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GEORG SIMMEL'S STRANGER AND WALTER BENJAMIN'S FLANEUR'S WAYS OF SEEING AND KNOWING

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ABSTRACT

Georg Simmel's stranger and Walter Benjamin's flaneur are social types constructed and reconstructed by modern life experiences and capitalism. Thinking each of these types as social scientists and filmmakers, the study analyzes their ways of seeing and knowing. In that sense, it lays bare that the stranger and the flaneur offer alternative ways of seeing and knowing that differ from the modernist ones. Accordingly, it investigates what the possibilities and limitations of the stranger and the flaneur's ways of seeing and knowing are, and how these possibilities and limitations are being formed. The main question of the study is how ways of seeing and knowing of these types differentiate from the modernist ones. The study claims that even though the stranger and the flaneur's ways of seeing and knowing can make the plurality of truth and points of view possible, they do not completely go beyond modernity's subjectivity and its experiential forms.

Keywords: Stranger, Flaneur, Social types, Ways of knowing, Ways of seeing

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GEORG SİMMELE'İN YABANCISI VE WALTER BENJAMİN'İN FLANÖRÜNÜN GÖRME VE BİLME BİÇİMLERİ

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ÖZ

Modern yaşam deneyimleri ve kapitalizm tarafından kurulan ve yeniden kurulan Georg Simmel'in yabancı ve Walter Benjamin'in flanörü toplumsal tiplerdir. Bu çalışma, bu tiplerin her birini sosyal bilimci ve sinemacı olarak düşünerek onların görme ve bilme biçimlerini ele alıyor. Bu manada yabancı ve flanörün modernist olanlardan farklılaşan görme ve bilme biçimleri sunduğu açıkça ortaya koyuyor. Buna bağlı olarak, yabancı ve flanörün görme ve bilme biçimlerinin imkanları ve sınırlılıklarını, bu olasılık ve sınırlılıkların nasıl biçimlendiğini araştırıyor. Buna uygun olarak, çalışmanın temel sorusu bu tiplerin görme ve bilme biçimlerinin modernist olanlardan nasıl farklılaştığıdır. Bu bağlamda onların alternatifliliğinin kapsam ve sınırlarını gösteriyor. Çalışma, yabancı ve flanörün görme ve bilme biçimleri hakikatin ve bakış açılarının çoğulluğuna dair imkanlar açmalarına rağmen, onların modernitenin öznellik ve deneyim biçimlerinin ötesine tamamiyle geçemediklerini iddia eder.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yabancı, Flanör, Toplumsal tipler, Görme biçimleri, Bilme biçimleri

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Introduction

Sociologists, among which George Simmel is a prominent one, produced some types (Baker, 2002), according to which the social phenomena in different spatiotemporal experiences are tried to be understood, explained and known. Most of them are, in a sense, the products of modernization and capitalism, because of the fact that modernization and capitalism constructed their dominant spatiotemporal grounds. Moreover, sociological thought constructed epistemological, ontological and methodological views around these types. Simmel's stranger and Walter Benjamin's flaneur are the most useful examples of these modern types.

Simmel's stranger represents a type, which has an objective attitude toward others because of his characteristics peculiar to him, and formed by his mode of relation to others. The stranger is not the direct product of modernization, and therefore, the characteristics of this type are not solely determined by modernization. So, the stranger is a type that has emerged before the modern era, and this type is a case in Simmel's sociology to explain the spatial relations, and the condition of human relations (Simmel, 2000, p. 402). The stranger's characteristics are related to his spatial qualities in the sense that his spatial proximity determines the relationships with others, and the ways of seeing and knowing. However, the stranger became an anonymous character in the modern Metropolis³, because, the interactions, the way of experiences and the attitudes of humans acquired new contents in the modern Metropolis (Simmel, 1976). As a result, whether the stranger has emerged with modernization or not, he represents a social type that can view others objectively since he is a potential wanderer outside any group. In that sense, the stranger is the producer of a type of objective knowledge through his ways of seeing and perception.

