



**T.C.
EGE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü**

**SEARCH FOR THE THIRD BODY WITH THE PERSPECTIVE
OF ÉCRITURE FEMININE IN THE COLLECTED NOVELLAS *THE
FOUND AND THE LOST* OF URSULA K. LE GUIN**

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Gülten KARAYİĞİT

Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı

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ETİK KURALLARA UYGUNLUK BEYANI

Ege Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne sunduğum **Search For the Third Body With the Perspective of Écriture Feminine in the Collected Novellas *The Found And The Lost Of Ursula K. Le Guin*** adlı yüksek lisans tezinin tarafımdan bilimsel, ahlak ve normlara uygun bir şekilde hazırlandığını, tezimde yararlandığım kaynakları bibliyografyada ve dipnotlarda gösterdiğimi onurumla doğrularım.

Gülten KARAYİĞİT

ÖZET

Ataerkil toplum düzeninin yarattığı baskı nedeniyle, özellikle kadınlar için kişisel alan, sürekli tartışmalı bir konu olmuştur. Bu bağlamda, feminist eleştiri ve teori erkek egemen toplumun baskısına karşı, yazarak bir alan yaratmayı amaçlar. Bilinçlenmenin artması amacıyla, sayısız eser feminist dünyasının sesi olmaya çalışmıştır. Aynı doğrultuda, dişil yazın yazarları, topluma hâkim kültürden uzakta, tarafsız bir alana kaçmak isteyenler için, eserleriyle bir alan açmaya niyetlenirler. Dişil yazın perspektifiyle dört bölüm halinde ele alınan bu çalışma, Ursula K. Le Guin'in *Uçsuz Bucaksız* derlemelerinde; özerk, cinsiyetsiz, üçüncü bir beden ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlar; bunu yaparken teorik ardaşanlar, kadın yazınının kökenleri, ataerkil söylemi yapısökümüne uğratan yöntemler gibi kritik konuları analiz eder.

Birinci bölümde, dişil yazın teorisinin gelişimini hızlandıran Derrida'nın yapısöküm teorisi ve Lacan'ın dil edinimi gibi temel teorik ardaşanları incelemek önemlidir. İkinci bölümde ise kadın çalışmalarının edebi ve akademik dünyadaki gelişim süreci vurgulanır. Feminizm hareketi ile feminist teorisinin oluşumu arasında sıkı bir bağın olduğu gözlemlenebilir. Burada feminizm ile kastedilen olgu tarihteki kadın hareketleridir; feminist teori ise edebiyatta feminist yaklaşım, kadın edebiyatı ve kadın yazınlarının ortaya çıkışı anlamlarını taşır. Üçüncü bölümde dişil yazını, bu kuramın güçlü sesi Hélène Cixous ve teori kitabı *The Third Body* ile çalışmak önemlidir. Son bölümde ise Ursula K. Le Guin'in *Uçsuz Bucaksız* derlemesindeki kısa hikâyeleri dişil yazın perspektifiyle ele alınacaktır, ayrıca kısa öykülerdeki üçüncü bedenin oluşumu da ele alınacaktır. Le Guin, eserlerinde hem kadın yazını hem de fantezi türünü bağdaştırır. Çalışmamız kadın karakterlere ait tüm baskılanmış imgeleri ve Le Guin'in fantastik mekânlarında, kadınlar için bir sığınak olarak görülen üçüncü beden adlı kişisel alanlarını açığa çıkarır.

Sonuç olarak, çalışmamızın temel amacı Ursula K. Le Guin'in *Uçsuz Bucaksız* derlemesindeki kısa öyküleri ele alarak, baskıya ve fallus merkezli geleneklere karşı bilinçlenmeyi artırmaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dişil Yazın, Hélène Cixous, Ursula K. Le Guin, Feminist Eleştiri

ABSTRACT

Personal space has perpetually been a problematic issue especially for women because of the oppression of patriarchal structures. In this sense, Feminist criticism and theory target to create space against the oppression of male-dominated world through writing. Countless studies have tried to be the voice of the expectations of a feminist milieu with the aim of consciousness raising. In the same direction, *écriture féminine* writers intend to give a room with their works for those who are willing to escape towards a neutral space distant from the mainstream culture. Elaborated on four parts with the perspective of *écriture féminine*, this study also aims to uncover a third body, an autonomous, genderless space in Ursula K. Le Guin's collected novellas *The Found and the Lost* employing crucial issues such as the theoretical background, the roots of women writing, and the ways of deconstructing patriarchal discourse.

In the first part, it is important to look through the basic theoretical background that accelerates the evolution of *écriture féminine*, such as Derrida's deconstruction and Lacan's language acquisition. In the second part, the evolution process of Women's Studies in literature and academia is underlined. An intimate relationship between feminism and the formation of feminist theory can be observed. By feminism, here, we try to underline the women's movement in history; while by feminist theory, we mean the emergence of feminist literary criticism, feminist literature and women's writings throughout history. In the third part, it is crucial to study on *écriture féminine* from its powerful voice: Hélène Cixous utilizing her theory fiction titled *The Third Body*. In the last part, Ursula K. Le Guin's novellas from *The Found and the Lost* will be urged upon through the perspective of *écriture féminine* and we will try to discuss the formation of a third body within the novellas. Le Guin harmonizes both feminist writing and fantasy in her works. Our study will uncover all the repressed images that are specific to women characters and their personal space in the name of the third body which is seen as a refuge for women in Le Guin's fantastic settings.

Consequently, the major aim of our study is to provide raising consciousness against any kind of oppression and phallogentric traditions by elaborating Ursula K. Le Guin's novellas from the collection of *The Found and the Lost*.

Keywords: Écriture Feminine, Hélène Cixous, Ursula K. Le Guin, Feminist Criticism



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INTRODUCTION

Women, women's writings, their place in society have always been a controversial topic because of the dominant masculine culture of the society. Women writers have not been accepted to the academia and literary community in terms of politics of exclusion performed by patriarchal structures. With the profound transformation of society thanks to the postmodern and digital era, postfeminist writers have started to get their share by requesting their respectability. Devastating effects of the postfeminist critics to the academia push the limits of the patriarchal order in authorship. During this study, we have tried to emphasize these devastating effects and their outcomes. One of these radical outcomes is *écriture féminine* which is coined by French feminists like Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous, and Luce Irigaray. In this study, we aim to uncover a third body, an autonomous, genderless space in Ursula K. Le Guin's collected novellas *The Found and the Lost* through analyzing crucial issues such as the theoretical backgrounds, the roots of women writing, and the ways of deconstructing patriarchal discourse in four parts with the perspective of *écriture féminine*.

Initially, in depicting *écriture féminine*, it is important to look through the basic theoretical background that accelerates the evolution of this term such as Derrida's deconstruction and Lacan's language acquisition. First, *écriture féminine* differs from the foregoing feminist movements that focus mostly on women's rights issues. Rather than a kind of movement aiming at gaining equal rights with the males, *écriture féminine* takes its roots from the Derridean philosophy of deconstruction. Derrida's deconstructed meanings and reversed binary opposition assumptions have helped those who expect to deconstruct patriarchal discourse among feminist theoreticians like Cixous. Derrida thinks that the search for a transcendental signified causes limited interpretations of the texts because it depends solely on certain criteria that are structured and dominated by male-dominated culture. Rejecting these kinds of boundaries provides a new vision for many philosophers who thirst for novelties which are the crucial steps in the way of breaking taboos. Derrida's deconstruction helps French feminists as a source of inspiration, in that way, French feminists including Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva, and Luce Irigaray attempt to devalue what the phallogentric language system value in their

controversial theory of *écriture féminine*. What is the most devaluated object in western culture especially in literature and authorship? They think that women and their bodies are the most repressed and devaluated object throughout history. That is why *écriture féminine* becomes a reference to women's bodies; this situation is a kind of the return of repressed as an expression of women writing. Then, another forerunner who lights the way of *écriture féminine* writers is Jacques Lacan who reinterprets Freudian psychoanalysis and psychosexual development continuum; he is known through his controversial ideas on mother's / women's place in the development process of an infant's identity. Lacanian language acquisition focuses on the male-centered learning process. In this way, we coincide again with our major dichotomy between men and women since, in this process, the mother becomes other while men become privileged, women are attached to the unprivileged status. Lacan's point of view is based on the major controversial idea that French feminists resist adopting: the patriarchal structure of language acquisition and of gaining identity. By rejecting this idea, *écriture féminine* focuses on the real stage in which the unity between infant and mother is not interrupted by the patriarchy yet. To sum up, French feminists' major source for their works of art relies heavily on the pre-symbolic period in which the mother is an inseparable part of the infant. Besides, *écriture féminine*'s purpose is to create an alternative discourse that will be different from the existing language system which is dominated mostly by the patriarchy. Many women writers have to disguise their identities as a writer throughout history because language and authorship are specific to males according to their inherent culture. That is why *écriture féminine* writers try to go beyond the boundaries between nature and culture dichotomy. Naturally, these writers should not accept this patriarchal discourse and dictation because it is a creation of the culture which can be considered as an artificial thing. But culturally, these women are subjected to the norms of culture. Thus they search for new possibilities which can be an alternative for the culturally established male-dominated language system. Founding a system similar to the existing system of language is difficult for them. That is why they prefer to bring novelties on content and structure of writing rather than changing the present language forms. To sum up, these novelties are inspired principally by the developments that occurred during

Postmodernism especially Derrida's deconstruction and Lacan's language acquisition theories as the culture proceeds towards a new era through a Postmodern way of thinking.

Moreover, in the second part, we underline the evolution process of Women's Studies in literature and academia. We observe an intimate relationship between feminism and the formation of feminist theory. By feminism, here, we try to emphasize women's movement in history; while by feminist theory, we focus on the emergence of feminist literary criticism, feminist literature and women's writings throughout history. Within feminism, one can observe different ways of thinking and motivations but we can divide it into three periods referring to three feminist waves: first-wave feminism (the late 1800s and early 1900s), second-wave feminism (1960s and 1970s), and third-wave feminism or so-called postfeminism (1980s till today). With the same continuum, feminist theory develops through three phases of women's writing: female, feminist, and feminine that we will discuss throughout our study together with the three waves of feminism. When we think of the theories of Derrida and Lacan together with the formation of the feminist movement and feminist literary theory, we can seize that *écriture féminine* is the newborn baby of feminine writing which is seen as the last phase of women writing in feminist theory. Feminine refers to the artificial boundaries that are set by the mainstream ideology in society to characterize women's comportments and feminine virtues which are welcomed by society, itself. *Écriture féminine* aims at transgressing these boundaries by refusing feminine virtues. In this way, our study will explain the ways that tried to surpass the borders by underlining the main issue of all feminist waves and all women's writing phases: oppression of any kind. Herein, women character's depictions and their stance towards oppression will be our vanishing point. Besides, we internalize postmodern techniques since *écriture féminine* is a pure result of the postmodern period throughout this study. The major aim of our study is to raise consciousness against any kind of oppression and phallogentric traditions.

Furthermore, in the third part, after examining major theoretical forces and the roots of women writing, it is crucial to study *écriture féminine* from its powerful voice: Hélène Cixous. This name is considered as the founding figure of the *écriture féminine*. She contributes to the formation and application of this theory in her works by creating

the structures and principles of this theory especially through her theory fiction *The Third Body* in which one can easily underline the major principles special to écriture feminine such as the narrative techniques, the psychological bisexuality, the notion of other and its reconciliation with the self. Briefly, throughout this part, Hélène Cixous's famous theory fiction *The Third Body* will be the significant premise in the way of internalizing perspective of écriture feminine. To make it more clear, the French term écriture feminine is formed mostly by the precursor French feminists like Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva, and Luce Irigaray. It refers to women's writing in English and we will use these two terms to underline the evolution process of women's studies in literature and academia. There are multiple points of view in feminist philosophy and thought yet each generation focuses mostly on the oppressed women's identity through feminist literary criticism. The oppressed women's identity, their stance against oppression and woman characters' positions in the novellas are expanded on through our study. In her book *Hélène Cixous and Writing and Sexual Differences*, Abigail Bray discusses both the political and poetic stance that Cixous has framed in *The Third Body*. According to Bray, within the operation of patriarchal power, the political is seen as repressive while the poetic resists the repressive effects of the political context. And she claims this situation is successfully implemented through the ebbs and flow of the unnamed narrator. By taking into consideration points of view in academia and literature research, this study underscores the analysis of a theory fiction from French literature. Can it be different from American or English feminist fictions' point of views and analysis? To see the difference between them we will handle both French theory fiction *The Third Body* and English short fictions of Ursula K. Le Guin in our study. Thus, we seek answers to similar questions which interrogate the major characteristics of women's writings in literary texts.

In the last part, Ursula K. Le Guin's novellas from *The Found and the Lost* will be examined through the perspective of écriture feminine and we will try to discuss the formation of a third body within the novellas through the self-journeys of characters by profiting from the frequent settings and women depictions. Le Guin is mostly known as a feminist and she harmonizes both feminist writing and fantasy in her works. Fantastic settings trigger the tension between binary oppositions and we need a reconciliation to

reach the third body where the other and the self make peace since this peaceful place is far away from the stereotyped ideology of patriarchal order. We have searched for this limitless space through characters and their experiences in the novellas of Le Guin. When the characters acquire their self-realization, a perfect unity of opponent forces that tighten up the readers from the very beginning of the plot is dissolved harmoniously. In that way, women characters find themselves a refuge that keeps them out of patriarchal institutions as *écriture féminine* suggests. In that way, our study will uncover all the repressed images that are specific to women characters and their shelters in the name of third body which is seen as a kind of refuge for women in Le Guin's fantasy settings and world. Associate Prof. Dr. Seda Pekşen examines the perspective of *écriture féminine* by applying it to three different novels in her thesis titled "Psychological Bisexuality and Otherness in the Novels of Angela Carter, Virginia Woolf, Marge Piercy and Ursula Le Guin: A Study from the Perspective of *Écriture Féminine*". While Dr. Pekşen handles famous fictions from English and American literature, this study deals with *écriture féminine* in terms of a work by Hélène Cixous who can be considered as the founder of this perspective. In addition, we will interpret Ursula K. Le Guin's contemporary novellas and this contributes to the dynamism of our study.

In conclusion, in this study, we witness the journeys of characters towards a genderless, neutral space in which they find themselves. Their self-journey is observed by elaborating Ursula K. Le Guin's collected novellas *The Found and the Lost* through analyzing crucial issues such as the theoretical background, the roots of women writing, and the ways of deconstructing patriarchal discourse throughout this study.

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.1. Jacques Derrida's Deconstruction

Elaborating on one of the two crucial figures, Jacques Derrida, in the theoretical background we attempt to comprehend the evolution process of *écriture féminine* in this chapter. French philosopher Jacques Derrida is considered the founding father of the concepts such as post-structuralism and deconstruction. The term of deconstruction appears in the United States through a symposium at John Hopkins University through Derrida's participation with his work titled "Structure, Sign and Play". Taking for granted the process of arriving at meaning from the linguistic signs in a language that is claimed by Ferdinand de Saussure, we focus on how Derrida proposes radical changes in Western philosophy and metaphysics.

