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POST-IMPRESSIONISM AND VIRGINIA WOOLF'S EXPERIMENTATION WITH LITERARY FORMS

Nurten BAYRAKTAR¹

Abstract

Virginia Woolf as one of the leading figures of modernist literature was in pursuit of challenging the so-called limitations of form in fiction. Triggered by the intellectual discussions in the Bloomsbury Group, formed by a group of intellectuals and artists in England, she attempted to redefine literary form by reorganizing her fiction to oppose the painters in the group who believed that literary form is restricted because of the nature of language. Influenced by her discussions with post-impressionist artists such as Vanessa Bell, Clive Bell and Roger Fry, Woolf acknowledged that artistic creativity is intermingled by "a myriad impressions" of an "ordinary mind on an ordinary day" with its own peculiarities and dissonances. Similarly, post-impressionism rejects objectivity as a necessity in realist painting and embraces spiritualism and personality in artistic expression. Knowing that literature is not solely composed of abstract ideas, Woolf even tested new printing techniques. In her novels, not only content and narrative techniques but also the norms regarding physical organization of a book are challenged. Therefore, Woolf greyed the lines between form and content by rendering the book itself as a fragmented material. Consequently, this paper aims to discuss Woolf's experimentalism in her selected works as a modernist attempt to blur the borders of the two edging literary components—form and content—by looking into the influences of post-impressionist art on her fiction.

Keywords: Modernism, Post-impressionism, Virginia Woolf, Literary Experimentalism, Roger Fry, Vanessa Bell

POST-EMPRESYONİZM VE VIRGINIA WOOLF'UN EDEBÎ BİÇİM DENEYSELÇİLİĞİ

Öz

Modernist edebiyatın öncülerinden olan Virginia Woolf kurmaca metnin sözde kısıtlamalarına meydan okumayı amaçlamıştır. İngiltere'de bir grup entelektüel ve sanatçının kurduğu Bloomsbury Grup dâhilindeki entelektüel tartışmaların tetiklemesiyle, dilin doğası nedeniyle edebî biçimin sınırlı olduğuna inanan grubun ressam üyelerine karşı çıkmayı amaç edinmiş, kendi kurmaca eserlerini yeniden düzenlemiş ve edebî biçimi yeniden tanımlamaya çalışmıştır. Vanessa Bell, Clive Bell ve Roger Fry gibi post-empresyonist ressamlar ile tartışmalarından etkilenen Woolf sanatsal üretimin "sıradan bir günde" "sıradan bir zihnin" tüm tuhaflığı ve uyumsuzluğuyla edindiği "sayısız izlenimi"yle iç içe geçmiş olduğunu öne sürmüştür. Benzer bir şekilde, post-empresyonizm realist resimde nesnelliğin bir gereklilik olduğunu reddedip sanatsal üretimde kişilik ve spiritüelliği benimsemiştir. Edebiyatın yalnızca soyut fikirlerden ibaret olmadığını bilen Woolf, yeni baskı tekniklerini dahi denemiştir. Romanlarında yalnızca içerik ve anlatı teknikleri değil, aynı zamanda bir kitabın fiziksel düzenine dair normlara da meydan okumuştur. Böylelikle, kitabın kendisini parçalandırarak içerik ile biçim arasındaki sınırları soluklaştırmıştır. Sonuç olarak, bu makalenin amacı Woolf'un edebî unsurların iki uç noktası olan biçim ve içerik arasındaki sınırları belirsizleştirmeye dayalı deneyselçiliğini, post-empresyonist sanatın Woolf'un kurmaca edebiyatına etkilerini seçilmiş eserlerinde inceleyerek, modernist bir deneme olarak tartışmaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Modernizm, Post-empresyonizm, Virginia Woolf, Edebî Deneyselcilik, Roger Fry, Vanessa Bell

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In rejection of traditional literary formulas, modernist writers developed new techniques for the new age while modernism emerged as a protest against the sense of detachment, dissolution of the self, and the atmosphere of bewilderment that marked the early twentieth century. Considering the modern disconcert, modernist aspiration blurred the set principles of literary tradition by reforming the genres. The characteristic tendency in modernist literature was based on experimenting narrative sequence which shifts in time while action, suspense and resolved ending were omitted (Armstrong 19). Virginia Woolf, too, played with the generic aspects of the novel to challenge the limits of conventional fiction. She reformulated time and space to expand the limits of setting while lessening the dialogues yet adding the flowing of inner thoughts in her characters' minds. Although she especially focused on formal innovations, form and content are inseparable elements of fiction in her endeavor to grasp life as it is (*Essays* 3 160). Influenced by the ongoing literary experimentation and the artistic revolutions in the early twentieth century, particularly post-impressionism, Woolf challenged the borders between form and content by reorienting the characteristics of fiction.

As a keen follower of world literatures and artistic movements, Virginia Woolf highlighted the inevitable change in literature by arguing that literature follows life and social dynamics through observing human nature. Even though she did not directly engage with the politics, she pointed out that literature had to react the dissolution of society as she claimed that "grammar is violated; syntax disintegrated" (*Essays* 3 433-34). Believing that a new age and a new concept of society and individual had started, she called for innovation in literary production by celebrating her contemporary modernist novelists. What she suggested was neither a new tendency in narration nor a new formalist endeavor, but both at the same time—experimenting with form and content by expanding the sources literary creativity can draw from as she offered in her essay "Modern Fiction" (1919, 1925) "nothing—no 'method', no experiment, even of the wildest is forbidden, but only falsity and pretence. The proper stuff of fiction, every feeling, every thought; every quality of brain and spirit is drawn upon; no perception comes amiss" (*Essays* 3 163-64). While criticizing the late Victorian novelists, "the Edwardians" in her words, she praised the newly emerged authors, "the Georgians," for their courage to subvert the set principles of novel genre. Almost all the modernist novelists she admired had a special interest and ambition to test literary forms. What Woolf and other authors attempted was an ongoing experience of reacting the older establishments at a time when they did not clearly see to what extent literature could be experimented.

The turbulence which followed World War I, the political polarization and economic depression affected artists and critics who purposefully resisted traditions by asserting that the world would no longer be as it had been. Virginia Woolf assured in her essay "Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Brown" (1924) that "on or about December 1910 human character changed" (*Captain's* 96). Woolf's referring to a vague date "in or about December 1910" is naively accepted as a hitherto of the political dynamics of the period such as the general election, or the suffragette movement. Nevertheless, as she embraced an ironic even sarcastic attitude towards politics, critics agree on that she highlighted the opening of the "Manet and the Post Impressionists" exhibition in London where the French paintings were introduced to the British audience by Roger Fry (Hodgkinson). In the exhibition, Fry introduced the work of Paul Gauguin, Vincent Van Gogh, Georges Seurat, and Paul Cézanne who he admired for their rejection of impressionist art which was devoted to naturalism with the aim of reaching emotions. Fry hoped that the exhibition could innovate British art even though it was not received as he expected. Fry was heavily criticized, even humiliated for this "rubbish" by the critic Charles Ricketts (qtd. in Hodgkinson). The British Library defines the impacts of the exhibition as "culture quake" (Hodgkinson). Considering the outrage caused by the exhibition, Jonathan R. Quick justifiably warns that Woolf as an essayist was ironic and hyperbolic and might be mocking the impacts of exhibition by saying that human character changed in or about December 1910 (547). Indeed, the exhibition immediately raised the tension, but then was forgotten soon after the second exhibition in 1920. Although these painters are the most influential figures in art history today, at that time they were seen as a loose group of anarchists who attached the artistic value to form rather than content. In a similar attitude on a different art form, Woolf was keen on form and, like these painters, her fiction was criticized for its insufficient content. Particularly Arnold Bennet, who was an influential late Victorian novelist and critic, claimed that her characters "cannot survive in mind" (*Diary* 2 248). Even though the exhibition was not favored by the general public and the critics of the period, it was a landmark for the Bloomsbury Group. Woolf's enthusiasm for formal innovations was largely triggered by the intellectual discussions among the group whose members were ranging from authors, painters, editors and political writers. As an artistic group from different fields, they traveled, painted, modelled for each other's painting, criticized one another's work, and edited one another's writing. Woolf was an enthusiastic participant in these "élite practices" (Lee 33), especially discussing art and literature in the context of the twentieth century with post-impressionist artists of the group Clive Bell, Vanessa Bell, and Roger Fry.

Woolf furthered her discussions with these painters in her well-known essay “Modern Fiction” which was published in 1921. She claimed that literature must narrate the “life itself” which is a whole: “Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions—trivial, fantastic, evanescent or engraved with the sharpness of steel” (160). What Woolf suggested is that writer is inseparable from the outer world, which means writing is a kind of “absorb[ation] [of] mental impressions from the data of the outside world” (Goldman 104). Furthermore, Woolf claimed that this occurs in the mind without a pause as it is “an incessant shower of innumerable atoms” (160). Coined as stream-of-consciousness technique, matter as it appears is not fundamental in literature, but the subjective impressions initiated by the material data are significant for Woolf. The outer world is re-configured by the author’s inner world, which forms up the experience of writing; and this is how exactly life is experienced for Woolf. Since life is made of everlasting impressions, Woolf encouraged the literary use of them:

Let us record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon the consciousness. Let us not take for granted that life exists more fully in what is commonly thought big than is commonly thought small. (161)

As observed in the quotation, Woolf highlighted that any impression, any experience or any event can be source for fiction no matter how it is disoriented. Acknowledging that life does not have a perfect shape, she believed that literature has no controlling boundaries. She also opened room in literature for unimportant details in life. Roger Fry suggested a similar claim about artist’s aspiring from anything while converting impressions to a harmonized unity:

Art is an expression and stimulus to the imaginative life rather than a copy of actual life. Art appreciates emotion in and for itself. The artist, is the most constantly observant of his surroundings and the least affected by their intrinsic aesthetic value. As he contemplates a particular field of vision the aesthetically chaotic and accidental conjunction of forms and colours begin to crystallize into a harmony. (“Æsthetics” 14)

Fry particularized the imaginative power of art as the method of interpreting actuality. As he acknowledged the chaotic nature of life embedded in art, he posed artistic production as the capability of harmonizing it. Woolf liberated literature by stating that no method can

be disallowed. Similarly, Roger Fry claimed that everything is possible for art by stating that “[i]n Art we know nothing for certain” (qtd. in Bell 5). Woolf pinpointed author’s role to see around and create meanings out of impressions to narrate life as “a sense of discrimination between the given of experience (reality in inverted commas) and that which has to be sought after (the artistic representation of another kind of reality)” (Gualtieri 2). Respectively, Fry put forth:

It was inevitable that artists should turn around and question the validity of the fundamental assumption that art aimed at representation; and the moment the question was fairly posed it became clear the pseudo scientific assumption that fidelity to appearance was the measure of art had no logical foundation. (“Art and Life” 7)

“Disconnected” and “incoherent” forms of life, in Woolf’s words, are welcomed by Fry for that art does not necessarily reflect what life is. On the contrary, art reflects what life might be. Woolf and Fry suggested that life is the source of art and they rejected the idea that artist should comply with certain aesthetic norms. An artist can be inspired by any minute moment in life or an image of a singular object by trusting on subjective perception. Artist impersonalizes any personal impression while transferring observation to work.

Agreed on the indeterminate nature of art, Woolf immediately began to test the so-called limits of writing. *Jacob’s Room* (1922) is one of the influential novels by Woolf about which she stated that it presents her own voice. The novel is employed with some innovative techniques as a *Bildungsroman* with its “tightly constructed, self-reflexive narrative” (Goldman 50). The protagonist Jacob’s absence is more significant than his presence as he is not directly presented by the narrator but represented by other characters. As Goldman suggests, Jacob’s ‘room’ is a matter of “the social and political space” of a man: “Occasionally the free-indirect narrative (a modernist technique that moves between third- and first-person narrative, stretching third-person voice to encompass first-person experience and voice) enters Jacob’s thoughts, but mostly he is apprehended through narrative that explores the consciousness of others as they encounter him” (50). Through Jacob’s absent presence, Woolf challenged the conventional plot structure of *Bildungsroman* by employing the indirect representation of the main character, which subverts the expected maturation process of the protagonist. The essence of the novel of formation, that is the protagonist, is lacking while the only given descriptions are pieces of impressions about him. As post-impressionism departed the

crucial aim of perfectly realist representation in impressionist art, Woolf abandoned the fundamental feature of *Bildungsroman* by excluding the protagonist. The novel does not narrate who Jacob is but presents who Jacob might be. She provided a notion of literary realism which is bound to other characters' perception, which demonstrated that form and realism in art are indeterminate and intrinsically open to be challenged.

Post-impressionist artists Roger Fry and Vanessa Bell's failure in establishing a relation between form and literature urged Woolf to carry out more courageous formalistic experimentation in her later works. Fry claimed in his work *The Artist and Psychoanalysis* (1924) that the English society cannot separate form from content. His suggestions attracted Woolf to question the role of form in fiction as she stated in her letter to Fry: "I've been [...] trying to make out what I mean by form in fiction. I say it is emotion put into the right relations; and has nothing to do with form as used of painting" (*Letters* 3 132). As it is seen in her later essays and letters on this issue, Woolf disdained dull symbolism like the idealized English gardens in the paintings, which does not raise any question about the aesthetic quality of artistic expression. The discussions on the basic elements of art between the two were influential on Woolf in different aspects. She wrote in her diary: "Roger asked me if I founded my writing upon texture or upon structure; I connected structure with plot & therefore said "texture" (*Diary* 1 80). Julia Briggs clarifies Woolf's reply as follows:

Connecting structure with plot, and plot with the unacceptable and unspoken term 'narrative', may have encouraged Woolf to choose 'texture', but from a formalist point of view 'structure' could have been the 'right' answer (if there was indeed a right answer). At any rate, it was the structural aspect of form to which she now turned her attention. (100)

Woolf's uncertainty about what form is demonstrates that her experimenting was an ongoing process under construction and re-construction. As suggested by Julia Briggs, Woolf was highly concerned with form in addition to her inquiries upon the value of literature to contradict Fry's underestimation of literary form. The idea shared by Roger Fry and Vanessa Bell that "[n]arrative was dubious as a source of aesthetic value because, like narrative painting, it was too often guilty of 'suggesting emotion and conveying ideas'" (qtd. in Briggs 97), was surely not an acceptable comment on literature for Woolf. As she was introduced with the theorization of modernism by the painters Clive Bell and Roger Fry, Woolf questioned the difference between plastic arts and literature. She tried to

understand whether literature is “suggestive” and “associative” because it is bound to language (Briggs 100). With an aim of proving that language does not limit literary form, she wanted to explore the intrinsic formulations of form in literary works. Thus, her works written after 1917 were provided with “a visual or spatial, even a ‘plastic’ dimension” (Briggs 100). She did not only expand the subject matters of her novels but also benefitted from unconventional narrative techniques to play with the boundaries of narrative time and space.

While expanding her discussions on literature and art with her friends in the Bloomsbury Group, Woolf also discovered that writing is not limited to an author's submission of the manuscript. She discovered that textuality of literature can provide new horizons for an experimentalist whose narrative techniques can be combined with printing techniques. On the way to her groundbreaking novels such as *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and *The Waves* (1931), her short story “Kew Gardens” (1919) was her first formalist attempt to test the relation between writing and printing. The story comprises of parallel minor events happening in the garden, including not only humans but also the fauna and the flora. While the insects and snails are moving on the flowerbed, four dialogues continue separately. What is surprising is Woolf's deliberate use of pages for the story. The Woolfs had a new printing machine worked with the folio through which “books were made up from single sheets of paper folded down the middle to form four pages” (Briggs 101). Therefore, the pages were multiples of four. Specially prepared for the printing machine, “Kew Gardens” consisted of sixteen pages on which the four dialogues in the story were put in those specific pages to match the couples according to their personalities exposed in their communications with their partners. Through the folio, it is possible to establish a bridge of their concerns and subject matters of their dialogue as well.² For example, “the first and fourth couples being mixed (and so corresponding to pages 1 and 4, the outer forme of the sheet), while the same-sex conversations correspond to pages 2 and 3 (the inner forme)” (Briggs 102). Furthermore, not only the dialogues but also the slow movements of the animals around the human are possible to establish a connection with the pages they were printed on. In this way, “Kew Gardens” was endorsed not only with oppositions between the characters and other constituents in the narrative, but also formed a form-wise contradiction. While rewriting her story to adapt folio pages, Woolf

² Julia Briggs offers a detailed explanation of Woolf's method used in the publication of “Kew Gardens” in *Reading Virginia Woolf* (2006).

succeeded in demonstrating that literature is also 'plastic' while form-content and page-content can support one another.

Diminishing the limits of literary writing started by "Kew Gardens" turned into a tool for Woolf's feminist messages layered in *To the Lighthouse* (1927). Form-content-page harmony is recognizable in this evocative feminist novel in which Woolf analogies women with odd numbers and men with prime numbers to reject the supposition that women have dual personality. She invented a kind of numerical system in page organization to challenge not only misogynistic views but also the traditional form (Briggs 105). She used the textual nature of a book based on separations of the text through page numbers for a surprising subversion of the connotative meanings of numbers. She obliterated presumptions on female personality by putting the descriptions of female characters on the pages with odd numbers. She organized and reorganized pages as if a painter was repainting a canvas with different colors. In order to offer a consistent picture where all different colors are harmonized, she maintained the feminist implications of the novel while re-shaping textuality to accompany content.

Following her initiative experimentation of earlier work, *The Waves*, acknowledged as a work of high modernism, is her masterpiece which offers a vibrant unity of form and content with its multiple identities and segmented subjectivities compatible with fragmentary narrative. Woolf admitted that she first aimed to imply the six characters as a single unity, then she herself experienced how hard it was to make even oneself one (*Letters* 6 397). Thus, the soliloquys and interludes notify "a sense of contested, incomplete or multiple subjectivity" (Goldman 71). As a result, the characters are captivated in their existential crisis. Therefore, the unsynchronized content (identity) in the novel is interwoven with the form through the disjointed soliloquys and interludes. Furthermore, in the process of moving on from manuscript to typescript, Woolf rewrote the novel to make "the nine unnumbered chapters (separated by ten italicised interludes) themselves create the shape of a pyramid, or rather of the wave whose rhythm and sound permeate the novel" as Julia Briggs explains what she did in reorganizing her work: Chapters 1 and 8 respond each other by focusing on loneliness and togetherness, chapters 2 and 7 focus on time, chapters 3 and 6 concentrate on language, chapters 4 and 5 present "the summit of the wave at noon, followed by its relapse" (109). All come together to create an image of wave. Chapter 9, on the other hand, stays out of the wavy shape as Bernard's final soliloquy being the summarizing and also critical point of view (Briggs 109).

At this point, what Woolf said is clearly demonstrated: "I am writing *The Waves* to a rhythm not to a plot" (*Letters* 4 204). The rhythm of the sea is forged with the content of each chapter. Woolf tested Roger Fry's prejudice against formalist depth of literature as she enriched her work with a unique plot structure in this novel. Woolf's final reworking of *The Waves* reflects her recreation of Fry's "volume and mass, depth and recession – into a structure that, though built out of words, nevertheless made a shape and possessed a visual, perhaps even a spatial dimension" (Briggs 110). The pace of the novel sustained through the integrity of content creates an image of wave which is unstill and even more vigorous than a still representation of wave on a canvass. Woolf did not only prove that fiction has flexibility of forms but also manifested the vibrancy of impressionist writing.

Virginia Woolf conducted new methods which innovated content and form in fiction to acknowledge the aesthetic trials and inventive styles of her period. Even though she simplified the content of her novels, she sophisticated form to refute Roger Fry and Vanessa Bell's claim that narrative is innately limited in terms of form. Following her early writing which obscures the characteristics of novel genre, she formulated unique structures in her later works by blurring the conventional definitive features of fiction. She provided dynamism in literary forms by knitting her narratives meticulously while preserving the simplicity of plotline. As illustrated in this essay, she applied literary experimentation in a wide range of content, form, textuality and physicality of literature. She did not simply disorient the elements of fiction but reoriented them to have a solid and original physical dimension in literature.

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IS PAIN AN EMOTION?: A LINGUISTIC EVALUATION OF THE CONCEPT OF PAIN IN MODERN TIMES

AĞRI BİR DUYGU MUDUR?: MODERN ÇAĞDA AĞRI KAVRAMININ DÖNÜŞÜMÜ ÜZERİNE DİLSEL BİR DEĞERLENDİRME¹

Gülden ALTINTOP TAŞ²

Abstract

The historical change and linguistic expression of physical pain, which is the subject of many different disciplines such as medicine, biology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, theology, linguistics are the main issues of this study. In this study, the relationship between physical pain and emotions has been mentioned. The concept of emotion has been explained, and basic emotions and types of emotions have been emphasized. The distinction (or integrity) of physical and psychological pain has been discussed, and the emotional states brought about by pain have been specified. Some of the ongoing discussions on whether pain can be accepted as an emotion or not have also been included in the study. Verbs used for pain concept that are commonly used in Turkey Turkish have been defined, then these verbs have been exemplified in sentences. It has been tried to reach how pain is conceptualized through these examples. It has been observed that the expressions of pain are not used directly with personal pronouns, and the conceptual metaphorical background of this situation has been emphasized. It has been concluded that the linguistic expressions of pain do not carry the metaphor of general emotion, emotional states are experienced with the body integrity of the person, but this expression is not used in the case of pain (in Turkey Turkish), therefore, as a result of the semantic analysis, it has been concluded that pain is not conceptualized as an emotion.

Keywords: Pain, Emotion, Metaphor, Linguistics

Öz

Tıp, biyoloji, psikoloji, sosyoloji, antropoloji, teoloji, dilbilim gibi birçok farklı disiplinin inceleme konusu olan fiziksel ağrı kavramının tarihsel dönüşümü ve modern dönemdeki dilsel ifadesi bu çalışmanın temel meselesidir. Çalışmada fiziksel ağrı ve duygular arasındaki ilişkiye değinilmiştir. Duygu kavramı açıklanarak, temel duygu ve duygu çeşitleri üzerinde durulmuştur. Fiziksel ve psikolojik ağrı ayrımı (ya da bütünlüğü) ele alınmış, ağrının beraberinde getirdiği duygusal durumlar belirtilmiştir. Ağrının bir duygu olarak kabul edilip edilemeyeceği üzerine yapılan tartışmalara yer verilmiştir. Türkiye Türkçesinde yaygın olarak kullanılan ağrı fiilleri tanımlanmış, daha sonra bu fiiller cümle içinde örneklenmiştir. Ağrının nasıl kavramsallaştırıldığına bu örnekler üzerinden ulaşılmaya çalışılmıştır. Ağrı ifadelerinin kişi zamirleriyle doğrudan kullanılmadığı görülmüş, bu durumun kavramsal metaforik arka planı üzerinde durulmuştur. Ağrının dilsel ifadelerinin genel duygu metaforunu taşımadığı, duygu durumlarının kişinin beden bütünlüğüyle deneyimlendiği ancak ağrı durumunda (Türkiye Türkçesinde) bu ifadenin kullanılmadığı, dolayısıyla yapılan semantik inceleme sonucunda ağrının bir duygu olarak kavramsallaştırılmadığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ağrı, Duygu, Metafor, Dilbilim

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GİRİŞ

Fiziksel ağrı; üzerinde çok tartışılan, tanımlanması ve sınırlandırılması bakımından farklı görüşlere açık konulardan biridir. Uluslararası Ağrı Çalışmaları Derneği (IASP) “ağrı (pain)” kavramını, gerçek veya potansiyel doku hasarıyla ilişkili ve ilişkili gibi görünen, hoş olmayan bir duysal ve duygusal deneyim olarak tanımlamaktadır. Ağrı; biyolojik, psikolojik ve sosyal faktörlerden farklı derecelerde etkilenen kişisel bir deneyimdir. Ağrı, sadece duyu nöronlarına bağlı olarak ortaya çıkmaz, bireyler yaşam deneyimleriyle de ağrı kavramını öğrenirler (IASP). Bu tanım ağrı kavramının modern dönemdeki çalışmaların bir sonucu olarak değerlendirilebilir ancak ağrının semantik ve metaforik derinliğinin anlaşılabilmesi için pre-modern dönemden modern çağa uzanan süreçte ağrı nedir sorusuna verilen cevapların da ortaya konması gerekmektedir. Çalışmamızın ilk kısmında konuyla ilgili kronolojik bir çerçeve sunulmaya çalışılmıştır.

Bu çalışmada bir yandan tarihsel süreçte ağrı kavramının algılanışı ele alınırken diğer yandan modern dönemle birlikte belirginleşmeye başlayan ağrı tanımlarının duygularla olan ilişkisi üzerinde durulmaktadır: Duyusal durumlar hiçbir zaman duygulardan tam bağımsız olarak düşünülemez. Ağrı çeken kişi yaşadığı şeyin dış dünyada nesnesi olmadığı, ağrı şeffaf olmadığı için kendini bir belirsizliğin içinde, bir eşikte, bir boşlukta hisseder. Yani yaşadığı şey sadece fiziksel bir duyum değil aynı zamanda melankoli, ıstırap, korku gibi duygulardır (Moscoso 108-109). Benzer düşüncede olan ve fiziksel ağrının aynı zamanda bir duygu olarak ele alınması gerektiğini öne süren araştırmacıların görüşlerine yer verilmiş, ağrı ve duyguların ortak yanları ve benzerlikleri ele alınmıştır.

Günümüz Türkçesinde yaygın olarak kullanılan ağrı sözcükleri ve sözdizimi semantik ve gramatik açıdan ele alınmıştır. Ayrıca genel duygu metaforu ve bunun sözdizimine yansımalarıyla ağrı ifadeleri arasında karşılaştırma yapılmıştır. Yapılan dilsel inceleme sonucunda Türkiye Türkçesi konuşurları için fiziksel ağrının duygular gibi kavramsallaştırılmadığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Geçmişten Modern Çağa Ağrı

Son yüzyıllarda bilim ve teknolojinin gelişmesi birçok alanda olduğu gibi tıp alanında ve dolayısıyla ağrı konusunda da binlerce yıllık süregelen inanışları değiştirmiş, ağrının bilinmezliğine bir nebze de olsa ışık tutmuştur. Ağrı insanoğlunun mevcudiyetinin ayrılmaz bir parçası olduğu için medeniyetler tarihinde kendisine her zaman bir yer bulmuş, her zaman ağrı üzerine araştırmalar ve incelemeler yapılmıştır. MÖ 2000 yıllarına ait Eski Mısır papirüslerinde ağrının sebebinin bir yandan travmalar olduğu belirtilirken diğer yandan da

anatomik olaylar mistisizm temelinde açıklanmaya çalışılmıştır: Ağrı üzerine araştırma ve uygulamaların yapıldığı en eski medeniyet Antik Mısır'dır. Yaklaşık 3.000 yıl önce Firavunlar zamanından başlayarak, Yunan ve Roma dönemlerine kadar tıbbi gelişim üzerinde birçok iç ve dış etki oluşturmuştur. Mısırlılar, hastalık ve hastalığın süreklilik kaybindan kaynaklandığı inancını dile getirmişlerdir. Bu nedenle eski Mısırlı doktorlar; idrar, dışkı, irin, balgam veya pıhtılaşmış kan gibi ağrıya neden olan bu maddelerin vücuttan atılması için çalışmışlardır (Ansary vd. 85-87).

Doğu tıbbında veya geleneksel Çin tıbbında, ağrı terimi ilk kez 3.000 yıldan daha uzun bir süre önce yazılmış olan *Huang Di Nei Jing* adlı kitapta ortaya çıkmıştır. Buna göre, ağrının yin ve yang arasındaki dengesizliğin bir sonucu olduğuna inanılmıştır. Yin'in baskınlığı 'han' (soğuk) ile sonuçlanarak, artık doku hasarı veya hasarı olarak bilinen 'xing'e (bir maddenin şekli) zarar vererek şişmeye neden olurken, yang'ın baskınlığı 're' ile sonuçlanır (hipertermi veya ısı) ve hasara neden olarak ağrıya yol açar. Bu muhtemelen nosiseptif ve enflamatuar ağrının semptom ve belirtilerinin tıp literatüründeki ilk tanımıdır (Chen 346).

Batı ülkelerinde, ağrının tanımı ilk kez Homeros'un destanlarında, İlyada ve Odyssey'de, MÖ 8. yüzyıl civarında Antik Yunan'da ortaya çıkmıştır. MÖ 500'de filozof Atinalı Antifon, insanın büyük bir zevk içinde yaşamasını sağlayacak şekilde hareket etmesi gerektiğini ve bunu elde etmek için acının giderilmesi gerektiğini belirtmiştir. MÖ 570-495'te yaşamış olan Pisagor acının, öfkenin ve zevkin ruhun uyumunu bozma potansiyeline sahip olduğuna inanmıştır. Yunan filozofu (MÖ 384-322) Aristo, acının kötü ruhların ve Tanrıların neden olduğu ve bir yaralanma yoluyla vücuda giren bir duygu olduğunu iddia etmiştir. Epikuros'a (341-270) göre keyifli yaşam kavramı, fiziksel acı, zihinsel rahatsızlık ve korkunun olmaması ve arkadaşlarla çevrili kendi kendine yeterli bir yaşam yaşanmasıyla elde edilebilirdi. Batı tıbbi literatüründe görünen ağrı terimi, kendisi ve takipçilerinin Hipokrat Koleksiyonu'nu yayınladıkları Hipokrat dönemine (MÖ 5. yüzyıl) kadar uzanmaktadır (Fradelos vd. 30-34).

Hipokrat'tan modern çağa doğru biraz daha gelindiğinde "İslam'ın Altın Çağı"nda önemli bilimsel gelişmeler dikkat çekmektedir. İslam dünyasının başhekimisi olarak anılan aynı zamanda düşünür ve astronom olan İbni Sîna'ya göre ağrı, normal olanın tam tersinin hissedilmesidir. Farklı ağrı türleri on beş türdür: kaşıntı (tahriş edici madde veya tuza maruz kalma), kaba (kaba madde), iğneleme (bir şey zarları uzatır), sıkıştırma; germe (şişkinlik veya kas veya sinir gerilmesi), parçalanma (kas ve zarların içinde parçalanan bir madde),

kırılma (kemik deęiřiklięi), yumuřak (kas deęiřimi), penetran (kalın bir madde veya kalın baęırsakta sıkıřmıř řiřkinlik) bıçaklanma, massli (bir organın iine hapsolmuř bir madde), uyuřma (ařırı soęuk veya damar tıkanıklıęı), nabızda artma (arterlere yakın bir tmr veya řiřlik), aęırlık (bir tmr veya akcięerlerde, bbrekte veya dalakta bir řiřlik), yorgunluk ve acılık (lserler) (Abu-Asab vd. 73-74).

İbni Sînâ'nın yařadıęı dnemin arařtırma ve inceleme imkânları gz nne alındıęında ayrıntılı aęrı trleri sınıflandırmasının bilim dnyası iin kıymeti aıktır. Modern arařtırma imkânları dâhilinde aęrı farklı bařlıklar altında gruplandırılmıřtır. Bu gruplandırmalardan biri de Foreman'a aittir. Ona gre drt temel aęrı vardır: nosiseptif, inflamatuvar, disfonksiyonel ve nropatik. Nosiseptif aęrı anlık yoęun aęrıdır, rneęin parmaęınıza vurduęunuzda hissedilen anlık yoęun tepkidir. İnflamatuvar aęrı kas ve iskelet sistemindeki yumuřak doku zedelenmesinde ortaya ıkan aęrıdır. Disfonksiyonel aęrı; fibromiyalji, irritabl baęırsak sendromu, bazı bař aęrısı trleri gibi herhangi bir dıř uyararı olmadan tetiklenebilen aęrılarıdır. Nropatik aęrı ise sinir sisteminin kendisinde meydana gelen hasardan kaynaklanan aęrılarıdır (Foreman 2-3). Aęrı konusunda modern tıbbın geliřimine yn veren nemli basamaklar řu řekilde sıralanabilir:

- 1803: Afyondan morfin sentezlendi.
- 1846: Anestezi bulundu.
- 1853: Enjeksiyon ięnesi bulundu.
- 1853: Asprinin etken maddesi keřfedildi.
- 1943: William Livingston tarafından "Pain Mechanisms" yayımlandı.
- 1965: Melzack ve Wall "Kapı Kontrol Teorisi"ni yayımladı.
- 1965: Disiplinler arası Aęrı Klinięi kuruldu.
- 1973: Aęrı alıřmalarında uluslararası kongre dzenlenmeye bařlandı
- 1975: McGill aęrı anketi yayımlandı.
- 1976: Endorfin icat edildi (Jackson 13-14).

Binlerce yıldan bu yana tartıřılan aęrı konusunda farklı teoriler ortaya konmuřtur. zellikle 18. yzyıldan sonra modern tıbbın ortaya ıkmasıyla birlikte aęrı zerine farklı yaklařımlar getirilmiřtir. Teknolojinin her geen gn ilerlemesi ve biyomedikal grntleme cihazlarının saęladıęı imkânlar sayesinde, aęrı teorileri gittike zenginleřerek farklı bakıř aıları sunmaya devam etmektedir.

Duygu Nedir?

Resmi bir duygu tanımı, duygunun geleneksel olarak önemli tüm yönlerini içerecek kadar geniş olmalıdır. Psikologlar duyguların ayırt edici özellikleri üzerinde anlaşılmadıkları için, duygunun olası yönlerini vurgulayan bir tanım önermekle yetinebiliriz. Duygu; uyarılma, zevk/haz/his gibi duygusal deneyimlere yol açabilen, nöral~hormonal sistemlerin aracılık ettiği öznel ve nesnel faktörler arasındaki karmaşık bir etkileşimler dizisidir (Kleinginna ve Kleinginna 346). Duygular farklı uyarılma seviyeleri, zevk ve hoşnutsuzluk dereceleri ile karakterize edilebilen; öznel deneyimler, somatik duyular ve motivasyonel eğilimlerle ilişkili; bağlamsal ve kültürel faktörlerle renklendirilmiş; kişisel ve kişiler arası süreçler yoluyla bir dereceye kadar düzenlenebilir çok boyutlu bir deneyimdir (Hofmann 22).

Duygu tanımı; duygunun deneyimi veya bilinç hissi, beyinde ve sinir sisteminde meydana gelen süreçler ve gözlemlenebilir duygu ifade kalıplarını içermelidir. Duygu durumları saniyelerden saatlere kadar sürebilir ve yoğunlukları büyük ölçüde değişebilir. Bireysel deneyimlerin yanı sıra sosyal ve kültürel etkenler, bir duyguyu neyin tetikleyeceğini ve duygu sonucunda verilen tepkiyi belirlemede önemli rol oynamaktadır. Duygular, sinir sistemindeki değişikliklerin bir sonucu olarak ortaya çıkar ve bu değişiklikler içsel veya dışsal olaylar tarafından meydana getirilebilir. Duygu; beyindeki elektriksel aktivite seviyesini, yüz ve vücut kaslarındaki gerilim miktarını, iç organ salgı sistemini, dolaşım sistemini ve solunum sistemini etkilemektedir. Duygular alanı karmaşık ve disiplinler arası bir alandır (Izard 5-50). Duyguların biyolojik, psikolojik, kültürel alanları kapsayan doğası farklı disiplinlerin bu konu üzerinde inceleme yapmasına olanak sağlamış ve elde edilen sonuçlar neticesinde yeni yorumlamalara zemin hazırlanmıştır. Duygu tanımlamalarının çeşitliliğinin yanı sıra temel duyguların neler olduğu konusunda da farklı görüşler öne sürülmüştür.

Duyguların Sınıflandırılması ve Temel Duygular

Temel duygular genellikle onlara eşlik eden bedensel duyumlara sahiptir. Ağrı, duyguyla yakından ilişkili bedensel bir duyumdur. Duygular, bedensel duyuların deneyimi tarafından hem uyandırılabilir hem de değiştirilebilir. Ağrının yaygın olarak sebep olduğu duygular üzüntü veya korkudur (Johnson-Laird ve Oatley 85). Ortony ve Turner geçmişten bu yana farklı araştırmacılar tarafından yapılmış olan ağrı sınıflandırmalarının, temel duyguların neler olduğunun ve bu duyguların hangi temellere dayandırılarak kategorize edildiğinin bir özetini sunmuşlardır:

Kaynak	Temel Duygular	Dayandıđı Temel
Arnold (1960)	fke (anger), iđrenme (aversion), cesaret (courage), znt (dejection), arzu (desire), umutsuzluk (despair), korku (fear), nefret (hate), umut (hope), sevgi (love), znt (sadness)	Davranıř eđilimleri ile iliřkili
Ekman, Friesen ve Ellsworth (1982)	fke (anger), nefret (disgust), korku (fear), neře (joy), znt (sadness), řařkınlık (surprise)	Evrensel yz ifadeleri
Frijda (1987)	arzu (desire), mutluluk (happiness), Merak (interest), řařkınlık (surprise), merak-řařkınlık (wonder), elem (sorrow)	Eylem hazırbulunuřluđu řekilleri
Gray (1982)	fke (rage) ve vahřet (terror), endiře (anxiety), neře (joy)	Fiziksel bađlantı
Izard (1972)	fke (anger), ařađılama (contempt), nefret (disgust), ıstırap (distress), korku (fear), suđluluk (guilt), merak (interest), neře (joy), utanç (shame), řařırma (surprise)	Fiziksel bađlantı
James (1884)	korku (fear), keder (grief), sevgi (love), fke (rage)	Bedensel Katılım
McDougall (1926)	fke (anger), nefret (disgust), kıvanç (elation), korku (fear), bađlılık (subjection), hassalık (tender-emotion), merak-řařkınlık (wonder)	İçgdsel bađlantı
Mowrer (1960)	ađrı (pain), zevk (pleasure)	đrenilmemiř duygusal Durumlar
Oatley ve Johnson-Laird (1987)	fke (anger), nefret (disgust), endiře (anxiety), mutluluk (happiness), znt (sadness)	nermesel iđerik gerektirmez
Panksepp (1982)	beklenti (expectancy), korku (fear), fke (rage), panik (panic)	Fiziksel bađlantı
Plutchik (1980)	kabullenme (acceptance), fke (anger), mit (anticipation), nefret (disgust),	Uyarlanabilen biyolojik sreçle

	neşe (joy), korku (fear), üzüntü (sadness), şaşıрма (surprise)	ilişkili
Tomkins (1984)	öfke (anger), merak (interest), küçümseme (contempt), nefret (disgust), ıstırap (distress), korku (fear), neşe (joy), utanç (shame), şaşıрма (surprise)	Sinirsel ateşleme yoğunluğuna göre
Watson (1930)	korku (fear), sevgi (love), öfke (rage) Fiziksel bağlantı	
Weiner ve Graham (1984)	mutluluk (happiness), üzüntü (sadness)	Nitelemeden bağımsız

(Ortony ve Turner 315)

Ekman, temel duyguları birbirinden ayırmak için “ayırt edici evrensel sinyaller”, “fizyolojik tepkiler”, “istenmeyen olay”, “duygusal tepkiler arasında tutarlılık” gibi kriterler belirleyerek sınıflandırmasını şu şekilde yapmıştır: Öfke (anger), dehşet (awe), küçümseme (contempt), nefret (disgust), mahcubiyet (embarrassment), heyecan (excitement), korku (fear), suçluluk (guilt), merak (interest), hüzn (sadness), utanç (shame), şaşkınlık (surprise) (Ekman 182-184). Yukarıda sınıflandırılan duygulardan yola çıkarak sorulan “Hangileri daha temel duygulardır?” sorusu yanlış yönlendirilmiş bir soru olacaktır. Duyguların hiçbirisi diğerinden daha temel değildir. Bilişler, duygu durumlarının ve duygu tepkilerinin bileşenlerinden oluşmaktadır (Ortony ve Turner 318). Çalışmanın temel meselesi duygu çeşitleri ve bunların sınıflandırılma metodolojisi değildir ancak konu üzerinde fikir birliği olmadığını gösterebilmek adına belli başlı tartışmalara ve sınıflandırmalara yer verilmiştir. Hangi duyguların daha temel olduğu, duyguların ne kadar çeşitlenebileceği ve bunların tespit ya da tahminine yönelik konular günümüzde de tartışılmaya devam etmektedir.

Toplumlar, kültürler, diller sürekli değişirken tanımların aynı kalması mümkün değildir. Duygu tanımı da tüm bu değişkenler bağlamında güncellenmeye ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Duygular, dört ilişki kümesi arasındaki kesin olmayan ilişki ağından oluşmaktadır: teşvik edici olaylar ve beyin durumundaki değişiklikler, beyin durumundaki ve duygulardaki değişiklikler, algılanan duygular ve onlara dayatılan sembolik yorumlar, yorumlanan duygu ve davranışlar (Kagan 4-10). Tıp teknolojisi sayesinde ağrının görüntülenme biçimlerinin çeşitlenmesiyle ağrının oluşumu hakkında sahip olunan bilgi ve

bulgular her geen gn daha da artmaktadır. Bu durum, Kagan'ın duygu sınırlandırması ve kategorizasyonunun esnek olması gerektięi hakkında belirttięi grşler temelinde ele alındığında aęrının bir duygu olup olmadıęı konusundaki tartıřmalar dinamik bir sre olarak devam edecektir.

Psikolojik ve Fiziksel Aęrı

Orta aę'da duygusal acılarının farklı ve aynı zamanda fiziksel acılardan ayrılamaz olduęu dřnlmekteydi. On beřinci yzyıl İtalyan doktorları, bu ikilięi ruh acılarını kendi alanlarına dâhil etmek iin kullanmıřlardır. İlahiyatılar ise duygusal acının benzersizlięini belirtmek ve fiziksel acı hissinin birincil aęrıřımını srdrmek iin yine bu ikilikten yararlanmıřlardır. Ge Ortaaę hekimlerinin ve ilahiyatılarının acıyı kendi alanlarında kullanmalarını saęlayacak řekilde ereveleme abaları, acı kavramının fiziksel ve duygusal alanlardaki esneklięini gstermektedir (Cohen-Hanegbi 70-76). Psikolojik acı ve fiziksel aęrı arasında net grlmeyen bu ayrıma gnmz grntleme teknolojisi aracılıęıyla bakıldığında: Fiziksel ve psikolojik aęrının beyin patofizyolojisinde ortak zellikler paylařtıęı hem znel deneyimlerle hem de beyin grntleme alıřmalarında ispatlanmıřtır (Mee vd. 685-690). "Aęrı bir deneyimdir; bedeni ruhtan, maddeyi maneviyattan, benlięi dięerinden ayırmaz." (Moscoso 15). Orta aę'dan bugne geldięimizde hala aęrının fiziksel ve psikolojik durumu hakkında net bir ayrıma varıldıęını syleyemiyoruz.

Biro, psikolojik aęrının vcuttaki yaralanmalarla aynı tr aęrıyı tetikleyip tetikleyemeyeceęini ele aldıęı alıřmasında; aęrı tanımlamalarının fiziksel yaralanmaya ve nosiseptr yollara baęlı olduęunu, bu sebeple psikolojik aęrının aęrı kapsamı dıřında bırakıldıęını ileri srmřtr. aędař bilim adamı ve hekimlerin oęunun, bunun tamamen farklı bir kategoriye ait olduęunu kabul ettiklerini ve psikolojik aęrıyı "acı-ıstırap (suffering)" olarak adlandırdıklarını belirtmiřtir. Birok dilde aęrı (pain) szcę hem psikolojik hem de fiziksel yaralanmalar sonucunda oluřan his iin kullanılmaktadır. Psikolojik acı eken insanların yařadıklarını anlatmak iin "McGill Aęrı Anketi"nde de belirtilmiř olan sıfatların oęunu kullandıęı gzlemlenmiřtir. Yani psikolojik ve fiziksel aęrıyı aıklamada aynı metaforlar kullanılmaktadır. Ayrıca birok kronik aęrı vakası, direkt herhangi bir nosiseptr uyarısı olmaksızın ortaya ıkabilmekte ve beyindeki etkili aęrı merkezlerinin psikolojik hasarla doęrudan aktive edilebileceęine dair kanıtlar da mevcuttur. Doku hasarı yokluęunda aęrı hissedildięinde (Tolstoy'sDolly, FridaKahlo, JoanDidion ve Kay RedfieldJamison vakalarında) aęrı ok gerektir ve fiziksel olarak aynı biyolojik sinyale hizmet etmektedir. İzole bir fiziksel acı diye bir řey olmadıęı gibi izole bir psikolojik acı diye bir řey de yoktur,

ağrı her zaman bir bileşiktir. Acının nedenleri ve tezahürleri her zaman hem bedeni hem de zihni içermektedir (Biro 53-65).

MacDonald ve Learys sosyal psikolojik ve fiziksel ağrı arasındaki benzerlikleri ele aldıkları çalışmalarında sosyal ağrıyı, kişinin toplum ya da arzu edilen kişiler tarafından değersizleştirilmeye verilen duygusal tepki olarak tanımlamışlardır. Onlara göre sosyal ve fiziksel ağrının mekanizmaları ortaktır. Kişinin sosyal dışlanma sonucu yaşadığı sosyal ağrı, fiziksel yaralanma ile ilişkili aynı acı verici duyguları uyatarak kişinin savunmaya geçmesi sonucunu doğurmaktadır. Her ikisi de hızlı, savunmacı davranışı motive eder ve duygusal olarak aşırı derecede iticidir. Her iki ağrı türü de ortak psikolojik bağıntıları ve fizyolojik yolları paylaşır. Yapılan çalışma kişilerin sosyal ve fiziksel dünyalarının iç içe geçmiş olduğu görüşünü benimsemektedir. Aynı zamanda toplumun sosyal ihtiyaçlarının ve ilişkilerinin insanın biyolojik varlığıyla bütünlük oluşturduğu sonucuna varılmaktadır. Sosyal ağrı, insanların birbirine olan fiziksel ihtiyacın bir örneğidir (MacDonald ve Leary 205-210).

DeWall ve arkadaşları da tıpkı MacDonald ve Leary'nin çalışmasında gördüğümüz gibi sosyal reddedilme ve fiziksel ağrı arasındaki benzerliğe dikkat çekmişlerdir. 62 kişi üzerinde davranışsal ve fonksiyonel manyetik rezonans görüntüleme (fMRI) yöntemlerini kullanarak iki farklı deney yapmışlardır. Yapılan deneyde sosyal ortamda herhangi bir sebeple dışlanma yaşamış olan deneklerin yarısına üç hafta boyunca her gün belirli dozda fiziksel bir ağrı kesici olan asetaminofen verilirken diğer yarısına plasebo verilerek deneklere olan etkileri hem fiziksel olarak fMRI aracılığıyla görüntülenmiş hem de denekler dinlenmiştir. Deney sonucunda asetaminofenin, sosyal reddedilme ağrısıyla ilişkili davranışsal ve sinirsel tepkileri azalttığı bulgusuna ulaşılmıştır. Asetaminofen, hem fiziksel hem de sosyal ağrı süreçlerinde rol oynadığı bilinen beyin bölgelerindeki (ACC, anteriorinsulavs) nöral aktiviteyi azaltarak sosyal ağrı deneyimini azaltabilmektedir. Bu deney sosyal reddedilme acısı, fiziksel yaralanmadan tamamen farklı görünse de ikisinin birbirine bağlı olduğunu göstermektedir (DeWall vd. 935).

Grey'in yaptığı çalışmada 1860-1960 yıllarında İngiltere ve Galler'de anneleri tarafından öldürülen yenidoğan vakalarının tutanaklarından yola çıkarak bu olaylardaki fiziksel ve duygusal acı ele alınmıştır. Dönemin kriminologları doğumdan sonra bebeklerini öldüren anneleri diğer cinayet suçlularıyla aynı kategoriye koymak yerine doğum yapan kadının yaşadığı fiziksel ve ruhsal acıları göz önünde bulundurmuşlardır. Çünkü bu kadınların çoğu geleneksel aile yapısının bir parçası olan, hatta başka çocukları da bulunan sıradan insanlardır. Suçlanan bir kadının cezasını nihai olarak belirleyen en önemli faktör,

suç anındaki bireysel kořullarının ve duygusal durumunun algılanmasıydı. Dnemin İngiltere'sinde doęumun yoğun sancısının bir kadını delirtebileceęi ve doęum sonrası yařanan lohusalık depresyonunun bebek cinayetiyle ya da intiharla sonulanabileceęi fikri kabul grmekteydi. Farklı aęır ceza mahkemelerinde ve farklı yıllarda yargılanmış olmalarına raęmen, temsilleri ve sonuları aısından belirgin benzerlikler gsteren yenidoęan cinayetlerinde kadınların yařadığı vcut acısı ve duygusal sıkıntı, tanıkların ifadelerinde rutin olarak belirtilmiştir. Sz konusu sebeplerle bebeęini ldren anneler ok az cezalar almış, jri yelerinde ve toplumda acıma duygusuyla birlikte empati uyandırmışlardır (Grey 204-215).

Fiziksel Aęrının Farklı Duygularla İliřkisi

Aęrı, duygu gibi i veya dıř uyarılardan kaynaklanabilen kiřisel bir fenomen olduęu iin aęrının net bir fenomenolojik tanımını yapmak zordur nk duyguyla karıřmamış saf aęrı olduka nadirdir. Yapılan alıřmalarda; sıkıntı ile karıřık aęrı, korku ile karıřık aęrı, fke ile karıřık aęrı gibi aęrının dięer duygularla birlikte kullanımına sıklıkla rastlanır. Aęrı genellikle "kesici bir alet" olarak tanımlanır ve bu sıfatlar sadece aęrının fiziksel zelliklerinin deęil aynı zamanda aęrı korkusunun da bir yansıması olabilir. Aęrıya dair derinlikle ilgili benzetmeler, aęrı ile sıkıntının karıřımını yansıtabilir. Aęrı aynı zamanda "kemirici" olarak tanımlanır ve bu tr tanımlar aęrı ve fke karıřımını yansıtabilir. Aęrı farklı bireyler iin farklı duyguları veya duygu kombinasyonlarını harekete geirdiğı iin durumdan duruma deęiřmektedir. Olaęandışı kořullar altında aęrı, sululuk duygusuna neden olabilir veya bununla iliřkilendirilebilir. Aęrı-duygu-biliř etkileřimleri, aęrı toleransını ve aęrıdan řikâyet etme eęilimini etkileyebilecek duyuřsal-biliřsel yapılara dnřebilir (Izard 169-174).

