visible presence in the home environment. This study investigates the portrayal of female characters in two examples of prose, both published in Istanbul, and aims to determine the extent to which male-dominated discourse and the feminist critiques of the period are reflected in the two texts, which were published a year apart by two Greek authors living in Istanbul, one a woman (Domna Thoma, *Time for Entertainment: Three Select Original Stories*, 1896) and the other a man (Fotios I. Lufakis, *Rejected Child: Original Novel*, 1897). The study aims to answer the following research questions: 1) Do the texts include a male-dominated discourse and critical feminist approach independent of the genders of the authors? 2) Are a male-dominated discourse and critical feminist approach observed in the texts of both authors? 3) Are the female characters in the texts of the two authors who lived in Istanbul during the same period portrayed in a positive or negative manner? 4) Which of the female characters are active, and which are passive? If any of the prose involve active women, when do they become active? Accordingly, the sexist ideology of the period is seen to be dominant in general in the examined texts, whereas considering the period in which they are written and the geography in question, these texts are somewhat outside the dominant ideology.

Whether a male-dominated discourse is used in the texts is not related to the gender of the author but rather a consequence of a choice the author either knowingly or unknowingly made. The work of D. Thoma, the female author examined in the study, includes three short stories, and as a result of this unconscious choice, inessential women as created by the dominant discourse are frequently encountered. In this context, the female character, as well as the female author at the same time, starts to

subconsciously view herself through the eyes of others based on the angelic and devilish images they've created for her. Other frequently encountered situations involve such things as the image of men as the protector of the family, the struggle of widowed women, the usage of angel and demon stereotypes, and the redeeming role of marriage for women. On the other hand, the text also includes traces of the cultural feminist tradition of the period. Based upon the concepts of matriarchy and the divinity of motherhood among the most prominent characteristics of the cultural feminist approach, the work emphasizes female intuition. Accordingly, the female character possesses an intuitive perception that is not seen in men, provided that she is pure and humble. With this skill, she can easily feel the invisible links that connect events, people, and various life forms to one another. When considering all these details, Thoma as an educated woman is understood to have been aware of at least part of the feminist discourses of the period.

The novel by Lufakis, the male author examined in this study, deviates from other literary texts of the period in that he selected a woman as the lead character and endowed her with positive traits, thus reversing the image of the weak woman. Nevertheless, the negative stereotypes of the female gender scattered throughout the text suggest that Ariadni Laru, the lead character of the novel, is an exception and has a different position than other women. However lively, active, and involved in the public sphere Ariadni may be, she does not pose a prototype for the ideal woman. Above all, the public sphere in which Ariadni is active is not a context of employment but one of crime, where she has to struggle using illegal means for her son Theodoros' father to recognize his paternal obligations. This is the issue the novel brings to the attention of the reader as being important for Ariadni. Fedon is the son of a wealthy family and is the one who has forced her to act like this; he has not acknowledged his obligations as her son's father and did not marry her despite having previously promised to do so.

Giriş

İstanbul, 19. yüzyılda ticari bir merkez olmasının yanı sıra Müslüman, Hristiyan ve Musevi cemaatlerinin ileri gelenleri tarafından değişik türde birçok yayının yapıldığı, çok sayıda gazete ve derginin çıkarıldığı bir kültür başkentiydi. Yakın tarihte yapılan bir araştırmaya göre, 1839-1900 yılları arası yayımlanan özgün Yunanca eserlerin sayısı 225'tir.¹ Varna, Leipzig, Londra, Odessa, Patra, İzmir ve Hanya gibi şehirlerde basılan bu eserlerin büyük bir çoğunluğunun yayın merkezi Atina ve İstanbul'dur² (Κούγκουλος, 2021, s. 59-60). 1855-1900 yılları arası sadece İstanbul'da yayımlanan Yunanca edebi eserlerin sayısı ise 33'tür. Bu eserlerin 28 tanesi yakın zamanda yapılan bir araştırma neticesinde tespit edilebilmiştir (Τσαπανίδου & Κούγκουλος, 2020, s. 359). Anastasia Çapanidu ile Thanasis Kungulos'un çok değerli çabaları sonuca ortaya çıkan bu bilgi ile, içlerinde bu makaleye konu olan iki eserin de yer aldığı, söz konusu metinler Çağdaş Yunan Edebiyatı literatüründe bugüne kadar ihmal edilmiş olan yerini alabilmişlerdir.³ Çok dilli ve çok kültürlü bir yapıya sahip bu şehirde üretilen eserler her zaman Yunanca, Türkçe ya da Ermenice kaleme alınmıyordu. Örneğin, Ermeni harfleri ile ya da Yunan alfabesiyle Türkçe (Karamanlıca) yazan yazarlar da söz konusuymdu. Bu durum göz önüne alındığında, sınırları kesin çizgilerle çekilen edebi bir sınıflandırma yapmak olanaklı değildir. Edebi değerleri ve sınıflandırma kaygısı bir yana bırakıldığında, 19. yüzyıl düzyazı örnekleri döneme dair önemli bir araştırma alanı oluşturur. Bu bağlamda, çalışmamızda her ikisi de Yunanca kaleme alınmış⁴ ve İstanbul'da yayımlanmış; ancak

- 1 Trakya Demokritos Üniversitesi öğretim üyeleri Anastasia Çapanidou ile Thanasis B. Kungulos tarafından kaydedilen bu eserlere, aynı üniversiteye bağlı *Halkbilim ve Sosyal Antropoloji Laboratuvarı*'ndan ulaşılabilir.
- 2 19. yüzyılın önde gelen yazarlarından Giannis Psiharis, Atina ve İstanbul'u Yunanlılığın iki "başkenti" şeklinde tanımlar (Mackridge, 2013, s. 276). Kültürel açıdan bakıldığında sözü geçen dönemde her iki şehrin de son derece üretken olduğu görülür.
- 3 Çapanidu ile Kungulos, araştırmalarının sonuçlarını yayımladıkları çalışmalarında bugüne kadar eleştirinin dikkatini, o dönemde hızla kentleşmekte olan Atina'yı konu alan eserlerin çekmiş olduğunu, eleştirinin aynı dönem Yunanistan dışında basılan Yunanca eserlere ilgisiz kaldığını belirtirler (2020, s. 358). Öte yandan, özellikle 1990'larda içlerinde basım yeri olarak İstanbul'un da yer aldığı ve Çağdaş Yunanca edebiyat literatürüne "apokrifa (gizem)" şeklinde geçen bir dizi suç romanı akademik araştırmalara konu olmuştur. Ayrıntılı bilgi için şu kaynaklara bakılabilir: Βουτουρής, Π. (1995). *Ως εις καθρέφτην...: προτάσεις και υποθέσεις για την ελληνική πεζογραφία του 19ου αιώνα*. Νεφέλη; Γκότση, Ζ. (1997). Η μυθιστορία των «απόκρυφων». Η συμβολή στην περιγραφή του είδους. Ν. Βαγενάς (Ed.), *Από τον Λεάνδρο στον Λουκή Λάρα. Μελέτες για την πεζογραφία της περιόδου 1830-1880* (s. 149-168) içinde. Πανεπιστημιακές εκδόσεις Κρήτης; Βαρελάς, Λ. (2015, Μαρτίου 29). *Η εικόνα του άστεως σε ελληνικά απόκρυφα μυθιστορήματα του 19ου αιώνα*. https://cantus.blogspot.com/2015/03/19_29.html; Tonnet, H. (2018). *Des "Mystères de Constantinople" aux "Misérables d'Athènes" Le roman-feuilleton grec au dix-neuvième siècle*. Classiques Garnier; Georgiadou, Z. (2021). *The Mysteries of Constantinople. Greek "social fiction" in the Ottoman Empire. A discourse about a Constantinopolitan Greek collective identity in the late nineteenth century?* [Yayımlanmamış doktora tezi]. University of Hamburg.
- 4 Her iki eser de Antik ve Çağdaş Yunancaya ait unsurların karıştırılması sonucu elde edilmiş yapay bir dil olan katharevusada kaleme alınmıştır. Katharevusa 1976 yılına dek Yunanistan'ın resmi dili olarak kullanılmıştır.

edebiyat eleştirisi tarafından bugüne kadar konu edinilmemiş iki eseri kadın karakterlere yaklaşımı açısından inceleyeceğiz. Aynı dönemde yaşamış, biri erkek, biri kadın iki Rum5 yazarın, bir yıl ara ile basılmış iki metninde eril egemen söylem ile dönemin feminist eleştirilerinin ne derece yansıtıldığını araştıracağız.

19. yüzyılda Avrupa’da giderek güçlenen cinsiyetçi söylem, toplumsal yaşamın birçok alanında olduğu gibi edebiyatta da kendini gösterir. Buna göre kadının, ‘doğası gereği zayıf’ karakter şeklinde sunulması, erkeğin, ailenin ‘koruyucusu’ olma ve ekonomik açıdan güçlü olma gibi özelliklerle donatılması bu dönem kaleme alınmış Yunanca düzyazı örneklerinde sıkça karşılaşılan durumlardır. Her iki cinsiyet için ayrı ayrı oluşturulan imajlarla erkek, görünür kılınıp güçlendirilirken, kadından ev içi alanda belli belirsiz varlık göstermesi beklenmiştir. Bilindiği üzere, ideal kadın, “melek”tir. Ondan beklenen, ‘iyi’ bir eş ve anne olup ahlaklı ve yüksek eğitilmiş çocuklar yetiştirmesidir. Ev içi alanda aktif olması arzulanan bu kadının itaatkârlık, saflık, kibarlık, ve az konuşma gibi özelliklere sahip olması beklenir. Nitekim, “on sekizinci yüzyıldan itibaren, genç kızlara itaatkâr, alçakgönüllü ve benliksiz olmayı empoze eden ve tüm kadınlara da meleksi olmaları gerektiğini anımsatan adabımuaşeret kitaplarının” sayısı giderek artar (Gilbert ve Gubar, 2016, s. 68). Toplumsal, etnik, ulusçu, cinsel vb. her türlü kimliğin, ‘öteki’ ile kurulan ilişki aracılığı ile oluşturulduğu, öteki ve dışlama kavramlarının kimlik inşasında önemli rol oynadığı (Lacan, 1998; Derrida, 1982; Laclau, 1990) göz önüne alındığında, egemen ideoloji tarafından söylem yoluyla üretilen ideal kadın imajının da – diğer bir deyişle kadına biçilen kimliğin – bir ‘öteki’ üzerinden inşa edildiği açıktır. Bu anlamda, melek kadının tam karşısında konumlandırılan kadın, şeytani olandır. Melek kadının tam tersi ve – olumsuz anlamda – fazlası özellikleriyle öne çıkan bu kadın, ideal kadının arkasında beliren koyu fon gibi, onun, egemen ideoloji tarafından ‘iyi’ olduğu varsayılan kimlik bileşenlerini ön plana çıkarıp parlamasını sağlamakla görevlidir. İstanbul’da yayımlanan Yunanca düzyazı örneklerinin birçoğunda birbirinin zıttı olan bu iki stereotipe sıkça rastlanır.

Bahsedilen dönemde İstanbul’da yayın yapan yazarların birçoğunun öz yaşam öyküleri hakkında ya hiçbir bilgiye sahip değiliz ya da çok az şey biliyoruz.6 Çalışmamızın ilk yazarı olan Domna Thoma-İosifidu hakkında sınırlı bilgiye sahibiz: Pallas Rum Kız

5 Bu çalışmada “Rum” sözcüğü Osmanlı İmparatorluğu içinde yaşayan ve ana dili Yunanca olan topluluğu tanımlamak için kullanılacaktır.

6 Özellikle İstanbul’la sınırlı kalıp Yunanistan’a açılmayan yazarların çoğu kez “gençlik hevesiyle” tek bir kitap yazdıkları, onu da akraba, eş dost ya da kendilerine mali destek veren kişilere ithaf ettikleri söylenir (Τσαπανίδου ve Κούγκουλος, 2020, s. 363).

Okulu'ndan mezun olmuş, Samatya ve Bakırköy Kız Okullarının müdürlüğünü üstlenmiştir (Γαϊτάνου-Γιαννιού, 1940, s. 125). Yunan Kadın Hareketinin öncü ismi Kaliroi Siganu-Paren'in Atina'da çıkan yayın organı *Hanımların Gazetesi*'nde yayımlanmış birkaç metni dışında, iki ciltlik coğrafya ders kitabı da vardır (Ριζάκη, 2007, s. 250). Bunların dışında bilinen tek edebi eseri ise 1896'da, Osmanlı Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın izni ile İstanbul'da yayımlanan *Eğlence Zamanı: Üç Orijinal Hikâye Seçkisi*' (Στιγμαί ψυχαγωγίας ήτοι συλλογή τριών πρωτότυπων διηγημάτων)dir.⁷ İkinci yazarımız Fotios I. Lufakis'in bilinen tek romanı *Reddedilen Çocuk: Orijinal Roman* (Αρνισίτεκνος: μυθιστόρημα πρωτότυπον) 1897'de, yine Osmanlı Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın izni ile İstanbul'da yayımlanmış, burada yaşayan Sakız Adası Cemaatine ithaf edilmiştir. Yazarının yaşamı hakkında ne yazık ki bilgiye sahip değiliz.

Eğlence Zamanı: Üç Orijinal Hikâye Seçkisi (1896)

Üç kısa hikâyenin yer aldığı bu eserde yazar, önsözünde eğlendirici kitapların8 yararından bahseder; ancak gençliğe zarar veren, onları yozlaştıran “yabancı” kitapların değil, Yunanca yazılmış özgün eserlerin okunması gerektiğini vurgular.⁹ Kitabın ilk hikâyesi “Sofia (Η Σοφία)”da Kasandra Theofanidu ve ailesinin öyküsü anlatılır. Anne Kasandra ile kızının öyküleri ayrı ayrı işlenir. Zengin bir ailenin kızı olan güzel Kasandra, iyi kalpli bir adamla evlendirilir. Evlendikten on yıl sonra amansız bir hastalıktan önce eşini, sonra da babasını kaybeder. Annesi ve dört çocuğu ile yaşamaya başlar. Erkeklerin ölümünden sonra ekonomik durumları da bozulmaya başlayan anne ile kızı bin türlü zorlukla geçinmeye çalışır. Kasandra annesini de kaybettikten sonra, çocuklarının iyi bir geleceğe sahip olması için köyünü bırakıp Beyoğlu'na (Pera) gelir. Beyoğlu'nun varlıklı ailelerinden Bay S., Kasandra'nın oğlu Konstandinos'un hamiliğini üstlenir, onu Paris'e tıp okumaya gönderir. Kızı Sofia, bir süre sonra tifo mikrobu kaparak hastalanır ve hava değişimi için kırsala, bir tanıdıklarının yanına gider. İki ay kaldığı kırsalda iyileşir ve arkadaşı Kaliopi'nin nikâhında tanıştığı bir gençle nişanlanır; ancak bu genç adam, kısa bir süre sonra Sofia'yı terkedip başka bir kadınla evlenir.