On the other hand, Benjamin's flaneur is also a social type, which has emerged with capitalism that has created the grounds for his perceptual and sensual experiences and interactions with the world. Therefore, the experiences and attitudes of the flaneur require the emergence of modern cities and capitalism that has changed the way of life of humanity. The flaneur fleets on the streets among the masses without interacting with any of them. During this fleeting and wandering, he records, perceives and observes the social phenomenon while distancing himself critically from the phantasmagoria of commodity fetishism and the lifestyle of capitalism which has fragmented humans' perceptions. Although capitalism changed everybody's perceptual and sensual experiences in their life in the city, the flaneur differentiates in his experiences from the others. Because, among and in between the fragmenting and attracting force of capitalism and city life, ranging also to capitalism's phantasmagoria, the flaneur actively constructs a critical attitude to capitalism's seductions. This critical positioning and the attitude of the flaneur offer the planes for his distinct subjectivity, and produce the ways of seeing through which it creates a knowledge and imagination critical of capitalism.

With regard to these, the stranger and the flaneur display different attitudes to modern life than the ordinary others due to their qualities and characteristics in constructing their positioning towards the external world. These qualities form their way of seeing and their lifestyles in modern life – crucial for the construction of their ways of knowing and seeing and subjectivity. This study discusses the stranger and the flaneur's subjectivity and ways of seeing and knowing. Accordingly, it examines the stranger and the flaneur by presenting their possibilities and limitations in the context of alternative ways and modes of seeing and knowing with respect to the modernist ways of seeing and knowing. Following these lines, it

³ Metropolis is the name given by Simmel to designate the modern big cities. For Simmel's Metropolis see, (Simmel, 1976).

questions whether these types' ways of seeing and knowing are different from modernist ways of knowing. Henceforth, the aim of the study is to show the peculiar characteristics and elements that constitute these types' way of knowing and seeing and differentiate them from modernist ways of seeing and knowing. To achieve this task, it critically analyzes the content of texts written by Simmel and Benjamin related to the topic of study concentrating on their main ideas and concepts. Given these, the study puts forward that the ways of seeing of these types are much related to their unconscious positioning towards others, although Simmel and Benjamin emphasize the awareness of these types. At this point, as modernist ways of seeing and knowing are based on universality and objectivity through conscious deliberation, these types' ways of seeing and knowing partly fall outside modernist ways. In other words, since the stranger and the flaneur are the product of unconscious social and subjective processes and mechanisms and produce partly relativist and subjectivist knowledge and perceptions of the world, they contradict the main motive behind modernist ways of knowing. According to this point, the study argues that even if their ways of knowing and seeing differ from, and offer new alternatives to modernist ways, they cannot totally exit from these ways. Because both Simmel and Benjamin do not leave the modernist philosophy of subjectivity and knowledge behind.

The Stranger and Flaneur as Social Types

As it is told, the qualities and characteristics of the stranger and the flaneur as modern social types are constructed by their positioning towards others in different spatiotemporal experiences. So, their characteristics are determined by their interactions with others. Therefore, in this section, the characteristics of the stranger and the flaneur – the making of their subjectivity – are tried to be explained in the context of their positioning towards others in modern life and capitalism.

Simmel's Stranger

The stranger as a social type did not emerge during the modernization processes and capitalism, because, according to Simmel, the stranger is an analytical tool to explain the qualities of the spatial forms of sociation, in which, the content of social interactions exist.⁴ In that sense, beyond the historical conditions of modernity, the characteristics of the stranger are formed by the qualities of these forms such as moving in space, proximity and distance to others, according to which, the stranger is in interaction with others. For Simmel, moving and wandering are among the characteristics of the stranger which structures his mode of existence, and frees the individual from the static configurations of space, and also creates for him a possibility of being in flux within the spaces (Simmel, 2000, p. 160). Accordingly, he is potentially free from the boundaries and habits of any group. On the other hand, the stranger in modern times is fixed in any group and is not in flux like the stranger in the past: "The stranger is thus being discussed here, not in the sense often touched upon in the past, as the wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but rather as the person who comes today and stays tomorrow" (Simmel, 1965, p. 402). In this sense, he is "the potential wanderer: although he has not moved on, he has not quite overcome the freedom of coming and going" (Simmel, 1965, p. 402).