Bedenin yařamını dzenleme sistemi drtler, motivasyonlar, acı ve zevk durumları olarak algılanabilen biyolojik durumları iermektedir. Duygular ise bu biyolojik durumlardan daha yksek ve daha karmařık bir seviyede gerekleřmektedir. rneęin, aęrı duyguları tetikleyebilir ve bazı duygular bir aęrı durumunu ierebilir (Damasio 72). Damasio'ya gre aęrı yalnızca doku hasarına baęlı olarak ortaya ıkmakla kalmaz aynı zamanda kendi bařına bazı duyguların oluřmasında da yol aar. Yani aęrıya neden olan aynı uyarı bařka duygulara da neden olabilir. Bilin bir aęrı olduęunu ve onunla iliřkili bir duyguya sahip olduęunun farkına varabilir. Damasio, aęrının duyusal ve duygusal etkisinin birbirinden ayrı olduęunu gstermek iin yapılan bir operasyonu rnek gsterir. Operasyon, lokal doku hasarına karřılık gelen duyusal kalıplara hibir řey yapmamışken duyusal kalıpların

doğurduğu duygusal tepkileri ortadan kaldırmıştır. Hasta “ağrılarının aynı olduğunu” ama “şimdi iyi hissettiğini” söylemektedir. "Ağrı hissi" ve "ağrı etkisi" arasındaki bu tür bir ayrışma, ağrı tedavisi için cerrahi prosedürler uygulanan hasta grupları üzerinde yapılan çalışmalarla da doğrulanmıştır. Kalp ritim bozukluğu için kullanılan Valium ve muadili ilaçlar ağrının neden olduğu duygusal tepkiyi azaltmaktadır. Bu şekilde belki ağrıyı değil ama duyguyu engellemek mümkündür. Doku hasarının neden olduğu olası duygu, uygun ilaçlarla azaltılabilir. Doku hasarı algısı kalır, ancak duygunun körelmesi, ona eşlik edecek ıstırapı ortadan kaldırır (Damasio 92-98).

Hale ve Hadjistavropoulos, akut ağrı deneyiminde yer alan duyguları tanımlamak için 30 yetişkin hasta kan alma işlemi yapmış ve hastaların yüz ifadelerini kayıt altına almışlardır. Daha sonra bu görüntüler farklı kişiler tarafından derecelendirilmiş ayrıca söz konusu hastaların öz değerlendirmelerine de başvurulmuştur. Araştırma sonucunda akut ağrı deneyiminde iğrenme, öfke, korku ve şaşkınlık duygularının yer aldığı görülmüştür (Hale ve Hadjistavropoulos 217-220). Ağrı ve duygular arasındaki ilişkiyi ele alan çalışmalardan biri de Lumley ve arkadaşlarına aittir. Kendilerinden önce yapılan çalışmaların geniş bir özetini sunup eldeki verilerle bazı çıkarımlarda bulunmuşlardır: Ağrı deneyiminde dört psikolojik süreç bulunmaktadır. Bunlar, duygusal farkındalık (awareness) (dikkat, farklılaşma ve duyguların etiketlenmesi), ifade (expression) (duyguların ifadesine karşı kaçınma veya bastırma), deneyimleme (experiencing) (uyum sağlamak için kişinin duygularına erişme, deneyimleme ve yansıtma) ve düzenlemeyi (modulate) (duyguların ağrı deneyimini düzenlemesi) içermektedir. Ağrı deneyiminden bahsedildiğine akla gelen ilk iki duygu korku ve kaygıdır. Korku, savunma tepkilerini doğururken kaygı, tetikte olma ve pasif savunmayı ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Kaygı ağrıyı artırırken olumlu duygular ağrıya dayanıklılığı artırır. Duygular, ağrı deneyimini şekillendiren nöral süreçleri hem etkiler hem de onlardan etkilenir (Lumley vd. 950-955).

Gilam vd. ağrı ve duygu yapılarının kavramsal ve işlevsel olarak büyük ölçüde örtüştüğünü öne sürmektedir. FMRI kullanılarak beyindeki nöral devrelerin incelenmesiyle birlikte ağrı-duygu ilişkisinin karmaşıklığı gözler önüne serilmiştir. Ağrı ve duygu arasındaki bağlantıya rağmen ağrıyı duyguya kıyasla benzersiz kılan şey, zararlı uyarıların algılanmasını kolaylaştıran özel nosiseptif sistemlere sahip olmamızdır. Bu tür sistemler, 500 milyon yıl önce en ilkel organizmaların bazılarında omurilik olmadan bile hayatta kalma ile ilgili davranışları teşvik eden bir mekanizma olarak zaten mevcuttu. Hem duygu hem ağrı yakın tehlikelere karşı koruyucu hayatta kalma davranışlarını destekleyen ilkel yollara

dayanmaktadır. Evrim yoluyla, bu yollar, hem gerek hem de hayali fiziksel ve psikososyal tehditleri tahmin etmemize ve bunlara yanıt vermemize izin veren mekanizmalar reterek, birbirini aprazlamıř gibi grnmektedir (Gilam vd 18).

Fiziksel Aėrı Bir Duygu Mudur?

Fiziksel ve duygusal aėrının net olmayan ayrımına ynelik yapılan deėerlendirmelere yer verdikten sonra řimdi de fiziksel aėrının bir duygu olarak kabul edilmesinin gerekliliėini savunan arařtırmacıların grřlerine deėinilecektir. Birbirinden farklı gerekelerle aėrının da bir duygu olması gerektiėini savunmuřlardır. Cabanac, biyolojik sreleri gz nnde bulundurarak aėrı ve cinsel zevkin de bir duygu olduėunu ne srer: Duygu, yksek yoėunluk ve yksek hedonisite ieren zihinsel bir deneyimdir. Yoėun ve gl bir řekilde olumlu veya olumsuz hedonik olan herhangi bir zihinsel deneyim duygu olarak kabul edilebilir. Bu nedenle duygu; duyum, algı, hafıza hatırlama, deėerlendirme ve hayal gcnden kaynaklanabilir. Bu tanıma gre yoėun aėrı ve cinsel orgazm da duygu olarak kabul edilmelidir. Her ikisine de genel duygu belirtileri olarak kabul edilen otonom tepkiler, yz ifadesi, tařıkardi ve terleme eřlik etmektedir (Cabanac 70-81).

Biro ise aėrı ifadelerinde kullanılan metaforlardan yola ıkarak fiziksel ve psikolojik aėrı iin aynı metaforların tercih edildiėini, bu ikisinin ayrılmaz bir btn olarak grlmesi gerektiėini, dolayısıyla bunların tek bir duygu olarak kabul edilmesi gerektiėini syler: Bu sebeple aėrı tanımı “Kiřinin kendisine ynelik caydırıcı bir zarar grme hissi ve potansiyel olarak daha ciddi zarar grebilme tehdididir, sadece metaforik olarak tarif edilebilir.” řeklinde geniřletilmelidir. Bu tanımlama řu aıklamaları iermektedir: Aėrı, bir duygudur. Aėrı hissi sinyalleri bedensel ve psikolojinin birleřimi olan kiři dzeyinde meydana gelen bir yaralanmadır (Biro 53-65).

Aėrının bir duygu olduėunu savunan arařtırmacılar; kesin bir biimde olmasa da aėrının dil yoluyla ifade edildiėini, hissedilen aėrının bedensel yansımalarının szcklerle, metaforlarla aıklanabildiėini ne srmřlerdir. Belirli kořullara baėlı ve farklı derecelerde olsa da kiřiler birbirlerinin aėrısını anlayabilirler. Aėrının beyindeki nrolojik varlıėı kabul edilebilir, bedensel yaralanma olmaksızın aėrı deneyiminin gerekliėi doėrulanabilir ve aėrıya neden olan řeyin duygusal bileřeni gz nnde bulundurulabilir. Acının (suffering) aėrı (pain) olduėunu ve aėrının da bir duygu olduėunu hem bilimsel hem de kltrel olarak anlamak hayati nem tařımaktadır. Duyguların evrensel olmaktan ziyade kltrel ve tarihsel olarak spesifik olduėu kabul edildiėinde acı deneyiminde duyguların nemi de artmaktadır (Boddice 1-7).

Son dönemdeki çalışmalardan elde edilen bulgular, insandaki acı hissinin homeostatik davranışsal dürtüyü yansıtan bir duygu olduğunu göstermektedir. Ağrı, vücuttan gelen esrarengiz bir duygudur çünkü hem intersepsiyonu (vücudun fizyolojik ihtiyaçlarını fark etmesini sağlayan iç algı) hem de belirli bir davranışsal motivasyonu içermektedir. Yani ağrı, hem bir duyum hem de duygusal bir durumdur. Homeostatik duygular davranışı yönlendirmektedir. Örneğin beden aşırı sıcak hissedildiğinde soğuk su rahatlatıcı etkiye sahiptir. İlkel termoregülatör dürtü ve algılanan motivasyonel etki, vücudun ihtiyaçlarına dayanır ve uygun homeostatik davranışı yönlendirir. Ağrı da homeostatik bir duygudur ve davranışsal bir dürtü içerir. Duygular, doğrudan otonomik etkileri olan bir duyum ve motivasyondan oluşur ve bu yeni görüşte ağrı, vücudun durumunu doğrudan yansıtan birçok farklı homeostatik duygudan biridir (Craig 305).

Türkiye Türkçesinde Fiziksel Ağrı İfadeleri

Türkiye Türkçesinde fiziksel rahatsızlığı ifade etmek için kullanılan en yaygın sözcükler: ağrı/ağrı-, acı/acı-, sancı/sancı'dır. Ağrı: a. Vücudun herhangi bir yerinde duyulan şiddetli acı: "Anlaşılan kollarındaki ağrı biraz daha sürecek." –A. Ümit. Ağrımak: (nsz) Vücudun bir yeri ağırlı durumda olmak: Baş ağrımak, diş ağrımak (TDK 50-51). Acı: a.1.bazı maddelerin dilde bıraktığı yakıcı duyu, tatlı karşıtı. Acıyı sever. 2. Sf. Tadı bu nitelikte olan. 3. Herhangi bir dış etken dolayısıyla duyulan rahatsızlık, ıstırap. 4. mec. Ölüm, yangın, deprem vb. olayların yarattığı üzüntü, keder, elem. 5. sf. Çarpıcı, göz alıcı (renk). 6. sf. Mec. Keskin, şiddetli. 7. sf. mec. Kırıcı, üzücü, incitici, dokunaklı, kötü. (s.8) Acımak: 1 (nsz) tadı acı duruma gelmek, acılaşmak: yağ acıdı. 2 (nsz) acılı, ağırlı olmak. 3. (-e) merhamet etmek, başkasının uğradığı veya uğrayacağı kötü duruma üzülme (TDK 11). Sancı: a. İç organlarda batır veya saplanır gibi duyulan, nöbetlerle azalıp çoğalan ağrı. Sancılanmak: (nsz) Sancılanmak işi (TDK 2026).

Halliday, anlamın nasıl yaratıldığına dair ipuçlarının dilin incelenmesiyle ortaya çıkacağını, bu yüzden dilbilgisel özelliklerin belirli kurallarla ezbere şekillenmiş olmadığını, dilbilgisi kural ve uygulamalarının anlamsal köklerinin olduğunu, dünyanın şekillendiği yerin dilbilgisi olduğunu söylemektedir. İngilizcedeki ağrı ifadelerin grameri üzerine yaptığı çalışmada şu örneği verir:

I have a headache. (Baş ağrım var.)

İngiliz bir konuşur baş ağrısını ifade etmek için böyle bir cümle kullanır. "My head aches / My head's aching." (Başım ağrıyor) ifadeleri İngilizce kuralları açısından hiçbir

sorun teşkil etmese de bu tercih edilen bir seçenek olmamıştır. Burada ağrı bir süreç olarak yorumlanmıştır ve bu sürece kişinin kendisi değil “baş”ıdır. Ancak “I have a headache. (Baş ağrım var.)” cümlesinde bir sahiplik söz konusudur. Sahip olunan şey dış dünyada olduğu gibi başkasına verilemez, kişi istese de sahip olduğu şeyden kurtulamaz. Bir cümlenin başlangıç noktasında, cümlenin kalanında verilen bilginin inşasını yapan özne bulunmaktadır. Söz konusu cümlenin başında “I” (ben) bulunduğu için, ağrı deneyimini tecrübe eden sadece baş değil bir bütün olarak kişinin kendi varlığının tamamıdır. “I hurt (here) (İncindim)” ifadesinde ise ağrıyı taşıyan bedenin bir parçası değil kişinin kendisidir. Davranışsal bir süreç olması açısından duygusal ve zihinsel durumları ifade eden cümlelerdekine benzer yapı karşımıza çıkmaktadır (Halliday 10). Halliday’in değerlendirmesiyle karşılaştırabilmek için şu iki cümleyi ele alabiliriz:

Baş ağrım var.

Başım ağrıyor.

Türkiye Türkçesindeki örnek ağrı ifadelerine bakıldığında ağrının hem sahip olunan bir varlık hem de bir süreç olduğu görülmektedir. Birinci cümlede baş ağrısı sahip olduğumuz bir nesne (isim) iken ikinci cümlede ağrı, bir süreç (fiil) bildirmektedir. Ancak Türkiye Türkçesinde ağrı ifade eden sözcükler kişi zamiriyle doğrudan kullanılmamaktadır:

Ben ağrıyorum

İngilizce “I hurt” örneğinde verildiği gibi, kişinin kendi varlığını bütünüyle ağrı fiiliyle ilişkilendirmediği görülmektedir. Tüm bedenin ağrıdığı durumlar için bile

Her yerim ağrıyor. / Tüm vücudum ağrıyor.

gibi ifadeler kullanılırken “Ben ağrıyorum” ifadesi tercih edilmemektedir. “Ben üzülüyorum, ben neşeliyim, ben tedirginim” gibi duygu ifade eden tüm sözcüklerde kişi zamiri kullanılabilir. Çünkü duygu kişinin varlığını bütünüyle kapsayan bir his olarak anlamlandırılır.

Büyük bir keder içindeyim.

İçimi bir sıkıntı kapladı.

Bugün sevgi doluyum.

Umutsuzluğa düştüm.

Örneklerinde görüldüğü gibi duygu durumları söz konusu olduğunda ya BEDEN KONTEYNERDİR ya da DUYGULAR KONTEYNERDİR metaforları ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu

yüzden özne tüm varlığıyla bir bütün olarak cümleye katılabilir ancak ağrı durumlarında bu söz konusu değildir. Eğer ağrı ifadesi fiziksel olarak değil de duygusal bir durum olarak kullanılacaksa o zaman durum farklılaşır:

Ben şu çocuğa çok acıyorum.

Burada “acı-” fiili fiziksel ağrıyı değil de merhamet duygusunu ifade ettiği için kişi zamiriyle birlikte kullanılabilir. Hissedilen merhamet duygusu “çocuğu” işaret etmektedir. Duyguların dış dünyada bir nesne ya da durumla ilişkilendirildiğini göz önüne alırsak fiziksel ağrı için bunu söyleyemeyiz. Ağrının dış dünyada gönderme yaptığı bir nesne yoktur: Tüm düşüncelerimiz, algılarımız ve duygularımız nesnelere bağlıdır, bu nesneler hakkındadır veya onlara yöneliktir. Ağrı, diğer içsel deneyimlerden farklı olarak, bir nesne almaz. Kötü bir baş ağrısı, sarsıcı bir adet krampı veya bacadan aşağı ateş eden bir ağrı düşünün. Bu deneyimler ne hakkında? İçimizdeki veya dışımızdaki hangi nesneye yönlendiriliyorlar? Akla hemen hiçbir şey gelmiyor. Ağrı, yok edilmemiş ve yakalanması zor, "düşünülemez" ve "tarif edilemez" olarak kalmaktadır (Biro 25). Duygular ise genellikle dış uyarılarla tetiklenir. Duygusal ifade uyarıldığı ortamdaki belirli bir uyarana yöneliktir. Her zaman olmasa da fizyolojik bir durum tarafından etkinleştirilebilir. Çevrede duygusal ifadenin yönlendirildiği doğal nesneler (yemek veya su gibi) yoktur. Bir nesne görüldükten veya değerlendirildikten daha önce değil daha sonra duygusal bir durum başlar (Plutchik 34). Ağrı dış dünyada bir nesneye işaret etmezken duygular dış dünyadan bir uyarana ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Fiziksel ağrı ifade eden fiillerin doğrudan kişi zamiriyle kullanılmadığını örneklendirmiştik. Şöyle bir cümleyi ele alacak olursak:

Hasta adam çok acı çekiyor.

Yukarıdaki cümlede fiziksel ağrı söz konusudur ancak doğrudan “acı-” fiili kullanılmamış, onun yerine “acı çekmek” ifadesi tercih edilmiştir. Burada ACI YÜKTÜR metaforu karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Yani fiziksel ağrı nesneleştirilmiş ve tekrar “çek-” fiiliyle birlikte kullanılmıştır. Dilin bu kullanımı ağrının dış dünyada bir nesnesi olmadığını ancak metaforik olarak nesneleştirilirse (yani duygu durumlarında olduğu gibi dış dünyadan bir nesneye işaret ederse) doğrudan kişi zamiriyle ilişkilendirilebileceğini göstermektedir. Bu durum da ağrı ve duygu ifadelerinin gramatik yapısı arasındaki farklı kurulumu işaret etmektedir.

SONUÇ

Çalışmada ağrı kavramının değişimi farklı açılardan incelenmiştir. Ağrı kavramının

modern ncesi dnemde farklı kltrel coĖrafyalarda gndelik deneyimlerle ŖekillendiĖi ve bunlara dayalı farklılıklar gstererek eŖitli biimlerde algılandığı grlmektedir. Modern dnemde yaŖanan teknolojik geliŖmelerin ve modern aĖın getirdiĖi yeni teŖhis ve tedavi yntemlerinin bu algıyı daha bilimsel ve evrensel bir forma dnŖtrdĖi grlmŖtir.

FarklılaŖan aĖrı algısı yeni tartıŖmaları da beraberinde getirmiŖtir. zellikle modern grntleme cihazlarının fiziksel ve psikolojik aĖrının beyinde aynı blgeleri harekete geirdiĖini gstermesi sregelen tartıŖmaların ynn deĖiŖtirebilecek niteliktedir. Fiziksel ve psikolojik aĖrı arasındaki izginin saydamlaŖması, bu iki his ve duygunun bir btn olarak ele alınması gerektiĖi savını doĖurmuŖtur. Dolayısıyla aĖrının da bir duygu olabileceĖi tartıŖması gncelliĖini korumaktadır.

alıŖmada ele alınan, fiziksel aĖrının bir duygu tr olduĖu grŖn savunan ya da bu grŖe yakın olan araŖtırmacıların iddiaları Ŗu Ŗekilde zetlenebilir:

- AĖrı, bazı duygularla yz ifadesi, terleme, taŖıkardi gibi ortak biyolojik tepkilere yol aar,
- AĖrı, sadece kendi baŖına olup biten bir durum deĖildir, beraberinde farklı duyguları getirir, iŖin doĖası gereĖi bazı duyguları iinde barındırır,
- Sıkıntı, fke, aresizlik, korku gibi duygularla i ie gemiŖ olabilir,
- Depresyonu tetikleyebilir,
- Fiziksel ve psikolojik aĖrı beyin patofizyolojisinde ortak zellikler taŖır,
- Fiziksel ve psikolojik aĖrı ortak fizyolojik baĖlantıları kullanır,
- Fiziksel ve psikolojik aĖrı ifadeleri iin ortak metaforlar kullanılır.

TartıŖmaları iki gruba ayırmak mmkndr: 1. Psikolojik ve fiziksel aĖrının ayırımının net olmadıĖı ve bu yzden aĖrının bir btn olarak duygu kabul edilebileceĖi, 2. AĖrının doĖası gereĖi baŖka duyguları ve bu duygulara verilen biyolojik tepkileri iinde barındırdığı iin bir duygu olarak kabul edilebileceĖi.

Trkiye Trkesinde fiziksel aĖrı ve duygular arasındaki iliŖkiyi semantik ve dolayısıyla gramatik aıdan incelediĖimizde aĖrı iin kullanılan fiil cmlelerinin, duygu ifadelerinde sz konusu olan BEDEN KONTEYNERDİR ya da DUYGULAR KONTEYNERDİR metaforunu taŖımadığı grlmektedir. Bu durum bedenin tamamını kapsamadığı ya da bedenimizle tamamen iinde bulunamayacaĖımız iin “aĖrı-, acı-, sancı-” fiillerinin kiŖi zamiriyle doĖrudan kullanılmaması sonucunu doĖurmuŖtur. Fiziksel aĖrı durumuna dilsel

ifade açısından bakıldığında, ağrının bir duygu olarak anlamlandırılmadığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

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ACCELERATION, MONTAGE, INTERMEDIALITY, AND THE SUBJECT: FUTURISM AND ITS LEGACY

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Abstract

Futurism adopts new technologies of early twentieth century as central tenets of its aesthetics and worldview. Its technomorphism prefigures cultural theory's views on the end of the humanist subject and the posthuman. The eternity of the technological flesh is the most far-reaching expression of the Futurist utopia centred on the machine. The Futurists' objective is to dislodge conventional forms of representation as a way to displace conceptual, cognitive, and behavioural models. Their aim is to revolutionize human identity and subjectivity. They foreshadow Virilio's concepts of instantaneity and ubiquity in our electronic culture, as well as Bauman's notion of liquidity as a sign of an ever-changing sense of selfhood. The intensification of sensorial elements and the colonization of the body by the machine recall McLuhan's theories. Futurism creates fusions and fluid exchanges of the arts and opens them to intermediality, abstraction, performance, and conceptualism. It opens many doors that lead to contemporaneity.

Keywords: Futurism, Technomorphism, Intermediality, Montage, Post-humanist Subject, Avant-garde

In 2009 there were celebrations around the world to mark the 100th anniversary of the publication of the first Futurist Manifesto. They highlighted an extraordinary creativity that expressed itself in a plurality of art forms. The questions I propose to address are the following: What lies at the core of the Futurist aesthetics? What is its legacy? Was the movement's objective to incite a social and anthropological revolution through the arts? What type of culture and consciousness did it foreshadow with respect to our present-day life models?

Between the end of the 1800s and early twentieth century, numerous technological inventions began to have a deep impact on the social life and on the perceptions of the world: electric engine, automobile, airplane, camera, X-ray machine, radio, and cinema. Writers and artistic movements of that time react in conflicting manners to these innovations. Several modernist writers and artists respond negatively and critically to the overwhelming scientific and technological transformation of life. The malaise and the angst associated with many modernists can be directly related to these developments. A case in point is represented by Italian literary movements such as *Crepuscolarismo* [Twilight Poetry] and *Ermetismo* [Hermeticism] which manifest an "apocalyptic" reaction to the

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technological changes brought about by late modernity. On the other hand, Futurism is the most “integrated” movement into the technological culture of that period. Indeed, the Futurists embrace the new technologies as the centre of their aesthetics, mythologies, and worldview.

Generally, the new technologies force modernism to reinvent the modalities of representation and to revise sensory and cognitive orientations. The aesthetics of the naturalistic realism of the 1800s is questioned and the new technologies of cinema and photography displace it forcefully. Futurism is the first avant-garde movement that articulates the full awareness of this new reality and the ways it alters both the aesthetic field and the fundamental nature of being human. Futurism shares with the culture of the avant-garde the conviction that by dislodging conventional and atrophied forms of representation, it would be possible to displace conceptual, cognitive, and behavioural models. This process put in motion a radical transformation of the dominant versions of the world and, ultimately, of consciousness itself.

The point of departure espoused by the Futurist aesthetics revolves around the notion that new technologies generate a modern world deeply distinct from that of the past. Technology inspires novel and singular expressions of life and determines an evolutionary metamorphosis of the self. It is no longer religious or ethical principles that act as a foundation of artistic creation, but technology, inasmuch as it reconfigures both the natural environment, human identity, and subjectivity. Indeed, the celebration of the machine questions the essence of the humanistic version of the subject. The machine age opens the way to a social and anthropological revolution. In “Multiplied Man and the Kingdom of Machine”, Marinetti writes:

It is necessary to prepare the imminent and inevitable identification of man with the engine, thus facilitating and making perfect an incessant exchange of intuition, rhythm, instinct and metallic discipline [...] We believe in an incalculable number of possibilities for human transformations, and we declare without a smile that in the human flesh there are dormant wings [...] we will reign as sovereigns over a tamed Space and time. (De Maria 39, 40, hereinafter translations from the Italian are mine)

Inhabitation of the new technologies involves their interiorization and the construction of a new technomorphized humanity. Indeed, Marinetti breaks away from the notions of invariability and stability associated with established conceptions of the human subject.

He proposes a multifaceted and fluid subjectivity: "Multiple and simultaneous consciences in the same individual [...] A multiplicity of human ambitions and desires without boundaries." (De Maria 100,101)

Technomorphism rests on the conviction that technology is not a mere instrument for accomplishing a task. It constitutes the core of human reality. The impact of the machine on Futurism's aesthetics and postures prefigures the views in cultural theory that revolve around the end of the humanist subject and the posthuman. The glorification of technology not only foreshadows a new bionic human being, but it removes temporal limits from its condition: "the mechanical man" liberated from "the idea of death" (De Maria 84). Or, as Marinetti writes in 1917, "[h]umanization of the steel and metallization of the flesh in multiplied man. Body engine of different interchangeable and replaceable parts. Immortality of man!" (Marinetti 103). The eternity of the technological flesh represents the most far-reaching expression of the Futurist utopia centred on the machine. The movement supplants the anthropocentric notions tied to the traditional tenets of the subject and moves towards the abolishment of the unyielding dualism of subject-object. It foresees the collapse of the distance that traditionally separated human beings and their technological artefacts.

The technical manifesto of Futurist painting (produced by Boccioni, Carrà, Balla, Severini, Russolo) reads: "Our new awareness does not allow us to consider man at the centre of universal life. To us a man's sorrow is as much interesting as that of an electric lamp" (De Maria 24). Balla, for instance, translates the glorification of the machine (fastmoving trains, airplanes, streetcars, and automobiles) into abstract forms—geometrical lines and contrasts of light that provide the perceptions of the new mechanical speed. Aeropainting (from Sironi to Fedele Azari and Achille Lega, aeropoems (by Marinetti or Folgore) share similar perspectives, as do innumerable poems that pay tribute to the new beauty and exhilarating effects of cars and other machines. The connection between technology and speed is a recurrent binomial of Futurist art and poetics. Marinetti possesses the full awareness that industrialized modernity is dominated by velocity. He continually insists on the "acceleration of life" and its "rapid rhythm" (De Maria100). Indeed, the machine causes a radical shift of the perceptions of time and space: space is shrunk and time has increased its pace. The refusal of the past coincides with the view that the version of the human being elaborated in a pre-technological environment no longer holds. This orientation is reinforced by the 1922 manifesto "Futurism and Mechanical Art" by Ivo Pannaggi, Enrico Prampolini, and Vinicio Paladini. Traditional

literature was still tied to agricultural metaphors and figures. Technomorphism embraces all aspects of life. Art opens both the psyche and the senses to the overpowering technical transformations of the world. Agricultural life ties art to a cyclical notion of time. Technology links it to the notion of progress, to the time of the future. Within the context of art, the Futurists are the first to elaborate the acceleration of the new age. The first manifesto states: “Time and Space died yesterday. We already live in the absolute, inasmuch as we have already created the eternal omnipresent speed.” (De Maria 6)

Similar observations can be traced in the field of sociology, specifically in the seminal essay by Georg Simmel “The Metropolis and Mental Life” (1903), but also in his *The Philosophy of Money* (1900). For the German sociologist, the slow rhythm of rural existence has been replaced, in the industrialized urban society, by an accelerated pace on life distinguished by the rapidity of shifting “stimulations of the nerves”. On the one hand, “outer and inner stimuli” produce an “intensification” of emotional life due to their “swift and uninterrupted change”, on the other, they generate a process by which the individual is “levelled down and worn out by a social-technological mechanism”. The metropolis of the early 1900s generates a culture of mobility, dominated by the “objective spirit”—the material culture, cultural forms and objects—over the subjective sphere—beliefs, ideas, ways of seeing the world—(Simmel 178, 175, 70). Simmel’s social and philosophical orientation correlates closely to the modernist malaise and angst associated with the anonymity of life and depersonalized spaces of modern urban centres. Even though his evaluation of a technologized modernity is moved by a dystopic view, antithetical to the celebrative fervour of the Futurists, both positions share the vision of a space governed by simultaneity of events, discontinuity of perceptions, immediacy, instantaneity, fleeting emotional and mental experiences.

Notwithstanding the Futurists’ boisterous excitement for the fast and floating experiences of modern life, they anticipate the contemporary notion of “dromocracy”, as defined by Paul Virilio (1977). Technologies shift our ways of seeing, the ways in which the world is sensed. Indeed, Marinetti stated that “different forms of communication, of transport, and of information exercise on [...] the psyche a decisive influence” (De Maria 100). As photography and cinema contributed to reshape perceptions, the digital technologies are doing the same. Their core is constituted by speed and they are ruled by the force of rapidity (“dromocracy”, from the Greek “dromos”, racetrack, and “kratos”, with the meaning of power, rule). The Futurists’ theoretical and artistic production, grounded on the notion that the world, its occurrences, manifestations, and sights, are inextricably

connected to the new technologies (engines, planes, cars, telegraphy), corresponds to Virilio's interpretation of the electronic culture and society based on instantaneity and ubiquity. As with Simmel, here too, the difference is in the evaluation of the conditions generated by technological revolutions. For Virilio, the digital speed is at the core of contemporary adversities: decline of the real, impermanence of spatial and temporal coordinates, pervasiveness of media communication and representation in its various expressions. The idea of a "liquid modernity", as expressed in the works of Zygmunt Bauman (2002), is foreshadowed as well by the Futurists' outlooks. The reconfiguration of space, time, and identity informs them both. Bauman's notion of "liquidity" corresponds to the Futurists' abolition of space and to their version of an ever-changing sense of selfhood. The definition of our present age as a 'surmodernity', marked by an acceleration of history and a narrowing of space, proposed by the cultural anthropologist Marc Augé (2003), also fits their predictions. The difference between Futurists and these contemporary theorists can be summarized by adopting the antithesis used by Umberto Eco (1964) in one of his early works: the latter represent the apocalyptic intellectuals and the Futurists the integrated ones. The impact of technologies on reality and modes of communication, however, rests the same on both. What differs is the assessment.

Futurism embodies the objective to build a modern and cosmopolitan Italian society, at that juncture still tied to a predominantly agricultural and traditional way of life. Within the poetic context, it counters the longing for the rural and the pastoral world conveyed by the poetry of Pascoli and D'Annunzio who were tied, also from a linguistic standpoint, to traditional canons. The transformations produced by the new technologies are either absent or openly opposed. Futurism unquestionably expresses the ambition of industrialization and imperialism advocated by the Italian bourgeois class. Marinetti's belligerent nationalism is closely linked to these goals. However, Futurists embrace modern life and its technologies also with the scope to transform the cultural constructs of the body, subjectivity, and time-space. Their practices of simultaneity, ubiquity, and instantaneousness are not to be interpreted as autonomous aesthetic principles, but as cultural conceptions linked to the formation of a modern human subject. Futurists would feel at home in our electronic age in which space is contracted and simultaneity and ubiquity are daily events created by our dual-monitor computers, split-screens, remote-controls, TV's multiple panels, cellular phones, iPods, intercontinental jets, and ventures into outer space. Marinetti anticipates various tenets of McLuhan's theories as well, although he fails to spell out the subtle distinction between electronic and mechanical

technologies. Here are a few revealing observations:

Earth has become much smaller because of speed [...] Today human beings possess a sense of the world [...] they have a constant need to know what their contemporaries are doing in every part of the world [...] the individual has the need to communicate with all the people of the earth [...] Love for speed, for abbreviation and synthesis. "Tell me everything quickly, in two words!" (De Maria 102)

In this passage, the notion of a new form of communication that embraces "every part of the world" is essentially the equivalent of McLuhan's notion of the "global village". But let us make a quick and schematic reference to two of McLuhan's elements of the tetrad: extension and obsolescence, fundamental laws that govern, in his view, the grammar of all media. It is apparent the Futurists articulate the same principles. The extension brought about by the new media, for the Futurists, as for McLuhan (1997), amplify and intensify sensorial elements. Indeed, the new visuality spawned by the new technologies is amplified and plays a central role in all areas of Futurist works. Actually, the Futurists realized, as McLuhan, that humans establish a symbiotic relation with technologies in as much as they are colonized by the machine. Furthermore, at the same time, these notions forecast the theoretical orientation that informs posthuman theory. A couple of examples will suffice: "We have stretched our iron nerves in the sun, / we have arched our metallic spines [...] / We have launched on the heavens' tides / -far beyond the rocky patches of clouds- machines made of steel-plated / will-power" (L. Folgore, "Song of the Airplane Hangars", in Bohn 2005a, 35); "I love you throbbing heart! / Throbbing mechanical heart / eager heart of steel: / in your beat anxious rhythms / of eager spatial life / in you ignite gleaming shudders / conquering temporal virginity / in you burns the ardent fever / of your hot dense blood / of your perilous life / gasoline!" [M. Goretti, "Conversing with the Motor", in Bohn 2005b, 180]). As for the principle of obsolescence, the Futurists are keen to highlight the effects of contraction of experiential components, in as much as new media renders outdated and passé previous ways of being and, thus, former modes of communication. Sufficient to point out that the new media of that time, such as the telegraph and cinema, render obsolete traditional modes of writing and, in particular, the syntactic organization of the text. For Futurists, the "medium is the message", in as much as it is the revolutionized language and its effects on the readers/viewers that constitute their messages and not the content. Their awareness of medium specificity is remarkable, as is its materiality.

It is useful in this perspective to see briefly how Futurism is tied to the Marconi effect. Indeed, its aesthetic practices are grounded on homological expressions of radiotelegraphy: the transmission of written communication sent through radio waves. The invention of this technology was made by an Italian: Guglielmo Marconi sent a message across the English Channel in 1898 and in 1903 across the Atlantic. In 1909, the same year of the first Manifestos, he received the Nobel Prize in physics. Radiotelegraphy is a wireless form of communication. In fact, Futurism conceives writing as a wireless form (“the wireless imagination”) and it insists on analogical devices and the abolition of syntax, as a projection of a wireless (without connections) construction of the text. This correlation is foregrounded by Marinetti in 1913 in “Destruction of the Syntax, Wireless Imagination, Words-In-Freedom”. He states that the new style must express the “analogical sense of life, telegraphically, namely with the same rapidity and economy that the telegraph imposes on reporters and war correspondents” (103). Futurists would feel completely at home with the rapidity and the contractions of text messaging made possible by digital technology.

The homologies between technology and Futurist aesthetic raise several issues: the relationship between subject and object, the crisis of the naturalistic-mimetic representation, the disintegration of the object and its relation to abstract art. Let us examine the following statements of poetics:

We proclaim that motion and light destroy the materiality of bodies (Boccioni and others, “Technical Manifesto of Painting”, 1910, De Maria 24)

Destroy the ‘I’ in literature, namely all the psychology. The man completely contaminated by the library and the museum [...] has absolutely no interest to us. Thus we must abolish him in literature and finally substitute him with matter [...]. Substitute human psychology—by now at a point of exhaustion—with a lyrical obsession of matter [...] We do not intent to humanize the dramas of matter. It is the solidity of a steel plate in itself that arouses our interest—the incomprehensible and inhuman alliance of its molecules or of its electrons [...] the heat produced by a piece of iron or wood provides us by now with much more passion than the smile or the tears of a woman. (“Technical Manifesto of Literature,” 1912, De Maria 81)

The Wireless Imagination and Words-In-Freedom will open us to the essence of matter [...] instead of humanizing the animal, vegetable, and

mineral (a hackneyed system), we will be able to animalize, vegetalize, mineralize, electrify and liquefy style, making it live of the same life of matter [...] We must express the infinitely small that surrounds us, the imperceptible, the invisible, the agitation of atoms [...]. I want to introduce poetry to the infinite molecular life. ("Destruction of Syntax Wireless Imagination Words-In-Freedom", 1913, De Maria 105-106)

These and other similar statements express a surprising foresight of the visual and verbal experiences that would mark twentieth-century's key artistic expressions: matteric art, abstract expressionism, op art. The bracketing of the 'I' and the exploration of the materiality of the artistic medium are at the core of late modernist art. In this sense, Boccioni advocated the necessity to engage art with a multiplicity of materials: "glass, wood, cardboard, iron, cement, hair, leather, cloth, mirrors, electric light" (De Maria 73). Futurism uproots solipsistic versions of art that dominated the humanistic-romantic-symbolist paradigms and ushers in physical, material constructions of visual works and written texts. Within the literary domain, it is possible to draw a correlation with the 'reduction of the I' that guides, not only the poetics of the *Novissimi* in the 1960s, but essentially all the experimental practices from the late 1950s to the 1960s and beyond, from the *école du regard* to the *nouveau roman* in general, to the narrative produced by the Italian new avant-garde. Here is a significant statement by Marinetti: "Our literary I burns and self-destructs in the great cosmic vibration, so that the declaimer, in some ways, disappears as well, in the dynamic and synoptic manifestation of words-in-freedom" ("The Dynamic and Synoptic Declamation", De Maria 177).

There are, however, contradictory bearings. On the one hand, Futurism declares the dissolution of the subject in matter and, on the other, it erects a heroic subject to be reshaped by the vitality of the new technologies. That said, central figures of the movement, Boccioni in particular, possess the solid understanding of art as a self-sufficient construct: "A piece of sculpture"—he writes—"as a painting, cannot but look like itself, inasmuch as the figure and the things in art must live outside of the physiognomic logic" (De Maria 71). For Boccioni, art must break with models of mimesis. Art is conceived as a production of meanings and not as a reproduction of the lifeworld. However, autonomy is not to be confused with separateness. The artistic realm explores forms and materiality of its medium and, in the process, it establishes a heteronomous relationship with the world, in as much as it displays its own visions within the specificity of the communication tools. Undoubtedly, the recurrent trait of all avant-garde movements is to create forms of

difference and antagonism within the context of the dominant systems of signs. Futurism reveals a peculiar feature: it establishes clear homologues with the technological and the industrial world of its times. It does not place itself in a conflictual position with the new value systems linked with the coeval material culture. This, in part, explains, its adherence to the intervention in WWI or, subsequently, its association with the established political orientation, fascism. However, Futurism expresses difference and antithesis at the level of the literary-artistic models of the times. Indeed, its conflict is directed towards the lingering effects of the pre-industrial and agricultural aesthetic forms of the past. As it has already been underscored, the correlation between forms, representation, new technologies, and industrial realities is at the centre of its aesthetic renewal.

The issue of representation acquires a crucial significance if considered in relation to the techniques of collage and montage adopted by artists such as Severini and Carrà. Within the context of painting the use of newspaper strips, cigarette wrappers, pieces of fabric, and other materials on the canvas questions representation, inasmuch as it abolishes the distance between art, as mirror-like reflection, and life. Life enters directly into art. On the other hand, within the poetic realm (works of poets such as Govoni, Soffici, or Marinetti) the rupture of conventional boundaries of genres is striking. The verbal text is propelled towards forms of hybridization that draw attention to visibility. Indeed, it is projected into the realm of intermediality, the core of contemporary creativity. They bring into poetry newspaper cut-outs, variations of typeface and daring layouts of the text. Futurists inaugurate a dialogue, a synergy among the arts. Poetry takes the first steps in adopting a fusion of elements pertaining to different media. Intermediality blurs the rigid confines of conventional genres and inaugurates a dialogue among the arts to foster new possibilities of meanings and versions of the world. It can be argued that forms of intermediality can be traced back to the Greek *technopaegnia* and the Roman *carmina figurata*, from Simmia of Rhodes to Optatianus Porfirius, and later expressions such as those by Rabelais or Lewis Carroll. The Futurist experience develops within an advanced technological context that favours forms of radical intermediality. Indeed, when visual poetry makes a significant breakthrough in the early 1960s, some of its most prominent representatives, such as Miccini, Pignotti, Marcucci, and Isgrò, members of the so-called Gruppo 70, declare unambiguously the objective to reconnect with the Futurist experience. (For an overview of Gruppo 70, see J. Picchione 180-189; for an anthology of visual poems and theoretical texts, see Miccini).

Whereas modernist aesthetics generally utilizes collage and assemblage to recall

the past through quotations, scraps of memory whose traces are retrieved into the present, Futurism calls for the obliteration of any past memory with the objective to usher in a new era centred on an updated notion of being human. These techniques, combined with the Futurist pursuit of putting an end to outmoded perceptions of the world, are directly linked to the art form that was about to revolutionize the twentieth century aesthetic landscape, cinema. The manifesto “The Futurist Cinematography”, published in 1916 and signed by Marinetti, Corra, Settimelli, Ginna, Balla and Chiti, is a celebration of the new medium. Cinema is presented as the quintessential Futurist expression “with no past and free of traditions” (De Maria 190), in opposition to the book, a medium of antiquated technology, “absolutely passéist” (De Maria 189), “tedious and oppressing” (De Maria 190). As the new art form, cinema must depart from the dramas of traditional theatre and explore its inner potentialities. Here are a few fundamental statements of this manifesto:

Cinema is an art in itself. Cinema must never copy the stage [...] It must become antigraceful, deforming, impressionistic, synthetic, dynamic, free-wording [...] Futurist cinema creates [...] a poli-expressive symphony [...] The Futurist cinema will adopt, as expressive means, a plurality of elements: from the slice of real-life events to a colour spot, from a line to free wordings, from chromatic and plastic music to the music of the objects. In other words, it will be painting, architecture sculpture, words-in-freedom, music of colours, lines and forms, a jumble of thrown-together objects and chaotic reality [...] Simultaneity and compenetration of shots of different times and places. We will give at the same instant-frame 2 or 3 different views one beside the other [...] Painting + sculpture + plastic dynamism + words-in-freedom + art of noises + architecture + synthetic theatre = Futurist Cinema. (De Maria 191,193,194)

Futurists are fascinated by cinema’s ability to capture the object in its spatial movement from a multiplicity of perspectives. Indeed, for Futurism, cinema is the medium that abolishes syntax and establishes distinctly a culture of montage. The world is no longer thought in terms of syntactic linearity, but in terms of analogies, rhythms, combinations, simultaneities. Although much of Futurist cinema was destroyed, particularly during WWII, clips of films like *Vita Futurista* (Marinetti, Ginna, Corra, Balla, Settimelli, 1916) or *Thais* (Anton Giulio Bragaglia, 1917), give us a glimpse of its production. In addition, several descriptions of films provided by the artists are available. A case in point is that of the Corradini Brothers. Even before adhering to Futurism they had

experimented with chromatic music (1910). Colours substituted musical notes. They built a special piano in which 28 electric lamps corresponded to 28 piano keys; the pressure on the keys allowed colours to be projected on a screen. These early experiments were followed by the technique of painting directly on film with the objective of producing colour symphonies, accords, correspondences, visual rhythms that clearly pioneer aspects of abstract cinema. Futurist film theory and cinematographic accomplishments have certainly contributed to creating the terrain for the development of pure cinema and other experimental tendencies expressed in the works by Richter, Eggeling, Vertov, Chamotte, or L  ger. In "The Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature" we read:

Cinema offers us the dance of an object that divides and recomposes without human intervention. It also offers the movement in reverse of a swimmer's feet that come out of the water and violently bounce back on the diving board. Lastly, it offers us a man running at 200 kilometres per hour. They are even more movements of matter, outside the laws of intelligence and thus made of a much more significant essence. (De Maria 82)

Futurism conceives film as a total aesthetic medium that, if used according to its new conceptions of art, would go beyond the "boundaries of literature" or "be an inspiration for the research of those painters who try to force their art beyond the limits of a painting" (De Maria 191). As a "joyful deformation of the universe, an a-logical and fleeting synthesis of the life-world" (De Maria 190), Futurism sees not only the experimental potentialities of the new medium, but champions cinema as the new art that will drive all other artistic endeavours towards unimagined territories. "We must liberate cinema as a means of expression in order to make of it an ideal instrument of a new art that is immensely broader in scope and much more versatile than all the present ones," the manifesto declares (De Maria 191). The other arts look at cinema and indeed, as with poetry, they absorb its practice of montage and its visual communication. Poems by Marinetti and Soffici are a clear demonstration, as are those by Govoni. This latter poet is one of the first to experiment with visual poetry. He has the clear objective to push the boundaries of verbal communication beyond its limits. The result is the creation of synergetic practices that involve the phonetic, the semantic, and the visual (see Govoni 1916). On the other hand, cinema looks at poetry. Futurism's objective is to create through the new art "cinematographic poems" (De Maria 192).

The Futurists do not produce a comprehensive theory of montage that can equal the technical reflections that inform Soviet cinema, from Lev Kuleshov to Sergei Eisenstein. They, however, capture the essence of cinematic language and adopt an aesthetic orientation of intermediality that has been a recurrent trend of modern and contemporary art. Futurism realizes the necessity of a dialogue among the arts and the urgency to transgress the confines of the single aesthetic medium by crossing borders: fusions and fluid exchanges, heterogeneity of materials and modes of communication generate new encounters, new sensory and conceptual perceptions. Cinema plays a fundamental role by engendering processes of re-mediation: poetry acquires forms of marked visualization, word and image cohabit, montage gives rise to collage, cinematic movement (together with the other technologies of speed) makes its way into the language of painting. In the intermedia practices, the components of any work cannot be disjointed, inasmuch as signification occurs at the level of their interaction. From this standpoint, the stimulus towards intermediality produced by the medium of cinema (at the time, the most advanced expression of the encounter of different arts) plays an essential role. The juxtaposition of different materials, semantic fields, or conceptual frames generate an ideological montage that expresses Futurism's overall postures and a worldview driven by the subversion of received ideas and of outmoded attitudes towards reality. Montage (but, to some extent, collage as well) reconfigures space-time coordinates, inasmuch as simultaneity is articulated by non-chronological time and by incongruous spatial properties that defy ordinary sequences and narratives. In his Futurist Photodynamism (1911), Bragaglia highlights the effects of "dematerialization" of the object and "pure movement" and, most importantly, the unprecedented aesthetic relation between time and space made possible by the new media. He writes that "in movement time is being translated into space" and that "**time will become a fourth dimension of space**" (Bragaglia 375. Bold in the original). The new media demolish the hierarchical modes of forms driven by a mirror-like reproduction of reality and of chronological time. In these early reflections on Photodynamism and cinema, there is no doubt Bragaglia exhibits symptoms of agon towards cinema. In fact, he stresses the cold and mechanical techniques of the new medium:

Cinematography does not register the shape of movement, but subdivides it, without rules, with mechanical arbitrariness, disintegrating and shattering it without any kind of aesthetic concern for rhythm [...] cinematography never analyzes movement, but shatters it in the frames of

the film strip, quite unlike the action of Photodynamism, which analyzes movement precisely in its details. (Bragaglia 369)

In the early stages of Futurism, as in Bragaglia's case, surface signs of rejection of the new medium. Bruce Elder claims that "radical artists and thinker working in traditional media saw cinema as a rival, and they proposed to transcast the media with which they worked by endowing them with the attributes of cinema, so that they might stand up the rivalry from cinema" (Elder 519). However, Bragaglia's "inter-movemental" creations and multiplication of objects, contractions or amplifications of time, resurface in "The Manifesto of Futurist cinema": "[s]imultaneity and interpenetration of different times and places [...] in the same instant-picture 2 or 3 versions different one besides the other" (De Maria 93). The homological relationships between these artistic practices and the coeval conceptions of space-time, advanced by the physics of Einstein and the initial theories proposed by quantum mechanics, acquire special significance. Indeed, Futurism draws constant analogies between aesthetic production and scientific investigation, from "the infinite molecular life" to the "imperceptible, invisible agitation of atoms" (De Maria 106).

This radical shift towards re-mediation, embraced by Futurism, is at the centre of aesthetic transformations that cut across the entire twentieth and twenty-first centuries, from visual poetry to video art, from pop art to Fluxus, to multimedia installations and new media art. There is no doubt, the figure of synaesthesia and the asyndetic syntactic constructs, together with the practices of simultaneity and daring semantic connections (pursued by poets), are directly linked to the trend of intermedia. The interaction among media correlates to the association of distant sensory responses, realities and ideas, or to the simultaneity of events and experiences. Indeed, Futurism contributes to shifting the focus of art, not only in the direction of self-reflexivity (reassessing aesthetic principles, questioning consolidated canons, or opening the way to an art grounded on the conceptual communication of self-critique), but also guiding it towards the avant-garde's key objective: to thwart the reader-viewer's expectations and to promote the shock of the new. This is an objective pursued also through animated gatherings and outings planned to demolish old artistic sites: on the one hand, they function as reflection of art on itself and, on the other, they pave the way to performance art and conceptualism, movements that will be at the centre of the experimentation several decades afterwards. Futurism opens central doors that lead to contemporaneity.

The Futurist musical renewal is extraordinary as well. It does not advocate harmony

or sounds of traditional instruments, but dissonance, noises made by factories, sirens, motorcycles, machines. They inspire new creativity. In his manifesto on the art of noises Russolo writes:

evolution of music is parallel to the multiplication of the machines that collaborate with man everywhere. Not only in the noisy environments of cities, but also in those of the countryside [...] the pure sound in its scantiness and monotony no longer raises emotions [...] we enjoy much more combining ideally the sounds of streetcars, combustion engines, train wagons, and rowdy crowds than listening to Beethoven's *Eroica* or *Pastoral*. (De Maria 92, 93)

The objective is not that of composing through a mimetic process, a reproduction of pre-existing sounds. The "art of noises must not be confined to an imitative reproduction", Russolo writes (De Maria 96). The Futurist musical aesthetics stresses the process of combinations and associations of sounds, rhythms, and resonance, imaginative melanges and fusions that become worlds in themselves, independent of externality. Indeed, Russolo's *intonarumori* are the new instruments for the realization of these compositions. The expectations of the public were radically destabilized. The reactions were violent, as in the case of Pratella's 'concerts' during which the stage was often littered with eggs and tomatoes. These events express the antagonistic thrust of the avant-garde, its disdain for established bourgeois norms and value systems. The refusal of conventional harmonies and the attack on society's dominant ways of being cannot be disjointed. Most importantly, however, Futurists explore the elements of chance, randomness, atonality, key features of the musical language produced by the innovative trends both in the first and second half of twentieth century.

