

The traces of Liquid Modernity in Howard Brenton's *Jude*

Howard Brenton'ın *Jude* Oyununda Akışkan Modernitenin İzleri

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Abstract

The emphasis of this study is the idea of 'liquid modernity', which Zygmunt Bauman (1925–2017) metaphorically created to describe the transition from modernism to postmodernism. The primary assertion of this study centers on themes commonly addressed in discussions about the escalating globalization of the world, such as immigration, marginalization, conflict, injustice, violence, and cruelty. The process of a young girl's (Judith) quest for identity as a refugee in England is also evaluated in the study from the perspective of Howard Brenton's (1942-) play *Jude* (2018). Although Howard Brenton, a well-known author and one of the pioneers of oppositional theatre, draws attention to the struggle between justice and power in his plays, he also employs historicism and mythological motifs to reinforce his realism discourse. In today's modern culture, the term 'liquid' appears to be an analogy for the swift conversion of communal consciousness to individuality. This leads to identities that are insensitive, self-centred, and alienated. Immigration is a clear sign of a dishonest and unfair system and draws attention as one of the contemporary world's key challenges. The primary objective of this study is to examine the inevitable consequences of modernism.

Keywords: Brenton, Modernism, Bauman, Liquid Modernity, National Identity

Öz

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı Zygmunt Bauman (1925-2017)'ın modernizm ile postmodernizm arasındaki geçiş sürecine ışık tutan ve metaforik olarak geliştirdiği 'akışkan modernite' teorisi oluşturmaktır. Çalışmanın temel tartışma zeminini küreselleşen dünyada çokça tartışılan göçmen, yabancı, savaş, göç, adaletsizlik, şiddet ve vahşet gibi sorunlar oluşturur. Howard Brenton (1942-)'ın *Jude* (2018) oyunu ekseninde mülteci konumunda İngiltere'de hayatta kalmaya çalışan Judith özelinde, genç bir kızın yabancı bir ülkede kimlik oluşturma süreci de çalışmanın içeriğinde yer alır. Karşıt görüşün ve muhalif tiyatronun öncü kalemlerinden biri olan ünlü İngiliz oyun yazarı Howard Brenton güç ve adaletsizlik arasındaki açmazı izleyicilerin dikkatine sunarken, oyunlarında tarihselcilik ve mitolojik unsurlara da yer vererek gerçekçilik söylemini güçlendirmeyi amaçlar. 'Akışkan' terimi, günümüz modern toplumunda duyarsız, bencil ve yabancılaşmış kimlikler üreten topluluk bilincinden, bireyciliğe doğru hızlı değişimin ve dönüşümün temsili olarak belirir. Modern dünyanın temel sorunlarından biri olarak göze çarpan göç, yozlaşmış ve adaletsiz bir sistemin açık göstergesidir. Araştırma, Modernizm sürecinde yaşanan ve kaçınılmaz olarak ortaya çıkan sonuçları incelemeyi amaçlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Brenton, Modernizm, Bauman, Akışkan Modernite, Ulusal Kimlik

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Introduction

Modernity resembles a forced adaptation to a new and unprecedented situation rather than a designed 'project'. Modernity emerged as a forced reaction to the collapse of the old world (a type of order that did not even need to see itself as an 'order', let alone a project), and there was no alternative to this reaction. Modernity can be told as a long and inconclusive story of escape from the great terror that emerged with the collapse of the old world (Bauman, 1995, p. 106).

Modernism is an expression of rejection of the past dominated by dogmas, traditions, customs, moral values and habits. Its focal point is the present time shaped within the concept of constant innovation. Concentrated on the absolute necessity of incessant change, modernism is an ideology combatting customs, morals and values. The ideology of modernity is the absolute and inevitable consequence of civilization; the transition process from dogmatism to rationalism has initiated modern progression in the fields of art, science, education, health, law, technology, and industry. With the "project of modernity", absolute innovation has been the inevitable fate of all humanity because "[m]odernity was born with the intention of throwing aside the legacy, burden and rubble of the past and making a fresh start" (Bauman, 2022, p. 41).

