



T.C.
EGE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

**REPRESENTATION OF THE BODY AS CONFINED SPACE:
PAIN AND PLEASURE IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH FICTION**

Doktora Tezi

Mustafa Demirel

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Ana Bilim Dalı

İZMİR
2023

T.C.
EGE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

**REPRESENTATION OF THE BODY AS CONFINED SPACE:
PAIN AND PLEASURE IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH FICTION**

Doktora Tezi

Mustafa Demirel

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Funda Civelekoğlu

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Ana Bilim Dalı
İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Doktora Programı

ETİK KURALLARA UYGUNLUK BEYANI

Ege Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne sunduğum “Representation of the Body as Confined Space: Pain and Pleasure in Contemporary English Fiction” adlı doktora tezinin tarafımdan bilimsel, ahlak ve normlara uygun bir şekilde hazırlandığını, tezimde yararlandığım kaynakları bibliyografyada ve dipnotlarda gösterdiğimi onurumla doğrularım.

Mustafa Demirel

PREFACE

It is undeniable that the concept of the human body, particularly the individual as a desiring and suffering subject, has always become not only very intriguing but also highly controversial to analyse. This study adds yet another dimension to that issue by complicating it through a spatial approach to human subjectivity. The recent developments all around the world have indeed suggested that the relationship between humanity and space gets much vaguer, more and more abstract day by day. The traditional perception of space, namely space as a physical phenomenon, has been extensively superseded by somewhat more metaphorical idea of space, especially in association with some dramatic technocultural improvements. The eventual implication has come out as *digital space* (photography, computer, and the Internet), lately even as *metaverse* (a virtual-reality space in which individuals are able to interact with other users within a computer-generated environment). Any contemporary attempt to survey human subjectivity will be incomplete if the argued complexity and abstraction of the link between human beings and space is overlooked.

Thus, my dissertation aims to explore the contemporary English fiction as a unique product of such a particular age of high technology and acceleration as well as spatial transformation. In so doing, I seek to contribute to the discussions on spatiality with my own conceptualisation of the human body, i.e. the spatial body. Perceiving the human body as space in itself, my study searches for how individuals have been confined as subjected and docile bodies, in which ways their own bodies have transformed into fantasy space of others. Throughout my study, the sexual body and “perverse” sexuality are presented as arguably the most significant instruments used and abused to that end. In brief, I may offer this dissertation as a particular attempt to examine the subjected individual in/as space, but more importantly, as a part of *perversion studies* within a loose categorisation yet to come.

Mustafa Demirel

June 2023, İzmir

ÖZET

Bu doktora tezi, çağdaş İngiliz kurgusundaki insan bedeni kavramına odaklanır ve bu kavramın sapkın temsillerini incelemeyi amaçlar. Çağdaş İngiliz romancılarının sapkınlığı acı ve zevk karmaşıklığı vasıtasıyla nasıl temsil ettiklerini anlayabilme adına, öncelikle beden üzerine yapılmış olan *mekânsal* çıkarımların da katkısıyla *uzamsal beden* kavramsallaştırılmıştır. Böylelikle, özellikle *kısıtlanmış* ya da bir şekilde *hapsedilmiş* bireyler aracılığıyla *kuşatılmış fantezi alanı* olarak insan bedeni algısına sahip sapkın stratejiler ve mekanizmalar ifşa edilmiş ve sorgulanmıştır. Aslında bu bağlamda, çağdaş dünyada insanın özne olma hâlinin sapkınca (cinsel ya da cinsellik dışı yolla) nasıl kurgulandığı ve bu durumun dönemin anlatılarına olan muhtelif yansımaları irdelenmeye çalışılmıştır.

Bu amaçla, bir hayli yüksek seviyelerde mekânsal/uzamsal farkındalık içeren dört çağdaş İngiliz romanı (farklı on yıllık dönemlerden) bilhassa seçilmiştir: Anthony Burgess'in *Otomatik Portakal*'ı, J. G. Ballard'ın *Çarpışma*'sı, Ian McEwan'ın *Yabancı Kucak*'ı ve Kazuo Ishiguro'nun *Beni Asla Bırakma*'sı. Ancak, bu romanlardaki mekânsallık/uzamsallık, bahsi geçen olgunun gerçek anlamından ibaret değildir. Fiziksel mekân zenginliğine ek olarak bu romanlar, mecazi mekân ve uzam fikrini, yani benim adlandırmam ile *uzamsal bedeni* ortaya koyar. Bu yüzden tartışma noktam daha çok, insan bedeninin sembolik düzlemde nasıl ve hangi şekillerde bir mekâna ya da bir uzama, diğer bir deyişle sapkın fantezilerde mekânsal veya uzamsal uzantılara, dönüştü(rüldü)ğü ekseninde yoğunlaşır. Bir yandan sapkın (birey) ile sözde medeniyet ve onun bileşen kurumları (toplum) arasındaki tehditkâr gerilim irdelenirken, diğer yandan da alternatif bir toplum ya da hâkim kültürü yedekleyen başka bir kültür inşa etme çabasındaki sapkın girişimler işaret edilmeye çalışılmaktadır. Nitekim bu doktora tezi, sadece birkaç sapkın özneyi değil aynı zamanda geniş çapta yaygın, sistematik olarak sapkın diye nitelendirilebilecek bazı uygulamaları, yani keyfî kurallara itaate zorlayarak bireyleri tahakküm altına alan, aksi halde onları şiddetle cezalandıran evrensel disiplin mekanizmalarını ve organizasyonları tartışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: beden, cinsellik, sapkınlık, uzam/mekân, öteki, medeniyet, iktidar, bilim, hapsedilme/kuşatılma, özne, düzen/düzensizlik, fantezi, acı, zevk, arzu, şiddet, bakış, çağdaş dönem, çağdaş İngiliz kurgusu, roman



ABSTRACT

This dissertation focuses on the concept of the human body and aims to explore its perverse (re)presentations in contemporary English fiction. To be able to understand how contemporary English novelists represent perversion by the agency of the complexity of pain and pleasure, I primarily conceptualise *the spatial body* so that I can uncover and interrogate those perverse strategies and mechanisms that perceive *the human body as confined fantasy space*. In so doing, I indeed attempt to survey how human subjectivity has been perversely (sexually or nonsexually) constructed in the contemporary world and its diverse reflections in the narratives of the period.

To this end, four contemporary English novels (from different decades) with a very high level of spatial awareness are selected on purpose: Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*, J. G. Ballard's *Crash*, Ian McEwan's *The Comfort of Strangers*, and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*. Yet, their spatiality is not simply in its literal sense. In addition to a multitude of literal spaces, all of those novels intriguingly convey metaphorical idea of space, i.e. *the spatial body* in my own denotation. My argument, therefore, rather concentrates on how human bodies are somehow transformed into those spaces, namely, how they figuratively become spatial extensions in perverse fantasies. On the one hand, I search for the threatening tension between the pervert (individual) and the so-called civilisation and its constituent institutions (society); on the other hand, I try to indicate the perverse attempts to form an alternative society, a substitute culture for the hegemonic culture. Thus, this dissertation discusses not only a number of perverse subjects but also some widespread systematic(ally) perverse practices, i.e. universal disciplinary mechanisms and organisations oppressing individuals to obey arbitrary rules or severely punishing them otherwise.

Keywords: the body, sexuality, perversion, space, the other, civilisation, power, science, confinement, subject, order/disorder, fantasy, pain, pleasure, desire, violence, gaze, contemporary era, contemporary English fiction, novel

CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	i
ÖZET	ii
ABSTRACT	iv
CONTENTS	v
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I: THE (SPATIAL) BODY	14
CHAPTER II: SEX(UALITY)	34
CHAPTER III: PERVERSION, OR SEXUALITIES	45
CHAPTER IV: THE BODY PERCEPTION IN THE POST-1950S CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH FICTION	76
4.1. Young Bodies' Subculture of Violence: <i>A Clockwork Orange</i> (1962), Anthony Burgess.....	76
4.2. Crushed Bodies' Fetishism for (S)Cars: <i>Crash</i> (1973), James Graham Ballard.....	104
4.3. Beautiful Bodies' Confinement in/as the Other Space: <i>The Comfort of Strangers</i> (1981), Ian McEwan.....	142
4.4. An Excursus on Kazuo Ishiguro's <i>Never Let Me Go</i> (2005): Cloned Bodies and/as Nonsexual Perversion	177
CONCLUSION	194
WORKS CITED	199
INDEX.....	211
TEŞEKKÜR	220
ÖZ GEÇMİŞ.....	221

INTRODUCTION

[I]t is not paradoxical to say that the abnormal, while logically second, is existentially first.

—Georges Canguilhem¹

According to the German sexologist Iwan Bloch, the history of civilisation, the progress of humanity towards higher forms of existence is highly related to changing sexual practices.² Indeed, to be able to create a civilised community, human beings have had to change and renounce certain natural and aggressive drives and desires; thus, human bodies have gradually turned into cultured phenomena. The body, particularly the desiring and suffering human body, has drawn attention all the time, has always become a hot debate and a complex issue to analyse; “Most of the time, the body maintains an unstable position between such extremes, at once the subject and object of pleasure, the uncontrollable agent of pain and the revolt against reason—and the vehicle of mortality.”³ Yet, the meeting of nature and culture, or as some would argue the clash of the two, has raised many questions about the concept of the body. The most crucial one of those questions is whether civilisation tames or, as Jean Jacques Rousseau claims, corrupts mankind and how (much) the human body has been influenced by this nature/culture equilibrium. While a certain group including religious figures, moralists, and traditionalists might regard sex as “dangerous, disruptive and fundamentally antisocial,” some significant theorists such as Wilhelm Reich and Herbert Marcuse condemn “corrupt civilization” due to the repression of such “a beneficent force” as sex, considering the latter as positively transgressive and liberating.⁴

¹ Georges Canguilhem, *The Normal and the Pathological*, trans. Carolyn R. Fawcett and Robert S. Cohen (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 243.

² Sarah Toulalan and Kate Fisher, eds., *The Routledge History of Sex and the Body: 1500 to the Present* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 1.

³ Peter Brooks, *Body Work: Objects of Desire in Modern Narrative* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 1.

⁴ Jeffrey Weeks, *Key Ideas: Sexuality* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 18, 84-85, 105-08.

The main source of problems at this point is that individuals, on their way to a “healthy” society, have had to repress their desires, restrain and balance certain instincts and drives—as for the famous psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, Eros (the principle of love or life including sexuality) and Thanatos (the principle of destruction or death) are the most prominent ones.⁵ In another saying, the unconscious keeps the most “dangerous” and repressed desires of individuals, albeit not absolutely;

The unconscious is a sphere of conflict: between ideas, wishes, and desires - above all sexual desires - denied access to conscious life by the force of mental repression, yet ‘returning’ all the time to disrupt consciousness in the form of dreams, slips of the tongue, jokes, neurotic symptoms or perverse behaviour. What fundamentally constitutes the unconscious are those wishes and desires which are repressed in the face of the demands of reality, and in particular the repressed, incestuous desires of infancy [...].⁶

In short, as Freud brilliantly sums up, history of humanity is history of repression; it tells the story of how individuals have experienced a transition from the pleasure principle (immediate satisfaction, pleasure, joy/play, receptiveness, absence of repression) to the reality principle (delayed satisfaction, restraint of pleasure, toil/work, productiveness, security).⁷ Traumatically realising that painless and full gratification is impossible in communal life, the individual experiences frustration, leaves momentary, uncertain, and destructive pleasure, and turns to delayed, restrained, but assured pleasure.⁸

In other words, states and societies make the individual do so. To protect the existing “functional” structure, status quo, through an “orthodox” understanding of

⁵ After all, Freud defines an instinct as “*an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things* which the living entity has been obliged to abandon under the pressure of external disturbing forces.” That is also why he calls it “a kind of organic elasticity” or “the expression of the inertia inherent in organic life.” For his definition and more, see below:

Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. and ed. James Strachey (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1961), 30.

⁶ Weeks, *Key Ideas: Sexuality*, 62.

⁷ Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (Boston, MA: The Beacon Press, 1966), 11-12.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

sexuality, states and societies take measures and impose sanctions. In his book *Policing Sexuality: Sex, Society, and the State*, Julian C. H. Lee raises “a simple question” in connection with this topic: “why do States seek to regulate sexual identities and behaviours between consenting individuals?”⁹ Lee then claims that holding national, social, and religious priorities and anxieties, states (and societies) around the world have enacted and enforced “laws that forbid various kinds of sexual behaviours and identities” and applied punishments “as light as small fines and as severe as the death penalty.”¹⁰ Although their motivations may differ, Lee continues, states and societies mostly attempt to control and constrain sexual behaviours and identities of their members by punishing some of them while promoting others. To prove his arguments, Lee hereafter offers five particular cases (India, USA, Malaysia, Turkey, and Britain) whose politics, ethnicity, religion, economics, and other factors differ while their concerns to manipulate (and *to police*) sexuality are similar. Lee’s study, in brief, is helpful to grasp how societies and social structures work in regulation of sexuality and organisation of individuals in order to construct a “running” social system.

Society, which is formed by individuals that come together by renouncing their instinctual needs originating from libido, is therefore a social construction, namely, a whole of *human-made* rules and standards, made up and universalised. Perceptions constituted in the name of a common culture are so pervasive for individual lives that even one’s own body cannot help being the target of social labels. To put it differently, “[...] natural bodies are marked, organized, and produced as cultural bodies.”¹¹ In the midst of normative and complex social relations, “[o]ur bodies and body parts are loaded with cultural symbolism, public and private, positive and negative, political and economic, sexual, moral and often controversial; and so are the attributes, functions and states of the body, and the senses.”¹² After all, both the body and any notions about it

⁹ Julian C. H. Lee, *Policing Sexuality: Sex, Society, and the State* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2011), 1.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Brooks, *Body Work*, xii.

¹² Anthony Synnott, *The Body Social: Symbolism, Self and Society* (Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002), 1.

are ascribed social meanings, ideas, images, associations, and connotations; thus, not only the body but also sex(uality) comes out of private sphere, evolves into a social arena. To put it differently, as Foucault clearly states, on the one hand sexuality becomes a product produced in the triangle of discourse, power, and knowledge, on the other hand through sexuality certain types of sexual subjects are generated.¹³ The heteronormative understanding of sexuality by the mainstream Western culture, which artificially considers the heterosexual equal to the natural/the normal, arbitrarily defines “normality” and tends to marginalise people that are nonconforming to it.

The French philosopher René Girard suggests that any community in trouble tends to search for a scapegoat (to disburden through it) and in Anna Katharina Schaffner’s opinion, that scapegoat regarding sexuality is the pervert who is introduced as “the absolute other” among society.¹⁴ Perversion as a word, deriving from *pervertere* in Latin, means “to distort” or “to turn upside down.” Even if its meaning may vary in accordance with different cultural and historical periods, the subjects called pervert have always been determined with regard to dichotomies created by certain essentialist assumptions such as right/wrong and natural/unnatural. Put it differently, as Michel Foucault states,

generally speaking, all the authorities exercising individual control function according to a double mode; that of binary division and branding (mad/sane; dangerous/harmless; normal/abnormal); and that of coercive assignment, of differential distribution (who he is; where he must be; how he is to be characterized; how he is to be recognized; how a constant surveillance is to be exercised over him in an individual way, etc.).¹⁵

¹³ Andrea Beckmann, *The Social Construction of Sexuality and Perversion: Deconstructing Sadomasochism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 27.

Lisa Downing, “Eros and Thanatos in European and American Sexology,” in *Genders and Sexualities in History: Bodies, Sex and Desire from the Renaissance to the Present*, eds. Kate Fisher and Sarah Toulalan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 205.

¹⁴ René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977), 79-80.

Anna Katharina Schaffner, *Modernism and Perversion: Sexual Deviance in Sexology and Literature, 1850-1930* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 12.

¹⁵ Michel Foucault, “Discipline and Punish,” in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, eds. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 553.

As for Foucault, the constant division between “normal” and “abnormal” is still visible; even today, mechanisms of power “are disposed around the abnormal individual, to brand him and to alter him.”¹⁶ Hence, social life is really controversial for the “abnormal.” In the eyes of a community, Schaffner observes, the pervert are transgressors who are “both polluted and polluters;” reflecting its anxieties via them society perceives the pervert—who are supposed as only pleasure-seeking for depriving sex of its procreative function—as a threat to the survival of the human species and the welfare of the state.¹⁷ That must be the reason why those perverts were used to be qualified and “excommunicated,” first (until the nineteenth century) within the frame of religious and moral values as “criminal against nature” or “sinner” and then (in the nineteenth century) through the biological and psychological models as “abnormal,” “pathological,” and “sick.”¹⁸

Modern sexual perversions, which were systematically studied by Richard von Krafft-Ebing for the first time, might be investigated under various titles such as homosexuality, sadism, masochism, fetishism, voyeurism, and exhibitionism. As it is visible here, even though sexual identities referred as pervert may vary there are still common points, one of which is (perhaps most explicitly) the complex relationship between the body, pain, and pleasure.¹⁹ Contrary to the popular belief, pain and pleasure are *not always* poles apart; they can come side by side at times and perversion is one of those occasions in which suffering is sexualised. Avgi Sketopoulou, as an example, conceptualises perversion as “the carrier of sexuality’s inherent enigma in the resource of the body,” as “sexuality’s *aspiration*,” and as “a sexual process” and grounds this process in “the coextensiveness of suffering and eroticism” in sexuality’s very

¹⁶ Ibid., 554.

¹⁷ Schaffner, *Modernism and Perversion*, 12.

¹⁸ Ibid., 4-5.

¹⁹ The relationship between the subject and pain is so sophisticated that there have been studies wholly committed to that relationship. For one of them, see below:

Doreen M. Francis, *The Psychomatrix: A Deeper Understanding of Our Relationship with Pain* (London: Karnac Books, 2015).

ontology.²⁰ To some other critics, besides, corporeal pleasures containing desire and violence are significant considering that they provide pervert individuals with “awareness of existence, mortality and life.”²¹

It is exactly here that one significant point about perversion should be underlined: perversion is *not necessarily* a sexual concept. It is true that the term has been mostly used (perhaps including myself) in its erotic sense, namely as an “abnormal” way of sexual gratification; nevertheless, there have been instances in which it is uttered without any necessary focus on sexuality. At this point, Christopher Williams might set an example with his article entitled “Perverted Attractions.”²² Although Williams acknowledges that “When people think about perversion, sexual examples come readily to mind” he still “resists a sexual focus” and evaluates the concept as a critical stance, as a type of tool that can be used “in order to criticize anything we want to criticize.”²³ Likewise, Jessica Yakeley also prefers to see perversion from a larger frame.²⁴ She draws on the term as perverse (defensive) psychic mechanisms that protect the individual in his relations with the other (mother, father, and object) against “very primitive relational anxieties about separation, abandonment and helplessness” and regulate his relationship with the superego.²⁵ This idea of perversion as nonsexual, or more precisely, not necessarily as sexual, will be broadly discussed later in the exclusive chapter on perversion. Even so, to foreshadow the debate here, perversion is *also* a distinctive way of thinking and behaviour. It is a particular way of dealing with the world, of challenging the prevalent way the world goes on. In this regard, it should be referred as *perverse logic*, a special cognitive form or mentality that perceives society and the social order (maintained through dominant

²⁰ Avgi Sketopoulou, “To Suffer Pleasure: The Shattering of the Ego as the Psychic Labor of Perverse Sexuality,” *Studies in Gender and Sexuality* 15, no. 1 (2014): 254-68.

²¹ Jeff Hearn and Viv Burr, “Introducing the Erotics of Wounding: Sex, Violence and the Body,” in *Sex, Violence and the Body: The Erotics of Wounding*, eds. Viv Burr and Jeff Hearn (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 1.

²² Christopher Williams, “Perverted Attractions,” *The Monist* 86, no. 1 (2003): 115-40.

²³ *Ibid.*, 115.

²⁴ Jessica Yakeley, “Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Paraphilias and Perversions,” *European Journal of Psychotherapy & Counselling* 20, no. 2 (2018): 164-83.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 173.

institutions and norms) and objective reality/absolute truth in nonconformist manners. Indeed, such an assumption that counts perversion as an umbrella term bearing all of those meanings inside will be fruitful for the sake of a more complete account.

The axis of the body, sexuality, and perversion has not been confined in psychological or sexological domain; it has definitely been drawn into literary circles' field of interest. Just as psychological and sexological studies have dramatically contributed to literary imagination, studies in literature have also inspired many psychological and sexological discussions and conceptions. About this interactive relation, the psychiatrist Krafft-Ebing's extensive use of literary texts to support his arguments, the great role of Marquis de Sade and his erotic works in the conceptualisation of sadism, the importance of Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's novel (*Venus in Furs*) for sexological concept-formation, and Freud's references to literature while raising his basic concepts like the Oedipus complex are only some of the notable examples.²⁶

Nevertheless, not only literary representations of perversion but also academic studies on the said representations have been either inadequate or biased in the main. Mostly, perversion in literature has been rendered either as taboo or as evil, or at the most, neglected totally. The lack of the so-called perverse experience in literary works or the negative approach to the existence of such experiences draws attention. Adrienne Rich, for instance, discusses this absence in her illuminating article "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence."²⁷ While she argues that (compulsory) heterosexuality—which should be, as for the author, recognised and studied as a *political institution*—has an enormous impact on the perception of lesbian experience "on a scale ranging from deviant to abhorrent, or simply rendered invisible," Rich also questions "how and why women's choice of women as passionate comrades, life partners, co-workers, lovers, tribe, [that is, "*lesbian continuum*"] has been crushed,

²⁶ Anna Katharina Schaffner and Shane Weller, "Introduction," in *Modernist Eroticisms: European Literature after Sexology*, eds. Anna Katharina Schaffner and Shane Weller (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 1-2.

²⁷ Adrienne Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," *Signs* 5, no. 4 (1980): 631-60.

invalidated, forced into hiding and disguise.”²⁸ Doing that, Rich remarks and criticises “the virtual or total neglect of lesbian existence” in a wide range of writings in the social sciences, in literature, even including feminist scholarship that should go beyond, as for the author, “merely to voice a toleration of ‘lesbianism’ as an ‘alternative life-style,’ or make token allusion to lesbians.”²⁹ Throughout the paper, Rich supports her arguments about the adverse representation or the total absence of lesbian experience in literature by revealing and analysing a number of literary books that have appeared, presented, and reviewed as “feminist,” but still have remained deficient or incomplete in terms of lesbian existence.

In the light of all these theories and arguments, this dissertation will aim to scrutinise the reflections of a particular meeting, that is, how the body and sexuality converge on the literary stage, especially through the characters called “pervert.” To explore the perverse literary representations of the human body, contemporary English fiction offers a highly fruitful academic ground, given that the post-war literature has been driven by a myriad of revolutionary technological and sociocultural changes that have perversely dominated individual bodies and lives as well as the notion of the sexual body. As it is profoundly examined in Kristina Gupta’s article by means of many researches of a number of scholars, the contemporary age—when “a postindustrial, consumer-oriented capitalist system” which “attempts to incite sexual desires in order to sell products that promise to fulfill those desires” prevails—enables us to clearly observe what is called *sexualization*, “the increasing visibility of and importance afforded to sex and sexuality in the public and private spheres.”³⁰ According to those researches, sex(uality) in the contemporary societies is explicit almost everywhere, including newspapers and magazines, music videos, television, video games, advertising, professional sports, music lyrics, the Internet, and the design of products such as clothing.³¹ The historian and sociologist Jeffrey Weeks too notices the

²⁸ Ibid., 632, 637.

²⁹ Ibid., 632.

³⁰ Kristina Gupta, “Compulsory Sexuality: Evaluating an Emerging Concept,” *Signs* 41, no. 1 (2015): 131-54.

³¹ Ibid., 138-39.

increasingly sexualised representations of the body in the media over the past few decades.³² Thus, the contemporary fiction, being a product of such an age of *sexualization*, can offer an intriguing field of study on the human body and its perverse (re)presentation.

This dissertation will consider *the body as confined space*, where numerous power plays are realised and deepest desires are externalised. The impact of the other's signification over the human body can be so profound that it becomes nothing but how the other conceives it, simply, somebody's *fantasy space*. To this end, four contemporary English novels –Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*, J. G. Ballard's *Crash*, Ian McEwan's *The Comfort of Strangers*, and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*– are selected on purpose. The initial motivation behind this selection is that the human body is always in the forefront in these novels, particularly the representations of “the body in pain,” “the body taking pleasure,” and “the body taking pleasure in pain.” From this perspective, they might very well serve to the aim of this dissertation, considering their presence as a rich source with plentiful desire and violence scenes enabling analyses through the triangle of the body, sexuality, and perversion. Besides, and more importantly, a very high level of spatial awareness is impressively evident in these narratives. Yet, their spatiality is not simply in its literal sense. In addition to a multitude of literal spaces, all of those novels intriguingly convey metaphorical idea of space, i.e. *the spatial body* in my own denotation. To argue it in a nutshell, the human body confined in another's space becomes an extension of that space, even transforms into that space, and as such, functions as another's fantasy space. In this sense, private bodies of the individuals in those narratives are constituted as social arenas of desire and power struggles by the prevalent perverse gaze, for (the pleasure of) the perverse gaze.

In the course of my study, some discussions by the prominent psychology and sexology figures such as Freud and Lacan will be helpful; what is more, a number of significant works on the human body and sexuality by theorists and critics like Foucault will be frequently cited. In this way, my arguments will be reinforced not just through

³² Weeks, *Key Ideas: Sexuality*, 58.

biological or psychosexual development of the subjects defined as pervert (Freud and Lacan), the impacts of social structures and dominating power relations on the individuals, turning them into “others,” (Foucault) will not be ignored as well. On the one side, particular concepts such as sadist, masochist, and fetishist and the subject positions constructed through those concepts will be reevaluated; on the other side, it will be debated how authorities, scientific and/or political, perversely make use of these notions and of human subjectivity for their own interests.

If Eros and Thanatos, as Freud argues, are the drives that have been sacrificed for the sake of civilisation and modern society, are those “pervert” characters in the novels, with their lustful and violent actions, indicate a sort of uprising against the idea of civilisation and the modern society? This will be one of the main questions to be searched along my study. From this perspective, it will also be discussed how (much) the pervert might pose a threat to what is called “healthy” society from within, whether s/he causes disorder in the order. My exploration will focus on how and why those nonconformist individuals, the abnormal in the eyes of most people, struggle to position themselves in the modern “healthy” society on the one hand; on the other hand their “perverse” deeds will be interrogated as rebellious movements against marginalisation and the norms lying behind it. As a result, the perverse attempts to form an alternative society, a substitute culture to the hegemonic culture will be among the main research interests of my study.

Structured as such, this dissertation is roughly divided into four chapters. In Chapter I, titled as “The (Spatial) Body,” I will try to conceptualise my basic body perception, namely, *the human body as confined fantasy space*. There will be references to many scholars and theorists to achieve it, but Michel Foucault and Slavoj Žižek will be at the centre. This chapter will extensively discuss not only that human beings are not merely biological creatures that are guided by “natural” laws, but also how and why the human body, signified in the subjective gaze of others for the subjective gaze of others, cannot be “objectively” perceived as a piece of flesh.

Chapter II is largely meant to argue that “Sex(uality)” is a culturally constructed phenomenon in the main. Transcending a simple “genitality,” sexuality and sexual practices are socially organised and arbitrarily regulated in accordance with taken-for-

granted norms of humanity. Keeping this approach in mind, this chapter aims to indicate that the sexual human body might be “natural,” but the control mechanisms that determine what is *sex-ual-ity* and what is not are all cultural, existing and expanding inconsistently, varying from time to time, from culture to culture.

Moving on from the previous chapter, Chapter III (“Perversion, or Sexualities”) is the part where I discuss why there is a fine line, or even none, between “normal” sexuality and perversion. As it is suggested by the title of the chapter too, sexual identities and sexual practices are so diverse and complex that the boundaries between normality and abnormality have already blurred. In addition to various theories explaining meaning(s) of perversion, this chapter includes two different approaches as well. First one liberates the perverse logic from confinement by a necessary sexual context. Second approach, which also finalises this chapter, intends to evaluate perversion in *the postmodern condition*. All of these diverse perspectives are referred on purpose; they are meant to be helpful while studying shifting perverse cases in the contemporary novels.

Chapter IV is the exclusive chapter completely dedicated to “The Body Perception in the Post-1950s Contemporary English Fiction.” Bearing the discussions of the previous chapter in mind, a particular focus on the narratives in the post-1950s provides me with a unique opportunity to look at the intersection of postmodernity and perversion. Thus, to be able to analyse perverse (and postmodernist) representations of the human body in such a distinctive period, this largest chapter of my study are divided into four subtitles on four different contemporary English novelists and their seminal works: Anthony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange*, J. G. Ballard’s *Crash*, Ian McEwan’s *The Comfort of Strangers*, and Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*.

Accordingly, in the first section titled as “Young Bodies’ Subculture of Violence: *A Clockwork Orange* (1962), Anthony Burgess,” I basically argue that for the protagonist Alex and his gang, the bodies of others become fantasy space to realise their violent desires, which causes a clash between the “pervert” (individual) and the “civilised” (society). Yet, my argument has another dimension too. While the other’s body is perceived as fantasy space by Alex, his own body transforms into confined space, namely, the powerful state’s social arena (ab)used for political ends.

The second section, “Crushed Bodies’ Fetishism for (S)Cars: *Crash* (1973), James Graham Ballard,” is there to explore how Ballard’s cars (and, by extension, motorways and parking lots) in a way become Žižek’s *fantasy space*, the ultimate erotic zone for (perverse) sexuality. From this regard, it is argued that cars are vitally functional for the peripheral subjects of Ballard (such as Vaughan) since they stand for substitution of the oppressive centre, decentralisation of authority from within. According to the Ballardian logic, which is both postmodernist and perverse, orgasmic pleasure is possible only where bodies and machines passionately merge: (s)cars. Thus, to put it briefly, my main goal in this chapter is to survey how Ballard’s cars (and their extensions) function as fantasy space, but also that the bodies themselves which are confined in those cars also become fantasy space for perverse desires of the other (as well as one’s own).

The third section is on “Beautiful Bodies’ Confinement in/as the Other Space: *The Comfort of Strangers* (1981), Ian McEwan.” Throughout this part, I analyse the spatiality of *Comfort* within a particular structure, in a chronological, circular, and geographically-hierarchical order, constructed from the periphery to the centre or from the large-scale to the small-scale, and demonstrate how the intensity of strangeness and confinement increases at every turn as the two outsiders of the novel progress in time and space. However, I tend to more focus on the idea of space figuratively and argue that the bodies of those outsiders who are confined in the other spaces of the narrative themselves become *the other space* constituted by the perverse gaze, for the perverse gaze. In the eyes of Robert and Caroline who are the explicit perverts of the story, Mary and Colin are nothing but an extension of a spatial otherness, the bodies standing for another land. Hence in this part, I concentrate on how the pervert locals desire to dominate this new virgin territory, the beautiful and “immature” bodies of the tourist couple.

The last section of this chapter is aimed to be supplementary, titled as “An Excursus on Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go* (2005): Cloned Bodies and/as Nonsexual Perversion.” As the very title suggests, this relatively shorter part gives me an opportunity, for the first time, to mainly focus on nonsexual perversion. This is again the first time perversion is regarded and confronted as an almost purely painful

experience, even as a unique ideological apparatus to victimise “the others” of the novel. In this narrative, perversion is reflected directly through the eyes of its victims, from the subjective perspective of the sufferer (Kathy as the narrator). Lastly, this special section also enables me to complete the contemporary fictional journey of this dissertation regarding the perverse representation of the human body in the post-1950s’ English literature. Since Ishiguro’s *Never* is set in the 1990s and published in the 2000s, it may function as both a literary and a historical bridge between the second half of the twentieth century and the new millennium and therefore contribute to the contextual integrity of my study. Thus, throughout this section I discuss how and why *Never* stands as a very pregnant literary source to analyse the spatial body, but this time in the context of *bodily nonsexual perversion*. The prevalent perverse gaze of the novel transforming human body into organ field dominates private bodies of the clone minority, abuses them by making them public properties. After this additional part, I finish my dissertation with “Conclusion” chapter where I present my overall commentary on the whole study and my justifications.

CHAPTER I: THE (SPATIAL) BODY

The body as we want to know it—as the agent and the object of what we precisely call “carnal knowledge”—is itself a complexly constructed and multiply invested site. As part of, and motive of, the process of creating meaning in the world by a way of symbols, the body is produced by the psychosexual thought of difference. And since this thought of difference is marked by dramas of desire and interdiction, the body is rarely simply a biological given. Phantasies project it forward in imaginary scenarios of fulfilment, pleasure, power, and backward to the unconscious infantile sources of phantasy.

—Peter Brooks³³

As the historian and sociologist Jeffrey Weeks suggests, despite its “secondary” position in such dualisms as the mind and the body or the spirit and the flesh, the body has always occupied an important space in every culture; “It has had the inevitable result of creating a cultural configuration which simultaneously disavows the body while being obsessively preoccupied with it.”³⁴ That obsession with the body is what paves the way for many theories and studies on the phenomenon; as a result, the body has been so far considered from quite different perspectives. As another of those perspectives, this chapter will search to a large extent *the spatial body*, how and why the body is regarded in/as space, both formed and confined by the others’ desires and anxieties. To be able to grasp this idea before focusing more on the sexual body, it will be useful to inquire the factors leading us to take the body spatially.

While discussing different punitive tactics from past to present, Foucault identifies basically four types of punishment: to sort them roughly, the first one is exile or any way causing displacement; the second is compensation, inflicting a financial obligation; the third one is physical injury, inscribing upon the body “the marks of power;” and lastly, confinement.³⁵ In brief, punishment in human history has mostly

³³ Brooks, *Body Work*, 13-14.

³⁴ Weeks, *Key Ideas: Sexuality*, 19.

³⁵ Michel Foucault, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow, trans. Robert Hurley and others (New York: The New Press, 1997), 23.

been in the form of dominating the body: forcing the body in or out a space or directly governing *the body as space*, on which any power practices can be executed.

Daniel Punday's reading of Foucault in a way supports this argument. Additionally, Punday takes one step further and strengthens it by associating Foucault's sense of the body with that of his predecessor Freud. At first, the critic suggests that Foucault, particularly in his *Discipline and Punish*, develops the idea of "the body as a site (of power):"

The modern body, we can say, is the normalized body—a body subjected to scientific, social, and economic surveillance. Foucault treats the normalized body as a spatial 'site' because normalization depends on space to order and differentiate individuals. The individual elements of the body are subjected to the spatial differentiation typical of the disciplinary system.³⁶

In other words, according to Foucault, the system attributes to every single body a particular space and to every space a particular body. As a result, the body becomes a site not only due to this special and spatial organisation but also since "power functions beyond the control and intentions of individual subjects."³⁷

Foucault's "Discipline and Punish" is indeed unique to explore the role of the body in social discipline, the internalisation of social control as well as the confinement of *the body in/as space*.³⁸ To Foucault, the body is "directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks [...]."³⁹ The reason is that "the body becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body."⁴⁰ Yet, the subjection as Foucault continues is not necessarily done through violence or ideology; it may be more organised and subtle, by means of "a 'knowledge' of the body," "a mastery of its forces," "the political technology of the body," all of which are in the hands of power.

³⁶ Daniel Punday, "Foucault's Body Tropes," *New Literary History* 31, no. 3 (2000): 509-11.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 511-12.

³⁸ Foucault, "Discipline and Punish," 549-66.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

Foucault then elaborates on the famous *Panopticon* model, which is based on the division of the bodies (into separated solo-cells), in which power is both visible and invisible at the same time, providing the disciplinary system with a state of conscious, internalised, and permanent subjection, which automises and disindividualises power. Foucault concludes that from an architectural model, a whole type of society emerges: we are in the panoptic machine in a sense.