7 Bu çalışmada incelediğimiz her iki esere de Yunanistan İstanbul Başkonsolosluğu'na bağlı Sismanogleio Megaro'nun dijital arşivinin bulunduğu *Medusa* üzerinden ulaşılabilir.

8 Denisi, 1845 yılından önce Yunancaya çevrilen kitaplarda, toplumun “yararı” gözetilirken, bu tarihten sonra yapılan çevirilerde “eğlendirme”nin amaç haline geldiğini belirtir (1994, s. 22-27).

9 Kasinis, özellikle 1845-1896 yılları arasında Batı tarzı yaşam ve düşünce şeklinin, okur kitlesinin merakını cezbedtiğini ve bu dönem yapılan çevirilerin büyük bir “iştahla” okunduğunu belirtir. Dönemin aydınları, özellikle Fransız romanlarından yapılan çevirilere gençleri yozlaştırdığı, aile yaşamını bozduğu gibi gerekçelerle karşı çıkıyordu (1998, s. 69).

19. yüzyılda kadın, aile yaşamı ile sınırlandırılan özel alanda konumlandırılmış, kendisinden bu alan içinde hareket etmesi, ev içi işleri düzenlemesi ve çocukların bakımı ve eğitimi gibi konularla meşgul olması beklenmiştir. Bu söyleme uygun olarak kendisine kamusal alanda görevler yüklenen erkek de ailenin geçim kaynağı ve koruyucusu olarak görülmüştür. Nitekim, Kasandra'nın eşi ile babasının ölümü üzerine şunları okuruz: "Bu iki yalnız kadın ağladılar. Yas tuttular, umutlarını kaybettiler. Artık bir koruyucuları, bu korkunç düşüşlerinde kendilerine destek çıkacak birisi yoktu. Dostları azalmış, zamanla hiç kalmamıştı. Onlarsa yıldırım çarpmış gibi acılarına, kara hüznlerine batmış halde kalmışlardı" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 13-14). Ailenin iki erkeğinin ölümünden sonra anne çalışmaya başlar, genç kadın ise ev içi yaşamı düzenleyip çocukları ile ilgilenir. Anne kız her türlü fedakârlıkla çocukları mutlu etmeye çalışır. Daha ileri yaşta olan kadın, ölen erkeğin yerini alır. Ailenin geçim kaynağını sağlayan koruyucusu rolüne bürünür: "Yirmi yıl sonra Kasandra'nın yetim çocukları artık tek düze ve sakin köylerinde değil, Pera'nın şamatalı ve hareketli mahallelerinden birinde oturuyorlardı; ama şefkatli ve ahlaklı anneleri ile koruyucuları olan, onları avutan anneannelerinden yoksun kalmışlardı" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 21).

İdeal kadın olarak sunulan Sofia, hikâyede erkek kardeşi Konstandinos'un bir adım gerisindedir. Kendi başına bir özne olmaktan çok, erkeğin arkasında duran, onu destekleyen, bir nevi 'gizli kahraman' şeklinde sunulur. Öte yandan, Sofia tamamıyla edilgen hale getirilmez. Beyoğlu'nda bir muayenehane açmak Sofia'nın fikridir. Konstandinos, kız kardeşinin "asla kulak arkası etmediği çok değerli tavsiyesini" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 42) dinleyip Beyoğlu'nda tuttuğu geniş, havadar bir evi muayenehaneye çevirmiştir. Bu muayenehanede Konstandinos, Paris'te tıp eğitimi almış bir hekim (tam etken konum) olarak çalışırken, kız kardeşi Sofia ona gönüllü yardımcılık (yarı etken konum) yapar. Kardeşi Konstandinos'u örnek alır. "Mükemmel bir ansiklopedik bilgiye sahip olmasa da seçkin ve yararlı kitapları derin derin okumasıyla dünyasını faydalı ve ilgi çekici bilgilerle zenginleştirir" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 32).

İdeal olarak nitelendirilen bu tipin betimlemesi şu şekildedir: "Sofia ahlaklı, uslu ve ölçülü, mükemmel bir kadın olarak yeniden karşımızda. Tatlı güzelliği, ahlakı ve annesinin meleksi ruhundan yıllar öncesinden aldığı özelliklerle evi güzelleştiriyor, ciddi karakteri, sempatik tavırları ve kardeşlerine karşı olan kalpten şefkati, anne sevgisi ile arkadaşlarının ve tanıdıklarının takdirini topluyordu" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 21). Alıntıdan da anlaşılacağı üzere Sofia, eril ideolojinin ideal kadın imajının içine hapsolmuştur: Ev içi mekânda aktif, "meleksi" özelliklere ve "ciddi karaktere" sahip, ailenin tüm üyelerini "anne sevgisi" ve "şefkati" ile sarıp sarmalayan "mükemmel bir kadın"dır. Gilbert ve Gubar 1884 yılında

İngiltere'nin tanınmış kadın ahlak ve davranış uzmanlarından Sarrah Ellis'in, kadının diğerkâmlığı üzerine yaptığı vurguyu hatırlatır: Ellis, bir kadının sabah uyanır uyanmaz ilk aklına gelen şeyin, "hayran olunmak ve memnun kalmak için ne yapmalıyım?" sorusu olması gerektiğini söyler. "Ev ahalisi arasında en az işi olan kişi kendisi olduğuna göre doğru hislere sahip bir kadın kendini başkalarının iyiliğine adanmalıdır" (2016, s. 68). Burada öznenin, kendine yönelik yıkıcı bir diğerkâmlığı söz konusudur. Dolayısıyla Sofia, kendisi bunu dile getirmese de her şeyi bilen-yöneten güç, yazar, tarafından diğerkâmlığıyla başkalarının da "takdirini" toplayan bir kadın olarak sunulur. Melek imajı, oluşturulmak istenen her tür kimlikte olduğu gibi, karşısında, kendisini güçlendirecek, meleksi özelliklerini daha belirgin hale getirecek olumsuz bir ikizini de barındırır. Bu iki kavram (melek-şeytan) egemen ideolojinin kaleme aldığı tüm metinlerde okura bolca servis edilir. Bu şekilde, ideal kadın kimliğinin taşıması şart olan niteliklerinin yanı sıra, kesinlikle sahip olmaması gereken bazı özelliklerin de altı çizilmiş olunur. Sofia'nın "ölçülemez şefkati ve kardeşçe sevgisi" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 43) klinikte yatılı tedavi gören iki kız çocuğunu da kapsar. Her ikisi de anneden yoksun, hasta çocuklardır. Birinin annesi, "ahlaklı ve şefkati bol bir kadın"dır (Θωμά, 1896, s. 44); ancak vefat etmiştir. Diğerinki ise dış güzelliğe sahiptir; ama ahlakı zayıftır. "Dansların ve davetlerin kraliçesi, çok sayıda hayranının hanımefendisidir; ama evinin hanımı, onurlu bir kadın değil"dir. "Onun için çocuk, evliliğin kaçınılmaz bir sonucu olan, şamata yapıp duran" bir varlıktır (Θωμά, 1896, s. 45). Bu nedenle doğumdan sonra çocuğunu ücretli dadılara teslim edip evden uzaklaşır. En sonunda da sevgiliyle kaçıp eşini ve çocuğunu terk eder. Baba ise, bu 'kötü' annenin tam tersine, tüberküloz kızını tedavi ettirebilmek için varını yoğunu ortaya koyar. İsmi okura açıklanmayan, sadece Anadolu Demiryolları'nda bir memur olduğunu bildiğimiz bu adam, Sofia'nın, kendisini terk eden eski nişanlısıdır. Sofia'nın tam tersi bir kadınla evlenerek cezasını bulmuştur. En büyük ceza ise kızının ölümüdür. Çocuğun ölümü üzerinde ayrıca durulması gerekir. On iki yaşındaki bu kız çocuğu, ölmeden kısa bir süre önce pederi çağırıp son dini vazifesini yerine getirmek ister. Çocuğun pedere söylediği sözler kayda değerdir: "Merhametsiz, kötü annelere anlatın, peder, anlatın benim başıma gelenleri. Başka çocukların da benim gibi mutsuz olmaması için bu sersem gençleri eğitin, öğütlerinizle yönlendirin" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 53). Egemen söylemin tanımladığı normlara uymayan bir annenin çocuğunun yaşama tutunma şansı yoktur. Bu anlamda "kaderin, [kendisine] sahtekâr bir baba ile ahlaksız bir anne bağışladığı" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 52) bu çocuğun ölümünün, aynı zamanda, sembolik bir anlam taşıdığı söylenebilir. Bu sembolik anlamın temelinde kadınların, bir topluluğun kimliğinin bireysel ve kolektif "sembolik taşıyıcıları" olarak görülmesi, çocuklarla ve toplumun geleceği ile ilişkilendirilmeleri ve bu nedenle topluluğun "şerefi"nin de taşıyıcıları olarak

algılanmaları yatar (Yuval-Davis, 2016, s. 93-95). Bu bağlamda, “sahtekâr” eski nişanlı, geçmişte yaptığı bir hatadan (Sofia’yı terk etmesi) dolayı sadece cezalandırılırken, ölen çocuğun annesi tamamıyla ötekileştirilir. Bununla birlikte, babanın, varını yoğunu ortaya koyup kızıyla ilgilenmesi, onu iyileştirmek için hastane hastane dolaştırması göz ardı edilir. İyi bir baba olmak, çocuğun iyi yetişmesi, hatta yaşaması için yeterli değildir.

“Aşk Mektubu (Η Ερωτική επιστολή)” başlıklı ikinci hikâye, erkeklerin kadınlar hakkındaki genel inancını kırmaya yönelik kaleme alınmış gibidir. Anlatıcı, burada da, iki tip kadın üzerinde durur: Söylem yoluyla idealleştirilen melek kadın ile marjinalleştirilen şeytan kadın. Hikâyenin konusunu anlatıcı Vasiliós’un, okula gitmek üzere her gün sokaklarından geçen Thalia adlı bir kıza âşık olup evlenmesi ve sonrasında gelişen olaylar oluşturur.

Bu iki stereotiple hikâyenin daha girişinde karşılaşıyoruz: “Sevdiğim bir arkadaşım, Bay Vasiliadis, her zaman kadınların kusurlarından, en çok da riyakârlıklarından korktuğunu söylerdi. ... Onun bu görüşlerine hiçbir zaman katılmazdım. ... Kadınlar her zaman ikiye ayrılır: anne, kız kardeş ve onurlu bir eş olan kadın ile bu *kutsal vasıfların* hiçbirine sahip olmayan kadın” (Θωμά, 1896, s. 53-54).¹⁰ Çok sayıda kötü erkek de vardır. Anlatıcı bu konuda kadınlara haksızlık yapıldığını düşünür. “Zayıf cins”in – yazar kendi cinsi hakkında bu tanımlamayı kullanmakta bir sakınca görmez – üç mükemmel örneği olarak annesini, kız kardeşini ve sonradan eşi olacak Thalia’yı gösterir (Θωμά, 1896, s. 56).

Thalia ile evlenen anlatıcı Vasiliós’un mutluluğu, eşinin öğrencilik yıllarından kalma kitaplarından birinin arasında bulduğu bir aşk mektubu ile bozulur. Eskiye ait olduğu şüphe götürmeyen bu mektup, Vasiliós’un – ve Thalia’nın da – şimdiki hayatını alt üst eder. Üstelik ilkinin destekleyecek başka bir mektup ya da şimdiye ait bir aldatma izi olmadığı halde, sadece kafasında kurduklarıyla Vasiliós’un hayatı cehenneme döner: “Ah, rezil! Ah, riyakâr kadın! [Ona olan] zaafımı gördü ve *kutsal Meryem Ana* taklidi yaptı. ... Aldatıldım, evet. Altta yatan *şeytani* kalbini göremeyip onu *melek* sanmakla fena kandırıldım. ... Ama kandırılan yalnızca ben miyim? Bu sanatı öyle iyi biliyor ki annemin de gözünden kaçmayı başardı” (Θωμά, 1896, s. 72-73).¹¹ Ataerkil metinler, “bir yazarın kurgusal karakterlerini yaratıp hapis edebildiği gibi onlara hayat verirken bile belirli bir özerklikten yoksun bırakarak seslerini kesebilir” (Gilbert ve Gubar, 2016, s. 57). Bu şekilde karakterler konuşma özgürlüklerini yitirirler. Benzer bir durum, ele aldığımız hikâyede

10 Vurgu makale yazarına ait.

11 Vurgular makale yazarına ait.

de yaşanı: Thalia'nın günlüğünü okuyan Vasilios, onun sesini duymamızı sağlar. Bu sayede düşüncelerini, neler hissettiğini öğrenme olanağı buluruz. Thalia, günlüğünde Vasilios'un onu artık sevmediğini, bu soğuk davranışlarının nedenini anlayamadığını yazar. Anlatıcının bulduğu mektupta imza, Fedon adında bir gence aittir. Günlükte bu gencin, kendisiyle aynı isme sahip bir arkadaşının sevgilisi olduğunu, kendisine bu kitabı hatıra olsun diye aynı arkadaşının verdiğini, Vasilios ile birlikte okuruz. Thalia birçok kişiyle görüşen bu arkadaşıyla aynı isme sahip olmaktan hoşnut değildir, onunla karıştırılmaktan endişe duyar: "Az kalsın bu üzücü karışıklığın kurbanı olup okulda aşk randevuları olan kız olarak kötü bir şöhrete sahip olacaktım" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 81).