This difference in modernity does not change the stranger's mode of existence, therefore, he continues his position and interactions with others. Because, despite his fixation

⁴ For Simmel the forms of sociation are the condition of unity and regularity of human relationships. It is very similar to, and inspired by Immanuel Kant's philosophy in the sense that Kant's forms of the mind synthesize and give unity to the complexity of the intuitions (Kant, 1998). Likewise, for Simmel, social form in social life gives a peculiar unity an orderly place within the complex and chaotic human interactions and makes it possible to make these complexities and chaos a social relationship (Simmel, 1965).

among the others in modern life, and his physical closeness to others as a group member, he does not have a close psychological proximity to others. Because "he has not belonged to it from the beginning" (Simmel, 1965, p. 402). In other words, the stranger has a physical closeness to the group, while it is psychologically far from the group by not being committed to the group. This condition of the stranger as being in-between inside and outside the group and having a character, the synthesis of wandering and fixation, proximity and distance, and indifference and involvement determines the boundaries of his interactions with a group of others. In that sense, his mobility and being outside the norms of any group condition his objective attitude and outlook towards the groups. However, it is wrong to express that this objectivity does not signify that the stranger has no interaction with any group. Quite the contrary, the stranger's interaction with the other's group is ambivalent. Since he is "committed to the unique ingredients and peculiar tendencies of the group, and therefore approaches them with the specific attitude of "objectivity" (Simmel, 1965, p. 404). However, the stranger's objectivity is not constituted by simple passivity, since "it is a particular structure composed of distance and nearness, indifference and involvement" (Simmel, 1965, p. 404).

The spatial positioning of stranger to any group, expression or construct of the dialectical relationship between wandering and fixedness, distance and proximity, and indifference and involvement determines his interactions with the particular group and offers an objective attitude and outlook about the group. In another sense, although the stranger can interact with any group, he can have objective views on the groups due to the fact that he is not a member. Such objectivity becomes widespread in the modern Metropolis, because it becomes an anonymous character for everyone living in the modern Metropolis. After all, modern individuals share the common characteristics of the stranger such as being distant to others. In other words, the new conditions in the Metropolis induced a mutual strangeness and repulsion among the humans and produced a reaction to the Metropolitan life due to the propensity of individuals to preserve "the autonomy and individuality of his existence in the face of overwhelming social forces, of historical heritage, of external culture, and of the technique of life" (Simmel, 1965, p. 409). Simmel analyzes well the conditions that were brought by modern Metropolitan life that made possible the emergence of this collective strangeness:

In addition to more liberty, the nineteenth century demanded the functional specialization of man and his work; this specialization makes one individual incomparable to another and each of them indispensable to the highest possible extent. However, this specialization makes each man more directly dependent upon the supplementary activities of all others. (Simmel, 1965, p. 409)

In this context, although the above-mentioned dialectics of the modes of interactions beyond the rational and conscious control of the individuals determine the stranger's relations to others, the acts and modes of existence of the stranger in Metropolis are framed by his conscious attitude. Because, "the person resists to being leveled down and worn out by a social-technological mechanism" (Simmel, 1965, p. 409). Such awareness is produced by the individuals' self-accommodation to the forces external to them in Metropolitan life. One of these forces is "the intensification of nervous stimulation which results from the swift and uninterrupted change of outer and inner stimuli" (Simmel, 1965, p. 410). This intensification which is particular to Metropolis including "the rapid crowding of changing images, the sharp discontinuity in the grasp of a single glance, and the unexpectedness of onrushing impressions" produces a change in the perceptual state of humans. These changes in modern city life make the intellect the dominant force of life. Accordingly, humans react with reason more than emotions. Therefore, "an increased awareness assumes the psychic prerogative.

Metropolitan life, thus, underlies a heightened awareness and a predominance of intelligence in metropolitan man” (Simmel, 1965, p. 410).