After offering the Foucauldian “body-as-site” perception, Punday tries to create parallelisms between that perception and Freud’s theory of libidinal investment; the outcome is that Freud with his theories inspires Foucault (often obscurely) in terms of the spatial model for the body.⁴¹ Punday basically claims that Freud’s libidinal organisation and exploration of “the spatial relationship between the object of interpretation and the individual” play a crucial role in the creation of the panoptic model, that is, in “Foucault’s thinking about the disciplinary system and, consequently, about the body as a ‘site’ in which power and discourse operate:”

Freud’s idea that body parts (as well as objects in the outside world) are cathected and given significance within the libidinal economy clearly treats the body as a kind of space that is organized and shaped by forces independent of that space. That Freud sees the body primarily as a kind of space to be organized and subdivided is most clear in his later work, when he develops the topographical model of the psyche that Foucault mentioned above. [...]. Thus, like Foucault, Freud’s inscribed body is the creation of external forces modifying the body.⁴²

Keeping all these arguments in mind, the most significant inference is that besides physical confinement within a particular space, the consideration of the body as a kind of confined space is rather intriguing. To make it clearer, the body itself becomes space that can be discovered and investigated, conquered and dominated, transformed and decorated, integrated and disintegrated, tamed and regenerated. Such an approach to the body, commanding or mastering it as a sort of location, can stimulate complex senses; it might be painful for some while it seems pleasurable for the “others,” i.e., the pervert.

⁴¹ Punday, “Foucault’s Body Tropes,” 517.

⁴² Ibid., 517-18.

Yet, the role of “the other” in the said perception of the body as a particular space is notable. The body in fact becomes what the other fancies or sees on that space. It is exactly at this point that a reference to Slavoj Žižek’s “Looking Awry” might help to develop the argument.⁴³ Žižek starts his article addressing to an excerpt from Patricia Highsmith’s “Black House,” which he claims “exemplifies perfectly the way fantasy space functions as an empty surface, as a kind of screen for the projection of desires.”⁴⁴ To tell the story briefly, there is a desolate old building in a small rural town, a mysterious building for the rural men. Those men often tell mysterious tales about that old “black house” which is “the place that links all their adolescent memories, the place of their first ‘transgressions,’ above all those concerning sexual experience.”⁴⁵ One day, a young engineer moves into the town and decides to visit the house after hearing those legendary stories. He goes to the “mysterious” black house but finds nothing fascinating. When he comes back and announces that the house is nothing but an old filthy ruin, the men are all horrified, one of them attacks the engineer and kills him. Žižek here raises a question, “Why were the men in the saloon so horrified by the act of the newcomer?” and answers it in an illuminating way:

We can grasp their resentment by means of the difference between reality and the “other scene” of the fantasy space: the “black house” was forbidden to them because it functioned as an empty space on which they could project their nostalgic desires, their distorted memories. By publicly stating that the “black house” is nothing but an old ruin, the young intruder reduced their fantasy space to an everyday, common reality; he annulled the difference between reality and fantasy space, depriving the men of the place in which they were able to articulate their desires.⁴⁶

Thus comes Žižek’s idea of *the anamorphic object*, which does not make any sense with a straightforward or “objective” look, which is visible only through a vision distorted by emotions. Žižek explains it by referring to Jacques Lacan:

⁴³ Slavoj Žižek, “Looking Awry,” *October* 50, no. 1 (1989): 30-55.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 30-32.

This is precisely the Lacanian *objet petit a*, the object-cause of desire, an object which is, in a way, posited by the desire itself. The paradox of desire is that it posits retroactively its own cause, i.e., an object that can be perceived only by the look “distorted” by desire, an object that *does not exist* for an “objective” look. In other words, the *objet petit a* is always, by definition, perceived in a distorted way, because, outside this distortion, “in itself,” *it does not exist*, i.e., because it is *nothing but* the embodiment, the materialization of this distortion, of this surplus of confusion and perturbation introduced by desire into so-called “objective reality.” *Objet petit a* is “objectively” nothing, it is nothing at all, nothing of the desire itself which, viewed from a certain perspective, assumes the shape of “something.”⁴⁷

That is, *the anamorphic object* can be seen only by “looking awry,” only by a perspective distorted by desires and anxieties; it is otherwise merely “a formless spot” for a disinterested eye.

Perceiving the subject as Žižek’s *anamorphic object*, it will not be wrong to consider the body as void, as an empty space that can be meaningful only by an anamorphic gaze from aside. The body is nothing in itself, no more than a piece of flesh without the positive existence given by desire; it becomes something only when it is another’s fantasy space as “looked awry,” only through his/her view distorted by the personal desires, fantasies, anxieties, memories, and so on. The body is someone’s signification; it exists only as the other’s imaginary space on which s/he projects inmost urges and the most “deviant” desires. In another way, the body is “rarely simply a biological given,” rather, “a complexly constructed and multiply invested site” on which “imaginary scenarios of fulfilment, pleasure, power,” and “the unconscious infantile sources of phantasy” are projected.⁴⁸ *The body from this perspective transforms into that which constitutes it through a certain gaze.*

To give an example on how that certain gaze of “the other” constitutes the body through a distorted and desirous view, how the body becomes *another’s fantasy space*, Gupta’s survey about *sexualization* “as a method of social control” may pave the way.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Ibid., 34. See also Lacan’s *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* as cited in the end.

⁴⁸ Brooks, *Body Work*, 13-14.

⁴⁹ Gupta, “Compulsory Sexuality,” 141.

Accordingly, individuals are either *sexualized* or *desexualized* by means of certain labels such as “sexual” and “nonsexual,” “hypersexual” and “hyposexual.”⁵⁰ Gupta clarifies the discussion by presenting the case in the United States via some scholars’ evaluations and the result is that while a number of groups have been accused of hypersexuality, including African American men and women, Asian women, and members of the working class, other groups have been stigmatised with hyposexuality, including older people, people with disabilities, Asian men, and people of size.⁵¹ The vital point here is that, Gupta continues, this kind of classifications creates parallelism between “the sexual” and “the normal,” which deepens the marginalisation of certain groups of people.⁵²

A much more controversial case in terms of the perception/constitution of the body in the eyes of “the other” might be what is thoroughly discussed in Carol J. Adams’s masterpiece, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*.⁵³ Adams defines “the sexual politics of meat” as “an attitude and action that animalizes women and sexualizes and feminizes animals,” which is originated from “the assumption that *men need meat*, have the right to meat, and that meat eating is a male activity with virility.”⁵⁴ In addition to various points debated alongside, the whole book in fact illustrates how the (female) body is *fantasised* as “meat,” more clearly, how patriarchal culture treats women and animals in the same oppressive way that compels both the female and the animal bodies to function for the male as *empty spaces* to impose and perform the most primitive and “perverse” desires and instincts on such as hunting, possessing, butchering, and raping (all of which can be considered both literally and metaphorically). The dominant culture, in this respect, not only controls, consumes, and defiles the female (and the animal) body but also fragments it (“the fetishism of body parts”). What is more, Adams suggests, in such a culture the female

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Carol J. Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (New York and London: Continuum Books, 2010).

⁵⁴ Ibid., 4.

and the animal are in a way born dead, become dead bodies or what Adams calls “the absent referent” since there is now a gap between “the meat eater” (men) and the original being (women and animals), and also between the original being (women and animals) and the end product (meat).⁵⁵ The “dead bodies” of both the animal and the female, therefore, are ready/reduced to be “meat” that can be painfully used for the (patriarchal) pleasure. Thus, from this perspective, animals and women transform into nothing but the victims of patriarchal fantasies.

The patriarchal imperative on the (female) body, so far, has been a hot subject of debate for many critics (particularly those of feminism), including Fatmagül Berktaş. In her article about the relationship between feminist theory and sexuality, Berktaş broadly discusses the role of patriarchy in attributing the female body the *secondary* position.⁵⁶ Again the female body is created/posited by another’s (the male) fantasised patterns, this time in Berktaş’s words as “a phenomenon that is mysterious and needs to be controlled.”⁵⁷ Women unlike men, Berktaş argues, are *determined* through their bodies and thus obliged to take the *biologically inferior position*, to be the object of dread and disgust in the male phantasy.⁵⁸ At this point, Berktaş puts emphasis on the contribution of biological essentialism to the said patriarchal domination. In the author’s opinion, biological essentialism has legitimised and promoted the oppression of the female body, not only by *generalizing* to define/create certain groups of people merely on the basis of biology but also by denying the effect of environmental factors on the body and that sex(uality) is historically and socially/culturally *constructed*.⁵⁹ Berktaş then gives an example on how the essentialist mindset helps patriarchy in legitimating its tyranny over the female body: the biological essentialist opinions assert that the male aggression or dominance is related to the male hormones and the anatomy of women (or the black) renders them inappropriate for certain occupations or more

⁵⁵ Ibid., 13.

⁵⁶ Fatmagül Berktaş, “Feminist Teorinin Önemli Bir Alanı: Cinsellik,” in *Cogito: Feminizm* 58 (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2009), 58-72.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 58-59.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 59.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 59-60.

greedy (“bestial”) regarding sexuality.⁶⁰ In this regard, sex(uality) becomes a significant agent to maintain the subjection of certain individuals.

The “secondary position” of the female body vis-à-vis the male body in terms of sexuality is discussed in Lee’s work too.⁶¹ In his book about how states regulate sexuality to control their members, Lee also touches on the patriarchal cultures’ attempts to confine the female body sexually. To do so, the author discusses the issue from the general to the specific and develops his basic assumptions on the subjection of the female body through particular cases, the most gripping of which is the Turkish one. To elaborate on “how cultural and religious views affect the lives of [Turkish] women,” Lee presents the Turkish case by mostly referring to the anthropologist Carol Delaney’s opinions on the subject.⁶²

Accordingly, Lee detects that “Perhaps most demonstrative of the Turkish worldview on sex and gender is the manner in which the procreative roles of men and women are imagined.”⁶³ At this point, Lee gives an important quotation from Delaney to strengthen his argument; “Men supply the seed, which encapsulates the essential child. A woman provides only the nurturing context for the fetus.”⁶⁴ That is, Lee argues, “The woman’s body becomes likened to agricultural soil which has only a secondary impact on the kind of crop planted in it.”⁶⁵ Thus, once again, the (female) body is considered *spatially*, fantasised as an empty space to project (male/sexual) desires on. Lee (and indirectly Delaney) in a sense supports this idea by noting some lexicological and religious indicators of women’s secondary place in the Turkish context. By giving examples from the Turkish sexological terminology (*döl*/seed, *döllemek*/inseminate/to put the seed on, *dölyolu*/seedpath/the vagina, *dölyatağı*/the seedbed), Lee and Delaney prove that “female anatomy is defined in terms of the male;” “[A]lthough they appear to go together naturally, they are categorically different, hierarchically ordered, and

⁶⁰ Ibid., 60.

⁶¹ Lee, *Policing Sexuality*.

⁶² Ibid., 110-11.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

differently valued. With seed, men appear to provide the creative spark of life, the essential identity of a child; while women, like soil, contribute the nurturant material that sustains it.”⁶⁶ In addition, Lee continues to refer to Delaney, this approach gains support from religious traditions and myths. Just as it is stated in the Qur’an (“Women are given to you as fields to be sown, so go to them and sow [your seed] as you wish”), men become “intercommunicating subjects in an I-thou relationship from which women are excluded and in which they are objectified. God talks to men about women.”⁶⁷

The idea of the *body as confined space* by “the other” is yet again observable in the theories of the two of the most prominent feminist critics: Gayle Rubin and Luce Irigaray. Both scholars in their own ways argue that human sexuality is culturally organised and the (female) body becomes the product of social, political, and economic systems.

In “The Traffic in Women,” Rubin does it through anthropology and psychoanalysis, particularly by a Marxist reading of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Sigmund Freud.⁶⁸ After stating that “A woman is a woman,” Rubin tries to indicate how and why “She only becomes a domestic, a wife, a chattel, a playboy bunny, a prostitute, or a human dictaphone in certain relations.”⁶⁹ To scrutinise such “a systematic social apparatus which takes up females as raw materials and fashions domesticated women as products,” Rubin introduces the *sex/gender system*, “the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied.”⁷⁰

On the way of “a more fully developed definition of the sex/gender system,” Rubin begins the study by deconstructing some preceding texts which she thinks have paved the way for the systematic oppression of women. Kinship systems as “concrete forms of socially organized sexuality,” as “observable and empirical forms of

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Gayle Rubin, “The Traffic in Women,” in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, eds. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 770-94.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 770.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 771.

sex/gender systems” have a great share in those previous narratives.⁷¹ Kinship systems “are and do many things” as Rubin sums up, but the exchange of women through the incest taboo as “gift” is perhaps the most controversial part of the story. While marriage as the “most basic form of gift exchange” turns women into “the most precious of gifts,” universal incest taboo imposes “the social aim of exogamy and alliance upon the biological events of sex and procreation” and thus divides “the universe of sexual choice into categories of permitted and prohibited sexual partners.”⁷² It is true that the taboo on incest enables a wide network of relations through a kinship structure, which means organisation and “organization gives power,” “but who is organized?” Rubin asks.⁷³ In this organisation, Rubin continues, women are the gifts, the given (sexual) objects in a sense, but men are the gift-givers, the exchange partners, that is, the (sexual) subjects per se. This system hence makes men “the beneficiaries of the product of such exchanges - social organization;” “And it is the partners, not the presents, upon whom reciprocal exchange confers its quasi-mystical power of social linkage.”⁷⁴

Rubin also deals with the significant implications of the system based on the exchange of women. First of all, it suggests that “the ultimate locus of women’s oppression [lies] within the traffic in women, rather than within the traffic in merchandise.”⁷⁵ Rubin here reminds that not only in the “primitive” world but also in more “civilized” societies (even “more pronounced and commercialized” in the latter) “Women are given in marriage, taken in battle, exchanged for favors, sent as tribute, traded, bought, and sold.”⁷⁶ “Men are of course also trafficked,” Rubin draws attention, yet it is not since they are *men*. When it comes to women, they are transacted “as slaves, serfs, and prostitutes, but also simply as women.”⁷⁷ As the second implication, Rubin comes up with the inference that if the incest taboo and the results of its application

⁷¹ Ibid., 776-81.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

constitute, as argued by Lévi-Strauss, the origin of culture, the oppression of women then occurred with the origin of culture, as a prerequisite of culture. Third, the exchange of women in a kinship system provides men with “certain rights in their female kin” while women do not have full rights even to their own bodies, let alone to their male kin’s. Lastly, and as a result of all these, “the subordination of women can be seen as a product of the relationships by which sex and gender are organized and produced;” therefore, “[t]he economic oppression of women is derivative and secondary.”⁷⁸

What Rubin argues about kinship and marriages is crucial inasmuch as it conveys perceptions on the body, particularly the female one. On the one hand, the exchange of women among the male partners creates a systematic domination from the outside over the female body because, as Rubin states, “marital debts are reckoned in female flesh.”⁷⁹ On the other hand, and related to the former, this system deprives women of being an autonomous desiring creature or a (sexual) subject; “[...] the preferred female sexuality would be one which responded to the desire of others, rather than one which actively desired and sought a response.”⁸⁰ Furthermore, the female body within this mechanism does not exist *in itself*; rather it becomes a substitute, an equivalent for another thing. Varying from culture to culture, that “thing” is sometimes another woman (a daughter, a sister, or other female kinswoman in turn), sometimes bridewealth, or in other times even an abstract value like political prestige.⁸¹ It is also important here to see how sex(uality) and the sexual body can carry political and economic meanings. That is the reason why Rubin’s *sex/gender system* constantly addresses to “the political economy of sex,” the increasing interrelation among sexuality, politics, and economics. As Rubin concludes, sexual systems cannot be understood in complete isolation, just as sexuality cannot be fully grasped without social, political, and economic analyses, the latter will also be incomplete if the sexual body is neglected.⁸²

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 783.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid., 787-88.

⁸² Ibid., 790.

Irigaray's arguments about the condition of the (female) body in "Women on the Market" somehow go parallel with those of Rubin's.⁸³ Throughout that article, Irigaray too aims to examine the homosocial bonds among men, which again relies upon the exchange of women, by challenging the prevalent ideas of the time regarding women. Just as Rubin does, Irigaray draws upon Marxist approach as well while dealing with the persistent anthropological, psychoanalytic, and economic assumptions; doing that, she interrogates the symbolic order in which "women's bodies [transform] into use values and exchange values."⁸⁴

The starting point of the interrogation is yet again the anthropological claims about the transition from nature to culture, about the passage into the economic, social, and cultural order through the incest taboo and exogamy, which has eventually caused the circulation of women among men. Considering such theses as biased and one-sided, Irigaray raises the question "why are men not objects of exchange among women?" and finds the answer in the exploitation of the sexualised female bodies as integral part of culture; "It is because women's bodies – through their use, consumption, and circulation – provide for the condition making social life and culture possible [...]."⁸⁵ Within this patriarchal order, Irigaray argues, the whole organisation, all the systems of exchange, the production and the circulation of women and/or commodities are "men's business," *always* and *only* among men. That is the reason why she coins the term *ho(m)mo-sexuality* (also as *ho(m)mo-sexual* monopoly and the reign of *masculine ho(m)mo-sexuality*) to define this male domain that depends on "the exclusive valorization of men's needs/desires, of exchanges among men."⁸⁶ As it is previously suggested by Rubin, once again, men are the desiring and sexual subjects of the order ("the economy of desire - of exchange - as man's business") while women are commodities or objects in the hands of the former. *Ho(m)mo-sexual* monopoly dictates woman "a passive acceptance of men's 'activity'" while "offering herself as its material

⁸³ Luce Irigaray, "Women on the Market," in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, eds. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 799-811.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 810.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 799.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 800.

support without getting pleasure herself,” without any access to desire and determines “women’s role as fetish-objects,” or as “the manifestation and the circulation of a power of the Phallus.”⁸⁷

According to this matrix, Irigaray explains, the female are there only to “serve as the possibility of, and potential benefit in, relations among men.” Related to this argument, she further states, “Reigning everywhere, although prohibited in practice, ho(m)mo-sexuality is played out through the bodies of women, matter, or sign, and heterosexuality has been up to now just an alibi for the smooth workings of man’s relations with himself, of relations among men.”⁸⁸ Moreover, this exchange system in which women do not participate as exchange partners causes alienation; women are alienated not only from the system but also from each other as separate commodities, even from their own bodies. Here, Irigaray clarifies, the female body is treated as an *abstraction* or “phantom-like reality” because the exchange is not done in terms of some intrinsic, immanent value of the “commodity,” that is not as “women.” In a given exchange, women are reduced to “some common feature - their current price in gold, or phalluses - and of which they would represent a plus or minus quantity” and since men are the consumer, “woman has value on the market by virtue of one single quality: that of being a product of man’s ‘labor’.”⁸⁹ That is, a woman’s value is not found *in* her; it *transcends* her (“the phallus as a transcendental value”), remains *external* to her by means of a comparison with an equivalence, another woman or commodity (another similarity with Rubin’s arguments).

Irigaray also points out yet another implication of the mechanism over the female body: “women-as-commodities are thus subject to a schism.”⁹⁰ In other words, the female body is forced to function as/for two separate sets of values: on the one hand, women become “utilitarian objects” for “private use” as they have use value with their “physical or natural form” or “matter-body;” on the other hand they are “objects of

⁸⁷ Ibid., 806, 808.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 800.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 801-02.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 802.

exchange” and “bearers of value” for “social use” with their exchange value, “relative value,” and “transcendent, super-natural, ek-static value,” as “a value form” or as “an envelope.”⁹¹ To express this cleavage more clearly in Irigaray’s own words; “A commodity - a woman - is divided into two irreconcilable ‘bodies’: her ‘natural’ body and her socially valued, exchangeable body, which is a particularly mimetic expression of masculine values.”⁹² In this sense, the female bodies stand there only as “a mirror of value of man and for man;” “[...] they give up their bodies to men as the supporting material of specularization, of speculation. They yield to him their natural and social value as a locus of imprints, marks, and mirage of his activity.”⁹³

In her conclusion part, Irigaray analyses the status of women in such a patriarchal social order and accordingly indicates three main social roles imposed on them: mother, virgin, and prostitute. These three types of sexual “objects” are significant since they prove how the dominant culture makes the female bodies submit to sexual regulation and its imperatives and how bodies transform into the products of the system they exist in, into a social arena or an operational *space* for the systematic power.

Among those types, the maternal body, with both natural and use value, “cannot circulate in the form of commodities without threatening the very existence of the social order;” therefore, “mothers, reproductive instruments marked with the name of the father and enclosed in his house, must be private property, excluded from exchange.”⁹⁴ “The virginal woman, on the other hand, is pure exchange value” says Irigaray and adds: “She is nothing but the possibility, the place, the sign of relations among men. In and of herself, she does not exist: she is a simple envelope veiling what is really at stake in social exchange. In this sense, her natural body disappears into its representative function.”⁹⁵ Once deflowered when “the ritualized passage from woman to mother is accomplished by *the violation of an envelope*,” the author maintains, the virginal body

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid., 804.

⁹³ Ibid., 802-03.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 807.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 807-08.

is “relegated to the status of use value, to her entrapment in private property; she is removed from exchange among men.”⁹⁶ As for the bodies of prostitutes, they have “value,” but “only because they have already appropriated by a man, and because they serve as the locus of relations – hidden ones – between men.”⁹⁷ Hence, prostitution for Irigaray amounts to “usage that is exchanged,” “that is not merely potential: it has already been realized;” that is, “the woman’s body is valuable because it has already been used.”⁹⁸ As the common fate of all these roles, “Neither as mother nor as virgin nor as prostitute has woman any right to her own pleasure.”⁹⁹ In brief, once again and this time by Irigaray, the oppression of women is unravelled through a critical stance towards master narratives of different domains. Each time, it becomes clearer that the (sexual) body cannot be fully apprehended unless social, political, and economic factors are taken into account and vice versa.

Leaving aside the debates on whether human sex takes place “in the head” or in/between the bodies, the undeniable situation is that the body, particularly the sexual body, has always remained on the agendas.¹⁰⁰ As it is maintained by Brooks, the erotic body, as perhaps the oldest of the body representations, has been there ever since “the mankind’s earliest attempts at art,” the “representations of fecund female forms and erect phalluses.”¹⁰¹ In this context, mother goddess figures (Anatolian mother goddess Cybele, for instance) might draw attention. Yet, it is not only the *material/physical body* that matters at this point. The reason is that, as Brooks declares, “[s]exuality belongs not simply to the physical body, but to the complex of phantasies and symbolizations which largely determine identity.”¹⁰² In accordance with the consensus by a great number of scholars, “[t]he sexual body is constituted in the intersection of corporeality, cultural

⁹⁶ Ibid., 808.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Hearn and Burr, “Erotics of Wounding,” 3.

¹⁰¹ Brooks, *Body Work*, 6.

¹⁰² Ibid., xiii.

discourses and institutions.”¹⁰³ Particularly and more intensively in the contemporary period, the (sexual) body becomes a space, a public arena on/for which certain struggles are realised:

As the obsession with commodities in capitalist-consumer culture had to be fostered, representations of ‘sexuality’ were given a major role in market-strategies. One of the most important consequences of the commodification of ‘bodies’ and their ‘sexuality’ has been the breaking down of the strict division of public and private. A big proportion of the internet focuses on ‘sexuality’ and thus becomes potentially a new source for the further deployment of ‘sexuality’.¹⁰⁴

To be able to understand comprehensively the said position of the (sexual) body, Foucault’s definition of sexuality (which will be examined in details in the next chapter) may clear the way;

It appears rather as an especially dense transfer point for relations of power: between men and women, young people and old people, parents and offspring, teachers and students, priests and laity, an administration and a population. Sexuality is not the most intractable element in power relations, but rather one of those endowed with the greatest instrumentality: useful for the greatest number of maneuvers and capable of serving as a point of support, as a linchpin, for the most varied strategies.¹⁰⁵

What Foucault says here about sexuality points to the sexual body as well; to put it another way, the body also transforms into a particular place where innumerable power plays and strategic moves are performed, deepest desires are realised.

Furthermore, when power and knowledge are centred on sex(uality) the body evolves into an epistemological space out of which certain types of subjects are formed. Before Foucault’s ideas on this subject-formation, it is better to hear words from a similar perspective on *the desire to know*. In his work about the body in modern

¹⁰³ Hearn and Burr, “Erotics of Wounding,” 3.

¹⁰⁴ Beckmann, *Social Construction of Sexuality*, 51.

¹⁰⁵ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 103.

narrative, Brooks deals with the body in the erotic tradition, “using ‘erotic’ to designate the body primarily conceived, and primarily become significant, as the agent and object of desire”, and uttering here the desire “that is originally and always, with whatever sublimations, sexual, but also by extension the desire to know: the body as an ‘epistemophilic’ project.”¹⁰⁶ Likewise, Foucault talks about the (subjected) body regarding epistemological concerns. At this point, Foucault puts forward four specific figures constituted after four strategic unities.¹⁰⁷ The first one is “the hysterical woman,” “a nervous mother” figure through *a hysterization of women’s bodies*: “a threefold process whereby the feminine body was analyzed—qualified and disqualified—as being thoroughly saturated with sexuality [...]” The second is “the masturbating child” with *a pedagogization of children’s sex*: children as “preliminary sexual beings” are to be taken charge to avoid “physical and moral, individual and collective dangers.” The third is “the ‘Malthusian couple’” after *a socialization of procreative behavior*: economic, political, and medical restrictions and measures for the fertility of couples. The last one is “the perverse adult” and *a psychiatrization of perverse pleasure*: sexual instincts and behaviours are categorised as normal and pathological and “a corrective technology” is sought for the anomalies. Thus, out of the alliance between power and knowledge, the body grows into a particular domain, not only to know or explore but also to govern and control.

To search for the relationship between power and the sexual body further, Foucault also refers to two kinds of customs in the Western societies.¹⁰⁸ While in the past there was a *deployment of alliance*, “a system of marriage, of fixation and development of kinship ties, of transmission of names and possessions” the Western societies have then created “a new apparatus,” the *deployment of sexuality* that “operates according to mobile, polymorphous, and contingent techniques of power” and “engenders a continual extension of areas and forms of control” by concerning itself with “the sensations of the body, the quality of pleasures, and the nature of

¹⁰⁶ Brooks, *Body Work*, 5.

¹⁰⁷ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 103-05.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 106-07.

impressions.” Yet, the more significant point here is that the *deployment of sexuality* as Foucault states links economy and the body, “the body that produces and consumes.” In addition to see how the body is exploited “as an object of knowledge and an element in relations of power,” this statement is helpful to comprehend, again, how (much) the body can be conceived *as space*, just like a land or plantation that *both produces and consumes* in time.

Another example of how power operates on, controls, and *confines the body* comes from a feminist perspective. In her article on heterosexuality and lesbianism, Rich contemplates on “the power of men” over women and explains eight characteristics of male power in archaic and contemporary societies referring to Kathleen Gough’s essay “The Origin of the Family:”

The power of men

1. *to deny women [our own] sexuality*

[by means of clitoridectomy and infibulation; chastity belts; punishment, including death, for lesbian sexuality; psychoanalytic denial of the clitoris; strictures against masturbation; denial of maternal and postmenopausal sensuality; unnecessary hysterectomy; pseudolesbian images in media and literature; closing of archives and destruction of documents relating to lesbian existence];

2. *or to force it [male sexuality] upon them*

[by means of rape (including marital rape) and wife beating; father-daughter, brother sister incest; [...]; idealization of heterosexual romance in art, literature, media, advertising, etc.; child marriage; arranged marriage; prostitution; the harem; psychoanalytic doctrines of frigidity and vaginal orgasm; pornographic depictions of women responding pleasurably to sexual violence and humiliation (a subliminal message being that sadistic heterosexuality is more “normal” than sensuality between women)];

3. *to command or exploit their labor to control their produce*

[by means of the institutions of marriage and motherhood as unpaid production; the horizontal segregation of women in paid employment; the decoy of the upwardly mobile token woman; male control of abortion, contraception, and childbirth; enforced sterilization; pimping; female infanticide, which robs mothers of daughters and contributes to generalized devaluation of women];

4. *to control or rob them of their children*

[by means of father-right and “legal kidnapping”; enforced sterilization; systematized infanticide; seizure of children from lesbian mothers by the courts; the malpractice of male obstetrics; use of the mother as “token torturer” in genital mutilation or in binding the daughter’s feet (or mind) to fit her for marriage];

5. *to confine them physically and prevent their movement*

[by means of rape as terrorism, keeping women off the streets; purdah; foot-binding; atrophying of women’s athletic capabilities; haute couture, “feminine” dress codes; the veil; sexual harassment on the streets; horizontal segregation of women in employment; prescriptions for “full-time” mothering; enforced economic dependence of wives];

6. *to use them as objects in male transactions*

[use of women as “gifts”; bride-price; pimping; arranged marriage; use of women as entertainers to facilitate male deals, e.g., wife-hostess, cocktail waitress required to dress for male sexual titillation, call girls, “bunnies,” geisha, *kisaeng* prostitutes, secretaries];

7. *to cramp their creativeness*

[witch persecutions as campaigns against midwives and female healers and as pogrom against independent, “unassimilated” women; definition of male pursuits as more valuable than female within any culture, so that cultural values become embodiment of male subjectivity; restriction of female self-fulfilment to marriage and motherhood; sexual exploitation of women by male artists and teachers; the social and economic disruption of women’s creative aspirations; erasure of female tradition]; and

8. *to withhold from them large areas of the society’s knowledge and cultural attainments*

[by means of noneducation of females (60% of the world’s illiterates are women); the “Great Silence” regarding women and particularly lesbian existence in history and culture; sex-role stereotyping which deflects women from science, technology, and other “masculine” pursuits; male social/professional bonding which excludes women; discrimination against women in the professions].¹⁰⁹

Rich’s list of male power characteristics clearly shows how the female body has been so far dominated, consistently and systematically, publicly and privately, economically and psychologically, shortly, in all spheres.

¹⁰⁹ Rich, “Compulsory Heterosexuality,” 638-40.

Indeed, all of these eight points suggest that *the (female) body transforms into a confined space* on which infinite power plays and desires have been realised. The “chastity belt” example, particularly, might be a significant symbol to investigate how the female body becomes a (male’s) private property that can be used arbitrarily and locked up to avoid any “intruders” when the “owner” is done. It seems that sexuality, arguably as the most crucial agent in the domination of the bodies, needs to be elaborated on.



CHAPTER II: SEX(UALITY)

Desire is essentially a *perverse desire*.
—Julia Kristeva¹¹⁰

“[...] science has so little to tell us about the origin of sexuality that we can liken the problem to a darkness into which not so much as a ray of a hypothesis has penetrated,” says Freud.¹¹¹ As the renowned historian and sociologist Jeffrey Weeks also notes, even the most famous sexologists such as Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Havelock Ellis, Auguste Forel, Magnus Hirschfeld, and Sigmund Freud in a way failed in their exploration of “the true meaning” of sex(uality); they frequently disagreed with each other, even contradicted themselves, and at last, many of them had to admit that they were defeated in a sense.¹¹² Even if today, in Weeks’s opinion, one may claim that people more know what is sexual and what is not, they are still as doubtful as those pioneers in terms of sexuality and its interpretations or implications.¹¹³ Nevertheless, this study largely tends to consider sexuality in its modern sense. To clarify it, by sexuality it is meant not merely “anatomical characteristics” or “the reproductive capacity of an organism” as it was thought before the 1890s but “the body and its desires,” “an umbrella term to refer to behaviour, orientation, identity, desire, anatomy and other matters that relate to individuality,” and also “some kind of (often mysterious) relationship to anatomy and psychology.”¹¹⁴ In other words, it is true that the body implicates sexuality one way or another; however, as Brooks states, this sexuality is not merely genitality, but “the complex conscious and unconscious desires and interdictions

¹¹⁰ This idea will be revisited later in the chapter on perversion. James Penney cites this statement by Kristeva in:

James Penney, *The World of Perversion: Psychoanalysis and the Impossible Absolute of Desire* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006), 1.

¹¹¹ Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 51.

¹¹² Weeks, *Key Ideas: Sexuality*, 5.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Harry G. Cocks, “Approaches to the History of Sexuality since 1750,” in *The Routledge History of Sex and the Body: 1500 to the Present*, eds. Sarah Toulalan and Kate Fisher (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 38.

that shape humans' conceptions of themselves as desiring creatures—it is always a restless captive of culture, including language.”¹¹⁵

As suggested beforehand, Freud explains the transition to the present-day civilisation, the “decisive step” to it, through the “substitution of the power of a united number for the power of a single man;” the community, its members, have restricted the possibilities of gratification (of sexual or aggressive desires) by means of a law which will not be broken by any individual.¹¹⁶ Within that civilisation, Freud goes on, “[...] sexual relations permitted only on the basis of a final, indissoluble bond between a man and woman; that sexuality as a source of enjoyment for its own sake is unacceptable to it; and that its intention is to tolerate it only as the hitherto irreplaceable means of multiplying the human race.”¹¹⁷

In Freudian psychoanalysis, Eros corresponds to sexuality in a sense; more than that, it sublimates the latter: “[...] Freud does not rigidly distinguish between Eros and sexuality. [...] Eros signifies a quantitative and qualitative aggrandizement of sexuality.”¹¹⁸ Being so, Eros is restrained in social life, which is cultured and civilised. The reality principle demands postponement of gratification (the pleasure principle) if not ultimate abandonment of it, which still leads to repression and thus unpleasure for the individual.¹¹⁹ As Marcuse clearly explains, to avoid “dangerous” desires, the civilised community hinders individuals from experiencing satisfying pleasure:

The uncontrolled 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,

¹¹⁵ Brooks, *Body Work*, 6.

¹¹⁶ Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (Aylesbury: Chrysoma Associates Limited, 2000-2005), 17.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹¹⁸ Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, 205.

¹¹⁹ Freud interprets this “temporary toleration of unpleasure” as “a step on the long indirect road to pleasure.” For his detailed analyses on the subject, see below:

Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 4.

inhibited in their aim. Civilization begins when the primary objective -- namely, integral satisfaction of needs -- is effectively renounced.¹²⁰

If so, is there any space for the individual to reveal the deepest desires or needs? Marcuse's words make it explicit that phantasy can remain free from the rule of the reality principle:

Phantasy plays a most decisive function in the total mental structure: it links the deepest layers of the unconscious with the highest products of consciousness (art), the dream with the reality; it preserves the archetypes of the genus, the perpetual but repressed ideas of the collective and individual memory, the tabooed images of freedom. Freud establishes a twofold connection, "between the sexual instincts and phantasy" on the one side, and "between the ego instincts and the activities of consciousness" on the other.¹²¹

Sex(uality) is not something that can be freely experienced among the civilised community. There are certain control mechanisms preventing sex(uality) based on one's natural instincts and spontaneous drives. Power is perhaps the most effective one of those controlling forces in Foucault's view. Yet, Foucauldian power is "everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but it comes from everywhere;" "[...] it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society."¹²² Foucault explains the West's history of sexuality through the relations of power with sex and offers the following five principal features.¹²³

Accordingly, the first one is *the negative relation*: there is always a negative connection between power and sex, which is made up of "rejection, exclusion, refusal, blockage, concealment, or mask." That is, "[w]here sex and pleasure are concerned, power can 'do' nothing but say no to them."¹²⁴ The second principle is *the insistence of*

¹²⁰ Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, 11.

¹²¹ Ibid., 140-41.

¹²² Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 93.

