

Jung Young Moon'un Vazelin Buda Anlatısında Bilinç Akışı, Absürtlük ve Flânör *

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Öz

Jung Young Moon'un Vazelin Buda başlıklı deneme metni, bilinç akışı tekniğiyle kurulan parçalı ve kaotik yapısı üzerinden, absürtlük ve flânör deneyimini merkeze alan bir anlatı sunar. Metin, modern bireyin anlam arayışını, hafızanın kırılmasını ve gündelik yaşamın absürt doğasını katmanlı bir kurgu içinde ele alır. Bu çalışma, söz konusu anlatıyı modernist ve postmodernist edebiyat gelenekleri bağlamında değerlendirerek flânör kavramı, absürt felsefesi ve anlatı kimliği yaklaşımı çerçevesinde incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Metnin merkezinde yer alan anlatıcının zihinsel ve fiziksel dolaşımı, Paris, Amsterdam ve Budapeşte gibi şehirlerde gerçekleşen gezintiler aracılığıyla somutlaşır. Bu gezintiler, yalnızca mekânsal deneyimler değil flânör bakışıyla şekillenen gözlem pratikleri ve bilinç akışına eşlik eden düşünsel süreçlerdir aynı zamanda. Zakkum çiçeği, uyku hapları, kedi ve Japon balığı gibi sıradan ya da absürt nesnelere etrafında kurulan çağrışımlar, bireyin yersiz-yurtsuzluk deneyimini, kimlik kırılmalarını ve dilin sınırlarını görünür kılar. Bu yönüyle metin, flânör'ün rastlantısal gözlemleri ile absürdün varoluşsal kabullenişini bir araya getirir. Metnin parçalı ve dağınık yapısı, bireyin anlam üretme çabasındaki kırılmasını ve parçalanmış kimlik deneyimini estetik bir düzlemde yansıtır. Jung Young Moon, bu anlatı stratejisiyle hem modernist bilinç akışı geleneğini sürdürmekte hem de postmodern anlatı olanaklarını genişletmektedir. Sonuç olarak Vazelin Buda, yalnızca Kore edebiyatının yerel dinamiklerini değil, aynı zamanda evrensel varoluşsal meseleleri de ele alan bir deneme metni olarak öne çıkar. Çalışma, yakın okuma yöntemiyle metnin dilsel ve tematik katmanlarını çözümleyerek modern bireyin anlam, aidiyet ve kimlik arayışındaki kırılma noktalarını göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kore Edebiyatı, Jung Young Moon, Vazelin Buda, Bilinç Akışı, Absürtlük, Flânör

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Stream of Consciousness, Absurdity, and the Flâneur in Jung Young Moon's Vaseline Buddha Narrative *

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Abstract

This study examines Jung Young Moon's essay Vaseline Buddha, focusing on its fragmented and chaotic structure shaped by the stream-of-consciousness technique. The text offers a narrative that foregrounds absurdity and the flâneur experience, exploring the modern individual's search for meaning, the fragility of memory, and the absurdity of everyday life. The narrator's mental and physical wandering materializes through journeys in cities such as Paris, Amsterdam, and Budapest, blending spatial experience with flâneur observation and reflective processes. Associations around ordinary or absurd objects—like the oleander flower, sleeping pills, cats, and goldfish—reveal experiences of placelessness, fractured identity, and the limits of language. The text unites the flâneur's chance observations with the existential acceptance of the absurd, while its fragmented form aesthetically mirrors the vulnerability and disintegration of identity. By doing so, Jung Young Moon both extends the modernist stream-of-consciousness tradition and expands postmodern narrative possibilities. Vaseline Buddha emerges as an essay that addresses not only the dynamics of Korean literature but also universal existential concerns. The study employs close reading to unpack the linguistic and thematic layers of the text, highlighting the fragility inherent in the modern search for meaning, belonging, and identity.

Keywords: Korean Literature, Jung Young Moon, Vaseline Buddha, Stream of Consciousness, Absurdity, Flâneur

* Ethical Statement: * It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.

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Introduction

Jung Young Moon is among the contemporary Korean writers who synthesize modernist and postmodernist narrative techniques. *Vaseline Buddha* (Moon, 2010) addresses the existential crises of the modern individual, the unreliability of memory, and chaotic experiences in the search for meaning by employing stream of consciousness, a fragmented narrative structure, and absurd elements. The narrator's reflections on mental processes and ordinary objects of everyday life create a multilayered narrative in which the boundaries between memory and fiction become blurred.

The structural features of the text evoke the stream-of-consciousness technique characteristic of modernism while simultaneously aligning with the fragmented construction and deferred meaning typical of postmodernist fiction. The narrator's physical and mental wandering through geographies such as Paris, Berlin, and Nepal can be interpreted as a contemporary reflection of Charles Baudelaire's concept of the flâneur (Baudelaire, 1964). When considered alongside Walter Benjamin's analyses of modern urban experience (Benjamin, 1999), this flânerie reveals the phenomena of individual alienation and cultural displacement.

The absurd elements of the narrative can be examined through Albert Camus's philosophy of the absurd (Camus, 1955). The narrator's contemplations on death, free will, and choice—mediated through everyday objects such as rat poison, a cat, or sleeping pills—demonstrate how the absurd permeates daily life. This quality situates the work within the tradition of absurd literature on both formal and thematic levels. In comparison with Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (Beckett, 1954), the absurd in Moon's narrative functions not only as philosophical content but also as a structuring narrative strategy.

Memory and narrative identity can be explained within the framework of Paul Ricoeur's theory of narrative identity (Ricoeur, 1992). The narrator's remark—"...anlattıklarım uydurma şeylerdi... ...what I recounted were fictitious things..." (Moon, forthcoming, p. 80)—reveals the instability of memory and suggests that identity is formed through continuous reconstruction rather than stable essence. This tendency aligns with postmodernist rejections of fixed identity. A parallel may be drawn with James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (Joyce, 1939), where stream of consciousness and memory shape narrative temporality and the perception of selfhood (Ellmann, 1982).

These theoretical perspectives are not treated as isolated frameworks but as complementary interpretive approaches. Flânerie conceptualizes the narrator's spatial wandering within modern urban experience (Baudelaire, 1964; Benjamin, 1999), Camus's philosophy of the absurd

explains the existential dimension of everyday experiences (Camus, 1955), and Ricoeur's narrative identity provides a conceptual model for understanding the dynamic construction of selfhood through memory and narration (Ricoeur, 1992). Together, these frameworks situate Moon's narrative at the intersection of modernist interiority and postmodernist narrative fragmentation.