Rejecting the long-held belief that a word is a symbol that equals to a thing (its referent), Saussure proposed that words are signs made up of two parts: the signifier (a written or spoken mark) and a signified (a concept). For example, when we hear the sound combination *ball*, the sound is the signifier and the concept of a ball that comes to our minds is the signified. (Bressler 61)

Derrida takes Saussure's key formula in creating his philosophy of deconstruction. But since this formula is founded on the arbitrary and conventional structure, Derrida rejects to reach meaning through Saussure's formula. According to him, Western philosophy stumbles while creating the true meaning because it tends to search for a transcendental signified that is "an external point of reference upon which one may build a concept or philosophy" (Bressler 75). That is why he claims a new way for interpreting the texts: metaphysics of presence to "encompass those ideas such as logocentrism, phonocentrism, the operation of binary oppositions, and other notions that Western

thought and culture hold concerning the nature of language and metaphysics” (Bressler 174). Derrida distrusts the well-founded western philosophy because these notions are founded on fragile relationships. These relationships are structured by forming privileged and unprivileged positions in reaching a true meaning. For example, as a reader who is educated by western thought for many years, we tend to privilege men over women, good over bad, and so on; in this way, we create an unprivileged position for women. We must interrogate our point of view against these kinds of notions since the meaning can change if we put it on another worldview. “Derrida’s objective is to demonstrate the shaky foundations upon which such beliefs have been established and thereby ‘deconstruct’ or take apart what western culture values and to show how such a deconstructive process will lead to new and exciting interpretations of a text” (Bressler 174). Derrida believes that the existing concept of center should be changed thus we reach a true play of texts in the language. He claims “There is nothing outside of the text” (*Of Grammatology* 158). The text does not have to mean a center idea, rather it should become a play of signifiers. By doing so Derrida has liberated chains of the language:

Confronted by...brilliant and penetrating exercises intended to illustrate a method, it is rather a question of unburdening ourselves of a mute anxiety, and of doing so at the point at which this anxiety is not only ours, the reader's, but also seems to conform, beneath the language, operations, and greatest achievements of this book, to the anxiety of the author himself. (*Writing and Difference* 6)

The key element for this deconstruction process is the *différance* which is “Derrida’s ‘What if’ question. What if there is no ultimate truth?... Derrida’s answer is that all meaning or interpretations of a text are undecidable, for a text can have innumerable meanings and interpretations” (Bressler 169). Derrida’s *différance* drives the readers and critics to rethink their status quo in creating meaning for a text. Since one can produce variable interpretations about only a single text without any boundaries, we cannot fix the certain meaning by underlining that this is the sole truth. With this unstable

structure, the truth is changeable according to different perspectives and interpretations of each individual.

Derrida's new ways of interpreting texts create new opportunities for those who try to go beyond the norms of western society and culture including French feminists. Derrida thinks that the search for a transcendental signified causes limited interpretations of texts because it depends solely on certain criteria that are structured and dominated by the culture. Rejecting these kinds of boundaries provides a new vision for many philosophers who thirst for novelties which are the crucial steps in the way of breaking taboos. Derrida's deconstruction helps French feminists as a source of inspiration, in that way, French feminists including Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva, and Luce Irigaray attempt to devalue what the phallogocentric language system value in their controversial theory of *écriture féminine*. What is the most devaluated object in western culture especially in literature and authorship? They think that women and their bodies are the most repressed and devaluated object throughout history. That is why *écriture féminine* becomes a reference to women's body, this situation is a kind of the return of repressed as an expression of women's writing. They also emphasize that women's writing must be different from that of men if we consider the biological differences between these two sexes. While women tend to express themselves using plural and multiple emotions and feelings, men are based solely on reason, rules, and norms. This huge difference should not be ignored in writing. Thus, *écriture féminine* tries to deconstruct patriarchal discourse by using Derrida's deconstructed western metaphysics and binary oppositions as their base. They will deconstruct the center of western literature and writing which is artificially formed by a male-dominated culture. We will handle how they deconstruct the conventional discourse in the following chapters.

Besides, he ruins the hierarchy of binary oppositions which are considered as the conventional norms for the culture for many years. According to Derrida, the problem of language is related to searching for meaning and to experiencing meaning. "For Derrida, however, this is precisely the "problem" of language: the complex relationship, whose existence linguistics forces us to acknowledge, between meaning and communication." (Schleifer 381). In the course of communication, language produces dominant and

recessive terms which repress each other. This act of repression is supplied mostly by the dominant terms which can be thought of as a better meaning transmitter while the recessive terms transmit less meaning. The connection between dominant and recessive terms constitutes the basis of binary oppositions by which the speaker privileges one word in the face of another. Elmar Holenstein explains this situation as the marked term and unmarked term:

the marked term provides more information. This is best illustrated by the example of polar adjectives and nouns. The statement "Peter is as young as Paul" is more informative than the statement "Peter is as old as Paul." Someone unfamiliar with Paul's age knows, after the first statement, that he is relatively young while the second statement reveals nothing about his age. Young is the marked term, old the unmarked term. Two oppositions overlap in the relation marked/unmarked-the opposition between a positive and a negative term and between an indefinite and a definite one. (Schleifer 387)

Many linguistics try to neutralize this marked and unmarked situation utilizing language itself. Derrida's deconstruction is also perceived as a neutralizer between marked and unmarked terms but Derrida refuses it sternly by depicting what deconstruction do to the traditional binary opposition relationship: "Derrida himself goes on to define "deconstruction" succinctly: deconstruction, he says, proceeds by the reversal or "overturning" of classical binary oppositions, in which "one of the two terms governs the other" in a "violent hierarchy" (Schleifer 388). The emphasized violent hierarchy may be the situation in which one oppresses the other, the issue may not be related to the transmission of more or less meaning with Derrida. Rather than neutralizing, Derrida reverses the place of binary oppositions which means the privilege of the recessive terms and this is the repetition of the same cycle by changing the place of dominant and recessive terms. To break the hierarchy, Derrida deconstructs the positions of binary oppositions thus the recessive ones function as if they are dominant and vice versa for the dominant ones. *Écriture féminine* gets also its inspiration from this broken

binary opposition relationship because recessive women identity can take its new position as a dominant voice in favor of deconstruction. Thanks to this idea, *écriture féminine* creates its path which leads to a kind of dissolution in the traditional dichotomy between women and men. To sum up, in this part we only focus on one of the contributors to the formation of *écriture féminine*. Derrida's contribution to women writing is related to his act of breaking the taboos by deconstructing language's conventional structure. In the following part of this chapter, we will discuss Lacan's language acquisition theory and its influence on *écriture féminine* to understand how it contributes to the theory, and what aspects French feminists profit from it.

1.2. Lacanian Language Acquisition

Another forerunner who lights the way of *écriture féminine* writers is Jacques Lacan who is a French psychoanalyst and psychiatrist. However, he reinterprets Freudian psychoanalysis and psychosexual development continuum; he is known through his controversial ideas on mother's / women's place in the development process of an infant's identity. Lacan's most considerable achievement depends on his theory that mostly centers upon the language in this development process. In this respect, his theory differs from Freudian psychosexual development of an infant although he has studied mostly to reinterpret it.

Lacan's great contribution – and it is indeed a major one – was to re-read Freud in the light of modern linguistics and to demonstrate beyond any reasonable doubt that the unconscious can be understood to be structured like a language.... Hence, psychoanalytic sessions are intended to allow a space within which 'the other' – our unconscious – can express itself. (Grange 226)

Lacan's theory consists of three stages that lead the infant to participate in the conventional order of society. The first stage is the Real which is the first stage of infancy where an infant's needs and desires are satisfied by the mother through feeding. The Real

phase refers to the times in which the infant has not seen himself as an independent subject in culture yet. Throughout this stage, mother and baby are in harmony with each other since the baby feels secure and comfortable when his needs are satisfied. Besides, the baby sees his mother as his inseparable part, in other words, he cannot distinguish his own 'self' from his mother's **self** (emphasis added). The baby thinks that they are one single entity and self since the most crucial things are the infant's needs and their satisfaction in this stage. We cannot observe any kind of feeling of lack in the Real phase as long as the infant's desires are met by the mother. Lacan claims that this reciprocal relationship between the mother and the infant continues because the infant supposes that the mother has phallus: "...a relation constituted in analysis not by his vital dependence on her, but by his dependence on her love, that is to say, by the desire for her desire, identifies himself with the imaginary object of this desire in so far as the mother herself symbolizes it in the phallus" (Lacan 198). The second stage is the mirror stage in which the infant becomes aware of himself by seeing his image in the mirror. In this stage, the infant finds a relationship between himself / his image and reality; but this created self-image by an infant is a kind of illusion according to Lacan. In this period the infant identifies himself with this fictional self-image or "imago" by idealizing it without seeing its fictional side. The mirror stage in the infant development refers to the ages of 6 and 18 months period; it is hardly difficult to define the exact ranges of ages among Lacanian stages but this time coincides also with the supposed end of our first stage because the infant notices that he is a separate being from both his mother and the other objects surrounding him. However, the baby starts now to feel something lacking because of the loss of his mother, and this feeling of lack drives the baby to find an alternative for his lack. This period is also called the Imaginary because Dino Felluga seizes in his "Modules on Lacan: On the Structure of Psyche" that

The image is a fantasy, one that the child sets up in order to compensate for its sense of lack or loss, what Lacan terms an "Ideal-I" or "ideal ego." That fantasy image of oneself can be filled in by others who we may want to emulate in our adult lives (role models et cetera), anyone that we set up

as a mirror for ourselves in what is, ultimately, a narcissistic relationship.
(Felluga)

When the infant needs the others, it is because of his feeling of incompleteness. According to Lacan, language is also gained through being aware of any kind of absence. The mother and the infant continue their intimate relationship even though infant has developed a fictional selfhood; that is why Lacan calls them “the imaginary couple of the mirror stage” (Pekşen 15). We can say that the real phase and the mirror phase maintain their developments correspondingly till the infant notices his mother’s huge lack: the phallus. Now the mother transforms into “other” and the infant starts to gain his own identity through meeting with the symbolic order. This period refers to the times in which the child learns language. Thus, the child takes a step towards the third stage of Lacan: the symbolic stage in which the child becomes subject to language learning. Thereafter, he gains his self-subjectivity in society. It can be said that this dictated language equals the same authority in Freud’s Oedipal Complex’s father image. Since the language has the same function, the infant does not need a real father figure.

Lacan agrees that the Oedipal Complex is triggered by the child’s fear of castration, experienced as a ‘lack’ or insufficiency, which shatters the apparent autonomy and totality of infant’s imago and he maintains that in order to resolve this complex the child must abandon his attachment to his mother, identify with his father and adopt his proper place in society.
(Hardwig 577-578)

For this reason, by the acquisition of language, the child has to recognize “The Law of the Father” in which the power is embodied in the father figure that is not the father himself; rather it is related to the phallus which refers to the authority instead of the penis. In short, Lacan reinterprets Freud’s stages of psychosexual development but the interrelatedness among the three stages can be easily observed in Lacan. We have mentioned “supposed end” above while indicating the transition from one stage to another because these three stages continue to influence the adult life of an infant according to

Lacan. Thus, we cannot speak of an exact end for one stage. In contrast to Freud, all three stages are intermingled and go on to control an adult's needs, desires and demands throughout his life.

Moreover, Lacanian language acquisition focuses on the male-centered learning process. For Lacan, identity does not come into existence genetically or is not related to physiological developments; rather it progresses gradually when the infant sees and composes the images and experiences from the outside world from the very beginning of life. As the infant faces the natural outcomes of culture such as language, norms, codes, social laws, it becomes inevitable to notice differences among genders, objects, and so on. Within this period, recognition of physical differences with (m)other occurs more painful, which, is called castration by Lacan. Castration's sense of incompleteness is filled with language learning which is symbolically the law of patriarchal structure that separates infant from mother.

Paradoxically, language both creates an unconscious space in being - a permanent sense of loss or Otherness - by introducing a deferral of "lived" experience, but also becomes a mechanism for helping human beings to master their own incompleteness. The infant represses the pain of separation, and also internalizes the phallic signifier. The residue of this drama is what Lacan has named Desire: a structural inadequacy in the human subject which drives individuals to strive forever, to seek new ways to compensate for the elemental loss of a psychic illusion of unity. (Sullivan 8)

Écriture feminine writers resist the phallic signifier by equating it with patriarchy rather than acknowledging it as a biological fact. That is why Lacan's language acquisition theory is perceived as a construction of a male-dominated culture conducted by the patriarchy. In this way, we coincide again our major dichotomy between women and men since mother becomes other in this process while men become privileged, women are attached to the unprivileged status. Lacan's point of view is based on the major

controversial idea that French feminists resist adopting: the patriarchal structure of language acquisition and of gaining identity. They do not agree with the phallic fixation of infants throughout language acquisition that Lacan has claimed. While the infant coalesces with her mother, Lacan's theory substitutes the father by eliminating the mother with the label of other. By rejecting this idea, *écriture féminine* focuses on the real stage in which the unity between infant and mother is not interrupted by the patriarchy yet. Helene Cixous attacks Lacan with these words:

Not to mention "speaking": it's exactly this that she's forever deprived of. Unable to speak of pleasure = no pleasure, no desire: power, desire, speaking, pleasure, none of these is for woman. And as a quick reminder of how this works in theoretical discourse, one question: you are aware, of course, that for Freud/Lacan, woman is said to be "outside the Symbolic": outside the Symbolic, that is outside language, the place of the Law, excluded from any possible relationship with culture and the cultural order. And she is outside the Symbolic because she lacks any relation to the phallus, because she does not enjoy what orders masculinity-the castration complex. Woman does not have the advantage of the castration complex-it's reserved solely for the little boy. ("Castration or Decapitation" 45-46)

Drastically, Cixous is troubled with the place of women in the cultural order. She defends feminine textual body which is energetic, irrepressible like a burst of laughter that we comb through in the next chapter. Briefly, French feminists' major source for their works of art relies heavily on the pre-symbolic period in which the mother is an inseparable part of the infant. In her book titled *The Body and the Text: Hélène Cixous, Reading and Teaching*, Shirley Foster seizes that

...for women the Symbolic means awareness of the self as a subject constituted through an alien – because logocentric and phallogocentric – discourse, which depends on pre-ordered naming and categorization. Entry into this state thus destines woman to a position in which she is

linguistically marginalised, rendered inactive or mute in speech as well as in social signification. The only way to overcome this verbal suppression is to speak through a language not dominated by the phallus. (Pekşen 19)

Therefore, French feminists proceed to create a new form of expression which is free from patriarchy and its male-centered norms and boundaries employing *écriture féminine*.

In conclusion, in this chapter, we have attempted to analyze the major theoretical backgrounds that accelerate the formation of *écriture féminine*. Firstly, we have evaluated through Jacques Derrida's deconstruction theory because this theory's deconstructed center of western metaphysics and binary opposition relationships are related to *écriture féminine*'s ideas in which male-centered patriarchal discourse should be deconstructed. Next, Jacques Lacan has been one of the major components of the theoretical background in terms of his controversial language acquisition theory which devalue women in the process of gaining identity of an infant; yet Lacan's Real phase becomes a way out for *écriture féminine* in the way of creating a new discourse specific to women. Under the guidance of these theoretical backgrounds, the next chapter intends to examine the roots of women's writing to understand its evolution process until *écriture féminine*.

CHAPTER 2

THE ROOTS OF WOMEN WRITING

2.1. Historical Background

While glancing at the roots of women writing, it is inevitable to face the term feminism which has mostly political definitions because of the preconceived status of females, femininity, and feminism. The realistic depiction of feminism is related to the theory of equality of sexes, but men are not responsible for proving or defending this theory since they are enjoying male-dominated natural laws and rights taken for granted. They are never obliged to defend their rights to exist. In this context, feminism is perceived as a feminine phenomenon by which women claim basic equal rights with men on the ground of the theory of equality of sexes. In patriarchal societies, these terms and their supporters are not welcomed and it is a widespread and strong idea championed all around the world. The existing world order favors the male-centered ideology while it treats women as second-class citizens. Nowadays, in a modern world, it may not be performed directly but these ideas are engraved in many people's subconscious. In the same direction, the feminist theory is a kind of effort to reorganize the traditional point of view about women, their place in society, and their writings. "Naming someone a feminist can be positive or bitterly negative; similarly, the use of feminist theory in art history can be seen as a complicating, even provocative political act, a corrective to mainstream received ideas about artistic representation and reception" (Easton 99). Feminism expresses itself in process of three waves throughout history, and women writings are developed also under the name of three divergent phases. *Écriture féminine* emerges as an outcome of the last phase of feminism in which postmodernism and post-structuralism dominate over. "Postmodern and post-structuralist theories have provided useful ways to reconsider the way gendered power structures are naturalized in society and to deconstruct fixed meanings, shifting the production of meaning from authorial/artistic intention to reader/viewer reception, useful in a field where artists are elusive." (Easton 101). Like all phases of women's writing, *écriture féminine* focuses on the

oppressed women's identity and depictions of women characters in a work of art. It seeks for means and methods to deconstruct the stereotyped portrayal of women.