¹²³ Ibid., 83-84.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

the rule, meaning that “[p]ower is essentially what dictates its law to sex.”¹²⁵ Foucault elaborates on it: firstly, power places sex in a binary system like “licit and illicit, permitted and forbidden;” secondly, “power prescribes an ‘order’ for sex that operates at the same time as a form of intelligibility: sex is to be deciphered on the basis of its relation to the law;” and thirdly, power holds on sex through language, “or rather through the act of discourse that creates, from the very fact that it is articulated, a rule of law [;] it speaks, and that is the rule” (a legislator as a good example).¹²⁶ As the third principle comes *the cycle of prohibition* that clarifies how “power employs nothing more than a law of prohibition” and thus constrains sex through taboo: “[i]ts objective: that sex renounce itself. Its instrument: the threat of a punishment that is nothing other than the suppression of sex. Renounce yourself or suffer the penalty of being suppressed; do not appear if you do not want to disappear.”¹²⁷ *The logic of censorship* is Foucault’s fourth principle, which requires “affirming that such a thing [sex] is not permitted, preventing it from being said, denying that it exists.”¹²⁸ Yet, as Foucault suggests, this logic may paradoxically imply the very existence of sex or its currency. The last principle is *the uniformity of the apparatus*, that is, seeking an obedient subject “[p]ower over sex is exercised in the same way at all levels;”

[I]t operates according to the simple and endlessly reproduced mechanisms of law, taboo, and censorship: from the state to family, from prince to father, from the tribunal to the small change of everyday punishments, from the agencies of social domination to the structures that constitute the subject himself, one finds a general form of power, varying in scale alone.¹²⁹

To Foucault, neither sex nor sexuality is something “naturally” determined;

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 84-85.

Sexuality is a part of our behavior. It's a part of our world freedom. Sexuality is something that we ourselves create—it is our own creation, and much more than the discovery of a secret side of our desire. We have to understand that with our desires, through our desires, go new forms of relationships, new forms of love, new forms of creation. Sex is not a fatality: it's a possibility for creative life.¹³⁰

Then, how (much) does it make sense to claim that a certain kind of sex(uality) is natural, normal, or standard while the others are deviant? This will be the following chapter's main argument.

Another constructionist approach comes from Weeks, for whom sexuality is not “a given” or “a primordially ‘natural’ phenomenon” but rather “a product of social and historical forces,” “a product of negotiation, struggle and human agency,” “an invention of the human mind,” “a ‘fictional unity’, that once did not exist, and at some time in the future may not exist again.”¹³¹ That is why Weeks prefers to call it “sexualities” by negating any absolutist attitude in sexuality's complex history. Indeed, what Weeks does here is *not* holding an essentialist, reductionist or deterministic stance;

But I am suggesting that what we define as ‘sexuality’ is an historical construction, which brings together a host of different biological and mental possibilities, and cultural forms - gender identity, bodily differences, reproductive capacities, needs, desires, fantasies, erotic practices, institutions and values - which need not be linked together, and in other cultures have not been. All the constituent elements of sexuality have their source either in the body or the mind, and I am not attempting to deny the limits posed by biology or mental processes. But the capacities of the body and the psyche are given meaning only in social relations.¹³²

Weeks's point of view, therefore, is a critique of the social organisation of sexuality, sustained by “a variety of languages” that try to tell us what sex is, what it should be, or what it can be.¹³³ Weeks also remarks that those languages of sex “embedded in moral treatises, laws, educational practices, psychological theories, medical definitions, social

¹³⁰ Foucault, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, 163.

¹³¹ Weeks, *Key Ideas: Sexuality*, 6, 19.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 7.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

rituals, pornographic or romantic fictions, popular music, as well as in commonsense assumptions” set the horizon of the possible by presenting themselves as “true representations of our intimate needs and desires.”¹³⁴ Thus, unstable social forces and diverse social practices that *define* and give meaning to the sex(ual) play the central role in Weeks’s conceptualisation of sexuality. It is so much so that he goes so far as to argue that sexuality exists only through its social forms and social organisation; besides, the forces which shape erotic possibilities of the body are not static, rather varying from society to society.¹³⁵

Even so, there are certain factors that are largely common in the social organisation of sexuality. Weeks identifies five broad areas which are particularly crucial: kinship and family systems, economic and social organization, social regulation, political interventions, and the development of “cultures of resistance.”¹³⁶ As the most basic and unchanging form of control, Weeks argues, kinship and family systems appear as “the ‘natural’ focus of sexual socialization and experience;” especially the incest taboo functions as “a universal law,” marking the passage “from a state of nature to human society,” and seen as “constitutive of culture.”¹³⁷ Weeks also emphasises that kin ties are rather “social relations between groups, often based on residential affinities and hostile to genetic affinities” than “*natural* links of blood.”¹³⁸ Yet, Weeks continues, families themselves are not autonomous, natural entities but in relation with wider social and economic forces such as class divisions, urbanisation, and rapid industrial and social changes. To clarify the economic and social organization of sexuality, Weeks indicates how work conditions can dramatically shape sexual lives, how the relations between men and women are constantly affected by changes in economic and social conditions and how the said conditions go hand in hand with recognition of the sexual autonomy of women.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 18-19.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 21-27.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

When it comes to social regulation of sexuality, Weeks calls attention to “a moral consensus” among society that is constituted through many agents such as religious and governmental significations; however, that consensus is subject to change in time. As one of those critical shifts of the last century in the heavily industrialised countries, he indicates a particular move, a transition from some moral regulation by churches to a more secular mode of organisation which has been realised through education, psychology, social work, medicine, and certain welfare practices.¹³⁹ Political interventions and the general political climate of a particular place are also important since any particular time’s political forces and the balance among them can determine the legislative control, its degree, and the intensity of moral intervention in that sexual sphere.¹⁴⁰ Last but not least for Weeks are cultures of resistance. The reason is that the history of sexuality is not simply the history of control in his view; it is also a history of opposition, of a resistance to moral codes since morally regulative forms pave the way for transgressions, subversions, and cultures of resistance.¹⁴¹

Just like Foucault, Weeks too highlights the intensifying interrelation between sexuality and power; “[...] issues of sexuality are increasingly important in the whole working of power in contemporary society.”¹⁴² To investigate a great number of structures of domination, of subordination in sexuality of the contemporary age, Weeks specifies three major axes: class, gender and race.¹⁴³ What is significant here for Weeks is that sexual politics can never be a single form of activity since those boundaries among race, gender, and class overlap unavoidably and power operates through a complexity of interlocking practices in a subtle way.¹⁴⁴ In another saying, sexuality is never “a unified whole” but consists of many sexualities (such as “class sexualities,” “gender-specific sexualities,” “racialized sexualities,” and “sexualities of struggle and choice”); “It is a continuing process in which we are simultaneously acted upon and

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid., 34.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 35-40.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

actors, objects of change, and its subjects.”¹⁴⁵ Hence, sexuality in Weeks’s opinion is not fixed but fragile; it defies any absolutist attitude while welcoming a pluralistic perception. In other words, he argues that sexual identities popularly defined as man or woman, normal or abnormal, and heterosexual or homosexual have all constructed from diverse materials negotiated by us throughout our life courses, but they have been also limited by our biological inheritance, altered by a number of phenomena such as contingency, social regulation, and control, and subjected to perpetual disruptions from our unconscious desires and wishes.¹⁴⁶

Yet, interpreting sexuality merely from a constructionist perspective might give an incomplete account. There *is* something subjective, something that is very personal and bodily in sexuality as well. While conceptualising sexuality, Stephen L. Goettsch elaborates on this idea and underlines four aspects: “(1) sexuality is an individual capacity, (2) sexuality is experiential, (3) sexuality is body-oriented, and (4) sexuality is genitally oriented.”¹⁴⁷

Goettsch claims that sexuality is an *individual capacity* because it arises within human beings, not originates from external forces; “One’s sexuality comes from within but is normalized by the discourse of sexuality.”¹⁴⁸ Culture and social standards for sure have an impact on sexuality nevertheless; “Norms provide the social parameters for sexual enactment, but cultures and norms channel, not create, sexuality. Cultures construct the manifestations of sexuality, the sexual enactment, which includes norms, beliefs, values, and behaviours—all elements that underlie the discourse and regulation of sexuality.”¹⁴⁹

For Goettsch, sexuality is not only an individual capacity but also an *experiential* phenomenon. Saying that, Goettsch challenges social norms that divide experiences into sexual/nonsexual categories since any experience, he suggests, can be

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 64.

¹⁴⁷ Stephen L. Goettsch, “Clarifying Basic Concepts: Conceptualizing Sexuality,” *The Journal of Sex Research* 26, no. 2 (1989): 249-55.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 250.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

described as sexual without the involved individuals perceiving them as such and reinforces the discussion by offering a gripping case;

[F]or example, a young woman has a sexual experience if she achieves an orgasm while riding a horse, even if she does not define the situation as sexual, and even if she doesn't know about orgasm. The significance of social definitions is that people must define situations as sexual before they will *intentionally behave sexually*, that is, intentionally manifest sexual enactment. This is evident in the differences in contemporary sexual constructions which define contact during breast-feeding and hugging relatives as nonsexual, while contact during foreplay leading to coitus as sexual. Despite nonsexual scripts and subjective definitions, all these contacts are sexual according to definition.¹⁵⁰

To put it differently, although society generally accepts any experience as sexual if it is something related to/leading to reproduction (for its own benefit) it is not necessary in fact for any behaviour to have reproductive potentiality to be counted as sexual.

As the third aspect in Goettsch's definition, sexuality is *body-oriented*; it is "physical both in source and as it is experienced through stimulation of the body regardless of the source (such as the environment, another person, self-stimulation, or unconscious muscle contractions)."¹⁵¹ By emphasising this, Goetsch not only indicates that individuals might differ in their responses to the same bodily experiences but also, again, renounces some cultural scripts that treat sexuality as nonphysical energy:

For example, sexual arousal causes identical physiological changes in breasts, whether or not the specific culture identifies breasts as erogenous zones. On the other hand, cultural scripts may deemphasize or prohibit contact with an erogenous zone (for example, taboos prohibiting anal contact), but they do not change the physiology of erogenous zones.¹⁵²

Before explaining the last aspect of sexuality, sexuality as *genitally oriented*, Goettsch raises a question, "Why are some body parts and activities perceived as more

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 251.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 253.

¹⁵² Ibid.

sexual than others?” and finds the answer in the distinction between sexuality and reproduction. To clarify it, even though individuals may find pleasure in limitless number of activities, cultures typically tend to reward behaviours that can result in birth and thus enable the continuity of human race. Goettsch clearly summarises this conservative mindset by stating that cultures seek to regulate sexuality by applying certain restrictions to sexual activities, to reproductive anatomy and processes including intercourse at the cost of a broader physical sexual experience or repertoire; the ultimate restriction possible here in any society is to limit sexual enactment to coitus so that a replacement population would be insured.¹⁵³

In fact, cultures not only regulate sexuality by restricting some of the sexual activities but also make those activities in a way compulsory to normalise humanity. It is exactly at this point that Gupta’s conceptualisation of *compulsory sexuality* as “a form of social regulation in contemporary Western societies” may help enlightening the question.¹⁵⁴ Gupta initially objects to the judgements that count asexuality as “deviant,” as “a sign of moral, medical, or psychological disorder.”¹⁵⁵ The author then explains the phrase *compulsory sexuality* as “the assumption that all people are sexual,” “the social norms and practices that both marginalise various forms of nonsexuality, such as a lack of sexual desire or behavior, and compel people to experience themselves as desiring subjects, take up sexual identities, and engage in sexual activity.”¹⁵⁶ What is more, Gupta maintains, *compulsory sexuality* is “a system that regulates the behavior of all people, not just those who identify as asexual;” it implies that “our society’s definition of the human and the normal are tied to the sexual, but not necessarily entirely to the heterosexual” (unlike what Adrienne Rich asserts).¹⁵⁷ Moreover, Gupta reminds that the term *compulsory sexuality* builds on some previous scholars’ approaches to sexuality (containing Michel Foucault’s, Adrienne Rich’s, Gayle Rubin’s, and Judith Butler’s) and that a number of other similar terms have also been proposed to describe the

¹⁵³ Ibid., 254.

¹⁵⁴ Gupta, “Compulsory Sexuality,” 131-54.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 132.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 135.

contemporary sexual landscape such as *sex-normative culture*, *sexualnormativity*, *sexusociety*, and *the sexual assumption*.¹⁵⁸

If sexuality is defined, as Ilka Quindeau does while developing “the concept of a comprehensive sexuality that is not gender-specific,” beyond the reproductive function, the dichotomy of male-female sexuality is transcended; besides, for any individual “the sexual experience oscillates consciously and unconsciously on many different levels between positions of femininity and masculinity.”¹⁵⁹ Such a perception of sex(uality) can invalidate not only gender norms but also any restraints on the way of pure pleasure. In Foucault’s thought; “The nineteenth century and our own [the twentieth] have been rather the age of multiplication: a dispersion of sexualities, a strengthening of their disparate forms, a multiple implantation of ‘perversions.’ Our epoch has initiated sexual heterogeneities.”¹⁶⁰ Thus, the next chapter will be about those sexual heterogeneities, decentring/decentred sexualities, or for some others, perversions.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 133-34.

¹⁵⁹ Ilka Quindeau, “Female Sexuality beyond Gender Dichotomy,” in *The Female Body: Inside and Outside*, eds. Ingrid Moeslein-Teising and Frances Thomson Salo (London: Karnac Books, 2013), 223.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 37.

CHAPTER III: PERVERSION, OR SEXUALITIES

Sex is dirty to the extent that erotic reality threatens to undermine the cosmic categories that organize the rest of social life. This is the source of the fears that surround sex, but also the source of its fascination. If sex did not disintegrate the cosmos to some extent, human beings would want to copulate only so much as animals, which are less preoccupied with sex. Those who desire to wash the dirt from sex...are polishing away the very impurities that make it worth doing, that allows sex to rise above mere biological process into an existential act.

—Murray S. Davis¹⁶¹

As it is suggested throughout the previous chapter, power for Foucault is not “something that is acquired, seized, or shared,” but it is “exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations;” in other words, relations of power are not “in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relationships (economic processes, knowledge relationships, sexual relations), but are immanent in the latter [...].”¹⁶² Besides, more importantly, to Foucault “[w]here there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power.”¹⁶³ Considering such an approach, it is relevant at this point to claim that perversion might be *a way to resist power from the inside*. Now that power is everywhere, everything is in the sphere of its influence; anything or anyway the pervert uses turns into a challenge inside, an internal threat to that power. In other words, as the sociologist Weeks suggests, control mechanisms paradoxically generate the very opposition of themselves: “The striving to produce and regulate the norm inevitably produces the Other, the feared and execrated or merely despised, which simultaneously denies and confirms the norm. The political and sexual ordering is always internally disordered by the very perversities it produces and sets up against

¹⁶¹ Murray S. Davis, *Smut: Erotic Reality/Obscene Ideology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 245-46.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 94.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 95.

itself.”¹⁶⁴ This is just another way to say that morally regulative forms inevitably give rise to transgressions, subversions, and cultures of resistance in any community.¹⁶⁵

Ivan Crozier’s perspective at this point is similar to Foucault’s. He accepts that the phenomenon of power, which is exercised through morality, social sanctioning, the law, and the like, has constrained individual expressions of sexual pleasures and desires; therefore, sexual categories are rather “manifestations of power” than “simply objective descriptions of the reality of particular sexual variations.”¹⁶⁶ The key problem here for Crozier is “the medicalization of ‘sexual perversions’” by the sexologists like Krafft-Ebing during the nineteenth century, the “tendency to equate a sexual act with a fixed sexual identity”: “the categorical imperative that still haunts us with the use of labels first constructed by nineteenth-century sexologists.”¹⁶⁷ Crozier’s work moreover leads us, once again, to the debates on (ab)normal sex(uality). He demonstrates that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, sexual “perversions” were psychopathologically and squarely constructed on the basis of conceptualisations of variations from the “normal” impulse, namely, heterosexual, reproductive, uxorious, and non-excessive.¹⁶⁸ Due to the “pathologizing discourses,” the social pressures, Crozier continues, the “pervert” bodies “have to negotiate their relationships with heteronormative discourses that describe their most cherished sexual outlets as perverse, and sometimes effect the ban of these acts entirely.”¹⁶⁹ If the pervert insists on seeking the inadmissible “deviant” pleasures (to the majority of the society), the cost will be heavy: “social sanctioning, from legal control, medical pathologization, social ostracism from beneficial social structures (marriage, the nuclear family, being ‘normal’, being ‘sane’).”¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁴ Weeks, *Key Ideas: Sexuality*, 76.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁶⁶ Ivan Crozier, “(De-)constructing Sexual Kinds since 1750,” in *The Routledge History of Sex and the Body: 1500 to the Present*, eds. Sarah Toulalan and Kate Fisher (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 142-43.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 142.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 143.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 144-45.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 145.

In fact, there is a fine line (or maybe none?) between “normal” sexuality and perversion. Any sexual activity can only be one step away from “deviance.” This point of view might stem from the very nature of desire itself, which is *perverse* as Kristeva puts it. James Penney elaborates on Kristeva’s idea: “[...] desire is essentially perverse because desire is infinite and impossible. Desire always exceeds its object and articulates itself transcendently—in a manner which overflows the container of its own sociohistorical conditions of possibility.”¹⁷¹ If so, how far away can sex(uality), already fed by such a *perverse* desire, stay from perversion? Thus, the basic act of the pervert, the reason why s/he is called pervert, is mainly to go beyond that thin line, to *transgress*. The one who violates the unwritten societal rules and goes beyond the previously defined (especially sexual) limits is a transgressor, a potential pervert. Here comes the nuance, the tricky side of the issue: perhaps it is not that s/he ignores the rules because s/he is a pervert; on the contrary, s/he is *supposedly* a pervert because there have been certain norms.

In their article on paraphilias, Dinesh Bhugra et al. extendedly discuss how (much) “the normal” is a culturally specific phenomenon.¹⁷² Throughout the article, the scholars frequently note that what is sexually permitted dramatically changes across cultures, varying from religion to religion, from time to time, even from individual to individual. Since societies perceive sexuality through symbols, they argue, sexual attitudes might be considered normal, subcultural or individual depending on the viewing eye. Presenting the interrelated examples of cross-dressing and uniforms, the scholars state that it is the degree and intention (relative concepts) that determine if any behaviour symbolises a fashion, a fantasy or a fetish. Above all, the scholars also highlight that for a given culture any “perverse” sexual attitude can be normalised in time—they present some cases from different cultures that strengthen this argument. It is from this perspective that *the normal* is nothing but “the effect obtained by the execution of the normative project,” particularly within the sphere of sexuality.¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ Penney, *The World of Perversion*, 33.

¹⁷² Dinesh Bhugra et al., “Paraphilias Across Cultures: Contexts and Controversies,” *Journal of Sex Research* 57, no. 2-3 (2010): 242-56.

¹⁷³ Canguilhem, *The Normal and the Pathological*, 243.

Many scholars are in fact aware of how the lines between the normal and the abnormal blur. Robert Gray, for instance, is one of those scholars that interrogate the grey area between “natural” sex(uality) and the “perverse” one.¹⁷⁴ In his work, Gray challenges the idea that natural sex(uality) is the one that is reproductive and deduces from this mentality that any other nonreproductive sexual acts must be “perverse” if that is the logic. If “sexual” means something that gives erotic pleasure, Gray suggests, labelling anything as “pervert” becomes pointless. Gray concludes his point briefly by asserting that any classification of a given type of sexual behavior as perverse is nothing but purely descriptive.¹⁷⁵ Jerrold Levinson too feels uneasy with the assumption of procreative sex(uality) as normal and complains about how irrational ways the distinction between normality and perversion is done through;

The idea that in a world threatened with overpopulation and beset by teenage pregnancy only sexual activity aimed at reproduction avoids the label of perversion is plainly laughable; and it is surely at least a matter of reflection whether pornographically-aided masturbation, despite being *among the statistically most common of male sexual behaviors*, nevertheless deserves the label of perversion.¹⁷⁶

Throughout their article where they review the history of sexuality and psychiatry’s historical struggle with the conceptualisation and categorisation of “unusual” sexual desires and practices (from Krafft-Ebing’s *Psychopathia Sexualis* in 1886 to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* in 2013), Andreas De Block and Pieter R. Adriaens indicate that the sexual instincts in fact have not changed much over time but what have changed are the *social reactions* to the expression of these instincts.¹⁷⁷ Every community constructs its own idea of sexuality as objective reality, which prevents the development of others; therefore, “individuals are

¹⁷⁴ Robert Gray, “Sex and Sexual Perversion,” *The Journal of Philosophy* 75, no. 4 (1978): 189-99.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 197.

¹⁷⁶ Jerrold Levinson, “Sexual Perversity,” *The Monist* 86, no. 1 (2003): 31.

¹⁷⁷ Andreas De Block and Pieter R. Adriaens, “Pathologizing Sexual Deviance: A History,” *Journal of Sex Research* 50, no. 3-4 (2013): 276-98.

born into 'pre-existing sexual worlds'."¹⁷⁸ Human sexuality is, Beckmann announces, in a sense *unnatural* for it is deeply connected with the symbols surrounding our sexual sphere.¹⁷⁹ Thus, for individuals, the so-called transgression becomes almost inevitable under such conditions and it has risen as one of the major themes in constructions of erotics and sexuality for a considerable number of critics recently.¹⁸⁰

For Rubin, for instance, kinship systems as the constitutive part of culture seems problematic since it rests upon heterosexual marriage; "They [kinship systems] therefore transform males and females into 'men' and 'women,' each an incomplete half which can only find wholeness when united with the other."¹⁸¹ This kind of conventional regulation or social organisation of sex(uality) not only constrains individual sexual lives but also imposes an obligatory heterosexuality. Gender is hence nothing but "a socially imposed division of the sexes."¹⁸² While correlating the oppression of women with the general tyranny of social systems in terms of sexuality, Rubin also touches on how gender identity is shaped by social sanctions: "It requires repression: in men, of whatever is the local version of 'feminine' traits; in women, of the local definition of 'masculine' traits. The division of the sexes has the effect of repressing some of the personality characteristics of virtually everyone, men and women."¹⁸³ That is to say, societies force individuals to identify themselves with *only* one sex; besides, their sexual desire also should be directed *only* toward the other sex: "The suppression of the homosexual component of human sexuality, and by corollary, the oppression of homosexuals, is therefore a product of the same system whose rules and relations oppress women...."¹⁸⁴ What is more, these social norms have a perpetual effect; they form a sexual discourse which creates *pre-existing sexual worlds* for the individuals: "While particular socio-sexual systems vary, each one is specific, and

¹⁷⁸ Beckmann, *Social Construction of Sexuality*, 26.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁸⁰ Hearn and Burr, "Erotics of Wounding," 2.

¹⁸¹ Rubin, "The Traffic in Women," 782.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

individuals within it will have to conform to a finite set of possibilities. Each new generation must learn and become its sexual destiny, each person must be encoded with its appropriate status within the system.”¹⁸⁵

Judith Butler might be one of the most famous among those critics holding a critical view of traditional idea of sexuality. To deconstruct sexuality in “Critically Queer,” Butler draws on *performativity* as “one domain in which power acts as discourse.”¹⁸⁶ Accordingly, one’s gender is nothing but the outcome of a chain of binding conventions, a citation of discourse, an assignment, a repeated process, an imitation of an ideal, and a reiteration of norms which precede, condition, and exceed the performer.¹⁸⁷ Referring to Louis Althusser’s *interpellation* of the individuals as subjects, Butler comes up with a parallel argument: sexual identities come into being through being called, named, or interpellated/hailed as “male” or “female” by the already existing sexual discourse. The heterosexual is, therefore, also a production of such a discourse. Within an *imaginary* logic, heterosexuality is the sum of compulsory performances individuals are forced to negotiate, hyperbolic versions of “man” and “woman.” This is the reason why Butler puts forward that heterosexuality is neither a psychic truth nor reducible to a surface appearance; it is rather taken-for-granted, naturalised, idealised, and performed iteratively.

Chris Brickell is another scholar that questions conventional understanding of sexuality.¹⁸⁸ Throughout the entire paper, Brickell scrutinises both classical and modern sexology texts and infers how instable sexual categories are. In other words, Brickell argues, even the key essentialist sexologists such as Johann Ludwig Casper, Richard von Krafft-Ebing, Albert Moll, and Havelock Ellis do not actually come up with a strict

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 784.

¹⁸⁶ Judith Butler, “Critically Queer,” in *Identity: A Reader*, eds. Paul du Gay, Jessica Evans, and Peter Redman (London: SAGE Publications, 2000), 108.

¹⁸⁷ For further information on Butler’s “sex/gender nexus,” see below:

Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2011)

———, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution,” in *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, eds. Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan (Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 900-11.

¹⁸⁸ Chris Brickell, “Sexology, the Homo/Hetero Binary, and the Complexities of Male Sexual History,” *Sexualities* 9, no. 4 (2006): 423-47.

dichotomy of homo/hetero; on the contrary, they somehow make room for somewhat sexual indeterminacy. In so doing, he puts forward that what those sexologists offered is indeed not so much a binary between heterosexuality and homosexuality, rather a complex and contradictory set of sexual ontologies which have encoded not only liminality but also notions of innate sexual perversion.¹⁸⁹ Highlighting that there are a variety of possibilities in sexuality “because the line between ‘normal’ and ‘inverted’ sexuality [is] a very fine one,” Brickell asserts that “Not only [is] the invert sometimes physically indistinguishable from the ‘normal person’, but the ‘normal’ individual contain[s] elements of the perverse.”¹⁹⁰ In brief, after examining even the most conventional texts of sexology, Brickell recognises that a simple division of homo/hetero in sexuality will be an incomplete one since sexual identities are much more complex and fluid than that: “Within the interstices of prevailing medico-moral divisions between ‘normal’ and ‘perverse’ sexualities lurked liminal forms of desire. [...]. What emerged was not so much a dichotomy between ‘perversion’ and ‘normality’ or (later) ‘homosexuality’ and ‘heterosexuality’, but something more complex and contradictory.”¹⁹¹

Is perversion abnormality or an ordinary outcome of “normal” psychosexual development? Yet, before this question comes another, whether there is anything as normal sexuality. Beckmann discusses such problems in her work and shows superficiality of “normal/natural” sexuality by noting that in fact, it is not humans but animals that have strict rules and orderliness in sex(uality) and that the so-called perverse behaviours can be seen in the animal world, in nature (that is, perversion is actually quite *natural*).¹⁹² Moreover, the earlier theories of Freud, unlike the sexological tradition, maintain that civilisation in fact depends upon perversion. At this point, acknowledging this debate, rather than being “the others,” perverts *are* natural part of the “healthy” society, but how?

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 427.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 432, 435.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 439.

¹⁹² Beckmann, *Social Construction of Sexuality*, 32-33.

The answer lies in Freud's "sexualization of the child" and "infantilization of the pervert." According to Schaffner and Weller, Freud considers sexual perversion as "essentially a form of arrested development," yet a lot more than that:

Arguably his [Freud's] most radical move, however, was to present sexual perversion as common to all human beings at a certain stage in their ontogenetic development. At the outset, according to Freud, the sexual drive consists of polymorphously perverse partial drives. If all human beings have to pass through a perverse phase, then perversion is in effect normalized. Perversion, then, becomes very much part of who we are, no longer something that can be assigned to some 'other' who has, for one reason or another, simply deviated from the path of healthy psychological development. Furthermore, by identifying neuroses such as hysteria, obsessive-compulsive tendencies and phobias as the consequence of repressed desires, Freud radically expands the domain of perversion within adult population. Lastly, by introducing the notion of sublimation, Freud insists upon a direct connection between perversion and all forms of cultural achievement, not least art and literature: [...] Freud presents the artist as a figure who has the power to render his or her own perverse desires of interest – which is to say, a source of libidinal pleasure – to others. [...]. He [Freud] placed Eros at the very heart of human experience, positing it as the force behind civilization itself [...].¹⁹³

In other words, by breaking radically with "the major explanatory models of the perversions" and challenging "aetiological narratives that posit perversion as the outcome of degenerative processes;"

He [Freud] shines the light on childhood and suggests a psychological model as a way out of the innate-acquired binary by introducing the notion of inhibited psychosexual development. Secondly, he sexualizes the child and infantilizes the pervert. Thirdly, he construes perverse sexuality as *normal*, as an ontogenetically determined constitutional phase through which every human being has to pass. [...]. By challenging the conception of perversion as a pathological, abnormal and exceptional condition, Freud attacks the basic premise of all previous sexological studies. Perversion is not a deviation from but is in itself the original state: it is the universal predisposition of the human sexual drive, from which, ideally, normal sexual behaviour develops during the maturation process. Fourthly, by declaring neuroses as the 'negative' of the perversions, he dramatically expands the latter's reign. And, lastly, he

¹⁹³ Schaffner and Weller, "Introduction," 2-3. See also Freud's *Three Contributions to the Sexual Theory* (1905) -as cited in the end- throughout which he develops such ideas.

establishes a direct link between perversion, art, knowledge and cultural achievements.¹⁹⁴

This kind of approach to perversions (as arrested infantile development) brings about yet other implications. As argued by Amber Jamilla Musser, Freudian theory of sexuality suggests that “instead of being the norm, heterosexuality is the culmination of a difficult developmental process;” “[t]hinking about perversions as developmental rather than hereditary, coupled with understanding that heterosexuality is an accomplishment rather than a given, radically alters the schema of studies on sexuality.”¹⁹⁵

Freudian contribution to the discussions about perversion is not limited to what has been said so far. The concept of the pervert as fetishist is yet another of Freud’s helpful ideas at this point. In his article “Fetishism,” Freud develops the said concept starting his study by examining a few particular cases; “In the last few years I have had an opportunity of studying analytically a number of men whose object-choice was dominated by a fetish.”¹⁹⁶ As a result of his analysis, Freud shares his arguments and announces his point plainly: “the fetish is a substitute for the woman’s (the mother’s) penis that the little boy once believed in and - for reasons familiar to us - does not want to give up.”¹⁹⁷ In other words, Freud associates fetishism with the castration complex. The boy refuses to take cognisance of the fact of his having perceived that a woman does not possess a penis because if the woman was castrated, the boy’s possession of a penis—and his narcissism attached to that particular organ—is in danger. According to Freud, the disavowal might be considered as a sexually positive phenomenon for the fetishist:

¹⁹⁴ Schaffner, *Modernism and Perversion*, 138-39.

¹⁹⁵ Amber Jamilla Musser, *Sensational Flesh: Race, Power, and Masochism* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2014), 6.

¹⁹⁶ Sigmund Freud, “Fetishism,” in *Collected Papers Vol.5: Miscellaneous Papers, 1888-1938* (London: Hogarth and Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1924-1950), 198-204.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

We can now see what the fetish achieves and what it is that maintains it. It remains a token of triumph over the threat of castration and a protection against it. It also saves the fetishist from becoming a homosexual, by endowing women with the characteristic which makes them tolerable as sexual objects. In later life, the fetishist feels that he enjoys yet another advantage from his substitute for a genital. The meaning of the fetish is not known to other people, so the fetish is not withheld from him: it is easily accessible and he can readily obtain the sexual satisfaction attached to it. What other men have to woo and make exertions for can be had by the fetishist with no trouble at all.¹⁹⁸

The possession of the object/fetish provides the pervert with a way to sexual pleasure; nevertheless, it must be kept in mind that this pleasurable dilemma (recognition/denial of the loss of the penis at the same time) might be also painful as a cause of a lifelong fragmentation and fear for the fetishist. The reading of Freud's "Fetishism" by Ana Boczar et al. supports this side of the issue:

Freud associates the disavowal of castration with splitting of the ego. The boy, when facing the horror of castration that he has discovered in his mother, disavows this absence. He maintains the unconscious affirmation that his mother is not castrated. He then dislocates the penis representation to another object - the fetish. The ego is divided into two parts: one is separated from reality and castration, and the other remains linked to both. The non-conciliation of these parts brings the perverse individual to fall into repetition, creating a scene in which castration is disavowed.¹⁹⁹

In addition to the horrific fantasy of mutilation, another of the devastating effects of this complex to the pervert's psyche is his exclusive perception of "the other." Ana Boczar et al. clarify that as well; "All wishes and desires endanger the individual who has made excessive narcissistic investment in order to avoid the anguish of disintegration. Unable to recognize the other as separate being, the perverse individual sees the other as a body, an object to be enjoyed and devastated for his own appropriation."²⁰⁰ Thus, once again, the body transforms into another's fantasy space. It turns into an empty space on

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ana Boczar et al., "Discontent in the Era of Consumption: 'I enjoy, therefore I exist'," *International Forum of Psychoanalysis* 14, no. 1 (2005): 206.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 206-07.

which the pervert imposes his inmost desires. The body in this sense is *an anamorphic object*, which is constituted by the other who makes it meaningful by his/her subjective gaze.

Yet, the Lacanian idea of perversion interprets castration otherwise and considers the position of the pervert from a different angle.²⁰¹ In Lacan's *perverse structure*, there is a prevailing "Law," the Law of the Other/Father who introduces castration and sexual difference and therefore founds human society (through the incest taboo and exogamy).²⁰² The perverse subject is a threat to this social/symbolic order since he desires to bring his own "law" against the pre-existing dominant one. Another significant point here is how/where this *structure* locates the perverse body. Accordingly, the perverse child is reduced by the first Other ("lacking" mother) to a phallic object to overcome the lack; that is, the child becomes nothing but "the imaginary phallus of the Other."²⁰³ From this perspective, the pervert subject as an object that makes the enjoyment of the (m)other possible cannot develop a desire of his own and continues to believe in his position as the instrument of the enjoyment of the Other. To become a desiring subject himself, the pervert should refuse the ruling *structure* and challenge it with his own rules.

Thus, the Lacanian interpretation of perversion is helpful, on the one hand, to see, again, how *discontent* the pervert subject is with civilisation (referring to Freud's work on the debate), with the concept of "healthy" society founded by the fatherly laws. The dissatisfaction is so obvious that the pervert desires to substitute the dominant culture with a new "perverse" one. On the other hand, unlike what is argued previously in Freudian perversion, this time the perverse body itself becomes the object of enjoyment, of the (m)other's pleasure. Once again, the body is fantasised by the other's empty space to fill with desires and anxieties; the pervert child's body as an imaginary phallus corresponds to the (m)other's "lack" and provides her with *jouissance*.

²⁰¹ Philippe Van Haute, "Lacan Meets Freud? Patho-Analytic Reflections on the Status of the Perversions in Lacanian Metapsychology," *Studies in Gender and Sexuality* 17, no. 4 (2016): 274-84.

²⁰² Ibid. See also Lacan's *Écrits* and *Formations of the Unconscious* as cited in the end.

²⁰³ Ibid.

