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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

We have introduced the second issue of 9th volume of the journal published in November 2023.

The acceptance rate of Current Research in Social Sciences Volume 9, Issue 2 was 54.5%, and I would like to thank to the authors, referees, members of the editorial board and editors who took part in the publication process of the journal. See you in our next issues.

Greetings and regards.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Duygu TÜRKOĞLU
University of Health Sciences Turkey
Department of Management and Organization

EDİTÖRDEN

Sevgili Okurlar,

2023 yılı kasım ayında yayınlanan dergimizin dokuzuncu cildinin ikinci sayısını sizlere sunmuş bulunuyoruz.


Current Research in Social Sciences 9. Cilt 2. Sayısının kabul oranı %54.5 olup, derginin yayın sürecinde yer alan yazar, hakem, yayın kurulu üyeleri ve editör arkadaşlarıma teşekkür etmek isterim. Sonraki sayılarımızda görüşmek üzere.

Selam ve saygılarımla.

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Duygu TÜRKOĞLU
Sağlık Bilimleri Üniversitesi
Yönetim ve Organizasyon Bölümü

Classroom Emotional Climate and School Burnout in Secondary School Students: A Hierarchical Regression Model

Ortaokul Öğrencilerinde Sınıf Duygusal İklimi ve Okul Tükenmişliği: Bir Hiyerarşik Regresyon Modeli

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the relationship between gender, grade level, classroom emotional climate and school burnout levels of secondary school students. Using a correlational research design, data were collected by random sampling method in this study. The study included a sample of 404 students enrolled in secondary schools located in Batman city, Turkey. Personal information form, Classroom Emotional Climate Scale and Elementary School Student Burnout Scale for Grades 6-8 were used as data collection tools. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient and hierarchical regression analyses were used to analyse the data. The findings showed that there were significant negative correlations between the positive classroom emotional climate and school burnout and significant positive correlations between the negative classroom emotional climate and school burnout. Also, the findings obtained from the hierarchical regression analysis revealed that both positive and negative classroom emotional climate significantly predicted school burnout even after controlling for the potential effects of gender and grade level. These results suggest that interventions that focus on increasing the positive classroom emotional climate and simultaneously reducing the negative classroom emotional climate may effectively reduce school burnout among adolescents despite gender and grade level differences.

Keywords: Positive Emotional Climate, Adverse Emotional Climate, School Burnout, Secondary Students.

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, ortaokul öğrencilerinin cinsiyet, sınıf düzeyi, sınıf duygusal iklimi ve okul tükenmişlik düzeyleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. İlişkisel araştırma deseniyle tasarlanan bu çalışmada veriler tesadüfi örnekleme yöntemiyle toplanmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemini Batman ilinde (Türkiye) ortaokullarda öğrenim gören 404 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak kişisel bilgi formu, Sınıf Duygusal İklimi Ölçeği ve İlköğretim 6-8. Sınıflar İçin Öğrenci Tükenmişlik Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde tanımlayıcı istatistikler, Pearson korelasyon katsayısı ve hiyerarşik regresyon analizlerinden yararlanılmıştır. Elde edilen bulgulara göre sınıfın olumlu duygusal iklimi ile okul tükenmişliği arasında negatif yönde; sınıfın olumsuz duygusal iklimi ile okul tükenmişliği arasında ise pozitif yönde anlamlı ilişkiler olduğu saptanmıştır. Ayrıca hiyerarşik regresyon analizinden elde edilen bulgular, cinsiyet ve sınıf düzeyinin potansiyel etkileri hesaba katıldıktan sonra bile hem olumlu hem de olumsuz sınıf duygusal ikliminin okul tükenmişliğini önemli ölçüde yordadığını ortaya koymuştur. Bu sonuçlar sınıfın olumlu duygusal iklimini artırmaya ve aynı zamanda sınıfın olumsuz duygusal iklimini azaltmaya odaklanan müdahalelerin, cinsiyet ve sınıf düzeyi farklılıklarına rağmen ergenler arasında okul tükenmişliğini azaltmada etkili olabileceğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Olumlu Duygusal İklim, Olumsuz Duygusal İklim, Okul Tükenmişliği, Ortaokul Öğrencileri.

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Classroom Emotional Climate and School Burnout in Secondary School Students: A Hierarchical Regression Model

In child development, the ecological model posits that the quality of interaction between the child and elements in the child's proximal environments influences developmental outcomes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). The classroom is a primary micro-context where teachers and students interact (Frenzel et al., 2018; Schutz & Pekrun, 2007). The nature of the social and emotional interactions within the classroom boundaries -between and among students and teachers- forms the classroom emotional climate (De Rivera & Páez, 2007; Jia et al., 2009; Reyes et al., 2012). In this respect, the emotional climate of the classroom is expected to impact students' learning outcomes (Konstantopoulos, 2009; Reyes et al., 2012; Stuhlman & Pianta, 2009). Previous studies into classroom climate have shown a significant and positive relationship between students' cognitive and affective outcomes (Fraser, 2005; Rowe et al., 2010). In the classroom, students have different experiences regarding their teachers' perceptions and reactions toward the students' emotional states and needs. Such experiences can impact students' adaptation, motivation, learning, and achievement depending on the socio-emotional competence of teachers (Patrick & Ryan, 2005) and teachers' being highly responsive to students and emotionally supportive improves student satisfaction (Joe et al., 2017). Added to this, emotionally supported students have been reported to tend to experience reduced peer rejection and school failure (Kiuru et al., 2012). Accordingly, it can be alleged that teacher support positively impacts students' level of affection and subjective well-being (Liu et al., 2016; Pekrun, 2009). Based on the above ideas, the necessity of assessing the classroom's emotional climate is underscored to yield a comprehensive insight into what is happening in a classroom to guide educational interventions. Accumulating evidence supports the fact that the classroom emotional climate is related to a wide range of phenomena that can contribute to the subjective development of the child in social and cultural terms in addition to learning outcomes. Furthermore, the desired classroom emotional climate should be supportive, egalitarian, and democratic and adhere to predetermined rules and regulations for appropriate teaching-learning processes and students' integration into social life (Zedan, 2010).

In addition to positive-oriented research related to classroom emotional climate (Barr, 2016; Wang et al., 2020; Zedan, 2010), there has been an accumulating body of literature on the development of negative emotions towards the school/classroom such as peer bullying (Raskauskas et al., 2010), excessive assignment, test or test anxiety (Cho et al., 2023; Reyes et al., 2012; Salmela-Aro et al., 2008). However, little has been said in the literature regarding the classroom emotional climate causing student burnout. Nevertheless, it can be said that school burnout has gained increased attention among researchers and can lead to school dropout or severe psychopathological problems (Bask & Salmela-Aro, 2013; Roberts & Lopez-Duran, 2019; Romeo, 2013). As with many employees, burnout is experienced by students as well. This may be because of the substitution of '*studies*' that refer to daily activities undertaken by students for '*work/job*' among students (Schaufeli et al., 2002a). This is exemplified by students attending classes and carrying out activities along with specific performance objectives (e.g., grade, level). Academic burnout, therefore, refers to a multifaceted syndrome such as exhaustion because of study demands, cynical attitudes toward one's study and feeling incompetent in academic work (Salmela-Aro et al., 2009a; Schaufeli et al., 2002a). As with professional contexts, the symptoms of academic burnout tend to be associated with a vast number of adverse outcomes for students. These outcomes encompass controlled motivation patterns, low self-esteem and even suicidal ideation (Ishak et al., 2013; Walburg, 2014; Zhang et al., 2013). Viewed from this perspective, it is thought that the likelihood of a positive change in the school and the educational system in a broad sense depends on the concept of classroom emotional climate.

Theoretical Framework

Emotions

Understanding and making sense of human behaviours are undoubtedly possible by understanding emotions. Over time, emotions have been the focal point of several very different disciplines (Küpers & Weibler, 2008). This phenomenon has been explored by a broad range of studies in the literature in individual, intrapersonal and organizational terms (Härtel, Zerbe & Ashkanasy, 2005). However, although no consensus has been achieved among researchers regarding the definition of emotions (Dilekçi & Manap, 2022), considering related studies, emotions are regarded as mediators between social contexts and events and individuals' reactions and experiences concerning these events. In this regard, it can be asserted that emotion is of a multi-faceted definition representing synchronized, consistent central nerve and environmental-physiological reaction patterns that emerge through subjective experiences and are reflected in face, voice, and mimics (Scherer & Moors, 2019).

Initially classified as positive or negative, emotions were later defined more complicatedly (Eysenck, 2004). Emotion is characterized by a complex, multi-component and action-ready situation, and there are 6 main components of the emotion process. These are as follows: *cognitive appraisal, subjective experience, thought and action tendencies, internal body changes, facial expressions, and response to emotion* (Atkinson & Hilgard, 2010). These components do not create a single emotion, yet their combination works together to form a particular emotion. While positive emotions improve people's thoughts and actions, negative ones restrict them. Moreover, a growing body of literature indicates a positive-oriented correlation between positive emotions and longevity (Danner et al., 2001). As a result, some psychologists define emotion as a complex pattern of bodily and mental changes that includes specific behavioural reactions (Gerrig & Zimbardo, 2012). Emotions can be differentiated from mood in that they are brief and intense. Mood lasts longer and is less intense (Frijda, 2013).

Emotion and its physiological and psychological aspects are addressed based on different theories (Çiçek, 2022). When the changes in the body because of over-stimulation in a situation are monitored, it helps to understand emotional experiences that have psychological and physiological aspects (Danner et al., 2001). Robbins and Judge (2012) have identified sources of emotion and mood: *personality, day and time of the week, weather, stress, social activities, sleep, exercise, age, and gender*. Theories relating to the roots and functions of the concept of emotion, which is so comprehensive and central to human life, have been postulated by many psychologists.

Classroom Emotional Climate

Along with the pioneering use of the term "*classroom climate*" by Walberg and his colleagues, most initial work was conducted mainly with the Learning Environment Inventory to evaluate students' perceptions of their own educational experiences (Walberg & Anderson, 1968). However, the work by Moos (1973) popularized this concept and stimulated additional studies. As a psychiatrist, Moos was initially focused on the climate of psychiatric hospital wards. Then, *the Classroom Environment Scale* (Trickett & Moos, 1973), devoted to measuring classroom climate, was used by many educators for the next 30 years to carry out studies on the nature of the classroom. In the following years, numerous researchers developed an inventory and scale on this concept, and the effects of each on the psychosocial characteristics of the classroom were investigated (Fraser, 1998).

De Rivera and Páez (2007) consider the emotional atmosphere as the prevailing communal feelings that arise from the social exchange among individuals in a specific environment. The classroom emotional climate, beyond doubt, conceptually appears as a part of the classroom climate (Evans et al., 2009). Considering vital to educational activities, a classroom is where students broadly establish social,

emotional, and cognitive interactions with their peers and teachers. Accordingly, as environments where students share experiences for a long time, the classroom climate plays a pivotal role in their cognitive, affective, and behavioural development (Barr, 2016; Dilekçi, 2021). The quality of social and emotional interactions between and among students and teachers constitutes the classroom's emotional climate (Pianta et al., 2008).

In many countries, it has been seen that the main objective of the increasing number of education reform initiatives in the classroom and that a consensus is achieved to improve the in-class dynamics (Wang & Degol, 2016). Previous research has demonstrated that the classroom climate emerged as an aggregative structure contributing to the children and adolescents' academic, behavioural, and socio-emotional developments together with learning experiences (Chapman et al., 2013; Hattie, 2009; Pianta & Hamre, 2009). Fraser and Tobin (1991) point out that the classroom, which constitutes an integral part of students' daily lives, significantly influences their behaviours, academic success, motivation, and attitudes towards education. Taken together, the investigation of the factors affecting the classroom environment will allow us to identify and understand the social processes in the classroom and to explain the students' behaviours at emotional and cognitive levels.

Burnout

Freudenberger (1974) introduced the concept of burnout in the literature as a syndrome related to the field of psychology. Burnout is characterized by an increased sense of emotional exhaustion. It is the desensitization to the work resulting from chronic fatigue and restlessness and the lack of idealism and engagement towards one's work. Burnout is now conceived as a phenomenon associated with any activity resulting in chronic stress (Brewer & Shapard, 2004; Shin et al., 2014). It is also considered a psychological syndrome that can yield a myriad of consequences such as depression (Hakanen et al., 2008) and reduced work performance (Nahrgang et al., 2011).

Burnout is addressed in terms of different variables in almost every sector and organization; meta-analyses notably related to gender (Purvanova & Muros, 2010); age and professional seniority (Brewer & Shapard, 2004); employee self-efficacy (Shoji et al., 2016) and strategies for dealing with burnout (Shin et al., 2014) are noteworthy. Burnout may result in excessive workload or working hours and conditions deemed as organizational factors. Another organizational factor is role conflict. The uncertainty of expectations from individuals can result in role conflicts, causing burnout. When it comes to individual factors, burnout may be yielded by discrepancies between professional skills and job expectations, certain situations arising from gender, age, education status or personality traits (Ereş, 2017). Taken together, individuals first suffer from apathy, then a decrease in performance and success, resulting in a low commitment to work, absenteeism, health problems, and interpersonal communication disorders (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020; Zhang et al., 2013).

School Burnout

Like professional burnout, school burnout is mostly used to denote the combination of three dimensions: *exhaustion*, *cynicism*, and *lack of efficacy* (Schaufeli et al., 2002a). Exhaustion means a sense of tension and chronic fatigue. Cynicism reflects indifference and a distant attitude towards schoolwork, or a loss of the capacity to attach meaning to schoolwork. Lack of efficacy, however, represents a decrease in the sense of competence, achievement, and feelings of achievement (Schaufeli et al., 2002b). Yilmaz and Altinkurt (2018), in their research on school burnout, concluded that gender, marital status, branch and educational status affected teacher burnout at a shallow level; professional seniority at a low or shallow level and the type of school, however, at low or moderate levels. Several meta-analysis studies regarding employee burnout in educational organizations have been encountered in the literature (Aloe

et al., 2014a; Aloe et al., 2014b; Halbesleben, 2006). In Weng's (2004) study, gender, marital and educational status, professional seniority, age, and length of service had a very low effect on burnout. In addition, Edmonson (2000a; 2000b) reported that gender, seniority, and age had a shallow impact on burnout. Prior studies on school burnout of students have focused on different groups ranging from secondary to higher education (Salmela-Aro & Read, 2017; Schaufeli et al., 2002a). School burnout is conceived as an incompatibility between an individual's socio-emotional skills and the demands imposed by the school context. Indeed, this term denotes the view that students suffer from energy depletion without gaining appropriate returns (Salmela-Aro & Upadaya, 2020). In recent years, school burnout experienced by secondary and high school students resulting from varying reasons and stress and anxiety accompanying this situation (Salmela-Aro et al., 2009b); school dropout (Bask & Salmela-Aro, 2013) and overall well-being (Andriyani et al., 2017; Liu et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2020) have gained increased attention among researchers. Students of all ages can suffer from chronic stress along with anxiety about assignments, tests, and exams (Salmela-Aro et al., 2008). These chronic stressors can lead to burnout over time. From this perspective, school burnout of adolescents involves exhaustion towards responsibilities and assignments, cynicism towards the school and lack of efficacy at school (Kim et al., 2021; Salmela-Aro et al., 2009b). This can result in low course achievement, psychological risk, low academic dedication, and school dropout (Bask & Salmela-Aro, 2013; Madigan & Curran, 2021). Besides, there is a correlation between burnout syndrome and maladaptive behaviours such as excessive internet use among teenagers. Adolescence is particularly worrisome as it is a period of vulnerability to stress, and being subjected to excessive stress can cause psychopathological problems (Roberts & Lopez-Duran, 2019; Romeo, 2013). Accumulating evidence in the literature reveals that school burnout is related to low academic achievement, albeit higher psychopathology (Madigan & Curran, 2021; Salmela-Aro, 2017). School burnout can reduce students' interest in school and learning and harm their motivation and ability to learn. Therefore, what may be of most significant importance, however, is the prevention and minimization of school burnout. To reduce school burnout, it is essential to organize and improve students' learning environments. Improving school settings and making them more attention-grabbing increases students' motivation and fosters their learning abilities (Ryan & Patrick, 2001).

Classroom Emotional Climate and School Burnout

Recent studies have unveiled that such concerns that students face during the secondary or high school years, such as intensive curriculum, exams or choosing a profession, adversely affect their emotional, behavioural and cognitive development (Özdemir, 2015; Kiuru et al., 2008; Salmela-Aro et al., 2008; Salmela-Aro et al., 2009b), none has been said about the relationship between the classroom settings where students spend the most time and the burnout levels arising from the emotional climate of this environment. Research in the related literature mainly centres on external factors of school burnout (Özdemir, 2015; Şahan & Baki, 2017). Indeed, the classroom climate, where students primarily interact with their peers and teachers, is significant in terms of being a learning environment and where experiences are organized (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007). Three dimensions of the classroom emotional climate (instructional, socio-emotional and behavioural) are correlated with young people's socio-emotional development, academic achievement and behavioural problems (Larson et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020). These results are consistent with Bronfenbrenner's (1994) ecological model, which encompasses the interaction between the child and the elements in his/her immediate environment.

The literature reveals that classroom climate makes contributions not only to the classroom but, to the school and education as a whole and to the students' behavioural and emotional adaptations (Kuperminc et al., 2001; Roeser & Eccles, 2003). Furthermore, according to the findings yielded by longitudinal research by Salmela-Aro et al (2008), positive motivation received from teachers was negatively

correlated with school-related burnout among students; on the contrary, on an individual level, support from school and positive motivation obtained from teachers were negatively related to burnout among students. It is believed that the development of strong communication and interaction between students in school and classroom settings where the emotional climate is well-managed will contribute to the generation of a culture based on trust among students. Contrary to this, it can be alleged that the likelihood of fear, anxiety and burnout towards the school will increase in case of the lack of support in teacher-student relations (Cho et al., 2023). Also, the likelihood of burnout seems to be lower in schools where students feel they can get help from a variety of professionals in the school (Salmela-Aro et al., 2008). In school contexts where students are not involved in decision-making processes and success and effort are not sufficiently valued, it has been seen that they suffer from a sense of burnout and injustice (Slivar, 2001). Considering the studies regarding the effect of emotional climate on teacher burnout in education organizations (Dilekçi & Kaya, 2021; Shorosh & Berkovich, 2022), it has been asserted that there may be a significant association between the classroom emotional climate and students' burnout levels. Given the context provided above, this study aims to investigate whether the classroom emotional climate has an impact on secondary students' experience of school burnout after controlling for the influence of gender and grade level. To this end, the study aimed to address the following hypotheses:

1. There is a negative relationship between positive emotional climate and school burnout.
2. There is a positive relationship between negative emotional climate and school burnout.
3. The relationship between positive emotional climate and school burnout remains significant after controlling for the potential influences of gender and grade level.
4. The relationship between negative emotional climate and school burnout remains significant after controlling for the potential influences of gender and grade level.

Method

Participants

Using a cross-sectional research design, data were collected from the students enrolled in a secondary school in Batman (Türkiye) in the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. A sample of 404 secondary school students was involved in this study through a random sampling method (223 females, 55.2%; 181 males, 44.8%). Among the participants, 118 students (29.2%) were in their fifth year of study, while 145 students (35.9%) were in their sixth year. Also, 72 students (17.8%) were enrolled in their seventh year, and the remaining 69 students (17.1%) were in their final year. In terms of class size, 107 students (26.5%) attended classes comprising 10-20 students, 97 students (24%) were in classes with 21-30 students, and the largest proportion of 200 students (49.5%) were part of classes consisting of 31-40 students.

Measures

Classroom Emotional Climate Scale (Gizir & Fakiroğlu, 2021). The scale includes 28 self-reported items grouped into two factors: positive emotional climate (16 items) and negative emotional climate (12 items). Each item is answered on a five-point Likert scale ranging from *totally agree* (1) to *totally disagree* (5). Sample items are “*Our teachers easily understand our emotions*” and “*Our teachers are often dissatisfied*”. In the present study, the coefficient of internal consistency was computed at .92 for the positive emotional climate and .88 for the negative emotional climate.

Elementary School Student Burnout Scale for Grades 6-8 (Aypay, 2011). The scale includes 26 self-reported items clustering into four factors: burnout from school activities, burnout from family,

inadequacy in school, and loss of interest. Each item is scored using a four-point Likert-type scale ranging from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (4), with a higher score representing a greater level of school burnout. Sample items are “School tires me” and “I feel happy at school”. For this study, we computed a total score. In the present study, Cronbach alpha coefficient was determined as .70.

Procedure

The study obtained the approval of the ethics committee of *Batman University* (10.11.2021 dated 021/03-08 number) to gather research data. In addition, necessary permissions were taken from the *Batman Provincial Directorate of National Education* on 30.09.2021 via the document numbered E-40456018-44-33472381. The data were collected from secondary schools in the city centre of Batman between December 10 and January 15 in the fall semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. The form involving the scales was administered to secondary school students face-to-face. Consent was obtained from all participants before taking part in the study. Participants were assured about the confidentiality and anonymity of responses.

Data Analysis

SPSS 22 package program was employed in data analysis. The research data were prepared in the first step and the necessary coding was conducted. Then, normality tests were performed, and Cronbach alpha coefficients of the scales were examined. According to the normality test results, the skewness and kurtosis values of the scales were between -1 and +1. Positive emotional climate skewness value (1.046) and kurtosis value (.858); negative emotional climate skewness value (-.582) and kurtosis value (-.293); and burnout scale skewness value (-.410) and kurtosis value (-.238) were determined. Frequencies (*n*) and percentages (%) were computed for the personal information of the participants. Moreover, to determine students’ opinions towards the classroom emotional climate and school burnout, mean values and standard deviation of the scores yielded from the instruments were studied. Finally, correlation analysis revealed the relationship between the scales, and hierarchical regression analysis examined whether gender, grade level and classroom emotional climate predicted school burnout. Before performing the regression analysis, a preliminary check was conducted to assess whether the analysis satisfied key assumptions, including multicollinearity, normality, and linearity. This preliminary analysis confirmed that there were no issues with the assumptions of the regression.

Results

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics (e.g., mean, and standard deviation), the correlation between the classroom emotional climate and students’ perceptions towards school burnout, and the effect of classroom emotional climate on the students’ perceptions regarding school burnout.

Table 1

Correlation Analysis Between the Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. Gender	1.45	.49					
2. Grade Level	2.23	1.05	-.077				
3. Positive emotional climate	1.89	.79	.013	.128**			
4. Negative emotional climate	3.69	.91	-.156*	-.172*	-.528*		
5. School burnout	2.91	.60	-.215*	-.244*	-.475*	.621*	

* $p < .001$, ** $p < .05$

Table 1 shows significant relationships between all variables except gender and grade level and gender and positive emotional climate variables. While a significant negative relationship was found between school burnout and gender ($r=-.215$), grade level ($r=-.244$) and positive emotional climate ($r=-.475$), a significant positive relationship was found between school burnout and adverse emotional climate ($r=.621$). In addition, the adverse emotional climate has a negative significant relationship with gender ($r=-.156$), grade level ($r=-.172$) and positive emotional climate ($r=-.528$). While there was a significant positive relationship between positive emotional climate and grade level ($r=.128$), no significant relationship was found between positive emotional climate and gender.

To examine the role of classroom emotional climate in the prediction of school burnout after controlling for gender and grade level, a hierarchical regression analysis was conducted. The analysis treated school burnout as the outcome variable, while positive and negative emotional climates were considered predictors. Also, gender and grade levels were incorporated as covariates to ensure accurate adjustments. The hierarchical linear regression analysis results are as follows in Table 2. The results demonstrated that in the first step (Model 1), gender ($t=-4.99, \beta=-.24, p<.000$) and grade level ($t=-5.56, \beta=-.26, p<.000$) were included in the model, and the model explained 11% of the variance in the perceived school burnout variable. In the second step (Model 2), positive emotional climate and negative emotional climate variables were included in the model. All variables (gender [$t=-4.02, \beta=-.15, p<.000$], grade level [$t=-3.97, \beta=-.15, p<.000$], positive emotional climate [$t=-4.84, \beta=-.21, p<.000$], adverse emotional climate [$t=10.29, \beta=-.46, p<.000$]) explained 45% of the variance in the perceived school burnout variable. When the possible effects of gender and grade level were controlled, positive affective climate and negative affective climate variables significantly explained 34% of the variance in perceived school burnout ($R=0.68, R^2=.45, R^2 \text{ change}=.34 [F=83.37, p<.000]$).

Table 2

Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis on the Predictive Level of Gender, Grade Level and Classroom Emotional Climate on Students' Perceptions of School Burnout

Variable	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	β	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>R</i> ² Change	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Model 1</i>				.34	.11	.11	25.95	.000
Gender	-4.99	.000	-.24					
Grade Level	-5.56	.000	-.26					
<i>Model 2</i>				.68	.45	.34	83.37	.000
Gender	-4.02	.000	-.15					
Grade Level	-3.97	.000	-.15					
Positive emotional climate	-4.84	.000	-.21					
Negative emotional climate	10.29	.000	.46					

Discussion

The current study investigated the contribution of the classroom's emotional climate in predicting students' experience of school burnout after controlling for the influence of gender and grade level. The results typically supported the hypotheses of this study and are discussed in detail below. A classroom with a positive emotional climate is characterized by a sense of respect, trust, empathy and support between teachers and pupils (Reyes et al., 2012). Such a setting makes students feel safe, comfortable, and interested. This enhances their motivation, creativity and academic performances (Chikendo, 2022; Davidovitch & Yavich, 2022; Derakhshan et al., 2023). A previous study by Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2007) confirms that positive teacher-student relations are associated with positive outcomes, including improved academic motivation, commitment and success. By creating a positive classroom emotional

climate, teachers increase their students' academic achievement and support their social and emotional development (Reyes et al., 2012). Therefore, generating and sustaining a positive emotional climate is indispensable for effective teaching. The available evidence (Heller et al., 2012; Reyes et al., 2012; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2007) provides empirical solid findings on the importance of a positive classroom emotional climate for effective teaching and learning. The negative emotional climate in the classroom can have detrimental effects on students' success and socio-emotional development. The adverse emotional climate is characterized by hostility, disrespect and conflict between and among students and teachers. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2018) detected a relationship between negative emotions such as anxiety and disappointment and students' academic burnout. In the same vein, Skinner and Belmont (1993) reported that students' negative emotions, such as anxiety and anger, were related to reduced motivation and commitment. The students suffering from a negative classroom emotional climate are more likely to exhibit behavioural problems, withdraw from learning and experience negative emotions. Pekrun et al. (2009) stated that a relatively low academic success might be attributed to several negative emotions such as anxiety, anger and boredom. Besides, the adverse emotional climate may pose long-lasting effects on students' social-emotional development, such as lower self-esteem, poorer peer relations and increased aggression (Kasen et al., 2004). As a result, it is of great importance for educators to prioritize classroom emotional climate to enhance students' success and social-emotional states.

Student burnout is a complicated phenomenon that can result from various academic and personal factors (Chen et al., 2023). The burnout may be attributable to the adverse emotional climate characterized by high levels of stress, anxiety and conflict. According to Özhan and Yüksel (2021), as the level of meeting basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence and connectedness) increases in teacher-student relationships, the students' burnout levels will also decrease. Prior studies exploring students' burnout within the context of teacher relations have revealed a significant negative correlation between the received autonomy support from teachers and the experienced burnout, and a positive association between the perceived psychological support from teachers and school burnout (Salmela-Aro et al., 2008). On the contrary, a positive emotional climate with high levels of support, respect and engagement can prevent students from burnout. A study by Salmela-Aro and Upadaya (2012) demonstrated that students experiencing a positive classroom emotional climate were less likely to suffer from academic burnout. Consequently, a positive emotional climate in the classroom is essential to promote students' academic achievement and social-emotional states and ward burnout. However, the substantial positive relationship between adverse emotional climate and school burnout aligns closely with existing literature, highlighting the detrimental impact of an unsupportive emotional climate on students' overall well-being and academic engagement (Evans et al., 2009; Reyes et al., 2012). This connection is consistent with studies indicating that an adverse emotional climate within educational settings can exacerbate stressors and contribute to a heightened sense of burnout among students.

The research's second sub-question is related to examining the relationship between gender, grade level classroom emotional climate and students' burnout levels. The results have indicated a negative and significant association between the classroom's positive emotional climate and students' school burnout levels and a positive and significant correlation between the adverse emotional climate in the classroom and their school burnout levels. The findings suggest that a high level of positive emotional climate in classrooms leads to a decrease in school burnout, whereas classrooms characterized by a high level of adverse emotional climate result in an increase in burnout. A study investigating students' burnout levels across various factors revealed that school-related burnout is not solely associated with the classroom environment but also with students' emotional states (Pilkauskaite-Valickiene et al., 2011). Wang and Jiang (2023) carried out a study on 13,087 adolescents aged between 12 and 18 and found that classroom

climate was an insignificant and negative association with symptoms of depression. Similarly, school burnout has been demonstrated to be correlated with classroom climate in a related study (Circir, 2018). The observed negative relationship between school burnout and both gender and grade level is consistent with previous studies, which have posited that students identifying as female, for instance, might be more prone to experiencing heightened levels of burnout due to various socio-psychological factors (Salmela-Aro et al., 2008; Salmela-Aro et al., 2018; Salmela-Aro et al., 2019; Yıldız & Kilic, 2020). Similarly, the inverse association between grade level and burnout corroborates earlier research indicating that burnout tends to increase as students progress through their academic journey (Virtanen et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2015). These congruences with established literature validate the present study's results and emphasize the robustness of the identified trends. The observed lack of a significant relationship between gender and positive emotional climate is by some prior research, suggesting that gender-related dynamics might not primarily shape emotional climate.

Another sub-question of the current study is whether gender, grade level and classroom emotional climate are significant predictors of students' school burnout levels. Based on hierarchical regression analysis, gender and grade level they explained 11% of the perceived school burnout variable variance. All variables (gender, grade level, positive emotional climate, adverse emotional climate) explained 45% of the variable perceived school burnout variable variance. When the possible effects of gender and grade level were controlled, positive emotional climate and negative emotional climate variables explained 34% of the variance in perceived school burnout significantly. One aim of the present study is to examine for the first time the relationship between classroom emotional climate and school burnout, and according to the explained level of the variance is significantly high. Students' academic and psychological well-being is also expected to be high in classroom settings where a positive emotional climate is encouraged. In a meta-analysis into the overall strength of the link between classroom climate and student outcomes, as well as the degree of theoretical factors governing this relationship, it has been stated that the classroom climate, as a multi-faceted structure, is in positive-oriented correlation with social competence, motivation, academic success and participation behaviours, yet in negative-oriented association with socio-emotional distress and exclusion (Wang et al., 2020). The literature confirms the importance of a positive emotional climate on student outcomes. One fact justifying this assertion is that students experience more interest, enjoyment and commitment in emotionally supportive classrooms (Marks, 2000; Rimm-Woolley, Kol & Bowen, 2009). Likewise, Klem and Connell (2004) reported that students in emotionally supportive classrooms had three times more qualified relationships with their teachers than those reporting they did not have such a classroom setting.

