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DISGUST AS A CULTURAL CATEGORY

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List of Abbreviations

Ed.	Edition
Vol.	Volume
Trans.	Translation
p.	page
pp.	pages



Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the emotional stages of disgust as an emotion through cultural norms, and as a cultural category. A key concern of this thesis is the issue of “learned disgust” and how it impacts cultural rules. Cultural and social teaching methods are evaluated by examining different cultures and their perception methods.

Disgust is an offensive emotion experienced by most people at some point during an ordinary day. The purpose of this study is to determine the emotional states of physical/bodily and psychological disgust, and how they are framed, structured, and guided by rationality and/or social rules. During the dissertation, the intersections of emotions such as fear, desire, hate, and disgust are detected. The answer to the question “What are the phases, levels, and the patterns of the socio-economic conditions of class segregation that affect disgust levels as an emotion?” has been discussed.

Through the study of disgust as a cultural category; sociological, philosophical, psychological, literary, artistic, and etymological approaches have been evaluated. Furthermore, the opinions of the philosophers, anthropologists, psychiatrists, and scientists such as Freud, Lacan, Kristeva, Foucault, Marcuse, Spivak, Douglas and Bataille on disgust have been discussed. As a result, the personal and social aspects of disgust are presented with examples in a categorical and detailed manner. (214 words)

Keywords: Disgust, Emotions, Culture, Categories, the “Other”.

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı, bir duygu olarak iğrenmenin duygusal aşamalarını kültürel normlar ve kategoriler aracılığıyla incelemektir. Bu tezin temel kaygısı, “öğrenilmiş-öğretilen tiksinti” ve bunun kültürel kuralları nasıl etkilediği meselesidir. Çalışmada farklı kültürel kategoriler içerisinde farklı algılama yöntemleri incelenerek sosyal öğrenme yöntemleri değerlendirilmiştir.

İğrenme, çoğu insanın sıradan bir gününde yaşadığı rahatsız edici ve olumsuz bir duygudur. Bu tez, fiziksel/bedensel ve psikolojik tiksindenmenin duygusal durumlarını ve bunların nasıl çerçevelendiğini, yapılandırıldığını ve rasyonalite ve/veya sosyal kurallar tarafından nasıl yönlendirildiğini belirlemek ve bu kategorileri analiz etmek amacı taşımaktadır. Tez kaleme alınırken duyguları tanımlamaya yönelik olarak korku, arzu, nefret, iğrenme gibi duyguların kesiştiği ve karıştığı noktalar dikkate alınmıştır. “Bir duygu olarak iğrenme düzeylerini etkileyen sınıfsal ayrışmanın sosyo-ekonomik koşullarının evreleri, düzeyleri ve kalıpları nelerdir?” sorusuna yanıt aranmıştır.

Kültürel kategorilerin incelenmesi yoluyla iğrenme ile ilgili sosyolojik, felsefi, psikolojik, edebi, sanatsal ve etimolojik yaklaşımlar değerlendirilmiştir. Ayrıca Freud, Lacan, Kristeva, Foucault, Marcuse, Spivak, Douglas ve Bataille gibi filozofların, antropologların, psikiyatristlerin ve bilim insanlarının iğrenme konusundaki görüşleri tartışılmıştır. Sonuç olarak iğrenmenin kişisel ve toplumsal yönleri kategorik ve ayrıntılı bir şekilde örneklerle sunulmuştur. (171 kelime)

Anahtar kelimeler: İğrenme, Duygular, Kültür, Kategoriler, Öteki

INTRODUCTION

“The body is the temple, housing the self or the soul within. This temple must be carefully guarded against all forms of pollution, or desecration, and we propose that disgust is best understood as the guardian of the temple of the body.”¹

Disgust is one of the pervasive feelings directed at any object or subject multiple times a day by an average person. It is a matter of debate, whether as an emotion disgust is innate or learned and adapted as a cultural category through which we think, evaluate and make judgments. Thus, this thesis is an investigation of emotional states that form disgust but also are formed as a result of disgust which itself is shaped and structured through some cultural categories.

I found that various studies I reviewed approach the issue of disgust from different perspectives. Throughout my study, I focused my analysis, independent of the person who was disgusted. I examined and evaluated different perspectives towards disgust while referring to different categories and approaches for I believe an investigation of emotions in general and disgust, in particular, requires an interdisciplinary approach.

Etymologically the word disgust means bad taste. In the excerpt below, the etymological origin of the word is mentioned:

1590s, “repugnance excited by something offensive or loathsome”, from French *desgoust* “strong dislike, repugnance, literally “distaste” (16c., Modern French *dégoût*), from *desgouster* “have a distaste for”, from *des-* “opposite of” (see *dis-*) + *gouster* “taste”, from Latin *gustare* “to taste” (from Proto-Indo-European root **geus-* “to taste; to choose”).²

Even though the word disgust is built on the meaning of bad taste, consideration about taste varies around the world. Which foods are generally considered disgusting by people? The perception of taste varies from one culture to the other

¹ J. Haidt, P. Rozin, C. McCauley & S. Imada; “Body, Psyche and Culture: The Relationship Between Disgust and Morality”, *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 1997, 9 (1), pp. 107-131.

² <https://www.etymonline.com/word/disgust>, accessed March 03, 2021.

in accordance with gustatory throughout the entire world. The following sentence is taken from an article and expresses that nauseous food has contradicting meanings in different cultures:

“One-hundred and seventy-eight insect species from 96 genera, 53 families, and 11 orders are commonly eaten in China.”³

In many cultures eating insects can be disgusting whereas, obviously in China, it is regarded as something completely normal. Something which is preferred in one culture could be found disgusting in another. So, disgust can be explained as the reading of the labels and/or the significance of the contents which are stuck to the objects or subjects by a certain society.

Additionally, there is also the dimension of time for disgusted and disgusting. Preferences in a community may differ with the transformations of living conditions over time. If someone offers you camel’s, or horse’s milk would you be willing to drink it right now, in Turkey? However, it is known that Turks were drinking kumiss -fermented mare’s milk- before emigrating from Central Asia. Kazakhs already have an expression today about kumiss; “Who does not want to drink kumiss?”⁴ It could be found disgusting to taste kumiss here, today. Yet, tasting it in Central Asia on a journey can be considered a nice experience. All in all, a clear analysis of “disgusting” through time, place, and environment is a quite complicated issue. Despite these determinations, thinkers agree on the idea that disgust is an emotion. Nevertheless, there is no consensus on the definition and the nature of emotions in the literature.

I would like to point out that I will examine different theories of emotion later. However, for now, it is important to emphasize the differences between feelings and emotions to avoid possible conceptual confusion. Ayşe Uslu argues that

³ Xiaoming Chen, Ying Feng and Zhiyong Chen, “Common edible insects and their utilization in China”, *Entomological Research*, 39, 2009, pp. 299-303.

⁴ <http://www.gastrorganik.com/gastrokultur/turklerin-gercek-milli-ickisi-kimiz-322.html>, accessed April 17, 2021.

feelings are subjective, personal, and biographical responses of the body. She explains that feelings emerge by the body's action and interaction states with affection and/or perception. She claims that the past experiences and the language ability store up feelings in the memory of an individual through the dynamic processes of the body. Uslu also states that feelings are structured in parallel with social and cultural differences for the environment, mind, and body constantly influence and transform each other. These situations lead to the production of all kinds of significations. This set of meanings emerges as a product of stimulus, behavior, and evaluation in a circular cycle. Feelings have an adhesive function in this cycle.⁵ Emotion, on the other hand, is defined as the expression of feelings, and as such, it involves a cognitive process. Thus, when we name a certain physiological feeling as disgust, we refer to our past experiences, memory, beliefs, and judgments.

There are two main contradicting approaches about the origin of the emotion of disgust in the literature. On the one hand, Darwin and the scientists who have defended his idea claim that disgust is innate, universal, and a primary emotion. On the other hand, there are a number of anthropologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, and social psychologists who conducted studies in this field believe that disgust is a learned emotion and as such it is socially constructed. As will be discussed in detail later, scientists who consider disgust as an innate emotion have a physiological perspective on the subject. Those who approach disgust as a learned emotion have dealt with this emotion mostly from cultural, sociological, and psychological perspectives.

Darwin's study on disgust has attracted the attention of many researchers interested in this emotion. I noticed his note on his celebrated book, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man, and Animals* about disgust. It is the most

⁵ Ayşe Uslu, "Duygu, His ve Duygulam Ayrımına Etkinleşimci Çözüm", *Feminist Tahayyül*, 1(2): pp.144-184.

famous quote which is used in literature. According to his account, while Darwin was sitting in his tent - in Tierra del Fuego which is located at the very tip of South America- a native came in and touched the meat he was already eating. Darwin accounts that at first, the native expressed his disgust towards the softness of the meat by grimacing. He says that the native did not understand how Darwin could eat this dish. Later, Darwin writes that “even though the native’s hands did not seem dirty, the touch caused disgust for the food I was eating.”

Thus, this anecdote raises the following questions: If a beautiful white woman were touching his food would Darwin still feel the same way? What triggers disgust here? Is it an act of touch or is it the social and communal status of the person who touched it? Or in a more general manner, we can ask the following: Do cultural categories determine the stages and forms of disgust?

Despite their different bodily and cultural styles of expressions, it can be universally accepted that there are primary emotions such as enjoyment, anger, and sadness. It is also generally agreed today that there are universal disgust stimuli like feces, body wastes, corpses, and blood, etc. However, in this study, following Paul Rozin and his colleagues, I will argue that disgust is not inherited, rather it is structured, learned as emotion, and imposed onto the individual through social rules and regulations. Furthermore, by interacting with behavioral patterns such as suppression, avoidance and/or anxiety, the signification of disgust had become an effective expression for almost anything negative in the modern age. Though we still use it for food or odour the use of the word has extended to other objects and even people alongside the moral values of a particular society.

Paul Rozin who is mentioned above is one of the most important researchers working on disgust. He has prominent studies on disgust for more than five decades with his colleagues and they have demonstrated that the feeling of disgust

emerges in humans between the ages of 4 and 8 years.⁶ Their studies have proven that a new-born is known to react to tastes and smells, but does not show any implications of disgust which might show us that disgust is probably not innate. They claim that disgust -for anything- grows in direct proportion to age for humans by storing the experiences in memory, especially in matters of pollution and contamination. Rozin says that “It is obvious that very young children do not have an inclination towards danger, disgust, and inappropriate situations.”⁷ This age group -up to the age of 4- exhibits behavioral patterns suggesting that food with bad taste should not be preferred, even rejected. What is more, Rozin et al. argue that through the outgrow process of a child, the principles of the parent guide the child’s perception of disgust.⁸

Rozin and his colleagues begin their research by investigating core disgust. Rozin defines core disgust as an oral-centered disgust. This term’s outline can be summarized as omnivores’ alert position for the threats of contamination that may come from the oral route during the evolutionary adaptation process. Food, body wastes, and animals that remind people rotten food like flies, larvae, rats are accepted as elicitors of core disgust by Rozin and his colleagues. In their further studies, Rozin and his co-workers include sex, hygiene, death, and bodily injuries to disgust types. They elaborate their idea with the extensive viewpoint of cultural evolution and called this type of disgust animal-reminder disgust.⁹

⁶ Paul Rozin, April Fallon, and Mary Lynn Augustoni-Ziskind, “The Child’s Conception of Food: The Development of Contamination Sensitivity to “Disgusting” Substances”, University of Pennsylvania, *Developmental Psychology*, 1985, Vol. 21, No. 6, pp.1075-1079.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ April E. Fallon, Paul Rozin, Patricia Pliner, “The Child’s Conception of Food: The Development of Food Rejections with Special Reference to Disgust and Contamination Sensitivity”, Published by Wiley, *Child Development*, Vol. 55, No. 2, April 1984, pp. 566-575. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1129968>, accessed February 02, 2021.

⁹ Jonathan Haidt, Clark McCauley, and Paul Rozin, “Individual Differences in Sensitivity to Disgust: A Scale Sampling Seven Domains of Disgust Elicitors”, *Personal Individual Differences*, (1994), Vol. 16, No 5, pp. 701-713.

Rozin's studies on disgust began with the idea that this feeling was innate, universal, and primary as an emotion. However, in his later studies, he claims that disgust increases in parallel with age, it is learned, and it depends on cultural factors. After all, Rozin argues that disgust is not only caused by the basic stimulus through food rejection but can also be caused by the circular contamination of the "evil". Rozin states that in addition to core disgust and animalistic disgust; magical and spiritual rituals can be assigned as disgust types. They claim that these ideological-based practices aim to dominate the individual's behaviors through the aspects of the social norms.

Rozin indicates that the studies on the contagious side of disgust -which he underlines this notion as sympathetic magic- were firstly initiated by the anthropologist E.B. Tylor (1871-1974), and then developed by Sir James Frazer (1890-1959), and by Marcel Mauss (1902-1972) who concluded that disgust is a transitional and also a permeable emotion. The sympathetic magic approach can be explained as follows:

For instance, when someone/something touches a disgusting object, she/he or it will become disgusting, too. The contagious side of disgust is not just about catching a disease. People do not want to touch disgusting things and accept them as untouchable. This shows that the act of touching adds positive or negative meanings to the object or subject by spiritual permeability. Thus, wearing our grandmother's ring or smelling the scarf of a loved one may have positive, spiritual, and magical emotional contagions.

Andras Angyal -who has a substantial article about disgust which was written in the 1940s- argues that many people cannot eat or drink anything from a bowl that has previously been in contact with feces or urine; even if it has been sterilized.¹⁰ In addition, contact or touching a murderer or a pervert would be disturbing for

¹⁰ Andras Angyal, "Disgust and Related Aversions", <https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fh0058254>, accessed February 05, 2021.

an ordinary person. In one of Rozin's and his colleagues' studies, it was proven that the clothes of a murderer or Adolph Hitler's sweater were not wanted to be worn by the subjects, although they were cleaned.¹¹ Thus, contact with "evil" creates a feeling of pollution and contamination in individuals. This observation is important for it also demonstrates that the emotion of disgust, the feeling it creates, and the mutual interaction between people give rise to the distinction between the "I and the Other".

When we examine the mutual contact styles between specific communities, we come across marginalization and stigmatization through disgust. Hinduism's belief system based on reincarnation can be evaluated in this respect. The caste system which dates back 2000 years, remains traditionally valid even though it was legally abolished in 1975, in India. Communities belonging to this belief system have rules that block the possibilities of transition between the castes. According to the Dharma belief system in Hinduism, pariahs -or Dalits- also deserve the caste which they are born into just as the other castes. People living in India and belonging to the Dalit community, which is at the lowest level of the caste system are called untouchables. This community is alleged to be contaminated, regarded as unclean and impure. Such that they are not considered within the caste system by other castes in India.¹² Jobs with the worst conditions that no one wants to do are done by Dalits. Dalits are not allowed to live in the cities and towns where Hindus live. They are forbidden to enter the temples. When they come across someone from a higher caste, especially if this person is a priest, they have to throw themselves to the ground and they have to hide their faces. This is a mandatory movement that must be done so that even the shadow of a Dalit should not reach and touch the higher caste's member.

¹¹ Haidt, P. Rozin, C. McCauley & S. Imada; "Body, Psyche, and Culture: The Relationship Between Disgust and Morality", *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 1997, 9 (1), pp. 107-131.

¹² <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/asyanin-otekileri-1-kast-sisteminin-en-altindaki-dalitlere-dokunmak-serbest-1795725>, accessed May 02. 2021.

As I mentioned, this group of people is called untouchables. This concrete example about contamination or pollution is not just about the contact. It also includes insulting and prejudices against Dalits who suffer from marginalization.¹³ We can characterize these explanations as being rooted in James George Frazer's "contagion law" or the "law of sympathetic magic" which will be examined in detail later in this study.

Disgust is an aversive and offensive emotion. On the other hand, fear, anger, hate, and unbounded desire are also considered negative emotions. One can feel different kinds of emotions by a stimulus in an interaction. When I started to examine the intersections of disgust and other emotions, I came across the subject of stigmatization and marginalization of the individual in each reading. While investigating the reason for this approach sociologically and psychologically, I had to take into account the scientists who studied the "Other". For this reason, I focused my research on Freud, Lacan, Kristeva who examined emotions, the formation of identity, and the social reflections of them.

In addition, marginalization is not just an individual exposure. Othering applied to groups is also developed by fear, anger, hate, and/or disgust. Those who examine the reflections of aversive emotions on society are mostly the philosophers such as Foucault, Marcuse, Spivak, and Sara Ahmed, as much as I have reviewed the interpretations of these philosophers regarding the concept of disgust and the "Other".

The main objective of my study will be analyzing disgust as a cultural category that forms offensive behaviors, labels and thereby excludes the anomalies and regulates the attitudes of the individuals. Though humans have the basic drives and basic stimulus for disgust, I would like to indicate that disgust is a learned emotion for them who are shaped by the culture in which they grow up.

¹³ <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/pages/article/indias-untouchables-face-violence-discrimination>, accessed February 03, 2021.

In the first chapter, I aim to examine the etymological, scientific, and physiological background of disgust from a descriptive perspective. First of all, I will begin with a closer look at the etymology of the word “disgust”. I will argue that the meanings and the conversions in the expression of disgust as an emotion are created by the culture, tradition, collective memories, and narratives of a specific society.¹⁴ Then, I will give an overview of the senses through which we feel disgusted towards an object or even a person. For the reason that a detailed examination of sensations and their relation to emotion extends the scope of this study, I will briefly touch upon the subject as it is important to show that the effect of senses on emotions in general and on disgust, in particular, will give an idea about how a seemingly pure physiological process –perception through senses– also has some cultural formations. Finally, in the first part, I will touch upon the types of disgust.

In the second chapter, I will examine the relationships and common points between the leading emotions that guide human life and disgust as an experienced emotion. The points where disgust meets fear, hate, desire will be the subject of this section. In doing so I will not give a detailed account of the nature of emotions in general, as this would extend the scope of this study, rather examine a particular emotion in its relation to disgust. Moreover, I will investigate the political, ethical, and moral dimensions of emotions in general and disgust in particular through the prominent works of Freud, Lacan, Kristeva, and Bataille in this chapter. Hereby, we will see that emotions need to be investigated in their interrelatedness and that social and physiological structures that form disgust and other emotions are related. Moreover, I will give true-life examples about the expressions of different emotions like hate, anger, fear, and desire which cannot be separated from the expressions of disgust.

¹⁴ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992.

In conclusion, we will see how different social, and cultural structures and factors such as groups, communities, status, class, income level, and political view shape the (re)construction of disgust.



CHAPTER ONE

I. EMOTIONS, SENSES, AND DISGUST

According to evolutionary theory, to survive, living beings develop characteristics that are most fitting to the environment in which they live. Living beings can acquire new features to maximize their living conditions in their habitats, by adapting to the environment.

Emotion is the name given to the change of physical and mental state of humans against a stimulus. The word “e-motion” refers to the reaction that occurs from the body to the outside. When people encounter a stimulus, their reaction is based on the potential information they have stored in their memory. This memory has the infrastructure that the body and the mind learn and construct from the interaction with their environment. These behaviors can be displayed voluntarily, or spontaneously. Pre-arranged emotions are generally accepted as the behavioral patterns which help humans in surviving.

Certain emotions have the same expressions in all cultures. When people are happy, sad, or angry they react more or less the same way around the world. Scientists who use evolutionary perspective in their searches have identified basic emotion types and disgust is mostly considered among these basic emotion categories. Even though disgust causes us to act impulsively for the avoidance of being poisoned, or infected, it also serves to develop negative, aversive, and stereotypical behaviors when it is evaluated in terms of the culture. As will be explained later, many forms of offensive behaviors which are related to disgust require consideration while identifying the cultural construction.

Paul Ekman, who inherited Darwin’s approach, started his studies about the effects of emotions on facial expressions and body movements in 1954. He determined six basic emotions and one of these emotions is disgust. Ekman argues that the feeling of disgust is formed as a consequence of the accumulation and absorption of things on organic

materials or people such as dirt, germs, poison, etc. Consequently, he describes this emotion as offensive, negative, and unpleasant.¹⁵

On the other hand, Rozin who expresses himself as the father of disgust in psychology¹⁶, together with his colleagues, has defined quite a few types of disgust. These disgust types are named core disgust. They can be counted as food disgust, disgust of body secretions, sexuality, corpses, body deformations, and blood. In addition, the lack of hygiene and animal reminder side of humans are evaluated as core, universal and evolutionary for disgust. Finally, certain moral offenses which they call sociomoral violations are accepted as one of the basic disgust types. They account that the facial movements of a person experiencing disgust are dynamic. They argue that people who are exposed to unpleasant, and impure stimuli react quickly.¹⁷

Ekman and Friesen's works on describing the physical conditions of disgust have an important place in the literature. The basic topic of their studies is physical disgust which is related to oral rejection. They determine that a disgusted person wrinkles his face and nose, lifts his upper lip, and gapes -opens his mouth-. Additionally, squeezing the eyes and nose is defined by them as a reaction to prevent contaminants from entering the orifices. In addition to this behavior, when a person is disgusted his or her mouth opens slightly, making it ready for vomiting, and/or saliva excretion.¹⁸

The studies conducted on animals show that disgust occurs due to avoidance from poisoning and survival.¹⁹ However, when it comes to humans, the body undergoes some mental changes in addition to physical changes. The anxiety, fear, and avoidance that

¹⁵ <https://www.paulekman.com/universal-emotions/what-is-disgust/>, accessed February 03, 2021.