The French term *écriture féminine* is formed mostly by the precursor French feminists like Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva, and Luce Irigaray. It refers to women writing in English and we will use these two terms to underline the evolution process of women's studies in literature and academia. There are multiple points of view in feminist philosophy and thought yet each generation focuses mostly on the oppressed women's identity through feminist literary criticism. Before analyzing *écriture féminine* in detail, firstly we must investigate the roots that affect the formation of it. Rather than defining *écriture féminine* as a separate field of study, we should adopt it as a part of ongoing feminist theory. "Feminist theory...is the critical analysis of the dynamics of gender and sexuality, a basic objective of which is to analyse gender relations – to see how gender relations are formed and experienced, how we think of them, or, more importantly, how most of the time we *do not* think of them" (Sabbarwal 268). Thus, we must question what feminism exactly is today.

...feminism can be defined as the doctrine advancing the view that women are systematically disadvantaged and are advocating a collective or individual struggle for equality. Defined this way, feminism is a political position. Feminism and feminist are political labels implying support for the objectives of the women's movement which emerged in the 1960s, and the feminist critique is a distinctive political discourse – a critical and *theoretical* exercise directed against patriarchy and sexism. However, feminism can also be defined as a social *movement* to achieve certain specified aims. (Sabbarwal 267-268)

We observe an intimate relationship between feminism and the formation of feminist theory. By feminism, we try to emphasize women's movement in history; while by feminist theory, we mean the emergence of feminist literary criticism, feminist literature and women's writings throughout history. Within feminism, one can observe different ways of thinking and motivations but we can divide it into three periods by

means of three feminist waves: first-wave feminism (the late 1800s and early 1900s), second-wave feminism (1960s and 1970s), and third-wave feminism or so-called postfeminism (1980s till today). In the following subtitle, we will discuss significance of these three feminist waves and their characteristics in terms of how they are similar or different from each other.

2.1.1. First, Second, Third Wave Feminism

We should scrutinize three waves of feminist movements to investigate the evolution process of women writing which extends until *écriture féminine*. As we underline before feminism is a political stance that aims to gain equal rights with males. And the movement starts with the idea of equality which is observed through three waves of feminist movements in this part. Initially, the first wave of feminism is mostly related to the developments about equal rights between women and men within society. It refers to the period of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Women are in search of equality in political, social, economic, and professional areas of life. It can be said that women are aware of the fact that the patriarchal society oppresses women by seeing them as second-class humans. Therefore, women believe that the sole solution to this oppression lies behind equal rights between the two sexes. “The first wave corresponded to the battle for women's suffrage finally achieved by the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920” (Easton 99). The first-wave’s great emphasis can be considered as women’s suffrage. Women have already started their fights for suffrage at Seneca Falls Convention in New York in 1848. Their Declaration of Sentiments and Grievances (1848), takes its inspiration from the Declaration of Independence (1776). “The Seneca Falls Declaration was outlined by Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815–1902), claiming the natural equity of women and outlining the political strategy of equal access and opportunity. This declaration gave rise to the suffrage movement” (Krolokke 3). Moreover, first-wave feminism focuses on other emerging problems like the right to education, better and equal working conditions, marriage and property laws. Herein feminists act shoulder to shoulder with other activists such as together with the slavery abolition movement’s participants. For them, it is important to collaborate to attain concrete outcomes in the way of gaining equality in

respect of sex and gender. In deep down, the very emphasis is on the unequal treatment of women during the first wave of feminism. For instance, women cannot profit from Title VI that prevents discrimination in educational programs.

The discrimination continued in colleges and universities. Many schools completely barred women from stereotypically male programs like law and medicine. Still others set quotas that limited the number of female students, no matter their qualifications relative to male applicants and students. Many of the nation's prestigious schools including even public colleges like the University of Virginia remained male only. (Galles 16)

The same attitude is valid for women teachers; they are not welcomed by the institutions or they get low salaries even though they work as efficiently as male workmates. Here first-wave feminism emphasizes another factor: better and equal working conditions. During World War II, women participate in the workforce since many men join the army. Labour unions demand adjustments equating salary rates arranged following gender. After men's return from the war effort, women are labeled as wage cutters since they get involved in the competitive world of work. Low wages are seen as an opportunity to keep women out of the workforce. As women continue to participate in labor unions, the gap between the wages of women and men decreased but it was not totally abolished.

The second-wave feminism refers to the periods of 1960s and 1970s. This period has witnessed more radical women's liberation movements such as many controversial protests to emphasize on women's oppression in all areas of social life. Actually, women have been divided into two groups during the second-wave because new and young generations' expectations are not met by the old feminists. The young generation thinks there is a problem of representation with the old generation which cannot offer many inspirations for lesbians, women of color, or women workers. New generation feminists of the second-wave, called radical feminists extend the diversity of feminists' interests. Radical feminists deal with various subject matters which are not solely focused on

women's issues, rather they resist any kind of oppression dictated by the mainstream culture. For instance, "There is a small but growing anarchist feminist movement. This essentially puts together an anarchist analysis of power relationships (i.e., relationships of dominance and subordination) as the root cause of all institutionalized oppression with a radical feminist analysis of patriarchy" (Ehrlich 24). Plenty of particular groups blossom under the name of second-wave feminism. This situation may be an outcome of the postwar era which breeds the leftist groups. Together with their anti-war sentiments, these leftist groups form a kind of counter-culture in society such as the hippies. Therefore, the feminist groups cannot be seen so separated from these groups' activities which can be categorized as the anti-war movements, lesbian and gay movements, the civil rights movements of black communities, and many other anti-mainstream movements. These radical feminists enhance a new and broader vision to relationships in regard to sex, race, age, sexual preferences, and gender balances.

A listing of critical issues for 1970 and 1980 would find much duplication: an end to economic exploitation of women, both inside and outside the home; the right to control our bodies (including an end to sterilization abuse, the right to legal abortion on demand for all women, safe, effective contraception for those who use it, an end to the medical epidemic of hysterectomies - the most common major operation); an end to oppression of lesbians; an end to rape and battering and the pornography that creates a climate for it; an end to sex-stereotyping in childrearing education, the media, and work; the right to make the decisions in all areas of our lives; the right to communal childcare for those who need it; and an end to the ideology of patriarchy that justifies and perpetuates the oppression of women. (Ehrlich 24)

This period bursts into prominence with its radicalism which aims to convert the established orders of the society. In multiple fields, women manage to make all radical groups' voices heard. In brief, all these groups aim to defend the rights of oppressed people by criticizing the mainstream ideology and capitalism. Feminism becomes

included in these activists in the way of searching for more equality between the two sexes in society. Educational opportunities broaden for women; some higher education colleges start to accept female students to the formerly male dominated programs such as law and medicine. During this huge transformation of the society, women of color find places for themselves by participating in colleges in many states. These educated women force affect work and family life to the same degree. Women have already participated in the work force because of the war effort throughout the first-wave period despite unequal wages for the same job with males; in the 1970s the number of women in the workforce increased drastically. Dissatisfied with female opponents, males are obliged to improve themselves to get new positions and they reorganize the gender roles in the family life. Existing practices peculiar to family life are shared with wives who are also a part of the workforce. Stereotyped breadwinner roles change dramatically because working women do not accept their role as an angel in the house. In short, social and economic balances are a bit equalized when we examine the radical changes that occurred during the second-wave period.

The third-wave feminism refers to the times of the 1980s until even today, it is also considered postfeminism. Postfeminism or the third-wave feminism includes the most radical groups of the history of feminism such as “lipstick feminism, girly feminism, riot girl feminism, cybergrl feminism, transfeminism or just grl feminism – feminism is alive and kicking” (Krolokke 15). Like their mothers and grandmothers, feminists of the third wave never adopt a conservative or limited attitude towards women’s oppression. Rather they prefer to wear bawdy and brave clothes to express themselves by underlining the motto of ‘my body, my choice’. They are all against the mainstream society while they also are against the first and second-wave feminists with their critical tones.

This new ‘new’ feminism is characterized by local, national and transnational activism, in areas such as violence against women, trafficking, body surgery, self-mutilation, and the overall ‘pornofication’ of the media. While concerned with new threats to women rights in the

wake of new global world order, it criticizes earlier feminist waves for presenting universal answers or definitions of womanhood and for developing their particular interests into somewhat static identity politics. (Krolokke 17)

Furthermore, in this period feminist movement is viewed as a structure since there are various point of views about previously debated issues like abortion. About this issue, new generation feminists do not think similarly with their mothers or grandmothers who defend abortion as a legal right of a woman. Quite the contrary, accepted as a patriarchal trap, abolition causes women to suffer while it gives men a sense of relief by saving men from the responsibility of raising a child. In that way feminists interrogate who liberates from a burden in favor of the right to abortion. It is solely an example of new generations of feminists' controversial ideas. With the effect of the postmodern period, this new generation tends to deconstruct what their grandmothers magnify under the name of gaining equal rights with the males. This generation has experienced crises, Vietnam War scenes, Iran hostage issues, inflation, and recession, and their deconstructed opinions may be an outcome of these traumatic years. Commonly, they complain about the inefficacy of the problematical Equal Rights Amendment. This new feminist generation is sometimes called militant feminists who attract attention with their excessive lifestyles.

Other women simply withdrew, deciding that they did not like militant feminism's tendency to polarize the sexes, encourage narcissism, and deprecate individual obligations to others. Eventually, outside academe, the popular feminist "notion of an already extant universal class - women as such - collapsed," noted scholar Jean Bethke Elshtain. "Not only were women [like men] divided along racial, ethnic, religious, class, regional, and political lines, but feminists, too, were fragmented into many parts." (Kramer 128)

On the other side, a large number of well-educated young women enjoy the spirit of independence especially in the field of education, career, and family life. Most

American women prefer to savor their autonomy and individualism with the higher rate of educational opportunities, cultural and social changes, and abundant job alternatives. They do not trouble about the grievances of marginalized feminist thought that hesitate the way to lead. But women are aware of the fact that the new feminist agenda does not embark on the significant value of family life including husbands, children, or home like many women prefer to do so. The great emphasis is that women do not have to be fulfilled through family life, that is not a feminist urge, but an outcome of conformism and individual space which are esteemed by the society, and all these possibilities are earned thanks to the contributors of past experiences. Briefly, third-wave feminism can be considered a fragmented, since multiple points of view cannot manage to be united under the common concurrence. After the introduction of feminist waves and its influences, now it will be appropriate to discuss how the feminist waves have influenced women's writing.

2.2. Phases of Women Writing

2.2.1. Female, Feminist and Feminine Writing

Women writing becomes a matter of debate from the very beginning of the feminist theory or feminist literary criticism which can be considered as women's writings aiming at consciousness-raising initially among women. Since women are not aware of their selfhood which is oppressed by the patriarchal structure of language, their text turns out to be a crisis of identity. Some feminist writers like Simone de Beauvoir claim that existing patriarchal structures of language oppress women's identity by marginalizing it in terms of creating an Other. "Humanity is male," wrote Simone de Beauvoir in 1949, "and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being. ... He is the Subject; he is the Absolute - she is the Other" (Beauvoir 15-16) The Subject can only exist if the opposing phenomenon, the Object, exists. In that way, using the tension of two opposing side, the location of Object is situated according to the location of Subject since they are opponent forces. By neglecting the correlation between two opponents, the Subject tries to marginalize the

Object and creates an Other. Beauvoir resists the status of objectivity for women. But this debate over the location of women is seen as meaningless by many critics by claiming the sexual differences are related to the biological facts, not the assumptions of theoreticians. We cannot disregard the idea defending that power has a counter-power. If we accept that humanity is male, our starting point can be complicated; rather than this expression, we can seize that humanity is governed by the male powers and there is always a counter-power which is female powers in this case. Feminist criticism and theory are always controversial but society's structures are always white male supremacist and patriarchal. For this reason, the feminist literary theory focuses on the oppressed women's identity and depictions in the literary texts and it searches for a way out to get rid of any kind of oppression.

Besides, when we examine the history of modern criticism, we notice that feminist criticism stays out of the frame because of the male authorities. Since the authorship is special to the males, multiple female writers had been obliged to hide and disguise their real identities. Hence, this situation drives women writers to use male names to publish their literary works. To tell the truth, women's writings are not approved and accepted as precious and worthy of being appreciated by practicing a politics of exclusion to the academia. Male-dominated authorities cause a problematic evolution problem for feminist criticism and theory since women writers have been overlooked and excluded from conferences or other intellectual activities. That is why feminist criticism does not emerge from the criticism in its origin; rather it blossoms from feminism which can be seen as a political stance against women's oppression and unequal practices of patriarchal society. "Since 1975 a second wave has included many women, especially in French and Comparative Literature, who have come to feminist criticism via psychoanalytic, post-structuralist, or deconstructionist theory, rather than via the women's movement and women's studies" (Showalter 35). This situation alters the course of events for feminist criticism and theory because "in the past year, several male theorists, especially those engaged in Marxist or black critical theory, have begun to write seriously about feminist criticism as well" (Showalter 35). Briefly, the path stretching to modern feminist criticism and theory is not a smooth way to overcome.

When we look through the historical evolution of women writing throughout history, we can lightly seize that feminist criticism and theory improves itself with the same continuum of three feminist waves which have been examined in the previous part of this chapter. It is tough to categorize women's writings under the name of feminist criticism and theory but we can discuss it through three phases: female, feminist and feminine, the details of these key concepts will be investigated in detail. In the first phase; the female phase coincides with the first-wave feminism that took place in the period of late 1800s and early 1900s. In this period, women's writings can be considered as female writing in which women writers or poets never transgress the social and cultural constructions excessively. They heavily adopt the gender roles that are enforced by society. They write mostly about motherhood, marriage, child care, love, women's place in society with their cheerful tones.

Besides, we can seize also their conservative attitudes rather than radical ideas. For example, "The Mills and Boon romantic novels are written by, read by, marketed for, and are all about women. Yet nothing could be further from the aims of feminism than these fantasies based on sexual, racial, and class submission which so frequently characterize these novels" (Moi 120). These novels can only be considered as female writings because there is nothing with them in the way of forming a kind of consciousness about women's oppression. Rather they are full of compliments about being an oppressed woman stereotyped with home, child care, and a happy marriage. Women's depictions are commonly restricted with the description of an angel in the house that pumps the cult of womanhood, the place of women as home, pure decorative ornament. Women's sole function is to meet their husband's expectations in their patriarchal trap. We can resemble these novels to the implementer of mainstream ideology dictated by the authorities to lead women to a male-centered order and culture to avoid any kind of breakdown in the social structure. In this period together with these kinds of popular products, we witness more satisfying works of art in favor of feminist criticism and theory: the most iconic early feminist work belongs to Mary Wollstonecraft with her book titled *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). In the introduction part, she sums up the status quo of women through these words:

This is the law of nature; and it doesn't seem to be suspended or repealed in favour of woman. This physical superiority can't be denied—and it is a noble privilege! But men, not content with this natural pre-eminence, try to sink us lower still, so as to make us merely alluring objects for a moment; and women, intoxicated by the adoration that men (under the influence of their senses) pay them, don't try to achieve a permanently important place in men's feelings, or to become the *friends* of the fellow creatures who find amusement in their society. (Wollstonecraft 4)

This book becomes a source of inspiration for both feminism and human rights movements while it contributes to improving the skeleton of feminist theory. These words drive its readers to rethink their status quo, especially for women readers. That is why there are differences between female and feminist writings. If we find a parallelism between the first-wave feminism and women writings, we witness female writings rather than the feminist ones as we think of the existing conditions of the period. At the end of the first-wave feminist movement, feminist criticism and theory start to gain ground in the way of consciousness-raising about women's place in a patriarchal society. The condition of being exposed to the male gaze in all fields of social and political life is not endured by a group of women like Mary Wollstonecraft. Even though the number of supporters is not adequate to found a new position for womanhood, the ideas provoked through this kind of works of art arouse curiosity among a considerable amount of women. It also paves the way for the next generations. All in all, first phase of women writings spreads seeds to the formation of feminist criticism and theory.