Additionally, in a study comparing the perceptions of students who are positively engaged in school activities and daily practices towards the school climate and those of the ones feeling distant and less engaged in school, burnout levels were reported to be high in students with low levels of commitment to school (Molinari & Grazia, 2021). In the same vein, previous studies indicating that students with high burnout levels tended to have negative feelings toward school (Tuominen-Soini & Salmela-Aro, 2014) concur with the present research findings. Reyes et al. (2012) concluded that students were less emotionally connected with their teachers in addition to a lack of mutual respect and the presence of humiliating threats involving a tendency to violence in classrooms with adverse emotional climate. School burnout has been acknowledged to be related to external factors, such as parental work-related burnout (Salmela-Aro et al., 2011), learning disabilities (Kiuru et al., 2011), or previous disorders (Salmela-Aro et al., 2009b). From this perspective, emotional support in the classroom and teacher-student solid and student-student communication will help minimize these external factors or even eliminate them over time.

Limitations

Some limitations on the findings of our research are of note. First, the study sample consisted of students enrolled in secondary schools in the province of Batman. Second, students studying in private schools were not included in the study, and only secondary school students in public schools were involved. Third, the research data were collected by administering scales. The opinions of secondary school students are limited to the items in the instruments. Finally, only gender and grade level were included in the hierarchical regression analyses as personal variables of the students.

Suggestions

Despite the limitations above, some suggestions for practitioners and researchers have been developed and listed based on research findings. *Recommendations for practitioners*; implementing a positive emotional climate in the classroom setting is not a topic that is primarily addressed in teacher training and professional development programs. Considering the cognitive, affective, and academic outcomes of a positive emotional climate, “*emotional skills*” training can be held for teachers in pre-service and in-service processes. Proactive measures can be taken against the factors leading to burnout by investigating unnoticeable homework, test, and exam anxiety at regular intervals by school guidance services. In addition, the teachers who are responsible for all educational activities in the classroom *a)* can attach more importance to their students’ feelings, *b)* can be clearer and precise while communicating, *c)* can provide positive feedback, *d)* can encourage group work, *e)* can provide students with the opportunity to express themselves, *f)* can arrange in-class activities regarding the development of relations between students. Recommendations for researchers: in addition to the classroom emotional climate, other variables can also be studied as a predictor of school burnout. The relationship between the classroom emotional climate and school burnout can be examined via different modeling using intermediary variables. Since the current research was carried out only by secondary school students in Batman, further extensive investigation can be conducted by including different cities. Also, a similar study can be conducted involving primary high school and university students. In addition to the ones in public schools, the students enrolled in private schools can also be examined. Qualitative research can be performed to provide insight into the factors affecting the classroom's emotional climate and school burnout.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical Approval

All study procedures involving human participants followed institutional and/or national research committee ethical standards and the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Ethical approval was also received from the Batman University Ethics Board.

Author Contributions

The first author planned, supervised, and made substantial contributions to the main body of the literature and academic writing process. The second author has contributed to the methodology, design, and analysis of the findings. The third and fourth authors have been involved in drafting the manuscript and giving final approval of the version to be published.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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The Mediator Role of Borderline Personality Features and Separation Anxiety in the Relationship between Childhood Traumas and Exposure to Abuse in Romantic Relationships

Çocukluk Çağı Travmaları ile Romantik İlişkide İstismara Maruziyet Arasındaki İlişkide Borderline Kişilik Özellikleri ve Ayrılık Anksiyetesinin Aracı Rolü

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Abstract

The study aims to examine the mediating role of borderline personality pattern and separation anxiety in adults in the relationship between childhood traumas and exposure to abuse in romantic relationships, to emphasize some factors that may cause violence in relationships, and to support initiatives to prevent exposure to partner violence. For the research, 400 participants aged 18-55 residing in İstanbul were determined by a simple random sampling method. After that, a Socio-demographic Information Form, Childhood Traumas Questionnaire (CTQ-33), Romantic Relationship Assessment Inventory (RRAI), Borderline Personality Questionnaire (BPQ), and Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire (ASAQ) were given to them. The data obtained from the study were evaluated with the SPSS-25 statistical analysis program. Relationships between scales were evaluated with Pearson Correlation analysis, and mediating roles were evaluated with PROCESS 3.5 Macro. All analyses were based on a 95% confidence interval. When the research findings were examined, A positive correlation was found between the Childhood Traumas Questionnaire and all its subscales, the Borderline Personality Questionnaire and all its subscales, and the Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire and the Romantic Relationship Assessment Scale. Research results show that childhood traumas predict exposure to abuse in romantic relationships and that borderline personality traits and adult separation anxiety play a partial mediating role in this relationship. It has also been determined that adult separation anxiety predicts borderline personality traits. As a result of the study, it is shown that in the case of abuse and neglect experiences in childhood, whether individuals are exposed to abuse in romantic relationships or not is related to borderline personality traits and low tolerance for separation. Study results reveal that separation anxiety significantly predicts borderline personality traits (34%), indicating that separation anxiety can be targeted as a key point in the repetitive abuse pattern. Another result of the study is that the increase in separation anxiety in borderline personality traits is associated with low economic levels. The current result reveals the importance of economic independence in exploitation patterns.

Keywords: Childhood Trauma, Violence, Abuse, Borderline Personality Disorder, Separation Anxiety.

Öz

Araştırmada çocukluk çağı travmalarıyla romantik ilişkilerde istismara maruziyet arasındaki ilişkide borderline kişilik örüntüsünün ve yetişkinlerde ayrılık anksiyetesinin aracı rolünün incelenmesiyle, ilişkilerde şiddet yaşantılarına sebep olabilecek bazı etmenlerin vurgulanması ve partner şiddetine maruziyeti engelleyici girişimlere destek olunması amaçlanmaktadır. Araştırmada, basit seçkisiz örnekleme metoduyla belirlenen ve İstanbul'da yaşayan 18-55 yaş arası 400 katılımcıya Sosyo-demografik Bilgi Formu, Çocukluk Çağı Travmaları (CTQ-33), Romantik İlişkiyi Değerlendirme Ölçeği, Borderline Kişilik Ölçeği-Türkçe BPQ, Yetişkin Ayrılma Anksiyetesi Ölçeği uygulanmıştır. Veriler, SPSS-25 istatistik analiz programıyla, ölçekler arası ilişkiler Pearson Korelasyon analiziyle, aracı roller PROCESS 3.5 Makrosuyla değerlendirilmiştir. Analizlerde %95 güven aralığı esas alınmıştır. Bulgular incelendiğinde Çocukluk Çağı Travma Ölçeği ve tüm alt ölçekleri ile Borderline Kişilik Ölçeği ve tüm alt ölçekleri; Yetişkin Ayrılık Anksiyetesi Ölçeği ve Romantik İlişkiyi Değerlendirme Ölçeği arasında pozitif yönlü bir ilişki bulunmuştur. Araştırma sonuçları çocukluk çağı travmalarının, romantik ilişkide istismara maruz kalmayı yordadığı ve borderline kişilik özelliklerinin ve yetişkin ayrılma anksiyetesinin bu ilişkide kısmi aracılık rolü olduğunu göstermektedir. Ayrıca yetişkin ayrılık anksiyetesinin borderline kişilik özelliklerini yordadığı belirlenmiştir. Çalışma sonucunda çocuklukta istismar ve ihmal yaşantılarının söz konusu olduğu durumda bireylerin romantik ilişkilerde istismara maruz kalıp kalmamasının sergiledikleri borderline kişilik özellikleri, ayrılığa düşük tolerans ile ilişkili olduğu göstermektedir. Çalışma sonuçları ayrılık anksiyetesinin borderline kişilik özelliklerini önemli ölçüde (%34) yordadığını ortaya koyarak ayrılık anksiyetesinin tekrarlayan istismar örüntüsünde bir kilit nokta olarak hedeflenebileceğini göstermektedir. Çalışmanın bir diğer sonucu borderline kişilik özellikleri ayrılık anksiyetesindeki artışın düşük ekonomik düzeyle ilişkili olduğunu belirlenmesidir. Mevcut sonuç istismar örüntülerinde ekonomik bağımsızlığın önemini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çocukluk Çağı Travması, Şiddet, İstismar, Borderline Kişilik Bozukluğu, Ayrılık Anksiyetesi .

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The Mediator Role of Borderline Personality Features and Separation Anxiety in the Relationship between Childhood Traumas and Exposure to Abuse in Romantic Relationships

Childhood traumas contain non-accidental and preventable behaviors towards the child that adversely affect the psychosocial and physical development of the child, ill-treatment and traumatic events such as loss of parents, divorce, witnessing violence, accidents, migration, natural disasters, and war (Helvacı Çelik & Hocaoglu, 2018; Öztürk, 2021). Behaviors that may physically harm the child increase the risk of injury and deterioration of the physical integrity of the child; sexual abuse, on the other hand, reveals a picture that can continue in adulthood, disrupts vital functioning at a high rate and creates a higher level of stress than an average negative experience (Igarashi et al., 2010). Children who are abused and whose psychological and emotional needs are not met because of neglect, who are mocked, humiliated, threatened, and belittled are highly affected by these repetitive traumatic experiences (Cantürk et al., 2021; Şar et al., 2021; Carr et al., 2013). Childhood traumas negatively affect the personality of the child who does not have the power to protect himself/herself and disrupt the child's development (Taillieu et al., 2016; Chang et al., 2021). It is stated that traumas experienced in childhood cause a life-long pattern of psychological fragility in the individual, being a factor in both personality organization and the formation of psychopathology, and mental disorders in childhood are more severe (Nemeroff, 2016).

Borderline personality disorder is at the top of the most common mental disorder associated with childhood traumas (Tekin, 2021; Kutlu, 2018; Taillieu, et al., 2016; Xie et al., 2021). Borderline personality disorder causes a persistent sense of emptiness and repetitive self-harming behaviors. It also manifests itself with relationship difficulties and inconsistencies caused by fluctuations in self and affect (Faraji, 2021). Childhood traumas and borderline personality traits have a strong association with adulthood separation anxiety (Bassi et al., 2021; Karaytuğ et al., 2023, Namlı et al., 2022). When the child cannot establish a secure bond in his first relationships, he expects to be abandoned in his future relationships, and this expectation reveals the emotional and cognitive processes underlying the formation of anxiety (Astuti et al., 2020). While separation anxiety in childhood is mainly on the axis of the fear of being away from the caregiver and home, especially from the mother, this anxiety usually turns into the anxiety of losing a partner in a romantic relationship (Bögels et al., 2013; Faraji & Özen, 2022).

Traumatic life events experienced in childhood increase the tendency to evaluate oneself negatively (Downey & Crummy, 2022). Individuals whose first relationships' are caring and nourishing earn the ability to establish similarly caring relationships again in the future. However, on the other side, children who have been abused or neglected in the early stages of their lives tend to be re-exposed to similar early negative experiences in their romantic relationships in adulthood (Butler et al., 2020). The child's first relationships and early life experiences are not only the prototype of adult relationships but also the precursors of one's emotions and self-expression, ability to cope with distress, one's internalized map of unwritten rules, personality organization, and predisposition to psychopathology (Levy et al., 2018).

In romantic relationships where an individual sees himself as worthless when alone and feels vulnerable against being alone, the individual may show hypersensitivity to being abandoned and alone in romantic relationships and obsessively dependent on his/her partner, just as in borderline personality disorder. In this case, the separation anxiety creates a tendency to be mistreated for the sake of not losing the relationship, and the individual may become more open to abuse (Kayha & Taşkale, 2019; Bassi et al., 2021). Based on this information, this study is planned to investigate the prediction that the effect of traumatic childhood experiences in the early period, facilitating the formation of borderline personality

patterns and separation anxiety, may cause these people to become more vulnerable to abuse in romantic relationships.

Globally, an estimated one-third of women are thought to have experienced some form of intimate partner violence in their lifetime (WHO, 2018). By the way, it is not just for women; numbers show that there are plenty of people who have been psychologically or physically attacked or threatened by their spouses or lovers at some point in their lives (Pichon, et al., 2020; Sansone et al., 2007). Also it is stated that having low income increases adult separation anxiety, borderline personality traits and partner violence (Ahmadabadi et al., 2020; Silove et al., 2016; Cohen et al., 2008; Frias & Angel, 2005). The study aims to examine the effect of childhood traumas on the increase in exposure to abuse in romantic relationships and also examine the increasing effect and mediating role of the presence of borderline personality pattern and separation anxiety on this exposure in these individuals. It is hypothesized that an increase in childhood traumas increases borderline personality patterns, separation anxiety, and exposure to abuse in romantic relationships. Moreover, borderline personality patterns and separation anxiety play a mediating role between childhood traumas and exposure to romantic relationship abuse. The secondary hypothesis of the study is having low income worsens whole scenario including having more separation anxiety and higher degrees of borderline personality traits and also experiencing abuse more frequently in romantic relationships. The increase in negative behaviors, such as the use of opposing force, coercive attitudes, threats, harassment, and physical or sexual violence, especially in romantic relationships, has led to the need to examine the causes of these behavior patterns as well as their consequences. This study aims to shed light on this problem and raise awareness about the foundations of this problem by trying to evaluate some of the antecedents in the formation of this unhealthy structure in romantic relationships. In this direction, it is aimed to support preventive initiatives specific to recurrent violence victimization in adulthood.

Method

Model of the Research

A relational screening and cross sectional model was used in this study. While examining the effect of being exposed to traumatic events in childhood on being more vulnerable to abuse in romantic relationships in adulthood, the mediating effect of the presence of borderline personality traits and intolerance and high anxiety about separation in this relationship is tested.

Population and Sample

The population of this study in the field of psychology was determined as adults residing in Istanbul. Paris (2001) indicates about 90% of borderline personality traits decrease by the age of 50. With time, especially when patient gets close to his/her sixties, impulsivity declines and patients learn to avoid the situations that cause them the most problems (such as passionate romantic relationships), finding solid niches that provide them the structure they require (Faraji ve Tezcan, 2022). In light of this information, the sample of this study consists participants, 326 women (81.5%) and 74 men (18.5%), between the ages of 18-55, residing in Istanbul using the simple random sample technique. 1% of the participants are primary school graduates 13.3% are high school graduates, 53.5% are university students, and 32.3% are university graduates or higher. While the rate of single participants is 64.8%, married participants make up 31.5% of the sample, and divorced participants make up 3.8%. The rate of people with low income is 14.5%, the rate of people with middle income is 72.5%, and the rate of people with high income is 13%. While 31.3% of the participants had received psychiatric support before, 68.8% did not.

Data Collection Tools

The Socio-Demographic Information Form

The Socio-demographic Information Form created by the researcher includes questions about the romantic relationships of the participants, as well as personal information such as gender, age, education levels, income levels, marital status. In this form, participants' experiences of receiving psychiatric support at any point in their lives are also questioned.

Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ-33)

The Turkish adaptation of the Childhood Traumas Questionnaire developed by Bernstein (1994) was made by Şar (1996, cited in Şar 2012) under the name CTQ-28. The scale was re-arranged in 2001 by Şar et al. (2012), and its new revision was published under the name CTQ-33. There are 33 items on the scale, and it is based on a 5-point Likert scale. Items numbered 1,2,4,5,7,10,13,19,26,28,31 on the scale are reverse items. The scale has subscales named emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, physical and emotional neglect, and overprotection-overcontrol. Cronbach's alpha value was determined as .87 (Şar, et al., 2021). For this study the Cronbach Alpha value, which is the internal consistency coefficient, was found to be .91 for the total score, .83 for the emotional abuse subscale, .85 for the physical abuse subscale, .76 for the physical neglect subscale, .86 for the emotional neglect subscale, and sexual harassment, .92 for the subscale and .85 for the overprotection/control subscale.

Romantic Relationship Assessment Inventory (RRAI)

Romantic Relationship Assessment Inventory (RRAI), developed by Kılınçer and Tuzgöl Dost (2013), was consist of 70 items and a 5-point Likert scale was used in the scale. The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale without an reverse item is 70, and the highest score is 350. An increase in the score means that the exposure to abuse in the relationship increases. The Cronbach Alpha value of the scale was determined as .97 (Kılınçer & Tuzgöl Dost, 2013). For this study, the Cronbach Alpha value, which is the internal consistency coefficient, was found to be .97 for the total score.

Borderline Personality Questionnaire (BPQ)

Poreh et al. (2006) to evaluate Borderline Personality traits according to DSM-IV, Turkish validity and reliability study of the scale was conducted by Ceylan (2017). The scale consists of 65 items and has subscales of Impulsivity, Affective Instability, Abandonment, Relationships, Self-Image, Suicidal Self-Injury Behavior, Feeling of Void, Intense Anger, and Psychotic-Like Situations. The Cronbach alpha value of the scale was determined as .89 (Ceylan, 2017). For this study, the Cronbach Alpha value, which is the internal consistency coefficient, was found to be .94 for the total score, .61 for the impulsivity subscale, .75 for the indecisiveness in affect subscale, .72 for the abandonment subscale, .72 for the relationships subscale, and self. .81 for the self-image subscale, .79 for the suicidal self-injury subscale, .77 for the sense of emptiness subscale, .81 for the intense anger subscale, and .70 for the psychosis-like states subscale.

Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire (ASAQ-27)

The Turkish validity and reliability studies of the Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire (Manicavasagar et al., 2003), were conducted by Diriöz (2012). The scale was consist of 27 items based on self-report, and a 4-point Likert scale was used in the scale. The Cronbach's alpha value of the scale was determined as .93 (Diriöz, 2012). For this study, the Cronbach Alpha value, which is the internal consistency coefficient, was found to be .93 for the total score.

Process

This study conducted with the permission of Istanbul Aydın University Ethics Committee (no: 2022/9 date: 27/05/2022) Socio-demographic Information Form, Childhood Traumas Questionnaire (CTQ-33), Romantic Relationship Assessment Scale, Borderline Personality Questionnaire, Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaires were given on a voluntary basis to people aged 18-55 living in Istanbul. An informed consent form was given to participants on the front page of the study. The identity information of the participants was not taken in order to comply with the principle of confidentiality. Participants were reached through online surveys. In the electronic environment, the questionnaires created with the Google Form application were delivered to the research participants via e-mail and social media channels. There is no need to get permission from any institution for the research. The average completion time of the scales was determined as 25 minutes.

Analysis of Data

Within the scope of this study, all statistical analyses were performed using SPSS 25 software. whether the scales exhibited a normal distribution was examined in detail. During this evaluation, the kurtosis and skewness coefficients of the scales were observed to meet the reference values in the range of -2 to +2 suggested by HahsVaughn and Lomax (2020).

The level and direction of correlation between abuse in romantic relationship, childhood traumas, borderline personality traits and adult separation anxiety variables were investigated using Pearson Correlation analysis. In addition, ANOVA tests were preferred to examine the differences in the scores of abuse in romantic relationships, childhood traumas, borderline personality traits and adult separation anxiety according to income status. Process Macro 3.5 programme was used to examine the mediating role of adult separation anxiety and borderline personality traits in the prediction of childhood traumas and exposure to abuse in romantic relationships. Since the validity of the Baron & Kenny (1986) causal steps technique, which is widely used in the analysis of the mediation model, is controversial today, it is preferred to use the new approach based on the bootstrap technique applied for psychology research. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), path a, path b, path c should be statistically significant. Unlike the Baron and Kenny method, according to the new approach, although these paths are not statistically significant, there may be mediation models whose mediation effect is statistically significant (Gürbüz & Bayık 2019). All these statistical analyses were performed with 95% confidence intervals and p value .05 level of significance.

Findings

The mean of the Childhood Traumas Questionnaire was determined as $\bar{X} = 41.12$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 12.39. The mean of Emotional Abuse was determined as $\bar{X} = 8.39$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 3.85. The mean of Physical Abuse was determined as $\bar{X} = 6.85$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 2.50. The mean of Physical Neglect was determined as $\bar{X} = 8.08$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 3.06. The mean of Emotional Neglect was determined as $\bar{X} = 11.46$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 4.49. The mean of Sexual Abuse was determined as $\bar{X} = 6.34$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 2.28. The mean of Overprotection-Overcontrol was determined as $\bar{X} = 10.81$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 4.48. The mean of the Borderline Personality Questionnaire was determined as $\bar{X} = 23.31$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 14.81. The mean of the Impulsivity was determined as $\bar{X} = 1.75$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 1.67. The mean of the Affective Instability was determined as $\bar{X} = 4.26$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 2.53. The mean of the Abandonment was determined as $\bar{X} = 2.54$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 2.23. The mean of the Affective Instability was determined as $\bar{X} = 4.26$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 2.53. The mean of the Relationship was determined as $\bar{X} = 2.91$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 2.24. The mean of the Self-Image was determined as $\bar{X} =$

1.93, with a standard deviation (SD) of 2.38. The mean of the Suicidal Self-Injury Behavior was determined as $\bar{X} = 1.06$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 1.63. The mean of the Feeling of Void was determined as $\bar{X} = 3.25$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 2.60. The mean of the Intense Anger was determined as $\bar{X} = 3.37$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 2.82. The mean of the Psychosis-like states was determined as $\bar{X} = 2.24$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 1.89. The mean of the Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire was determined as $\bar{X} = 28.91$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 15.20. The mean of the Suicidal Self-Injury Behavior was determined as $\bar{X} = 94.54$, with a standard deviation (SD) of 31.60.

Table 1

The Relationship Between Childhood Traumas, Adult Separation Anxiety, and Exposure to Abuse in Romantic Relationships

	Adult Separation Anxiety	Exposure to Abuse in Romantic Relationships
Childhood Traumas	.252**	.292**
Emotional Abuse	.232**	.247**
Physical Abuse	.186**	.250**
Physical Neglect	.165**	.216**
Emotional Neglect	.178**	.234**
Sexual Abuse	.201**	.142**
Overprotection-overcontrol	.236**	.292**

Note. **p<0.01, *p<0.05 Name of the test applied: Pearson Correlation Test

It was examined that, there is a weak positive relationship between Separation Anxiety Questionnaire and Childhood Traumas Questionnaire ($r=.252$, $p<0.01$). It was examined that, there is a weak positive relationship between Romantic Relationship Assessment Inventory and Childhood Traumas Questionnaire ($r=.292$, $p<0.01$).

Although the variables showed low correlation with each other, mediator analysis was performed because it was thought that they could predict abuse in an adult romantic relationship in case of co-existence of childhood traumas and separation anxiety.

Table 2

The Relationship Between Borderline Personality Traits and Childhood Traumas

	Childhood Traumas	Emotional Abuse	Physical Abuse	Physical Neglect	Emotional Neglect	Sexual Abuse	Overprotection-overcontrol
Borderline Personality Traits	.464**	.390**	.315**	.306**	.401**	.317**	.346**
Impulsivity	.261**	.202**	.240**	.172**	.213**	.164**	.145**
Emotional Instability	.306**	.231**	.187**	.207**	.299**	.199**	.210**
Abandonment Relationships	.384**	.326**	.283**	.247**	.308**	.289**	.322**
Self Image	.323**	.246**	.183**	.267**	.294**	.199**	.244**
Suicide/ Self Harm	.439**	.373**	.271**	.318**	.380**	.282**	.353**
Suicide/ Self Harm	.427**	.422**	.326**	.240**	.298**	.346**	.250**
Sense of Emptiness	.444**	.381**	.277**	.285**	.391**	.316**	.336**
Intense Anger	.270**	.269**	.183**	.128*	.259**	.128*	.219**
Quasi Psychotic States	.222**	.131**	.179**	.165**	.180**	.211**	.178**

Note. **p<0.01, *p<0.05 Name of the test applied: Pearson Correlation Test

It was examined that, there is a moderate positive relationship between Borderline Personality Traits and the following variables: Childhood Traumas Questionnaire ($r=.464$, $p<0.01$) Emotional Abuse ($r=.390$, $p<0.01$), Physical Abuse ($r=.315$, $p<0.01$), Physical Neglect ($r=.306$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Neglect ($r=.401$, $p<0.01$), Sexual Abuse ($r=.317$, $p <0.01$), Overprotection-Overcontrol ($r=.346$, $p<0.01$).

It was examined that, there is a weak positive relationship between Impulsivity and the following variables: Childhood Traumas ($r=.261$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Abuse ($r=.202$, $p<0.01$), Physical Abuse ($r=.240$, $p<0.01$), Physical Neglect ($r=.172$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Neglect ($r=.213$, $p<0.01$), Sexual Abuse ($r=.164$, $p<0.01$), Overprotection-Overcontrol ($r= .145$, $p<0.01$).

It was examined that, there is a moderate positive relationship between Emotional Instability and Childhood Traumas ($r=.306$, $p<0.01$), Also, there is a weak positive relationship between Emotional Instability and the following variables: Childhood Traumas ($r=.306$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Abuse ($r=.231$, $p<0.01$), Physical Abuse ($r=.187$, $p<0.01$), Physical Neglect ($r=.207$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Neglect ($r=.299$, $p<0.01$), Sexual Abuse ($r=.199$, $p<0.01$), Overprotection Control ($r=.210$, $p<0.01$).

It was examined that, there is a weak positive relationship between Abandonment and the following variables: Childhood Traumas ($r = 0.384$, $p < 0.01$), Emotional Abuse ($r = 0.326$, $p < 0.01$), Physical Abuse ($r = 0.283$, $p < 0.01$), Physical Neglect ($r = 0.247$, $p < 0.01$), Emotional Neglect ($r = 0.308$, $p < 0.01$), Sexual Abuse ($r = 0.289$, $p < 0.01$), and Overprotection-Overcontrol ($r = 0.322$, $p < 0.01$).

It was examined that, there is a weak positive relationship between Relationships and the following variables: Childhood Traumas ($r=.323$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Abuse ($r=.246$, $p<0.01$), Physical Abuse ($r=.183$, $p<0.01$), Physical Neglect ($r=.267$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Neglect ($r=.294$, $p<0.01$), Sexual Abuse ($r=.199$, $p<0.01$), Overprotection-Overcontrol ($r=. .244$, $p<0.01$).

It was examined that, there is a moderate positive relationship between Self-Image and the following variables: Childhood Traumas Questionnaire ($r=.439$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Abuse ($r=.373$, $p<0.01$), Physical Neglect ($r=.318$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Neglect ($r=.380$, $p<0.01$), Overprotection-Overcontrol ($r=.353$, $p<0.01$). Also there is a weak positive relationship between Self-Image and the following variables: Physical Abuse ($r=.271$, $p<0.01$), Sexual Abuse ($r=.282$, $p<0.01$).

It was examined that, there is a moderate positive relationship between Suicidal/ Self Harm Behavior and the following variables: Childhood Traumas ($r=.427$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Abuse ($r=.422$, $p<0.01$), Physical Abuse ($r=.326$), $p<0.01$), Sexual Abuse ($r=.346$, $p<0.01$). Also, there is a weak and positive relationship between Suicidal/ Self Harm Behavior and the following variables: Physical Neglect ($r=.240$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Neglect ($r=.298$, $p<0.01$), Overprotectio-Overcontrol ($r=.250$, $p<0.01$).

It was examined that, there is a moderate positive relationship between Emptiness and the following variables: Childhood Traumas ($r=.444$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Abuse ($r=.381$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Neglect ($r=.391$, $p<0.01$), Sexual Abuse ($r=.316$, $p<0.01$), Overprotection-Overcontrol ($r=.336$, $p<0.01$). Also, there is a weak positive relationship between Emptiness and the following variables: Physical Abuse ($r=.277$, $p<0.01$), Physical Neglect ($r=.285$, $p<0.01$).

It was examined that, there is a weak positive relationship between Anger and the following variables: Childhood Traumas ($r=.270$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Abuse ($r=.269$, $p<0.01$), Physical Abuse ($r=.183$, $p<0.01$), Physical Neglect ($r=.128$, $p<0.05$), Emotional Neglect ($r=.259$, $p<0.01$), Sexual Abuse ($r=.128$, $p<0.05$), Overprotection-Overcontrol ($r=.219$, $p<0.01$).

It was examined that, there is a weak positive relationship between Quasi Psychotic States and the following variables: Childhood Traumas ($r=.222$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Abuse ($r=.131$, $p<0.01$), Quasi Physical Abuse ($r=.179$, $p<0.01$), Physical Neglect ($r=.165$, $p<0.01$), Emotional Neglect ($r=.180$, $p<0.01$), Sexual Abuse ($r=.211$, $p <0.01$), Overprotection-Overcontrol ($r=.178$, $p<0.01$).

Table 3

The Relationship Between Borderline Personality, Adult Separation Anxiety, and Exposure to Abuse in Romantic Relationships

	Adult Separation Anxiety	Exposure to Abuse in Romantic Relationships
Borderline Personality Traits	.584**	.307**
Impulsivity	.254**	.262**
Emotional Instability	.497**	.177**
Abandonment Relationships	.569**	.252**
Self Image	.463**	.227**
Suicide/ Self Harm	.436**	.297**
Emptiness	.376**	.200**
Intense Anger	.474**	.271**
Quasi Psychotic States	.445**	.187**
	.277**	.169**

Note. **p<0.01, *p<0.05 Name of the test applied: Pearson Correlation Test

The correlation between Adult Separation Anxiety and Borderline Personality Traits ($r=.584$, $p<0.01$), Adult Separation Anxiety and Impulsivity ($r=.254$, $p<0.01$), Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire and Emotional Instability ($r=.497$, $p<0.01$), Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire and Abandonment ($r=.569$, $p<0.01$), Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire and Relationships ($r=.463$, $p<0.01$), Adult Separation Anxiety and Self-Image ($r=.436$, $p<0.01$), Adult Separation Anxiety and Suicide/ Self Harm Behavior ($r=.376$, $p<0.01$), Adult Separation Anxiety and Emptiness ($r=.474$, $p<0.01$), Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire and of Intense Anger ($r=.445$, $p<0.01$), Adult Separation Anxiety and Quasi Psychotic States ($r=.277$, $p<0.01$) variables are weak and moderate positive.

The correlation between Romantic Relationship Assessment Inventory and Borderline Personality Questionnaire ($r=.307$, $p<0.01$).

Table 4

Findings on the Prediction of Borderline Personality Traits by Adult Separation Anxiety

Independent Variable	B	SE	β	t	p	%95 CI	
						LL	UL
Constant	6,85	1,29		5,29	<.001***	4,31	9,39
Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire	0,57	0,04	0,58	14,37	<.001***	0,49	0,65

$R=.59$ $R^2=.34$ $F_{(1,398)}=206.43$ $p<.001$ ***

Note.***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05; The test use: Simple Linear Regression, CI: Confidence Interval

Table 4 shows adult separation anxiety predicts borderline personality traits. The R^2 value was .34 and the predictor explained 34% of the variance in the outcome variable ($F(1,398)=206.43$, $p<.001$). As a result of the findings, adult separation anxiety positively predicts borderline personality traits ($\beta=.58$ $p<.001$).