Side by side with these, in the Metropolis, the objective culture increases its domination of subjective culture. In that sense, it is required to explain Simmel’s distinction between the subjective and objective culture. According to him, subjective culture is an ability to embrace, use, and feel culture. Hence, it is very close to the individual and her or his psychological experience of the world. On the other hand, objective culture is separated from the individual or group’s control. In other words, the objective world exists far beyond the individuals and excludes their personalities: “Objective relationships, which completely exclude the personal element to an unlimited number of others, are much more capable of making people aware of a unity that extends beyond individuals” (Simmel, 2000, p. 166). Objective culture is more rational than the subjective culture in which not intellect, but feeling or unconscious elements are important. Given these, the objective culture becomes stronger in modern societies, in which the objective forces such as money economy dominate the metropolis, transforming the old social relations. Simmel makes it clear: “Money is concerned only with what is common to all: it asks for the exchange value it reduces all quality and individuality to the question: How much?” (Simmel, 2000, p. 176). Correspondingly, all intimate emotional relations between persons are confined into individuality. On the other hand, “in rational relations man is reckoned with like a number, like an element which is in itself different. Only measurable achievement is of interest” (Simmel, 2000, p. 176).

So, because of modernity, life became more objective through punctuality, calculability and exactness, and is divorced from subjectivity: “Punctuality, calculability, exactness are forced upon life by the complexity and extension of metropolitan existence” (Simmel, 1965, p. 413). As a result, all these developments made the individuals free from the bounds of any social group, thus, increasing their objective standing. This objectivity made individuals more indifferent and distant to others. However, this indifference and distance does not mean that the individuals have no relation to others. Because, on the one hand individuals have a blasé attitude and indifference to others; on the other, they have objective and psychologically distant involvement with others. Accordingly, the strangers in modern Metropolis display similar characteristics with the stranger, and the above-mentioned spatial qualities are widespread to provide the conditions for constructing the modern subject: being objective to others, physically close but psychologically distant despite of being fixed in the Metropolis and being free from the bounds of the group.

The Flaneur from Edgar Allan Poe to Benjamin

The flaneur as a social type shares a lot of similar characteristics with modern strangers, because it is also produced by the social and subjective mechanisms, and the processes brought about by modernity. Before anything else, the main similarity is that the flaneur is also freed of the bounds of any social group. Adding to this, it develops a critical attitude toward capitalism by producing a distance to the phantasmagorias of capitalism. Correspondingly, it is reasonable to state that as it has a blasé attitude to capitalism; it actively involves and interacts with the objects and phenomena from the crowds to the marketplaces produced by capitalism. As the blasé attitude constructs its critical subjectivity, his interaction and involvement with the products of capitalism, very different from an ordinary and unconscious wandering in the spaces of capitalism where its objects and people are located, make it an observer. Within this framework, the flaneur is an ambivalent character due to its own actions formed in-between the blasé attitude and active involvement with the streets and crowds.

The flaneur as a social type, whose main characteristic is fleeting on the streets of Metropolis is not Benjamin's discovery, because before him Edgar Allan Poe and Charles Baudelaire wrote about the flaneur. Although Poe did not directly use the name 'flaneur', he fictions a man in his story, *The Man of The Crowd* (Poe, 2001), who wanders slowly on different streets among the crowds for hours gazing at the phenomenon that is the city. As an enigmatic character, the man seems different from the others on the street. Poe (2001, p. 37) considers this man with a very negative view: "'This old man,' I said at length, 'is the type and the genius of deep crime. He refuses to be alone. He is the man of the crowd.'" On the other hand, this same urban wandering hero was positively reused by Baudelaire to fictionalize his flaneur, Monsieur G.: "This cosmopolitanism is the condition of his distinctive characteristics: "His interest is the whole world; he wants to know, understand and appreciate everything that happens on the surface of our globe" (Baudelaire, 1964:7). Moreover, Monsieur G.'s curiosity about the newness brought upon by modernization forms his difference from the others and his distinctive characteristics (Baudelaire, 1964, p. 7). Such a curiosity attracts him in a desire to see and know various images on the streets of cities (Baudelaire, 1964, p. 8).