In the second-wave period which coincides with the periods of 1960s and 1970s, women's writings take their new shape that we call feminist writing in which we can see more radical ideas and decisions that correspond with the spirit of the era. This spirit also creates a new academic result in feminist theory: women's studies departments in the universities through the huge increase in the number of women who manage to get opportunities in educational areas. "Its [Women's Studies department] initial task was

consciousness raising, in other words, bringing to fore women's oppression...by questioning why there was an almost complete non-presence of women's perspectives in social sciences" (Sabbarwal 269). Literary works of the period are signaling the same revolutionary spirit and they increase society's awareness about women's oppression. In that way, we can call these works of art mostly as feminist writings. The most influential ones are *A Room of One's Own* (1929) by Virginia Woolf, *The Second Sex* (1949) by Simone de Beauvoir, and *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) by Betty Friedan. Virginia Woolf claims that men treat women as inferiors, that all areas of life are controlled by men; "she believed that a female Shakespeare could achieve literary prominence in the twentieth century if women scholars, teachers and critics would only pave the way" (Bressler 104). In her cornerstone *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf creates a fictional woman character who seeks for all written texts about women; by means of this character, the author proves that all the historical and literary texts belong to male authorities. In a male-dominated world of art, being a woman writer is not easy task to overcome. For this reason, she insists that a woman writer should have essential sources like independence and a room of her own, which turns out to be a huge metaphor for women's independence and creativity. Thus, equal conditions are provided to women writers which have mostly disadvantaged positions in a patriarchal world of authorship. Virginia Woolf and her ideas become the source of inspiration for the forthcoming generation of feminist writers. And she also gives shape to the feminist criticism and theory by mentioning basic problematic issues that women and women writers try to cope with. Like Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir underlines that all structures in society are controlled by patriarchy. Beauvoir makes emphasis on the male's classification of women as other. According to her, women should go beyond the bonds of patriarchal society and should create themselves by destroying the image of the other in which she is defined by men sole as an object. As we have already emphasized Beauvoir's ideas, she tries to climb over the stereotyped women objectification problem with her radical writings. "With the distinction intact, it is no longer possible to attribute the values or social functions of women to biological necessity, and neither can we refer meaningfully to natural or unnatural gendered behavior: all gender is, by definition, unnatural" (Butler 35). Beauvoir claims that gender is an artificial notion that is created by the male-dominated patriarchal society, thus we

should resist the abuse of biological facts because there is a huge difference between gender and sex. Culturally structured gender refers to the acculturation of the body according to the law of male-dominated culture. In a broader sense, patriarchal culture should not shape a person's behavior pattern, whether this person is male or female. One must gain her/his identity on her/his own. Beauvoir's fascinating point of view is coherent with the spirit of second wave's radicalism and contribute to the evolution of feminist criticism and theory because "revealing the natural body as already clothed, and nature's surface as cultural invention, Simone de Beauvoir gives us a potentially radical understanding of gender" (Butler 49). Another important name who manages to be a strong defender of the feminist movement and a significant contributor of feminist criticism and theory is Betty Friedan with her book titled *Feminine Mystique* (1963). She also claims that

The feminine mystique says that the highest value and the only commitment for women is the fulfillment of their own femininity. It says that the great mistake of Western culture, through most of its history, has been the undervaluation of this femininity.... But however special and different, it is in no way inferior to the nature of man; it may even in certain respects be superior. The mistake, says the mystique, the root of women's troubles in the past is that women envied men, women tried to be like men, instead of accepting their own nature, which can find fulfillment only in sexual passivity, male domination, and nurturing maternal love. (Friedan 37)

Friedan defends that women should exit from their "happy place" which is called home to reach personal fulfillment which can be ensured only through education and work life. She emphasizes that men are not the hostile opponents of women; rather, women's passivity incarcerates them to a patriarchal trap. Her confusing claims draw attention to many people including men and women. Her attempt to modify the position of women can be seen as a second-wave feminist movement's outcome since she is accepted as a catalyst and pioneer of the movement. Friedan accelerates the Equal Pay Act of 1963 by

triggering the tension of radical groups through her articles which are seen as inspirational for the formation of feminist criticism and theory. In sum, the second phase of women's writings, so-called feminist texts in feminist criticism and theory pave the way for more rooted changes for the militant feminists of the next generation.

Third-wave feminism is more open to marginal ideas which pass down from the second wave. Women's writings can simply be called feminine in this period which coincides with the 1980s up to the contemporary day. In the same token women's literature transshapes overwhelmingly by focusing mostly on the theory and the text itself by keeping the descriptions of women characters in the background. This dynamic shift in women's texts is commented as a result of postmodernism and the post-structural theories. Feminist critics of the third wave do not deny their inspiration from post-structural theories, so much that they are also called as post-structural feminists. As we have mentioned previously in "the Theoretical Background" chapter of this study how post-structural theories pave the way for the naissance of real theory regarding feminist criticism since post-structural feminists denominate previous feminist writers' generation as ardent defenders of women rights and oppression, distant from theory.

From the perspective of some post-structuralist feminists the first phase of feminist criticism may be dismissed as theoretically naive, an American "flight towards empiricism" which assumes "an unbroken continuity between 'life' and 'text.'" Only theory, they insist, can provide adequate answers to feminist questions and a position from which to discuss the whole of literature and culture, rather than one within a ghetto of female experience. (Showalter 35)

To be recognized by academia, feminist criticism must have a theoretic dimension, claim the post-structural feminists. Texts produced by women must be different from texts written by male authors because a man cannot write out the sensations and sentiments that women's bodies have experienced since men are created, developed, shaped as rational creatures; not as emotional ones. Women's experiences are multiple,

they are innately sensational and extroverted while male-centered culture tries to repress this so-called excessive sensationalism for the sake of forming an ideal woman. To sum up, briefly, we have already mentioned the other two phases in the formation of women writing. Firstly, female refers to women's biological differences from men, while feminist refers to a political stand. In the first-wave, we have seen more suitable works for female nature that are organized by the patriarchal order. In the feminist phase, we go beyond these boundaries to some degree; yet in feminine writing and its aftermath, the characteristics will be completely different from the previous ones.

Formerly, feminine represents a kind of artificial entity as Beauvoir argues in *The Second Sex* that women have been reduced to an object for men throughout history because men imagine women as other, women have been denied their subjectivity but all of these proclamations are not natural things, they are created artificially by the patriarchal society: "One is not born, but rather becomes, woman. No biological, psychic, or economic destiny defines the figure that the human female takes on in society; it is civilization as a whole that elaborates this intermediary product between the male and the eunuch that is called feminine" (Beauvoir 330). This act of culturally becoming a woman refers to feminine or femininity. It means a kind of illusion, a social construction to decide female compartments imposed by culture and society. This culture makes women believe that accepting these norms of femininity means to become normal and natural, but vice versa she is abnormal and unnatural. Toril Moi explains the status quo about the feminine:

Patriarchy has developed a whole series of 'feminine' characteristics (sweetness, modesty, subservience, humility, etc.). Should feminists then really try to develop another set of 'feminine' virtues, however desirable? And even if we did want to define femininity normatively, would it then not just become a part of the metaphysical binary oppositions Hélène Cixous rightly criticizes? There is also a danger of turning a positive, feminist definition of femininity into a definition of femaleness, and thereby falling back into another patriarchal trap. Gratifying though it is to be told that women really are strong, integrated, peace-loving, nurturing

and creative beings, this plethora of new virtues is no less essentialist than the old ones, and no less oppressive to all those women who do not want to play the role of Earth Mother. (Moi 123-124)

In that way, feminists have already rejected female writing because it praises the unnecessary stereotyped women's sphere as home and inferior. This writing's depiction of women as an angel in the house is destroyed by means of feminist writing in which feminists have tried to create a consciousness about women's oppression. Feminists rarely adopt this word of femininity itself because it underlines the negativity and weakness of being feminine. Thus women should not accept both the biological and cultural dictations that create a sense of lack in women's minds; rather a powerful depiction of women can be created if women do not resign themselves to society's artificial standards for females. To conclude, in this part of our study, we have examined the assumed three phases of women's writings to comprehend the evolution process of feminist criticism and theory in detail. In the next section, we will try to point out Hélène Cixous and *écriture féminine* so that we can provide the framework for the analysis of the theory fiction *The Third Body* and Ursula K. Le Guin's novellas from *The Found and the Lost*.

2.2.2. Hélène Cixous and *Écriture Feminine*

The period of 1980s and its aftermath can be denominated as post-structural feminist criticism, or we can think of it as *écriture féminine* which means "women's writing" in English and suggests a deconstructive feminine writing by focusing on the body as a source of self-knowledge for women by refusing the biological and cultural boundaries of femininity. *Écriture féminine* sees the women's body "as the productive site of multiple desires, a plenitude of *jouissance*..." (Krolokke 14). As emphasized previously, the evolution process of feminist theory and women's writing interact with feminism's three waves throughout history.

We will handle other major characteristics of *écriture féminine* by examining one of three important figures: Hélène Cixous; so it gives us insight into the way of interpreting our theory fiction *The Third Body* and searches the perspective of *écriture*

feminine in the collected novellas of Ursula K. Le Guin from *The Found and the Lost*. Écriture feminine coined mostly by Hélène Cixous refers to an alternative female discourse against the patriarchal, masculine economy of the language system. By means of achieving this alternative way of writing, women writers manage to escape from the boundaries and oppression of patriarchy. In creating this discourse, women should embrace certain criteria that are considered as the cornerstones for the perspective of écriture feminine. These criteria can be categorized as follows: return to the repressed, body and female sexuality as a source of writing, sexual differences and bisexuality, jouissance and flying manuscript, the harmony of the in-betweenness and duality. First of all, women should enfold the source of the uncanny in which our unconscious and repressed feelings play an important role in creating a sense of fear and anxiety in an individual according to Freud. Besides, we call it as Id in Freudian terms, while Lacan entitles it as the Real; all represent our unconscious. New formed female discourse aims at returning to this repressed zone of the human mind in which the mother has not turned into the other yet. That is to say, the return to the repressed of our unconscious is reflected as something that individuals should fear and be uneasy about it by patriarchal way of thought. But écriture feminine claims a reconciliation between the self and the unconscious to create id-liberated female discourses. For instance, the most repressed thing in women's unconscious is surely the female body and female sexuality. According to the Law of the Father, these notions are represented as something queer; thus women have to suppress their body and sexuality. Therefore, the most crucial thing in écriture feminine is to write the body since it is a kind of liberation for women sexuality which has been in captivity for years. In her article titled "The Laugh of Medusa" Hélène Cixous underlines that:

Women must write through their bodies, they must invent the impregnable language that will wreck partitions, classes, and rhetorics, regulations and codes, they must submerge, cut through, get beyond the ultimate reserve-discourse including the one that laughs at the very idea of pronouncing the word 'silence,' the one that, aiming for the impossible, stops short before

the word 'impossible' and writes it as 'the end.'...women are body. More body, hence more writing. ("The Laugh of Medusa" 886)

Patriarchy teaches us that the unconscious is a dark continent that one must avoid approaching so close. But Cixous claims that women's plurality is repressed here by patriarchy again; besides women are depicted a state of lack. Thus women should liberate their plurality through writing about female sexuality "...not about destiny, but about the adventure of such and such a drive, about trips, crossings, trudges, abrupt and gradual awakenings, discoveries of a zone at one time timorous and soon to be forthright" ("Laugh of Medusa" 885). In this way, women manage to see the unseen which is repressed by a fictional and artificial label of other and state of lack. Women are not the objects that must be fulfilled anymore. Rather than ignoring and excluding the other like masculine ways of thinking, the woman embraces the other that situates both in her inside and outside. Women writings thus represent a journey towards inside of oneself which "leads to enrichment – not of the narcissistic self but the self of the person in labour" (*Rootprints* 250). "The self of the person in labour" may refer to the birth myth in which this pregnant woman is ready to give birth despite its devastating sufferings. Although a woman is desperate throughout the labor, birth also means being open to new beginnings. These beginnings are provided only by the process of uniting the fragmented parts of a woman. It is a kind of reunion between the lack and the self of a woman. Thus this continuum will be painful but women can manage to fulfill it. But it should also be underlined that:

The book is not written for other, but as Cixous puts it with a nod to Stendhal, for 'the skin of our belly,' which is to say not for myself either in any simple way, but for a particular part of myself, or one of myself, at my own middle limit, for the other of myself, because in this writing experience of writing experience 'I is not I, [...] it is with the others, coming from the others, putting me in the other's place, giving me the other's eyes. Writing is not making love but making room, 'making room for the other part of myself who is the other, who can only exist, of course, if I am there to receive. (*Rootprints* 250)

However, it seems like a fantasy, the act of writing provides an effusiveness of the invisible events that are repressed in the Real. The most important invisible event is the sexuality and sexual differences between the two sexes. There is no way to understand the limits of sexual differences which are not similar to each other. But in the encounter of two sexes, Cixous talks about two types of results: "...on the one hand a negative incomprehension which is a violent close-mindedness and rejection of the other, and on the other a positive incomprehension at work in love or friendship-love: 'The fact that we can say to each other all the time: here, I am not like you'" (*Rootprints* 252). Thus women writing should have a stand that promotes bisexuality to prevent such kind of confusions in the encounter of the two sexes. In Anima Animus and Shadow theory, Jung claims that each person has both masculine and feminine sides together with the shadow representing the unconscious that we must scrutinize deeply. Écriture feminine writers also should have a bisexual mind in which two sexes are not repressed by focusing on the shadow, unconscious, or whatever we call the repressed sequences of our identity. Because repression of one sex makes écriture feminine to equal phallogocentric structures and discourses, "... the act of writing is equivalent to masculine masturbation (and so the woman who writes cuts herself out a paper penis) or that writing is bisexual, hence neuter, which again does away with differentiation" ("Laugh of Medusa" 883). One way or another, women should go beyond the barrier that we call sexual differentiation, therefore they can reach a neutral position against patriarchal discourse; then this act means a kind of deconstruction of the existing order in authorship and writing experience that is dominated by men. In other words, women's writing will not oppress a single sex while privileging the other one. Rather, by means of uniting two different facets of both femininity and masculinity, women's writings become plural and multiple. Cixous likens this style to the act of *voler* which means both "to steal" and "to fly" in English. Cixous uses a pun to underline two different aspects of writing: firstly, women should take back their stolen sexual identity which is repressed and imprisoned for years. Secondly, by living a kind of *jouissance*, women will feel as if they are flying through the writing experience. *Jouissance* can be translated in English as enjoyment and sexual orgasm. Women should experience the excessiveness in *jouissance* to create a flying manuscript which is "volcanic; as it is written it brings about an upheaval of the old property crust,

carrier of masculine investments; there's no other way. There is no room for her if she is not a he. If she is a her-she, it is in order to smash everything, to shatter the framework of institutions, to blow up the law, to break up the 'truth' with laughter" ("Laugh of Medusa" 888).

Besides, women achieve to capture a harmony through duality and in-betweenness in creating an id-liberated female discourse. Rather than repeating themselves with the rumination of binary opposition, they adopt a mild relationship that does not feed on the conflicting ideas of these oppositions. That is to say, *écriture féminine* juxtaposes two contrasting ideas and then, it creates coherent and plural meanings. Our major binary opposition to handle is women-men duality; *écriture féminine* transgresses this duality by uniting them in a bisexual mind by creating the in-between condition. "The principle of duality, the calling into question of labels and categories of thoughts, the naming un-naming that is at work, constitute the foundation of the Cixousian approach. It is a systematic game-playing capable of dynamiting (and of dynamizing) the conventions, the clichés, the expressions that suit the ready-to-think" (*Rootprints* 166). In theory, *écriture féminine*'s objectives are well understood. All of these objectives are based on a basic aim: creating id-liberated female discourse.