¹⁶ J. Gorman quoted in Paul Rozin, "A Perk of Our Evolution: Pleasure in Pain of Chilies", New York Times, September 20, 2010. <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/21/science/21peppers.html#:~:text=They%20can%20help%20lower%20blood,concept%20supported%20by%20rec>, accessed 16.06.2021.

¹⁷ P. Rozin, J. Haidt, CR. McCauley, *Disgust*, in *Handbook of Emotions (3rd edition)*, Edited by M. Lewis, JM Haviland and LF Barrett, New York: Guilford Press, 2008.

¹⁸ Paul Ekman, Wallace V. Friesen, *Unmasking the Face: A Guide to Recognizing Emotions from Facial Expressions*, California, Los Altos: Malor Books, 2003.

¹⁹ James A. Pfister, "Behavioural Strategies for Coping with Poisonous Plants, Bulletin 1999 no. 70, pp.45, <https://pubag.nal.usda.gov/catalog/17193>.

occur in humans have much more complex physical, anthropological, sociological, and cultural codes than the survival reaction in animals.

To summarize, in this chapter, I will review the etymology of synonymous words for disgust and I will give examples about how they are used today in my native language, and different languages. I will examine different approaches to basic emotion theories. I will investigate the studies conducted about disgust. My review of the senses, and disgust, albeit brief, would shed light on the emergence of basic behavioral patterns of disgust. After all, I will give information about the types of disgust under the second heading. This section is the product of summarizing and presenting the works I have read, and summarized, to get basic information about the expression of disgust as a feeling. This review will support, and form the basis of the descriptive approximation for disgust especially from a physical perspective, and will be useful for the argumentative, and physiological approach that I will study in the second chapter of this thesis.

1.1 The Etymology of Disgust

My main purpose here is to reveal that the alteration in the use of words, throughout history, is related to the changes in human lifestyle. The adjustment and variation of a word in a specific language could symbolize the path of the conversions during social structuring. The meaning of disgust, which is regarded as universal by many thinkers, does not have the same overlapping meanings in different languages. Although disgust is used as loathing, or nauseate in Turkish, English has various words which have different aspects of this emotion. There are numerous words in English, from mild disgust to extreme disgust. Disgust can be represented by dislike, aversion, distaste, repugnance, revulsion, abhorrence, hideousness, loathing, contempt, hate, abomination, execration, antipathy, etc.

In *the Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words*, Freud argues that the meaning of a word is usually identified by the opposite meaning of that word, for the meaning contains the opposite meaning of the same word. He gives us examples from different languages to

prove this argument.²⁰ Here I will follow Freud's lead and examine the word disgust in English, German, and in my native language, Turkish.

The word disgust, which first appeared in English, in the early 17th-century, was used in contexts related to the sense of taste at that time. Its origin is based on old French (1500-1600). The French word *desgouster*, comes from the root of *goust* which means taste.²¹ In *Anatomy of Disgust*, William Ian Miller determines that its widespread use in the Middle Ages was for bad smells and loathsome images. Miller states that in German, the expression *widerwille* is used with the word *ekel* to define the sense of disgust, which contains the meaning of antipathy.²²

In old and pure Turkish *yigren* can be detected as a word for the use of disgust. *Yigren* was first mentioned in *Mukaddimetü'l-Edeb*²³, which is a dictionary, consisting of the explanations of short Arabic sentences. This dictionary was written in the 13th-century by Zemahşerî.²⁴

Kaşgarlı Mahmud, who determined the linguistic features of dialects of Turkish, gathered vocabulary in the dictionary named *Divan-u Lügat-it Turk*. In this glossary, the lexical item for disgust is detected as *yarsınçığ* which represents the words dirty, filthy and unclean.²⁵

During the Ottoman State period, the word *ikrah* which is derived from Arabic was used for expressing disgust. *İkrah* represents the meaning of rejecting or not consenting. It was also used in case of intolerance. Its root *kerh* means forcing a person to do a job without her/his consent. *İkrah* also means forcing to convert the religion of people, to confiscate property without the consent of the proprietor, to force women into prostitution, and to

²⁰ Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Volume XI (1910), London: The Hogarth Place and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1957, p. 155.

²¹ <https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/disgustXI>, accessed January 21, 2021.

²² William Ian Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust*, London: Harvard University Press, 1997, p. 16.

²³ <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/mukaddimetul-edeb>, accessed January 29, 2021.

²⁴ <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/zemahseri>, accessed January 29, 2021.

²⁵ <https://www.turkbitig.com/eskiturkcesozluk-tz.html>, accessed January 29, 2021.

include women as property in heritage. It is important to be clear about these indications encompass negative conditions which can be determined as oppression, authority, and domination.²⁶

In Turkish, when disgust is used as *iğrenme*, *tiksinme* the opposite meaning of the word clean comes to mind immediately. The Turkish word *temiz* for clean derives from the Arabic word *tamyiz*, rooted from *myz*. The meaning of *myz* is mentioned as selected, sublimated, or refined. According to the Turkish Language Association (TDK), the meaning of *temiz* is recorded as pure, and morally spotless. Furthermore, *temiz* signifies the things that are not dirty, not stained, and not contaminated.²⁷ As can be seen, the word clean suffers from a lack of expression without the word dirty. It is important to be clear about the definition of meticulous *-titiz* in Turkish- which has a close usage with clean and tidy until the beginning of this century. *Titiz* was used for fastidious, angry, and irritable people in negative connotations in the 19th century. Today it has gained positive content, including the characteristics as being careful and elaborate. The sterile life created by the modern age has caused the word to gain a positive meaning. There is a significant correlation between the notions of hygiene, and contamination when it comes to disgust.

Broadly speaking I agree that appealing to etymological evidence can be helpful, for, without its antonym, the meaning of disgust would not be understood properly. It is a matter of fact that social and cultural rules and ways of expression of emotions affect, and form the meaning of the words. Emotions are significant in human life. To understand disgust as an emotion, the assertion about emotions and their relationships with disgust will be evaluated in the following section.

²⁶ <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ikrah>, accessed January 28, 2021

²⁷ <https://www.seslisozluk.net/disgust-nedir-ne-demek/>, accessed January 21, 2021.

1.2 Theories of Emotions

Are occurrences and expressions of emotions universal or regional? The answer to this question has been constantly scrutinized by researchers. Darwin and his followers have regarded the display of emotions as innate and address the theory of emotion from an evolutionary perspective.²⁸ On the contrary, anthropologists such as Margaret Mead, Ray Birdwhistell, Gregory Bateson, Edward Hall claim that emotions are formed by cultural structure.²⁹

In *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, Darwin quotes that while he was wandering around the Zoological Gardens, he was scared of the sudden attack of a snake through its thick glass-burrow. He adds that after this harmless move of the snake he instinctively leaped back and retreated. In his writings, he noted that: “Although I was aware that the snake could not reach me, I was still afraid of it.”³⁰ Here, fear as an emotion emerges instantly, however when the stimuli disappear, the specific state disappears, too. Darwin argues that the mind unconsciously evaluates the emotional state, when the stimuli appear, and as a result, human physiology and organs unintentionally react to these cases by shocking, freezing, fainting, vomiting, etc.

Even in the earliest studies, emotions are identified as an area that researchers always pay attention to. Yet, the cultural, and personality-dependent responses of emotions were neglected by analysts until the beginning of the 20th century. The details given in the paragraph below can be considered as a summary of the stages of the change in perspective on theories of emotion:

The great classical philosophers -Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza, Descartes, Hobbes, Hume, Locke- all understood emotions to involve feelings understood as primitives without component parts. An alternative idea was first introduced by William James, who argued that scientific psychology should stop treating feelings as eternal, and sacred psychic entities, such as the old immutable species in natural history. James’ proposal, often labelled as the James-Lange theory because it is rather similar to the one offered around the same time by Lange (1885), stated that emotions are feelings constituted by

²⁸ Charles Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, edited by Francis Darwin, UK: Cambridge University Press, Published first 1890, Digitally printed version 2009.

²⁹ Paul Ekman, *Emotions Revealed*, New York: Times Books, 2003, p. 20.

³⁰ Charles Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, p. 113.

perceptions of changes in physiological conditions relating to the autonomic and motor functions. When we perceive that we are in danger, for example, this perception directly sets off a collection of bodily responses, and our awareness of these responses is what constitutes fear.³¹

Hence, in the modern era, pioneering studies in psychology on theories of emotion have been initiated in three basic separate categories: cognitive, physiological, and neurological. These categories investigate the formation of emotions as a result of intellectual-mental activities, bodily reactions, and brain activities, respectively. Summarizing these theories shortly will guide us in following the perception, development, and expression of emotions, and of course disgust.³²

1.2.1 Physiological Theories of Emotions

William James, who is known as “the father of American psychology” and the framer of functional psychology, wrote his prominent article which was published in *Mind*, “What is an Emotion?” in 1884.³³ James defends that the cognitive experience comes after the physical experience in this article. According to James, emotions are cognitive responses generated by outside information. He claims that in case of fear, the body reacts first, such as shaking, after this reaction, the feeling of fear will be perceived by the person who has just experienced it. Despite, Lange and James were working separately, they produced the same theory at the same time, and for this reason, their theory is named as the James-Lange Theory in the literature. Though this theory seems to have a physiological approach in the first place, it is the first theory to express the combination of psychological, and physiological responses. The James-Lange theory maintains its importance by examining the physical, and psychological aspects of emotions together for the first time in the literature.

³¹ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/emotion/>, accessed January 21, 2021.

³² Ibid.

³³ William James, “What is an Emotion?”, *Mind*, Vol. 9, No. 34 (Apr.1884), pp. 188-205, UK: Oxford University Press on behalf of the Mind Association, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2246769>, accessed January 22, 2021.

The Cannon-Bard theory (1920-1930), which aims to improve the James-Lange theory, pays attention to the formation of emotions through neuroscience. Walter B. Cannon's studies in the 1920s at Harvard University, were very substantial for the development of the theory of emotion. This theory is also known as "fight, or flight theory" and claims that emotions are formed as a result of vital functions in the sympathetic system of the body. The theory defends bodily reactions and emotional reactions occur at the same time.³⁴

1.2.2 Cognitive Theory of Emotions

Schachter-Singer Theory (1962) identifies that the external factors provide the affectivity. This emotion theory maintains that firstly the emotion is felt by an individual. After the stimulus occurs, the person will perceive the emotion. Through this cognitive determination, the emotion will be identified. This theory is known as "the two-factor theory of emotion" which indicates psychological arousal and cognitive label in psychology. According to this theory, emotions emerge from the cognitive definition of observations. After physical stimulation, people label the emotion at the cognitive level.³⁵

Richard Lazarus, who developed the Lazarus theory, drew attention to the importance of the stimulus in the sequence of events that elicit the emotional mood. He defends that after the arousal, the consideration is made by the mind, and the body, and adds that the physiological response and the emotion emerge at the same time. Lazarus claimed that the stimuli which feature the emotional state will always be responsible for the specific mood. Richard Allen Shweder who is a cultural anthropologist and has important works about cross-cultural states of self, emotions and moral reasoning claims his point of view on this issue in the following paragraph:

³⁴ R. McCarty, "The Fight-or-Flight Response: A Cornerstone of Stress Research", Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, USA, *Stress: Concepts, Cognition, Emotion, and Behaviour*, 33.

³⁵ Stanley Schachter and Jerome E. Singer, "Cognitive, Social and Physiological Determinants of Emotional State", *Psychological Review*, Vol. 69, No. 5, September 1962.

Lazarus formulates his psychobiological principle as follows: If a person appraises his, or her relationship to the environment in a particular way [e.g., as irrevocable loss], then a specific emotion [e.g., sadness] which is tied to the appraisal pattern, always follows. A corollary is that if two individuals make the same appraisal, then they will experience the same emotion, regardless of the actual circumstances.³⁶

It is important to emphasize that emotions are not always experienced cognitively. One can experience fear in darkness without knowing why. Emotion occurs as a result of mutual feelings becoming visible. Ayşe Uslu expresses that a consciousness free of emotions paralyzes life. The body and mind go through mutual interaction, revealing the emotion from the memory it has stored.³⁷ For this reason, scientists continue to study emotion theories from different perspectives.

1.2.3 Universal Emotions Approaches

Silvan Tomkins (1911-1991) is one of the notable names in the literature who worked on universal emotions. He pursued the ideas of Darwin and Freud on evolutionary psychology. Tomkins determines nine innate motivational and phenomenological universal emotions (interest, enjoyment, surprise, fear, anger, distress, shame, contempt, and disgust). Tomkins' studies pioneered many scientists' works such as Izard, Ekman, and Friesen. Tomkins' researches effectuated the basic approaches to neurological and biochemical investigations of emotions.³⁸

As well as Tomkins, Paul Ekman's (1934) studies are entirely based on proving the existence of universal emotions. Ekman conducted several experiments about the emotional responses of facial expressions of people from various cultures. In one of his experiments, images, and photographs of surgeries, and accidents were shown to a Japanese, and an American group, and then the emotions of members of these two

³⁶ Richard A. Shweder, "Book Review Essays on Lazarus' Emotion and Adaptation, Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Cognitive Appraisal Theory Without Being Conscious of It", *Psychological Inquiry*, 1993, Vol. 4, No. 4, pp. 322-342.

³⁷ Ayşe Uslu, "Duygu, His ve Duygulan Ayrımına Etkinleşimci Çözüm", *Feminist Tahayyül*, 1(2): pp.144-184.

³⁸ <https://www.tomkins.org/tomkins-topics/theory/tomkins-and-izard-theories-compared/>, accessed February 01, 2021.

different cultural groups were compared. Ekman defends that the survey revealed strong similarities in the expression styles of both groups. However, the Japanese group members smiled more in their reactions, if there was a researcher around them. It has been observed that people who display supervised, and managed behaviors in society give more innate reactions when they are alone.³⁹ He later continued his research about facial expressions, because of the specific response of the Japanese group.

For this purpose, he examined the non-verbal behavioral patterns of the isolated Fore tribe, which inhabits New Guinea. After this experimental practice, Ekman manifested the universal expressions of emotions. He identifies the universal emotions like anger, happiness-enjoyment, disgust, fear, sadness, and surprise.⁴⁰

As a result of Paul Ekman, and Wallace V. Friesen's work, a device called, *The Facial Action Coding System* (FACS) was introduced to scientists in 1978. This device was created by processing photographs and the films of the facial expressions of tens of thousands of people. With this statistical database, FACS was deciding and appointing the accurate emotion of people by looking at the facial expressions in the photographs and the films. It has been claimed that this device could make the right decision about the true meaning of the muscle expressions of the specific emotion on a face at a certain moment by comparing the expression with its database. The device is used when emotions and expressions need to be detected by psychologists, doctors, courts, police officers, and animation companies in America.⁴¹

These scientists who believed in evolutionary psychology claim that universal emotions are independent of geography, culture, and language. They explain that in studies conducted with adults and children around the world, regardless of the culture, the facial

³⁹ Paul Ekman, *Emotions Revealed*, New York: Times Books, 2003, p.21.

⁴⁰ <https://www.paulekman.com/universal-emotions/what-is-disgust/> accessed February 03, 2021.

⁴¹ Paul Ekman, Wallace V. Friesen, *Unmasking the Face: A Guide to Recognizing Emotions from Facial Expressions*, California, Los Altos: Malor Books, 2003.

expressions though with small differences have certain common traits defining the emotion of a human.⁴²

Additionally, studies on blind-born children demonstrate that they display the same facial expressions as the children without any visual impairment. The investigation which is carried out by Galati and his colleagues suggests that evolution and heredity have quite an influence in expressing emotions.

The ability of congenitally blind persons to produce voluntarily facial expressions of a number of emotions was compared with that of normally sighted individuals using both objective facial measurement and observer recognition. Results revealed that there were almost no significant differences between blind and sighted participants with respect to the number and type of facial action units produced.⁴³

Nonetheless, beyond these universal emotions mentioned above, there are behavioral patterns that differ from culture to culture while expressing or perceiving the emotions. The expressions of emotions are learned through social rules and regulations. Field studies conducted by Boucher -who is Ekman's former student- in Malaysia and America in the 1970s, revealed the evidence of universal emotions as well as of culture-based emotions. Boucher argues that people apply display rules in the course of expressing their emotions. Ekman accepts the differentiates and connotes display rules as; "the masks of people while expressing their emotions in the context of the codes, and permissions that culture gives them." ⁴⁴

Eventually, it can be said that emotions are visceral. Yet, certain emotions can be named by anyone with specific body movements, for example crying or laughing. Emotions are engraved in our bodies and brains. Even though we do not want to feel fear, anger, or joy our body and mind make us experience these emotions. However, as we mentioned in the introduction, the expression of emotions, that is, the subject of feeling, may differ in every cultural structure.

⁴² Paul Ekman, *Emotions Revealed*, p.43.

⁴³ D. Galati, KR Scherer & Ricci-Dono, "Voluntary facial expression of emotion: Comparing congenitally blind with normally sighted encoders", PE (1997). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73 (6), pp. 1363-1379.

⁴⁴ Paul Ekman, *Emotions Revealed*, p. 40.

Feelings are recognized with preconceptions by other people living in the same environment. The actions which are expressed after emotional states will consist of total responses of feelings, senses, and consciousness. The way of communication between people and the interactions factors determines the way of expressing feelings. When I studied the theories of emotion, I saw those physical responses of the body play an important role in practicing the emotions. However, I think that these physical reactions cannot be independent of the physiological and social conditions of the person. The environment we are born into shapes us. I believe that social interaction affects people's decision-making mechanisms. The effect of emotions on judgments, decisions, and beliefs should not be underestimated. Hence, this study will continue to search about the facts and relationships between the other emotions and disgust.

1.2.4 Studies about Disgust as an Emotion

The first substantial research in the literature about disgust was done by Samuel Johnson in the 1750s. His remarkable article was published in the journal named *The Rambler*. In *The Anatomy of Disgust*, William Ian Miller draws attention to this study. Miller quotes Johnson's argument: "The moral capacity of humans is driven by aversive, sensitive and passionate influences of emotions."⁴⁵

It was determined that there was no remarkable study done on disgust until the mid-20th century. Darwin was interested in disgust while examining emotions, and their expressions. Afterward, Andras Angyal's prominent article, "Disgust and Related Emotions" was published in 1941. The article was about the secretions of the animal and human body. Angyal is interested in the contagious side and universal features of disgust. He claims that contact with certain stimuli -like excreta- and objects -like a disinfected chamber pot- create anxiety about infection.⁴⁶ He argues that disgust is perceived by

⁴⁵ William Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust*, p. 16.

⁴⁶ A. Angyal, "Disgust and Related Aversions", <https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fh0058254>, accessed February 05, 2021.

mental experiential reactions which he calls symbolic and he also mentions the body's neuromuscular features while experiencing disgust.

Angyal draws attention to Franz Kafka's and John C. Bourke's determinations about disgust in this article. He states that Kafka's novel characters loathe organic substances, not inorganic ones. He also identifies that Kafka deals with disgust through sexuality and adds that Kafka treats sexuality as a mechanism that regulates life despite its loathsomeness.

Moreover, Angyal gives examples about Bourke who was an ethnologist. He says that Bourke has many works which show that disgust occurs through cultural conditioning. Angyal gives examples of documented observations about indigenous people in America along with Bourke's *Scatalogic Rites of All Nations*. Bourke had examined how universal forms of disgust find different expressions in various cultures in this study.

William Miller's determination about Angyal is that he brought an innovative perspective to the subject of disgust rather than universal, or functional emotional approach. Angyal's article is an important sample in the literature that handles all universal, cognitive, and social sides of disgust.⁴⁷

In the last decades of the 20th-century, studies on disgust through psychological, anthropological, and cultural viewpoints gained momentum. Rozin and his colleagues are the most important group that performs basic disgust studies and experiments. In their early studies, they defend that disgust was structured by the evolutionary process which they call core disgust as I mentioned before in the introduction. Subsequently, they focus particularly on the social and psychological effects of disgust.