And what about the Futurists projects for urban and architectural space? Here too, Futurists, thanks to the adherence to the movement by the Lombard architect Antonio Sant'Elia, accomplish a radical break with the past. The "Manifesto of the Futurist Architecture" (1914) expresses the total rejection of the field's history and the urgency to develop an architectural style in sync with the technologies and the cultural experiences of modernity. The urban space must be reinvented, refuse "grotesque anachronisms" and make "use of all resources offered by science and technology" (De Maria 149). It is conceived as a "gigantic machine" (De Maria 150), capable to convey the mobility and the dynamism of the modern metropolis. The architectural lines are meant to relay the agility,

the elasticity, the lightness, and the movement inherent to the speed of the new machines. Sant'Elia's projects encompass the rethinking of materials: cement, metal, glass. They must suit industrial structures inhabited by large masses. The utilisation of new technologies, such as exterior elevators and escalators connecting considerable distances inside huge buildings, railroad stations, shopping centres, and hotels, are all key elements of his urban designs. Unfortunately, he died prematurely and his projects could not become a reality. The architectural language that informs his visions, however, found an outlet in the works of Enrico Prampolini or Virgilio Marchi during the years following WWI. The works of architects not directly tied to Futurism, such as Giacomo Matté-Trucco (responsible for the FIAT Lingotto, 1916-1926) or Giuseppe Terragni (an advocate of the Rationalist Movement) show the marks of the Futurist architectural innovations.

The Futurist new aesthetic forms are inextricably linked to the need of provoking a cultural revolution that could reinvent life and make it a true expression of modernity. The Futurists celebrate it with the cult of technology. In their view, the time was ripe for a true anthropological revolution that would make possible the birth of a truly modern human being. They put into motion a state of euphoria that if, on the one hand, contributed to giving rise to new subjectivities and new aesthetic expressions, on the other, it created several mythologies that were blind to the critique both of technologies and of modernity itself. But this is the fate that time reserves us when we embrace a cultural paradigm. We cannot help but be historically situated, even while being firmly projected into the future.

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A. S. BYATT'S POSTMODERNIST WORLD IN "THE CHINESE LOBSTER" ÖYKÜSÜNDE A. S. BYATT'IN POSTMODERN DÜNYASI

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Abstract

A. S. Byatt's oeuvre instantiates many postmodern tropes, by dint of which her underlying thematic messages find a better way of being imparted to the audience. Albeit deemed one of the critically little-attended works of Byatt, "The Chinese Lobster" from *The Matisse Stories* (1993) stands as an epitome of postmodern literature. This hard-to-interpret story offers its thematics, this study suggests, in the guise of numerous postmodern elements whose investigation enables one's mastery of how and why Byatt aims at allying her thematic messages with an equal share of postmodernist discourse. In illustrating such postmodern elements, this paper's arguments lean towards interpreting some salient postmodern features such as paradox, parody, irony, undecidability, and little and grand narratives in the story.

Keywords: A. S. Byatt, "The Chinese Lobster," Postmodernism, Paradox, Parody, Undecidability

Öz

A. S. Byatt'ın külliyatı pek çok postmodern unsuru somutlaştırır ki bu yolla eserlerinin altında yatan tematik mesajları okurlarına daha iyi aktarmanın bir yolunu bulur. *The Matisse Stories* (1993, Matisse Öyküleri) koleksiyonunun bir parçası olan "The Chinese Lobster" (Çin Istakozu) öyküsü de, her ne kadar Byatt'ın eleştirel bağlamda az dikkat çekmiş bir eseri olsa da, postmodern edebiyatın bir timsali olarak durmaktadır. Bu makalenin savladığı gibi, yorumlanması zor olan bu öykü, temalarını pek çok postmodern unsorda gizleyerek sunmaktadır. Bu unsurların derinlemesine tartışılması da Byatt'ın öykü içerisinde tematik mesajlarını postmodernist söylemle eşit bir şekilde nasıl ve neden paylaştığını anlamayı mümkün kılar. O yüzden, bu çalışma, bu tür postmodern unsurları örneklerdirken, öyküdeki paradoks, parodi, ironi, karar verilemezlik ve alt ile üst anlatılar gibi bazı belirgin postmodern özellikleri yorumlamaya yönelir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: A. S. Byatt, "The Chinese Lobster," Postmodernizm, Paradoks, Parodi, Karar Verilemezlik

As a contemporary woman writer with a distinct voice in postmodern literature, A. S. Byatt deserves a large body of systematic research in recent critical studies. As a reason behind this assertion, one should suffice to say Byatt is not the writer to whom one can get privy effortlessly. One might rightly think that it takes a great deal of investigation and

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sophistication to generate a mild, if not thorough, reading of her oeuvre. Her underlying thematic messages need to be read, deciphered, re-read, and eventually fathomed. Her short story “The Chinese Lobster” is not an exception. A relatively little-known short story that has not been sufficiently attended to in literary scholarship, “The Chinese Lobster” was published first in *The New Yorker* in 1992 and subsequently as the final part of *The Matisse Stories* in the following year. The story can be regarded as an emblematic work in the postmodern arena by portraying the salient features of postmodern fiction in the light of its elusive characters and themes. Therefore, taking its cue from theorists such as Linda Hutcheon, Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle, this article examines particular elements of postmodern fiction such as parody, paradox, irony, undecidability, and little and grand narratives, which all constitute the central plank of the narrative in “The Chinese Lobster.” Through this analytical quest, one, this study suggests, could come to a better grasp on not only the stylistics of Byatt’s writing, but also, more importantly, the postmodern thematic aesthetics, which have equally informed the narrative of this short story.

Byatt’s story revolves around three characters’ fragmented texts, accounts, and aphorisms: Sitting in a Chinese restaurant, decorated with astounding objects, is Dr Gerda Himmelblau, the Dean of Women Students. Upon the knowledge of a complaint letter from Peggi Nollett, a graduate art student, she is about to meet Professor Peregrine Diss, a painter and a distinguished visiting professor (DVP) who was also the person accused in the letter. As Nollett puts it, he is acutely and relentlessly unforgiving and aggressive in criticising her dissertation – a study of Henri Matisse’s works from a critical viewpoint – and has, in her allegation, abused her sexually. Diss, in his defence, states that Nollett does not have the subtlest sense of art and all she has done is debase Matisse’s works out of misandry and laziness for proper study. He goes on declaring that she, taking into account the absence of seemliness in her appearance, would be the last woman to attract him, much less to have him think of sexually harassing her. In further discussions of Nollett’s state of mind, Himmelblau reveals the student’s struggle with anorexia and suicidal attempts. This part of the conversation dusts her memory of a once-spirited but now-deceased friend, Kay, whose life had become a never-ending series of suicidal acts following her daughter’s death. The only solution to Nollett’s problem appears to be in handing her dissertation over to a more compliant and sympathetic supervisor in the hopes of finding her the right path of academic pursuit. Without a resolution of this serious allegation, “The Chinese Lobster” leaves its readers with a perplexed mind flowing with questions as to what actually happened, what might come out of such text exchanges,

accounts, and aphorisms, and what they would do if they were in each character's shoes.

The most conspicuous feature of "The Chinese Lobster" emerges as a series of paradoxes and contradictions unfold in the plot. In a similar fashion to her other postmodern novels and stories, Byatt seems to employ and sustain the technique of postmodern paradox in this story as well, following Linda Hutcheon's conceptualisation. Hutcheon, underlining it as an indispensable component of postmodernism in *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* (1988), extensively contemplates the matter of contradictions. Negotiating it in the postmodern discourse, the theorist clearly and recurrently uses this concept of paradox almost like a keyword to her discussions as well as other pertinent and impertinent arguments. To her, paradoxes and contradictions curiously act like the very meta-narratives³ whose denial or repudiation is what she, together with all the other postmodern thinkers, has striven for in all her canon:

I would like to begin by arguing that, for me, postmodernism is a contradictory phenomenon, one that uses and abuses, installs and then subverts, the very concepts it challenges – be it in architecture, literature, painting, sculpture, film, video, dance, TV, music, philosophy, aesthetic theory, psychoanalysis, linguistics, or historiography. (Hutcheon, *Poetics* 3)

In a manner embracing all literary and cultural productions, Hutcheon employs a generalised sense of contradiction/paradox. For her, the postmodern paradox acts as a powerful tool for re-visiting the taken-for-granted structures that need intensive interrogations and re-formations. In a similar vein, Byatt exploits this aspect in her framing the narrative around such a much-disputed figure as Henri Matisse (1869-1954).

"The Chinese Lobster," as well as all the other Matisse stories in the collection, takes Henri Matisse as the principal figure around whom the plots and themes of the stories revolve, as the title of the collection dictates. Despite paying homage to Matisse's artistic novelties and qualities as in Peregrine Diss' case, the characters like Peggi Nollett do not abstain from tarnishing and discrediting the French artist even at a point of grotesque and blatant aspersions. In a manner to echo Hutcheon's postmodern paradox, Matisse is used and abused, installed, and subverted to provoke awe and contempt in the story. Repelling and impelling the artist, Nollett believes that Matisse's works are on the "*distortions of the Female Body*," specifically "*on certain Parts of the Body which appeal*

³ For a better understanding of the concept of meta-narratives coined by Lyotard, refer to Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1984).

to Men and tend to immobilise Women such as grotesquely swollen Thighs or protruding Stomachs” (Byatt 110–111). Connecting this so-called “*sinister*” approach to “*the whole tradition of the depiction of Female Slaves and Odalisques*” (111), the student voices her disgust of Matisse during her appointment with her dissertation supervisor, Diss:

I told the DVP what my line on this was going to be ... and he argued with me and went so far as to say I was hostile and full of hatred to Matisse. I said this was not a relevant criticism of my work and that Matisse was hostile and full of hatred towards women. (111)

In contradiction with Nollett’s vantage, Diss is an admirer of the French artist and responds to his student: “*Matisse was full of love and desire towards women (!!!!!)*”; as he believes that Nollett fails to understand this, she “*ought to fail [her] degree*” despite the student’s artistic interpretation and endeavour (111). Their paradoxical approaches to Matisse come to a tipping point in Diss’ discussion of Nollett’s works on the artist, in which she uses her faeces to shame his face:

[T]hey have all been smeared and defaced. With what looks like *organic matter* – blood, Dr Himmelblau, beef stew or faeces. ... Some of the daubings are deliberate reworkings of bodies or faces – changes of outlines – some are like thrown tomatoes – probably *are* thrown tomatoes – and eggs, yes – and some are *great swastikas of shit*. (Byatt 118; italics in the original)

Diss, as a Matisse fan, finds such artistic and interpretative expressions by Nollett “appalling” and “pathetic” (118). For the advisor, the French artist is – in a fashion of overstatement – a heavenly being in his appraisal of oranges which “are the real fruit of Paradise,” and “Matisse was the first to understand orange. ... Orange in light, orange in shade, orange on blue, orange on green, orange in black” (132). This postmodern ambivalence or conflict directly addresses Matisse’s dignity in two characters’ disputes over the artist’s approach towards women in his sense of art and artistic productions. Nevertheless, this paradoxical address stems from Byatt’s perspective of the painter as well.

Despite taking Matisse as the core subject of this collection, Byatt enables the standpoints of solid woman characters like Himmelblau and Nollett to dominate “The Chinese Lobster.” In doing so, the author re-evaluates the feminist critics’ attack on the painter due to his submitting women to the heteropatriarchal male gaze (Fernandes 205–

206). Byatt, as Isabel Fernandes asserts, “subjects her less obvious intratextual object, Matisse, to a process of indirect scrutiny” and, thus, “forces the reader to re-evaluate Matisse from a radically new vantage point” employing “the scattered references to the painter’s works and life” in the story (201). However, this “scrutiny” is playfully integrated into the other side of Byatt’s postmodern paradox in the text: Matisse and his art are re-visited and acknowledged in terms of their artistic achievements. The author, “qualifying her praise of him” (201), pushes the reader towards teasing out Nollett’s and Himmelblau’s impassés in a critical manner. Byatt intends to warn or do justice to both camps – Matisse detractors and defenders – reasonably on a proper stance. This conflicting ambivalence is further substantiated in Christien Franken’s comparative analysis of Byatt’s written art and critical notions. Franken argues that “nothing is as authentic or central as her ambivalence” (xv). To achieve this sustained ambivalence, Byatt “constructs a double-speaking position” in her narratives, throughout which “‘the self as writer’ A. S. Byatt wins the argument over ‘the self as critic and philosopher’ and resolves the ambivalence” (Franken 16, 18). With a similar technique in “The Chinese Lobster,” neither does Byatt remain neutral, nor her voice is dormant, for she seems to render her words prone to partake of a sense of sympathy with Nollett, not to mention her frequent support for Matisse as in the case of Diss. Although this cannot be denied as a paradox, the sympathetic siding with Nollett outweighs the implicit Matisse support. Analytically read, Himmelblau meets all the criteria to fit the profile of being Byatt’s voice or persona: Himmelblau resembles Byatt in her indirect criticism of Matisse, as she, throughout the story, supports Nollett (who represents all the women who posed for Matisse and were distortedly painted by him) and contrarily shows a minimal reaction, if any at all, to Diss’ complaints of Nollett as well as his reverence for Matisse. Logically, Himmelblau is positioned akin to Byatt, Diss akin to Matisse, and Nollett akin to all the women who posed for Matisse and were unethically exposed by him, since Himmelblau – like Byatt – identifies with Nollett in suing Diss for the dishonourable deed he was claimed to have committed. Resembling the triptych structure of this story collection, Himmelblau, Diss, and Nollett hypothetically epitomise Byatt, Matisse, and the unethically exposed women in a tripartite framework. In dialogues and collaborations with one another, all three characters and their real-world doppelgangers engender a story in the same postmodern paradox.

In addition to her employment of the postmodern paradox in the story, Byatt resorts to other postmodern narrative techniques while situating Matisse in this triptych: parody and irony. Parody in the postmodern rhetoric is known to diverge from its conventional

definitions of imitating “the serious manner and characteristic features” of a work or “the distinctive style of a writer or artist” to devalue “the original by applying the imitation to a lowly or comically inappropriate subject” (Abrams and Harpman 36). Postmodern parody develops distinct differences in a narrative rather than having the heavily ridiculing mode at its core. To expand on this topic, Hutcheon straightforwardly diverges from previous discussions regarding the concept and reconfigures it as such:

What I mean by “parody” here ... is *not* the ridiculing imitation of the standard theories and definitions that are rooted in eighteenth-century theories of wit. The collective weight of parodic *practice* suggests a redefinition of parody as repetition with critical distance that allows ironic signalling of difference at the very heart of similarity. In historiographic metafiction, in film, in painting, in music, and in architecture, this parody paradoxically enacts both change and cultural continuity. (*Poetics* 26; italics in the original)

Not only does postmodern parody attend to the enactment of change and constancy in literary and cultural practices, but it also aims at social discourse, “us[ing] its historical memory, its aesthetic introversion, to signal that this kind of self-reflexive discourse is always inextricably bound to social discourse” (Hutcheon, *Poetics* 35). This way, this notion acts as a strategy that distances itself from the traditional mockery and instead incorporates diverse facets like culture, society, and politics. Including such historical concepts enhances the postmodern parody’s satirical effect by adding a more didactic and obvious performance to its aesthetics. Therefore, “this parodic reprise of the past of art,” as Hutcheon reaffirms in *The Politics of Postmodernism* (2002), “is not nostalgic; it is always critical” (*Politics* 93).

Pursuant to Hutcheon’s reconceptualisation, Byatt subjects the painter as well as his works to postmodern parody in “The Chinese Lobster.” Byatt incorporates a kind of parodic historicity and falls on the same page with Hutcheon, especially in her work *Possession: A Romance* (1990), the most emblematic instance of historiographic metafiction.⁴ Likewise, in *The Matisse Stories*, the existence of Matisse and in-passing mention of the grand painters of the history render “The Chinese Lobster” historically

⁴ Hutcheon coined the term “historiographic metafiction” (“Beginning” 12) in 1987. For a solid grasp over the concept, see chapter 7 of *A Poetics of Postmodernism*. In short, such works as Byatt’s *Possession: A Romance*, Hutcheon suggests, are a blend of historical allusions to artists or art narrative and a fictional line of author’s self-reflexive innovation.

parodic enough in the postmodern sense: "She [Himmelblau] has heard him [Diss] lecture, on Bellini, on Titian, on Mantegna, on Picasso, on Matisse. His style is orotund and idiosyncratic" (Byatt 107–108). By dropping these names in this subtle intertextuality, Byatt invites late-twentieth-century readers to ponder these painters and their styles in portraying gendered bodies or objects of the gaze in their works while situating perceptions on Matisse in the story. The French artist, as a genuine part of the historical narrative of art in the story, is sufficiently discussed as the object of non-nostalgic parody in Diss' account of his visiting Matisse in Nice:

I went to see him once, you know, after the war when he was living in that apartment in Nice. ... I loved him and was enraged by him and meant to outdo him, ... – which I never did. He was ill then, he had come through this terrible operation, the nuns who looked after him called him "le ressuscite." (Byatt 132)

Byatt further embellishes Diss' visit with factual details which quite resonate with Hilary Spurling's biographical account (437–438):

The rooms in that apartment were shrouded in darkness. The shutters were closed, the curtains were drawn. I was terribly shocked – I thought he *lived in the light*, you know, that was the idea I had of him. I blurted it out, the shock, I said, "Oh, how can you bear to shut out the light?" And he said, quite mildly, quite courteously, that there had been some question of him going blind. He thought he had better acquaint himself with the dark. (Byatt 132; italics in the original)

Here, Byatt blends the linguistic paradox of light and dark with critics' discussions of Matisse's approach to women by reminding us of his fear of blindness, "or inability to paint" that would "haunt him at moments of great danger or disruption" (Spurling 353). Besides, Byatt must have known this terror because the painter used to read "*The Light That Failed*, [Rudyard] Kipling's novel about a painter whose loss of sight plunges him into a downward spiral of destruction, despair and death" (Spurling 383). Both Byatt's fictional Matisse and the real one curiously resemble Kipling's protagonist, Dick Heldar, who is revered or despised by different groups of characters due to his artistic style and relations with women.

Such historical authenticity in the story is subverted for further interrogation of Matisse and his art. In her re-evaluation of Matisse's life and works, for instance, Nollett

studies the painter's relation with his wife Amélie and daughter Marguerite during World War II:

I have a three-dimensional piece in wire and plasticine called The Resistance of Madame Matisse which shows her and her daughter being tortured as they were by the Gestapo in the War whilst he sits like a Buddha cutting up pretty paper with scissors. They wouldn't tell him they were being tortured in case it disturbed his work. (Byatt 112)

Accusing him of oblivion to the women's tortures, Nollett acts as Byatt's paradoxical and parodic critic of Matisse, who exclaimed not to have known such cruelties happening to them at the time (Spurling 423–424). In such ways, Matisse himself and some detailed descriptions containing him and his life add to this postmodern narrative's historic and parodic weight.

"The Chinese Lobster" holds a serious tone of postmodern parody as opposed to the concept's conventional aspect of humour or a sense of ridicule to which Hutcheon objects. Ridiculing Matisse in a comic tone with which the conventionalists might agree occurs very little if any at all. Nor does the same apply to his paintings. Instead, Matisse is the subject of a non-comic and severe conflict that jeopardises a student's life as well as a professor's job. Barely can one witness a comic line regarding Matisse, provoking a smile, much less a laugh. Apart from the serious situations resulting from the Matisse case in this story, Matisse's artistic style is seriously parodied, as mentioned earlier. If this were a conventional parody, Byatt would have included some melodramatically ridiculed or overstated paintings of Matisse throughout her fiction, whereas she did include the original paintings ultimately in an intact form. All she is doing is invite the reader to re-read Matisse through a critical sequence of literary points rather than mocking or ridiculing him by virtue of comic or funny terms. Therefore, in short, the parody levelled at Matisse remains critical, non-comic, and historic.

Alongside the extensive use of parody in a postmodern narrative, irony has also invariably appeared to be an integral component of postmodern tropes, transcending its status to the best of its capacity. Hutcheon, in *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony* (1995), despite her recap of various discussions on the concept of irony, feels at total liberty to theorise her notion of the term. She recurrently defines it as "transideological." She believes that the transideological nature of irony is what constitutes its basis: Irony "can and does function tactically in the service of a wide range of political positions,

legitimizing or undercutting a wide variety of interests" (*Irony's Edge* 10). In her conceptualisation, irony is intrinsically post-structuralist due to its deconstructive, subversive, and re-constructive aspects. Interrogating the de/re-constructive nature of irony, she exemplifies two camps regarding this notion's functional uses. The first camp, most audibly encompassing "feminist, postcolonial, gay and lesbian theorists," includes the people who "see irony as a powerful tool or even weapon in the fight against a dominant authority" (Hutcheon, *Irony's Edge* 26). The second one, though, is composed of members who are "on receiving end of an ironic attack (or missed the irony completely) or by those for whom the serious or the solemn and the univocal are the ideal" (Hutcheon, *Irony's Edge* 26) and believe that irony aims at negation and destruction. Emphasising the inseparability of the two camps, Hutcheon claims that both sides are intertwined at their roots and that one cannot have the negating nature of the irony isolated from the affirming one.

In setting a relational mode between Hutcheon's postmodern irony and "The Chinese Lobster," a certain Matisse stands out, as is often the case with Byatt in *The Matisse Stories*. Byatt subjects Matisse to a specific ironic state in which Matisse meets the transideological expectations that Hutcheon demands. Nollett uses the power of irony to rebel against the authority, namely Diss, who is but an allusion to Matisse. In all likelihood, this is the first camp whose members are of feminist, postcolonial, gay, or lesbian identities. Nollett fits the profile here as she strives to stand up for her rights against a sexually harassing Diss. Himmelblau's position as a member of this camp holds true as well, as she is doing her best as the dean of the faculty to protect the women students' rights. Diss, however, is the other side of the irony on whom the attack falls. Therefore, he serves as the object of this transideological equation of irony, the very entity being destroyed and undercut. Byatt portrays this transideological situation in a manner to preserve her ambivalent status in the story, only by implicitly supporting the feminist cause with a brief reference during Diss' conversation with Himmelblau to the plausibility of his sexual assault on Nollett, who should have left "the old scars, well-made *efficient* scars, on his wrists" (Byatt 132; italics in the original). However, barely can one detect explicit sympathies or siding of Himmelblau with a certain camp throughout the story, hence giving rise to an undecidable position.

As another salient feature of postmodernism, the notion of "undecidability" has to do with a sense that no absolute interpretation can be made from a work of art. In the words of Andrew Bennett and Nicholas Royle, undecidability "involves the impossibility of deciding between two or more competing interpretations" (249). This definition suggests

more efforts on the reader's side to generate her/his relative stance regarding what s/he reads. Furthermore, the interpretation(s) and message(s) falling on the reader are not meant to be the only or the eventual one(s): "Undecidability dislodges the principle of a single final meaning in a literary text. It haunts" (Bennett and Royle 249).

"The Chinese Lobster" showcases postmodern undecidability in many respects. One certainly vivid realm within which undecidability operates efficiently in "The Chinese Lobster" is the accusation of sexual assault by Nollett. She, by means of her letters, solidly accuses Diss of sexually abusing her, saying:

Then the DVP got personal. He put his arm about me and hugged me and said I had got too many clothes on. ... he grabed me and began kissing me and fondling me and stroking intimate parts of me – it was disgusting – I will not write it down... The more I struggled the more he insisted and pushed at me with his body until I said I would get the police the moment he let go of me. ... (Byatt 112–113)

This account, however, robustly runs counter to what Diss has to say in his defence:

Have you seen her legs and arms, Dr Himmelblau? They are bandaged like mummies, they are all swollen with strapping and strings and then they are contained in nasty black greaves and gauntlets of plastic with buckles. You expect some awful yellow ooze to seep out between the layers, ready to be smeared on *La Joie de vivre*. And her hair, I do not think her hair can have been washed for some years. It is like a carefully preserved old frying-pan, grease undisturbed by water. You *cannot believe* I could have brought myself to touch her, Dr Himmelblau? (120; italics in the original)

It is, thus, upon a very delicate plane that Byatt puts her reader when she creates this undecidable condition. Making a decision, then, is arduous, if not impossible. It all hinges upon whose side the reader is inclined to take, as Diss himself asks Himmelblau: "whose side are you on?" (120). Byatt deserts this delicate plane in a serious tongue-in-cheek manner.

Undecidability in "The Chinese Lobster" is evidently felt in how the whole issue of Nollett's complaint would be resolved. Initially, there are talks of Diss' job loss and severely unpleasant consequences that may befall him. Himmelblau tells Diss: "I am very much afraid that ... you will lose your job, and whether you do or don't lose it there will be disagreeable protests and demonstrations against you, your work, your continued presence

in the University" (Byatt 121). However, the ending lines of the story develop a somewhat different position, and Himmelblau's fair resolution seems to lie in finding a sympathetic supervisor for the art student: "There is a simple solution. What she [Nollett] wants, what she has always wanted, what the Department has resisted, is a sympathetic supervisor" (Byatt 133–134). The ultimate resolution tends to remain in the dark and undecided though, as the narrative offers no clarity on how this academic conflict will be settled.

Undecidability is instantiated anew once our analysis veers to the realm of characters of "The Chinese Lobster." All characters seem to be lost, unstable and undecided. Psychologically, the characters sway between the past and present or are trapped in liminal spaces, leaving them with traces of traumatic events whose reminiscence haunts them. This, in turn, renders the critical reading of the characters so harsh as to resort to the term *undecided*. One character whose undecidability seems to be more tangible than the other characters is Himmelblau. In fact, Himmelblau's undecidability concurs with the ambivalent voice of Byatt herself. One could infer that the ambivalence of Byatt might have given rise to the undecidability of Himmelblau who, this study claims, is the voice of Byatt. The undecidability that has permeated Himmelblau's soul regarding Nollett's case and consequently the believability of her account in accusing Diss of sexual abuse or the opposing defensive words she hears from Diss does but leave her utterly undecided. The obscurity of this situation is, in all probability, conveyed to the readers as well. The undecidability in the alleged actions and testimonies of two sides, Nollett and Diss – even three sides with Himmelblau, has enough impact to be imparted to the reader, as the textual undecidability makes readers oscillate between their decisions to side with either party. Seldom would a reader, albeit sophisticated in reaching a verdict, get a vivid clearance on deciding upon the characters and their various psychological layers by which they are shaped.

Once a critic or a reader tries to take one side in the deadlock of "The Chinese Lobster," s/he will realise that the attempt to take side requires a central argument or a centre of values. Nonetheless, the postmodern is decentering and is meant to interrogate the centrality of all the previously assumed knowledge by linguistic and structural subversions and re-installations of the past concepts. For instance, Bennett and Royle render the term "decentering" efficiently omnipresent in their postmodern jargon in its challenges to "the logo-centric," "the ethnocentric," and "the phallogocentric" (256). That is why, in a manner to subvert the taken-for-granted centres, postmodernism encompasses a series of words that precede the prefixes "de-" and "dis-," including "deconstruction,

decentering, dissemination, dispersal, displacement, difference, discontinuity, demystification, delegitimation, disappearance” (Hassan 309). However, at the very heart of it obviously comes *decentering*, and “The Chinese Lobster” has ample use of this strategic tool in the testimonies of its characters.

In the story, the authority of the words, which according to Jacques Derrida reflects Western philosophy⁵ and canon, is ironically censured and attacked by the random linguistic misspellings that Nollett makes throughout her letter to Himmelblau. The misspelt words could be interpreted in many other ways, of course. Some might attribute them to the mental breakdown and unbalanced state from which Nollett is suffering. Some may also relate it to the undecidability of the characters. However, a detailed look at Nollett (as she might be the emblem of the women whom Matisse in his works unethically and distortedly exposed) suggests the obliteration of all the previously constructed and revered linguistic rules (metaphorically an allusion to the highly revered artistic state of Matisse in the previous literature), whose destruction, or in better terms deconstruction (an allusion to Derrida’s deconstruction which falls on the same page as the decentering of postmodernism), comes at the very shaken and fragile hands of Nollett, hence the shaken and misspelt words. Put simply, those misspelt words could be the very questioning of the logocentrism against which postmodernism stands; the very principle to which Nollett and many other people like her steadfastly, in a spirit of rebellion and protest, object and at which Himmelblau, as Byatt’s voice, aims to clarify. Some instances of such misspellings are illustrated below:⁶

He asked me why I had not *writen* more of the *disertation* than I had and I said I had not been very well. (110)

I mean to *conect* this in time to the whole tradition of the depiction of Female Slaves and Odalisques. (111)

But I had *writen* some notes on Matisse’s *distortions* of the Female Body with respect especially to the *spercificaly* Female Organs. (111)

... and undermining and *dismisive* and unhelpful even if no worse had

⁵ Derrida’s denial of the Western philosophy (Derrida 27–73) is based on rejecting the logocentrism. He believes that the signified meaning of a word is never present in a pure sense, hence its undecidability. The consequent undecidability is no doubt a postmodern element.

⁶ The selected misspelled words have been accompanied by the sentences in which they appeared in order to give the reader a better contextualised grasp. To pinpoint the words, original italics are removed and misspelled were emphasised.

haped. (111)

The more I *strugled* the more he insisted and pushed at me with his body until I said I would get the police. (113)

In addition to apparent reiterations coming from Nollett's shocked hands after the alleged sexual assault, the above misspelling becomes a revolt against the phallogocentric and ordered/organised stance of her supervisor as well as a manifestation of the subverted artistic installation of female-male, marginal-central dichotomies.

In doing so, Byatt permits the proliferation of "different, heterogeneous discourses that acknowledge the undecidable in the past" – the narrated past of Nollett and Diss in this case – rather than imposing a homogeneous, linear network of "causality and analogy" (Hutcheon, *Politics* 66). This way, she opposes *grand narratives* – totalising and comprehensive thoughts of Western literature and philosophy including concepts such as God, death and religion – which have come to an end in Jean-François Lyotard's viewpoint, as teleology, at the very heart of the obsolete grand narratives, plays a less critical role in the postmodern tropes. Instead, the postmodern prefers to emphasise *little narratives*, whose implications are less totalising and absolute. To further approach the postmodern dialectics of "The Chinese Lobster" in the province of little and grand narratives, three distinct trajectories are open to our advancement.

The first trajectory concerns the structural grounds upon which Byatt bases her writing, in that Byatt, knowingly or unknowingly, does her best to give rise to individual and local narratives of a community. She creates a personal Nollett suffering from both mental and physical pains, a Diss who suffers from delusions of grandeur as well as contempt to a student's art, and eventually the dean of women students who stands in the middle of both. All these seem not to abide by the previously totalising narratives whose heroes or heroines typically reflected the glorious values of death or life and honour or dishonour. One might find here nothing more than a detailed personal account of a conflict between a professor and a student, whose value, to the postmodern eye, seems to outweigh the cliché-ridden and totalising values of the modernist or classic perspectives. In "The Chinese Lobster," the teleology one might seek in these little narratives loses its meaning in the strongest of the terms, inasmuch as no justice is expected to surface in the story; nor an ending, or a resolution in better terms, to the stereotypical evil is heralded. In fact, rarely is the classic evil stereotype – or the whisper of the diabolic seduction for that matter – felt through the story, much less the story's coming to an end or justice. All there is to be

seen is the local and specific “little narrative” of a woman whose personal conflict with a professor has tangled a knot, which consequently implicates the reactionary measures of another professor striving to untangle the very same unpleasant knot.

The second course one might take in addressing the grand and little narratives of “The Chinese Lobster” has to do with Byatt’s stylistics of writing. With postmodern little narratives in mind comes a certain espousal of detailed descriptive writing rather than the cursory holistic style: a style which stands against the ideals of putting on a pedestal the heroic or the epic dimensions of the plot, as was often the case with modern or classic writers. What Margarida Esteves Pereira writes in “More than Words: The Elusive Language of A. S. Byatt’s Visual Fiction” reveals this particular issue further:

In her “Introduction” to *The Oxford Book of English Short Stories* (1998), A. S. Byatt justifies some of her choices of stories, because they contain what she, using Henry James’s phrase, calls “solidity of specification.” In her words “solidity of specification” may be defined as a detail in characterization provided by the exhaustive description of the objects, or at least of those objects that are important for the narrative. For Byatt it is this detailed description of an object, which she refers to as “the thinginess of things,” that enhances the dramatic effect of the narrative. (211)

Byatt in “The Chinese Lobster” pays excellent homage to specificities, descriptions, and detailed illustrations. Descriptions of the restaurant, Diss, the lobster, eating manners, and clothing are, to name but a few, among the elements which call the attention in this story. As an instance of the specificity in postmodern stylistics and bearing in mind that the lobster – be it literal or figurative – possesses an essential bearing to the title of the story, one must have a proper reading of the part where Byatt details the lobster at the outset of the story:

In the middle, in the very middle, is a live lobster, flanked by two live crabs. All three, in parts of their bodies, are in feeble perpetual motion. The lobster, slowly in this unbreathable element, moves her long feelers and can be seen to move her little claws on the end of her legs, which cannot go forward or back. She is black, and holds out her heavy great pincers in front of her, shifting them slightly, too heavy to lift up. The great muscles of her tail crimp and contort and collapse. One of the crabs, the smaller, is able to rock itself from side to side, which it does. The crabs’ mouths can

be seen moving from side to side, like scissors; all three survey the world with mobile eyes still lively on little stalks. From their mouths comes a silent hissing and bubbling, a breath, a cry. The colours of the crabs are matt, brick, cream, a grape-dark sheen on the claw-ends, a dingy, earthy encrustation on the hairy legs. (106)

The colour of the lobster and later the nuances of the colours of the crabs, the location of the crabs, their hissing sound, and the kinaesthetic delicacies informing the whole descriptive lines are among some of the stylistic staples of Byatt's narrative which could strike a close chord with the postmodern *little narrative* stance, strengthening the effect of Byatt's narrative and the offerings thereof. This characteristic and exclusively detailed description of the lobster and crabs does not end here. Byatt trims her story with such nuances and complexities of description when need be.

The third way, also the last line of argument here, is targeted at Matisse once more. The little narratives constantly attempt to question and perhaps annihilate the very essence of the fact that there is a grand scheme of narratives, one that has never been deconstructed or challenged. If Matisse in "The Chinese Lobster" serves the story as an allegorical grand narrative or an echoing voice of the art and its history or a flashback to the grandeur of the golden age of art, all this is shattered by Byatt's occasional, yet destructive, censuring of Matisse in the guise of Nollett's complaints of both the artist and Diss. Matisse happens to be questioned and scrutinised in much the same way as Byatt seems to deconstruct the whole line of the "grand narrative" of art history.

Byatt elusively opts for a lobster as her story's title as well as her detailing the lobster's position in the display case. Byatt portrays "a live lobster flanked by two live crabs. All three, in parts of their bodies, are in feeble perpetual motion" (106). Later, she speaks of their bubbling, hissing, and crying. The lobster is barely moving, and the crabs are crying. This should be rightly evocative of how Nollett and Diss flank Himmelblau. The undecidability befalling Himmelblau in helping the complex case of Nollett and Diss leaves her with very little room to move, as the lobster is shown to be heavy in its movements. Though, as depicted, lobster gets decentered at times from the very centre where it was flanked but falls back again to the trap. Thus, it is hypothesised hereby that the lobster and crabs indicate Himmelblau and Nollett-Diss, respectively. Crabs cry out for the undecidable and decentered lobster whose movement or decision is trapped by its own struggles to perceive and untangle the tangled crux. The fate of the flanked and decentered

lobster is vague in much the same way as the fate of Himmelblau, and by extension, the fate of the vexing case whose resolution she has been trusted with is at the mercy of her own cognition and diagnostic senses.

Byatt, by dint of masterfully apposing a myriad of postmodern narrative elements in “The Chinese Lobster,” presents her artistic achievement in portraying the controversial issues of arts, perspectivity, women’s problems and challenges in much of the contemporary academy in the world. Employing the postmodern paradox and parody delicately, she enables multiple perspectives on Henri Matisse to be debated on elusive grounds. Her double-edged and playful position as Himmelblau acts as the binding transideological endband of clashing ironies of Nollett and Diss, while she does not waver from her ethical position. This paper, thus, has made an effort to offer a better reading of Byatt’s rather hard-to-interpret story, which has inextricably laced many undecidable staples with the newly born little narratives in the postmodern discourse.

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HERSTORY&FEMALE IDENTITY: POSTMODERN FEMINIST REVISION OF FEMALE CHARACTERS IN ISLAMIC NARRATIVE IN MOHJA KAHF'S *HAGAR POEMS*¹

Aya ELBABLY²

Abstract

Contending with the re-reading and re-writing of history that has always excluded women from its grand narratives, postmodern feminist writers have always sought to revise canonical texts from a gynocentric perspective. Through their revisionary fiction, they aimed at challenging the subordinate, marginal and invisible position of the women characters in these texts. In place of the alleged objectivity of these accounts, postmodern feminist revisionist writers transform these ancient tales while employing female insight to re-narrate the story of humanity, yet through women's perspective. Thus, they create new texts to challenge the fundamental gender stereotypes, namely the binary images generated by the 'collective male fantasy' of women as divine/demonic. This reclamation additionally shatters the imposed silence upon women, while granting these female characters the voice and agency they were denied. This paper demonstrates Mohja Kahf's re-writing of the female characters, Hajar, Balqis and Zuleikha in her poetry collection *Hagar Poems* (2016). Kahf re-envision the Islamic narrative by recollecting these women's stories from a postmodern feminist revisionist perspective. Such re-appropriation of these female figures unsettles the traditional linear Islamic history that conventionally focuses on male characters and recreates these eminent women in new archetypal forms. In effect, this paper draws upon the critical theories of postmodernist revisionism, using Adrienne Rich's seminal concept of 'Re-vision' and Alicia Ostriker's feminist revisionist mythmaking theory, along with postmodern feminist historiography and in particular Linda Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction, in addition to Islamic feminism. Hence, the paper displays how Kahf recasts these notable women to create a dialogue between the past and the present. Her revisionary feminist re-narration renders a possible divergence to the patriarchal symbolic and problematizes the androcentric basis of history. Finally, the paper demonstrates how Kahf's poetry reinforces modern Muslim women's agency and enriches their subjectivity.

Keywords: Postmodern Feminist Historiography, Feminist Revisionist Mythmaking, Arab American Poetry, Islamic Feminism, Mohja Kahf

INTRODUCTION

In her poetry collection, *Hagar Poems* (2016), Arab American Feminist Muslim writer Mohja Kahf deals with some of the most iconic women characters along the history and through the three main Abrahamic religions, namely Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Inspired by the notable female figures in the Qur'an, Hajar, Balqis and Zuleikha among others, Kahf re-reads and re-envision Islamic history by recollecting these eminent

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women's stories from a postmodern Islamic feminist revisionist perspective. The aim of this paper is thus multifold. While relying on potent characters from her historical Islamic cultural background and mythology, the paper examines how Kahf draws upon the Islamic narrative to formulate and enrich her Arab American Muslim subjectivity, vis-a-vis the dominant Western, i.e., Greco-Roman myths or Judeo-Christian narratives. The paper shows how Kahf employs the three women as strong and independent idols and inspiring role models for young Arab American Muslim immigrant women. First, Kahf focuses on Hajar's experience, i.e., ordeal, struggle, and survival to empowers herself as well as other Arab American Muslim (immigrant) women. Accordingly, Kahf identifies with her ancestor's persona's estrangement to provide a symbolical archetype for Arab American Muslim immigrants who create new Muslim communities in the United States, while fighting and surviving against all the prevalent oppressive Islamophobic policies and culture in the U.S. Second, by re-narrating the three women's accounts, the paper analyzes how Kahf's poetry positions them in the center of the narrative contrary to the earlier omnipresent and/or androcentric accounts while disputing their status of obscurity and/or oblivion. Through giving them voice and agency, the paper explores how the poet contests the dual axis of the Western orientalist view of Islam as repressive of women and the conventional patriarchal Islamic exegesis. Finally, this paper demonstrates how the writer is keen on celebrating Islamic history that highlights female experience and expression. Such revision depicts how the poet highlights these women's agency and substantial role in making history.

Postmodernism, Feminist Historiography and Feminist Revisionary Mythmaking

Postmodernism advocated the release of historical narratives from its overwhelming totalizing and repressive ideologies and called for creating multiple histories. It aimed at opening historicity to bearing plural meanings and interpretations rather than forcing and imposing a unilateral version that suppresses numerous voices and demolishes countless hidden stories. Influenced by Lyotard's rejection of and disillusionment with the traditional master narratives, postmodernism contested the view of history as an orthodox grand narrative (Waugh 177). Coupled with the rise of postmodernism, new historicism and second wave feminism, Feminist historians and critics starting from the 1960s, and most remarkably in the 70s and 80s have disputed the grand narrative of history that has centered around the narratives of great men. As Virginia Woolf expressed it, women in history, 'have been all but absent from history' (36). Joan Scott in *Gender and the Politics*

of History (1988) and Gerda Lerner in *The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History* (1979) have thus questioned the “exclusive universality of the (Anglo-Saxon) male subject” as well as the central roles that male subjects have traditionally occupied in standard well-known historical narratives (Elam 36). Therefore, postmodern feminist writers and critics started to undertake a process of re-evaluation and reinterpretation of women’s place and agency in history.

Postmodern women writers attempted to recover history from its male dominated version and patriarchal monolithic narration. As Linda Nicholson shows in *Feminism/Postmodernism* (1990), postmodernism with its revision of history inspired female critics and writers to contest the established neutrality and rationality of grand narratives which only support normative masculine ideals (qtd. in Selden, Widdowson and Brooker 209). Instead of viewing historical narratives as a “directly accessible unitary past,” feminist historiographers and revisionist women writers substituted it with the concept of histories, as ongoing series of constructed narratives (Cox and Reynolds 4). They intended to ‘demythicize’ and ‘demystify’ such biased historical accounts from its hegemonic patriarchal ideology to allow the dissemination of other narratives rather than the experiences of men (Himmelfarb 75). According to Scott, ‘herstory’ includes writing a narrative of the experiences that women had, either alongside or totally outside the traditional frameworks of historical contexts (“Women in History” 147). Scott indicates that women must be the focus of the enquiring process into history, the subjects of their stories, and own the narrative by becoming its agents (“Women in History” 145). This inclusion entails stressing the value and historical significance of women’s actions, which have been ignored and devalued and highlighting the female agency in the making of history (Scott 147). That is to say, ‘Herstory’ is a means to defy the notion of history as neither “the story of man’s heroism” nor the premise of exclusive masculine agency, where traits of rationalism, self-determination and self-presentation are affirmed only for men (Scott, *Feminism and History* 3). As a result, ‘herstory’ stands as “a corrective to the phallogentric themes of most historical accounts” as well as portraying women as implicit in history making as much as men (Scott, *Feminism and History* 3). To reiterate, postmodern women writers actively claimed and remembered the lost past and the nameless and ostracized woman figure in history after decades of being marginalized, voiceless and absent to foreground ‘herstory’ with the primary focus on female experiences.

In the same manner, Linda Hutcheon, in *The Politics of Postmodernism* (1989) and *A Poetics of Postmodernism* (1988), strongly advocated the possibility of the multiple

narratives of history by deconstructing the concept of the master narratives of history and propagating the postmodern view of history as a plural concept through the narrativization of past events. Unveiling the parallelism between literature and historiography, the critic perceives both paradigms as “discourses, human constructs”, which are based on signifying systems and that is why they are both subjected to constant variations and change which transform their nature along time (Hutcheon, *Poetics* 93). Historiographic metafiction thus lays claim to historical events and personages to re-conceptualize and rework the forms as well as the contents of the past to embrace a plurality of truths, while defying the claims of the canonical narratives’ objectivity (*Poetics* 5). This engagement, questioning and subversion of conventional historical narratives were indeed optimal for prompting feminist possibilities that present an imagined historical narrative, lending new insights into the original official version of history, creating a fresh dialogue with the past that led to engendering different renewed interpretations. In accordance with this view, Kahf’s poetry exhibits Hutcheon’s theory of metafictional historiography. In historiographic metafiction, history loses “its privileged status as the purveyor of truth”, which confirms its nature as constructional, perspectival, and uncertain rather than naturally given and objectively monolithic (Hutcheon, *Politics* 10).

Imploring women writers to rethink and rewrite history, Cixous analogously urged them to revise and retell all the narratives that they inherited from the patriarchal symbolic order. Through this revisionary process by female writers, demystification and reclaiming occurs, which would consequently result in retelling all the stories in an invigorating manner, as the critic states “all the stories will be retold differently, and then the future would be incalculable, the historical forces would, will, change hands, bodies; another thinking as yet not thinkable will transform the functioning of society” (“Sorties” 289). Realizing the negative effects of being subdued by male-centered narratives, Adrienne Rich in her seminal article “When we dead awaken: Writing as re-vision” (1972) called upon women writers to adopt ‘re-vision’ whom she defines as “the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction-is for us more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival...it is part of our refusal of the self-destructiveness of male-dominated society” (18). As Rich emphasizes, retelling the traditional patriarchal accounts of canonical narratives is pivotal to disentangle the entrenched discourses on women from the dominant male ideology of female subordination as well as limit the social structures’ patriarchal mode. Hence, it would help

to reformulate women's identities from a female viewpoint, rather than a male's androcentric perspective.

In her monumental article, "Thieves of Language" (1982), Ostriker equally envisions re-visionist writing as a linguistic medium to redress stereotypical images of women. In this way, revisionist women writers can attain a new self-definition by stealing "the language of the Father" and deconstructing prior myths and narratives that imprison women within descriptions of binary oppositions that do not authentically express their experiences ("Thieves" 72). As Daly (1990) suggests, revising the mythic and historical symbols embedded in the dominant cultural discourses could significantly open up depths of reality closed to women (*Gyn/Ecology* 44). By asking new questions about old texts, revisionist women writers uncover the hidden sexism and implied meanings inherent in such ancient texts, which only helped in fostering patriarchal traditions and propagating certain archetypes that affected the collective unconscious. Such revision resists sexism in canonical literature and increases awareness of the sexual politics of language and style that are employed in such accounts, in order to create new texts that disrupt the old ones.

Similarly, Islamic feminist scholars, as Miriam Cooke illustrates in *Women Claim Islam* (2001), "challenge conventional histories and canonical texts that either omit mention of women or stigmatize their prominence as an aberration" (62). These scholars conceive the individual and the communal as inextricably intertwined especially when they start seeking the past, interpreting scripture and looking into history to forge a just future (Cooke 62). Consequently, Islamic feminist writers read into the gaps of historiography and participate in rectifying the distortions of hermeneutics for retrieving women's agency and activism. In effect, Islamic feminist writers are "constructing a counter-memory that situates them between the grandmothers they are honoring and the daughters they are serving" (Cooke 64-65). As Asma Barlas explains, to acquire a meaningful encounter with God, women should actively cultivate their intellectual capacities in analytical reading of God's verses (255-256). Therefore, Muslim feminist writers seek to develop a spirit of critical inquiry into rereading women's stories in the Qur'an.

Kahf's poetry consistently consolidates what these scholars call for in terms of reimagining and revivifying women's significance, and specifically women in the Islamic historical tradition. As Ostriker highlights, Western Greco-Roman classical myths and biblical narratives inform 'high culture' which are handed down either through the religious or the educational authority (*Stealing* 213). That is why, Kahf usually onsets her poems

with holy verses. Such inclusion denotes Kahf's use of Qur'an as a religious and historical canonical text that founded the stories of these women across the ages. However, in her poems, Kahf follows Hutcheon's notion of metafictional historiography and attempts to reconstruct these accounts and expand the women's roles in them. Kahf's poetry thus fits Hutcheon's definition of historiographic metafiction that echoes history in its resonance of the past texts and contexts along with its figures, yet in a fictional way (Hutcheon, *Poetics* 3).

Kahf chose distinguished Qur'anic narratives as symbolic of 'high culture' or a historical grand narrative. The poet thus disputes such normative patriarchal historical narratives that transformed these women into peripheral characters and identifies them as speaking subjects rather than silent submitters (Kahf, "Braiding the stories" 159). That is why, Kahf's poetry seeks to displace the totalizing and repressive narratives and she imaginatively articulates different stories, i.e., multiple histories that are more personal and subjective. Such revision would contribute to transforming the ways of reading and re-interpreting Islamic history. Her poetry disrupts the normative patriarchal historical narratives and brings about a real change in women's cultural status, by redefining their historical roots and thereby creating potent female archives for the future generations. Kahf's poems can be considered as a work that does not "simply supplement what is lacking in the sacred texts, in a celebratory tone, but enters into dialogue, in a subversive way" with the Qur'an and its prevailing patriarchal interpretations (Bertrand 8). By re-narrating and reconfiguring these significant ancient women's stories that are central to Islamic historical discourse, Kahf resists the dominant patriarchal accounts, affirms these women's agency, fights against women's alterity and exclusion and hence promotes reconstructing contemporary Muslim women's identities. The poet employs parody as a radical suspension of the act of historiography as a means of subversion, not to "destroy the past" but to both enshrine and question it (*Politics* 6). Thus, historiographic metafiction allows Kahf's poetry to exhibit an assertion and a denial of the past, with the revision of its reductive patriarchal representations of women.

Hajar-the Founding Mother: Reinventing Her Legacy

Despite having never been explicitly named in the Qur'an³, Hajar⁴ is indeed one of Islam's pillars, a fundamental character in history and a pivotal archetype for modern women, representing many ideals of faith, agency and strength. The classic story of the Abrahamic family⁵ of Prophet Ibrahim, Sara, Hajar, Ismael and Isaac has various versions among Judaism, i.e. Genesis/Old Testament, New Testament (Bible) and Islam, i.e. Qur'an/Hadith⁶. Though the main plot coincides between the different versions, some discrepancies still persist in particular aspects in regard to Hajar's origins, her abuse and escape, the reason why she was sent away into the forsaken desert with her baby child

³ As Riffat Hassan explains, Hajar's name was never mentioned explicitly in the Qur'an even though the name of her husband prophet Ibrahim is one of the most recurrent names in the Quran as he was stated 30 times. Also, her son Ismael was cited several times in the Qur'an (152,155). However, Muslims only know about Hajar's name through Ibrahim's prayer in the Quran; Q 14:37 in Surah Ibrahim; added to Prophet Muhammed's Hadith (Hassan 152,155). See Riffat Hassan's article "Islamic Hagar and Her Family" (2006).