To conclude, in this part, we have studied the roots that trigger the formation of *écriture féminine* and then, we have briefly tried to examine certain criteria of *écriture féminine* such as return to repressed, body and female sexuality as a source of writing, sexual differences and bisexuality, *jouissance* and flying manuscript, the harmony of the in-betweenness and duality. In theory, we should pay attention to these objectives since we adopt a perspective of *écriture féminine* in reading our theory fiction *The Third Body* and reinterpreting the collected novellas titled *The Found and the Lost* of Ursula K. Le Guin. Yet we have to interrogate how we can deconstruct the patriarchal discourse in practice. We will look through these practices in the following chapter of our study. Then we search for the implementations of these practices also in our theory fiction *The Third Body* and our novellas from *The Found and the Lost* however these practices have many similarities in terms of postmodernist techniques such as metafiction and intertextuality that we will investigate thoroughly in the forthcoming chapter.

CHAPTER 3

THE WAYS OF DECONSTRUCTING THE PATRIARCHAL DISCOURSE IN *THE THIRD BODY*

3.1. Creating A Neutral Zone Beyond Gender Relationships: *The Third Body*

In this part of our study, we focus mostly on our theory fiction titled *The Third Body* by Hélène Cixous to analyze it in terms of narrative techniques that aim at deconstructing male-oriented patriarchal discourse. As we know, conventions of patriarchy have certain criteria to be acceptable by the mainstream. Écriture féminine deconstructs these well-founded conventions through its concept of bisexuality and its redefinition of otherness together with the frequent use of postmodernist techniques. That's why in this part, we examine both of these concepts of écriture féminine: bisexuality and otherness, and postmodernist techniques on our theory fiction by harmonizing the previous sections altogether. *The Third Body* is founded on an unnamed protagonist and her relationships with her kith and kin especially her lover named T.t. Throughout the fiction, we observe that the unnamed protagonist-also the narrator- is in a dream-like position mostly in her bed. The narrative plies between acts of appearance and disappearance. As the conventional norms have dictated, these appearance and disappearance dualities do not have a negative sense. Rather, we seize that these dualities are the only way of exit for the protagonist in the way of creating a neutral space for herself. This disappearance can be considered as the dissolution of the couple in a single body. The feeling of disappearance manifests itself with the departure of the lover because the self prevents and postpones dissolving in the other body till this departure. But the self faces the pain of departure, and then notices the transparency between the couple. "In short, my disappearance was foreseen because of a final look in which it was established that everything was in order, then it was, but it could not be seen, for it absorbed itself. T.t was convinced that he was the locus of my disappearance..." (*Third Body* 3). In other words, it is a beginning for the protagonist in the way of creating a bisexual mind, because we observe the dissolution of identities based on genders. But here, we see that our

protagonist gives up her female identity while we do not know anything about T.t's situation. Écriture feminine writers aim to construct a neutral area in which both women and men do not have to give up their identities. Nonetheless, this is the first step of creating this neutral zone. Throughout the fiction, we cannot observe any kind of plot that is suitable for patriarchal discourse. We see a woman depiction who tells, dreams, imagines what she has felt in the face of her ordinary relationships with her environment. As a reader we cannot easily understand the exact plot of the fiction, rather we feel the sensations of the protagonist, we identify ourselves with her while feeling her sorrows and delights as if they are our own. The sensations of the protagonist are given by means of the depictions of dream-like bed scenes in which she is like in a trance. The very emphasis on the body and its sexual implications is at the forefront.

... At every moment I want to be able to go into that body, into that thought, at every moment be able to be before him as before a temple wall that doesn't exist, that exists only if I cross the wall and if I am the door. I cannot 'do without' your altogether different body, which I never left in the first place. He's making me make millions of love, it's not me, it's not my father. All the mysteries are there: I see my bones through your blood, I am in front and yet I am inside, I am the gaze and its abolition. (*Third Body* 64)

Crossing the wall may represent to exceeding the limits of gender-based sexuality; the body is a temple for both sexes in which we reflect our pure thoughts and feelings. This quotation refers to write the body to be valuable in female discourse to create a writing style special to women. As readers, we give up to pursue standards of writing because we are possessed with the flow of narration and the flying manuscript of the novel.

Besides, since the protagonist's state of mind is inconstant we can observe fast shifts from one story to another. "If your only virgin daughter had betrayed you, you couldn't move a finger without another wound opening in your flesh from whence she sprang" (*Third Body* 22-23). Her pains come from inside not from outside. Her

experiences drive her to doubt anything. These experiences can be identified by many of us, it may be a common sorrow of separation from a lover. But here, we must pay attention to the fact that we cannot catch any linear state of mind. Her narrative changes so fast that we cannot find any linear connection with the narrative of the following page. The novel consists of multiple narrations which are intermingled to prevent the reader from creating a sense of comprehension of the exact plot. This is a distracting element that also aims at deconstructing the patriarchal discourse in the way of creating a female one. While nonlinear narration makes it difficult to be comprehensible, the lack of plot drives readers to think twice about what they have read. In fact, this depiction is very similar to a woman's mind which is always in process. As stressed before, *écriture féminine* defends that women's mind and writing differ from the men's mind and writing. Because of the social structure dominated by patriarchy, the ways of developing one's identity vary between the two sexes. As claimed, men gain their autonomy while marginalizing his mother during his so-called Freudian Oedipus complex and Lacanian Symbolic stage while a woman continues to identify herself with her mother throughout all her life, thus "...women develop capacities for nurturance, dependence, and empathy more easily than men do and are less threatened by these qualities, whereas independence and autonomy are typically harder for women to attain" (Gardiner 352). The construction of our theory fiction *The Third Body*'s narration demonstrates to us the dimensions of how women's writing recasts the traditional plotline since we can observe the huge difference between the two sexes' minds with our narrator.

In *écriture féminine*, through the play of words, writers try to interrupt the narration to prevent creating works of art similar to those of patriarchy. In that way, *The Third Body* can be considered as a metafiction which is the basic element of the postmodern genre. Metafiction is a kind of distracting element that prevents reader from being lost in the fiction. In terms of this style, readers are conscious of both reality and fiction in general. In the postmodern period, the authors try to create their own parody with the help of this technique. John Barth comments on this situation of the period in his "Literature of Exhaustion":

...I'm calling 'the literature of exhausted possibility' - or more chicly, 'the literature of exhaustion.' By 'exhaustion' I don't mean anything so tired as the subject of physical, moral or intellectual decadence, only the used-upness of certain forms or the felt exhaustion of certain possibilities - by no means necessarily a cause for despair" (Barth 64).

Postmodern fiction thus creates new from the old form of fiction. "Postmodern fiction, then, often exhibits a metafictional quality. Metafiction is typically defined as 'fiction about fiction- that is, fiction that includes within itself a commentary on its own narrative and/or linguistic identity'" (Worthington 114). *Écriture féminine* applies these techniques of the postmodern genre into their own works of art. Its sole purpose is to form something both new and special to female discourse. In *The Third Body*, metafiction warns readers by giving details about the writing process of fiction:

Lesson: the laws of arbitrariness. A critic said that my last book 'swarmed with precise notations about the most everyday life-events.' One shouldn't say in a book that one has already written a book. There is, there ought to be, a law aimed at this type of adultery. I cite this phrase because of the high incidence of germs of meaning in it, at least to my ear. (*Third Body* 11)

As seen, Cixous's narrator is mocking with standardization of the rules that are transcendental beings special to authorship for the patriarchy. If one author reveals the secrets of authorship, the narrator claims, there must be a punishment as serious as the law of adultery. Throughout the fiction, we see the interruptions that awaken readers about the fictionality of the text: "The word was written, in *bold*, rather luminous letters, in the dark depths of my consciousness. Handwritten; therefore the word was written by someone. It doesn't seem to be me, I don't think it's my handwriting- or else I would have sensed it.... It's I who am the author of the word written in a neutral hand" (*Third Body* 52). In this quotation, the protagonist gives clues about her writing experience, she

emphasizes the neutral hand by implying with it the neutral zone of bisexual mind that écriture feminine underlines.

Besides, metafiction is empowered by different examples of intertextuality which means simply to take reference from old, previous texts in the flow of narration. The postmodern genre claims that it is not possible to find any stable meaning including the denotative ones since meanings in a language are always in a situation of process. The unstableness of meaning drives writers towards intertextuality because they do not have any single source of meaning, rather they should reach meaning through the relationships among texts. In *The Third Body*, we come across two different stories except our protagonist's story. The first text is Wilhelm Jensen's *Gradiva* while the second one is Henrich von Kleist's *The Earthquake in Chile*.

Norbert Hanold fell in love at first sight with the image of a woman walking. The body, depicted at about a third of its actual size, had attracted him with such a violence that he felt absorbed by this porous figure, into which he was surprised he wished to penetrate as if seeking in some nonexistent depth the mystery of its surface; the porousness itself, which did not open onto any organ, fascinated him by its substantive contradiction. (*Third Body* 41)

Employing intertextual citation from *Gradiva*, our unnamed protagonist's experiences in her bed are enriched by the author. She tries to read *Gradiva* in her bed; this act becomes an essential source of pleasure for her. She accompanies with her bodily gestures to Norbert Hanold's love story by feeling the pleasures and delights of this man. Towards the end of the novel, the protagonist identifies herself with *Gradiva*. *Gradiva* functions to multiply the meaning of female writing. And at the end, this story also helps to the creation of a neutral zone for our protagonist. Besides, *The Earthquake in Chile* narrates the story of Jeronimo who is accused of a crime. Although he is sentenced to death, the flow of the story reverses through an earthquake. "...what was up is down, the sky has fallen to the earth, the sixth wall has crumbled, the other walls have buried the

law, the young man who wanted to hang himself from the pillar is clinging to that same pillar so as not to be knocked down” (*Third Body* 33). Now, in *The Third Body* the narration shifts from our unnamed protagonist’s love story with T.t to another love story between Jeronimo and Josephine who tries to prevent the death of Jeronimo by jeopardizing her own life. The mingled bodies of Jeronimo and Josephine depict what écriture feminine writers aim to create:

The night of the pomegranate tree in bloom...they tell each other their story; at the intersection of the two narratives, the child is born. He knows his mother. He twists in the water of the river, he stretches his body between the water and the air, but she holds the little salmon tight by his head. It’s the first time that there’s water in this tale: up to here, fire, wall panels, holes, ashes, pillars. And especially bodies: bodies to hang, bodies to kiss, bodies to cut up, bodies living in a simple prison, a lost body, a nude cut to pieces. And the imagining: each person wants the whole body of the other in which there is everything. (*Third Body* 41)

The couple unites in a harmonious way to reach the perfect neutral zone: the third body in which each individual has the whole body, there is no lack in there, there is sole completeness with the other. Otherness is not a queer thing that one should avoid, instead, two varied other unites in a single spirit, it is the third body. And a child is born as a symbol of hope and future. This story can be considered as a reference to the writing process in which Cixous resembles “the self in labour” (*Rootprints* 250). In other words, writing is a conclusion that can be born only through the fusion of the fragmented self of a person. And a person can attain this fusion by making peace with the ‘other’ dwelling inside and outside of the self. Using intertextual citations, our unnamed protagonist prepares herself a special ground in which she can be equal to both her lover T.t, her mother Eve, and her father. She reaches this ground by comparing her lovers in her life including T.t and her father. She forms a chart by writing the characteristics of her father and T.t. In the end, she decides that each one is equal to the other one because they are all part of a harmonious completeness. In that way, we see the multiplicity of female

writing. There is one but many. The protagonist is unnamed because she may signify everybody. We cannot associate it with the nonexistence of women in patriarchy since as a single woman; her identity equals to all, not one single woman. A third body is the common point, a magical refuge for everybody: “We are familiar with terrors, doubts, black holes and white holes, eternal presences, primordial powers, the first waters and the last. At the intersection of our tongues there came to us a third body, at a place where there is no law” (*Third Body* 70). In her dream-like state of mind, the protagonist explains the third body:

I am in this room, a vestibule, which is neutral, and I can't see the walls, or the ceiling, or the floor, but it's defined by the geometric system of its molding. In this room, there is no time. I might have entered it recently, but there's a perennial quality to the air that suggests an undated oldness, not weighed down though by duration. I'm here with my mother. It doesn't seem as though we intend to leave. We show no sign of activity; a silent, unmarked complicity connects us. It is possible, moreover, that the presence of my mother, whom I do not see, is purely fictional. It is also possible that I am my mother. There is my mother. Do I have one sex? I have one I. No more. ONE calm, vibrant, attentive I. (*Third Body* 100)

Briefly, the protagonist makes emphasis on one single self which has no sex, no boundary, and no limit. By reaching this one single self, the narrator is freed from the chains of culturally formed genders and their strained relationships. Thus, without creating an opponent, “an other”, it is possible to produce rich texts according to *écriture féminine*. While reaching at this point, it is crucial to embrace the other as one part of the self rather than seeing it as a threat like the patriarchy does. Thus, one can reach a bisexual mind in which self and other complete each other. This completion is not the same meaning of the fulfillment of women as patriarchal discourse demonstrates. There is no lack to accomplish with the women and women writings. It should be underlined also that

Hélène Cixous interweaves a loose narrative line with anecdotal presentations, autobiography, lyricism, myth, dream, fantasy, philosophical insights, and intertextual citations of and conversations with other authors and thinkers. Cixous evokes the relationship of the female narrator and her lover, a relationship of alternating presences and absences, separations and rejoinings -a passionate and ever-buoyant relationship in which the partners partake of life and death, memory and oblivion, desire and discovery, the transgressive and the visionary, and the chimerical and the "real." This relationship assumes protean forms within a complex web of writing. Creating a "third body" out of the entwined bodies of the narrator and her lover. This is a sensuous body endowed with flesh and blood reality, and it is also the body of the text: for Cixous. Writing is grounded in the physical body, and the physical body becomes writing. (Vijayaraghavan 50)

The enrichment of women writing is possible through different ways we have mentioned throughout our study. In the collected novellas *The Found and the Lost* of Ursula K. Le Guin, we examine these possibilities in the next chapter.

To sum up, briefly, *The Third Body* includes many intertextual citations which distort the patriarchal discourse's expectations about the standards of the novel. Every intertextual reference contributes to the formation of a self-journey in the mind of the protagonist. This situation drives readers to a difficult reading process because of multiple stories and characters. In fact, these stories do not have a precise conclusion, something incoherent is formed in the minds' of the readers but écriture feminine writers' initial aim is to be contradictory against the conventional, thus the texts should be open-ended as in *The Third Body*. Since a woman's body is infinite and boundless, this characteristic can be reflected through the open-ended narrations. To conclude we have examined the methods that écriture feminine adopts to deconstructing patriarchal discourse. These methods can be categorized into two groups: the first group includes the postmodern techniques such as metafiction and intertextuality while the second group consists of

écriture féminine's fundamental characteristics like bisexuality and otherness. It will be informative to take into consideration these two categories in reading *The Third Body* with the perspective of écriture féminine. As seen, we have observed the implementation of certain practices that have been elaborated with the perspective of écriture féminine in *The Third Body*, we will apply them to Ursula K. Le Guin's novellas from *The Found and The Lost* in the following chapter.



CHAPTER 4

SEARCH FOR A THIRD BODY THROUGH NOVELLAS FROM *THE FOUND* *AND THE LOST*

4.1. Fantasy World of Ursula K. Le Guin

4.1.1. Frequent Settings

In the previous chapter, we have spoken of the possibilities for the enrichment of women's writings through different practices implemented by H el ene Cixous. We have discussed that these different practices vary such as adding anecdotal presentations, autobiography, lyricism, myth, dream, fantasy, philosophical insights, and intertextual citations of and conversations with other authors and thinkers. In this part of the chapter, we examine the settings frequently used by Ursula K. Le Guin in her works of art, we welcome the frequent settings of Le Guin since we can observe a world of fantasy, utopia, dreams-like conditions and Le Guin's biographical inspiration as a feminist critic. It is impossible to make an accurate generalization about this subject matter yet there are some essential places or imaginary worlds that are often-used by the author. Settings are mostly important to increase the impact of the storyline in which the characters unfold their self and experiences. We can handle Le Guin's frequent settings in two headings such as fantasy world and unknown territories, and the hidden corners of the American West.