These arguments based on the *boy's* fetishism bring to mind if they also work for the girl. Since the leading figures like Freud described fetishism through the agency of the male child's perception of the female genitals and castration anxiety, perversion has been traditionally comprehended and conceptualised by the prominent sexologists as *male* perversion in the main. Otherwise, when it comes to female fetishism, they attempted to explain it through a direct equivalent of the male counterpart, just like how the psychoanalyst George Zavitzianos does.²⁰⁴ Zavitzianos aims to figure out the basic difference between male fetishism and female fetishism by means of the developmental factors involving the phallic phase; accordingly, he suggests that "for women the fetish represents the penis of the father, not of the mother [the imagined maternal phallus]."²⁰⁵ In other words, he seeks to demonstrate that "the perversion of fetishism exists in women as well as in men and that fetishism in women conforms in general to the same unconscious dynamic genetic principles and factors elucidated by Freud in his work on fetishism in men."²⁰⁶

However, some other psychiatrists including Estela Welldon challenge those attempts to create an *exact* correspondence between male and female fetishism.²⁰⁷ To that end, Welldon calls attention to the distinction that for men it is the penis at the centre of perversion while for women it is *the whole body*. The pervert male's fetishism is towards an "outside part-object," but woman's is towards either her own body or her baby's as an extension of her own. In this direction, Welldon argues, there are basically two possibilities of object-relations for the female pervert: first, she uses her own body for gratification through certain ways such as self-abuse and prostitution (I might call this the masochistic dimension); second, her baby who is completely in the mother's control transforms into a "dehumanized/fetishistic object" and thus becomes the target

²⁰⁴ George Zavitzianos, "The Perversion of Fetishism in Women," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (1982): 405-25.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 405.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ Estela Welldon, "Perversions in Men and Women," *British Journal of Psychotherapy* 12, no. 4 (1996): 480-86.

of her abusive fantasies and acts (I might call this the sadistic dimension).²⁰⁸ If so, unlike men, women have physical or emotional connection (no matter whether it is negative or positive) with their fetishistic objects as Welldon puts it. Doing that, Welldon does not ignore the role of the mother in the psychosexual development of the (perverse) female; she even presents some cases in which some childhood traumas of (sexual) abuse between the girl and the mother return as adulthood deviance for that female individual. In sum, Welldon illustrates female perversion/fetishism roughly through self-abuse, prostitution, and abuse of children. Even if she conceptualises it distinctively from male fetishism in general terms, she still suggests that perversions of both sexes share common points: the significance of the early childhood relationships with the (erotized) mother and the fact that “the attacked object” is always “the female body and its maternal attributes.”²⁰⁹

Just like sexuality itself, perversions or any perverse behaviours are in fact complex issues and hard to explain at once. The fact that “[i]n perversion, erogenous zones become surrogates for the genitals” might give an idea about how ambivalent sexual desires can be.²¹⁰ The mysterious nature of perversion is also emphasised by Robert J. Stoller, who characterises perversion as *the erotic form of hatred*.²¹¹ Stoller finds the root of this *eroticized hatred* in childhood “trauma” and traces it through particular concepts such as “hostility,” “revenge,” and “risk” (generating excitement due to conscious and unconscious dangers the pervert feels), which finally leads to “triumph.” In accordance with this schema, Stoller defines perversion as such:

Perversion, the erotic form of hatred, is a fantasy, usually acted out but occasionally restricted to a daydream (either self-produced or packaged by others, that is, pornography). It is a habitual, preferred aberration necessary for one’s full satisfaction, primarily motivated by hostility. By “hostility” I mean a state in which one wishes to harm an object; that differentiates it from

²⁰⁸ Ibid. Welldon offers a number of case studies that exemplify “deviant” relationships between the female pervert/fetishist mother and her children as the fetishistic object of the former.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 485.

²¹⁰ Schaffner, *Modernism and Perversion*, 141.

²¹¹ Robert J. Stoller, *Perversion: The Erotic Form of Hatred* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018).

“aggression,” which often implies only forcefulness. The hostility in perversion takes form in a fantasy of revenge hidden in the actions that make up the perversion and serves to convert childhood trauma to adult triumph. To create the greatest excitement, the perversion must also portray itself as an act of risk-taking.²¹²

That is, perversion for Stoller is in fact the result of “an essential interplay between hostility and sexual desire” and of “family dynamics that, by inducing fear, force the child who yearns for full immersion in the oedipal situation (desire to possess the parent of the opposite sex and identify with the parent of the same sex) to avoid it.”²¹³ Stoller’s formulation of perversion based on “the reversal of trauma into triumph” has bodily implications too. Accordingly, the perverse fantasy relies on “harming” and “dehumanizing” the other (object), also “splitting” its totality/integrity, “fetishizing” it and at last, “idealizing” it as a new object. These indications suggest that the body as fantasy space becomes another’s signification; as such it is constituted and formed as something through the subjective signifying process of the other. From Stoller’s perspective, it is visible that sexual gratification of the pervert is only through “the complicated path.”²¹⁴

Hence, keeping Stoller’s ideas of “eroticized hatred” in mind, violence in sex(uality) might be evaluated as another of the complicated aspects. Related to violence, wounding as a form of transgression attracts some critics’ attention:

In some contexts wounds are best understood as a process, at other times as an object of attention, a thing, even a fetish, that comes to be eroticised. In terms of sexual desire, a considerable number of connections with wounding are possible; these include desire of/for the wounder, desire of/for the wounded and desire for the wound. [...]. In addition, and perhaps more controversially, the wound itself or the production of the wound may, for some, be constitutive of sexuality and erotics.²¹⁵

²¹² Ibid., 4.

²¹³ Ibid., xi, xvii.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 117.

²¹⁵ Hearn and Burr, “Erotics of Wounding,” 2, 4.

As it is indicated here by Hearn and Burr, wounding tells us how flesh, human meat itself, may turn into a sexual fetish.²¹⁶ Besides, wounding becomes significant since it carries further symbolic meanings. In addition to attributing the sadistic position to the wounder and the masochistic position to the wounded, wounds may give rise to other implications as well; “(Sexual) Identification may take place with this position, as when wounds are signs of sexual initiation and maturity or as in sexual arousal by wounds in rape or other sexual crimes.”²¹⁷

Hearn and Burr also draw attention to the relationship between wounds and gaze (a frequently debated issue in modern times). Reminding some previous studies in the visual media such as war photography, fine art, literature, and film studies, the critics sum up that the wounded naked body (mostly male one) has been frequently presented as spectacle and in this way it has carried sexual and gender meanings.²¹⁸ To summarise the issue, Hearn and Burr’s ideas about erotics of wounding explicitly demonstrate how complex the relationship between the body and pain is:

Violence and wounding are both simultaneously material and discursive: simultaneously painful, full of pain, and textual, full of text. They are matters of experience of change in bodily matter, and matters of change in discursive constructions. Wounding, and what is meant by wounding, is historically, socially and culturally constructed; this is a matter of material discourse. Talk and text about wounding is not just representation, it is also (creation of) reality in its own right. The whole complex of wounding, talk about wounding and responses thereto is a cultural phenomenon that is both material and discursive.²¹⁹

Those painful sexual experiences including violence or wounding inevitably lead us to sadomasochism (SM) as the broadest subtitle of perversion.²²⁰ It is the

²¹⁶ Ibid., 10.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 5.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 8.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 11.

²²⁰ Franco De Masi extensively examines the sadomasochistic perversion in:

Franco De Masi, *The Sadomasochistic Perversion: The Entity and the Theories*, trans. Philip Slotkin (London: Karnac Books, 2003).

compound form of sadism and masochism, which have been named after the novels by Marquis de Sade and Leopold von Sacher-Masoch. SM might invoke both negative and positive meanings at the same time, varying from person to person, shifting in accordance with the context. Each discourse may interpret or react to it differently. As for Beckmann, for instance, SM is not only “a by-product of the complex processes that accompanied the construction of the modern form of ‘sexuality’ itself” but also the sadomasochist is “a mere supplement, functioning to define and stabilize the ‘heterosexual’ and his/her identity.”²²¹

When it comes to Gary Wilson Taylor, SM might be many things at once: first *dissidence*, understanding SM “as much about politics as anything else,” “as deliberately, consciously and militantly antithetical to a sexual hegemonic, to patriarchal heterosexuality,” “as a parody of abusive, divisive sexual relations” to turn them upside down, to ridicule, to undermine, to exploit, to expose, and finally to destroy them, as oppositional to “‘vanilla sex’, conventional non-SM sexual relations, which were positioned as conformative, uninteresting, unadventurous and unerotic;” secondly *pleasure*, “positioning SM and ‘SM identity’ as ‘fun’, as ‘having a laugh’, as ‘mucking about’, as play”, having a distinctive vocabulary such as “playmates,” “sex play,” “playroom,” “sex toys,” “SM games,” “sex games;” thirdly *escapism*, “of the mundane, of the ordinariness or alienation of everyday life,” “compensating for a perceived lack in their life, such as in countering feelings of aloneness, drudgery or boredom,” again including a special language and phrases such as “scene” or “role-play” that indicate “the role of SM as escapist fantasy, not necessarily as an avoidance of reality but as another (alternative) reality, with its own conventions and its own inherent benefits for the participant;” fourthly *transcendence*, positioning SM within “a spiritual or mystical framework,” considering it “as a heightened state of consciousness or as in some way making them more astute, more enlightened or more alive,” as “possessing ceremonial significance,” sometimes “almost with the status of religion” referring to “new age primitivism” or likening it to “religious flagellation and to non-Western spiritual practices involving the endurance and infliction of pain and suffering,” interpreting it

²²¹ Beckmann, *Social Construction of Sexuality*, 37.

“as causing an adrenaline rush or an endorphin high,” attributing it to “a more physiological cause” seeing it “as potentially addictive, like any pleasurable drug;” fifthly *learned behaviour*, “an understanding of SM as the result of a learned association usually originating in childhood,” usually involving “some awareness of SM as having a neurophysiological component in which pain and arousal become inseparably paired;” sixthly *intrapsychic*, thinking SM as “being in some way related to certain psychological aspects of their personalities, often understood as the result of experiences in childhood,” one of whose most dominant discourse is “the importance of control and its role in SM as a continuation, re-enactment or reversed re-enactment of earlier power issues,” or relating SM to “guilt or unhappy or abusive childhoods;” seventhly *pathology*, regarding SM (potentially) “indicative of pathology,” sometimes dismissing SM behaviours as “unhealthy” or “extreme” if they are without consent or “beyond the context of immediate sexual arousal;” and lastly *inexplicable*, treating SM behaviours “as weird,” “as defying comprehension.”²²²

Foucault too has some comments on the issue. During an interview, he declares his ideas on what SM might possibly mean.²²³ For Foucault, the idea in SM is “to make use of every part of the body as a sexual instrument.” Besides, he still associates it with the relations of power, touches on SM as master/slave relationship, as games of perpetually gaining and losing power across and through bodies. This uncertainty, this tension is what intensifies the pleasure during an intercourse. To reinforce his allegation about the existence of power in sexual relations, Foucault goes back to homosexuality among the ancient Greeks and reminds that while it was “natural” for a nobleman to make love with a passive male slave since the latter was his inferior, an intercourse between two nobles was a problem because they were equals in power as members of the same social class. Foucault suggests that SM has alleviated this problem somehow with reciprocal power exchange. Furthermore, SM is also significant for Foucault since

²²² Gary Wilson Taylor, “The Discursive Construction and Regulation of Dissident Sexualities: The Case of SM,” in *Body Talk: The Material and Discursive Regulation of Sexuality, Madness and Reproduction*, ed. Jane M. Ussher (Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002), 121-26.

²²³ Foucault, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*.

it not only broadens horizons of pleasure but also provides opportunities to recognise one's own body in a different way:

[I]t's the real creation of new possibilities of pleasure, which people had no idea about previously. The idea that S&M is related to a deep violence, that S&M practice is a way of liberating this violence, this aggression, is stupid. We know very well what all those people are doing is not aggressive; they are inventing new possibilities of pleasure with strange parts of their body—through the eroticization of the body. I think it's a kind of creation, a creative enterprise, which has as one of its main features what I call the desexualization of pleasure. The idea that bodily pleasure should always come from sexual pleasure as the root of *all* our possible pleasure—I think *that's* something quite wrong. These practices are insisting that we can produce pleasure with very odd things, very strange parts of our bodies, in very unusual situations, and so on.²²⁴

In brief, SM for Foucault is *a subculture* in which there is visibly eroticisation of power, of strategic relations, which strikes Foucault since the power relations and roles here are not that rigid but fluid and mobile (in comparison with social power).

Although masochism was considered by Krafft-Ebing as “a feminization of man's sexual *role*,” it is in fact not simply that: as Musser defines it, masochism is not only “the desire to abdicate control in exchange for sensation (pleasure, pain, or a combination thereof),” “a site where bodies, power, and society come together in multiple ways” but also its “plasticity” can signal “powerlessness, domination, or ambivalence depending on one's point of view,” allowing us to question “different ways of experiencing power.”²²⁵

In other words, alternative sexual practices are not there “just for fun” or for the sake of pleasure, but they might and should be perceived as a stand against the mainstream idea of sexuality, against the monopolisation of pleasure in the hands of heteronormative power centres. Any erotic fantasy or practise that is nonconforming to the traditional forms spontaneously creates its own centre and thus substitutes the prevalent (sexual) culture. This peripheral expansion in the conceptualisation of

²²⁴ Ibid., 165.

²²⁵ Musser, *Sensational Flesh*, 1, 4.

sexuality helps weakening the singular/“normal” understanding and brings about multiplicity in sexuality (therefore *sexualities*).

BDSM is another abbreviated term that might be used as an umbrella to define those alternative ways of sexuality challenging the powerful pre-existing sexual world from the inside. In her paper where she explores the intersections of BDSM and disability, Stephanie Tellier traces the sexual discourse to clarify the issue.²²⁶ Initially reminding that individuals with disabilities are often assumed as asexual by the majority looking through “a heteronormative lens,” Tellier then examines how BDSM can make an alternative space for individuals (definitely including those of disabilities). Accordingly, BDSM is the concept used to describe various alternative sexual practices including bondage, discipline/dominance, submission, sadism and masochism with the purpose of erotic gratification.²²⁷

The significant point is that Tellier interrogates the discourses, especially medical, that pathologise BDSM practices and holds a critical view of the attempts demonstrating the individuals participating in BDSM as “mentally unstable or victims of abuse, suffered from anxiety, depression, obsessions and compulsions.”²²⁸ On the contrary, Tellier continues, certain studies indicate that “there is no significant difference in the psychopathology of persons engaging in BDSM as compared to the general population;” what is more, those individuals/couples are “more open to new experiences,” “less neurotic and more extroverted,” “more securely attached and less sensitive to rejection and self-report a higher feeling of well-being.”²²⁹ That is, while the said heteronormative lens considers any type of alternative sexuality as deviant and dangerous, Tellier and the scholars she refers argue that safe and consensual BDSM might be even beneficial (particularly for people of disabilities) regarding its advantages

²²⁶ Stephanie Tellier, “Advancing the Discourse: Disability and BDSM,” *Sex Disabil* 35, no. 1 (2017): 485-93.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 487.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

in terms of “communication, sexual exploration and gratification, personal empowerment, meaning-making, and pain management.”²³⁰

Here, again, we encounter the body’s complex relationship with pain and pleasure. BDSM somehow blurs the boundaries of what is painful or pleasurable. At this point, Tellier highlights that many scholars come up with the idea that pain is a socially constructed concept, a subjective emotion and as such, it can be given new meanings.²³¹ The power over pain, the playful control on the painful is what gives pleasure and satisfaction to individuals. Thus, pain might turn into pleasure, into a useful/positive energy through consensual power plays. Tellier also draws attention to this side of the medallion and tells us how beneficial pain might be;

Pain can produce endorphins which hinder and may even block the transmission of pain signals in the brain. As sensory stimuli, the experience of pain can increase the sensation of pleasure. Experiencing pain not only enhances the brain’s attention to pain-causing stimuli but increases the processing and intensity of all sensory signals. In addition, relieving pain is not simply about eliminating pain, but it involves the *pleasure* of having the pain reduced or removed. An example is the increased satisfaction of drinking a cool glass of water after eating extremely spicy foods. There is not only the satisfaction of having the burning sensation stop but the pleasure of feeling the coolness on the tongue.²³²

To briefly sum up Tellier’s point of view, BDSM is in fact a negotiation process in which individuals enjoy because, on the one hand, they can control and dominate both their own bodies and the other’s; on the other hand, the reciprocal commitment provide them with a safe harbour through which not only the dominant but also the submissive can take control temporarily and delight in the power exchange. From this regard, Tellier concludes, the idea of *transcending* the boundaries of pain through power games (the exchange of giving/receiving pain between partners) is the pleasurable part of the story, mostly for people of disabilities who are socially exposed

²³⁰ Ibid., 488.

²³¹ Ibid., 489.

²³² Ibid.

to *double marginalisation* based upon their disabilities and “perverse” sexual practices.²³³

In the long run, attitudes towards different sexual orientations or perversions may change. Since the so-called normal varies in accordance with the given time and space, social perceptions of alternative sex(uality) may also experience transformations. Especially in the Western tradition, the journey of masturbation and homosexuality from perversion to normality might be a good example at this point.²³⁴ Even any lexicological alteration in language might stimulate a different treatment to “abnormal” sexual behaviours. A good example comes from Downing, who reminds the succession of the phrase *paraphilia* after *perversion* in the twentieth century American sexology: “The term describes, etymologically, an expression of desire that goes beyond or lies alongside sanctioned love, and therefore it is a nominally less judgemental designation than ‘perversion’: the love that deviates from its prescribed course, goes wrong.”²³⁵ Likewise, Jeffrey Weeks analyses two terms, *perversity* and *diversity*, which are “clearly related” and have “a common history” since both suggest “a move away from a strict ‘normality’;” but still, they hold different meanings within:

Yet when applied to sexuality, the implications of these words today are distinct. Perversity and diversity may appear to refer to the same phenomenon. In reality a chasm has opened between them signifying a major shift in the language of sexuality and the way we think about our needs and desires. For while all the terms relating to ‘perversity’ suggest a hierarchy of sexual values in which ‘the perversions’ are right at the bottom of the scale, ‘diversity’ hints a continuum of behaviours in which one element has no more fundamental a value than any other.²³⁶

²³³ Ibid., 491

²³⁴ William Simon, “Deviance as History: The Future of Perversion,” *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 23, no. 1 (1994): 6-8.

²³⁵ Downing, “Eros and Thanatos,” 213.

²³⁶ Weeks, *Key Ideas: Sexuality*, 69-70.

To put it differently, terminology somehow determines perception; while the term *perversity* as mostly used in pejorative sense conveys *negative* connotations the phrase *diversity* more implies a *positive* pluralistic presence.

Another instance, more exclusively, might be comprehension or perception of homosexuality that has varied throughout different historical and cultural periods. As Jane M. Ussher suggests, there has been an oscillation between the two layers of analysis, about “whether homosexuality is a matter of the material body or a matter of discourse;” both lay people and experts, that is, all scholars of sexology and biology, poststructuralist and social constructionist theorists, and critics of gender studies have perpetually alternated between two remarks: if homosexuality is “something people *are*” or “an act that people *do*.”²³⁷ What is more, there have been also some others like Ussher, who are at neither of these two poles, or say, supporting both at the same time. Ussher argues that both the material and the discursive are interlinked; adopting one of them may cause a partial or incomplete understanding.²³⁸

To conclude the theoretical discussions on sexuality and the sexual body before shifting to the reflections of those discussions in the contemporary English fiction, one last possible debate might be about the relationship between perversion and the postmodern (erotic) culture. Since the contemporary sexual landscape goes hand in hand with postmodernity, it becomes inevitable to associate the perverse psychic structure with *the postmodern condition* of the highly industrialised, technologically improved, and media-driven societies. Accordingly, the pervert is the postmodern subject that lives in an age of *hyperreality*, when one cannot differentiate between the original and its simulations as Baudrillard broadly discusses in his works. In this regard, the pervert might be considered as the schizophrenic subject while perverse fantasies transform into *simulacra*. “Real” sexual activities with “real” partners become irrelevant at this point as “the real” is no more there; it is only one more copy among others. Thus, whether they are *realised* merely in the psyche or through any

²³⁷ Jane M. Ussher, “Framing the Sexual ‘Other’: The Regulation of Lesbian and Gay Sexuality,” in *Body Talk: The Material and Discursive Regulation of Sexuality, Madness and Reproduction*, ed. Jane M. Ussher (Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002), 131-32.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 132, 155-56.

pornographic representations,²³⁹ “deviant” dreams about partners/activities replace the actual ones. Within this *hyperreal* atmosphere, the pervert as the postmodern schizophrenic subject gives up seeking for reality, which is no longer accessible, rather delights in delirium. Instead of obeying social impositions by running after standard/normal/real sexuality in vain, the pervert enjoys perverse representations of sexuality that have remained intact within the private psyche.

This particular association between sexual desire and postmodernity is visible in William Simon’s article as well. While investigating the hyperreality found in modern versions of sexual desire, Simon argues that “hyperrality represents the ascendancy of the ‘simulacra’ or ‘dream of desire’ over the enactment of desire, which sustains the repetitions that are fueled by the quest for what does not and, by its very nature, cannot exist.”²⁴⁰ In this way, Simon goes on, sexual hyperrealities displace or at least substitute the conventional sex(uality) and doing that, not only become a source of pleasure but also provide the (postmodern/pervert) self with an opportunity of “transcend[ing] the prevailing inconsistencies and indifference of the world.”²⁴¹

Since it is such an intriguing debate, the intersection of the postmodern world and the pervert’s world preoccupies the minds of other scholars too. Ana Boczar et al., for instance, put it on their agenda in their grippingly entitled article “Discontent in the Era of Consumption: ‘I enjoy, therefore I exist’” by rising a question: “What about the encounter between perversion and post-modernity?”²⁴² The scholars then try to explain throughout their work how and why “post-modern logic lies very close to perverse logic.”²⁴³ As the first and main common point, they offer that the simulacrum encompasses contemporary culture and thereby both logics; “It is like a new conception of reality - a kind of ‘everything is possible’. Original and copy are no long opposed.

²³⁹ Pornography itself represents the idea of *double perversion*: “perverse acts and the perverse pleasure of viewing these acts.” For this argument and more, see below:

Linda Williams, “Power, Pleasure, and Perversion: Sadomasochistic Film Pornography,” *Representations* 27, no. 1 (1989): 37-65.

²⁴⁰ Simon, “Deviance as History,” 9.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Boczar et al., “Discontent,” 207.

²⁴³ Ibid.

[...] We are confronted with superficiality, loss of density and image supremacy.”²⁴⁴ Both logics are now dominated by the media, which is itself dominated by the logic of excess; “An excess of offers and products mobilizes anyone and everyone with a promise of enjoyment that never ends.”²⁴⁵ What is more, that enjoyment can be at any cost; the postmodern/perverse subject can *consume* anything to get immediately what s/he wants. Everything can be sacrificed, even for a moment of satisfaction. Here, to exemplify this perverse form of logic in contemporary societies, Ana Boczar et al. talk about *Sex and the City*, one of the most famous TV series of the age; “It consists of an emblematic example of narcissistic eroticism, present in contemporaneous society, in which the superficiality of relationships annihilates the differences. Once again, the link is enjoyment.”²⁴⁶ Such programmes on TV (especially reality shows), no matter if they appeal to the consumer’s satisfaction of pain or pleasure, render him/her to the position of the voyeur and invite him/her to complete the perverse scene.²⁴⁷

The overlap of perversion and postmodernity as the simulacrum culture has some implications on the body in/and the contemporary age. When the postmodern and the perverse logics meet, the inevitable motto for the subjects becomes “I enjoy, therefore I exist.” Focussing on this idea, Ana Boczar et al. contemplate on how the postmodern/perverse bodies locate themselves in this world of simulations. To that end, the scholars present some cases in which mostly young individuals, considering their bodies as their “media,” experiment with their own bodies by hooking, cutting, and scarring to get perverse enjoyment. According to the scholars, these cases of disfigured and wounded bodies in fact go beyond being personal problems or particular movements; they represent the general crisis in the contemporary period: “the rationality crisis, the reference crisis, the subject crisis, the sense crisis.”²⁴⁸ The correlation between postmodernity and perversion conveys the human condition in the simulacrum culture in which commitments are unnecessary and bodies are confined in

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 208.

the enjoyment of consuming. Besides, this culture evokes yet another imperative on the body:

We also witness the dictatorship of the ideal body: a cocktail that is readily offered by the pharmaceutical industry, beautifully wrapped up by the media, granting an immediate solution for any signs of anxiety that might appear in the subject. The kit offers Botox for wrinkles, Viagra for impotence, Xenical for the problem of overeating - brought on by culture itself - and Prozac in case none of the above have solved the discontent that is insistently disavowed by the post-modern subject.²⁴⁹

The kit does not help the postmodern subjects, Ana Boczar et al. claim. The proof is that more and more individuals come to their office in search of direction for they feel lost and empty. This kind of alienation pushes young individuals in particular to search for new bodily experiences to find a safe harbour in this chaotic world; “Teenagers, covered by a multiplicity of piercings and tattoos that perforate and brand their bodies, frequently explain: ‘It’s just to show my style,’ adding, ‘It has something in common with my way of being.’ Acting out once again replaces words, a characteristic similar to both perversion and post-modernity.”²⁵⁰ In brief, as it is brilliantly summarised by Ana Boczar et al., the postmodern/perverse subject once more reminds us of *civilization and its discontents*; “The discontent between subject and culture, as long shown by Freud, still remains pertinent, and now it has been potentiated by the so-called effects of post-modernity.”²⁵¹

Moving back to Simon’s work to evaluate another dimension of the issue (*erotic body*), the scholar also speaks of “the decentring of the sexual in recent years in recognition of its increasing detachment from the family as an institution, which was once its nearly exclusive social address.”²⁵² Based upon this statement, we can again refer to the idea of sexuality in *the postmodern condition* where one cannot help being paranoid about any institutionalised/centralised entity. Since the postmodern subject is

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Simon, “Deviance as History,” 9.

suspicious about any singularity (including sexuality) and against the concept of absolute truth, s/he tends to plurality, to enjoy alternative sexualities. That must be the reason why Simon develops his ideas in his subsequent work, *Postmodern Sexualities*, in which he discusses the “postmodernization,” “destabilization,” “denaturalization,” and “de-essentialization” of sex(uality) in the contemporary period.²⁵³ Particularly for the pervert, *the centre cannot hold* sexuality through its stereotypical idea of sex resting merely upon reproduction; on the contrary, one should taste innumerable number of erotic dreams disregarding any social institution or authority, religious, medical, or any other. Now that there is no more objective reality and any reliable institution or person, the norm(al) is now obsolete. The perverse subject can do nothing but take pleasure in his/her subjective fantasies. On this postmodern space, the pervert’s fantasy space, social order is disturbed by erotic disorder. By producing sadomasochistic sexual plays in which the power centre perpetually shifts, the pervert in fact plays with strict social boundaries and threatens “healthy” society from very within.

All these arguments about the juncture of the perverse logic and the postmodernist stance in fact automatically lead us to what is previously announced in the introduction part: perversion should not be posited simply as the sum of “deviant” sexual attitudes. It is pregnant with a variety of meanings that can transcend the sexual sphere. It is of course explicit, but also superficial and incomplete, that the pervert acts out of the standards of sex(uality). The vital point here is that perversion is indeed *a particular stand* against any social impositions under the cloak of reality/truth. Jeanine Chasseguet-Smirgel says that “[Perversion is one of] man’s attempts to escape from his condition. The pervert is trying to free himself from the paternal universe and the constraints of the law. He wants to create a new kind of reality and the dethrone God the Father.”²⁵⁴ If so, I might dare to say: *The “deviant” deviates from “the normal” because he knows that the so-called normal is nothing but what the powerful says so (and “no” - the Law of the Father/Other).* This is one of the main suggestions of my

²⁵³ William Simon, *Postmodern Sexualities* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).

²⁵⁴ Jeanine Chasseguet-Smirgel, *Creativity and Perversion* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), 12.

dissertation that has been explained so far and will continue to be developed from now on.

The semantic richness in perversion has been declared by a considerable number of critics. Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis already point out how extensively the term has been used so far;

Those authors who accept a plurality of instincts are thus brought to make a very broad category out of perversion and to posit a multitude of forms for it to take: perversions of the ‘moral sense’ (delinquency), of the ‘social instincts’ (prostitution), of the instinct of nutrition (bulimia, dipsomania). In a similar vein, it is common to speak of perversion in order to qualify the character and behaviour of certain subjects who manifest particular cruelty or malevolence.²⁵⁵

Fiona Ross is also among the authors that refer to perversion within a larger sense.²⁵⁶ In her book entitled *Perversion: A Jungian Approach*, Ross revises the traditional psychoanalytic model of perversion and comes up with a more comprehensive understanding by integrating Freudian (along with post-Freudian developments) and Jungian theories.²⁵⁷ Making use of “the grey area” between the two models, Ross offers a perception of perversion that is sexual *and* nonsexual at the same time. This new approach that largely benefits from basic Jungian concepts and ideas expands the idea of perversion merely relying upon the sexual assumptions. What Ross introduces is, fundamentally, a *perverse psychic structure*²⁵⁸ that can be roughly called *relational*,²⁵⁹

²⁵⁵ Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (London: Karnac Books, 1988), 307.

²⁵⁶ Fiona Ross, *Perversion: A Jungian Approach* (London: Karnac Books, 2013).

²⁵⁷ This particular integration is also the reason why I have opted here to refer to her work (rather than direct references to Carl Gustav Jung’s, most notably such as *Psychology of the Unconscious*, 1912).

²⁵⁸ Ross, *Perversion: A Jungian Approach*, 79-80, 133-34. Here, Ross underlines that the existence of a *perverse psychic structure* is generally accepted by many scholars she lists on these pages even if their approaches and comments about it may differ.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 17-18. Ross defines perversion as “intrapsychic deception enacted relationally in the outside world,” “result[ing] from early relational trauma and includ[ing] vengeful behavioural enactments, not necessarily sexual, that have become addictive and are symptomatic of a particular type of defensive psychic structure that establishes and perpetuates self-deception through the employment of a variety of defence mechanisms, particularly splitting, projection, and regression.”

which includes “sexual” perversion *but also* “bodily,” “emotional” and “cognitive” perversions.

Before citing Jung’s contributions to the expansion in understanding perversion, Ross reminds that the term already had a more extensive usage (in religious, moral, sociological and legal contexts) before psychoanalysis’s limited adoption as a sexual concept. Though there is no established or agreed Jungian definition of perversion, Ross claims, a Jungian perspective might widen the conventional model of perversion that largely relies on Freud’s readings and therefore considers perversion and sexual perversion synonymously. Ross believes that a broader theoretical model for perversion is possible when perversion rooted in infantile relational experience is evaluated through Jungian framework. This new model “recognizes,” not “privileges,” sexuality; from this regard, the body becomes “the site of overlap between Freudian and Jungian theory and arguably also between sexual and non-sexual perversion.”²⁶⁰

Ross views a holistic view of the psyche as central to Jungian theory, which means that “the internal world is a vibrant system of interconnectedness, extending multi-dimensionality rather than through linear causal chains, into a living pattern of emergent self-organising structures.”²⁶¹ What perversion does here is to oppose this “psychic integrity” through its “defensive and segmented nature” and with a “subjective expression of a particular relationship to reality.”²⁶² Ross’s main method to expand Freudian idea of sexual perversion is to enrich it with Jungian concepts, namely, replacing libido with psychic energy, instinct with archetype, personal unconscious with collective unconscious, and understanding of causation with teleology:

Introducing this Jungian perspective involves adopting a broad understanding of the concept of libido, extending beyond the area of sexuality; linking of instinct through the collective unconscious to imagery and perceptive ideas; the acceptance of archetypal governance in psychic organisation and in defence

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 193, 97-98.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 88.

²⁶² Ibid., 88, 92.

mechanisms; and understanding of a futural sense in the psyche, including teleological directness in the creation of symptoms.²⁶³

To wrap up Ross's debates, the inclusion of Jungian theory into what Freud already suggested offers us new possibilities in the name of a more complete understanding of perversion. Furthermore, the distinction made by Ross between sexual *and* nonsexual perversion broadens our horizon, make us think about the notional potentiality of perversion. To evaluate that potentiality, Ross's example of "a lethal injection into the body of another person" may suggest something. This is a kind of bodily perversion in the eyes of Ross; "The aim is not sexual, at least in the narrowest sense of the term, but is, in my view, perverse in that it has the essential qualities of addiction, compulsion, vengefulness, self-deception, splitting, projection, and regression."²⁶⁴ Ross's ideas, in brief, pave the way for other possible assumptions and connections between the body and perversion.

Now that it is the time to claim perversion matters as a nonsexual concept too, it will be relevant and helpful to refer to Jon Jureidini and his conceptualisation and desexualisation of perversion as a way of dealing with conflict, as a specific kind of behaviour, thought and perception.²⁶⁵ Throughout his work, Jureidini attempts to criticise some previous characterisations of perversion (as "the negative of neurosis," as sexual deviation, as hostile enactment of unconscious fantasy) and argues for the plausibility of perversion as disavowal of reality or truth. The scholar initially reminds us of the historical evolution in the usage of the term: Although perversion was used specifically in relation to sexuality, only in the late 19th century, to describe "a disorder of sexual behaviour in which satisfaction is sought through channels other than those of normal heterosexual intercourse" (*Oxford English Dictionary* 1892), there were much

²⁶³ Ibid., 92-93.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 14.

²⁶⁵ Jon Jureidini, "Perversion: Erotic Form of Hatred or Exciting Avoidance of Reality?," *Journal of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis* 29, no. 2 (2001): 195-211.

For further information on the topic, see below (what is also addressed by the author):

Jon Jureidini, "Pathological Play," *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 5, no. 4 (2000): 606-12.

older senses of perversion, extending back to the 14th century, conveying the meanings of moral or social deviance.²⁶⁶ Jureidini also highlights that the perverse person is thought “corrupted or damaged” or “a corrupter” while perversion carries connotations of “deliberate badness and dangerousness.”²⁶⁷ Therefore, the author finalises this part pointing that he will use perversion and related terms such as perverse to refer to “particular patterns of behavior or thought,” and such “mental mechanisms.”²⁶⁸

After this historical and semantic introduction and his critical views of the other characterisations of perversion, Jureidini passes to his own idea of perversion; “I conclude that sexual focus is not the defining characteristic of perversion, and may not even be an essential feature of perversion.”²⁶⁹ To see his approach in a nutshell, perversion is not necessarily a sexual concept but a special way of dealing with reality/truth through a capacity of disavowal/distortion/fiction/fantasy/play. From this perspective, the pervert’s case originally goes back to castration anxiety; “Fetishism is perverse [...] because it disavows reality. Perverse behavior is therefore doubly driven, by excitement, and by the avoidance of some feared pain or other consequence of resisting the perversion.”²⁷⁰ Perversion’s necessary condition in this sense is “a special treatment of reality or truth” (reality as “the way things are”) since the fetishist disavows the reality of the absence of the penis (simultaneously acknowledges and denies it); “Thus, psychosis changes reality, neurosis buries it, but only perversion allows reality to live, relatively stably, side by side with a fiction.”²⁷¹ That is, in an instant of unpleasantness in the pursuit of the perverse goal, the pervert just “turns down the volume on reality.”²⁷²

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 195-96.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 196. The author also suggests that this is why Foucault has been criticised in his application of the term perversion to sexual acts and thus displacing social crisis and conflict onto sexuality.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 202.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 204.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 204-05.

²⁷² Ibid., 205.

With regards to Jureidini's proposal of "the twisting or avoidance of reality" through some "mental maneuver" as the central mechanism of perversion, a general reading of the pervert becomes possible. As it is argued over the course of this chapter, the pervert individuals are in fact at odds with the patronising society and its dominant social norms. Since the pervert does not comply with what is offered as the absolute truth/objective reality by the majority, the punishment is oppression and exclusion. Against this tyrannical monopolisation in every domain including sexuality, the perverse logic creates alternatives, constructs pluralistic disorder within the singular order, and by this means challenges the symbolic "fatherly" law with lawlessness and chaotic complexity. The idea is that even if this system based on pre-existing codes is tough to be totally demolished, the alternative way to encounter it might be *substitution*, to alternate the already-existing culture with new possibilities. Taking this kind of approach into consideration, perversion *exceeds* becoming a mere way to sexual pleasure; it is somewhat revolt against absolutism, renouncement of the imposed way of the powerful others, and transgression over the arbitrary borders of the "civilised" humanity.