In the early studies of Rozin, body wastes and secretions are accepted as stimuli that cause core disgust. He claims that these wastes remind humans of some animal characteristics. People remember the mortality and earthiness of their bodies if they think that they have no distinction from an animal. In addition to that, the human body is seen as more

⁴⁷ William Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust*, p.16.

ordinary, mortal, and vulgar with these inhuman characteristics. Rozin et al. explain core disgust as oral rejection. These researchers' studies indicate that humans evolved disgust to protect the healthiness of the body against infections. Rozin identifies universal disgust impulses as feces, vomit, urine, mucus, and blood. The subsequent studies address the following issues which were added to core disgust in their later investigations.⁴⁸

- ✓ Situations that create dissatisfaction in an emotional state
- ✓ Fear of harm to the body in case of danger
- ✓ Feelings against prohibited or inappropriate food and approaches through the cultural and religious beliefs

Rozin identifies disgust as an offensive emotion that accompanies fear, anger, and anxiety. He states that disgust has possible consequences of avoidance. Surprisingly, his recent studies focus on the moral side of disgust. He determines that disgust develops free from phobia, fear, and anxiety. This is because the disgusting object is likely to be contagious on contact. Additionally, the behavioral habits of people who have a phobia for spiders can be distinguished from those who feel disgusted. David F. Tolin and his colleagues argue that someone can feel fear and disgust for a spider at the same time. The summary of their experiment can be presented as follows; A person with spider phobia may be afraid of spiders. Without a doubt, she/he will not be afraid of the pen that contacted a spider. Yet, she/he does not want to touch that pen, because she/he is disgusted. Eventually, the experiment they had done indicates that the pen which the spider gets in touch with many times is the object of disgust, not the object of fear.⁴⁹ Although disgust creates a feeling of escape, like fear, and is often confused with fear, it is a primary emotion that has different characteristics from fear, as described in the example above.

⁴⁸ Paul Rozin, J. Haidt, C.R. McCauley, *Disgust*, In *Handbook of Emotions* , Edited by M. Levis, J. M. Haviland-Jones & L.F. Barrett, New York: Guilford Press, 2008, pp. 757-776.

⁴⁹ David F. Tolin, Lohr JM, Sawchuk, et al. "Disgust and Disgust Sensitivity in blood-injection-injury and spider phobia", 1997, *Behavioural Research and Therapy*, 35, pp. 877-93.

1.3 The Relationship Between the Senses and Disgust

Undoubtedly, the body identifies the objects through the sensory organs. The perception is actualized by a total judgment of all senses -taste, touch, smell, sight, and hearing-. The decipherment of the objects or the subjects through the senses has a significant role during the emotion's expressions. Clearly, as an emotion, the feeling of disgust, actually the expression of disgust by the body and the mind is practiced by these senses.

It should be noted that the meanings attributed to objects have varied throughout the ages. Vedat Ozan -who has remarkable books and studies about odour and culture- points out that during the Roman Empire when detergent had not yet been discovered, people received services from enterprises that could be considered as dry-cleaning companies at that time. These establishments used urine as a cleaning material due to its ammonia content. Ozan quotes that urine was collected from public toilets and buckets placed in front of these laundries. After the clothes were disinfected by soaking with urine, they were scented with lavender and fragrances. He adds that the word "laundry" is derived from the word *lavare* which means "to wash" in Latin. The word "lavender" which was used for scenting the clothes in the Roman period, is also based on this origin.⁵⁰

The urine buckets which were visible in the past will most likely be considered as a disgusting situation in today's conditions. However, it was a situation that was considered within acceptable limits under the circumstances of those times. Over time, the changes in perception by the senses affected the disgust stimuli levels and even disgust.

In *Disgust; the Gatekeeper Emotion*, Susan Miller argues that the senses have a hierarchical order among themselves. She states that the body often needs a collective decision-making mechanism by all senses. Particularly the sense of sight takes the first place on top of this hierarchy. In terms of perceiving disgust, the senses of smell, taste, and touch have more considerable importance. She remarks that vision has less and

⁵⁰ Vedat Ozan, *Kokular Kitabı III- Kültürler*, İstanbul: Everest Publishing House, 2018, p. 142.

hearing has the least influence to experience disgust.⁵¹ In the following section, I will examine how the effects of the senses cause disgust.

1.3.1 The Sense of Hearing and Disgust

The vomiting of a drunk, or a sick person, the noise of nasal cleansing, and the voices made during throat cleansing are sufficient reasons for feeling disgusted in our country in Turkey. In the modern world, burping, abdominal noise, hiccups may happen involuntarily in public. These voices certainly cause self-disgust and they would also be enough to disgust the audience, too. Strange sounds of breathing that cannot be understood without seeing the reason can trigger disgust. Yet, hearing a voice cannot be evaluated apart from the environmental conditions.

Furthermore, people's accents are regarded as an important symbol in determining class distinctions in the modern era. The urban person who hears someone speaking with a local dialect exhibits a smile that embodies the meaning in itself. In *Kokular Kitabı III- Kùltùrler*, Ozan states that there was an ascription as *olere* which means "scented tongue" to disdain the provincial people with bad accents in Rome.⁵²

Besides, the sounds which are considered natural by the old generations, are regarded as repulsive, and disgusting by the new breeds. Susan Miller explains that the sounds demonstrated by the old generation of Japanese, while eating their traditional food noodle are found disgusting by the new generation. She adds that this eating style is considered remarkable by the elders to protect their traditions. For the elders, these voices are seen as a symbolic feature of being Japanese.⁵³

Hearing generally influences the feeling of disgust through a context; hearing alone has less impact on disgust. Because if the act of hearing is independent of the environment,

⁵¹ Susan B. Miller, *Disgust the Gatekeeper Emotion*, USA: The Analytic Press, 2004, p. 7.

⁵² Vedat Ozan, *Kokular Kitabı III- Kùltùrler*, p. 170

⁵³ Susan B. Miller, *Disgust the Gatekeeper Emotion*, p. 9.

the definition of sound can be speculative. In addition, due to this limitation, hearing is the least important sensation, when it comes analyzing disgust as a stimulus.

1.3.2 The Sense of Sight and Disgust

When humans managed to stand on their feet, they learned to use their hands for more useful tasks. Moreover, the homo-sapiens view angle widened due to this upright position. Walking on fours was limiting the perception of the environment. For example, it was hard to specify the invisible moving creature behind a bush. It can be a prey or a menace at the same time. That's why, when people were walking on all fours, the senses of smell, and hearing were much more prominent. Indeed, it is known that animals with visual impairment -like mole or bat- use their sense of smell or hearing effectively for surviving.

Furthermore, sight gives humans a sense of confidence. The eye provides a continuous, diverse, and rich stimulus from the environment much more conveniently than the other sensory organs. This uninterrupted stimulus decreases the importance of other senses and provides an important advantage to the eye during perception. We do not question what we see with our own eyes. People have precise opinions about what they do not want to see. When they see a disgusting object or person, they turn to the other side so as not to see it. In the cases of inevitability, most of them would prefer to close their eyes.

The aspect of disgusting is evaluated within the framework of modernization. The image of a casualty with bowels out in an accident creates a feeling of disgust rather than sadness. There would be no need to smell, hear or taste to be disgusted in case of seeing a repulsive thing.

Spoiled food or excrement can be revolting when they are seen. Yet, food that looks delicious may smell gross for a certain person. Lamb meat, fish, snail, or bacon with cumin paste can have a delicious look beside their characteristic odours. William Miller

argues that at this stage other sensory organs will step in and encode the stimulus which causes disgust.⁵⁴

1.3.3 The Sense of Touch and Disgust

Certainly, the skin is the barrier that protects vulnerable internal organs. In general, touching something featured as soft, greasy, slippery, harsh, and muddy incurs disgust. First of all, the reaction of a specific person against a touched object should be considered according to the precisions, assumptions, teachings, and prejudices of that person. The touch sensitivity of a person who must work with a sewage truck and the touch sensitivity of a doctor who is doing an operation on the intestines would not be at the same level just because of the jobs they do. The perception level of people cannot be considered free from the character, the lifestyle, and the cultural codes.

Thus, the sensation level of the same person about the same object can vary depending on the context. For instance, the sensory experience levels would be different in case of touching a bat in a cave or touching a bat with a fork as food while traveling as a tourist in China. The value assigned as “clean and pure” is determined by all attributes of that specific moment. The attribution of clean and pure sets the ground for the content of disgusting.

In *Purity and Danger*, Mary Douglas argues that the pureness and pollution rites form the basis of social codes. She identifies that the norms of the societies are formed by symbolic beliefs about pollution and the types of hazardous contacts. She claims that if anomalies occur in the normal patterns of social life, the members of society react with avoidance, anxiety, and suppression. She states that: “Reflection on dirt involves reflection on the relation of order to disorder, being to non-being, form to formlessness, life to death.”⁵⁵ Her unique study -which will be examined in the coming parts due to its intense relevance

⁵⁴ William Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust*, p. 81.

⁵⁵ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger, An analysis on the concepts of pollution and taboo*, New York: Routledge, 1st published in 1996, This edition is published in the Taylor Francis e-Library, pp. 3-5.

with disgust- defends those social codes that are embedded in pollution and contamination phenomena and strengthens this claim by examining the isolated tribes.

Furthermore, touching includes the action of contact. Contacting something automatically rings the alarms of the contagion. Brain tests the condition of the object whether it is safe, or not before touching it. The human brain is programmed to survive. Therefore, to avoid the possibility of catching an infectious disease most people select a specific behavioral pattern. A very young child can pick up a dead animal -for example, a bird or a kitten- and play with it like a toy, but a conscious adult will accept the dead animal as a corpse, destroy it, and purify the environment to maintain the hygiene.

Another point is the orifices of the human body on this issue. The eyes, mouth, nose, ear, anus, and vagina are the orifices of the body and they involve the risk of oozing the microbes into the body due to their permeability. The restrained contact rules attributed to these organs in social structures are based on their undefendable and vulnerable permeability.

What is more, the difference can be noticed between touching an object and a person. Touching has certain rules when a person is the subject of the action. Of course, touching concerns the person who is touched. There are rules determined by the social structure about touching a person. Furthermore, the degree of this action is determined by the social connection between the person who touches and the person who is touched. For centuries, the contact of the holy persons, or the monarchs to ordinary people has been seen as a transfer of the power they have. Today, the touch of power to the weak still motivates people.

If we examine again the opinions of Mary Douglas, we see that in *Purity and Danger* she points to the contagiousness of the sacred. She gives an example from Emile Durkheim while expressing this kind of diffusion: “The sacred must always be treated as contagious

because relations with it are bound to be expressed by rituals of separation, demarcation and by beliefs in the danger of crossing forbidden boundaries.”⁵⁶

Douglas also highlights the body and physiology, following the path of William James, in examining the rituals of the isolated tribes. In her explanations of dirt and purification, she includes James’s following comment:

The body, as we have tried to show, provides a basic scheme for all symbolism. There is hardly any pollution which does not have some primary physiological reference. As life is in the body it cannot be rejected outright. And as life must be affirmed, the most complete philosophers, as William James put it, must find some ultimate way of affirming that which has been rejected.⁵⁷

The purification methods of isolated tribes could have been changed in modern life. It is important to emphasize that the person’s standard of living and cultural codes are effective in the “way” of contamination and purification. However, the conditions of the communal order are still effective in our decision-making mechanisms when we need to touch.

A person can touch her/his mother’s open wound, even if she has got an inflammatory disease. On the other hand, the same person can flee away from a stranger who has the same disease. Even the involuntary and incidental touch of an unknown person may disturb us. Rachel Herz states that the disgust level we feel towards people with whom we are close is much lower than the ones we do not know at all. Also, she says that the individual’s immune system forms in the habitat of the owned family. So, bacteria or viruses of a family member cause less damage to the ones who share the same environment.⁵⁸ If touching includes sexuality, it should be based on the mutual consent of the parties. If there is a conflict about the consensus, then the person without consent generally feels disgust.

⁵⁶ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger, An analysis on the concepts of pollution and taboo*, p. 22.

⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 165.

⁵⁸ Rachel Herz, *That's Disgusting: Unravelling the Mysteries of Repulsion*, New York: WW Norton & Company, 2013, p. 131.

1.3.4 The Sense of Taste and Disgust

As stated before, disgust's etymology root in English is derived from bad taste and related to food rejection through ingestion. In *That's Disgusting: Unravelling the Mysteries of Repulsion*, Rachel Herz narrated that the facial expression of a person who has a feeling of disgust is the same as a person who eats bitter melon.⁵⁹ Paul Rozin and his colleagues argue that disgusting foods have a bitter taste. In his early studies, Rozin defines that the most important organ related to disgust was the mouth, and rejecting food is the most important symptom of disgust. He claims that babies react to foods with bitter flavors by refusing and gaping -as if they want to get the food out of their mouth- just after they are born. However, he admits in his later works that the feeling of disgust started to be exhibited at a stage between the ages of 4 and 8.⁶⁰

We spit out immediately if the food taken into the mouth tastes bad. Spoiled foods have bad taste and odour. They cause nausea and sickness if we swallow them. The rancid and stinky food threatens human health. The digestive system activates the defense mechanisms of the body against the danger of getting sick. Eaten food is thrown out, which can cause harm to the body by vomiting and diarrhea. People do not prefer to taste the food they are disgusted by unless they have to.

On the other hand, William Miller states that salt, and bitterness do not cause disgust. Many foods and beverages with a bitter taste can be preferred as a flavor. Miller gives the example of bitter-tasted beer, which is highly preferred by the British. Additionally, sour, and sweet tastes will not affect our sense of taste with the meaning of disgusting if they are not taken into the mouth or swallowed.⁶¹

The sense of taste is highly related to the eating habits developed by people living in different geographies. The people who are fond of eating blue mold cheese are known as

⁵⁹ Rachel Herz, *That's Disgusting: Unravelling the Mysteries of Repulsion*, p. 43.

⁶⁰ D. Levinson, J. Ponzetti, & P. Jorgenson (eds.), Disgust Entry in *Encyclopaedia of Human Emotions*, Volume 1, Paul Rozin., Haidt, J., & McCauley, C. R., New York: Macmillan, 2000, pp. 188-193.

⁶¹ William Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust*, p. 16.

gourmet. Rachel Herz transfers that *casu marzu cheese* is a cheese that is fermented with sheep milk and maggots -fly larva- and it is a unique aliment in Sardinia Island.⁶² Is this cheese, which has a pungent smell and alive maggots on it, consumed with such love in other geographies? In Mexico, people consume dried grasshoppers as a snack.⁶³ As a result, we can determine from various examples that specific nutrition patterns peculiar to certain regions and cultures form the phenomenon of taste.

1.3.5 The Sense of Smell and Disgust

Undoubtedly, every time we breathe, we have to smell the environment. Vedat Ozan states that humans breathe an average of twenty-two thousand times a day and the sense of smelling becomes a part of this activity automatically.⁶⁴ As it has been remarked in the former parts, disgust is an emotion that is accepted universal, and the core side of disgust is practiced more or less identically in overall societies. Yet, the stimulus and the expressions of the feeling are mostly affected by culture and the social environments we live in. In the same way, researchers identify that smell reactions to odours do not occur at birth. Disgust and smelling something are learned by infants with time while growing up. In her article “Odour Memory and the Special Role of Associative Learning” Rachel Herz expresses that without the sense of smell, there would be no disgust.⁶⁵

When a person cannot smell her/his perception level changes. When people have a cold or flu, foods that taste delicious generally appear unpleasant to the patient. While the body is struggling with the disease, the immune system collapses. Usually, an ill person cannot eat food willingly. Meanwhile, the stuffy nose -which cannot smell- must be the main reason for the lack of appetite.

⁶² Rachel Herz, *That's Disgusting: Unravelling the Mysteries of Repulsion*, p. 14.

⁶³ <https://tr.theplanetworld.com/6202-the-10-tastiest-insects-and-bugs-in-mexico-tr>, accessed April 04, 2021.

⁶⁴ Vedat Ozan, *Kokular Kitabı-III, Kültürler*, p. 176.

⁶⁵ Rachel Herz, “Odour Memory and the Special Role of Associative Learning”, p. 95-115. In Gesualdo M. Zucco, Rachel Herz and Benoist Schaal, “*Olfactory Cognition, From perception and memory to environmental courses and neuroscience*”; Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamin Publishing House Company, 2012.

A specific fragrance is invisible and penetrates all over the periphery rapidly. Furthermore, the obscure odours and emissions can be signals of contamination. Before microbes, viruses, and harmful bacteria were discovered by scientists, it was thought that odour was the main source of prominent diseases. People who practiced medicine during the plague outbreak in Europe, in the middle age, were known as “Plague Doctors” and they were wearing crow-beak-shaped masks to shield themselves from miasma, consequently from the plague.

Miasma theory is known as the “Bad Air Theory” during the great plague in the 1660s, and was neglected after the 1870s. Hippocrates (460-377 BC) and Galen (129-216 AD) are the first scientists to use the term miasma. The theory supporters believe that the cause of the diseases is the poisonous odours of the wastes.⁶⁶

Miasmists believed that disease was caused by infectious mists, or noxious vapors emanating from filth in the towns and that the method of prevention of infectious diseases was to establish sanitary measures to clean the streets of garbage, sewage, animal carcasses, and wastes that were features of urban living. This provided the basis for the Sanitary Movement, with great benefit to improving health conditions. The miasma theory had strong proponents well into the later part of the nineteenth century.⁶⁷

“Plague Doctors” were wearing gloves and wax-covered cloaks which were covering their bodies that extended up to their feet. Their eyes were covered by spectacles. The beak part of the mask was filled with the spices like musk, amber, and neroli. It was believed that these plants would prevent the poisoning, and they would help while healing. The purpose of these masks was to prevent the transmission of the disease, which was thought to spread by respiration.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ <https://www.medicinenet.com/miasma/definition.htm>, accessed January 25, 2021.

⁶⁷ Theodore H. Tulchinsky MD, MPH, Elena A. Varavikova MD, MPH, Ph.D., Robert Koch, and Paul Ehrlich: “Criteria of Causation of Disease and Chemotherapy as ‘Magic Bullets’”, in *The New Public Health (3rd edition)*, 2014. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/medicine-and-dentistry/miasma-theory/pdf>. accessed January 25, 2021.

⁶⁸ <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/reference/european-history/plague-doctors-beaked-masks-coronavirus/>, accessed January 25, 2021.



Figure 1 Plague Doctor Costume *

To avoid bad odours and not to get sick from accessories, people in Europe carried cloth plague bags and ceramic balls with holes which were called pomander. These balls and bags were filled with medicinal and fragrant plants to avoid bad odours and not to get sick. Also, it must be underlined that the widespread use of perfumes coincides with this period.⁶⁹

Today, cleaning materials are sold with pleasant fragrances like lemon, apple, rose, and lavender scents. A cleaning agent with highlighted chemical function and free from perfume is not preferred by people. Although there is no direct link between hygiene and scent, most people are spontaneously convinced that the fragranced object, person, or place is clean.

Paul Rozin determines that the smell of food is different before ingestion. He adds that the sense of smell has two different systems; ortho-nasal and retro-nasal. Decoding the odour taken with breath from outside with the nose is designated as the ortho-nasal function system. The decryption of the scent of the substances brought into the mouth is phrased as the retro-nasal olfactory system. This location is defined as the inner part of

⁶⁹ <https://deathscent.com/2020/01/28/the-sweet-smell-of-plague-preservatives/>, accessed January 26, 2021.

*https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plague_doctor#Costume, accessed January 26, 2021.

the nose, the inner part of the palate, behind the tongue, and close to the pharynx. When this area which is close to our throat is triggered while eating or drinking, the retro-nasal olfaction system begins to run. According to Rozin “Retro-nasal olfaction sense is the perception of the odours and flavors emanating from the oral cavity during eating and drinking.”⁷⁰ The difference between ortho-nasal and retro-nasal sensory could be understood with this specific example given below:

Durian is a popular fruit in South Asia with a strong foul smell. The flavor of the durian fruit is described as tasting like cheese, almonds, garlic, and caramel. The smell is described as the combination of Sulphur, sewage, fruit, honey, and roasted and rotting onions. The impression of the fruit depends on whether you smell the sweet-smelling or stinky compounds more strongly.⁷¹

Eventually, in the modern era, the sense of smell has deteriorated in comparison to the other senses. The senses of sight, taste, and touch are more practiced by humans to feel something compared to smell or hear. Besides, the expressions of odours are linguistically becoming insufficient due to the regression in the sensation of smell. The sense of smell is tried to be expressed with metaphors and comparisons in general. The odour which spreads after rain, which is defined as petrichor in English, is called “the smell of soil” in Turkish, and the odour which is caused by wind in dry weather is expressed as “the smell of dust”. The specific words to distinguish the types of smells are insufficient. Over time, inadequate use of the sense of smell resulted in transmutation of the smell-related language. The designation of different types of odour terms is formed by the borrowed words from the senses of touch and sight. Accordingly, the odour repertoire related to disgust is very inadequate.

In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud defends that the substitution of the sense of smell with the sense of sight dates to the homo-sapiens achievement of standing on legs. After humans relinquished walking on all fours, genital organs became exposed, visible, and unprotected. Freud emphasizes the importance of this period as the starting point of

⁷⁰ Paul Rozin, “Taste-smell confusions and the duality of the olfactory sense, Perception and Psychophysics”, 1982, 31397-401 in

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamaotolaryngology/fullarticle/649745>, accessed March 18, 2021.

⁷¹ <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/durian-fruit#uses>, accessed January 26, 2021.

the feeling of embarrassment for humankind. He points out that scent and the pheromones -which were used by primitive humans to choose a mate- started to decline with this period. The restrictions in the vision for any reason bring out a much more functional sense of smell and hearing.⁷²

Here it can be concluded that through the examples which were given, the relationship of disgust with the senses is closely related to cultural features. The modern human has pushed the senses of smell and hearing to the background with civilization. When it comes to disgust, the sense of touch is the most important since the contact carries the risk of contagion or infection. Today, the other important senses that humans depend on can be counted as taste and of course sight.