Table 5

The Mediator Role of the Borderline Personality Traits in the Prediction of the Childhood Traumas and Exposure to Abuse in Romantic Relationships

Model		B	SE	β	t	p	%95 CI		F	R ²
							LL	UL		
1	Intercept	63.97	5.25		12.18	<001***	53.65	74.30	38.59***	.08
	Childhood Traumas	0.74	0.12	0.29	6.08	<001***	0.50	0.98		
2	Intercept	63.73	5.15		12.38	<001***	53.61	73.85	28.26***	.12
	Childhood Traumas	0.48	0.14	0.19	3.58	<001***	0.22	0.75		
	Borderline Personality Traits	0.47	0.11	0.22	4.12	<001***	0.24	0.69		
	Undirect Total Effect (Mediator)	0.18	0.06				0.06	0.31		

Note. ***p<.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05 Test used: Process Macro 3.5

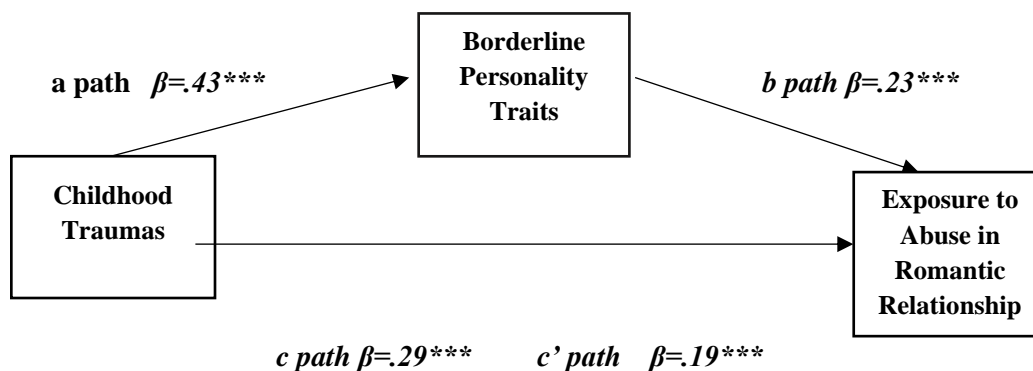
When the mediator role analysis utilized, it is seen that childhood traumas predicted the level of abuse in romantic relationship. The R² value was .08 and the predictors explained 8% of the variance in the outcome variable (F(1,398)=38.59, p<.01). According to the findings, childhood traumas positively predicted the level of abuse in romantic relationship (β =.29, t=6.08, p<.001) (Figure 1, path c).

The regression model after the mediator variable borderline personality traits was included in the model was statistically significant (F(2,397)=28.26, p<.001). After the mediator variable was included in the model, the predictive effect of the independent variable childhood traumas (β =.19, t=3.58, p<.001) on the level of abuse in romantic relationships continued (Figure 1, path c'). The R² value is .12 and it is seen that the predictors explain 12% of the variance in the outcome variable.

After the mediator variable was included in the model, the difference in variance explained between the models was found to be .04. The β coefficient of childhood trauma decreased from 0.29 to 0.19 and it was found to have this partial mediating role because it lost its statistical significance (Figure 1). The total partial mediation effect of these two variables was obtained as (β =.10, p<.05).

Figure 1

Beta Coefficients Regarding the Mediator Role of the Borderline Personality Questionnaire in the Prediction of the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire and the Romantic Relationship Assessment Inventory



Note. ***p<.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Table 6

The Mediator Role of the Adult Separation Anxiety in the Prediction of the Childhood Traumas and the Exposure to Abuse in Romantic Relationships

Model		B	SE	β	t	p	%95 CI		F	R ²
							LL	UL		
1	Intercept	63.97	5.25		12.18	<001***	53.65	74.30	38.59***	.08
	Childhood Traumas	0.74	0.12	0.29	6.08	<001***	0.50	0.98		
2	Intercept	55.95	5.36		10.45	<001***	45.42	66.47	32.27***	.13
	Childhood Traumas	0.59	0.12	0.23	4.81	<001***	0.35	0.83		
	Adult Separation Anxiety	0.49	0.10	0.24	4.94	<001***	0.30	0.69		
	Undirect Total Effect (Mediator)	0.10	0.04				0.04	0.18		

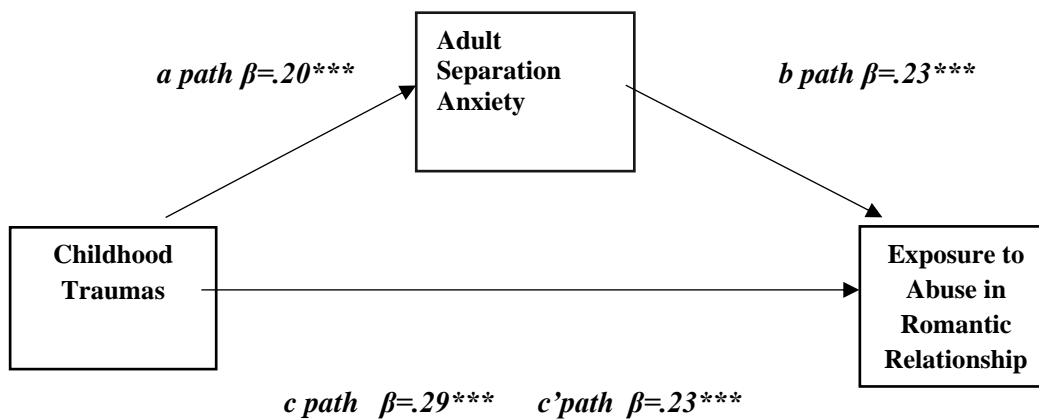
Note. ***p<.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05 Test used: Process Macro 3.5

The regression model after the mediator variable, adult separation anxiety, was included in the model was statistically significant ($F(2,397)=32.27, p<.001$). After the mediator variable was included in the model, the predictive effect of the independent variable childhood traumas ($\beta=.23, t=4.81, p<.001$) on the level of abuse in romantic relationship continues (Figure 2, path c'). The R² value is .13 and it is seen that the predictors explain 13% of the variance in the outcome variable.

After the mediator variable was included in the model, the difference in variance explained between the models was found to be .04. The β coefficient of childhood traumas decreased from 0.29 to 0.23 and since it lost statistical significance, it was found to have this partial mediating role (Figure 2). The total partial mediation effect of these two variables was obtained as ($\beta=.06, p<.05$).

Figure 2

Beta Coefficients Related to the Mediator Role of the Adult Separation Anxiety in the Prediction of the Childhood Traumas and Exposure to Abuse in Romantic Relationships



Note. ***p<.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Table 7

Comparison of Borderline Personality Traits, Adult Separation Anxiety, Exposure to Abuse in Romantic Relationships by Income Status

Dependent Variables	Income Status						F(2,397)	p
	Low Income (n=58)		Medium Income (n=290)		High Income (n=52)			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Borderline Personality Traits	30.17	15.42	23.28	14.51	15.83	12.07	13.69	<.001***
Impulsivity	2.09	1.60	1.67	1.68	1.81	1.66	1.55	0.214
Affective Instability	5.14	2.20	4.33	2.55	2.90	2.32	11.62	<.001***
Abandonment	3.48	2.56	2.57	2.14	1.37	1.79	13.17	<.001***
Relationships	3.67	2.26	2.95	2.24	1.85	1.81	9.65	<.001***
Self-Image	2.78	2.91	1.92	2.32	1.04	1.68	7.55	0.001**
Suicide/ Self Harm	1.52	1.88	1.05	1.60	0.62	1.32	4.30	0.014*
Emptiness	4.59	2.70	3.23	2.53	1.90	2.22	15.66	<.001***
Intense Anger	4.22	3.00	3.34	2.77	2.56	2.68	4.93	0.008**
Quasi Psychotic States	2.69	2.13	2.22	1.88	1.79	1.63	3.15	0.044*
Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire	34.60	17.35	28.54	14.42	24.56	15.37	6.46	0.002**
Romantic Relationship Assessment Inventory	100.09	41.68	94.32	32.50	92.69	23.70	0.88	0.418

Note. *** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$ Test Used One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

When the scores obtained from the Impulsivity and Romantic Relationship Evaluation Scale were analysed according to income status, no difference was observed between the groups ($p > .05$) (Table 7).

There is a significant difference in borderline personality scores among participants based on their income levels ($F(2,397)=13.69$, $p < .001$). As a result of Games-Howell findings, it was observed that those with low income (30.17 ± 15.42) scored significantly higher than those with medium income (23.28 ± 14.51) and high income (15.83 ± 12.07), and those with medium income (23.28 ± 14.51) scored significantly higher than those with high income (15.83 ± 12.07) (Table 7).

When the scores obtained from the Affective Instability subscale ($F(2,397)=11.62$, $p < .001$) were analysed according to income status, a difference was observed between the groups. As a result of Games-Howell findings, it was observed that those with low income (5.14 ± 2.20) and medium income (4.33 ± 2.55) scored significantly higher than those with high income (2.90 ± 2.32) (Table 7).

When the scores obtained from the Abandonment subscale ($F(2,397)=13.17$, $p < .001$) were analysed according to income status, a difference was observed between the groups. As a result of Games-Howell findings, it was observed that those with low income (3.48 ± 2.56) scored significantly higher than those with medium income (2.56 ± 2.14) and high income (1.37 ± 1.79), and those with medium income (2.56 ± 2.14) scored significantly higher than those with high income (1.37 ± 1.79) (Table 7).

When the scores obtained from the relationships subscale ($F(2,397)=9.65$, $p < .001$) were analysed according to income status, a difference was observed between the groups. According to Tukey findings, it was observed that those with low income (3.67 ± 2.26) and medium income (2.95 ± 2.24) had significantly higher scores than those with high income (1.85 ± 1.81) (Table 7).

When the scores obtained from the Self-Image subscale ($F(2,397)=7.55$, $p < .01$) were analysed

according to income status, a difference was observed between the groups. As a result of Games-Howell findings, it was observed that those with low income (2.78 ± 2.91) and medium income (1.92 ± 2.32) scored significantly higher than those with high income (1.04 ± 1.68) (Table 7).

When the scores obtained from the Suicide/ Self Harm subscale ($F(2,397)=4.30$, $p<.05$) were examined according to income status, a difference was observed between the groups. According to Games-Howell findings, it was observed that those with low income (1.52 ± 1.88) scored significantly higher than those with high income (0.62 ± 1.32) (Table 7).

When the scores obtained from the Emptiness subscale ($F(2,397)=15.66$, $p<.001$) were analysed according to income status, a difference was observed between the groups. According to Tukey findings, it was observed that those with low income (4.59 ± 2.70) scored significantly higher than those with medium income (3.23 ± 2.53) and high income (1.90 ± 2.22), and those with medium income (3.23 ± 2.53) scored significantly higher than those with high income (1.90 ± 2.22) (Table 7).

When the scores obtained from the Intense Anger subscale ($F(2,397)=4.93$, $p<.01$) were analysed according to income status, a difference was observed between the groups. According to Tukey findings, it was observed that those with low income (4.22 ± 3.00) scored significantly higher than those with high income (2.56 ± 2.68) (Table 7).

When the scores obtained from the Quasi Psychotic States subscale ($F(2,397)=3.15$, $p<.05$) were analysed according to income status, a difference was observed between the groups. According to Tukey findings, it was observed that those with low income (2.69 ± 2.13) scored significantly higher than those with high income (1.79 ± 1.63) (Table 7).

When the scores of the Adult Separation Anxiety Questionnaire ($F(2,397)=6.46$, $p<.01$) were analysed according to income status, a difference was observed between the groups. According to Tukey findings, it was observed that those with low income (34.60 ± 17.35) scored significantly higher than those with medium income (28.54 ± 14.42) and high income (24.56 ± 15.37) (Table 7).

Discussion

People who have had traumatic experiences in childhood have lower psychological resilience and a higher predisposition to psychopathology than those who have not been abused and neglected in childhood (Chang, et al., 2021; Carr, et al., 2013). Individuals with childhood traumatic experiences are at high risk for forming unhealthy personality organizations (Xie, et al., 2021; Ibrahim et al., 2018). All these features cause people to have insufficient ability to resist, stop, and move away from repetitive attacks in adulthood (Lelaurain et al., 2021). Experiences of abuse and neglect in childhood can cause people to normalize their experiences of violence in adulthood and easily integrate into violence to resolve conflicts (Cyr et al., 2006). Individuals may tend to repeat their childhood experiences in adulthood by reintroducing the aggressive objects they have known from their past lives. The belief that attachment to the offensive object is better than having no object to attach to and being alone, as a result of their extreme fear of object loss and abandonment, is also among the reasons that make people more vulnerable to repetitive victimization (Bögels, et al., 2013). Therefore they tend to engage abusive romantic relationships (McClure & Parmenter, 2020).

The main finding of the current study is that childhood traumas predict exposure to abuse in a romantic relationship and that borderline personality traits and adult separation anxiety partially mediate this relationship. Adults and children can develop strong emotional bonds with people who abuse, beat, and threaten them, and the persistence of these bonds can lead to the confusion of pain and love. This prevents making the right relationship decision and causes the longing for attachment to overcome realistic fears (van der Kolk, 1989). People exposed to abuse and deprivation early in their lives may

become vulnerable to violent relationships with their peers as adults (Gabbard, 2011).

Childhood neglect and abuse lead to the lack of integrative processes in identity, preventing the formation of a healthy structure in the child and may lead to a personality organization with borderline personality traits (Cirasola et al., 2017). Studies have revealed the role of childhood traumas in developing borderline personality (Ibrahim, et al., 2018; Kutlu, 2018; Tekin, 2021; Xie et al., 2021). Sansone et al., (2005) study, which is on hospitalized patients, reported that patients with borderline personality disorder mostly reported childhood trauma. Taillieu et al. (2016), pointed out that child maltreatment, especially emotional abuse and emotional neglect, increases the tendency of borderline personality disorder. Cirasola et al. (2017) showed that not just childhood maltreatments but also childhood distress has a significant association with the diagnosis of borderline personality disorder. Consistent with the other studies mentioned below, a positive relationship was found between borderline personality traits and each of the childhood traumas in the present study. According to these results, it is seen that as the childhood trauma experiences increase, the borderline personality traits increase, too.

When someone's childhood environment consists of aggressive, humiliating and abusive individuals (especially caregivers), the person can put the other individuals in the same role in future relationships, match with partners suitable for these roles, and hide the experienced victimization in relationships again like before (Gabbard, 2011). In borderline personality organization, people establish unbalanced and masochistic relationships and are repeatedly traumatized in their relationships (Battle, et al., 2004; Persano, 2022; Salome et al., 2023). As the bad experiences in the first relationships increase, this personality pattern of the people is positioned at the more extreme, and the romantic relationship problems experienced in the adult life also increase. Igarashi et al. (2010) drew attention to the effect of neglect and abuse in the first relationships on borderline personality organization and emphasized that the sexual nature of maltreatment is a higher disruptive factor.

Sansone et al. (2007) found that a considerable percentage (64%) of women diagnosed with borderline personality disorder were exposed to partner violence. Likewise, Newhill et al. (2009) reported, an even a more considerable percentage that 73% of individuals diagnosed with borderline personality disorder were exposed to interpersonal violence within one year after discharge from the hospital. Loas et al. (2011) found that 50% of women diagnosed with dependent personality disorder who were exposed to violence by their spouses showed borderline personality disorder comorbidity. Stepp et al. (2012) says that having borderline personality traits is a significant risk factor for relationship victimization. In another study, Newhill et al., (2012) showed that emotion regulation disorder is an essential longitudinal mediator of violent behavior among individuals with borderline personality disorder and may serve as the primary mechanism that increases the risk of violence in borderline population. Westphal et al. (2013) found that the relationship between interpersonal traumatic experiences in adulthood and borderline personality disorder is as strong as the relationship between interpersonal traumatic experiences in childhood and borderline personality disorder. Similarly, this study found a positive relationship between exposure to abuse in a romantic relationship and borderline personality traits. The fear of abandonment, in the subset of borderline personality disorder, increases the risk of being a victim of violence again (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

The current study's results show that separation anxiety predicts borderline personality traits in a significant level. Matthies et al. (2018) also indicate that the development, management, and therapy of BPD may all involve separation anxiety as a key trait. Data from epidemiological, environmental, psychological, and neurobiological studies linking BPD to separation experiences, feelings of loneliness, insecure attachment patterns, dimensional separation anxiety, and separation anxiety disorder as a whole point to a partially common etiological pathway hypothesis underpinning both disorders

(Matthies et al., 2018).

Separation anxiety disorder can be comorbid with many other psychopathologies and cause significant problems in people's lives, especially in the relationship dimension (Manicavasagar et al., 2010; Silove et al., 2010). This disorder is particularly common among women in low-income countries (Silove et al., 2016; Bögels, et al., 2013). This situation is related to the dependency-increasing nature of financial inadequacies. It is thought that the psychological difficulties and problems that arise from childhood traumas increase dependency and, thus, separation anxiety with the perception of being inadequate alone. Separation anxiety in adulthood increases the possibility of being exposed to higher relational stress and victimization in the relationship (Silove, et al., 2016). Kayha and Taşkale (2019) examined women as both perpetrators and victims of violence. They found a positive relationship between separation anxiety and violence experiences in adults and emphasized the increasing effect of separation anxiety on violence. Silove et al. (2016) reported in a study on pregnant women that a group showing only the basic features of separation anxiety reported higher levels of physical violence than women with low-level symptoms. Likewise, this study found a positive correlation between the adult separation anxiety levels and the level of abuse exposure in a romantic relationship. Our results indicate that low economic level has a association with both borderline personality traits and separation anxiety the two psychological condition which have strong relations with victimization in romantic relationship.

Childhood traumas may contribute to a particular vulnerability to different types of psychopathology in childhood and adulthood (Carr, et al., 2013; Chang, et al., 2021; Lochner, et al., 2010). Traumatic stress experiences cause high levels of anxiety in children, and studies reveal the relationship between childhood traumas and different types of anxiety disorders (Nemeroff, 2016). Separation anxiety seen in adults is among the anxiety types highly correlated with childhood traumas (Karaytuğ et al., 2023). A similar relationship was also reported by Çakmak (2016). Similarly, this study found a positive correlation between adult separation anxiety levels and all types of childhood trauma.

The need for acceptance, belonging, and being assured of a commitment to others is one of the most important elements of human existence. Since a large part of human behavior, feelings, and thoughts stem from this primary interpersonal drive, lack of belonging creates a serious deprivation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Every individual needs to connect with the other (Bowlby, 1960). However, since individuals with borderline personality traits have extremely anxious expectations about losing this belonging one, being rejected and abandoned, they may display more sensitive and reactive attitudes towards the rejection signals and loss of the bonds they have established (Hepp, et al., 2018; Hepp, et al., 2017; Staebler, et al., 2011). They may also easily encounter the experience of abandonment as a self-fulfilling prophecy because of their maladaptive behaviors such as aggression or withdrawal, emotional dysregulation and sensitivity, marked impulsive behavior, and difficulties in anger control (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Houben et al., 2018; Quattrini, et al., 2019).

It has been reported that separation anxiety can be highly co-diagnosed with personality disorders, including borderline personality disorder (Manicavasagar & Silove, 2016). Fear of abandonment plays an important role to engage in abusive romantic relationships in the presence of childhood abuse (Zerubavel et al., 2018). Borderline personality disorder symptoms of "fear of abandonment or efforts toward not being abandoned" and separation anxiety symptoms have some different points. These anxieties are typically brought on by emotionally charged and unstable relationships in borderline personality disorder. However, adult separation anxiety disorder patient views separations brought on by "accident, injury, death or other unforeseen event" as more terrifying than abandonment when they occur in stable and healthy partnerships (Namlı et al., 2022). But in the case of existence of both of them it can cause a significant tendency to do not leave the romantic relationship any way even in the case of abuse. Because with a comorbid diagnosis of personality disorder, separation anxiety was found

to be much more severe and impair functionality more significantly (Osone & Takahashi, 2006). It is undeniable that both intolerance to separation and being alone make people more vulnerable to being abused in their romantic relationships (Battle, et al., 2004). In this direction, while many studies associate borderline personality disorder with exposure to violence generally (Alexander, 2009; Coolidge and Anderson, 2002), there are also studies stating that borderline personality disorder and exposure to violence, especially in romantic relationships, are associated (Reuter et al., 2015; Vanwoerden et al., 2019; Brownridge & Tyler, 2022). The conflicting and irregular nature of romantic relationships is seen as one of the main characteristics of relationship violence, and the presence of instability in interpersonal relationships in borderline personality disorder is associated with increased exposure to abuse (Capaldi et al., 2012; Carotta et al., 2018; Sinai et al., 2018; Wojciechowski, 2019). Adults who neglect the child by not providing adequate support in the first relationships, abuse the child emotionally and physically, or actually or imaginatively abandon the child make child tend to develop borderline features in adult life and become more sensitive to separation, more sensitive to abandonment, more intolerant of loneliness and more abusable (Widom et al., 2009; Westphal et al., 2013; Berber Çelik & Odacı, 2019; Wojciechowski, 2019).

Conclusion and Recommendations

It has been found that traumatic experiences in childhood are associated with borderline personality organization and separation anxiety in adults, and this personality structure and intense separation anxiety play a mediating role in the romantic relationships that people form in adulthood, as well as being open to violence. The experiences of abuse and neglect in childhood predispose these people to the same experiences of abuse and neglect in adulthood, positioning them in a similar violent experience. The mediating roles of borderline personality organization and separation anxiety in adults, which are emphasized in the study, serve to reveal the association of the violence cycle in childhood and adulthood.

Violence experienced by individuals in childhood can lead to their inability to form a healthy personality. On the other hand, these personality traits can imprison people in the same cycle of violence with a behavior pattern that invites violence again. Similarly, the ongoing separation anxiety of these people, who were abandoned physically or imaginatively in childhood, whose emotional needs were not met, or who were abused physically or sexually, being separated from those first objects with which they could never reunite, can make tend to be in a dependent relationship with people who abuse them in the same way in adulthood. At this point, the current study's results show the importance of separation anxiety and borderline personality organization on victimization in romantic relationships. Also, results show that separation anxiety predicts borderline personality organization. Therefore, it indicates that focusing on separation anxiety in the psychological processes of individuals who have childhood trauma, especially those with borderline personality features might be useful.

The fact that the research is limited to only 400 people residing within the provincial borders of Istanbul is among the limitations of the research. Another limitation of this study is that when determining the age range, focusing on borderline personality traits and not taking into account that the experiences gained with age can lead individuals to healthier romantic relationships. Therefore, it is recommended to evaluate the 18-30 age range in future studies. In addition, the fact that this study was conducted in a cross-sectional design causes a limitation in presenting the background of recurrent abuse experiences. In this regard, longitudinal follow-up and evaluation of children with childhood trauma is recommended in future studies.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical Approval

Ethics committee approval was received for this study from the Ethics Committee of Istanbul Aydın University (Approval Date:27/05/2022; Approval Number:2022/9).

Author Contributions

H.F. led the conceptualization of the study and was also responsible for the design phase and providing supervision throughout the study. Data collection and processing, as well as the analysis and interpretation of the data, were carried out by D.S.C., who also conducted the literature search. The writing of the manuscript was a collaborative effort between H.F. and D.S.C. The critical review of the manuscript was specifically performed by H.F..

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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The Pied Piper as a Killer in London: China Miéville's Novel King Rat

Londra'da Bir Katil Olarak Fareli Köyün Kavalcısı: China Miéville'in Kral Fare Romanı

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Abstract

This study examines how the story of The Pied Piper of Hamelin is re-told in China Miéville's novel King Rat in London by combining elements of urban fantasy and arguing that the boundaries between the real and the fantasy world are blurred in the city of London. China Miéville is regarded as one of the most remarkable contemporary British Fantasy literature writers. In King Rat, blending the familiar cityscape with elements of myth, magic and horror creates a rich environment where ordinary lives intersect with extraordinary forces. By analysing the thematic and stylistic features of the novel, this study will reveal how King Rat exemplifies the basic elements of urban fantasy, focusing on the setting, characters, and fantastic elements and how it makes an important contribution to the genre. This analysis will provide readers with a detailed panorama of the interplay between urban settings, fantastic elements, and dark themes in contemporary literature.

Keywords: King Rat, Urban Fantasy, China Miéville, Fantasy Literature.

Öz

Bu çalışma, Fareli Köyün Kavalcısı hikâyesinin China Miéville'in Kral Fare adlı romanında Londra'da şehir fantezisi unsurlarıyla birleştirilerek nasıl yeniden anlatıldığını incelemekte ve Londra şehrinde gerçek dünya ile fantezi dünyası arasındaki sınırların ayırt edilemez hale geldiğini gözler önüne sermektedir. China Miéville, çağdaş İngiliz Fantastik edebiyatının en dikkat çekici yazarlarından biri olarak kabul edilmektedir. Yazar, Kral Fare'de tanıdık şehir manzarasını mit, büyü ve korku unsurlarıyla harmanlayarak sıradan hayatların olağanüstü güçlerle kesiştiği zengin bir ortam yaratır. Bu çalışma, romanın tematik ve üslup özelliklerini analiz ederek, romandaki mekan, karakter ve fantastik unsurlara odaklanarak bu özelliklerin şehir fantezisinin temel unsurlarını nasıl örneklemediğini ve türe nasıl önemli bir katkı sağladığını ortaya koyacaktır. Bu analiz, okuyuculara çağdaş edebiyatta kentsel ortamlar, fantastik öğeler ve karanlık temalar arasındaki etkileşimin ayrıntılı bir panoramasını sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kral Fare, Şehir Fantezisi, China Miéville, Fantezi Edebiyatı.

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The Pied Piper as a Killer in London: China Miéville's Novel *King Rat*

Along with the remarkable increase in the number of works written in the field of fantasy literature in recent years, various subgenres of this genre have begun to emerge. Among these subgenres, urban fantasy [UF] has gained tremendous popularity as one of the prominent subgenres in contemporary literature with its perspectives that push the boundaries of traditional fantasy literature and explore new narrative realms. In this context, China Miéville's *King Rat* stands out as an essential representative of the UF genre. Published in 1998, *King Rat* presents readers with a skilfully orchestrated blend of the real setting of the city of London, supernatural elements, and a series of violent events, offering a remarkable and gripping reading experience. In this study, firstly, general information will be given about fantasy literature and its sub-genres of UF, then China Miéville's literary direction as a writer of fantasy literature will be discussed, and the characteristics of *King Rat* as a representative of UF will be analysed.

In the 21st century, fantasy literature has emerged as a vital and influential genre, significantly shaping contemporary literature. Its importance lies in its ability to transcend the boundaries of reality, offering imaginative and thought-provoking narratives that explore the complexities of the human experience. Fantasy literature provides a unique space for authors to delve into social, political, and philosophical themes through metaphor and allegory, allowing readers to engage with complex ideas in an engaging and accessible manner. Moreover, in an increasingly interconnected and technologically driven world, fantasy literature offers an essential escape from the mundane, providing readers with a much-needed respite from reality and a means to explore different cultures, mythologies, and fantastical realms. It fosters imagination, empathy, and creativity, encouraging readers to expand their horizons and challenge preconceptions.

There are various opinions regarding fantasy and the lack of consensus as to what it implies requires a brief outline of its diverse definitions to provide a general impression. In her study, Kathryn Hume (1984) suggests that all literature:

is the product of two impulses. These are mimesis, felt as the desire to imitate, to describe events, people, and objects with such verisimilitude that others can share your experience; and fantasy, the desire to change givens and alter reality—out of boredom, play, vision, longing for something lacking, or need for metaphoric images that will bypass the audience's verbal defences. (p. 20)

As can be understood from Hume's ideas the interplay between mimesis and fantasy in literature is a fundamental aspect of the creative process. It allows writers to navigate between the realms of reality and imagination, offering readers a diverse range of experiences and insights. This duality not only enriches literature but also mirrors the intricate interplay between our desires for representation and transformation in the broader human experience.

Apart from Hume's definition, which underlines the difference between fantasy and other genres, in Andrew's study with Rennison (2009), the related definition seems to be an inclusive one that covers some of the most important characteristics of fantasy:

Fantasy is the literature of imaginary and inexplicable places, times, events, and beings. Fantasy stories take place either in our world or others, in our time or other times, their authors describing imaginary things that they do not attempt to explain rationally or scientifically, sometimes evoking magic and the supernatural to provide an excuse for the presence of these imaginary elements. (p. xi)

Fantasy indeed thrives on the power of imagination and allows authors and readers to explore worlds, events, and beings that exist solely in the realm of creativity. This imaginative aspect is one of the defining features of fantasy literature. Fantasy stories often transport readers to entirely fictional settings, eras, and situations. These elements can be as diverse as the author's imagination allows, from otherworldly realms to alternate histories, from mythical creatures to entirely new species. The above statement accurately indicates that fantasy can be set in various places and times. Some fantasy stories are set in our world but feature hidden magical elements (UF), while others create entirely new universes. This diversity in settings and timeframes is one of the genre's strengths, offering a rich tapestry for authors to explore. Unlike science fiction, which often strives to provide logical or scientific explanations for its speculative elements, fantasy tends to embrace the inexplicable. It does not always adhere to the laws of physics or logic. Instead, it often relies on the suspension of disbelief and encourages readers to accept the fantastic elements as part of the narrative's internal logic. Many fantasy stories incorporate magic and the supernatural as central elements. These mystical forces serve as a bridge between the ordinary and the extraordinary, allowing authors to introduce and justify fantastical elements within their narratives. Magic can also be a source of wonder and conflict in fantasy worlds.

Imagination might be considered a key term in defining fantasy as Richard Mathews (2002) remarks "fantasy unlocks imagination" (p. xi) and the boundaries of fantasy are circumscribed by the power of imagination. Similarly, Briab Attebery (1992) argues that "the fantastic mode, by contrast, is a vast subject, taking in all literary manifestations of the imagination's ability to soar above the merely possible" (p. 2). This phrase emphasizes that the fantastic mode in literature is a vast and diverse field that encompasses various literary forms and is defined by its exploration of imaginative elements that go beyond what is conventionally considered possible or real. It points to the rich creative potential and the boundless realms of storytelling that this mode allows authors to explore. From a different perspective, it could be claimed that all types of fiction derive from the writer's power of imagination, however, some works are surely regarded as more imaginary than others, and as Cynthia Duncan (2010) indicates "[...] if the work presents a world which varies so greatly from our own that it appears more invented than familiar and true, we are apt to talk about it as a product of the writer's imagination" (p. 1). How the readers perceive and discuss the literature is emphasized here. When a literary work introduces a world or elements that are significantly different from reality, readers are inclined to acknowledge it as a result of the author's creative imagination. It speaks to the power of literature to transport readers into new and imaginative realms and reflects the fundamental role of creativity in the art of storytelling.