CHAPTER IV: THE BODY PERCEPTION IN THE POST-1950S CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH FICTION

4.1. Young Bodies' Subculture of Violence: *A Clockwork Orange* (1962), Anthony Burgess

[...] there is always the possibility that scientific advances can be perverted.
—Frank R. Ervin, psychiatrist²⁷³

A Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess is set in a near-future (dystopian) England and tells (through a first-person narration) the story of Alex, a fifteen-year-old, and his three “droogs” (friends), namely, Pete, Georgie, and Dim.²⁷⁴ In a totalitarian society which is crowded with a great number of violent youth street gangs, Alex and his comrades often hang out at “Milkbars” (selling drugged milk) and afterwards randomly do brutal acts including beating, robbing, raping, and any other harassment. After a while, a conflict appears between Alex and the other members of the group about who the leader of the gang is; hence, Alex is tricked by them during an attempted robbery (during which he murders the householder), arrested, and then sentenced to fourteen years in prison. Going through a tough imprisonment and realising that it will continue for years, Alex decides to volunteer for the government’s experimental medical programme, an aversion therapy applied to control the criminal’s brain through special injections and special films with (sexually) violent content. The procedure kills Alex’s urges to commit a crime since any attempt causes him to feel an intolerable pain; however, it also terminates his free will, his capacity to make moral choices. Released from prison, he is a harmless and vulnerable citizen at the mercy of the outside world, where he is badly beaten and abused by many people. He attempts to commit a suicide (he is intentionally driven to do that by some political opponents of the government) but

²⁷³ Robert J. Trotter, “*A Clockwork Orange* in a California Prison,” *Science News* 101, no. 11 (1972): 175.

²⁷⁴ Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange* (London: Penguin Books, 1972).

fails and eventually finds himself in a hospital where the conditioning effects of the previous treatment are removed from his body. He is once again the brutal Alex.²⁷⁵

As such a novel about the ultra-violent adventures of a gang, *Clockwork* draws attention as representation of the bodies taking pleasure and/in pain. It is stated in the previous parts (referring to Laplanche and Pontalis) that certain subjects who manifest particular cruelty or malevolence are also qualified as perverts, which exactly addresses to Alex and his comrades. The gang members' sadomasochistic desires emerge as performances of sex, violence, and sexual violence. They carry enormous rage and hate against those who seem in their own terms vulgar, disrespectful, disgusting, and wretched, i.e., "lovebirds," the poor and homeless, homosexuals, "intelligent types" (readers and writers), unquestioning idiots, protectors of the order, and the disrespectful against "Great Music." The passionate emotions inside them (rage and hate) transform into sheer urge to "educate" those "others," to take revenge, and to punish them physically and psychologically, usually sexually but not necessarily. As it is explained by Schaffner in her reading Freudian sexuality, Freud suggests that the erogenous zones change in accordance with the particular perversion: for the voyeur and exhibitionist, it is the eye while for the sadist and masochist it is the skin.²⁷⁶ From this regard, I argue that, the bodies of others become fantasy space for the gang to realise their violent desires, which causes a clash between the "pervert" (individual) and the "civilised" (society). Yet, my argument has another dimension here. While the other's body is perceived as fantasy space by Alex, his very own body transforms into confined space, namely, the powerful state's social arena (ab)used for political ends.

In relation to violence, crime and punishment are notable phenomena in *Clockwork*. It is obvious that Alex and his comrades are prone to violence, which ends up with some criminal acts and penal sanctions as an inevitable result. Yet, the novel bears further meanings concerning this issue. On the one hand, the gang's need/wish to hurt the others as a result of the inner hatred might be a reaction, a reflection of their

²⁷⁵ The American edition of the novel ends here, omitting the last chapter where Alex feels tired of violence after encountering an old gang friend who now settles down with a job and a girl; hereupon Alex visualises his own "orderly" life in the future. For many readers and critics, this last chapter is unconvincing or dissonant considering the overall flow of the story.

²⁷⁶ Schaffner, *Modernism and Perversion*, 141.

anger against the ultimate target, the authoritarian regime that rules the people with an iron hand. From this perspective, their illicit acts derive from the overflowing desire to rebel, to violate the dictated arbitrary social rules. The regime's rigid policies are crime against humanity, but it is the others as victims that pay the price in a sense.

On the other hand, as it is suggested throughout the novel, "violence makes violence."²⁷⁷ Although the youth's severity is generally in the foreground of the story, it is visible that physical and psychological violence is everywhere, at all levels of society. Apart from the ones during the copycat crimes of the gangs, the most explicit violence scenes occur when Alex encounters the state and its institutions. Alex experiences physical and psychological torture by many government agents, in almost every public institution, namely the police station, the prison, the medical centre, and even the public library. As one of its representatives, the prison governor's words in fact mirror the state's deterrence strategies based on violence over the individual bodies; "An eye for an eye, I say. If someone hits you you hit back, do you not? Why then should not the State, very severely hit by you brutal hooligans, not hit back also?"²⁷⁸ In this context, violence by the hands of the state paradoxically becomes both the cause and the effect of criminal violence among society. In other words, severe punishments ironically bring about new reactive crimes to make the punisher pay off.

The persistent existence of violence among society—since "violence makes violence"—again meets the eye after Alex's "treatment," which renders him in Illya Lichtenberg et al.'s view "impotent, in all senses of the term."²⁷⁹ Alex is used to passionately chase violence beforehand, but this time he struggles to avoid it, albeit in vain. His victims, even the old ones in the public library, desire to revenge violently. Perhaps, Alex's punishment actually starts only after the prison period when he falls into the hands of the ruthless world. If so, what Lichtenberg et al. argue is true; "Alex lives in a sadistic world, only slightly different from our own, in which everyone who

²⁷⁷ Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 57.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 74.

²⁷⁹ Illya Lichtenberg et al., "'Darker than Any Prison, Hotter than Any Human Flame': Punishment, Choice, and Culpability in *A Clockwork Orange*," *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* 15, no. 2 (2004): 439.

has power over others manifests this power with more or less indifferent cruelty.”²⁸⁰ Moreover, the scholars continue, “[a]ll expressions of authority have elements of arbitrary violence in them,” much of which has “a sexual undertone, and most forms of sexual expression have at least hints of power and subjugation.”²⁸¹ This collective tendency towards (pornographic) violence in the novel may imply that violence is in fact very “human,” that the destructive side is inherent in human nature, which makes the reader question how much “perverse” Alex should be considered if that is the case.

Yet, one aspect differentiates Alex from the rest here: his passion, especially that for “Great Music.” As suggested by Lichtenberg et al., Alex and the other members of the gang differ in their motivations behind delinquency. Accordingly, while Alex’s comrades commit crimes mostly for financial ends, “[f]or him, their nightly acts are crimes of passion;” “Alex, who beyond his almost limitless capacity for violence is socially powerless, expresses his desires, his sense of self, his alienation, and his artistry through the violence itself.”²⁸² That is, Alex is sharply driven to aggression as his passionate soul is triggered by some agent, which is mostly art as a creative process. When his violent nature meets classical music, for instance, Alex feels euphoria and craves sadistic experiments. As soon as a symphony plays Alex falls into a unique state of mind that is driven by sadomasochistic imageries, aggressive (day)dreams and lustful illusions (just like when he gets high using drugs). He simply gets an orgasmic pleasure through music, which is greater than the one he experiences during a real sexual intercourse. Music is therefore indispensable for Alex as it makes his (sexually) destructive side reach the climax; “Music always sort of sharpened me up, O my brothers, and made me like feel like old Bog [God] himself, ready to make with the old donner and blitzen and have vecks and ptitsas creeching away in my ha ha power.”²⁸³

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 434.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 35-36.

Language is probably the most explicit domain to observe the said tendency to (sexual) violence in *Clockwork*. The youth speak “Nadsat,”²⁸⁴ a particular teen slang including extremely rude and humiliating words and phrases, relentlessly conveying aggression and obscenity. The Nadsat language from this regard is too crucial to be overlooked because it functions not only as an indicator but also as a transmitter of the adolescent enthusiasm for (pornographic) fierceness. As argued by Stuart Y. McDougal, Burgess’s invented language may be difficult to understand for the reader initially and therefore functions as an alienating device during a series of violent and sexually explicit scenes in the beginning; “This language proves baffling to most readers and shields them somewhat from the sex and violence.”²⁸⁵ What is more, this particular language does a lot more than that in the novel. Nadsat, revealing the youngsters’ “full of hate” inner worlds, emerges and stands as a reaction against any authority (such as the state and parents) that expects and forces them to use a polite and proper language; that is, a street jargon threatens inside, challenges, and eventually replaces the official language. If it is considered that language is the most significant instrument as a constituent and carrier of culture, what Nadsat does is indeed a revolt against and a substitution of the prevailing culture.

At this point, drawing on language as a bridge to see the overall body perception in *Clockwork* might be helpful. In other words, before analysing how the body is both literally and metaphorically confined in the novel, a reading of how the other’s body is perceived, formed, and reflected through language might be a good start. The particular

²⁸⁴ “From the Russian suffix for ‘teen’ – comprised of a mixture of [Cockney] slang, baby talk, Romany, and Russian derivatives to express a reality that is at once near and distant.” For this quotation and further details about “Nadsat,” see below:

Stuart Y. McDougal, “Introduction: ‘What’s it going to be then, eh?: Questioning Kubrick’s *Clockwork*,” in *Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange*, ed. Stuart Y. McDougal (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 9.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 3. In addition to this defamiliarizing effect, Burgess himself suggests something like a “brainwashing” effect. In accordance with his suggestion, “Nadsat” functions as “a brainwashing device” in the book which is “supposed to be about brainwashing;” that is, the reader is somehow “brainwashed to learn it” while reading. This is also the reason why Burgess objects to any demand of adding a Nadsat glossary to his book. For this information and further details about the discussion, see below:

Roger Craik, “‘Bog or God’ in *A Clockwork Orange*,” *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews* 16, no. 4 (2003): 51.

jargon Alex and his comrades use referring to “the other” in a way foreshadows the upcoming offensive acts against the latter. Their fantasies over the other’s body initially manifest themselves through language, through their generalising and derogatory discourse. Throughout the story, the gang verbally abuse and marginalise a myriad of people, shape and categorise their bodies via language: the old body, the teen body, the female body, the beautiful body, the ugly body, the fat body, the queer body, the animal body, and so on. The common point in this categorisation is that the other’s body is abstracted from and deprived of its spirit and thereby transforms into a piece of flesh; it becomes the ostracised victim of/in another’s fantasies. These cases are significant since they point how the body is signified through the eyes -and the mouth- of the (perverse) other, how it is constituted as the pervert’s fantasy space.

The imperatives on the (other’s) body are not limited to the lingual sphere in the novel. The body is heavily dominated in divergent senses and therefore visualised throughout my study in/as confined space. Especially the experiences Alex goes through tell us why and how the body is confined by the powerful, both physically and figuratively. The first part of the debate, the physical confinement, is obviously easier to evaluate. Alex is subjected to captivity for a number of occasions; respectively, the Corrective School, “Staja” (State Jail), the medical centre, and the house of the political opponents. From a broader perspective, moreover, the world from which Alex cannot escape (because even the idea of suicide is enough to make him feel sick after the treatment) though he is weary of the physical and psychological oppression by the others, turns into a prison, yet another and ultimate confinement for him.

Besides the idea of the body physically confined within a space, the body itself somehow becomes a confined space in *Clockwork*. The remarkable case here will be definitely that of Alex, the particular relationship between Alex the subject and the state that turns the former’s body into a figurative prison. Before my own analyses on this matter, it might be helpful to see how Pat J. Gehrke deals with it in his reading *Clockwork* and Foucault’s texts as “congruent critiques of social scientific and

criminological attempts to define and constitute deviancy and subjectivity.”²⁸⁶ Acknowledging that Foucault’s leading writings on subjectivity and Burgess’s (and Stanley Kubrick’s) *Clockwork* were concurrent, Gehrke brilliantly creates parallelisms between the two and makes a detailed Foucauldian reading of the latter. In so doing, his basic assumption is this; “A *Clockwork Orange* is a narrative about an individual (Alex) who transits through at least four subject-positions. In the transition between these positions, Alex is exposed (as are we) to different relations of power and knowledge.”²⁸⁷ To prove that, Gehrke follows Alex “from the life of his gang, through his stay in prison, his treatment at the psychology institute, and his release back into society” and indicates us how he is “constructed as a subject in at least four different ways:” *Alex as criminal, Alex as convict, Alex as patient, and Alex as citizen.*²⁸⁸ Hereafter, the scholar explains each subject-position in depth and highlights divergent political and scientific methods to keep strict discipline mechanisms. What can be primarily deduced from Gehrke’s study is that while Alex’s subjectivity may be shifting between various positions the unchanging condition is the identification and constitution of an individual body as (deviant) subject by the (powerful) other, mostly the state and its agents.

Prior to the elaboration of Alex’s case as subject, it should be kept in mind that each violence scene in the novel might be separately read in accordance with the given idea of the body in this study. A striking example may be the “HOME” scene during which Alex rapes the wife while the husband, the author F. Alexander, is forced to watch it.²⁸⁹ This scene is dramatically significant since it is pregnant with numerous

²⁸⁶ Pat J. Gehrke, “Deviant Subjects in Foucault and *A Clockwork Orange*: Congruent Critiques of Criminological Constructions of Subjectivity,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 18, no. 3 (2001): 270.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 274.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ There are some scholars who create a particular (Freudian) association, something like a father-son bond, between Alexander and Alex. Accordingly, there is a persistent hateful rivalry between them and the rape scene suggests an Oedipal crisis, “a reverse restaging of the primal scene,” since Alexander as “father” is forced to watch his “son” Alex rape the wife/mother. For this illuminating alliance and more, see below:

meanings in terms of the body and perversion. On the one hand, the scene suggests that the female body transforms into an arena on which two rival men confront. The pleasure Alex gets meanwhile exceeds a sexual one because he teaches the husband “a lesson of masculinity” by doing that in front of his eyes. In a way, sexuality becomes an instrument of (male) power here while the female body sexualised as such is only an object in *the desire of the Other*. Alex really delights in this “master” position, but this gratification does not completely stem from the feeling of dominating (male) power over/through another’s (female) body. The pleasure also comes from the desire for vengeance, from the urge to punish the decadent society and its dysfunctional institutions such as education. Alex has always hated reading, readers and writers and now, raping “an intelligent type’s” most beloved one satisfies him that much. Ironically, while punishing “an intelligent type,” taking his revenge by giving him a lesson, Alex holds the position of his victim by becoming himself a “teacher” (another “intelligent type” for Alex) in a sense.

On the other hand, the cause of Alex’s satisfaction during the rape scene transcends a simple sexual pleasure; it is closely connected with a *layered perverse structure* as well. If the scene is profoundly read through the lens of a perverse psychic mentality, there will come out different layers of perversion. I devise a circular frame to explain it. Within the first circle, the central one, we have the rape, a perverse action in itself. Encircling this primary one is the first peripheral circle, which includes the two victims as spectators of the central perverse action, the rape. The wife is clearly the sufferer during the rape, but she is also a victim as a spectator of the scene in which she is obliged to experience the shame of being raped in front of her husband. Likewise, the husband is forced to watch his wife being raped. Thus, the position of voyeur is inflicted on both victims as they are unwillingly involved in the perverse scene. So far, it seems that we have a kind of *double perversion*; yet, what comes hereafter makes it more complicated, converts it into a multilayered one.

Margaret DeRosia, “An Erotics of Violence: Masculinity and (Homo)Sexuality in Stanley Kubrick’s *A Clockwork Orange*,” in *Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange*, ed. Stuart Y. McDougal (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 70, 82.

Philip E. Ray, “Alex Before and After: A New Approach to Burgess’ *A Clockwork Orange*,” *Modern Fiction Studies* 27, no. 3 (1981): 484-86.

At this point, the third circle surrounding the second comes into being: there are additionally Alex's friends (to whom Alex shows here who the boss is) as the spectators of this double perversion. They are holding the voyeur position too, rather as victorious victimisers than as miserable victims. They enjoy watching not only the rape itself but also the victims' helpless gaze. The last but not the least circle is the outermost one enclosing all these interior circles; it contains us, the readers,²⁹⁰ who are supposedly befriending "our Friend and Humble Narrator" Alex. While narrating his (rape) story, Alex directly addresses to us as his friends and brothers and thereby makes us participate in the perverse scene, just like his other friends in the room do. In this manner, we the readers by extension take our share in the voyeur role and complete the perverse structure by serving as its last ring.

To wrap up this section, another point in addition to all these deductions might be stated: the rape scene once more suggests how complex the relationship between pain and pleasure is. It is clear that Alex takes pleasure, but this is a pleasure derived from pain; "Each HOME sequence offers a site at which one man draws pleasure not from the woman, but rather from the provocation, display, and refusal to assuage male suffering."²⁹¹ It is a sadistic satisfaction achieved by hurting "the other" bodily and more importantly, psychologically. The genuine pleasure here is not rooted in what Alex feels, rather what he causes the victims to feel, inferiority and shame. This nuance, as well as the previously said layered structure, tempts us to analyse Alex's case under the title of perversion.

When it comes to the main clash regarding the body perception in *Clockwork*, it certainly occurs between Alex as the (pervert) individual body and the state as representative of power. Realising that the conventional punishment methods are in vain, the governmental authorities decide to draw on a new strategy which is called the "Ludovico's Technique." The process is done by injecting a special liquid and applying various techniques to control the criminal's brain and in this way terminate the criminal inclination. Aiming to produce "good law-fearing citizens" in a "crime-free era," the

²⁹⁰ If it is for Kubrick's film adaptation (1971), then that is meant for the audience as well. In fact, the film version may be a better example here to analyse the voyeur position of the spectators.

²⁹¹ DeRosia, "An Erotics of Violence," 80.

state wishes to transform pervert selves to perfect citizens, to secure social control through dominating individual bodies. This is the reason why Lichtenberg et al. claim that “[*Clockwork*] is concerned with the notion of excessive state power over individuals, whether those individuals are good citizens or not.”²⁹²

However, as it is proved by means of the failure in Alex’s case, the new strategy only culminates in physical and psychological torture. The governmental desire to kill “the criminal reflex” or “the principle of destruction” turns out to be a murder in a sense. It might be uttered so because it leads Alex to literal and metaphorical death at the same time. Literally, Alex goes through an intense trauma after the treatment and attempts to suicide for a few times—paradoxically, the treatment leads him to suicide, but it is also the effect of the treatment that prevents him to do so. Although the literal murder does not come true, the metaphorical one is realised since the Ludovico kills Alex’s self, his authentic behaviours. It is true that Alex can no more commit a crime; yet, he can no longer be himself either.

The confrontation of Alex and the state conveys further implications from the point of the body as (confined) space. First of all, as the trailblazer of the Ludovico, Alex’s body is abused as an epistemological space on which the state’s brand new “scientific” experiments are carried out for the sake of certain political ends. An individual’s body becomes a social arena where new governmental policies can be tried out; it goes beyond being a private zone. Alex’s body is cleansed from its characteristic features, exclusive emotions, desires, and urges so that it transforms into “a clockwork orange.”²⁹³ He certainly changes, from “a creature capable of moral choice” to a machine which is used and directed in line with the others’ desires and anxieties. As McDougal states, he is *programmed* “to find sex and violence nauseating in the

²⁹² Lichtenberg et al., “Darker than Any Prison,” 433.

²⁹³ As Burgess himself explains, the metaphor carries two implications at the same time: first, the Cockney phrase “queer as a clockwork orange” which is used by the author to suggest “the application of Pavlovian, or mechanical, laws to an organism which, like a fruit, was capable of colour and sweetness;” second, in Malaya where Burgess had served, the word “*orang*” means a human being. For the detailed account of Burgess’s interpretations, see below:

Ray, “Alex Before and After,” 481.

extreme.”²⁹⁴ That is, Alex’s body becomes the state’s fantasy space on which the authorities have the opportunity to materialise their inmost fantasies and imaginary scenarios. In fact, no matter if it is for the “outmoded penological theories” such as imprisonment or new techniques like the Ludovico, one point is clear and firm: the individual body is signified by the state as its arena of power.

Moreover, this governmental strategy has its equivalent among society as well. The community in the novel endeavours to “tame” the pervert, to civilise Alex by wiping out his “primitive” sides, his “wildness.” This collusion between the individual and society might be somehow read as a nature/culture dichotomy from a larger frame. There is a patronising culture as people try to impose on Alex some received social behaviours and taken-for-granted norms under the cloak of “reintegration into society.”

The character Dr. Branom in the novel actually reveals what is truly intended about Alex. The “civilised” society is determined to teach/dictate Alex how to be a “normal,” “healthy,” “sane,” namely, a “good” subject by ruling his very own body; “Your body is learning it. [...]. What is happening to you now is what should happen to any normal healthy human organism contemplating the actions of the forces of evil, the workings of the principle of destruction. You are being made sane, you are being made healthy.”²⁹⁵ Thus, Alex’s body is regarded as a social and political instrument among society. Even the ones that seemingly help him (doctors or the political opponents for instance) in fact look after their own interests and fantasies, which will only be realised by making use of Alex’s body. For the political opponents, for example, his body means “a thing,” or “a very potent weapon” as “a martyr.” As seen here, the body, even a dead one, can transform into an agent, a (political) space for power struggles. What is done to Alex in the name of “the goodness of society” is nothing but an outcome of the others’ enthusiasm for more power. No one in fact cares about “real Alex;” already, there is no free will, no space remained for his self. What only matters is “the Alex” in their eyes and imagination, which is worthy only as a useful subject, as a tamed body.

²⁹⁴ McDougal, “Introduction,” 6.

²⁹⁵ Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 85-86.

Looking through a wider frame, *Clockwork* bears the approach that the modern world itself is “a clockwork orange”²⁹⁶ while people as “the victims of the modern age” are its unconditional subjects. It is indeed about the general human condition at a particular time and condemns, as Steven M. Cahn puts it, “the inescapable conditioning process” erasing free will in modern society; “[*Clockwork*] is a portrait of human life as a series of learned, automatic [reflex] responses to the stimuli of the environment.”²⁹⁷ From this perspective, “the Ludovico conditioning technique is merely a concentrated version of what goes on every minute of every human being’s life.”²⁹⁸

The novel thus introduces the new world order in which the state and its mechanisms convert citizens into “mechanical creations” by means of certain tactics—a rigid work order that forces everyone except the ill, children and the ones with children to work, particularly in state-funded jobs if possible, partial media organs which numb and brainwash individuals through deceptive audiovisual productions, security forces as executors and protectors of state policies, scientific institutions or medical centres working parallel with the governmental interests, also channelling some other domains such as education and religion to particular ends—and reform the resistant in order to make them conform the order. This is a system that is able to work only by turning an individual into a subject, alienating him/her from his/her authentic self; as a result, the individual becomes nothing but a robot which will comply with the commands unconditionally. At this point, the prisoner Alex might be the most relevant example since he is straightforwardly presented as “subject” in the novel.²⁹⁹ As he is jailed, he leaves his personal belongings behind, including his name, his identity. He ceases to be himself because he is now reduced to a number. Within an Althusserian manner, the subject Alex will be perpetually hailed/interpellated as “6655321” from then on; “You, 6655321, are to be reformed.”³⁰⁰

²⁹⁶ The metaphor works well regarding the global shape of both the earth and an orange.

²⁹⁷ Steven M. Cahn, “A *Clockwork Orange* is not about Violence,” *Metaphilosophy* 5, no. 2 (1974): 156.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 97, 99.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 75.

This debate also leads us to consider the social conjuncture in the novel drawing on the Foucauldian “panopticon model,” which tells us about automatisations of people, internalisation of discipline, and thereby avoidance of disobedience even if any agent of power is not available. Here, the character P. R. Deltoid (the Post-Corrective Adviser) might be perceived as the eye continuously surveilling in the name of discipline mechanisms. He represents the permanent existence of authority, stands as the latter’s upper hand above the subject. P. R. Deltoid in this sense functions as *the Sword of Damocles*, always here and there to punish Alex whenever/wherever he makes a mistake. What is more, the adviser’s presence is not necessary. Since the subject Alex acknowledges the perpetual possibility of the adviser’s appearance at any time in any place, he inwardly knows that he should stay away from any improper act. This self-control mechanism in the absence of any member of power is the ultimate purpose of the panoptic society.

A critique of such a society is valid in both Burgess’s *Clockwork* and F. Alexander’s *Clockwork*, the novel within the novel. Both authors somehow illuminate how the government capitalises on citizens, especially the young ones, as the protectors of the order by manipulating them through certain strategies. In Burgess’s *Clockwork*, the case is very clear since we encounter that some former gang members (Dim and Billyboy) are now turned into brutal policemen. The governmental message is that you can freely engage in violence on streets only if you stand by our side or do it in favour of us. In other words, you have nothing but two choices; either you will be a part of this running machinery and go on living as a “clockwork” fruit, or you will be roughly crushed if you dare to fall off the tree by standing against the order.

Alex therefore reacts against such an order as he wishes to be himself, takes pleasure from being able to choose “the evil” with his free will. He is “deviant” because he deviates from the way dictated by the powerful (state). Instead of keeping up with the majority as sheep would do, Alex goes for his own way, which seems more virtuous to him. Hence, it is reasonable to think that he is called “A-lex” on purpose (“lex” means “law, rule, and principle”; therefore, it is his law, his own order, the one and

only.³⁰¹ Or considering the prefix “a” in the meaning of “not, without,” his name suggests his anarchic spirit). Alex is aware of the fact that some of his acts might be popularly considered “bad.” However, if “goodness/normality/healthiness” is what the other people around him are doing or pointing he opts for being a “pervert.” At least it is what makes him human, not a robot as the rest are; “When a man cannot choose he ceases to be a man.”³⁰² Alex himself supports these arguments at some instances throughout the novel. Once he states;

More, badness is of the self, the one, the you or me on our oddy knockies, and that self is made by old Bog or God and is his great pride and radosty. But the not-self cannot have the bad, meaning they of the government and the judges and the schools cannot allow the bad because they cannot allow the self. And is not our modern history, my brothers, the story of brave malenky selves fighting these big machines? I am serious with you, brothers, over this. But what I do I do because I like to do.³⁰³

Again, here it is; “Hell and blast you all, if all you bastards are on the side of the Good then I’m glad I belong to the other shop.”³⁰⁴ As seen through these quotations, what Alex does is intentional to some degree. He passionately turns to the “dark side” since the good side promises no more than a lifeless mechanisation.

The dress code is one of the most influential factors in this mechanisation, as well as being its most obvious manifestation. In this context, the body in “clothes” is really meaningful and draws attention not only for the main character Alex but also for the others in the novel. Broadly speaking, changing clothes is like changing skin, just like a snake’s sloughing off its old skin. Talking for Alex, for instance, each dress brings along new conditions and thus a new identity. The “Nadsat fashion” symbolises freedom and provides him with being “himself,” the anarchic Alex. He wears its garments willingly, within “free will” in a way, and therefore with pleasure. Yet, the

³⁰¹ Mesut Yilmaz, “A Cinematic Approach to the Sociology of Deviance: *A Clockwork Orange*,” *Journal of Humanities and Tourism Research* 10, no.4 (2020): 897.

³⁰² Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 67, 122.

³⁰³ Ibid., 34.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 57.

dress code imposed on him by some others is the painful part of the story. The state forces him to put on first a student uniform, which is the beginning of confinement by the other. Alex then has to wear a prison uniform as the clear example of standardisation and “disidentification.” Lastly, he has to have the particular clothes given by the medical staff on during the aversion therapy. That is, each dress-change means a new power practice, a new sanction through a new strategy. Desire for the other’s body or confining fantasies over another’s body are realised by converting that body into the desired form in the first place. The (state’s) fetish for “uniform” takes its source from fantasies of possession, from the obsession of dominating the other’s body by confining it with imaginary walls.

In the same way, clothes are significant for the rest of the characters as well. We have “uniformed police officers,” “uniformed guardians,” and the white-coated but again “uniformed healthcare providers,” all of whom are somehow both victims and executors (even executioners) of the governmental fantasies. The powerful (state) dresses you, shapes you in a way that will be fit in its own dreams. No matter what/how inside the body is, the outside cover to a certain extent determines its route. As Alex occasionally implies in the novel, the officials counted above unwillingly do the things (even if) they do not want to do since they are in formal dress. You are forced to behave in accordance with your clothes; and in time, you get used to behave so without any force.³⁰⁵ Dim and Billyboy are good examples from the novel to see the sanction power of “uniform.” The governmental clothes are able to turn the most vicious criminals into police officers, to keep them on the state’s side so that they will fight for, not against, the governmental interests. Similarly, the citizens working in the state-owned factories (such as Alex’s parents) have to wear uniform, which makes them not merely workers but actually protectors of the order.

Yet, the crucial point here is that the order for some might be others’ disorder. In this respect, one of the most remarkable conflicts in *Clockwork* is between Alex/the individual/the “pervert” and “civilisation”/culture/society/authority/power/the state and

³⁰⁵ Again reminding us of the panoptic sense; automatised/internalised discipline so that there will be no need for constant surveillance.

its institutions. Keeping this wide spectrum in mind, anyone reading the novel may reconsider whether there is a “healthy” community or a stinking, sick, and rotten one. As a reference to the Freudian terms, the so-called civilisation remains so shallow that almost everyone except the opportunists of the regime has some *discontents* about it. The agonising, even sadistic, treatment to reform the “pervert” Alex by means of “filthy pervert films”³⁰⁶ proves that the “civilised” society and its institutions can be more perverse than any criminal or deviant individual. Furthermore, if science and scientific methods can be that brutal/inhuman/“perverse” for political ends, it becomes irrelevant for any individual or any sexual identity/orientation to be stigmatised as “abnormal/pervert” by such a corrupt and unreliable domain. Namely, arguments in the name of civilisation are contradictory, constantly denying themselves within a vicious circle. This debate also corresponds to the contrast between the “civilised” adults and the “uncivilised” youth in the novel.³⁰⁷ While young individuals are accused of shameful acts against the total goodness of society it is in fact “the adult world [...] with their wars and bombs and nonsense” that disturbs “the order” by evoking barbarity.³⁰⁸

Holding a critical view about the link between the (deviant) individual and civilisation, scholars frequently read *Clockwork* in terms of the conflict between the main character Alex and the “civilised” society he lives in.³⁰⁹ Among those scholars is Hans Feldmann, who considers (Kubrick’s) *A Clockwork Orange* within a trilogy (along with *2001* and *Barry Lyndon* of the same director) on “the moral and psychological nature of Western man and on the destiny of his civilization.”³¹⁰ For Feldmann, the trilogy is “a disturbing study of a decadent civilization, decadent because the life-forms it has established for man to achieve the expression of his essential self

³⁰⁶ Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 91.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 35.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ Zerrin Eren might be counted among those scholars as well. See below:

Zerrin Eren, “The Uncivilizing Process of the West and Burgess’s Suggestion for Stopping This Process in *A Clockwork Orange*,” *folklor/edebiyat* 24, no. 96 (2018): 141-57.

³¹⁰ Hans Feldmann, “Kubrick and His Discontents,” *Film Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (1976): 12.

are founded upon a false conception of the nature of man.”³¹¹ Here, the overall principle Feldmann draws on is that “Western civilization is moribund, that its cultural forms and social institutions no longer provide man with the significant order that makes life meaningful experience;” therefore, there is a troublesome relationship between the individual man and “the cultural forms through which that individual must achieve the expression of himself.”³¹²

Though Feldmann grounds his arguments in the trilogy as a whole, his assumptions are still relevant and notable to review *Clockwork* singularly. In accordance with this, the prevailing idea of man and civilisation in *Clockwork* is not Romantic (civilisation corrupts “the intrinsically good natural man”) but Freudian; “the primal facet of the human personality is the id, the completely self-oriented structure that demands immediate gratification of its instinctual urges for food, shelter, and the propagation of itself. It is not moral or intellectual or sensitive to the needs or feelings of others. It simply is.”³¹³ It is from this regard that Alex stands as “the Freudian id,” a threat to the social order as “the savage instinctual man who operates only to gratify his basic urges.”³¹⁴ Doing that, Feldmann goes on, Alex contradicts “all the virtues Western culture has taught man to respect;” however, he still emerges as “the most attractive and sympathetic character” among others for a reason: because he is “the most *human* character” in his environment.³¹⁵ Looking through a Freudian lens, the “perverse” individual Alex is *discontent* with civilisation forms “not only because they frustrate the instinctual man, but also because they deny that the instinctual self is intrinsic to man’s

³¹¹ Ibid., 13.

³¹² Ibid., 15.

³¹³ Ibid., 13.

³¹⁴ Ibid., 15. Another scholar, Daniel Shaw, also confirms this argument referring to Kubrick, who approves the Freudian reading of *Clockwork* according to which Alex is “a creature of the id” as “‘man in his natural state’ driven by Eros and Thanatos,” which makes the reader/audience unconsciously identify themselves with him rather “on the psychological dream content level” than “on the social and moral level.” In so doing, Shaw reminds us of the sharp contrast between this idea of “the natural man as a creature of the id” and Rousseau’s vision of *the noble savage*. For these discussions and further details, see below:

Daniel Shaw, “Nihilism and Freedom in the Films of Stanley Kubrick,” in *The Philosophy of Stanley Kubrick*, ed. Jerold J. Abrams (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 224.

³¹⁵ Feldmann, “Kubrick and His Discontents,” 15.

nature,” which is cleverly highlighted in *Clockwork* “by juxtaposing the brutal enactment of instinctual urges with sublimated expressions of those urges.”³¹⁶ Feldmann then clearly explains why Alex is “the chief manifestation of a collapsing civilization, as well as the chief threat to the continued viability of his culture’s claims to meaningful forms;”

If Freud is correct in arguing that civilization progresses as it develops forms and institutions to control the spontaneous expression of the id, then the converse becomes possible: a civilization in decline would be marked by the increasing ineffectuality of those forms to control the expression of the id and eventually by the unhampered re-emergence of the id itself.³¹⁷

Nevertheless, it is also what makes Alex the sympathetic “hero” of *Clockwork*, says the scholar and adds; Alex embodies “the libidinal energy which will drive the faltering human spirit through the collapse of that civilization” as “the only character [in *Clockwork*] who is *not* a clockwork orange,” who “never submits to the restricting and falsifying forms of his society, who never becomes the mechanical, adjunct of moral or ethical or political abstractions, who operates always and only from his primal, instinctual, human self,” and who is “by no means admirable, but [...] a real part of every man.”³¹⁸ Feldmann’s concluding remarks about *Clockwork*’s general suggestion are also significant to point: “man must embrace the Alex [the savage, destructive side] in himself to be whole again. He must reject his past, his cultural traditions, the dead moral scheme that falsifies life and deforms, rather than controls, the instinctual man.”³¹⁹

Thus, coming back from Feldmann’s article to our own discussion here, the relationship between (pervert) individual and (civilised) society is problematic because the components of the latter are no more functional. Each unit of the “civilised” community in the novel is corrupt, or inoperative at its best, which makes the “pervert”

³¹⁶ Ibid., 16.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 16-17.

³¹⁹ Ibid., 19.

stand against the whole idea of civilisation. We may begin with the social order and the nuclear family as an extension and basic unit of the former. If a “healthy” family structure as an agent of the larger system of control helps in maintaining the functional community, as argued by Kate Millett, the lack of “ideal” family in the novel must indicate something.³²⁰

Alex is deprived of familial love since his unaffectionate parents do not care about him. Here, Daniel Shaw might be right in his Freudian analysis of Alex’s (deviant) behaviours; “His father is precisely the type of weak figure that would have been unable to generate castration anxiety in his son, hence failing to trigger the primary repression from which the superego is said to result, according to Sigmund Freud.”³²¹ Not just the father model but all familial ties are weak in Alex’s family; therefore, he can never truly feel the warmth of home.³²² Even during his hardest times, the parents do not support him, which must be the reason why Alex is always in search of “HOME.” The indifferent and unsympathetic parents lead Alex to get closer with his “brothers;” the cruel but sympathetic gang members become an alternative family for him (calling his readers “my brothers” may be again a part of his desire to substitute his family). Nevertheless, we should keep it in mind that any attempt to create a direct connection between Alex’s “perversion” and the lack of an “ideal” family will be incomplete and superficial. Since the very entity of “family” has already been hollow, simply drawing on a cause-and-effect relationship while analysing Alex’s case of deviance might not work here. This microcosmic disorder in family has its equivalence at the macrocosmic level as well; that is, there is only social unrest among the citizens. It is true that there are laws to keep the order; yet, to whom the laws serve

³²⁰ Kate Millett, *Sexual Politics* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 33.