He cleverly uses reason which provides him the equipment "for self-expression with manhood's capacities, and a power of analysis which enables it to order the mass of raw material which it has voluntarily accumulated" (Baudelaire, 1964, p. 8). He is a flaneur having an insatiable passion for seeing and feeling. This passion makes the streets nothing other than a home for him and a place for him to feel very grateful and sensible to others when he is among the masses. In other words, he is a man who is passionately among the crowds to see and observe: "The crowd is his element, as the air is that of birds and water of fishes. His passion and his profession are to become one flesh with the crowd" (Baudelaire, 1964, p. 9). Accordingly, the crowds are his source of existence. As a result, Baudelaire's flaneur feels and experiences deep passion and loves to be close and involved in the infinite images of the modern cities produced by modernity (Baudelaire, 1964, p. 11). He observes, analyses and records these images, reproducing them in a conscious kaleidoscope (Baudelaire, 1964, p. 9).

The characteristics of Baudelaire's flaneur such as having the sense of being at home among the masses and on the streets of the city, his insatiable curiosity to observe and record the images, and reproduce them subjectively in the outside world while fleeting on the streets of Metropolis, is very similar to the flaneur. However, Benjamin details the characteristics of the flaneur and focuses on capitalism as the ground for the emergence of the flaneur's experiences. In that sense, Benjamin draws attention to capitalism as the main condition for modern city life which includes public places (for example arcades, marketplaces) as the fleeting and observing places for the flaneur, and technological developments such as omnibuses easing the wandering of the flaneur as well as of the masses in the city (Benjamin, 1999). What makes up the flaneur's primary actions such as looking and gazing at the external world is mostly related to the conditions framed by the advent of capitalism. That is because, in modern capitalism and modernization, everybody experiences their sensations through the dominance of looking, overhearing and touching. Benjamin's quotation from Simmel well explains this dominance: "Interpersonal relationships in big cities are distinguished by a marked preponderance of visual activity over aural activity" (Benjamin, 1999, p. 69). The public means of transportation is the main reason behind this fact. Since the development of modern transportation led people not to look at one another for long minutes without speaking to one another (Benjamin, 1999, p. 69).

Therefore, the main conditions that make up the flaneur's experiences and characteristics are produced by the developments and processes in capitalism. These do not only provide the grounds for the flaneur, but also for all modern individuals as will be mentioned below. However, the flaneur consciously constructs himself as a different subject. Before anything

else, the flaneur observes the marketplace and is the explorer of the crowd (Benjamin, 1999, p. 427). The marketplaces of capitalism and the centers of commodity fetishism such as arcades, world's exhibitions produce the phantasmagorias to which the flaneur abandons himself. These marketplaces are the sites that offer entertainment opportunities to the masses. However, the flaneur flees in the streets with a very different aim and has another kind of attitude towards the phantasmagorias of capitalism (Benjamin, 1999, p. 21). He differentiates himself from the crowds, but he still "seeks a refuge in the crowds" because of the aim of creating an alternative phantasmagoria: "The crowd is the veil through which the familiar city transformed for the flaneur into phantasmagoria" (Benjamin, 1999, p. 21). This phantasmagoria transforms the city into a landscape and a room. Therefore, the flaneur is not a simple wanderer but is an observer and writer making his experiences different from the crowds. He walks among the masses slowly, because he can realize and construct his subjectivity only in the streets among the masses. So, the flaneur's conscious distancing himself from capitalism constructs his subjectivity. This provides him with a critical way of living due to his idleness (Benjamin, 2006, p. 84).

As a result, the flaneur as a modern social type distances himself from the phantasmagoria of capitalism through feeling on the streets. This makes it possible for him to be a critical observer and writer different from the others. Accordingly, he creates new experiences from the productions of capitalism within the context of walking and seeing. Accordingly, he is able to reproduce the new images from the phenomenon produced by capitalism, owing to his critical attitude. "Flanerie, in other words, can be associated with a form of looking, observing of people (social types, social contexts and constellations), a form of reading the city and its population ... and a form of reading written texts" (Frisby, 1994, p. 82-83).

The Stranger and Flaneur's Way of Seeing

In the previous section, it was made evident that the stranger and the flaneur are constructed and framed by their positioning, vis-à-vis, interactions with others in modern life. Their positioning and interactions not only make up their subjectivities but also their ways of seeing. These are the result of the changing perceptual modes of individuals due to technological developments and increased impulses in the outside world. This atmosphere in modernity made the pluralization of the ways of seeing and standpoints meaning that the truth became democratized (Crary, 1990). Therefore, the objective knowledge of the stranger and the subjective knowledge of the flaneur are not true knowledge in the sense that the knowledge of any one-to-one correspondence to the thing-in-itself is not from a true point. Rather, since knowledge is framed by the subject's standpoint, true knowledge is nothing other than a representation of the thing-in-itself. In that sense, this section analyzes what the ways of seeing of these types implicate in the construction of knowledge.