This study examines Vaseline Buddha through these three theoretical perspectives by employing close textual analysis. Selected passages are analysed on linguistic, structural, and thematic levels to determine the text's position within modernist and postmodernist literary contexts. Academic studies on Korean literature in Türkiye (Koroğlu Türközü, 2017; Özçelik & Koroğlu Türközü, 2022; Özçelik & Koroğlu Türközü, 2025) have largely focused on historical and cultural developments. Consequently, stylistic and narratological approaches remain relatively limited in Turkish scholarship.

The limited attention given to Jung Young Moon's works within Turkish academic literature constitutes one of the central motivations of this study. Previous research has predominantly emphasized sociocultural and historical contexts while paying less attention to narrative experimentation and postmodern literary strategies (Özçelik & Koroğlu Türközü, 2022, 2025). By addressing this gap, the study aims to contribute to the growing body of scholarship on contemporary Korean literature and to provide a theoretical interpretation of Moon's narrative aesthetics.

Since the textual analysis in this article is based primarily on the Turkish translation of Vaseline Buddha (Moon, forthcoming), a brief clarification regarding the textual source is necessary. Unless otherwise stated, all quotations are taken from the Turkish translation Vazelin Buda (forthcoming). While the study acknowledges the mediated nature of the text, its primary aim is a literary analysis rather than a translation-oriented investigation. References to the Korean original (Moon, 2010) and the English translation (Moon, 2016) are provided for contextual purposes. In line with this focus, the analysis concentrates not on the act of translation but on the narrative dynamics of the text, particularly its use of stream of consciousness, its engagement with absurdity, and its construction of the flâneur figure. At the same time, the study seeks to bring to light layers of meaning, narrative nuances, and stylistic intricacies that may not be readily discernible to the ordinary reader, thereby approaching the text as a complex literary structure that invites close and attentive analysis.

Textual Background

Vaseline Buddha (Moon, 2010) is a significant work in contemporary Korean literature, combining modernist and postmodernist narrative techniques. The novel intertwines autobiographical traces with fictional elements, presenting the narrator's mental and physical journeys through a chaotic, fragmented, and multilayered stream-of-consciousness experience. For instance, the narrator's existential reflections on seemingly ordinary objects—such as rat poison, a cat, or a goldfish in a Paris apartment—alongside expansions of thought reaching global references, including Buddha statues in Nepal, or sleeping pills, illustrate the work's ability to address local and universal themes simultaneously.

The central themes of the novel include the modern individual's search for meaning, the instability of memory, and the absurdity of everyday life. References to global spaces highlight the individual's cultural displacement and struggles for adaptation within the conditions of global modernity. Vaseline Buddha thus stands out as a distinctive narrative that merges culturally specific elements of Korean society with broader existential concerns resonating with modern and postmodern literary traditions.

Because the textual analysis in this study relies on the Turkish translation (Moon, forthcoming), it is important to clarify the textual basis of the research. The analysis draws on the pre-publication PDF version³ of this translation, allowing a comprehensive examination of the narrative's thematic and stylistic features. The original Korean text (Basellin Budda, Moon, 2010) and the officially published English translation by Yewon Jung (Moon, 2016) provide an additional textual framework situating the work within a broader international readership.

Jung Young Moon

Jung Young Moon is a prominent figure in contemporary Korean literature, frequently associated with experimental narrative practices. His works are characterized by fragmented narration, philosophical reflection, and an emphasis on the instability of meaning. Within Korean literary history, Vaseline Buddha can be situated alongside earlier experiments with interior narration and fragmented consciousness. For example, Yi Sang's short story Wings (1936/2001) is considered a foundational model for such experimentation, reflecting the alienated condition of the modern subject under colonial modernity.

³ The Turkish translation analyzed in this study was prepared by the author and is currently unpublished (forthcoming). All citations are drawn from this manuscript and used with the author's permission.

Moon has occasionally been referred to as the “Korean Beckett,” highlighting the influence of absurdist and minimalist narrative traditions on his writing. From this perspective, *Vaseline Buddha* may be interpreted not only as a narrative of individual existential experience but also as a text connecting the modernist heritage of Korean literature with contemporary global literary experimentation.

Textual Source and Translational Note

This study is based primarily on the author's own Turkish translation of Jung Young Moon's *Vaseline Buddha* (Moon, forthcoming; translation by the author, unpublished), accessed in pre-publication PDF format. All quotations cited in this article are derived from this Turkish version and are rendered into English by the author unless otherwise indicated.

To ensure textual accuracy and contextual consistency, the analysis also references the Korean original (*Basellin Budda*, Moon, 2010) and the officially published English translation by Yewon Jung (Moon, 2016). Any direct references to these sources are explicitly indicated in the text.

This statement clarifies the pre-publication status of the Turkish translation, confirms that the translation was conducted by the author, and ensures methodological and ethical transparency in the close-reading analyses presented.

Vaseline Buddha

Vaseline Buddha, written by the Korean author Jung Young Moon, is an experimental novel that intentionally moves away from traditional narrative forms. Instead of presenting a clear and linear plot, the text develops through free association and fragmented narration. It begins with a simple nighttime situation involving an insomniac narrator, but soon shifts inward, focusing on the narrator's mental processes. As the narrative progresses, reality, imagination, and surreal elements become intertwined. In this sense, the novel is less concerned with telling a conventional story and more focused on conveying states of mind.

A central theme of the novel is the difficulty of expressing certain thoughts and experiences in language. Meaning is not presented as fixed or explicit; rather, it remains open, ambiguous, and shaped by the reader's interpretation. This deliberate ambiguity weakens the sense of narrative unity, while also encouraging reflection on the limits and possibilities of language. The use of fragmentation, repetition, and sudden shifts in direction invites the reader to take an active role in making sense of the text.

In this work, Jung Young Moon explores themes such as existence, reality, and perception in unconventional ways. The novel is based on the idea that reality is not stable or singular, but is continuously reconstructed through individual consciousness. As a result, *Vaseline Buddha* challenges conventional reading habits both in terms of its content and its form, and is considered an important example of experimental writing in contemporary Korean literature.