⁴ Hajar's name is transliterated with "j", not "g" since there is no "g" sound in Arabic. Also, Hajar's name with a 'j' could denote her symbolic migration from Egypt to Mecca as part of her Divine mission (hijra), as well as her inclination to dissociate from all evil doings/sins (hajjara) as other scholars argued (Abugideiri 85). However, in this paper, Hajar will be used as the right Arabic-sounding transliteration along with her connotation as an immigrant.

⁵ The story begins with Prophet Ibrahim, who is promised by God to be blessed by land, progeny and inheritance. Due to Sara's barren condition, the old couple were deprived of begetting any children. Sara then decides to endow her husband with a new wife, and chooses her own slave/maid, the Egyptian Hajar. Hajar promptly gets pregnant and delivers baby Ismael. Shortly, Sarah gets pregnant herself and bears Isaac. After some time, Prophet Ibrahim takes Hajar and Ismael into the desert in Mecca and leaves them there. Desperate that they would die out of thirst, Hajar starts looking for any sign of water for survival. She ran seven times between the two mountain tops of Safa and Marwa. After the 7th time, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Hajar. The angel nudged the earth with his wings and underground well of fresh water explodes. Hajar and her son were rescued, and they started the nation of Arabs, whereas Isaac started the genealogy of Jews.

⁶ In some Genesis accounts of the story of Abraham's family, Hajar is described as an Egyptian princess, not a slave, who was given as a gift to serve Sara as her handmaiden since Sara was of wealth, beauty and grand family origins. In addition, despite giving birth to Abraham's first son, some biblical narratives describe that Hajar remains a slave who is to be abused until she flees into the wilderness, where she is rescued and directly addressed by God/the archangel Gabriel, who promised her great fortune and told her about begetting Ismael, a great leader and prophet in the future. Then, she was commanded to return to her hostile servitude in Abraham's home, before once again being driven into exile (Abugideiri 85). A major difference in the storylines lies in the real reason why Hajar and her son were sent away into the desert. According to the Testament's story, Sara persuades Ibrahim to expel Hajar and her son, because of her jealousy after bearing Isaac, fearing the competition in the succession of progeny. However, as per Hadith in Islamic tradition, God ordered Ibrahim to take Hajar and Ismael to (Mecca) now, where they would later build Ka'ba and transform the desert into a habitable community, i.e. establishing the Arab Muslim lineage and culture. Also, in the Genesis story, Hajar sits away from Ishmael and prays not to see his death after their water is consumed. God opens her eyes and she sees a well. While in the Islamic narrative, Hajar actively ran seven times looking for water. On one hand, the Genesis account portrays Hajar as passive and helpless, whereas the Islamic depiction of Hajar's effort denotes her agency.

Ismael and finally her role and agency in finding the water of Zamzam⁷. As Amina Wadud illustrates, women and religion studies in the 1990s started an academic scholarly trend that focused on women's shared aspects of history and ideology among the Abrahamic religions that perceived women as daughters of Sara and Hajar (*Inside the Gender Jihad* 121). This reconceptualization helped in successfully forging relationships between women, replacing the patriarchal view of women in the Abrahamic tradition (Wadud, *Inside the Gender Jihad* 121). The Hajar/Sara trajectory has been abundantly discussed in the postmodern Western feminist revisionary Jeudo-Christian and womanist biblical literature⁸ vis-à-vis the dominant literature that focused on the figure of Ibrahim. As Phyllis Trible and Letty Russel further demonstrate in their *Hagar, Sara, and Their Children* (2006), Hajar and Sara's characters have been recurrently reviewed by feminist critics and theologians across all Abrahamic religions (1). Feminist critics and theologians of different faiths have extensively retold, redefined, analyzed and commented on their narrative.

In the Judeo-Christian traditional narratives, Hajar's story is always read as a story of exploitation, betrayal and abandonment. Despite her status as an eminent matriarch of monotheism, Hibba Abugideiri in her "Hagar: A Historical Model for 'Gender Jihad'" pinpoints the scarcity of modern revisionary Islamic feminist scholarly reinterpretation of Hajar's narrative⁹ that only started to expand recently (81). Even though the Hajar/Sara paradigm has been numerously adapted in English literature, the research concerning the use of Hajar's story by an (Arab) Muslim author in fictional/poetic works originally written in English yields no clear results. Hence, Kahf's poetic collection, *Hagar Poems* (2016) is of prime significance as she engages with the former Jeudo-Christian feminist revisionary

⁷ Zamzam is the Arabic name for the well of fresh water that Hajar found with the help of Archangel Gabriel. It has a special symbolic meaning to Muslims, as it saved both Hajar and her baby Ismael from thirst and death in the desert. To this day, Muslims drink from its running waters and it holds such a spiritual and religious meaning to them. They also believe in its healing prospects.

⁸ See Trible Phyllis *Texts of Terror* (1984); Sharon Pace Jeanson *The Women of Genesis: From Sarah to Potiphar's Wife* (1990), Katharine Doob Sakenfeld *Just Wives: Stories of Power and Survival in the Old Testament and Today* (2003), Renita J. Weems *Just a Sister Away: A Womanist Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible* (1988), Dolores Williams, *Sisters in the Wilderness: The Challenge of Womanist God-talk* (1993), Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and John I. Esposito (eds) *Daughters of Abraham Feminist Thought in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (2001), Trible Phyllis and Letty M Russell (eds) *Hagar, Sarah, and Their Children: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives* (2006).

⁹ See Islamic Feminist scholars' works of Amina Wadud's "A New Hajar Paradigm: Motherhood and family" (2006), Riffat Hassan's "Islamic Hagar and Her Family" (2006), Hibba Abugideiri's "Hagar: A Historical Model for" Gender Jihad" (2002), Barbara Stowasser's "The Women of Noah, Lot, and Abraham" (1994), Aysha A. Hidayatullah's *Feminist Edges of the Qur'an* (2014) among others.

accounts, by rewriting her narrative guided by her Arab American Muslim feminist ethnicity, religion and perspective. Kahf's poetry perceives Hajar's archetype as an iconic sacred woman whose strength and faith entrusted her to be the Muslim matriarch and a prototype of inspirational leadership, strength and hope, owing to her unwavering belief and persistence.

In a series of twenty-nine poems, which establishes the first section of Kahf's *Hagar Poems*, the poet remembers, rewrites and reconstructs Hajar's story, where she honors the latter as her foremother, commemorates her myth and symbolic significance in Islamic culture. The poems celebrate Hajar's agency in finding the water, the miracle that ensued as well as her courage and faith which resulted in surviving the predicament of being stranded alone in the desert. Using dramatic monologues with Hajar as the speaker, the poems also tackle the relationship between Hajar and Sara, while transposing them into an American millennial setting. The poet highlights Hajar's merit in Islamic history as the founder of the Islamic civilization which is little known to many non-Muslim Americans as Islamic feminist scholar Riffat Hassan (2006) states in her "Islamic Hagar and Her Family" (149). While establishing her pivotal role in forming Muslim women's individual and communal lives in the past, the poet nonetheless reflects on what Hassan recognizes as her close relevance to Muslim women's lives at present (149). By honoring Hajar's role in the foundation of Mecca, Kahf's poems denounce how patriarchy erased "the tradition of historicizing women as active, full participants in the making of culture", as Barlas explains (257). In the meantime, Juliane Hammer observes that it is common for Muslim women and scholars to draw from the story of Hajar, who is considered the mother of Islam, as an example of the persistence, perseverance, and strength of Muslim women¹⁰ (95). By retrieving Hajar's story and her role in populating Mecca, converting it into a hustling town that turned into the development of new world civilization, the poet indeed stresses the latter's agency in Islamic history that was brought about by her determination, bravery, and self-sacrifice.

As feminist historians demanded the necessity of establishing the history of women as a field of inquiry, Kahf engages with Islamic history and places Hajar's persona at its center and thus revises Hajar's character and role in Islamic history as an interactive

¹⁰ In addition to Kahf's poems in *Hagar Poems* (2016), see for example Asra Nomani's novel *Standing Alone in Mecca: A Woman's Struggle for the Soul of Islam* (2006), Azizah.Al-Hibri's autobiographical essay "Hagar on My Mind" (2003) in *Philosophy, Feminism, and Faith*, Ruth E. Groenhout and Marya Bower (eds) and Amal al-Jubouri's Arabic poetry volume *Hagar Before the Occupation, Hagar After the Occupation*, translated to English in (2011).

subject but not as a topic as Gerda Lerner delineates (7). Moreover, Ostriker contends that the technique of reversal and defiance is one of the effective tropes of feminist revisionist mythmaking ("Thieves" 74). In these poems, Hajar is evidently featured as the main subject in her dramatic monologues where Kahf is bent on naming her explicitly. Thus, the poet brings Hajar as a woman and a mother to the center.

In the poem "The First Thing" (4-5), the poet empowers Hajar to claim the miracle of Safa and Marwa as well as Zamzam Water, symbolic of the rite of Sa'y¹¹ which later became known to be one of the fundamental stages of performing Haj or Umra rituals in Islam in her own voice and words. The poet writes, "I am Hagar the immigrant / There came to me the revelation of the water" (4). Amina Wadud on one hand maintains that all references to female characters in the Qur'an use an important "cultural idiosyncrasy that demonstrates respect for women"¹² (*Qur'an and woman* 32). On the other hand, Kahf's Hajar rejects what Mary Daly terms in *Beyond God the Father* (1973) as the seized power of naming, where "women have had the power of naming stolen from us" (8). Despite Abugideiri's argument that Hajar's nearly absent name in Islamic texts does not make her significance disputable for Muslims and in Islam (81), Kahf seizes the speech to "make female speech prevail" (Ostriker, *Stealing* 211). Thus, the poet transforms Hajar's state of being the invisible silent woman into granting her the opportunity to seize speech and have access to authoritative expression (Ostriker "Thieves" 69). Kahf in fact allows her ancient historical poetic persona to deliver a powerful statement about herself and reinvents her worth and agency for modern Muslim female generations. As the poet further illustrates, "the first thing the founder does is look for water" (5). Upon sharing the water of Zamzam with the tribe of Jurhum¹³, the thriving town of Mecca was created, which in turn proves her status as the founding matriarch of monotheism and of Islam hereafter (Hassan 154).

¹¹ Sa'y is a fundamental ritual in the Islamic rituals of the pilgrimage (Haj) and could be performed in the Omra; another trip to the holy house of God (Kaaba) in Mecca, Saudia Arabia. In it, they emulate Hajar's straddling between the two mounts of Safa and Marwa located in Mecca, while she was searching for water for herself and her son. They have to follow her footsteps, seven times as she did in the past.

¹² Except for Mary, the mother of Jesus, they are never called by name. Most are wives and the Qur'an refers to them using a possessive construction (the idafah) containing one of the Arabic words for wife (Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman* 32).

¹³ Jurhum is the name of the Arabic tribe, that was passing through Mecca now and once they found traces of water from Zamzam well, asked for Hajar's permission to share the water with her and settle in the area. Hajar granted them the use of the water well, on the condition that it remains in her family's possession. They also taught Ismael the Arabic Language and he married one of their daughters. (Hassan 153)

Thus, Hajar's finding the necessary water for survival was the essential reason for the evolution and blossoming of her people and society and later Islamic Islamic civilization.

Moreover, the poet's use of the word "immigrant" features not only Hajar's immigration to the new barren land of Mecca but also establishes a link of identification between the poet and her Muslim matriarchal ancestor. This association between both generations inscribes some of Hajar's positive characteristics of strength, stamina and leadership that would pass on to her granddaughter(s) as part of her inherited legacy and influence. As Hassan further shows, Hijrah/immigration is a blessed notion in Islam. Hajar's place in the wilderness, without the protection of any family or familiar protégée, makes her faith in God and in herself tested (155). Her embrace of the challenges of hijrah; by leaving her birthplace, her origins and familiar milieus to fulfill God's destiny and will makes her gain merit in God's favour (Hassan 155). Thus, she was rescued and revered as the founding mother of Islam and of all Muslims.

Consequently, Kahf indeed identifies and resonates with both of Hajar's loneliness yet courage in parallel to Arab American Muslim immigrants' journey and struggle in their new homelands. The poet aims to inspire Muslim women by their ancestor grandmother Hajar who was lonely in her struggles, yet faced these difficulties with fearlessness and resolution on survival. That is to say, Kahf's resurrection and reinvention of Hajar's symbolic character enacts her Muslim identity and roots, in the figure of a strong pious Matriarchal leader Hajar.

The poet also exposes the difficulties she had to endure because of this divine mission that she was chosen for, including the loneliness, the physical hurt and emotional stress. As the poet expresses:

I walked across a razor-sharp horizon,
slates of earth, sediment
of ancient seas
to stand alone at this frontier:
where the shape of the cup of morning is strange
and dome of sky, mat of earth have shifted (5)

Kahf's poetry provides Hajar with an opportunity for self-representation as well as the power of speech, instead of showing her as a passive or secondary character who could be perceived as only endowed by a miracle from God for the sake of her prophet boy Ismael and her prophet husband Ibrahim. It nonetheless affirms the role of Hajar the matriarch,

displacing patriarchy and deconstructing the male hegemony of Ibrahim's character as the founding father of monotheism. Kahf's re-imagination of Hajar sets an example of women's autonomy and agency. As Hassan remarks, Hajar refuses to give up, thus she keeps running and looking and praying for help (155). This underscores her commitment and dedication to fight for both her life and her child's, exerting all her last drop of strength and perseverance (Hassan 155). Facing her predicament bravely, while maintaining piety, active hope and belief in God's rescue and mercy only confirms her determination. As Wadud furthermore explains, Hajar's faith represents practical efforts and a spiritual relationship with the divine (*Inside the Gender Jihad* 142). Thus, her endurance and resolution resonate with the ideal of both the submitting and the active hope and faith of being a Muslim (Stowasser 49). In consequence, Hajar is indeed a model of faith, reason and resourcefulness for all Muslims to follow and learn from her historical account (Stowasser 49). This is reflected through the ways the poet gives her the voice to narrate her story, underlines her defiance and persistence, as well as highlights her strength, stamina and courage.

Moreover, the poet affirms Hajar as a great matriarch, saying: "I am Hajar, mother of a people" (5). These words, uttered with such enthusiasm and vigor echo Hajar's sense of pride along with her sense of responsibility for being the leading Muslim matriarch. The poet proclaims Hajar as the main reason for starting a whole nation of Muslims thereafter, by saying:

where God does not have a house yet
and the times for prayer have not been appointed,
where the only water is buried deep
under hard ground and I must find it
or my child will die, my people
remain unborn. (5)

Hajar is not only seen as Ismael's mother or Ibrahim's slave wife, yet she is the mother of all Arabs and all Muslims. She rose from the lowest position of a dark-skinned servant slave girl into being in one of the holiest and most revered positions in Islamic tradition¹⁴, being a mother and a predecessor for Prophet Muhammed, whom all Muslims venerate

¹⁴ In Muslim societies, "mother" is the most highly revered member of the family because, following one of the most popular traditions of Islam, where Muslims believe that the mothers' place is in Heaven; in reference to their belief that "Paradise lies under the feet of the mother", for the sacrifices and effort they undertake for their children (Hassan 154).

and respect. Hassan indicates that Hajar is also perceived as “the pioneer woman,” a leader who is the reason for the establishment of a new civilization (154). Similarly, Hatoon Alfassi perceives Hajar as the true Calipha on Earth who undertook God’s purpose of populating the land and developing it into a prosperous community (26:55). The above lines also pertain to the notion of feminist mythographers who maintain that matriarchy preceded patriarchy and that matriarchy is the origin of myths as Daly her *Gyn/Ecology* (1978) argues (218). Additionally, the poet changes the perspective by shifting the center from a dominantly male to a predominantly female voice and persona. The Judeo-Christian discourse emphasizes Hajar’s passivity, and the patriarchal discourse strengthens Hajar’s features in position to men’s characteristics of power and reason, contrary to women as essentially vulnerable, emotional and inert (Weil 154). However, the poet presents Hajar as reasonable, resourceful and a protective nurturing mother-figure, whom the poet looks up to as a remarkably influencing role model. By writing history for all Muslims, Hajar deconstructs the established power relationships between male and female and reconstitutes the female-male dyad in terms of power and agency.

Kahf’s usage of the first-person pronoun (I) repeatedly as well as pronouncing Hajar’s name in a confident and defiant manner signifies the poet’s resolution that Hajar’s name and narrative is not to be subdued after her name was obscured in Qur’anic verses. The poet here insists on naming Hajar, as well as stressing the female character’s independence and ownership of the miracle and taking the credit to herself so that her name, agency and significance cannot be missed by anyone who is unfamiliar with her story. Such re-writing aligns with one of the most common feminist revisionist mythmaking strategies, as Diane Purkiss (1992) conveys, where women characters are given a voice and persona, after having always been portrayed as “silent, objectified or inaudible in previous narrations of the story” (445). The poet subverts the universality of the Abrahamic story as ‘History’ as a given and thus explores the implicated characters along with different relationships of power (Lerner 8). Through recasting her miracle and underscoring her agency in history making, the poet then focuses on Hajar’s fable as ‘herstory,’ rather than just being dismissed as anecdotal. By rewriting Hajar and Ibrahim’s historical story for all Muslims, Kahf’s Hajar deconstructs the established power relationships between male and female and reconstitutes the female-male dyad in terms of power and agency.

The poet adds that Hajar’s miracle came after her tenacious effort in finding such water, declaring:

I am Hajar, mother
of a people
I stand here
straddling the end and the beginning
Each rock cuts into the heel like God
Each step is blood, is risk:
Is prayer (5)

Despite the unfamiliarity of the setting of the desert and the imagery of loneliness which enhances the physical and emotional affliction that Hajar undergoes, it in effect highlights her own resilient character and unwavering resolution along with her piety and courage. It puts her as an antagonist to Ibrahim and compares her to God's other messengers who all had to endure hardships for the sake of delivering God's words or establishing monotheistic nations. As Abugideiri (2002) points out, Hajar was a God-appointed messenger, whose migration to Mecca along with her trials puts her on equal footing with God's other messengers (85). Barbara Stowasser similarly suggests that "Hajar had to endure the distress and danger that have typically marked the careers of God's chosen historical agents" (44). Hajar's suffering is analogous to any great hero's suffering, linking her to the status of male prophets, who had to endure many impediments to deserve God's grace and the high status they are viewed in. Kahf reimagines Hajar's persona in order to "enlarge, contest and reanimate the tradition itself" (Howe and Aguiar 9). In place of the conquering heroes, the poem exhibits a woman and a mother figure, who is a symbol of courage and persistence and, defies lots of physical and psychological hardships but gets out victorious at the end.

The revision of Hajar resonates Ostriker's notion that the revised heroine is not merely an object anymore, who is only seen from the outside, but rather a "quintessential woman-as-subject", who gets engaged in the action and takes responsibility for her deeds ("Thieves" 79). Such qualities of evident determination and stamina clearly subvert the stereotypical patriarchal qualities attributed to being a weak, subordinate, or passive female. Besides the adversities embedded in such a journey as well as the frightening isolation, Hajar, the speaking poetic persona on the other hand embraces her solitude as part of the expedition she has to undertake to redeem and rediscover herself. Hajar undertakes such a journey by herself and finds spirituality and glory. This poem represents the essence of revisionary fiction that "deconstructs a prior myth and constructs a new

one" ("Thieves" 72). As Zajko and Leonard emphasize, Kahf's description of Hajar gives voice to a fundamental character whose actions are central to other people, but whose inner consciousness is rarely explored (2). Such revision insists on including, affirming and underscoring Hajar's miraculous journey, impact and legacy.

Kahf certainly echoes Hajar's authoritative voice and asserts her divine appointment, agency and leadership in Islamic heritage and collective consciousness. The poet reinvents the ancient figure of Hajar to afford her the due archetypal power among contemporary Muslim women and highlights the historical continuity between Hajar the immigrant Matriarch and contemporary women. As Abugideiri declares, Muslim women should depend on their heritage along with their faith, i.e., Islamic subjectivity in order to correct the wrongs of patriarchal social structures to achieve social reform; guided by their ancestor mother Hajar who forcefully established female agency and defied orthodoxy (83). Along these lines, Kahf resurrects the symbolic figure of Hajar as her narrative is vivid with moral lessons and real experiences that could be of great benefit and close relevance to contemporary Muslim women (Abugideiri 82). Kahf's reinvention of Hajar generates a "historically potent model of reform" for modern Muslim women (Abugideiri 83). Equally, through the re-establishment of Hajar's positive Islamic archetype, the poet reclaims Islam as a positive force, in contrast to its orientalist depiction as a source of oppression or a motive for rebellion (Waldmeir 220). Hence, the poet introduces Hajar, as a powerful devout woman to contest the stereotypical western hegemonic singular images of oppressed and helpless Muslim women (Waldmeir 221). So, Hajar in this poem is a great symbol for life-bearing matriarchs, founders of cultures and civilizations as well as an autonomous woman who feels both proud and accountable for her people, and thus, earns her irreplaceable role in Muslims' lives.

Reincarnating the Matriarchal Ancestral Spirit: Establishing Ties with Modern Muslim Women

Extending the metaphor of Hajar as a guiding Guru and a healing spiritual model, Kahf reaffirms Hajar's potent symbolic powers in her short one-stanza poem namely, "Lifting the Hajar Heel" (38). The poet expresses that Hajar as an icon of matriarchy, endurance and survival is incarnated in every living woman's soul, giving her the due support and guidance, only if the contemporary woman was attentive to her innate instincts and is willing to start listening to her intuition. The poet maintains that:

Dying for water,

Hajar went racing
back and forth in the valley,
when what she needed most
was under the heel of her foot.
All it took was an angel's nudge.
Little self, panting in the world,
take a hint, lift your heel.
Find your own long-buried Zamzam spring. ... (38)

Using the metaphor of Zamzam spring as the underlying and inherent miraculous power present in every woman repressed by the dominance of patriarchy, Kahf addresses all contemporary women along with herself to find their inner miracles and hidden powers. Using the imperative form "Find your own" added to stressing the fact that it is a "long-buried" miracle such as "Zamzam spring", the poet almost orders her female readers in specific to start looking deep within their souls to uncover their marvels, to unearth the buried 'feminine imaginary', as Irigaray contends, which would then yield into discovering different possibilities (qtd. in Whitford 164). The poet thus instigates modern Muslim women to explore the Islamic tradition and history as a source for their identity (Waldmeir 225). Hence, Muslim women should take the example of their ancestor Hajar as a symbolic figure, who got actively engaged in constructing such subjectivity, one that is mainly based on spiritual belief and devout piety along with active self-reliance and autonomy.

The poet, therefore, urges all her women audience/readers to unleash their repressed powers and voices, and get inspired by their great grandmothers, like Hajar, and overthrow the shackles of patriarchy and ethnic confines to fight the long centuries of inhibition that women have suffered in pursuit of their true subjectivity. According to the poet, women should rather be bent on unraveling their feminine internal divine subconscious, which is the true essence of their power and grandeur, since such influence of the Female Divine results in inspiration, self-discovery and original subjectivity (Keating 484). Kahf's subversive memory and re-imagination of Hajar emphasizes her close association with the Divine, acting as a source of divine spirituality. Hence, Kahf portrays Hajar as a symbol and an enactor of the hope and possibility of reconciliation and defiance of any injustice. As asserted in Hassan's words, all women, whether Muslims or women in general ought to remember the story of Hajar, stressing that:

[Her story] is important not only for Muslim daughters of Hagar but for all

women who are oppressed by systems of thought or structures based on ideas of gender, class, or racial inequality. Like her, women must have the faith and courage to venture out of the security of the known into the insecurity of the unknown and to carve out, with their own hands, a new world from which the injustices and inequities that separate men from women, class from *class*, and race from race, have been eliminated. (164)

Using a simple colloquial modern style, the poet directly addresses her great ancestor, Hajar in a dramatic dialogue in the final poem of the volume's first section, namely "Hajar Thorn" (44-45). In the poem, the poet implores Hajar to visit her in her American home country, Arkansas, USA. Thus, the poet says:

Visit me anytime, sit on my porch
 I will make you strong dark tea
 I will take you to Hot Springs, Arkansas
 to see the mineral wells (44)

The speaking persona in the poem imagines Hajar as a visiting guest, who she imagines to be part of her family, a kind of a great grandmother who might travel to see her immigrant granddaughter, and the granddaughter in turn who promises to show her around her hometown. She lists all the things they could do together, and she assures her that she will be hospitable to her by offering her strong tea as the host's favorite drink and entertaining her by taking her to do some sightseeing at the famous Arkansas Hot Springs, and the mineral wells. Recalling these specific Arkansas Hot Springs is quite emblematic, as the American Springs is one of the oldest federal reserves in the United States, whose age extends to ancient history, and was celebrated among the Native American tribes for their belief in its medicinal properties for which they took it as a legend.

Evoking such a monumental hot spring in notably establishes an analogy between Hajar, who is famous for her own Zamzam spring and the poet's current home and time. Hence, it emphasizes such an ancestral link and an unbreakable bond between the two characters, despite having different locations, as in the Middle East and the West/America, or even disparate time zones, one before history (BC) and the other is contemporary age. This analogy indeed affirms the extended impact and influence between the two women. As Ostriker delineates, Kahf beseeches modern Muslim immigrant American women to reconstitute their lost families, that is Islamic roots, to amend their spiritual ties with their matriarchal ancestors, to rediscover them as "spiritual mothers and daughters for each

other in time of need," since rediscovering these lost ancient Mothers, sisters and daughters aids in recovering "the original" women that they are ("Thieves" 74). That is to say, the closer these modern Muslim American women get to their Hajar's of the past, the more grounded and supported that they would feel since they would not feel estranged or uprooted. On the contrary, they would feel like they belong to a genealogy that extends over thousands of years, while claiming potent and powerful women archetypes as ancient Hajar as their own matriarchal ancestor.

The poet next expresses the unique and unbreakable association that the two women share, saying:

It is your story
and I am complicit in it
...
Hajar, even if I fail again and again,
you have been my guide
through a merciless, burning day
My sister, my teacher, my friend,
whether near to me or estranged,
inextractable thorn in my flesh (45)

The poet manifestly revitalizes the ancient Hajar of the classic Islamic texts making her story relevant and relatable for (Muslim) women today as she helps in empowering modern women by allowing them to see in themselves reflections of a strong, surviving spiritual ancestor. Thus, Kahf's poem calls upon Muslim women to remember their ancestral matriarchs, even if this knowledge was locked or held from them by factors of patriarchy or distortion of history. As Ostriker clarifies, modern women must reconstruct the past historical accounts of their ancestors to be able to know who they are and arrive at their inner truth "Each one is queen, mother, huntress" ("Thieves" 75). Furthermore, Kahf's invocation of the ancient Hajar aligns with what Juanita Ruys identifies as 'memoria' in her article, "Playing Alterity" in *Maitresse of My Wit: Medieval Women, Modern Scholars* (2004). Ruys describes that memoria is a manner of reconnecting to these historical characters, as she maintains that:

It may even be that our medieval subjects, themselves highly conscious of a continuum from the ancient world to their own time, might have been pleased to think that they would continue to partake in the imaginative

chain of memory, not only as remembering subjects in their own day, but as subjects remembered in ages to come. (230)

Memoria, then, serves as a means of facing the silence in documenting these ancient women figures and the determination to retrieve this concealed and forgettable bond between the different women generations.

Drawing on her depictions in the hadith and expanding her character in new and revelatory ways, the poet indeed gives a picture of Hajar as a symbol of strength, hope and reconciliation, a Hajar figure who is worth remembering and imitating. That is why, Kahf establishes the deep connection and relationship between herself and this great Matriarch. This affirms one of the fundamental functions of feminist revisionary mythmaking, that is increasing awareness through recognizing past myths and key historical female figures. As Ostriker states, “the recognition that the faces in mythology may be our own faces which we “must explore” to gain knowledge of myth’s inner meanings and our own ... women’s mythological poems demonstrate increasing self-consciousness, increasing irony and increasing awareness” (*Stealing* 215). In that sense, Kahf’s strong rapport with such an eminent figure as Hajar is a way to gain knowledge into our own modern Muslim female psyches to achieve increased self-consciousness and spread cultural awareness of women’s contributions. As Hajar’s account still survives and in learning to recognize “*the flickering light of the divine*” in both herself and those around her, the poet finds the strength to bring healing to modern fractured women characters and as a result the sense of hope is readily apparent (Kahf 35).

The poet further stresses Hajar’s significance in order to question stereotypical orientalist as well as patriarchal assumptions about women, or Muslim women in particular, and their great roles in history. Kahf’s revisionary poetry reveals Ruys’ notions of ‘presentism’ and ‘pastism.’ While ‘presentism’ is concerned “with what the study of medieval people can reveal to us of ourselves and our own cultural imperatives,” ‘Pastism’ “reifies alterity, positing a fundamental gulf of understanding between ourselves and our medieval subjects” (212-213). That is to say, the poet engages with such an ancient mythological narrative and re-makes it anew in her poetry collection to foreground Hajar’s female voice and reflect her own ethnic feminist subjectivity. Through re-inscribing cultural Islamic archetypes, such as Hajar, Kahf aims to resist the normative patriarchal notions as well as subvert the orientalist cultural implications that silence Muslim women and inhibit their subjectivity.

That is to say, Kahf 's rewriting, re-visioning and reinterpreting of Hajar confirms the timelessness of her myth, suggesting the continuous relevance to contemporary (Muslim) women's lives, besides her immense importance as an influential matriarch, making visible her agency and subjectivity. The poet enacts Helen Cixous' call for the woman writer to write herself into history, to reinvent her story, so as to "forge for herself the antilogos weapon. To become *at will* the taker and initiator, for her own right, in every symbolic system" ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 880). Her revision of Hajar's ancient archetype in Islamic collective unconsciousness maintains Sandra Gilbert's concept of the "revisionary imperative," as an essential part of women's literary tradition is a "crucial antidote" to cultural alienation and marginalization of women (50). The poet indeed reclaims her ancestral linkage with Hajar and rewrites the Islamic historical narrative.

As a result, Kahf's Hajar can be described as Daly's 'Spinster,' where as a matriarch, she is the one who "participates in the whirling movement of creation," who "has chosen her Self, who defines herself by her choice," on her own terms, neither in relation to children nor to men (*Gyn/Ecology* 3). As the poem "Hajar Triumphant" (39) reads:

Here I Am,
Eve out of Eden,
left with only the wahy* of water
and the task of helping another
human being, Ismail:
He who, without Hajar, is history (39)

Through her poems, Kahf's appropriation of Hajar as a potent matriarch helps in attaining a re-imagination, a revision and a re-interpretation of her as a historical persona by rewriting her and her myth. Comparing Hajar to a female divinity, Kahf retrieves Hajar's powers that have been repressed and silenced, as Jane Caputi demonstrates (426). Such a revision of Hajar's eminent status promotes a change of consciousness, leading to redefining the world, humanity and women at large (426). She contests Hajar's static portrayal, adding to her the necessary depth, and psychological complexity through the means of the poet's shift of narration.

In this sense, Kahf refutes the 'law of the father', while aiming at destabilizing male hegemony over language and myths. She revises Hajar, while writing her with a 'mother tongue,' or with a female language, as Ostriker maintains (*Stealing* 211). The poet uses her poems to disrupt Hajar's invisibility, impartiality, and marginalization. She works on

bringing her voice from muteness into articulation and expression, defying the patriarchal feminine qualities of timidity, passiveness or submission, and stressing her miracle and strength. As a feminist revisionary poet, Kahf attempts to displace orthodox patriarchal mythical structure and language to pursue a hidden buried female truth as Ostriker states (*Stealing* 50). Contrary to the typical patriarchal portrayal of ‘images of women,’ the poet here imparts a subjective image of Hajar as a real woman, while trying to reveal her inner psychological feelings, thoughts and ideas.

Kahf fundamentally celebrates Hajar’s motherhood as a biological attribute of superiority rather than inferiority as patriarchy would conversely deem. Hajar was not portrayed as merely a ‘womb’ as the phallocentric discourse pertains. Yet, her motherly senses drove her to first saving her little son Ismael, besides creating a great nation hereafter, marking her one of the historically significant matriarchs. Hence, Kahf’s revision subverts Hajar’s latent invisibility and marginalization and highlights her significance, subjectivity and agency. In other words, Kahf’s reappropriation of Hajar’s narrative undermines the patriarchal archetype of mothers as submissive objects, oppressed under men’s dominance, and showed her as an autonomous subject, with strong will and determination. Hajar is no longer a man’s ‘other,’ as a secondary inferior being but instead, she is given the freedom of speech and the value she deserves. Kahf vividly expresses this in her poem “Hajar Triumphant” (39) again as she says:

begins with hijrah, alienation,
homo sapiens at ground zero,
cast out in otherhood, motherhood,
I and Thou in the desert,
having no hard rod of law to lean on for holiness,
but only this flow between our fingers (39)

Altogether, as Barlas proposes, Kahf’s re-reading and re-inscription of Hajar’s persona in contemporary American poetry is considered a “feminist reading that poses a challenge to dominant and androcentric modes of knowledge-construction,” (258). This re-appropriation opens up various liberatory possibilities of the Qur’an’s stories and women characters that are a crucial part of human history and the Muslims’ collective consciousness (Barlas 258). Kahf’s revised narrative of Hajar inserts her forcefully into history and cultural narratives while highlighting her womanhood and motherhood.

While asserting her ethnic identity, Kahf revives Hajar as an inspiring model for

herself and other Muslim women. She defied her loneliness, ostracism and discrimination and built a new nation, just like Arab American Muslim women. Hajar is indeed a model for Arab Muslim women immigrants, for they have to be determined and powerful and endure the hardships and struggles they face, while having the proper faith and belief that they will survive such hardships and ordeals, and come out triumphant just like Hajar. Despite her suffering, Hajar ended in wholesome survival, granted with water and mercy, while being recognized as the great mother of prophets and woman of miracles. Hajar had the courage and stamina, not to be defeated by the gruesome and intolerable conditions around her. She acted and worked on delivering herself and her son out of this test and achieved salvation and deliverance. Therefore, Hajar's story is a physical and spiritual achievement and accomplishment.

Balqis: The Subversive Queen

As one of the examples of the enthralling women that were mentioned in the Qur'an, Kahf deals with the story of the queen Balqis¹⁵, in "Balqis Makes Solomon Sign a Pre-Nup" (61-62). As Stowasser (1996) explains, Balqis, the renowned queen of Sheba has always been regarded as an enigma; a strong yet a foreign character, who resists paradigmization (62). She was a fierce woman and a powerful sovereign who was not afraid of Solomon. After trying to persuade her to believe in the only God and quit paganism, Balqis entered political and religious negotiations with Solomon. She was also unaffected by his great reputation until she saw a palpable proof of his powers and miracle. Therefore, she defies the monolithic representation of women as fearful and timid. Wadud meanwhile illustrates that the Qur'anic story of Balqis evidently celebrates both her wise political views (*Qur'an* 40). Wadud applauds Balqis for her "worldly knowledge of peaceful politics and her spiritual knowledge of the unique message of Solomon" (*Qur'an* 41). Wadud also concludes that these traits made Balqis on an equal footing with Solomon and indicated her independent ability to govern her people wisely and be able to make sound political decisions, opposite to the norms of her people, who for instance advised her against going to Solomon (*Qur'an* 41). However, Stowasser observes that traditional Islamic exegesis and scholars did not reinforce Balqis' model as a potent and wise female political sovereign which clearly defied the acceptable social paradigm of Muslim women (66). On the

¹⁵ As Amina Wadud mentions in her *Quran & Woman* (1999), the "Balqis" story is narrated in the Qu'ran. She is the queen of Sheba, a sovereign ruler of her sun-worshipping pagan people. After hearing about this queen from his hoopoe, Balqis enters political and religious negotiations with God's prophet Solomon who asks her to believe in the One and Only God. After realizing his powers of controlling nature and its forces, along with other abilities, Balqis submits to God and joins him in his cause.

contrary, some of them used her story as a cautionary tale against Muslims being ruled by women, lest this would cause them eternal damnation and loss of God's favour¹⁶ (66). Nevertheless, in some of the uncommon but more liberal modern interpretations, like Sayed Qutb's modern interpretation, Balqis was regarded as Solomon's equal, and not his submissive since all people in God's sight are equals since they are all believers (Stowasser 66). In this manner, Postmodern revisions of Balqis' story prove to be of eminent significance as it aligns with the Qur'an's initial representation of her as a strong leader. She is depicted as a queen who seeks advice from her people, yet is courageous enough to make her own decisions and act upon them even though they are contradictory to her people's beliefs or men's counsel. Certainly, this sets inspiring models for modern Muslim women.

Even though God has endowed prophet Solomon with mighty potentials and abilities, such as knowing how to communicate with human beings as well as animals such as birds, besides his treasures and wealth, Balqis still defies and challenges his authority and command. In this poem, Kahf re-figures Balqis talking to Solomon, her future husband in a defiant and self-assured manner, rejecting any act of submission as a result of their union in marriage, expressing her insistence to continue being a ruler for her people. That is to say, the poet puts her at the center of the narrative, as the speaking subject who imposes her terms onto the union between her and her future husband in their prospective relationship. The poem gives an overall impression of Balqis' setting down her own conditions and terms of this marriage relationship, as indicated by the poem's title, resonant of the notion of a modern prenup, where the couples sign off a contract of specific rules and regulations guiding their relationship. First, Balqis declines to abandon her throne, even to her lover, despite loving him, confirming that:

I love you,
but I won't be
signing off

¹⁶ As Stowasser argues, even though the Qur'an overtly stated that Balqis was the competent ruler of her country, conservative and fundamentalist scholars followed Ibn Kathir's report on the Prophet comment on a woman ruler, as he says, "a people who entrust their command to a woman will not thrive" (65). Orthodox scholars took this statement as an indication of women's inability of sovereignty and they applied it to Balqis' story, whom they conceived her as being damned till she acceded to Solomon's call of monotheism. These scholars include Abu Hanifa, Despite the fact that this hadith has been proven as weak and only said in link with Khosroe's daughter accession to the Persian throne, Stowasser maintains that "While this hadith remains an important scripturalist argument in the conservative Islamic stand against women's rights to share in, let alone assume, political power." (66)

my sovereignty.
I come to you
but keep my throne
for my Self's
ascent alone (61)

Despite her love and acceptance of marriage to Solomon, Balqis as a ruling queen asserts that she refuses to give up her throne, her kingdom and her right to rule. Hence, she is not depicted as the weak wife who has succumbed to the control and domination of her husband. In contrast to what is commonly misinterpreted by the patriarchy in this specific Qur'anic narrative, Balqis is not defeated, conquered or subordinated by Solomon. Even though agreeing to believe in his God and follow him as God's sent messenger, she nonetheless retains her prerogatives as a queen and her individuality as a loving wife out of her free will. She now acquires the position of speaking subjectivity as Molly Hite explains (9). The use of the subject pronoun (I) maintains the reversal of Balqis' position of someone who is commonly perceived as a secondary character in her story. In this poem, she is rather the defining part of this relationship. Her opinion matters the most. She is no longer a subordinate, or an auxiliary.

In addition, the poet challenges the patriarchal religious restrictions imposed on modern women, who are made to believe that women should not be rulers. As Osmani, Farooq and Ahmad assert, even though the Qur'an uses no terms that imply such prohibition, some orthodox Islamic scholars such as Abu Hanifa, Imam al-Baqillani, Al-Mawardi, Imam al-Ghazali, Ibn al-'Arabi al-Maliki, Ibn Kathir, believed that women were not entitled to hold leadership roles (57). Some modern conservative scholars followed these earlier fundamental scholars' decree, amongst who are Al-Shawkani, Muhammad Rashid Rid, Mustafa Al-Siba'i, Abul A'la Mawdudi, Muhammad Hussain Fadlallah, Hasan al-Turabi al-Qaradawi, Abu Shiqqah, al-Bahansawi and Zaydan as they believe that women should not be the top leaders of a country (Osmani, Farooq and Ahmad 57-59). Here, Kahf pinpoints Balqis' position as a ruling queen and voices her defiance of such a ban as well as the unfounded interpretation of her story. The poem enacts what Cooper and Short name "feminist intervention," to restore and reinforce such historical women characters' significance in history (3). Through employing such feminist intervention, the poet in effect challenges this stern fatwa, and depicts that women can very well be queens and ruling monarchs.

As Mariadele Boccardi suggests, the revision of historical women, such as Balqis and other female characters not only influences and reshapes how these women are depicted, but also aids in establishing active and agent women characters for the present generations (qtd. in Cooper and Short 7). Through this interplay and the co-existence of the two disparate historical moments, which are put together side by side, historiographic metafiction hence reveals crucial aspects about both the moment of production and the moment being reproduced. That is why, Kahf could also be criticizing the idea that today's Muslim women are still manipulated to think that they must give up their identity, their lives and careers in which they thrived after their marriage, in order to be subdued by their husbands. Kahf clearly criticizes the religious patriarchal thought that instigates women to abandon their success, work and titles to be content to be only wives, as inferiors to their husbands and partners. Using Balqis' defiant voice and insubordinate manner, the poet shows her insistence on preserving her status as a queen, a sovereign and a successful woman, to empower contemporary young Muslim women, stressing that they can be both loving wives and independent subjects and successful working women in their professional lives since the two roles are not mutually exclusive.

This bold and confident tone persists in Balqis' words. The queen actually discards the stereotypical propagated image of married couples being as one soul as all but impractical and unreasonable belief as she says:

Don't pull that mystic
 oneness stuff—
 that I love you
 is enough (61-62)

Kahf reframes Balqis character as resisting to be defined and differentiated in reference to Solomon. She is by no means the incidental, the inessential or the other as opposed to Solomon, who is to conceived as the essential, the subject and the absolute, as Beauvoir contends (qtd. in Nicholson 14). Balqis, furthermore, continues to remind Solomon/the readers of how powerful she is as a woman of her own will, as a queen of herself, who can bestow lavish gifts upon her lover, as she proudly shows off by saying, "I shower you / with peacock gifts" (62). Nonetheless, she declares that only she has the utter control over whether to give him her body. She maintains the dominant will to act, with her being the only authority to decide and who is in full control of her body, as she says, "my silken body /— mine to give" (62). Taking control of her body and sexuality is fundamental to

establishing her autonomy and freedom of choice.

Setting boundaries of her freedom and independence in a self-determined manner, Balqis additionally warns Solomon not to oversee her actions, send any followers to track her down, as this relationship should be built on mutual trust. She directly says that she refuses him to act as her guardian as she warns him saying:

Don't ask the hoopoe
how late I'll be—
I cherish
living free (62)

That is to say, the poet implies that proper marriage is not an imprisonment for women. It is not an excuse for limiting women's freedom or overpowering them. Balqis' aggressive tone and confident voice delineate Ostriker's notion of identifying active aggressive women with truth as a means of defiance to this long tradition which equated strong women with deception and virtuous women with gentle inactivity ("Thieves" 76).

By the end of the poem, Balqis asks Solomon that he must understand her status. She is a different woman, a queen and is thus never submissive. Saying that:

Other wives
surrendered more?
You've not loved
a queen before.
All yields to you,
...
all but this ... (62)

Kahf's recreation of a powerful Balqis in this poem reclaims her as symbolic to the relationship between Muslim couples. Kahf's disapproval of current gender relations makes her show Balqis renouncing them, in order to highlight, challenge and subvert the patriarchal practices that underpin them, in both the medieval and the contemporary times (Cooper and Short 9). In this view, the poet accordingly disrupts the prevalent androcentric and patriarchal power relations between genders that are stereotyped by traditional and fundamentalist Islamic exegesis. The poet here reimagines such a conversation between an extraordinary couple to condemn some of the patriarchal practices in Islamic marriages that coerce women to be obedient to their husbands and abandon their freedom. That is

why the poet criticizes Muslims' perception of marriage as a kind of surrender of women's identity to be put under the control of their counter partners. Through the reconstruction of Balqis and voicing her demands and presenting her mindset as a queen and a free woman, the poet establishes the equality of both partners, who would still maintain equal responsibilities and obligations towards each other as well as society. While believing that Islam, feminism and women's significance in history and religion are not mutually exclusive, Kahf advocates Islamic feminism which promotes the view of Islam as defending feminist ideals. The poet entrusts Islamic feminism's significant role of challenging the mistaken extremist patriarchal interpretations of Qur'an.

In this sense, the poet engages in what Susan Friedman in *Mappings* (1998) calls as the "deformation of phallogocentric history" (202). Integrating women's experiences while contending with the issue of gender as Friedman explicates, reforms the historical narrative as well as strengthens and enriches the newly reconstituted history of women (200). Consequently, in place of the conquered queen, Kahf reclaims Balqis as an empowered female figure to set her as a liberating archetype for an iconic queen in Islamic tradition, so as to embolden modern young Muslim women generations. As a result, Kahf's poem as Friedman argues creates a counter narrative to resist and subvert the story about Balqis that is told by the dominant patriarchal culture which reinforces her alterity and passivity (230). In her poem, she counters the stories that exclude women, deprive them of their rights of equality and continue to rectify the wrongs done to our female ancestors and heritage and reconstruct the identities of the ancient queen figure and the new women generations alike (Friedman 230). Seeking to construct her story out of a feminist paradigm, the poet counters hegemonic histories through her story as told from a feminist perspective (Friedman 202). Furthermore, by setting her as the speaking agent of her story, who sets down her rules and conditions and re-narrates her own story, using such bold voice and strong commanding verbs and tone, Kahf's poem defies the standard language that belonged to phallogocentric logic and the language that previously portrayed her; which was encoded of male privilege (Ostriker, "Thieves" 69). The poet uses defiant and strong language to describe women's experiences, defy language as the law of the father that insists on subjugating women as wives, and lets Balqis access authoritative expression, to seize speech (Ostriker 69). She properly expresses her desires and needs in her marriage relationship.

Kahf's poem presents Balqis as the main speaking personae, rather than situating her as a silent woman in the story's background. The poem gives her a voice, by which she

powerfully dictates Solomon what she looks for in their relationship, her boundaries and the terms and conditions which she can tolerate, endure, compromise with or totally reject and abstain from. Hence, re-appropriating Balqis' story adds other new layers of meaning that invoke further comparisons of female experience and representation between the past and now (Cooper and Short 13). The inclusion of Balqis' historical figure intervenes with the past and opens up an essential self-conscious dialogue between the ideas in the past vs. the present, that question gender politics in both ages. Equally, it fulfills what Hutcheon calls as metafictional historiography where both fiction and history are being "simultaneously used and abused, installed and subverted, asserted and denied" ("Historiographic Metafiction" 5). Re-telling her narrative in Kahf's poetry thus serves a dual purpose; one is deconstructing the subservient image of Balqis as a queen who surrendered to Solomon's rule as commonly propagated in standard Islamic exegesis, and the second is re-defining the proper relationship between Muslim couples that should be based on mutual love, equality and respect for each other's desires and needs, without subjugating the wife as an inferior or a subordinate figure to her male counterpart. By re-imagining conversations and adding dialogues to the revised canonical text, the poet develops these women characters' subjectivity as dynamic women rather than monolithic and sets them as compelling examples for current Muslim generations, especially the young women.

Zuleikha: A Woman in Love

In comparison to all the faithful female figures depicted or spoken of in the Qur'anic tales, Stowasser comments that Zuleikha¹⁷ is considered the most complex character of them all (50). As Stowasser states, this Qur'anic tale acts as a strong metaphor and demonstrates the psychology of a female, who is fired by desire and love, mixed with repentance, honesty and fidelity (50). However, fundamentalist Islamic scholarly exegesis has focused on reading the story as indicative of women's nature that is woven with aspects of cunning and slyness as the definitive traits of women. Instead of seeing the story as portraying the human nature in its fullness, with both its vice and goodness, women were thus categorized as the archetype of "sexually aggressive" and dangerous creatures who pose a threat to men by their sexual allure and depravity, which would result

¹⁷ Zuleikha is inferred from the Quranic Surah of Yossef. She was the woman who was married to Potifar, the pharaonic Egyptian army leader who bought Youssef as his slave after arriving in Egypt. After he came of age, she fell in love with him and attempted to seduce him. When he denied her seduction, she conspired against him and sent him to prison for 10 years.

in social chaos and instability (Stowasser 50). In this context, women and Zuleikha, were compared to Satan who entices believers away from the righteous path due to their immense attraction and irresistible charms. According to Selden, Widdowson and Brooker (2005), postmodern fiction writing is at once parodic and critical, complicit and subversive of grand narratives in specific, turning the grand narratives into plural histories (200). As a postmodernist feminist writer, Kahf thus employs satire and parody to take a critical stance towards the historical representation of Zuleikha's character and her revisionary poetry raises questions about the "the ideological and discursive construction of the past" as well as the representation of the truth (Selden, Widdowson and Brooker 200). The poet in "Zuleikha Ionic" (63-64) questions and problematizes Zuleikha's story. She exhibits Zuleikha's story as symbolic of "the enduring power of female selfless love and faithfulness" (Stowasser 50). The poet as a result reimagines Zuleikha's character, representing her voice and expressing the story from her female perspective as a story of a woman in love.

Believing that reading and understanding the Qur'an has been heavily influenced by men's vision, perspective, desires and needs over the history as Wadud states, women's psyches and experiences in repercussion have either been overlooked or excluded from the basic paradigms of Qur'an's interpretations (*Qur'an* 2). Hence, Wadud calls for re-negotiating, retrieving and reclaiming the woman's voice that has been dominantly silenced by such patriarchal readings in order to arrive at a more holistic understanding of Islam and how to develop a Muslim identity (*Qur'an* 2). Wadud furthermore self-consciously seeks to identify the significance of the female voice in the text from a woman's perspective. In correlation with Wadud's invitation to unearth the female voice and experience in the Qur'an and re-interpreting women's characters and narratives that are found there, Kahf retells Zuleikha's story through her eyes as an ardent lover, who is passionately overworn by her affection to Youssef. Instead of portraying her as the epitome representative of the tempting Satan, through her sexual attraction to her lover, Kahf repaints her with a gentler yet in still with a critical eye for her psychological condition as a woman deeply and passionately in love, whose infatuation was severely rejected.

Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn propose in their *Metafiction and Metahistory in Contemporary Women's Writing* (2007) that postmodern feminist writers deconstruct and reinterpret the earlier narratives that have silenced or have been closed to female subjects (2). Along these lines, Kahf's poetry revisits and appraises the historical interpretation of Zuleikha's actions and motives that have been previously misjudged as a woman character.