Vasilios, bu yanığı için eşinden özür dileyerek şunları dile getirir: "Özür dilerim, binlerce kez özür dilerim, *meleğim*. Bu rezil mektup aklımı başımdan aldı. Sandım ki [bu mektup] erkeklerin [kadınlar hakkındaki] ortak görüşünü, kadın kalbinin tam bir karmaşa olduğunu onaylıyor" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 84).¹² Bu noktada sorulması gereken, bugün dahi önem taşıyan, sorular vardır: Kadının geçmişte yaşadığı bir aşk şimdiki ilişkisini neden bu denli etkiliyor? Geçmişte yaşanmış bir olay niçin kadının üzerinde – ya da sadece kadının üzerinde – 'kirli' bir etiket olarak duruyor? Daha da ilgi çekici olan, Thalia'nın, eşinin bu tavrına herhangi bir eleştiri getirmemesidir. Aksine, hiçbir açıklama yapmaksızın kendisine oldukça mesafeli duran ve kaba davranan, geç saatlerde eve gelip, alkol almaya başlayan eşi Vasilios için üzülür. Öyle ki bu üzüntüsü canını feda edecek dereceye varır: "Evet, [onun için] seve seve canımı verirdim. Yeter ki ölümümün ona huzur ve mutluluk getireceğini bileyim" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 80). Thalia'nın bu tavrı Gilbert ve Gubar'ın, "diğerkâm masumiyet" şeklinde adlandırdıkları durumla eşdeğerdir. Araştırmacılar, bu türden masumiyetin erkeğin mutlu edilmesi üzerine kurulu olduğunu savunurlar (2016, s. 67). Kadın, erkeğin mutluluğu için canını bile seve seve feda eder. Tıpkı "Sofia"da olduğu gibi burada da kadının, kendine yönelik yıkıcı diğerkâmlığı söz konusudur. Thalia, geçmişte karşı cinsle hiçbir arkadaşlığı olmamış bir kadın olarak yüceltilir. Kendisine atfedilen "kutsal Meryem Ana" ve "melek" sıfatları da bunun bir göstergesidir. Benzer şekilde aşkı da beşeri değil, ilahidir: "Vasilis'e duyduğum aşk, basit ve ucuz değildi. Saf ve çıkarsızdı. Kalbimde asla sönmeyen, kutsal, semavi, ilahi bir alevdi" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 80). Eril egemen ideolojinin, kadın kutsallığına yüklediği bu anlam, aslında, kadının varlığını sıfırlar, onu "öyküsüz" ve "benliksiz" hale getirir:

Görüyoruz ki bir kez kadınlar tamamı ile edilgen ve yaratıcı güçten yoksun varlıklar olarak tanımlandıkları için erkek sanatçıların nezdinde ilahi bir

12 Vurgu makale yazarına ait.

varlık olarak algılanmaktadırlar. Bu metafizik boşluğun içerisinde kadın 'saflığı', kelimenin sunduğu tüm ahlaki ve psikolojik sonuçlarını da kapsayacak biçimde kadınların *benlik-siz* olduğunu göstermektedir.13 (Gilbert ve Gubar, 2016, s. 66)

Metnin eleştiri noktasını, erkeklerin tüm kadınları aynı görüp onlara haksızlık ettiği inancı oluşturur. Bu anlamda üretilen iki stereotip – Thalia (ideal kadın) ve Thalia'nın adaşı (öteki kadın) – ile egemen ideolojinin kadın için ürettiği söylem vurgulanır. Anlatıcı olarak bir erkeğin, Vasilios'un, seçilmesi dikkat edilmesi gereken başka bir noktadır. Bu şekilde yazar, iki şey amaçlıyor olabilir: ya erkek bir anlatıcı yoluyla inandırıcılığını artırıp okuru ikna etmeye çalışır ya da eril egemen ideolojinin kadınlar hakkındaki söylemini, yine erkek bir anlatıcı yoluyla (kadın anlatıcının bu anlayışta olamayacağını varsayarak) okura aktarma, ideolojinin bu gerçeğini ona gösterme kaygısı taşır. İdeal ve öteki kadın imajı, bu tanıma uygun yaratılan stereotiplerle birbirlerine adeta ters ayna etkisi yaparak güçlendirilir. Bu bağlamda yaratılan, birbirinin zıttı iki kadın ile egemen söylem vurgulanır.

Kitabın üçüncü ve son hikâyesi olan "Gurbetçi (Ο Ξενιτευμένος)"de babası öldükten sonra geçim sıkıntısı çeken annesine destek olabilmek için yurtdışına giden (önce Bükreş, sonra Rusya) Nikolaos Ksenopulos'un yıllar sonra, tesadüfen, kız kardeşini bulması anlatılır. Anna Evdokimopulos eşiyle ve çocuklarıyla mutlu bir yaşam sürmektedir. Çiçek salgınında önce iki oğlunu, ardından, oğulların acısına dayanamayan kocasını kaybeder. İki kızının hamiliğini üstlenen amca da bu işi beceremeyip tüm serveti batırınca, dul kadın inisiyatifi ele alıp geride kalan iki kızının "hem annesi hem babası" olur (Θωμά, 1896, s. 118). Amcadan kurtarabildiği ne kadar malı varsa ya kiralayıp ya da satarak yaşamını düzene sokar; ancak çıkan bir yangında hem evini hem de büyük kızı Maria'yı kaybeder. Geriye kalan kızı Polikseni ve üvey kızı (Gurbetçi Ksenopulos'un kız kardeşi) Eleni ile yaşamına devam eder. Eleni ile Polikseni, dört yaşından beri Beyoğlu'nun en büyük mağazalarından birinde terzi olarak çalışırlar. Bu sayede varlıklı bir aile olan Pilidislerle tanışırlar. Pilidisler zamanla bu ailenin koruyucusu olur. Bay ve Bayan Pilidis'in oğlu Dimosthenis, Rusya'da tanıştığı arkadaşı Ksenopulos ile birlikte, kız kardeşi Melpomeni'nin nikâhı için İstanbul'a gelir. Ksenopulos gelişen olaylar sonucu Anna Evdokimopulos'tan tüm gerçeği öğrenir ve yıllardır görmediği kardeşi Eleni'ye kavuşur.

Metinde dul kadınların mücadelesi ile babanın, ailenin koruyucusu olduğu inancı sıklıkla vurgulanır. Ksenopulos genç yaşta eşini kaybeden annesi için şunları dile getirir:

13 Vurgu yazarlara ait.

“Onu öyle, gencecik dul haliyle, korkunç bir mücadele, o iğrenç, korkunç Hidra’ya, açlığa, karşı mücadele verirken görmek ve en ufak bir katkıda bulunamamak yüreğimi parçalıyordu” (Θωμά, 1896, s. 99). Polikseni’nin annesi Anna da, benzer şekilde, şunları dile getirir: “Ölüm, geçim kaynağımızı, koruyucumuzu elimizden aldı. Tüm servetimiz, yetimlerin vasiliğini üstlenen, rahmetlinin kardeşi tarafından sağa sola savruldu. [Kızlarımın] bakımına ve terbiyelerine özen göstermeliydim. Onların hem annesi hem babası olmaya karar verip hayranlık uyandıran bir yüreklilikle silahlarımı kuşandım” (Θωμά, 1896, s. 117-118). Madalyonun öbür yüzüne bakıldığında evliliğin, kadınlar için kurtarıcı olarak algılandığı görülür. Ksenopulos, arkadaşı Dimosthenis’in evinde karşılaştığı iki kız kardeşten birini, Polikseni’yi, sever; ancak henüz kendi kardeşi olduğunu bilmediği Eleni’ye de sempati duyar:

Bu yetimlere karşı duyduğum sempati bana tuhaf ve açıklanamaz geliyordu. Belki yoksul oldukları içindir. Ama yoksul olsalar bile mutsuz sayılmazlar. Anneleri var. Öyle bir anne ki yeryüzünün bütün zenginliklerine değer. Ama neler söylüyorum! Polikseni’nin annesi var. Güzel Eleni’nin var mı bakalım? Bayan Pilidis’in söylediğine göre üveymiş. Nasıl acıyorum ona! Ah! Daha genç olsaydım kendi kaderimi bu bahtsız yetimin kaderiyle seve seve birleştirdim. Ama neler diyorum! Eleni’yle mi evleneyim? Peki, Polikseni ne olacak? Kesin başkasıyla evlenir. Buna dayanamam. Bunu düşünürken bile kalbim karşı çıkıyor, altüst oluyorum... (Θωμά, 1896, s. 108-109)

Ksenopulos’un “Ah! Daha genç olsaydım kendi kaderimi bu bahtsız yetimin kaderiyle seve seve birleştirdim” sözünden üvey de olsa bir ailesi ve işi olan Eleni’yi ‘güçsüz’, ‘korunmaya muhtaç’ gördüğü anlaşılır. Bozis, *İstanbullu Rumlar* adlı kitabında 19. ve 20. yüzyılda Beyoğlu’nda bulunan kadın terzilere ayrı bir başlık altında değinir. Bugün İstiklâl Caddesi olarak bildiğimiz Büyükyol’da (Μεγάλη Οδός) ünlü dikiş atölyelerinin bulunduğunu, bu atölyelerin, seçkin müşterilerine dönemin Avrupa modasına uygun kıyafetler diktiğini belirtir: “Büyükyol’da bulunan Paquin d’İstanbul adlı moda atölyesinin müşterileri, saraylı sultan eşleri ve kızlarından oluşuyordu. Paquin yüksek müşterilerine Avrupa modasını sunuyordu. ... Ünlü terzi İfiyenia Epenetu II. Abdülhamid’in ailesinin terzisi idi. Marika Pandias ile İfiyenia Dönümoğlu dönemin tanınmış Peralı terzilerindendi” (2023, s. 174). Bozis’in verdiği bilgiler doğrultusunda, söz konusu dönemde terziliğin, önemli meslek kollarından biri olduğu anlaşılır. Beyoğlu’nun sözü edilen en büyük mağazalarından birinde terzilik yaparak geçimini sağlayan Eleni, ekonomik açıdan kendi

kendine yeter olmak bir yana, korunmaya muhtaç bir kadın olarak sunulur. Bu durum, Yuval-Davis'in toplumsal cinsiyet tanımını akla getirir. Yuval-Davis'e göre toplumsal cinsiyet, kadın ve erkek arasındaki toplumsal rollere ya da ekonomik konumlara dayalı farklılıklar olarak değil, her iki cinsiyetin de cinsel/biyolojik farklılıklarıyla tanımlandığı özneler grubuna ilişkin söylemdir" (2016, s. 32). Hikâyenin sonu da arzu edilen 'mutlu son'u göstermesi bakımından kayda değerdir: Ksenopulos, üvey kızı Eleni'yi artık göremeyeceğini sanan Anna'ya şunları söyler: "Anneciğim, size böyle seslenmeme izin verin lütfen, kızınız olarak çağırmaktan mutluluk duyduğum Eleni'yi kaybetmediğiniz gibi bir de oğul kazandınız. Eleni'nin mutlu kardeşi olmam, Polikseni'ye iyi bir eş olmama engel değil. Eleni'ye gelince, ona bir damat buldum bile" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 128). Ksenopulos'un Eleni'ye bulduğu damat, arkadaşı Dimosthenis'tir. Benzer bir yaklaşım, "Sofia" başlıklı hikâyede de gözlemlenir: Yetim ve yoksul kızlarla evlenmek 'kurtarıcılık' olarak kabul edilir; ancak erkeğin ekonomik açıdan güçlü olması şartıyla. Sofia'nın erkek kardeşi Nikolaos, 14 "hassas ve empatik kalbinin kurbanı" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 22) olur. Yoksul ve yetim bir genç kızla tanışır. Sempati duyduğu bu kızla, onu içinde bulunduğu 'mutsuz' durumdan 'kurtarabileceği' düşüncesi ile evlenir. Ancak ekonomik yetersizliklerin üstüne bir de çocuk eklenince, derin bir ümitsizliğe kapılır. Kardeşlerinin sözünü dinleyip evliliği ekonomik güce kavuşuncaya kadar ertelediği için pişman olur. Bu şekilde, erkeğin ekonomik açıdan yeterli olması şartıyla "ailenin koruyucusu" vasfını kazanabileceği vurgulanırken, kadın, kendi kendine yetebilecek kadar bile para kazanıyor olsa, 'korunmaya muhtaç' şeklinde algılanır.

Kadını 'güçlü' kılan yanı sezgiselliğidir. 19. yüzyılda antropoloji alanında, ataerkillikten önce anaerkil bir toplum yapısının var olduğunu kanıtlayan iki çalışmanın¹⁵ yayımlanması, kültürel feminist teorinin, üzerinde şekillenebileceği uygun zemini hazırladı. Anaerkil bakış açısı üzerinde temellenen kültürel feminist gelenek, "bilginin duygusal, sezgisel yönü üzerine vurgu" yapıyordu (Donovan, 2016, s. 75). Bu geleneğin, Margaret Fuller'ın *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (On Dokuzuncu Yüzyılda Kadın, 1845) adlı eseri ile başladığı kabul edilir. Fuller, adı geçen çalışmada kadınların "elektrikli bir töze", sezgisel bir doğaya sahip olduklarından bahseder. Bu, egemen ideolojinin kadına atfedip küçümsediği sezgisellikten farklı bir hissiyattır:

14 Dört kardeşin isimleri metnin başında şu şekilde sıralanır: Sofia, Konstandinos, Georgios ve Theodoros (Θωμά, 1896, s. 17). Yazarın, bu isim hatasını yanlışlıkla yaptığını düşünüyoruz.

15 Johann Jakob Bachofen, *Das Mutterrecht* (Analık Hukuku, 1861); Lewis Henry Morgan, *Ancient Society* (Eski Toplum, 1877).

[Kadının] sezgileri daha hızlı ve doğrudur. Yüksek zekâya sahip erkekler, ortamdaki değişiklikler karşısında aptallaşıp etraflarındaki yaşam formlarını birbirine bağlayan ince, görünmez bağları fark edemezken, sıradan bir kadının, saf ve alçakgönüllüyse, çünkü ancak bu şekilde ilkel benlik akıl gözünü gölgede bırakamaz, tüm bunları şaşmaz bir muhakeme ile kavrayıp tasvir ettiğini sıklıkla görürsünüz. (1845, s. 91)

Buna göre kadın, "saf ve alçakgönüllü" olması koşuluyla erkeklerde olmayan sezgisel bir algılamaya sahiptir. Bu yeteneği ile olayları, insanları ve değişik yaşam formlarını birbirine bağlayan "görünmez bağları" rahatlıkla hissedebilir. Fuller'ın bu yaklaşımı hikâyelerin üçünde de yankılanır. "Sofia'da Kasandra'nın, Fener semtine taşınması "ilahi bir yönlendirme" sonucudur. "Dul ve neredeyse hiçbir geliri olmayan; ama güçlü bir iradeye sahip olan ve ilahi iradeye inanan" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 23) Kasandra'nın bu sezgisi boşa çıkmaz: Fener'de yaşayan Bay S., oğlu Konstandinos'un hamiliğini üstlenir. Bay S.'nin, Konstandinos'u destekleme kararı, beşeri bir karar olmayıp "ilahi sesin yönlendirmesi" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 25) sonucu meydana gelen bir durumdur. En nihayetinde, Kasandra'yı Fener'e yönlendiren ile Bay S.'ye Konstandinos'un hamiliğini üstlendiren, aynı ilahi güçtür. "Aşk Mektubu"nda Thalia, "sadık dostu" olarak seslendiği günlüğüne annesinin, tek bir söz söylemese bile derdini hissedip kendisini avutacağını yazar: "Sen, cansız ve soğuk dostum, belki de yalnızca kaybettiğim anneme güvenip açabileceğim, onu da yazarak ya da anlatarak değil, ağlayarak yapabileceğim sırrımı dinle. Evet! Yalnızca ağlardım ve onun o anne yüreği acımı anlar, şefkatli sözleriyle beni avuturdu" (Θωμά, 1896, s. 78). "Gurbetçi" adlı hikâyede ise Bayan Pilidis'in, Ksenopulos'un "melankolik tavrı" üzerine dile getirdikleri, anlatıcı tarafından şöyle aktarılır:

Annesi, aslında Bay K.'nin bir şeyi olduğu benim de dikkatimi çekiyor; ama yine de belki karakteri böyledir deyip susuyorum, dedi. Bu görüşü, eşinin her düşüncesinin altına imzasını atıp her kararını onaylamak gibi nadir bir karaktere sahip Bay Pilidis de onayladı. Eşinin muhakemesine ve basiretine güveni ve inancı tamdı (Θωμά, 1896, s. 93-94).