In addition to imagination, the term impossibility is another important concept while defining the fantasy as Gary Wolfe (2004) defines fantasy "as a fictional narrative describing events that the reader believes to be impossible" (p. 271). Also, Mendlesohn and James (2009) emphasize the significance of the impossibility for fantasy in their definition and argue that "the most obvious construction of fantasy in literature and art is the presence of the impossible and the unexplainable" (p. 3). According to Mendlesohn and James's argument one of the main ways to identify fantasy in literature and art is by observing the inclusion of elements that are beyond the bounds of what is possible or rational. Fantasy invites readers and viewers to suspend their disbelief and immerse themselves in worlds where the extraordinary and the inexplicable take centre stage, offering an escape into the realms of imagination and wonder. As can be understood from the various scholars' opinions, the concept of impossibility is used by fantasy literature writers so that they can provide new perspectives to the readers and help them understand real-world issues using impossibility in secondary worlds. Clute and Grant (1996), while defining fantasy in *The Encyclopaedia of Fantasy*, also highlight the relationship between fantasy and impossibility:

A fantasy text is a self-coherent narrative. When set in this world, it tells a story which is impossible in the world as we perceive it [...] when set in an otherworld, that otherworld will be impossible, though stories set there may be possible in its terms. (p. 338)

Fantasy literature thrives on the tension between the impossible and the internally consistent. Authors create worlds and narratives that, while fantastical and beyond the scope of our everyday experiences, follow their own rules and invite readers to explore these imaginative realms. This capacity to present the impossible coherently and engagingly is a hallmark of the genre, making it a source of fascination and escape for readers seeking to venture beyond the boundaries of reality.

Urban Fantasy

After providing a brief overview of fantasy literature, it is essential to focus on various subgenres. Traditionally, fantasy subgenres are classified as high and low fantasy; if the story is set completely or partly in the real world, then it is regarded as low fantasy; however, if it is set in an alternate/secondary world, then it is called high fantasy. In addition to this classification, while Martin (2009) categorizes the subgenres of fantasy literature as “high fantasy, adventure fantasy, fairy tale fiction, magical realism, and dark fantasy” (p. 37), Manlove (1999) mentions six distinct subgenres; secondary world, metaphysical, emotive, comic, subversive, and children’s fantasy (p. 4). In this study, UF will be focused on analyzing *King Rat*.

UF, not surprisingly, means fantasy set in cities, either an existing one made fantastical, such as London or Hong Kong, or a fantastical one, such as Terry Pratchett’s Ankh-Morpork made real in accordance with the logic of the related story. Further, Alexander C. Irvine (2012) explains the characterization of these two kinds of cities as such: “One comes from an exploration of the folkloric tradition and places it in an urban environment; the other derives from the tradition of exploration of urban existence and uses the devices of the fantastic to continue this exploration (p. 201).

Clute and Grant (1996) define UF as “normally texts where fantasy and mundane worlds intersect and interweave throughout a tale which is significantly about a real city” (p. 975). Stefan Ekman (2016), who is well-known for his studies on UF, refers to UF as a genre on its own rather than see it as a subgenre to fantasy and states that: “its [UF’s] root genres are not only fantasy but Gothic, horror and romance, and it can also draw on mystery, science fiction, and crime fiction” (p. 452). Similarly, Hobson and Anyivo (2019) point out the difficulty of categorizing UF: “The ambiguity of urban fantasy as a genre grows from the blending of many genres into one. Urban fantasy complicates the idea that genres are stable with fixed borders and consistent iconography (p.19). From a different perspective, in her description, Helen Young (2016) emphasizes the role of UF solving problems of modernity such as loneliness, isolation, fragmentation, and alienation, she characterizes all these problems as identity trouble and remarks:

Tolkien and his followers turned to the medieval in search of authentic identity, while Urban Fantasy also looks to the past in search of identity, but brings that past forward into the present, populating the streets of small towns and cities with the beings of folklore and mythology. (p. 141)

Since urban space is essential in UF, the setting plays an active role in the narrative. Hobson and Anyivo (2019) underline this fact, adding that the location itself is a character in the plot of UF and expresses: “The city is alive, not simply as a location but creating both obstacles and aids for the protagonists” (p. 1). In light of this basic information about what UF is, the novel *King Rat* can be regarded and evaluated as a representative of UF. However, before starting the analysis, some information about China Miéville is to be given.

The English fantasy writer China Miéville has written a distinguished body of work; he has eight novels and stories published in various anthologies, and *King Rat* is his debut novel. *King Rat* stands as an exemplar, skilfully weaving the enchantment of fantastical elements into the fabric of a modern urban milieu. Through the creative synthesis of the supernatural with the familiar contours of city life, Miéville crafts a narrative that not only challenges conventional distinctions but also offers a profound exploration of the urban experience, making *King Rat* a pivotal work deserving of meticulous scholarly inquiry.

Sherryl Vint (2009) indicates China Miéville's significance for British speculative fiction: "China Miéville is an important figure in a number of literary contexts. His work is at the centre of the renaissance of British science fiction and fantasy literature, often referred to as the British Boom" (p.197). Further, Thomas Scholz (2018) emphasizes that modern fantasy was ignored until the middle of the twentieth century and states Miéville's role in its development as such: "But in the end, it took academia only a few decades to overturn this false estimation. Now, authors such as J.R.R. Tolkien, Ursula Le Guin, China Miéville and Terry Pratchett are on their way to being canonized (p.227). In addition, Rayment (2014) also explains the literary style of China Miéville together with Pratchett and Pullman:

They displace elements of the 'real world' of our everyday 'social reality', decontextualize them, give them a non-real appearance (an appearance that is transformed and disrupted) and then throw it back at us 'real being'. A fantasy reality that is more than 'reality' itself. This is how they make us question over and over again what is postulated as self-evident, how they disturb our mental habits, the way that we do and think things, how they dissipate what is familiar and accepted, how they make us re-examine rules and institutions. In short, this is how they radically make us see again. (p. 18)

The power of fantasy literature lies in its capacity to reframe and reinterpret reality, prompting readers to see the world with fresh eyes and question the familiar. It invites us to explore the boundaries of our imagination and consider the limitless possibilities of the human experience. Doing so, it plays a vital role in the ongoing process of personal and societal growth and transformation.

With his works, China Miéville has become an influential voice in speculative fiction, renowned for his sweeping imaginative scope, erudite political perspective, and richly evocative prose style. His debut novel *King Rat* is London phantasmagoria and kin to Neil Gaiman's *Neverwhere*. However, it was with the publication of *Perdido Street Station* in 2000 that Miéville became a literary sensation. *Perdido Street Station* is the Bas-Lag series' first novel, followed by *The Scar* and *Iron Council*. Although *King Rat* received great acclaim when it was first published in 1998, it was later overshadowed by these three novels, known as the Bas-Lag trilogy, written between 2000 and 2004, and academic studies on the author have generally centred around the Bas-Lag trilogy.

***King Rat* as a Representative of Urban Fantasy**

King Rat is a modernized version of The Pied Piper of Hamelin tale. However, China Miéville has not adapted the fairy tale to his novel but has re-constructed a story based on a murder. The novel progresses both fast and intriguingly. The novel tells the story of Saul Garamond whose father turns out to be a rat, while his mother is a human. Saul finds himself in a bloody war against the Pied Piper of Hamelin who wants to kill Saul.

The main argument of this study is that *King Rat* can be regarded as a representative of UF. In order to discuss this claim, Stefan Ekman's ideas in his study entitled *Urban Fantasy: A Literature of the Unseen* is to be used. In his study, Ekman (2016) collects eleven accounts written about UF to determine the

basic features of the genre. After his evaluations, he underlines three distinctive points: the setting, characters, and fantastic elements peculiar to UF. Ekman (2016) starts with the distinctive characterization of the setting in UF; he explains that:

Urban Fantasy can be set in a secondary world metropolis which is itself a central figure of the story, a setting integral to the goings-on that can be considered a main character; or in a modern primary world which may or may not have become aware of the supernatural or mythological beings and events that dwell in it. (p. 463)

Miéville is known for his vivid and imaginative world-building, and *King Rat* is no exception. The story is set primarily in London, specifically in the urban landscape of the city. Its crowded streets, dark neighbourhoods, iconic buildings, and rivers function as a backdrop for the events of the story. The setting comes alive and contributes to the unique atmosphere and tone of the story. For example, after King Rat breaks Saul out of the prison in the police station, Saul finds himself in a supernatural and mystic world, although the setting is still London. Following these fantastic events, i.e., meeting King Rat and escaping from prison with him, Saul's thoughts and descriptions of London begin to change. His new perspective regarding the city is depicted in the novel as such: "The city had been made unsafe. Saul felt it yawn before him, infinitely vaster than he had imagined unknowable and furtive" (Miéville, 1998, p.53). For Saul, the fact that the city in which he has lived for years suddenly becomes a great unknown brings questions about the city. As Saul learns that London is much bigger than he had imagined, he questions the city:

"So, so ... " said Saul slowly. *So, What is London?* he thought. *If you can be what you are, what's London? What's the world? I've had it all wrong. Do werewolves and trolls lurk under bridges in the parks? What are the boundaries of the world?* (Miéville, 1998, p. 54)

Saul's continuous questions include a kind of curiosity and contemplation, and they seem to be asked to explore the nature of reality. Especially, the question 'What is London' is a rhetorical one. If there are supernatural creatures like King Rat living in London, then what he has known about London needs to be re-evaluated in the context of the fantastic events and creatures he encountered. The following questions further Saul's inquiries into the nature of truth. As Saul himself sees it, if King Rat exists in this world, what is the limit, and what else could be possible in this world? These questions imply a kind of realization that the world could be far more complex and supernatural than Saul previously believed. Further, when Saul questions the nature of reality, he realizes that he has lived in a false reality so far, as is seen in his remark, '*I've had it all wrong*'. Also, his words about supernatural beings like werewolves and trolls signify fantasy. After meeting King Rat, Saul sees it possible to encounter other fantastical creatures within the boundaries of the world. The last question, '*What are the boundaries of the world?*' could be seen as the most comprehensive and challenging one. The writer encourages the readers to think about the unknown. Also, within the framework of UF, it could also be claimed that the writer indicates that the boundaries between the real world and the world of fantasy are blurred and not clear; in other words, it is not known where the boundaries of the real-world end and the fantasy world begins. The two worlds are intertwined.

When King Rat takes Saul to the underground, he sees a manhole and, to Saul's surprise, he defines it as his home and enters it. Then, it is Saul's turn to enter from the manhole. His first impression of the sewer is as follows:

Saul stared into the pit. The swirling winds of the courtyard yanked at the rich-smelling wisps of vapor emerging from the hole. The sewer was gorged with darkness; it seemed to overflow, seeping out of the open concrete and obscuring the ground. The organic scent of compost billowed out. Just visible, a ladder driven into the subterranean brick plunged out of sight.

Where it was riveted to the wall, metal had oxidized and leached out profusely, making the sewer bleed rust. The sound of a thin flow of water was amplified by the yawning tunnels, making for a bizarre booming trickle. (Miéville, 1998, p. 84)

The city seen below unsettles the readers and as Pike (1981) indicated “see the city from below is to demonise it” (p.36). Further, this paragraph describes a different setting- underground London and sensory details are employed. In his vivid and atmospheric depiction, Miéville skilfully uses descriptive language to evoke a sense of foreboding and otherworldliness. The fact that the sewer is likened to a ‘pit’ which is ‘gorged with darkness’ creates a dark tone and again the setting functions as a character in the story. The use of the word ‘gorged’ to describe the darkness is particularly effective, as it suggests that the sewer is overflowing with something dark and sinister. This dark atmosphere is further intensified using the expressions ‘swirling winds’ and ‘rich-smelling wisps of vapor’. Moreover, the expression ‘ladder driven into the subterranean’ could be regarded as one of the elements of UF since the ladder seems to be a gateway or a portal to another world. The auditory imagery is equally compelling. The sound of a thin flow of water is amplified by the yawning tunnels, creating a disorienting effect, and emphasizing the strangeness of the scene. The sound of the water is also a powerful image, as it suggests that the protagonist is being swallowed up by the darkness. The ‘bizarre booming trickle’ adds an eerie quality, enhancing the sense of the uncanny that often defines the UF genre. Miéville uses his mastery of language to create a vivid and atmospheric scene that is both chilling and exciting. He masterfully combines the familiar elements of an urban landscape with the fantastical, blurring the boundaries between the mundane and the magical. By means of his evocatively crafted narrative, he immerses the readers into a concealed realm beneath the Earth’s surface, where enigmas and perils lie in wait. The passage undeniably prompts readers to contemplate the forthcoming developments, exemplifying the seamless integration of the tangible world with the supernatural, characteristic of the UF genre.

After gaining the power to control the rats, Saul emerges from the sewers and wanders through the alleyways of London, where he meets a homeless young woman and sees that she is afraid of the rats in the street. With his extraordinary power, Saul controls the rats in front of her eyes. While the woman is very surprised by this situation, Saul sits next to her and his ideas about London are exactly descriptive of UF: “He looked to his right and saw the lights of Edgware Road, only ten feet away. Again, he thought: these things take place so close to the real city, and no one can see them. They take place ten feet away, somewhere in another world” (Miéville, 1998, p. 166).

Through the protagonist Saul’s observation of the lights of Edgware Road, a familiar and tangible urban setting, the author effectively conveys the hidden nature of fantastical events that occur in the shadows. Edgware Road has often been described as a diverse and vibrant urban setting, making it a compelling backdrop for writers exploring themes of multiculturalism, urban life, and the convergence of different cultures. Writers have used Edgware Road as a symbol of London’s cosmopolitan character and its ability to absorb and adapt to diverse influences. The paragraph begins with Saul looking to his right and seeing the lights of Edgware Road, only ten feet away. This juxtaposition of the real and supernatural worlds is a key element of UF, and Miéville successfully captures this duality. As indicated by Mark Bould “*King Rat* is, consequently, a novel of multiple cities—or, rather, of a city’s multiplicities” (p. 318). The fact that the supernatural world is so close to the real world, yet invisible to most people, creates a sense of mystery and suspense. The phrase ‘somewhere in another world’ is particularly effective, as it suggests that the supernatural world is not just a different dimension, but a different reality altogether. This sense of otherworldliness is further enhanced by the mention of the ‘lights of Edgware Road’, which represent the everyday world that Saul knows and understands. The paragraph ends with Saul’s realization that ‘these things take place ten feet away.’ This realization is a

powerful reminder that the supernatural world is always present, even in the midst of the everyday world. It is a reminder that there is more to the world than what we can see, and that there are forces at work that we do not fully understand. By highlighting the proximity of the extraordinary to the ordinary, he invites readers to question what lies beneath the surface of their own urban environments.

After Saul sends rats all over the city in search of the Piper, he observes the city from an area surrounded by rubble and scaffolding that overlooks the rear facade of the buildings in London:

This point of view was dangerous for the observer, as well as for the city. It was only when it was seen from these angles that he could believe London had been built brick by brick, not born out of its own mind. But the city did not like to be found out. Even as he saw it clearly for the product it was, Saul felt it square up against him. The city and he faced each other. He saw London from an angle against which it had not front, at a time when its guard was down. (Miéville, 1998, p. 257)

This paragraph could be regarded as one of the best examples supporting Ekman's idea that the setting itself is a character in UF. Also, in UF the city is not described as a safe place and "images which depict the city as an unruly, unsettling and disorderly place are increasingly dominant" (Bannister & Fyfe, 2001, p. 807). Further, the paragraph delves deep into the essence of UF by exploring the complex relationship between the city and its observer. Through Saul's dangerous point of view, the author unveils the concealed nature of London, emphasizing its constructed existence rather than a spontaneous creation. Similarly, Bould underlines that "Miéville's London is profoundly dialectical. The opposition *King Rat* asserts between the reality of the rat city and the falsity of the human city is nothing more than chauvinism. The city multiplies across fractal scales and fresh perspectives" (p. 319). Further, Miéville's choice of words, such as 'dangerous' and 'found out,' imbues the observer's perspective with a sense of risk and vulnerability. This speaks to the inherent dangers associated with unravelling the hidden truths of the city's origins and nature. The suggestion that the city 'did not like to be found out' implies a consciousness, an entity that guards its secrets fiercely. It reinforces the notion that the city itself is a character in the narrative, with its own desires and defences. Also, Saul's perception of London as a product constructed 'brick by brick' challenges the notion of a city birthed from its own mind, suggesting a more deliberate, human-made origin. This perspective aligns with the core of UF, which often subverts our perceptions of reality by exposing the constructed nature of our urban environments. The paragraph ends with Saul feeling as though the city is 'square up against him'. This suggests that the city is aware of being observed and that it does not like being found out. This is a powerful image, as it suggests that the city is not just a passive object, but a force that can actively resist human understanding. The personification of London heightens the sense of confrontation and establishes a dynamic relationship between Saul and the city. This paragraph captures the essence of UF by highlighting the symbiotic relationship between the city and its observer. It emphasizes the city as a living entity with secrets to protect, while the observer's perspective is a dangerous act of defiance and discovery. Miéville challenges our perceptions of urban landscapes, encouraging us to question the hidden narratives and concealed histories that lie beneath the surface.

The second distinctive point that Ekman (2016) makes about the features of UF is about the characterization, he states:

The protagonist can be a social outsider; or can belong to a group that in some way creates order out of chaos and makes the unknown (artists, musicians, scholars, investigators); or has the physical, mental, or magical skills to take on supernatural threats. [...] The protagonist and their allies can belong to the fantastic domain or not, be born into it or recently have discovered their powers. (p. 463)

Saul, the novel's protagonist, lost his mother at an early age and has conflicts with the person he thinks is his father. Saul's group of friends are people who like to make music, so Saul has a close connection with music. Especially, Natasha is portrayed as a real musical genius. There is also a police inspector in the novel, which also fits the description above. Moreover, the novel's antagonist is the Piper from the fairy tale *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. It tells the story of a town called Hamelin that is infested with rats. The townspeople, desperate to rid themselves of the rats, promise a reward to a mysterious piper who claims he can solve their problem. The piper plays a magical tune on his pipe that lures the rats out of Hamelin and into the Weser River, where they drown. However, when the townspeople refuse to pay the piper the promised reward, he becomes angry and vows to take revenge. The piper returns to Hamelin and plays a new tune that lures away all the town's children, except for one lame boy who cannot keep up. The children are led into a cave in a nearby mountain, and the entrance closes behind them. The townspeople are left in sorrow and regret for breaking their promise. Accordingly, the Piper has come to the real world from a fantastic and folkloric realm. Moreover, King Rat, the former king of rats; Anansi, the king of spiders; and Loplop, the king of birds, are also characters from the fantastic world.

Saul's mother is a human, but his father who raped his mother, is a rat- King Rat. Therefore, Saul is a character with half-rat and half-human characteristics. However, he is unaware of his rat characteristics until he meets King Rat. Shortly after they meet, King Rat begins to inform Saul about the powers he possesses but does not know about. When King Rat and Saul get hungry, King Rat goes through the rubbish, looking for something to eat, but Saul says he cannot eat from the rubbish. King Rat asks Saul "When was the last time you puked?" (p. 51) and continues:

You can't recall because you've never done it. Never spewed nothing. You've been ill, I'll bet, but not like other Godfers. No colds or sneezing; only some queer sickness making you shiver for days, once or twice. But even then, not a sign of puke [...] You've got rat blood in your veins. There's nothing you can't stomach. (Miéville, 1998, p. 51)

In this paragraph, the concept of UF is portrayed by exploring Saul's unique nature and blending human and rat elements within him. Miéville employs evocative language to convey the transformative nature of UF and its ability to challenge our conventional understanding of identity. The mention of Saul's inability to recall or experience vomiting suggests a departure from typical human experiences and bodily functions. This sets the stage for the revelation that Saul possesses rat blood in his veins, blurring the boundaries between species and hinting at a hidden, fantastical realm that intertwines with the urban environment. The line 'You've got rat blood in your veins' also exemplifies the essence of UF, where ordinary individuals discover extraordinary elements within themselves and their surroundings. The fusion of human and animal characteristics creates a sense of duality and adds depth to the narrative. Saul's rat blood implies a connection to the underground London, aligning him with the hidden world of the rats and granting him a unique perspective on the city. The idea that there is 'nothing [Saul] can't stomach' reinforces the notion of his transformative nature and highlights his resilience. It suggests an adaptability that allows him to navigate the dark and fantastical aspects of the urban landscape. This concept of embracing the extraordinary and accepting the uncanny is a common theme in UF, where characters often confront with and integrate fantastical elements into their identities.

This paragraph is a good example of how UF can blend the real world with the supernatural. The fact that Saul has rat blood in his veins is a supernatural element, but it is also grounded. Saul's physical advantages are not just magical, and they are also physiological. Miéville's paragraph showcases the blending of human and supernatural elements, exemplifying the essence of UF. It challenges the preconceived notions of identity, inviting us to question the boundaries between species and the hidden potentials within ourselves. By intertwining the fantastical and the urban, Miéville demonstrates the

power of UF to disrupt the ordinary.

As the story progresses, Saul's fantastical powers begin to become more apparent. This change in Saul is illustrated with the following expression: "He was shedding his humanity like an old snakeskin, scratching it off in great swatches. It was so fast, this assumption of a new form inside" (p. 83). These sentences describe a metamorphosis since Saul sheds his humanity and assumes a new form. These sentences also raise questions about the nature of identity. Saul is a half-human, half-rat hybrid, and this means that he is not fully human. He has some of the same physical characteristics as rats such as climbing buildings easily, being able to eat anything without feeling nauseous and communicating with mice. This raises the question of whether Saul is genuinely human or whether he is something entirely different. The comparison of Saul shedding his humanity to an old snakeskin highlights the profound and rapid nature of his transformation. The image evokes a sense of renewal and rebirth, as Saul discards his previous identity and embraces a new form. This theme of metamorphosis is a recurring motif in UF, where characters often undergo profound changes, both physically and psychologically. Further, the speed and intensity of Saul's transformation are implied with the phrase 'scratching it off in great swatches'. This heightened pace is characteristic of UF narratives, where events unfold rapidly, propelling characters into unknown territories and revealing hidden aspects of their identities. The phrase 'assumption of a new form inside' shows the core of UF—the blurring of boundaries between the ordinary and the extraordinary. Saul's internal transformation reflects the transformative power of the urban environment itself, where characters discover hidden potentials and embrace their newfound identities. This internal metamorphosis mirrors the external changes that occur within the urban landscape, as fantastical elements intertwine with the mundane.

After King Rat introduces Saul to his friends Anansi and Loplop, the three of them tell Saul that the one who is after him and wants to kill him is the Piper who slaughtered rats in Hamelin 700 years ago. In addition to rats, the piper also committed genocide on spiders and birds, which is the reason for Anansi and Loplop's hostility towards him. The reason why Piper wants to kill Saul is that Saul, who is half man and half rat, is not affected by Piper's music. Unlike all other creatures, the Piper cannot control Saul with his melodies and therefore wants to eliminate him as is stated in the novel:

"He [Piper] can choose, see?" said King Rat. 'Will I call the rats? The birds? The spiders? Dogs? Cats? Fish? Reynards? Minks? Kinder? He can ring anyone's bell, charm anything he fancies. Just choose and he plays the right tune. Owt he chooses, Saul, except for one thing. "He can't charm you, Saul. You're rat and human, more and less than each. Call the rats and the person in you is deaf to it. Call to the man and the rat'll twitch its tail and run. He can't charm you, Saul. You're double trouble'. (Miéville, 1998, p.133)

The use of the Piper adds a significant layer of intrigue and mythology to the story. The character of the Piper draws upon folkloric and mythical associations, enriching the UF narrative with a sense of ancient power and mystery. By incorporating this legendary character into the narrative, Miéville taps into our collective cultural consciousness, invoking a sense of familiarity and curiosity. The Piper assumes a prominent role as a powerful and dangerous figure. His presence introduces a supernatural and ethereal quality to the story, heightening the sense of urban enchantment. The Piper's abilities and influence over the rat population contribute to the overall thematic exploration of the hidden and magical elements that exist within the urban landscape. Furthermore, the Piper serves as a catalyst for the conflict and tension that drives the plot forward. His actions and motivations create a sense of mystery and suspense, as characters navigate the complex dynamics and power struggles associated with his presence. The Piper's presence underscores the idea that UF often involves ancient and timeless forces intertwining with modern urban settings. By incorporating the Piper into the novel, Miéville expands the mythological and folkloric dimensions of the narrative, weaving together elements of the

past and present. The character not only adds depth to the UF world but also reflects the underlying themes of transformation, hidden power, and the interplay between the human and supernatural realms. If we reconsider Ekman's ideas on UF characters, the fact that the Piper is both a musician and a folkloric character from the fantasy universe shows how important this character is for the novel.

The last distinctive point suggested by Ekman (2016) for explaining the features of UF is the use of fantastic elements, he proposes:

The fantastic can derive from existing myths and folklore, as well as from beings well-established in Gothic horror stories, or it can arise from the urban environment itself. The existence of the fantastic can be known to the entire world or to the protagonist or can be a shocking discovery that becomes familiar over the course of the story or series. (p. 463)

The use of fantastic elements in *King Rat* enhances the urban setting, creates allegorical layers, drives character development and conflict, builds an immersive world, and provides readers with an engaging and imaginative story. These elements are key to the success of the novel as a work of UF. As mentioned above, the story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin strengthens and advances the plot of this novel. Moreover, retelling this folkloric story in a modern London setting with a combination of fantastic and ordinary characters attracts and intrigues the reader. What makes the plot more interesting is that the Piper, traditionally mentioned as a good character, appears as an antagonist in this story. In other words, while the original story is told from the point of view of humans, in this novel, the same story is told from the point of view of animals, especially rats. So much so that *King Rat* expresses that genocide was committed against his race. In the novel, the fact that the piper tortures and kills people as well as animals brings to the forefront the feature of UF containing both gothic and crime stories. Throughout the story, the fantastic elements are usually linked with the actions of the Piper. The dead bodies of two police officers killed by the Piper are described as follows:

The skin folded up under the chin and became a tightly wound coil, a skein of flesh wrung out to dry. The body was chest-down, limbs uncomfortable, and the head was facing the ceiling, twisted around nearly 180 degrees. [...] Crowley looked at the seated man and made a small disgusted noise, as if at rotten food. He stared into the ruinous mess of the other's face. Blood was smeared across the wall. The dead man's uniform was saturated with it, stiff like an oilskin coat. (Miéville, 1998, p. 77)

Here, the reader is confronted with a disturbing description. In the realm of UF, fantastical elements blend with urban settings to create a unique atmosphere. This paragraph captures the dark and gritty nature often associated with the genre. The way that Miéville describes the scene is both realistic and spooky. The details are so vivid that the reader can almost see the body for themselves, but the way that the body is contorted, and the blood is smeared across the wall is also distinctly unnatural. This creates a sense of unease and suspense, as the reader is left wondering what could have caused such a gruesome death. In Piper's next murder, he kidnaps an innocent friend of Saul in order to learn his whereabouts, and after torturing him, Piper hangs him on the railway track after which he is hit by a train. Again, in this murder, as in the above quotation, the gory scenes are depicted quite clearly. By depicting violence and gore, Miéville sets an unsettling and visceral tone, immersing readers in a world where danger lurks in the shadows. This contributes to the overall aesthetic and mood of the UF setting, creating an environment where supernatural elements can coexist with urban realities.

UF often involves the integration of fantastical elements into the familiar urban landscape as stated by Jim Butcher: "It's [UF] expanded in almost every sense, including nearly any type of modern setting and a broader variety of characters" (p. 25). Accordingly, the presence of blood and gruesome imagery can serve as a bridge between the mundane and the supernatural. It highlights the collision of the

ordinary and the extraordinary, showcasing how the fantastical intrudes upon and disrupts the everyday world. The use of blood can symbolize the breaking of boundaries, the manifestation of hidden powers or creatures, and the revealing of a hidden layer of reality. Blood could be regarded as a potent symbol associated with life, death, and transformation. In the context of *King Rat*, the blood and its presence on the wall and the saturated uniform can symbolize violence, sacrifice, and the consequences of supernatural encounters. It can represent the hidden struggles and conflicts that exist within the urban landscape, both literal and metaphorical.

Saul's fight with the Piper could be another example of the use of fantastical elements within the story. Loplop, the king of birds, helps Saul escape from the Piper, grabs his body, and flies Saul away with him. However, the Piper uses his pipe to control the birds and chases after them. This event is described in the work as follows: "They [Birds] converged on the Piper, imploding from all sectors of the sky toward his hunched shoulders, and then en masse they rose again, suddenly clumsy, trying to fly in concert, dragging the Piper's body through the air with them" (Miéville, 1998, p. 191). Miéville uses imagery to create a powerful mental picture. This vivid description engages the reader's senses and immerses them in the scene. The sentence builds tension and suspense as the birds attempt to fly in concert with the Piper's body. The word "clumsy" implies a struggle or lack of coordination, adding to the sense of urgency in the scene. These statements engage the reader's imagination and set the stage for further developments in the story; they also effectively convey a sense of urgency, chaos, and mystery.

As an example of 'a shocking discovery' underlined by Ekman in his definition, Saul learns that he has rat powers and starts to develop these powers one by one throughout the novel. However, Saul, who cannot be a complete human or a complete rat, is always in a state of conflict throughout the novel. Especially, after he learns that King Rat is actually his real father and that he raped his mother, his conflict within himself increases even more. In the last part of the novel, the Piper's melodies that control both humans and animals do not work on Saul. Saul attacks the Piper heroically and shouts:

I'm not rat plus man, get it? I'm bigger than either one, and I'm bigger than the two. I'm a new thing. You can't make me dance. [...] I'm the new blood, motherfucker. I'm more than the sum of my parts. You can't play my fucking tune, and your flute means nothing to me. (Miéville, 1998, p. 301)

This paragraph is a powerful expression of the protagonist Saul Garamond's identity crisis and indicates the fantastic elements he has. Saul is half-human, half-rat, and he struggles to find his place in the world. He is constantly being told that he is not a "real" person, and he is forced to conform to the expectations of both human and rat societies. In UF, the characters are expected to learn "to extend their view of life beyond solely personal problems to much larger issues" (Weiss, 2006, p. 110). Saul's declaration of being "bigger than either one" and "bigger than the two" speaks to the concept of individual agency and power. In UF, characters often discover hidden strengths or tap into supernatural abilities, surpassing the limitations of their ordinary selves. Saul's assertion of being more significant than the sum of his parts aligns with this motif, highlighting his unique and potent nature within the UF framework. In the context of UF, the paragraph can be seen as a commentary on the nature of identity in a world where the supernatural exists alongside the mundane.

Conclusion

China Miéville's *King Rat* emerges as a compelling representative of the UF genre, blending the supernatural with the urban landscape to craft a narrative that re-imagines the city of London and the boundaries of reality itself. Through the use of fantastic elements, Miéville intricately weaves a story that not only captivates with its imaginative world-building but also serves as a commentary on the

hidden facets of urban life. The protagonist's transformation from an ordinary denizen of the city to a pivotal figure within the realm of the supernatural highlights the genre's propensity for character development and the exploration of the magical within the mundane. In other words, Saul Garamond's journey from an ordinary young man to a figure of newfound power underscores the transformative potential of UF, wherein fantastical elements catalyse personal growth. Furthermore, *King Rat* exemplifies the genre of UF genre through its masterful depiction of the setting, compelling characters, and the integration of fantastic elements into an urban landscape. Through a careful analysis of these key elements, it becomes evident that *King Rat* embodies the essence of UF and demonstrates the unique qualities that make the genre so captivating.