Vaseline Buddha: Fragmented Consciousness and Existential Flânerie

Jung Young Moon's *Vaseline Buddha* is an autobiographical essay-narrative that foregrounds the instability of consciousness through a fragmented and absurd narrative structure. Written in the stream-of-consciousness mode, the text moves fluidly among memory, perception, and philosophical rumination, illustrating the modern subject's alienation within a world lacking coherent meaning. The narrator's flânerie—both mental and spatial—extends across Berlin, Amsterdam, and Paris, transforming geographical mobility into an existential itinerary. Within this fluid structure, solitude, displacement, and absurdity converge, creating a space in which meaning is perpetually deferred and identity remains provisional.

1. Fragmentation, Memory, and the Logic of Chance

The narrative opens with quotidian scenes—the care of a friend's cat, the delegation of a goldfish named Kierkegaard, or the contemplation of a Maoist cat—that blur the boundary between the trivial and the philosophical. Through these accidental encounters, Jung constructs a "logic of chance," where random events supplant causal coherence. Memory functions simultaneously as a narrative device and a philosophical problem: recollections of Nepal's snowy mountains or fleeting encounters in European cities emerge not as continuity but as rupture, revealing the narrator's fragmented psyche. Acts of remembering thus stage the very instability of subjectivity that defines the modern flâneur.

2. Existential Vertigo and the Limits of Flânerie

At the center of the narrative lies the motif of vertigo—both a physiological condition and a metaphor for existential imbalance. The narrator's physical dizziness, diagnosed as a vestibular abnormality, becomes a point of reflection on the loss of meaning and control. His solitary walks in Berlin, punctuated by observations of cats, magpies, and passersby, recall Benjamin's notion of the flâneur yet simultaneously expose its limits in contemporary modernity. What was once an aesthetic mode of urban perception now turns into a symptom of disconnection: movement without purpose, reflection without synthesis. In this respect, Jung's text reframes

the modernist concern with alienation as a postmodern play of absurdity, dislocation, and distance.

3. Symbols of Death, Serenity, and Ambivalence

Objects such as oleanders, sleeping pills, oyster shells, and bones accumulate as symbolic condensations of death, desire, and ambivalence. The sleeping pills stored in glass bottles evoke both the temptation of self-annihilation and the longing for stillness. The poisonous oleander embodies the paradox of beauty and mortality, while the Buddha statue signifies an unattainable ideal of spiritual equilibrium. Recurring motifs such as these form a symbolic network that mirrors the tension between existence and nothingness, evoking Beckettian absurdity while remaining grounded in the narrator's intensely subjective interiority.

4. Writing, Self, and Open-Endedness

The narrative closes with the act of writing itself—an unfinished attempt to impose form on chaos. The decision to title the work *Vaseline Buddha*, rather than leave it untitled, underscores the fluid and elusive nature of self-expression. Writing becomes both a site of liberation and a constraint, mirroring the dual structure of consciousness in the postmodern condition. Images such as cats sleeping on rooftops or an imagined island drifting in Austria convey a metaphysical resistance to closure. Through this cultivated open-endedness, Jung constructs an ontology of uncertainty in which the search for meaning becomes, paradoxically, the ultimate absurd act.

Literature Review

Modernist and postmodernist literature frequently explore the individual's inner world and experiences of social alienation. Within this tradition, James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) and Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* (1955) are commonly regarded as foundational examples of the stream-of-consciousness technique, reflecting the mental fragmentation of the modern subject (Ellmann, 1982). Jung Young Moon's *Vaseline Buddha* adapts this narrative heritage within a Korean literary context, combining globally recognizable modernist techniques with culturally specific perspectives. Its fragmented narrative structure and shifting perspectives also resonate with postmodern literary strategies that challenge stable meaning and narrative coherence (Hutcheon, 1988). Contemporary literary commentary similarly emphasizes how Moon's narrative style creates a sense of disorientation and interpretive openness for readers (Malone, 2016). Video-based discussions further highlight how the text's chaotic narrative flow and absurdist elements shape reader reception (책을 삼킨 [Chaek-eul Samkin] TV, 2013). In this

context, the stream-of-consciousness technique can also be understood as a narrative mode that foregrounds the character's inner monologue and presents fragmented thoughts, emotions, and temporal shifts as they occur in the mind, often merging past and present experiences while reflecting psychological and social tensions (Şerifova, 2023).

The concept of the flâneur, first articulated by Charles Baudelaire to describe the detached observer of modern urban life, was later reinterpreted by Walter Benjamin as a key figure of modernity's sensory and spatial experience (Baudelaire, 1964; Benjamin, 1999). In *Vaseline Buddha*, the narrator's wanderings through cities such as Paris, Berlin, and Kathmandu extend this tradition to the experience of the contemporary Korean subject. These movements combine physical travel with mental drift, producing a narrative that reflects both personal displacement and broader transnational mobility (Almony, 2016). As recent scholarship suggests, the flâneur in modernist literature is not merely an urban observer but also a figure closely tied to processes of memory, mediating between past and present while navigating the tensions between tradition and modernity through a reflective form of wandering (Sivri & Altar, 2025).

Another significant theoretical perspective is Albert Camus's philosophy of the absurd, which emphasizes the confrontation between humanity's search for meaning and the indifference of the universe (Camus, 1955). The narrator's encounters with seemingly ordinary objects—such as rat poison, cats, or sleeping pills—illustrate how existential reflection emerges from everyday experiences. In this regard, the absurd functions not only as a philosophical theme but also as a narrative principle that shapes the text's episodic and reflective structure.

Paul Ricoeur's concept of narrative identity provides an additional interpretive framework for understanding the instability of memory in the text (Ricoeur, 1992). According to Ricoeur, identity is constructed through narrative processes in which memory and storytelling continually reinterpret past experiences. In *Vaseline Buddha*, the narrator's shifting recollections and blurred distinction between memory and fiction illustrate this dynamic process of identity formation.

Critical discussions of Jung Young Moon's work further emphasize the role of existential stagnation and narrative inaction. Lee (2013) notes that Moon's narratives frequently depict characters whose apparent inactivity reflects deeper philosophical tensions concerning subjectivity and meaning. Literary reviews similarly underline the text's metafictional qualities and dream-like narrative logic, which blur the boundaries between philosophical reflection and storytelling (Malone, 2016; Popovich, 2021). In this sense, the protagonist's oscillation between flânerie, memory, absurdity, and moments of contemplative inaction reflects both existential

freedom and the constraints imposed by modern life (Almony, 2016). Visual and video-based commentary has also highlighted how Moon's narrative techniques contribute to the reader's experience of fragmentation and interpretive ambiguity (책을 삼킨 [Chaek-eul Samkin] TV, 2013).