Sensing the feeling of disgust varies more or less according to different types of disgust. Disgust can be felt momentarily, although it can suddenly turn into a positive emotion. People studying disgust have studied the main stimuli of this emotion. The next topic will address these issues.

⁷² Sigmund Freud, *Bir Yanılsamanın Geleceği, Uygarlık ve Hoşnutsuzlukları*, Ankara: İdea Publishing House, 2000, p. 85.

II. TYPES OF DISGUST

Modern society has tried to ignore the relationships that can be established between animals and humans in the civilization process. However, the subject of disgust is associated with animalistic aspects of humans according to many pro-evolutionary scientists as it would be explained further. Indeed, disgust has a side effect that protects people from the factors which can harm the body. Yet, the scientific approach that the evolutionary perspective brings to the whole form of disgust can be insufficient in some cases.

Certainly, to explain the forms of disgust, we need to review how stimuli are filtered by the body and mind. Dilemmas would be encountered when the analysis of emotion is done only from a biological viewpoint or only from a psychological perspective. When a particular emotion type is analyzed in terms of its various aspects, its meaning will be understood with an integrative approach.

Angyal expresses that a person's reaction to what is disgusting has feedback that includes experiential and mental responses. These cognitive and bodily declarations are named as symbolic by Angyal as I mentioned in the first part of this chapter. He states that symbolic expressions of emotions, especially disgust, require phenomenological analysis. Additionally, he suggests that the disgust response given by motor functions is a state of disgust that belongs to the body and has consequences for somatic systems such as breathing excessively, vomiting, hypersalivation, and difficulty in swallowing. He indicates that these responses are related to both the neural and muscular systems. Angyal's main premise is that animal or human waste products cause universal disgust responses. He argues that disgust types other than these waste products are formed according to cultures and differ from one culture to another.

People are concerned about "anomalies" and they always try to stabilize life by avoiding them. The threats draw a route for humans to develop ways for how to flee to a safe space. It has also been discussed in the previous sections that disgust is one of the strongest tools

to survive for human-being. Admittedly human reactions to disgust have evolved according to the changes in types of threats and their intensity. The individual who tries to keep her/his body sterile more than a “normal” person would experience disgust more often.

In that case, such questions arise; Which kinds of stimuli create disgust? While experiencing this feeling are there any certain ways for people to feel disgusted? To get satisfactory answers to these questions, types of disgust have been examined under almost the same headings by many researchers such as Paul Rozin, Rachel Herz, Susan Miller, William Ian Miller, etc. While summarizing the disgust types, most researchers investigate disgust mainly in two categories: Body Disgust, Moral Disgust.

Susan Miller who has also made the above distinction in her studies states that body disgust involves “body signifiers of emotion, for example, vomiting, gagging, nausea; these occur in a context suggestive of disgust.” And she argues that “...ideational disgust involves ideas about something disgusting, abhorrent, abominable, vile, and so forth.”⁷³ In the following sections, I will examine different types of disgust under body disgust, because the main purpose of this section is to clarify the conditions of physical disgust in an explanatory way.

2.1 Body Disgust

A rotten and decaying corpse reminds humans of their vulnerability and mortality. When disgust is considered physiologically, it has a vital value, as has been mentioned many times before. From here we can get the result that disgust collaborates with death. Human beings have sanctified their bodies as well as their souls, as in the quote of Rozin, which was given at the very beginning of this study: “the body is the temple of the soul”.

The first example that can be given for this situation is *Walking Death* which is a famous TV series that preserves its popularity right now. The series describes the survival and

⁷³ Susan B. Miller, *Disgust the Gatekeeper Emotion*, p. 41.

the organizational skills of a group of people who are fighting against zombies. Zombies with their grey, green and yellow skin, whose flesh sways from all their sides bite humans and transform them into their kind. The theme of the series can be identified as protecting human dignity against zombies, who are the symbols of decay, decomposition, putrefaction, and death. The vampires, zombies, imaginary monsters such as Frankenstein, and lepers in fiction are neither alive nor dead creatures. The fact that their bodies do not have human-equivalent integrity causes a feeling of disgust mixed with fear because they remind us that we are mortal.

Physical deformations of the body constitute another perspective of disgust. Although the monsters produced by the fantasy world disgust and scare people, physical deformations of people can trigger the feeling of disgust in real life. Quoting these words used to express disgust as an emotion does not contain any prejudice. It is unfortunately sad that the values that the majority accept as “normal” may sometimes carry stigmatization or marginalization for people with “different” features from time to time. People who have wounds, burn marks, tumors or amputated organs are given as examples of body deformations. Unfortunately, people with physical deformities are seen by the majority as unattractive, repulsive, or disgusting because they are not within the limits of “normal”.

Under these circumstances, who sets the standards for “normal” or aesthetics, and by whom these standards were determined? The determination of Kant’s evaluations about aesthetics, ugliness, and disgust is cited by James C. Hatch as follows:

For Kant, it is disgust which makes ugliness fall outside of the aesthetic: “There is only one kind of ugliness which cannot be represented in accordance with nature without destroying all aesthetical satisfaction, and consequently artificial beauty, viz. that which excites disgust (*ekel*). For in this singular sensation, which rests on mere imagination, the object is represented as it were obtruding itself for our enjoyment, while we strive against it with all our might”⁷⁴

⁷⁴ James C. Hatch, “Disruptive affects: shame, disgust, and sympathy in Frankenstein”, *European Romantic Review*, Vol. 19, No. 1, January 2008, pp. 33–49.

Eventually, bodily disgust types can be counted as; food disgust, disgust with body wastes (saliva, sweat, urine, feces, genital secretions), disgust with the deformations of the body (wound, bleeding, gore, an amputated organ), animal disgust (spider, rat, insect, etc.), disgust with creatures that reminds people the animalistic nature, disgust with objects that are considered infectious, self-disgust, etc.⁷⁵ Essentially, anything nauseating and related with somatic can be investigated under the heading of body disgust. The counted types of disgust above are generally examined by giving relevant examples below.

2.1.1 Food Disgust

There are “Disgusting Food Museums” in Malmö, Sweden; in Nantes, France, and in Las Vegas, USA.⁷⁶ The museums illustrate the samples of amazing foods all around the world. There are several samples of nutrients from all over the world in different countries. While I was looking at the photographs in the virtual tour of the museum, I felt nausea and had an urge to vomit. When I saw the photograph of Kale Pache, my vomit flew away. I do not like it at all, and I do not eat Kale Pache, but my cultural codes tolerated illustration of the food in the first place.

Rozin states that the foods we disgust by our sensory affection depend on 3 factors as he explained in the next paragraph:

The first is sensory-affective, the belief that the relevant object has negative sensory properties. Usually, this means that it has a bad taste or odour. The second is the anticipation of harm following ingestion. This could be bodily harm, occurring either rapidly (e.g., stomach cramps), or after a long interval (e.g., cancer). The harm can be social, such as degradation of social status (as in public consumption of a “lower-class” food, acceptance of foods handled by a member of a lower caste in India, or ordering a very cheap wine at a fancy restaurant). The third type of motivation for rejection is based on ideational factors. This means knowledge of the origin, or nature of the food, illustrated by the rejection of a grasshopper just because it is a grasshopper.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ William Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust*, p. 6.

⁷⁶ <https://disgustingfoodmuseum.com/> , accessed April 07, 2021.

⁷⁷ Paul Rozin, April E. Fallon, “A Perspective on Disgust”, *Psychological Review*, 1987, Vol. 94. No. 1, pp. 23-41.

The food eaten for vital nutrition has an important role in affecting the body's defense system. Anything that could infect us by spreading microbes, polluting the environment, or having the possibility of contamination, rings the alarms of protection for humans to stay alive according to the fight-or-flight response.⁷⁸ In addition, teachings, traditions, and moral values are important in terms of food preference and rejection.

2.1.2 Waste Products-Bodily Products

Firstly, Paul Rozin denotes that body wastes are accepted as universal stimuli that create repulsion. The secretions and wastes belonging to the body are referred to as feces, vomit, urine, mucus, and blood by Rozin.

In Europe, medieval people ignored these secretions or did not try to hide them. However, on the contrary, "modern people" who are living in the same area conceal these secretions very carefully and hide the moments when these secretions are produced and cover up the actions that produce them. For "modern people" the normal process of the body that causes the wastes symbolizes something disgusting even if they belong to her/himself.

People describe these secretions as revolting through the framework of the instructions, and social rules they have internalized. Some researchers note that the reason behind disgust for these wastes is because they remind humanity of their animalistic side.⁷⁹ Social norms have created a set of rules called "human behavior". People who act outside of these rules are considered evil or animalistic.⁸⁰ Yet, in reality, these wastes have vital importance in the terms of human's living conditions. In short, everyone goes to the toilet including the idols, and the heroes. As it's known, these wastes are biological realities.

On the contrary, there are exceptions like a mother who admires her baby's poop or those who chat with a close friend or partner about abdominal functions. Rachel Herz claims

⁷⁸ <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-the-fight-or-flight-response-2795194>, accessed January 27, 2021.

⁷⁹ Rachel Herz, *That's Disgusting: Unravelling the Mysteries of Repulsion*, p. 25.

⁸⁰ P. Rozin, J. Haidt, CR. McCauley, *Disgust*, in *Handbook of Emotions (3rd ed.)*, Edited by M Lewis, JM Haviland and LF Barrett (ed) New York: Guilford Press, 2008.

that these examples are evidence of the fact that people do not disgust bodily fluids or wastes of their loved ones (their babies, family, partner, close friends, etc.). She adds that the shared environment with the family, the genetic sensitivity, and the immune system of the family are effective in these spontaneous reactions. Nevertheless, it is generally agreed today that everyone must stay away from these wastes to avoid the risk of infection.⁸¹

The organs that produce wastes are seen as threats towards the pureness of the body and additionally the soul. Yet, it can be said that they are universal disgust types. Today, a vast majority of humans are disgusted with body secretions, and wastes in urban areas, for example, white-collar employees, people with high-income levels, or hygiene obsession of people due to the increasing types of illnesses. Additionally, being clean is accepted as one of the indicators of being civilized in modern societies. At the same time, in many societies, for example, due to crowd, socio-economic situation, cultural codes, etc., body waste is not considered as important as in modern societies, for instance in rural parts of India, East Asia, or Africa. I will evaluate these secretions and wastes briefly while trying to point out the most important aspects of them in terms of disgust under the next headings.

- **Eye-Tear**

In *The Process of Civilization, Socio-Formational and Psycho-Formational Studies*, Norbert Elias quotes the opinions of Erasmus. In *On Civility in Children*, Erasmus advises children to be good citizens and indicates the following expressions in this book about the eye just as:

The wide opened eyes are the signs of stupidity. The indifference that sticks out somewhere, the extremely sharp gaze of the tendency to anger, and the overly vivid, and very expressive looks are the signs of insolence. The glances should indicate a calm spirit, and respectful friendship. The saying of the ancients that the soul is in the eye is not a coincidence.⁸²

⁸¹ Rachel Herz, *That's Disgusting: Unravelling the Mysteries of Repulsion*, p. 131.

⁸² Norbert Elias, *Uygarlık Süreci, Sosyo-Oluşumsal ve Psiko-Oluşumsal İncelemeler, Cilt 1, Batılı Dünyevi Üst Tabakaların Davranışlarındaki Değişmeler*, İstanbul: İletişim Publishing House, 2004, p.137.

The eyes are accepted as the mirror of the soul. Eventually, the eyes reflect the emotions which are experienced at that time. A person may smile, but it is possible to determine from her/his eyes whether she/he is sincere or not. The eyes are also an orifice of the body. Viruses or bacteria can enter the body through this open path. The eyes are generally seen as the cleanest organ in a healthy person. Crust around the eyes after a long sleep or eye infection which is known as conjunctivitis, and pimple around the eye which is called styne are the most unclean conditions of this organ.

Besides, tears are known as the purest body secretion in many societies. There are three types of tears: basal tear, reflex tear, and emotional tear.⁸³ To contact tear is not considered disgusting for the majority. In ancient times, tears were filled to tear bottles by those who cried after the deceased. These bottles were put in graves as a sign of respect. Overall, the tear is considered the cleanest fluid among the body secretions. Given these points, eyes, and the secretion of it -tear- is the most harmless type of bodily fluids.

- **Ear-Earwax**

The importance given to the eyes does not suit the ear. Since being deaf is considered less important than being visually impaired, and earwax is less threatening than the rest of the body wastes. On the other hand, its sticky nature and dark color evoke repulsion. When a person with a dirty ear is seen, she or he will be judged not to be a clean person by the observer. However, in reality, this dirt lubricates and protects the outer canal of the ear. It may cause fullness in the ear, difficulty in hearing, and tinnitus symptoms. In addition, the location of ears on the head reduces the possibility of the appearance of their inside. Earwax is considered as the least dirty secretion of the body after the tears.⁸⁴

⁸³ Juan Murube, "Basal, Reflex, and Psycho-emotional Tears", *The Ocular Surface*, (2009). 7(2), pp. 60–66. doi:10.1016/s1542-0124(12)70296-3, accessed April 12, 2021.

⁸⁴ William Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust*, p. 91-92.

- **Nose-Mucus**

A runny nose is a sign of illness in general. Disgust easily occurs when mucus is visible, even if it does not show the sign of a disease. Snot and phlegm are generally evaluated as disgusting secretions. A person -even if she/he is meticulous- may have to swallow the mucus for not being considered as disgusting by the audience. In some countries in Europe, it is considered normal to clean the nose loudly in public. William Miller indicates that in Western folk literature, there is an identification of the nose with the penis. He adds that this simile is the reason for the jokes about the nose in European culture. According to Miller, peasants blowing or workers wiping their noses on their sleeves, or wrists are accepted as signs of class distinctions.⁸⁵

- **Mouth-Saliva**

The mouth is known for its mucous and vulnerable structure. The mouth is known as the most permeable orifice. Indeed, the mouth allows food absorption and performs the first digestion phase with saliva. Nevin Büyükakyüz and Murat Öztürk' s study points out that protein and RNA molecules in the saliva allow diagnosing diseases just like blood tests. For this reason, the detection of many diseases can be accomplished through saliva-based tests. The quality of the saliva determines the healthiness of the inner mouth. The diseases that belong to the mouth can be counted as fungal infections, abscesses, gum diseases, and bad odour.⁸⁶

In his 1960 renowned article Gordon Allport writes that “Collect your saliva in your mouth, pour it into a glass and try drinking again. What appears to be ours suddenly becomes foreign and disgusting.”⁸⁷ Taking anything out of the mouth triggers disgust as a stimulus.

⁸⁵ Ibid. p. 94.

⁸⁶ Nevin Büyükakyüz, Murat Öztürk; “Tükürüğün Yapısı ve Tanı Açısından Önemi”, *Türkiye Klinikleri, Dış Hekimliği Bilimleri Dergisi*, 2012;18(2), pp. 191-7

⁸⁷ William Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust*, p. 97.

Before the 20th-century spitting was an ordinary act. In *The Civilizing Process*, Norbert Elias reminds us of a study written in 1859, “*The Habits of Good Society*”. In this writing, it was stated that spitting was a nauseating behavior and also it was accepted as very rude and disgusting behavior. It was specified that spitting was also harmful to health.⁸⁸

In addition, when someone is disgusted with something, the action of spitting follows up as a common behavior in societies. Indeed, it is not surprising to see someone spit in the face of others, in a situation of feeling aversion towards them. Normally, spitting the saliva is an act of taking precautions -moral or emotional- with a certain concern of being contaminated. Also, as illustrated by an example from a news center, spitting on someone or something includes insulting in most cultures.⁸⁹

- **Anus-Feces**

The digestive system’s activity starts in the mouth and ends in the intestines. The final task of the digestive system is to extract the processed waste out of the anus. Defecation is vital for humans. Furthermore, toilet training is considered one of the important milestones in a child’s development. This is a universal stage in a child’s independence from parents. It is a stage for the child to take control of her or his senses in growth. The foster’s approach about hygiene, dirt, and disgust affects the child’s assessment about performing this action. Rozin indicates this stage as one of “the mechanisms of early disgust acquisition” and stating that this period is effective in the formation of the reflexes of human beings.

The mechanisms of early disgust acquisition that we review below, such as toilet training, may therefore have no specific disgust effects, as distinct from distaste, and danger. However, we consider this unlikely. The behavior of parents, and other adults toward disgusting substances is surely very different from their behavior toward distasteful (or dangerous) items. There is less emphasis on the sensory properties of disgust substances. Furthermore, observations of interactions among children, and between children, and parents indicate that from as early as 14 months, there is an appreciation by children that

⁸⁸ Norbert Elias, *Uygarlık Süreci, Sosyo-Oluşumsal ve Psiko-Oluşumsal İncelemeler, Cilt 1, Batılı Dünyeyi Üst Tabakaların Davranışlarındaki Değişmeler*, p. 261.

⁸⁹ <https://www.ntv.com.tr/turkiye/coronaya-yakalanan-doktor-esinin-yuzune-tukurdu,uB5XHwKMB0-XOUSwQhLXeg>, accessed April 14, 2021.

disgust substances (e.g., feces) have special significance for adults. Young children do a great deal of joking about disgusting substances, and often draw attention to these substances. There is also a great deal of discourse among children and between children, and parents on this subject.⁹⁰

Another point is that excretion is one of the issues that have been converted into a taboo by humans. This biological activity -feces- constantly is used in slang speech in different forms of words. Its different expressions are known as vulgar and represent swearing. These words -which are displaced with feces- are being used for several situations of hatred, insulting, humiliation, contempt, and even an exclamation of surprise.

- **Genital Organs-Menstrual Blood-Semen**

Biologically, the genital organs are the reproductive organs. The health of future generations is directly related to the healthy reproductive organs giving birth to members. Both males' and females' organic structures of their genital organs are vulnerable and highly sensitive to contagious diseases.

Broadly speaking, patriarchal cultures do not question the issue of male virginity. Moreover, semen symbolizes the biological fertilization and reproductive potential of men as it is produced at any point in the life of a healthy male. On the other hand, after reaching reproductive age, women have the chance to ovulate and fertilize once a month throughout productive life.

Rachel Herz, states that a woman's long periods of pregnancy and the average age of reproductive activities can be estimated. She evaluates that a healthy woman has only 30-40 chances to give birth in her entire lifetime. Consequently, nine months of pregnancy is long in a woman's life, and the reproductive capacities end with menopause. Herz adds that a female who wants to reproduce must act selectively than a male. She says that women's emotional sensitiveness and thus their disgust sensitivity increases during the pregnancy. Herz finds a significant correlation between pregnancy and threat emerged

⁹⁰ Paul Rozin, April E. Fallon, "A Perspective on Disgust", *Psychological Review*, 1987, Vol. 94, No. 1, pp. 23-41.

behaviors, for instance, an increase in smell sensitivity, feeling continuous nausea, and vomiting. She argues that the body, which is alarmed for protecting the fetus during pregnancy will have a much higher sensitivity to smell and disgust.⁹¹

In addition, virginity and menstrual bleeding are still considered taboos today. In many countries and especially in the Middle East and Eastern cultures, there is an ideological acceptance that women are dirty during the menstrual period. When it comes to this issue, a conservative attitude is generally displayed all over the world. Again, Herz states that women with fewer disgust feelings are found to be more comfortable and open-minded in sharing about their periods. She gives an example about the perspective on the menstrual period from the Old Testament which is considered sacred by monotheistic religions:

In the Old Testament, it is written: “When a woman has a discharge of blood which is her regular discharge from her body, she shall be in her impurity for seven days and whoever touches her shall be unclean until the evening. And everything upon which she lies during her impurity shall be unclean; everything also upon which she sits shall be unclean. And if any man lies with her, and her impurity is on him, he shall be unclean seven days and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean.”⁹²

On the other hand, sexual disgust is another remarkable title for disgust. Penetration is an issue that is assigned to women. Homosexuals and lesbians are widely accepted as infectious literally and morally by homophobic people. Similarly, some people display exhibitionism, voyeurism, pedophilia, and fetishism. The diverse sexual behavioral patterns ignoring the social rules are called as perverse actions and they are accounted as anomalies to the social norm. Thus, these anomalies evoke the survival mode of people. People turn on the defend mode against these behaviors easily. This defensive mode creates a disgust reaction to those anomalies for avoidance. What is more, in conservative cultures disgust may cause violence against “Others” rather than avoidance.

⁹¹ Rachel Herz, *That's Disgusting: Unravelling the Mysteries of Repulsion*, pp. 113-119.

⁹² Ibid. pp. 211-214.