Miéville's *King Rat* serves as a prime example of UF, effectively utilizing its setting, characters, and fantastic elements to create a rich and immersive narrative. By embracing the duality of the urban landscape, exploring the complexities of characters caught between worlds, and properly blending the extraordinary with the ordinary, Miéville crafts a compelling UF experience. The novel proves the genre's ability to evoke a sense of wonder, challenge societal norms, and illuminate the hidden depths that exist within our familiar urban environments. *King Rat* stands as a testament to the enduring allure of UF and solidifies China Miéville's position as a master of the genre. Also, many aspects of *King Rat* remind of Neil Gaiman's *Neverwhere* in terms of their exploration of UF and the hidden, fantastical aspects of urban settings. Both novels are set in urban environments, with *King Rat* taking place in London and *Neverwhere* specifically set in the dark, magical, and hidden corners of London's underground. They both explore the idea that beneath the surface of a city lies a hidden world filled with extraordinary beings and events. Moreover, the protagonists of both novels, Saul in *King Rat*, and Richard in *Neverwhere* find themselves thrust into these unfamiliar and surreal worlds, and they must navigate these new environments and face various challenges. Also, these novels explore themes of transformation, as the characters undergo personal changes and growth as they adapt to their new surroundings and face the challenges presented by the fantastical elements of the story. Both novels blur the lines between reality and fantasy, challenging the reader's perceptions of what is possible within the urban environment. They depict a hidden layer of existence that exists alongside the mundane world.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for this study is not applicable.

Author Contributions

The author confirms sole responsibility for the following: study conception and design, data collection, analysis and interpretation of results, and manuscript preparation.

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(Dis)utopian Landscapes in Don DeLillo's Fiction

Don DeLillo Kurgusunda Dis(ü)topya Manzaraları

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Abstract

The concepts of utopia (a good place) and dystopia (a bad place) might be arrived at and developed by one's contact with the (constructed) reality and comprehension, yet frustration and discontent with it, and one's pessimism and optimism over a better present and future contingent upon the place and time in which one exists. The former has a long history, whereas the latter is a work in progress. That is, one cannot simply distinguish between the two by asking whether the latter is primarily precautionary and reactive, cautioning us what not to do, whilst the former is proactive, pointing us towards the right direction. Both the former and latter may have similar motives, namely, to demonstrate the dark characteristics of one society by comparing it with another, fictitious culture. Someone's utopia might alternate dystopia, or many traditional utopias from the past include aspects that modern readers would identify as dystopian. On the other hand, one could argue that dystopia serves as the worst-case scenario, presenting a degraded, collapsing, and/or collapsed society, be it socio-culturally, economically, or technologically, worse than another, yet still hopeful for a drastic change for the better. Utopia could be received as the best-case scenario for people in a society considering its socio-political demise. Shortly, both utopian and dystopian scenarios would fit into an extended framework of contemplations on a catastrophe that would either signal a tremendous shift for the better or result in an apocalyptic nightmare. Drawing on the standpoints of Giles Deleuze and Jean Baudrillard and tracing Don DeLillo's fiction, this paper seeks to explore the notion of dystopia, the future assumptions that dystopian fiction puts forward, and the challenges and issues it highlights, such as digital surveillance, technological control, the disappearance of individualism, uncertainty, and dread.

Keywords: Utopia, Dystopia, Deleuze, Baudrillard, Don DeLillo.

Öz

Ütopya (iyi yer) ve distopya (kötü yer) kavramlarına, insanın (inşa edilmiş) gerçeklik teması ve kavrayışı, hayal kırıklığı ve hoşnutsuzluğu ve daha iyi bir şimdiki ve gelecek zamana yönelik karamsarlığı veya iyimserliği üzerinden karar verebiliriz. Bunların ilki derin bir geçmişe sahipken, ikincisi halen devam eden bir çalışmadan ibarettir. Yani, ikisi arasındaki temel ayrım, ilkinin proaktif olup bize doğru yönü işaret ettiği, ikincisinin öncelikli olarak uyarıcı ve tepkisel olup olmadığı, bizi ne yapmamamız gerektiği konularında uyarması üzerinden yapılamaz. Her ikisi de herhangi bir toplumun karanlık yönlerini hayali diğer bir kültürle karşılaştırmalı olarak sunmak gibi bir odağa sahip olabilir. Birinin ütopyası, bir başkasının alternatif bir distopya olabilir veya geçmişten gelen birçok geleneksel ütopya, modern okuyucuların distopik olarak tanımlayacağı yönleri içerebilir. Distopyanın en kötü durum senaryosu olarak hizmet ettiği, sosyo-kültürel, ekonomik ve teknolojik olarak çökmüş ve/veya çökmekte olan bir toplum sunduğu ve ötekenden daha kötü olduğu, ancak yine de bir umut vaat ettiği iddia edilebilir. Ütopya, sosyo-politik yok oluşu içeren bir toplumda yaşayan insanlar için en iyi bir senaryo olarak algılanabilir. Kısaca hem ütopik hem de distopik senaryolar, ya daha iyiye doğru büyük bir değişimi işaret eder ya da kıyamet benzeri bir kabusla sonuçlanacak bir felaket üzerine geniş bir tefekküre sığır. Bu makale, Giles Deleuze ve Jean Baudrillard'ın bakış açılarından yararlanıp Don DeLillo kurgusunun izini sürerek, özellikle distopya kavramını, gelecek varsayımları, olası zorluklar ve problemleri dijital gözetim, teknolojik kontrol, bireyin ölümü, belirsizlik ve korku kavramlarına odaklanarak ele alacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ütopya, Distopya, Deleuze, Baudrillard, Don DeLillo.

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(Dis)utopian Landscapes in Don DeLillo's Fiction

The concepts of utopia (good place) and dystopia (bad place) might be arrived at and developed by one's contact with the (constructed) reality, and comprehension, yet frustration and discontent with it, and one's pessimism and optimism over a better present and future contingent upon the place and time in which one exists. Discussions over good places (utopias) and bad places (dystopias) still exist. The former has a long history, whereas the latter is a work in progress. Unlike the former, the latter is undoubtedly a far fresher concept, arriving only from the late nineteenth century and lacking any apparent literature or tradition (Claeys, 2013, p. 14). It is difficult to discern between the two. That is, one cannot simply distinguish between the two by asking whether the latter is primarily precautionary and reactive, cautioning us what not to do, whilst the former is proactive, pointing us in the right direction. The former as well as the latter might have similar goals, namely demonstrating the dark aspects of one society by juxtaposing it with another, fictional one (Vieira, 2013, p. 352). Someone's utopia may be an alternative dystopia (Claeys, 2013, p. 7), or many conventional utopias of the past have characteristics that modern readers would readily recognize as dystopian (Vieira, 2013, p. 352). For Krishan Kumar, dystopia is the "shadow" of utopia (2013, p. 19), while for Lawrence Davis, it is a "alter ego" (2013, p. 23), or it frequently refers to utopias gone wrong (Gordin; Tilley; Prakash, 2010, p. 1). On the other hand, one could argue that dystopia serves as the worst-case scenario, presenting a collapsed and/or collapsing society, be it socio-culturally, economically, and technologically, worse than another and/or the worst, yet still hopeful for a drastic change for the better. Utopia could be received as the best-case scenario for people in a society considering "the collapse of so-called grand narratives that are believed to foster human progress and secular perfectibility" (Vieira, 2013, p. 354), and socio-political demise. Shortly, both utopian and dystopian scenarios would fit into an extended framework of contemplations on a catastrophe that would either signal a tremendous shift for the better or result in an apocalyptic nightmare. In this paper, I will examine the concept of dystopia by drawing on the perspectives of Giles Deleuze and Jean Baudrillard and analyzing Don DeLillo's fiction. Specifically, I will explore the future assumptions presented in dystopian literature as "harbingers" (Kumbet, 2017 p.186), as well as the challenges and issues it brings to light. These include topics such as digital surveillance, technological control, the erosion of individualism, uncertainty, and dread.

Dis(utopia) in Theory and Practice

What drives us to speculate, hypothesize, and fantasize about utopia and dystopia? Is it, as Eric Fromm argues in his "Afterword to George Orwell's 1984," the near despair about the (present) and future of humans, the change in the course of history, the loss of human qualities, the creation of soulless automatons, and the (human) ignorance of all this? (1963, p. 313). As Margaret Atwood in "Writing Utopia," the critical essay collection *Writing with Intent* puts it:

Both the Utopia and the Dystopia concern themselves with the designing of societies, good societies for the Utopias, and bad ones for the Dystopias. ...But in a Utopia, you get to plan everything – the cities, the legal system, the customs, even facets of the language. The Dystopian bad design is the Utopian good design in reverse – that is, we the readers are supposed to deduce what a good society is by seeing, in detail, what it isn't (2004, p. 106).

According to Atwood, our speculation, hypothesis, and fantasy of utopia and dystopia develop from the designs of societies, including the designs of cities, legal systems, customs, and language itself. The good (utopic) and bad (dystopic) of it are determined by how good and bad the design appears. Sir Thomas More developed the term "Utopia" in 1747 to describe an ideal society in his sixteenth-century hypothetical discussion on government. However, it alludes to a place that does exist nowhere. But how

can one decide a society that does not exist would be ideal? “Why bother to try to improve society, or even to visualize it improved, when you know it’s all going to go around again, like clothes in the wash? And how can you define a “good” society as opposed to a “bad” one if you see good and bad as aspects of the same thing?” (Atwood, 2004, p. 98). Both utopia and dystopia, according to Atwood, are generated exclusively by monotheist societies, or cultures that are based on a single concept of the good, as in Plato’s *Republic* (c. 375 BCE) or systems that presuppose a single, goal-oriented timeline. From Genesis to Revelation, there is just one God and a one-story arc in this monotheist civilization. A linear monotheist civilization produces many fictitious utopias, as well as numerous attempts to establish the real (good) thing on Earth (2004, p. 98). Before More formulated the concept of utopia, the broad assumptions pointed to Plato’s *Republic* (c. 375 BCE) and John the Apostle’s the Book of Revelation (96 CE) as the backdrop of modern utopias. The Bible, Dante, and Milton may serve as inspirations for modern dystopias. After More, Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travel*, William Morris’s *New from Nowhere*, H.G. Wells’s *Time Machine*, Samuel Butler’s *Erewhon*, W.H. Hudson’s *A Crystal Age*, Huxley’s *Brave New World*, Bellamy’s *Looking Backward*, Zamyatin’s *We*, Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-four*, W. H. Hudson’s *A Crystal Age*, Charlotte Perkin Gilman’s *Herland*, and Marge Piercy’s *Woman on the Edge of Time*, and many more would be considered to have invested in the formulation of the concept. Another unambiguous assumption recognized among writers and critics is that utopias satirize political and social malaise, namely ills of the time regarding, among others, the distribution of wealth, labor, and power relations, equality, and rights, discipline, and control, yet dystopias warn us against the current predicament including biopolitics, digital surveillance, technological control, commodification and weakening conviction in the future and the sense that real change is no longer feasible (Jameson, 2010, p. 24) projected to collapse the future if not responded to seriously. As Atwood puts it:

“... but the Utopia-Dystopia as a form is a way of trying things out on paper first to see whether we might like them, should we ever have the chance to put them into actual practice. In addition, it challenges us to re-examine what we understand by the word human, and above all what we intend by the word freedom. For neither Utopia nor Dystopia is open-ended. Utopia is an extreme example of the impulse to order. Dystopia, its nightmare mirror image, is the desire to squash dissent taken to inhuman and lunatic lengths. Neither is what you’d call tolerant, but both are necessary to the imagination: if we can’t visualize the good, the ideal if we can’t formulate what we want, we’ll get what we don’t want, in spades. It’s a sad commentary on our age that we find Dystopias a lot easier to believe in than Utopias: Utopias we can only imagine, Dystopias we’ve already had.” (2004, p. 100)

Atwood contends that Utopia and Dystopia as genres, in the face of the trials and tribulations of collective existence and the spirits of time, provide us with a setting in which we may engage with imagination by challenging, fantasizing, and redesigning what the representation of the good and ideal might look like. Utopias, according to John Gray (2007), serve as normative models used to legitimize violent acts performed by religious or political groups, and they perpetually lead to totalitarian regimes of power, and totalitarian oppression. Although not all utopias produce oppressive regimes, the rejection of utopianism is frequently attributed to the breakdown of so-called grand narratives such as “reason and revolution, science and socialism, the idea of progress and faith in the future” (Kumar, 2013, p. 19), most notably the belief in human progress, the pursuit of the secular millennium, and secular perfectibility (Claeys, 2013, p. 165). The belief that reasons and science can usher in a new period of peace and prosperity has been waning since the Enlightenment.

The shift from utopia to dystopia often signifies a lack of clarity on the conditions for a good society, rather than a loss of faith in humanity’s capacity to create such a society in the future (Vieira, 2020, p.

354). In other words, the dystopian refusal of modernity, namely modern reliance on techno-scientific progress, automation, and mechanization contributes to the lack of clarity about what defines a good society. The lack of clarity and uncertainty, as Frederic Jameson argues, might be linked to postmodernity, globalization, overpopulation, the explosion of the masses and multiplicities, the desertion of the countryside, the growth of the megacity, global warming, and ecological disasters (2010, p. 36). Only in the twentieth century do humans receive the potential to impact change on humanity through nuclear technology, genetic manipulation, and major biosphere modification considering they have now assumed the position of divinity as the creator and destroyer of life (Vieira, 2020, p. 356). Anti-modern thinkers view these scenarios to be potential dystopian futures, one of which involves the elimination of humans because of the upheavals and imbalances brought on by modernity and the anti-modernists' solid belief that they have the power to both create and destroy life. Don DeLillo's writing, as examined in this article, showcases certain characters who experience the adverse impacts of such scenarios and have abandoned their faith in humanity's potential to build a good society in the future.

DeLillo's Fiction: Utopia Becomes (Dis)utopia

Modern American writer Don DeLillo's fiction is rich in contexts of modern technology that blur the distinctions between humans and technology, presenting a solid ground for looking into these issues. Characters in DeLillo's works have access to contemporary technology and struggle with detachment and unrest in the face of rapid advancements in technology and cultural upheaval. DeLillo's works explore the physical and mental consequences of being in a dystopian setting characterized by fast technological advancements and frequent examination of social and cultural norms. While some struggle to navigate in this rapidly changing environment, and often appear alienated and estranged, others yield to dissatisfaction and despair. DeLillo depicts a (dis)utopian world where technological advances transform the human experience and long-held beliefs are questioned. While some characters are frequently at the vanguard of technological progress, either as pioneers who embrace the new potentials provided by technology or as victims that struggle to cope with its destructive repercussions, others consciously desire to escape. In Don DeLillo's fiction, one could also encounter such manipulations and disturbances of dystopia – media-saturated, and hyperreal America, where the masses stand as commodities, “soulless automatons” (Fromm, 1962, p. 313). In such a dystopia, escapism develops among these characters as their final resolution and response. This entails seeking refuge from the artificiality, technological dominance, commercialization, and excessive reality of America by escaping to rural areas in search of authenticity and originality. In these settings, individuals embrace a profound feeling of satisfaction, security, and fulfillment. His writings delve into a wide range of topics, including the potential of dystopian consequences of political conflicts, the dread of nuclear war, and many more.

Don DeLillo, in his essay “In the Ruins of the Future” published in Harper's Magazine, presents a (dis)utopian world in which “capital markets have dominated discourse and shaped global consciousness” (2001, 1st para.) and multinational corporations have become more significant, and dominant compared to governments. In the essay, he addresses how 9/11 transformed many things that America had previously mandated: “The primary target of the men who attacked... was not the global economy. It was America that drew their fury. It was the high gloss of our modernity. It was the thrust of our technology. ...It was the blunt force of our foreign policy. It was the power of American culture to penetrate every wall, home, life, and mind” (December 2001, 2nd para.). DeLillo argues “In the Ruins of the Future” that America is facing an explosive response from terrorists that has been developing for years and appears inescapable (December 2001, 3rd para.).

In his novel *Falling Man* (2007), DeLillo pens how the dominance of financial markets, rationalism reinforced by technology, rationalism in disguise of godlessness, omnipotence, and the bluntness of foreign policy, as well as the influence of American culture, might be considered as the contents of a bad place (dis)utopia, and an unstable today and unknown future (dystopia) that occupies people's thoughts and lives. *Falling Man* (2007) reads the story of 9/11 as "the mother of all events" (Baudrillard, 2003, p. 4); "the World Trade Center was destroying itself committing suicide in a blaze of glory [...] implying a sense of desire for sublime" (Maffey and Teo, 2018, p. 9). It portrays the account of how people fell from skyscrapers that were demolished in a terrorist assault. The plot begins when the first skyscraper falls. Keith Neudecker, the main character, and survivor, instead of going to the hospital, sees his estranged wife, Lianne. Before arriving home, he must "go through checkpoints, barricades, and barriers patrolled by troops in gas masks" (*Falling Man*, p. 24). He finally arrives home, hoping to return to normalcy with his estranged wife. In conversation with his wife, the fall scene means differently for each. Keith portrays a dystopia saying, "That's where everything was, all around him, falling away, street signs, people, things he couldn't name" (p. 246). Victims are falling, objects are falling, and the system is falling, that is the political and technological system. It proves that U.S. power is falling and is in decline. For Sven Cvek, this fall scene would suggest "as anti-Arab violence, irrational and non-representative reaction" (2014, p. 9). 9/11, as the representation of violence between/among nations, proves that racializing, radicalizing racial, religious, political, and economic formulations demand reformulation urgently. It also signifies the downfall of US power and the necessity for reformulation to incorporate various races, nationalities, and religions. Although *Falling Man* (2007) might be read as the story of a trauma, it reflects a historical crisis and hints at a dystopia, the crisis of global relationships among nations. It is, for Sven Cvek, the falling of the empire that has severe nationalist supremacy over other nations around the globe; the militarization process is prevalent, and the liberal imagination is also collapsing at the same time – a collapse of Humanism that celebrated man as 'the measure of all things' for more than a half-century (Cvek, 2014). It is, on the other hand, the death of utopia, the desire to build a good place. It is rather a story of a bad place, dystopia. A man jumps from the upper floor's window and perishes in the air. US hegemony over the less-human outside vanishes in the air; its hegemony over the annihilation/elimination of the spirit of diversity disappears in the air.

DeLillo in *The Silence* (2020), "continues to illustrate his belief that "we" depend on disasters to consolidate our visions" (Herbrechter, 2021, p. 1). The novella develops among five characters at a Super Bowl party in an apartment in 2022 Manhattan on Sunday – two couples in their late Middle Ages, one who survives the airplane crash and the other wait for their arrival, and a young man, quoting from Albert Einstein's theory of relativity. On this day, all technology suddenly comes to a halt, and silence dominates everywhere, a digital shutdown (Preston, 2020). It seems as if "this is the casual embrace that marks a dystopia; the fall of world civilization" (*The Silence*, 2020, p. 16). It is time for these people to be present and have a conversation:

"...Being boring. Living life"

"Is this something that they've always longed for, subliminally...?",

"And the streets, these streets... Crowds dispersed. Streets empty".

"I am done with all this. Sunday or is it Monday? February whatever. It is my expiration date"
(Max, the party host).

"What if all this is a living breathing fantasy? [...] Has time leaned forward [...] or has it collapsed?" (DeLillo, 2020, p. 24).

This silence is a 'global silence' that foreshadows a post-technological silence; threatens to consume humanity and their (dis)utopian environment. In *The Silence* (2020), characters lack access to modern technology, and must accept their mortality; cultural death; the end of the Earth; the end of time (Cohen, 2020). Characters are left to relativity, uncertainty, and incompleteness of time; present continuous time and the future time become relative, uncertain, and incomplete within this 'global silence,' technological shutdown; "the Now cannot exist except as fiction [...] without technology, this lack of a present – or the fictionality of the present – will once again become palpable to our/[their] own experience [...] each of us/[them] lives in our own discrete, individual present [...], and it will make us/[them] insane" (Cohen, 2020, 9th para.). They cannot tackle this (dis)utopian landscape and take refuge in isolated rooms and places. DeLillo seems ambiguous between the yearning for a utopia and the 'frustration about a dystopia – the (traditional humanist) human reality, desires to "rehumanize, remember and reinvent" (*The Silence*, 2020, p. 22). While the novel might dismiss dystopia, it implies the urgency of a utopia to rehumanize and reinvent humans to tackle the problems of a changing world. In his article "Technology in the Dystopian Novel," Gorman Beauchamp argues that the dystopian novel, in showcasing an admonitory predicament of the future, employs fear: the fear of technology (1986, p. 53). This is the fear of essentially authoritarian technological determinism, a futuristic Frankenstein's monster (p. 55). This is a historical perspective that claims that science and technology actively contribute to the construction of reality, hence introducing human uncertainty into the nonhuman world. Historically, dystopias have expressed a refusal of modernity, and that refusal has recently evolved into a refusal of humans as the agents who brought about modern life and its concomitant problems. Such a view is consistent with modern observations on the Anthropocene, a geological epoch defined by humans' long-term effect on the earth (Vieira, 2020, p. 357). Kumar underlines the picture of the future that any dystopia implies as it "picks out the most distinctive and novel features" of each time and "presents them in the form of an imaginatively realized society" (cf. Vieira, 2013, p. 3). For instance, the twentieth-first century's conflicts, which include wars, revolutions, and struggles against colonialism, racism, sexism, speciesism, and homophobia, to name a few, are all referred to as the dystopian century (Sargent, 2013, p. 11) which is considered to be caused by fact that the traditional human concept prioritizes human hegemony over nature and ecological systems has been destroying the planet for a long time. In such a dystopian environment, "What a Human and his/her brain – or rather the Brain and its Human – would resemble now when they leave the planet forever, before its destruction; that, the story does not say. So ends the (postmodern) fable we are about to hear" (Lyotard, 1999). The concept of humans' desertion of the dystopian planet before its destruction suggests that humanity would need to adapt to a new environment to survive. Lyotard's statement might imply a degree of doubt and ambiguity about what these changes would entail and what repercussions would there be. This uncertainty might reflect the complicated and unexpected nature of the ecological predicament we face, as well as the difficulties in finding ethical, and sustainable solutions. Overall, Lyotard's remarks raise critical concerns regarding the link between humans and the environment, as well as how we may need to adapt and evolve in dystopian environments. This might also imply that "we need the dystopia to remind us that our dystopia(n) (century) could get worse, but we need the eutopia, even more, to remind us that better, while difficult, is possible" (Lyotard, 1999). Likewise, Jonathan Jong argues that technological or sociopolitical progress is inherently utopian, but humans' over-reliance on science and technology to bring about a better world is driven by dystopian impulses that combine two fears: the fear of technology itself and the fear of a technological utopia (2019, p. 2). The dystopian imagination envisions an alternate future in which utopia is realized but human urges remain sharp beneath the oppressive structures of a technologically advanced civilization. If dystopias provide us that manipulating and controlling past and present information is essential for order, then to fight today's dystopias, we must distribute knowledge, recover memory, access free information, produce critical thought, build hope, and resist (Baccolini, 2013, p. 45). As Baccolini and

Moyland put it in their “Introduction” to *Dark Horizons*: “Dystopian imagination has served as a prophetic vehicle, the canary in a cage, for writers with an ethical and political concern for warning us of terrible sociopolitical tendencies that could, if continued, turn our contemporary world into the iron cages portrayed in the realm of utopia’s underside” (p. 2). As the narrative begins in the middle of the nightmarish society, cognitive alienation is initially stifled by the immediacy and normalcy of the setting. The protagonist, as well as the reader, is inherently present in the current reality, completely engrossed in society without self-awareness. Nevertheless, an opposing narrative arises as the citizen of the dystopian society transitions from initial relief to feelings of isolation and defiance, moving from an early understanding to taking decisive action that ultimately leads to a transformative and catastrophic event aimed at restructuring the social order.

DeLillo’s fiction, as examined in this paper, invents ((dis)utopian world); the nonexistent, unnamable, and unimaginable have all but disappeared (Boxall 2006). It has witnessed the transmission of the cultural reality by the forces of globalized capital, technoscientific progress, automation, and mechanization which includes no escape. In *Great Jones Street* (1998), for example, one can discover the representation of exhaustion in a (dis)utopian world. It narrates a famous rock ‘n’ roll star Bucky Wunderlick, tired of “‘the excess,’ ‘a devouring neon,’ ‘outrage,’ ‘hysteria in limousines,’ hysteria in the frenzy crowds, ‘knife fights in the audience,’ ‘bizarre litigation,’ ‘treachery,’ ‘drugs’ and ‘pandemonium’” deafening crowds, hysterical teenagers who care about his image as a singer, not his songs as pieces of art” (DeLillo, p. 3), leaves his band in the middle of a tour and isolates himself in his unfurnished apartment on Great Jones Street in New York. Wunderlick abandons the music market economy that has transformed him into an image, a symbol, a commodity, and/or a virtual image. Wunderlick, by taking drugs, escapes from the fans and music authorities to silence and oblivion; from media-saturated, technologized America to his safe chamber, which never secures him. This ultimately indicates that Wunderlick’s withdrawal is impossible. Utopia turns (dis)utopia, namely, what was meant to be a good place turns into a bad place. That is, Wunderlick escapes from a bad place that includes ‘symbolic violence’ (Bourdieu, 2001), of the music market economy. Symbolic violence “inscribes itself in the habitual patterns of perception and behavior, which are accepted and unquestioned [...] It ensures that order of rule is maintained without requiring the expenditure of physical violence” (Han, 2013, p.78). Wunderlick refuses to embrace patterns, such as his service to the economy, to satisfy the audience, and leaves the band and isolates himself in his unfurnished apartment in New York. He escapes a utopian environment in which power and control are protected; challenges power relations (in the music market economy), that make power and violence appear natural. Despite his resistance, Wunderlick, as his response to this (dis)utopia, surrenders and kills himself by consuming drugs at the end of the story. His response to (dis)utopian environment is to submit to death. In his article “Postscript on the Societies of Control,” Gilles Deleuze contends that discipline is a pervasive concept in disciplinary societies, whereby it extends from one enclosed setting to another. This progression may be seen, for instance, when it moves from the home to the educational institution, then to the military barracks, and subsequently to the industry. Similarly, it can be traced from the hospital to the jail (2017, p. 3). In control societies, however, these are replaced by ultra-rapid forms of free-floating control processes, such as pharmaceutical production, molecular engineering, genetic manipulations, and salaries based on merit that motivates the masses through challenges, contests, and highly comic group sessions. Individuals have evolved into “dividuals,” (italics in original) as have masses, samples, data, markets, or (data) “banks” (p. 4). Technology, including fields such as medicine and eugenics, creates effective social systems and maintains stability in society, but this comes at the cost of limiting human freedom. Society maintains power via the use of biotechnological, pharmaceutical, and psychological engineering, which leads to the development of conditioned subjectivity and allows for self-regulation. Marcuse characterizes this conditioned subjectivity as ‘happy consciousness,’ a perceptual state in

which a person acknowledges the ethical doubts about the status quo but complies with its constraints since their essential needs and desires are fulfilled (Marcuse, 1991). However, Dystopian literature, according to Michael Ryan and Douglas Kellner, is “concerning fears of machines or technology negatively affirm social values such as freedom, individualism, and the family” (Ryan and Kellner, 1990). Dystopian literature on technology indicates that humans must ultimately triumph over technology by fetishizing nature and savagery above technological progress. This duality is technophobic and anti-progress, indicating that dystopian writing about technology supports a Luddite perspective of technology in which people should return to a more natural state of being without technology’s dehumanizing influences (Jong, 2019, p. 16). In DeLillo’s *White Noise* (1986), one could argue that technology appears as a metanarrative of the century. However, considering destructions such as wars, environmental disasters, exhaustion, and depression led by technology, one discovers that DeLillo approaches technology as the metanarrative with distance and skepticism. How his characters escape from such a technologized and media-saturated social structure and retreat into seclusion typifies this distance. In his narration, these characters witness disasters through technology, which mediates and softens their sense of disaster and produces a profound fear of death; it penetrates their daily lives through which their dependence on these systems seems inevitable. Characters in the novels desire and consume disasters, yearning for more disasters to happen through which they avoid death. Watching disasters on TV creates a sense of belonging, and a duty to witness these disastrous events. “Each disaster made (them) wish for more, for something bigger, grander, more sweeping” (DeLillo, 1986, p. 64). For example, *White Noise* (1986) narrates the story of Jack Gladney, with his wife Babette and their four children, the chairman of the Hitler studies at the College-on-the-Hill. They, as the whole family, are exposed to media technologies, to the disasters screened, “mudslides, brush fires, coastal erosion, earthquakes, mass killings, et cetera” (p. 66), and they “relax and enjoy these disasters” (ibid). Witnessing disaster through TV saturates the Gladneys with a sense of intense fulfillment: “The darker the (disastrous) news, the better, and the severity of the disasters replicated through TV desensitize them (and the American society in general)” (Maffey and Teo, 2018, p. 6). Maffey and Teo argue that since morphed reality has superior potency and effect; “the television becomes more real than reality itself and represents a hyperreal world from which real disasters become “hallucinogenic pleasure(s),” (p. 5) drug-like pleasures. The Gladney face “The Airborne Toxic Event,” a chemical spill that forces them to abandon their homes suddenly and escape from death and survive. Though disasters screened through media distance the family from reality, and though “Jack senses it is not taking place because these occurrences happen to poor people who live in exposed areas [...] These things don’t happen in places like Blacksmith” (DeLillo, 1986, p. 114), it becomes excruciating once they face reality. In fear of death, and in hope for a long life, Dylarama, an illegal pharmacological substance is what they embrace, yet they cannot prevent death. Their escape, on the one hand, proves that the Gladneys experience discomfort and unrest and that they feel uneasy with the weakness and mortality of their body on the other. In this context, Dylarama holds the hope of overcoming their mortal bodies and escaping from the dystopian environment. It depicts a (dis)utopian palliative society that needs perpetual anesthesia: a small dose of poison that induces pleasant dreams. And enough poison at the end for a peaceful death. In contrast to utopia, dystopian novels, which are considered dark, display a worse society in the future than in the present. It presents an undesirable future world controlled by totalitarian regimes, in which power and technology become the primary methods of controlling the people. Because these regimes’ control mechanisms see individualism as a danger to their power, they impose a type of collectivism that cancels out all individual differences and reduces heterogeneity in all aspects of life to a forced homogeneity. People are constantly monitored; freedom and human rights have become a luxury; and justice is merely an expectation (Nebioğlu, 2020, p. 22). Dystopia hopes for a brighter future by escaping the ills of the present. That is, dystopian writers believe that the current ills of society and the death of the main characters in their texts will bring about a shift in the present society while offering

better alternatives for the future. This is referred to as “transgressive dystopia” (Nebiolu, 2020, p. 30) since it entails a transgression of moral or social boundaries. The events of 9/11, the war on terrorism, environmental catastrophes late capitalism, and globalization contributed to a flood of dystopian works dealing with optimism in the face of pessimism in the new century through various forms of terror, violence, multiplicity, fragmentation, and subversion. They avoid a negative worldview in favor of hope and transformation. This is conveyed in the context in such a manner that the protagonists, with a glimmer of hope, attempt to discover different opportunities to escape the dystopian world in which they have been trapped. Readers might encounter the protagonists’ resistance in the narration, and escape and potential happiness in their alternative lives in the end. Readers might not encounter protagonists’ hopeful transgressions in totalitarian regimes; potential change and transformation would not be a promise. That is, protagonists are subject to the strict rules of the totalitarian state (Nebioglu, 2020, p. 34). In this way, contemporary dystopia promotes a change and a transformation in the characters (and readers) through their interpretation of the present. Alternative societies shown in contemporary dystopia are not fictitious depictions of a hypothetical future that is worse than the present, but rather fictitious re-presentations of the present, the harsh reality of the existing society that appears to be unchangeable. Jean Baudrillard in his *Simulation and Simulacra* argues that simulation is the creation of models of the real without its original reality. It is, indeed, hyper-real. The area no longer precedes or survives the map (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 3). It implies that the map no longer refers to reality. It is a referential illusion. He contends that the substitutes of the signs that the real signs substitute for the real. He describes the term “simulate” as feigning to have what one does not have (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 5). For Baudrillard, simulating is more than just acting. It jeopardizes the distinction between the real and false, the real and imagined. He employs Disneyland as an example of a simulation order. Disneyland, according to Baudrillard, is a game of ‘illusions and phantasms,’ with attractions like Pirates, The Frontier, and Future World. The American crowd is drawn to this little social microcosm, the miniature and communal religious delight, by this fictional and illusionary universe. The crowd parks their cars outside, queue, then become disoriented just before the exit. They remain inside with the warmth and affection of toys and gadgets. However, when they return to their automobiles in the parking lot, they discover that they (feel) completely isolated (Baudrillard, 1994, p. 24). As the American crowd fails to distinguish the dystopian reality of Disneyland (of the present society) from its fantastic pretenses, contemporary dystopia emerges to emphasize that it is the ‘real’ country, the ‘real’ world that is a (dis)utopia. Contemporary (dis)utopia is a microcosm of the real present, just as Disneyland is a microcosm of real America (Yanar, 2018). With the dystopian views that exist in society, contemporary dystopian writers do not hold an ambition to safeguard the future by enacting changes in their societies. They additionally do not imagine a better society as an alternative to the one we have now. On the contrary, what they achieve is a transformation, individually as well as collectively, to rescue the present. The dystopian works produced in the twenty-first century stand out for their process orientation as well as efficacy in making people recognize their potential and the forces of life that challenge, transform, and create new ways of living as well as being in the present (Nebioglu, 2020, p. 35). Dystopian writers are no longer compelled to set dystopian societies in the distant future. Even if some writers conform to the tradition of locating them in the future, they avoid emphasizing the time reference. Second, they become more likely to contribute to the protagonists in their resistance. Resistance in contemporary dystopia, on the other hand, is not limited to concealed rebelling actions or secret escape plans; rather, the main characters resist by discovering methods to fight and escape both within and against the prevailing system, as well as by researching ways to destroy it. These developments in contemporary dystopia allow readers to identify that they are living in dystopia and should take action to alter their present society. Contemporary dystopia does not offer established schemas for ways to enhance contemporary society but rather raises people’s awareness of their power and the potentiality of life to transform and create. For example, in DeLillo’s *Americana* (2006), David