Overall, existing scholarship demonstrates that Vaseline Buddha synthesizes multiple literary and philosophical traditions, including flânerie, absurdist philosophy, and theories of narrative identity. By integrating these frameworks with the cultural context of contemporary Korean society, Moon's work contributes to broader discussions of modernist and postmodernist aesthetics in world literature and illustrates how Western literary traditions can be reinterpreted within a Korean narrative context (Popovich, 2021).

Methodology: Integrating Narrative Identity, Absurdism, and Flânerie

This study adopts a qualitative literary methodology combining theoretical interpretation with close textual analysis to examine Jung Young Moon's Vaseline Buddha (Moon, 2010 forthcoming). Unless otherwise stated, all quotations from the novel are taken from the Turkish translation Vazelin Buda (Moon, forthcoming). The research design integrates philosophical and literary theories to analyse how narrative form articulates existential and spatial disorientation.

1. Methodological Approach

The study employs qualitative textual analysis grounded in interpretive literary methodology. Rather than statistical or corpus-based analysis, the research focuses on close reading of selected passages, examining linguistic, structural, and thematic patterns. The objective is to identify how narrative techniques construct experiences of memory, absurdity, and spatial wandering.

Within this framework, textual interpretation is guided by a theoretically informed reading strategy. Philosophical concepts are not treated as external commentary but as analytical tools that illuminate the narrative structure of the text.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework integrates three complementary perspectives: Paul Ricoeur's theory of narrative identity, Albert Camus's philosophy of the absurd, and the tradition of flânerie developed by Charles Baudelaire and later reinterpreted by Walter Benjamin.

Ricoeur's (1992, 2004) conception of narrative identity provides the foundation for analyzing the narrator's fragmented recollections. The interplay between autobiographical memory and fictional invention aligns with Halbwachs's (1992) notion of socially conditioned remembrance, emphasizing identity as a dynamic process rather than a fixed entity.

Camus's (1955) philosophy of the absurd illuminates the existential implications of this instability. Encounters with everyday objects provoke reflections on the indifference of existence, highlighting the tension between the human longing for coherence and the opacity of the world. Echoing Beckett's minimalism (Beckett, 1955, 1954), the narrative resists closure while simultaneously exhibiting postmodern metafictional awareness (Hutcheon, 1988).

Flânerie, theorized by Charles Baudelaire (1964) and elaborated by Walter Benjamin (1999), provides a spatial dimension to existential disorientation. The narrator's wandering through Berlin, Paris, and Kathmandu reflects Michel de Certeau's (1984) conception of walking as individualized meaning-making. These movements operate as narrative strategies externalizing existential drift, while the transnational scope of urban spaces mirrors broader tendencies toward existential detachment and non-engagement in contemporary Korean fiction (Fulton & Kwon, 2005; Lee, 2013).

3. Analytical Procedure

All analyses are conducted based on the Turkish translation (Moon, forthcoming). Passages cited in the article were translated into English by the researcher. Consequently, the study situates itself within the field of reception-oriented interpretation rather than comparative philology.

Close reading constitutes the primary analytical method. Particular attention is given to narrative fragmentation, syntactic rhythm, repetition, and stream-of-consciousness patterns. These microstructural features are interpreted through the theoretical framework described above.

The analysis proceeds on three interrelated levels:

1. **Conceptual–Thematic Analysis:** Memory, absurdity, and flânerie are interpreted through a unified philosophical lens, drawing on modern theories of memory that conceptualize it as a reconstructive process shaped by perception and experience, while the figure of the flâneur mediates between urban space and subjective consciousness (Benjamin, 1999).

2. Formal and Structural Analysis: Fragmentation, temporal discontinuity, and digressive narration are examined in relation to modernist interiority (Joyce, 1922, 1939) and postmodern metafiction (Hutcheon, 1988).
3. Cultural Contextualization: The transnational settings—Paris, Berlin, and Kathmandu—are interpreted as spatial manifestations of existential displacement within contemporary Korean literature, in line with theories of extended cognition that frame space as an active component in the construction of identity and memory (Clark & Chalmers, 1998).

By integrating theoretical interpretation with close textual analysis, this methodological framework enables a multidimensional reading of Vaseline Buddha. Fragmented memory, absurd existence, and spatial wandering emerge as interconnected narrative mechanisms shaping the text's representation of modern subjectivity. The study therefore situates Moon's narrative at the intersection of modernist explorations of consciousness and postmodern narrative experimentation.

Findings

Jung Young Moon's *Vaseline Buddha* is constructed through a chaotic stream-of-consciousness technique, employing absurd images, ordinary objects, and experiences of flânerie in global spaces to reveal the existential quest of the modern individual. The text intertwines the themes of memory, absurdity, and flânerie, making visible the uncertainties and contradictions in the search for identity, meaning, and belonging. The findings analyze the thematic and formal characteristics of the text through three theoretical frameworks—Baudelaire's concept of the flâneur, Camus's philosophy of the absurd, and Ricoeur's theory of narrative identity—and classify them under four main themes.

1. The Formation of the Absurd through Everyday Objects

The text deepens existential inquiries by situating ordinary objects in an absurd context. The narrator employs everyday items such as sleeping pills, a cat, and the oleander flower as metaphors for universal issues such as death, free will, and intention. The act of hoarding sleeping pills represents a desire for temporary escape or a "reversible death," as the narrator states:

Buna rağmen bende öldürücü doza ulaşan, her zaman elverişli bir biçimde kullanabileceğim uyku hapları vardı, onlardan bir kısmı bir vakit seyahate gidip hatıra eşya olarak aldığım, müzik kutusunun içinde duruyordu. Bazen müzik kutusunu açıp içindeki uyku haplarımı

kontrol ederdim, müzik kutusundan çıkan sesleri dinleyerek o şeylere bakarken uyku hapları her zaman bir beklentiye kapılmama neden oldular, ayrıca bana güvence de verdiler. Her neyse söz konusu uyku haplarını aldıktan sonra, müzik kutusunun kolunu çevirip müziği dinlerken ebedî bir uykuya da dalabilirdim (Moon, forthcoming, p. 192).

Nevertheless, I had sleeping pills that had accumulated to a lethal dose, always available for convenient use, some of which I had once bought as a souvenir during a trip, and which were kept inside a music box. Sometimes I would open the music box to check the sleeping pills inside, and while listening to the sound from the box, those pills always aroused a sense of anticipation in me, while also giving me a sense of reassurance. In any case, after taking those sleeping pills, I could fall into eternal sleep while listening to the music by turning the crank of the music box (Moon, forthcoming, p. 192).⁴

This scene, in the context of Camus's philosophy of the absurd, demonstrates that the meaning of life is shaped in a void that cannot be determined by rational answers (Camus, 1955).