- **Hair-Fur**

It is a well-known fact that hair in food, hair in the mouth or throat, tufts of hair hidden in the genitals and armpits, etc. are the situations that cause disgust. April E. Fallon et al. give the information that hair has a much more disgust drive than we think. They write about very young children's responses to hair disgust as written below:

In one experiment to determine just where children under two years old age would draw the line as to what, if anything, they would not put in their mouths, 62% ate imitation dog feces realistically crafted from peanut butter and smelly cheese, 58% ate a whole, small dried fish, 31% ate a whole sterilized grasshopper, but only 8% would tolerate a loc of human hair.⁹³

Hair will grow in the genital organs and armpits of every ordinary healthy human being who starts to gain the ability to reproduce. On the other hand, humans try to have less hair on the whole body. Modern humans seem to be free of hair. Hair on the body is generally associated with dirtiness, rancid sweat odour, and finally disgust. Hair on the shoulders, back, chest and in the ears, and nose would be identified as animalistic or monstrous.

However, people identify themselves with strong and muscular animals such as a wolf or a lion. Animals have feathers and fur. Animals without fur make people feel as if these animals are naked. People do not prefer to be identified with animals without fur like snakes, insects, sphynxes, and so on. They rarely prefer to touch animals without fur. William Miller accounts that identifying themselves with animals causes humans to think about the uncanny life:

The animals that disgust us do not disgust us as animals but because they have characteristics that are disgusting: sliminess, slitheriness, teemingness...Our bodies and our souls are the prime generators of the disgusting. What the animals remind us of, the ones that disgust us like insects, slugs, worms, rats, bats, newts, centipedes, is life, oozy, slimy, viscous, teeming, messy, uncanny life. We needn't have recourse to the animals for that reminder; all we need is a mirror.⁹⁴

⁹³ April E. Fallon, Paul Rozin, Patricia Pliner, "The Child's Conception of Food: The Development of Food Rejections with Special Reference to Disgust and Contamination Sensitivity", Published by Wiley, *Child Development*, Vol. 55, No. 2, (April 1984), pp. 566-575.

⁹⁴ William Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust*, pp. 49-55.

It seems that as a social entity, the human being is again suppressing her/his physical relationship with the animals through disgust. And this emotion emerges as a great tool to be used to glorify the social norms. Yet, here is the dilemma; as a metaphor, we may describe ourselves as the animals we like most, or maybe humiliated with the animals we do not like; on the other hand, we cannot associate our body's physical properties with the animals and we try to get rid of those traits. Here again, disgust is a savior feeling for humans not to feel guilty.

As a result, the details of physical disgust were examined under the headings listed above. Many scientists who support the evolutionary theory state that physical disgust is impulsive. Yet, the literature is replete with questions asking why we abhor a human or something clean in reality just like Darwin's feelings for the native who touched his food. It proves that disgust is not innate and is learned through the fact that it occurs as an emotion between the ages of 4 and 8 for humans. The learning stages of human beings develop intertwined with their social environment. Social rules are shaped by the moral and religious values and teachings of the society we live in.

Philosophy and theology have examined morality throughout history. On the other hand, especially in the last two centuries; anthropology, physiology, and biology have begun to investigate the features of morality. Shweder, who has important studies in the field of cultural anthropology and cultural psychology has studied the nature of morality through Hindus in India. Shweder and his colleagues have classified three moral domains that can be considered as basic moral values in the world.⁹⁵

They present an original taxonomy of 3 moral domains that may encompass all moral systems in the world: autonomy codes, based on rights violations; community codes, based on communal values, and hierarchy violations; and divinity codes, based on concepts such as sanctity and purity.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Shweder, R. A., Much, N. C., Mahapatra, M., & Park, L. (1997). "The "big three" of morality (autonomy, community, divinity) and the "big three" explanations of suffering", In A. M. Brandt & P. Rozin (Eds.), *Morality and Health*, (p. 119–169). Taylor & Frances/Routledge.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

Haidt, who was a student of Shweder and contributed to most of Rozin's studies, also made important studies in the moral field on emotions and particularly on disgust. Haidt et al. state that people give their reactions to a stimulus based on their past experiences. According to them, the meaning emerges in a way that is rapidly evocative and based on intuitive recognition patterns. They named these identification mechanisms which are based on sensation as embodied schemata.

Haidt quotes that " If the heterogeneous class of disgust elicitors is linked together by a set of shared schemata, then the elaboration of disgust, from the core through socio-moral, may be explained by the mechanism of preadaptation."⁹⁷ Haidt argues that core disgust based on rejection is adapted to the other types of disgust. In his study, it is suggested that these schemata are universal.

According to Haidt, embodied schemas in social life include psychological and cultural universal processes. Overall, he adds that bodily and social meanings are regulated or filled by culture. He argues that the meaning that changes according to the culture is related to the perception of the "body" by the culture. In addition, it is stated that threats to the self or soul are influential in a specific culture's attitude towards disgust.

People in all cultures have bodies which provide them with rich sets of embodied schemata. Each culture draws from these schemata to spin its own particular webs of significance upon which its social, and moral life is based.⁹⁸

Furthermore, Rozin says that "The significance of moralization is that it converts preferences into values. Values are more durable than preferences, more central to the self, and more internalized."⁹⁹

A specific example is given by Rozin and his colleagues on morality and disgust through vegetarianism. Vegetarians may choose not to eat meat to have a healthier body or they

⁹⁷ J. Haidt, P. Rozin, C. McCauley & S. Imada; "Body, Psyche, and Culture: The Relationship Between Disgust and Morality", *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 1997, 9 (1), pp. 107-131.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Rozin, P., Markwith, M., & Stoess, C. (1997). "Moralization and Becoming a Vegetarian: The Transformation of Preferences into Values and the Recruitment of Disgust", *Psychological Science*, 8(2), 67-73.

may prefer it by considering moral values. Rozin states that in one survey, those who morally prefer vegetarianism prefer the word “ought to” for their choice to be vegetarian. He also identifies that those who are vegetarian in terms of health state that they prefer the word “necessary”.

One of the most interesting aspects of the process of becoming a vegetarian involves the hedonic shift that often accompanies it; meat changes from a liked to a disliked, or even disgusting entity. This shift may be considered an example of internalization of preference, in that the avoidance of meat becomes motivated by a dislike for the sensory or other inherent properties of the entity itself.¹⁰⁰

Rozin states that the emotion of disgust is selectively associated with moral vegetarianism. According to the results of the research conducted by Rozin and et al, those who prefer vegetarianism in terms of health do not feel aversion to meat and can give up vegetarianism more easily.

In summary, disgust is more evident in Western societies when it comes to harm—for example, harming the health of people around you by cigarette smoke. However, in countries where belief systems are more prominent, and the education level is “lower”, disgust comes to the fore as a moral emotion. The explanation of meaning with different concepts stems from the embodied schemas of the specific society. I entirely agree that “values are more durable than preferences” just like Rozin has quoted.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO

I INTERSECTIONS OF DISGUST AND OTHER EMOTIONS

Disgust can be felt towards organic materials as well as individuals, or groups. This is why Darwin was disgusted with the hands of the native, even though they were clean. Negative feelings towards people can be based on prejudices. In societies, there is a judgment that people belonging to certain races, ethnicities or groups are dirty, immoral, and have the potential to commit crimes. As it will be explained further with examples, the feeling of fear lies at the root of all these negative behaviors against these people. Irrepressible and persistent fear and anxiety create anger in the long run. The ossified anger may turn into hatred over time. In this section, I will try to identify the moments when the expressions of fear, anger, hatred, and unlimited and hedonic desire are mixed and blurred with disgust.

As it is known, interaction emerges with social communication. Substantially, the norms of the society we were born into determine our behavioral acts, communication styles, and interactions while expressing our emotions. Social constructivism theory -which was pioneered by Vygotsky, Piaget, and Glasersfeld- states that learning is based on experience and interactions. Vygotsky argued that the cognitive functions of the individual are affected by social interactions, as well as by psychological development.

Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level and later on, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals.¹⁰¹

Theodore D. Kemper says: "In order for there to be an emotion, as we commonly understand it, there must be some autonomic component. Otherwise, we have only sensation or cognition." He states: "A major issue is whether or not some emotions are

¹⁰¹ <https://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/learning-theory-research/social-constructivism/>, accessed May 25, 2021.

‘primary’ or more ‘fundamental’ than others.” He investigated primal emotions through the perspectives of evolutionary, ontogenetic, cross-cultural, physiological, and social-relational.¹⁰² Kemper claims that primary emotions are considered basic emotions which are exposed through the survival reflex and are displayed in the very early period of childhood. Kemper argues that research has proven that primal emotions are active around age 2 before babies begin to use the language actively.

Ridgeway, Waters, and Kucza (1985) found the following percentages of 18-23-month-old children who knew the meaning of the emotion terms or their synonyms: happy (77%), sad (50%), afraid (47%), and angry (43%). By 24-29 months of age, when language production is sufficiently advanced, the following percentages of children used the four emotion terms, or their synonyms: happy (73%), sad (50%), afraid (50%), and angry (50%). In both the comprehension and production modes, the percentages for the four hypothesized primary emotions exceeded those for any other recognized emotions, for example, loving, liking, surprised, bored, ashamed, shy, hating, disgusted, jealous, guilty, or their synonyms. Fehr and Russell (1984) also argued for the linguistic precedence of primary emotions.¹⁰³

Additionally, Ekman accounts facial expressions of the universal emotions can be counted as fear, anger, sadness, disgust, surprise, and happiness as detailed in the first chapter.¹⁰⁴ Scientists interested in evolutionary theory generally accept disgust as one of the primary emotions. Disgust which is mentioned here is associated with the reflex to survive against poisoning or contamination. Rozin et al. also identify food rejection by mouth as core disgust in their early studies as I mentioned in the introduction. Later, he and his colleagues claim that disgust should not only be limited to core disgust. Yet, they point out that they do not give up their consideration about core disgust. They admit that disgust can be experienced through body products, animals (which remind people the spoiled food and body wastes; like a rat, insects, cockroaches, flies, etc.), sex, personal hygiene, body’s envelope violations, and death. They nominate all these types of disgust

¹⁰² Theodore D. Kemper, “How Many Emotions Are There? Wedding the Social and the Autonomic Components”, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 93, Number 2, (September 1987) pp. 263-89. This content downloaded from 192.148.225.018 on September 07, 2017 19:02:25 PM www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdf/10.1086/228745, accessed April 17, 2021.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.paulekman.com/about/paul-ekman/>, About Paul Ekman | Emotion Psychologist, accessed February 20, 2021.

under the title of animal reminder disgust. They state that “Anything reminds us that we are animals elicits disgust.”¹⁰⁵

The general opinion about secondary emotions is that they are learned emotions during socialization. From the evolutionary perspective, it is believed that secondary emotions are the successors of universal emotions. Kemper gives the samples of secondary emotions as follows; fear is followed by guilt, anger is followed by shame, fear and anger are followed by hate, jealousy, envy, and happiness is followed by pride, gratitude, loving, and being loved.¹⁰⁶

Even though disgust is categorized as a primary emotion, it is also related to other emotions as we shall see in this chapter. To investigate this, we should also show that disgust directed towards someone can be analyzed through contempt, marginalizing, or stigmatization. But as we shall see, disgust towards someone is also related to disgust towards things and objects.

As we have noticed, the prevailing view of disgust is that disgusting things have low status. This is an externalization process of “disgusting” so that it becomes possible to define the boundaries for the things possessing the same features. For instance, wastes are disgusting because of their smell and features of their appearance. Unfortunately, anyone can admit that the disgusting features of the garbage inflicts its loathsomeness on scavengers. Furthermore, preconceptions of humans apply those features to the groups showing similar or identical features. This approach also set bounds between the dissimilar groups inside the society. To ensure its safety, social reflex makes very clear distinctions among these different groups. It is important to emphasize that the unity of the group is created by the description of the “Other”.

¹⁰⁵ Jonathan Haidt, Clark McCauley, and Paul Rozin, “Individual Differences in Sensitivity to Disgust: A Scale Sampling Seven Domains of Disgust Elicitors”, *Person Individual Differences*, (1994), Vol. 16, No 5, pp. 701-713.

¹⁰⁶ Theodore D. Kemper, “How Many Emotions Are There? Wedding the Social and the Autonomic Components”, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 93, Number 2, (September 1987), pp. 263-89.

In her *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, Julia Kristeva states that primitive humans who isolated themselves from the threat of wild animals used to see these animals as the representatives of slaughter and limitless sexuality. In the primitive age, humans defined the meaning of animalistic through the features of predators and prey since life was mostly based on threats of predators and the food supply by prey. Thus, the perception is related to the survival function as a community.

The abject confronts us, on the one hand, with those fragile states where man strays on the territories of *animals*. Thus, by way of abjection, primitive societies have marked out a precise area of their culture in order to remove it from the threatening world of animals, or animalism, which were imagined as representatives of sex and murder.¹⁰⁷

In short, norms and “what is normal” are created through beliefs and viewpoints. Broadly speaking, I agree with Kristeva, because oral rejection, which allows us to avoid something poisonous, could be an instinctive type of disgust. Yet, the animal reminder disgust types were formed due to various social norms. Hence, Kristeva admits that primitive humans made the definition of “identical” through the features of humans. Despite this, she claims that the dissimilarity was firstly defined on the distinctions between humans and animals. She reclaims that in case of a deviation from the norms of the community, disgust will emerge to keep the community as a whole. She also identifies disgust as a vague field of the rules of the society which is neither accepted nor rejected.

On the other hand, religion has always been an important instrument in determining the basic principles of social life. This arises a basic question; do people of the same religion, but of different races and cultures, for example, a Muslim Turk, a Muslim Arab, or a Muslim Indian, view disgust in same the frame? If odour and taste are considered fundamental in disgust, a food prohibited by religion can be considered as a study subject. Is it a coincidence that foods that are not suitable for consumption in religions are positioned through disgust?

¹⁰⁷ Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror; An Essay on Abjection*, Trans. Leon S. Roudiez, New York: Columbia University Press, 1982, pp. 12-13.

Jewish and Islamic religious rules include many forms of disgust, such as consuming pork which is forbidden in their scriptures. The reason for this is that pig is considered dirty, impure, and profane in Islam and it is so because of what the pig consumes.¹⁰⁸ Undoubtedly, we could say the same for the chicken and yet it is constantly consumed by Muslims, and this identical characteristic of chicken is ignored by them. This situation can be detected in the consumption of wine, too. Christians who believe in the same god consume pork. Also, wine is considered sacred by Christians. Such rules show that the object or thing that is disgusted is formed in line with the cultural and religious assumptions specific to a particular society.

Another example can be given from the Torah. The dietary laws of the Jews were regulated under the name kosher. Kosher, which means suitable foods that must be consumed according to the religious norms has similar characteristics to the concept of halal in Islam. A brief explanation for kosher is as follows; “The rules are based on distinguishing between pure and impure, and one can apply it to every stage of her/his life.”¹⁰⁹ Kosher rules are restricted to the Israelites. Consuming pigs, reptiles, and insects is considered disgusting according to these rules. In addition, the milk of foreign women who are not from Israelites is equivalent to the milk of animals that are forbidden to consume by religion.¹¹⁰

Then the following question arises; “How far does the limit of disgust extend in the social structure; in terms of religion, culture, law, tradition, and education?” The feeling of disgust, which has complicated relationships with other emotions sometimes hides behind other emotions. After this question a new query can appear; “Is it possible to clarify and distinguish the points where disgust is mixed with other emotions?”

If someone starts to act with her/his moral values, social teachings, emotional approaches come to the fore which in many occasions cannot be detached from her/his social

¹⁰⁸ <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/domuz> accessed February 15, 2021.

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.turkyahudileri.com/index.php/tr/yahudilik/111-kosher-yemek>, accessed January 25, 2021.

¹¹⁰ Ali Osman Kurt, “Yahudilikte Koşer ve Koşer Ekonomisi”, *C.Ü. İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, 2010, Cilt: XIV, Vol: 2, pp. 103-149.

structure. While experiencing an emotion another emotion or emotions can also be felt. The stimuli that are taken into consideration while experiencing these feelings activate various mechanisms.

To investigate the answer to the questions asked above, I will take a closer look at the emotional states of desire, fear, and hate. In doing so, I want to evaluate the circumstances in which these emotions are aroused. Also, I will examine these emotions' intersections with disgust through the standpoint of philosophers like Freud, Lacan, Kristeva, Bataille, Marcuse, Spivak, Ahmed.

I am aware that these emotions cannot be examined in detail here. Examining and expressing each emotion may require a single master thesis. Yet, my goal is to identify the points where these emotions intersect with disgust in different and discrete categories. While the emotions of fear, hatred, and unlimited desire are experienced, it is seen that they have many common stages related to the emotion of disgust.

This section explains that the members of the society have diagrams, and schemas for identifying the "Other", foreign and different while displaying offensive and negative emotions. The perception and positioning of the body through moral or rational values in culture is effective on the interpretation and expression of emotions as I examined in the first chapter. Hereby, to demonstrate the dominance of disgust's expressions as a feeling over the other emotions, I will begin with desire and continue by examining the emotions of fear and hatred.

1.1 Desire, Pleasure, Violation, and Disgust

In its broadest sense, desire can be defined as wishing or requesting something to happen in an enthusiastic or yearning mood. It should be noted that the limits of the wishes and the motivations of realizing them are not standard. Surely, desire needs motivation. In addition, it needs an object, a subject, or a factor associated with this motivation that should bring out the targeted circumstance.

Does desire arise from an impulse, consciousness, or temperament? How do active and passive desires reflect on human nature? There are many scientific fields that seek answers to these questions. However, the concept of desire as an emotion is a subject matter that is mostly studied in philosophy and psychoanalysis.

It is important to emphasize that the viewpoints of desire are investigated in two categories in philosophy, namely through affirmative and negatory perspectives. The standpoint that stretches from Plato to Freud and Lacan examines desire through absence and deficiency. Their perspective on desire is through the subject's desire which is formed by deprivation and lack along with negative consequences. However, Spinoza, Nietzsche, Deleuze, and Guattari interpret desire as an impulse that provides positive energy for the living of human beings.¹¹¹

The passionate, inadmissible, and insatiable desire is reminded with arrogance in society in general. Historically, desire beyond the acceptance of the community has been considered a violation of the "normal". The desire which is considered "abnormal" according to social values includes the negative meanings of immoderation and dissatisfaction. It can even be evaluated as a sign of sin.

When we examine the literature, it is determined that the most remarkable studies on desire were made by Freud. Especially, desire plays a significant role in Freud's Oedipus Complex Theory. In addition, Freud analyses Shakespeare's *Hamlet* through psychoanalysis; the desire for mother and law of father is another study on desire.¹¹² The Oedipus complex is also used by Freud in Little Hans' case to decipher Hans' nuisance. He defends that Hans' fear of horses is compatible with the fear of being castrated by his father, due to the sexual desires for his mother. Freud states that children experience this emotional phase -he calls this period the phallic stage- between the ages of 3-5. Moreover, girls' similar moods are called Electra Complex. The love of the girl for her father and

¹¹¹ Eugene W. Holland, *Deleuze ve Guattari' nin Anti-Oedipus'u, Şizoanalize Giriş*, Trans. Ali Utku, Mukadder Erkan, İstanbul: Otonom Publishing House, 2013, p. 58.

¹¹² Sigmund Freud, *Düşlerin Yorumu I*, Trans. Emre Kapkın, İstanbul: Payel Publishing House, 1996, pp. 313-311.

the sense of competition with her mother are handled in the same way in terms of the opposite sex. Freud defends that child lives this period in a dilemma of desire and fear. In that sense, desire and fear can be detected as mirrors of each other in Freud's analyses.

Furthermore, Freud states in *Ego and Id* that the ego, or the "I", in other words, is not congenital. He claims that there is no "I" for a baby. With the progress of the child's language and awareness of the "Other", the construction process of the "I" begins. The individual who detached him/herself from the outside world can never fully realize this rupture. He refers to the sense of the subject's self-perception that is defined by "Other" will never be rediscovered once it has been lost. He argues that before this loss, there was a sort of desire at the place of the "I". Freud identifies that the loss of the object of desire will be filled with offensive emotions.¹¹³

Essentially, Freud explains libido as the sexual behavior which forms the basis of human's vitality. In *Discontents of Civilization*, he examines civilization and human life as a struggle of love and hate. In Freud's view, civilization entails suppressing humans' desires and impulses. He determines that this process has devastating and destructive effects on people's drives. The impulse for blessing life is named after Eros since it represents love and creativity. The destructive impulses of individuals are named after Thanatos who is the God of war and the ruler of death.¹¹⁴

In *Eros and Civilization* Herbert Marcuse synthesizes the thoughts of Freud, Hegel, and Marx through the cultural structures in the industrialized societies.¹¹⁵ Marcuse argues that industrialized societies suppress people's personal and sexual lives by an artificial state of happiness created by the feeling of being a member of that society. Marcuse claims that life instincts can be driven by liberation rather than repression in shaping the environment and transforming nature. He states that this liberation will achieve success

¹¹³ Sigmund Freud, *Bir Yanılsamanın Geleceği ve Uygarlık ve Hoşnutsuzlukları*, Trans. Aziz Yardımlı, İstanbul: İdea, 2000, pp. 21-22.