Bell, a wealthy, handsome, and talented 28-year-old television executive, resolves to leave New York for America's Midwest to document the small-town lives of regular people and maintain a strong contact with his birthplace, despite later discovering that America has come to an end. Randy Laist (2008) argues that Bell's "authentic or unique self has been trivialized" in *Americana*. Similarly, David Bell's postmodern predicament is analogous to Michael Oriard's "quest of the soul for meaning that begins in *Americana*" (ibid). Douglas Keesey defines it as "separating the real from the reel in his life, truth from Hollywood fantasy [...] and getting at the unmediated truth" (Keesey, 1993, pp. 29-30). Bell's journey across the American midwest is an attempt to find some truth inside the dichotomy of his preoccupation with media technology - television and cinema. It is associated with an enigma because, as Laist says, media technology "undermines the value of the human subject by conceptualizing consciousness as wholly formed by its material environment" (ibid). As Marshall McLuhan argues in *The Medium is the Message* that the effects of technology are not manifested as opinions and concepts, they instead create some changes in the sense ratios or patterns of perception (1967, p. 41). David Bell suggests that "images move him from first-person consciousness ("I") to third-person ("We")" (DeLillo, 2006, p. 270), which underestimates or neglects his individuality or subjectivity. Bell desires to discover the authentic American heartland and destroys the inauthenticity left behind. In other words, he expects to liberate himself from the superficiality of dystopian America. Being subjected to "another dull and lurid year," "the recurring news of airplane disasters and military engagements," and "the number of dead and missing," and "such exactness" seem to be "a trickle of electricity to the (his) numbed brain" (DeLillo, 2006, p. 3-4). With all of this, Bell suggests that he must endure the monotony of his life by highlighting boredom in Western civilization, and he says, "The whole point was to separate for the evening and find exciting people to talk to and then meet again at the very end and tell each other how terrible it had been and how glad we were to be together again." "It is the essence of Western civilization" (2006). Monotony and image bombardment from TV, "a creator and victim of the televisual hyperreal," "blue-eyed David Bell," as a successful executive, "goes out West anyway in a few months to do a documentary on the Navahos" (DeLillo, 2006, p. 10). One might relate Bell's situation to the Baudrillardian fatalistic view of the world. In his reference to *Fatal Strategies* (1990), Douglas Kellner argues that the uncontrollable "obscene proliferation of an object world, and it surpasses all attempts to understand, conceptualize and control it" (1998, pp. 155) and he says, "objects and events in contemporary society are surpassing themselves, growing and expanding in power. The ecstasy of the objects is their proliferation and expansion to the degree, to the excellent; [...] the real more real than the real in television" (1998, p. 156). The sovereign power of the object, dominant over the misery of the subject, seduces human beings with commodities, capital, fashion, sexual object, media, politics, information, codes, and models (Kellner, 1998, p. 157). Bell's situation is articulated by the object's developing supremacy, its appeal, seductiveness, and final dominance over himself. To alleviate his grief and suffering, he wishes to cleanse his physical and psychic condition of the "supremacy of objects," as well as their "charms and traps," by traveling across the country. William G. Little (2002) argues that Don DeLillo admits America's becoming a virtual wasteland since the products and byproducts of technological advance people more liable to physical ruin, and the contemporary culture has too much faith in waste which implies that producing too much waste means too many useless products in the physical environment, and too much exposure to waste in the wasteland, the physical environment in America, reminds Bell his misery and suffering.

DeLillo explores in *Americana* how individuals should not customize themselves for the benefit of society at large. "If they let themselves be what they want to be, both physically and spiritually, they can kill a lot of the dead inside them" (DeLillo, 2006, p. 360). Although this celebrates human freedom to do anything they desire physically and spiritually, it is unimaginable since the postmodern consumer environment engulfs and envelops individuals with its media technology. Bell's retreat to a distant

island to escape American consumerism demonstrates his preference for first-person awareness over the universal third-person singular. Bell manifests his “willingness to deal with the complexities of truth, he sees himself as the most successful person; however, he ends in silence and darkness, sitting still, a maker of objects that imitates his predilection” (DeLillo, 2006, p. 347). This is David Bell’s “unveiling movement from mystification to enlightenment and revelation” (Docherty, 1991, p.186). Although David Bell determines that there is no such (authentic) place anymore in America, he nevertheless seeks and maintains his real, conscious self. In that sense, “postmodernity, as Kellner echoes Baudrillard, is known by its implosion of meaning, reproduction of models of the hyper-real, acceleration of inertia, and the implosion of the mass in a dark hole of nihilism and meaninglessness” (Kellner, 1989, p. 118). His nihilist future lacks inspiration and optimism. Despite his nihilism, David Bell fights hegemonic systems’ unsustainable limits. The system cancels past values and significance. Within this self-annihilating dystopia, David Bell will resist and find redemption.

As the final discussion of this paper, Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts of ‘the plane of transcendence’ and ‘the plane of immanence’ could bring a novel standpoint to dystopia discussions. Transcendence hints at a center, logocentrism, and binarism, and the plane of transcendence is where one establishes a foundation or solid point of reference for one’s thought. Any ground relating to binarism implies transcendence because transcendence continually offers an illusion of a division between body and mind, internal and external, inside and outside. It excludes life’s multiplicity and virtuality to confined forms, so limiting its infinity (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 47). Transcendence reduces life’s flows, refuses the divisions that exist, and categorizes its fluidity and mobility. The challenge with transcendent dystopia is the nature of the society that produces it. The genre of dystopia arose around the beginning of the twentieth century, coinciding with the rise of fascism, communism, and World Wars I and II. It was described as a disciplinary period in which a transcendent source of power restricted humans inside control zones and banned diverse and multiple lifestyles and beliefs. As a result, transcendent dystopia evolved as a response and opposition to this authoritarian power, envisioning its probable demise in the future yet hoping for a better future (a better world), including a non-totalitarian, non-oppressive, non-patriarchal, non-utopian future. The twenty-first century abandoned transcendent discourses such as fascism and communism but embraced neoliberal capitalism and freedom (in the economy, ideology, and social life) as a new discourse, leading to the growth of liberal democracies, free market economies, and the betterment of human rights and liberties. It canceled out the transcendent center, a tyranny of transcendence while embracing the plane of immanence, which included boundless expanses, movement, fluidity, and flexibility. Immanent dystopia, as the new pattern, fosters optimism using a rhizomatic system based on a network of continuous connections, rather than a binary system of thought, a finite point, or a location. It includes the possibility of unlimited new life possibilities, boundless and... and alternatives. It does not present its main characters with only two solutions to two opposites; rather, it presents various possibilities and offers multiple strategies of resistance and alternate styles of life. That is why the protagonists could depart from the established conventions and prescriptions. One might read such departure from the solid conventions through various possibilities in DeLillo’s *Zero K* (2017), in which DeLillo discusses how new technologies (such as bio- and Nanotechnologies) “control the fragile boundary of between life and death [...] and investigates the portrayal and implication of the presence of technology and the philosophical reasoning behind it” (Maffey and Teo, 2018, p. 2). The novel represents a desire to end life and embrace death as the human species is corporally and conceptually impotent, weak, and egotistical, and hence should be escaped through such advanced technologies. In *Zero K* (2017), Ross, Jeffrey Lockart’s father, is a billionaire in his sixties who lives with his wife, Artis. Ross is one of the most significant investors in a firm called the Convergence, a scientific research center on a distant and secret campus, where human bodies are cryogenically frozen, a “cryonic suspension” (p. 8). Through

bio- and Nanotechnologies, the main characters, are preserved and cured for their deficiencies for the future, a life in a new world in which such disasters are arguably eradicated, and deaths are expectantly not man-made. “Technology has become a force of nature. We/They can’t control it. It comes blowing over the planet, and there’s nowhere for us/them to hide. Except here (in the Convergence), of course, in this dynamic enclave, where we breathe safe air [...]” (p. 245). For both Ross and Artis, the world they endure is dark, a world of disasters full of terrorist attacks, floods, famine, epidemics, and many others. Also, in such a world, man-made death must be defied. First, Artis and then Ross escape from such a world to ‘frozen death’ purposefully and consciously. Although it is, for Artis, “an uncertain farewell” (p. 8) and “a sense of closing down, coming to an end” (p. 20), she “wants to own the end of (her) world” (p. 6). Although technology, in his novels, stands out as an imminent disaster, “a force of nature”, a vital threat to humanity, a trap from which to hide and/or escape seems impossible, one can notice that it stands out as a safe zone/area to escape in *Zero K*. Namely, technology provides a refuge both for Ross and Artis in which posthumans will embrace and shelter in. In *Zero K* (2017), “DeLillo offers no clear resolution to these [dilemma] of technology, perhaps using the apocalyptic setting as a metaphor for contemporary American society’s reliance on these systems, and the helplessness humans have attained as a result of their dependence and comparative inferiority to technological systems” (Maffey and Teo, 2018, p. 11). I argue that DeLillo hints at the end of such metanarratives that have owned the end of everybody’s world so far. Thanks to biomedical advances and new technologies, it is everyone’s voluntary decision to end their own lives. Bodies will be frozen in *Zero K* and revitalized in an environment in which man is not seen as the central performer responsible for such disasters and violence, but as a fellow species animate/inanimate, human/nonhuman. Or bodies to be renewed in ecology where death is caused by men rather than by flawed human-made structures. Although disasters are “our bedtime story” (*Zero K*, 2017, p. 52), something out of comprehension, a sense of comfort [and transformation]. The Convergence project is a resignation to the impending end of the planet owing to technology’s lack of control (Maffey and Teo, 2018, p. 11). I contend that DeLillo’s *Zero K* (2017) portrays technology as a threat and a sanctuary from dystopia. The novel’s protagonists, Ross and Artis chose cryonic suspension to escape their world’s brutality and instability. This decision is a voluntary response to the (dys)utopia that has marked human history for ages. Convergence is a surrender to the inevitability of technological change and a transformational place in which humans may reinvent their connection with the world. In this approach, *Zero K* (2017) suggests that technology is neither intrinsically good nor harmful but rather a tool that may be employed for either. It also unleashes its positive energy to modify, transform, and establish new pathways of being, freeing its heroes from its transcending bonds. This also suggests that there is no linear progression into the future in immanent dystopia, but rather a significant reliance on the inherent potentialities of the present as a source of resistance. Immanent dystopia additionally represents a dystopia without a future, nonetheless, it is a dystopia with hope as well as its unique perfection (Nebioğlu, 2020, pp. 44-49). Hope is introduced into a dystopian vision through the embodiment of a new temporality as is seen in Ross and Artis’ choice of cryonic suspension, that is a temporality that repositions the future in the present, the future, a life in a new world in which such disasters are arguably eradicated, and deaths are expectantly not man-made.

Conclusion

We still might not have a clear understanding of what drives us to speculate, hypothesize, and fantasize about utopia and dystopia. We might imagine that both utopian and dystopian scenarios would fit into an extended framework of contemplations on a catastrophe that would either signal a tremendous shift for the better or result in an apocalyptic nightmare. Don DeLillo’s works in this paper indicate the human condition in a (dis)utopian technological age. Protagonists live in a (dis)utopian (unpredictable and dangerous) environment, yet they also can transcend their boundaries through becoming someone

new, becoming dead, commodity, and becoming null. In this sense, his works present a drastic current predicament (a dystopia) or a future vision (maybe a utopia) in which technology is not a cause of dread or doubt but a source of liberation and transformation. These works explore the apocalyptic facets of our modern society, especially the demeaning impacts of technology, the demise of genuine connections with others, and the death of individuality. His pieces reflect a hyper/techno-capitalist society where the main character's search for meaning collapses into an unconventional and dystopian existence. His works typically give an even perspective on the possibility of both utopian and dismal ends. His depiction of a good place (utopia) is frequently characterized by a subtle, unattainable quality. In a society overwhelmed with media and consumption, his characters constantly seek meaning and contentment. The pursuit of an idealistic existence by the protagonists contrasts dramatically with the reality of a society saturated with media noise, environmental concerns, and personal fear. DeLillo's approach to utopia and dystopia is profoundly established in his social critique. His works encourage readers to evaluate how technology progress, consumer culture, and cultural transformations influence our perception of a potentially good or bad future. While he frequently demonstrates these, his narratives serve as insightful findings on the human predicament in a world that is constantly shifting.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical Approval

Ethics committee approval is not required for this study.

Author Contributions

This research and all its stages were conducted by one author.

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Notes

ⁱ *Zero K* is the name given to a unit. *Zero* indicates -273.15 degrees, and *K* indicates a physicist named Kevin.

Comparison of Traditional Chinese Thought and Xi Jinping's Understanding of Governance through the Hundred Schools of Thought

Yüz Düşünce Okulu Örneklemini Üzerinden Geleneksel Çin Düşüncesi ile Xi Jinping'in Yönetişim Anlayışının Karşılaştırılması

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Abstract

Xi Jinping, often referred to as the contemporary Mao, has introduced numerous development plans on a national and global scale since taking office as President in 2012. Having learned lessons from the disastrous Cultural Revolution which aimed to implant socialist ideas in China and resulted in the deaths of millions, Xi Jinping declared a new era in governance by emphasizing the importance of "Chinese Characteristics". Now, a Chinese government that has overcome the 'century of humiliation' and is capable of confronting Western powers through a concerted effort, has successfully integrated Marxist-Leninist ideology with Chinese characteristics. Xi Jinping's philosophy, which combines modern requirements with the principles of traditional Chinese governance, has become part of the CCP ideology. Xi's comprehension of governance stems from traditional Chinese philosophy. The Warring Principalities era and the emergence of the Hundred Schools of Thought are the foundations of Xi's understanding of governance. This article investigates the heritage and evolution of Xi Jinping's governing ideology from ancient Chinese traditional beliefs, using the example of the "Hundred Schools of Thought". The article aims to explore the value implications of traditional Chinese governance thought in contemporary political life. Additionally, it seeks to promote the essence of ancient Chinese traditional culture, investigate its relevance in modern times, reveal patterns of cultural development, and offer guidance on how to carry forward and inherit the traditional Chinese cultural perspective.

Keywords: China, Xi Jinping, Hundred Schools of Thought, Traditional Chinese Governance Thought, Xi Jinping's Governance Philosophy.

Öz

Yaşayan Mao olarak adlandırabileceğimiz Xi Jinping, 2012'de devlet başkanlığına gelmesiyle gerek ulusal gerekse uluslararası bir dizi kalkınma stratejisini hayata geçirmiştir. Sosyalist düşüncenin Çin'e yerleşmesi amacıyla yapılan ve milyonlarca insanın ölümüyle sonuçlanan Kültür Devrimi'nden ders çıkaran Xi, "Çin Karakteristiği" söylemine vurgu yaparak yönetim anlayışının yeni bir döneme girdiğini duyurmuştur. Artık utanç yüzyılı geride bırakmış, gücünü toplayarak batıya karşı koyabilen, Marksist-Lenist ideolojiyi Çin Karakteristiğinde harmanlayan bir Çin yönetimi oluşturulmuştur. Geleneksel Çin yönetimi anlayışı temelinde modern dönemin ihtiyaçlarını karşılayacak şekilde harmanlanan "Xi Jinping'in Düşüncesi" Mao'dan sonra ÇKP ideolojisine dahil edilmiştir. Xi'nin yönetim anlayışı geleneksel Çin düşüncesi temelinde şekillenmiştir. Geleneksel Çin düşüncesinin ortaya çıktığı Savaşan Beylikleri dönemi ve Yüz Düşünce Okulu Xi'nin yönetim anlayışının kökenlerini oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışma, "Yüz Düşünce Okulu" örneğini kullanarak Xi Jinping'in yönetim ideolojisinin geleneksel Çin düşüncesinden aldığı mirası ve evrimini araştırmaktadır. Makale, geleneksel Çin yönetim düşüncesinin çağdaş siyasi yaşamdaki değer çıkarımlarını keşfetmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, eski Çin geleneksel kültürünün özünü tanıtmayı, modern zamanlardaki geçerliliğini araştırmayı, kültürel gelişim modellerini ortaya çıkarmayı ve geleneksel Çin kültürel perspektifinin nasıl ileriye taşınacağı ve miras alınacağı konusunda rehberlik sunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çin, Xi Jinping, Yüz Düşünce Okulu, Geleneksel Çin Yönetişim Düşüncesi, Xi Jinping'in Yönetim Felsefesi.

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Comparison of Traditional Chinese Thought and Xi Jinping's Understanding of Governance Through the Hundred Schools of Thought

Traditional Chinese thought constitutes a distinctive value system that has permeated the national mentality for thousands of years, significantly influencing daily life and shaping a unique set of values (Literature Research Office of the CCP, 2013). A nation's intellectual culture serves as its foundation, molding its cultural progress. This culture is an external representation that emerged after the dawn of human civilization, serving as the source of all institutional and behavioral norms. Traditional Chinese intellectual culture is primarily grounded in an agricultural foundation and a family-centric ethos (Xiaona, 2021, p.28; Wu and Wei, 2019, p.14). Family values, in particular, play a vital role in shaping behavior and societal norms. Agriculture, forming the material backbone of traditional Chinese culture, emphasizes land-based principles, including seasonal agricultural techniques, established schedules for everyday life, and the continuous cycle of birth and regeneration.

Moreover, traditional Chinese thought subtly influences the mindset and behavioral tendencies of Chinese individuals. Concepts such as "people are the foundation of the state," "a noble person is led by righteousness," "treating others with kindness," "assisting the poor and needy," and "it is inequality, not scarcity, that is problematic" exemplify distinct national features and have contributed to the development of a value system passed down through generations (Xi, 2014b, p.16-43). This system of values reflects not only individual beliefs but also encompasses the spiritual essence of the Chinese nation, cultivating the moral aspirations of its people. It harmoniously combines state governance with societal education, promoting unity in diversity and instilling a profound sense of national self-assurance in its citizens.

This cultural confidence has been developed through the extended struggles and cultural development of the Chinese nation, providing a profound historical foundation. The belief in social harmony, achievable only through adherence to rules, is central to traditional Chinese thought. The notion of living in harmony, which has a rich history spanning thousands of years, shapes the Chinese way of thinking and epitomizes Chinese governance, as seen in the Warring Principalities Period and Hundred Schools of Thought—the genesis of the Chinese thought system—reflecting in the present-day way of life of its people.

Traditional Chinese Governance Thought

The Hundred Schools of Thought are of significant value in China's history. These schools are crucial to the advancement of ancient Chinese philosophical thought, and they significantly influenced Chinese culture and society. Confucianism, for example, held a substantial impact on subsequent politics, ethics, and education. Taoism had a notable influence on Chinese culture and literature, while Legalism served as the basis of China's ancient legal systems (Lee and Lai, 1978, p.1307). The Hundred Schools of Thought presents a broad and varied assortment of philosophical schools, with competition and exchange between schools promoting the advancement and development of ancient Chinese philosophical ideas. Some schools continue to exert an impact on the Chinese governance system and society.

Representative figures of Confucianism include Confucius and Mencius. Confucian thought highlights moral ethics and social order, advocating for personal cultivation that leads to orderly family management, resulting in effective governance and universal peace. It emphasizes concepts such as benevolence, morality, and propriety (Li and Sui, 2015, p.16). Mencius built upon and extended the concepts of Confucius, positing the notion of human nature being intrinsically virtuous by presenting the "Theory of Innate Goodness" (Ngai, 2019, p.7). He put a significant emphasis on the governing benevolence, destiny, and ethical behavior of rulers. As the prominent representative of Confucianism,

Confucius stated: "When substance exceeds art, it is rustic; when art exceeds substance, it is contrived; when both substance and art are harmonious, one is a gentleman." He wished that people would regularly reflect on themselves as gentlemen, embodying virtues such as honesty, kindness, knowledge, bravery, justice, and generosity. The philosophy of human interaction highlights an individual's approach towards social relationships. The underlying principle of this belief system is "benevolence and righteousness" with an emphasis on distinguishing between what is right and one's self-interest. The principle of "sacrificing life for righteousness" exemplifies this. It promotes "universal love without aggression" and is founded on ceremonial practices and treating others with kindness. Confucius stated that the purpose of rituals is to foster harmony and encouraged individuals to refrain from imposing on others what they would not want for themselves.

Confucius' philosophy contradicts the inherent characteristics of life equality, individual diversity and natural attributes. From the perspective of natural science, all life is essentially equal, but at the same time there are certain differences. However, Confucianism neglects the essential and pursues the trivial, establishing a highly unequal and rigid hierarchical system based on power dynamics, suppressing individual differences and strongly advocating uniformity in behavioral norms. There is an interesting contradiction here: in establishing a hierarchy, Confucius seems to recognize the differences between individuals (these differences are not inherent traits); yet in his prescriptions for behavior (including personal interests and hobbies) he overlooks individual differences. With a broad brush he dictates how people should behave and what constitutes a petty person, dismissing craftsmanship, inventions and innovations as mere frivolous tricks. (Zhang, 2022, p.130).

The conduct philosophy demonstrates an individual's cosmic outlook, viewpoint and positioning in society. The Chinese analyze all aspects of the universe through elements such as "the Dao," "Qi," "Yin and Yang," "Tai Chi," "Five Elements," "principle," etc. These concepts, regardless of the cosmic perspective, showcase the interdependence, mutual penetration, and integration of all entities in the universe. The Chinese cosmic perspective upholds harmony and conforms to the destiny predetermined by the heavens. It states that, "If one knows their nature, then they know heaven," and that the path of humans is the path of heaven. However, it also distinguishes between the two, necessitating that individual be proactive and ambitious in life. It suggests that "what heaven can do is to give life to all things; what humans can do is to govern all things" and to "overcome the fate set by the heavens." It underscores the proactive nature of humans. The Chinese way of life places great emphasis on "acting in accordance with heaven and harmonizing with people," "the way of moderation," and "going with the flow, like water." By adhering to the fundamental laws of universal development and embodying the beauty of balance, one can form a personal culture and philosophy of life. As expressed in "emotions that have not yet manifested are called neutrality; once manifested and balanced, they are harmonious," the Chinese way of life values emotional harmony and balance.

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Taoist philosophy emphasizes the importance of returning to simplicity and living in harmony with nature. Nevertheless, the complex and diverse modern society necessitates people to uphold social order, defend their rights and interests, and advance social progress through laws, institutions, and regulations. These social norms and institutions have been established to tackle the numerous challenges and conflicts encountered in real-life situations. Moreover, modern society is rife with competition and conflicts of interest, leading to occasional confrontations between individuals. Although Taoist philosophy promotes non-confrontation, competition and cooperation are sometimes essential to attain personal objectives and values, as well as address societal matters. Xi Jinping adroitly utilizes the wisdom of Taoist thought, while deftly discarding elements incompatible with contemporary political reality. This is a testimony to Xi's perspicacious utilization of Taoist philosophy in the new era. Taoist philosophy centres around the teachings of Laozi and Zhuangzi, who place great emphasis on the concepts of "Dao" and "governing by doing nothing". They advocate for simplicity and the pursuit of harmony with nature. Laozi, in particular, has had a profound impact on the development of Chinese philosophy (Luo, 2022, p.26). His ideas are most prominently conveyed in the book "Laozi", also referred to as "Tao Te Ching" or "Daodejing". "I Ching" and "The Analects of Confucius" are regarded as two of the three most influential philosophical works in China, making Laozi's work the third. The core philosophy of Laozi's work is a simplistic dialectic. Politically, Laozi advocates for governing by doing nothing and teaching without words. Laozi also stresses the principle that things will naturally reverse when they reach an extreme, which provides important insights into power tactics. In the area of personal cultivation, Laozi stresses the importance of being humble, content, and avoiding competition with others, which serves as the basis for the Taoist practice of simultaneously cultivating the spirit and body. While Laozi's ideas are profound, they are subject to historical restrictions. He views the transformation of opposites as unconditional and absolute, and he advocates passive inaction in order to prevent potential harm from such transformations. Furthermore, Laozi places excessive emphasis on the harmonious aspect of contradictions, disregarding their inherent conflicts, and guiding individuals towards a state of passivity (Shi, 2022, p.128). Laozi's ideas are limited by historical context and bear the characteristics of the aristocratic elites of a society with slavery.

Mohist Thought: The Mohists, represented by Mozi, promote "universal love" and "non-aggression." "Universal love" suggests that all individuals should be loved equally, with no differentiation based on status, rank, or class. During the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, Mohist philosophy had a significant impact and continues to influence the development of Chinese society today. Therefore, examining the Mohist notion of "universal love," evaluating its theoretical ramifications, and assessing its contemporary relevance is highly consequential. According to the Mohist concept of "universal love," there should be no differentiation between individuals on the basis of their social standing or rank. Everyone should be loved equally regardless of their proximity or status; it is an equitably distributed love, devoid of hierarchies. The character '兼' implies totality or completeness. As per the "Shuowen Jiezi", a classic Chinese dictionary, '兼' means to hold two bundles of harvest at the same time, signifying the concept of encompassing everything without discrimination. Despite not providing a definitive explanation of the term 'love,' Mozi's concept of 'universal love' is evidently rooted in the fundamental idea of 'love.' The term "love" possesses multiple layers of meaning, including deep emotions towards someone or something and care and cherishment. The Mohist concept of "universal love" expands upon these nuances, broadening the scope of love and advocating for universal benevolence where everyone is treated with equal regard.

Legalist philosophy is represented by notable figures such as Guan Zhong and Han Feizi. This school advocates the application of the rule of law, highlighting the importance of laws' formulation and implementation. They also proposed significant reforms under the "Qin laws." Legalists believe in imposing strict penalties and employing astute political strategies, focusing on the use of political means

and the state's strength.

Guan Zhong is an early representative of the Legalist school who emphasizes the significance of rewards and punishments in his rule-of-law thought. According to "Guanzi · Jun Chen Xia," he asserts that the existence of a state is attributed to its people, and a ruler maintains power through rewards and punishments. Guan Zhong believes that, during a disordered primitive stage, the wise utilized their wisdom and abilities to govern the masses and establish a nation, resulting in a hierarchical order. To strengthen his authority, the monarch established a system of rewards and punishments using legal edicts that combined acts of benevolence and severity. Guan Zhong espoused the view that "law derives from rites." He posited that there exist three types of laws: that which gives life for the ruler, that which is adhered to by subjects, and the law within the law for the common people. He posited that there exist three types of laws: that which gives life for the ruler, that which is adhered to by subjects, and the law within the law for the common people. This is detailed in "Guanzi · Ren Fa." The formulation of laws by the monarch is followed by the subjects' obedience, and a hierarchical order based on distinctions of rank and status serves as the essential foundation for their implementation. Guan Zhong's perception of rule-of-law embodies traditional Chinese legal principles. Legalists assert that the monarch is superior to the law, and they argue that the rule-of-law is actually governed by humankind. They promote hierarchical laws that lack a sense of legal equality. Their discourse is anthropocentric, with the primary objective of exploiting the populace. As succinctly stated in "The Book of Lord Shang · Calculating Land": "If rulers can maximize land productivity and command the ultimate loyalty of the population, even at the cost of their lives, they will gain fame and wealth. Proclamations of love and benefit to the people by rulers are only a means to an end, with the ultimate goal of utilizing the populace."