³²¹ Shaw, “Nihilism and Freedom,” 222-23.

³²² That might be the reason why Todd F. Davis and Kenneth Womack coin the term “pseudo-family” to define the dysfunctional family structures. In their view, the destructive Alex who is a “pseudo-self” using a “pseudo-language” is somehow a production of “pseudo-family” patterns, which hinder a “healthy” self-development. From this regard, the scholars pay attention to the omitted last chapter of *Clockwork*’s American edition in which (they assert) Alex dreams of his future (functional) family and thereby hints at the possibility of an “ethical transformation.” About these debates and more, see below:

Todd F. Davis and Kenneth Womack, “‘O my brothers’: Reading the Anti-Ethics of the Pseudo-Family in Anthony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange*,” *College Literature* 29, no. 2 (2002): 19-36.

is not obvious. Justice works only to protect the powerful, even to strengthen them more. That is why almost every segment of society in the novel (the old, the youth, the intelligentsia, the dissident, the homeless, and the like) complains about the social disorder.

As another of those problematic social entities, education and its representatives are attacked by the “pervert” individual, Alex. While schools and books are full of useless information, teachers, writers, and readers only accommodate to this numbness, keep up with this vanity. Perhaps from this regard, Alex desires to harass “the intelligent types” (such as the old man from the public library as a devoted reader and F. Alexander as an author of novels) and to smash any books available. Police forces are yet another rotten social organisation. As the “decapitators” of the state, they represent the power(ful) on the streets by doing dirty things on behalf of the administrators. If needed, they can violate rules and be merciless and violent as much as any gang (already, they deliberately employ gang members to this end). Moreover, science (medicine) as another carrier of civilisation does not work as it is supposed to. There is no “objective truth” but rather subjective interests to pursue. Scientists no longer care for ethical questions in their methods. Although they know that the Ludovico’s treatment breaks basic human rights since it ceases the freedom of moral choice, they anyway continue to apply the technique for political reasons.

Religion too, as a constituent part of the prevailing culture, is interrogated throughout the novel. While concepts such as “the good” and “the bad” or heaven and hell are frequently uttered and contemplated on, the implied point is that all these phenomena are relative. “A better world” for Alex sounds like hell for others (the authorities, for instance) and vice versa. A repeated question is how to be “a true Christian.” Is it really a divine command that worshippers *have to choose* “goodness” like a machine or should not it be on human’s free will if s/he will prefer the good or the bad path? Does not “being a good human being” mean avoiding wrongdoings *consciously* (as an urge coming from the inside), without any outside pressure/imposition? These kinds of questions which are occasionally raised in the story orient the reader to a spiritual quest and usually come to a particular conclusion; “God

works in a mysterious way.”³²³ Nonetheless, what is not that “mysterious” is the degenerate religious approach in the State Jail, which is called “Prison Religion.” The aim is to reform the criminals by morally directing them; yet, the sermons by the prison chaplain (whose spiritual shortcomings are also obvious) only worsen the situation. The criminals now seem wilder, more tricky and more hypocritical despite (or due to?) the periodical religious meetings. This case shows nothing but how religion may function as a state apparatus, in which ways it is, as an institutionalised and instrumentalised phenomenon, (ab)used to manipulate any particular group of people to any particular ideological benefits.

Considering the juxtaposition of religion and perversion in the novel, certain implications on the social perceptions of the latter become visible. The reader can see through the eyes of Alex both the prison chaplain’s preaching and the narratives in the Holy Scriptures. What is suggested there is that while those religious sources curse “perversion” (through the parable of *Sodom and Gomorrah*) and call for punishment they are themselves full of violence, proud of wars dedicated to religion and even encourage violent acts against “the others.” The confusing point is that even Alex (the “pervert individual” of this narrative) has pejorative discourse against the “queer body,” the other in his sense. In fact, both Alex’s expressions and those sacred writings are reflections of the general societal apprehension of perversion, according to which the homosexual is the absolute other. Although there are myriads of malign actions against the peace of society, which are perceived (relatively) more positively by the same society, homoerotic behaviours are deemed as the ultimate perversion and therefore strictly damned/condemned. Thus, there is nothing to do with a “healthy” community. Beyond this clearly superficial pretence is homophobia, hatred against “the marginal” and desire to punish and assimilate them or if it is not possible, to exterminate them at all. What is ironical here is that this is one of the rare points on which the governmental mentality and that of Alex and his gang overlap. Both parties wish to oppress and eventually destroy “the other” in their own eyes: while for the state, the target is the

³²³ Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 76-77.

gangs and the political opponents (like the novel-writer F. Alexander³²⁴) dealing with perverse/“subversive” practices, for the gang, it is the homosexual, the homeless, the “lovebirds,” the “intelligent types,” and so on.

When the discussion is about the oppressor and the oppressed, we cannot neglect the broad network of power relations in *Clockwork*. The novel bears a wide range of power struggles at both macrocosmic and microcosmic levels. The largest realm is about the global desire to be the superpower of the world. At this point, the sociohistorical context must have inspired Burgess. As suggested by Lichtenberg et al., the author published the novel when “[...] World War II, the atomic bomb, the brutality of the Stalin regime, and the Holocaust were all relatively recent events” and “[t]he destructive capabilities of a finely tuned military-industrial machine and a totalitarian government were known to all.”³²⁵ This international layer of desire for hegemony is visible in the novel through the “special films” (shown to Alex during the treatment) on the Nazi and Japanese tortures during the Second World War.

When Foucault counts the main types of punishment along the human history, he points to how power dominates the bodies; and as one of those types he offers physical injury, i.e., leaving the imprint of power on the body; “expose, mark, wound, amputate, make a scar, stamp a sign on the face or the shoulder, impose an artificial and visible handicap, torture—in short, seize hold of the body and inscribe upon it the marks of power.”³²⁶ What is aimed by those parties of the war must be entirely related to this strategy. Once again, the individual bodies become political arena on which the states can prove how much powerful they are. In other words, the bodies of the soldiers serve as an alternative battlefield for “the big shots.” The second largest sphere of power-seeking in the novel is within the borders of the state, which includes the struggles to take control of the state either legally or illegally, through elections or unfair tactics. This dimension is indicated by means of the governmental officials (led

³²⁴ “Alex’s future self,” “a future version of Alex’s self.” Philip E. Ray writes the entire paper grounding in this association. See below to read the comparison in details:

Ray, “Alex Before and After,” 479-87.

³²⁵ Lichtenberg et al., “Darker than Any Prison,” 433.

³²⁶ Foucault, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, 23.

by the Minister of the Interior) who go to any lengths not to lose the administration and their political opponents (like F. Alexander) who also persevere for reversal of the situation.

When it comes to the microcosmic level, we encounter temporary balance of power in-between different groups of people. Taking the intra-familial aspect into account, for instance, the power centre in Alex's family perpetually changes. When Alex was a little boy the power belongs to the parents for sure. As he grows up, the parents gradually lose their authority over him. As his voice gets coarser and his bones and muscles thicker, his mother's voice softens, becomes thinner; "[...] my mum called in in a very respectful goloss as she did now I was growing up big and strong."³²⁷ After the imprisonment and the medical treatment, however, Alex weakens both physically and psychologically against his parents and no more has any influence over them. He is even obliged to quit home since he has already been replaced by a substitute boy, his parents' lodger. Lastly, he regains the authority at home as the negative effects of the treatment are removed out of his body via "deep hypnopaedia." As a result, the "perverse" side which makes him "Alex" comes back as *the return of the repressed* in a way. In other words, "[h]is humanity and his perversity, always linked, are conjointly restored" in the end.³²⁸

Likewise, the main dispute within the gang stems from the desire to be the chief man in the group. During the battle for the sake of being the owner of "the voice," Alex is on one side while George & Dim are on the other. Although Alex appears as the winner of the first round, the final victory belongs to George & Dim, who trap Alex and send him to jail. This debate encourages us to refer to Margaret DeRosia and her article in which she interrogates construction of masculinity and (homo)sexuality in *Clockwork* as "an erotics of violence."³²⁹ DeRosia's main argument is that *Clockwork* is based on homosocial sadomasochistic struggles (including, arguably, homoeroticism) between male subjects and in this context, women who merely set the stage for those male

³²⁷ Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 30.

³²⁸ Lichtenberg et al., "Darker than Any Prison," 440.

³²⁹ DeRosia, "An Erotics of Violence."

encounters are only in the secondary (object) position; “[*Clockwork*] maintains an ambivalent relation to women, sustaining their presence as objects of desire while debasing and denying them all subjectivity.”³³⁰ The problematic treatment to women as superficial motivations (or causes in appearance) of male struggles encourages DeRosia to argue that what is indeed desired in the novel is the relationship among men; “*Clockwork* explores the link between masculinity, subjectivity, and violence by symptomatically representing these realms in highly (homo)eroticized, self-reflexive ways.”³³¹

In brief, *Clockwork* offers a stratified structure of power relations, all of which are fundamentally based on the motivation to hold the absolute power, i.e., to be the leader of people, the commander of soldiers, the master of slaves, or the shepherd of sheep. One’s hunger for supremacy sometimes causes to harm himself/herself; therefore, s/he has to take responsibility and pay the price for his/her greed and *hubris*. Yet, as the prominent saying goes, *when elephants fight ants die*. The major losers of those harsh power struggles are always the insignificant others. From Foucault’s point of view, the individual bodies as confined and subjected by the powerful are the ultimate victims. They function as historically and culturally constructed subjects of the discourse of power, as passive objects in the relations (*transcending* them) between subjects, merely as instruments on the way of the others’ greater ends.

Concluding this chapter on *Clockwork*, the self-referential narrative of the novel leads us to recall the association of perversion and postmodernism discussed in the theoretical part of this study. Drawing on the strategy of “the story within the story” by presenting an author character and his own *Clockwork* in the novel, Burgess reflects to the reader not only himself as an author but also certain narrative elements. Moreover, the main character Alex is aware of his position as “the narrator” as well, perpetually reminds the reader of his fictional status. This metafictional frame-breaking strategy, playing with the limits between fiction and reality, enables the author to question the idea of “the real.” Besides, doing that, he can convey meanings via two texts at the

³³⁰ Ibid., 64.

³³¹ Ibid., 64-65.

same time; first, using the larger outer frame and then repeating and confirming his message in the inner frame. Thus, simultaneously carrying two author selves, Burgess determinedly announces that he “raises his sword-pen” against “laws and conditions appropriate to a mechanical creation.”³³²

Apart from these technical details, *Clockwork* also illustrates *the postmodern condition* in a nutshell. The correlation constructed between the perverse and the postmodernist logics is still observable here. Being one of the reflections of that intersectional area, we encounter the postmodernist idea of *exhaustion* in the novel, but this time within the context of perversion. As a part of postmodernist manner, since all content-related materials have been exhausted so far, the new direction of the age is towards formal experiments in literature. Parallel with this approach is the contemporary period’s “perverse” idea of eroticism in which new forms of interaction with the body and sex(uality) come out as a result of dissatisfaction with the pre-existing ones. Neither Alex nor his friends are contented with standard/taken-for-granted ways of sexual gratification; therefore, they search for sadomasochistic experiences or “perverse” experiments to get genuinely orgasmic pleasure.

Furthermore, while analysing the problematic relationship between the (pervert) individual and constituents of the “civilised” society in the previous parts, it is argued that the pervert subject is suspicious about all domains representing authority such as science and religion. This particular stand against the idea of “objective reality/truth” is another common point for the pervert and the postmodern subjects. While analysing the subject-formation in *Clockwork* through a Foucauldian reading of the institutional authorities, Gehrke somehow implies a similar idea.³³³ In his survey of changing subject-positions of the “deviant” Alex, the scholar draws attention to “the instability of the lines between criminal, convict, patient, and citizen.”³³⁴ Emphasising the blurred lines between different categories of subjection, including the postmodern and “perverse” ways, Gehrke in a sense summarises the contemporary culture; “In accepting

³³² Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 21.

³³³ Gehrke, “Deviant Subjects,” 282.

³³⁴ Ibid.

the conditions of being (post)modern citizens –media-subjects– we also become perfect victims.”³³⁵

Undoubtedly, the paranoid and schizophrenic condition of the postmodern pervert subject Alex is not just connected with his approach to the institutions of the dominant culture. The novel offers many instances where Alex experiences something in-between reality and illusion, *dreamlike reality* in a way. From time to time, he constructs for himself a fantasy world, his *wonderland* so to speak. When Alex gets high through drugged milk and “Great Music” he falls into another dimension, a trance-like mental state in which his perception of reality and of his own body dramatically changes. This position in limbo between reality and fantasy provides Alex with an escape, not only from merciless and boring “facts” of everyday life but also from a dictated subject-position within the modern society. He passes into a private zone where he can freely wander without any necessary “identity.”

The interrogation of reality/truth in *Clockwork* is in fact an overall principle. The novel does it deliberately reflecting *the simulacrum culture* by means of different elements. In addition to Alex’s (day)dreams/nightmares/hallucinations/illusions in which the borders between the real and the imaginary blur, there are also examples of *simulacra*, occasions where the copy/the fictional simulates and finally replaces the real/the original. The “special films” shown to Alex during the therapy are the most distinctive ones. Those fictional productions vividly simulate what Alex and his “droogs” exactly did beforehand, their sexual and physical aggressions. The videos also include particular torture scenes from the Second World War. Although they are seemingly the actual shootings, one can never be sure whether they really are. They might be, just like the films about Alex and his gang, simulations of war, merely other *versions* of “reality.”

This Baudrillardian way of schizophrenic attitude towards “the real” is a perpetually reminded notion throughout the story. Another example might be the tests³³⁶ prepared for Alex to measure the effects after his medical treatment. The

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ During which “Alex occupies the space of both subject of the narrative and object of the gaze.” For this and further details, see below:

medical staff and the audience acknowledge that the people on the stage are only performers, actors and actresses, but Alex does not. What he experiences on the stage is a kind of fictional/theatrical production for the others while Alex assumes that it is real and behaves accordingly. Indeed, what is ironic in this *simulacrum culture* is that the copy/fictional is more impressive than the original, “more realistic” than “the real” in a sense. It is notable that what makes Alex feel sick and pain is not violence but violence *on the screen*; “It’s funny how the colours of the like real world only seem really real when you viddy them on the screen.”³³⁷

While studying Sade’s novels dealing with “a subject matter which is buried deep in the Id,” Timo Airaksinen talks about the Sadean world and the heroes of that world; “The Sadean friends produce waste, excrement, upon which they live in their inverted world of nightmares. They like pain, worship all that cannot be respected, and enjoy what is disgusting. They aim at pleasure, now understood in terms of suffering.”³³⁸ This is in fact what the world means for Alex and the other members of his gang. Suffering for others is pleasure for them. Their “aberrant” desires might be threatening for the “civilised” society, but perhaps that is what exactly they intend to do; to disturb the order by substituting it, even to overthrow it if possible. Again, maybe that is the reason why the final chapter, which “takes Alex into adulthood and reformation,”³³⁹ was omitted from the American edition of the novel. Alex will remain as the young passionate transgressor because “horrorshow” must go on.

As the finalising words here, it should be noted that both Burgess’s novel *A Clockwork Orange* and Kubrick’s film adaptation (1971) with the same title have created tremendous impact and great reactions in real life. Apart from the critical acclaim, both works have given rise to many controversies all around the world. Some attacked Burgess and Kubrick accusing them of promoting violence. Following the publication of the novel and the release of the film version, the increasing number of the

DeRosia, “An Erotics of Violence,” 75.

³³⁷ Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*, 82.

³³⁸ Timo Airaksinen, *The Philosophy of the Marquis de Sade* (Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2001), 1-2.

³³⁹ McDougal, “Introduction,” 8.

copycat crimes particularly among the youth of the period was attributed to the temptation by *Clockwork*. However, one can never be sure whether it is just the other way around. As it is discussed earlier, the period *Clockwork* was born into had already been full of pro-violence figures and their cruel acts; therefore, the novel or the film might be only a reflection of what had been the case anyway, an inevitable corollary in a sense.

Besides, *Clockwork* has extensively occupied the agendas of academic circles and scientific platforms. Especially the “scientific” methods applied during the Ludovico have entailed moral dilemmas among scholars. As one of them, for instance, Robert J. Trotter searches for the real-life equivalences of the fictional medical treatment of Alex and therefore investigates the ethical debates over “experimental brain surgery on prisoners and a possible resurgence in the use of lobotomy and psychosurgery to control violent persons.”³⁴⁰ In this research, Trotter draws on many scientists and scholars’ opinions on certain medical treatments to heal a variety of psychological/emotional problems, “including homosexual tendencies.”³⁴¹ The most striking remark throughout the study is that while trying to control people, scientists destroy normal brain tissue which causes damage to the human personality. That must be the reason why the psychiatrist Frank R. Ervin says; “[...] there is always the possibility that scientific advances can be perverted.”³⁴² If so, who is the pervert? Perhaps, *all individuals are perverse, but some individuals are more perverse than others.*

³⁴⁰ Trotter, “California Prison,” 174.

³⁴¹ Ibid., 175.

³⁴² Ibid.

4.2. Crushed Bodies' Fetishism for (S)Cars: *Crash* (1973), James Graham Ballard

The deviant technology of the car-crash provided the sanction for any perverse act. For the first time, a benevolent psychopathology beckoned towards us [...].
—Ballard, the narrator³⁴³

The general effect of all this is to normalize the deviant and perverse. We should accept this and not try and fight against this particular tide; instead, to quote Conrad's phrase, we should to some extent immerse ourselves in this destructive element ourselves.

—Ballard, the author³⁴⁴

J. G. Ballard's *Crash* is a novel about a group of "marginal" people whose car-crash obsession makes them sexually aroused and leads them to stage and participate in real car-crashes. The story is narrated by a young man, a commercial producer James Ballard (the author's namesake), and centres on the other protagonist Robert Vaughan (a former TV-scientist that turns now into the "nightmare angel of the expressways") and his loyal acquaintances joining car-crashes. One day, James is involved in a terrible car accident during which he kills the husband of Dr. Helen Remington (also a victim of the crash) with whom he starts to have an affair afterwards. The accident not only makes James aware of his desire for sexual gratification through cars and crashes, but also paves the way for his meeting Vaughan, who will play the leading role in all his (homo)sexual adventures afterwards (including James's wife Catherine later on). From then on, the story continues with Vaughan and his subjects' extramarital sexual affairs mostly centred on cars, crashes, and scars and their fantasies of re-enacting the crashes of celebrities. In the end, Vaughan dies while trying to realise his ultimate fantasy (dying in a head-on collision with the cinema star Elizabeth Taylor) and James, as Vaughan's devoted follower, already starts to design his own car-crash death scenario.

While introducing his novel in 1995, Ballard in fact looked back in time and evaluated the contemporary period out of which *Crash* had been born.³⁴⁵ This

³⁴³ James Graham Ballard, *Crash* (London: Harper Perennial, 2008), 112.

³⁴⁴ Jeremy Lewis and J. G. Ballard, "An Interview with J. G. Ballard," *Mississippi Review* 20, no. 1/2 (1991): 33.

³⁴⁵ James Graham Ballard, "Introduction," in *Crash* (London: Harper Perennial, 2008).

“Introduction” is not only a brilliant overall analysis of the novel but also a kind of manifesto of the marriage of a new sex(uality) and high technology, that is, of perversion and postmodernism in Ballardian sense. The author portrays unconventional forms of sexuality, but in doing so, he also reflects how and why those “deviant” perceptions are integrated with and transform through *the simulacrum culture*. Just through a few pages, Ballard touches on highly significant discussions about *Crash* and the age it presents us.

First of all, it is visible that Ballard shares Lyotardian paranoia and Baudrillardian schizophrenia against the idea of “objective reality” or “absolute truth.” He points to the blurred lines between all the dynamics of the contemporary age such as politics, commerce, media, and advertisement. It is such a chaotic period that any attempt to search for reality is vain; “The most prudent and effective method of dealing with the world around us is to assume that it is a complete fiction.”³⁴⁶ No one or none of the institutions of this age is totally reliable in this sense because “We live in a world ruled by fictions of every kind.”³⁴⁷ It is clear that “We live inside an enormous novel” as Ballard puts it, but that novel is also very pornographic from Ballard’s perspective.³⁴⁸

With that, Ballard refers to the evolution of “the erotic” along with the idea of “the real.” The new age’s revolt against “the absolute” shows itself through postmodern perverse sexual possibilities and alternatives. From this regard, disorder/chaos of “the others,” especially in terms of sexuality, disturbs, threatens, challenges, and finally substitutes the order of the powerful. In spite of all the options the modern times offer, the consumerist postmodern individual is *exhausted* and dissatisfied; therefore, s/he looks for perverse formal experiments, which become more and more attractive or inviting as Ballard says so.

Another point emphasised by the author at this stage is that those social and sexual transformations along with the contemporary age have their reflections in the literature of the period. Just as the perverse individual of the postmodern age is too

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

exhausted to follow the traditional perception of sex(uality), the postmodernist novelist also no more enjoys conventional realist literary practices. Thus, there are some noticeable parallelisms between the formal experiments in postmodernist writing and those in “perverse” sex(uality)—they both meet on a nonconformist ground. As it is implied by Ballard here, there is no longer any “author(ity)” (conveying the truth/the real) in both novel-writing and sexuality (relevant in many other significant domains or for myriads of taken-for-granted phenomena as well). “The author” in this sense is no more than an agent constructing possible alternatives or imaginary possibilities, which is what Ballard himself does in *Crash*. If there is no more a clear distinction between “the real” and “the imaginary/the fantastic” as Ballard asserts, there is also nothing wrong to bring back what is buried in the id/unconscious to the conscious mind. It is exactly what is aimed by Ballard here, namely, revealing dreams and fantasies to the real world, or in Freudian terms, *manifesting* the *latent* content through “perverse” sexuality. In doing so, Ballard draws on a powerful juncture as his basic method: the marriage of the postmodern logic (high technology of the contemporary age) and the perverse logic (sexual “deviance,” dreams, and fantasies). His pervert characters fetishise (s)cars and all kinds of machines, “the technological” in general, which might be a “more powerful” challenge than “reason” against the order as Ballard suggests.³⁴⁹

In a nutshell, *Crash* is “the first pornographic novel based on technology” in the author’s own words.³⁵⁰ Here, Ballard draws on pornography as “the most political form of fiction, dealing with how we use and exploit each other, in the most urgent and ruthless way.”³⁵¹ If so, I can argue, the novel is all about *the body confined as fantasy space*: “confined” because it is exploited by the (powerful) other; “fantasy” since it is (ab)used by that other to satisfy destructive desires and deepest fantasies. In line with my argument, Ballard’s cars (and, by extension, motorways and parking lots) function as Žižek’s “mysterious old black house,” which becomes *fantasy space* (for the local men who have nostalgic desires and sexual fantasies over there) as the famous

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

psychoanalyst puts it. Parallel with Žižek's suggestion, there might be nothing special about cars for other individuals; for them, cars are just "vehicle," only a medium to realise their actual purpose: to travel, to arrive at a destination. However, for Ballard's pervert characters, cars become "destination" as themselves. They are at the very centre of the story; or more precisely, they *are* the centre, the ultimate erotic zone for (perverse) sexuality. It is from this regard that Ballard both constructs and interrogates an ironic dichotomy, i.e. centre versus periphery. Those cars are vitally functional for the peripheral subjects of Ballard since they stand for substitution of the oppressive centre, decentralisation of authority from within. According to the Ballardian postmodern perverse logic, orgasmic pleasure is possible only where bodies and machines passionately merge: (s)cars. Through this conjoined logic, the organic body (humans) meets the inorganic/metallic body (cars, machines) by means of an automobile, the true erotic locus for the pervert. The meeting is so intense that the human body and the car body become almost interchangeable; they act as if they were extensions of each other. In brief, I argue not only that Ballard's cars (and their extensions) function as Žižek's *fantasy space*, but also that the bodies themselves which are confined in those cars also become fantasy space for perverse desires of the other (as well as one's own).

In fact, car crashes are supposedly traumatic experiences; even the slightest possibility of any accident is enough to unsettle for many drivers. However, as argued by Jim Byatt, "[...] Ballard's *Crash* emphasizes the eroticism of the traumatic moment, the id being jerked free of its repressive moorings and propelled into the conscious mind [...]."³⁵² Besides the delightful sensation (adrenaline) meanwhile, what turns such a painful experience into a pleasurable experiment is the idea behind it or the particular attitude embedded in it. It derives from the clash between the "perverse" individual and the "civilised" society. From this regard, the car crash becomes for the victims "a release from the ethical order of the world into a realm of pure primitivism, a return to the pre-civilized state embodied and encrypted by the unconscious," and for the

³⁵² Jim Byatt, "Being Dead? Trauma and the Liminal Narrative in J. G. Ballard's *Crash* and Tom McCarthy's *Remainder*," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 48, no. 3 (2012): 253.

spectators “a temporary break from order which, in ways analogous with Bakhtin’s carnival, both affirms the structures of the social world and serves as a reminder of the potential for their violation.”³⁵³ Looking through Byatt’s viewpoint, Ballard’s novel might be read as a story about “the (literally) escapist fantasy of the trauma victim,” a fantasy that “[...] replaces the reality of the situation with a fictional alternative – one which does not disregard the real but instead encodes it, as dreams do, in a palatable form [...]”.³⁵⁴

Crash’s key character Vaughan, with his uneven legs and massively scarred body, is the “sex-guru”³⁵⁵ of a subculture of eroticism, violence, and transgression. The members of his sadomasochistic cult unconditionally comply with his demands for erotic experiments and sinister atrocities. In this sense, Vaughan might be perceived as a godlike figure with his desire for and pleasure in getting godlike power over others—just like *Clockwork*’s Alex, who enjoys “feeling like old Bog (God) himself.” Here (drawing on Althusserian terminology), Vaughan is at the centre, holding the ultimate Subject position, and has great authority over his peripheral followers as subjects. These subjects submit themselves to Vaughan’s *providence*; “For some reason, Vera Seagrave absolved Vaughan of any responsibility, although – as I realized later and she must have known already – Vaughan was clearly using her husband as an experimental subject / She’s under Vaughan’s thumb.”³⁵⁶ Moreover, it is not just for the Seagraves as James suggests; “[...] I had the sense that Vaughan was controlling us all, giving each of us what we most wanted and most feared.”³⁵⁷ His influence over his subjects is so huge that he can devise not only their lifestyle but also their lifespan. He fantasises death scenarios for many of them (including his friend James’s wife Catherine) and passionately chases after his deadly deviant dreams. For this “messiah of car culture,”

³⁵³ Ibid., 250.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 251.

³⁵⁵ Fred Botting and Scott Wilson, “Sexcrash,” in *Crash Cultures: Modernity, Mediation and the Material*, eds. Jane Arthurs and Iain Grant (Bristol and Portland, OR: Intellect Books, 2003), 84.

³⁵⁶ Ballard, *Crash*, 74, 92.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., 76.

as Daniel Cojocaru puts it, “Car crashes are turned into an immense sacrificial ritual.”³⁵⁸ Thus, from a spiritual perspective, Vaughan might represent divinity; however, it might be wrong to assume that his disciples are completely puppets in his hands. It is true that he is influential in many senses, but he also leaves his subjects free to choose the good or bad path.³⁵⁹ He never forces them to do anything, rather *tempts* them either physically or psychologically; “As Vaughan urged me again to crash the car into the vehicles approaching us, I was tempted to obey him, making no effort to answer the teasing pressure of his hand.”³⁶⁰ This is really ironical because it renders Vaughan satanic as well, as opposed to his godlike (omni)presence that simultaneously disturbs and delights his subjects at every turn.

While Vaughan is frantically driving after Catherine to crash his car into hers and finalise her death scenario, her husband James does literally nothing; “I made no attempt to warn her.”³⁶¹ It might be so due to the belief that you cannot intervene in God’s working (in mysterious ways). Still, the relationship between Vaughan and James transcends what is suggested here. When Vaughan dies and ascends the sky, he becomes God the Father in a way. As his now most faithful disciple (“an eager disciple”³⁶²) and the unique representative of his unfinished projects on earth, James takes the position of God the Son, who will resolutely perpetuate what has been inherited from Vaughan the Father, the divine destiny scripted by the Subject for the subjects. Vaughan’s desire for godlike power to control and shape the others’ fate is also transmitted to James; from then on, he is the one who will write death scenarios for his wife Catherine.

Vaughan’s bizarre fantasies thus far set the scene for a complicated relationship between the (erotic) body and the (desired) other. Indeed, it indicates how Vaughan and

³⁵⁸ Daniel Cojocaru, *Violence and Dystopia: Mimesis and Sacrifice in Contemporary Western Dystopian Narratives* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 62-63.

³⁵⁹ This association between Vaughan as Subject and “his volunteer subjects” is implied quite a lot times throughout the novel. For instances, see below:

Ballard, *Crash*, 107, 111, 120.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 163.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 179.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, 156.

his “abnormal” friends have a particular perverse psychic structure and how mysterious and complex human (perverse) sexuality works. What is (erotically) “meaningful” for the deviant might sound very “normal,” even absurd, for others. It is from this regard that perversion might be considered as a special meaning-making mechanism which constantly (re)creates possibilities and alternatives, multiplies taken-for-granted concepts and ideas. The perverse mind is in a way “a brothel of images” while the perverts are “obsessed with the sexual possibilities of everything around.”³⁶³ Their fetishism for (s)cars also functions through the same way. As Fred Botting and Scott Wilson suggest, *Crash* “fetishize[s] a generalized lack” as its story is “plotted along a chain of scars signifying the displacement of the fetish from its ‘original’ location as the substitute for maternal lack, to a fetishistic repetition and universalization of lack: all figures are all-too-obviously castrated, scarred, clumsy, limping bodies, mobile only with the aid of vehicles, sticks and callipers.”³⁶⁴ Car accidents supposedly leave only painful and traumatic memories; yet, the pervert might take pleasure and “celebrate wounds” for they stand as “an immense encyclopedia of accessible dreams.”³⁶⁵ This is evident in the novel, from the very beginning to the end, since the reader encounters countless instances where either Vaughan or anyone out of his subjects devises a perversely fantastic, sexually vivid scene set on the other’s body. They perpetually daydream and imagine “the perverse,” anytime and anywhere.

At this point, despite her physical absence along the novel, the film star Elizabeth Taylor³⁶⁶ occupies an important position. For Vaughan the pervert, her body becomes the fantasy space *par excellence*. Under the name of “the Taylor film project,”

³⁶³ Ibid., 19.

³⁶⁴ Botting and Wilson, “Sexcrash,” 85.

³⁶⁵ Ballard, *Crash*, 19.

³⁶⁶ Michael Hardin suggests that celebrities as cultural icons (like the cinema idol Taylor) both live and die as/through simulated/media images. From a religious perspective, “Death allows for perpetual ‘life’,” but it is much more so for the famous figures that become immortal by means of their deaths as essential part of cultural iconography. For Hardin’s comprehensive study on celebrities, death, and *simulacra*, see below:

Michael Hardin, “Postmodernism’s Desire for Simulated Death: Andy Warhol’s *Car Crashes*, J. G. Ballard’s *Crash*, and Don DeLillo’s *White Noise*,” *Literature Interpretation Theory* 13, no. 1 (2002): 21-50.

Vaughan desires to discover every details of her, making each part of her body an erogenous zone through his perverse gaze. It is such a gaze that envisions the actress's body within an imaginary form, wishes it to be shaped in accordance with a desired form, which is for Vaughan "a crushed body," and finally, "a dead body." This might be also read, by making use of Baudrillardian terminology, as a perverse *semiurgy of the body*, that is, production and inscription of new (sexual) meanings on the body.³⁶⁷ From this point of view that somehow liberates desire from being merely anatomy- or physiology-oriented phenomenon, "[...] contusions, scars, mutilations, and wounds [...] are like new sexual organs opened in the body."³⁶⁸ What Baudrillard suggests here about the sexual body is the summary of what is encountered throughout *Crash*; "Gone are the 'erogenous zones': everything becomes a hole for reflex discharges."³⁶⁹

Vaughan-Taylor association is indeed quite suggestive concerning the clash between the body and the other. In the first place, we can start with Vaughan's position as the other as "scientist," or more concisely, as an image of *mad scientist*. His identity as such is repeatedly underlined in the novel by means of some phrases like "a one-time computer specialist," "one of the first of the new-style TV scientists," "madman," "hoodlum scientist," and "the scientist as hoodlum."³⁷⁰ He often cites academic sources and uses forensic medical journals and textbooks of plastic surgery to devise celebrities' car-crashes. This perspective is significant since it invites further implications, which are basically two.

First, if Vaughan is a scientist, then his main field of study is Elizabeth Taylor, whose body in this sense transforms into an epistemological space for the former. Observing scientific principles, he works on Taylor's body very carefully, sensitively, and comprehensively. As a result, he produces very detailed illustrations, tests, and analytical texts explaining and revealing his subject's body inch by inch. Thus, Taylor becomes his experimental subject, a "trailblazer," on whom he can try aberrant

³⁶⁷ Jean Baudrillard and Arthur B. Evans, "Ballard's *Crash* (*Crash de Ballard*)," *Science Fiction Studies* 18, no. 3 (1991): 313-20.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 314.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁰ Ballard, *Crash*, 11, 48.

fantasies—which again reminds us of Alex-the state relationship in *Clockwork*. Here comes the second of the argued suggestions: this juxtaposition of science and perversion (particularly through the character Vaughan) throughout *Crash* once more raises questions about reliability of science and possibility of objective truth. In other words, science and perversion are so interwoven in the novel that Vaughan's *scientific perversion* inevitably evokes the idea of *perverse science*.³⁷¹ Again, as debated in the chapter on *Clockwork*, it also renders all “scientific” claims about who the pervert is disputable. While scientists occupy themselves with such perverse deeds as Vaughan's, their diagnosis of “abnormality” for any individual automatically disclaims itself.

Besides his existence as a (lunatic) representative of science, Vaughan stands there as an extraordinary “artistic” personality too, which makes the bond between him and Taylor more intriguing. From Freudian perspective, artistic imagination helps Vaughan's unconscious fantasies be manifested, turning the id's latent content into the manifest. His apartment is a large single-roomed studio where science and (visual) art meet on a perverse ground. There are many cinematic equipments and scientific textbooks, additionally, science-fiction paperbacks as the meeting point of the former two. Vaughan is also a committed photographer, enthusiastically and obsessively taking photos and shooting videos of others' (mostly wounded) bodies, then taking great pleasure from watching his artistic productions for a long time. For Vaughan, accident sites stand as artistic spaces where artistic imagination speaks most loudly; crashed cars and crushed bodies are all there as works of art for an aesthetic look. He acts like a director or a scriptwriter while devising/re-enacting (usually celebrities') car-crash scenarios.

³⁷¹ During an interview, Ballard drawing on his own term “the science of pornography” thoroughly talks about “the interconnectedness of science and pornography” in connection with “the *obsessions* of [their] own practitioners.” Accordingly, (especially in the contemporary era) both have more partial obsession with their subject matters, i.e. the bodies of the others, which opens the way for the debates of isolation and dehumanisation. Thus, Ballard in a sense implies that the scientific vision goes hand in hand with the pornographic imagination. For more details about this discussion and the rest of the interview, see below:

Lewis and Ballard, “An Interview with J. G. Ballard,” 27-40.