The random actions of the cat named Maoist reveal the parallels between human consciousness and the balance between choice and instinct. The narrator observes the cat wandering across the piano keys:

Bir gün Maoist kedi kapağını açık bıraktığım piyanonun tuş takımı üzerinde yürüyordu, tuşlardan çıkan sestten bir hayli şaşırıp azıcık da korkarak söz konusu seslere birazcık da merak salarak, o şeyden bir sevinç duymuş gibi kaç kere temkinli bir biçimde tuşların üzerinde gelip gitti, daha sonraları da birkaç kez böyle yaptı. Bir ara müzisyene dönüşen Maoist kedinin çaldığı müziği dinlemek hoşuma gider oldu, her seferinde birbirinden farklı içine doğduğu gibi çaldığı müziklere Mavi Ekstazi ya da Çöken Hüzün yahut Kontrol Edilemez Baş Dönmesi gibi isimler verdim (Moon, forthcoming, pp. 186–187).

One day, Maoist the cat was walking across the keyboard of the piano I had left open. Surprised and slightly scared by the sounds coming from the keys, the cat cautiously walked back and forth several times, as though curious yet delighted by the sounds. Later, the cat repeated this a few more times. At one point, Maoist seemed to turn into a musician, and I enjoyed listening to the music the cat played each time, each tune different and spontaneous. I named the music pieces things like Blue Ecstasy, Collapsing Melancholy, or Uncontrollable Vertigo (Moon, forthcoming, pp. 186–187).

⁴ Quotations from the Turkish edition (Moon, forthcoming) are rendered into English by the author.

This section shows that the absurd functions not only as a philosophical concept but also as a narrative strategy integrated into daily life experiences. Similarly, the watering of the poisonous oleander, despite its deadly nature, symbolizes the enchanting yet destructive quality of life:

Gelgelelim kediye göz kulak olmak için gittiğim o evde genelde göz kulak olduğum şey söz konusu evdeki çiçektir. O şey zakkumdu, ağzından köküne kadar her yeri zehirdi, özellikle beyaz öz suyu yaralı bir deriye dokunduğu anda ölüme neden olabilen bir şeydi. O şeye göz kulak olduğumu söylüyorum ama yapıp ettiğim tek şey saksısına bir defaya mahsus su koymuş olduğumdur, genelde yaptığım bir şey varsa o da o şeyin içindeki zehre dair düşünmektir (Moon, forthcoming, p. 179).

However, when I went to that house to look after the cat, what I usually looked after was the flower there. It was an oleander, poisonous from its mouth to its root, especially its white sap, which could cause death the moment it touched wounded skin. I say I looked after it, but the only thing I did was to water it once. What I usually did was think about the poison inside it (Moon, forthcoming, p. 179).

The nature of the oleander strengthens the integration of the absurd into the ordinary elements of daily life and underscores the relationship between existential anxiety and individual experience. Moon's approach resonates with the tradition of absurd literature both formally and thematically, reinforcing the experimental structure of the text.

2. Flânerie and Global Placelessness

The text conveys the narrator's physical and mental wanderings across global spaces, exposing the experience of placelessness in the modern individual. Wanderings in Berlin, Paris, and Amsterdam represent the absence of a fixed identity and the position of the modern subject as an observer-alienated figure in urban settings (Baudelaire, 1964).

The narrator's time spent gazing at a garden from a Berlin apartment illustrates how spatial movement in the city merges with the experience of loneliness and alienation:

Genel itibarıyla bahçe onun içinde vakit geçirmeye çok elverişli bir yer olmasının dışında pencereden seyretmek için de iyi bir yerdi. Kışın başladığı sıralarda bir süreliğine sıradan önemsiz bir edebiyat etkinliğine katılmak için Brüksel'e gittim Almancaya çevrilen bir kitabımın yayınının ne durumda olduğunu görmek için (tahmin ettiğim gibi pek bir netice yoktu) Berlin'e gidip o şehirdeki bir yerleşim bölgesinde bulunan bir binanın dördüncü katındaki odanın penceresinden bahçeye bakarak zamanımın çoğunu geçirdim. Başım bir

hayli döndüğünden neredeyse tamamen odaya tıklamak zorunda kaldım. Aslında Berlin'deki söz konusu odaya kadar bile zar zor ulaşmıştım... (Moon, forthcoming, pp. 208–209).

In general, the garden was not only a very suitable place to spend time but also a good place to watch from the window. When winter began, I went to Brussels for a while to attend an insignificant literary event, and to see the state of publication of my book translated into German (which, as I expected, yielded little result). Then I went to Berlin, where I spent most of my time in a fourth-floor apartment overlooking a garden in a residential area, as I was almost entirely confined indoors due to severe dizziness. In fact, even reaching that apartment in Berlin had been extremely difficult for me... (Moon, forthcoming, pp. 208–209).

In Paris and Amsterdam, the narrator's aimless wanderings highlight the tension between individual experience of placelessness and cultural contexts. While reading Beckett's *Molloy* in a hotel, the narrator reflects on the writer's death and literature as a form of relation to death:

O gün akşam söz konusu kasabada amaçsızca dolaşırken oradaki küçük bir otelde kaldım, orada o kızın tavsiyesiyle satın alıp okuduğum, Beckett'in üçlemesinden biri olan [Molloy]'u okurken, Paris'teki bir otelde son saatlerini geçirerek, şu berbat duvar kâğıdını değiştirmesem öleceğim demesinin üzerinden çok geçmeden ölüp giden, İrlandalı yazara dair düşündüm (Moon, forthcoming, p. 88).

That evening, while wandering aimlessly in that town, I stayed in a small hotel. There, I read *Molloy*, one of Beckett's trilogies, which I had purchased on the recommendation of a girl. While reading it, I thought about the Irish writer, who had spent his last hours in a Paris hotel, saying, 'If I don't change this horrible wallpaper, I will die,' and soon after, he did indeed die (Moon, forthcoming, p. 88).