In contrast to the monolithic interpretations of historical narratives, Kahf in her “Zuleikha Ionic” (63-64), is determined to produce a counter historical discourse, depicting her as a woman in love, not as an evil seductress but just as an emotional fervent lover who needs to learn how to channel her emotions properly, instead of burning herself and hurting her dear ones in the process. The poet uses the third pronoun (she) to re-narrate her story. The female narrator, created by the poet, can evidently see and understand Zuleikha’s character and actions better as a woman storyteller. Therefore, in the first stanza of the poem, she writes:

This is Zuleikha:
Love surges beautiful
high voltages in her
She is loose, frightened,
charring everything
she touches and
hurting, hurting, hurting
herself (63)

As Purkiss (1992) highlights, ways of rewriting women characters in revisionary works include changing the narrator from male to female, focusing on female characters and putting them in the center rather than marginalizing and relegating them to the periphery of the story as secondary/non-essential characters, transforming the negative female model into a positive female icon and strong matriarchal figures, that work as inspiring archetypes for later women generations (441-442). Accordingly, Kahf as a female narrator retells Zuleikha’s story and puts her in the center of her narrative, while compassionately reworking her motives and inner consciousness. Contrary to the dominant patriarchal stereotype of the image of Zuleikha as the sexual predator or the malicious woman who wants to betray her husband¹⁸ and takes advantage of her protegee, the young handsome innocent Youssef, Kahf presents her in the poem as the victim in reverse. She is refigured as the woman who fell victim to her emotions of love and unfortunately got things out of control. Her love and deep intense emotions of infatuation are compared to electrical voltage that when is let loose without proper constraint and direction, began to hurt everyone. Despite its great danger and power of destruction, electricity is such an

¹⁸ Zuleikha’s husband, Potifar who had a high-ranking position as the leader of Egyptian pharaonic armies, was reported to be an old and impotent husband by some Islamic scholars (Stowasser 55).

indispensable force in life that brought so many revolutionary developments and progress to modern life in particular. Zuleikha is thus compared to such force with her love that is key to life, yet with her uncontrolled passion that is destructive.

The poet correspondingly sympathizes with Zuleikha, whom she pictures as a blind frightened lover and who hurts herself the most, as is shown in the poem the extent of her self-harm with the repetition of the word “hurting” three times. This indicates how much the woman suffers from her unrequited love and is torturing herself with her impulsive actions and trials, rather than the typical image of the she-devil who conspires to entrap Youssef, her lover. That is to say, Kahf as a postmodern feminist writer employs feminist historiography in order to reconstruct the past as well as subvert the coercive discourse of classical history that constructed and ideologically propagated the subjective and collective meanings of women and men as categories of identities (Scott qtd in Friedman 210). In aligning with women’s and feminist scholarship on the Qur’an as Barlas contends, Kahf re-narrates Zuleikha’s story to the modern reader in order to reveal the patriarchal exegetical interpretation that has distorted such canonical text. Barlas additionally pronounces that such re-reading of the text is vitally suggestive. Rereading the qur’anic tales establishes the continuing relevance of its narratives to present-day Muslims, as well as rescues the Qur’an from the deforming shades of sexism and misogyny that have controlled and disfigured our understanding of it for centuries (Barlas 268). Kahf thus questions the construction of Zuleikha and Youssef in the archetypes of the satanic seductress and the angelic victim in respective.

The poet then confirms Zuleikha’s state as a tender lover, comparing these emotions of adoration to electric charges and Zuleikha as an ion. Yet, Kahf reverses Zuleikha’s image to be the victim, due to the lack of support and love she gets from her husband. The poet thus expresses that:

Zuleikha, ionic,
charged electrically
from an excess
of passion, or a deficiency
She is a lover
She is a lover
She doesn’t know how to stop it (63-64)

That is to say, Kahf self-consciously problematizes the nature of the authored and

authorized character of Zuleikha in the long-established Islamic historical narrative as Heilmann and Llewellyn argue ("Hystorical Fictions" 138). By rewriting such historical narratives, Kahf alters the repressed aspect of the present reshapes the collective unconscious of a people (Heilmann and Llewellyn "Hystorical" 138). That is to say, such reappropriation emphasizes the recreation and the re-inspiration as well as the subjectivity of the historical character rather than being mere parody and pastiche (Harris 181). By reappropriating Zuleikha's narrative, her historical account is revised. Through the use of historical metafiction, readers feel uneasy about the past with its influential ideologies. In effect, Kahf's re-vision, disruption and subversion of the typical narrative of Zuleikha establishes a fresh dialogue with the past, which would lead to engendering different renewed interpretations.

Kahf furthermore pictures Zuleikha as lacking the due patience and the maturity of a typical lover on fire, who doesn't care about anything in the world except for satisfying her urge and thirst for love and passion. The writer thus compares Youssef to an electrical conductor, whose proximity to Zuleikha adds more fire in her heart, swelling her heart with more desire and a yearning she cannot resist, as she pronounces:

This is Yusuf:
He is a conductor
Zuleikha doesn't know from conductor
She wants to surge
She wants him to surge with her
She doesn't have patience for science
She breaks the beakers and sweeps the table clean
She knocks over the gallon and lights the gasoline (64)

The poet moreover illustrates that Youssef, though he leaves and gets far away from her, he never blames, curses or hates her for her feelings of love to him.

Yusuf, scorched,
will have left
sometime in the night
He will not curse her
She is a lover (64)

Finally, the poet asks Zuleikha to be more patient, as she will learn from her great

suffering and experience that love needs time, rules to be fulfilling for both partners and the right timing to flourish, as the poet demonstrates:

One day she will learn
the science of conduction,
how to love and not be consumed

Then she will become
the spark itself and bond
to every blue and particle of gold,
to all that is Yusuf in the world,
spinning, sub-atomic,
alight in beauty
alight in beauty (64)

Instead of demonizing her and slandering all women because of her weakness towards her fond emotions towards her lover Youssef, the poet sets her as an example of a woman in love, who should be respected and appreciated for her tender heart and longing passion. In place of slyness and cunning as fixed traits in women's nature, the poem never mentions any of these negative qualities. On the contrary, the poem celebrates these love emotions and considers them as noble and refined, which became iconic and emblematic of all loving relationships in history, especially those of unrequited love stories, where one of the parties involved gets devoured by their feelings and passionate love. Zuleikha's major flaw, as the poem showed, was how reckless and eager she was to love and consume this love to feel the satisfaction she yearned for, but not as stereotypically portrayed as a decadent woman who wants to ruin a man's chastity. Thus, Kahf's re-vision of Zuleikha's character and motives enacts what Hutcheon advocates as questioning the master narratives of history while promoting the possibility of the narrativization of past events in order to allow several possible interpretations and readings of these standard narratives. In this manner, Kahf reclaims the figure of Zuleikha and transforms her from an evil seductress into a loving woman who became symbolic for all spontaneous lovers in the world.

Hence, Kahf's poem reframes and refigures Zuleikha's narrative as part of recovering the lost past and the nameless and ostracized woman figure in history after decades of being marginalized, voiceless and disfigured, while focusing on the female experience. Kahf's revisionary poem re-introduces her story and voice, actions and

motives from a different feminist perspective. Kahf's Zuleikha stands in juxtaposition to this archetypal image of women's inherent attributes of lust, seduction and debauchery. While she is portrayed as a depraved and immoral woman who is only driven by her basic instincts as sexual craving, Kahf delineates her as an inexperienced lover who is driven by ardor but not desire, and as a result, gets consumed by the demands of love. As Heilmann and Llewellyn assert, one can never escape from one's past and roots, for it is one's history(ies) that the core of identity is constructed (*Metafiction* 6). Accordingly, Kahf's revision of Zuleikha is extremely vital since such historical revision and re-appropriation of those momentous characters are pivotal to contemporary Muslim Arab women's identity formation.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, believing in the importance of actively remembering, claiming and rewriting the stories of Hajar, Balqis and Zuleikha as distinguished women in Islamic historical and religious narratives reverberates postmodern feminist and Islamic scholars' re-visionary enterprise. Kahf, along with many (Islamic) revisionary feminist scholars, reframe and reproduce medieval/prehistoric women to contest the mostly masculinist textual culture as well as androcentric interpretations. To elaborate, Kahf's revisionary poetry represents what Omaima Abou-Bakr (2013) identifies as evidence of "an interlocked structure of both patriarchal exclusion and female resistance" (332). As Abou-Bakr emphasizes, Kahf's re-introduction and re-writing of these women's accounts create visibility of women in Islamic history and allows present scholars/writers to review the tradition and generate new trends that aid in knowledge production of different female archetypes, by turning the traditional works *from texts about women to texts by women* (my emphasis) (Abou-Bakr 332). Since women's historical presence still holds an intimate relationship with modern-day women through our thoughts about them, Abou-Bakr maintains that it is the feminist critic of cultural history's task to use our vantage present perspective in order to divulge the latent empowering meanings through such re-interpretation of these historical women (322).

Kahf's revisionary poetry indeed dismantles the standard narratives of representing female historical figures, who were introduced and are understood solely through male-authored narratives. As an alternative, Kahf features the three historical/Qur'anic women while praising and admiring them for their heroism, courage, articulation, agency and daring sense of adventure, contrary to women's common portrayal in historical narratives

as solely favored as romantic, love interests, passive subjects or evil women (Cooper and Short 2). Kahf liberates her Islamic women figures from the static time frames and history to renew their characters and releases them from the inescapable eternity of the stereotypes they were forced to fit into. The re-appropriation and the re-narration of these women's stories alter the patriarchal basis of history and disrupts the patriarchal stories of these historically renowned figures and women (Heilmann and Llewellyn, *Metafiction* 6). Such revision as Yorke (1991) equally perceives, pertains a possible divergence to the patriarchal symbolic (203), describing such reworking of women's stories as "wonderful expansions of the subversive pertinence" that would result in opening up "a vast field of possible becoming for women" away from the entrenched psychic restraints imposed by the patriarchal social forms (205-206) in order to cause a change in cultural power relations.

Through her poetry, Kahf exhibits what Hamilton terms as 'herstory'; by replacing the past histories that have been generally written by men about men, where women's state has been rendered almost invisible and their roles, contributions and achievements have been minimized or totally ignored (Southgate 94), making it time for women's stories to stand on equal terms with 'his story' (Hamilton 192). Instead of viewing history, as his story and the preserve of the male, Kahf's retelling of these women's accounts problematizes their patriarchal interpretations, releasing it from its inherent bias, and it cultivates history to be regarded as narratives that are by, for and about women as well (Cooper and Short 3). This revision and rewriting make them survive along with freeing them, just like Scheherazade survived through the telling of tales, who was yet liberated again through the retellings of her own story (Cooper and Short 7). The poet also uses intertextuality from Qur'anic verses/stories to first unsettle the traditional linear narrative about these women, recreating them in different archetypal forms. Second, the poet's revision opens up a dialogue between past and present to inspire younger Muslim women generations and subvert the dominant negative cultural stereotypes of women. Kahf's restatement of the stories of these three historical women is quite symbolic, as they represent myriads of women symbols, not only as wives, but rather as mothers, monarchs, and women in love. Kahf mines the tradition for such stories and offers novel interpretations which would help create this voice, as "she frequently turns to language, imagery, and dramatic moments that focus attention on the physical bodies that express Muslim experience" (Waldmeir 227) and lets her female characters speak in their own voice from within an Islamic paradigm. The poet also deconstructs the western one-

dimensional representation of Muslim women and re-introduce emerging resilient Hajars, bold queens and amorous women, and explores the ramifications of unraveling the embedded layers of meanings in their stories (Waldmeir 233). This act of uncovering a second story aligns with Kahf's ideology and efforts to reconstruct a female Muslim protagonist in a new non-monolithic form from a postmodernist revisionary perspective. Consequently, Kahf's poetry reframes and refigures these women's narratives as part of recovering the lost past and the nameless and ostracized woman figure in history after decades of being marginalized, voiceless and dispossessed, while focusing on the female experience. Kahf's revisionary poems re-introduce their stories and voices, actions and motives from a different feminist perspective as they form the basis of the formation of contemporary Arab Muslim women's subjectivity.

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TROPIC AND SEMANTIC DISPLACEMENT AS MODERNIST COMPLEXITY IN WALLACE STEVENS' POETRY¹

WALLACE STEVENS'İN ŞİİRLERİNDE MODERNİST KARMAŞIKLIK OLARAK MECAZİ VE ANLAMSAL YERDEĞİŞİM

Nilüfer ÖZGÜR²

Abstract

The American symbolist Wallace Stevens (1879-1955) is widely accepted as one of the most complicated poets of twentieth-century modernism. Due to his contribution to poetry through a genuinely innovative style that has inspired many, he has been recognized as one of the most notable and revered American poets. The present study aims to attempt a discussion on Stevens' poetics by focusing on a number of poems that exemplify its semantic and linguistic complexity in terms of symbolic structures, imagery, and other tropic qualities. It limits itself to a number of poems that apparently accommodate Stevens' favorite theme—the relationship between imagination and reality—and simultaneously reconstruct and deconstruct their own aesthetic delineations. Moreover, this study rests on the idea that Stevens' body of work is itself deconstructive and that poststructuralist philosophy and deconstructionist criticism may come to aid when one attempts to demonstrate how those semantic and linguistic complexities become the coinages of modernist poems in their attempt to present themselves as organic and coherent entities, organized around a unifying principle.

Keywords: Wallace Stevens, Modernist Poetry, Deconstruction, Symbolism, Jacques Derrida, J. Hillis Miller

Öz

Amerikalı sembolist şair Wallace Stevens (1879-1955), yirminci yüzyıl modernizminin en karmaşık şairlerinden biri olarak kabul edilmektedir. Şiir sanatına olan katkıları bir yana, pek çok edebiyatçıya ilham veren, kendine özgü yenilikçi bir tarzı olan ve en dikkate değer, saygın şairlerden biri olarak görülmektedir. Bu çalışma, Stevens'in belli başlı şiirlerini ele alarak, bu şiirlerdeki simgesel yapılarda, imgelemelerde ve diğer söz sanatlarında görülen anlamsal ve dilsel karmaşıklıklar üzerine bir tartışma yürütmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, Stevens'in en sevdiği tema olan hayal ve gerçek arasındaki ilişkiyi ele alan ve aynı zamanda kendi estetik sınırlarını yeniden belirlemeleri ve sökmeleri bakımından anlamlı bulunan bazı şiirlerle sınırlıdır. Aynı zamanda bu çalışma, şairin yapısöküme yakın olduğu, ve temelde kendilerini organik ve uyumlu birer varlık olarak sunmayı hedefleyen ve bütünleştirici bir ilkenin etrafında örgütlenmeye çalışan modernist şiirlerin, bu anlamsal ve dilsel zorlukları temsil etmeleri noktasında, post-yapısalcı felsefenin ve yapısökümcü eleştirinin yarar sağladığı fikrine dayanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Wallace Stevens, Modernist Şiir, Yapısökümcülük, Sembolizm, Jacques Derrida, J. Hillis Miller

1 The content of the present study is the extension and more detailed elaboration of some ideas developed by the author through her participation in the Modernism and Postmodernism Studies Conference, 23-24 July, 2020. The abstract of the presentation, titled "The Image and the Symbol as Derridean 'Différance' in Poems by Wallace Stevens," was published in the Book of Abstracts.

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SCOPE, AIM AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As of the mid-nineteenth century, humanity has witnessed a transition from a knowledge of language that rests on empirical truths to an understanding of language that rests on symbolic truths. Modern theory of language has inevitably challenged the Aristotelian theory of poetry as a *mimesis*, as a mirror held toward external reality. Indeed, twentieth-century modernism marks a new era in which human language is perceived as a system of signs which accommodates a gradual move from mimetic to symbolic representation. This transition can be traced also in the ontological and epistemological problems of Western philosophy. The publications of philosophers and scholars like Nietzsche, Heidegger, Freud, and many others, become the epitomes of modern discourse, which herald the destruction of grand narratives and conventional systems of knowledge. In the words of the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, the beginning of the new century marks the *closure*, if not the end, of the metaphysics of presence (*Of Grammatology* 6). Terry Eagleton, moreover, has argued that human language had to witness this shift from mimetic to symbolic truth because “in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, language in Western Europe was felt to be in the throes of deep crisis” (140). Therefore, humanity had come to realize the existence of this ontological and linguistic crisis, and as a result, writing had to change; “it could no longer remain the instrument of a largely industrial and commercial society, it could no longer share the confident rationalist and empiricist trust of the mid-nineteenth century middle class that language did indeed hook itself onto the world” (Eagleton 140).

It is possible to assume, therefore, that as an artistic creation, the language of poetry is also predisposed to such linguistic and semantic crisis, especially with regard to its most indispensable components—imagery and prosody. Indeed, it is the power and capacity of poetry to expose how literal and figurative meanings fall prey to one another and to demonstrate the inexhaustible possibilities of reading a poem when the free play of signifiers is at work. Since it is of common knowledge that poetry employs a more compressed, condensed and figurative language; this fact in itself renders the language of poetry more obscure and more open to reinterpretation.

The tendency to experiment with language in innovative ways and to challenge the traditional poetic forms does not certainly begin with twentieth-century modernists. Victorian poets had already paved the way to modern aesthetics in unusually unconventional ways. Daniel Albright, for example, claims that in their inventiveness of

new stanza forms, in their transgressing the prosodic boundaries and exploring “of new sonorities of verse, the Victorians were unsurpassable—the Modernist poets began their careers in a world in which the Victorians had already broken all the rules and developed strange and idiosyncratic new rules” (24). Despite their “genteel conservatism,” Victorians bent the rules; they had a taste for prosody and dissonance, experimented with rhyme and free verse, employed rhyme as dissonance, had a desire to make sound conform to sense, rearranged meter to add musical quality (e.g. Hopkins) to their poems (Albright 24-31). Modernists, on the other hand, “overtly rejected traditional English meters, looking elsewhere for their meters: 1) Old English, 2) Greek and Latin, 3) Chinese and Japanese, 4) Pure intuition” (Albright 31). Moreover, modernists shared a tendency to “strip poetry of decorative elements, to simplify into strangeness” (33); they shared a dislike for the iamb (e.g. Pound), a tendency for reduction, for experimenting with punctuation, for the gnomic, abstract and the fragmentary; they actually disliked free verse (e.g. Eliot, Pound, Frost), enjoyed a sense of plurality, and, in short, they sought stability but not rigidity (Albright 31-40). Thus D. Albright situates the modernist form somewhere “between extreme systemlessness and radical resystematization; the poet manipulated forms but noncommittally” (40). In conclusion, it may be convenient perhaps to assume that Victorian poets had long started to revolutionize the aesthetics of poetry; however, it is modernist poetry that can be taken as a nod to post-modernist aesthetics which sought to destroy all kinds of metaphysical presuppositions.

Why modernist poetry should be considered as an experiment that pursues a unifying principle but simultaneously and paradoxically deconstructs its own language in its attempt to incorporate meaning is a complicated matter. Rainer Emig comes to aid while he argues that “modernist poems are not mimetic depictions, mirror images of an environment that determine their shape and not that of their material, language” (237). Nevertheless, they tend to “present themselves as coherent and complete, as works” (238). Terry Eagleton is perhaps in the same line with R. Emig as he acknowledges that the passage to the twentieth century evidences the fact that a “symbolic truth hovers between a subject it cannot define without endangering and a notion of transcendental Truth it requires as an orientation yet is unable to reach” (210). That is to say, modernist poems seek to organize themselves around a principle, a *logos*, but they partly fail to delineate the limits of signification, leaving behind an unsettled tension and semantic ambivalence. This also testifies to and parallels the transition of humanity (or, rather human language) from mimetic to symbolic truths.

One of the forerunners of deconstructionist criticism, J. Hillis Miller, who leads an elaborate discussion on the poetry of Wallace Stevens, argues likewise by referring to three theories of poetry in his book *The Linguistic Moment*. The first theory is the Aristotelian theory of poetry as imitation; it implies that poetry is “imitation, mimesis, analogy, copy. Truth is measured by the equivalence between the structure of words and the structure of nonlinguistic reality. Poetry is mirroring or matching at a distance” (5-6). Miller explains that “the poetry of imitation, of the *logos* captured in language, is at the same time the annihilation of the *logos* as the hidden one. Being vanishes, dispersed into its representation. The second theory of poetry is poetry as an *act*. It is “the act of the mind seeking revelation through the words and in the words. Poetry is a revelation in the visible and reasonable of that which as the base of reason cannot be faced or said directly” (7). The third theory of poetry is poetry as *creation*, not discovery (10). In this theory, “there is nothing outside the text. All meaning comes into existence with language and in the interplay of language” (Miller 10). In other words, meaning exists only in the poem, and this “meta-poetry” is “a poetry of grammar, in which what counts is the play of words among themselves. Words are repeated, grammatical forms change and alter, and the same word is verb, adjective, noun, in turn” (Miller 10). To sum up, poetry is an imitation, an act of revelation, and an act of creation. More or less, poetic traditions may tend to comply with any of these theories. On its own part, modernist poetry seeks to break away with all traditional forms that come before itself; however, paradoxically, it also tends to set its own rules, its own aesthetics. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that modernist poems are both mimetic and non-mimetic representations. They tend to organize themselves around a governing principle, but they do that without a recourse to a unified sense of self and to conventional metric, tropic and stanzaic forms.

In this line of thinking, it is possible to suggest that the poetics of the American symbolist Wallace Stevens represents a combination of Miller’s aforementioned theories of poetry in the sense that it presents itself as a challenge to mimetic representation. It is not a coincidence that critics and readers frequently allude to Wallace Stevens’ reputation as one of the most complex and philosophic poets of the age. Above all, faithful to the modernist spirit, his unique poetic voice manifests a sense of selfhood that is plural, distanced, and displaced. For example, the poet Elder Olson suggests that Stevens “assumes various persons” in his poems, “he sees, not individuals, but the collective man;” remains a “detached spectator, chiefly even of his own emotions; it is as spectator, not as

participant that he is moved when he is moved” (195). Furthermore, Olson suggests that much of his later poetry has been assessed by many as philosophical and difficult; however, it is neither philosophic nor difficult but rather personal (198). Stevens is seldom obscure, claims Olson, and “the real source of whatever difficulty there may be in his poetry lies in the fact that he is primarily a poet of images” (198). Stevens is simultaneously a poet of ideas, however, unlike ideas, images need not be coordinated and subordinated into propositions and arguments. This is likely to “puzzle the reader who expects signs of logical relation, and who seeks to turn the poem into rational meanings” (Olson 198).

In a similar line of thinking, the present study will attempt to develop an explanation about why Stevens is unanimously recognized as a difficult and complex poet by doing a close reading of a number of popular and less popular poems. This analysis rests on the assumption that his poetry is a reflection of the modernist tendency and the complexity of a self-deconstructive poet. It will mainly focus on some poems by Stevens that exemplify the relationship between imagination and reality—his favorite theme. These particular poems constitute an argumentative ground not only for the discussion of Stevens as a unique modernist poet but also as a poet who grapples with the problem of signifying. This, to some extent, implies that his poetry renders itself convenient for deconstructionist analysis because deconstruction p(rop)oses strategies by which critical readings expose the linguistic and semantic breaches and ruptures characteristic of some modernist poems. In other words, Stevens’ poems echo the modernist linguistic crisis verbalized above by T. Eagleton and R. Emig, as they are both mimetic and non-mimetic constituents of poetic utterance.

Wallace Stevens’ Modernist Complexity

To illustrate one example of the mimetic and non-mimetic nature of Stevens’ poems, a look at “Of Modern Poetry” may enable the commencement of the discussion. The poem is an example of ontological demarcation because it poses a canonical and philosophical question in the opening part—“what will suffice” (2) (*The Collected Poems* 239). In other words, the poem launches its thematic, focal point at the very beginning. “What will suffice” becomes the poet’s quest for a unifying principle, a *logos* that will serve as the definition of the content and function of modern poetry. “What will suffice” is also the phonetic signifier that moves the poem onward, that creates aesthetic suspense in the poet’s attempt to come up with a new definition of poetry that satisfies the mind of the age; i.e., becomes “the poem of the act of the mind” (28). The whole poem is a series of tropes—

metaphors and similes that are sequenced to define what modern poetry should be like. The persona's anxiety to denominate, to describe, to find a corresponding point of reference coincides with the modernist tendency to organize around a principle, to compose a synthetic whole. However, here "modern poetry" is *forced*, so to speak, to represent too many things, i.e., "what will suffice;" contains things that exist on so many different levels and verges of life; it "has to think about war," (9) "of a man skating,/ a woman dancing, a woman/ Combing" (27-28). What follows is a series of similes, personifications, and compound structures that signify poetry becoming a variety of things—"an insatiable actor," (12) "a metaphysician in the dark," (20) "containing the mind, below which it cannot descend," (23) "beyond which it has no will to rise" (24). Modern poetry is here the signifier of human imagination; it is accorded so many functions and objectives that the load of attributes overtakes the poem and to some extent creates tension in the face of all these multiple representations. The tension arising out of the narrator's attempt to create similitude and condensation for multiple times causes some amount of linguistic and semantic dislocation. The poetic persona imagines that poetry cannot and will not "rise beyond the mind" although the poet will be like a metaphysician, a magician who will need to "satisfy" the mind as well as the senses. The impossibility to single out and finalize "what will suffice" is in fact an epitome of human imagination as abstraction. It cannot delineate its own limits, it cannot become the manifestation of absolutes but will continue to pursue the urge to create anew, "to construct a new stage" (11). Although the poem's language appears to be largely mimetic in its use of clear tropic elements and metaphoric compounds, Stevens problematizes the semantic finitude of the poem with the use of multiple tropes and also by way of some utterances that connote ambiguity—phrases such as "changed to something else," (6) and "an invisible audience" epitomize the necessity to construct a different stage for poetry, but at the same time they imply something unfinished, indefinite, and something to be performed intuitively. The poet will be "twanging an instrument in the dark;" i.e., in front of an invisible audience, and by reverting perhaps mainly to his own instincts. The repetitive use of an imperative utterance such as "it has to" in several lines is further intensified with the signifier "it must" in line 25 and finally compromised with "*it may* [emphasis added] be of a man skating" (25-26) at the closing part of the poem. The modern poet seeks to break away with former traditions; he does not want to "repeat what was" already "in the script" (3-4). However, the difficult task of finding what will suffice and satisfy something which will always be "something else," proves to become indeed the all-too-challenging definition that the persona is

seeking. The narrator feels perhaps the inexhaustible possibilities for human quest, and the discursive and denotative ruptures that come with it.

This poem by Stevens also becomes a convenient example of how Miller identifies poetry as mimesis, as an act of revelation, and as creation. Stevens concretizes the search for the *logos* by poeticizing language, by employing multiple tropic elements that seek to denominate and define; however, the multitude of tropes that he uses in the poem bear witness to the impossibility of constructing absolute signifieds. In deconstructive terms, each figure of speech becomes a “différance” of the other tropes, employed to contribute to the poem’s semantic conclusiveness. Stevens’s poetry of the mind and the senses has to be continually redefined, to find correspondents, signifiers that manifest its function. Although the poem’s tropes intend to fulfil this function, they simultaneously transform into abstractions as they become also symbolic of the repetitive enactment of the poetic urge to define and redefine. The trope becomes an epitome of *différance* and deferred meaning in Derridean terms. Derrida uses the term “différance” to elicit the closure of metaphysical presuppositions and to point at the inaccessibility of the *logos*, the “deferral” and “difference” of the signified, which is also a “transcendental signified”:

Differance more properly refers to what in classical language would be called the origin or production of differences and the differences between differences, the play [jeu] of differences...Differance is neither a word nor a concept. In it, however, we shall see the juncture—rather than the summation—of what has been most decisively inscribed in the thought of...our "epoch": the difference of forces in Nietzsche, Saussure's principle of semiological difference, differing as the possibility of [neurone] facilitation, impression and delayed effect in Freud, difference as the irreducibility of the trace of the other in Levinas, and the ontic-ontological difference in Heidegger. (“Differance” 130)

Derrida's *différance*, therefore, is the possibility for communication through a play of differences. *Différance* is never an empirical or phonocentric concept which can identify an ultimate signified but more like an agent of the Nietzschean “play of signification” (*Writing and Difference* 351-371). Language is thus seen as self-referent because meanings cannot be exhausted in their totality and we are left only with the phonetic signifiers alone. As Derrida would have maintained, *différance* could stand for “the destruction, not the demolition but the de-sedimentation, the de-construction of all the

significations that have their source in that of the logos" (*Of Grammarology* 10).

It is possible to trace this assumption of Derrida in another poem by Wallace Stevens—"Anecdote of the Jar." It exemplifies his favorite theme—the relationship between imagination and reality, the signifier and the signified. It employs a concrete image as its focal point—the jar—as a product of human imagination ["I placed a jar in Tennessee" (1)], fluctuating between mimetic and non-mimetic representation. Although it is largely written in free verse, the poem displays internal rhymes achieved by the repetition of similar sounds as in "ground, surround, around." The alliterative tone of the poem intends to create coherence of sound, or perhaps to suggest the round-ness of the jar, to provide a closer look at the *thing* itself. This sense of coherence can be illusory, however. What coheres in terms of sound does not seem to cohere in terms of signifying. Frank Lentricchia, for example, argues that such poem could definitely place Wallace Stevens in opposition to formalists because "it will not cohere;" "the imposing jar is also a port" (haven? gate? but for whom?)" (10). It poses a question of tone, which cannot be avoided any longer (Lentricchia 11). Rinda West, on the other hand, suggests that the poem lays out "the essential problem" that is presented to us "by both our perceptual apparatus and our language: we can't even perceive the world without imposing on it the categories of our brains; we certainly can't speak of it without organizing it according to the patterns of our grammar" (130). Indeed, "Anecdote of the Jar" poses a problem of signification: that is why it is incoherent and dissonant. The juxtaposition of alliterative sounds creates not only internal rhyme for the otherwise unrhymed poem but also ambiguity. The verses are partially irregular and the use of broken language disrupts the process of building all-too-harmonious and coherent phonetic signifiers:

I placed a jar in Tennessee,
And round it was, upon a hill.
It made the slovenly wilderness
Surround that hill.

The wilderness rose up to it,
And sprawled around, no longer wild.
The jar was round upon the ground
And tall and of a port in air.

It took dominion everywhere.
 The jar was gray and bare.
 It did not give of bird or bush,
 Like nothing else in Tennessee. (*The Collected Poems* 76)

The image of the jar creates a dual relationship and opposition when it is placed in nature, i.e., wilderness. This metaphysical relationship becomes the focal philosophical point in the poem. The jar serves as an image that has to carry the burden of all signification and meaning-formation in the poem. Although the poem relies on a single tropic element, i.e., the jar, its invocations and associations are multiple; it may be taken to represent a variety of things—the human mind, imagination, modern technology, human civilization, industrialization, colonial expansion, the American frontier etc. These multiple possibilities and associations simultaneously disintegrate the ultimate suggestiveness of the main symbol in the poem. On one hand, the jar, as an image, enables the act of signification to become more concretized because it is a tangible and observable object; however, on the other hand, its repetitive combination with alliterative words (such as “around,” “surround”) creates a symbolic register that has to eventually disperse at the end of the poem. That is, the image moves from concrete to abstract signification and then dissolves into a cluster of meanings. It paradoxically creates an obscure entity which seems to “dominate everywhere” and yet fails to triumph as a fixed, stable signified. In other words, meaning-formation tends to disseminate under the evasiveness of this signified. The power struggle between the jar and nature is unfinished and deferred, yet to come, like Derrida’s *différance*. The dual relationship between imagination and reality is worked on subversively, and, therefore, deconstructed by the poem’s own linguistic and symbolic *play*. External reality is obscured, put under erasure because each power-element imposes its own reality on the other—the jar, causing nature to become “no longer wild” (6); and, nature, causing the jar to remain “grey and bare” (10). The jar is posed as the metaphysical opposite of nature, but the power struggle between the jar and “slovenly” nature, i.e. the relationship between imagination and reality transcends and obscures the binary demarcation. Since the jar which apparently “took dominion everywhere” (9) cannot “give off bird or bush” (11), it falls prey to its opponent—nature, like meaning falls prey to language. The signified is therefore, evacuated again, and we are left only with the phonetic signifiers. The poem ends with a sort of an obscure negation—“like nothing else in Tennessee” (12)—which either represents some kind of a balance between the symbolic

powers of the artificial object and organic nature, or epitomizes the dissemination of meaning at the backdrop of tropic displacement and symbolic collapse. This corresponds to the modernist crisis of representation which Terry Eagleton and Rainer Emig exemplify above and also to Miller's claim that "any poet's vocabulary is to some degree irreducibly idiosyncratic" (393). Therefore, "the vocabulary of a poet is not a gathering or a closed system, but a dispersal, scattering" (394)³.

"Another Weeping Woman," a poem about loss and grief, poses a semantic breach at some point in the otherwise clearly delineated dual oppositions—life and death, man and woman, imagination and reality, the pain of loss and the urge to exist. The color of death is black and dark, and it subordinates the rest of the tropic elements in the poem. The narrator is watching a woman from aside, who is grieving for the loss of her beloved one, as we infer from "with him for whom no phantasy moves" (11). The reality of grief is that it is inconsolable and "will not sweeten" (3):

Pour the unhappiness out
From your too bitter heart
Which grieving will not sweeten.

Poison grows in this dark.
It is in the water of tears
Its black blooms rise.

The magnificent cause of being,
The imagination, the one reality
In this imagined world

Leaves you
With him for whom no phantasy moves,
And you are pierced by a death. (*The Collected Poems* 25)

First of all, the poem invokes the impression that elements characteristic of modernist

³ While Miller makes an extensive discussion of a later poem by Stevens, "The Rock," he acknowledges that the word "ground" in Stevens is a common word and it may be taken as "the solid earth we stand on, or ground as background upon which a figure appears, or the more "metaphysical" use of the term to mean foundation, basis, source, mind or consciousness, reason, measure" (1985, 392). Thus Miller highlights the complexity of the word and the denotative instability that ensues with it.

poems are at hand; the distanced and impersonal poetic self apparently observing and addressing a woman grieving, the lack of intersubjectivity between the poetic persona and his/ her interlocutor; the broken language and rearrangement of syntax, the use of free verse and partly irregular lines that combine a number of juxtaposed images which pile up freely upon one another—unhappiness pouring, poison growing, tears shedding, black blooms rising. This juxtaposition of images is perhaps reminiscent of the aesthetics of imagists as well as of the so-called “objective correlative” of T. S. Eliot’s “Tradition and the Individual Talent.” This principle of Eliot can be understood as the urge to convey meanings and emotions not by stating them directly, but indirectly, by implementing or accommodating a set of concrete images instead (48). Stevens’ poem seems to rely on indirect rather than direct statement with the exception of the last line—“And you are pierced by death” (12), which still displays the use of a metaphoric substitute for death, possibly as Cupid’s mischief.

Secondly, Stevens repeatedly exploits here the conflict between imagination and reality; however, the punctuation and metrical patterns in the poem ambiguate the denotative quality of this dual relationship. “The magnificent cause of being” (7) connotes the urge to live against all odds, but it also seems to represent “the imagination” because it succeeds “the being” immediately in the following line. Moreover, imagination and reality seem to slide under each other, merge, and then incorporate their roles at the expense of creating suspense in the poem. Living is an illusory and fleeting experience in this physical world; death is real but “reality” must be also illusory and contingent of “this imagined world” (9). The denotation of meaning depends on the overlapping of illusion and reality; therefore, the reality in this imagined world must be perceived as an illusion within-an-illusion. Grief is real but living is an illusion. Meaning, therefore, partly disperses and disseminates, transcending the binary pattern with which it was initially delineated. The signifier overtakes the role of the signified and the poem intentionally subverts its own logic by partial semantic and tropic displacement.

According to Miller, the Aristotelian concept of poetry as imitation is “by no means absent in a ‘sophisticated modern poet’ like Stevens” (6). In poetry “the *logos*, as being or ground, comes into the open by way of the *logos* as words. The *logos*, as the hidden one, is revealed and expressed in the *logos* as the many, in differentiated form, in dramatic action or as trope” (7). However, Miller continues, Stevens’ poetry is also an act, “the act of the mind seeking a revelation through the words and in the words” (7). “It seems that what is most logical, the *logos* itself, ‘being’ in Stevens’ traditional name for it, turns into

the illogical and into non-being when the poet tries to face it directly" (8)⁴. In poetry "the red of reality is transformed in the blue of imagination" (Miller 9). These suggestions of Miller perfectly epitomize the mimetic and non-mimetic nature of Stevens' aesthetics. The implication is that if we look for the *logos* in Stevens' poetry, we have to continually rely on the self-referentiality of the words and the phonetic signifiers at work. It is not a closed circuit; however, denotation and signifying seem to fluctuate continually between symbolic and mimetic representation.

Indeed, not all poems by Wallace Stevens parallel the semantic subversiveness and complexity of meaning in the poems discussed above. Sometimes a poem's tropic and linguistic arrangement leaves one with the impression that signifiers cohere with exactly those meanings that the poet intends to convey. "Disillusionment of Ten O' Clock," for instance, can be taken as an example of a coherent and mimetic representation of the external world. The narrator is again somewhat distanced and aloof, but at the same time sort of omniscient and omnipotent—there is an uncanny impression that the narrator is holding a camera, moving freely, ascending and descending, peeping into the rooms of the houses in a modern city where people are moving about, ghost-like, wearing white nightgowns (*The Collected Poems* 66). This cinematographic effect and the color symbolism in the poem [e.g. "or purple with green rings," (4) "or green with yellow rings" (5)] do not seem to cause semantic and denotative displacement in the overall presentation of its theme, commonly accepted as a criticism of the American middle-class and its lack of imagination and ingenuity. The dual oppositions and contrasts at work [the imaginative individual (i.e., the drunken old sailor) vs. the boring and suffocating crowd; conformity vs. non-conformity; the exotic vs. the familiar etc.] are strengthened consistently and contribute to the overall thematic and denotative conclusiveness in the poem. Namely, the poem employs a mimetic language whereby the tropic elements and technical arrangement of the verses consistently contribute to the finalization of the central idea—a disillusionment about what could have been imagined and what appears to be real.

Nevertheless, Stevens' poems more frequently come up as denotations of his modernist sensitivity and complexity, all the more decidedly challenging further our perception of what the poet intends to convey and how the poem inherently pursues this intention until the end. For example, a poem with a title like "Poetry is a Destructive Force"

4 Miller states that both imagination and reality are liable at any moment to turn into this nothing, what Stevens calls "the dominant blank, the unapproachable" (*Collected Poems*, 477; qtd. in Miller, 8).

comes as no surprise, and powerfully signals the outlet of tensions and breaches that undermine or threaten its semantic and denotative domain (*The Collected Poems* 192). “That’s what misery is,/ Nothing to have at heart,/ It is to have or nothing” (1-3) reads the opening part of the poem, hinting at some inexplicable feeling of sadness and emptiness. The effect is possibly achieved by the sheer reduction of language and by negation. It is like a wordplay, a doubling of the perspective, and is followed by “It is a thing to have,/ A lion, an ox in his breast,/ To feel it breathing there” (4-6). Stevens combines metaphoric compounds and similes [“He is like a man/ In the body of a violent beast” (10-11); “Its muscles are his own” (12); “the lion sleeps in the sun” (13)] which create an effect of approximation and distancing, condensation and dispersal simultaneously. The destructive power of poetry (or, *writing*) is apparently considered analogous to the savage awaiting of a brutal and ferocious beast whose “nose is on its paws” (14) and “It could kill a man” (15). The semantic complication in the poem partly arises out of the juxtaposition and compilation of multiple images (man, heart, dog, bear, lion, ox) and the shifting use of third person point of view and personal pronouns (“Corazon” “he,” “it”). Like the subject himself, the addressee or the interlocutor is also indefinite and ambiguous; the metaphoric and other tropic elements seem to become agents of gradual displacement and dislocation which results in semantic complexity. Despite the complex wording and sliding signifiers used in the poem, some interpreters clearly denominate the message that it tries to convey. According to the American poet and scholar Robert Pinsky, for example, “poetry breaks and devours comforting sentiments, soothing language, elevated humbug, wishful thinking. It re-imagines in language what we are used to” (“Poet’s Choice,” 2006). “Violence is figurative,” Pinsky states, “it menaces and devours not flesh and blood but cozy preconceptions” (“Poet’s Choice”). Indeed, poetry is all those things, a de-structive and re-constructive force, although the narrator never uses the signifier *poetry* throughout the verses except the title. This power of poetry is personified and anthropomorphized in the body and heart of man but its violence and menace are also incorporated in the body of the beast. The power to construct and destruct belongs to writing; and in the modern theory of language, writing is a violent and usurping act. Therefore, as in “Of Modern Poetry” discussed previously, poetry again becomes a “force” that seeks to delineate the margins of its *logos*; however, attached to multiple signifiers and tropes that transition between abstractions and denotations, it destabilizes and partly disavows its constructed mimetic representations.

CONCLUSION

Modernist poems challenge the ontological and epistemological assumptions about literature and poetry. In T.S. Eliot's world, they seek a "tradition," in Wallace Stevens' world, they seek "what will suffice." The sensibility of the modernist mode of expression disseminates and dissociates the mimetic nature of the language of poetry. From this vantage point, Stevens' complex symbolism becomes an epitome of the modernist crisis of representation. Consequently, Stevens' favorite choice of subject, i.e., the relationship between imagination and reality, the signifier and the signified, invokes the idea that like many other modernists, he grapples with problems of meaning by poeticizing and problematizing language. It is a common trait of modernist poets due to the fact that the new material does not cohere any longer with old forms—in an era of cultural and emotional exhaustion, symbolic structures tend to dissolve and language fails to fully reproduce a formula compatible with what one calls "mimetic reality."

And in the words of J. Hillis Miller, at last, his poetry "constantly pulls the rug from under itself. It constantly deprives itself of that origin or ground with which it seems at the same time to provide itself" (4). His poetry is "the battleground among conflicting theories of poetry. The poet tries first one way and then another way in an endlessly renewed, endlessly frustrated, attempt to 'get it right,' to formulate once and for all an unequivocal definition of what poetry is and to provide an illustration of this definition" (Miller 5).

In conclusion, critical reading through the lenses of deconstruction may be not only helpful but also inevitable when one attempts to grapple with issues of language and meaning-formation. Poetry is an exercise and an experiment that both constructs and deconstructs its own material, manifested in the complexity of semiotics and the disparities and convulsions of figurative language. Modernism seeks to succeed in making a self-conscious break with its antecedents, boldly faces the historical cul-de-sac and rebels against grand narratives, materialism and the bourgeois complacency of conventional ideologies. Modernist poetry, on its own behalf, is a reaction against middle-class consciousness and the precepts of Romantic poetry, an attempt to accumulate and incorporate the changing cultural, philosophical and psychological needs of the individuals in Western democracies. Modernist literature is revolutionary in the sense that it repudiates conventional norms but is consistent in its contradictory persistence in establishing its own institutionalized literary norms, its own intellectual and scholarly pursuits and paradigms.

The American symbolist poet Wallace Stevens, therefore, who is considered as one of the most genuinely innovative poets of the twentieth century, comes as an outstanding example of these pursuits of literature. His poetry does not only testify to the modern sensitivities and tendencies shared by most of his contemporaries, but it is also a nod toward, a heraldry of the upcoming post-modernist age and a literature that is open to even freer modes of expression and flexibility of form. His poetry of the mind and the senses manifests the modern needs and literary norms of the age—a more dislocated and distanced self, reduction and economy of language, a combination of direct and indirect treatment of the thing, abstraction and deferral of meaning. His narrators are not passive or mute observers, they watch from distance but participate in the process of aesthetic recreation. There is a sense of poetic anxiety and tension in those poems by Stevens. As this study attempted to show, his poetry becomes an epitome of the quest for the *logos*, which is traceable and available only by poeticizing language, and by temporal transcending of the dual relationships that the tropic and figurative elements embody in the poem.

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ON THE NEW MEDIATIC REPRESENTATION OF HEALING: A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF “TUNCER ÇİFTÇİ İLE HOŞ SOHBETLER”

ŞİFANIN YENİ MEDYATİK TEMSİLİ ÜZERİNE: TUNCER ÇİFTÇİ İLE HOŞ SOHBETLER PROGRAMI'NIN SOSYOLOJİK ANALİZİ

Mehmet Emin BALCI¹

Abstract

Late modernity created a new social universe that shocked the classical framework of modernity. One of the most important examples of this shock is the social construction of the disease. Late modern relations have revived the traditional health practices (traditional medicine, spiritual therapy, etc.) suppressed by disciplinary medicine, which constitutes a model for modern society. To put it more accurately, earthquakes in the modern information-power system have caused old practices to be associated with modern health monopolies. On the other hand, neo-liberal market conditions have led to the re-coding of these authentic improvement methods by the bureaucratic logic of the information-power order. In this article, we will focus on the analysis of the “Tuncer Çiftçi ile Hoş Sohbetler” program, which is one of the religious examples of alternative healing practices in Turkey. In his TV programs, which he made for a long time in the daytime and late generations of satellite channels, Çiftçi claimed that he instantly diagnosed his patients over telephone connections and healed them with his miraculous power. After leaving the conventional media for an “unknown reason”, he continues to distribute the healing through his private channel and Youtube broadcasts. Ciftci's tele-therapeutic methods, which enable him to be characterized as a “religious abuser” or a charismatic personality, point to new sociological syntheses between the bureaucratic institutionalism of modern medicine and common sense disease knowledge. In this study, the meaning of health at the institutional and inter-subjective level in modern society will be discussed in the context of Talcott Parsons' sick

Öz

Geç modernlik, modernliğin klasik çerçevesini çok eden yeni bir sosyal evren yaratmıştır. Bu şokun en önemli örneklerinden birini hastalığın toplumsal inşası oluşturur. Modern toplum için bir model teşkil eden disiplinler tıbbının bastırdığı geleneksel sağlık uygulamalarını (geleneksel tıp, ruhsal terapi vb.) geç modern ilişkiler yeniden canlandırmıştır. Daha doğru bir ifadeyle, modern bilgi-iktidar düzeninde yaşanan depremler eski uygulamaların modern sağlık tekeliyle ilişkilmesini sağlamıştır. Öte yandan neo-liberal piyasa koşulları, bilgi-iktidar düzeninin bürokratik mantığınca söz konusu otantik iyileştirme yöntemlerinin yeniden kodlanmasına neden olmuştur. Bu yazıda, Türkiye'deki dini şifacılığın bir örneği olarak “Tuncer Çiftçi ile Hoş Sohbetler” programının analizine odaklanılacaktır. Uzun süre farkı uydu kanallarının gündüz ve geç kuşaklarında yaptığı TV programlarında Çiftçi, telefon bağlantıları üzerinden hastalarını anında teşhis koyup mucizevi gücüyle iyileştirdiğini ileri sürmüştür. Konvansiyonel medyadan “sebeb-i meçhul” bir şekilde ayrılmasının ardından kendi özel kanalı ve Youtube yayınları aracılığıyla kendince şifa dağıtmaya devam etmektedir. Çiftçi'nin bir “dini istismarçı” veya karizmatik bir kişilik olarak nitelenmesini sağlayan tele-terapik yöntemleri modern tıbbın bürokratik kurumsallığı ile sağduyusal hastalık bilgisi arasındaki yeni sosyolojik sentezlere işaret etmektedir. Bu çalışmada öncelikle modern toplumda sağlığın kurumsal düzeyde ve özneler-arası düzeyde kazandığı anlam Talcott Parsons'un hasta rolü ve Alfred Schutz'un fenomenolojik sosyolojisi bağlamında ele alınacaktır. Ayrıca Türk modernleşmesinde

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role and Alfred Schutz's phenomenological sociology. In addition, the discursive function of the health/disease distinction in Turkish modernization will be addressed and the alternative health literature will be discussed in outline. Finally, the appearance of Tuncer Çiftçi in the Turkish media and the formal and content structure of the program will be analyzed.

Keywords: Patient Role, Religious Healing, Turkish Modernization, Alternative Medicine, Digital Identity

sağlık/hastalık ayrımının söylemsel işlevine değinilecek ve alternatif tıp literatürü ana hatları ile ele alınacaktır. Son olarak Tuncer Çiftçi'nin Türk medyasındaki görünüş biçimleri ile programın biçimsel ve içerik yapısı analiz edilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hasta Rolü, Dinsel Şifa, Türk Modernleşmesi, Alternatif Tıp, Dijital Kimlik

GİRİŞ

Geç modernite, klasik modernlik tanımını şoka uğratacak birçok gündelik pratiğin sıradanlaştığı toplumsal bir evren yaratmıştır. Bu şokun en ilgi çekici örneklerinden birini ise sağlık bilgisinin/bakımındaki (care) “post modern evrim” oluşturmaktadır (Fox 713). Modern tıbbi söylemin kazandığı büyük başarılar toplumsal tasarımlar için de bir Arşimet noktası teşkil ederken, geç modernliğin akışkan ilişkileri, yaşam bilimlerinin epistemik sahasına devre dışı bırakıldığı düşünülen bir dizi alternatifi (Doğu tıbbi, doğal tedavi yöntemleri, manevi terapiler) yeniden dâhil etmiştir. Daha doğrusu modern toplumun bilgi-iktidar düzenindeki sarsıntılar sosyal hayatta bir şekilde varlığını sürdüren bu pratikleri tekrardan su yüzüne çıkarmış (Demir) ve modern tıbbın sağlık üzerindeki tekeline ortak etmiştir. İletişim teknolojilerindeki radikal gelişmeler sayesinde söz konusu ortaklık, geleneksel/otantik şifa yöntemlerinin rasyonel bürokratik bir mantıkla yeniden üretilmesine neden olmuştur. Bu çalışmada alternatif şifa pratiklerinin dinsel örneklerinden biri olarak, Tuncer Çiftçi ile Hoş Sohbetler programının analizine odaklanılacaktır. Çalışmada birkaç yıl önce bir uydu kanalında tesadüfen izleyip sonrasında ise gerek yaptığı TV programlarını gerekse de Youtube yayınlarını zaman zaman takip ettiğimiz Tuncer Çiftçi vakasını ele almak istiyoruz. Programın, ilk görüşte, bir düzmece, saf insanlardan para koparmak için kurulmuş bir komplo izlenimi uyandırdığı inkâr edilemez. Bununla birlikte gecenin geç saatlerinde yaklaşık yarım saat boyunca telefon hatlarının meşgul olmasından anlaşılacağı üzere programın sadece bir düzmece değil, en azından inanılmış bir düzmecedir. “Herkesin önünde” iyileştiklerini beyan edilirken kötü bir senaryonun figüranlığını mı yapılmaktadır yoksa gerçekten şifa mı bulunmaktadır? Klasik modernliğin ağır yapılarının çözülmesi ile ortaya çıkan anlam krizinin (Berger ve Luckman) Türk modernliğindeki yeni yansımalarını göstermekte Çiftçi vakası kendine özgü bir değere sahiptir. Dini istismarcı veya mesianik bir şahsiyet olarak Çiftçi'nin tele-terapik yöntemleri modern tıbbın mutlak kurumsal mantığı

ile hastalık hakkındaki dinamik sađduyusal bilgisi arasındaki yeni sosyolojik sentezlere iřaret etmektedir.