What draws attention here is that while Vaughan and his subjects are working on the bodies of the celebrities, they draw on a *spatial* approach.³⁷² Considering the body topographically, they design their own imaginary wounding (calculating their perverse fantasies over the other's body) by making with pencils a partial marking and encircling on those famous bodies. In fact, it might be affirmed through these perverse crash scenarios that Ballard attempts to suggest a twofold discussion about the body. As Jane Arthurs contemplates on it, in *Crash* the body is both *spatially* and *temporally* the focus of attention: on the one hand, spatial boundaries of the body, the distinctions between the self and the other or the animate and the inanimate, are all interrogated by means of crashes where the bodies are "represented as broken, wounded, scarred, turned inside out (semen, blood) or invaded by the object;" on the other hand, those car accidents imply mortality of humanity, which is here "represented by the corpse, the body [itself] transformed into an object, soon to be returned to the undifferentiated matter from which it temporarily emerged."³⁷³

Among the most prominent of those celebrities as others is Taylor, whose body conceived by Vaughan as the ultimate aesthetic object. Through plenty of her photos and videos, Vaughan draws his projects working on her body, just like a sculptor forming a sculptural figure of a woman in accordance with the desired image in his mind. In a word, it is not only in Vaughan's studio but also in his psyche that science and art (both representing *transgressive desire*³⁷⁴), reason and imagination, wisdom and madness, the postmodern and the perverse all blend. The outcome of this meeting is a colourful pastiche cherished by Ballard in the whole novel (relevant for all Ballards; the author, the main character, and his wife).

³⁷² Ballard, *Crash*, 110.

³⁷³ Jane Arthurs, "Crash: Beyond the Boundaries of Sense," in *Crash Cultures: Modernity, Mediation and the Material*, eds. Jane Arthurs and Iain Grant (Bristol and Portland, OR: Intellect Books, 2003), 66.

³⁷⁴ William Beard, "Crash (1996): 'A benevolent psychopathology beckons towards us'," in *The Artist as Monster: The Cinema of David Cronenberg* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 420.

Vaughan's plot on Taylor does not end as he has intended; "Vaughan had dreamed of dying at the moment of her orgasm."³⁷⁵ He dies in a car accident, but meanwhile the film star is not with him.³⁷⁶ In spite of being an unfinished project, Vaughan's desire for the concurrence of death (nonbeing; the ultimate state for the body) and orgasm (climax; the ultimate state for sexuality) is meaningful. It suggests that he fantasises at his last moment to enjoy the conjoined Eros and Thanatos, both of which are socially repressed phenomena on the way of a "civilised" community. As such, Vaughan truly represents "Ballard's paraphiliac and nightmarish consensual Other" in Mark Thomas's words.³⁷⁷ In his study that examines *Crash* through the Freudian tropes such as *libido* and *Thanatos* and the automobile as "the [hypertechnologised] twentieth century erotic icon," Thomas emphasises how Ballard's "Other" somehow rejects "the law of human sexual regulation," both internally (polymorphous psychosexual development against "normality") and externally (perverse sexual practices against conventional ones, accepted by the "law" as the law).³⁷⁸ Thus, Vaughan's ultimate fantasy is the euphoria of the pervert "as a creature of the id," manifesting his *discontent* with and revolt against the idea of civilisation that wishes to tame him, to *normalise* the abnormal.³⁷⁹ To this climactic end ("climax" for

³⁷⁵ Ballard, *Crash*, 2.

³⁷⁶ "Our fascination with celebrity death is a vicarious extension of our own death drive, and its endless cycle of the repetition compulsion," say Mikita Brottman and Christopher Sharett. While interpreting Vaughan's obsession with the car as "a symbol of a claustral (womb-like) environment" (safe and secure but urging to escape at the same time) and with Taylor as "the fetishized body," the scholars also point to his obsession with the celebrity car crash as "a fantasy of literalization: the final and much longed-for union between the celebrity and members of their audience." For these arguments and more, see below:

Mikita Brottman and Christopher Sharett, "The End of the Road: David Cronenberg's *Crash* and the Fading of the West," *Literature/Film Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (2002): 126-32.

³⁷⁷ Mark Thomas, "The Rules of Autogeddon: Sex, Death and Law in JG Ballard's *Crash*," *Griffith Law Review* 20, no. 2 (2011): 333-61.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁹ Reading it through another perspective (Hankiss's), Vaughan's lethal deeds might be perceived as "the wish to annihilate life," "the will to self-destruction," "the wish to return to the safety of the maternal womb—to the Nirvana of nonbeing, a world where there is no suffering." Or from Freud's description of the death instinct, Vaughan's masochism here stands as "the component instinct which is complementary to sadism, must be regarded as sadism that has been turned round [from an object] upon the subject's own ego" (which means, Vaughan's [sadistic] instinct turns from others as objects to the ego [masochism]). From this point of view, besides, Freud suggests that masochism is in a way "a return to an

the sexual body in both senses: simultaneous death and orgasm), Vaughan makes many practices, “private rehearsals for a terrifying drama unfolding in his mind, the sex act he saw as the climax of his own death-collision.”³⁸⁰ What is ironic here is that the novel starts with the climax, revealing its ending on the very first page; “VAUGHAN DIED YESTERDAY in his last car-crash.”³⁸¹ In a way, Ballard’s story (both the author’s and the narrator’s) just begins when Vaughan the author’s is over.

It is the story of crashed cars and crushed bodies, whose obsession with wounding and wounds as eroticised phenomena emerges through sadomasochistic desires and acts. Here, Ballard offers a new powerful linkage between the body and an automobile in the contemporary age. There is an almost mystical relationship, a very complex association in the axis of the bodies, cars/machines, and sex(uality); so much so that each of them corresponds to another, immediately evokes each other, and becomes an extension of the others in a sense. In *Crash*, says Baudrillard, “Bodies and technology fused, seduced, inextricable one from the other.”³⁸² Bodies are considered as cars and cars as bodies, but more importantly, both as the pervert’s *fantasy space*;

For Vaughan, the colour-keyed interiors of the Lincoln and other cars which he began to steal for an hour or so each evening exactly simulated the skin areas of the young whores whom he undressed as I drove along the darkened expressways. Their bare thighs modulated the panels of pastel vinyl; the deep-cone speakers recapitulated the contours of their sharp breasts. I saw the interior of the motor-car as a kaleidoscope of illuminated pieces of the bodies of women. This anthology of wrists and elbow, thigh and pubis formed ever-changing marriages with the contours of the automobile.³⁸³

earlier phase of the instinct’s history, a regression,” which supports the possibility of “such a thing as primary masochism.” For these details and more, see below:

Elemér Hankiss, *Fears and Symbols* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001), 173-74.

Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 48-49.

³⁸⁰ Ballard, *Crash*, 142.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

³⁸² Baudrillard and Evans, “Ballard’s *Crash*,” 315.

³⁸³ Ballard, *Crash*, 140-41.

James continues by wrapping it up as such; “For Vaughan the motor-car was the sexual act’s greatest and only true locus.”³⁸⁴ In fact, it is not just for Vaughan and not only about cars. Ballard constructs a particular and complex perverse structure in which he makes through all his deviant characters a “clear equation between sex and kinaesthetics of the highway.”³⁸⁵ The end product of such a structure is a technocultural space (cars, highways, parking lots, and so on) promising the perverts unlimited sexual possibilities and alternatives on the way of gratification; “As obsessed with his hard body as he himself was with the bodies of automobiles, I found myself locked into a system of beckoning violence and excitement, made up of the motorway and traffic jams, the cars we stole and Vaughan’s discharging sexuality.”³⁸⁶ This special erotic space offers the pervert a dreamlike state, in a sense, a *carnavalesque* atmosphere³⁸⁷ where they can disregard any authorial sanctions that hinder realisation of fantasies nonconforming to prevailing norms, standards, and customs. Thus, as suggested throughout *Crash*, all those public spaces such as expressways and multi-storey car-parks become “paradise” for the pervert while they turn into hell for the order-protectors.³⁸⁸

If we are discussing here “the spatiality of *Crash*” with regard to the clash between the pervert and the social order, Christopher Duffy’s study that explores the novel through “a central tension between discourses of seeing and not seeing,” as a sheer dialogue between embedded but antithetical spaces of “supermodernity,” might be enlightening.³⁸⁹ Accordingly, while the motorway location (in addition to some other places such as airports and hospitals) is the prime example of (Marc Augé’s) *non-place*, “an anonymous and impersonal space” under the rule of governmental authorities

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 142.

³⁸⁷ Recalling ancient Greek and Roman *Dionysian Mysteries*, a particular ritual with some trance-inducing elements and techniques (psychoactive drugs, music, and dance) aiming to liberate individuals from sociocultural constraints, promising a return to a “natural” state.

³⁸⁸ Ballard, *Crash*, 40, 66, 171.

³⁸⁹ Christopher Duffy, “Hidden Heterotopias in *Crash*,” in *J. G. Ballard: Landscapes of Tomorrow*, eds. Richard Brown, Christopher Duffy, and Elizabeth Stainforth (Leiden and Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2016), 112-25.

regulating it with official instructions, the personalised car cabin “marked by the presence of the owner” stands as (Michel Foucault’s) *heterotopia* of illusion, an alternative/other space established within the former, as “hidden enclave” or “a site of imaginative possibility” for Vaughan and his subjects whose subversive acts inside/through automobiles are deemed rebellious and resistant to the order.³⁹⁰ In other words, “the smooth running of non-place” maintained by impositions of “proscriptive, official, and correct use” is interrupted by Ballard’s perverse characters who realise their improper deeds on their own exclusive spaces, “hidden from the outside gaze of authority.”³⁹¹ Since “Cars become extensions of their owners” in Duffy’s phrase, Vaughan’s car is portrayed as always “dusty and dirty” and his way of driving as “aggressive” reflecting the owner’s personality.³⁹² From this perspective, almost all car-related actions of Vaughan’s cult such as dangerous car-crashing experiments, restaging them, and recording accident sites with photographs and videos in unauthorised ways are not only criminal for the “anxious authorities” but also seemingly internal threats to the regulatory institutions. What draws Duffy’s attention here is that “Vaughan utilizes governmental techniques used to regulate and control the motorway space in order to produce his own results.”³⁹³ By that, he means, Vaughan sometimes disguises himself as “authority figures” (first as a doctor, then as a police photographer) to be able to carry out his perverse intentions and draws on “perverse knowledge” (scientific methods and computerised techniques about traffic systems) to be the nightmare angel of the expressways.³⁹⁴ In a sense, Vaughan keeps an eye for an eye tactic and gives the officials a taste of their own medicine as the idiom suggests.

In this context, cars and car-related places that are symbols of resistance also function as centres of eroticism in *Crash*. They are central for almost every fictional couple, who somewhere experiences techno-perversion in one way or another. James,

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Ibid., 122.

³⁹³ Ibid., 120.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., 120-21.

for example, admits that “this small space” of “the cabin of the car” is like a heaven on earth for him and Helen:

Strangely, our sexual acts took place only within my automobile. In the large bedroom of her rented house I was unable to mount an erection, and Helen herself would become argumentative and remote, talking endlessly about the more boring aspects of her work. Once together in my car, with the crowded traffic lanes through which we had moved forming an unseen and unseeing audience, we were able to arouse each other.³⁹⁵

In other words, car cabin as fantasy space provides them with a relief from ordinariness, with an escape from the domain of social impositions that have conventionally predetermined where/when/how to copulate into a private zone without any sexual restrictions. The perverse technology and cars as its foremost productions nearly have a magical power here, an aphrodisiac effect for sure; “I could bring myself to orgasm simply by thinking of the car in which Dr Helen Remington and I performed our sexual acts / Only in the car could she reach her orgasm.”³⁹⁶ Likewise, James recognises his “growing homo-erotic involvement with Vaughan,” but this homoeroticism is possible only through techno-erotic loci;

Vaughan excited some latent homosexual impulse only within the cabin of his car or driving along the highway. His attraction lay not so much in a complex of familiar anatomical triggers [...] but in the stylization of posture achieved between Vaughan and the car. Detached from his automobile, particularly his own emblem-filled highway cruiser, Vaughan ceased to hold any interest.³⁹⁷

Within this postmodern perverse logic, Ballard comes up with not only sexualisation of cars/machines but also mechanisation of bodies (body parts as mechanised extension of cars; car parts as sexualised extension of bodies). According to this logic, bodies as well as cars serve as a spatial agent to realise “perverse” fantasies. A vehicle body becomes the body’s vehicle for the pervert, to express his deepest urges,

³⁹⁵ Ballard, *Crash*, 64.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 65, 97.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 94, 122.

inmost fantasies, but it is the other way around too. That is, the body perpetuates any vehicle's body, functions as the continuation of its outer shell (bonnet/metal surface), and provides it with another type of shell, which is the human skin. It is also observable through Ballard's techno-fetishist characters whose movements are almost mimetic representations of operating machines, forming a pleasing symmetry with the latter; "The equations between the styling of a motor-car and the organic elements of his body Vaughan *mimed* continually in his own behaviour."³⁹⁸ It will not be irrelevant from this perspective to suggest that the union of the organic body (humans) and the inorganic/metallic/mechanical body (cars) as a single one implies the concept of *cyborg* and foreshadows the period of *posthuman condition*—in which humanity is decentred; the borders separating it from machinery are interrogated, blurred, and removed. Needless to say, it is a matter of another complicated debate,³⁹⁹ but nonetheless, what matters here is again the related discussion of *exhaustion* and desire for formal experiments in the postmodernist (perverse) view. That new "human condition" inspires the postmodern perverse subject to produce (technological) innovations about both the body and sex(uality). The ways to perceive the sexual body dramatically change along the age, which is vividly depicted by Ballard in *Crash*.

Ballard's main instrument in doing so is for sure "a new sexuality born from a perverse technology."⁴⁰⁰ The said "new sexuality" is constructed in the novel through deviations from the traditional perception of sex(uality), which is basically genital, marital, procreative, and thereby strictly heterosexual. *Crash* challenges this *normal* sex(uality) by making room for alternatives and possibilities within the former, therefore, threatening it from the inside. To that end, sexual diversities such as homoeroticism/homosexuality and bisexuality are situated side by side with "standard"

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 140 (emphasis added).

³⁹⁹ For such an exclusive debate on *Crash*, see below:

David Roden, "Cyborgian Subjects and the Auto-Destruction of Metaphor," in *Crash Cultures: Modernity, Mediation and the Material*, eds. Jane Arthurs and Iain Grant (Bristol and Portland, OR: Intellect Books, 2003), 91-102.

Christine Cornea, "David Cronenberg's *Crash* and Performing Cyborgs," *The Velvet Light Trap* 52, no. 1 (2003): 4-14.

⁴⁰⁰ Ballard, *Crash*, 6.

sexuality throughout the novel. While the notion of the sexual body is enriched by that of “the queer body,” the conventional approach to sexuality is contested by means of an alternative sexuality, or sexualities, or “perversion” so to speak.⁴⁰¹ Ballard’s “pornographic novel,” accordingly, embraces liberal characters whose sexual acts vary from intersexual to intra-sexual affairs. Even if James-Catherine marriage seemingly represents the most conventional form of sexuality in the novel, the couple’s perverse fantasies including their extramarital affairs disturb the traditional order. In fact, far from being conventional, it is rather an open marriage maintained on the condition that the partners should consent to welcome each other’s illegitimate activities. Apart from that, there are other intersexual relationships such as James-Renata (his secretary), James-Helen, James-prostitutes, Catherine-Vaughan, Catherine-lovers, and Vaughan-prostitutes. These are all heterosexual, but they are still, as extramarital affairs, inappropriate according to the conventions. As for the examples of intra-sexuality, Vaughan-James, Catherine-Karen, and Helen-Gabrielle affairs are the most notable ones, all of which are to be labelled as perversions per se by the popular opinion.

The author’s recreated approach to sexuality also reveals itself as transformation in the perceptions of certain phenomena such as “the erotic,” “the beautiful,” or “the aesthetic.” The fundamental distinction here materialises by means of “perversion,” through the inclusion of the perverse logic in sexuality, which extensively enlarges the boundaries of the erotic space—even makes it boundless. “The erotic” now does not directly correspond to anything like “the perfect;” on the contrary, the erotic stimulation happens through *the beauty in “ugliness”* or the aesthetic in the disgusting. From this

⁴⁰¹ Konstanze Kutzbach comes up with a parallel argument about gender identity and the (sexual) body in *Crash*, which presents “a decadent society” according to the scholar. She argues that rather than a conventional *two-sex model* based on a strict gender difference, the novel offers us “a universal (*n*)*one-sex model* as the basis of human ontology.” The scholar states that this new model as a blend of pre-modern and postmodern conceptions depends on “interchangeable” perceptions and therefore erases natural or biological categorisations by means of a new “unisex fusion” including both sexes *and* machines. From this regard, Kutzbach claims, “devastation/de(con)struction” in *Crash* means “creation” of new forms of eroticism, desire, and identity through “dehumanization and the absence of boundaries.” For this discussion of Kutzbach and more, see below:

Konstanze Kutzbach, “The Two-..., One-..., None-Sex Model: The Flesh(-)Made Machine in Herman Melville’s ‘The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids’ and J. G. Ballard’s *Crash*,” in *The Abject of Desire: The Aestheticization of the Unaesthetic in Contemporary Literature and Culture*, eds. Konstanze Kutzbach and Monika Mueller (Amsterdam and New York, NY: Rodopi, 2007), 181-96.

regard, “the erotic” in perversion is, just like pain and pleasure, highly complex and widely relative.

Perhaps, the mystery or charm of perversion has its source in this complicated structure. What makes others nauseate might make the pervert delight. *Crash* offers many characters and scenes to observe such a (postmodern/perverse) turn in the history of eroticism. The narrator James is among those “deviant” ones. His perverse perception of “the erotic” based on *the beautifully ugly* is visible from the very first pages of the novel, which might be initially shocking for the reader;

I remember my first minor collision in a deserted hotel car-park. Disturbed by a police patrol, we had forced ourselves through a hurried sex-act. Reversing out of the park, I struck an unmarked tree. Catherine vomited over my seat. This pool of vomit with its clots of blood like liquid rubies, as viscous and discreet as everything produced by Catherine, still contains for me *the essence of the erotic delirium of the car-crash*, more exciting than her own rectal and vaginal mucus, as refined as the excrement of a fairy queen, or the minuscule globes of liquid that formed beside the bubbles of her contact lenses. In this magic pool, lifting from her throat like a rare discharge of fluid from the mouth of a remote and mysterious shrine, I saw my own reflection, a mirror of blood, semen and vomit, distilled from a mouth whose contours only a few minutes before had drawn steadily against my penis.⁴⁰²

These frank and bold words by James might be read, as Michel Delville does, in the light of “Ballard’s poetics of abjection” which observes “the creation of a new grammar of (self-)representation that does justice to the characters’ altered values and perspectives” and reflects the “intensity of [their] responses to the violent energies released by the car crash.”⁴⁰³ It also indicates Ballard’s “fascination with the machine-influenced logic of consumer culture” out of which both the novel itself and “a new-born self nourished by the beauty of technology and speed” emerge; “Alternating between extremes of baseness and spirituality, collapsing traditional distinctions between the abject and the spiritual, the artificial and the natural, *Crash* is characterized

⁴⁰² Ballard, *Crash*, 8-9 (emphasis added).

⁴⁰³ Michel Delville, “An Alphabet of Wounds,” in *J. G. Ballard* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1998), 40.

by a desire to break through the limits of consciousness and an irresistible urge to accept the instrumental logic of the automobile [...]"⁴⁰⁴

Some parallel arguments with Delville come from William Beard, who theorises Ballard's car crashes as "the doorway to lost abjection."⁴⁰⁵ Here, Beard highlights that the characters of *Crash*, who have been tired of any perceptions of "mechanised" perfection related to this techno-cultural age (perfect bodies, perfectly functional cars, monotonous sex), are now in favour of "the abject," any deviant idea of beauty in a sense. Since the images of "pure beauty" such as a beautiful female body (nothing but a lifeless "sex-doll") or a brand new car are no longer desired, those individuals attempt to "re-abstractify" both organic and inorganic bodies through crashes so that they are able to make sense of their existence or to feel "(sexually) alive" in this era of artificiality, alienation, meaninglessness, and emptiness.⁴⁰⁶

The erotic monologue by James thus exhibits how the perverse psychic structure works in Ballard family, particularly with the help of "imperfection." The couple can keep their marital bond alive only through contributions of each other's deviant dreams and fantasies. It is true that Catherine is a very beautiful woman; however, what sexually attracts James is not her beauty but any ugliness disturbing that beauty, the very scarce and precious flaws about this almost flawless creature. That is the reason why he lasciviously searches for any "disgusting" liquid or stain (rectal, vaginal, in-ear, and the like) on his wife's body while making love,⁴⁰⁷ namely, for anything which will cause a lack in her perfection, which will disrupt not only the traditional sense of beauty but also expectations of the repressed and "civilised" humanity. Similarly, after he spectates the passionate lovemaking scene between his wife and Vaughan, James celebrates and glorifies the bruises made by Vaughan on his wife's body; "These disfigurements marked the elements of her real beauty."⁴⁰⁸ The couple truly achieves orgasm only when they share an aberrant sexual fantasy with each other. In short, it is

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., 41-42.

⁴⁰⁵ Beard, "Crash (1996)," 379-422.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Ballard, *Crash*, 90. Here is a clear example from the novel.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid., 136-37.

not the traditional conception of sexuality or other social norms submitted by civilisation that maintain the Ballards as a “healthy” or functional family. If they are still together, it is, by all means, owing to a (con)sensual marriage grounded on their mutual perversities (sexual stimulation through car-crashes, homoeroticism, cuckold fantasy, and *et cetera*).

The postmodern perverse erotic logic brings about some parallel experiments in Vaughan’s case too. While describing Vaughan, James draws on this particular logic for which the beautiful/aesthetic is quite relative and ambivalent. Accordingly, Vaughan is “a harsh beauty” with his scars and hairs, an “ugly golden creature, made beautiful by its scars and wounds,” and “a deranged drag queen revealing the leaking scars of an unsuccessful trans-sexual surgery.”⁴⁰⁹ It means, as suggested by Beard, Vaughan is described not only as Frankenstein (the *mad scientist* figure; discussed earlier) but also as his *monster*.⁴¹⁰ Nevertheless, these are all features that make Vaughan more attractive in James’s eyes and trigger a homoerotic/homosexual relationship between the two.

The same logic prevails in Vaughan’s psyche as well, which is like “the museum of a slaughterhouse” exhibiting “a terrifying almanac of imaginary automobile disasters and insane wounds.”⁴¹¹ For Vaughan, the prerequisite for this particular way of thinking is a perversely fruitful fusion of the sexual body and machinery; “His photographs of sexual acts, of sections of automobile radiator grilles and instrument panels, conjunctions between elbow and chromium window-sill, vulva and instrument binnacle, summed up the possibilities of *a new logic* created by these multiplying artefacts, the codes of a new marriage of sensation and possibility.”⁴¹² His “ultimate crash” fantasy about Taylor is a head-on collision of blood, urine, mucosa, semen, engine coolant, and iconic celebrity, which might sound quite unbearable for others.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., 163-66.

⁴¹⁰ Beard, “*Crash* (1996),” 401.

⁴¹¹ Ballard, *Crash*, 6.

⁴¹² Ibid., 85 (emphasis added).

That erotic desire for a kind of postmodern perverse blend leads us to associate *Crash*'s James and Vaughan with *Clockwork*'s Alex for whom orgasmic pleasure is possible only through a mixture of great music, drug, and erotic violence. For all these characters, there is the postmodern perverse space where fantasy enables them to transcend the realm of "the real," taken-for-granted norms and standards. They try to construct within the order a dreamlike atmosphere through which they can experience "the climax," a trans-like state violating the limits determined by any institution or authority. From this particular point of view, car-crashes as "the only real experience" provide Ballard's perverts, on the one hand, with "a relief" through a rejuvenated "confrontation with [their] own body."⁴¹³ On the other hand, for those characters, "the ecstasies of head-on collisions" promise in a sense another dimension, an escape from "the commonplaces of everyday life," from all those "realities," conventions, facts, norms, and standards—indeed, promising them even the ultimate escape from the world of the social order (of the powerful): the peace of nonbeing through death.⁴¹⁴ In other words by Delville, "[...] violence and perversion seem to have become the only means through which Ballard's characters can relate to each other or even achieve a sense of transcendence [...]" that "enable[s] them to escape the burden of their psychic past and enliven[s] a sexual life that has become sterile and perfunctory."⁴¹⁵ From this regard, Vaughan and his subjects, with all their "uncivilised" and "subversive" acts on state-controlled social zones, might be considered as serious threats both to the order and civilisation. Last but not least, the so far argued perverse logic can turn any negativity into a positive phenomenon by making it more meaningful. When Vaughan died in his last car-crash, "[...] the spectators moved towards this huge stage, drawn there by *the logic and beauty* of Vaughan's death."⁴¹⁶ The perverse logic again recognises the pleasurable in the painful; while such a tragic incident as death becomes a kind of artistic performance, the dead body is canonised as an aesthetic object.

⁴¹³ Ibid., 28.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid., 3, 28.

⁴¹⁵ Delville, "An Alphabet of Wounds," 35-36.

⁴¹⁶ Ballard, *Crash*, 183 (emphasis added).

Such a glorification of “the painful” through “the perversely pleasurable” is a received attitude along the novel. If car-crashes and accident sites somehow function as erotic scenes for the pervert characters, their spectator position meanwhile is that of the voyeur. Thus, looking through the perverse voyeuristic gaze, crashing cars are like copulating couples performing rough sex(uality). It can be also called a pornographic gaze through which one’s body transforms into fantasy space of the (perverse) other. Accordingly, the pervert holds the position of pornography audience, becomes a porn-spectator, who abstractedly stares at and relentlessly lusts for the (desired) body of another. That is, car-crashes provide the pervert with the required sexual content while the crushed bodies turn into pornographic materials.

The foremost representative of the argued perverse/voyeuristic/pornographic gaze in *Crash* is Vaughan on whom bodies in/as cars have hypnotising effect. He always watches the movements of his prostitutes (with whom he makes love inside cars) with “an abstracted gaze.”⁴¹⁷ While driving after Catherine to crash his car into hers, Vaughan is again in that trance-like state; “Vaughan kept her within his aberrant gaze” (which sexually stimulates her husband James as well).⁴¹⁸ Furthermore, the Ballards offer us similar instances too. At the beginning of the story, the narrator James Ballard merely (and coincidentally) observes what Vaughan does: “Already his acts of violence had become so random that I was no more than a captive spectator.”⁴¹⁹ Then, however, he actively (and willingly) joins in his perverse deeds. From this sense, Vaughan as his sexual guru plays a significant role in James’s perversely sexual maturation. As their acquaintanceship progresses, the narrator experiences a transition from a passive object position (flatly gazing at what is happening around himself) to a subject position (actively participating in the perverse fantasies). Catherine Ballard shares this common perverse mindset as well; “Catherine had a natural and healthy curiosity for the perverse in all its forms.”⁴²⁰ While talking about her husband’s car

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., 5.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid., 95.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid., 5.

⁴²⁰ Ibid., 38.

accident, she “describe[s] the damage to the car with the persistence of a voyeur,” during which James immediately recognises “the hyper-excitement” generated in his wife by the event.⁴²¹ Owing to Catherine’s occupation in airline business and her extramarital affairs meanwhile, “her pleasantly promiscuous mind” is not only familiar with but also enthusiastic about that kind of (mechanical/technological) violence leading to sexual excitement.⁴²²

The perverse gaze’s capacity to enlarge the horizon of eroticism is therefore obvious. The disabled character of the novel, Gabrielle, is there to suggest how perversion clears the way for new understandings in sexuality through its meaning-making potential. As it is argued in the theoretical part of this study (by referring to Stephanie Tellier), consensual “perverse” practices might have benefits for socially marginalised people of disabilities, providing them with certain advantages and alternatives in terms of communication, sexual exploration and gratification, personal empowerment, pain management, and so on. Gabrielle, as one of the members of Vaughan’s cult, has severely injured quite a lot times during the sadomasochistic car-crash experiments; she is the fictional representation of such a new perception of sexuality negating the popular opinion that disabled people are asexual; “Each of her deformities became a potent metaphor for the excitements of a new violence. Her body [...] was a ripening anthology of perverse possibilities.”⁴²³ In *Crash*, Gabrielle’s disability is not considered as a tragic, traumatic, or painful experience preventing realisation of her sexual capacity; on the contrary, her crippled body (and “her pallid skin”) with all the mechanical equipments around it (“her shackled legs”) and with all its pleasurable possibilities is featured as more erotic by the prevalent perverse gaze of the novel. Those “perverse possibilities” of her body create a new energy which captivates not only the male but also the female individuals around her, including James and Helen.

⁴²¹ Ibid., 33-34.

⁴²² Ibid.

⁴²³ Ibid., 144-45.

James admires Gabrielle's wounded body as a gift of "unimagined technologies" that make room for innumerable erotic opportunities for the pervert; "For the first time I felt no trace of pity for this crippled woman, but celebrated with her the excitements of these abstract vents let into her body by sections of her own automobile."⁴²⁴ After he looks through Vaughan's albums of Gabrielle that shows her transformation crash by crash, James appreciatively acknowledges how "the multiplying technologies of the twentieth century" have transformed "a conventional young woman" into a postmodern perverse subject; "The crushed body of the sports car had turned her into a creature of free and perverse sexuality, releasing [...] all the deviant possibilities of her sex. Her crippled thighs and wasted calf muscles were models for fascinating perversities."⁴²⁵ James defines this dramatic change as a "rebirth," which provides Gabrielle with "the keys to an alternative sexuality" enabling her to discover "the real possibilities/parameters of her body."⁴²⁶ This "new" Gabrielle, created through a perverse technology, is not simply a grotesque figure but rather a quite more attractive version of the former familiar female image; so much so that, she becomes an erotic inspiration for the couple James and Helen; "[Helen's] body formed an awkward geometry with the windshield pillars and the angle of the steering column, almost as if she were consciously mimicking the postures of the crippled young woman, Gabrielle."⁴²⁷ That is, Vaughan's "photographs of violence and sexuality" (depicting Gabrielle's bodily transformation) implies one thing for sure; "The deformed body of the crippled young woman, like the deformed bodies of the crashed automobiles, revealed the possibilities of an entirely new sexuality."⁴²⁸

In brief, Gabrielle's presence in the novel as a disabled subject of the postmodern age of mechanisation implies a twofold proposition in terms of the body perception. On the one hand, her crippled body emerges, somehow, as a production of a global perverse gaze, which has so far invented perverse technology and machinery that

⁴²⁴ Ibid., 148.

⁴²⁵ Ibid., 78-80.

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁷ Ibid., 97-98.

⁴²⁸ Ibid., 81.

unavoidably confine the contemporary individuals from all sides. From this perspective, Gabrielle's body (and other subjects' of the age by extension) becomes the fantasy space of that universal "deviant" mentality trying to "civilise" humanity by applying any technological and experimental fantasies on the former. On the other hand, as the outcome of such a worldwide perverse gaze, Gabrielle's now crippled and half-mechanical body is still a centre of attraction for yet another perverse gaze, an individual one, that is, the gaze of another subject. Her "extraordinary" body seems as a precious erotic space, as a renewed source of exceptional sexual fantasies in the eyes of Ballard's postmodern perverse characters, notably James.

If you think about Gabrielle's peripheral position among (traditional) society as a disabled single female individual and James's status as a married man, it will be easier to evaluate the intensity of "perversion" in case of an illegitimate relationship between the two. Yet, Gabrielle is not alone in James's deviant dreams. Now, he takes it one step further and incorporates many ostracised groups of people, "the others" so to speak, into his perverse crash scenarios: "the psychopaths", "the neurasthenic", "the schizophrenics", "the sadists" "the lesbian", "the autistic", "the mental defectives," and the like.⁴²⁹ Revising the already-deviant erotic scenes through the "abnormal" subjects in the eyes of society, James not only seriously challenges the idea of the centre through the help of those socially marginalised individuals and subcultural groups, but also more complicates the perverse fictional world.

At this point, I will again argue about *a multilayered perverse structure* in *Crash* (just like in *Clockwork*). In fact, apart from particular scenes to observe such a structure more clearly, almost every form of eroticism along the story is perversely stratified considering popular moral principles. While conventional perception of sexuality is rarely (even never?) seen in the novel, the reader continuously encounters countless sexual diversities contradicting multiple social norms at once. To illustrate it, the sexual affair between the female doctor Helen and her female lover Gabrielle is "perverse" as lesbianism, but we might describe it as *double perversion* paying attention to Helen's fetishism for Gabrielle's wounded/crippled body. That is exactly what the narrator

⁴²⁹ Ibid., 7-8.

James means when he utters the phrase “more perverse” upon the case; “I was glad that Helen Remington was becoming ever more perverse, finding her happiness in Gabrielle’s scars and injuries.”⁴³⁰ Besides, taking into account that their already doubly perverted sexual affairs mostly happen inside a car as fantasy space or on public spaces such as motorways and parking lots, it becomes “much more perverse” than what James implies, that is, a multilayered perversion.

There is a good deal of example to mark such a complex deviant system working throughout *Crash*. Ballard makes use of a variety of methods to form that structure. A plain one of them is simulation (to be expanded on later) fantasy, simulating a real (tragic/painful) event or phenomenon through its fictional (pleasurable) substitute. Vaughan’s fanaticism regarding such sort of experiences is so obvious. His rehearsals for “the ultimate car-crash” not only foreshadow but also simulate his own death in his last car-crash.⁴³¹ His obsession with simulations is also noticed by James; “[...] I saw that the women he brought to the car each evening had begun to resemble more and more closely the colouring and figure of the film actress. The dark-haired schoolgirl resembled the young Elizabeth Taylor, while the other women represented her at successively older ages.”⁴³² Concerning some fictional details as such, Cojocar’s description of Elizabeth Taylor as “the prime symbol of the simulated world” of *Crash* sounds more meaningful.⁴³³ The argument is to the degree that “[the actress] is not represented as a human being but is already conceptualized as a hyperreal, simulated image [...]” “Elizabeth Taylor does not exist except in the simulated image of television.”⁴³⁴ Indeed, Taylor is just a sample to see the larger illusion, namely the delusional world of stardom, as noted by Cojocar; “Thus as Elizabeth Taylor in *Crash* is enhanced to a hyperreal, pornographic and composite

⁴³⁰ Ibid., 184.

⁴³¹ The perception of death and disaster as simulation and hyperreal and thereby as a crucial part of the postmodern simulacrum culture is extensively interrogated by Michael Hardin in the study below:

Hardin, “Postmodernism’s Desire for Simulated Death,” 21-50.

⁴³² Ballard, *Crash*, 143.

⁴³³ Cojocar, *Violence and Dystopia*, 59.