¹¹⁴ Aziz Yardımlı, "Eros Modernlik ve Ruh Çözümleme", fore-word, in Sigmund Freud, *Bir Yanılsamanın Geleceği-Uygarlık ve Hoşnutsuzlukları*, İstanbul: İdea Publishing House, 2000.

¹¹⁵ Prof. Dr. Nermin Abadan, "Kitap Tahlili, Herbert Marcuse, One Dimensional Man", <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/37133>, accessed April 20, 2021.

with artistic activities and aesthetics. In addition, he argues that a harmonious autonomy can be established against cruelty and death through liberation.¹¹⁶

Marcuse examines desire through the bard Orpheus and Narcissus' characteristics who have an important place in Greek mythology. As a result of the punishment of the Hellenic Gods, Narcissus falls in love with himself when he sees his reflection on the water. He could not stop looking at his image; day by day, he destroyed himself, and eventually he died. In this manner, Narcissus represents the arrogance of the human being. Freud defines Narcissism as "directing the libido -sexual energy- which is isolated from the outside world to the ego (me)" as Marcuse quotes in the paragraph below:

In other words, narcissism may contain the germ of a different reality principle: the libidinal cathexis of the ego (one's own body) may become the source and reservoir for a new libidinal cathexis of the objective world-transforming this world into a new mode of being. This interpretation is corroborated by the decisive role which narcissistic libido plays, according to Freud, in sublimation. In *The Ego and the Id*, he asks "Whether all sublimation does not take place through the agency of the ego, which begins by changing sexual object-libido into narcissistic libido and then, perhaps, goes on to give it another aim." If this is the case, then all sublimation would begin with the reactivation of narcissistic libido, which somehow overflows and extends to objects. The hypothesis all but revolutionizes the idea of sublimation: it hints at a non-repressive mode of sublimation which results from an extension rather than from a constraining deflection of the libido.¹¹⁷

The topic can be examined through another Marcuse's anecdote that is about Orpheus. Marcuse cites that Orpheus is a poet who fascinates the audience with his lyre. He devotes himself to be loved and he wants a non-violent and peaceful life. Marcuse suggests that society can manage the pacification status of its population by controlling nature.

According to Marcuse, Orpheus distributes love and desire to everybody through his art. Later he falls in love with someone of the same gender. On the other hand, Narcissus keeps his love and desire for himself. The preciousness they both dedicated to love and

¹¹⁶ Herbert Marcuse, *Eros ve Uygarlık, Freud Üzerine Felsefî Bir İnceleme*, Translation. Aziz Yardımlı, Ankara: İdea Publishing House, Third Version, 1998, pp. 128-129.

¹¹⁷ Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization, A philosophical Enquiry into Freud*, USA: The Beacon Press, 1974, p. 68.

desire prepared their extinction. Marcuse associates these Gods with Freud's analyses of narcissistic personality disorder:

The Orphic-Narcissistic images are those of the Great Refusal: refusal to accept separation from the libidinous object (or subject). The refusal aims at liberation -at the reunion of what has become separated. Orpheus is the archetype of the poet as liberator and creator: he establishes a higher order in the world- an order without repression. In his person, art, freedom and culture are eternally combined. He is the poet of redemption, the god who brings peace and salvation by pacifying man and nature, not through force but through song:

*Orpheus, the priest, the mouthpiece of the gods,
Deterred wild men from murders and foul foods,
And hence was said to tame the raging moods,
Of tigers and of lions...
In times of yore, it was the poet's part --
The part of sapience -- to distinguish plain,
Between the public and the private things,
Between the sacred things and things profane,
To check the ills that sexual straying brings,
To show how laws for married people stood,
To build the towns, to carve the laws in wood.¹¹⁸*

Eventually, to live boundless desire, Orpheus had chosen homosexuality to share his love, and due to the fact, he was slaughtered by Thracian women. Orpheus, in Marcuse's words, who desired to live with all aspects of "a complete Eros" was sentenced to death, because he crossed the limits of the "normal". Marcuse summarizes this argument as follows:

Eros is just as fatal as his deadly counterpart, the death instinct. Their destructive force derives from the fact that they strive for a gratification which culture cannot grant: gratification as such and as an end in itself at any moment. The instincts must therefore be deflected from their goal, inhibited in their aim. Civilization begins when the primary objective -namely, integral satisfaction of needs- is effectively renounced.¹¹⁹

In other words, if pleasure and desire are not suppressed, pain and disappointments will be experienced. Eros is defeated by his opposite Thanatos and his desire of living limitless life destructs himself just like Narcissus and Orpheus. Following in the footsteps of Freud, Marcuse argues that the pleasure principle turns into a positive factor only when it is

¹¹⁸ Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization, A philosophical Enquiry into Freud*, USA: The Beacon Press, 1974, p. 68.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. p.12.

reconciled with society to improve the living conditions. Freud argues that living in harmony with the community requires one to suppress her/his desire, sexuality, and she/he has to choose working and producing something. He adds that suppressing the internal impulsive features of pleasure, freedom, and violation will help to reach the goal.

Lacan is another important name in psychoanalytic literature when it comes to desire. His viewpoint adds a different perspective to Freud's theory of desire. Lacan describes the mother's breast and the child as a special type of attachment which has two ends. The mother's breast symbolizes delight and pleasure for the baby. The subject who loses this bond goes after the loss throughout her/his lifetime and chases this delight and pleasure.

After the 1960s, Lacan began to work on the mirror stage hypothesis in which he examined the shaping process of ego through identifying one's specular image. According to Lacan, the child who sees her/himself in the mirror and experiences her/his mother introducing her/himself in the mirror determines a character for her/himself in line with these definitions. In other words, the mirror helps the infant to develop a self-description. The child identifies her/his image through her/his mother's eyes.¹²⁰

The function of the mirror stage thus turns out, in my view, to be a particular case of the function of imagos, which is to establish a relationship between an organism and its reality –or, as they say, between the *Innenwelt* and the *Umwelt* [the 'inner world' and the 'outer world'] (*Ecrits*, 96).¹²¹

In *An Introduction to Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, Bruce Fink points out the following determinations for desire:

As Lacan said, meaning is determined by the public through the eyes of the "Other"... Desire arises from absence. Once you get what you want, you do not want it anymore like you did the first time. Satisfaction buries the desire under the ground... If you want the truth, there is no object of human desire... In Lacan's words; one's desire is to be desired by the "Other"... Yet, the "Other" has been missing. There is no God, no ultimate being that can tell who you are and what you do. No signifier that can answer what is the meaning of "I" in the "Other".¹²²

¹²⁰ <https://www.lacanonline.com/2010/09/what-does-lacan-say-about-the-mirror-stage-part-i/>, accessed April 20, 2021.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Bruce Fink, *Lacancı Psikanalize Bir Giriş*, Trans. Özgür Ögütçen, İstanbul: Encore Publishing House, 2016, pp. 88-98

To be more precise, Lacan claims that the child who discovers her/himself in the mirror follows her/his mother's expressions and descriptions. The reflection of the child in the mirror perceived through his/her mother's eyes is the idealization of the outside world, which cannot be reached by the child. The desire which has been lost in the desire of the "Other" will always be incomplete -Lacan summarizes this situation as a phallus that a mother cannot have- and will never be achieved.

Lacan argues that the satisfaction of desire can be experienced through fantasy. According to him, fantasy provides a special fulfilment to desire. Lacan identifies that the subject is erased and disappears along with the fantasy. The subject does not know the desire she/he is constantly looking for and tries to end this quest by making choices among the signifiers. Fink indicates that Lacan accepts the law and repressed desire as one and the same.¹²³ In this context, Lacan evaluates the destructive side of desire because of the deficiency of its satisfaction.

According to psychoanalysis, when people get tired of searching for this loss, they do not take responsibility and blame others for the things that go wrong in their lives. In the end, satisfaction becomes a real problem for them. Fink identifies that this struggle is a painful process for people. Nevertheless, people continue to be exposed to this situation, as if they are satisfied with it.¹²⁴

So where do disgust and desire intersect? What is the connection between desire and disgust? Lacan, who brings a philosophical perspective to psychoanalysis, generates arguments about desire and disgust. Fink writes:

The French have a fine word for this kind of pleasure in pain, or satisfaction in dissatisfaction: *jouissance*. It qualifies the kind of "kick" someone may get out of punishment, self-punishment, doing something that is so pleasurable it hurts (sexual climax, for example), or doing something so painful, it becomes pleasurable. Most people deny getting pleasure or satisfaction from their symptoms, but the outside observer can usually see that they enjoy their symptoms, that they "get off" on their symptoms in a way that is too round-about "dirty" or "filthy" to be described as pleasurable or satisfying.

¹²³ Ibid. pp. 111-342,343.

¹²⁴ Bruce Fink, *A Clinical Introduction to Lacanian Psychoanalysis, Theory and Technique*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: Harvard University Press, 1997, pp. 8-9.

The term *jouissance* nicely captures the notion of getting off by any means necessary, however clean or dirty.¹²⁵

According to this quote, Lacan defines the distinction between desire and disgust as follows: There is an unclear resemblance between the peak of the unlimited, unbounded desire and the feeling of disgust. Living without inhibited desire becomes equivalent to ignoring the emotion of disgust. In many satisfaction situations, people feel guilty about their fantasies, especially sexual ones. Finally, this approach determines that the feeling of disgust is an emotion that helps to regulate the fantasy and satisfaction states.

The Bulgarian-French philosopher Julia Kristeva, who follows Freud's footsteps, yet whose analyses, and interpretations differ from Freud, also examines the relationship between desire and disgust. Kristeva argues that what is considered disgusting by society has nothing to do with pollution or disease. According to her, what is disgusting is a *thing* that breaks the systematic order in the satisfaction process.¹²⁶

Kristeva argues that the subject which sticks to the "Other" expresses and creates her/himself via the "Other". Just like Freud's statements which could be found in *Mourning and Melancholia*. She suggests that the subject creates her/himself as signified by the "Other and/or as a symbol in the Other". She further adds that the formation of language and culture of the subject is established while this person is searching for the object with desire. Finally, the subject who is seeking desire discovers that the object of desire is absent at all. Figuring out that there is nothing to be found provides a confronting space for the subject. According to Kristeva, at this stage, the subject also feels lost in this deprivation. The subject who feels insignificant and searches for her/his missing half begins to mourn about this despair. She defines that the subject prefers to live her/his mourning by suppressing, avoiding, or hiding and turns the whole attention to her/himself with a narcissistic attitude. Disgust and abomination are expressed in Kristeva as a moment of narcissistic crisis as it is summarized below:

¹²⁵ Ibid. pp. 8-10.

¹²⁶ Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror; An Essay on Abjection*, Trans. Leon S. Roudiez, New York: Columbia University Press, 1982, p. 15.

Two seemingly contradictory causes bring about the narcissistic crisis that provides, along with its truth, a view of the abject. *Too much strictness on the part of the Other*, confused with the One, and the Law. *The lapse of the Other*, which shows through the breakdown objects of desire. In both instances, the abject appears in order to uphold “I” with the Other. The abject is the violence of mourning for an “object” that has always already been lost. The abject shatters the wall of repression and its judgements. It takes the ego back to its source on the abominable limits from which, in order to be, the ego has broken away -it assigns it a source in the non-ego, drive, and death. Abjection is a resurrection that has gone through death (of the ego). It is an alchemy that transforms death drive into a start of life, of new significance.¹²⁷

Kristeva states that while seeking desire, the stage of “disgusting” should be accepted as the stage of demolishing the judgements and borders against the suppressed things. Disgust is characterized by her as a return of “I” to the foul, profane, and hideous archaic origins. She states that “Abjection appears as a rite of defilement and pollution in the paganism that accompanies societies with a dominant or surviving matrilinear character.”¹²⁸

In short, Kristeva expresses that repressed disgust can be found in archaic origins. This phenomenon is summarized as breaking the law and taboo which refers to the law of the father just like in Freud’s writings. She argues that a person who is in a narcissistic crisis puts her/his ego in front of the imposed social rules and prohibitions. She/he frees her/himself and her/his mind from restricted desire. The subject will remove the borders with the help of disgust. Longing for the defined unique self which can never be reached is actually longing for what has never existed. If a subject cannot cope with this absence during the search, she/he would sink into narcissism.

The philosopher and anthropologist Georges Bataille, who also discusses the relationship between disgust and desire investigates Freud’s analysis of Eros. If we remember, Freud states that life will become positive with the following principles: to focus on subjects that arrange human’s daily life with practical and useful works. In addition, he argues that purifying the animal aspects, ensuring independence from these features, and restraining the desire will help the seeker to find her/his confident and safe path.

¹²⁷ Ibid. p.15.

¹²⁸ Ibid. p.17.

However, Bataille adds another perspective to these opinions. According to Bataille humans are differentiated from animals by the violations of limitless desire that endangers the order, as well as, by the awareness of social norms. Bataille states that evil is presented as a form of action that denies the given order, but also evil searches, and encourages the choices about the boundaries of freedom.

Thus, Bataille specifies that the subjectiveness of desire emerges along the process of searching and structuring the personality. His notion of desire includes beauty and attractiveness despite their disgusting and violent features. Eroticism and pornography are at the forefront of Bataille's studies. However, Susan Sontag refers to the authenticity and power of distorted consciousness of pornography and argues that the pornographic side of Bataille's literary language can be evaluated as an approach to death in her essay *Pornographic Imagination*. She claims that Bataille's obscene, suggestive, and desire-charged works are the experiences of vital energy through exaggeration. She claims that obsessive desires disrupt the sexual health of societies. Sontag states that the way to overthrow fear is to challenge pleasure and desire as well as death.¹²⁹

Bataille establishes the answer to the question of "Which is disgusting?" as; consuming instead of producing, preferring the profane instead of the sacred, as well choosing lust instead of working. Additionally, Bataille's approach about the roots of excluding the desire and the disgust from the socialized life can be read through this statement:

The line of development from taboos on incest, or menstrual blood to the religions of purity and of the soul's immortality is quite clear: it is always a matter of denying the human being's dependence on the natural given, of setting our dignity, our spiritual nature, our detachment, against animal avidity.¹³⁰

Offensive types of desire orientations direct humans towards their animalistic nature. In this context, desire is a bunker of both attractive and disgusting feelings. As Bataille

¹²⁹ Susan Sontag, *Pornografik İmgelem*, in Georges Bataille, *Gözün Hikayesi*, Ankara: Chiviyazıları Publishing House, 2014, pp. 17-72.

¹³⁰ Fred Botting and Scot Wilson Edited by, *The Bataille Reader*, Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1997, p. 250

claims that “Human will be a sacred creature when she/he admits that she/he has a soul. If she/he does not have a soul, she/he cannot be holy anyway.”¹³¹

Another intersection point of desire and disgust can be detected along with the ceremonies and festivals. In ancient times, archaic religious ceremonies and rituals were celebrated in ecstatic ways. In addition to these rituals, festivities were organized by the community before the harvest began for the fertility of that year’s crop. These festivals included the activities of sacrifice, consumption, drunkenness, enthusiasm, and chaos.

Dionysus festivals can be given as an example of these ceremonies. People who got rid of the routine of daily life, including the slaves, had the permission to live their desire, pleasure, and freedom with extremes on these days. The limits of “normal” were violated during these days. These festivals served to create moments of joy, and freedom, which were set for people to discharge their desires before they started their long periods of study. By the way, I would like to point out that in mythology both Orpheus and Narcissus characters -which I have examined through Marcuse’s viewpoint- are associated with Dionysus who is accepted as the God of pleasure, wine, and festivity. This identification was explained by Marcuse as being the opposite of the god who approved the reason.¹³²

Undeniably, humans are different from animals in making tools, working, creating a social life, and organizing it. Homo-sapiens have become humans by learning to control their bodies along with a set of rules and by applying this control mechanism to society. The desire to violate this system is considered inhuman or an instance of animalistic behavior. At the same time, humans want to forget about mortality by trying to dominate nature, and their bodies and souls.

¹³¹ Georges Bataille, *Din Kuramı, İnsanlaşma Sürecinde Dinin Oluşumu*, Trans. M. Mukadder Yakupoğlu, İstanbul: Göçebe Publishing House, 1997, p.29.

¹³² Herbert Marcuse, *Eros ve Uygarlık, Freud Üzerine Felsefi Bir İnceleme*, Trans. Aziz Yardımlı, Ankara: İdea Publishing House, 3rd ed., 1998, p. 122.

If desire or lust's periphery reaches an inconsistent, illegal, or unstable content, this emotion must be suppressed in order to integrate with society and its rules. Yet, it is the disgust against the socially normal acts on the stage, so to say, that evokes the archaic feeling of desire. From this perspective, disgust helps the person to feel true desire and pleasure. But the feeling of disgust that cultures create tries to suppress the individual against the society for the survival of the group.

In *Purity and Danger*, the anthropologist Mary Douglas explains that the things which threaten the standards and create pollution threaten the sacred and secular. This is identified as matter out of place which means that what is regarded as dirt in a specific society.

If we can abstract pathogenicity and hygiene from our notion of dirt, we are left with the old definition of dirt as matter out of place. This is a very suggestive approach. It implies two conditions: a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order. Dirt then is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is a system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements. This idea of dirt takes us straight into the field of symbolism and promises a link-up with more obviously symbolic systems of purity.¹³³

Douglas determines that society's unique norms exist to regulate people which it contains. She justifies these determinations by studying several primitive tribes and by reviewing the books of scholars who have studied them. She accounts that the exclusion of desire which is equated with deviance and disgust is considered equivalent to the exclusion of pollution in primitive cultures. She states that communities accept lust, adultery, incest, etc. as the behavior patterns that pollute the body both physically and socially.¹³⁴

For these reasons, the repressed desire is imprisoned in the fantasy world of the one who desires. Taboos, as stated earlier, form the basis of rules that were established to serve humans to suppress their animal aspects or animalistic desires. Sex performed without adhering to established social rules is accepted as disgusting by society whereas sex

¹³³ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger, an analysis on the concepts of pollution and taboo*, pp. 36-37.

¹³⁴ Ibid. pp. 125-145.

performed under a marriage contract is considered sacred. At the same time, sexual intercourse of animals has never been called making love. Animal sex is described as mating to breed. Thus, the forms of desire that contain animalistic features have been excluded by religions, traditions, and customs.

Homosexuality, incest, pornographic behavior, necrophobia, or being interested in materials such as pictures and films which contain these behaviors create a feeling of disgust by “normal” people. A significant portion of the news attributed to evil sexual sensations is headlined with the statements of disgusting or loathing (like it has been given as samples below in the footnote).¹³⁵

In ancient Greek, the word *porne* means prostitute and *graphie* means description, painting, or writing. Pornography is a term that originated in French and refers to publications, images, etc. that are intended to arouse sexual desire while also being contrary to moral values. Herz quotes “Feelings of lust can be so powerful that they override disgust...When you are feeling sexy ‘disgusting’ cues of sex are less disgusting.”¹³⁶ It can be deduced that living the desire freely causes a decrease in the feeling of disgust.

An example can be added to this situation from the social structure of today’s Japanese society. Japanese are known as traditionalist, respectful, humble and timid. They give extreme importance to the family through their social characteristics. However, when it comes to the pornographic film industry, it can be seen that such films shot in Japan are intriguingly contrary to their social structure. Women are subjected to sexual assault and advanced violence in Japanese pornographic films that are surprisingly “at a disgusting, nauseating at tearful level” just like Rachel Herz’s statement.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2020/gundem/izmirde-igrenc-olay-once-kadini-taciz-etti-sonra-polise-saldirdi-6177571/> accessed December 22, 2020

¹³⁶ Rachel Herz, *That’s Disgusting: Unravelling the Mysteries of Repulsion*, p. 196.

¹³⁷ <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/yazarlar/2019/11/23/erotizmden-pornoya-yesilcamdan-japonyaya-last>, accessed December 22, 2020.

Herz recounts that today, fantasy has been replaced by eroticism, eroticism by pornography, and pornography by violence. According to her, violence combined with desire converts this activity into a casual and common practice. And, this brings us back to the animalistic feature of having the instinct of disgust only to survive. She narrates that one who experiences extreme desire and pleasure becomes evident for discussion.¹³⁸

On the contrary, when we examine Holland's discourse of Spinoza -who was the master of Deleuze- it can be concluded that desire is identified as a revolutionary notion that encourages innovation and creates the real world in simple terms. When the history of the world is reviewed, it is clear that previous generations have attempted to minimize desire and pleasure. Holland argues that Deleuze and Guattari stated that desire triggers the creation and joy of living.¹³⁹

Marcuse, on the other hand, examines the negative effects of desire through production, and consumption for the modern, civilized world. It is known that the emergence of the bourgeois class with the industrial revolution brought the outcome of the disappearance of feudal structures. He claims that the bourgeois revolution was built on individualism. Marcuse argues that the members of societies who based their point of view on the concept of individuality choose to constitute a self-centered structure system over time. He adds that the concepts of maximum pleasure and maximum profit have become equivalent in the course of time. According to him, the idea is that the welfare of society should be based on the production and consumption of these produced goods which are imposed by power. He further claims that the commodities purchased to become the objects of libido and he defines that today pleasure is fully commodified. He identifies that feeling the desire and taking pleasure in the realization of this desire has become extremely important and extravagant in the consumption culture.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Rachel Herz, *That's Disgusting: Unravelling the Mysteries of Repulsion*, p. 201.