In Amsterdam, small details such as a toy doll floating in a canal and a young girl encountered on the street show how minor daily events trigger feelings of placelessness and transience in the modern subject:

Ayrıca bir vakit Amsterdam'dan sadece biraz daha kuzeye gitmek düşüncesiyle İskandinavya'daki bir ülkeye giden gemide yer ayırtmak niyetiyle sabahleyin limana giderken bir kanalın önünde suya sürüklenip giden bir oyuncak bebeği gördükten sonra seyahat etmek isteğim bir anda sönünce İskandinavya'ya gitmekten vazgeçerek Hollanda'yı hemencecik terk etmek istedim... (Moon, forthcoming, pp. 132–133).

One morning, on my way to the harbor to book a place on a ship bound for a Scandinavian country, planning to travel slightly north from Amsterdam, I saw a toy doll drifting in a canal. At that moment, my desire to travel disappeared, and I immediately gave up going to Scandinavia, wanting to leave the Netherlands right away... (Moon, forthcoming, pp. 132–133).

Encounters with Buddha statues in Nepal further reinforce the temporary and individual nature of the search for meaning through cultural symbols. The narrator reflects on the sincerity of a gift—a reclining Buddha statue—linking it both to the giver's intention and the symbolic weight of the object:

Neticede ben benden uzaklaşmaya çalışan kediyle beraber birkaç gün hemen hemen hiçbir şey yapmadan durdum birkaç yerimden de sivrisinek ısırıldıktan sonra kendi evime döndüm. Seyahate gidip gelen biri bana ahşaptan oyularak yapılmış yan yatan küçük bir Buda heykeli hediye etmişti, o şey bir vakit gittiğim Nepal'deki bir antika dükkânında ahşaptan yapılmış küçük atı gördükten sonra o şeyi bir hayli içime sindiğinden satın almak istemiştim ama aslında bir hayli büyük olduğundan vazgeçtikten sonra onun yanında duran oturan Buda heykelini satın almama müteakiben Buda heykellerini biriktirdiğimi söylemiştim de ondan. Nepal'de oturan Buda heykeli satın aldığım gerçektir ama Buda heykellerini biriktirdiğim şakaydı. Yan yatan Buda heykeli bir bakışta kaba görünen bir şey olarak baktıkça daha da kaba görünen bir şey olarak, hediye eden kişinin ne kadar samimi olduğunu bir kez daha düşündüren bir şeydi... (Moon, forthcoming, pp. 187–188).

In the end, I spent a few days doing almost nothing with the cat that was trying to distance itself from me. Someone who had traveled gave me a small wooden reclining Buddha statue as a gift. It reminded me of the time when I had been in an antique shop in Nepal and considered buying a small wooden horse. Although I decided against it because of its size, I had bought a seated Buddha statue instead and mentioned that I had started collecting Buddha statues. That was why the person later gave me this reclining Buddha statue, which, at first glance, looked crude, and the more I looked at it, the cruder it appeared. It made me reflect once again on how sincere the giver had been... (Moon, forthcoming, pp. 187–188).

These scenes illustrate Moon's method of merging physical wanderings with mental observations to represent the placelessness of the modern individual within cultural and spatial contexts. Both urban experiences and symbolic spaces across different geographies deepen the sense of alienation and transience in the search for meaning.

3. Memory, Narrative, and Identity

The text interrogates the individual's search for identity through the blurred boundaries between memory and fiction. By recounting memories related to objects such as cats and a goldfish named Kierkegaard, the narrator renders visible the transitions between reality and imagination. Within Paul Ricoeur's framework of narrative identity, this dynamic demonstrates how individuals constantly reconstruct their identities by oscillating between memory and fiction (Ricoeur, 1992).

The narrator reflects on the uncertainty of memory and the passage of time while observing cats on a rooftop:

Bundan böyle bahçenin karşı tarafındaki komşu evin çatısının üstünde üç kedi yürüyor. Söz konusu kedilerin geçen yıl yaz başladığı sıralarda çatının üstünde yürüdüklerini gördüğüm kediler olup olmadıkları belirgin değil. Ne var ki orada bir hayli güneş aldığından kedilerin uzanıp zaman geçirmeyi sevdikleri bir yer olması hasebiyle, şekerleme yapıp uyanan bir kedinin sırtını tüm gücüyle dikleştirip kamburunu çıkararak esneyişini arada bir görebiliyorum (Moon, forthcoming, p. 229).

From then on, three cats were walking on the roof of the neighboring house across the garden. It was not clear whether they were the same cats I had seen walking on the roof when summer began the previous year. However, since the place received a great deal of sunlight, cats seemed to enjoy stretching out there. Occasionally, I could see one waking from a nap, arching its back with all its strength, and stretching (Moon, forthcoming, p. 229).

The structuring of identity through memory and symbols is also expressed through the burial of a goldfish named Kierkegaard:

Mezarlık eskiden bir dönem Hıristiyan misyonerliği yaparken başları kesilerek öldürülen misyonerlerin gömüldüğü bir yerdi. Bir misyonerin mezarının önündeki toprağı azıcık kazarak Japon balığını oracığa gömdüm. Başları kesilmiş misyonerlerin gömüldüğü, aşağısında nehrin görüldüğü o yerin balık mezarı olarak dört dörtlük bir yer olduğunu düşündüm, böyle yaparak balığa münasip bir cenaze merasimi gerçekleştirmiş gibiydim. Ansızın Kierkegaard diye bir ismin Danca'da kilise mezarlığı anlamına geldiğini hatırladım, ölen balığa Kierkegaard adını verdim gayet yakıştı gibime de geldi. Ayrıca misyonerlerin mezarlığında Kierkegaard adlı bir balığın uyuduğu gerçeğini benden başka kimsenin bilemeyeceği gerçeği ve benim bir vakit kilise mezarlığı Kierkegaard'a gelip balık

Kierkegaard ile filozof Kierkegaard'a dair düşünebileceğim gerçeği sevindiriciydi (Moon, forthcoming, pp. 191–192).

The cemetery had once been the burial place of missionaries who had been executed by beheading during their missionary work. I buried the goldfish in the soil in front of one of the missionary graves, thinking it was a perfect place for a fish's grave. In doing so, I felt as if I had held an appropriate funeral ceremony for the fish. Suddenly, I remembered that the name Kierkegaard meant 'churchyard' in Danish, and I named the dead fish Kierkegaard, which seemed quite fitting. Moreover, the thought that only me would know that a fish named Kierkegaard was buried in a missionary cemetery, and that I could someday return to that churchyard and reflect on both the fish Kierkegaard and the philosopher Kierkegaard, delighted me (Moon, forthcoming, pp. 191–192).