Under the title of "liquid modernity", Bauman argues that worldwide injustice and cruelty are consequences of globalization, the capitalist system, and the exploitation of technological advancements. With all his sensitivity, Bauman has gone beyond mere research about modernity. Bauman's argument in the context of 'liquid modernity' is that in the modern world order, man can never be sure that the weapon he has produced thanks to technology will not be pointed at himself. Seidman's compilation (1994) concisely captures the essence of the basic ambiguity within modernity "[...] the accounts of technological determinism destroying 'man' by the 'ma- chine' or 'meaningful political action'" (p. 88). In the framework of modernity, the hardest condition is being in a quest for identity. The form of classified societies and nations originating from Capitalism has created 'outsider' communities oppressed under the strength of affluent nations. Bauman has been influenced by the ideas of Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), particularly his views on the oppressive ideologies of the capitalist system over the subalterns within class-based society. The 'outsiders' are deprived of peace, security, and freedom. In an interview with Daniela Castellanos Reyes, Bauman enlightens the basic meaning of security in the modern world order: "Security not in the sense of safety from terrorists, burglars, or pickpockets...but security in the sense of knowing where you are, who you are, on what kind of future you can count [...]" (2009, p. 2). Besides genocide, mass migration from the East to the Western countries is another sign of liquid modernity that causes insecurity and deep fear. For immigrants, modern fear is an expression of loss of identity or a desperate search for it. The constant mobility in the migration wave all around the world is a symbolic indicator of 'liquid modernity' that represents fluidity in 'time' and 'space'. Major problems arising from the idea of modernity are uncertainty, identity crisis, fear and anxiety against the vagueness of future possibilities. In *Community* (2001), Bauman questions the signs of corrosion in modern life by offering answers to each: "Do you want security? Give up your freedom. Do you want confidence? Do not trust anybody outside your community" (p. 4) He then discusses the modern face of security and confidence.

1. Transition from Modernism to Postmodernism

The shift from modernism to postmodernism is a multifaceted process that spans cultural, intellectual, and artistic dimensions. However, Zygmunt Bauman points out that modernism is not an end but a state of constant liquid. Bauman argues that modernism is not an 'end' point, but rather that individuals are constantly in the process of adapting to a new world. For him, Modernism represents the process of individuals' transition from traditional thought patterns to new and modern ones. In this sense, Berman advocates that "[i]n the twentieth century, the process of modernization expands to take in virtually the whole world, and the developing world culture of modernism achieves spectacular triumphs in art and thought" (1982, p. 17). During this process, radical changes and transformations took place in the fields of art, literature and thought. However, modernism is not just a period of transition, but it is also an attempt by people to adapt to a complex and rapidly changing world. Therefore, it should not be assumed that modernism has ceased to exist or has been entirely supplanted by postmodernism. On the contrary, the transition process between modernism and postmodernism indicates a continuous process of interaction and transformation. This process needs to be viewed as the development and expansion of the ways in which individuals and societies perceive and interpret the complexities of reality. On the other hand, postmodernism is defined within various contexts like culture, condition, fashion, project, discourse, phenomenon, and style

because it is “a many-faceted formation” (Malpas, 2005, p. 22) that is used in art, architecture, literature, and cultural theories. Postmodernism is a way of thinking based on deep scepticism about almost all social, religious, political, and cultural phenomena on account of despair, loneliness, and dilemma in modern man caused by wars, economic conflicts, and political instabilities. Postmodernity is fundamentally against the products of capitalism like individualism, pure rationalism, and the culture of hyper-consumption and commodification. According to postmodern thought, conflicts of the modern epoch such as injustice, brutality and insecurity are clear signs of the collapse of the modernity project that promises freedom and equality. World War II is accepted as the milestone in the process of interrogation of the Enlightenment and its consequences. As O'Donnell (2003) claims “[g]reat hopes were held for human liberation, progress and social change. These ended in disillusionment with the advent of the Second World War” (p. 16). To better understand this conflict between modernity and postmodernity, it is important to question the foundations of modern thought.