Fuller, "ilahi enerji"nin eril ve dişilden oluşan ikili doğasına vurgu yaparak şunları dile getirir: "Erkek ve kadın büyük, radikal düalizmin iki yanını temsil eder; ama aslında birbirleri ile sürekli iç içedirler. ... Biz inanıyoruz ki ilahi enerji, önceki çağların görmediği ölçüde doğayı saracak ve iki yarı [cins] arasında çatışma değil, büyüleyici bir uyum meydana getirecektir" (1845, s. 103, 26). Bay Pilidis'in, "eşinin muhakemesine ve basiretine"

olan güveni ve inancı, aslında, “ilahi enerji”nin birbirini tamamlayan iki yarısının “uyumu” olarak yorumlanabilir. Nitekim kadının, diğer bir deyişle dişil enerjinin, bu doğasının henüz yeterince anlaşılmadığı da Bay Pildis’in bir istisna olduğu dile getirilerek vurgulanır: Bay Pildis, eşinin sezgilerine güvenen “nadir karaktere” sahip erkeklerden biridir.

Kültürel feminist eleştirinin, din konusunda en radikal kabul edilen yaklaşımı (Donovan, 2016), Elizabeth Cady Stanton’ın öncülüğünde bir grup kadın tarafından kaleme alınan ve 1895, 1898 yıllarında iki bölüm halinde yayımlanan *The Woman’s Bible* (Kadının İncili)dır. Stanton burada, tıpkı Fuller gibi, Tanrı’nın ikili doğasına değinir¹⁶ ve “genç neslin, dualarını bir Baba’ya olduğu kadar ideal bir İlahi Anneye de göndermesi” gerektiğini vurgular: “Tanrısallığın içinde, güçte ve görkemde, maskülen ile eşit olan feminen bir unsur da vardır. İlahi Anne ile Baba! ‘Tanrı insanı *kendi suretinde yarattı. Onları erkek ve dişi olarak yarattı*’” (1895, s. 14-15).¹⁷ İlahi Anne kavramı, “Gurbetçi”de “içsel anne” şeklinde belirir. Ksenopulos, Bükreş’te bir otelde çalışırken tesadüfen tanıştığı bir adamla Rusya’ya gider. Yıllar önce oğlunu kaybeden bu adam, Ksenopulos’un, annesinin ölümünü atlatamaması üzerine şunları söyler:

Çalışmak onurdur, yaşamdır, varlığımızın kutsal amacıdır. Annen öldüğü için ümidinin kalmadığını söylüyorsun; ama annen ölse de sana kutsal hatırası kaldı. Göklerde seni izleyen bu kutsal hatıranın anısına onurlu ve yararlı bir insan olmalısın. Çünkü ancak bu şekilde hem annenin ruhunu hem de her ahlaklı insanın rehberi olan içsel anneyi, Tanrı’dan ilham alan o iradeyi memnun edersin. (Θωμά, 1896, s. 103-104)

Hristiyan Ortodoks gelenekte Meryem Ana’ya ayrı bir önem atfedildiği, günlük dilsel kullanımlarda dahi Hz. İsa ile birlikte anıldığı – “İsa ve Meryem Ana’m!” – göz önüne alındığında, “Tanrı’dan ilham alan içsel anne”ye yapılan vurgu önem taşır. Burada, Tanrı ile her ne kadar tam bir eşitlik söz konusu olmasa da “içsel anne”nin ilahi bir rehber olarak aktif olduğu, kendisine Meryem Ana’dan daha başka bir kutsallık atfedildiği açıktır.

Thoma’nın, döneminin feminist eleştirilerinden ne derece haberdar olduğunu bilemeyiz; ancak eğitilmiş bir kadın olarak o dönem yürütülen tartışmaların en azından bir kısmından haberdar olduğunu tahmin ediyoruz.

16 Tanrı’nın eril ve dişili kapsayan ikili doğası hakkında bir çalışma için bkz. Berktaş, F. (2016). Erken Hıristiyanlıkta Tanrı’nın Dişil Tasavvurları ve Hiyerarşi Karşılığı. *Toplumsal Tarih*, 276, 42-49.

17 Vurgu yazara ait.

Reddedilen Çocuk: Orijinal Roman (1897)

Lufakis'in *Reddedilen Çocuk* adlı romanı "apokrifa" denilen gizemli şehir romanları 18 kategorisinde değerlendirilebilir. Romanda Ariadni adlı bir kadının evlilik dışı dünyaya getirdiği çocuğu Theodoros'un soy hakkı için verdiği mücadele anlatılır. 1872-1890 yılları arasında İstanbul ve İzmir'de geçen romanda İstanbul'un sayılı zenginlerinden Fedon M., konaklarında hizmetçi olarak çalışan Ariadni Laru'yu evlenme vaadiyle kandırarak onunla birlikte olur. Ariadni'nin hamile kaldığını öğrenince de başından atmak için Büyükkada'ya göndermek ister. Ariadni, Efterpi Margo adında varlıklı ve iyi kalpli, dul bir kadın sayesinde korunur, çocuğunu doğurur ve vaftiz ettirir. Vaftiz belgesine babasının soyadının ilk harfini yazdırır. Efterpi'nin de desteğiyle yıllar içinde varlıklı bir kadın haline gelen Ariadni, oğlu Theodoros'u İzmir'de ve İsviçre'de okutur. Kurduğu çeşitli bağlantılar sayesinde Fedon'u sahte hisse senedi satmaktan tutuklatır. Sonrasında ona şantaj yaparak hem kendisiyle evlenmeye hem de oğlunu yasal olarak tanımaya zorlar. Fedon, Ariadni ile birlikteyken, Elpiniki adında, varlıklı bir ailenin kızını da kandırıp hamile bırakır. Ariadni yıllarca hem kendi oğlunun hem de Elpiniki'nin kızı Evlalia'nın koruyuculuğunu üstlenir. Fedon, ilk başta çocuklarını reddetse de romanın sonunda her ikisini de tanır ve Ariadni ile evlenir.

Ariadni, ev içi yaşamda hemen hemen hiç görülmeyen – sadece doğum öncesi ve sonrasında Efterpi'nin evinde, bir odada bulunur – erkeklerle bağlantılar kuran, çatışan, hatta "bu dünyada her şeyden çok sevdiği adamı göğsünden bıçaklayan" (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 24) son derece aktif bir kadındır. Ariadni romanda sıradan bir tip olarak belirmez. Başkahramanın Ariadni olduğu, yazar tarafından hem önsözde hem de metin içinde vurgulanır: "Eserimizin iki asıl kişisinden, yani Ariadni'den sonra, biri olan Fedon..." (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 5); "Bu romanın kahramanı Ariadni Laru..." (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 29). Egemen söylemin, ideal kadın için tanımladığı temel özelliklerin oldukça dışında kalan bu karakter, dönemin diğer düzyazı örneklerinde sıkça karşılaştığımız tipik bir hizmetçiden çok farklıdır. Ariadni, evin beyi ya da oğlu ile geçici bir hevesle flört etmez. Konaklarında çalıştığı varlıklı ailenin bekâr oğluna samimi bir gönül bağı ile bağlanır. Kendisine evlilik vaadinde bulunan bu delikanlıya güvenir. Son derece canlı bir karakter olan Ariadni, ne dediğinin farkındadır, kendini çok iyi savunur:

18 Bkz. 3. dipnot.

- Dinle, Ariadni, sanırım artık eşim olmanın imkânsız olduğunu anlamışsındır.
 - Evet, nerede sende o yüreklilik!
 - ...Akli başında olan insan bir kez hata yapar.
 - Evet; ama düzeltilebilen bir hata ise yapmaya devam etmez.
 - Gerçek bir avukat gibi konuşuyorsun, Ariadni.
 - Çocuğumun avukatı olamaz mıyım? Daha doğmadan terkedilmiş bir çocuğun hakkını [annesinden] daha sadık başka kim savunabilir?
- (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 10-11)

Ariadni istifasını verir. Kendisine nereye gideceğini soran Fedon'un üvey kız kardeşi Ermioni'ye "Benden beklediğiniz ve umduğunuz gibi gece kulüplerine gitmeyeceğim" (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 22), diye cevap verir.

Bilindiği üzere egemen ideoloji, erkeği rasyonellikle kadını ise irrasyonel kabul ettiği çöşku, heyecan, hassaslık gibi duygularla ilişkilendirir. Bu tanımlamaya göre erkek, olaylar karşısında akli başında davranıp rasyonel kararlar alabilirken, kadın, aynı basireti ve soğukkanlılığı gösteremez; her iki cinsiyet de farklı doğalara sahiptir. Kadının ötekileştirilmesinin ardında erkeğin güç istemine dikkat çeken Berktaş, 19. yüzyıl kadın imajının, "iktidarı elinde tutan ve uygulayan spesifik bir öznenin, yani beyaz, sömürgeci erkeğin bakış açısıyla oluşturulmuş spesifik bir söylem" olduğunu savunur (2012, s. 136). Dönemin bu söyleminin, romanda tersine çevrildiği görülür. Fedon eğlence hayatına dalarak "neredeyse melankolik" bir hal alıp "mantık dışı semptomlar"¹⁹ (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 90) göstermeye başlarken, Ariadni "doğası gereği güçlü" sayılır: "Ariadni doğası gereği güçlü olsa da Fedon'un elini hissettiğinde kendini tutamadı" (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 168). Ariadni, Fedon'un elini hissettiğinde duygulanır; ancak duygularını dışa vurmaz. Ahmed, yumuşaklık ve sertlik metaforlarının cinsiyetlendirilmiş özellikler olduğuna dikkat çeker (2015, s. 11). Fedon'un kız kardeşi Ermioni ve Ariadni'nin, duygusal bir sahne karşısındaki tutumlarının betimlemesi sözü geçen metaforların kullanımı açısından bir hayli ilginçtir: "Ermioni ağlıyordu. Daha fazla dayanamayıp duygularına teslim olmuştu. Ayrıca kadını ve *kadın kalbi fazlasıyla yumuşaktı*" (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 189).²⁰ Egemen söylemi tekrarlayan bu sözlerin hemen devamında, Ariadni'nin "sert" yapısı yeniden vurgulanır: "Ariadni, bu çelikten kadın, elinde katladığı kâğıdı tutuyor, en ufak bir duygu belirtisi göstermeden sahneyi izliyordu" (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 189). Bahsedilen

19 O dönemde melankolinin ve hastalığın (bir hastalık belirtisi olarak "semptom" sözcüğünü kullanıyor) kadını ilişkilendirildiği düşünülürse yazarın kelime tercihleri bir hayli ilgi çekicidir.

20 Vurgu makale yazarına ait.

sahne, iki genç insanın (Theodoros ile Evlalia'nın) "baba, baba" diye Fedon'a seslendikleri sahnedir. Fedon, Ariadni'nin elinde tuttuğu kâğıt sayesinde, kaybettiği servetine kavuşabilecek, masum olduğu kanıtlanabilecek; ama çocuklarını da yasal olarak tanımak zorunda kalacaktır.

Biri 'zayıf', diğeri 'güçlü' olarak sunulan bu iki kadının genel olarak nasıl karakterler olduğuna bakıldığında, romanın başkahramanı olan Ariadni'nin son derece olumlu bir imaja sahip olduğu açıktır. Bununla birlikte, Fedon'u 'yola getirmek' için başvurduğu yollar – ona iftira atıp defalarca şantaj yapması – tamamıyla okurun değerlendirmesine bırakılmıştır. Öte yandan, Fedon'a olan aşkı ve onunla evlilik dışı birlikteliği yazar tarafından onaylanmaz: "Bu kız, aşkı hariç, diğer her şeyde saf ve temizdi. Zekâ ya da hafiflik olarak adlandırabileceğimiz bir kurnazlığa sahipti" (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 30). Gilbert ve Gubar, "melek kadın"ların gizli bir kurnazlıkla birlikte sunulduklarına dikkat çekerler:

...melek kadının ev/mistik alanı yönetiyor olduğu gerçeği, onun yönetebilme yetisine sahip olduğunu; plan yapabildiğini; komplolar kurabildiğini – hem öyküler hem de stratejiler anlamında – göstermektedir. Viktoryen meleğinin planlaması, ölümlü bedenselliği ve patlamaya hazır hiddetinin bastırılmış kapasitesi (ve tam da bu nedenle daha da korkutucu) erkek "angelographers"ların en parlak metinlerinde bile genellikle belli belirsiz yer bulur. Örneğin, Patmore'un Honoria'sının ilk başta görüldüğünden çok daha ikiyüzlü olduğunu fark ederiz. "Güvercinin küçük aptallıklarından çok, bir yılanın zekasına sahip olduğunu" şair-sevgilisi de itiraf etmektedir. Elbette bu kurnazlığı "iyi" bir amaç doğrultusunda kullanılmaktadır: yani "erkeğin aşkını güçlendirip perçinlemek" adına. (2016, s. 71)

Yazar, Ariadni'yi ya da başka herhangi bir kadını melek sıfatı ile nitelemeyi; ancak romanın olumlu sunulan ve sonunda 'ödüllendirilen' başkahramanı Ariadni de tıpkı alıntıda değinilen Honoria gibi bir kurnazlığa sahiptir. Bununla birlikte, "zekâ ya da hafiflik olarak" adlandırılan bu kurnazlığını, Fedon'u yeniden elde etmek ya da gözüne 'hoş' görünmek için değil, çocuğunun soy hakkını elde edebilmek için kullanması bakımından Honoria'dan ciddi şekilde ayrılır. Ermioni ise mutlak olumsuz bir karakter olmasa da olumlu da değildir. Evin aşçısı ve bahçıvanı ile birlikte Ariadni'ye tuzak kurar; Fedon'a âşık olduğu için Ariadni'ye iftira atar. Fedon'u tedavi etmek için evlerine gelen ve Ariadni hakkında

olumlu şeyler dile getiren doktora şunları söyler: “Senin o iyi dediğin Ariadni, Fedon’u sevdi. Ama öyle görünüyor ki genç kadınların yarım düzine sevgilisi olması şimdilerde moda. Ariadni’ninkiler de az sayılmazdı” (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 50). Romanın diğer bir kadın kahramanı Elpiniki, Belge’nin “işlevsel kişi” olarak tanımladığı karakterlere (2014, s. 32) örnek oluşturur. Elpiniki’nin ailesi, kızlarının evlilik dışı hamileliğini kabullenerek çocuklarına destek çıkarlar; ancak Odissea’da bir deniz kazasında yaşamlarını yitirirler. Aynı kazadan sağ çıkan Elpiniki bir manastıra kapanıp münzevi hayatı yaşamaya başlar. Kızı Evlalia’yı da burada doğurup büyütür. Ariadni, Elpiniki’yi sık sık ziyaret eder. Bu iki kadın arasında zamanla oluşan dostluk sonucu Ariadni, Elpiniki’nin kızı Evlalia’nın da koruyuculuğunu üstlenir. Öyle ki Evlalia’yı manastırın bahçesinde görüp beğenen ve kaçırmaya çalışan anti kahraman Kaliadis’le bile çatışmaktan çekinmez. Romanda bir “araç” olarak görev yapan işlevsel kişiler genel değerleri temsil etmeleri açısından önem taşırlar. Bu şekilde başkahramanların “üzerindeki soyut yükleri” kaldırarak onlara “bireyselliklerini koruma olanağını sağlarlar” (Belge, 2014, s. 32). Böylelikle dönemin bazı genel değerleri Elpiniki aracılığı ile okura aktarılır. Ariadni ile Elpiniki arasında geçen bir diyalog bu açıdan kayda değerdir:

(Elpiniki)

- Sanırım artık Fedon’dan intikam alma düşüncesinden vazgeçtin.
- Ölüm beni yakalamadığı sürece vazgeçmem.
- Ama sen, kadın halinle bir erkeğin karşısında ne yapabilirsin?
- Güçsüzleri koruyan Tanrı yardım edecektir. (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 99-100)

Elpiniki’nin “Ama sen, kadın halinle bir erkeğin karşısında ne yapabilirsin?” cümlesi, egemen söylemin vurgulanması bakımından önemlidir. Bu şekilde, bir yandan kadının ‘zayıf’ ya da erkeğin ‘güçlü’ olduğu/olması gerektiği yönündeki inanç, diğer yandan Ariadni’nin bu açıdan bir istisna olduğu okura yansıtılmış olunur. Nitekim Ariadni’nin verdiği cevap da bu yaklaşımı destekler. Ariadni’nin “güçlü” doğasının kaynağı Tanrı’dır. Haklı ve “güçsüz” olduğu için Tanrı tarafından korunup kollanır. Ariadni de son derece inançlı bir kadındır: “Ah, Tanrı’m! varlığından ve gücünden şüphe duyduğum anlar için beni affet” (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 64). Ariadni’yi bu denli güçlü ve bağımsız kılan durum, onun anne olmasıdır. En nihayetinde, tüm bunları oğlu Theodoros’un soy hakkı için yapar. Onun bu gücünün birincil kaynağı Tanrı, ikincil kaynağı ise babasıdır. Anlatıcı, Ariadni’nin iş kotarıcı özelliklerinden bahsederken, ‘iyi’ saydığı bu özelliklerin hangi taraftan geldiğini vurgularcasına “babasının kızı” ifadesini kullanır (Λουφάκης, 1897, s. 24).

Ne kadar kanlı canlı, aktif ve kamusal alanda boy gösteren bir karakter olursa olsun Ariadni, ideal bir kadın prototipi oluşturmaz. Her şeyden önce, Ariadni'nin aktif olduğu kamusal alan, çalışma hayatı değil, çocuğunun soy hakkı için yasa dışı yollardan mücadele etmek zorunda kaldığı bir alandır. Ariadni için önemli olan ve roman boyunca okura hissettirilen nokta, oğlu Theodoros'un soy hakkıdır. Onu böyle davranmaya zorlayan, çocuğunu kabul etmeyen ve zamanında, söz verdiği halde, kendisiyle evlenmeyen Fedon'dur. Bu durum, romanın saygın karakteri diyebileceğimiz doktor Leonidas Avramios tarafından şu sözlerle dile getirilir: "Kadın, hele bir de anneyse ve terkedilmişse daima ölümcül yaralar açar" (Λουφάκη, 1897, s. 48). Leonidas'ın, Fedon'un bıçak yarası için dile getirdiği bu sözler, romanın ilerleyen sayfalarında soyut anlam kazanarak Fedon'un içinde bulunduğu zor durumu da tanımlar. Leonidas'ın cümlesinden, kadınlara yönelik genel bir önyargının da varlığı hissedilir. Dikkatli bir okuma ile kadının, anne değilse ve terkedilmemişse de ölümcül yaralar açma potansiyelini her zaman taşıdığı sonucuna rahatlıkla ulaşılabilir. Yazar, benzer bir ifadeyi, bu sefer daha genelleşici bir şekilde, başka bir yerde daha kullanır. Kadının 'güvenilmez' yapısını kastederek şunları söyler: "Kadınlar her zaman her şeyi büyütürler" (Λουφάκη, 1897, s. 112). Metnin aralarına serpiştirilmiş, kadın cinsiyetine yönelik bu tür genel yargılar bize, Ariadni'nin diğer tüm kadınlardan farklı olduğunu, bir istisna oluşturduğunu gösterir. Romanın sonunda Fedon, kendisine yapılan şantaj sonucu, Ariadni ile evlenir ve çocuklarının her ikisini de yasal olarak tanır. Burada şu soruyu sormamız gerekir: Karakterlerin, zaman zaman yazarlarının denetiminden kaçıp bağımsız davranışlar sergileyebildiği, kararlar alabildiği görüşünü kabul edecek olursak Fedon'la evlenmek, gerçekten, Ariadni'nin kararı olabilir mi? Nitekim Ariadni, Fedon'un, kendisiyle evlenmesi konusunda diretmeyp çocuklarının annelerinden biriyle – kendisiyle ya da Evlalia ile – evlenmesi konusunda ısrar eder. "Merhametsiz sevgili", "acımasız baba" (Λουφάκη, 1897, s. 48) gibi olumsuz sıfatlarla nitelenen Fedon ile evlenmek, gerçekte, Ariadni için mi, yoksa Fedon için mi 'mutlu son'u oluşturur? Ariadni, kendisini kandıran, kovan ve aldatan bir erkekle evlenerek gerçekten arzu edilen 'mutlu son'a ulaşmış olur mu?

Suç romanına uygun bir kurgu ile kaleme alınmış bu eserde ataerkil öğeler hâkimdir; ancak yine de dönemin diğer örneklerinin yanında çok farklı bir noktada durduğu açıktır. Başkahramanının başlı başına bir kadın olması, çocuğunun soy hakkı için sonuna kadar mücadele etmesi, romanı dönemin diğer örneklerinden önemli ölçüde ayırır.

Değerlendirme

Yazarın, metnine 'babalık' ettiği düşüncesi üzerinde şekillenmiş olan "edebi babalık metaforu"²¹, kanımızca, gerçek anlamda metnin yazarının cinsiyetine bağlı olmayıp yazarın, egemen ideoloji tarafından üretilen söylemleri kullanıp kullanmama konusunda bir seçimdir. Bu seçim, çoğu zaman bilinçli ya da bilinçsiz olabilir. Melek ve şeytan metaforları, kendilerine yasak olan bir alanda yeni yeni kalem oynatmaya başlayan kadın yazarlar için içinden çıkılmaz, zor bir süreci başlatmıştır. Araştırmacılara göre yazar bir kadın, öncelikle, kendisi için üretilen bu iki imajı incelemeli ve ötesine geçmelidir; ancak kadının, yaratılan bu metaforların içine hapsolmesinden daha önemlisi, aynı metaforların "onun içinde ikamet edecek ve bakış açısını değiştirecek olmalarıdır" (Gilbert ve Gubar, 2016, s. 63). Bu anlamda hemen yukarıda bahsettiğimiz "bilinçli ya da bilinçsiz seçim" ayrımı önem taşır. 20. yüzyıl feminist eleştirinin büyük ölçüde etkilendiği varoluşçuluk akımının önde gelen isimlerinden Jean Paul Sartre'ın "bakan-bakılan" tanımlaması, "bilinçsiz seçim" konusunda yol gösterici olabilir. Sartre'a göre,

karşıt taraflardan ancak birisi 'bakan' olabilir; diğeri ise 'bakılan' olmak zorundadır. Bakan, eğer bir 'özne' ise, 'bakılan' bir nesneye dönüşür. Dolayısıyla benim, bakılan olduğumun farkına varışım, bana hiçbir zaman kadına ilişkin bir özne olma duygusu sağlayamaz. Bu deneyim sayesinde farkına vardığım şey, kendimin öznel bir varlık olduğu değil, nesneleştirilmiş bir benlik – 'ötekiler için-bir benlik' – olduğudur. [...] Özbilinçli bir varlık olarak benim gerçek varoluşum, sırf ötekinin beni tanınması olgusuna değil, ama ötekinin beni, ne tür bir ben olarak tanıdığına bağlıdır: "Ben, öteki'nin gözünde ne isem o'yum." (Llyod 2015, s. 129, 131)

Sartre bu durumu "kötü yazgı" olarak tanımlar: "Kötü yazgıda kişi, Öteki tarafından seri olarak üretilen bir kimliğe girerir. Kişi 'kendine karşı Öteki'nin bakış açısını' takınır" (Donovan, 2016, s. 231). Thoma'nın üç hikâyesinde de "nesneleştirilmiş bir benliğe" sahip, diğer bir deyişle "benliksiz", "kötü yazgılı" kadınlara rastlanır. Erkeğin ailenin

21 "...bana göre erkek cinselliği sadece analogik bağlamda değil, fiilen de edebi gücün özünü oluşturmaktadır. Şairin kalemi, kimi yönlerden (ve metaforik olmanın ötesinde) bir penistir. ...Bu nedenle ataerkil Batı kültüründe metin yazarı, tıpkı penisi gibi kalemi de üretken bir güce sahip olan bir baba, ata, yaratıcı ve estetiğin aile reisidir. Dahası, kalemin gücü tıpkı penisin gücü gibi sadece yaşam verme yeteneğine değil aynı zamanda Said'in Partridge'den alıntılıdığı 'arttırıcı' ya da 'kurucu' kelimelerinde olduğu gibi, üzerinde hak iddia ettiği gelecek nesilleri de yaratma gücüne sahiptir. Bu açıdan bakıldığında kalem, fallik eşdeğeri kılıçtan çok daha muazzamdır ve ataerkil dünya içindeki yargısı da daha çok cinsel bir içerik taşımaktadır" (Gilbert ve Gubar, 2016, s. 46, 49).

koruyucu olarak görülmesi, dul kadınların mücadelesi, melek ve şeytan stereotiplerinin kullanımı sıklıkla karşılaşılan durumlardır. Metinlerde ataerkil öğeler baskın olsa da yazar, döneminin feminist tartışmalarına yabancı değildir; anaerkil bakış açısına dair kimi görüşleri metninde rahatlıkla kullanır.

Büyük resmi biraz da olsa görebilmemiz için Thoma'nın, yazdıklarını yayımladığı ortama kısaca bakmamız yararlı olacaktır. Bilindiği üzere, 19. yüzyılda Avrupa'da olduğu gibi, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda da cinsiyetçi yaklaşımlar söz konusudur. Günaydın'ın yerinde tespiti ile bu dönem, "siyaset, sanat ve edebiyatın erkeklerin hâkimiyetinde olduğu, o güne kadar egemen kültürün kadına bir birey ya da özne olma olanağı tanımadığı, toplumsal cinsiyetin oluşturduğu zorluk ve sınırların kadını hem bir kimlik hem de yazar olarak kuşattığı sancılı bir süreçtir" (2017, s. 34). Dönemin önemli bir tanığı olan, Rum cemaatinin tanınmış isimlerinden Sofia Spanudi (1878-1952), "o dönemde İstanbul'da bir kadının yayın yapmasının affedilmez bir günah sayıldığını" dile getirir (Παπακώστας, 1980, s. 197). Rum, Ermeni ve Müslüman kadınlar ürettikleri eserler aracılığıyla bir var olma savaşı verirler. Örneğin, yazılarını Thoma ile aynı dönemde yayımlayan Aleksandra Papadopulu²² (1867-1906) kendisine karşı yöneltilen ağır eleştirilerle mücadele etmek zorunda kalır. Papadopulu'nun *Hanımların İlerici Derneği*'ni kurması (1893) üzerine *Neologos* gazetesinin yayıncılarından Stavros Vutiras, kendisine "Takma adlı küçük hanım" diye seslenerek şu sözleri sarf edecektir:

Şimdi söyleyeceklerimi dikkate al ve her zaman her yerde başkaldırmaya falan kalkma, İlerici Derneklerin kurucu hanımı. Kadının özgürleşmesi ile ilgili bu İlerici Dernekleri, protestoları, acayip ilke ve fikirleri bırak bir yana. Ev ekonomisi ile meşgul ol ve dikkatini buraya ver. Çünkü kadın, ev; erkek, bilim ve toplum için doğmuştur. (Παπακώστας, 2008)

Romanlarında Ermeni kadınının ekonomik açıdan kendi ayakları üzerinde durabilmesinin ve görücü usulü yerine özgür iradesiyle aşk evliliği yapabilmesinin önemini vurgulayan Sırpuhi Düsap (1841-1901) 1883 yılında İstanbul'da yayımladığı *Mayda* adlı romanı ile edebiyat çevresinden tepkileri üzerine çeker. Erkeğin kadından üstün olduğu inancına karşı çıkan yazar, ikinci romanı *Siranuş'* (1884)a yazdığı önsözde kendisini ağır bir dille eleştiren Krikor Zohrab ve Hagop Baronyan gibi aydınlara "Neden bu can sıkıntısı? Neden bu öfke? Eğer benim söylediklerim meşruysa, o zaman ben adalet davasına

22 Papadopulu hakkında şu çalışmaya bakılabilir: Çete, A. (2019). 19. Yüzyıl İstanbul'undan Bir Ses: Aleksandra Papadopulu (1867-1906). *Roman Kahramanları* 38, s. 94-102.

hizmet ediyorum demektir ve bu, korku ve öfke yerine şükran doğurmalıdır” diyerek onları kadınların kurtuluşuna destek olmaya çağırır (Rowe, 2006, s. 60). Ermeni edebiyatının diğer bir önemli ismi Zabel Asadur [Sibil] (1863-1934) toplumun tepkisinden çekindiği için *Bir Kızın Kalbi* (1891) adlı romanını “Alis Hanım” takma adıyla yayımlar (Rowe, 2006, s. 129). Benzer şekilde, Fatma Aliye (1862-1936) de kendi adıyla yayımladığı ilk romanı *Muhadarat* (1891)tan önce George Ohnet’in *Volonté* adlı eserini çevirir ve “Bir Kadın” imzasıyla 1890 yılında yayımlar. Bu çeviri vasıtasıyla tanıştığı Ahmet Mithat’a yazdığı ilk mektupta erkeklerin egemen olduğu bir dünyaya tek başına bir kadın olarak, kimliğini gizlemiş dahi olsa, adım atmanın ne kadar zorlayıcı bir durum olduğundan yakınır (Timuroğlu, 2021, s. 33-34). Ahmet Mithat’ın Fatma Aliye’ye ve dönemin kadın şairleri Makbule Leman ile Fitnat Hanım’a desteğinin oldukça değerli olduğunu göz ardı etmeyen Timuroğlu’nun, Ahmet Mithat’ın dışarıdan bakıldığında çelişkili görülebilecek bir yanını vurgulaması dönemin bir kadın yazara destek olan erkek yazar için de zorlayıcı olabileceğini göstermesi bakımından kayda değerdir. Timuroğlu’nun mektuplar üzerinden tespit ettiği duruma göre Ahmet Mithat, bir yandan “yardım etmenin ve destek olmanın yanı sıra, korkutarak ve duygu sömürsü yaparak Fatma Aliye’yi ve onun aracılığıyla Fatma Aliye’nin dost edindiği kadın şairleri kontrol ediyor ve tahakkümü altına almaya çabılıyor”, diğer yandan ise kadınların hangi edebi türde ve nasıl yazmaları konusunda cinsiyetçi söylemlerde bulunuyordu. Araştırmacı bu kontrolcü tavrın en önemli nedeninin, “himaye ettiği kadın yazarların kendisine bir zarar getirmesini önlemek olduğunun” altını çizer. Bu açıdan bakıldığında Fatma Aliye, aynı anda hem sesini duyurabiliyor ama bir yandan da bu sesin sürekli sansürlenmesi tehlikesi ile karşı karşıya kalıyordu²³ (2021, s. 34-35).