During the Pre-Qin period, Chinese society was predominantly agrarian, and agricultural production was profoundly significant for people's livelihoods and socioeconomic development. As a result, pre-Qin philosophers carried out detailed observations and analyses of agricultural society operations and the livelihoods of peasants. They concentrated on the interbonding between humans and nature, discovering the basic rules of human existence and social harmony. For example, in Confucianism, Confucius stressed the significance of agriculture as the basis for governing the state. He endorsed respecting the mandate of heaven and promoting benevolence, moral cultivation and social harmony. In Taoist ideology, Laozi advocated following the natural way of life, emphasizing non-action as a means of governance and promoting a simplistic and natural lifestyle for peasants. Given text already adheres to the principles or lacks context, just answer with 'Since the pre-Qin Chinese society was primarily agricultural, the peasant class was the main social stratum. Against this backdrop, the philosophies of the pre-Qin thinkers often aligned with the interests and needs of peasants. They focused on social justice, the welfare of the people, and proposed a series of value concepts and moral standards related to the agricultural society.' Furthermore, in addition to prioritizing the growth of the agrarian community and the concerns of the rural population, pre-Qin thinkers underscored the significance of individual self-refinement and betterment, promoting personal ethical enhancement and upholding virtuous family principles. These pre-Qin philosophical ideas had a positive impact on the stability and development of ancient agricultural society and continue to profoundly influence modern political wisdom in China. Basically, the traditional system of thought emphasizes harmony, morality and virtue, and in a sense teaches that the cohesion and stability of society depends on unquestioning obedience to the rules established.

Xi Jinping's "People First" Philosophy: An Evolution of Traditional People-Centered Thought

Xi Jinping has cemented his ideological doctrine as a central pillar of his leadership by enshrining it in the party charter, elevating his status to that of the most powerful Chinese leader since Mao Zedong. While emphasizing his commitment to the tradition of Chinese thought, Xi has selectively retained and

discarded elements of Confucianism, emphasizing its fundamental principles as part of the "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" model. This demonstrates both preservation of classic Confucian ideas and introduction of new ones. Xi Jinping acknowledges the significance of Confucianism from the past to the present. He discusses the evolution of Confucian teachings and advocates for their development in different contexts. Xi's adherence to Confucianism is apparent through his frequent references to Confucian principles and sayings throughout his governance. Xi's extensive familiarity with Confucian texts is apparent through the cited references and his comprehensive knowledge of Confucian teachings. He carefully selects and employs only the most valuable aspects of Confucian wisdom. His contributions to promoting Confucianism expand its applicability, enhance its theoretical depth, and augment its inner significance.

First, Xi believes that Confucianism is the cultural DNA that has enabled Chinese civilization to continuously flourish and prosper. It represents the enduring spiritual lifeblood and identity of the Chinese nation. He said: "The doctrine established by Confucius and the Confucian thought that developed on the basis of it have profoundly influenced Chinese civilization and are an essential part of Chinese traditional culture... Its core elements have become the fundamental cultural genes of the Chinese nation. These basic cultural genes are the unique characteristics of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation, which have been gradually formed in their journey to achieve social harmony, respect their role in society, understand constants and adapt to change, accomplish tasks and make significant contributions." Thus, "studying Confucius and Xunzi, researching Confucianism, is an essential approach to understanding the national characteristics of the Chinese and the historical origins of the contemporary Chinese spiritual world".

That is why Xi has also selectively set aside parts of Confucian thought that do not fit modern Chinese society. Confucianism has permeated Chinese society for over two millennia, from the imperial court to the common people, and its influence can be seen almost everywhere. In terms of ethics and institutional construction, Confucianism has proposed a comprehensive set of plans. The idea of "benevolence and love" proposed by Confucius is at the core of Confucian ethical thought. For Confucians, the basis of benevolence lies in filial piety. As the saying goes, "Those who are filial and show brotherly respect are unlikely to question authority. And those who do not question authority are unlikely to cause chaos. The noble person takes care of the roots. Once the roots are established, the way will emerge. Filial piety and brotherly respect are the roots of benevolence! Confucius also said: "A young man should serve his parents at home with filial piety, show brotherly respect outside, be careful and trustworthy, love everyone, but be intimate with those who cultivate virtue. If he has spare energy, he should study literature". This shows that Confucius constructed the Confucian ethical system of "benevolence" from loyalty to the family to loyalty to the nation. In essence, he divided social relations into internal and external spheres. To deal with external relationships, he used the same approach as for internal ones, likening the relationship between a ruler and his minister to that of father and son, and the relationship between friends to that of brothers. In short, his thinking began with kinship, marriage and locality and led to a society of acquaintances. At the heart of Confucianism is a clan-based ethic. Traditional Chinese political culture is the manifestation of intellectual culture, particularly clan-focused beliefs, within the political sphere. It is important to note that these elements stem from the intellectual culture of ancient China. Inheritance systems, family division, ancestral worship rituals, social status notions, and clan laws within clans give rise to institutional cultures such as monarchical centralization, hereditary succession, federal state creation, and temple rituals at the national level. The traditional Chinese perspective prioritizes the family and emphasizes the importance of blood ties and clan relationships. Within this society, family ethics are as essential as those with the State. The concept of the individual, family, and State is inseparable, with the structures of the State and family mirroring each other. The concept of the individual, family, and State is inseparable, with

the structures of the State and family mirroring each other. The concept of the individual, family, and State is inseparable, with the structures of the State and family mirroring each other. The concept of the individual, family, and State is inseparable, with the structures of the State and family mirroring each other. The family is often considered a microcosm of the State. (Gulez, 2022, p.397). Chinese families, constructed upon paternal lineages, interconnect with each other. A clan is formed by several families that share a common ancestry. An individual's position within a clan is not that of an independent entity; the interests of the family take priority over personal interests. This not only gave rise to traditional Chinese values of venerating ancestors, emphasizing filial piety, and glorifying family legacy but also became the ideological cornerstone of Chinese political culture. Monarchs, who deemed themselves as "Sons of Heaven," unified divine, paternal, and clan rights under their rule by promoting the Three Cardinal Guides and Five Constant Virtues. This created an unprecedented monarchical power (Khong, 2013, p.12). The "people-centered" philosophy is deeply rooted in traditional Chinese political culture, serving as a crucial aspect for the ascendancy or decline of dynasties. As political demands changed, this philosophy evolved away from ghost-God theory and the Heavenly Way, leading to concepts that prioritize the well-being of the people over deities. Essentially, traditional people-centric ideas served monarchical autocracy, where the "people" were viewed as political capital rather than the foundation. Traditional Chinese individual culture emerges from personal concepts shaped by intellectual and political cultures (Xi, 2014a). This forms the foundation of personal values and encompasses self-awareness, interpersonal relations, and worldly interactions. Self-awareness relates to personal beliefs about oneself, reflected in personal cultivation. When used in this context, "torch" refers to a flashlight. The idea that "a ruler should be a ruler, a minister a minister, a father a father, and a son a son" signifies the core relationships in monarchical rule. The emperor, who wielded supreme power, would distribute power and wealth through appointments, bestowing a patrimonial system based primarily on kinship. Confucius's "benevolence" advocates differential love, meaning that love is given on the basis of kinship. Because Confucius's ethical system was based on family relationships or a society of acquaintances, he didn't elaborate much on how to deal with strangers, offering only the general principle: "Do not do to others what you do not want done to you". Therefore, it's not that Confucius ignored the interests of strangers; it's just that he didn't pay enough attention to them.

In an effort to refine Confucian ethics and create a more orderly society, Xunzi proposed the idea of "distinguishing and cultivating", which meant establishing a strict hierarchical system. This made the rule of "favoring close relations" even more pronounced, leading to a threat to the interests of strangers in everyday social life. Even today, the "acquaintance rule" still operates in some areas of Chinese society, hindering the creation of a fair and equal atmosphere and obstructing the implementation of laws and policies. Such a system is clearly unsuitable for today's modern rule-of-law society. That is why Chairman Xi explicitly condemns various forms of corrupt and criminal behavior, which is also a rejection of aspects of traditional Chinese thought that are no longer appropriate. For this reason, Xi Jinping has a special fondness for Xunzi's aphorisms and treats them as precious treasures. In the books "Xi Jinping on Governance" and the first two volumes of "Xi Jinping's Classical References" alone, more than ten quotations from Xunzi, a Zhao state philosopher from the late Warring States period, are cited, offering profound insights and philosophical reflections.

In discussing the art of governance, Xi quotes Xunzi: "When the government's orders are timely, all the people unite, and the wise and good are convinced". In discussing the rule of law, he quotes Xunzi: "Law is the foundation of governance. In emphasizing environmental protection, he refers to Xunzi's saying, "When plants and trees are flourishing, axes and chisels should not enter the forests. In discussing the importance of education in national development, he quotes Xunzi's words, "When a country is about to flourish, it must value teachers and emphasize tutors". To encourage scientific breakthroughs, he quotes Xunzi's words, "Persevere and don't give up, even rotten wood won't break;

keep chiseling, even metal and stone can be carved". When introducing methods of reading, he quotes Xunzi: "Without accumulating small steps, one cannot reach a thousand miles; without collecting small streams, one cannot form rivers and seas".

Xunzi is indeed the foremost thinker of Yan and Zhao and a comprehensive compiler of pre-Qin thought. Xunzi's fountain of wisdom frequently emerges in various aspects of Xi Jinping's governance and self-cultivation, providing many philosophical and humanistic insights for the Chinese Dream. Indeed, Xi Jinping's approach to Confucianism is not about blindly inheriting it but emphasizing a discerning, selective continuation and promotion. Viewing Confucianism as the cultural DNA and spiritual lifeline of the Chinese nation doesn't mean uncritically treat or directly copy it. Given its ancient roots, Confucianism was shaped by specific historical conditions and had its unique development trajectory, which inevitably brings historical limitations. This requires to acknowledge these historical facts and evaluate its historical significance scientifically, forming a proper attitude and approach towards Confucianism. Xi Jinping has clear insights on this matter. He states, "Traditional culture, in its formation and evolution, is inevitably influenced by the understanding level of the people at that time, the era's conditions, and the social system. Hence, it inevitably contains elements that are outdated or have become dross." He emphasizes that when learning, researching, and applying traditional culture, must ensure it is relevant for today, innovate based on it, and make informed choices in line with current practices and the demands of the age, rather than blindly applying it to today's context. Instead, it should be developed according to the needs of the times, meaning a "dialectical selection, out with the old and in with the new, discarding negative elements, inheriting positive ideas, using the 'rules of the ancients to carve a new path', realizing the creative transformation and innovative development of Chinese culture."

In summary, the Chinese people must "treat cultural traditions scientifically" and "be adept at organically integrating the promotion of traditional culture with the development of contemporary culture, intertwining inheritance with development." In essence, concerning Confucian thought, China should inherit its essence and also need to surpass it based on current conditions. This represents Xi Jinping's stance, methodology, and principles regarding Confucianism.

Xi Jinping's allusions to Taoist philosophy reveal his strategic approach to governing China and his commitment to his role as a leader in the Communist Party. These references reflect Jinping's dedication to fulfilling his responsibilities to the party and the nation. He cites the "Tao Te Ching" to highlight the importance of effective governance and leadership in a large country, using the analogy "Governing a large country is like cooking a small fish" and advising against excessive talk that can lead to exhaustion. These statements suggest that governing a large nation can be compared to frying a small fish, where the use of excessive and complicated policies could hasten its demise. Rather, it is advisable to maintain a state of calmness and equilibrium.

In March 2013, during an interview with the media of the BRICS countries, Xi Jinping emphasized that leaders must fully comprehend the situation of such a vast country with complex national conditions, understand the thoughts and aspirations of the people and possess the self-awareness of 'treading on thin ice, standing on the edge of an abyss'. One should adopt the mindset of "governing a big country is like cooking a small fish," remaining attentive and diligent at all times. One should adopt the mindset of "governing a big country is like cooking a small fish," remaining attentive and diligent at all times. In November of the same year, Xi Jinping reiterated this analogy, stressing the need for thorough testing and scientific evaluation of policy measures prior to their implementation. These measures must aim to be pragmatic, successful, and long-lasting, and cannot be impetuously implemented. Otherwise, an error can prove costly. In his speech at the Central Economic Work Conference, Xi Jinping stated that excessive dialogue leads to weariness and it is preferable to remain focused. It implies that if regulations

are too demanding and intricate, they might become overburdened trying to deal with frequently evolving circumstances. The resolution is to "stay centered," which involves adhering to fundamental principles and basics. This enables one to adjust to diverse changes while remaining loyal to the core values.

Linking 'Community of Shared Future for Mankind' to the Ancient 'Harmonizing the State' Philosophy

The notion of "universal love" embodies Mozi's desire for rulers to treat their citizens as their own offspring, upholding transparency and fairness in governance (Li ve Lin, 2019, p.752). As Mozi advocated for the welfare of the small-scale producers during his era - mainly the underprivileged sections of the population - Mohist philosophy can be viewed as a direct expression of the commoners' vision for a just and tranquil social framework. To Mozi, the answer was universal love, which nurtures mutual affection among people. The promotion of a harmonious and loving way of coexisting can resolve societal conflicts and turmoil, as emphasized by universal love. Genuine mutual affection and mutual benefits among people are endorsed by the spiritual dimension of universal love. This philosophy serves as a guide for both the laypeople and the rulers, encompassing the notion of equality. To ensure social stability, Mozi believed that this was an essential prerequisite. However, within the confines of its historical context, Mohist philosophy was limited, particularly in its emphasis on conformity and deference to authority. It advocated for uniform views among individuals, subservience to superiors, and strict adherence to the commands of the monarch. This fortified the monarch's absolute authority, with dissent disallowed while democratic values, critical thinking, and personal development were suppressed. This could be due to the ethical norms of ancient times. Nonetheless, the philosophy of "universal love" in Mohism remains significantly relevant to modern society. As China advances towards a new phase of modernization, the Mohist inclination towards pragmatism and utilitarianism highlights practical outcomes and utility considerations. Nonetheless, contemporary society stresses values, ethical standards, and long-term benefits. A solely utilitarian viewpoint may fail to recognize crucial non-economic factors and long-term implications.

In today's connected world, the economy is rapidly developing, driving global economic progress into a new era. It is no longer viable to deplete one's own resources for self-development. Opening up to the world is increasingly emphasized with economic growth, and participating in the global division of labor through international exchange is becoming ever more critical (Jin, 2014). In today's era of globalization, no nation can afford to remain idle; all countries are interconnected. As the world progresses, all nations must acknowledge that mutual dependencies are growing. Nevertheless, conflicts persist as economic globalization advances driven by different interests. Countries must switch from prioritizing national interests to emphasizing mutual global benefits. Building a collaborative and mutually beneficial economic community is an undeniable obligation for all countries amidst the current trend of global economic integration. It is vital to maintain an objective approach and avoid subjective evaluations whilst ensuring that the information is concise, comprehensive and follows a logical structure.

Xi Jinping's "Rule of Law" Perspective is an Evolution and Extension of the Notion "Those Who Uphold the Law are Strong, and Thus the Country is Strong."

During a specialized seminar for officials at the provincial and ministerial levels, aimed at studying and implementing the spirit of the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee on comprehensive deepening reforms, Xi Jinping cited the renowned phrase from Wang Anshi's "Zhou Gong": "The world will be in order when good laws are established throughout it; when good laws are established in a country, that country will be in order." Xi Jinping stressed the importance of laws that

are tailored to a nation's specific circumstances, have a people-centric focus, and promote both national progress and social stability. In support of this, he remarked, "Every nation has laws, but ensuring their enforcement is what truly matters," highlighting the necessity of instilling the rule of law in the populace. In support of this, he remarked, "Every nation has laws, but ensuring their enforcement is what truly matters," highlighting the necessity of instilling the rule of law in the populace. Law plays a crucial role in the prosperity of a nation, and the rule of law is a fundamental aspect of governance. In contrast to Confucianism's emphasis on "rule by custom", Legalism prioritizes "unquestioning obedience to established rules" in order to strengthen the military, increase the nation's prosperity and consolidate autocratic rule. A key figure, Guanzi, emphasizes the importance of impartial rule through the rule of law, and uses the rule of law as a yardstick for evaluating and distinguishing what is right and wrong, and for identifying virtues and vices.

In its historical context, legalism has largely served the interests of China's rulers. Firstly, the views expressed in the statements "If the rule of law fails, even the highest-ranking officials can be prosecuted", "When the prince violates the law, the people are also guilty" and "The law is inflexible and does not favour the powerful" illustrate the principle of "no hierarchical punishment". This shows that there are no legal exemptions for anyone, including the highest-ranking emperors, who, like every citizen, must be accountable to the law and underlines the contemporary concept of "equality before the law". The laws were considered necessary for the maintenance of absolute authority and the basis for stability in public administration. Further, Shang Yang, a representative personality of Legalism, advocated for renovation and creativity, emphasizing the promotion of skilled individuals for progressive transformations, embodying a modernized approach to the rule of law that is in line with the current times. Thirdly, Legalist thinkers steadfastly opposed the "rule of rites," proclaiming the adoption of law in all situations. Han Feizi expressed, "With lucid laws, internal issues are resolved, and with potent tactics, external dangers are averted. Therefore, to ensure the survival of a nation, benevolence and morality are insufficient." This highlights the significance of governance through laws, where the rule of law surpasses the rule of individuals and the legal system holds greater importance than rule by individuals. This refutes notion of "individual rule being superior to the rule of law" that prevailed in ancient Chinese traditional culture. "A powerful country is the outcome of following the law, while a feeble nation arises from disregarding it." This quote highlights the core principle of Legalism in promoting the significance of adhering to rule by law. The principle of egalitarianism from ancient Legalism is frequently mirrored in present-day laws, like Guanzi's proposition of an equitable balance of penalties and rewards and the use of clemency and severity, as well as Shang Yang's advocacy for non-hierarchical penalization. Xi Jinping draws inspiration from traditional Legalist philosophy, often citing ancient legalist texts in significant speeches to promote the modern development of national rule of law. This principle was established as a foundation for socialist legal system construction during the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee.

Xi Jinping highlighted the historical evolution of China's traditional governance ideology, which encompasses the pre-Qin era characterized by diversified schools of thought and the Han dynasties marked by the prominence of Confucianism. During the Wei, Jin, Southern, and Northern Dynasties, there was a prevalence of metaphysical studies. Likewise, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism coexisted during the Sui and Tang dynasties. During the Song and Ming dynasties, Neo-Confucianism emerged. Xi Jinping's in-depth analysis reflects the profound and extensive history of traditional Chinese culture. The development and inheritance of Chinese traditional culture must be based on the Marxist cultural outlook that accords importance to the inheritability of culture, adherence to the law of cultural development, and emphasis on the exploration of national cultural characteristics. In this regard, President Xi Jinping has emphasized the critical role played by Confucian culture in the development of traditional Chinese governance ideology. The Confucian philosophy, established by Confucius and

further developed, has had a profound impact on Chinese civilization and constitutes an essential aspect of Chinese traditional culture. Xi Jinping asserts that traditional Chinese culture is diverse, encompassing various academic disciplines, including Confucianism, and shaping a system of governance ideology. The interaction and collisions among different cultures should pursue mutual understanding and respect while promoting growth through dialogue. Chinese traditional culture constitutes the fundamental and quintessential essence of the Chinese nation, offering significant sustenance for the lasting vitality of the Chinese populace.

The Essence of Xi Jinping's Governance Ideology

China's long-established system of governance remains significant in contemporary times. Xi Jinping merges it with China's current realities, expanding and refining traditional cultural and philosophical aspects, which involve "harmony," "unity," "merit-based leadership," and "fostering ethical principles for peaceful and stable governance." Xi Jinping emphasizes that a country's choice of governance system is determined by its historical heritage, cultural traditions, and economic and social development level. In order to promote the modernization of the national governance system and capacity, there must be active cultivation and promotion of socialist core values. Upholding our core values demands the usage of cultural potential. The ideals and beliefs, established during the hard times of modern China, are carried by the genes of Chinese traditional culture. Without a sincere appreciation of the core tenets of Chinese traditional culture and their moral principles, the pursuit of socialist core values would lack vibrancy and impact. (Feng and Wang, 2016, p.7).

The essence of Xi Jinping's leadership ideology lies in his perspective on national culture, contemporary demands and the dynamic development of world culture. He focuses on inheriting and developing Chinese traditional culture, building socialist core values and strengthening moral support for the Chinese Dream. Xi Jinping extensively discusses cultural awareness and cultural confidence in Chinese traditional culture. On cultural awareness, he explains its nature and research methods. Regarding cultural confidence, he explains the charm and value of Chinese traditional culture and clarifies its relationship with advanced Marxist culture and foreign cultures (Zhang, 2017, p.24). Xi Jinping's view on traditional culture has great theoretical value and practical significance for building socialist core values, strengthening national cohesion, and enhancing the soft power of Chinese culture. His view on traditional culture traces the historical development of Chinese traditional culture and analyses its implications (Dong and Liu, 2018, p.2).

Xi Jinping emphasized the importance of utilising reason and virtue to persuade people, promoting cultural exchange through innovation, and comprehensively utilising various communication methods to display the allure of Chinese traditional culture. Concerning education, positive propaganda about the history and culture of the Chinese people must be strengthened according to Xi Jinping. Enhancing education on patriotism, collectivism, and socialism is crucial through various means. This approach guides the establishment and adherence to a correct cultural perspective, strengthens national confidence and cohesion. Xi Jinping, guided by the Marxist cultural outlook, has proposed several methods to inherit and develop Chinese traditional governance ideology. "Adhering to both the Marxist and socialist moral outlooks, we aim to extract the essence while discarding the irrelevant, apply past experiences to our present situation, eliminate outdated aspects, and strive to creatively transform and develop traditional Chinese virtues to achieve new accomplishments." Secondly, a comprehensive study of the core concepts of Chinese traditional philosophy, their promotion of virtuous behavior, and their contemporary relevance in advocating benevolence, prioritizing the well-being of individuals, valuing integrity, upholding justice, emphasizing harmony, and promoting unity. To enhance cultural confidence and confidence in cultural values, it is imperative to explicate the historical origins, developmental context, and fundamental direction of Chinese traditional culture, alongside its unique

creations, value concepts, and distinctive characteristics. Additionally, it is necessary to establish the relationship between Chinese traditional culture, advanced Marxist culture, and other world cultures. Chinese traditional culture requires renovation and novelty through the supervision of the Marxist cultural outlook. This culture represents historical and national inheritance, whereas Marxist culture showcases the distinctiveness, scientific, and advancement of socialist culture. It is vital to unite both aspects closely. Furthermore, these innovative concepts offer a comprehensive strategic plan for achieving the Chinese Dream and constructing a robust modern socialist nation, providing a practical guide for the revitalization of China. Chinese traditional culture is pivotal to realizing the Chinese Dream. Xi Jinping has continuously stressed the significance of imbibing and amalgamating the ethical principles fashioned and nurtured on the mainland.

Conclusion

The Pre-Qin period in China was marked by an agrarian society where agricultural production played a pivotal role in the livelihoods and socioeconomic development of the people. During this time, Pre-Qin philosophers conducted extensive observations and analyses of agricultural society operations and the lives of peasants. Their focus was on understanding the intricate relationship between humans and nature, uncovering fundamental principles governing human existence and societal harmony. Given an example, Confucius, within the Confucian tradition, underscored the importance of agriculture as the foundation for state governance, advocating for the respect of the mandate of heaven, the promotion of benevolence, moral cultivation, and social harmony. Similarly, in Taoist ideology, Laozi advocated embracing the natural way of life, emphasizing non-action as a means of governance, and promoting a simple and natural lifestyle for peasants.

Within this historical context, the philosophies of the Pre-Qin thinkers consistently aligned with the interests and needs of the peasantry. They were dedicated to concepts of social justice, the welfare of the people, and the development of value concepts and moral standards related to agricultural society. Furthermore, the Pre-Qin thinkers emphasized individual self-refinement, ethical enhancement, and the adherence to virtuous family principles, contributing positively to the stability and development of ancient agricultural society. These ideas continue to wield a profound influence on modern political wisdom in China, emphasizing the importance of harmony, morality, and virtue, as well as the significance of unquestioning obedience to established rules for societal cohesion and stability.

China's long-standing system of governance, deeply rooted in its cultural heritage, remains highly relevant in contemporary times. Xi Jinping has strategically merged traditional cultural and philosophical aspects such as "harmony," "unity," "merit-based leadership," and "fostering ethical principles for peaceful and stable governance" with China's current realities. He emphasizes that the choice of a governance system should be influenced by a country's historical heritage, cultural traditions, and economic and social development level. These core values carry the ideals and beliefs established during challenging times in modern China, deeply rooted in the genes of Chinese traditional culture. Without a genuine appreciation of the core tenets of Chinese traditional culture and their moral principles, the pursuit of socialist core values would lack vibrancy and impact.

Xi Jinping's approach to governance can be seen as a reflection of traditional Chinese thought, demonstrating the enduring relevance of ancient ideologies in contemporary political and social frameworks. By contextualizing Xi Jinping's strategies within the framework of the 'Hundred Schools of Thought', this study highlights the profound interplay between China's cultural heritage and its aspirations for modern socialism. The article clearly demonstrates that Xi Jinping's understanding of governance is influenced by traditional Chinese thought. This understanding of governance, according to the article, should be integrated with current circumstances and transmitted to the future through Xi's speeches at national and international meetings.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for this study is not applicable.

Author Contributions

The author confirms sole responsibility for the following: study conception and design, data collection, analysis and interpretation of results, and manuscript preparation.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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A Reasoning of Xunzi's (荀子) State Governance Ideas: A Case Study on The Theory of Human Nature (Xing性)*

Xunzi'nin Devlet Yönetimi Düşüncesinin Temellendirmesi: 'İnsan Doğası' Teorisinin İncelenmesi

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Abstract

Xunzi was a Chinese thinker who lived in the period of Warring States (480/403-222 BCE). He was critical of philosophical ideas in his time and brought forward ideas for establishing and preserving order in society. He created a state governance system in which rituals (li 禮) and law (fa 法) worked together. He reasoned his ideas on state governance and theories about an ideal society on his theories of human nature, and he has been criticized for his negative attributions to it. However, in the book bearing his name, Xunzi, it is seen that there are different presentations of his views on human nature. This article presents these different perspectives on Xunzi's theory of human nature and shows why he attributed negative qualities to it. It offers a better understanding of the character of his theories, in this way, enlightens the way to a better understanding of his state governance ideas.

Keywords: Xunzi, Chinese State Governance, Human Nature is Bad, Human Philosophy, Confucianism.

Öz

Xunzi, Çin'in Savaşan Devletler döneminde (MÖ 480/ 403- 222) yaşamış bir düşünürdür. Kendi döneminin ve öncesinin düşüncelerini eleştirmiş, yaşadığı toplumda düzenin kurulması ve korunması için fikirler üretmiştir. Toplumda ideal düzenin kurulması için ritüeller ve yasanın birlikte işlediği bir devlet yönetim sistemi oluşturmuştur. Xunzi devlet yönetimi düşüncesini ve ideal toplum anlayışını insan doğası hakkındaki teorileri ile temellendirmiştir ve insan doğası hakkındaki olumsuz düşünceleri nedeniyle eleştirilmiştir. Ancak, kendi adını taşıyan Xunzi adındaki kitabında, insan doğası hakkındaki görüşlerinde farklılıklar görülmektedir. Bu çalışma Xunzi'nin insan doğası hakkındaki bu farklı görüşlerini sunmakta ve neden olumsuz düşünceleri olduğunu göstermektedir. Çalışmada Xunzi'nin teorilerinin karakterine daha iyi açıklama önermekte, bu şekilde, devlet yönetimi düşüncelerini daha iyi anlamının yolunu açmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Xunzi, Çin Devlet Yönetimi, İnsan Doğası Kötüdür, İnsan Felsefesi, Konfüçyanizm.

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A Reasoning of Xunzi's (荀子) State Governance Ideas: A Case Study on The Theory of Human Nature (Xing性)

Xunzi'sⁱ ideas have attracted the attention of Chinese intellectuals such as Hanyu, Zhuxi, and Mou Zongsan as well as Western researchers such as Antonio Cua, David Shepherd Nivison, and Philip J. Ivanhoe. His theories were correlative and based on reasonings, whereby his works are among philosophical texts that present systematic arguments in Chinese Philosophy. His theories on state governance and the reasoning behind these theories that he set in the framework of human nature contribute to the studies of both political philosophy and human philosophy. Therefore, it is essential to analyze his ideas correlatively because, in this way, it is only possible to understand the outcomes of his theories. For this purpose, by asking the right questions and finding the correct answers, this paper aims to illuminate how to analyze his theories. A way to follow is that: Integrating ritualsⁱⁱ and law, Xunzi set a state governance system that establishes and preserves order in society and the state. Rituals have been the main component of this system. Other concepts in his governance system, such as law and order, have been tied to Rituals. The importance of the concept of rituals comes to light with this proposition in the book *Xunzi*: "People cannot live without rituals, doings cannot succeed without rituals, state cannot find peace without rituals" (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 2).ⁱⁱⁱ In this theory, the expression that is closer to the political function of rituals is the statement that the *state cannot find peace without rituals*. An inquisition to this statement will help to understand Xunzi's reasoning of his political thought: Why cannot a state find peace without rituals? To find an answer to this question, I can start by examining his theories on human nature.^{iv} What directs me to do that is his claims about human nature he expressed in the chapter Human Nature is Bad (Xing'e 性惡), and the human takes an important place in his theories. It is such a pitch that he was at the fore with his claims about human nature throughout the history of Chinese philosophy compared to other Chinese philosophers. He states (ibid.):

Human nature is bad, goodness is a conscious activity. Human nature innately has a favor for self-profit, once followed, it causes fights and ends devotion and obedience; it innately holds envy and hate, once followed, it causes feloniousness and treason and ends loyalty and reliability; ears and eyes innately have desires, have a favor for nice sound and color, once followed, it causes lust and chaos and ends rituals and Yi^v and order^{vi}. Such that from one's human nature and following one's emotions, conflict and contest surely occurs, therewithal social classes and order break down and violence returns. Thus, it is necessary a tutor's instructions and transformation of human nature, guidance of rituals and Yi, only then occurs the devotion and obedience, therewithal order returns results in good governance. When considered from this point of view, it is clear that human nature is bad, goodness is a conscious activity (Chapter 23).