To begin with, Ursula K. Le Guin uses fantasy to express herself and it is a way of escape from the modern world and its new outcomes like technology, industrialism, materialism, environmental pollution, and the crowd of people. Fantasy functions like a literary genre that is different from the ordinary. While escaping from the ordinary, she takes shelter in the imaginary world of fantasy. Mostly founded on fictional territories, her stories take their inspiration from the author's vivid depictions of place which can be seen as a living organism. Fantasy is an alternative world that provides an escape from the existing conditions of the real world. Tzvetan Todorov's account of the fantastic complicates the picture. Todorov defines the fantastic in terms of readers' hesitation over

the unfamiliar nature of certain events involving supernatural occurrences. The fantastic draws the self and the other together showing the boundaries between them to be fragile and easily traversed. In that way, fantasy transforms into an unordinary thing, event, or a source of otherness that involves readers to the storyline through different emotional states. Because the ordinary seems to be easy to access and there is nothing to hesitate to get lost in the story. Besides, since fantastic keeps the self and the other together, it resembles to what écriture feminine claims: the harmonious unity of opponents contrary to patriarchal structure's separation of two opponent forces under the name of binary oppositions. This act of unification takes the readers off the unique temple of écriture feminine, which is called the third body, a neutral zone in which two opposing forces are united responsively including men- women duality. Le Guin offers to her readers a different state of mind by giving them unknown territories and stranger folks to explore, to accommodate the readers with the unknown that can be seen as the other from the perspective of écriture feminine. For instance, "... *The Left Hand of Darkness*, describing the planet Gethen, inhabited by aliens genetically related to humans, but who are neuter except when they come into heat, which they can experience as both male and female at different times" (Bratman 105). This fantastic world is so similar to those of écriture feminine writers have created. There are no sexes or genders, it claims bisexuality and the third neutral zone to freely exist in a world of chaos. Without boundaries of genders or sexes, these people situating in a world of fantasy seem uncanny to the rational reader who panics in the face of such unrealistic creatures but it becomes a kind of refuge from the harsh realities of the daily world by the time. Also, the readers coherently locate the contrarious characters in their mind as écriture feminine claims. As usual, these bisexual characters should have been found odd by the readers shaped by patriarchal culture but a great deal of the follower of Le Guin's series of books prove that modern readers find a way to accommodate the extraordinary in an ordinary way. And because it is not ordinary, it is catchy. "Its most extreme appearance is in the bizarre civilizations to be found on other planes of existence in her late collection *Changing Planes*. In all of these, the emphasis is on how the conditions would affect human behavior." (Bratman 105-106). Within the frequent landscape of the fantasy world, Le Guin intends to go deep into the

human soul and mind. To sum up, first of the frequent settings used by the author is observed in this part of the chapter by harmonizing the perspective of *écriture féminine*.

Secondly, another frequent setting that is preferred by Le Guin, the hidden corners of the American West will be examined to underline the very idea of homeland. Since the homeland harbors the notion of return which resembles us the idea of the return of repressed in any form if we look through the perspective of *écriture féminine*. The act of returning to the homeland is as if someone takes refuge in the unconscious in which *écriture féminine* texts have to reconcile again the opposing sides such as the self and the other. Throughout the novellas, we frequently behold the return to the homeland of women characters to regularize their life through the reconciliation of the past and the present of their lives. This is the same attitude with following a middle course between two opposite poles. Moreover, the American West becomes home for the author since she was born in California and lived in Oregon after her marriage. On the one hand, the American West may be attractive to choose as a setting for the novels or stories for any author because of its hugeness, emptiness, wilderness, calmness, and native origin inhabitants' mythical tales. As we have emphasized before, Le Guin is interested in exploring human societies through the eyes of characters. The vivid depictions of wilderness give both the sense of divinity and fear at the same time. In each detail of these depictions, we can witness a reconciliation created by the author to reach a safe place dwelling inside the opponents. Like the horrifying ocean in *Moby Dick*, the American West symbolizes and reinforces this sense of divinity and fear. Contrasting images find a way to compromise during the storylines. For instance, characters reach a perfect point, the neutral zone in the middle of the tension between divinity and fear, we feel how she feels and reaches tranquility with these vivid depictions:

But this is water of the sea, brewed, imbued, souped up with life and life's dying and decaying. It is tainted, it is profoundly impure. It is the mother-fluid, the amniotic minestrone. From the unmotherly sea of winter, the cold drowner, the wrecker, from her lips flies the mad foam. And on the lips, on the tongue, it does not taste pure and salt, but bursts like coarse

champagne with an insipid, earthy flavor, leaving a tiny grain of sand or two between your teeth.... intersection of its duration and mine, the joining of bubbles—my eyes, the sea, the windy air. How we fly along the beach, all air and a skin bitter wet and whitish in the twilight, not to be held or caught, and if touched, gone! (*The Found and the Lost* 93-94)

This scene resembles the flying manuscript that *écriture féminine* promotes. During natural chaos created by the tension of divinity and fear of nature, the character, Virginia of the novella “Hernes” from *The Found and the Lost*, dissolves by coalescing the landscape of the wild west. Moreover, in her book titled *The Word for World is Forest*, Le Guin handles the frontier myth from a different point of view. In fact, the main idea is similar to the historical American past: some people struggle against the wild west to tame nature and to transform this soil into a place life-hospitable. We can easily observe historical war scenes that have occurred throughout the past through the war between Athsheans and the Earthmen. “Finally, *The Word for World is Forest* is rooted in the deep, practical belief that mental and physical being are synchronized to environmental conditions. Well-being means a nourishing interchange between what you are and where you are” (Dean 76). This is important to be conscious of what you are and where you are because the tension between the self and the setting may turn into insolvably inside conflict of the identity. Humankind needs to be settled down both materially and spiritually. Where you are, affects what you are, in other words, the earthly accommodation called setting ensures the human experience that constitutes the better part of an identity. Interaction between the self and the setting should be identical, if it is not identical, the returns and the change of setting become inevitable to procure a reconciliation. When we look at the returns of women characters to the homeland that we will discuss extensively in the upcoming parts of this chapter, we can notice this struggle of being settled and reconciled. Briefly, American West functions as a setting in Le Guin’s oeuvres to embrace the glorious values of mother nature such as wilderness, tranquility, sense of emptiness together with the sense of fear and terror. We have discussed how the novellas handle these two opponent senses through settings and characters by profiting from the perspective of *écriture féminine*.

On the other hand, American West can be handled as a nostalgic homeland through which one can find the self and this mother nature transforms into a shelter as a setting in many stories of Le Guin. Return to the West to found a life away from the modern societies' burdens is another important point to go over. This act of returning home means a kind of attaining the roots of one's identity. The characters take refuge to West Coast in Le Guin's story titled "Hernes" from *The Found and the Lost* to feel safe by getting rid of the uneasiness of other stranger places. It may be because the West Coast has a meaning of space in which the spirit and the self become free and independent.

In the West Coast novels of 1971 to 1985, Le Guin imaginatively performed a very cathartic act: she destroyed American society, the society based on dominance-submission, where the military-industrial complex prospered by being perpetually involved in wars and by making the planet uninhabitable. These apocalypses were evidently the drastic acts she needed to perform in order to break free of assumptions about female identity, language, social structure, and narrative form which her culture had taught her, "the internalized ideology of a male supremacist society. (Cummins 159)

For instance, Virginia's return to the West Coast may be an escape from the oppression to the chance of isolation which is considered to be away from the patriarchal societies' structures in Le Guin's novella of "Hernes" from *The Found and the Lost*. Since Virginia has a problematic marriage in which her husband tries to reshape her by denying her right to education, her husband may be seen as a delegate and a practitioner of mainstream ideology dominated by artificial patriarchal culture. With the escape of Virginia from this encircled and trapped institution so-called marriage, she manages to create a personal space for herself that cannot be interrupted by the institutions of patriarchy. Thus, the setting of the west coast has meaningful importance and function like a homecoming for Virginia. The homecoming of Virginia refers also to the attempt for creating a new isolated space, a neutral zone in which she can take shelter and can reunite her fragmented self, being welded in the oppression of patriarchy. As seen,

American West both becomes home for various novels underlining wilderness and frontier myth and welcomes the very idea of being an isolated shelter for those who desire to be away from the male-dominated world.

4.1.2. Women Depictions

It is crucial to observe women characters in a feminist study in which the readers should analyze how the women characters are situated, how they are depicted and how gender roles are arranged in a work of art. In this part of this dissertation, we overview the women characters in Ursula K. Le Guin's oeuvres in general. Depicted herself as a feminist, Ursula K. Le Guin is mostly impressed by the works of other feminist writers such as Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir, Betty Friedan, and so on. Initially, she depicts herself as a feminist, not a feminist writer, but in time she thinks of her position.

Along about 1967, I began to feel a certain unease, a need to step on a little farther, perhaps, on my own. I began to want to define and understand the meaning of sexuality and the meaning of gender, in my life and in our society ... It was the same need, I think, that had led Beauvoir to write *The Second Sex*, and Friedan to write *The Feminine Mystique*, and that was, at the same time, leading Kate Millett and others to write their books, and to create the new feminism. But I was not a theoretician, a political thinker or activist, or a sociologist. I was and am a fiction writer. The way I did my thinking was to write a novel. That novel, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, is the record of my consciousness, the process of my thinking.

(Magarey 132)

From these expressions, we can state that Le Guin prefers men as main characters in the fiction, they are the center of the storyline until the seventies; while women characters are depicted as secondary figures like the mainstream culture and the traditional reader expects. As she has a critic stand because of the construction of genders and sexuality, she knows to the necessity or even obligation of going forward. The

traditional gender roles dominate over her works of fiction even though she feels deep down an uneasiness. This situation is also considered to be a worrisome outcome of the male-dominated nature of authorship. In the end, the author, herself can be denominated as a victim of patriarchal structure since writing is a way of self-expression for writers. In any case, she has to repress her creativity that can be also presumed as oppression while she may have preferred to multiply it regardless of her aims which can be self-expression, or the enrichment of women writing, or the resistance to the patriarchy's categorization of genders. Briefly, her works of art may have been divergent and purified from the male-dominated structures. She should have been aware of this situation that she needs to revise both her old oeuvres and her future probable works with her new state of mind. It is important to underline that the reader can observe a huge evolution in the female characters of Le Guin's works. "Le Guin's female characters evolve from relatively weak women, whose influence on their world is negligible and suspect, into powerful women who are the agents, subjects and representatives of radical change in Earthsea" (Rawls 129-130). These powerful female character depictions combine with the fantasy world of Le Guin and hereby the dragons, witches, beautiful femme fatales are born. Powerful dragons are depicted as fearless women in Le Guin's latest books, this situation is also an unexpected thing in a conventional storyline. Depictions of female characters change in the process of time after the images of femme fatales again. Throughout her last book of *Earthsea*, we can easily observe a reconciliation between binary oppositions such as light and dark, life and death. This situation is reflected in the gender roles in the stories. All the balances are reconstructed and the stories transform into a journey in which polarities are compromised. This may be a result of the author's positive attitude and tendency to *écriture féminine* because the reconciliation process between two opponents stretching to the harmonious unification under the roof of the third body, is a unique temple for *écriture féminine*. Without boundaries of the tension among binary oppositions, Le Guin's writings are enriched through the plurality and coherence of being settled down and reconciliation. The third body can be depicted as a personal space in which compossibility is conceivable, it is a neutral zone that is nourished from the peace and tranquility by courtesy of the alliance between the self and the other dwelling inside one's identity. Moreover, she decides to revise her pronoun

usages in her previous books and explains this situation like this: “I’ve never seen so clearly how I was controlled, when I wrote the book, by the hidden force, the real dominance, of that false-generic he” (Rashley 26). Insidiously, a male-dominated structure governs the behavior patterns of individuals from every walk of life; its effects are also felt with the authorship which is dominated mostly by male authorities and male authors. This horrible situation is so simply normalized by the mainstream that asserting the contrary is sufficient to be labeled as an outsider who denies the norms and the customs of the culture. To sum up, when we observe female characters in Le Guin’s oeuvres, we seize an impressive change in the image of womanhood, women’s body, and place of a woman throughout the storylines. After analyzing the portrayal of women in Le Guin’s novellas, the next subtitle focuses on the influence of setting, how Le Guin uses the setting as an influential factor that helps the creation of third space/body.

4.2. Finding a Third Body as a Shelter

4.2.1. Settings in Novellas

In a work of art, characters, settings, and plot constitute the main schema that the writer aims to create. While observing Ursula K. Le Guin’s world in her works, we can easily seize that she gets inspiration from various sources. Through examining in detail the two novellas titled “Buffalo Gals, Won’t You Come Out Tonight” and “Hernes” from *The Found and the Lost*, we analyze two main settings that are wielded frequently by the author as we have already elaborated in the previous part of this chapter titled “Frequent Settings”. We can handle Le Guin’s frequent settings in two headings such as fantasy world and unknown territories, and the hidden corners of the American West.

Firstly, Le Guin’s world is widely known as a fantasy world and unknown territories in which characters and events are far away from real life and real occurrences. Mostly it consists of imaginary characters and fanciful dreams of those characters which form the storyline of her works.

She has always defended the fantastic, by which she means not formulaic fantasy or “McMagic” but the imagination as a subversive force. “Imagination, working at full strength, can shake us out of our fatal, adoring self-absorption,” she has written, “and make us look up and see—with terror or with relief—that the world does not in fact belong to us at all” (Phillips 2-3).

Fantasy evokes sentiments of unfamiliarity in the minds of readers because this world is not an ordinary environment where people are accustomed to. This sense of unfamiliarity creates an emptiness which is triggered by the urge of fear. People tend to marginalize what seems improper to the artificial structures of mainstream culture. The flow of a work of art is also designated to meet these kinds of expectations. As mentioned before, *écriture féminine* offers a reconciliation among the tensions to satisfy the readers; without underlining the stress of conflict dwelling inside one’s identity, it aims at reaching perfect unity in a coherent way. In Le Guin’s works, the tension between the sense of terror and relief is reflected successfully employing fictional settings of the fantasy world. We will look through this world with the novella titled “Buffalo Gals, Won’t You Come Out Tonight” in this part of the chapter. Initially, the novella “Buffalo Gals, Won’t You Come Out Tonight” is founded on an imaginary world in which animal characters are human beings. They live, talk, work like humans and they are depicted as a guide for a little girl who has had an airplane crash. In the story, a coyote welcomes the young girl, when she wakes up after the crash.

“YOU FELL OUT OF THE sky,” the coyote said.

Still curled up tight, lying on her side, her back pressed against the overhanging rock, the child watched the coyote with one eye. Over the other eye she kept her hand cupped, its back on the dirt.