Tıbbi söylemde bir semptom birtakım hastalık tanımlarına ve bu tanımların da nihai gösterileni olarak belirli bir biyolojik mekanizmaya bađlı olarak okunur. Çiftçi ve muadili řıfa pratikleri, tıbbi dađarcığın řekillendirdiđi modern toplumsal tahayyöl için sadece bir gelenek tortusu veya henüz açıklanamamıř bir anomali deđildir. Bastırılmıř, yok edilmeye çalıřılmıř, bununla birlikte organizmadaki geliřmelere adapte olarak kendini yeniden üretmeyi bařarmıř farklı toplumsal iliřkilerin birer semptomdur. Bu semptomlarsa eski teřhis-tedavi tekniklerinin ötesine geçen bir költürel bedeni imlemektedir. Çiftçi örneđinin iřaret ettiđi farklı gerçekliđi anlamak arzuladıđı (klasik) modernite ideallerine eriřmeye çalıřırken geç modern toplumun farklı problemleri ile karřı karřıya gelen ölkemiz sosyal bilim kamusu için bilhassa önemlidir. Bařlangıçtan itibaren modern tıbbın bařarılarına hayran olan ve řevkle kendine/i uyarlamaya çalıřan Türk modernleřme söylemi, özellikle Cumhuriyet'in ilanı ile, uygar toplum modelinde modern tıbbi dađarcıktan fazlasıyla yararlanmıřtır (Kalaycı 102). Jön Türkler'in devleti kurtarmak adına büründükleri "içtimai tabiplik" rolü (Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*200) Türk modernleřme tarihinin kırılma anlarında yükseliře geçen bir strateji olarak kendini güncellemiřtir. Bununla birlikte tıbbi ve politik söylem arasındaki ideolojik ittifakın modernliđin katı yapılarının çözümleri ile yařadıđı güç kaybı dünyada olduđu gibi ölkemizde de sađlık bilgisi üzerindeki tıbbi tekeli sarsıntıya uğratmıřtır. Günümüzde hurafe damgasıyla dıřlanan geleneksel sađaltım pratikleri "alternatif tıp" kategorisi altında yaygınlařmıř hatta giderek prestij kazanmıřtır. 2021 yılında 92.65 milyar dolarlık bir pazar payına ulařan yardımcı ve alternatif tıp piyasası ulařmıřtır (Biospace). Türkiye'de ise 2019 yılı itibariyle geleneksel, alternatif ve tamamlayıcı tıp piyasasının 100 milyon dolarlık bir sektör haline geldiđi tahmin edilmektedir (Türk Tabipler Birliđi). Ölkemizde 2012 yılında Sađlık Bakanlıđı bünyesinde Geleneksel ve Tamamlayıcı Tıp Daire Bařkanlıđı kurulmuř, üniversitelerde alternatif ve tamamlayıcı tıbbın profesyonel bir meslek olarak icra edilmesine yönelik eđitim programları açılmaya bařlanmıřtır. Geç modern bireysel kimliklerin beden ve öz-bakım temelinde kurulması konvansiyonel ve sosyal medyada alternatif řıfa tekniklerini popüler konulardan biri haline getirmiřtir. Ulusal TV kanallarının gündüz kuřaklarında bedenimiz ve ruhumuzla kanserojen madde içermeyen, dođal kürlerle nasıl ilgileneceđimiz konusunda bilinç ařılamayan bir uzmana rastlamak oldukça güçtür. Dođa bilimsel bilgileri veya oköltist bilgileri birleřtiren yeni uzmanlar kendilerine ait TV kanalları ve sosyal medya hesapları ile kitlelere yol göstermektedir. Yeni sađlık söylemleri, McLuhan'ın "aracın mesaj olduđu" önermesini teyit ederek, kitle iletiřim

araçlarının temelindeki bilişsel biçimlere ve tıbbi bilgi-iktidar düzeninin sızdığı gündelik anlam haritalarına uyarlanıp tedavüle girmektedir.

Bu çalışmada öncelikle hastalığın bürokratik mantığı ve “hastalık-rolü” üzerinde durulacaktır. Modern tıbbın epistemik temelleri ve örgütlenme tarzının toplumsal ilişkilerin karmaşık doğasını genel bir toplumsal sisteme dönüştürmekte nasıl bir rol üstlendiği Parsons’ın hasta-rolü kavramlarından yararlanılarak çözümlenecektir. İkinci olarak kurumsal tıbbın göz ardı ettiği bir probleme, hastalığın deneyimsel anlamı üzerinde durulacaktır. Bu bağlamda sağlık/hastalık durumlarının sağduyusal bilgi kapsamındaki tariflenme süreci Alfred Schutz’un fenomenolojik sosyolojisi bağlamında soruşturulacaktır. Üçüncü olaraksa Çiftçi’nin TV ve internet yayınları gösterge düzeni analiz edilecek ve hastalığın yeniden üretim sürecinde gönderimde bulunduğu yeni anlam haritaları açığa çıkarılmaya çalışılacaktır.

Hastalığın Bürokratik İnşası

Bir asra yaklaşan ömründe çok az doktor yüzü gören Bernard Shaw, kurumsal tıbbın “halka karşı bir komplo” olduğunu söyler (Porter 59). Bu ifade, hastalıkla karşılaştığı ilk andan itibaren kendini modern tıbbın uzman ellerine teslim eden birçoğumuz için rahatsız edici olabilir ama yine yanlış teşhisler, ağır yan etkiler ve hastanedeki köşe kapmacalardan muzdarip birçoğumuz için de bir haklılık payı taşımaktadır. Söz konusu düşüncenin gerçekten haklı olup olmadığını bir kenara bırakırsak “komplo” ifadesi üzerinde durulmaya değerdir. Komplo toplumsal bilinç-dışının bir semptomudur. Rüyalar nasıl bireysel bilinç dışının yorumlanması gereken temsilleri (Freud 325) ise komplolar da özellikle modern toplumsal bilinç dışının deşifre edilmesi gereken teorileridir. Modern toplumda hastalık bütün sosyo-psişik yatırımını toplumsal koşullarla mücadele edip başarılı olmaya yapan “sağlıklı” bireyler için sinsi bir düşmandır. Bu düşmandan organizmayı korumak ve olası bir karşılaşmada onu anında imha etmek kurumsal tıbbın en önemli vazifesi olarak görülür. Bu genel kabul, çoğunlukla insanlık tarihinin “en büyük başarısı” olarak gördüğümüz modern tıbbın farklı mücadele alanlarındaki kayıpların üzerinde yükseldiği gerçeğini sansürler. Kurumsal tıp, organizmanın içsel ve dışsal mekanizmalarını açıklayan teşhis kanonu ve ölümcül hastalıkların er geç üstesinden gelecek tedavi teknikleri ile atalarımızın sahip olamadığı bir nimet olarak kabul ederken bu hayati nimetin ancak modern bilgi-iktidar söylemince üretilmiş bir bedensel bilincin inşası ile gerçekleştiği unutulur.

İnsanın ölüme yürüyüşündeki dördüncü atlı olarak hastalık, her tarihsel dönemde

yüzünü o dönemin kazanımlarına uygun bir şekilde göstermiştir. Tarım devrimi ortalama bir tokluk durumu yaratmasına karşın insanın bedensel zindeliğini azaltmış ve evcilleştirilen hayvanlardan bir dizi hastalığın (grip, çiçek, kızamık vb.) bulaşmasını beraberinde getirmiştir. Sanayi devrimi nüfus ve refah artışına dayanan sıhhi problemlerin, mesleki rahatsızlıkların veya raşitizm gibi yeni kent yaşamına özgü hastalıkların türemesini tetiklemiştir (Porter 34). Organizmaya musallat olan farklı (tarihsel) bedensel semptomlarını okumak, onları belirli bir tanı ile eşlemek ve tıbbi sistemdeki yerini belirlemek Foucault'nun deyişiyle bir "hastalıklılık bilinci" gerektirir: "Şeylerin ne oldukları nasıl tanımlandıklarına bağlıdır; şeylerin nasıl tanımlandıkları genel kültürün olguları uzlaşım alanları içine nasıl yerleştirdiğine bağlıdır. Bu bilgi teorisi benimsendiğinde hastalık doğada yer alan patolojik bir durum değil, aksine toplumsal ve tarihsel süreçlerin bir sonucu olarak görülür" (Turner 21). Foucault'ya göre modern tıbbın evrensel başarısının temelleri 17. ve 18. yüzyılda atılan biyoloji paradigmasının uygulamalı bir sonucudur. Klasik dönemin her şeyi benzerlik ve temsil yolu ile aşkınsal olarak birbirine bağladığı evren tasavvurundan bir kopan biyolojik söylem "canlılığı" genel bir ontolojik sınıflandırmanın hayat kaynağı olarak görmemiştir; canlılık, disiplinin içkin ölçüt ve kategorilerince inşa edilmiş bir kurgudur. Böylece bedensel mekanizmaları işleten ama onlarla nasıl ilişkilendiği açıklanamayan hayatın bilinmezliği, biyolojik sistemlerin işletim sahasında kurulan bir fenomene dönüşmüştür (Foucault *Kelimeler ve Şeyler* 377). Bu durumun hastalık durumu açısından birincil sonucu hastalık ve hasta arasındaki öznel-öznelerarası bağın paranteze alınmasıdır. "Hasta yok hastalık var" ilkesini telkin eden tıbbi pedagoji hastalığı semptomolojik ve etiyojik bir kurgunun tezahürü haline getirirken hasta da psiko-fiziksel mekanizmaları doğru şekilde işletme becerisinden mahrum bir beden olarak tanımlanır.

Foucault'ya göre "insanın" çalışmanın, konuşmanın ve yaşamının özerk alanlarının iç içe geçtiği bir rasyonelleşme biçimi olarak kurulması toplumsal dünyanın da bu rasyonalizasyonun tescil ettiği bir düzen tasarısını zorunlu kılmıştır. Bu alanlar, her ne kadar farklı ölçüm değeri, sınıflandırma enstrümanları ve işletim modellerini gerektirseler de (toplumsal) anomalinin bir kapatma tekniği ile savuşturulması genel bir yaptırım haline gelmiştir. Toplumsal dünyanın her noktasını yeniden üreten bu "büyük kapatılma" akıllı, ahlaklı ve çalışkan insanların birlikteliğini dışardakilerin tehlikesinden korumanın yanı sıra anom(al)inin kural ve mekanizmalarını tayin etmekle normatif olana karar verir. Başka bir deyişle dışarının ölümcül tehlikesi insanların biraradalığını düzenleyen içkin iktidarı oluşturur. Bu noktada tıbbi sağlık anlayışı ve hastalık korkusu kamusal yaşamın düzenleyen bir referans noktası olurken ilk modern kent planlamacılarının hekimler arasından çıkmıştır

(Baer 671-678; Foucault *Kelimeler ve Şeyler* 134-156). Öte yandan disipliner tıbbın en büyük alamet-i farikası olan hastanelerin hastalık ve hasta ilişkisine getirdiği kurumsal açılım diğer toplumsal düzenlemelere de ayna tutar. Hastanenin laboratuvarı, normal ve patolojik olanın belirlenmesi konusunda toplumbilimcilere ilham verir. Steril ortamı, kamusal alanın muzır kişiliklerden dezenfekte edilmesi için bir örnek teşkil eder. Hücre ve koğuş sistemi toplumsal sağlık/ahlak için tehdit oluşturanlara nasıl muamele edileceğini öğretir:

Hastane insan davranışlarının kendisine göre yeniden yorumlanmasıyla giderek daha fazla bir ilk-örnek haline gelmektedir. Onaylanmayan davranışlar, artan bir şekilde, cezalandırılması gereken bir suç, tanzim edilmesi gereken bir mağduriyet veya sabır ve lütuf gösterilmesi gereken bir günah olmaktan çok tedavi edilmesi gereken bir hastalık olarak anlamlandırılmaktadır (Friedson 248).

Modern tıbbın bedeni biyolojik mekanizmaların ürettiği bir nesne olarak kendi evrensel ilkelerince tanımlaması sosyal bilimlerin tikel fenomenleri genel bir sistemin parçası olarak ele almaları için bir model olmuştur. Klasik sosyologların toplumsal fenomenleri organizmacı anolojiler yardımı ile açıklığa kavuşturmaya çalıştığı sosyoloji tarihinde ilk öğretilen bilgiler arasındadır. Bununla birlikte biyolojik sistemleri toplumsal sistem ve rol arasındaki ilişkiler için doğrudan model alan ilk isim Talcot Parsons'dır. Parsons, "hasta rolü" (sick role) kavramıyla, hastalığın teşhisi, tedavisi ve bu noktada aktörlerin sağlık kurumları ile karşılaşma deneyimini refah toplumunun rol kalıpları, kurumsal beklentileri ve sistemin genel işleyişine tahvil etmeyi dener. Ona göre tıbbi uygulamaların analizi toplumsal yapının analiz edilmesi için sosyolojik bir paradigma sağlarken bireysel ve kolektif sapmaların (anomi) bozduğu toplumsal sistemin dengesinin nasıl yeniden sağlanacağı konusunda rehberlik eder (Parsons 479). Parsons'a göre hastalık kurumsal düzenin tamamlayıcı parçası olarak toplumsal yaşama katılan aktörü eylemlerinin yönelmesi gereken zorunlu hedef ve normlardan alıkoyar. Hasta kendine has bir alt-kültürün değil aslında diğer sağlıklı bireylerden müteşekkil bir kültürel bütünün mensubudur. Hâlbuki hastalık ortaya çıktığında yetişkinlerin işe, yetişme çağındakilerin okula gitmesi ve dolayısıyla belirli bir sosyal ortamın beklentilerinin karşılanması imkansız hale gelir. Parsons kurumsal beklentiler düzeni ile ilintili olarak anlaşılması gereken hastalık durumunun dört boyutu olduğunu ileri sürer. Birincisi, hastalık normal toplumsal rollerimiz sorumluluklarından bizi muaf tutar (Parsons 436); fakat hastalık durumu,

hastalara toplumsal zorunlulukları yok sayma hakkı vermez. Bununla ilişkili olarak ikincisi, hastanın kendi iradesi ile kendisini iyileştirmesi beklenemez; sorumluluklarından muaf tutulduğu gibi bakımının da üstlenilmesi gerekir. Üçüncü boyutu Parsons biraz paradoksal gözükken şekilde şöyle ifade eder: “hastalık arzu edilmeyen bir durum olarak iyileşmek istemeyi zorunlu kılar.” Çünkü hastalık sınırlı meşruiyetini, hasta ve diğerleri tarafından mümkün olan en kısa zamanda geçecek olması umudundan alır. Dördüncüsü, hastalıktan kurtulmak ümit etmek zorunda olunan bir şey olduğundan duruma teknik yeterliliğe sahip bir uzmanın yani hekimin el koyması gerekir. Parsons’a göre rahatsız (disease) kişinin bir hasta (ill) olarak görülebilmesi için roller hiyerarşisi dahilinde hekimin kendi rolünü icra etmesi gerekir. Rahatsızlık hekim tarafından tescillenmediği sürece bireylere sistemsel beklentilerden bir muafiyet sağlamaz.

Görüldüğü üzere Parsons’ın hastalığı toplumsal sistemin norm ve beklentilerince tanımlanmış bir durum olarak kabulü, modern tıbbın bedeni biyolojik mekanizmaların bir yansıması olarak ele alan tutumu ile büyük bir uyum içindedir. Hastalığın kamusal ilişkileri düzenleyen bürokratik bir rasyonalizasyonla tanımlanması modern tıbbın hastalığı hastalardan ayırmasına imkan tanıdığı gibi sosyolojik sistemlerin öznel hastalık deneyimlerini paranteze almasını kolaylaştırır. Her şeye rağmen sosyal bir gerçeklik olarak hastalık, sağduyu bilgisince de anlamlandırılmaya devam etmektedir. Bedenin semptomlarını okumak, bir hastalıkla eşleştirmek ve hasta veya sağlıklı etiketi ile değerlendirmek ait olduğumuz grup eşliğinde yorumladığımız bir süreçtir.

Hastalık Bilgisinin Sağduyusal Temelleri

Modern tıbbın bürokratik şifa tekniklerinin bedeni hastalıktan ayrı ele alarak kamusal bir denetim ve toplumsal bir düzenlemenin nesnesi kılar. Bu durumun günümüzdeki normatif olarak içselleştirilmesi modern öncesi toplumların hastalık hakkında sahip oldukları düşünceler ve tedavi rejimlerinin çocukça uygulamalar olarak görülmesine neden olur; özellikle de sağlıklı zamanlarımızda... Öte yandan hastalığın peşi sıra getirdiği aciziyet hissi yetişkin bireyleri az çok çocuklaştırır. Çocukluk ve yetişkinlik arasındaki bir nekâhat bölgesinde edindiğimiz tuhaf bakış açısı, hastalığın tıbbın özerk ve kesinlikli söylemine indirgenemeyecek başka türden bir anlamı olduğunu gösterir.

Hasta iken dünya gözümüze olduğundan farklı görünür. Organizmanın bir noktasında baş gösteren rahatsızlık bütün “yaşamsal dikkat”in dış dünyandan benliğin kendisine dönmesine neden olur. Hasta için sağlıklı zamanlarının aksine dış dünya, tekinsiz ve baş etmesi imkânsız bir yerdir. Hastayken sürekli duyduğumuz dinlenme ihtiyacı, çektiğimiz

acıdan dolayı bedenimizin biyolojik etkinliklerini yavaşlatmak kadar dış-dünyanın hareketliliğinden kendimizi koruma iç-güdüüne dayanır: “Sağlıklıyken iletişim kurmak, uygarlaştırmak, çölü ekip biçmek için çaba göstermeyiz ... Dik duranlar ordusunun neferi olmaktan firar ederiz. Onlar savaşa yürür... Bizse sorumsuzca, umursamazca ve belki de yıllar sonra ilk kez etrafımıza, yukarıya bakmayı beceririz” (Woolf 68). Gündelik işlerimizi içinde koşturduğumuz gerçeklikle (paramount reality) aramıza açılan yarık olağan dünyanın unutturduğu varoluşsal dehşeti su yüzüne çıkarır (Schutz *The Problem of Social Reality* 228). Dünya algımızın kesintiye uğramasının bir sonucu olarak hastalık bilinci ötekine karşı geliştirdiğimiz “doğal tutumu” paranteze alarak sıra-dışı bir (alt) evren yaratır. Daha doğrusu gündelik yaşamın olağan gerçekliğini tanımlayan fenomenolojik alt evrenlerin sınırlarını iç içe geçirir. Alfred Schutz’e göre gündelik dünya fantezi, rüya ve bilimsel alt-evrenlere bölünmüştür. Fanteziler, şeyleri olgusal boyutlarından koparıırken benliği dış dünyanın zorlayıcılığından kurtarmış yalın bir arzu durumu içinde temellendirir (234). Dış dünyanın nesnelliğini bilinç-dışında yeniden ürettiğimiz gerçeklik kurguları olan rüyalarsa “canlı bir müşterek zamandan çok yarım bir biz-ilişkisine” (s.244) yerleştirdiğimiz keyfi öteki tipleridir. Fantezinin bütünüyle rüyaların ise kısmen paranteze aldığı dış dünya, bilimsel evrenin sınırları içinde benliğin kendisini paranteze alır. Öznel arzu ve düşünme biçimlerinin gerçeklikle bağı iptal edilirken rasyonel referans çerçevesinin sınırları içinde şeylerin olumsuzluğu bir nedensellik zinciriyle sabitlenir. Beden ile ruh arasına giren hastalık bilinci, elbette ki, her bireyi Ivan Ilyich gibi hayatı doğru şekilde yaşayamadığı kaygısıyla hasta yatağından varlığın dipsiz kuyularına atmaz. Öte yandan hastalık, estetik bir anlatı, psikanalitik bir kurgu veya bilimsel bir yasanın yaptığı gibi, insanı yaşanan dünyanın mahiyeti hakkında bütünsel bir açıklama arayışına sevk eder. Bencil dürtüler ve kurumsal düzenlemeler arasındaki bir savaşa ev sahipliği yapan hastanın pratik bilinci modern tıbbi etioloji ile ruhsal kurtuluş reçetelerine aynı zamanda tutunur:

Nedensellik zincirine büyücüleri dahil ettiğimizde, dünyaya kötü bir cin veya Tanrı tarafından hükmedilip edilmediği hakkındaki Kartezyen şüpheyi gideremeyiz. Olup bitenlerin mantıklı bir şekilde olup bittiğine eminsek, o zaman büyücülerin müdahaleleriyle gerçekleştiğinden de emin olabiliriz. Hegelci olmayan bir diyalektikten bahsetmeye meyletmek gibi, Öklitçi olmayan bir geometriye de meyilliyizdir (Schutz, *Studies in Social Theory* 141).

Hastalıklarla baş etmeyi sağlayan (geleneksel-modern) bilgiler meşruiyetlerini bedeni

sağaltılmadaki başarılarından öte bu tarihsel-fenomenolojik bilinç yapısının enstrümanları olarak kazanır. Hastalığı sistemsal bir arıza ya da ilahi bir lütuf/ceza olarak görmek, hastayı tecrit etmek veya ona eşlik etmek, biyo-mekanik bir bulmacayı cevaplamak ya da hayat kurtarmak ruh-beden bağlantısının farklı bilgi-iktidar söylemlerindeki yansımasıdır. Her tarihsel dönemde hastalık, bir uzmanlık sorunu olduğu kadar dünyayı kavrama biçimi ile doğrudan ilgili olmuştur: “Siyah elbise giyen üç insan yani papazı, hakimi ve hekimi bir tutan atasözü boş değildir: bunlardan biri ruhlarda, öteki keselerde, üçüncüsü bedenlerde açılan yaraları tedavi eder; bu üç insan toplumu üç ana yaşama anlamında temsil eder: vicdan, varlık, sağlık” (Balzac 62). Ebedi bir vicdan ağrısından muzdarip Dr. Benasis’in bu sözleri, yaraların çeşitleri ve sayısı artıp uzmanların renk tercihleri değişse de, tıbbi pratiğin toplumsal söylemle iç içe geçtiğini veciz bir şekilde özetler. Profesyonel tıbbın “tartışmasız başarıları” tarihsel olarak modern tıp öncesi ve sonrası arasında keskin bir ayrıma bizi zorlamasına rağmen modern sağlık tekniklerinin farklı tarihsel süreç ve iktidar ilişkilerinin tezahürü olduğu ortadadır. Örneğin, her kentte, sayılarının iki elin parmaklarını geçmediği doktorlar uzun yıllar hastalığı kendine has tekniklerle çözmeye çalışan cerrahlar, berber-cerrahlar, eczacılar ve her evin doğal hekimi kabul edilen koca karılar ile sağlık iktidarını bölüşmek zorunda kalmıştır (Lindeman). Benzer şekilde modern tıbbın mabetleri olarak hastanelerin on dokuzuncu yüzyılda kazandıkları kamusal değere her dönem sahip olduklarını söylemek güçtür. Avrupa’da öncelikle cüzzamlıların karantina altına alınması için kilisenin öncülüğünde kurulan hastaneler, sadece biyo-mekanizmaları bozulanların değil yoksul, yaşlı ve kimsesizlerin barındırıldığı ve hayatlarının kurtarılmasından çok ölene kadar “misafir edildiği” (hospitality) mekanlar olmuştur. Sterilleşmeyi amaçlayan toplumsal bir etiğin en önemli örgütlenme biçimi olarak hastanenin yüklendiği söylemsel işlev; kentleşme, sanayileşme, yoksulluk ve suç gibi sorunlar dikkate almaksızın kavranamaz. İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrası refah politikaları kamu sağlığının önemsenmesinin, hastane patlamasının ve hastaneye giden insan sayısında ciddi bir artışın yanında 19. asrın kolektif düşlerinin kurumsallaşmasına olanak sağlamıştır (Porter 150-153). Bu gelişmelerin sonucunda hastalık fenomeni sağduyusal bilgilerden arındırılıp tıbbi bir sterilizasyon ve kapatılma söyleminin tekeline bırakılmıştır. Öte yandan bu söylemin tahakkümü, hastalığın öznel-arası boyutunun bütünüyle imha edildiği anlamına gelmez. Eski görünürlüklerini kısmen kaybetmelerine ve disipliner sağlık bilgisi tarafından sistematik olarak sansürlenmelerine rağmen yaşam-dünyasal pratikler yeraltı dolaşımlarını sürdürmüştür. Geç modern dönemde bireyler kolektif-kurumsal yaptırımlardan ziyade öznel ve otantik deneyimlerle kendilerini tanımlarken ruh ve beden arasında kalanları psiko-fiziksel bir

mekanizmaya dayandırmaya çalışan tıbbi açıklamalar da radikal bir eleştiriye uğramıştır. Dini gerçekliğin bir tür aşkınlık deneyimi olarak geri dönüşü seküler-rasyonalist söylemin dışarda bıraktığı sağlık pratiklerinin de (akupunktur, homöopati, yoga) ortodoks tıp için bir alternatif teşkil etmesine yol açmıştır. Sağlıklılıktaki yeni alternatifler, modern tıptan başka şeyler bekleyen (sıkıntıları hakkında varoluşsal bir açıklama, hayatın tesadüfiliğini çözecek gizli bir şifre, özgüven telkin edecek farklı duygular) post modern bireylere ümitvar bir ruh-beden bakımı önermektedir (Hodge and Derezotes 2008; Berger and Zjderveld 2010). Bununla birlikte genişleyen piyasa sistemi bu alternatif tekniklerin üretim mekanizmalarının, dağıtım şebekelerinin ve kullanım tarzlarının da kitlesel bir tüketim mantığınca örgütlenmesini sağlamıştır. Sağlık pastasının yeni ve gelişen bir sektörü olarak alternatif sağlık pratikleri, bir yandan neo-liberal piyasa politikalarının özgürleştirici şemsiyesi altına alınırken diğer yandan da tüketim toplumunun gösterge ekonomisine kodlanmaktadır.

Literatür Değerlendirmesi

Parsons'ın kurumsal tıp modeli ile toplumsal sistem arasında kurduğu analogik birliktelik sağlık sosyolojisi alanında uzun süre geçerliliğini korumuştur. Bununla birlikte gerek çağdaş toplumun 1968 krizinin açığa çıkardığı yapısal sorunlar gerekse farklı fizyolojik rahatsızlıklar, bağımlılık türleri, psikiyatrik vakalar ve otoimmün hastalıkların türeyişi sapma ve bütünleşmenin kurumsal ekseninde işleyen hastalık durumunun da yeniden ele alınmasını zorunlu kılmış; hastalığın öznel anlamlandırma süreçleri ve grup içi etkileşim süreci doğrultusunda yüklendiği sosyal değere yönelik çalışmalar (edilgen) hastalık rolü tanımına bir açılım kazandırmıştır (McKinlay ; Suchman). 1970 sonrasında toplumsal kurumların yaşadığı çözülme ve bireysel kimlik arayışlarının yükselişi Ortodoks tıba yönelik sonsuz güvenin sarsılmasına neden olurken tedavinin de bir tür benlik bakımı (self care) ile birleştiği post-modern bir hastalık bilincine zemin hazırlamıştır. Disipliner tıbbın paranteze aldıklarını yeniden devreye sokan bu kültürel iklim, alternatif tıbbi pratiklerin de hasta, pratisyen ve hekimler nezdinde kabul görmesini sağlayacaktır (Siahpus 160). Kurumsal tıbbın tek yönlü hasta-doktor ilişkilerinden duyulan memnuniyetsizlik, manevi anlamda bütüncül bir kişiliğin bedenini kendi kendini iyileştirmesine yardım edebileceğini savunan new age felsefelerle birleştiğinde hastalar için alternatif tedavi teknikleri oldukça vaatkar bir hale gelecektir (Siahpus 161; Sharma). Literatüre bakıldığında hastaların alternatif tıba yönelik ilgisinin yalnızca ideolojik bir yönelimden kaynaklandığı söylenemez. Kurumsal tıbbın kesin bir şekilde ortadan

kaldıramadığı kronik rahatsızlıkların düşürdüğü yaşam kalitesi ve moral çöküntüsü alternatif tıbbi pratiklerin ruh ve beden arasında post modern bir köprü kurmasına neden olmuştur (Semmes). Öte yandan post modern kültürün bedeni yeniden keşfedişi ile farklı bedensel uzmanlıklar emek piyasasına katılırken alternatif tıp uygulayıcıları profesyonelleşecektir. Başta Anglosakson dünya olmak üzere homöopati, osteopati ve geleneksel Çin tıbbi gibi tedavi teknikleri, ortodoks tıbbi söylemin toplumu korumak adına yürüttükleri tüm muhalefete rağmen sağlık piyasasında hem kendine bir yer edinmeyi başarmış hem de hükümetlerce desteklenmiştir (Wardwell; Anyinam).

Alternatif tıbbin hekimler dünyasını birkaç cepheye böldüğü söylenebilir. Yapılan çalışmalar bir kısım hekimlerce alternatif tedavi teknikleri tartışmasız bir şekilde reddedilmesine rağmen kimi tıbbi uzmanlar tarafından farklı motivasyonlarla da olsa desteklendiğini göstermektedir. Hasta-doktor bağına güçlendirmek, bir tür plasebo etkisi uyandırmak gibi amaçlarla alternatif tıp tekniklerinin zımnen kabul edilmesinin (Kotow; West) yanında akupunktur başta olmak üzere tüm dünyada birçok hekim “heretik teknikleri” öğrenmekte ve hatta örgütlemektedir (Ullman; Wolpe). Geleneksel tıba ait tedavi tekniklerinin yükselişi yanında dini telkin ve arınma pratiklerinin bedensel bir benlik bakımına dönüşmesini ele alan çalışmalar literatürde öne çıkmaktadır. Geleneksel dinlerin eski kolektif anlatıları bireysel kimlik arayışı açısından yeniden yorumlanırken sağlık fenomeni de biyo-mekanik bir işleyişten ziyade “hasta ya da engelli bireyin gündelik yaşamında bütüncül bir kişilik ve ahlaki sorumlulukla şekillendirdiği” (Garret 61) ruhsal bir durum olarak ele alınacaktır. Manevi bir otobiyografik dürtünün yönlendirdiği benlik anlatıları ile acı deneyimi arasındaki ilişkiye odaklanan birçok çalışmada ilkel ve Doğu dinlerindeki egzotik beden tekniklerinin yeniden üretimi (Waddell; Charmaz) veya konvansiyonel dinler içindeki mistik mezheplerin post modern şifa pratiklerine (Stolz) odaklanılmıştır.

Sağlık sosyolojisi literatüründeki gelişmelerin Türkiye’nin toplumsal değişimi ile doğru orantılı gittiği söylenebilir. Bu bağlamda alternatif tıbbin toplumsal arka planına yönelik çalışmalar dünya sosyolojisinde 1980’lerle başlatılırken bu ilginin Türk sosyal bilim kamusunda bir yankı bulması 2010 yılından sonra başlayacaktır. Osmanlı ve Erken cumhuriyette birçok reform ve düzenlemenin dirimsel bir söylemden hareket etmesi tıbbi kadrolar ve politik seçkinler arasında yakın bir ittifak doğurmasına rağmen sağlık sosyolojisine yönelik çalışmaların 1960’lı yıllarda başladığı söylenebilir (Güven 132). Doğum ve ölüm kayıtlarının düzenlenmesi, halk sağlığı, koruyucu tıp ve beslenme gibi konularda yoğunlaşan ilk dönem çalışmalar (Türkdoğan; Gençler; Elmacı) planlamacı-kalkınmacı bir

söylemin izlerini taşır. Sağlık sosyolojisiyle uzun süre eş anlamlı bir kullanıma sahip olan tıp sosyolojisi çalışmaları da alanda öne çıkan diğer bir katmandır. Hekimlerin eğitimi, profesyonel bakış açıları ve toplumsal örgütlenmesine odaklanan bu çalışmaların (Kasapoğlu; Kızılçelik) sağlık bilimsel bir söylemle sosyolojik bir bakış açısını birleştirmeye çalıştığı söylenebilir. Literatürün iki katmanı, dönemsel ve çalışma konularındaki farklara rağmen, paradigmatik olarak tıbbi ortodoksi ile toplumsal sistemler arasındaki işlevselci ortaklıktan yola çıkmaktadır. 1990'lı yıllarda modernliğin ağır yapılarına yöneltilen yorumsalayıcı ve post yapısalcı eleştiriler 2000'li yıllara gelindiğinde sağlık sosyolojisi alanında tıbbi toplum modelinin tartışıldığı çalışmalara imza atılmasını sağlamış (Işık) toplumsal cinsiyet ve neo-liberal sağlık politikaları hakkındaki çalışmalar alanın ilgi gören yeni konuları arasına girmiştir (Özbay). 2000 sonrası kuramsal çeşitlilik ve çalışma konularındaki farklılaşma alana bir açılım sağlamakla birlikte bu çalışmaların genellikle bir meta-eleştiri işlevi taşıdığı söylenebilir. Eski sosyolojik paradigma ve ideolojilerle hesaplaşmayı amaçlayan birçok çalışmada alternatif tıp pratikleri ya genel geçer bir eleştiri nesnesi kılınmış ya da sosyal gerçekliği görmezden gelinmiştir. Yüksek Öğretim Başkanlığı Ulusal Tez Merkezinde alternatif tıp anahtar sözcüğü ile yapılan aramalarda yalnızca 23 çalışmanın bulunması bu tutumun bir göstergesi olarak görülebilir. 2010 sonrasında yapılan söz konusu çalışmaların tamamına yakını tıp eğitimi ve sağlık bilimleri kapsamında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bununla birlikte alternatif tıp kullanıcıları ve uygulayıcılarının toplumsal kökenlerini araştırıp anlam haritalarını çıkarmaya yönelik çalışmalar (Kurttaş; Doğan) yapılmaya başlanmasına rağmen söz konusu çalışmaların sosyal bir profil çıkarmanın ötesine geçtiğini söylemek oldukça güçtür. Uzun süre bilim kamusunda netameli bir mevzu olarak görülen dini şifacılık üzerine son yıllarda birtakım araştırmalar bulunmaktadır (Güldaldı; Alptürker). Öte yandan dini şifacılığın öznelerin anlam dünyasındaki karşılığını Türkiye'nin modernleşmesi anlatıları ekseninde okuyan ilk yetkin çalışma Christopher Dole'a aittir. Ankara'nın iki gece kondu mahallesinde yaptığı etnografik araştırmada dini şifacıların pratikleri (üfürükçü, cinci hoca veya bio-enerji uzmanı) ile evliya kültürünün sunduğu sağlık-hastalık anlatılarının sağduyusal farkını yetkin bir şekilde göstermiştir (Dole 178-179). Bu çalışmada analiz edeceğimiz Tuncer Çiftçi'nin tele-terapisi aslında Dole'un ayrı söylemsel evrenler olarak incelediği bu iki kategoriye eş zamanlı olarak bir araya getirmektedir.

Türkiye'nin Modernleşme Sürecinde Sağlık Söylemi

Cumhuriyetin ilanıyla başlayan süreçte, egemen sosyolojik tezler toplumsal

değişmeyi sekülerleşme seviyesi ile ilişkilendirmiştir (Berkes, *Laiklik ve Teokrasi* 71; Berkes *Türkiye’de Çağdaşlaşma* 16). Kurucu elitler için sekülerleşme dinsel-geleneksel olanı temsil eden her bilgi ve uygulamanın kamusal ilişkilerden temizlendiği ve dinin kişisel bir vicdan meselesi olarak özel alana çekildiği bir uygarlık projesini gerçekleştirmek anlamına gelir. Bu bağlamda Erken Cumhuriyet ideolojisi, bireyin dünyayı geleneksel görgü ve pratiklerden arındırarak yeni toplumsal beklentilere göre anlamlandırmalarını sağlayacak rasyonalist bir kolektif anlatı kurmaya çalışmıştır. Haklardan çok vazifeleri, özgürlüklerden çok sorumlulukları olan yeni insanlar yaratacak bir püriten etik, bilime ve özellikle tıbbi bilgiye büyük bir güven beslemiştir. Bilim yalnızca hayatı kolaylaştıran bir takım keşif ve icatlardan öte öncelikle “doğru” düşünme ve yaşama aracı olarak düşünülmüştür. Tıbbi ve politik söylem arasındaki ideolojik ittifak geleneksel teşhis ve tedavi tekniklerinin sadece bilimsel olarak yanlış değil aynı zamanda muasırlaşma idealleri açısından son derece tehlikeli ve imha edilmesi gereken tortular olarak değerlendirilmesine sebep olmuştur. Homojen bir kamusal anlatı içinde toplum düşmanı hurafeler olarak “resmen” lanetlenmek geleneksel şifa pratiklerinin modernleşme tarihinin ilk planıdır (Hanioğlu 46; Dole 81-82). Şerif Mardin’in yerinde tespitiyle, cumhuriyet ideolojisinin toplumun kurumsal dönüşümünü gerçekleştirmesine rağmen gündelik ilişkileri (Volk İslam) dönüştürmekte yaşadığı başarısızlık (Mardin, *Din ve İdeoloji* 144-145) bu “çağ dışı” uygulamaların yaşam-dünyalarında sürdürülmesini sağlamıştır. 1980’li yılların serbest piyasa sistemine açılması, farklı tüketim tercihleri yaratmanın yanı sıra seküler kamusal söylemde bir takım çatlakların açılmasını tetiklemişti. 1990’lara siyasal İslamcılığın yükselişi damga vururken ana akım medyada rejimin ve tarihsel kazanımlarının İslamcılığın tehdidi altında olduğu geniş yer tutar. Siyasal alandaki kamplaşma geleneksel-modern pratikler arasındaki farklılıkların da keskin bir çatışmaya dönüşmesine neden olur. Bu bağlamda geleneksel şifacılığın sadece bir bedensel/ruhsal bir sağaltım anlayışı değil İslamcı tehlikenin su yüzüne çıkardığı uygarlık-karşıtı bir tehdit olarak değerlendirilmesi şaşırtıcı değildir. 1990 sonrasında bu uygulamaların tıbbi söylem ve özellikle modernlik projesi açısından nasıl değerlendirileceği tıp camiasından çok medyanın iştirak ettiği hararetli tartışmalara neden olmuştur. Çok kanallı 90’lı yıllarda her tartışma programın ana gündem maddelerinden biri geleneksel uygulamaların mucizevi etkileri karşısında ortodoks tıbbın bilimsel hakikatleridir. TV izleyicisinin yeni tanıştığı reality showların ise vazgeçilmez konuları arasında üfürükçülerin dolandırıcılığı ve bunlara inan saf halkın trajedisi yer alıyordu (Söz Fatoda, Kanal D, 15 Ocak 1996; Teksoy Görevde, 16 Ocak 1998, Star TV). Dini şifacılığın ülke kamuoyunu bu denli işgal etmesi yalnızca halk sağlığına gösterilen bir

duyarlılık değildir. Modernleşme tarihimizin ana güzergahını oluşturan ileri-gerici gerilimi, 28 Şubat süreci ile birlikte dini şifacılığın politik tehlikelerini göstermekte kullanılmıştır. Ali Kalkancı, Müslüm Gündüz, Fadime Şahin gibi suçlu veya mağdur temsilleri üzerinden oluşturulmaya çalışılan dinsel söylem, modernleşme tarihimizin tıbbi-ideolojik dilinin çağdaş bir göstereni olarak okunabilir. Bu tablonun 2000 sonrası değişmeye başlaması oldukça ilginçtir. Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisinin tek başına iktidarı ile başlayan 2000 sonrası dönemde sekülerleşmecî modernleşme söylemine yoğun bir eleştiri yöneltirken geleneksel-modernlik arasında daha uzlaşmacı bir ilişkinin mümkün olduğunu savunan alternatif modernlik kuramları büyük bir hüsn-ü kabul görecekti (Nilüfer Göle, 2016). İdeolojik söylemdeki bu değişim küresel piyasanın yeni meta düzeni ve talepleri ile eş zamanlı gelişir. Ortodoks tıbbın bitkiler üzerine yaptığı yeni araştırmalar kamuoyunda geleneksel sağlık bilgisine karşı bir ilgi uyandırırken, yeni sağlık profesyonelleri doğanın ve maneviyatın iyileştirici güçlerinin çevrelediği alternatif bir şifa alanı yaratmış ve bu yeni araştırma alanının varlığına konvansiyonel uzmanlar dahi kayıtsız kalamamıştır. Günümüzde alternatif tıp artık sadece koruyucu tedavinin bir parçası değildi; sakıncalı bir bilgi ise kesinlikle değildir. Gündelik yaşamdaki bu dönüşüm sağlık sosyolojisi alanında hastalık rolü yeniden tanımlanırken alternatif tıp söyleminin yeni bir çalışma sahası olarak gelişmesine neden olur.

Örneklemin Oluşumu

Çalışmanın örneklemini üç katmandan oluşmaktadır: gazete haberleri, TV yayınları, youtube paylaşımları. Araştırma evreninin ilk katmanı olarak Çiftçi'nin ulusal basındaki izleri, farklı mecralarda hakkında yapılan haber ve yorumlar incelenmiştir. Kocaeli, Bursa, Erzurum gibi şehirlerde düzenlediği toplu dua etkinlikleriyle ismini duyuran Çiftçi, ulusal basında ilk kez Haziran 2008 tarihinde yoğun bir katılımı ile düzenlenen toplu dua seansı sonrası Kocaeli Cumhuriyet Savcılığınca açılan soruşturma ile haber olmuştur. Çiftçi'nin TV programları ile adını daha fazla duyurmaya başlaması ulusal basında daha fazla dikkat çekmesini sağlamış; bu durum haber sayılarında bir artış meydana getirmiştir. Bu süreçte tuhaf bir medya figürü olarak kimi haberlerde servis edilmesine rağmen Çiftçi'nin kamuoyunu ortak bir kanaat oluşturacak kadar etkilediği söylenemez. 2016 yılından itibaren hakkında yapılan haber ve köşe yazılarında Çiftçi olumsuz etiketler içeren söylemlerle anılmaya başlamıştır. "Sahtekar", "sahte mehdi", "din taciri" gibi ağır ifadelerle tanımlandığı çoğu haberde Çiftçi, yeni Adnan Oktar olarak konumlandırılır. 2018 yılından itibaren kamuoyunda Çiftçi'nin yalnızca dini istismar eden değil; ahlaki nitelikleri zayıf biri olduğuna

yönelik farklı haberler yapılmaya başlanmıştır. Farklı yaş gruplarından kadın müritlerine şelalenin altından geçmelerini emreden eski bir görüntü kaydı oldukça ses getirmiş; ziyaret ettiği bir hayvanat bahçesinde bir kanguruya yaptıkları ile sosyal medyada tepki çekmenin yanında ana haber bültenlerine konu olmuştur. Çiftçi konusunda farklı ideolojik kökenlere sahip yayın organları din tacirliği gibi ortak bir söylemde buluşurken, kadına ve hayvana şiddetle anılan haberleri genel bir olumsuz algı yaratmıştır. Öte yandan bu homojen söylemin Çiftçi ve sevenleri arasında bütünleşmeyi arttıran bir etki uyandırması oldukça ilginçtir. Kurgu ya da gerçek olduğunu tespit etmenin güçlüğü bir kenara bırakırsak kanalının internet sitesindeki yorumların hayranlık ve destek mesajlarından oluştuğu görülmektedir.

Araştırma evreninin ikinci katmanını Çiftçi'nin ulusal kanalarda canlı bir stüdyo programı olarak yayınlanan "Tuncer Çiftçi ile Hoş Sohbetler" programı oluşturmaktadır. 2011 yılından itibaren Kanal 9, Kaçkar TV, Tempo TV, Rumeli TV gibi yerel kanalların gece ve gündüz kuşaklarında canlı yayın bağlantıları ve kısa mesajlarla sürdürülen programlar yapmış; kimi zaman programda dini müzik grupları performans sergilemiştir. Programa gelen şikayetler üzerine Radyo Televizyon Üst Kurulu hareket geçmiştir. RTÜK'ün program hakkında aldığı kararların seyri oldukça ilginçtir. 09.01.2012 tarihinde "Tuncer Çiftçi ile Hoş Sohbetler" programının 6112 sayılı Kanunun 8. Maddesinin "toplumun millî ve manevî değerlerine, genel ahlaka ve ailenin korunması" ile "kişileri fal veya batıl inançlar yoluyla istismar edemez" ilkelerini ihlal etmediği ancak "haksız çıkarlara hizmet eden ve haksız rekabete yol açan unsurlar içeremez" ilkesini ihlal ettiği oy çokluğu ile karara bağlanır. Bununla birlikte sekiz ay sonra programın "kişileri fal ve batıl inançlar yoluyla istismar ettiği" ve "destek verene veya üçüncü kişiye ait mal ve atıfta bulunduğu"na oy birliği ile karar verilir. 19.03.2013'de ise programın "toplumun manevi değerlerine aykırı yayın" yaptığına oybirliği ile kanaat getirilir. İtham edildiği her üç maddeden uzun süre farklı yaptırımlara maruz kalan programın stüdyo macerası sonlanır. Çiftçi, 8 Şubat 2016 tarihinden itibaren yayın akışının çoğunluğunu kendi programlarının oluşturduğu Gonca TV'de, RTÜK tarafından para cezası ve yayın durdurma cezaları ile karşılaşmasına rağmen, sevenleri ile buluşmayı sürdürmektedir.

Araştırma evreninin üçüncü katmanını ise Çiftçi'nin dijital yayıncılık serüveni oluşturmaktadır. Stüdyo yayınlarının engellenmesinin ardından Çiftçi, internet yayıncılığına yoğunlaşır. Stüdyo ortamındaki eski program kayıtlarının yanı sıra mehdilik makamının varlığı, Çiftçi'nin turistik seyahatleri, çeşitli görsellerinden oluşan sevgi klipleri, farklı ortam ve kişilerle buluşmaları başta Youtube olmak üzere birçok video paylaşım sitesinde

dolaşımdadır. “İyileştirdiği hastaların” olumlu tanıklıklarını içeren kayıtlar ile başlanan video paylaşımlarını, şöhret ile doğru orantılı olarak Çiftçi’nin farklı anlarını ve hakkındaki iddiaları cevaplayan çok sayıda kayıt takip etmektedir. Çiftçi’nin görüntü kayıtlarını, mesajlarını ve onunla ilgili haberleri yayınlayan 10’un üzerinde Youtube kanalı bulunmaktadır. Çoğu anonim olan bu kanalların isimleri Çiftçi’nin söyleminden seçilmiş kelime kalıplarından oluşur: Goncanın Özlemi, Allah CC Büyüktür Es – Selâm, Osmanlı Torunu, Sahibbüz Zaman. 3 Nisan 2016 tarihinden itibaren düzenli yayın yapan Sahibbüz Zaman 10,900 abone ve 3.5 milyonun üzerinde toplam izlenme sayısı ile en etkin yayın organı konumundadır. Diğer kanalların düzensiz yayınları ve daha az aboneli oluşu hayranları tarafından kurulduğu izlenimini uyandırır. Bununla birlikte kayıt yükleme trafiğine bakıldığında Çiftçi’nin kayıtlarının gerek yasal gerek trol faaliyetler nedeniyle yayından kaldırılma tehlikesi ile karşı karşıya olduğu gözlenmektedir. Paylaşımların başlığında “kaldırılmadan hemen izle!” gibi uyarı notlarının bulunması ve yayın ile erişim tarihlerinin arasındaki zaman farkı kayıtların dolaşımına mani olunduğunu gösterir. Bu durumu önlemek adına yayınların Youtube’da organize bir ekip tarafından yürütüldüğü söylenebilir. Özellikle sayfanın yorum kısmında yalnızca Çiftçi’ye destek mesajlarının yer bulması, her çeşit görüşün sert bir şekilde ifade edildiği Youtube platformunun izleyici yapısıyla oldukça çelişmektedir. Yeni medya araçlarının izleyici ve içerik üreticisi arasındaki yoğun özdeşleşme lider ile sanal cemaati arasındaki bütünleşmeyi arttırırken karşıtların yoğun tepkilerinden de göstergesel bir izolasyon tesis eder. Konvansiyonel ekrandan bireyselleşmiş ekranlara geçişi hem Çiftçi’nin kendinden menkul karizmasını yüceltir hem de izler kitlenin ona daha da yaklaşmasını sağlar.

Bu çalışmada Çiftçi’nin tele-terapi seanslarını analiz etmek adına daha geniş bir tanınırlığa ulaştığı 2010 sonrası stüdyo kayıtlarına ağırlık verdik. Diğer yandan üretilmeye çalışılan karizmanın görünmeyen/ program dışı unsurlarını tartışabilmek için diğer kayıtlardan da istifade etmeye çalıştık. Hoş Sohbetler programının biçimsel ve içerik açısından ele alarak dini mesajın üretimindeki sosyo-kültürel ve iletişimsel unsurlarının gösterge düzenini yorumlamayı denedik.

Programın Biçimsel Özellikleri

Çiftçi programlarında öncelikle bir şifa uzmanı olarak belirir. TV döneminde çoğunlukla stüdyoda gerçekleşen programlar zaman zaman dış mekanlara taşınır. Temposu oldukça yavaş olan programda ortalama izleyicinin dikkatini diri tutulmak adına farklı taktiklere başvurulur. Çiftçi bazen gösterişli papağanları ile programı yürütür (Çiftçi, 17

Ağustos 2013) bazen renkli çiçeklerle süslenmiş bir stüdyoyu kullanır. Söz konusu “doğal” motifler, dikkati çekmenin yanında programın bir cennet temsili sunmasını sağlar. Son dönem yayınlarında çekim yeri olarak kime ait olduğu anlaşılamayan evlerin salonları kullanılır. Çiçeklerle süslü, arka fonda hareketli doğa manzaraları ya da bir dünya haritasının bulunduğu bu çekimlerde Çiftçi, evin ambiyansı ile uyumlu spor kıyafetleri veya günlük kıyafetleri tercih eder. Bununla birlikte çekimlerin gerillavari bir tarzla sürdürülmesi bahçe peyzajlarının yanında seyir halindeki bir otomobilin (Çiftçi, 24 Ekim 2020) de set ortamı olarak kullanılmasına neden olur.