¹³⁹ Eugene W. Holland, *Deleuze ve Guattari' nin Anti-Oedipus' u, Şizo-analize Giriş*, Translation. Ali Utku, Mukadder Erkan, İstanbul: Otonom Publishing House, 2013, pp. 58-59.

¹⁴⁰ Herbert Marcuse, *Eros ve Uygarlık, Freud Üzerine Felsefi Bir İnceleme*, Trans. Aziz Yardımlı, Ankara: İdea Publishing House, 3rd ed., 1998, p. 12.

Similarly, Lacan's theory of desire -the subject's constant search for this desire and the attempt to fill this deficient integrity with phantasms- comes into being with capitalism's dissatisfaction. The object of consumption has been replaced with the object of desire which cannot be satisfied. In the meantime, a narcissistic understanding has replaced the "I". Beauty, symmetrical facial, and body features like being thin and tall are presented by the system as an ideal that should be preferred by the members of the society. People desire to appear in these ways and incur many materials and compensate for moral costs to achieve these goals. People who are accepted as obese, fat, too short, or "not white enough (?)" are always characterized and marginalized as "disgusting" in the media, social networks, press, and interactions between people.¹⁴¹

The system that guides the subject determines the desire of the super-ego. Desire can be transformed into an object unconsciously. Some objects of desire are considered disgusting. For instance, excessive desires, which are not accepted by society can be regarded as disgusting and can create permeable emotional areas including disgust. On the ambiguity of disgust Kristeva writes:

...The abject is perverse because it neither gives up nor assumes a prohibition, a rule, or a law; but turns them aside, misleads, corrupts; uses them, takes advantage of them, the better to deny them.¹⁴²

Excessive consumption, exploitation of religion in underdeveloped regions, exploitation of labor by capital, gaining unfair income by using corruption and interest relations, pornographic publications, patriarchal and male-dominated opinions, and even the transformation of the female body into a commodity in daily life... Aren't these areas uncertain boundaries and grey zones of societies where desire, lust, and pleasure become vague just like disgust?

¹⁴¹ <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/galeri/sozleri-olay-yaratti-hastalikli-igrenc-cirkin-6147417/5>, accessed December 22, 2020.

¹⁴² Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror; An Essay on Abjection*, Trans. Leon S. Roudiez, New York: Columbia University Press, 1982, p. 15.

1.2 Fear and Disgust

Neurologically, fear is considered a primary emotion by evolutionary biologists. It is detected by the amygdala area of the brain just like the other emotions. When fear is felt, the signal is transmitted from the brain to the nervous system. Güneş Ünal who works for Behavioral Neuroscience Laboratory on fear memory states that most of our fears are learned fears. He argues that learned fears which we have experienced also have the possibility of being forgotten. Ünal adds that the brain writes new and different codes over the old codes and creates new fears. Thus, even if an innate fear is forgotten over time, it becomes possible to add a fear over this forgotten fear and this process can create anxiety disorder. Furthermore, Ünal adds that in animal tests -the rodents and primates whose amygdala were destroyed- it was found that the feeling of fear disappears and a fearless creature emerges at the end of these experiments.¹⁴³

Fear affects a creature's decision-making mechanism. A terrified person may freeze or run away in order to escape. Fear is detected as a vital and biological reaction for survival. In the modern world, the psychology of fear emerges with symptoms such as anxiety, phobia, and panic attacks. However, we cannot explain the experience of fear only through biological factors or neurological processes.

Humans create meanings of emotion, fill in the content of the meaning, and express it as a state of feeling. As Sara Ahmed writes:

Emotions are relational: they involve (re)actions or relations of “towardness” or “awayness” in relation to such objects. The bear becomes the object in both senses: we have a contact with an object and an orientation towards that object. To be more specific, the “aboutness” of fear involves a reading of contact: the child reads the contact as dangerous, which involves apprehending the bear as fearsome. We can note also that the “reading” then identifies the bear as the cause of the feeling. The child becomes fearful and the bear becomes fearsome: the attribution of feeling to an object (I feel afraid because you are fearsome) is an effect of the encounter, which moves the subject away from the object. Emotions involve such affective forms of reorientation.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Güneş Ünal, “Korkunun Hafızası Nasıl Çalışır”, *Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Haberler*, 08/10/2018 <https://haberler.boun.edu.tr/tr/haber/korkunun-hafizasi-nasil-calisir>, accessed February 21, 2021.

¹⁴⁴ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Edinburgh University Press, 2004, p. 8.

Ahmed argues that “white bodies” underline their differences by establishing closeness among themselves. She explains this act of establishing closeness with the feeling of fear with the examples she is giving in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*.

Ahmed states that fear can be an act of protection. This act of protection starts from a singular point of view and leads to the development of behavior patterns that form the basis of all social interactions. She first draws attention to the fact that fear and anxiety occur with the loss of the object. She then touches on how fear limits the body’s mobility. Finally, she makes the reader think about how the power uses fear to recreate itself to become stronger. In the following paragraph, Ahmed describes how fear compels a person to turn in upon herself/himself:

Emotions may involve *readings of such openness*, as spaces where bodies and worlds meet and leak into each other. Fear involves reading such openings as dangerous; the openness of the body to the world involves a sense of danger which is *anticipated as a future pain or injury*. In fear, the world presses against the body; the body shrinks back from the world in the desire to avoid the object of fear. Fear involves shrinking the body; it restricts the body’s mobility precisely insofar as it seems to prepare the body for flight.¹⁴⁵

The way people regulate their openness out of fear can also be detected from a societal perspective. Foucault’s work on confinement might be regarded as an example for Ahmed’s observations about “towardness” or “awayness”. In *Madness and Civilization*, Foucault describes the enclosure techniques for the ones who are not considered the members of society. He examines the process through which some people are constructed as fearsome and thus are to be avoided (“awayness”). Foucault’s research explores the isolations in the Middle Ages during the periods of leprosy and plague outbreaks. He defines patients as collectively isolated in certain regions and hospitals in all European cities. One of the reasons for this isolation was the fear of contagion. The path followed for lepers was replaced by the plague, smallpox carriers, sexually ill carriers, mad people, vagrants, poor people, and immigrants over time.

¹⁴⁵ Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, p. 69.

Paul Rainbow is a professor of anthropology who edited the essential works of Foucault between 1954-1984. Rainbow states that the address of all the texts of Foucault overlaps the concept of subjectivity which means that “the way a human being turns him or herself into a subject.”¹⁴⁶

The history of subjectivity was begun by studying the social divisions brought about in the name of madness, illness, and delinquency, along with their effects on the constitution of a rational and normal subject. It was also begun by attempting to identify the modes of objectification of the subject in knowledge disciplines [dans ses savoirs] such as those dealing with language, labor, and life.¹⁴⁷

This continuum creates a form of social acceptance which has the same route. However, the phenomenon of expulsion, exclusion, and closure become punitive. The system is disciplined by the published law of power. As Foucault points out in his early studies, authority needs instruments of discipline like law and punishment to rule the masses. The people have been homogenized and internalized the social rules with the emergence of social management methods and control devices of power. This situation laid the foundations for the development of self-controlling subjects in the future. Foucault argues that as these internalized rules ossified, subjects with self-control mechanisms were formed in society.

Currently, exile, deprivation, and exclusion have become enforceable for all kinds of marginalized segments. Indeed, all kinds of epidemics have served the systematic regulation functions of power since the 17th-century.¹⁴⁸ This process also is a process of the construction of the “Other”.

¹⁴⁶ Michel Foucault, *Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth*, edited by Paul Rainbow, Translated by Robert Hurley, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984, Penguin Books Ltd, October 09, 2019, iBook, p. 8.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 166.

¹⁴⁸ Michel Foucault, “Cüzzam ve Veba Salgını Dönemlerindeki Politik Denetim Modelleri”, Trans. Ali Artun, 15.05.2020, skop bülten.
<https://www.e-skop.com/skopbulten/cuzzam-ile-veba-salginlari-donemindeki-politik-denetim-modelleri/5761>, accessed February 21, 2021.

A person's internalization of the social regulations is also addressed by Sara Ahmed. In her book, where she examines fear in the scope of cultural politics, Ahmed states the following:

The fear announces itself through an ontological statement, a statement a self makes of itself and to itself – “I’m frightened.” Such statements of fear tell the other that they are the ‘cause’ of fear, in a way that is personal: “Now they were beginning to be afraid of me.”... The production of the black man as the object of fear depends on past histories of association: Negro, animal, bad, mean, ugly. The movement of fear between signs is what allows the object of fear to be generated in the present (the Negro is an animal, bad, mean, ugly). The movement between signs allows others to be attributed with emotional value, as “being fearsome”.¹⁴⁹

According to Ahmed, fear as an emotion affects the border between self and the “Other”. At the same time, she states that there is a given judgment for feared objects. This makes some objects look more frightening. Also, according to Ahmed, being afraid includes losing something -mother, family, homeland-. She states that the subject, who is afraid of, losing can develop a control mechanism against what she/he may lose.

Ahmet claims that the sovereign has the purpose of regulating “Others” to prove its power. Also, it gives the assurance of protecting its inner “optimal” people from the threatening fears. Ahmet says that the sovereign promises protection and the elimination of fear to achieve consent in civil society.¹⁵⁰

In addition, this approach can also be detected through some rules and regulations of religions which also may use fear as its main tool to direct and control people's lives. For instance, monotheistic religions attribute certain characteristics to their believers in order to distinguish the strangers. They command their believers not to be like them. They separate themselves from “Others” with certain rules. Some religious verses are based on defining the dissimilar. The concessions that a person who prepares her/his soul for the spiritual world are clearly stated in the rules of monotheistic religions. The entire religious rules which are applied by society are a contract that is made in order not to forget the bond established with God. The adoption of the rules by the community as a broad

¹⁴⁹ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Edinburgh University Press, 2004, pp. 63-64.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. pp. 63-80.

identical behavior pattern is considered as respect for the ancestors and the traditions of that society. People may experience less anxiety and uncertainty when the moral, religious, and sexual boundaries of their ancestral laws are clear. These regulations help people to clarify their belonging as a member of the group. However, it works the other way around as well; transgressing the law may lead to fear.

Freud argues that the basis of the fears is built by the taboos, and taboo is accepted as *divine fear*. He claims that breaking the taboo automatically brings punishment. According to Freud, the taboo is regarded as a system of punishment that was set long before inscriptions were invented. In *Totem and Taboo*, he argues that the person who breaks the taboo will be considered dirty and disgusting by the community. Also, anyone who contacts this profane loses his/her divinity and becomes dirty.¹⁵¹

Thus, disgust is an emotion that is learned just like fear. As mentioned earlier, contact is accepted as one of the important stages in experiencing disgust, like fear. Anxiety disorder is at the forefront of both emotions. Both the feeling of fear and disgust can lead to a phobia. For this reason, sometimes the expression of these two feelings can be confused. Studies conducted on fear of animals, blood, injection, injury, spiders have determined that the feelings of fear and disgust can be seen separately, and/or simultaneously in phobic people.¹⁵²

Julia Kristeva is another thinker who also writes on the relationship between fear and disgust as well as how these emotions contribute to the construction of the “Other”. In *Powers of Horror*, Kristeva performs to adopt the psychoanalytic approach, and she states that human’s existence depends on the definition of the “Other”.

¹⁵¹ Sigmund Freud, *Dinin Kökenleri, Totem ve Tabu, Musa ve Tektanrıcılık ve Diğer Çalışmalar*, pp. 79, 89, 130.

¹⁵² David F. Tolin, Jeffrey M. Lohr, Craig N. Sawchuk, and Thomas C. Lee, “Disgust and Disgust Sensitivity in blood-injection-injury and spider phobia”, *Behavioural Research and Therapy*. 1997, Vol. 35 No. 10, pp. 949- 953.

Nilgün Tatal who is the translator of Kristeva's books in Turkish and an important researcher of her works states that Kristeva's basis of viewpoint and interest area of her studies are dealing with the individual's life phase before the formation of significance and linguistics. According to Tatal, in *Powers of Horror* Kristeva examines the infant's fear as a result of breaking the bond with the mother while creating her/his own language. Kristeva defines that the object of the mourning is the loss which will be encountered by the subject through the emotions of horror and disgust. She identifies that an individual who experiences pushing the limits of desire will be related with literature, and art while experiencing the mutual way of disgust and fear free from the society's rules.

In *Powers of Horror*, Kristeva states that the symbol is the representation of the father who was always there even before our formation. This means that the constituent of one's self should be defined by an "Other". Additionally, she defines the symbolic as something that enters the domain of impure and profane which is excluded as prohibitions in the form of eating, drinking, and sexual prohibitions... Kristeva equates disgust with a kind of primordial narcissism which she associates with creativity and perversion... Heresy is likened to disgust by its features because both don't subservience to the law, they disapprove of the law, and they act as if they are beyond the law... The phobic person is a master of metaphor, as in Freud's Little Hans. A phobic person is skilled in symbolic, and signification activity. Language has replaced the nice breast of the mother. For this reason, the phobic person would produce culture extraordinarily.¹⁵³

Kristeva admits that fears can only be expressed freely through making art. The feelings which are beyond the limits of the normal can be experimented with literature, sculpture, cinema, music, and so on. Additionally, she enhances that art has left its doors open so as not to be afraid of the disgusting, abject, and the pervert and that which is refined by art will not be regarded as actually disgusting, and heretical.

Though Kristeva's observations about the possible cure for the fear of the "Other" and correspondingly for feeling disgusted towards the "Other" are promising, it would not be exaggerated to call the 21st-century the era of stigmatization through fear and disgust. Anything that causes en masse deaths, and toxic contamination causes feelings of disgust and fear. Terror and epidemics are the most feared events by societies. The epidemic

¹⁵³ Nilgün Tatal, "İdeolojinin Konumlanma Alanı: Kristeva ve Adlandırılmayanla Yüzleşme", İstanbul: Doğu Batı Publishing House, 2005, No:30, pp. 65-67.

diseases detected in the last century such as AIDS, SARS, Ebola, Bird Flu, Swine Flu, and finally the current Covid-19 pandemic offer an extremely prosperous field for the study of the behavioral models of fear and disgust.

The fear of catching a virus and experiencing an unknown process. If the treatment of the sickness is uncertain, this situation will lead to the creation of new social behavioral patterns for the public. At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, people who took advanced hygiene and cleanliness measures developed a racist attitude toward communities -like people from the Far East- who were believed to be spreading the virus. This negative attitude can also be detected on the news.¹⁵⁴

Bülent Küçük has stated that policies that direct the public in pandemic periods result in intervention in social life especially in countries with weakened democratic institutions. He adds that the political processes of pandemics make the states plenipotentary all over the world. Thanks to the policies of closure and isolation, regimes gain powers that they did not have before.¹⁵⁵ In other words, they take advantage of the situation's uncertainty and fear that is experienced by people.

Fear of terrorism is another area with the risk of mass death and it indicates the changes in behavioral patterns in cultures and societies. Terrorists are accepted as unknown, unpredictable, and "foreign". The symbols of the terrorist exist in society's memory. Groups associated with terrorism, and its extensions face prejudice by the majority. Ahmed expresses her views on this issue as follows:

This violent slide between the figure of the asylum seeker and the international terrorist works to construct those who are "without home" as sources of "our fear" and as reasons for new forms of border policing, whereby the future is always a threat posed by others who may pass by, and pass their way into our communities.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/dunya/her-cekik-gozluyu-hastalikli-saniyoruz-41439105>, accessed February 21, 2021.

¹⁵⁵ Bülent Küçük, "İktidar Sürü Bağışıklığı Politikası Uyguluyor", May 01, 2020, *Evrensel Gazetesi* <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/401008/sosyolog-bulent-kucuk-iktidar-suru-bagisikligi-politikasi-uyguluyor>, accessed February 21, 2021.

¹⁵⁶ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Edinburgh University Press, 2004, pp. 80.

Especially after the September 11 incidents, a certain fear has been developed against Muslims in the USA and Europe. This fear, namely Islamophobia, has resulted in the association of Muslims with violence and terrorism effortlessly. Islamophobia brings the outcome of the avoidance of the Muslim community by Christians. Ordinary Muslims face offensive propaganda which they are exposed to by this prejudice.

The results of the islamophobia research conducted by Gallup, one of the leading research companies in the world, in countries where the majority of Christians live, such as Italy, Germany, America, etc. are summarized as follows:

Within key Western societies, there are genuine negative perceptions, prejudices, and discriminations targeted against Muslims. Seeing Muslims as not loyal, voicing prejudice against Muslims, and avoiding Muslims as neighbors are all symptoms of Islamophobia that exist in the West. However, these feelings do not characterize Western countries. They are generally shared by a subset of the general population, though they exist in substantial enough numbers to draw both attention and concern. The very existence of Islamophobia is something to be addressed. The degree to which individuals expressing Islamophobia have particular views of Muslims in their communities, Muslims globally, and Islam as a religion is genuine, and quantifiable with measurable outcomes.¹⁵⁷

Through social rules and regulations of a specific culture unfortunately can be exposed to a sense of disgust. From these analyses we can understand that disgust towards certain things, people, and groups can be shaped, formed, and structured. In this way, certain groups can be labelled and stigmatized as disgusting, while references are developing fear towards these groups at the same time. Since the feeling of disgust attributed to these segregated groups can easily turn into fear which is also an impulse to stay alive. Thus, disgust is contagious and something disgusting represents the fear of contagion and infection. This fear of losing the purity of the common or becoming impure turns into a phobia for “Others”.

¹⁵⁷ <https://news.gallup.com/poll/157082/islamophobia-understanding-anti-muslim-sentiment-west.aspx>, accessed March 27, 2021.

1.3 Hate and Disgust

Firstly, we can appeal to etymological evidence to see the relation between hate and disgust. The etymology of hate in Turkish exactly overlaps with disgust. The meaning of hate *-nefret-* is derived from *nafar* in Arabic. *Nafar*'s meaning is determined as disgust, loathing, and willingness to escape in a scared and alarmed mood. *Menfur* which means abominable also comes from the same root and contains the meaning of disgusting. *Nefer* could be added to these Arabic rooted *nfr* words. *Nefer* means an animal herd, a raider group, and also includes the meanings of chaos, escape, alarm, and panic.¹⁵⁸

Hate in English also includes the meanings of envy, malice, and hostility. *Hatian* which was used in Old English is explained as extreme ill-will, having a passionate aversion to or treating as an enemy.¹⁵⁹ Hate is originated in Dutch and German and is used to mean to have bad feelings and to be hostile to the enemy.¹⁶⁰ The opposite meanings of hate are determined as sympathy and love.

In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Sara Ahmed argues that there is a human image that is created for an average, ordinary, and “white” person. This embodiment defines the protected majority who should feel the fear, anger, and disgust. Anything except this embodiment is the ones who are pointed out to be hated or disgusted.

We might note that this emotional reading of others as hateful aligns the imagined subject with rights and the imagined nation with ground. This alignment is affected by the representation of the rights of the subject and the grounds of the nation as under threat, as “failing”. It is the emotional reading of hate that works to stick or to bind the imagined subjects and the white nation together. The average white man feels “fear and loathing” ; the White housewife, “repulsion and anger” ; the White working man “curses” ; the White Christian farmer, feels “rage”. The passion of these negative attachments to others is redefined simultaneously as a positive

¹⁵⁸ <https://sozluk.gov.tr/nefret>, accessed March 20, 2021.

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=hate>, accessed March 20, 2021.

<https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=EV%C4%B0L>, accessed January 04, 2021.

¹⁶⁰ <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/hate>, accessed March 17, 2021.

attachment to the imagined subjects brought together through the capitalization of the signifier, “White”.¹⁶¹

This “common” human is the person who suffers from “Others” that are invading his/her boundaries. Ahmed claims that the “Other” is accepted as foreign and the content of this formation is based on hatred. She adds that this feeling or rhetorical discourse stems from the attachment to love and esteem of the nation. According to Ahmed, those who are not among the community are accepted as a threat to society. These threats are portrayed as people who would inflict pain on them by making them unemployed, stateless, and/or penniless. These people are threats to their nation. These explanations complement each other and help to illuminate the phenomenon of “foreign” which symbolizes the majority who have the potential to commit crimes and to violate their boundaries.

...the ordinary, or normative subject is reproduced as the injured party; the one that is “hurt” or even damaged by the “invasion” of “Other”s. The bodies of “Other”s are hence transformed into “the hated” through a discourse of pain. They are assumed to “cause” injury to the ordinary white subject such that their proximity is read as the origin of feeling. Indeed, it is implied that the white subject’s good feelings (love) have been “taken” away by the abuse of such feelings by “Other”.¹⁶²

Groups that consider themselves as being harmed can legitimate their reasons for hatred. Indeed, this feeling originates from the invasion just like in Turkish etymological analysis. The place that has been invaded is the country and the homeland. Homeland is identified with the female body in the literature. The most important symbol of the French revolution, *Marianne* can be cited as an example for this argument. Homeland is the legacy of the ancestors and the sanctuary of future generations. Invasion is the contamination and corruption of this valuable, unique, and incomparable space.