When rationalism was developed by leading philosophers like Kant, Hegel, Descartes, and Spinoza, it was regarded as the power of human beings to control and dominate nature but in the framework of modernity, rationalism is the basic reason for alienation which creates a gap between human being and his product. Modern man sees nature, which is “a human construction” according to Heidegger (1977, p. 23), only as a resource and distances himself from it. Through questioning the nature of power and the purpose of knowledge, postmodernists reject all developments threatening humanity. Jean-François Lyotard (1924-1998), one of the pioneers of postmodernists, criticizes the relationship between the power of knowledge and Western countries in the quest for power in *The Postmodern Condition* (1984): “Knowledge in the form of an informational commodity indispensable to productive power is already, and will continue to be a major – perhaps the major – stake in the worldwide competition for power” (p. 5). On the other hand, postmodernists challenge the hegemony of knowledge and power, highlighting its manipulation for competitive dominance.

2. Liquid Modernity

Bauman rejects the notion of drawing a distinct boundary between modernism and postmodernism, contending that, in his view, modernism is “an incomplete project” (Habermas, 1983, p. 16) and its consequences are still ongoing. Bauman has called the phase between modernism and postmodernism ‘liquid modernism’, a concept that highlights the constant and unpredictable shifts in the structures of social values such as equality, identity, justice, ethics, and morality. His metaphorical usage of the term ‘liquid’ represents a temporary and unreformable transformation of “forms of social life” (Bauman, 2011, p. 12). ‘Liquified’ state of norms represents the inevitable loss of cultural ‘solid’ values such as morality, identity, security, and humanity. “Increasing uncertainty made it possible to introduce the liquid metaphor as an alternative to describing modernity’s ambiguities and, at the same time, address the future of this trend” (Lee, 2022, p. 71). Besides, the term ‘liquid’ has been technically used in terms of “easily changed into money by being sold or exchanged” (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 2009); Bauman uses the concept of liquidity in the figurative sense by associating it with modern capitalist order that is dominated with materiality. The erosion of ‘solid’ cultural and traditional values like “traditional loyalties, customary rights and obligations” (Bauman, 2000, p. 3) creates a sense of uncertainty and instability, prompting individuals to seek new forms of belonging and personal validation. Uncertainty and constant change in modern social life breed strain, doubt, anxiety, and quandary. Bauman has criticized ambiguities of modernity in his several works: *Modernity and Holocaust* (1989), *Liquid Modernity* (2000), *Community* (2001), *Identity* (2004), *Liquid Life* (2005), *Liquid Fear* (2006), *Modernity, Capitalism and Socialism* (2011) and *Strangers at Our Door* (2016).

Bauman and his Polish Jewish family experienced the impact of the Nazi invasion of Poland firsthand. Escaping the genocide, Bauman, deeply traumatized by the horrors of the Holocaust, reflects on its profound effects in the Preface to *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989): “I believed that the Holocaust was an interruption in the normal flow of history, a cancerous growth on the body of civilized society, a momentary madness among sanity... How could it happen in the heart of the most civilized part of the world?” (p. 8). The Holocaust (1933-1945), defined in the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2009) as “the killing of millions of Jews and other people by the Nazis during the Second World War”, is, for Bauman, the onset of queries about conflicts of (so-called modern) new world order. Having been originated in modern culture and civilization, the Holocaust, according to Bauman, cannot just be described as a Jewish affair; the Holocaust is the issue of ‘Western civilization and culture’; it is a matter of all humanity. When modernity is seen as a natural outcome of the Enlightenment, the global world is envisioned as a foundation for civilization, embodying justice, equality, and peace, rather than brutality, violence, and racism. However, as noted, “[t]he modern era had been founded on genocide, and proceeded through more genocide”

(Bauman, 1995, p. 182). On the axis of existence, human beings make choices and take responsibility for their choices, but in the modern age, the individual is forced to make some choices and is unaware of the responsibilities they will face. This is one of the main sources of insecurity, ambivalence, and fear. As Abrahamson (2004) claims “While ‘trust’ and ‘confidence’ were constitutive of early modernity, ‘risk’ and ‘uncertainty’ are now hallmarks of liquid modernity” (p. 172).