The Stranger's Objectivity

As mentioned above, the stranger's positioning of being in between indifference and active involvement constructs his objectivity. This positioning includes the subjective differences as Simmel puts it out: "Objectivity is ... a positive and specific kind of participation just as the objectivity of a theoretical observation does not refer to the mind as a passive tabula rasa on which things inscribe their qualities" (Simmel, 1965, p. 404). However, this objectivity is constituted by active involvement of mind, since mind "operates according to its own laws, and to the elimination, thereby, of accidental dislocations and emphases ..." (Simmel, 1965, p. 404). So anyone's distance to the object as a spatial form of sociation determines his objective truth (Simmel, 1965, p. 7).

Simmel makes clear the role of spatial positioning of the individuals to the objects in the construction of knowledge in his essay, *Bridge and Door* (Simmel, 2000, p. 170-175).

According to him, the construction of knowledge is much related to the degree of the constructed boundaries between persons. In that sense, the knowledge of anything implies the correlation between separateness and unity does not correspond to reality, but is much related to the mind's activities of separating and combining (Simmel, 2000, p. 170-175). Accordingly, any knowledge is a product of spatial positioning which is related to the degree of the interactions between persons. Simmel makes it very clear: "The fact that people usually introduce themselves to one another whenever they engage in a conversation of any length or meet on the same social level" (Simmel, 1965, p. 308). Due to this positioning, humans develop relations that "give rise to a picture of each in the other; and this picture, obviously, interacts with the actual relation. The relation constitutes the condition under which the conception, that each has of the other, takes this or that shape and has its truth legitimated" (Simmel, 1965, p. 308).

In this sense, our knowledge is not separated from our subjectivities, because one's objective picture of the other person is influenced by real, practical and sentimental relations (Simmel, 1965, p. 308). As a result, the stranger's objective way of seeing is very much related to his positioning towards the others in space, in which the society is constructed by the degree of the interactions. Therefore, the objectivity of the stranger does not imply a true general point. In that sense, the common character of the modern individual as a stranger implies a plurality of the true points. Although Simmel argues that objectivity is to some extent a conscious attitude, he also emphasizes that the construction of the qualities of the stranger is outside the unity of the individuals. Accordingly, the stranger as a social type is the construction of uncontrolled forces such as spatial forms and lifestyles beyond the subjective control and consciousness of the individuals.

The Flaneur's Criticism

As mentioned above, the flaneur's experiences are constructed either by capitalism, or modernity's processes and mechanisms. The flaneur's critical way of living and usage of his gaze in a very different style makes it possible for him to create a different text from the images of modernity. In that sense, he produces an alternative phantasmagoria to the phantasmagoria of capitalism through new images and knowledge. That is also evident in Benjamin's work, *The Arcades Project* (Benjamin, 1999), and this work evidently is the prototype in the production of flaneur as he explains his aim: "This book completes the century's constellation of phantasmagorias with one last, cosmic phantasmagoria which implicitly comprehends the severest critique of all others." (Benjamin, 1999, p. 25) In this sense, the flaneur's knowledge on any object does not exactly correspond to reality. He gazes at the external world with a critical way of seeing, collects the images, and then creates new images in a very similar way to the montage theory of Eisenstein (Eisenstein, 1994). Like Dziga Vertov, he collects different images from the external world with his eyes, and then creates a symphony of images (Vertov, 1995).