Kadınların edebiyatla ilgilenmelerinin saldırıya uğradığı, hatta neyi okuyup neyi okumamaları gerektiği konusunda tartışmaların yürütüldüğü bir dönemde Thoma’nın çekingen duruşu anlaşılabilir. Bir kadın olarak kendi adıyla yayın yapması, dönemine göre değerlendirildiğinde, yeterince devrimci bir duruştur.

19. yüzyılda gerek Yunanistan’da gerekse İstanbul’da yayımlanan Yunanca edebiyat metinlerinin genelinde kadın baş kahramana rastlanılmaz. Her ne kadar “apokrif” olarak adlandırılan gizemli şehir romanlarında son derece aktif kadınlara yer verilse de bu

23 Fatih Altuğ kadın yazarlık alanında 1895 yılının bir dönüm noktası olduğunu belirtir. *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*’nin çıkarılmaya başladığı bu tarihten itibaren kadın yazarların ve edebi üretimlerinin sayısında bir artış olduğuna dikkat çeker (2021, s. 11). Fatma Aliye de aynı tarihten itibaren Ahmet Mithat’ın sözünü dinlememeye başlayacak, yazılarını *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*’ye Ahmet Mithat’ın onayını almadan gönderecektir (Timuroğlu, 2021, s. 41-42).

kadınlar çetrefilli suç ağıları içinde beliren tamamıyla olumsuz karakterlerdir. Romanını Thoma ile aynı dönemde yayımlayan Lufakis, eril egemen ideolojiden kesin çizgilerle ayrılmaya da bir kadın karakteri, adıyla sanyla, romanının başkahramanı olarak seçmesi, bu karakter için olumlu bir imaj üretmesi ve hatta 'zayıf' kadın söylemini tersine çevirmesi onu dönemin diğer yazarlarından farklı bir noktada konumlandırmamız için yeterlidir.

Çok renkli kareler sunan 19. yüzyıl edebi metinlerini kesin bir sınıflandırmaya tabi tutmak yanıltıcı sonuçlara ulaşılmasına neden olabilir. Benzer şekilde, kadın ve erkek yazarların birbirlerinden kesin çizgilerle ayrılan anlayışlarda metinler kaleme aldıklarını –örneğin, kadınların feminist, erkeklerin ataerkil ideoloji doğrultusunda yazdıklarını – söylemek bizi aynı hatalı sonuçlara ulaştırabilir. Çalışmamızda incelediğimiz iki düzyazı örneğinde de dönemin cinsiyetçi ideolojisi hâkimdir. Bununla birlikte, bu metinlerin, yazıldıkları dönem ve coğrafya göz önüne alındığında, egemen ideolojinin bir parça dışında kaldıkları da gözlemlenir.

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Book Review

The Postmodern Representation of Reality in Peter Ackroyd's Chatterton by Arya Aryan

Aryan, Arya (2022). *The Postmodern Representation of Reality in Peter Ackroyd's Chatterton*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 120 pp., ISBN: 1-5275-8496-8

Sercan Hamza BAĞLAMA¹ 



¹Associate Professor, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of English Language and Literature, Çanakkale, Türkiye

ORCID: S.H.B. 0000-0002-3361-6616

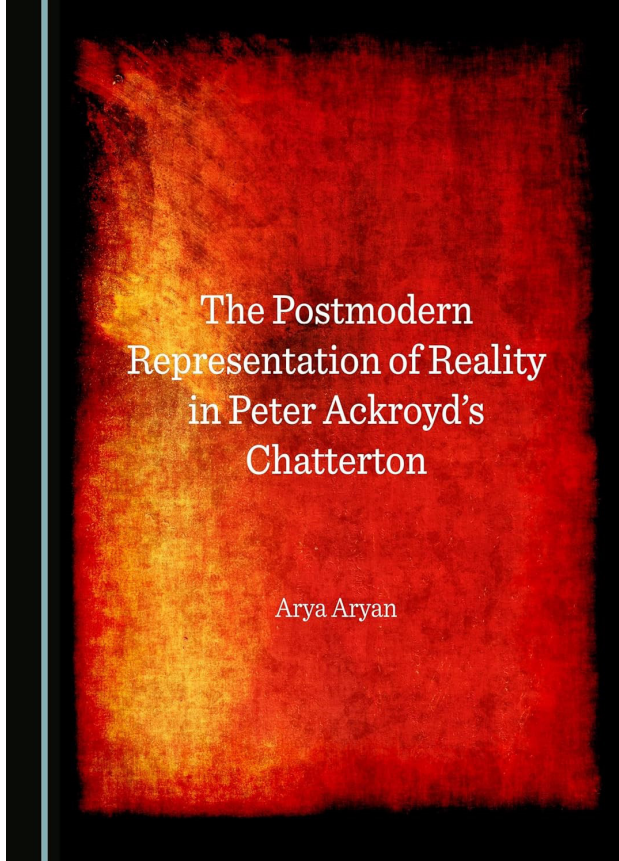
Corresponding author:

Sercan Hamza BAĞLAMA,
Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University,
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Department of English Language and
Literature, Çanakkale, Türkiye
E-mail: sercanhamza@gmail.com

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Arya Aryan's *The Postmodern Representation of Reality in Peter Ackroyd's Chatterton* provides an elaborate and admirably deep analysis of the representation of reality in Peter Ackroyd's *Chatterton* (1987). It does so by revealing how the novel challenges the long-standing dichotomy between representational and anti-representational perspectives that have been central to literary analysis for centuries. Aryan explains that contemporary postmodern literary critics, including Patricia Waugh and Linda Hutcheon, associate postmodern literature with a central paradox in postmodern literature – self-referentiality – and suggest that a text is intrinsically confined to referencing itself. However, as Aryan argues, *Chatterton* reveals that historiographic metafiction disrupts traditional notions of representation within literature and simultaneously renders the text as both a heterocosmic entity and a hetero-referential construct. In other words, Aryan discusses that the novel uniquely reflects the real world by invoking actual historical events and figures, challenges its own capacity to portray reality, and manifests self-referentiality in a way that defies traditional narrative conventions. The premise of the book is underpinned by postmodernist theories and a close reading of the novel. Aryan perfectly analyses and reveals the delicacies of Ackroyd's narrative strategies and techniques in creating a heterocosmic and hetero-referential fictional world. The significance of the book lies in its unique contribution as the sole deconstructive examination of how reality is represented within postmodern texts. It therefore serves as an essential source for scholars and enthusiasts of postmodernist theory and literary practices, with a particular emphasis on historiographic metafiction.

Aryan, already a specialist in postmodern and contemporary literature as evinced in his publications, including *The Post-war Novel and the Death of the Author*, "Fiction as Therapy: Agency and Authorship in Samuel Beckett's *The Unnamable*" and "The Traumatized Shaman: The Woman Writer in the Age of Globalised Trauma", establishes his authority in the field in this book. Drawing upon works by Linda Hutcheon and Patricia Waugh, Aryan explicates how Ackroyd employs a series of narrative techniques to problematise the realist, romantic and modernist theories of representation of reality. An elaborate analysis of the novel's narrative and artistic strategies and techniques, which result in demystifying the text's meaning-granting process, serves as a powerful argument underpinning Aryan's discussion. The author of the book distinguishes the postmodern representationality of reality from that of realism, romanticism, and modernism. As opposed to modernism, which propagates the anti-representationality of a work of art, postmodernist re-presentation highlights the text's possibility of artistic

representation. It acknowledges the existence of reality and the text's possibility of representation but problematises it via different narrative techniques such as emplotment, paratextuality, parody, self-reflexivity, under erasure, and *mise-en-abyme*. Aryan's analysis of the novel is rooted in a deconstructive methodology, employing close reading and textual analysis of both form and content.

In five well-argued and elaborated chapters, Aryan investigates and closely examines Ackroyd's narrative techniques and strategies which problematise the representation of reality and simultaneously challenge the auto-referentiality of art. Chapter One introduces postmodern theories, narrative strategies and some concepts, including the representational and anti-representational concepts of art, heterocosm, paratextuality, and under erasure. It ends with its original argument which is a poetics or theory of the postmodern representation of reality. As Aryan explicates, the postmodern representation acts as a junction where the self-reflexivity and autonomy of modernism intersect with historical and realist representationality, and does so by obscuring the distinction between representational and anti-representational perspectives (p. 11).

This chapter is followed by three chapters which demonstrate the postmodern representation of reality via a profound analysis of Ackroyd's *Chatterton*. In Chapter Two, Aryan first provides a theoretical framework for postmodernism and its theories and artistic practice. Aryan argues that postmodernist writers "contest artistic representation prescribed by realism, as well as the universalising concepts of liberal humanism in favour of self-conscious, self-contradictory, self-reflexive, paradoxical and popular-esoteric postmodernist works" (p. 14), and that "metafiction . . . marks the problematisation of the representation of reality" (p. 14). Aryan also expands and draws upon Patricia Waugh's exploration of metafiction and Linda Hutcheon's take on historiographic metafiction to develop a methodology for a deeper understanding of the postmodern mode of writing and to provide a theory or "poetics" which he calls "postmodernist re-presentation" (p. 15-16). Herein lies one of the original aspects of the book compared to other related published works, as it contributes to, and develops, the methodology and a deeper perception of historiographic metafiction. This type of fiction is imitative, but with a twist; it imitates in order to interrogate what it imitates, thereby making readers aware that any representational perspective of art is inherently problematic (p. 20), which is actually a critical stance emphasised through the use of irony and parody.

Aryan also points out a fallacy in the argument of many postmodernists who reject the mode's possibility of representationality. As he puts it, "to claim that a novel is an artistic production which has nothing to do with our life and the external reality . . . is a fallacy due to its very paradoxically imitative characteristics" (p. 20). On the one hand, historiographic metafiction is aesthetically engaged with language and self-reflexively exposes its own fictionality; on the other hand, it makes references to historical events and personages. The latter marks the mode's representational relation to real life and history. These lead to the problematisation of how reality is represented. In doing so, historiographic metafiction exposes modes of representation as ideological constructs and aims to eschew the illusion of a mass consensus inherent in liberal humanism and contemporary capitalism (p. 24). To that aim, such a mode of art "brings the past to the fore in a dialogue with the present" (p. 26). Moreover, Aryan argues that a prominent feature of this mode of fiction is its aesthetic preoccupation and self-reflexive engagement with narrative techniques and strategies to reveal that even works that appear highly objective, including historical texts, utilise literary narrative strategies to some extent in order to construct meaning (p. 36).

Chapter Three shows how Ackroyd's *Chatterton* exemplifies a heterocosmic, rather than a macrocosmic, fictional world constructed via different narrative techniques and strategies. The novel, set in three different historical timelines, investigates the death of Thomas Chatterton and reveals the "meaning-granting process" (p. 42) of history as a discourse. As Aryan puts it, *Chatterton* delves into the exploration of how meaning is constructed and the processes through which events are ascribed significance – essentially, how 'facts' are fabricated (p. 42). It does so by conflating and blurring the border between "biography and fiction" and between "forgery and innovation" (p. 44). The novel puts history under erasure by providing three simultaneous but contradictory accounts of the death of Thomas Chatterton, each supported by sufficient evidence such as Chatterton's biography, letters, and poems. Particularly illuminating in this chapter is Aryan's analysis of Ackroyd's contestation of the Romantic concept of originality, as Chatterton represents Romantic ideals of originality, authenticity, and genius. However, Ackroyd reveals that Chatterton himself was a forger.

In Chapter Four, Aryan shows how *Chatterton* reveals that meaning is created in a process and suggests that the novel is not simply anti-representational. He posits that the novel, as a form, does not merely suggest the impossibility of representation but actively engages the reader with its constructedness through the narration process.

He also argues that the novel serves as an exemplar of how art reflects the external world, albeit filtered through the medium of fictive elements (p. 77). An example of such theory is Henry Wallis' portrait of the death of Chatterton which is still able to refer to an external referent as we identify the figure in it as Thomas Chatterton. However, it does so as a result of the painter's different artistic techniques which are revealed in the novel. Similarly, Ackroyd's novel is able to make references to external events and personages, such as Thomas Chatterton, Henry Wallis and George Meredith, yet problematises its very referentiality by revealing its narrative techniques and strategies. As a result, the novel is pitched between representationality and anti-representationality, leading to hetero-referentiality. Aryan concludes that, in contrast to poststructuralism, which attributes the ambiguity in a text to the fundamentally unreliable nature of language, the novel, when viewed as metafiction, adopts a perspective that merges deconstructivist and formalist elements. He ends the book by making some suggestions such as a study of the novel "with a focus upon the concept of voice and ventriloquism" as Thomas Chatterton "fakes and composes poetry by adopting the voice and identity of a medieval monk", "Charles is a ghost writer who writes for Harriet" and "George Meredith embodies the substantialised voice of Thomas Chatterton's death" (p. 105). This could help better understand the process of artistic creation and storytelling and the ways authors substantialise "disembodied voices into palpable characters" (p. 105).