3. The Signs of ‘Liquid Modernity’ in *Jude*

Foucault draws attention to the underlying ideal of purity which reminds us of the tale of the madmen. These madmen are perceived as symbols of a dark disorder and ceaseless chaos that pose a threat to the clear and mature coherence of the mind. They are apprehended by authorities, placed on a ship, and subsequently dispatched to the sea. This act is believed not only to separate them from society but also to purify them (Foucault, 1961, pp. 7-8). The inability to accept the existence of strangers, or the urge to get rid of them is observed in almost all societies, much like the non-acceptance of the existence of mentally ill people, and it is closely related to the ideal of purity. Although the definitions of purity vary from one culture to another, the interest in purity and the obsession with fighting against dirt have manifested themselves in every age and culture, even as stated by Bauman; by actions such as sweeping the floors and marking traitors or exiling foreigners; efforts such as preserving order, making the environment conducive to reasonable actions, or maintaining this favourable state of the environment seem to stem from the same motivation (Bauman, 1997, pp. 7-8). We simply cannot trust the stranger because the possible actions of the stranger, who is unfamiliar to us or about whom little known, are unknown and unpredictable. Lack of mutual trust between us and this forced human migration towards the West is “the mass production of refugees” (Bauman, 2007, p. 41) Bauman views it as the dissolution of the surplus population due to negative globalization. Furthermore, he argues that refugees contribute to the growth of mutual suspicion, in other words; “from lack of trust, borderlines are drawn, and from suspicion, they are fortified with mutual prejudices and recycled into frontlines,” (Bauman & Donskis, 2013, p. 104). “Foreigners are now seen as pure ‘security problems’” and as “‘timebombs ready to explode’ and are treated in this way” (Bauman & Donskis, 2013, pp. 7;104). “The proper place of the poor is ‘out of sight’; they should be relegated from public spaces, stowed away in the ghettos, or, if possible, deported” (Abrahamson, 2004, p. 176). In sharp contrast to this polarizing perspective, known for his historical and political plays, Howard Brenton (1942-) stands out as one of the most radical playwrights of his period with a distinctive voice and innovative concepts. Brenton creates a connection between the past and the present, and he aims to reveal the defects of the past and to strengthen the possibility of a borderless and socialist world that has reflections in his utopian plays in particular. The characters in his plays often appear as participants in a collective or movement within a society primarily shaped by immoral and political corruption. In *Jude* (2018), Brenton has centred on racism, violence, injustice, brutality, inequality, and class distinction as a contemporary oppositional and socialist playwright, by especially applying historical figures and mythological elements within a realistic framework.

Jude by Brenton is a theatrical production that incorporates the character of Euripides and is inspired by *Jude the Obscure* (1895) by Thomas Hardy (The Guardian, 2019). In *Jude*, Brenton establishes a connection between the civilization of Ancient Greece and the contemporary modern world. The Greek dramatist Euripides (484-406) is animated as both a real and imaginary character on the stage. As a unique view of his time, Euripides avers women’s rights and criticizes the underestimation of their power by the patriarchal society of his time. Brenton associates Jude with Euripides’s *Medea*, staged in 432 BC; just like Medea, Jude struggles against injustice, social prejudices, and male dominance. Euripides himself must leave Athens and live in Macedonia as an immigrant as a consequence of his severe criticism of society and comedy playwrights that are against his tragic women characters. Like Jude in Britain, Medea is betrayed in the lands she has come to as a stranger. Brenton unifies realistic, mythological, historical, and modern issues in *Jude*. In the play, Judith (Jude) is portrayed as a young Syrian refugee woman struggling to form a new life in Britain. She is involved with a British man named John Donn and is the mother of a young boy named Timmy, whom she has with him. Despite her aunt’s insistence, Jude has never formally married John. In her aunt’s words, the only relatives of Jude who are alive are her aunt Martha and her cousin Mark: “For my sins I am all the family that God has left her” (Brenton, 2018, p. 19) because Jude has lost her family members on the migration road. She is obsessed with studying languages because it was her father’s wish:

JUDE: I was great with the languages. Daddy. All the way to the Hungarian border, my little sweet-talker, you said. That Albanian with the phones. Got us through the wire. In the snow. But I couldn’t do the Hungarian, not like Greek, Latin, ugly sounds, clacky tins banged, I couldn’t do the language, couldn’t stop the men –

cruel men - in the snow – you – in the snow. (Brenton, 2018, p. 36)

Jude could not translate Hungarian at the border crossing and ‘the cruel men’ killed her father so she has felt guilty since then. In her own words, Jude has ‘a story’ that is full of pity and despair, and she avoids sharing it with others. Jude earns her life by cleaning Sally Phillotson’s (a teacher and an activist) house. Sally, a university faculty member, discovers Jude stealing a Greek edition of Euripides’ *Medea* while cleaning her house. In response to Sally’s prejudiced remarks about Jude’s identity, who is caught in the act and confesses, “I’m what you think I am, ain’t I,” (Brenton, 2018, p. 3), Jude articulates her “position without identity” (Bauman, 2009, p.38) when she faces as a Middle Eastern refugee in the marginalized ‘othered’ position in the UK. For Sally, however, who is deeply embedded in dominant Western culture and perceives herself—whether consciously or unconsciously—as superior to Jude and other refugees, Jude’s efforts to reconcile her Middle Eastern and refugee identity are seen as nothing more than a fabrication and a mere imitation. The new identity that Sally is trying to construct by blending Jude’s Middle Eastern identity with her refugee status is merely a project, a pretence, and fake: Jude is just trying to ‘be like’ something. She finds herself in an idealistic situation, almost like a metaphorical dream state. Jude seeks Sally’s help to gain admission to the Department of Languages at Oxford, leveraging his innate ability to translate Ancient Greek, and she responds by saying: “I will change my life” (Brenton, 2018, p. 22). No matter what Jude says about herself, the image of an immigrant girl that has reduced Jude to stereotypes has already been formed in the mind of Sally, who is a representative of the dominant Western culture. Jude is in a position that Spivak calls “the colonized subaltern subject” (2010, p. 324) and describes as “a position without identity” (Spivak, 2005, p. 482) against the European imperial power in the post-colonial period. Continual debates revolve around her identity although she is not allowed to speak for herself.; even the intellectuals who claim to defend their rights have never asked the ‘other’, whom they see as aggrieved, what they want; because Jude and people like Jude are essentially ‘nobodies’ in the face of the dominant civilization:

JACK: Okay okay! I don’t know how you got into the country, and I don’t care. What’s fucking Syria to me, one more foreign toilet. All that matters is – You’re just – here. Like out o’ nowhere. (Brenton, 2018, p. 20)

When Sally is offered research at Christminster College, Oxford, Jude wants to go with her and attend Oxford as a graduate student, but Sally refuses because of Jude’s maternal responsibility, her ‘domestic situation’ in Britain and John’s illegal affairs in meat work. Despite Jude’s high grades in exams, her admission as an Oxford student has been blocked by the university administration because of the prosecution of her cousin, Mark, as a Muslim terrorist “because no rules existed for the unprecedented” (Bauman, 1993, p. 177). Jude feels a deep disappointment due to the biased approach of the administration and Sally’s betrayal. As a result of the desperate condition she is in, Jude chooses to leave her family. Security forces, Roger Sylvester and Pat Nash, interrogate Sally and John about the denouement of Jude’s story. Roger tries to help John because Jude’s permission to stay in Britain is revoked and their son must be sent to Syria. Despite Sally’s betrayal, Jude takes the exams, but the university administration betrays and lowers her points. Patricia Nash, a member of the security forces, is an old student of Professor Deidre Cass who had a lesbian relationship with her in the past. Accepting a genius as a student at the university is not in itself a true scandal, but Deidre’s immoral relationship with her student could be considered a scandalous event. Ironically, Deidre and Sally have doubts about their own civilized and secure country. They interrogate this condition they are in only when their freedom is restricted and only when their safety is in danger. This is a portrayal of modern individualism through selfishness: “SALLY: That is outrageous. This isn’t a police state! DEIDRE: I begin to think that depends on who you are” (Brenton, 2018, p. 65).