“There was a burned place in the sky, up there alongside the rimrock, and then you fell out of it,” the coyote repeated, patiently, as if the news was getting a bit stale. “Are you hurt?” (*The Found and the Lost* 39)

The opening scene of the novella shocks the readers because they witness another world order in which a coyote is talking to the little girl. It creates an ambiguity in minds which needs a spot of time to sympathize with the story. Then the plot is founded on the relationship between the young girl and the other animals such as a coyote, young owl, chipmunk, rattler, jay, and so on. While reading the story, the setting starts to seem very similar to the world of people but it is like a fable in which animals talk to give moral lessons to the readers. Herein, rather than giving moral lessons, animals continue their ordinary lives with this newcomer, stranger. But they help this little girl to find her path. In such stories, animals' functions are much deeper than it seems. Symbolically, they are all representing different meanings in the way of finding the true self for the little girl because this young lady matures and discovers her new self as if she is the hero of a coming age novel. In a way, Le Guin depicts a fantastic world in this short story because unrealistic animal characters are at the forefront in a fictional world. When we think of fantasy, we cannot categorize it only with elements of Medievalism such as kings, knights, castles and so on. This idea is emphasized by the author herself in an interview. With fantasy genre, the readers seize supernatural powers, magic, and mysticism that removes readers from the sharp realities of the modern world. In the symbolic meaning, the coyote dies for the sake of the little girl's search for her community and own identity. Because coyote leads her to a farm in which the little girl's folk lives which symbolizes the modern world where the spirit of these fictional animals are not suitable to survive. Coyote eats the foods of these people and because of that she dies:

That wasn't so smart, eating that," Coyote said, and then held herself and began to shiver, to scream, to choke—her eyes rolled up, her long arms and legs flew out jerking and dancing, foam spurted out between her clenched teeth.... But when the cold came through the fur as the presence of death, the child let the slight, stiff corpse lie down on the dirt. (*The Found and the Lost* 69)

The coyote is depicted as a woman in the story and the little girl calls her mom. In one sense, the little girl has lost her mother figure. Series of similar unrealistic events

are exemplified from the novella but the idea that we must emphasize is the abnormality of this world of fiction. Actually, the readers may sympathize with the storyline since animals behave as if they are human beings but the sense of ambiguity delays it. If we reply to the question of how we can accommodate the tension between the sense of ambiguity and sympathy, we should handle again the novella from the perspective of *écriture féminine*. This tension and its reconciliation are the desired notions for *écriture féminine* since the readers should attain a sense of relief after the sense of terror as if they solve a puzzle. We get the sense of terror in the face of an absurd setting, illogical animal characters of the imaginary world. And we should ensure a sense of relief. When we think of the little girl and her experiences from the perspective of *écriture féminine*, we can deduce that this is a journey starting with the plane crash and stretching towards improving the sense of self for our unnamed character, immature young lady. We witness that this journey turns into a means of self-realization that we will elaborate on in the subsequent part of the chapter titled “Reaching the Neutral Zone: The Third Body”. This setting plays an important role in the way of creating ambiguity and terror and triggering the tension which is resolved with a sense of relief at the end of the story. In that way, the setting functions as a medium to reach the perfect unity of the third body, the neutral zone by provoking the tension. To sum up, the setting in the novella of “Buffalo Gals, Won’t You Come Out Tonight” reflects a fictional territory, a fantasy world that can be considered as a way out for those who are willing to escape from the burdens of the modern world to the neutral zone called as third body and the animal characters’ depictions show us an example from the fantasy world of Ursula K. Le Guin.

Secondly, Le Guin usually uses her hometown situated on the West Coast of the United States as a setting. She makes emphasis on the wild west and Indian territories’ folk tales and the spirit of her ancestry that lived in California and Oregon. As mentioned before in the part of “Frequent Settings” of this study, the west coast functions as a shelter for the theme of return to the homeland which can be interpreted as a different expression of return of repressed when we apply the perspective of *écriture féminine*. Returning to the homeland signifies the return of the unconscious in which the self encounters with the repressed other. In the novella of “Hernes” from *The Found and the Lost*, the main

characters, four generations of Hernes women return back to the West Coast, Oregon even if they have experienced various destinies before their arrival to their homeland. Le Guin celebrates the very landscape of the Oregon Coast in which four generations of Hernes women feel safe and at home. For instance, grandmother Jane, the second generation, who is a divorced woman finds peace by embracing her homeland after she gives up her troubled marriage with her husband named Lafe who deceives her over and over.

I never will marry, I'll live up in the shack on the Kelly place, the property Mother bought, the Property on Breton Head. I'll live alone and be old and scream at night like gulls, like owls. My Property. My beach. My hills. My sky. My love, my love! Whatever is to come I love. I love it here, I love my name, I love to love. (*The Found and the Lost* 77)

There is a sense of belonging to her hometown in Jane's expressions, all the characters like Jane dissolve in the arms of this land which becomes a neutral zone in which their past and present make peace. Experienced the oppression, Hernes women harbor to their paradise where there are no boundaries of a male-dominated patriarchal structure. When they leave this land, they dread and feel uneasiness as if a foreign hand spoils her personal space, even when they leave on vacation, this sense of disruption devastates Lily, the third generation: "...the Pullman porter was so kind, making up my berth, making jokes. He called me Missy. You all right in there, now, Missy? But when I woke in the night the mountains were turning outside the window in the moonlight across gulfs of darkness. I want to be home. Six days now" (*The Found and the Lost* 130). With the darkness, Lily counts the days as though she comes together with her true love, her shelter, her peaceful place, her neutral zone. The emphasis of the homeland through the eyes of characters is so powerful that we may deduce it as the author's attempt to demonstrate how huge the psychological damage that Lily has experienced since she is raped by a man in the forest and prefers to breed a fatherless baby named Virginia, the fourth generation.

He turned off the switch no headlamps all dark and the engine silent and I said, Dicky, we really should be going home, and oh there's oh there's the bluejay, the jay yelling, but so far away now from the sunlight. That was so dark. Please go away. Oh please oh please oh please go away leave me be. Please stop. The blood began as just a little spot but now it will run out of the pores of my fingers and legs and arms and make spots on all my clothes, on the sheets. (*The Found and the Lost* 85)

Briefly, the darkness and uneasiness in the spirit of Lily are rooted in this dark and bloody night, and even in this scene she wants to return home, but her demand is ignored by a brutal medium of a male dominated society. Besides, the landscape is praised with the long walks of Hernes women, the mother nature is crowned with the famous myth of Persephone whose coming to the Earth is glorified with spring and summer in which the hope and nature itself are reborn. The depictions of this rural coast provide to dream or visualize the scene easily because of the vivid portrait of landscape, sea, waves, foam of the waves, sand, forest that the narrator offers to the readers gently. In the New Yorker magazine, Julie Philips writes about this subject matter:

The high desert of eastern Oregon is one of Le Guin's places. She often goes there in the summer with her husband.... She sees herself as a Western writer, though her work has had a wide range of settings, from the Oregon coast to an anarchist utopia and a California that exists in the future but resembles the past. Keeping an ambivalent distance from the centers of literary power, she makes room in her work for other voices. (Philips 2)

All in all, Hernes women find their shelter in the land situated on West Coast, Oregon. Until they come back to their shelter, they feel the agony of uneasiness because they cannot find their selfhood and the spirit of belonging in another place. This setting demonstrates to us how women characters are situated, how they are depicted in the novella of "Hernes" from *The Found and the Lost*. Throughout this part of our study, we have tried to observe the two different settings that are at the forefront in our two novellas.

The first one belonged to the imaginary world of “Buffalo Gals, Won’t You Come Out Tonight” and the second one was the vivid landscapes of the author’s hometown.

4.2.2. Reaching the Neutral Zone: The Third Body

In the part of “Settings in Novellas” of our study, we have spoken of reaching the neutral zone via the reconciliation of tensions between opponent forces and we have elaborated on how settings have helped us to arrive at our unique temple called the third body. Besides we have mentioned how hidden corners of the American West as a setting function as a refuge for women characters who flee from the oppression of patriarchy. In this part we focus mostly on the character’s journeys to the neutral zone and how women characters are situated in the stories by urging upon the novellas titled “Buffalo Gals, Won’t You Come Out Tonight” and “Hernes” from *The Found and the Lost*.

Firstly, the imaginary setting of “Buffalo Gals, Won’t You Come Out Tonight” has already ensured to trigger the tension between the sense of terror and of relief. We will try to pacify this tension by providing the third body for our unnamed narrator, a little girl who is depicted as a guest in a world that is completely strange to herself at first. In this fictional world, Ursula K. Le Guin tries to depict a utopia in which animal characters are so alike to human beings and their characteristics. It is important to see here different women animals who have their own home in which only offsprings and their mothers live, we cannot see male characters frequently. The little girl is guided by a female coyote when she gets lost. It is crucial because female the coyote is depicted as a leading figure in the little girl’s search for her identity and nest. While reading this novella, we easily understand that Le Guin’s world consists of different kinds of animals like a coyote, squirrel, nonett, horse. There are two different worlds, the first one belongs to the lineage of the little girl and the other one relates to the animals who are described as similar to humankind. Between these two worlds, the little girl is searching for a way to reach her own world with the help of female animals. It is remarkable because the little girl’s friends are all female in the way of maturing. In the imaginary world of animals, there is not malignancy and cruelty but in the material world, there is no place like this, thus the little girl lives a kind of anomy. She does not feel like an animal character but she also cannot

be a part of the cruel human breed. In the end, she reaches complete harmony with a third neutral zone using her two symbolic eyes. The little girl loses one of her eyes after the plane crash and doctor crow makes a new one for her. This new eye brings her a new point of view thus she can observe the world more sharply and she becomes aware of the situation in which all human beings live. She has one eye from the world of her kind, and another eye from the world of Le Guin's utopia where the little girl finds her new self. At the end of the story, she does not want to return back home because she thinks that humankind is so cruel to live with but the grandmother character warns her sternly about her unwillingness to return home. She insists on the little girl's obligation to return her own kind and her place. The little girl desires to keep her new eye and this request is accepted by her grandmother. The grandmother figure is important because she is depicted as a decision-maker for this folk. And the little girl had to obey the decision made by the grandmother. The journey of little girl is the point that we should focus on since she gains her own identity and personal space that is provided through her experiences gained through her two transcendental eyes. Briefly, the tension of an anomy the little girl has experienced between two different worlds is resolved by locating herself in another world, the neutral area, the third body together with the experiences of the journey and her transcendental eyes. With the dissolving of the young lady through her eyes which can be seen as the symbol of her process in life and her experiences, the tension between the terror and the relief that the readers have felt is reconciled directly since the absurd fictional world which can be regarded as a source of terror because of its unfamiliarity turns into a familiar world where the little girl gains experience and maturity. Readers forget the abnormality of this fictional world when they manage to sympathize with the animals who formerly mentor the little, immature and inexperienced girl. Her journey finishes with the fulfillment of the little girl's pure self thus the readers do not have to interrogate the tension that has been experienced in the face of an odd world of Le Guin which prompts the sense of terror at first glance. In this way, the entire troubled conflicts and tensions are united and dissolved in a harmonious way under the roof of the neutral zone, the third body.

In addition to the reconciliation of our young unnamed narrator and her refuge to the unique temple of the neutral third body, we must pay attention to the grandmother character who demonstrates to us how women are situated in Le Guin's fictional world. It is crucial to underline the profession of the grandmother who is occupied with weaving and quilting. It is a symbol that represents womanhood and the cult of womanhood. The grandmother's weaving and quilting job remind us of old American gatherings where women have socialized with a sense of community. In those times, women come together to express themselves by quilting and this act of quilting reinforces the commitment among women, herein all women feel free from their dictated place, home, for a couple of hours. The most important function of these quilting bees' communities' is the chance of isolation for women participants from the patriarchal authority. We can witness the same function with the grandmother of "Buffalo Gals, Won't You Come Out Tonight". The grandmother figure forms her community devoted themselves both to the daily routines of life and the occurrences taking place on the outside. They acknowledge what happens inside and outside their community and organize an idyllic place remote from the patriarchal interference. Besides, the grandmother's character reminds us also of an archetypal woman Penelope who waits for the return of her lovely husband, Odysseus. While waiting she resists the enforcements of her folk. She avoids marrying with someone that's why she weaves in the mornings and unravels what she weaves at nights to decelerate the completion of her wedding sheet. Penelope is a weaver, that is her job. If she unravels the fabric, this is a revolt against the suitors. As long as she delays her marriage with a stranger who occupies her home, she will not belong to this man. Thus, she unravels at night what she weaves in the mornings. This monotony provides her a refuge. With the act of weaving, she becomes distant from the patriarchal structure and its burdens. She creates herself a third neutral zone, a third body in which she takes shelter in her solitude and womanhood. Like Penelope, the grandmother in "Buffalo Gals, Won't You Come Out Tonight" founds her dominance over the utopia world of Le Guin, dwelling in her own nest, she is far from the folk but she is a mentor for other characters and she helps the little girl to find her way and her ultimate destination, her neutral zone. With the help of this wise woman, the little girl apprehends where she belongs to. She can be a part of neither humankind nor the utopic world of animals created by the author.

She is more powerful and free with her two eyes that she gains through her journey to the utopia and she gains wisdom and maturity through her experiences in this land of fiction. At the very beginning of the story, the little, inexperienced girl turns into a mature, self-reliant woman who is aware of herself and her neutral zone which is far from the patriarchal structures. She is conscious of two different worlds under the favor of her valuable experiences yet she prefers to live in her individual world, in her third body just because in the way of gaining maturity, this unexpected travel to Le Guin's utopia ensures her an unprecedented path stretching to her independence from the patriarchy. In this path, the grandmother figure is positioned as a wise mentor who paves the way for new opportunities for our unnamed narrator. To sum up, in this part we have elaborated on the novella of "Buffalo Gals, Won't You Come Out Tonight" in terms of the character's journeys to the neutral zone and how women characters are situated in the text.

Secondly, we focus on the novella titled "Hernes" by examining how women characters are situated in the text and how they manage to create their third body. The story consists of different biographical voices of four generations of Hernes women: Fanny, Jane, Lily and Virginia. We can notice that the women that take place in this novella are ahead of their time for reasons such as their nonconventional relationships with their fellows and husbands. This novella is written by utilizing the stream of consciousness technique in which all the stories are interwoven. The readers cannot follow any linear plotline and it is impossible to distinguish the characters at first sight. Indeed, the grandmother Fanny buys land from the West Coast in which all other women characters feel safe and at home. All of them recultivate a sense of belonging with this land here at Fanny's daughter, grandmother Jane builds a house for her in this land as her mother wishes after many years. This house turns into a refuge for the next generations of the family's women, Lily and Virginia. Especially for the youngest of Hernes women named Virginia, this house becomes a destination of return, an escape from the burden of today, and of her troubled marriage. Being attached to a man is impossible for these women because their expectations and hopes are not ensured even though they demand pretty simple things that a husband must procure such as respect, commitment, faithfulness, trustiness, right to education, and so on. Predominantly, Hernes women

depart from their homeland for their husbands to support them in some way or another. For instance, Jane leaves the city because of her husband's job but her husband has an affair with another woman. Frustrated Jane breaks up with her husband despite her love by venturing countless rumors as a widow which is not seen as a moral thing those days. In the story, while Jane and her husband talk about his disloyalty, the demeanors of the husband are remarkable:

He kept his arm around her shoulders and his body inclined towards hers as they walked, but his arm was rigid, weighing heavy.

"All I have is self-respect," she said. "You were part of it. The best part of it. You were the glory of it. That's gone. I had to let it go. But it's all I will let go."

"What is it you want, for God's sake, Jane? What do you want me to do?"

"...Sallie Edgers," she said in a whisper, with intense shame.

"What," he said flatly, and stopped. He drew back from her. After a long pause he said rather breathlessly, "I can't live with this..." (*The Found and the Lost* 90-91)

The sole thing that Jane wishes for is self-respect and trustiness that can be assumed as vital necessities of a marriage. Jane prefers a life far away from the oppression and the insult of her husband. It is a revolutionary decision for a woman of her time. She faces the hardships of this life as a widow raising her daughter, Lily, on her own. The land on the West Coast becomes a refuge for her, Jane builds a house for herself and all Hernes women. With this refuge, she feels safe all her life, she completes herself, she does not need anyone who supports her behaviors. When her daughter Lily becomes a young girl, she is raped and gives birth to a fatherless girl named Virginia.