The book's main argument is that much of the theoretical and philosophical debate on the representation of reality in literature has been, though frequently more implicit in literary fiction, either representational, postulating immediate and direct access to the external reality through the medium of art or literature (as in literary realism), or anti-representational, assuming a work of art as an autonomous entity (as in modernism) or attributing the crisis of representation to language itself (as in metafiction). However, a significant gap in the literature is the scarcity of a detailed and comprehensive explanation of postmodern theories (including those of Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, Jean-Francois Lyotard, Linda Hutcheon, Patricia Waugh and Marc Currie) and a practical deconstructive analysis of *Chatterton* which reveals the text as hetero-referential. Aryan's book fills this gap very well with its impressive close reading of the novel and is illuminating for students and researchers of postmodern literature.

Reference

Aryan, A. (2022). *The Postmodern Representation of Reality in Peter Ackroyd's Chatterton*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

TANIM

İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, Batı Dilleri Bölümü'nün yayını olan Litera: Dil, Edebiyat ve Kültür Araştırmaları Dergisi – Journal of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, açık erişimli, hakemli, yılda iki kere Haziran ve Aralık aylarında yayınlanan, çok dilli bilimsel bir dergidir. 1954 yılında kurulmuştur.

AMAÇ VE KAPSAM

İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, Batı Dilleri Bölümü'nün yayını olan Litera: Dil, Edebiyat ve Kültür Araştırmaları Dergisi – Journal of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, açık erişimli, hakemli, yılda iki kere Haziran ve Aralık aylarında online olarak yayınlanan, çok dilli uluslararası bilimsel bir dergidir. 1954 yılında kurulmuştur.

Litera: Dil, Edebiyat ve Kültür Araştırmaları Dergisi– Journal of Language, Literature and Culture Studies'in amacı, Batı dilleri ve edebiyatlarına odaklanılarak yapılan edebiyat bilimi, dilbilim, kültürbilimi, medyabilimi, çeviribilim ve dil öğretimi alanlarındaki disiplinler ve/veya disiplinlerarası, kuramsal ve/veya uygulamalı çalışmaları yayımlamaktır; böylelikle alana ilişkin ulusal ve uluslararası camialarla entellüktüel bir platform oluşturmaktır.

Batı dilleri ve edebiyatlarına odaklanılarak yapılan çalışmalar derginin kapsamının ana alanını oluşturur. Dergi Batı dilleri, edebiyatları ve kültürleri ilgili tartışmaları içeren ya da bu tartışmalara odaklanan multidisipliner yaklaşımlara açıktır. Derginin hedef kitlesini akademisyenler, araştırmacılar, profesyoneller, öğrenciler ve ilgili mesleki, akademik kurum ve kuruluşlar oluşturur. Derginin yayın dilleri Almanca, Fransızca, İngilizce, İspanyolca, İtalyanca ve Türkçedir.

Litera tezden üretilmiş makale ve tam metni yayınlanmış bildirimlerden oluşan makaleleri değerlendirme sürecine kabul etmemektedir.

EDİTORYAL POLİTİKALAR VE HAKEM SÜRECİ

Yayın Politikası

Dergi yayın etiğinde en yüksek standartlara bağlıdır ve Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA) ve World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) tarafından yayınlanan etik yayıncılık ilkelerini benimser; Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing başlığı altında ifade edilen ilkeler için: <https://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines-new/principles-transparency-and-best-practice-scholarly-publishing>

Gönderilen makaleler derginin amaç ve kapsamına uygun olmalıdır. Orijinal, yayınlanmamış ve başka bir dergide değerlendirme sürecinde olmayan, her bir yazar tarafından içeriği ve gönderimi onaylanmış yazılar değerlendirmeye kabul edilir.

YAZARLARA BİLGİ

Makale yayınlanmak üzere Dergiye gönderildikten sonra yazarlardan hiçbirinin ismi, tüm yazarların yazılı izni olmadan yazar listesinden silinemez ve yeni bir isim yazar olarak eklenemez ve yazar sırası değiştirilemez.

İntihal, duplikasyon, sahte yazarlık/inkar edilen yazarlık, araştırma/veri fabrikasyonu, makale dilimleme, dilimleyerek yayın, telif hakları ihlali ve çıkar çatışmasının gizlenmesi, etik dışı davranışlar olarak kabul edilir. Kabul edilen etik standartlara uygun olmayan tüm makaleler yayından çıkarılır. Buna yayından sonra tespit edilen olası kuraldışı, uygunsuzluklar içeren makaleler de dahildir.

İntihal

Ön kontrolden geçirilen makaleler, iThenticate yazılımı kullanılarak intihal için taranır. İntihal/kendi kendine intihal tespit edilirse yazarlar bilgilendirilir. Editörler, gerekli olması halinde makaleyi değerlendirme ya da üretim sürecinin çeşitli aşamalarında intihal kontrolüne tabi tutabilirler. Yüksek benzerlik oranları, bir makalenin kabul edilmeden önce ve hatta kabul edildikten sonra reddedilmesine neden olabilir. Makalenin türüne bağlı olarak, bunun oranın %10'dan az olması beklenir.

Çift Kör Hakemlik

İntihal kontrolünden sonra, uygun olan makaleler baş editör tarafından orijinallik, metodoloji, işlenen konunun önemi ve dergi kapsamı ile uyumluluğu açısından değerlendirilir. Editör, makalelerin adil bir şekilde çift taraflı kör hakemlikten geçmesini sağlar ve makale biçimsel esaslara uygun ise, gelen yazıyı yurtiçinden ve /veya yurtdışından en az iki hakemin değerlendirmesine sunar, hakemler gerek gördüğü takdirde yazıda istenen değişiklikler yazarlar tarafından yapıldıktan sonra yayınlanmasına onay verir.

Açık Erişim İlkesi

Dergi açık erişimlidir ve derginin tüm içeriği okura ya da okurun dahil olduğu kuruma ücretsiz olarak sunulur. Okurlar, ticari amaç haricinde, yayıncı ya da yazardan izin almadan dergi makalelerinin tam metnini okuyabilir, indirebilir, kopyalayabilir, arayabilir ve link sağlayabilir. Bu "<https://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/translations/turkish-translation>" BOAI açık erişim tanımıyla uyumludur.

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Derginin tüm giderleri İstanbul Üniversitesi tarafından karşılanmaktadır. Dergide makale yayını ve makale süreçlerinin yürütülmesi ücrete tabi değildir. Dergiye gönderilen ya da yayın için kabul edilen makaleler için işleme ücreti ya da gönderim ücreti alınmaz.

Telif Hakkında

Yazarlar dergide yayınlanan çalışmalarının telif hakkına sahiptirler ve çalışmaları Creative Commons Atıf-GayrıTicari 4.0 Uluslararası ("<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/deed.tr>") CC BY-NC 4.0) olarak lisanslıdır. CC BY-NC 4.0 lisansı, eserin ticari kullanım dışında her boyut ve formatta paylaşılmasına, kopyalanmasına, çoğaltılmasına ve orijinal esere uygun şekilde atıfta bulunmak kaydıyla yeniden düzenleme, dönüştürme ve eserin üzerine inşa etme dâhil adapte edilmesine izin verir.

Hakem Süreci

Daha önce yayınlanmamış ya da yayınlanmak üzere başka bir dergide halen değerlendirilmediği olmayan ve her bir yazar tarafından onaylanan makaleler değerlendirilmek üzere kabul edilir. Gönderilen ve ön kontrolü geçen makaleler iThenticate yazılımı kullanılarak intihal için taranır. İntihal kontrolünden sonra, uygun olan makaleler baş editör tarafından orijinallik, metodoloji, işlenen konunun önemi ve dergi kapsamı ile uyumluluğu açısından değerlendirilir. Baş editör, makaleleri, yazarların etnik kökeninden, cinsiyetinden, cinsel yöneliminden, uyuğundan, dini inancından ve siyasi felsefesinden bağımsız olarak değerlendirir. Yayına gönderilen makalelerin adil bir şekilde çift taraflı kör hakem değerlendirmesinden geçmelerini sağlar.

Seçilen makaleler en az iki ulusal/uluslararası hakeme değerlendirmeye gönderilir; yayın kararı, hakemlerin talepleri doğrultusunda yazarların gerçekleştirdiği düzenlemelerin ve hakem sürecinin sonrasında baş editör tarafından verilir.

Hakemlerin değerlendirmeleri objektif olmalıdır. Hakem süreci sırasında hakemlerin aşağıdaki hususları dikkate alarak değerlendirmelerini yapmaları beklenir.

- Makale yeni ve önemli bir bilgi içeriyor mu?
- Öz, makalenin içeriğini net ve düzgün bir şekilde tanımlıyor mu?
- Yöntem bütünlüklü ve anlaşılır şekilde tanımlanmış mı?
- Yapılan yorum ve varılan sonuçlar bulgularla kanıtlanıyor mu?
- Alandaki diğer çalışmalara yeterli referans verilmiş mi?
- Dil kalitesi yeterli mi?

Hakemler, gönderilen makalelere ilişkin tüm bilginin, makale yayınlanana kadar gizli kalmasını sağlamalı ve yazar tarafında herhangi bir telif hakkı ihlali ve intihal fark ederlerse editöre raporlamalıdır. Hakem, makale konusu hakkında kendini vasıflı hissetmiyor ya da zamanında geri dönüş sağlaması mümkün görünmüyorsa, editöre bu durumu bildirmeli ve hakem sürecine kendisini dahil etmemesini istemelidir.

Değerlendirme sürecinde editör hakemlere gözden geçirme için gönderilen makalelerin, yazarların özel mülkü olduğunu ve bunun imtiyazlı bir iletişim olduğunu açıkça belirtir. Hakemler ve yayın kurulu üyeleri başka kişilerle makaleleri tartışamazlar. Hakemlerin kimliğinin gizli kalmasına özen gösterilmelidir.

YAYIN ETİĞİ VE İLKELER

Litera: Dil, Edebiyat ve Kültür Araştırmaları Dergisi– Journal of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, yayın etiğinde en yüksek standartlara bağlıdır ve Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA) ve World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) tarafından yayınlanan etik yayıncılık ilkelerini benimser; Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing başlığı altında ifade edilen ilkeler için adres: <https://publicationethics.org/resources/guidelines-new/principles-transparency-and-best-practice-scholarly-publishing>

Gönderilen tüm makaleler orijinal, yayınlanmamış ve başka bir dergide değerlendirme sürecinde olmamalıdır. Her bir makale editörlerden biri ve en az iki hakem tarafından çift kör değerlendirmeden geçirilir. İntihal, duplikasyon, sahte yazarlık/inkar edilen yazarlık, araştırma/veri fabrikasyonu, makale dilimleme, dilimleyerek yayın, telif hakları ihlali ve çıkar çatışmasının gizlenmesi, etik dışı davranışlar olarak kabul edilir.

Kabul edilen etik standartlara uygun olmayan tüm makaleler yayından çıkarılır. Buna yayından sonra tespit edilen olası kuraldışı, uygunsuzluklar içeren makaleler de dahildir.

Araştırma Etiği

Dergi araştırma etiğinde en yüksek standartları gözetir ve aşağıda tanımlanan uluslararası araştırma etiği ilkelerini benimser. Makalelerin etik kurallara uygunluğu yazarların sorumluluğundadır.

- Araştırmanın tasarlanması, tasarımın gözden geçirilmesi ve araştırmanın yürütülmesinde, bütünlük, kalite ve şeffaflık ilkeleri sağlanmalıdır.
- Araştırma ekibi ve katılımcılar, araştırmanın amacı, yöntemleri ve öngörülen olası kullanımları; araştırmaya katılımın gerektirdikleri ve varsa riskleri hakkında tam olarak bilgilendirilmelidir.
- Araştırma katılımcılarının sağladığı bilgilerin gizliliği ve yanıt verenlerin gizliliği sağlanmalıdır. Araştırma katılımcıların özerkliğini ve saygınlığını koruyacak şekilde tasarlanmalıdır.
- Araştırma katılımcıları gönüllü olarak araştırmada yer almalı, herhangi bir zorlama altında olmamalıdır.
- Katılımcıların zarar görmesinden kaçınılmalıdır. Araştırma, katılımcıları riske sokmayacak şekilde planlanmalıdır.
- Araştırma bağımsızlığıyla ilgili açık ve net olunmalı; çıkar çatışması varsa belirtilmelidir.
- Deneysel çalışmalarda, araştırmaya katılmaya karar veren katılımcıların yazılı bilgilendirilmiş onayı alınmalıdır. Çocukların ve vesayet altındakilerin veya tasdiklenmiş akıl hastalığı bulunanların yasal vasisinin onayı alınmalıdır.
- Çalışma herhangi bir kurum ya da kuruluşta gerçekleştirilecekse bu kurum ya da kuruluştan çalışma yapılacağına dair onay alınmalıdır.
- İnsan ögesi bulunan çalışmalarda, “yöntem” bölümünde katılımcılardan “bilgilendirilmiş onam” alındığının ve çalışmanın yapıldığı kurumdan etik kurul onayı alındığı belirtilmesi gerekir.

Yazarların Sorumluluğu

Makalelerin bilimsel ve etik kurallara uygunluğu yazarların sorumluluğundadır. Yazar makalenin orijinal olduğu, daha önce başka bir yerde yayınlanmadığı ve başka bir yerde, başka bir dilde yayınlanmak üzere değerlendirmede olmadığı konusunda teminat sağlamalıdır. Uygulamadaki telif kanunları ve anlaşmaları gözetilmelidir. Telifte bağlı materyaller (örneğin tablolar, şekiller veya büyük alıntılar) gerekli izin ve teşekkürle kullanılmalıdır. Başka yazarların, katkıda bulunanların çalışmaları ya da yararlanılan kaynaklar uygun biçimde kullanılmalı ve referanslarda belirtilmelidir.

Gönderilen makalede tüm yazarların akademik ve bilimsel olarak doğrudan katkısı olmalıdır, bu bağlamda “yazar” yayınlanan bir araştırmanın kavramsallaştırılmasına ve dizaynına, verilerin elde edilmesine, analizine ya da yorumlanmasına belirgin katkı yapan, yazının yazılması ya da bunun içerik açısından eleştirel biçimde gözden geçirilmesinde görev yapan birisi olarak görülür. Yazar olabilmenin diğer koşulları ise, makaledeki çalışmayı planlamak veya icra etmek ve / veya revize etmektir. Fon sağlanması, veri toplanması ya da araştırma grubunun genel süpervizyonu tek başına yazarlık hakkı kazandırmaz. Yazar olarak gösterilen tüm bireyler sayılan tüm ölçütleri karşılamalıdır ve yukarıdaki ölçütleri karşılayan her birey yazar olarak gösterilebilir. Yazarların isim sıralaması ortak verilen bir karar olmalıdır. Tüm yazarlar yazar sıralamasını [Telif Hakkı Anlaşması Formunda](#) imzalı olarak belirtmek zorundadır.

Yazarlık için yeterli ölçütleri karşılamayan ancak çalışmaya katkısı olan tüm bireyler “teşekkür / bilgiler” kısmında sıralanmalıdır. Bunlara örnek olarak ise sadece teknik destek sağlayan, yazıma yardımcı olan ya da sadece genel bir destek sağlayan, finansal ve materyal desteği sunan kişiler verilebilir.