Similarly, memories of Buddha statues in Nepal illustrate the interaction between memory and physical objects, reinforcing the fluid nature of identity:

Nepal'den ayrılırken bir antika dükkânında ahşaptan yapılmış, bir kızın apış arasını ayırmış vaziyette oturan Buda heykelinin dizlerinin üstüne oturduğu, ahşaptan yapılmış, birazcık kaba görünen küçük bir Buda heykeli satın aldım, o şey terbiyesiz olmakla beraber büyüleyici görünüyordu. Daha sonrasında o şeyin üst kısmına rulo tuvalet kâğıdı doladım, ilkin yatağın altına koydum sonrasında masanın altına da koymuştum ama, o şeye hâlâ doğru dürüst bir yer bulamadığımdan o şeyi öteye beriye koyuyordum (Moon, forthcoming, p. 188).

When leaving Nepal, I bought a small, slightly crude wooden Buddha statue from an antique shop, which depicted a girl sitting with her legs spread apart, with the Buddha sitting on her knees. It was vulgar yet fascinating. Later, I wrapped toilet paper around it and placed it under the bed, then under the table, but since I still could not find a proper place for it, I kept moving it around (Moon, forthcoming, p. 188).

These examples show that Moon weaves memory, narrative, and identity into a multilayered representation of individual experience, emphasizing the postmodernist view that identity is not fixed.

4. The Meaning of Chaotic Structure

The chaotic structure of the text lacks a stable narrative framework, constantly inviting readers into an interpretative process. The narrator's reflections on the act of writing align with postmodernist aesthetics: meaning is continually deferred, and readers are compelled to

construct their own interpretations within the text's chaotic nature (Hutcheon, 1988). The connections among elements such as sleeping pills, the cat, and death demonstrate through fragmented thought patterns that absurdity and meaninglessness are intrinsic to modern life. The act of hoarding sleeping pills symbolizes both existential escape and small rituals developed in response to the uncontrollability of everyday life. This chaotic structure operates as a narrative strategy reflecting both the flow of individual consciousness and the fragmented nature of modern experience.

The narrator reveals the structural chaos of the text by reflecting on the writing process itself:

Bir gün, gecenin yarısından şafağa doğru geçen, henüz her şeyin karanlığa gömüldüğü saatte, uyuyamayan bendeniz, yaşadığım evin pencere kenarına oturup yazı yazmaya yönelik hayal meyal bir düşünceye kapılıyorum. Yazacağım yazının, şayet bir türü varsa, nereye ve neye doğru ilerleyeceğini hiç bilmiyorum, bunu önceden bilmek dahi istemiyorum, şu an bunu muştulayan herhangi bir şey de yok. Hâliyle yazacağım şeyin herhangi bir yazı olabileceğini düşünmem, ilk etapta doğru ama, herhangi bir yazı bile olmayabilir (Moon, forthcoming, p. 7).

One day, in the hour between midnight and dawn, when everything was still shrouded in darkness, unable to sleep, I sat by the window of the house I lived in, vaguely thinking about writing. If what I wrote could be called a text, I had no idea where it would lead or what it would become, nor did I want to know in advance. At that moment, there was nothing to foretell it. Thus, I thought that what I would write might be any kind of writing, or perhaps not even writing at all (Moon, forthcoming, p. 7).

The narrator expresses self-reflection through the act of limitless note-taking:

Gerçekte bir çeşit afazi yani istenilen sözü bulup söyleyememe hastalığından mustaribim, kendimi söz söylemektense yazı yazmaya daha yakın buluyorum, yazıya daha yakın olduğumu düşünüyorum, bu nedenle konuşmak meşakkatli, düşünceler yazıya dönüştürüldüğünde görece daha doğal olan bendeniz hiçbir şeye dahi değmeyen bu türden tümceleri not defterime defalarca yazdım, bu şeyler sınırsız bir biçimde yazılabilen şeyler olduğundan, bu şeyleri yapmak işi bir tür saf sevinç veriyor.(Bir noktada bu yazıyı bir şeyin listesinin tutulduğu bir şey olarak düşünüyorum ve bu liste sonsuz bir biçimde yazılıp, silinip, eklenip, düzeltilip tekrar yazılabilecektir) (Moon, forthcoming, p. 37).

In fact, I suffer from a type of aphasia—a condition of not being able to find and say the desired word. I find myself closer to writing than to speaking, and I feel that writing comes

more naturally to me. For this reason, speaking is burdensome, whereas writing is relatively natural. I wrote these kinds of sentences, which touched upon nothing, repeatedly in my notebook. Since such sentences could be written endlessly, writing them gave me a kind of pure joy. (At one point, I considered this text to be like a list, one that could be endlessly written, erased, added to, corrected, and rewritten) (Moon, forthcoming, p. 37).

Rituals created through objects such as sleeping pills and bones illustrate both symbolic and tangible examples of the chaotic structure:

O gün kızın evine gittim ama pencere kenarına oturup içtik o kadar. Kız bana hediye olarak bir istiridye kabuğu verdi, istiridye kabuklarını biriktirdiğini söyledi. Ne var ki kızın biriktirmiş olduğu istiridye kabuğu anca birkaç taneydi... Buna rağmen kemik toplayabileceğim düşüncesini düşünmüştüm, belki de insanlar ölürken kendi bedenlerindeki herhangi bir kemiği kendi evlatlarına miras bırakabilirlerdi, hâliyle o şeylerin de muhteşem yadigârlar olabileceklerini düşündüm... (Bir keresinde bir yerde bulunan dağdan aldığım, yaban domuzunun sivri dişini andıran şeyi cebime koyup gezerken bir trenin içinde önümdeki koltuğun koltuk cebine koyup indiğimi o kıza anlattım) (Moon, forthcoming, p. 222).

That day I went to the girl's house, but we just sat by the window and drank. The girl gave me an oyster shell as a gift, saying that she collected oyster shells. However, she had only a few shells in her collection... Nevertheless, I thought about the possibility of collecting bones instead. Perhaps people, when dying, could leave one of their bones to their children as a keepsake, making them marvelous heirlooms... (I once told the girl how, while walking with something resembling a wild boar's tusk I had taken from a mountain in my pocket, I put it in the seat pocket of a train and left it there) (Moon, forthcoming, p. 222).

Moon's narrative thus clearly demonstrates the relationship between chaotic structure, the flow of individual consciousness, and the fragmented nature of modern experience. The narrator's small rituals and chains of thought, built around ordinary objects, intertwine with postmodernist aesthetics, compelling the reader to continually generate meaning.