Therefore, the knowledge produced by the flaneur is not a truth waiting to be discovered by the person provided with a stand in a true point. Rather, his knowledge represents the phenomenon in the external world, but his knowledge is a different representation of reality. This is because; he uses the phantasmagoria of capitalism to construct a new phantasmagoria through his involvement with its effects (Cohen, 1989). In other words, as the phantasmagoria does not truly represent the external world, the flaneur's knowledge does not tell the truth. Because, modernity offers new ways of seeing through which reality can be represented (Benjamin, 2004), and thus, everything is transformed into a part of a phantasmagoria: "... the new forms of behavior and the new economically and technologically based creations that we owe to the nineteenth century enter the universe of a phantasmagoria" (Benjamin, 1999, p. 14). Due to this fact, every creation in capitalism has a "perceptible presence. They are manifested

as phantasmagorias” (Benjamin, 1999, p. 14). Flaneur emerges on this order of things and “abandons himself to the phantasmagorias of the market, where people appear only as types, are the phantasmagorias of the interior” (Benjamin, 1999, p. 14). Accordingly, the flaneur does not discover the truth but can collect images of the phantasmagoric world. In that sense, the images of the flaneur are not the images of reality as Gilles Deleuze argues that the images in cinema do not refer to reality (Deleuze, 1986, 1989).

As a result, the flaneur’s ways of seeing are the direct products of capitalism and modernization, which have changed the perceptual states of individuals and social relations, and they do not tell the truth. His knowledge is the construction of his way of seeing that offers new forms. According to Benjamin, although his ways of seeing and his freedom are the products of capitalism, he consciously uses these new ways of seeing and living in a very different attitude. However, this conscious attitude is not constructed by the flaneur in an isolated manner, because the flaneur’s ways of seeing imply that the interactions with the external world, such as being in active involvement with the crowds and gazing at the images, are the products of his positioning created by capitalism, as Benjamin emphasized.

Conclusion

In this study, it was made evident that the experiences and characteristics of the stranger and the flaneur are the constructions of their positioning towards the others. Therefore, their subjectification and ways of seeing are mostly related to their interactions with the external world. In that sense, the construction of these types is beyond the Cartesian subjectivity as conceptualized by Rene Descartes. Moreover, truth is treated in a relativist way by Simmel and Benjamin through the narration of these types, however they ascribe to these types’ consciousness. Therefore, the stranger and the flaneur’s subjectivity and knowledge are the products of unconscious forces, even if Simmel and Benjamin fictionalized them as having awareness and consciousness. These types can be also taken as a social scientist, or a filmmaker as some of the other authors did (Fischel, 1989; Gleber, 1999), because modern strangers are fictionalized as writers and observers with their ocular-centric activities, which can be the topic of another study. However, some final remarks on these types as social scientists can be made.

In that sense, the ocular-centrism of the stranger and the flaneur as modern social types can be criticized. Neither Simmel nor Baudelaire criticized the ocular-centric activities of these types which objectify the others. Although Simmel puts an emphasis on the stranger’s subjective experiences that has an influence on his objectivity, he does not criticize the modern perceptual modes. He hailed modernity, thinking that it makes people free from their bounds, however, the distance of the stranger from the others excludes some of the other senses such as hearing and touching. Henceforth, the subjective experiences of the modern stranger’s involvement with the others are ocular-centric. In that sense, social scientists are modeled like the stranger, limiting their subjectivity. That limitation or construction of boundaries is the guarantor of the totalized subject. In that sense, the stranger as a social scientist can be seen as maintaining his totality under the de-totalizing forces of modernity such as the intensification of the stimulus. Correspondingly, it can be said that the stranger as a social scientist, writer, or filmmaker is an idealized type.

Benjamin’s flaneur critically distances himself from the external world, even if he is the product of modernity. That is also his ground for his totalized subjectivity like the stranger. In this sense, he is to some extent an idealized and romanticized character. Even if Benjamin’s flaneur is considered as a social scientist, a filmmaker, or a writer is outside the division of labor, since he objectifies others through his ocular-centric activities. Therefore, his subjectivity is also limited, because he does not touch, speak to, or hear the others; he only gazes. Moreover, the activities of the flaneur are very limited to the centers of capitalism and commodity

fetishism, even if he wanders a lot on the streets of the city. Accordingly, due to the flaneur's data being the product of capitalism, the flaneur's collected and recreated images are capitalism-centered. Beyond these criticisms, some of Simmel and Benjamin's assumptions, constructed around these types, are crucial, because their types' subjectivities offer new ways of seeing and knowing. In that sense, they view knowledge in a very relativistic way, and therefore, they adopt singularist views on the truth.

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