Bütün yazarlar, araştırmanın sonuçlarını ya da bilimsel değerlendirmeyi etkileyebilme potansiyeli olan finansal ilişkiler, çıkar çatışması ve çıkar rekabetini beyan etmelidirler. Bir yazar kendi yayınlanmış yazısında belirgin bir hata ya da yanlışlık tespit ederse, bu yanlışlıklara ilişkin düzeltme ya da geri çekme için editör ile hemen temasa geçme ve işbirliği yapma sorumluluğunu taşır.

Editör ve Hakem Sorumlulukları

Baş editör, makaleleri, yazarların etnik kökeninden, cinsiyetinden, cinsel yöneliminden, uyruğundan, dini inancından ve siyasi felsefesinden bağımsız olarak değerlendirir. Yayına gönderilen makalelerin adil bir şekilde çift taraflı kör hakem değerlendirmesinden geçmelerini sağlar. Gönderilen makalelere ilişkin tüm bilginin, makale yayınlanana kadar gizli kalacağını garanti eder. Baş editör içerik ve yayının toplam kalitesinden sorumludur. Gereğinde hata sayfası yayınlamalı ya da düzeltme yapmalıdır.

Baş editör; yazarlar, editörler ve hakemler arasında çıkar çatışmasına izin vermez. Hakem atama konusunda tam yetkiye sahiptir ve Dergide yayınlanacak makalelerle ilgili nihai kararı vermekle yükümlüdür.

Hakemlerin araştırmayla ilgili, yazarlarla ve/veya araştırmanın finansal destekçileriyle çıkar çatışmaları olmamalıdır. Değerlendirmelerinin sonucunda tarafsız bir yargıya varmalıdırlar. Gönderilmiş yazılara ilişkin tüm bilginin gizli tutulmasını sağlamalı ve yazar tarafında herhangi bir telif hakkı ihlali ve intihal fark ederlerse editöre raporlamalıdırlar. Hakem, makale konusu hakkında kendini vasıflı

hissetmiyor ya da zamanında geri dönüş sağlaması mümkün görünmüyorsa, editöre bu durumu bildirmeli ve hakem sürecine kendisini dahil etmemesini istemelidir.

Değerlendirme sürecinde editör hakemlere gözden geçirme için gönderilen makalelerin, yazarların özel mülkü olduğunu ve bunun imtiyazlı bir iletişim olduğunu açıkça belirtir. Hakemler ve yayın kurulu üyeleri başka kişilerle makaleleri tartışamazlar. Hakemlerin kimliğinin gizli kalmasına özen gösterilmelidir. Bazı durumlarda editörün kararıyla, ilgili hakemlerin makaleye ait yorumları aynı makaleyi yorumlayan diğer hakemlere gönderilerek hakemlerin bu süreçte aydınlatılması sağlanabilir.

YAZILARIN HAZIRLANMASI VE YAZIM KURALLARI

Dil

Dergide Türkçe, İngilizce, Almanca, Fransızca, İtalyanca ve İspanyolca makaleler yayınlanır. Makalede, makale dilinde öz ve yanısıra İngilizce öz olmalıdır. Ancak İngilizce yazılmış makalelerde geniş özet istenmez.

Yazıların Hazırlanması ve Gönderimi

Aksi belirtilmedikçe gönderilen yazılarla ilgili tüm yazışmalar ilk yazarla yapılacaktır. Makale gönderimi online olarak ve https://litera.istanbul.edu.tr/tr/_ üzerinden yapılmalıdır. Gönderilen yazılar, yazının yayınlanmak üzere gönderildiğini ifade eden, makale türünü belirten ve makaleyle ilgili bilgileri içeren (bkz: Son Kontrol Listesi) bir mektup; yazının elektronik formunu içeren Microsoft Word 2003 ve üzerindeki versiyonları ile yazılmış elektronik dosya ve tüm yazarların imzaladığı [Telif Hakkı Anlaşması Formu](#) eklenerek gönderilmelidir.

1. Çalışmalar, A4 boyutundaki kağıdın bir yüzüne, üst, alt, sağ ve sol taraftan 2,5 cm. boşluk bırakılarak, 12 punto Times New Roman harf karakterleriyle ve 1,5 satır aralık ölçüsü ile ve iki yana yaslı olarak hazırlanmalıdır. Paragraf başlarında tab tuşu kullanılmalıdır. Metin içinde yer alan tablo ve şemalarda ise tek satır aralığı kullanılmalıdır.
2. Metnin başlığı küçük harf, koyu renk, Times New Roman yazı tipi, 14 punto olarak sayfanın ortasında yer almalıdır.
3. Metin yazarına ait bilgiler başlıktan sonra bir satır atlanarak, Times New Roman yazı tipi, 10 punto ve tek satır aralığı kullanılarak sayfanın soluna yazılacaktır. Yazarın adı küçük harfle, soyadı büyük harfle belirtildikten sonra bir alt satıra unvanı, çalıştığı kurum ve e-posta adresi yazılacaktır.
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Kaynaklar

Kabul edilmiş ancak henüz sayıya dahil edilmemiş makaleler Early View olarak yayınlanır ve bu makalelere atıflar "advance online publication" şeklinde verilmelidir. Genel bir kaynaktan elde edilemeyecek temel bir konu olmadıkça "kişisel iletişime" atıfta bulunulmamalıdır. Eğer atıfta bulunulursa parantez içinde iletişim kurulan kişinin adı ve iletişimin tarihi belirtilmelidir. Bilimsel makaleler için yazarlar bu kaynaktan yazılı izin ve iletişimin doğruluğunu gösterir belge almalıdır. Kaynakların doğruluğundan yazar(lar) sorumludur. Tüm kaynaklar metinde belirtilmelidir. Kaynaklar alfabetik olarak sıralanmalıdır.

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- American Psychological Association. (2010). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). Washington, DC: APA.
- <http://www.apastyle.org/>

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(Esin ve ark., 2002; Karasar 1995)

Tek yazarlı kaynak;

(Akyolcu, 2007)

İki yazarlı kaynak;

(Sayiner ve Demirci 2007, s. 72)

Üç, dört ve beş yazarlı kaynak;

Metin içinde ilk kullanımda: (Ailen, Ciambune ve Welch 2000, s. 12–13) Metin içinde tekrarlayan kullanımlarda: (Ailen ve ark., 2000)

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Kitap

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Karasar, N. (1995). *Araştırmalarda rapor hazırlama* (8.bs). Ankara: 3A Eğitim Danışmanlık Ltd.

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Radyo ODTÜ (Yapımcı). (2015, 13 Nisan). *Modern sabahlar* [Podcast]. Erişim adresi: <http://www.radyoodtu.com.tr/>

f) Bir Televizyon Dizisinden Tek Bir Bölüm

Shore, D. (Senarist), Jackson, M. (Senarist) ve Bookstaver, S. (Yönetmen). (2012). Runaways [Televizyon dizisi bölümü]. D. Shore (Baş yapımcı), *House M.D.* içinde. New York, NY: Fox Broadcasting.

g) Müzik Kaydı

Say, F. (2009). Galata Kulesi. *İstanbul senfonisi* [CD] içinde. İstanbul: Ak Müzik.

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İLETİŞİM İÇİN:

Editör : Özlem Karadağ

E-mail : okaradag@istanbul.edu.tr

Tel : + 90 212 455 57 00

Web site: <http://litera.istanbul.edu.tr>

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Basic Reference Types

Book

a) Turkish Book

Karasar, N. (1995). *Araştırmalarda rapor hazırlama* (8th ed.) [Preparing research reports]. Ankara, Türkiye: 3A Eğitim Danışmanlık Ltd.

b) Book Translated into Turkish

Mucchielli, A. (1991). *Zihniyetler* [Mindsets] (A. Kotil, Trans.). İstanbul, Türkiye: İletişim Yayınları.

c) Edited Book

Ören, T., Üney, T., & Çölkesen, R. (Eds.). (2006). *Türkiye bilişim ansiklopedisi* [Turkish Encyclopedia of Informatics]. İstanbul, Türkiye: Papatya Yayıncılık.

d) Turkish Book with Multiple Authors

Tonta, Y., Bitirim, Y., & Sever, H. (2002). *Türkçe arama motorlarında performans değerlendirme* [Performance evaluation in Turkish search engines]. Ankara, Türkiye: Total Bilişim.

e) Book in English

Kamien R., & Kamien A. (2014). *Music: An appreciation*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.

f) Chapter in an Edited Book

Bassett, C. (2006). Cultural studies and new media. In G. Hall & C. Birchall (Eds.), *New cultural studies: Adventures in theory* (pp. 220–237). Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.

g) Chapter in an Edited Book in Turkish

Erkmen, T. (2012). Örgüt kültürü: Fonksiyonları, öğeleri, işletme yönetimi ve liderlikteki önemi [Organization culture: Its functions, elements and importance in leadership and business management]. In M. Zencirkıran (Ed.), *Örgüt sosyolojisi* [Organization sociology] (pp. 233–263). Bursa, Türkiye: Dora Basım Yayın.

h) Book with the same organization as author and publisher

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American psychological association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Article

a) Turkish Article

Mutlu, B., & Savaşer, S. (2007). Çocuğu ameliyat sonrası yoğun bakımda olan ebeveynlerde stres nedenleri ve azaltma girişimleri [Source and intervention reduction of stress for parents whose children are in intensive care unit after surgery]. *Istanbul University Florence Nightingale Journal of Nursing*, 15(60), 179–182.

b) English Article

de Cillia, R., Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. (1999). The discursive construction of national identity. *Discourse and Society*, 10(2), 149–173. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0957926599010002002>

c) Journal Article with DOI and More Than Seven Authors

Lal, H., Cunningham, A. L., Godeaux, O., Chlibek, R., Diez-Domingo, J., Hwang, S.-J. ... Heineman, T. C. (2015). Efficacy of an adjuvanted herpes zoster subunit vaccine in older adults. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 372, 2087–2096. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1056/NEJMoa1501184>

d) Journal Article from Web, without DOI

Sidani, S. (2003). Enhancing the evaluation of nursing care effectiveness. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research*, 35(3), 26–38. Retrieved from <http://cjr.mcgill.ca>

e) Journal Article with DOI

Turner, S.J. (2010). Website statistics 2.0: Using Google Analytics to measure library website effectiveness. *Technical Services Quarterly*, 27, 261–278. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07317131003765910>

f) Advance Online Publication

Smith, J. A. (2010). Citing advance online publication: A review. *Journal of Psychology*. Advance online publication. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a45d7867>

g) Article in a Magazine

Henry, W. A., III. (1990, April 9). Making the grade in today's schools. *Time*, 135, 28–31.

Doctoral Dissertation, Master's Thesis, Presentation, Proceeding

a) Dissertation/Thesis from a Commercial Database

Van Brunt, D. (1997). *Networked consumer health information systems* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 9943436)

b) Dissertation/Thesis from an Institutional Database

Yaylali-Yıldız, B. (2014). *University campuses as places of potential publicness: Exploring the political, social and cultural practices in Ege University* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://library.iyte.edu.tr/tr/hizli-erisim/iyte-tez-portali>

c) Dissertation/Thesis from Web

Tonta, Y. A. (1992). *An analysis of search failures in online library catalogs* (Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley). Retrieved from <http://yunus.hacettepe.edu.tr/~tonta/yayinlar/phd/ickapak.html>

d) Dissertation/Thesis abstracted in Dissertations Abstracts International

Appelbaum, L. G. (2005). Three studies of human information processing: Texture amplification, motion representation, and figure-ground segregation. *Dissertation Abstracts International: Section B. Sciences and Engineering*, 65(10), 5428.

e) Symposium Contribution

Krinsky-McHale, S. J., Zigman, W. B., & Silverman, W. (2012, August). Are neuropsychiatric symptoms markers of prodromal Alzheimer's disease in adults with Down syndrome? In W. B. Zigman (Chair), *Predictors of mild cognitive impairment, dementia, and mortality in adults with Down syndrome*. Symposium conducted at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Orlando, FL.

f) Conference Paper Abstract Retrieved Online

Liu, S. (2005, May). *Defending against business crises with the help of intelligent agent based early*

warning solutions. Paper presented at the Seventh International Conference on Enterprise Information Systems, Miami, FL. Abstract retrieved from http://www.iceis.org/iceis2005/abstracts_2005.htm

g) Conference Paper - In Regularly Published Proceedings and Retrieved Online

Herculano-Houzel, S., Collins, C. E., Wong, P., Kaas, J. H., & Lent, R. (2008). The basic nonuniformity of the cerebral cortex. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *105*, 12593–12598. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0805417105>

h) Proceeding in Book Form

Parsons, O. A., Pryzwansky, W. B., Weinstein, D. J., & Wiens, A. N. (1995). Taxonomy for psychology. In J. N. Reich, H. Sands, & A. N. Wiens (Eds.), *Education and training beyond the doctoral degree: Proceedings of the American Psychological Association National Conference on Postdoctoral Education and Training in Psychology* (pp. 45–50). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

i) Paper Presentation

Nguyen, C. A. (2012, August). *Humor and deception in advertising: When laughter may not be the best medicine*. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Psychological Association, Orlando, FL.

Other Sources

a) Newspaper Article

Browne, R. (2010, March 21). This brainless patient is no dummy. *Sydney Morning Herald*, *45*.

b) Newspaper Article with no Author

New drug appears to sharply cut risk of death from heart failure. (1993, July 15). *The Washington Post*, p. A12.

c) Web Page/Blog Post

Bordwell, D. (2013, June 18). David Koepp: Making the world movie-sized [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/page/27/>

d) Online Encyclopedia/Dictionary

Ignition. (1989). In *Oxford English online dictionary* (2nd ed.). Retrieved from <http://dictionary.oed.com>
Marcoux, A. (2008). Business ethics. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.). *The Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy*. Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-business/>

e) Podcast

Dunning, B. (Producer). (2011, January 12). *inFact: Conspiracy theories* [Video podcast]. Retrieved from <http://itunes.apple.com/>

f) Single Episode in a Television Series

Egan, D. (Writer), & Alexander, J. (Director). (2005). Failure to communicate. [Television series episode]. In D. Shore (Executive producer), *House*; New York, NY: Fox Broadcasting.

g) Music

Fuchs, G. (2004). Light the menorah. On *Eight nights of Hanukkah* [CD]. Brick, NJ: Kid Kosher.

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CONTACT INFO

Editor : Özlem Karadağ

E-mail : okaradag@istanbul.edu.tr

Phone : + 90 212 455 57 00

Web site: <http://litera.istanbul.edu.tr>

Email : litera@istanbul.edu.tr

Address : Istanbul University,

Faculty of Letters

Department of Western Languages and Literatures

Ordu Cad. No: 6

34134, Laleli

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