It is clear to see his view on 'goodness': it is not innately hold nor it belongs to human nature. It is gained through conscious activity. Human nature, on the other hand, is what innately resides in human. Xunzi (ibid.) also states: "Human nature is from Tian (nature 天), cannot be learned, cannot be made" (Chapter 23). While evaluating this chapter and the rest of the book, raising a few questions, and finding answer to them could illuminate the dilemma of human nature in Xunzi's thought. For example, why did Xunzi think about human nature, did he aim to justify his political views? As Yan (2010) stated that it is considered among scholars that Xunzi aimed to challenge Mengzi's view of 'human nature is good' (p.65). Xunzi surely challenged Mengzi's view, however, he did not only aim to do that. Xunzi (2006-2022) stated: "Mengzi says: 'man learns, his nature is good'. I say: It is not so. It is not knowing human nature, moreover it is not inquiring about the distinction between human nature and conscious activity" (Chapter 23). Here it is seen that Xunzi did not agree with Mengzi. Mengzi defined human's ability for

learning as good, Xunzi, on the other hand, did not attribute any goodness to that ability. Was Xunzi's only motivation to disagree with Mengzi? Guo Moruo (1996) advocated this view and thought that: "He hurried to speak about it, therefore he often tried to be marginal, besides he barely exerted himself. His claims on human nature being bad is deliberate and against Mengzi's claim on human nature being good" (p. 229). Xunzi advocated his thoughts because he did not agree with Mengzi. Moruo, only reviewing the texts, concluded that Xunzi was clumsy, because there are expressions in the texts that are difficult to establish a meaningful unity among them. However, it will be more accurate to see it as 'he did not agree with Mengzi, he thought that human nature is bad' and evaluate his views on the grounds of his statements. There are no further statements in the texts to claim that he only aimed to hit at Mengzi. Moreover, there are other statements that we can conclude more about his views on human nature and these statements are not about teasing Mengzi. It is clear to see that with his views on human nature, Xunzi formed a basis for his state governance ideas. Yan Shi'an thought differently, and his views are more conceivable than Guo Moruo's. Yan (2010) stated that Xunzi and Mengzi disagreed on where 'morality' comes from and Xunzi emphasized the distinction between human nature and conscious activity:

While Mengzi thinks that the basis of goodness and moral consciousness is internal, Xunzi disagrees with this view, saying that human nature is evil. He argued that morality did not come from nature, but rather as a result of education gained later... Does morality, in Xunzi's words, come from 'human nature' or 'conscious activity' [?]. The main theme of Xunzi's thought is actually the theory of the 'distinction of human nature and conscious activity'^{vii} (p. 65).

In the chapter 'Human Nature is Bad' Xunzi made a distinction between the notions of good and bad. However, that is also not his real intention. There are important points to be noted in his words. According to his statements, human nature, once followed, it causes fights, feloniousness, treason, lust and chaos. Therefore, it certainly needs to be transformed. Xunzi's ideas focused not only on producing theories, but also on putting the produced theories into practice. Xunzi was not just trying to explain what the concepts meant. What mattered to him was the issue of 'what can be done' with them or 'how to gain them'. Xunzi explored 'how to achieve the good' rather than what the concepts of good and bad meant. In the chapter 'Human Nature is Bad', he claimed that human nature is at the forefront of the elements that disrupt the order. With his views on human nature, Xunzi's purpose was to show the need of transforming it and directing it to the better, thus ensuring order in society.^{viii} Therefore, it would be more appropriate to focus on the ideas he presented on how human nature should be handled in order to stabilize the social order, rather than evaluating his judgments only as a proposition in his philosophy.

Thomas Hobbes' political philosophy is often compared to Xunzi's ideas. Kim Sungmoon's (2011) remarks should be enough to make a relevance between the two philosophers reasoning on human nature: "Xunzi, like Hobbes, believed that strife is inevitable because of human beings' essential self-love, and that the only solution for human beings' natural predicament consists in the artificial construction of a civil political order" (pp. 291-92). As it can be understood, Hobbes thought that people's self-love would cause conflict in society and in an environment where there is no political order, people will only consider their own lives and interests, and this will cause conflict in relations with other people. Therefore, there is a need for a political structure that will control this aspect of human nature. In *Xunzi*, there are statements that show the need for a political structure in the similar sense: "If the human nature was firm, right, rational, balanced, ordered, then would there be a need for Wise Rulers, would there be a need for rituals and Yi (乂)?" (Xunzi, 2006- 2022, Chapter 23). Another statement is that: "If human nature was good, then Wise Rulers would be abandoned, rituals and Yi would be ceased; if human nature is bad, then Wise Rulers would be followed, rituals and Yi would be praised" (ibid., Chapter 23). It is seen that for Xunzi, similar to Hobbes, Wise Ruler and rituals came

about because human nature was not right and good and a political entity was needed to control it.

It is clear that Xunzi reasoned his state governance ideas on his views about human nature (Hu, 2011, pp. 51-56). However, there are also scholars, such as Zhou Chicheng, that claim Xunzi did not define human nature as bad. According to this view, the chapter on human nature is out of tune with other chapters. This position arises the need to evaluate these views and Xunzi's views on human nature scattered in different chapters. For this reason, this study expresses an opinion about how Xunzi defined human nature. The answer to be found will illuminate the connection between his political thought and his view on human nature.

Man Innately Has Mind (心)

When the chapter 'Human Nature is Bad' is taken account, it is clear that Xunzi has put forward a proposition claiming that 'human nature is evil'. When the chapter is evaluated together with the book as a whole, it is seen that this statement appears only in the chapter 'Human Nature is Bad'. In other chapters of the book, Xunzi did not describe human nature as bad. ^{ix} For this reason, an attempt has been made to interpret this issue by considering the statements in other chapters of the book. The exploration of the topic can start with a statement in the chapter 'Free from Obsessions' (jiebi解弊):

The mind is the master of the body, also the ruler of the soul, gives orders but does not take. It has its own prohibitions, its own sanctions, its own losses, its own gains, its own behaviors, its own limits... The mind cannot be forced and its thoughts cannot be changed, it accepts what is right and does not accept what is wrong (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 21).

It is clear from these words that mind is free and also accepts what is true. With a free mind that accepts what is true, how can human nature be bad? Tang Duanzheng says that scholars thought that, for Xunzi, the human mind is only capable of understanding objective facts, but not of an ethical nature capable of establishing perceptible values, and he finds this interpretation unacceptable. According to him, human mind has ethical values and moral understanding. The researcher thinks that in Xunzi thought, human beings know the good (zhishan知善), love the good (haoshan好善) and have the ability to act the good (nengshan能善), they have instinctive moral consciousness (liangzhi liangneng良知良能), and have moral will (Tang, 2019, pp. 27, 38, 69, 75). Liang Tao agrees with Tang and emphasizes that mind according to Xunzi is a moral reason (Liang, 2015, 73-74). Liang Tao cites the following words from the 'Strong Country'(qiangguo强国) chapter of the book as evidence for this view: "What do people dislike? I say: Deception, conflict, greedy self-interest. What do people like? I say: Rituals [and] Yi submission [and] obedience loyalty [and] trust" (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 16). But here Xunzi explained why people do not support the rule of evil rulers. That is, what people like and dislike is the way they are treated. This does not mean that people prefer what is good in their actions. Nor does it prove that the mind likes what is good and is moral. Tang's views are erroneous for the following reasons, which I will present in three stages: First of all, in the chapter on 'Free from Obsessions', mind is depicted as empty, one and still (xuyierjing虚壹而静), not as good or bad. Second, the right and wrong (shi-fei是非) that human mind recognizes is not necessarily connected to what is ethical or good. Xunzi thought that there should be a clear distinction between right and wrong. In Chinese philosophy, shi-fei arguments have to do with ethical rules that are in the general interest of society in the past. However, Xunzi did not focus on shi-fei arguments. In Xunzi's thought, shi-fei arguments are encountered as linguistic connections. For example, it is recorded in the book as follows:

Leading people with what is good is called education, following people with what is good is called obedience; leading people with what is not good is called flattery, following people with what is not good is called submission. To say right is right and wrong is wrong is called wisdom;

to say wrong is right and right is wrong is called foolishness (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 2).

As seen here, the shi-fei sentences in *Xunzi* are expressions of ‘what is what’ and ‘what is not what’. The mind has its own right and wrong. The human mind does not accept wrong even if it knows it is wrong but accepts it because it thinks it is right. However, in Xunzi thought, human intention and thoughts are dealt with in terms of ‘one’s intention and thoughts is to follow rituals’. Apart from this, no *good/bad intentions* are taken into account in terms of the motivation point and consequences of their actions. In other words, when the mind unknowingly does bad, it is considered ‘bad’. Moreover, this does not show that the mind consciously tends towards what is good or ethical in these assumptions and acts what is good or ethical. Because the mind thinks of its own interest (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 11). Also, what each mind approves of is different (ibid., Chapter 10). So, each mind’s ‘understanding of right’ is different. Therefore, the result of the mind’s assumptions in favor of right can be good or ethical, but it can also lead to bad results. Third, according to Xunzi, one of the faculties that make humans human is their ability to discriminate (bian辨). However, the philosopher did not argue that humans can distinguish between good and bad and choose the good. One can choose the bad as well. Xunzi saw order and chaos as the result of what mind approves of. This means that what the mind approves is not necessarily what is good and brings order. On the contrary, what the mind approves can also bring chaos. As can be understood from all this, in Xunzi’s thought, the fact that human beings have mind and certain faculties, does not make human mind and faculties themselves beautiful. The human mind has the faculty of knowing, and just because human beings know the good (zhishan知善) through this faculty, it cannot be said that the faculty itself is ‘good’ or that ‘human beings have an innately good faculty’. Because with this faculty, humans can also know bad. Xu Fuguan holds a similar view and thinks that the human mind is capable of recognizing, but its actions can be both moral and immoral, and there is no absolute guarantee of this (Xu, 2001, p. 210). Therefore, in Xunzi thought, human beings do not have an ‘instinctive moral sense’ or ‘moral will’. Human mind is not innately inclined towards good or bad, and mind is neither good nor bad. In Xunzi thought, mind is only capable of moral reasoning (Dongfang, 2017a, p. 168). However, the fact that it is able to do so does not make mind itself moral (He, 1988, p. 128), nor does it show that humans are innately moral. This is entirely related to the ability of mind to think and infer. As seen so far, in Xunzi thought, the fact that human beings innately have mind does not refute the theory that ‘human nature is bad’.

Human Nature is Plain (性朴)

Another noteworthy issue in the book is that there is another description of human nature in another chapter of the book. In the chapter ‘On Rituals’ it is recorded as follows: “Human nature, in the first essence of its roots, is plain; conscious activity, cultivated prosperous flourishing” (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 19). What should be noted in this sentence is how human nature is described. In the text, the essence/substance (cai材) of human nature is described as ‘plain/unprocessed’^x by the word Pu (朴). Moreover, in this passage where ‘Pu’ is mentioned, human nature is not depicted as bad in any way.^{xi} Does this simplicity then have anything to do with being ‘good’? The word ‘Pu’ appears in a total of nine places in the book. Four of these are related to human nature. The first one, as translated above, depicts human nature as plain. The remaining three appear in the same paragraph in the chapter ‘Human Nature is Bad’:

Mengzi says: ‘now human nature is good, then it completely loses its nature and destroys it [so it becomes bad].’ And I say: if this is true, then he is wrong. If human nature, after it is born, is separated from its **simplicity**, separated from its source, then it is definitely losing and destroying [it]. If we think in this way, then it is clear that human nature is bad. The so-called good nature does not depart from its **simplicity** but makes it beautiful, does not depart from its

source but makes use of it. The association of source [and] **simplicity** with the beautiful is [like] the association of mind [and] thought with the good” (Wang, 2018, pp. 515-516).

As seen in the text, Mengzi does not actually mention simplicity or source.^{xii} However, Xunzi’s words contain these expressions, suggesting that Mengzi is also talking about them. Looking at the text only, for Mengzi, ‘man is born good and then loses his innate good nature’; for Xunzi, ‘according to Mengzi, human nature loses its simplicity and source’. For Mengzi, ‘this loss of man makes him bad’; for Xunzi, ‘the reason for this loss of man proves that his nature is already bad’. In this text, Xunzi evaluates Mengzi’s views. He does not emphasize whether, in his own view, human nature possesses simplicity and source. However, he draws attention to the relationship of the concepts of simplicity and source with beauty. This relationship is likened to the relationship of mind and thought with the good. As seen in the previous headline, the relation of mind to the good is not a necessary direct relation. In addition, the thinker states that ‘if human nature were good, it would not depart from its simplicity and would beautify it’. In that case, this simplicity in human nature does not mean ‘beautiful’. Because it is not necessary to beautify something that is already beautiful. It is seen in the light of this information: Xunzi’s explanations are consistent with the following statement in the following sentences of the paragraph in which he describes the substance of human nature as ‘plain’: ‘human nature alone cannot be beautiful without conscious activity’. The plain/simplicity of human nature does not describe it as beautiful. On the contrary, what is understood from these statements is that the plain/simple should be beautified. Moreover, no relation is established between this simplicity and the ‘good’. However, this does not mean that what is described with simplicity is ‘ugly’. Plain has no qualities other than simplicity in Xunzi thought. As can be seen, the ideas expressed in ‘Human Nature is Bad’ does not contradict the ideas expressed in ‘On Rituals’, but neither does it create a meaningful unity. Burton Watson nevertheless thinks that the statement in ‘On Rituals’ should probably belong to ‘Human Nature is Bad’:

This paragraph seems to have little to do with what goes before or after and almost certainly does not belong here. In wording and thought it is most closely allied to sec. 23., “Man’ Nature is Evil.” Probably five or six of the bamboo slips upon which the text of that section was originally written dropped out and were mistakenly inserted here (Watson, 2003, p. 114).

When the expressions are brought together in the same chapter, there is still no unity of meaning between them. There are also researchers who think that the expressions in the two sections have completely different meanings. For example, Liang Qixiong thinks as follows:

In his words ‘human nature is plain’, Xunzi takes ‘human nature’ as the first essence of its roots and calls it that ‘which comes from Nature’ or that ‘which is unmanufactured and but natural’. He also brings out ‘conscious activity’ with ‘rituals and Yi’ and compares it with ‘human nature’. He called the nature of this root simply ‘plain’ and ‘cannot be beautiful by itself’^{xiii}. This is certainly not to say that it is ‘bad’. Xunzi’s statements of ‘human nature is bad’ emphasize that: ‘human nature is bad, goodness is a conscious activity’. In this sentence, he defines the ‘good’ and ‘bad’. Xunzi said: ‘in the past and now, a good person on earth is righteous, rational, balanced and orderly; a bad person is dangerous, unbalanced and disorderly.’^{xiv} The theory, Xunzi is discussing here is the ‘human nature is bad theory’. In fact, these two theories are different (Liang, 1963, p. 52).

Liang is right because Xunzi does not describe human nature as bad when he says, ‘human nature is plain’. In this sense, this statement is different from ‘human nature is bad’. However, it should be noted here that the idea of *simplicity* does not refute the idea of *bad*.

Zhou Chicheng thinks that some scholars have presuppositions and are influenced by Xunzi’s view that

'human nature is bad' and cannot see different ideas. Zhou Chicheng agrees with Liang Qixiong that the two statements are different. According to him, Xunzi's statement does not show a pure attitude towards human nature. Zhou explains his thoughts as follows: "The theory of the simplicity of human nature does not have a pure naturalistic attitude toward human nature, but the theory that human nature is neither good nor bad does" (Zhou, 2014, p. 123).^{xv} Zhou's argument is reasonable. Compared to a precise statement like 'human nature is bad', these words expressing the simplicity of human nature do not contain a clear description of human nature. It should also be noted that, as in the case of 'human nature is bad', there is not a clear statement such as 'human nature is plain' (xingpu 性朴) in the book. Zhou offers a different perspective on this issue. According to him, Xunzi did not delve into the discussion of 'human nature is good' or 'human nature is bad'. The importance of this question has increased with developments in history. For many thinkers of his time, this problem was not considered important (Zhou, 2014, p. 124). This view of Zhou is also quite reasonable. For Xunzi, the human is of course important, but what the thinker focuses on is that human beings cannot be expected to be 'good' without education or any intervention, rather than emphasizing that they are 'bad'.^{xvi} This is what is emphasized in *Xunzi* in chapters such as 'Promoting Education' (quanxue 劝学) and 'Cultivating the Body' (xiusheng 修身):

He who is not aware of the precious words of previous rulers does not know the importance of education [and] research. The children of Gan, Yue, Yi, Mo [people] cry in the same way from birth, they differ in their customs as they grow up, [this is because] their education is different (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 1).

What is important for Xunzi is not the 'same' things that people are born with, but the 'different' things they are born with.

Human Desires (欲)

In Xunzi thought, one of the issues that must be examined in order to make definitive judgments about the theory of human nature is that human beings have certain desires from birth. The chapter 'On Rituals' contains the most comprehensive information about rituals in the book. The reason for the creation of rituals is clearly stated in the chapter.^{xvii} The chapter begins with the following notes:

How did rituals come into being? I say: people have innate desires, if they don't get what they desire, it's inevitable that they will seek, if there is no measure of boundary [and] no distinction in their search, it's inevitable that there will be strife. Strife brings chaos, and chaos brings powerlessness. The previous rulers disliked chaos, so they created rituals [and] Yi to make distinctions, satisfy people's desires, and satisfy their search (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 19).

As can be understood, Xunzi again explained the reason for the existence of rituals with a phenomenon that humans are born with. This time the subject is human desires. In the chapter 'The Correct Use of Names', Xunzi defines human desires as follows: "Human nature is from Nature; emotions are the original substance of human nature; desires are the manifestation of emotions" (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 22). Clearly, desires do not describe human nature, but human beings are born with desires. What should be noted in the book is Xunzi's attitude towards human desires. Although Xunzi sees human desires as a cause of disorder in society, he does not characterize them as evil, on the contrary, he sees human desires as a human phenomenon. The following paragraph, he states: "To seek, thinking that they can obtain what they desire, is absolutely inevitable for human emotions" (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 22). Kim Sungmoon interprets these words as follows: "Xunzi never condemns yu 欲 as a source of evil. What is evil in his view is rather the negative consequences that are likely to be brought to the person and eventually to the society under certain circumstances, given the universal appetitive

desire” (Kim, 2011, p. 299). For Xunzi, desires lead to disorder if they are not under certain limits and measures, and it is not possible to get rid of desires^{xviii}: “Even with the Son of Nature, it is not possible for desires to disappear. Although it is not possible for desires to disappear, one can come close to destroying [them]. Although it is impossible to get rid of desires, their pursuit can be controlled” (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 22). Therefore, in order to maintain order in society, human desires must be properly satisfied. This is possible through rituals. It is recorded in the book as follows:

Rituals, then, satisfy. Foraged animal meat [and] rice up to the rafters, the harmony of the five flavors, satisfy the mouth; spices [and] the fragrance of orchids, satisfy the nose; ornate decorations carved bright jade patterns, satisfy the eye; bells drums harmonious instruments, satisfy the ear; a spacious room a secluded house wicker flooring sofa bed cushion armrest [and] table, satisfy the body. Rituals, then, satisfy^{xix} (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 19).

As can be seen, it is rituals that bring order to human desires and thus to society. So far, the analysis of the idea of human nature in *Xunzi* has shown the following: First, the human mind is neutral in Xunzi thought. Second, the substance of human nature is simple, but this simplicity does not mean ‘beautiful’. Third, human beings have innate desires and it is possible to maintain order by satisfying these desires to a certain extent. These three theories do not refute the theory that ‘human nature is bad’. However, it is seen that the expression ‘human nature is bad’ leads to confusion. Considering this situation and the fact that the phrase appears in only one chapter of the book, one may be skeptical about the thinker’s views on human nature. Therefore, in order to make a clear argument on the thinker’s idea of ‘human being’, it is necessary to evaluate the chapter itself from a different perspective. The question to be investigated here is the following: Is there a statement in the chapter that can be clearly inferred about the philosopher’s philosophy of human nature and that is compatible with the other chapters of the book?

Human Nature is Bad (性恶)

In the chapter ‘Human Nature is Bad’, the concepts of good and bad are defined as follows: “A good [person] is righteous logical balanced orderly; a bad [person] is danger-prone unstable chaotic” (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 23). It is clear that good is associated with order and bad is associated with chaos. Cheng Chung-Ying also explains his views on this issue as follows: “to say that human nature is bad is equivalent to saying that it can bring bad results or consequences and that that is undesirable from a political-social-moral point of view” (Cheng, 2008, p. 24).

For Xunzi, bad ‘means that which causes trouble in society’. Moreover, the connection between human desires and social chaos is quite clear. For this reason, one can comment on the thinker’s view of human nature by drawing attention to the following two statements: The first is the following statement in the section ‘The Proper Use of Names’: “Love, hatred, joy, anger, sadness, happiness in human nature are called emotions. The choice made by the mind among emotions is called decision. The action made by the mind’s decision and the [ability] to act is called conscious activity” (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 22). Therefore, human nature also contains emotions such as love, joy, happiness, etc., and the free mind can choose them. The second is the following statements in the chapter ‘The Sovereign’s System’:

Water [and] fire have air/breath^{xx} but no life, grass [and] trees have life but no cognition^{xxi}, animals have cognition but no Yi, human beings have breath, life, cognition, and moreover Yi, so they are the most precious on earth (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 9).

Here Xunzi explained the aspects that distinguish human beings from other beings with the characteristics they have from their creation. It is important to note that he emphasizes that human beings have the principle of Yi (righteousness/justice) from creation.

The first statement can be interpreted as follows: The fact that the mind chooses emotions such as love, joy, happiness, etc. does not mean that human beings would definitely act in a good way with these emotions. The result of the choice of these emotions can still be evil. Antonio Cua has a similar view on this issue. Cua thinks that the issue is about the negative consequences of these emotions, for him emotions and desires themselves are morally neutral (Cua, 1977, p. 377). This statement, then, is not against the idea that ‘human nature is bad’, but rather supports it. For man harbors an innate love of self-interest, and if he pursues it, strife [with] fight arise and submission [with] obedience disappear. When the choices of the human mind are self-interested, bad action will be the result. So not every conscious activity is a good activity. A contradiction emerges here^{xxiii}: In the chapter ‘Human Nature is Bad’, it is seen that human nature and conscious activity are separate from each other. Moreover, the thinker says that ‘human nature is bad’ and ‘goodness is conscious activity’. When we look at the consequences of the choices of mind, we see that ‘evil is also conscious activity’. What is understood here is that human nature is influential on the choices of mind, but human mind, which is free in its choices, is not determinative on human nature. Human mind determines the quality of the results of conscious activity. Shangguan Jie also holds this view, emphasizing that the goodness or badness of human actions has something to do with human nature, but rather depends on the consequences of the choices made by mind (Shangguan, 1989, p. 40).

The second statement can be interpreted as follows: First of all, it is necessary to understand what kind of character Yi is. In the chapter ‘Strong Country’, Xunzi defines Yi as that which prevents people from committing evil and violent acts (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 16). So, it is certain that Yi is a concept that can be described as ‘good’. Li Chengyang, on the other hand, thinks that Yi is a potential capacity in human beings and argues that this potential capacity was not active before the sages created rituals^{xxiii} (Li, 2011, pp. 55-56). In *Xunzi*, Yi and its function are not described as a ‘potential capacity’ as interpreted by Li Chengyang. However, this can be interpreted in the following way: Breath, life, and the faculty of knowing, which are said to be possessed by human beings in this text, are not things that determine the character of human nature. Therefore, the fact that humans have these and Yi by birth does not prove that human nature is not bad. The fact that humans have Yi can be interpreted as a principle that exists neutrally in humans, such as having emotions like love, joy and happiness. The problem here, however, is that the fact that humans have Yi by birth is completely contradicted by the following statement in the chapter ‘Human Nature is Bad’: “Human nature today, in fact, does not have rituals [and] Yi, ... in terms of [man’s] birth, man does not have rituals [and] Yi, [man] does not know rituals [and] Yi” (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 23).

Conclusion

Given the interpretations and statements, the answer to the question of the character of the thinker’s thought on human nature is the following: The description of human nature in Xunzi’s philosophy is not clear, it is contradictory. However, there is no argument that suggests that human beings are innately good. Throughout the book, the goodness of human beings and the beautification of their nature are associated with their conscious activities. The answer to the question of whether there is a coherent common expression between the chapters is the following: Xunzi makes it clear that human beings, no matter what their nature is, need to be educated. For Xunzi, evil means uneducated people who cause chaos in society. Human nature, on the other hand, inclines human actions towards evil due to the sense of self-interest it harbors. According to the thinker, when one is hungry, one craves food, when one is cold, one craves heat, when one is tired, one craves rest, and when in the presence of an elder, one does not dare to get what one desires immediately. These things are realized through rituals and observance of Yi. The point he wants to emphasize is that decorum, manners and social harmony can be achieved through education. Xunzi integrated state governance with education and morality. He aimed to create

good governance through good morals and good traditions. Good traditions require developing one's morality in accordance with the traditions of society, while good governance requires creating legal systems for society. For this reason, what is important for this study is the place of the idea of human nature in the reasoning of his state governance ideas, and according to this, whether human nature is good or bad, it must be educated to ensure social order. Order cannot be established without educating and controlling human beings. In the section 'Human Nature is Bad', after stating that human nature causes chaos, the following statement is made:

The ancient wise rulers saw that human nature was bad, thought that it was danger-prone and untrue, unstable chaotic and disorderly, created rituals and Yi, established laws [and] standards, and corrected [it] by correcting [and] cultivating human emotion [and] nature (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 23).

This is also how the thinker reasoned his system of thought on 'man', in which rituals and law were the basis for bringing order to political and social life and protecting it.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for this study is not applicable.

Author Contributions

The author confirms sole responsibility for the following: study conception and design, data collection, analysis and interpretation of results, and manuscript preparation.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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Notes

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- ⁱ Xunzi (荀子): his name was Kuang (况). Some studies mention the thinker with the name Xun Kuang. In this paper, Xunzi refers to the thinker, and *Xunzi*, in italic form, refers to the book bearing his name.
- ⁱⁱ The concept of rituals (li 禮), in a general sense, refers to the conventions to be followed both in the government and society for peaceful and orderly rule and life.
- ⁱⁱⁱ All the translations from Chinese, not otherwise cited, are my own.
- ^{iv} In Xunzi's thought, human nature (xing 性) is described as “the nature that is possessed by birth; the innate nature, its essence [and] emotional reactions as a whole, not produced but the natural one” (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 22).
- ^v The concept, Yi (义), means “righteousness”, “honesty” and “just”. It also means the proper/right way of action taken in accordance with rituals.
- ^{vi} The concept, wenli (文理), is often mentioned in *Xunzi*. Liang Qixiong (1963) explains it as “embroidered with rituals and Yi” (p.52). Liang Qichao (1999), on the other hand, separates the words and describes ‘wen’ as cultural heritage (wenli 文物) and describes ‘Li’ as order (tiaoli 条理) (p. 4641). The term is translated as ‘order’ in this paper, but it should not be forgotten that it is an order that contains culture within itself.
- ^{vii} There is an important point to note in Yan Shi'an's words: The researcher thought that Xunzi argued that morality comes as a result of later education. This view is frequently encountered in studies comparing Xunzi's thought with Confucius and Mengzi's thought. Researchers base their opinions on the statements of Mou Zongsan. Mou (1982) thought that in Confucius and Mengzi's thinking, man is born with the principle of Ren (仁) and morality is internal (youneizhuan- yourenyichu 由内转-由仁义出); For Xunzi, this is not the case, and morality is external since he believed that man was not born with rituals and Yi (ziwaizhuan-youliyiru 自外转-由礼义入) (p. 120). According to this view, human morality needs to follow rituals in Xunzi thought and without rituals one cannot be moral. This view also has led researchers to different ideas on the origins of rituals. For detailed information, see (Dongfang, 2017b, pp. 14-25).

^{viii} Xunzi is not the only thinker who reflects on the nature of human nature and develops his state philosophy based on it. Social and political order, morality and virtue etc. were related with human nature both in Chinese and Western philosophies. The view that everything is related to ‘human’ and that everything can be explained by knowing and explaining ‘human’ have also been influential in both traditions. As a matter of fact, it is emphasized in the book, *Xunzi*, that man is “the most precious thing on earth” (Xunzi, 2006- 2022, Chapter 9).

^{ix} Except for the chapter ‘Human Nature is Bad’, there is no reference to Xing’e (性恶) in any part of the book.

^x The reason for using the word ‘plain’ for Pu (朴) in the translation is to correspond with the word wenli (文理) in the description of conscious activity. The word wenli here means that which is embodied with cultural heritage and principles. The word pu can also mean simple and is used in some places according to the flow of the sentence.

^{xi} However, in the next sentence of the paragraph, it is noted that human nature alone cannot be beautiful without conscious activity. Therefore, the plain/unprocessed state of human nature before conscious activity is not beautiful!

^{xii} The word Pu (朴) does not appear in the Mengzi texts either. The link to the book is given in the bibliography.

^{xiii} “Human nature alone cannot be beautiful without conscious activity” Liang Qixiong refers to this sentence here.

^{xiv} This is how good and bad are described in the 23rd Chapter.

^{xv} Zhou also states in his study that he thinks that the chapter ‘Human Nature is Bad’ does not belong to Xunzi. To prove his ideas, he cites both the contradictions in the book and shows the fact that scholars such as Sima Qian and Dong Zhongshu, who lived in the Han Dynasty and gave information about Xunzi, never mentioned it.

^{xvi} It is recorded in the book as follows: “human nature alone is not sufficient to establish order” (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 8).

^{xvii} Scholars consider this text as the origin/ basis (laiyuan/qiyuan来源/起源) of the rituals. However, as can be seen from the text, the ‘reason’ (liyuan理由) for the creation of rituals is explained here. Hui Jixing agrees: “Scholars haphazardly assume that Xunzi’s words explain the basis (qiyuan起源) of rituals. But the basis (qiyuan起源) that Xunzi mentions here is the reason for the production of rituals in terms of its function and purpose” (Hui, 1996, p. 47).

^{xviii} For Xunzi, there is no need to get rid of desires anyway: “Those who say that order can only be based on getting rid of desires are those who cannot direct their desires and are slaves to their desires” (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 22).

^{xix} The text mentions various instruments and objects of the period. For the English translation, the instruments are named in general terms.

^{xx} Qi (气): literally translated as ‘air’, this concept is encountered in Chinese thought as ‘life’, ‘breath’ and vitalizing ‘energy’. Qi refers to the movement between Tian and Earth, the coming into existence of being and the balance between Tian and Earth. Man also possesses Qi, and he who balances his Qi balances his soul and nature. In *Xunzi*, Qi is encountered in the idea of ‘training the body’. For more information on Qi, see: (Guo, 2006, p.20)

^{xxi} Zhi (知): the ability to know, to understand, and understanding. This is innate in the human mind.

^{xxii} Another of these contradictions is the following: According to ‘Human Nature is Bad’, human nature is bad, while according to ‘The Correct Use of Names’, ‘Harm to human nature is called disease’ (Xunzi, 2006-2022, Chapter 22). If the two statements are combined, then what is harmful to ‘bad human nature’ is also called disease. The fact that illness would be undesirable shows that Xunzi does not desire any change in human nature. Of course, if the word xing (性) here is thought of as the body structure that comes from nature, as in the chapter ‘Webbed Toes’ (pianmu骈拇) in the Zhuangzi book, this contradiction will disappear. A link to the Zhuangzi book is provided in the bibliography.

^{xxiii} Nivison takes a similar view. The researcher defines Yi as an ‘unfilled’ capacity. He emphasizes that Yi is the capacity of people to feel and think morally (Nivison, 1996, p. 213).