In conclusion, Vaseline Buddha intertwines the themes of memory, absurdity, and flânerie to comprehensively reveal the uncertainties in the modern individual's quest for identity, meaning, and belonging. Its chaotic and fragmented structure highlights not only the narrator's mental and physical experiences but also the modern subject's alienation and placelessness across global and local contexts. The absurd use of everyday objects, the flâneur's urban wanderings,

and the constant interplay of memory and fiction present existential inquiries on both a dramatic and aesthetic level. Thus, *Vaseline Buddha* goes beyond being merely a literary experience, positioning itself as a text that reflects, through a multilayered perspective, the place of the modern and postmodern individual in the world, their search for meaning, and their construction of identity.

Discussion

This study examines how *Vaseline Buddha* constructs a fragmented narrative through the interplay of stream-of-consciousness technique, absurdity, and flânerie. The text brings together everyday objects, spatial movement, and associative thought processes to depict the modern individual's search for meaning, belonging, and identity. By integrating modernist interiority with postmodern fragmentation, the narrative reflects the instability of subjectivity and the experience of placelessness. This section evaluates these dimensions in relation to absurdity, consciousness, space, and memory.

Stream of Consciousness and Fragmented Subjectivity

Stream of consciousness functions as a primary narrative mode that shapes both form and meaning. The narrator's thoughts unfold through discontinuous associations rather than linear progression, reflecting the instability of perception and identity. Sudden shifts between places, objects, and memories illustrate how consciousness operates through fragmentation rather than coherence.

This technique situates the text within the modernist tradition of representing interiority while also incorporating postmodern indeterminacy. The absence of clear narrative transitions reinforces uncertainty and prevents the stabilization of meaning. As a result, subjectivity appears as a fluid construct formed through momentary impressions rather than a fixed essence.

Absurdity and Everyday Objects

Absurdity is articulated through ordinary objects that mediate existential reflection. Items such as the oleander flower and sleeping pills function as points where everyday experience intersects with questions of life, death, and meaning. In line with Camus's philosophy, these objects foreground the tension between the desire for coherence and the indifference of the world (Camus, 1955).

At the same time, the text introduces a restrained ironic tone. The description of sleeping pills as "a seasoning sprinkled over meals" exemplifies how the ordinary becomes a site of subtle

absurdity. This approach aligns philosophical seriousness with understated humor, echoing the aesthetics of the absurd without reducing it to either tragedy or parody.

Flânerie and Global Placelessness

Flânerie structures the narrator's engagement with space, extending beyond physical wandering to include mental and perceptual movement. The narrator's presence in cities such as Berlin, Amsterdam, and Kathmandu is not presented as stable observation but as part of a shifting experiential field shaped by memory and reflection.

In this context, flânerie operates in line with Baudelaire's and Benjamin's formulations while adapting them to a transnational setting (Baudelaire, 1964; Benjamin, 1999). Through movement across urban spaces, the narrator constructs a narrative that reflects displacement rather than belonging. Certeau's notion of "spatial writing" helps explain how these movements produce meaning without establishing permanence (Certeau, 1984). Consequently, space becomes a medium through which the instability of identity is revealed.

Memory and the Fluidity of Identity

Memory in the text does not function as a stable record of the past but as a shifting narrative process. The narrator moves between recollection and invention, and these transitions occur within the flow of consciousness rather than through clear temporal markers.

This dynamic corresponds to Ricoeur's concept of narrative identity, in which identity emerges through the ongoing reinterpretation of experience (Ricoeur, 1992). The instability of memory reinforces the broader thematic concern with the impossibility of fixed meaning, positioning identity as provisional and continuously reconstructed.

Chaotic Structure and the Deferral of Meaning

The text's fragmented structure requires the reader to engage in an open-ended interpretive process. The narrator's statement, "Çoktan bu hikâyeye bir şekilde başlamış, niçin anlatmakta olduğumu unuttuğumu hissediyorum ama, bu büyük bir problem olmayacaktır: I already feel as though I have somehow started this story and forgotten why I am telling it, but this will not be a big problem" (Moon, forthcoming, p. 169), foregrounds the absence of narrative closure.

This structural indeterminacy parallels Hutcheon's account of postmodern narrative, in which meaning is deferred rather than resolved (Hutcheon, 1988). The lack of linear development and the persistence of uncertainty align the text with the aesthetics of the absurd, where coherence remains unattainable yet continually sought.

Conclusion: Existential Aesthetics and Narrative Identity in Vaseline Buddha

1. Existential Dislocation and Flânerie

Vaseline Buddha presents the modern individual as situated within a condition of existential dislocation. Through flânerie across cities such as Paris, Amsterdam, Budapest, and Kathmandu, the narrative links physical mobility with the fragmented flow of consciousness. These movements do not produce belonging; instead, they emphasize deterritorialization and the instability of identity.

2. The Aestheticization of the Absurd

The text demonstrates that absurdity emerges within ordinary experience rather than outside it. Objects such as oleander plants, sleeping pills, cats, and goldfish serve as focal points for existential reflection. In line with Camus, absurdity is not resolved but rendered perceptible through narrative form, where irony and restraint replace overt dramatization.

3. Memory, Narrative, and Identity Formation

Identity is constructed through the interaction of memory and narration. The fluid boundaries between recollection and fiction show that meaning is neither stable nor complete. Consistent with Ricoeur's framework, identity appears as a process shaped by ongoing reinterpretation rather than as a fixed structure.

4. Narrative Form and Literary Position

By combining stream-of-consciousness narration with a fragmented structure, the text brings together modernist and postmodern narrative strategies. The focus on interiority aligns with modernism, while the deferral of meaning and structural discontinuity reflect postmodern concerns. This synthesis positions the text within both Korean literature and broader discussions of contemporary narrative form.

5. Implications and Future Research

This study highlights the importance of narratological and philosophical approaches in the analysis of contemporary Korean literature in Türkiye. Existing research has largely focused on historical and sociocultural contexts (Köroğlu Türközü, 2017; Özçelik & Köroğlu Türközü, 2022, 2025). By contrast, this study demonstrates the analytical value of integrating absurdity, spatial theory, and narrative identity.

Future research may develop comparative perspectives that situate Korean narrative experimentation within wider literary traditions. Interdisciplinary approaches linking literary theory, translation studies, and global modernity can further clarify how themes of consciousness, absurdity, and identity operate across different cultural contexts.

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