Deidre Cass struggles to help Judy and accepts her as a bursar, but she gives up her decision because of the pressure and threat made by MI5 (Military Intelligence, Section 5) administered by SIS (Secret Intelligence Service). MI5 and SIS are responsible for the internal and international security of England against terrorism, and they reveal that Jude’s cousin has participated in terrorism in London. However, Bauman stresses that the real terrorism of the modern world is marginalizing immigrants just because of their national and religious identities (Bauman, 2004, p. 72). Brenton reflects Mark and Jude as victims of Western-based nationalist prejudices and draws a portrait of both a Syrian refugee girl hopeful about her future and a desperate refugee woman overwhelmed by modern cruelty. Despite her exceptional genius, the modern system hinders Jude from directing her future. During the introduction speech of his play, Brenton explains his general perspective about Jude and the hard conditions that turn her into a victim suffering from ambivalences and dilemmas of modern times:

Jude is a story of a genius someone who has a vision who falls through the rotten floorboards of our country.

Jude is a tragic heroine of our times as talents are denied and I fear that is happening too many gifted people who don't fit who do not tick the boxes and therefore whose lives are crumpled up like pieces of paper by a bureaucracy and thrown away. (Brenton, 2020)

Brenton underlines the hints of the consciousness of 'nationalism' that rules the modern age when national values (nationalism and individualism) predominate humanity, equality, justice and morality. Jack Donn who constantly brags about his British citizenship regards himself as a degree of salvation for Jude because being a British citizen is synonymous with being in a privileged status and the only solution for Jude to live peacefully and freely in Britain is to be the wife of a British man. Although marrying a British man will make Jude's life in England more stable and secure both in society and in front of the law, for Jude her Syrian identity melts away; the complete cancellation of the identity she had built until that day, the irreversible separation from the culture in which she was raised, and the forced abandonment of the value judgments she had adopted were, in a way, like the end of her existence. From another point of view, the fact that Jude is forced to marry a British citizen to get rid of the label 'other', to obtain British citizenship and to have the same rights as all other citizens of this country is a sanction of the government on the female body, and Jude proves to be against this sanction by refusing to marry. Indirectly, she resists the government and even the fact that it is a source of pride for a man to be her rescuer:

JACK: I'll save you.

JUDITH: Save me?

JACK: They won't chuck you out. British national's wife. I mean they're getting really heavy about you lot.

JUDITH: My lot?

JACK: All you f*cking Arabs 'n 'Africans. (Brenton, 2018, p. 19)

Bauman qualifies consciousness of 'identity' as one of the "collective diseases of modern life" and "a modern invention" (1995, pp. 81-82). Identities have been created in the modern order to deepen vagueness and suspense in each 'stranger'. According to Bauman, "identity construction" is fundamentally the origin of the problem because the disadvantaged Eastern groups of people have been forced to migrate and they have just two options in the Western countries: They will either agree to be assimilated into the 'new' identity or they will live a life in fragments and in an immense uncertainty with "a life morally impoverished" (Bauman, 1995, pp. 134). Brenton depicts the dilemma in the two-faceted reality. While Judith is expected to remain unresponsive in the face of contempt, her cousin Mark, in despair, is obligated to accept the new identity chosen for him. Mark experiences the contradictory states of both acceptance and refusal; the state of being deprived of his own identity and inability to feel belonging to the new culture creates an identity crisis. The condition of liminality is described as a condition of an immigrant stuck between two identities. It is possible to observe a discourse of suppressed acceptance in Mark and Judith's conversation:

MARK: Everyone thinks I'm a Muslim.

JUDITH: I know, you don't get a chance to say 'But I'm a Christian, there are Christians in Syria.'

MARK: Yeah, why are people so ignorant in England?

JUDITH: Funny, isn't it? I mean my father always said, 'In England people are free. 'I s'pose he meant free to be pig ignorant.