Lily silly Lily little one, don't go down in the well in the dark, come up, look up. You're not the first girl Lily nor the last to Oh! but that she let him in! The second time! She let him in, let him in the house, our house! That she knew no better! What did I not give her, not teach her? How could

I raise such a fool? Alone, in the woods, in the car, what could she do, his thick hands, his big thick body.... (*The Found and the Lost* 96)

While everyone stresses the obligation of Lily's marriage with that boy, Jane avoids this kind of oppression that is possible to prey upon her daughter for life: "He ought to marry her, Mary says. Face up to those damn Hambletons, she said. Face up to them? Make her marry him, make her lie down every night for him to rape her with his thick body with the blessing of the law? No." (*The Found and the Lost* 96). The norms of society oppress a young girl who is called a child of divorce. It was a common belief that this type of a girl can easily be raped because she is already far from the morality and ethical values of society. Despite the rumors, Lily gives birth and continues her life contrary to the expectations of society. Being a woman out of the ordinary is not an easy thing to deal with. Her mother Jane understands Lily's decision to give birth after many years, initially, she sets against the birth of a fatherless baby. "That gives me pleasure. She gives me pleasure. She looks like Lafe, the way she carries her head. She glances sidelong, her eyes flash. I thought she was wrong to let Lily have her way, wrong to have the child, wrong to come here to live, but I guess we think when a woman's free she's wrong" (*The Found and the Lost* 124). During all the times, the traditions and norms prompt women to be oppressed, to be silent, and humble and to submit to their destiny. These are the rules of patriarchy that dominates society. Yet, as a single mom, both Jane and Lily prefer to be strong and be completed all alone. A woman does not need a man to be complete because nothing is missing with womanhood which must be completed by a male authority. There should be another dimension, another option in which the two biological sexes become free and boundless; their shelter in the West Coast turns into Hernes' women's other option that can be seen as a third body which is distant from the entire norms of oppression dictated by the artificial structures of patriarchy. These women are untouchable and inviolable in their safe place. Jane describes this safe place as follows:

I dream sometimes, but there isn't a man in this county I'd look at twice. I don't know what I want; I don't know that I want anything. Only to know

some soul better. I don't know anyone. I never have. Mary, of course, she's a good friend, we share our whole lives, yet something's left out. It's like there's a country in me where I can't go. Life might have gone there, but he turned away. And other people have that country in them, but I don't know how to find it. (*The Found and the Lost* 135)

Écriture feminine depicts this distant country as a place inside but far away from all the structured, conventional order, this dwelling somewhere deep inside of someone, and once a person reaches this land of paradise, everything is dissolved including sexes, rules, authority figures, everything that compels human mind and spirit, especially for women since all have the burdens of patriarchal society. The youngest one of these four generations of Hernes women, Virginia, is a little bit different from her mother, Lily, and her grandmothers Jane and Fanny. She makes self-sacrifice to support her husband by leaving her education incomplete. Her husband becomes an assistant professor at Harvard University and he is unwilling when his wife, Virginia, wants to continue her education in the West. Virginia leaves her husband to continue her education and also gives birth to a girl named Jaye. There is a feeling in her heart to return back to the west which is the home for all family's women. She feels as if she will be fulfilled harmoniously when she returns to this safe place. Deep down, she believes she will be free in the West Coast. When she decides to continue her education in the West, her husband humiliates her with these words:

At last he spoke measuredly, thoughtfully, patiently. "I'm trying to understand what it is you want. What you've always said you wanted was time for writing. You have it now. You don't have to work, we're past that stage. ... But I think I do see why you think you ought to finish. A kind of moral point, a kind of closure. But isn't it really the suburban housewife syndrome? Women who don't have anything to do, going back to school for 'self-improvement' or, God help us, 'self-expression.'" (*The Found and the Lost* 113-114)

Virginia's voice for her right to education is interpreted by her husband as a syndrome of a desperate housewife. This type of oppression is a little bit different from the oppression of her mother and her grandmother have experienced. Time flies, the conditions change but only the oppression against women continue in different ways. The novella starts with this phrase: "I SAID WE HAD THE same name." (*The Found and the Lost* 72). Even though the very circumstances vary from one generation to the other, the oppression remains constant. All the feminist writers' resistance is for the sake of eluding oppression of any kind. In this resistance, women should experience a sense of isolation, both psychological and also physically, listen to themselves and their bodies. A lot of women search for a way to escape from this kind of servitude by finding new ways to achieve herself along with her solitude. Like all women of the Hernes family, Virginia takes refuge in their land-dwelling at the west coast. It is a way of escape from the burdens of norms and artificial moral values that are dictated by the patriarchy. The women of Hernes haven can be associated with the depictions of Virginia Woolf's work titled *A Room for One's Own* which suggests space for women within the domination of patriarchy. The character Virginia is depicted as a writer and poet in the novella of "Hernes" and she always desires to continue writing. When she wants to continue writing, she is in search of a significant space just like Virginia Woolf acclaims in her work. Her name may also come from Virginia Woolf and this story refers to this famous work which can be seen as a cornerstone of feminist criticism. Virginia always underlines that we all have same name from the very beginning of the novella. In fact, all the women have the same destiny even if their name vary. She refers to the myth of Persephone which tells the traumatic story of a woman. Actually, we are all alike with Persephone who resists her husband and becomes free.

A STRONG WOMAN WHOSE STRENGTH is her solitude, a weak woman pierced by visionary raptures, those are my mothers. For a father no man, only semen. Sown, not fathered. Who is the child of the rapist and the raped?

They never tell if Persephone had a child. The King of Hell, the Judge of the Dead, the Lord of Money raped her and then kept her as his wife. Did

she never conceive? Maybe the King of Hell is impotent. ...but I say that Persephone bore a child, nine months after she was raped in the fields of Enna. She was gathering flowers there, spring flowers, when the black chariot came up out of the ground and the dark lord seized her. (*The Found and the Lost* 103-104)

Like Persephone, Lily, the mother of Virginia is raped at a young age. This is the common destiny, the fall of the women of the Earth. Traditionally, women are obliged to marry with her rapist to restore their honor. Lily refuses the conventional structures and gives birth to a fatherless daughter, Virginia. Here in, Hernes women, deconstruct what the phallogocentric structure values by behaving in a nonconventional way. Lily never minds her status as a widow, she demands equality between the two sexes. She interrogates how the society devaluates women as a widow while men are considered valuable with the same experience: "So I'm to be a divorcée. Stupid fancy Frenchy word. Why's it only for the women? Isn't he a divorcé?" (*The Found and the Lost* 99).

Away from the borders of sexes, women can be depicted as genderless human beings. In that way the traditional gender and family roles that the society organized years before are melded. The characters can be each other's grandmother, mother, father, or daughter. In addition, the most important thing is to see every person as an individual and to accept a separate living organism. In traditional cultures, parents adopt their children as the goods of their marriage by forgetting or neglecting children's personal identities. Victoria and other Hernes women are aware of the fact that their children never belong to them.

So she was born out of me on that last long wave of unutterable pain, and runs free now. She returns, she comes home, home at four in the afternoon, milk and a cookie, can we play by the creek, never yet gone longer than overnight or farther than a school excursion, but she runs away from me.... She went where she wanted to go. But I can't run after her. I must not pursue her, making her my prey. (*The Found and the Lost* 128)

Hernes women manage to be straight ahead individuals who are aware of the personal space and identity of oneself even though the point in question is their own flesh. Briefly, with various examples, we have demonstrated how women characters are located, how they react to the phallogocentric traditions throughout the novellas. The examples can be multiplied, the names can change but as Fanny stresses “we had the same name” (*The Found and the Lost* 72), women’s destinies and experiences repeat themselves if women cannot have the courage to go forward. All women have the same name for reasons of the oppression that they suffer, women should go beyond the boundaries of patriarchy at all costs. Like Virginia, Lily, Jane, Fanny, and plenty of unnamed heroines, women should not endure the oppression, violence, pain, heartbreaks that the patriarchal structures deem women suitable for. Instead, women should find their peaceful place, a neutral zone as *écriture féminine* suggests because women can solely be blossomed and multiplied if they become free from the chains of the patriarchal structure. We have tried to find how women characters reach this unique temple of *écriture féminine*, these novellas may be a source of inspiration for many of us. In sum, in this part we have focused mostly on the character’s journeys to the neutral zone and how women characters are situated in the stories by urging upon the novellas titled “Buffalo Gals, Won’t You Come Out Tonight” and “Hernes” from *The Found and the Lost*.

CONCLUSION

The degraded image of women has been imposed in the artificially constructed culture for centuries. Even in primitive societies, womanhood was identified with certain stereotyped functions such as being a humble wife, a devoted mother, an exhausted babysitter, a cook whose meals are displeased and many more adjectives can depict the conditions of womanhood. Nonetheless, these workloads that seem quite exhausting are pumped to the mainstream culture under the name of the cult of womanhood. Strangely, that these gender roles are divided by an invisible hand and they are accepted as social norms and ethics. When we think of the reasons why this grim reality exists, we cannot help thinking about the biological, physical, and spiritual distinctions between the two sexes: female and male. The physical conditions of women are indeed more fragile than men, but this situation should not be a justification for the oppression of women. Throughout history, women have had to defend themselves against this kind of sexist ideologies utilizing feminist waves. Women writers have not been accepted to the academia and literary communities in terms of the politics of exclusion performed by patriarchal structures. With the profound transformation of society thanks to the postmodern and digital era, women start to get their share by requesting their respectability. Besides, the literary community turns into an open market for women writers who have remained passive for many years. Devastating effects of the postfeminist critics to the academia push the limits of the patriarchal order in authorship. During this study, we have tried to emphasize these devastating effects and their outcomes.

One of these radical outcomes is *écriture féminine* which is coined by French feminists such as Julia Kristeva, Hélène Cixous, and Luce Irigaray. Their theory is considered sensational since they break taboos by claiming a new form of women writing that give woman body and woman sexuality, a special prominence. These are the taboos that the masculine nature of society has challenged for centuries. Like sexual experience, women's writing should be enthusiastic, intrinsically ungovernable according to *écriture féminine*. In our study, we have handled in detail how a woman's writing should be with the perspective of *écriture féminine*. Besides, this study also aims to uncover a third body,

an autonomous, genderless space in Ursula K. Le Guin's collected novellas *The Found and the Lost* through analyzing crucial issues such as the theoretical backgrounds, the roots of women's writing, and the ways of deconstructing patriarchal discourse.

Initially, we have looked through the theoretical backgrounds of *écriture féminine* such as Derrida's deconstruction and Lacan's language acquisition in the way of examining Hélène Cixous's theory fiction *The Third Body*. Derrida's deconstructed meanings and reversed binary opposition assumptions have helped to those who expect to deconstruct the patriarchal discourse among feminist theoreticians like Cixous. Thanks to the tension between the reversed binary oppositions, women's writing targets to reach a reconciliation in which women can create a lucrative force by experiencing the neutrality of the third body, *écriture féminine's* unique refuge. However, Lacan transforms the imagery of the mother into an "other" by underlining a negative perception towards motherhood and womanhood after the child's entrance into the Symbolic phase.

Thus, the interruption of patriarchal order throughout the Symbolic phase is denied by *écriture féminine* which prefers to stay in the pre-symbolic period while creating a unique female discourse. *Écriture féminine* glorifies the female body and sexuality under the name of "*jouissance*." It tries to create a neutral ground to adopt two different sexes at the same time not privileging neither of them. That is why both women and men manage to meet in an equal zone where there is no interruption by the Law of the Father. Briefly, in the first part of this study, our major aim was to demonstrate how *écriture féminine* is shaped with the help of the other contemporary theories which dominate over the Western way of thinking. By taking Derrida's deconstructed binary oppositions as an infrastructure, *écriture féminine* deconstructs male-oriented patriarchal discourse while it creates id-liberated female discourses by assigning new and different meanings for the Lacanian '(m)other'.

Next, in the second part of this study, the historical roots of feminism and female writing have been at the forefront since they are important in the way of understanding the actual perspective of *écriture féminine*. We witness many varied feminist waves and their multiple representations in literature as women's writing. This part of the

dissertation has demonstrated the formation process of *écriture féminine*; this process proves that women's writing gains its own autonomy and power. Throughout all periods of women writing- female, feminist, feminine- we observe an empowerment of the female identity although their representatives are from varying generations and backgrounds. Yet the sole common motivation can be considered as the rejection of patriarchal oppression towards women. As Jane Austen seizes in *Persuasion* "But I hate to hear you talking so like a fine gentleman, and as if women were all fine ladies instead of rational creatures. We none of us expect to be in smooth water all our days" (83). Women reject to be an object of desire which is created and imposed by the patriarchy. They do not prefer to be the angel in the house. And throughout many years, they have struggled and continue to struggle to gain an equal sphere for equal labor rights. Shortly, as long as this motivation becomes the driving force of women, women's studies and literature manage to stand still for long years. With the coming of the postmodern period, women writings take different shapes like *écriture féminine*, but the same motivation specific to women's identity still survives today. As we mentioned throughout the second section of this study, *écriture féminine* aims at deconstructing well-established patriarchal discourses by focusing mostly on the language which is considered male-dominated structure.

In the third part of this dissertation, we have examined Hélène Cixous's theory fiction *The Third Body* in terms of looking through the postmodern elements together with the *écriture féminine*'s objectives. It is quite difficult to follow a linear process of reading for the readers of this kind of work of art since multiple stories and characters are juxtaposed and intermingled in it. The very idea is to gain consciousness about the existence of empowerment of female identity and to take pleasure in the reading process, not to reach a conclusion with a happy ending. It is similar to being on the road without having an exact destination. Hence being on the road gives pleasure, we do not need to reach a promised land. The supreme possession is the journey itself. *Écriture féminine* tries to create a self-journey for woman by providing the exploration of both her own body and those of the other. In the end, it urges her to unite in a neutral ground, in a bisexual mind, in the third body. Thus the third body functions as a tool in which the two "others" comprehend the qualities unique to each gender. Women see masculinity; men

see femininity without labeling each other as the 'other.' Employing the third body, the concept of other transforms into mother, a maternal body of oneself. Therefore, there is nothing queer about the other since it includes the mother in itself. Briefly, *The Third Body* manages to create id-liberated female discourses thanks to the contributions of the postmodern genre's techniques such as metafiction and intertextuality. In conclusion, our major aim is to make a close reading of écriture feminine and Hélène Cixous's *The Third Body* throughout this piece of work. To get rid of the patriarchal oppression Cixous prefers to create an alternative discourse that can compete with those of the patriarchy.

Subsequently, we have aimed to elaborate Ursula K. Le Guin's novellas from *The Found and the Lost* with the perspective of écriture feminine. Creating a neutral zone is a must for women to get rid of the boundaries of patriarchy since numerous women have been smashed under the burden of oppression. By emphasizing self-journey towards the third body, women's writings try to create a ground where they can breathe. Ursula K. Le Guin also remarks these breathless times by admitting how she has been controlled through an invisible hand for many years, thus she prefers to revise some of her works after many years. The change of her viewpoint brings in new masterpieces to feminist literature. She manages to harmonize her feminist stand with the genre of fantasy. Throughout our study, we have profited from her fictional settings thanks to this harmony. Fantastic settings trigger the tension between binary oppositions and we need reconciliation to reach the third body where the other and the self make peace since this peaceful place is far away from the stereotyped ideology of patriarchal order. We have searched for this limitless space through characters and their experiences in the novellas of Le Guin. When the characters acquire their self-realization, a perfect unity of opponent forces that tighten up the readers from the very beginning of the plot is dissolved in harmoniously. In that way, women characters have found themselves a refuge that keeps them out of patriarchal institutions as écriture feminine suggests. Briefly, we have witnessed the journeys of characters towards a genderless, neutral space in which they find themselves. Their self-journey is observed by elaborating on Ursula K. Le Guin's collected novellas *The Found and the Lost* through analyzing crucial issues such as the

theoretical background, the roots of women writing, and the ways of deconstructing patriarchal discourse throughout this study.

In conclusion, we can seize that the degraded image of womanhood takes this kind of a journey if we consider the path that women's identity intersects for many years. It seems that there are plenty of paths that women should pursue in the way of being existent in a world where it is quite hard to break taboos especially about the cult of womanhood that ensures men the comfort zone while women suffer from the lack of their personal space. Shortly, through this study, we have tried to uncover the third body, an autonomous, genderless space in Ursula K. Le Guin's collected novellas *The Found and the Lost* by analyzing crucial issues such as the theoretical backgrounds, the roots of women writing, and the ways of deconstructing patriarchal discourse. We hope that this piece of work influences and inspires women and other academic research in this field.

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