Absolutely, the polluter of the purity should be filthy. For this reason, the definition of race, class, and group belonging should be specified during the protection of purity. The definition of who is the polluter must be expressed briefly. While creating references of the “dirty and evil” the borderlines of its significance should be clarified. Surely, the dirty

¹⁶¹ Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, p. 43.

¹⁶² Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, p. 44.

and evil equals disgusting, too. Thus, the legislator leads, directs, and orients its citizens to avoid confusion and chaos against the polluters.

Hence, the legislator uses symbols to create these references. These symbols structure the concepts of “us” and “them” by the definition of evil and disgusting by hate speech and discriminatory discourse. Those who have to be hated can be found in lists that were given by the dominant power. However, the content of this list varies through place and time. That’s why the rising of these differentiations is more related to prejudice at the outset. People who are led to think with prejudice display these behaviors as a project and they engage these symbols as if they are their rights. Moreover, they think that these attitudes are the right implementations that must be done.

Saime Tuğrul makes the following determinations in *Canım Sana Feda (I can sacrifice my life for you)* by taking the law and the legislator at the center of the field of her study:

The people who are living within the borders of the homeland can become citizens only by dissolving into the nation. Nationalization purports to attribute the cultural characteristics of an ethnic group to the whole community. The sovereignty of citizen’s, thus becomes sovereignty of an *ethnos* decomposed from the foreign elements -the “Other”s- which were mixed in... The way to own land can be ensured by the sanctification of certain spaces between the boundaries. The sanctification of the collective always results in the sanctification of the community...The sanctification also provides a sacrificial act... However, in modern societies, sacred is not directly related to sacrifice but directly depends on the state of “naked lives” which is defined as *homo sacer* by Agamben.¹⁶³

However, a need to clarify the definition of the sovereign power’s formation of the “Other” arises. Subaltern as a term is put forth firstly by Antonio Gramsci and then the term is analyzed by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak.¹⁶⁴ The term “subaltern” refers to social groups such as “women, blacks, gays, proletarians, peasants, ethnic minorities, poor, uneducated persons or the “Others” who are considered to be culturally, economically and politically inferior and subordinated. Spivak states that these categorizations are structured by the dominant language and the logic of the sovereign. She states that

¹⁶³ Saime Tuğrul, *Canım Sana Feda*, İstanbul: İletişim Publishing House, 2014, pp. 19-20.

¹⁶⁴ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Scattered Speculations on the Subaltern and the Popular*, Postcolonial Studies, England: Routledge, 2014.

operative language is the language of the authority and sovereign who is in charge by power. Once again, language and discourse are interpreted through the “different” from the majority’s view which can be characterized by “Other”.

However, Spivak argues that the position and meaning of the subaltern is mostly structured through references to good and evil. She adds that the language of idiosyncratic positioning of self-expression does not come from individuality or singularity, yet it comes from particularity or the particular individual who belongs to a community which itself is regarded as harmonized, but more importantly unified. For her, it is the colonization process that structures language. Spivak interprets the subordinated ones through the colonizers who organize the system, even though; the colonizers who created this situation were also in charge of protecting the rights of all subordinates.

Subalternity is a position without identity. It is somewhat like the strict understanding of class. Class is not a cultural origin, it is a sense of economic collectivity, of social relations of formation as the basis of action. Gender is not lived sexual difference. It is a sense of the collective social negotiation of sexual differences as the basis of action. “Race” is not originary; it assumes racism. Subalternity is where social lines of mobility, being elsewhere, do not permit the formation of a recognizable basis of action. The early subalternists looked at examples where subalternity was brought to crisis, as a basis for militancy was formed. Even then colonial, and nationalist historiography did not recognize it as such. Could the subaltern speak, then?¹⁶⁵

Bülent Somay adds that not every subordinate is subaltern. To become a subaltern, one must be a party to a dominant relation. The subaltern only exists as the “Other” through whom the dominating group defines, identifies, and positions itself.¹⁶⁶

It is a well-known fact that during World War II, Germany’s genocide policy against Jews, Gypsies, blacks, physically and mentally disabled persons, homosexuals, homeless people, and criminals began at first with a phase of excluding and regulating the “Other”. The majority of the society was provoked against groups that are stigmatized in course of time. These groups were pointed out by the instruments of propaganda and education as to be feared, disgusted, and avoided in the first place. First, they were subjected to

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Bülent Somay, *Madunların Küstahlığı in Çok Bilmiş Özne*, İstanbul: Metis Publishing House, 2011, p.156.

prejudice and then categorization and supervision, finally to genocide in the concentration camps.

Der Giftpilz (The Poisonous Mushroom) is a pictured storybook that was used as a propaganda tool to manipulate German children during Nazi Germany. The book was submitted as evidence in Nuremberg Courts. Hence, I am going to examine this book as an example of how hate speech was built with a systematic structure through the process of marginalization.¹⁶⁷

Mary Mills is an educator and writer who received her Ph.D. on the activities of the *Quaker Sect of the Third Reich* in Germany. The author who also studied *Der Giftpilz (The Poisonous Mushroom)* as well as anti-Semitic children's storybooks named *Heid und keinem Jud bei seinem Eid! (Don't Trust a Fox in a Green Meadow or the Word of a Jew!)* and *Der Pudel, Mops, Dachel, Pinscher (The Poodle-Pug-Dachshund-Pinscher)*. She gives important clues about how young minds are organized and arranged for a particular purpose by the established system which aims at the purity of the nation.¹⁶⁸

It can be noticed that prejudice can be taught by identifying Mills' article. Mills argues that children around the age of 6 are subjected to military training in the Nazi camps. Additionally, in school and their daily life children are raised by various propaganda sources like documents and books.

The most important point that requires attention here is the effort of giving perspective through the hatred language which aims to disgust the children in the name of the "Other". The specifications and definitions are arranged to discriminate against the "Others". As remembered from previous representations; children do not have disgust feelings until the age of 4. Scientists have noticed that child's a disgust chord occurs at any period between the ages of 4-8. So, based on this argument the German national socialist education system started to educate children between the ages of 6-8 about the

¹⁶⁷ <https://www.yadvashem.org/download/education/conf/Millsishedwithoutpic.pdf>, accessed January 01, 2021.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

communities that should be avoided and disgusted. We can remember that Rozin and his colleagues determine that the moral orientation of a child is settled effectively during this period. To understand more clearly, we can look at Mary Mills' analysis:

Thematically, the book is organized around an anti-Semitic attack on three fronts: physical appearance, religious beliefs, and moral values. After the introduction comparing the Jews to poisonous mushrooms, there is a chapter dedicated to enabling German children to recognize Jews. In school, during the "Jewish lesson" German children are instructed about the "physical characteristics" of Jews and encouraged to recite them. Even more venomous are the subsequent chapters, whose stories are essentially assaulting upon the Talmud and the moral fiber of Jewish society itself.¹⁶⁹

Der Giftpilz-The Poisonous Mushroom was published in 1938. The book is about Franz who is a little German child and his dialogues with his mother while they are picking mushrooms in the woods. After a conversation about edible and poisonous mushrooms, his mother tells Franz that Jews are also like these poisonous and hideous mushrooms. Albeit, his mother expresses to Franz that it is difficult to understand the difference between the poisonous ones and the rest. From Franz's mother's perspective, it is imposed that Jews are catastrophic threats to Germany and even to the entire world "with their poison". It is remarked that Jews are the human form of the devil in the whole world in this pictured book for children.

Moreover, Ayşe Yurdakul and Altan Alperen state that in *Der Giftpilz*, Jews are described as dirty, smelly, hook-nosed, unemployed, lazy, ugly, malicious, and demonic. Jews are reflected as emanating clandestinely to German society. On the contrary of these hate speeches, Yurdakul and Alperen add an important detail, that the names of the buildings in the concentration camps were *Happy Nightingale*, *Rose Garden*, *Baths*, and *Breathing Institute*. According to researchers, these expressions were given to create the impression about the activities that were done there were neat, sanitary, and unpolluted.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ Mary Mills, "Propaganda and Children During the Hitler Years", 1999, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/propaganda-and-children-during-the-hitler-years>, accessed January 12, 2021.

¹⁷⁰ Ayşe Yurdakul, and Altan Alperen, "Nazi Almanya'sında Çocuk Kitaplarının Propaganda Aracı Olarak Kullanılmasına Dair Bir Örnek: Der Giftpilz (Zehirli Mantar)", *Alman Dili ve Kültürü Araştırmaları Dergisi*, No: 1, Vol. 2, Winter 2019.

Heid und keinem Jud bei seinem Eid! (Don't Trust a Fox in a Green Meadow or the Word of a Jew!), is another storybook that was printed at the same time with *Der Giftpilz* for German children. Mills states that Jews are represented as a fox in this book which is identified as clever, tricky, and deceitful in European folk culture. She adds that Greek narratives identify the fox as the devil. In contrast, Germans are described as hardworking, honest, vigorous, and handsome in the book.¹⁷¹

In the last half of the 19th-century, the empires collapsed one by one and people began to determine their destinies through their folks by referencing nationalization. Nationalism, which has been trying to come into the flesh, so to say, since the French Revolution, was the most important building block in the construction of today's commonwealths. The communities were living under the oppression of the emperor rulers for centuries. The nations who could not speak their native language, could not perform their religion and tradition plainly due to the pressure were revolted against the rulers to prove their identity and to declare their independence.

Germany cannot get the necessary share from colonialism in the colonization era in the 15th and 16th centuries. Germans wanted to gain power and land in the international arena by starting World War I and they came out of this war with defeat. As a result, Germany suffered a great deal of economic and military losses. It can be supported with numerous examples about the German nation's attitude towards the results of World War II. The national socialist politics during this war have shown "how to hate and why not to hate" to humanity.

Policies enforced between societies today have little differences from the times of World War II. Even though, practices are recognized differently by nation-states according to their national policy perspective. For example, in Israel, a 14-year-old boy who throws stones at

¹⁷¹ Mary Mills, "Propaganda and Children During the Hitler Years", 1999, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/propaganda-and-children-during-the-hitler-years>, accessed January 12, 2021.

Israeli soldiers is accepted as a terrorist by the Israel state.¹⁷² However, Turkey's Palestine policy evaluates this action as a rightful and legitimate action that is done against those who try to violate and invade Palestinian's land, religion, culture, and tradition.¹⁷³

The politics of national states spread to the layers of the administrations and institutions and to the sub-communities which formed these administrations. Research conducted on a site in Beylikdüzü, Istanbul where ten thousand people live is an important example that can be given on this subject. The study is presented in the congress declaration published by the Department of Sociology at METU in 2016 and titled "Sociology in the Age of Differences, Conflicts, and Actions VIII. The article was held by Leyla Bektaş-Ata and Ali Murat Vural which is titled "Arab Neighbor in the Guarded Site: Because They Are Prophet Genealogy I Don't Want to Talk, But They are Dirty".¹⁷⁴

The researchers declare that study is practiced by using ethnographic methods. According to this study, "Turkish people" who accept themselves as the host country designated a bunch of Egyptian, Lebanese, Syrian and Libyan immigrants under the name of Arab in a masse. Arabs are considered and described as dirty, messy, untidy, and reckless by some Turkish people. I would like to say that this article draws attention to the "Other" similar to exactly what is reminded in Kristeva's, Ahmed's, or Spivak's viewpoints. Ata and Vural make the following conclusions:

The nationalism of the "residents" towards foreigners is, in the words of Ernest Gellner, "not a formless feeling like an unnamed, vague Angst." On the contrary, it can be described, explained, and rationally justified in their way: "The object of...is defined quite sharply as love for certain categories of people and aversion to 'Others'." In the encounters with Arabs in the site, there is no hesitation about how to behave against them. It was determined that Turkish people avoid communication with them, do not show greetings, and even avoid eye contact with Arabs. However, the hatred felt for this group of people is held to a certain degree due to the speech "because they are the descendants

¹⁷² <https://www.yenisafak.com/dunya/israil-askerleri-tarafindan-oldurulen-14-yasindaki-filistinli-cocuk-son-yolculuguna-ugurlandi-3588189>, accessed January 12, 2021.

¹⁷³ <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/turkiye/israilli-yazar-ve-aktivist-peled-terorist-bir-orgut-varsa-o-da-israil-ordusudur/1031888>, accessed January 12, 2021.

¹⁷⁴ Leyla Bektaş-Ata, Ali Murat Vural "Arab Neighbour in the Guarded Site: Because They Are Prophet Genealogy I Don't Want to Talk, But They are Dirty" in Sociology in the Age of Differences, Conflicts and Agencies, VIII. *Ulusal Sosyoloji Kongresi Bildiriler Kitabı*, Editors Feray Arta and Akın Bakıoğlu, Ankara, 2017.

of the prophets” by Turkish people which assigns that Arabs come from their prophet’s lineage.¹⁷⁵

Prejudice is defined as an exact positive and negative judgment, exact provision, or exact opinion for certain conditions, events, and images concerning a person or a thing.¹⁷⁶ However, certainty can differentiate through time, place, and culture. Since prejudice is out of rationality, it also involves sentimentality. Nevertheless, it is a state of justifying our circumstances whether they are positive or negative.

Negatory prejudice has a content of offensive affections and this attitude is fed by inadequate ideas and beliefs. Prejudice constitutes an important phase in creating a language of othering and alienation. In addition, prejudice is about thinking through one’s or the community’s general judgments while commenting on an idea. People want to be confident about the environment they live in. Community awareness needs trust along with the relationships, because of the survival impulses of the group. Moreover, the disgust response is an important discrimination attitude to those who are seen as inferior by the community. Sara Ahmed defines the feeling of invasion by the foreign as follows:

They signify the danger of impurity or the mixing or taking of blood. They threaten to violate the pure bodies; such bodies can only be imagined as pure by the perpetual restaging of this fantasy of violation. Note the work that is being done through this metonymic slide: mixed-race couplings and immigration become readable as like forms of rape or molestation; an invasion of the body of the nation evoked here as the vulnerable and damaged bodies of the white woman and child.¹⁷⁷

Ahmed adds: “Because we love, we hate and this hate is what brings us together.”¹⁷⁸ Here, she claims that hate sticks to the crowds by the discourse of power. Ahmed identifies emotions with Marx’s labor theory of value. Marx claims that value in circulation assumes a different structure from its original value. The surplus-value is taken by the investor and that the investor -capitalist- will always be much more demanding

¹⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 127

¹⁷⁶ <https://sozluk.gov.tr/>, accessed January 12, 2021.

¹⁷⁷ Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, p. 44.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid. p. 52.

from labor for surplus-value. Ahmed adopts Marx's theory and replaces the variable of the value by emotions:

What I am offering is a theory of passion not as the drive to accumulate (whether it be value, power, or meaning), but as that which is accumulated over time. Affect does not reside in an object or sign, but is an effect of the circulation between objects and signs (=the accumulation of affective value). Signs increase in affective value as an effect of the movement between signs: the more signs circulate, the more affective they become.¹⁷⁹

Thus, offensive prejudice turns into anger or hate in circulation. Moreover, Aristotle states that anger is felt against individuals, yet hatred is felt towards communities.¹⁸⁰ Hate has a much more powerful and persistent meaning than anger. There is a deep difference between "I hate bad smells" and "I hate the ones who smell bad".

In her "Understanding the Stereotypes" Dilek İmançer examines the terms which create inaccurate perceptions referring to obstruct interpersonal communications. According to this study, in cognitive theory, perceiving objects with preconceptions without encountering them is defined as the "act of knowing" about other people's beliefs, values, and ideas. She indicates that the stereotypes contain sensuality. Scientists who examine the decisions that were made during the wrong thinking process detect various suspicious information because of this process. İmançer quotes Piaget who identifies these learned and continued stages as *assimilation*. The child's learning course for new information must include adaptation, coordination, and assimilation. Besides, future information will be structured on past information through behavioral diagrams. He argues that the formation of stereotypes and prejudices in the socio-cultural approach is based on the early childhood education process in which time period that the values and norms are internalized. Piaget claims that this process which is responsible for creating stereotypes and prejudices forms the basis of the permanent resistance behavioral attitudes of humans. Facts such as the law of foreigners which are institutional forms of discrimination and

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. p. 45.

¹⁸⁰ Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, p. 49.

immigration restrictions for certain countries' citizens are accepted as forms of stereotype and prejudice in daily life.¹⁸¹

We can then conclude that hatred is a learned emotion, like disgust. It is formed and structured through beliefs and cultural categorizations. Therefore, it is not surprising that the lexical meanings of disgust and hate overlap.

CONCLUSION

In this study, I have reviewed the physical, mental, and social literature of disgust and other emotions that can be blended or accompanied with the emotion of disgust. The categorical literature review allowed me to observe how disgust is formed and structured as a cultural category and how physical disgust contributes to this process. I also investigated how disgust is related to other emotions such as desire, fear, and hatred.

As we have seen, disgust contains threatening. Disgust abstracts the threats by defining them, exposing them, and/or avoiding them. Throughout human history, physical disgust had an active role in escaping from the threats like carrion which reminds us of death. Humans do not want to feel, think or consent that they are mortal or despicable. They do not want to decay like an animal after death. As humans became more socially and culturally more sophisticated, disgust turned out to be an emotion that tries to protect the unity of the civilization. Besides, with this phase, humans started to move away from nature. Brutal and savage acts corresponded with the features which remind humans of the primal side of her/him. Thus, these primitive behavioral patterns are accepted as animalistic. Wild sides of humans had been interrupted or prevented with the rules that are accepted as "humanistic". Here disgust as a cultural category comes into play and undertakes the task of protecting the purity, divinity, and sanctity of the body, soul and/or ego which will ensure social unity. In sum, as a learned emotion, the meaning of disgust

¹⁸¹ Dilek İmançer, "Stereotipleri Anlamak", *Yeni Düşünceler*, Vol. 2, February 2008, pp. 301-320. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/720072>, accessed January 14, 2021.

itself and the things being disgusted have been changing throughout human history. That means what is being learned for disgust is changing and the change is happening from tangible to intangible side of disgust.

It is important to emphasize that Haidt et al.'s studies have proven that children under the age of 7 do not exhibit universal disgust responses. Rozin states that the "part can stand for the whole" principle is not working on children up to the age of 7. For example, a child under 7 can eat chocolate in the form of poop without questioning. In addition, it is indicated by Haidt that studies on feral humans showed that these people do not have the feeling of disgust. After the stages of cognitive and culturally supported learning progress are completed, the child would begin to develop reactions related to disgust. During the growth process, the child observes and models the behavior of her/his nurturer.

In addition, social rules and regulations act to its inhabitants such as a caretaker just like a mother who is dictating her rules to her child to keep his or her body and soul pure and clean. Rules and regulations draw the boundaries of the "normal" for its personas. Things that are outside of these boundaries would be regarded as "abnormal". It is a matter of fact that by defining these anomalies with embodied schemas -as I explained in the first chapter- a defense mechanism to the "threats" is created. Various offensive emotions such as shame, fear, hatred etc. can cause avoidance which can be mixed and blurred with disgust. Elias has observed that embarrassment and avoidance are the fundamental behavioral patterns that were taught to humans and especially to children in the process of reconstructing Europe's culture.

Every culture regards itself as unique and tries to keep its codes alive in order to survive as a community. When defining these codes, it is very important to become aware of and realize what, where or who is the "Other". The foreign is a stranger, definitely not a relative, who does not belong to our own culture, community, or group. The kinship and the symbols which would be the descriptions of the specific relationships can be established through an object such as a totem like animalistic symbols of political parties or a specific basketball team's mascot. The magical and spiritual belief and attitude

system of people who believe in the same religion, nation, race, or group have schemas and have irreplicable moral codes.

Moreover, the new content of disgust, fear, anger, and desire would be modified by social media or technology of the reconstructed world. Primitive people's fears were darkness, thunder, or being prey to wild animals. The human who "succeeded" in transforming nature for her/his own benefit now experiences emotions such as fear, anger, and desire through social precisions blending with disgust.

Thus, the body of the society is formed by its cultural norms. The ways of accepting and blessing the body of the members of the cultures determine the content of disgust as I examined in the first chapter. The idea that the body should lead a physical, healthy, and conscious life forms the handbook of western societies as we told with specific instances like smoking or preferring to be a vegetarian. As Haidt points out, embodied schemata describe and teach people how to express their emotions in a rapid and internalized manner. Recall Rozin who states that values are mandatory, but requirements are optional. Yet, both forms of disgust (physical and moral disgust) include states of being blurred by negative emotions such as contempt, exclusion, fear, anxiety, and/or hatred.

Many psychoanalysts and philosophers who follow Freud's footsteps, whether they defended him or produced new theories against his views always made evaluations along the "Other". In addition, Rozin and his group who examine disgust as a visceral emotion of human beings have associated their determinations with social situations and moral values in recent years. In all of the approaches I have examined, whether it is handled from a personal or social point of view the feeling of disgust has been identified as a negative, repulsive and basic emotion. In order to reach measurable results, at the next step of this study, it is necessary to conduct field research on the feeling of disgust, as a cultural category which forms and structures the "Other".

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