MARK: I begin to feel 'You think I'm a Muslim, okay I'll be one. (Brenton, 2018, pp. 48-49)

Mark is an allegoric name intentionally chosen by Brenton that represents 'marked (stigmatized) identities' determined by modern states for strangers. Mark tends to submit to all kinds of imposed identities. Bauman (2016) claims that marking an individual leads to self-contempt (p. 23). Brenton reveals this kind of psychology through Jude's aunt, Martha. As a result of the oppressed attitudes of both Sarah and John, she is forced to tell lies that she does not believe in: "I am always saying, I have always said and say again and again, I am grateful to English people, grateful to England, grateful to your Government, I will never say anything else. Now, please-..." (Brenton, 2018, p. 14).

It seems quite ordinary and natural that immigrants have given various psychological reactions due to identity crises in such an ambiguity. The central argument of Zygmunt Bauman within the framework of 'liquid modernity' is the limitation of individuals' freedom to the point where they are unable to even express their true identities. The modernity project has strengthened the consciousness of uncontrollable nationalism contrary to its early promise of cultural and social independence of individuals. Just like most of the immigrants, Martha also feels like she has been stuck in a trap and deep

fear. The most dangerous war (impossible to win) of modernity is “uncertainty and ambivalence” (Bauman, 1995, p. 215). In the Introduction to *Liquid Fear* (2006), Bauman describes this issue: “Fear is the name we give to our uncertainty” (p. 2) The boundary between assimilation and commitment to values places individuals in a liminal position, and this uncertainty serves as the primary catalyst for modern fear. To explain the function of fear, Bauman (1994) comments that the “heuristic of fear would mean nothing more than resisting” against the fear of the unknown (p. 31). Aunt Martha desires a kind of certain life for Jude by indicating the bad position she will possibly encounter:

MARTHA: The immigration, they can come for you, today, now. They’ll be at the gate-big black car, big men, some stony-faced woman to take Timmy. They’ll throw you in one of those centers, then God help you. Judith, you’re back with your son now, be a family is the last hope.

JUDITH: Or- the last horror

MARTHA: Marry. Be safe.

JUDITH: Nowhere is safe, Auntie. (Brenton, 2018, p. 74)

The feeling of despair and loneliness resulting from the modern nuisance has a remarkable affinity with Bauman’s concept of ‘panoptic fear’ which is a metaphorical discourse indicating the anxiety of the immigrants due to being surveilled. (The ‘panopticon’ style of prison buildings was designed by English philosopher and reformer, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), allowing constant surveillance of prisoners). The ‘panoptic fear’ has mostly been related to sociologist David Lyon’s (1948-) concept of ‘liquid surveillance’ developed based on Bauman’s ‘liquid modernity’. It is impossible for prisoners to feel secure and comfortable under fixed observance. Bauman argues that the modern fear of immigrants is a product of the modern way of transparent observation. The system of transparency ignores individuals’ privacy which is an obvious implication of a threat to freedom. In Western countries, the fate of immigrants is determined by organized powers like Refugee Centres and Charitable Ensembles that keep the immigrants under surveillance in the name of protecting them. On the scale of Jude and her family’s desperate condition, Brenton sheds light on psychologically oppressed profiles of the immigrants. For Jude, the chance of entering Oxford is equivalent to crossing the borders and gaining eternal freedom, on the contrary, Mark tries to illustrate Jude the harsh facts of the contemporary world:

MARK: Going to university! Don’t you see, they’ll never let you in.

JUDE: Why not?

MARK: Cos of who we are.

JUDE: No, they’re scholars, scientists, thinkers, all they believe in is excellence.

MARK: We’re trash to them, Judith. (Brenton, 2018, p. 47)

Through the understanding of Western societies, the strangers are qualified by insulting words such as “trash, tainted, terrorist, clingy” as underlined by Brenton or “weeds” as Bauman (2022) indicates. Being alienated due to their identity, belief and culture has transformed the strangers into fearful, ordinary, and purposeless beings. In late modernity, the community of strangers has been the origin of “myxophobia” (the incessant fear of immigrants) in civilized nations (Bauman, 2016, p. 5). Bauman satirically claims that Western communities have regarded immigrants as the source of danger, disorder, crime, terrorism, and chaos. Bauman emphasizes that the understanding of solidarity in ‘solid modernity’ turns into alienation in the conception of ‘liquid modernity’ due to myxophobia. For Jude, being frightened and excluded creates feelings of desperateness and nuisance, so she has to admit the realities: “We’re not on a journey. It’s an illusion. We go nowhere. We are dead still” (Brenton, 2018, p. 76).