Çiftçi yayınlarında genellikle yalnızdır; kamera genelde göğüs plan çalışır. Duanın kritik anlarında kamera Çiftçi’nin yüzünü yakın plan yansıtır. Bir şifa uzmanından keramet sahibi bir ermişe dönüştüğü stüdyo yayınlarında Çiftçi geleneksel bir din adamı görünümünde değildir. Sinek kaydı bir traşla, ekran karşısına çıkan Çiftçi, çoğunlukla canlı ve tek renk gömlekler giydiği takım elbiseler tercih eder. Bu haliyle sıradan bir insan izlenimi sunarken, peltek konuşma tarzı lahuti ortamın gereken ciddiyetini dağıtır. Öte yandan son dönem yayınlarında hilal şekli verdiği bıyıkları ve at binip kılıç kuşandığı görüntü kayıtları mutedil imajına daha maskülen bir izlenim kazandırmıştır. Dualarında Arapça deyişlere, uzun ve çetrefilli tamlamalara yer vermeyen Çiftçi, gündelik dua diliyle “peygamberin”, “sahabenin”, “Allah dostlarının” yüzü suyu hürmetine gibi bilindik ifadelerle terapisini gerçekleştirir. Arayanları büyük oranda kadın ve yaşlıların oluşturduğu telefon bağlantılarında hastasına, uzman bir hekim gibi, kendinden emin ve sakin bir ses tonuyla yaklaşır. Ortalama 3-5 dakika süren görüşmelerde tüm hakimiyeti elinde tutan Çiftçi, arayanın ona beslediği bireysel güven ve ümidi diğer seyircilere aktarıp istisnai mucizelerini sonraki yayına taşır.

Mesajın Üretimi

Programı arayanlar hastalığın geçmişi ve ağrılarının hangi noktalarda toplandığını öğrenmeye çalışıldığı bir konsültasyona tabi tutulur. Konsültasyon sürecinde hastanın Çiftçi’ye “hocam” şeklinde hitap etmesi dini olduğu kadar tıbbi bir göndergedir. Bu işlem sırasında Çiftçi, hastayla hem maddi hem de manevi olarak temas kurmaya çalışan dini şifacıya/cinci hoca pek benzemez. Keramet erbabının aksine bilgisi sıkı bir öz-denetim ve çalışmaya dayanan cinci hocalar ikna edici bir karizmaya sahip değildir. Yüz yüze ilişkilerin taraflar arasındaki eşitleyiciliği ile baş etmek ve gücünü ispatlamak zorundadır. Hasta, kişisel tercihleri, şifacının tutumu veya bilinmeyen başka bir etken nedeniyle görüşmeyi sonlandırmak isteyebilir. İyileşme sürecinin uzaması veya beklenildiği gibi sonuçlanmaması

hasta nezdinde güven kaybı oluşturabileceğinden sürekliliği sağlamak oldukça güçtür (Dole 175). Öte yandan program süresince kaynak ve alıcı arasındaki mesafe, şifacı ile hasta arasındaki yüz yüze karşılaşmaya dayalı eşitliği hasta-doktor arasındaki hiyerarşik ilişkiye dönüştürür. Düşmeyen telefon hatları ve diğer izleyicilerin tanıklığı Çiftçi'nin görüşme sırasında dokunulmaz bir karizma kazanmasına neden olur. Bedensel arızaların hastanın yaşamındaki anlamından tıbbi otoritenin haklılığını ispatlayan birer göstergeye dönüşmesi gibi program süresince hastanın çektiği acı da Çiftçi'nin kişisel karizmasının göstergesine dönüşür. Tıbbi tedavi bedenle ilgilenip ruhu paranteze alırken bu tele-terapide ilgi odağı ruhtur; bedensel rahatsızlıklar manevi bozukluğun bir semptomu olarak yorumlanır. Çağdaş bir tay-i mekan ve tay-i zaman olarak TV'nin sunduğu çoklu uzam-zaman algısı, arayanların doğrudan "Çiftçi'ye bağlandığı" bir (tele-) velayet ile programın göstergesel anlamını ikinci bir evreye taşır. Tele-terapik karizma Çiftçi'yi dini şifacılaraya yönelik itibarsız etiketlemelerden korumakla kalmaz aynı zamanda onu sufi geleneğin ahir zamandaki temsilcisi kılar.

TV programının yanı sıra internet yayınlarında kerametlerini sergilemeye sürdüren Çiftçi, bir kaydında asi bir horozu tesirli duası ile sakinleştirir (Çiftçi, 13 Ekim 2015). Başka bir kayıta yüzündeki mesihanik işaretlerin anlamını dini bütün teyzelerin yorumları ile sanal cemaatine bildirir (Çiftçi, 15 Aralık 2010). Arayanların hastalıklarının kronikliği ve doktor tedavisinin yetersiz kaldığı konuşmalarda sürekli vurgulanır. Bu noktada ağrının kronik oluşu hastaların psikolojik farkındalığını azaltırken izleyenler nezdinde tedavinin başarılı olduğu izlenimini güçlendirir. Bazı seanslardan sonra hasta sorularla tedavinin işaretlerini okumaya sevk edilir. Örneğin, ağrı duyulan yerde bir sıcaklığın olup olmadığı veya hareketsiz kaslarda bir karıncalanmanın başlayıp başlamadığı sorularak tedavinin psikosomatik izlerinin hem hasta hem de izleyici için takip edilmesi sağlanır. Diyaloglar, hastanın ya iyileşmeye başladığı yahut da izleme süresi ile orantılı olarak iyileşeceği müjdesiyle sonlanır:

İzleyici: Şiddetli bir boyun ağrım var. Ağrım için dua istiyorum sizden.

Tuncer Çiftçi: Şu an ağrıyor mu boynun?

İzleyici: Evet evet hocam aşırı... Doktora gidiyorum, doktorlardan şifa bulamadım yani.

Tuncer Çiftçi: Kaç yıldır ağrıyor bu boynun ablacığım?

İzleyici: İki senedir falan.

Tuncer Çiftçi: Ne kadar süredir beni izliyorsun?

İzleyici: Geçen sene Temmuzdan beri hocam.

Tuncer Çiftçi: Bayramdan bayrama mı sürekli mi izliyor musun?

İzleyici:...

Tuncer Çiftçi: Tamam Allah'ım Ümmeti Muhammed'e hepimize şifa nasip eder, merhamet eyler, tertemiz eder, acını alır boynunun. Kısmet bayramdan bayrama izleyince bayramdan bayrama cevap çıkıyor (Rumeli TV, 1 Mart 2014).

SONUÇ

Gerçekliği betimleyip, değerlendirme aracımız olan kategoriler aşkın birer veri değil insanın dünya içindeki ilişkilerinin birer tezahürüdür. (Toplumsal) ilişkilerin taraflara sunduğu avantaj ve dezavantajlar, pratik yatkınlıklar veya beceriksizlikler aktörlerin dünyayı nesnelleştirdikleri anlam haritalarını da temellendirir. Yiyeceklerimizi hazırlama ve sunma biçimiz sindirim sistemimizin bir parçası; akrabaların ten uyumu normal bir gen haritasının dolaylı teminatıdır. Doğa ve kültür arasındaki hipotetik ayrım özellikle hastalık/sağlık gibi kültürün her bir noktasına egemen olduğu bir kategoride bütünüyle geçersizleşir. Özneler-arası ilişkilerin (yaşam-dünyası) ve kurumsal soyutlamaların (sistem) kesişim noktasında beden hem türsel hem de tarihsel bir güç savaşında yer alır. Kurumsal düzenlemeler sahip oldukları söylemsel-maddi iktidar sayesinde kendi normatif tanımlarını bir süreliğine devre dışı bırakabilir. Diğer yandansa yaşam-dünyasal pratikler kurumsal norm ve yönlendirmelere rağmen ve hatta onlarla birlikte kendilerini yeniden üretebilme yeteneğine sahiptir. Özellikle geç modern dönemde kitle iletişim araçlarının verdiği mesajın Pavlovvari bir etki göstererek kitlelerin boş zihinlerini manipüle etmediği ortadadır. Bireysel anlam haritalarınca yorumlanan mesaj aynı zamanda yorumlamayı mümkün kılan yeni bir yorum cemaatine kaynaklık etmektedir. Öte yandan bu gündelik anlam haritaları bürokratik-hiyerarşik alanların sınır ve önceliklerine eklemlenir. İşte bu geç modern çifte-gönderim Çiftçinin yayınlarının dayandığı toplumsal bağlamı oluşturur. Tıbbi ve akademik evrenin uzmanlık fetişizmine saplanan disipliner iktidarı yeni sosyolojik sentezlere yanlış modernleşme tortuları olarak muamele ederken, üç hayati noktayı gözden geçirir. Birincisi, bilimsel epistemenin indirgemeci yaklaşım, hastalığın yarattığı çaresizliğin her türden iyileşme olasılığına başvurabilecek kendine has bir bilinç yapısı geliştirdiğini kavramakta yetersizdir. İkincisi Hoş Sohbetler gibi programların etkisini alt ve orta gelirlerdeki kültürel sermayesi düşük kitlelerin cehaleti ile açıklayan yüzeysel yorumlar kültürel sermayenin

toplumsal yapının imkan ve tehditlerince bahşedilen ortak bir kapasite olduğunu ihmal etmektir. Çiftçi örneği, tikel bir sapma değil geç modern toplumsal ilişkilerin mantığını gösteren bir ideal tip olarak görülmelidir. Toplumsal dünya yapısal norm ve aktörsel deneyimler arasında zikzak çizerek hareket eder. Yeni medya teknolojileri ile uzmanlık bilgisi korunaklı alanını kaybedip sıradan insanın anlam haritalarını yeniden yapılandırırken gündelik hayatımızı kotarmamızı yardımcı olan sağduyu bilgisi yeni uzmanlık alanları üretmektedir. Sıradan insanların birer yarı-uzmana dönüştüğü ve uzmanlıkların kitlesel taleplerin karşılanması ile karakterini kazandığı bu toplumsal uzamın alışılmadık sentezlerini çözümlemek ancak düşünömsel bir perspektifle mümkündür.

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REPRESENTATION OF THE OTHER IN WESTERN HISTORY: A POSTCOLONIAL READING¹

Rasha MALEK²

Abstract

Much of the European discourse on the Other has been informed by canonical figures like Kant, Hegel, and Freud, who have misrepresented the non-European non-white with special emphasis on women who were believed to be generally inferior to men. This has urged postmodern and postcolonial writers like Gayatri Spivak, Edward Said, Franz Fanon, and Luce Irigaray to counter those writers in order to rewrite the history and identity of women and the non-European. This paper traces the history of ideas regarding the representation of the Other and offers a postcolonial critique of theories advanced by Kant, Hegel, and Freud. Kant represented the Other as lacking judgment faculties whose taste and moral judgment cannot be compared to the wise European. Hegel excluded the Other from history and alleged that the only history is European since he believes that the Other is incapable of writing history. Finally, Freud portrayed the Other as savage and primitive whose mind resembles his neurotic patients. He also represented women's sexuality as inferior to men. Such misrepresentations have resulted in a long history of dehumanization and prejudices towards the Other. This has triggered the emergence of the postcolonial discourse in order to balance the Othering process. For instance, Spivak attacked Kant for disempowering and excluding the non-Europeans from his *Critique of Judgment*. She also critiqued Hegel for creating Oriental stereotypes in his *Philosophy of History*. Hegel's master/slave dialectic has been deconstructed by Franz Fanon, who argues that the black cannot attain self-recognition through the gaze of the white, since the black has always been portrayed as inferior in the white's discourse. Irigaray challenged Freud by arguing that he lacks an understanding of female sexuality. Edward Said contradicted Freud's ambivalent notion of the non-European. Such revisionist history aims at rewriting the Other's image and identity.

Keywords: The Other, Postmodernism, Postcolonialism, Hegel, Kant, Freud, Representation, Feminism

INTRODUCTION

The postmodern current (1970s) has brought about several ideological changes where skepticism has become the source of meaning. Critics and thinkers like Jean-François Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, and Michel Foucault urge the postmodern reader to discredit the dominant narrative and question the capital truth in favor of the marginalized narrative that has always been silenced by canonical voices. This inciting call has triggered the emergence of feminist and postcolonial discourse where critics like Gayatri Spivak, Luce Irigaray, Edward Said, and Frantz Fanon challenge and question the representation

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of the Other by white Western canonical patriarchal figures including Kant, Hegel, and Freud. Those influential figures in Western history have been considered the pillars of Western thought for their invaluable contribution to the formation of theories. Kant was considered “one of the greatest philosophers of all times,” whose theories in “epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics greatly influenced all subsequent philosophy” (Duignan & Bird). Hegel was “the last of the great system builders of Western philosophy and the greatest and most extravagant representative of the school of absolute idealism” (Knox). His philosophy inspired much of the 19th-century school of thought, including idealists and Marxists (Knox). He was also considered “among historians and classical scholars rather than among philosophers” (Knox). Freud is the founder of psychoanalysis, whose influence extends far beyond psychology (Jay). He has advanced a number of theories that revolutionized the field of psychology: the theory of the “unconscious,” the structure of the “Id,” “ego,” and “superego,” “the Oedipus Complex,” and the method of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, to cite a few. The high visibility and reputation of those eminent writers explain why their discourses have shaped the Western ideology pertaining to the image of the non-Western. However, those same philosophers have been viewed as racist and sexist by the postmodern logic due to the fact that their representation of the Other is questionable. This paper traces the views of Kant, Hegel, and Freud regarding race and gender, as well as employs a postcolonial reading in order to refute their arguments.

I. Immanuel Kant

Kant develops his racial theory in his article “On the Different Races of Man” (1775), where he identifies four races of human beings based on skin color. He theorizes that the climate is the reason for different physical variations and consequently inferiority. The importance of this racial division was further elaborated in his Critique of Judgment (1790) (Gray 397), where he argues that the beautiful is “the object of a universal delight” (42). However, Kant emphasizes that the concept of the “universal” differs from one race to the other. Thus, by “universal,” he means shared and common to the judgment and taste of the European, which would differ from “a black man” and a “Chinese person” (65). In Kant’s philosophy, judgment and taste are not cultural constructs but rather are inborn and inherent in each race. This is a crucial aspect that characterizes the Enlightenment thinkers as they believe everything is hereditary rather than culturally constructed, and genetics mark the superiority versus the inferiority of each race. Sally Hatch Gray defines the notion of the “normal idea” according to Kant by maintaining that the “normal idea cannot be universal for all humans... The different races will come to their own ‘Normalidee’ not solely

through the process of adding up experiences, but through a ‘universal’ subjective judgment” (408). This has led her to conclude: “Thus, it seems rather important to note that here ‘universal’ can also mean ‘European,’ and that, under consideration, this may not actually present any contradiction for the work as a whole” (408).

Kant, however, does not refer to other races in order to include them in his critique of the judging criteria, but rather to exclude them from being capable of making the right judgment, as shall be discussed. He devises a theory in which he seeks to fit everything. For this reason, he has to mention the non-Europeans, but only to exclude them and claim that they are incapable of making reasonable judgments (Spivak, *A Critique* 26). Kant ascribes great importance to man’s reason and wisdom, which he believes are the marker of civilization and superiority. Gayatri C. Spivak believes that the only significance of the presence of “the New Hollander or the man from Tierra del Fuego” in Kant’s critique is that they “*cannot* be the subject of speech or judgment in the world of the *Critique*” (*A Critique* 26). This idea of exclusion is further elaborated and enhanced in Kant’s article “Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime” (1764), where he charts the degradation in taste and morality regarding other races, including the Arabs, the Japanese, the Indians, and the Negros, whom he considers the most inferior of all. This emphasizes Kant’s reasoning in excluding the Other from taste and judgment. According to Kant, the Arab is “the noblest man in the Orient, yet of a feeling that degenerates very much into the adventurous...His inflamed imagination presents things to him in unnatural and distorted images, and even the propagation of his religion was a great adventure” (54). As for the Japanese, he believes they “could in a way be regarded as the English—men of this part of the world, but hardly in any other quality than their resoluteness - which degenerates into the utmost stubbornness - their valor, and disdain of death. For the rest, they display few signs of a finer feeling” (55). Contrary to the Japanese, the Indians “have a dominating taste of the grotesque, of the sort that falls into the adventurous. Their religion consists of grotesqueries. Idols of monstrous form, the priceless tooth of the mighty monkey Hanuman...and so forth are in this taste” (55). Kant also refers to the sati practice as “a hideous excess³” (55). As for the black-skinned people, he sees them as the most

³Spivak critiques the representation of the sati practice in the colonial narrative as a proof of savagery and brutality that was used to justify the colonization of India in order “to save brown women from brown men” (“Can the Subaltern Speak” 93). Spivak argues that the sati has been muted and misrepresented in both the colonial and the postcolonial narratives.

degraded of all, which was a common perception and allegedly proven scientifically⁴. He confidently declares that “the Negroes of Africa have by nature no feeling that rises above the trifling” (55). He alleges that “not a single one [black] was ever found who presented anything great in art or science or any other praise-worthy quality, even though among the whites some continually rise aloft from the lowest rabble, and through superior gifts earn respect in the world” (55). He even comments “this fellow was quite black from head to foot, a clear proof that what he said was stupid” (57). If anything at all, Kant’s argument reflects the Western inclination to exclude rather than include, which marks the rise of Eurocentrism and white supremacy through the lens of taste and judgment.

In his lectures in *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798), Kant further compares the Europeans to the Indians and the blacks, and stresses that the Europeans are superior to every other race through the lens of climate. In clear-cut terms, he states that “in the hot countries the human being matures in all aspects earlier, but does not, however, reach the perfection of those in the temperate zones. Humanity is at its greatest perfection in the race of the whites” (63). He also believes that the Indians and the Negroes are “timid” and “fear many things,” which for him is exemplified in some incidents where “the Negro slave from Guinea drowns himself if he is to be forced into slavery. The Indian women burn themselves. The Carib commits suicide at the slightest provocation. The Peruvian trembles in the face of an enemy, and when he is led to death, he is ambivalent, as though it means nothing” (64). This view clearly highlights his incomprehension of the culture of the Other. The incident of the slave who drowned himself is reminiscent of Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* (1987), where Sethe kills her daughter to spare her a life of slavery, thus privileging death over enslavement. This stands in contrast to Kant’s interpretation and evokes meanings of courage, dignity, and freedom rather than timidity and fear. This shows how the postcolonial discourse reverses the argument by viewing it from the Other’s side.

Thus, with regards to the judgment of beauty, Kant believes that the criteria of beauty are predefined and inherited; therefore, the judgment of beauty is universal and common to all men of the same race. He later presents the same ideas of judging the beautiful in his *Critique of Judgment*. However, his lectures and earlier writings remain the premise of his *Critique*. In short, the Kantian criterion is “universal” in the sense that it could only be exercised by the wisest races of humanity, whom Kant believes to be the

⁴The pseudoscience of race during the Enlightenment and modern periods alleged that the brain of the white is more developed than that of the black.

Europeans.

Kant's view of the feminine is controversial since he reserves a special place for the woman as beautiful and delicate beings. However, he makes a clear distinction between masculinity and femininity, where all the qualities of beauty, tenderness, and delicacy are ascribed to the feminine, as opposed to strength, courage, and wisdom that are ascribed to the masculine. For Kant, the feminine beauty would be corrupted by learning that it should be reserved for the masculine. He writes,

Laborious learning or painful grubbing, even if a woman could get very far with them, destroy the merits that are proper to her sex, and on account of their rarity may well make her into an object of a cold admiration, but at the same time they will weaken the charms by means of which she exercises her great power over the opposite sex. (*Observations* 37)

Kant views the woman as a beautiful ornament to men. She "is always the agreeable object of a well-mannered entertainment" (42), who possesses all the beautiful and virtuous qualities. For this reason, he believes that some knowledge might corrupt her personality; therefore, a woman's knowledge should be guarded by her man, who would expose her to the knowledge that suits her feminine nature. The philosopher of the age of Enlightenment announces that a woman's "philosophical wisdom is not reasoning but sentiment" (38).

Moreover, Kant hypothesizes that the woman is always "embarrassed" by her lack of "lofty insight," but she compensates for this "by demanding these qualities in her man" (*Observations* 48). On the other hand, the man "is compensated for the lack of book-learning and for other lacks that he must make good by his own talents" by his wife's beauty and "naivety" (48). The two sexes, for Kant, have to be distinct from one another. This means that masculinity must be the opposite of femininity. For instance, "a man must never weep other than magnanimous tears. Any that he sheds in pain or over reversals of fortune make him contemptible" (39). He also alleges that even when a woman tries to excel in what he considers a man's knowledge, "nature still always seek to return to its proper order" (48). This is because for Kant, "what is most important is that the man becomes more perfect as a man and the woman as a woman" (49). In Kant's view, the greatest fault is when "men adopt feminine qualities, in order to please, and women sometimes (although much more rarely) work up a masculine demeanor, in order to inspire esteem; but whatever one does contrary to the favor of nature one always does very badly"

(49). Thus, the discourse of gender segregation and division of roles has its roots in Kant's philosophy.

This has urged feminist postcolonial writers like Spivak to call for rewriting women's identity in order to dissolve the binary oppositions between masculinity and femininity that has been consolidated by the philosophers of the Enlightenment. Inspired by the postmodern critical thinking⁵, Spivak realizes that the concept of gender is tied to a whole body of epistemology that needs to be revisited in order to formulate a new discourse free of assumptions and prejudices. (*A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*; "Feminism and Critical Theory"). Spivak believes that "Feminism lives in the master text as well as in the pores" (*A Spivak Reader* 71)⁶. This idea illustrates how the image of "woman" has been established and regulated by those "master texts." Therefore she concludes that the concept of gender as dictated by male canonical figures "must be rewritten so that there is new material for the grasping of the production and determination of literature within the general production and determination of consciousness and society" (59).

II. G.W.F. Hegel

Hegel's contribution to philosophy remains one of the most influential in history. For this reason, his theories of race and gender acquire special importance and contribute to consolidating the image of the Other in the Western discourse. Despite his ingenuity, Hegel is still the product of the history of the racist ideas of his age. Regarding his view of gender, Hegel holds women in an inferior position to that of men in both "Spirit" and mind. In his book *Philosophy of Right* (1821), he states that man is "an independent, personal self-sufficiency, and knowing and willing of free universality" (144). On the other hand, the woman is dependent on her husband because her spirit is "subjective and passive" (144). For Hegel, a woman has no worth outside marriage and family life, "whereas man has another field than the family for his ethical activity. The sphere of woman is essentially marriage" (143). Moreover, he believes that women's minds and intellectual faculties are inferior to men, and when they are placed in a position for decision making, undesirable

5 Postmodern critics believe that biases are communicated through language and definitions. For instance, the simple sign "woman" evokes all the attributes, history, and epistemology that have been ascribed to it by the European patriarchal narrative. To explain, as a postmodern postcolonial Third World feminist, Spivak is concerned with the question of gender as deeply embedded in the Western ideology, which urges her to deconstruct canonical writings (Freud, Marx) in order to rewrite women into history and discourse ("Feminism and Critical Theory").

6 "Feminism and Critical Theory" is one of the articles collected in *The Spivak Reader* (edited by Donna Landry and Gerald Maclean).

effects could ensue. According to Hegel,

Women can, of course, be educated, but their minds are not adapted to the higher sciences, philosophy, or certain of the arts. These demand a universal faculty. Women may have happy inspirations, taste, elegance, but they have not the ideal. The difference between man and woman is the same as that between animal and plant. The animal corresponds more closely to the character of the man, the plant to that of the woman. (144)

Such views, very similar to those of Kant, establish and consolidate the gendered identity in the European consciousness, enhancing the binary division between the two sexes, which problematizes the feminist discourse.

Hegel's views on race are also very controversial and problematic. His paradigm of representing the cultures and habits of different races, including the Negros, Indians, and Egyptians, cannot be overlooked. In his book *The Philosophy of History* (1837), Hegel depends fully on the accounts of the colonizers. This is clear in his use of sources: "An Englishman states that he also saw..." (167). *The Philosophy of History* is a book of essentialism that creates stereotypes of the image of the Other. In Hegel's philosophy, "the Spirit" is the most important faculty that defines the culture as well as the history of peoples. For this reason, he aims to analyze the "Spirit" of each race in order to evaluate their culture and history. Hegel believes that the "Spirit" is the essence of morality and freedom, but it should be tamed and elevated by religion. As a result, those who do not worship a Supreme Being and worship material things or animals instead have a lack in both spirit and morality (111).

Like Kant, Hegel believes that the "Negro" is the most inferior and vilest of all races who "exhibited the most reckless inhumanity and disgusting barbarism" (*The Philosophy of History* 110). This degradation of the "Spirit" of the Negro is ascribed by Hegel to the absence of the belief in a Supreme Being, a belief that tames the spirit and the person into a "humbler being" (111). However, the "Negro", according to Hegel believes himself to be in the position of the Supreme Being by believing in "sorcery", which puts him "in a position of command over the power of nature" (111). Moreover, he alleges that "The Negro... exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state" with no "reverence and morality" that "there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character" (111). Hegel goes on to describe the savagery, inhumanity, blood thirst, lack of

feelings, and immorality that he associates with the “Negroes,” to the extent that he claims “Negroes indulge ... that perfect *contempt* for humanity” (113). Thus, Hegel excludes the “Negroes” from humanity, highlighting their radical difference from the Europeans by associating them with cannibalism.

Furthermore, Hegel’s view of slavery and colonialism is very controversial. He not only justifies slavery and colonialism, but further suggests that they are the only means of education and, consequently, the liberation of the Other, who could then achieve “self-recognition” (master/slave dialectic). Hegel clearly states, “it was the European colonization that brought civilization” (*The Philosophy of History* 99). Although he argues that “slavery is in and for itself *injustice*, for the essence of humanity is *Freedom*” (117), he justifies the slavery of the “Negro” as the only means of his maturity and education. Additionally, he claims that the “Negro” cherishes slavery and views those who suggest the “abolishing” of slavery as his “enemies” (116), since the “Negro” is able to make money by selling his children and committing them to slavery because “among the Negroes moral sentiments are quite weak, or more strictly speaking, non-existent” (113).

Since Hegel believes that the “Negro” lacks “Spirit,” morality, and freedom, he views the “Negro’s” life as having no value. Therefore, in the most peculiar announcements, he concludes that it was “the Negroes who allow themselves to be shot down by thousands in war with Europeans. Life has a value only when it has something valuable as its object” (*The Philosophy of History* 113). Moreover, he states that the “Negro” has no political life or organization (113). He consequently states, “Africa is not a historical part of the World; it has no movement or development to exhibit” (117). He vehemently announces that “what we properly understand by Africa, is the Unhistorical, Undeveloped Spirit, still involved in the conditions of mere nature, and which had to be presented here only as on the threshold of the World’s History” (117).

For Hegel, the natives of America are inferior “in all respects” (*The Philosophy of History* 99). However, those who inhabit Patagonia have “vigorous natures,” but are “still abiding in their natural condition of rudeness and barbarism” (99). As for the Mongolians, “they are careless and provide nothing for the winter, on which account therefore, half of the herd is frequently cut off. Among these inhabitants of the upland there exist no legal relations, and consequently there are exhibited among them the extremes of hospitality and rapine” (106). Hegel believes that the laws and morality that govern the Oriental world are “external”, thus “nothing” is for them “subjective in the shape of disposition,

Conscience, formal Freedom...Justice is administered only on the basis of external morality, and Government exists only as the prerogative of compulsion" (128). He ascribes this lack of morality from "within" to a lack of religion since "God has not yet in the East been realized in consciousness, for our idea of God involves an elevation of the soul to the super sensual" (129). Asia too is "unhistorical" for Hegel (129). However, he shows admiration of both Indian and Chinese cultures, but still believes that they "lie...outside the World's History" (133). For Hegel, "no People has a so strictly continuous series of Writers of History as the Chinese. Other Asiatic peoples also have ancient traditions, but no History" (133).

In his attempt to deny the other histories, he states that "the mythical and prehistorical is treated by Chinese Historians as perfectly historical" (*The Philosophy of History* 135). Similarly, the Indians are "incapable of writing History" (180). This is because they have "an Idealism of imagination, without distinct conceptions," which makes them render "everything into the merely Imaginative" (156), and "all that happens is dissipated in their minds into confused dreams" (180). Hegel explains that writing history "requires Understanding — the power of looking at an object in an independent objective light, and comprehending it in its rational connection with other objects" where "individuals comprehend their own existence as independent, *i.e.*, possess self-consciousness" (180). If the Other does not possess such faculties, then any writing of history is not to be acknowledged, according to Hegel's philosophy. Spivak criticizes Hegel's views on India. According to her, despite Hegel's apparent admiration of Indian religious texts (the Gita), he is using it to recreate Oriental stereotypes of Indian culture, which she believes reflects "imperial axiomatic" (*A Critique*). Spivak's critique highlights Hegel's blind spot when it comes to the Other's culture and identity.

One might think Hegel has a different view of Egyptians because he shows appreciation for the ancient Egyptian culture. Yet, it does not take him long to say that in Egyptian history, "The Mythical is blended with the Historical, and the statements are as diverse as can be imagined" (*The Philosophy of History* 220). Regarding the "Egyptian Spirit", he believes that "the Egyptians are vigorous *boys*, eager for self-comprehension, who require nothing but a clear understanding of themselves in an ideal form, in order to become *Young Men*" (240). This view sums up Hegel's colonial, patriarchal, and patronizing tone, since he views the Other as lacking maturity, implying that it is only through European civilization that the Other could achieve maturity. Comparing non-European adults to

European children is a recurrent notion in the philosophy of the Enlightenment. In short, Hegel believes that the only history is that of Europe, and that the only “Spirit” that is capable of writing history is that of the Europeans. This stems from his belief that the European “Spirit” is the only mature one that possesses morality, self-consciousness, and freedom. Colonialism and slavery, for Hegel, is what brought civilization and history to the Other of non-Europe.

The most influential and problematic of Hegel’s ideas remains his master/slave dialectic that he presents in *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* (1807) under the title of “The Lordship and the Bondage.” The Hegelian dialectic evokes Otherness and differences when the Self encounters the Other, and it problematizes the concept of self-recognition since it can only be achieved through the recognition of the Other. The relationship between the Self and the Other is that of hostility from the first encounter: “each seeks the death of the other” (113). However, the powerful decides to spare the life of the Other provided that the Other remains a slave to the master and abides by *their* dictations. The slave who values *their* life accepts slavery as a means of salvation (115). Both the master and the slave achieve their self-recognition through the gaze of the Other, not from within (113). The master achieves *their* self-recognition by being superior to the Other, enslaving and urging *them* to be *their* servant (116). The slave, on the other hand, achieves *their* self-recognition later, through *their* work and production, when *they* realize that *they* are the producer of everything and not the master (117-118). Consequently, the master is enslaved by the slave’s work and production, and it is the slave who reaches *their* full self-recognition. The danger of Hegel’s master/slave dialectic is that it allows no dialogue when “a subject is perceiving an object,” as Robert Young puts it (*White Mythologies* 37). The Hegelian dialectic enhances the binary opposition between the Self/Other and the Subject/Object. Moreover, self-recognition is only attained through the gaze of the Other. Both the master and the slave need one another in order to attain self-recognition. The master, being the more powerful, needs the slave to be *their* opposite in order to confirm *their* superiority, and the slave needs a master in order to produce, struggle, and attain freedom or even mastery. This dichotomy is problematic and still outlines the power relations and binary division between the colonizer/colonized, East/West, Inferior/Superior, and Civilized/Terrorist. However, the real problem, Young argues, is that there is no alternative to this dialectic “because strictly speaking it is impossible, insofar as the operation of the dialectic already includes its negation” (*White Mythologies* 37).

The Hegelian dialectic, however, does not work for Frantz Fanon, who argues in

Black Skin, White Mask (1952) that the slave or the black never gets the promised self-recognition for *their* part in the dialectic, even after the end of slavery and colonialism. Since the only History is white, as Hegel maintains, the black is locked in white ideals. Fanon thus argues that rather than recognize a value and self-worth in *their* blackness, the black aspires instead to be white. According to Fanon, since self-recognition can only be attained through the Other in the Hegelian dialectic, the black can never attain self-recognition, but can only aspire for proof that *they* are “worthy of white love” (63). Fanon clarifies this by saying, “I wish to be acknowledged not as *black* but as *white*. Now-and this is a form of recognition that Hegel had not envisaged-who but a white woman can do this for me? By loving me she proves that I am worthy of white love. I am loved like a white man. I am a white man” (63). This idea has been reified by Morrison in *The Bluest Eye* (1970), where Pecola dreams that her eyes turn blue in order to receive recognition from the society. All the characters in the novel are locked in the white discourse instead of defying it. They adopt and appropriate it to the extent that they hate their blackness. The “Negro,” Fanon states, “from time to time has fought for Liberty and Justice, but these were always white liberty and white justice; that is, values secreted by his masters” (221). Thus, the problem of the Hegelian dialectic is that recognition is not achieved from within the person, but from the perception of the Other. Furthermore, Hegel’s master/slave dialectic valorizes slavery as the only means by which the slave can achieve self-recognition, since the slave only starts to be productive and achieve self-recognition when enslaved by his master.

It is highly revealing to read the Hegelian account of history through the lens of the master/slave dialectic, where Hegel, as the master, has imposed his own version of truth and history on the slave of Africa. The slave must accept Hegel’s version in order for both of them to reach the state of self-recognition through the gaze of the Other. Some critics have challenged Hegel’s opinion of accepting slavery to death by recounting incidents in history where slaves have sacrificed their lives for freedom. Paul Gilroy, for example, offers a “supplement to Hegel’s dialectic” by recounting the story of a slave who chose to kill her own daughter (Aching 914). Margret Garner “killed her youngest child to free her from a life of bondage. This incident famously retold by Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*” reverses the Hegelian dialectic, since “Hegel resolved this impasse by having the dependent or servile consciousness (slave) prefer the independent consciousness’s or master’s version of reality (the slave’s forced labor)” (Aching 914). The idea that freedom could be valued to

life deconstructs the Hegelian dialectic and his assumption of “a life-death struggle” (*The Phenomenology of the Spirit* 114). Thus in the postcolonial reading, the struggle becomes rather a struggle for freedom and individuality. In this version, the slave does not accept the master’s discourse by enslaving *themselves* in order to live.

III. Sigmund Freud

Although the Enlightenment period witnessed a great privileging of mind, reason, and judgment, Sigmund Freud challenges those notions in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899) by theorizing that the unconscious mind is responsible for all the actions of human beings. This means that past events and traumas that have been suppressed govern the choices and deeds of a person without knowing or understanding the reason behind certain behavior. Thus, Freud crushes all those apparently embellished ideas of the Enlightenment about man’s supreme judgment and reason. His theory of the unconscious remains one of his greatest achievements. It has always been an eye-opener and even contributes to the poststructuralist skeptical thought. Yet Freud was a misogynist who has significantly contributed to the image of women as inferior to men. He introduced this discourse to psychology in an attempt to prove that women are psychologically as well as physically subordinate. Freud was one of the main culprits responsible for the degradation of the position of women in European history and discourse. He aims to prove that women are sexually and, consequently, psychologically inferior to men by fabricating his hypothetical theory of “penis envy” (1925). Perhaps no one better than Freud has misrepresented women’s sexuality throughout history. The misrepresentation of female sexuality and psyche in Freud’s narrative has contributed to the silence and marginalization of women. This has urged many feminist critics including Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva, Sarah Kofman, Helene Cixous, Judith Butler, and Spivak to challenge Freud’s notions of women’s sexuality.

Freud focuses mainly on sexuality which he regards as the major impulse that governs the actions and lives of humanity. Although Freud was ignorant of female sexuality, which he admits is a “dark continent for psychology” (*The Question of Lay Analysis* 212), he theorizes and formulates women in relation to his knowledge of male sexuality. The problem that arises from such rendering is that it assumes an Other that should be understood in relation to the Self, which means that women should be like men but at the same time unlike them. Freud writes, “with little girls, so we have supposed, things must be similar, though in some way or other they must nevertheless be different” (“Some

Psychological Consequences” 250). This formulation problematizes Freud’s theory since women are rendered– in Freud’s discourse – objects that have been imagined in relation to the subject (Man). Such interpretation of the Other in relation to the Self is the point of departure from which every discrimination proceeds.

Freud explains men’s sexuality by proposing his theory of the Oedipus complex (*The Interpretation of Dreams; Totem and Taboo*) as a recapitulation point that is essential for the sexual development of all boys. He theorizes that all boys, at a certain stage, love and desire their mothers while seeking to get rid of their fathers as competitors. He bases such theory on an idea that he explains in *Totem and Taboo* (1913), where he theorizes that in the history of the primitive man, the father used to have all females for himself. This urged the sons to kill the father in order to make love with his wives (235). In Freud’s logic, what happens in primitive life must be experienced psychologically by all people. Consequently, he believes that all boys develop such sexual desire toward their mothers at a young age, as well as a sense of rivalry towards their fathers. However, they overcome such a phase through their fear of castration by their fathers (“Some Psychological Consequences” 250).

To redeem such an idea and make it applicable to girls’ sexuality as well, Freud proposes his “penis envy” theory as the turning point in the sexual development of girls. Freud turns his contempt for women into science by devising such hypothetical theory by which he has inscribed his phallogocentric logic to women’s sexual development and identity. Freud views the male organ as superior, and a symbol of strength and greatness, whereas the female organ is inferior and even “castrated.” He writes:

When a little boy first catches sight of a girl’s genital region, he begins by showing irresolution and lack of interest; he sees nothing or disavows what he has seen, he softens it down or looks about for expedients for bringing it into line with his expectations. It is not until later, when some threat of castration has obtained a hold upon him, that the observation becomes important to him: if he then recollects or repeats it, it arouses a terrible storm of emotion in him and forces him to believe in the reality of the threat which he has hitherto laughed at. (“Some Psychological Consequences” 251)

This view of the woman’s organ as lacking, according to Freud, urges the boy to develop “horror of the mutilated creature or triumphant contempt for her” (251). Since the female

organ is already castrated, when a girl notices “the penis of a brother or playmate, strikingly visible and of large proportions, at once recognize it as the superior counterpart of their own small and inconspicuous organ, and from that time forward fall victim to envy for the penis” (251). The girl thus, as Freud claims, develops a sense of “penis envy” since she “knows that she is without it and wants to have it,” which Freud names the “masculinity complex” (252). Freud believes that this complexity that the girl develops, as a result of her realization of the inadequacy of her organ compared to the superior boy’s organ, leads her in turn to develop “a sense of inferiority” and “to share the contempt felt by men for a sex which is the lesser in so important a respect, and, at least in holding that opinion, insists on being like a man” (252). Consequently, the girl develops hate for her mother as the person responsible for making her “insufficiently equipped” with an “unsatisfactory” organ. She also starts to become jealous when noticing that her mother is “fonder” of her brother for his being a male and possessing a penis (252).

While Freud’s analysis were taken for granted for centuries as scientific, the postmodern reader cannot help but refuting Freud for valorizing the sexuality of man as the main sex, while female sexuality becomes that of the subordinate sex. In other words, Freud projects his feeling as a man onto psychoanalysis by glorifying the male organ, which leads him to believe that the woman has to be jealous and yearn to possess it. The retrograde logic of Freud’s theorization is that he seeks to make everything fit into his proposed theory rather than try to understand and explain concepts that already exist. He does not take into consideration the point of view of the woman who might view her organ as the superior one. Had Freud treated both sexes on equal footing, he would have theorized that women, too, would experience a “lack of interest” (251) upon encountering the boy’s organ rather than a sense of inferiority and a lack. Such a view would have reversed the theory and led Freud to conclude that the woman does not yearn to possess a penis, but, on the contrary, fears and abhors the sight (just like the man). Such reversal acknowledges both sexes as equals, which consequently dissolves the sense of inferiority that Freud believes is psychologically felt by all women.

The misrepresentation of women’s sexuality has led Helen Cixous to coin the term “l’écriture féminine” in her essay “The Laugh of the Medusa” (1976). In the essay, she argues that language has been controlled and dominated by phallogocentrism. She maintains that in order for women to represent themselves, they have to develop their own writing technique to re-inscribe their bodies and sexuality. Similarly, Luce Irigaray believes that “women’s social inferiority is reinforced and complicated by the fact that woman does

not have access to language, except through recourse to 'masculine' systems of representation which disappropriate from her relation to herself and to other women" (85). The Freudian discourse has inscribed women's identity and image as lacking, inferior, and envious of the superior sex. Hence, European history and discourse need feminist revision and the deconstruction of women's image and identity that have been marginalized and misrepresented by the patriarchal narrative.

Spivak deconstructs Freud by writing the womb into Freud's theory of the penis envy (*The Spivak Reader* 57). She replaces the penis envy with the womb envy and questions the phallocentrism in Freud's vocabulary, where "the genital stage is preeminently phallic, not clitoral or vaginal" (58). Spivak asserts that "the idea of the womb as a place of production is avoided both in Marx and in Freud" (58). Her discussion of Freud sheds light on the phallocentric domination encapsulated in Western discourse and language, where male organs are valorized to female organs. For this reason, Spivak offers supplementary to Freud's theory by inserting feminist perspective. Moreover, Freud insists that in order for the femininity to develop, "the elimination of clitoridal sexuality is a necessary precondition" ("Some Psychological Consequences" 253), where women's interest in the clitoris will be shifted to the vagina. He justifies such shift by arguing that the woman's psychological loss of interest in the clitoral masturbation would be caused by "her narcissistic sense of humiliation which is bound up with penis-envy, the reminder that, after all, this is a point on which she cannot compete with boys and that it would therefore be best for her to give up the idea of doing so" (253). Such misinterpretation of the clitoral pleasure has also been subject to heavy critique, since Freud has underestimated the vital role of the clitoris in women's sexuality. According to Irigaray, "Feminine pleasure has to remain inarticulate in language" (77). For this reason she believes that women "should attempt to express their own pleasure" (77). Irigaray also postulates that Freud was unaware of the female "erogenous zones" since he recognizes only the penis as a sexual organ (23). Furthermore, Freud believes that women's inferiority to men is essentially moral. This is because the woman's superego has not developed like that of the man, when she realizes that she has no penis and, as such is inferior. He says: "I cannot evade the notion (though I hesitate to give it expression) that for women the level of what is ethically normal is different from what it is in men. Their super-ego is never so inexorable, so impersonal, so independent of its emotional origins as we require it to be in men" ("Some Psychological Consequences" 254). Irigaray aptly challenges Freud's unequal treatment of

the unconscious in men and women. She wonders “whether certain properties attributed to the unconscious may not, in part, be ascribed to the female sex, which is censured by the logic of consciousness. Whether the feminine *has* an unconscious” (73). This has led her to conclude that, “leaving these questions unanswered means that psychoanalyzing a woman is tantamount to adapting her to a society of a masculine type” (73).

Freud’s view of other races as “savages” is most discernible in his book *Totem and Taboo*. Kantian influence is traceable in Freud’s book (Jones 273). Freud views the “aborigines of Australia” and “the Melanesian, Polynesian and Negro races of Africa” (21) as savage races. Like Kant (*The Critique of Judgment*), Freud discusses the aborigines of Australia as an example of the savage race, which he believes are the “most backward and wretched” (2). Freud’s knowledge of those races is secondary and based on anthropologist James Frazer’s descriptions in *The Golden Bough* (1890). He says,

The aborigines of Australia are looked upon as a peculiar race which shows neither physical nor linguistic relationship with its nearest neighbours, the Melanesian, Polynesian and Malayan races. They do not build houses or permanent huts; they do not cultivate the soil or keep any domestic animals except dogs; and they do not, even know the art of pottery. They live exclusively on the flesh of all sorts of animals which they kill in the chase, and on the roots which they dig. Kings or chieftains are unknown among them, and all communal affairs are decided by the elders in assembly. (2)

Freud refers to the culture and habits of the aborigines in order to analyze his neurotic patients. This idea of viewing the mentally disabled as similar to savages is a constellation of the evolution model⁷, where racial scientists⁸ believe that the Other’s brain is similar to the brain of the European child, woman, and mentally disabled. Thus, Freud reproduces the patronizing colonial narrative related to the discourse on the “savage” Other in his psychoanalysis.

⁷ The theory of evolution has been proposed by Charles Darwin (1809 – 1882), where he hypothesizes that living beings evolved through the process of natural selection. Darwin’s work *On the Origin of Species* was published 1859 which further consolidated his evolution theory. Scientific racism adopted Darwin’s evolution model in order to allege that Europeans are the more developed model of the Other.

⁸ Scientific racism is a pseudoscience that alleges that the Other is physically inferior to the European. It flourished during the Enlightenment period. See *The Mismeasure of Man*, by Stephen Jay Gould, and *White over Black*, by Winthrop D. Jordan for more information about scientific racism.

Freud analyzes the idea of the “totem⁹” and the “taboo” in primitive savage races by discussing the restrictions that those races impose upon themselves in relation to incest (*Totem and Taboo* 6). Such restrictions reach the level of “avoidance” (17) where the daughter is not to stay home alone with her father. Furthermore, the mother is not to touch her son or hand him food but rather leave it on the table, and the brother and sister are to hide from one another in order to avoid any encounter or conversation (16-20). Freud argues that although “we surely would not expect that these poor naked cannibals should be moral in their sex life according to our ideas” (3), such restrictions are the result of sexual desires.

Freud formulates a rigid dichotomy between two categories, namely the civilized (European) versus the savage (other races). The reference to the savage in Freudian discourse is essential for the construction of a civilized Self (to echo Spivak’s critique of Kant), but more importantly for the exclusion of the neurotic from civilization. Freud, thus, appropriates colonial discourse that entails the exclusion of the Other as well as the disabled. However, the question of the Other in the Freudian discourse is challenging, since Freud, as a Jew, has been a victim of the Holocaust. Thus, he himself experienced a sense of Othering in Europe at some point in time. Edward Said critiques Freud’s ambivalent relation with non-Europeans. On the one hand, Freud has marginalized some races and labeled them as “primitive” and “savages,” yet, on the other hand, he idolized some figures as heroes (like Moses), who were also non-European Semites (*Freud and the Non-European* 12). Said writes,

To Freud, the Pacific, Australian and African cultures he took so much from had been pretty much left behind or forgotten, like the primal horde, in the march of civilization; and even though we know how much of Freud’s work is dedicated to recovering and acknowledging what has either been forgotten or won’t be admitted, I don’t think that in cultural terms non-European primitive peoples and cultures were as fascinating to him as were the people and stories of Ancient Greece, Rome and Israel. The latter were his real predecessors in terms of psychoanalytic images and concepts. (12)

Said argues that Freud’s views regarding the Other are “Eurocentric” (12). He also

⁹The totem is a certain animal that is believed to be sacred and spiritually related to certain group of people. According to Freud, in savage life, the totem of each person is inherited from his parents. Members of the same totem are not allowed to have sexual relations even if there are no blood ties between them (*Totem and Taboo* 4).

questions Freud's ambivalence regarding the Jews, since Freud insists that Jews are not different from Europeans. To Freud, Jews "are not a foreign Asiatic race, but mostly consist of the remnants of Mediterranean peoples and inherit their culture" (19). Said argues that this view contradicts Freud's argument in *Moses and Monotheism* (1939) where Freud claims Moses was an Egyptian. It seems that for Freud the integration of the Jews into European culture is essential, since he does not recognize other cultures as civilized. Furthermore, Said also contemplates Freud's ambivalent position as an atheist who insists on his Jewish identity as if Jewishness is not a religion. Said describes such position as "complicated" and "hopelessly unresolved" (16). Sandra L. Gilman argues that Freud projects his sense of Otherness onto the discourse of femininity, where the Jews become the "knowable" or the familiar, and the woman becomes the Other and the alien. Freud thus naturalizes and incorporates the Jews into psychoanalysis, while displacing and alienating women as different or "unknowable" (173). Consequently, it could be inferred that the European straight man is the only subject of Freud's psychoanalysis. This is because his superego normally develops in contrast to the superego of the woman, the homosexual, and the savage. Freud therefore marginalizes and misrepresents women and the non-European in his psychoanalysis by excluding them from the category of the normal. He denies women their pleasure as "masculine pleasure" and portrays them as lacking and envious in his pseudo-scientific discourse.

CONCLUSION

The Other has been excluded from judgment (Kant), history (Hegel), and psychoanalysis (Freud). This means that the monolithic Western discourse has constructed a sovereign Europe and dehumanized the non-West by insisting that all civilization, history, wisdom, and stable subjects are European. To conclude, theory is built on identity politics, knowledge production, and the construction of the Self versus the Other. This has produced a pressing need to present a counter-narrative by which the Other comes to power and challenges the misrepresentation of *their* identity and culture. This occurs by deconstructing the Western discourse and its representation of the Other. The emergence of the postcolonial theory is a reaction against a long history of racism and misrepresentation of the non-West. Kant, Hegel, and Freud are three of the most influential figures who contributed to the racial attitude of the West towards the Other. Although those three philosophers are canonized as the pillars of Western theory, the postcolonial reader is urged to view them in different light as racists and sexists. Many postcolonial theorists, including Spivak (*A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*; "Feminism and Critical Theory"), have

found it essential to revise and deconstruct the narrative of those philosophers, since they form the foundation of the Western epistemology regarding the image of the Other. This paper offers a different view of Kant, Hegel, and Freud by surveying and questioning their attitudes towards race and gender.

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FOUCAULT, THE MODERNIST?