The choice of compulsory disappearance for Jude is an obvious sign of her being stuck in a psychological condition between survival and death. Despite her definite goals and confident decisions, Jude has lost the war against the ambiguity of liquid modern life. Despite her rare abilities in languages, Jude fails to comprehend the rules of the language spoken in the civilized world, and as a result, she has chosen to disappear just as the modern world expected of her and all other ‘strangers’. Such a policy implemented by any government on the immigrant population is a result of the government feeling threatened by hundreds of thousands of immigrants like Jude, Mark and Martha and taking the necessary measures to maintain its existence. Today’s British society, the heir of a great cultural heritage, is experiencing existential insecurity, like many other European societies, and is worried that in the cosmopolitan world of modern society, where the borders have become blurred, they will end up like Middle Eastern refugees; in other words, they leave no trace of their existence and the civilization they built. The desire to become a community and to remain a community is expressed as the rejection of

immigrants and other foreigners (Bauman, 2006, p. 179). The fear of an uncertain future is no longer a temporary standstill for both refugees and contemporary civilizations (Bauman & Donskis, 2013, p. 96).

Conclusion

Evaluated from the eyes of the immigrants, modernism has not created any innovation, but on the contrary, it has made the 'strangers' second-class outsiders and dangerous people. As a member of the post-modern society, Brenton sheds light on the victimized condition of the refugees in *Jude* to create a universal common sense. With his realistic view, the playwright reflects the mass migration crisis on the scale of individual perspective rather than a purely political issue. Brenton portrays the mass migration within the semi-political atmosphere but pays attention to personal fear and desperation. The audience witnesses the psychological breakdowns of the refugees. Bauman associates this kind of breakdown with 'derivative fear' meaning the consistent mood of uncertainty and vulnerability; it is a kind of exhausting consciousness that danger is everywhere but invisible. In Bauman's discourse, 'negative globalization' strengthens the consciousness of nationalism turning into a dimension of racial distinction because instead of creating a borderless world, modernity has clearly defined them. Within the framework of 'liquid modernity', Bauman underlines permanent labels like national and religious identities placed on modern individuals that are the unchangeable signs marked on their fates.

The connection between Euripides' Medea and Brenton's Jude, whom we encounter in the opening scene of the play, is shaped in the area surrounded by the triangle of trust, betrayal and exile in the adventure that continues until the end of the play. Jude's refugee status, like all other refugees, is a forced exile and remaining in exile. Jude is forced to leave her country, which now consisted of the ruins of a huge civilization and is betrayed and left stranded by those who promise her the most trust. The fate of this woman, who is condemned to fight tooth and nail against injustice, inequality, prejudices, and the male-dominated social order, was determined at the very beginning of her life in exile, where her roots were far away from her body. Jude's fate in the modern society of people who view refugees with frowning suspicion, so to speak, is decided before she even begins the battle to build her identity and shape her life in the distance created by mutual distrust and fear between the refugees and the settled society. If Jude wants to feel safe in her position as a refugee, to be accepted and to build an environment where she can realize her dreams by avoiding being the other, she must make great compromises on many elements such as family, ethnicity, religious identity, language, and culture that make her a unique character and an individual. It is doomed to fall under the yoke of the dominant civilization; The dominant culture requires the establishment of conditions where it does not feel threatened by the foreign, the unknown, or the unpredictable. At the end of the play, much like Euripides' Medea, who refuses to surrender under any circumstances, we are left uncertain about the fate of Brenton's Jude, who surrenders to the government's demands and expectations. Neither submission nor rebellion provides a solution for Jude's sense of perpetual exile.

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