Daniel RUSSO¹

Abstract

In this essay, I argue that it's theoretically and historically misleading to talk about a break between modernism and postmodernism, and more specifically, that thinkers such as Foucault and Derrida, two figures frequently associated with the postmodern turn, are situated within certain rational, enlightenment and modernist traditions. As part of this claim, I explore how features such as essentialism, binarism, determinism, positivism, and productivism are not characteristics that can be applied to all of enlightenment thought and modernism, and that such a description of the enlightenment and modernism would themselves be essentialist and caught up in binaries. To illustrate these arguments, I re-read figures such as Berkeley, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and a range of Modern artists (especially their conceptualizations about essences, representations, and processes), tracing patterns such as plurality, particularity, and absurdity/incoherence throughout their thought. After historical and theoretical overview, I connect the experiential and philosophical patterns existing before our so-called "postmodern turn" to an examination of Foucault's rational methodology and critical ontology, as well as his theorization of enlightenment thought, power/knowledge, ethics, and resistance (especially in, but not limited to, his later works). Through all of this, I ultimately show that 1) Rather than a break, postmodernism signifies an extrapolation of certain pre-existing enlightenment and modernist trends, and 2) Michel Foucault can be claimed as both an enlightenment thinker and a modernist. Such a set of arguments, if deduced as correct by readers, might restructure traditional understandings of postmodernism and the legacy of enlightenment thought.

Keywords: Michel Foucault, Enlightenment, Modernism, Postmodernism, Rationality, Intellectual History

INTRODUCTION

What follows is a case study on Michel Foucault. I will argue that Foucault, one of critical humanities' most venerated figures of thought and values, is in favor of a kind of rational, enlightenment, and modernist enterprise. If this ends up being an appropriate takeaway, then that may help in removing a veil of anti-rationality, anti-enlightenment, and anti-modernism that I see widespread in much of the aesthetics and rhetoric of Critical Humanities.² Rethinking this dichotomy between modernism and postmodernism, between enlightenment and anti/post-enlightenment, just might enable us to increase critical

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2 The 1998 book of collected essays, *Postmodernism: Critical Concepts*, edited by Victor Taylor and Charles Winqvist, is one example of postmodernism getting equated with anti-enlightenment thought. Thus, essayist Sandra Harding talks of "Feminism, Science, and the Anti-Enlightenment Critiques" (Taylor and Winqvist 743). Further, the first essay of the book, by J.B. Harley ("Deconstructing the Map"), interpolates Foucault: "The ideas that follow owe most to writings by Foucault and Derrida" (Taylor and Winqvist 4).

scholars' reputations within and outside of universities, among scholars and across American publics. This in hand may help eliminate some of the popular mischaracterizations on the Right about a 'Radical Left taking over universities' and 'indoctrinating students' with anti-enlightenment anti-truth ideology (see the likes of Jordan Peterson, Ben Shapiro, James Lindsay, or Ted Cruz when they talk about 'the Left' and education).³

In a way, this essay tries to articulate answers to familiar questions posed against postmodernism. Questions such as, 'Isn't it a universal truth to say that there are no universal truths?', 'Isn't it modernist to say you want to get beyond modernism?', 'Isn't it rational to say that it's not always good to be rational?' and, 'Isn't it an enlightenment motif to say you want to escape the dogma and authority of reason?' All these questions, I argue, really do raise detrimental critiques against postmodernism as a decisive break in theory or practice. Below, I attempt to show this in detail, ultimately through an assessment of one central question: Was Michel Foucault a modernist?

Analysis begins by looking at precursors to postmodernism, particularly in historical figures of the enlightenment and those reacting to the conditions of modernity, whether philosophers, artists, or political revolutionaries. Then, I offer definitions of modernity, modernism, postmodernism, the enlightenment and rationality, or at the least, I try to make transparent the connections between these floating signifiers. After this theoretical layout, I proceed to explore Foucault's rational methodology and critical ontology, particularly as they relate to knowledge, power, resistance, and possibility. I conclude with the dual argument that Foucault is a modernist figure, and that what we call postmodernism remains within a modernist paradigm.

Postmodern Precursors

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault reflects on the arbitrary nature of categories and classifications. To make this point, he interpolates the mid-19th century poet Comte de Lautréamont's metaphor of the "chance encounter of the umbrella and the sewing-machine on the operating table" (xviii-xix). The metaphor highlights the nonsensical

³ The Cato Institute is one conservative think tank that falls for the trap of equating postmodernism to anti-enlightenment. And they make this mistake specifically because they turn to self-identifying postmodern and radical scholarship that is upfront in their belief of being anti-Enlightenment. Thus, Cato finds themselves quoting an article from Devin Vartija in *Intellectual History Review*, who remarks that a "postmodern or postcolonial critique of the Enlightenment" claims that "the Enlightenment is fundamentally compromised by its association with European colonialism" (Vartija 606 cited in Young 14). Even Cato knows that "it is worth noting that the Enlightenment was not nearly as monolithic as the critiques often imply" (Young 14).

juxtaposition of images/signs, asking us to think hard about the space between our categorical binaries that otherwise are supposed to help us make sense of, and operate in, the world. The juxtaposition produces something new, maybe even something exciting. Like surrealist philosophy and Heideggerian poesis, the piece ultimately points to making or bringing something into being that didn't exist before, reconstructing the nature of something, refusing the naturalization of the origin essence as the only essence something can or should be.

Franco Moretti notes the Lautréamont piece as a "small classic of the modernist imagination," one that "ironically negates any idea of totality" (Morretti 340). Alex Callinicos, writer of *Against Postmodernism: A Marxist Critique*, points to this as just one example in which "[Foucault]'s thought is informed by a modernist sensibility" (Callinicos 69). Callinicos goes on to make the argument that these philosophical positions originate in Nietzsche, but that Foucault "regards as having been explored in the greatest depth by certain modernist writers" (Callinicos 70). In fact, Foucault once noted that he only began reading Nietzsche "because of Bataille and Bataille because of Blanchot" ("Structuralism and poststructuralism" 199). In this sense, Foucault makes an argument that his strand of poststructuralism is indebted to literary modernism and their emphasis on the deconstruction of language, the age of science, and ultimately, coherence.

Callinicos is not the only one to note Nietzsche as a precursor to modernist motifs. Jürgen Habermas (*Philosophical Discourses of Modernity* 122-23) recalls that:

[Nietzsche] is the first to conceptualize the attitude of aesthetic modernity before avant-garde consciousness assumed objective shape in the literature, painting, and music of the twentieth century – and could be elaborated [by Adorno] into an *Aesthetic Theory*. In the upgrading of the transitory, in the celebration of the dynamic, in the glorification of the current and the new there is expressed an aesthetically motivated time consciousness and a longing for unspoiled, inward presence.

On top of this, a principle Nietzschean thesis is one in which "the plural nature of the self is merely one instance of the inherently multiple and heterogenous character of reality itself" (Callinicos 64). Yet, as fascinating as this dual literary and Nietzschean modernist connection to contemporary postmodern thought may be, we can look even further into the past for a similar strand.

For instance, Bishop Berkeley, one of the primary Enlightenment thinkers of the 18th

century, was an empiricist but was also against mechanistic thinking in human sciences, especially philosophy and communication (Smith and Grene). Berkeley also didn't believe words or ideas were truly whole. He said, "*everything which exists is particular*" (cited in Smith and Grene 27). That is, much like Derrida, Stuart Hall, Laclau/Mouffe, and so many others popularly considered a part of the West's postmodern intelligentsia, Berkeley thought that ideas (not just words for the ideas) were false generalities, falsely totalizing signifiers and signifieds.

He thus took a pluralist and particularist approach regarding essences or 'the real,' going as far as to suggest that, as two Berkeleyan scholars put it in the 1940s, the "supposed abstraction [of the idea of a dog] involved in the use of language seemed impossible" (Smith and Grene 3). The Berkeleyans further suggested that in regard to such thinking being extended to more serious socio-political abstractions beyond trying to categorize four legged animals, "the pretense to it [is] fatally confusing" (Smith and Grene 3).

I take this early detour through Berkeleyan thought to reveal that not only was such pluralism and particularism present in the modernist thinkers of the 19th and early 20th century, it was also present in the 18th century in Berkeley. Modernism was not just the high modernism of Joyce, Elliot, Dadaism, Cubism, Surrealism, and so on; it was also at least one 18th skeptical empiricist, and a broad range of 19th century German philosophical traditions—idealism, romanticism, pessimism, existentialism; these were all reactions to the *dominant* enlightenment thinking/application, but they themselves were still very much a part of the enlightenment project of a knowledge/power (K/P) pursuit.⁴ I will speak more on this K/P pursuit in a later section, but for now, it seems to me that to suggest that postmodernist philosophy of language is a revolutionary break from enlightenment and modernist thought is to obfuscate their connections, or as Stuart Hall might put it, obfuscate how the new is also the old.

What postmodernism may be, then, is an emergent—or perhaps in some cases, like in 21st century Critical Humanities departments, a newly hegemonic—philosophical paradigm, one that contrasts itself with what it perceives as an essentialist, universalist, positivist, mechanist/instrumentalist/productivist, paradigm (something that, as I note from the start and which should become more and more clear as we go on, is not quite

⁴ It is likely that the degrees vary regarding whether this K/P pursuit was focused more on personal/individual ends or on social/collective ends, depending on the particular enlightenment or modernist philosophy taken up.

appropriate to equate with enlightenment thought in general). We might, after all, following the rationale of Berkeley, call this ‘enlightenment’ label as it is used dominantly today in Critical Humanities, with all the essentialized meaning interpolated in/on to it, a falsely totalizing signifier (or a straw-figure, if you prefer exploring this from a logical fallacy perspective). More particular and willingly provisional labels for discussing historical influences and departures seems a must, as well as better articulations of those labels.

This worthwhile semantic pursuit notwithstanding, the cultural theorist Lawrence Grossberg (2022) reminds us that Jacques Derrida argued we’re probably unable to escape the conceptual binarism that was created by the likes of Plato and Descartes. Derrida is of course another one of postmodernism’s favorite figures to interpolate. Grossberg further said that although Derrida’s ambitions were precisely to escape this problem, he always came to the disappointing conclusion that the attempt to escape always ends up producing a new binarism, and that therefore *we can’t escape the enlightenment; the project of escaping it is already an enlightenment project*. Crucially, Derrida wasn’t suggesting that it’s impossible to escape, say, the constituted binaries that produce racialization, colonization, and other forms of categorical oppression, rather, he’s merely arguing that the notion of “getting beyond” or “escaping” enlightenment and modernist thinking are in fact notions produced by an enlightenment and modernist attitude.

Even without this motif, though, historical discourses of modernity that emphasize the modern experience of both the self and reality as fractured, multipolar, fluid, and incomplete reveals that much of what gets claimed as ‘post’-ing the enlightenment and modernism is actually a deepening and re-working of the logics and reflections made by those 18th-20th century enlightenment thinkers and modernists critical of false totalities (as we are beginning to see and which will be further explored in the next section). In this sense, postmodernism is in part about taking stable identities and logics and opening them up to more critical reflections and possibilities.

There is yet another way to view postmodernism, though, which is to look at it as a project of emancipating cultural and social structures from instrumental rationality. Of course, this already seemed to fit in-line quite nicely with the enlightenment motifs of emancipation, liberty, freedom, autonomy, etc. Yet one of the things that the dominant or hegemonic enlightenment did was establish the creation of the economy and culture as autonomous realms, as if the autonomy were not defined by external determinations. This is a myth, as the economy is always embedded with socio-cultural-political determinations.

Yet the imaginative invention of it as autonomous, acting *as if it is* autonomous, has very real effects for how we as a society think it's best to manage them. From this example, we see that *postmodern critiques of the institutional constructions of the dominant enlightenment are a rational pursuit of deconstructing myths, taken-for-granted ideas, essences, institutions, and problem-solving practices.*

With this understanding, one might even say that this essay attempts to assume a postmodern mode of critique in its goal to deconstruct historical myths and taken-for-granted ideas about the enlightenment, modernism, rationality, and postmodernism's relationship to these three. To advance this pursuit, what follows is a deeper exploration into what rationality's relationship is to the enlightenment, what the enlightenment's relationship is to modernism, what modernism's relationship is to (the conditions of) modernity, and what postmodernism's relationship is to modernism. Proceeding this, and to strengthen the argument that some of the most influential postmodernists are indeed pro-enlightenment and modernist, I will move into more direct analysis of Michel Foucault. There, I will make the argument that Foucault was both pro-Enlightenment and a modernist.

Rationality's Relationship to the Enlightenment; Enlightenment's Relationship to Modernism

Looking back at history, we can find that it is not that rationality didn't exist before modernity or enlightenment thought, rather, rationality was previously held captive by religious dogma. Thus, art historian Christopher Witcombe noted in 1995 that you can't talk about enlightenment without its radical break away from theological proofs and towards secular thought. Even Pope Pius X, the head of the Catholic Church from 1903 to 1914, remarked in 1907 that modernism was a "synthesis of all heresies," where, 'modernism leads to atheism and to the annihilation of all religion,' and where, "the error of Protestantism made the first step on this path; that of Modernism makes the second; atheism makes the next."

In a similar vein, postmodernism sees itself as a radical break from secular dogma. This may be true, but I also argue that this does not constitute a radical break from the enlightenment, but rather, a break from the hegemonic or dogmatic tendencies of reasoning since the break from religious authority. After all, it is enlightening when you realize that certain kinds of secular projects take on just as authoritative and dogmatic turns with all sorts of religious fervor attached it ("Believe science!" "I stand with science!")

“Only biological females can be women!”). Yet this sort of critical reasoning is only one that strengthens the legitimacy of enlightenment thought, rather than shying away from it. It is, as Kant said, another moment of people releasing themselves from self-incurred tutelage.

On that note, a variety of modernists have been critical of the turn to secular authority from the start. Thus, in 2013 the artist-blogger Joshua Kilburn defined modernism in the first instance as, “a flat out rejection of the lingering sentiments of Enlightenment (through Realism), as well as a flat out [rejection] of a benevolent, all-powerful creator God. Modernism rejects tradition....” If we take that to be true – the only correction I would add is ‘lingering sentiments of the *dominant* enlightenment’ – then *modernism is really about constantly starting over, rejecting authority, and rejecting tradition for tradition’s sake*.⁵

Thus, many of the so-called heroes of the so-called high era of Modernism tended to be 1) pessimist towards - and aware of the difficulty if not impossibility of comprehending - modernity, while also 2) often maintaining a politically revolutionary desire to transform or transcend one’s dominating experience with it. Regarding 1), it is for this reason that I speak of anti-modern modernists. Regarding 2), this understanding links up somewhat well with Arendt’s 1963 thesis that the ideation and playing out of revolutions are modernist phenomena. Modern (Western) philosophy began with Descartes doubting, so the story goes; every revolution in Western philosophy since then has been based on doubting a dominant articulation of truth or methods of truth.

Modernism’s Relationship to Modernity; Postmodernism’s Relationship to Modernism

What is modernity, anyways? Modernity is simply the playing out of modernization processes on a global, regional/national, or local scale, or conversely, the experience of that. Following this, modernism is an accompanying reflection of that experience, of which there are many interpretations of, wherein what people claim to be postmodernism is but one of those interpretations. In a sense, then, *to be a modernist is to consciously take up the task of reflecting and reacting to modernity in a way that somehow seeks to 1) preserve, develop, or benefit one’s individuality, and/or 2) take hold of, control, counter, or otherwise respond to modernization processes taking place within one’s environment*. From this, we

⁵ This is a fairly common view of literary and artistic modernism after all; a self-reflexive rejection of traditional styles and techniques, most succinctly summed up by modernist poet and critic Ezra Pound’s “Make it new” (1935).

can see that to be a modernist is to enter and maintain a power/knowledge pursuit in relation to managing or positively affecting one's conditions and experiences of (or reactions to) modernity.

Both modernity and modernism has been two-faced—or really, multi-faced—from the start. This seems true whether talking about the start of a wide range of modernist applications or the start of a wide range of modernist effects. What people call postmodern attitude or thought can be traced back to at least Kant and his critiques of reason (but some go as far back as the pre-Socratics or sophists). So much so that we might say Kant's work marks the start of postmodernism. Postmodernism, then, if we can distinguish it from modernism all, is merely a particular enlightenment and modernist reaction to, or normative reflection on, modernity or the experience and lived conditions of modernization.⁶ It is, as I alluded to earlier, one insistent on deconstructing essentialist ideas of history, reality, and identity.

This postmodern reaction/reflection is one that I believe becomes fashionable especially around those times where modernization seems to be at another rupture or revolutionary moment. For instance, in 1989, Callinicos asked us to consider these two quotes:

In the multidimensional and slippery space of Postmodernism anything goes with anything, like a game without rules. Floating images such as those we see in the painting of David Salle maintain no relationship with anything at all, and meaning becomes detachable like the keys on a ring. Dissociated and decontextualized, they slide past one another failing to link up into a coherent sequence. Their fluctuating but not reciprocal interactions are unable to fix meaning. (12)

The nature of our epoch is multiplicity and indeterminacy. It can only rest on the moving, the slipping, the sliding, and is aware that what other generations believed to be firm is in fact the moving, the slipping, the sliding. (12)

The first quote is from a postmodern art critic in 1987 (Suzy Gablik), two years shy of the Berlin wall falling. The second quote is from a modernist poet (Hugo von Hofmannsthal) in 1905, around the time of the first Russian Revolution. Frank Kermode writing in 1968, a revolutionary period of its own, further makes the argument that 'the

⁶ A likely reason why Lyotard ultimately calls postmodernism a strand of modernism (*The Postmodern Condition*).

mood of end-dominated crisis” is “endemic to what we call modernism” (Kermode 98).

So there were already modernists who recognized plurality, incoherence, dangerous contradictions, and what is now generally considered a Nietzschean, anti-enlightenment perspective. Even before Nietzsche, though, Schopenhauer – traditionally placed in the idealist or romanticist camp of 19th century modernism – was talking about endless interplays of images and desires, and the endless striving of the will. Such theorizing of endless plays became quite fashionable all throughout the 20th century among revolutionary socialists, poststructuralists, and postmodernists alike. Loosely speaking and perhaps not related enough to note: Lenin and Gramsci, and Mao and Althusser following them, accepted the thesis of overdetermination which makes it too difficult to fix meaning or causality. But more explicitly relevant are the theorists such as Foucault, Deleuze and Derrida who talk of endless plays of domination, desires, and signifiers, respectively.

Berkley, Schopenhauer and High Modernist heroes make for just some of the examples of anti-dominant enlightenment and anti-modern modernist reactions to modernity, long before the 1950s-80s claims of a similar (now called postmodern) nature. In many strands of both enlightenment thought and modernism, accepting an overwhelming incomprehension of reality was coupled with individualist desires to overcome the despair of that incomprehension by embracing it and embarking on an authentic journey, to the extent that anyone’s motives and actions are authentic or wholly autonomous from external influence (in other words, to the extent that anyone has free will). Foucault continues this relationship, this desire, and this journey, picking up where the likes of Bataille, Nietzsche and Heidegger left off.

Given the parameters of this paper, it is not quite possible to elaborate all the ways in which Foucault may be considered a modernist. However, I don’t think that focusing on just one modernist characteristic in his thought makes compelling enough a case. For this reason, I will choose to explore at least a few areas, which for purposes of validation, should each be further elaborated in future research (by myself or anyone interested). I will look at two intersecting enlightenment or modernist impulses in Foucault, corresponding to 1) power/knowledge, social totality, and poststructuralism, and 2) self, ethics, and resistance, all of which are dealt with via a rational methodology and critical ontology.

1. Power/Knowledge, Social Totality, and Poststructuralism

Callinicos notes that the "Incredulity towards metanarratives seems...to be at least as old as the Enlightenment which was so productive of grand narratives in the first place," and further, that "the leading figures of the heroic era of Modernism at the beginning of the century generally rejected the notion of historical progress" (Callinicos 10-11). It seems to follow, then, that any claim such as, 'to be a modernist means to remain deterministic or teleological in our historical thinking,' ultimately falls flat. Modernists can be aware of contingency, and can be existential in the absurdist sense. We don't just need to look at modernist artists, we can also obviously see this in Nietzsche and those who refuse to find or acknowledge transhistorical meaning, order, or determination.

Foucault, for his part, remained both critical and friendly to metanarratives. He simultaneously denounced them while offering universalizing concepts of the social such as epistemes, discursive formations, truth regimes, and *dispositifs*. In fact, as Callinicos notes, the "Foucauldian conception of an apparatus of power-knowledge is as much a theory of totality as Marx's": Under the guise of a "methodological preference for pluralism," the Marxist theory of social totality is "reduced to merely one fragment of an inherently multiple theoretical field, and thereby rendered into material appropriate for incorporation into a Nietzschean perspective which treats the class struggle as one instance of the struggle for domination traversing human history" (Callinicos 85). Relatedly, in 1997 Dews observed that for Foucault, "power – often spoken of in the singular – becomes a constitutive subject on the Kantian or Husserlian sense, with the social as its constituted subject" (Dews 188). In this sense, the omnipotent narrative of power espoused by Foucault is both more grand and more plural than a classical Marxist one. It is, as Patton noted in 1988, more uniquely identified by accepting "difference and discontinuity at the heart of human history" (Patton 133). The legitimacy of Marx's theory or Foucault's is beside the point (in fact, notice how I have mostly strayed from judging the validity of post/modernism, enlightenment, rationality, etc.. I have only been focused on revealing the myth that there is a binary between modernism and postmodernism). What is crucial to note here are Foucault's emphases on totalizing regimes, antagonism between domination and struggle/resistance, difference, and discontinuity, all of which are phenomena or theories about phenomena which existed well before 'the postmodern turn' of the 1950s-80s.

Furthermore, we can see that the poststructuralism or deconstructionism of

Foucault is on par with a sort of normative (ethically-charged), subversive, and reconstructive power/knowledge pursuit, one that can be focused on either individual or social ends. Given that the power/knowledge nexus turns out to be quite totalizing, or what Willmott in 1998 referred to as an 'endemic condition,' Foucault argued in 1980 that the normative intellectual pursuit is one of "detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic, and cultural, within which it operates at the present time" (*Power/Knowledge* 13). In this sense, I follow Willmott in characterizing Foucault's poststructural analysis as one of "a commitment to a mood of restlessness," of revealing the partiality and provisionality or contingency of perceivably stable structures, conventions, and ultimately, meanings (Willmott 90). From here, we make another connection to Marx's radical enlightenment project, this time with regard to his notorious call for an ongoing ruthless critique of everything existing. Let us now further explore Foucault's enlightenment and modernist project as it relates rationality, methodology, and ontology.

2. Rational Methodology and Critical Ontology for the Self, Ethics, and Resistance

Foucault's methods stay within an enlightenment project for a number of reasons. It seems that Foucault rightfully recognizes that it's not really enlightenment thinking to praise science, productivity, and growth dogmatically or unwaveringly, particularly at the cost of other human values like care for the self, the community and the environment. Let me try to show this with a number of reasons. One reason relates to the idea that it's not always rational to be rational. What this simple idea reveals is that something rational in one framework (like mechanistic or hard-scientific rationality applied to soft sciences / humanities) can be seen as irrational in another framework (like in value spheres which find that mechanistic rationality applied to the study of humanity and sociality is a risky game). In this sense, or in a similar vein, the statement 'it's not always rational to be rational' implies that it is rational to not always be rational, which means that the original reference to rational is actually a reference to something else; related no doubt, maybe an expression or mode of it, but something qualitatively different. As Habermas noted in 1987, what's considered rational in one value system can be contradictory or agonistic to another. He makes this argument to explain that the capitalist (private property and commodity market-based) economic system is hegemonic in part because its self-rationalization processes require encroaching on other systems, and part of this is done by accentuating one form of rationality (instrumental) over another (social or communicative, for instance).

The discussion of Habermasian theory is useful here because we can use it to argue that Foucault's proliferation of writing may be a result of his belief in, or at least his practice of, communicative rationality. Why else write publicly? In other words, Foucault's critical readings and writings – broadly speaking – are a mode of communicative rationality that can bring about knowledge/power for himself and others, a mode of thought that especially arises at the dawn of the enlightenment, and which should not be so negatively equated with the technological functionalist (i.e., instrumental) rationality of modern systems and institutions. Making truth-claims, finding evidence to support one's argument, and critiquing the claims of others (both peers and those in authority) — this was the rational pursuit that the freethinking of the age of the enlightenment opened up.

But it's not only communicative rationality where Foucault practices reason. Let us recall in detail what Foucault said in his 1983 'What is enlightenment?' essay, and we can then find a second reason why Foucault remains tied to enlightenment thought and rationality:

I prefer the very specific transformations that have proved to be possible in the last twenty years in a certain number of areas which concern our ways of being and thinking, relations to authority, relations between the sexes, the way in which we perceive insanity or illness; I prefer even these partial transformation, which have been made in the correlation of historical analysis and the practical attitude, to the programs for a new man that the worst political systems have repeated throughout the twentieth century... (316).

This is, I believe, an incredibly revealing quote in at least three ways. It seems that 1) Foucault preferred some socio-political phenomenon, culture, relations, etc. to others, and 2) Foucault thought that these more preferred settings come from critical historical analysis and a sort of pragmatic/practical thinking. Here we find proof of Foucault desiring to take advantage of the fact of the knowledge-power nexus; analysis and practice lead to more preferable or less preferable transformations depending on the quality of the said analyses and practices (which includes tactical/strategic decision-making. See his *Power/Knowledge* interviews for a greater discussion of tactics/strategies, and how important Foucault found them to be, or at least how useful he thought they were as concepts for understanding and participating in power games). Thus, we are dealing with a type of practical-theoretical rationality that I see Foucault strongly adhering to. 3) Lastly,

in regard to the above quote, Foucault in a way is revealing a conception of progress. Consider that individual conceptions of progress may be tied to one's normative ethics (which of course have a variety of influences). Depending on one's ideals, one can legitimately see progress in history simply by using historical and present data as it relates to the criteria one sets as part of their vision of progress. So whatever Foucault's criteria were, conscious of them or otherwise, he surely preferred some social relations, institutions, and norms over others. He saw historical progress in at least some instances (relations between sexes and perceptions of insanity, for instance). He therefore had at least some normative ethics, regardless of if it can be excavated from the rest of his body of work and regardless of its consistency. Perhaps then, even though we can say that Foucault rids of dominant enlightenment and modernist ideas that suggest progress is humanity's destiny, while also ridding of a conception of progress that overemphasizes productivity and economic growth while underemphasizing community, environment, and plurality of experiences and preferences, we might also say that he nevertheless harnesses an enlightenment mode through his practical-theoretical pursuit of revealing and overcoming conditions of possibility in a transformative manner.

All that said, there is yet another, third reason he stays within an enlightenment project. He developed quite substantial methodologies of archaeology and genealogy, whose signposts are not only an analogy to existing hard scientific disciplines but are also considered by Foucault as a new kind of rigorous empiricism⁷ and a new kind of ("effective") history. Colin Koopman argues Foucault's archaeology is an "empiricism of the smallest differences and the most momentary shifts," but also, "the empiricism of explosive and momentous intersections" (Koopman 108).

Meanwhile, Foucault considered his genealogy as a form of resistance "in opposition to the scientific hierarchization of knowledges and the effects intrinsic to their power" (*Power/Knowledge* 141). Dreyfus and Rabinow, in their friendly 1982 problematization of Foucault's work on truth/power/resistance (or what they describe as a 'series of dilemmas'), further remark: "In Each set there is a seeming contradiction between a return to the traditional philosophic view that description and interpretation must ultimately correspond to the way things really are, and a nihilist view that physical reality, the body, and history are whatever we take them to be" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 205). It's this same

⁷ As just one example, In an April 1983 interview, Foucault makes a claim and then says, "I think that starting from this general theme, we have to be both extremely prudent and extremely empirical" ("Politics and ethics: An interview" 378).

sort of contradiction that explains why postmodernists such as Lyotard have to walk back their critical arguments, finding themselves trapped by their own radical logics which demand them to undermine any attempts at clarity and knowledge production. As Habermas argues, “reason can be convicted of being authoritarian in nature only by having recourse to its own tools” (quoted in Callinicos 81). In other words, critique is normatively structured and immanent. It is possible only because of our existing truth regime and its norms and tools of thinking/being/acting. Nietzsche, and Foucault following him, sustain the paradoxical “attempt to demonstrate by means of rational argumentation the perspectival and indeed instrumental nature of knowledge” (Callinicos 81).

Furthermore, Foucault’s explicit turn to how the self can resist/subvert reveals his libertarian, emancipatory, constructivist, and ultimately modernist and pro-enlightenment stance: To develop capacities; to overcome weakness and external power; to create oneself. As Nietzsche put it in *Will to Power*, “Pleasure appears where there is the feeling of power. Happiness lies in the triumphant consciousness of power and victory. Progress lies in the strengthening of the type, the aptitude for strong use of the will. Everything else is dangerous misunderstanding.” The knowledge/power construct that Foucault so exceptionally breaks down in his archaeological and genealogical period is turned on itself to emancipate the multipolar subject.

Indeed, in his 1983 “On the Genealogy of Ethics” interview, Foucault asked why “everyone’s life couldn’t become a work of art?” (261). At this point in his career, Foucault yearned for a process of making sense of one’s life *through making one’s life*; the self as a process of creation. He asked us that we first and foremost practice the “exercise of self upon self by which one tries to…transform one’s self and to attain a certain mode of being” (“The ethics of the concern for self as a practice of freedom” 282). It has also been noted that, “as a follower of Nietzsche’s path to enlightenment, Foucault approached maturity with a preceding analysis of finitude, subsequent to which he suggests how to be within it” (Bregham 214). Foucault argued that both finitude and ambivalent rationality must be met with a limit-attitude, which when “amalgamated with a critical history…the outcome is a critical ontology of who we are in the present” (Bregham 214). Or as Foucault put it regarding the relation between his ‘history of the present’ and the historical perspective found in Kant’s original ‘What is Enlightenment?’ essay, “it seems to me that it is the first time that a philosopher has connected in this way, closely and from the inside, the significance of his work with respect to knowledge, a reflection on history and a particular analysis of the specific moment at which he is writing and because of which he is writing”

(Foucault, "What is enlightenment?" 309).

We can further see this critical and transformative impulse in Foucault's praise for the way Kant demarcated enlightenment thinking as-such. Foucault felt that rather than think of the enlightenment as an age, a doctrine, a set of procedures, or a body of knowledge, it would be wiser to view enlightenment as an attitude or ethos that's worth sustaining. Again, on this matter I find value in quoting him at length:

It seems to me that a meaning can be attributed to that critical interrogation of the present and on ourselves which Kant formulated by reflecting on the Enlightenment. It seems to me that Kant's reflection is even a way of philosophizing, which has not been without its importance or effectiveness during the last two centuries. The critical ontology of ourselves must be considered not, certainly, as a theory, a doctrine, nor even as a permanent body of knowledge that is accumulating; it must be conceived as an attitude, an ethos, a philosophical life in which the critique of what we are is at one and the same time the historical analysis of the limits imposed on us and an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them. (Foucault, "What is enlightenment?" 318-19)

Here, Foucault equates Kant's *critical interrogation of the present*, and what Foucault calls the *critical ontology of ourselves*, to the enlightenment attitude. His critiques of Kant notwithstanding, clearly Foucault found novelty in Kant's ability to reflect on history and the present as they relate to conditions of possibility.

Now to briefly summarize this section, Foucault as critical ontologist uses archaeology to excavate the savior behind the discourse, and then genealogy to "reveal the contingent and arbitrary" of the savior, all in order to "pursue maturity as a transformative practice vis-à-vis finitude" (Bregham 214). Or again, in Foucault's own words from 1983, "following lines of fragility in the present" helps "in managing to grasp why and how that-which-is might no longer be that-which is," such that "any [historical] description must always be made in accordance with these kinds of virtual fracture which open up the space of freedom understood as a space of possible transformation" ("Critical theory/intellectual history" 36). Foucault used these methods as part of a rational power/knowledge pursuit that placed an emphasis on critiquing and overcoming modern conditions, or at least, more consciously managing your experience of/with such conditions.

Lastly, I ask that if you are still not convinced of this practical nature to Foucault,

one that is keen on using knowledge for individual or collective power pursuits, that you consider this exchange between him and Gerard Raulet:

G.R.: Is it here, along the fractures, that the work of the intellectual - practical work, quite clearly - is situated?

Foucault: That is my own belief. I would say also, about the work of the intellectual, that it is fruitful in a certain way! To describe that-which-is by making it appear as something that might not be, or that might not be as it is. ("Critical theory/intellectual history" 36)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I feel that intellectuals who consider their work to be of a postmodern or anti-enlightenment tradition need to do a better job at understanding themselves and marketing their ideas. Why do I make this somewhat harsh prescriptive statement? Because postmodern academia has catapulted and-or justified a belief that enlightenment and modernism are things to be of the past, already overcome if not in desperate need of still overcoming. This essay has tried to show that such a characterization of enlightenment thought and modernism both obfuscates the absurdist, anti-essentialist, pluralistic attitudes found within them and disguises how what we call postmodernism is but one of the most radical strands of enlightenment thought and modernism. Instead of maintaining the misconceived binary between postmodernism and modernism, I find it imperative that we remember, as Stuart Hall noted in 1988, the "double-edged and problematic character of modernity: what Theodor Adorno called the 'negative dialectic' of enlightenment" and further, that:

to be 'modern' has *always* meant to live a life of paradox and contradiction... alive to new possibilities for experience and adventure, frightened by the nihilistic depths to which so many modern adventures lead (e.g. the line from Nietzsche and Wagner to the death camps), longing to create and hold onto something real even as everything melts. ("The meaning of 'New Times'" 228)

I also suggest that we, as Habermas articulated in 1986 when recalling Adorno's project, "remain true to the idea that there is no cure for the wounds of Enlightenment other than the radicalized Enlightenment" (*Autonomy and Solidarity* 156). Or further, as a student of Herbert Marcuse put it in 2021 about Marcuse's project, one where we are chiefly critiquing the "worldview [that] prevails in Modern Society based on the principles

of natural science, and that [this] world view eliminates everything but the facts from the purview of rationality” (Feenberg). It is as though Marcuse was disgruntled that when he looked out at society and its economic and political institutions, he yearned for the ways and uses of rationality that are beyond dealing with a functionalist use of surface level facts. In a sense, then, he was critiquing anti-intellectualism and calling for deeper, wiser practical-theoretical pursuits. It is my belief that Foucault’s mode and spirit precisely represent this pursuit. As this paper comes to an end, I hope that the reader notices its two-fold thesis: that postmodernists are modernists, and so was Foucault.

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HOW TO COPE WITH POSTMODERN TEXTS: TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF INTERTEXTUALITY, PARODY, AND PASTICHE IN READING POSTMODERN TEXTS

POSTMODERN METİNLERLE BAŞA ÇIKMAK: POSTMODERN METİNLERDE METİNLERARASILIK, PARODİ VE PASTİŞ KULLANIMININ METİNSEL ANALİZİ

M. Zafer AYAR¹

Abstract

This work explores how postmodernism has developed its own literary style reflecting the social, political, religious as well as philosophical and intellectual mood of the era. Postmodern texts have been created and recreated out of a blend of varied texts from previous periods, and they succeeded in creating a more conscious and questioning audience. Throughout the postmodern period, readers replaced authors and writerly texts replaced readerly texts. Literary texts began to be deconstructed according to the notions and theories of scholars and philosophers such as Roland Barthes, John Barth, and Jean-François Lyotard. In an attempt to succeed in producing new texts, postmodern writers established a sort of textual relationship between metanarratives and little narratives, applying intertextuality that is in a close interrelation with parody and pastiche – two complicated terms often miscible to one another. This study seeks to clarify the meaning of postmodern literary works by highlighting some postmodern literary devices such as intertextuality, parody, and pastiche in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* by John Fowles, *Night Train* by Martin Amis and *The Crying Lot of 49* by Thomas Pynchon.

Keywords: Postmodern Text, Deconstruction, Little Narratives, Writerly Text, Intertextuality

Öz

Bu çalışma dönemin felsefi ve entelektüel olduğu kadar sosyal, politik ve dini atmosferini yansıtarak postmodernizmin kendi edebi üslubunu nasıl oluşturduğunu incelemeye çalışacaktır. Postmodern metinler, önceki dönem metinlerinin yeniden üretilmesi ile oluşturulmuş ve bu anlamda daha bilinçli ve hatta sorgulayıcı bir okuyucu kitlesinin ortaya çıkmasını sağlamıştır. Postmodern dönem boyunca okuyucu yazarın yerini alarak, yazar için metinler (writerly text) okur için metinlerin (readerly text) yerine geçmiştir. Ronald Barthes, John Barth ve Jean-François Lyotard gibi düşünür ve eleştirmenlerin düşüncelerine ve teorilerine bağlı olarak metinler bir dizi yapı bozuma uğramışlardır. Postmodern yazarlar, yeni bir metin kurgulamakta başarılı olmak için üst anlatı (metanarrative) ve küçük anlatılar (little narratives) arasında bir ilişki kurmuşlardır. Bunu metinlerarasılık tekniğini kullanarak geçmiş metinlerin ya parodisini yapmışlar ya da pastiş kullanarak- ki bu iki terim birbirleriyle karıştırılır- eski metinleri günün şartlarına uyarlamışlardır. Bu çalışma John Fowles'in *Fransız Teğmenin Kadını*, Martin Amis'in *Gece Treni* ve Thomas Pynchon'un *49 Numaralı Parçanın Nidası* adlı postmodern eserleri metinlerarasılık, parodi ve pastiş gibi postmodern terimleri öne çıkararak inceleyecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Postmodern Metin, Yapıbozum, Küçük Anlatı, Okuyucu Merkezli Metin, Metinlerarasılık

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Literary movements develop in dialectical and reactionary ways that establish links to their preceding periods. Postmodernism, with its complementary devices, creates ways in which new literary elements can be understood in connection with previous periods. In this way, it offers meaningful interpretations for prior works. Postmodern texts furnish the reader with binaries such as author/reader, grand narrative/little narrative, readerly text/writerly text. Therefore, postmodern texts with their deconstructive characteristics tend to be a bridge between previous literary works and the texts especially produced during and after the 1950s. The cornerstones of this bridge consist of such literary devices as intertextuality, parody, and pastiche in their ability to recreate a new meaning by referencing it to the previous text(s). The aim of this study is to contribute to the creation of meaningful interpretations of postmodern texts by providing more concrete connections between these literary devices and selected texts *French Lieutenant's Woman* by Fowles, *Night Train* by Amis, *The Crying of Lot 49* by Pynchon.

Modernism lasted for about half a century until its connection with postmodernism. It is regarded as the age of fresh ideas, complex structure and the questioning of both conscious and unconscious realities. Unlike postmodernism, modernism rejects the literary traditions of the previous Victorian era to destroy the stereotype writing style. However, the postmodern way of writing does not break ties with modernism and its preceding periods but rather unites two distinct ages by reshaping previous works through varied literary devices. The roots of postmodernism date back to the end of the World War II, initiated by the thoughts of some prominent philosophers of the age such as Roland Barthes in *The Death of Author* (1967), John Barth in *The Literature of Exhaustion* (1967), and Jacques Derrida in *Of Grammatology* (1967). Barthes (1967) claims that postmodern texts are written in an attempt to give the reader an active role to comment on the function of the text rather than the intention of the author. That is, the roles are shifted, so readers create their own interpretations of the texts. Regarding reader-based knowledge, Zafer Ayar suggests that “postmodern fiction does not enable readers to get to resolution easily and they fail to present all the necessary materials readers need to establish the meaning. This meaninglessness and incredulity towards grand narratives of previous literary periods is reflected in the postmodern writerly texts whose purpose was to invite readers to produce his/her own meaning and reality” (132). As the postmodern writer enables the reader to make their own exploration, the basic characteristic of postmodern texts, the author deconstructs the text by using varied literary devices. The reader thus takes on a more active role; as Ayar writes, “By doing so, postmodern narrative gives the reader the

opportunity to discover the meaning through an interwoven or twisted plot structure that enables the reader to go through an inquiry throughout the whole reading process" (132). This reading process lets the reader make an internal expedition that reaches the unconscious imagination. Readerly texts, in contrast, as is the case in metanarratives, "imposes a meaning on the reader and Barthes argues that readerly texts encourage passive consumption, being designed to constrain the exercise of reader's imagination" (cited in Yaghoubi 2006, 106). Postmodern writing can be considered a means of counterattack to metanarratives since it has highlighted and then developed its own particular way of writing called writerly text. Postmodern texts have also emerged as a reaction to the previous metanarratives. Bran Nicol (2009) comments on Jean-François Lyotard's description of the movement as follows: "[p]ostmodernity, Lyotard argues, prefers 'little narratives' (petit recits), those which do not attempt to present an overarching 'Truth' but offer a qualified, limited 'truth', one relative to a particular situation" (12). Postmodernity, in other words, not only enables but requires the reader to conclude or recreate the story with their own possible postures.

Postmodern intertextuality, e.g., the acknowledgement and reference of previous works, is considered to be one of the most crucial postmodern writing methods that leads readers as well as writers to create a kind of connection between the past and the present with regard to literary genres. It gives readers an opportunity to perceive the events from writers' perspective of the previous centuries and comment on them in the vernacular of the present literary era. As Hutcheon (1988) explains, "intertextuality is a formal manifestation of both a desire to close the gap between past and present of the reader and a desire to rewrite the past in a new context" (Hutcheon 118). Intertextuality suggests the ways in which the text can be reshaped from a new perspective. In *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Fowles uses epigraphs taken from different writers of the 19th century to incite curiosity about the events and characters for the reader. In the following epigraph, Fowles (1969) quotes from Tennyson's *Maud* to help the reader to understand the situation of Sarah in the related chapter: "And once, but once, she lifted her eyes, /And suddenly, sweetly, strangely blush'd/To find they were met by my own...TENNYSON, *Maud* (1855)" (Fowles 28). In the form of anachronism, the use of analepsis or flashback evokes a travel back in time. In this way, Fowles manages to associate Victorian society with that of his own day, and he consolidates his notion through referencing each opening quotation especially from the prominent authors of the Victorian Era.

Hutcheon's (1988) further explanation about intertextuality reinforces Fowles' (1969) use of epigraphs from different writers of the previous periods. She asserts that "It is not a modernist desire to order the present through the past or to make the present look spare in contrast to the richness of the past. It is not an attempt to void or avoid history. Instead, it directly confronts the past of literature and of historiography, for it too derives from other texts (documents)" (Fowles 118). Therefore, intertextuality enables the writer to connect previous texts with present works in order to contribute to the understanding of contemporary events. In this context, Fowles in his *French Lieutenant's Woman* establishes a set of intertextual links between his own web of plot and that of Victorian writers such as Thomas Hardy, Brontë Sisters, and George Eliot, whose works particularly deal with social issues of the period such as gender, love affairs, and class division.

Ernestina wanted a husband, wanted Charles to be that husband, wanted children; but the payment she vaguely divined she would have to make for them seemed excessive. She sometimes wondered why God permitted such a bestial version of duty to spoil such an innocent longing. Most women of her period felt the same; so did men; and it is no wonder that duty has become such a key concept in our understanding of the Victorian age- or for that matter, such a wet blanket in our own.' (13)

The quotation accentuates a stereotype of the Victorian Period in that expectations of women and men alike are peculiar to social norms and relations of Victorian society. Most of these expectations make readers aware that the social perceptions of the previous period are being narrated from Fowles' later twentieth-century point of view. Fowles deconstructs the romantic love story of the Victorian Era and transforms it into the taste of his own time, namely postmodern period.

Postmodern parody is used as a device to reinterpret formerly written texts in an ironic manner to draw attention for certain occurrences throughout the plot. As is the case in postmodern literature, several writers of the period mastered the use of parody in their works and presented events to create awareness through an entertaining way. This literary device gives the reader a chance to rethink about specific occasions more intensively from an objective perspective. The device also allows for creation of new meaning; as Hutcheon (1988) writes, "Parody is a perfect postmodern form, in some senses, for it paradoxically both incorporates and challenges that which it parodies" (Hutcheon 11). However, postmodern texts present this incorporation and challenge by diverting the traditions and

conventions of the text written beforehand, thus parody functions as a critical literary device in this case. In common with intertextuality and pastiche, parody references earlier texts; however, it differs from such devices with its ridiculous manner. So, postmodern readers realise both positive and negative aspects of the situation in question. A notable example written in the form of parody is Martin Amis' *Night Train* (1998) that not only diverts the stylistic devices of detective fiction, but it also deconstructs the traditional plot structure of formerly written conventional crime stories that are a combination of setting of the scene, interrogation and resolution respectively.

"You saved my life. I'd do anything for you. You know that." He reached down for his briefcase. From it he removed a folder. Jennifer Rockwell. H97143. He held it out toward me, saying "Bring me something I can live with. Because I can't live with this."

Now he let me look at him. The panic had left his eyes. As for what remained, well, I've seen it a thousand times. The skin is matte, containing not a watt of light. The stare goes nowhere into the world. It cannot penetrate. Seated on the other side of the desk, I was already way out of rage. (Amis 26)

The quotation suggests that the writer both re-routed the ordinary course of events of detective stories and deconstructed the plot structure. Amis believes that absurd mimicry and adaptation of detective stories need to be shifted for the reader to have a different viewpoint and realise the main point of the events through humor. The writer presents the events in a way that the deconstructed elements fit into the cases and gives the text a new meaning by transforming them into a funny tone. In the quotation above, the traditional way of writing detective stories is deconstructed, and the usual sequence is avoided. Rather than investigating the crime of Jennifer Rockwell, detective Mike Holihan analyses the attitudes of Jennifer's father and makes inferences. This unusual outgoing is the essential characteristic of parody that presents even a very serious event in a mocking way. "Parody, according to [Fredric] Jameson, has a critical edge: it challenges and subverts which it mimics" (cited in Malpas 25). The aim of parody in *Night Train* is both to criticise the attitudes towards the events and undermine the interrogation process through a fitful and inconclusive inquiry into the death of Jennifer Rockwell. The strategy Amis employs fits into the tenets typical of postmodern plot structure. He parodies traditional detective fiction by deconstructing the end of his fiction with a failed resolution contrary to the

expectations of the reader:

On the fucking street Colonel Tom. For a year she was second-guessing her own head. Bax Denziger told me she'd started losing it on the job. And talking about death. About staring at death. And things were coming apart with Trader because she was sizing up some other guy. ...

I won't be here. Listen, I'm fine. I'm really good- really, Wait... That's better. I'm just upset with all this. But now it's made. And you just have to let it be, Colonel Tom. I'm sorry, sir. I'm so sorry.

Mike...

It's down. (71)

In the closing part of *Night Train*, Mike Holihan desperately accounts for the failed interrogation of suicide -or homicide- and he informs Colonel Tom about the death of her daughter. The ending of the novel suggests that Holihan reaches no concrete findings, and Amis does not complete his fiction in parallel with the expectations of the reader. Therefore, the expected genre is subverted; as Norman (2019) writes, "From this perspective, *Night Train* adopts and distorts the narrative conventions of the hard-boiled procedural but offsets such knowing strategies through appeals to authenticity through style" (45). This distortion of the conventional genre appeals clearly to the taste of the postmodernity, thus the adaptation of parody.

Pastiche, a literary device used in postmodern writing, is an imitation of style of a previous work, without the mocking tone of parody. The aim of this literary device is to blend previous related texts to highlight various parts of the novel. Pastiche is not considered as plagiarism since it does not copy texts wholly but uses them in a certain subverted way. As McArthur (1992) explains Pastiche as "a text consisting wholly or largely of direct borrowings from one or more other works. [...] It is different from plagiarism, which conceals borrowings in an attempt to deceive" (756). Moreover, pastiche, unlike parody, does not necessarily endeavor to make fun of other texts and tends to borrow parts in varied quantities from other texts are able to establish an intertextuality between different literary works. Nicol comments on this relationship between texts citing: "Barthes contends that literary composition is not and never has been an original activity, but a matter of the author rearranging previous literary and linguistic conventions rather than creating something completely new" (61). So such literary devices like parody and pastiche enable authors to appropriate previous texts and imitate them to some extent. In *The Crying of*

Lot 49, Pynchon uses pastiche to make the narration interrelated to other texts. Oedipa goes after the real version of *The Courtier's Tragedy* and finds a book whose "paperback is supposed to be a straight reprint of the book she now held." Puzzled, she saw that this edition also had a footnote" (70). *The Crying Lot of 49* is a combination of pastiches of different literary genres. Pynchon designs the web of events in accordance with the fragmented structure of post-war society of the postmodern era. In order to create a multidimensional perspective in his novel, he includes such sub-genres like science-fiction, fantasy and a taste of detective fiction that refer to the fragmentation of consumer society. Nicol (2009) describes the novel as "an inversion of the Oedipus story. Where Oedipus is able to solve a riddle and discover hidden truth, Oedipa is patently unable to do either. Her quest is failure" (94). As a distorted pastiche of *Oedipus* by Sophocles, in *The Crying of Lot 49*, Pynchon chooses a role of failed mission for his main character: an inverted version of pastiche of detective fiction in which Oedipa never reaches a solid solution for the riddle about an underground organization named 'Tristero'.

Either Oedipa in the orbiting ecstasy of a true paranoia, or a real Tristero. For there either was some Tristero beyond the appearance of the legacy America, or there was just America then it seemed the only way she could continue, and manage to be at all relevant to it, was an alien, unfurrowed, assumed full circle into some paranoia. (Pynchon 126)

Oedipa has complicated thoughts about this secret structure, yet she fails to sort out the riddle about Tristero, and she cannot come to a final decision about this structure. "Oedipa, like the classic private-eye, needs to know; she must struggle to bridge the gap between appearances and reality, she must question the reliability of every piece of information, every source" (Mchale 22). Yet, she has many questions in her mind, wondering if "she has really discovered a secret network; this discovery is simply a delusion; a vast conspiracy has been mounted to fool her thinking she has discovered a secret network; or she's imagining such a conspiracy" (Nicol 95). Accordingly, *The Crying of Lot 49* is a subverted pastiche of traditional detective fiction that normally reaches solid resolution.

To conclude, postmodernity by its very nature features several literary characteristics related to their historical, social, cultural, religious, political aspects, creating a kind of fragmentation. This fragmentation is reflected in postmodern narrative which makes it hard to understand the implicit meanings of the work. Literary devices, such as intertextuality, parody and pastiche, deconstruct the plot and subvert traditional

ways of writing to make the work difficult to comprehend. The roles have been shifted with the author giving the reader an active participation in the text to let them discover their own truths. Postmodern style also allows the reader to engage with existing knowledge in order to determine the implicit meaning of the work. This study has attempted to contribute to the ways in which postmodern readers can cope with literary devices. In this way, it has aimed to encourage the reader to interpret literary works in their own way of understanding. Postmodern works in this study such as *French Lieutenant's Woman* by Fowles, *Night Train* by Amis, *The Crying of Lot 49* by Pynchon have potential to open the door for the reader to make concrete connections between intertextual literary devices included consciously or unconsciously in texts by writers in this literary turbulent period.

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