⁴³⁴ Ibid., 49-50.

image, so the imitation of contemporary celebrities is an imitation of the functionality of the spectacularized image of the celebrity.”⁴³⁵

The erotic scenes of Vaughan with those prostitutes inside cars in the presence of James chauffeuring him stand for the proclaimed complicated organisation, but what makes it even more complicated this time is Vaughan’s fetishism for re-enactment of an accident they have previously witnessed. He wishes the girl to look just like the accident victim he has seen before; “In the rear seat of the car Vaughan arranged her [an airport whore] limbs in the posture of the dying cashier.”⁴³⁶ By doing that, he shapes the other’s (female) body into the (manly) desired form and thereby challenges conventional idea of sex(uality); the latter is also renewed through a postmodern perverse logic, transformed into a perversely desired structure. Assuming “a series of stylized positions” meanwhile as the narrator and spectator James recognises, “Vaughan unfolded for me all his obsessions with the mysterious eroticism of wounds: the perverse logic of blood-soaked instrument panels, seat-belts smeared with excrement, sun-visors lined with brain tissue.”⁴³⁷ There is another occasion in the same line with this discussion. Once, while Vaughan is exploring some photographs of crash fatalities “gazing at their burnt faces [and at ‘the junctions of their wounded bodies with the fractured windshield and instrument assemblies’] with a terrifying concern,” James acknowledges that “He would mimic these injuries in his own driving postures, [and using the prostitutes’ bodies,] he recapitulated the deformed anatomies of vehicle crash victims” and curiously searched for their reactions meanwhile.⁴³⁸ Considering this,

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 55. Note that there are some other scholars who consider *Crash* completely as a novel of signs and images. As one of the most prominent of them, Paul Youngquist reads the novel as Ballard’s portrayal of the landscape of late industrial culture (driven by high technology, mass media, and celebrities) as “a world as surface continuous with the semiotic system that reproduces it.” According to Youngquist, there are no more conventional perceptions such as “organic body” and sexuality because the (sexual) body is just another sign/image out of many others. While bodies become extensions of machines of the world of images, sexuality is nothing but the mimetic repetition of what is (re)presented through certain media images such as celebrities. Any perception of humanity is now shaped and reflected by this semiotic world in Youngquist’s view. For this specific discussion and more, see below:

Paul Youngquist, “Ballard’s Crash-Body,” *Postmodern Culture* 11, no. 1 (2000): 1-18.

⁴³⁶ Ballard, *Crash*, 5.

⁴³⁷ Ibid.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 117-18.

Kutzbach's words make more sense when she states that in *Crash* "[...] simulation is favoured over reality, since the reality of traditional (female) markers of sexual difference has become devoid of erotic energy."⁴³⁹ There is, she continues, "[...] an ironic reversal of the notion of 'perfection'; perfection here does not pertain to a natural, physical, and biological real (cf. the narrator's disappointment upon dealing with a 'real' rather than a simulated breast), but to the technical simulation of a real [...]."⁴⁴⁰ It seems that such *formal* experiments in sex(uality) render it not only more intriguing but also more amusing for the pervert.

As another medium serving to the layered perverse structure of the novel, the characters' obsession with photography is spectacular. Vaughan, as the leading one of those characters, has his own photographic equipments and many photographic albums exposing some private moments of others—"the background of all the pictures was the same – the automobile, moving along the highways around the airport, in the traffic jams on the flyover, parked in culs-de-sac and lovers lanes."⁴⁴¹ James is the main target of Vaughan's voyeuristic photos beholding car as fantasy space; "The leitmotif of this photographic record emerged as I recovered from my injuries: my relationships, mediated by the automobile and its technological landscape, with my wife, Renata and Dr Helen Remington."⁴⁴² As James himself suggests here, Vaughan's "crude photographs" or his video clips are significant because through them Vaughan is able to "freeze" private (sexual) moments of others,⁴⁴³ which makes the case twice perverse: first, as the original act of voyeurism; second, by occasionally returning to that special moment through its copies, namely, recalling the perverse experience on digital space.

This kind of approach is relevant and suggestive regarding the characters' fixation with road accidents as well. They enjoy not only watching the accident sites but also photographing the victims with a cine-camera and screening the films afterwards. Here is again perversion in varying phases: at the initial stage, their sexual stimulation

⁴³⁹ Kutzbach, "The Two-..., One-..., None-Sex Model," 192.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., 193.

⁴⁴¹ Ballard, *Crash*, 80.

⁴⁴² Ibid.

⁴⁴³ Ibid.

through scenes of crashes/crushed bodies of others, which is perverse in itself; secondarily, voyeurism through gazing at the videos and photographs that enable them to perpetuate the perverse scene and the deviant act, to keep their perverse voyeur position continuously, at any time in any place. Indeed, it is the place where Ballard reveals a cunning paradox: (perverse) photography immortalises the mortal bodies in a sense. Those characters' fetishism for car-crashes and wounded/dead bodies might cause killings, yet photographing eternises the dead victims—they survive through digital space. The erotic scene between Vaughan and James is, in a way, both a manifestation and a celebration of that immortalising power of perversion; “In our wounds we celebrated the re-birth of the traffic-slain dead, the deaths and injuries of those we had seen dying by the roadside and the imaginary wounds and postures of the millions yet to die.”⁴⁴⁴ Their particular psychic condition is able to translate “the crash-inflicted wounds into symbols of an oncoming process of bodily and spiritual transfiguration” as Delville puts it.⁴⁴⁵

Mirrors⁴⁴⁶ are substantial tools for Ballard to accentuate the so far discussed voyeur position of the characters (and ours as readers) and therefore extensively and effectively made use of along the novel to elaborate on the complex perverse structure. They are mostly visible in the car sex scenes of Vaughan and his prostitutes in the presence of James driving the car. During those scenes, James always acknowledges and highlights his (by extension, our) voyeuristic perspective; “I [...] adjusted the driving mirror so that I could see into the rear seat. [...]. In the rear-view mirror I could still see Vaughan and the girl, their bodies lit by the car behind [...].”⁴⁴⁷ All those instances appear like simulations, namely, simulated scenes from any pornographic production in which everyone plays his/her own part. Vaughan is the leading male actor

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., 167.

⁴⁴⁵ Delville, “An Alphabet of Wounds,” 36.

⁴⁴⁶ If it is for David Cronenberg's cinematic adaptation of *Crash* (1996), it is eligible for all kinds of vitreous items as well, such as camera lens of the director, windows of the cars, and windowpanes of the buildings along the film. Cronenberg cleverly draws on these elements by supporting them with certain cinematic techniques and in this manner strengthens both the voyeuristic perspective (of the characters and the audience) and the perverse structure originally constructed by Ballard in the novel.

⁴⁴⁷ Ballard, *Crash*, 115-16.

of the production. He does not behave spontaneously while making love; on the contrary, it seems like he is role-playing as a performing artist. He *acts* complying with certain directions, adjusting his movements during the scene according to “the rhythm of the passing cars, matching his own movements to the play of light sweeping transversely across the roof of the car.”⁴⁴⁸ Prostitutes have their own roles as the castmates of Vaughan meanwhile. James’s part, however, is twofold, hence the most sophisticated one. He is the spectator *and* the director of this pornographic production at once. He watches what is happening in the car all the while; besides, he somehow guides the cast; “I realized that I could almost control the sexual act behind me by the way in which I drove the car.”⁴⁴⁹ The steering wheel becomes the director’s megaphone in this context. James’s role in these pieces of pornographic simulations gets denser later on when he starts to join them as an actor too; “[...] I *acted* as Vaughan’s chauffeur, giving him money to pay the prostitutes and part-time whores [...], I watched Vaughan explore every byway of sex and the automobile.”⁴⁵⁰

The very long and passionate love-making scene between Vaughan and Catherine during the automatic car-wash while James is in the driver’s seat is again one of the best examples to observe such a multilayered perverse organisation through the agency of mirrors.⁴⁵¹ Perhaps, it is by means of this stratified deviance that Catherine achieves one of her rare orgasms. The perverse structure of the scene is so complicated that it is better to explain it step by step. Here, we have again a duplicated pornography, the primary spectator of which is James himself. He perpetually watches the erotic scene through the rear-view mirror and the driving mirror. As he admits, James has just “visualized” Catherine’s liaisons until now, but this is the first time he has “observed” one of them.⁴⁵² Thus, the category of this pornographic material is cuckold, reflecting James’s perverse voyeuristic fantasy about his wife’s body and/with the other (man). Yet, this means pure pleasure for both parties of the marriage. While the husband

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 117.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid., 141 (emphasis added).

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., 130-35.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

satisfies his cuckold fantasy, the wife also enjoys as the target of her husband's (porn-spectator) gaze. When the scene is read through a special and *spatial* awareness, its complexity more shows itself. First of all, the said perverse affair happens not in a private place but outside, within a car cabin as a sexualised zone, as fantasy space. Second, keeping the sex partners' obsession with scars in mind, the wounded body turns into yet another fantasy space on which the pervert can freely experience the "dirtiest" desires. What is more, there is one more figure that makes the argued perverse structure much more complicated. It is the reader (or the audience for the film version) as voyeur encircling all these layers of perversion, closely monitoring what is happening in front of his/her eyes. From this regard, we are the secondary porn-spectator of *Crash* following James the narrator.

There are further implications suggested by the same scene. While his wife is making love with Vaughan, James is "celebrating in this sexual act the marriage of their bodies with this benign technology."⁴⁵³ What he celebrates is, indeed, their liberation from the prison of traditions through the postmodern perverse logic. This is in a sense their own way of revolt against the social/conventional perceptions related to sex(uality); "I felt that this act was a ritual devoid of ordinary sexuality, a stylized encounter between two bodies which recapitulated their sense of motion and collision."⁴⁵⁴ James very well knows that the consensual perversion between him and his wife (deriving from that mutually shared logic) is useful for their marriage, providing it with the necessary energy and excitement; "Her expression [while making love with Vaughan] showed both irony and affection, an acceptance of *a sexual logic* we both recognized and had prepared ourselves for."⁴⁵⁵

The Ballards are aware of "their own complex pleasures," of that their sexual life is completely "maintained by a series of imaginary games and perversities," which contain their mutual illicit acts as "the raw material."⁴⁵⁶ The couple is tired of any

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid. (emphasis added).

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., 21, 24, 64.

traditional/marital form of sexuality; therefore, they create (perverse) alternatives within their marriage, which becomes indispensable for them after a while; “She [Catherine] soon became unable to reach an orgasm without an elaborate fantasy of a lesbian sex-act with Karen [...].”⁴⁵⁷ This kind of perversion, namely inclusion of an (imaginary) other as a third-party into the present copulation, is again a production of a complicated perverse logic. The same logic works in an entire chapter (12) depicting one of those bedroom scenes of the Ballards, who this time prefer Vaughan as their third-person fictitious sex-partner.⁴⁵⁸ The imagined homoeroticism meanwhile (just as in Karen’s case) makes the fantasy scene more complex, much more perverse; “This was one of the first times that she had envisaged me in a homosexual act, and the intensity of the fantasy surprised me.”⁴⁵⁹ The more perverse sex(uality) means the more intensive orgasmic pleasure for the Ballards.

That particular “sexual logic” is recognised not just by the Ballard couple but by the author Ballard too. As stated before, there is a dominant approach throughout *Crash*, which emerges through a perverse gaze at *the postmodern condition*. Despite the fact that Ballard heavily draws on sex(uality) to convey this perverse perception, what he tries to suggest should not be received necessarily as sexual. This nuance is consistently implied along the novel by means of certain expressions such as “a perverse technology” through which many people are killed (intentionally or not), including Dr. Helen Remington’s husband.⁴⁶⁰ In other words, it is true that *Crash* is largely about some perverse individuals dealing with “abnormal” sexual acts, but it eventually comes out that this “deviance” is, in a sense, a general human condition in such a period of high technology, mass media, and marketing, that is, the age of speed and *hyperreality*: “[...] all these seemed threatening and *super-real* [...]”⁴⁶¹ It is perplexing for James because he lives in “a world governed by the principle of

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., 24.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., 92-95.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid., 55.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid., 37 (emphasis added).

simulation” as Baudrillard defines it.⁴⁶² Baudrillard regards *Crash* as “the first great novel of the universe of simulation” and adds; “In *Crash*, there is neither fiction nor reality—a kind of hyper-reality has abolished both.”⁴⁶³ With regard to Baudrillard’s ideas, Ballard portrays in his novel a microcosm of the postmodern society;

In *Crash*, everything is hyper-functional: traffic and accidents, technology and death, sex and simulation [the camera eye] are all like one single, huge synchronous machine. It is the same universe as the *hyper-market*, where merchandise becomes hyper-merchandise—in other words, it and the entire atmosphere surrounding it are always already caught up in the continuous figures of circulation [and acceleration].⁴⁶⁴

In a nutshell, thus, Ballard’s characteristic style in *Crash* lies in his creation of a very close alignment in-between postmodernism and perversion on an erotic space. To this end, the realm of “the real/true” is perpetually disturbed by fantasies and simulating copies, which poses a serious threat to any traditional conception including sexuality. It is not only Vaughan’s “skull” but also Ballard’s that is an “overlit realm ruled by violence and technology,” through which we encounter “endless variations” of countless scenarios multiplying any traditional singular approach.⁴⁶⁵ For the postmodern perverse imagination, nothing is absolutely real or properly sexual since neither reality nor sexuality can be constrained within strict borders. They are quite relative phenomena for everyone, but mostly so according to the postmodern perverse subject.

As representatives of such a complex subject position, Ballard’s “symphorophiliac” (aroused by disasters) characters reflect the traits of *the simulacrum culture* in which copies imitate and finally replace “the real.” From this regard, they remind us of *Clockwork*’s Alex to whom reality *on the screen* seems “more colourful,” “more real.” That might be the reason why Vaughan and his subjects continuously

⁴⁶² Jean Baudrillard and Arthur B. Evans, “Simulacra and Science Fiction (Simulacres et science-fiction),” *Science Fiction Studies* 18, no. 3 (1991): 310.

⁴⁶³ Baudrillard and Evans, “Ballard’s *Crash*,” 319.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid., 318 (square brackets added; alternative expressions by Baudrillard).

⁴⁶⁵ Ballard, *Crash*, 7-8.

devise myriads of celebrity car-crash scenarios revealing their “woven elaborate fantasies.” In so doing, they not only revisit history with a kind of nostalgic desire but also recreate/rewrite it in a subjective way by simulating some legendary historical events. What they do is in fact construction of *a* fictional reality, substituting and alternating *the* established one. When James discovers Vaughan’s special organisation named “The Recreation of a Spectacular Road Accident” that covers some re-enactments of the most famous car accidents, it instantly draws his attention; “This should be more interesting.”⁴⁶⁶ Meanwhile, there is also a cameraman video-recording the show and Vaughan as the director of it “outlining with aggressive gestures some new choreography of violence and collision.”⁴⁶⁷ The whole production, in sum, means at least a double distance from “the original.” While the show itself already imitates the authentic accident landscape, the video-recording process reproduces the production and therefore connotes yet another imitation, a second imitation of the imitation. Whenever the recorded crash videos are screened, each copy continues to produce its own copies. Thus, this ceaseless process of (re)production means an ever-growing alienation from “the real,” each time taking one step away from it.

“The Road Research Laboratory” too offers some parallel experiments of simulation. It is a distinctive place of test collisions for the audience, who can both see the crashes with the naked eye and watch them later through video records as Vaughan always does; “Vaughan screened slow-motion films of test collisions that he had photographed with his cine-camera.”⁴⁶⁸ The laboratory promising very detailed scripts to produce full-scale crash scenarios stands as a good model to observe *fictional reality*. One of those comprehensive test collisions is about an imaginary family of four (husband, wife, and two children) represented by four plastic mannequins.⁴⁶⁹ What draws attention here is that everything about it is so realistic; the mannequins are fully decorated and their plastic bodies are formed in a manner that will make them really

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., 66-67.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid., 3-4.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., 98-104.

look like the fictional family members. They are even given proper names (Charlie, Greta, Sean, and Brigitte) and finally introduced to the audience in details. Accordingly, this family of four mannequins with “the anticipated injuries [...] marked on their bodies” sit in the car; then the simulated harsh crash happens; and lastly, the collision is replayed (in “a dream-like calm”) in slow-motion on screens where the audience can watch every detail about how the bodies of the family members are wounded and crushed.⁴⁷⁰ James emphasises how much the violence *on the screen* is impressively real by narrating the reaction of the wife of a Ministry official meanwhile; “Her eyes watched the film with a rapt gaze, as if she were seeing herself and her daughters dismembered in the crash.”⁴⁷¹ Though a “dreamlike logic” prevails during those simulations as James puts it, the outcome is “more colourful” than the real. Fictional reality is perversely pleasurable.

Perhaps, this motto also explains the motivation behind Ballard’s own obsession with the borders between reality and fiction. That obsession manifests itself as an authorial desire to play with and blur those limits. Through a quick reference to *Clockwork*, we can easily remember that Burgess has a similar approach, which is realised by means of a self-referential narrative in which he gives a place to another *Clockwork* novel within the original novel. Indeed, Ballard too draws on a parallel method when, for instance, he allows his characters to talk about another (fictional) “pornographic novel” within his own pornographic novel *Crash*.⁴⁷² Yet, there are other clues in addition to this relatively minor one. One of them comes to the fore from the very beginning of the novel: we encounter a fictional namesake of the author in the novel, the narrator/protagonist named James Ballard, who is most probably not only a nominal substitute but also a mental reflection of the author. Besides his fictional self, Ballard makes use of many real life famous figures (such as Elizabeth Taylor, James Dean, Albert Camus, Jayne Mansfield, John Kennedy, and Marilyn Monroe) throughout his fiction; thus, he frequently finds an opportunity to practice some “in and out”

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

⁴⁷² Ibid., 53.

strategies (between real life and fictional world) that are peculiar to postmodernist novelists.

Before the concluding remarks of this chapter, it should not be overlooked that the argued authorial (postmodernist) approach to reality and fiction corresponds to his characters' perception of fictional reality. All those simulations of car-crashes and celebrities, all of their "deviant" activities, might be delightful for them, but they induce paranoia and schizophrenia at the same time. James can never be sure about whether the bruises and wounds on the bodies of the performers of collisions are also "simulated" or real. That is the reason why he talks about his "potent confusions of fiction and reality" during the adventures with Vaughan and his subjects.⁴⁷³ The level of scepticism becomes visible during some occasions; "The massive traffic jams on the motorways seemed to suffocate the air, and I nearly believed that Vaughan himself had conjured these vehicles on to the exhausted concrete as part of some elaborate psychological test."⁴⁷⁴ The constant feeling of surveillance triggered by Vaughan's quasi-omnipresence might be sometimes unpleasant for James, but it paradoxically becomes, through the integrated fantasies of exhibitionism and voyeurism, a source of perverse pleasure at the same time. While contemplating on his illegitimate affairs with Helen, James indeed confesses that the true satisfaction comes from (layered) perversion, not (ordinary) sex; "Without Vaughan watching us, recording our postures and skin areas with his camera, my orgasm had seemed empty and sterile, a jerking away of waste tissue."⁴⁷⁵ As Vaughan's authority over James intensifies day by day, the latter's doubts about the former increase equally; "I was sure that everything around me [...] was part of some ironic intention of Vaughan's [...]."⁴⁷⁶ Needless to say, Vaughan as a mystical and "paranormal" figure plays a very crucial role in James's psychic condition; "Increasingly I was convinced that Vaughan was a projection of my own fantasies and obsessions, and that in some way I had let him down."⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷³ Ibid., 89.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 119.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid., 97.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid., 161.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid., 181.

In conclusion, *Crash* is all about some postmodern perverse subjects who are sometimes paranoid, sometimes schizophrenic, but always dissatisfied. It is an age of consumerism in which individuals have used up not only all goods but also all kinds of (conventional) ways to reach sexual gratification. At this point, Mikita Brottman and Christopher Sharett are right when they analyse the road in *Crash* as “a metaphor for the cultural condition of western civilization.”⁴⁷⁸ Unlike their apocalyptic and more pessimistic vision, however, my perception of Ballard’s roads is closer to that of the pervert’s, i.e., considering roads as fantasy spaces to delight in the delirium of the age. High technology, mass media, and extensive marketing of the period have provided people with almost everything they desire; however, desire itself is essentially perverse as Kristeva puts it. *Crash* is, therefore, an indivisible part and inevitable outcome of such a postmodern culture during which, as Dennis A. Foster puts it, perversion has become “fully interwoven with the forms of advertising and technology that drive contemporary capitalism.”⁴⁷⁹ Foster adds, more importantly, that “[...] the rational forms of production, marketing, and consumption are dependent on perpetuating a certain perversion.”⁴⁸⁰ It seems that perversion and the contemporary era have an intricate relationship or a particular dialogue based on a mutual language: dissatisfaction. Since they are too *exhausted* to maintain what has been taken-for-granted, the postmodern perverse subjects search for formal experiments in every domain, including sexuality. *Crash* is the fruit of such a contemporary journey. Its adrenaline-seeking characters juxtapose eroticism and machinery, through which they crave for “perverse” satisfaction that will make the pale world “more colourful.”

The theme of mechanisation discussed along *Clockwork* has its equivalence here in *Crash*, rather in the form of fetishism. While Burgess interrogates some power centres and discipline mechanisms that turn “free” individuals into some sort of automated/mechanised puppets, Ballard displays individuals who are themselves obsessed with that mechanisation or technological space promised by the prevalent

⁴⁷⁸ Brottman and Sharett, “The End of the Road,” 126-32.

⁴⁷⁹ Dennis A. Foster, “J. G. Ballard’s Empire of the Senses: Perversion and the Failure of Authority,” *PMLA* 108, no. 3 (1993): 527.

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

culture. Looking through this perspective, Ballard's characters somehow emerge as productions of the dominant mentality which has been previously described by Burgess. They are all subjects of a new world order, which is, as depicted by Botting and Wilson, driven by "repetition," "banality," "boredom," and "automation," in which sexual desire has been "extinct" as "sex has become work" alongside many things else.⁴⁸¹ Ballard's anarchic characters disturb from the inside such an artificial order which demands that everything including sex(uality) must run like *clockwork*. Hence, it remains controversial if *Crash* offers us a story of degeneration or of self-discovery. For some, Vaughan and his friends are almost "inhuman," extremely deviant individuals that have already deviated from the received path of humanity. Yet for others, they represent "the instinctual self" of humanity that has been spoiled or repressed by universal civilising attempts. From the latter viewpoint they are, as heralds of *the return of the repressed*, not very alien to us.

⁴⁸¹ Botting and Wilson, "Sexcrash," 79-90.

4.3. Beautiful Bodies' Confinement in/as the Other Space: *The Comfort of Strangers* (1981), Ian McEwan

But what about the pain [...]?
—Mary⁴⁸²

Perhaps you find that hard to understand. It's not the pain itself, it's the fact of the pain, of being helpless before it and being reduced to nothing by it. [...]. I was terrified, but the terror and the pleasure were all one.

—Caroline⁴⁸³

Sorry. We're very ordinary people.
—Mary⁴⁸⁴

In *The Comfort of Strangers*, Ian McEwan tells the story of an unmarried couple, Mary and Colin, who have been on holiday abroad in an unnamed city (which strongly resembles Venice). Mary as a divorced mother of two children has been in a relationship with her pretty handsome lover Colin for seven years, but the bond between the two is seemingly based on friendship and familiarity rather than a passionate love, at least for the time being. One day, when the couple gets lost during one of their usual wanderings, they are unwillingly befriended by an unsettling local man named Robert, who takes them to a bar which later comes out as his own. In this apparently gay bar, Robert tells them about his childhood and upbringing, some traumatic stories related to his sadistic father and naughty sisters. Later in the story, despite the couple's uneasiness and reluctance, Robert convinces them to visit his house and meet his wife Caroline. Robert and Caroline initially seem very hospitable, yet it later on becomes clear that the hosting couple has voyeuristic tendency and maintains a sadomasochistic marriage. During another occasion, Robert takes Colin to his bar for a drink while Caroline and Mary stay at home to have a conversation. Meanwhile, Caroline reveals all the details about her extraordinary relationship with Robert: how Robert is obsessed with hurting, how she herself loves being hurt, and how their sadomasochistic practices have reached

⁴⁸² Ian McEwan, *The Comfort of Strangers* (London: Picador, 1982), 107.

⁴⁸³ Ibid., 109.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., 112.

to such an extreme level that once, Robert would almost kill her during their sexual intercourse (also the reason of her body aches and limping). Later on, Caroline prepares for Mary some herbal tea with a paralysing drug in it and leads her into the bedroom where Mary recognises a wall covered with various photographs of Colin. Though she starts to understand the couple's perverse intentions on Colin, she feels exhausted and cannot help falling asleep. When Colin and Robert return, Colin notices that something is wrong with Mary, who can do nothing but watch helplessly what is happening around. Robert and Caroline forcefully touch Colin and kiss him. Finally, Robert slits Colin's wrist with a razorblade. Colin bleeds to death as the couple impliedly begins making love in the presence of his tortured body. Meanwhile, Mary passes out completely and later awakens in the hospital only to find out that Robert and Caroline have already run away from the city. The officials then ask Mary some irrelevant questions and make absurd comments about the case. They can do no more than informing Mary that such crimes are common here in this city.

As soon as the Picador edition of *Comfort* is leafed through, three quotations that truly reflect the general mood and spirit of the novel catch the reader's eye as repetitions of its leitmotifs. The first one of them is seen on the back cover of the book and refers to Anthony Thwaite from *Observer*; accordingly, the English poet and critic comments on McEwan as "the master of taciturn macabre" that brilliantly transmits "the evils of power and the power of evil."⁴⁸⁵ The other two appear as epigrams from important literary figures: first comes Adrienne Rich's verse, "how we dwelt in two worlds / the daughters and the mothers / in the kingdom of the sons;" the second one belongs to Cesare Pavese; "Travelling is a brutality. It forces you to trust strangers and to lose sight of all that familiar comfort of home and friends. You are constantly off balance. Nothing is yours except the essential things – air, sleep, dreams, the sea, the sky – all things tending towards the eternal or what we imagine of it."⁴⁸⁶ Thus, *Comfort* gives us clues about itself in the very beginning by implying that we will encounter not

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

only the clash between “we” and “they”/the others in the context of tourism but also the dark face of power relations taking root in family dramas and childhood traumas.

Such kind of initial details about *Comfort* and the very ironic title of it already suggest that McEwan actually leads us to an uncanny story about *the (dis)comfort of (un)familiarity*. The novel clearly develops around two outsiders (Mary and Colin) who are confined in the site of others, in the other space of strangers. The spatiality of *Comfort* therefore exists within a particular structure, in a chronological, circular, and geographically-hierarchical order. This spatio-temporal narrative frame which is intentionally formed by McEwan from the periphery to the centre or from the large-scale to the small-scale appears throughout the story respectively as such: a strange foreign country, a strange city, a strange neighbourhood, a strange house, and a strange room. As the two outsiders progress in time and space and visit those particular places in sequence, the intensity of strangeness and confinement increases at every turn.

What has been explained so far – which is related to the literal spaces of *Comfort* – is the first dimension of this chapter’s research, but the more important part of it is connected with the metaphorical idea of space, i.e. the spatial body. Hence, I will more focus on the latter and argue that the bodies of those outsiders who are confined in the other spaces of the narrative themselves become *the other space* constituted by the perverse gaze, for the perverse gaze. In the eyes of Robert and Caroline who are the explicit perverts of the story, Mary and Colin (largely portrayed as English) are nothing but an extension of a spatial otherness, the bodies standing for another land. They perversely desire to dominate this new virgin territory, the beautiful and “immature” bodies of the tourist couple. Within an obvious topographical association, the deviant couple first lay their eyes on the “unspoiled” bodies of Mary and Colin, then malevolently attempt to record them to discover and study every detail about them, and finally takes action to conquer or subjugate them.⁴⁸⁷ It is plain that the other spaces of this “strange” country turn into prison for the tourist couple, but the more sinister point about it is the prevalent perverse gaze which will transform their bodies into a figurative

⁴⁸⁷ When we consider that Robert and Caroline deliberately separate Mary and Colin before the torture scene by offering Colin a drink outside, it might be called, again in geographical sense, their *divide and rule* policy against the bodies as other spaces.

prison to carry out harsh punishments and innermost fantasies. From this sense, an account of *Comfort* in terms of spatiality will be incomplete if the idea of the body as confined fantasy space is ignored. McEwan indeed tells us the story of Mary and Colin, two “very ordinary people” who are haunted by some dark objects, darker spaces, and the darkest desires.

As it is suggested quite a lot times along the novel, Mary and Colin know each other very well; their relationship, just like their lovemaking, is in fact maintained by means of the comfort of familiarity and friendship, ordinariness, mutual trust and understanding rather than great passion.⁴⁸⁸ They are like mimicking reflection of each other; “They often said they found it difficult to remember that the other was a separate person. When they looked at each other they looked into a misted mirror.”⁴⁸⁹ Everything about them is, at least initially, so much monotonous and boring that it almost foreshadows something hideous in the future. It evokes *the silence of the lambs* as if they were for now enjoying *the calm before the storm*: too much order makes us anticipate the forthcoming disorder. They are “on holiday” as they frequently repeat and therefore supposed to relish as idle tourists, yet they perpetually feel some uneasiness, something like emptiness, alienation, and meaninglessness. They often feel “exhausted,” are occasionally “completely confused” about time and space, sometimes even getting lost in both.⁴⁹⁰ From this perspective, their position as tired travellers searching for the route might be read as a reflection of the general human condition in the contemporary age in which individuals unavoidably keep a sense of hollowness and aimlessness, ennui and dissatisfaction, but also schizophrenia and paranoia due to the possibility of alternative realities and a continuous surveillance. Keeping this viewpoint in mind, McEwan’s “dummies” in a department store⁴⁹¹ or Ballard’s “mannequins” in the Road Research Laboratory—in a sense, humanoids dressed and portrayed just like

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid., 18-19, 52, 63, 78-79, 96, 116.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid., 18.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., 25-26, 57.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., 22-23.

real human beings—might be there to imply the suggested spiritual emptiness of the subjects of postmodern times.

The beautiful and “immature” bodies of this couple of victims stand as the spectacle *par excellence* for the perverse voyeuristic gaze. They are both well-groomed, “as though [...] there waited someone who cared deeply how they appeared.”⁴⁹² They use expensive colognes and powders on their bodies and choose their clothes meticulously—Mary even considers carefully what she will prefer as her underwear. Colin sometimes shaves twice in a day while Mary never skips her yoga exercises. As opposed to Robert and Caroline, they are the “immature” bodies because they are generally portrayed and act as the juvenile rather than the adult. David Malcolm prefers to explain it by considering the story as a representative family drama;

Colin and Mary are childlike; Robert and Caroline become parent figures to them. From the start of the novel the younger couple’s life in their hotel room is a kind of irresponsible physical feast composed of sleeping, making love, and bathing, one free from the normal duties of adulthood. All the labor is done by the invisible maid, and Colin and Mary “titter like school-children” in the hotel dining room (78). Robert and Caroline become something of surrogate parents to them, directing them, feeding them, waiting for them. Caroline watches them sleep; Robert disciplines Colin [his powerless son].⁴⁹³

In spite of the fact that “neither of them have a sufficiently developed sense of mature selfhood,”⁴⁹⁴ it is implied especially through the agency of Colin who are now “dressed in all white” that the couple represents infantile purity, that is, the angelic, innocent, and unspoiled body. As J. R. Banks recognises, Mary and Colin are “scared by the power they perceive in the two strangers” and therefore “regress to a recreation of infancy late

⁴⁹² Ibid., 13.

⁴⁹³ David Malcolm, “Fiction and Evil (II): *The Comfort of Strangers*,” in *Understanding Ian McEwan* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002), 82-83.

Malcolm comments on Colin and Mary as such; however, it should also be noted about the couple that the city Venice, with all its distinguishing characteristics (which will be exclusively analysed later on), provides them with a sense of transgression, of transition to another dimension in a way.

⁴⁹⁴ Dominic Head, “Dreams of Captivity: *The Comfort of Strangers*,” in *Contemporary British Novelists: Ian McEwan* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 65.

in the book in a moving scene where Colin nurses at Mary's breast."⁴⁹⁵ A similar suggestion that implies an unconscious "mother-son" connection between Mary and Colin comes from Charles Forceville, who writes an article completely on how Colin is profoundly depicted as a child both in the novel and in its film adaptation (1990), which is also what makes him fall prey to Robert the infertile predator;

In short, Colin and his behavior are on many occasions linked explicitly and implicitly to that of a baby or a child. There are no simple answers to the question why McEwan insisted on the metaphor, but there clearly is the suggestion that Colin is Mary's "child" rather than her partner. Certainly it is noticeable that several of the metaphorical instances are seen from Mary's perspective. His childlikeness meshes with the fact that Colin is not a father (he himself is still a "child") and his lack of enthusiasm for Mary's real children (his "rivals"), and, moreover, it may add a dimension to Robert's reasons for killing Colin: Robert jealously "punishes" Mary (the parent that he himself is prevented from being) by murdering her "child."⁴⁹⁶

Colin is obviously at the centre here; his body is described not only as an example of perfect beauty (evocative of "femininity" at the same time) but also as smooth and pure as a baby's. Such a portrait of Colin as a divine/feminine/childish beauty recurs throughout the narrative through some key phrases and implications: Mary kisses his nose "in a tender, motherly way;" Colin who lies "foetally" at Robert's home is defined "like a child" (hairless legs, "small feet like a child's," smooth white skin, small and firm buttocks "like a child's," extraordinarily small nostrils, straight and firm mouth, unnaturally fine hair "like a baby's," and "womanly neck," "shy" attitudes); his body is again depicted by Mary, Robert, and Caroline as a "perfect beauty" ("like a god," like "a statue's," "so lovely," and "very beautiful"); and he himself claims that he has always envied women's orgasms and that he once felt "an approximation of womanly desire."⁴⁹⁷ In the light of all these fictional depictions and

⁴⁹⁵ J. R. Banks, "A Gondola Named Desire," *Critical Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (1982): 29; McEwan, *The Comfort of Strangers*, 90.

⁴⁹⁶ Charles Forceville, "The Metaphor 'COLIN IS A CHILD' in Ian McEwan's, Harold Pinter's, and Paul Schrader's *The Comfort of Strangers*," *Metaphor and Symbol* 14, no. 3 (1999): 185.

⁴⁹⁷ McEwan, *The Comfort of Strangers*, 18, 55-65, 79, 85.

implications, Judith Seaboyer's own descriptions of Colin, the ultimate "object of the gaze" in the novel, as "a classical sculpture," as (thinking of the photographs of Colin) a representation of "the eroticized, horizontally posed male nudes of late-eighteenth-, early-nineteenth-century French neoclassical painting," as "a childlike physical flawlessness and vulnerability," and as "an image of androgyny" with his occasionally emphasised "ambiguous sexuality" make much more sense.⁴⁹⁸ Out of all these suggestions, I argue that Colin —occupying such a position as a model of "heavenly creature," as flawless and pure as a god or a baby— becomes the desired object for Robert the demonic beast. This extraordinariness and perfection in beauty, this bodily otherness or uncanniness, is what stirs the pervert, making the pervert desire to spoil the unspoiled.

The ironic point here is that there are also some instances where Robert too is addressed as a child, albeit not that much as Colin. In addition to the overall image of him as an insistent and impatient kid, some direct references to that aspect of him draw attention as well; "Mary spoke [to Robert] as though to a child."⁴⁹⁹ His wife Caroline too mostly describes Robert as a child who always makes up stories to tell other people. What might be inferred from this seemingly contradictory state is somehow a dichotomous perception of "the child." On the one side, we have Colin as the innocent boy who is still intact and pure, who has not been corrupted by civilisation (*the noble* but not *savage*). On the other side is Robert the child as pervert, as the instinctual creature or the Freudian id, representing the destructive erotic side which has been struggled to be repressed by the same civilisation (*the savage* but not *noble*).

If Mary and Colin are the victims of the story, Robert and Caroline are the perpetrators that make the victimised bodies their own confined site, fantasy space. Nevertheless, it is rather Robert who comes to the forefront as the key pervert figure of *Comfort*, just like "Robert" Vaughan does in *Crash*. This is for sure a hilarious nominal coincidence, yet certain strong and striking parallelisms between the two make it transcend a simple association.

⁴⁹⁸ Judith Seaboyer, "Sadism Demands a Story: Ian McEwan's *The Comfort of Strangers*," *Modern Fiction Studies* 45, no. 4 (1999): 969.

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

First of all, both Roberts have some kind of connection with London (Vaughan is a Londoner while Robert has grown up there). This compatriotism obviously makes our or any other reader's association easier; besides, it supports the quasi-mystical connection between the two with a regional commonality. Second is their common disturbing presence in each narrative as *the beautifully ugly* in contrast with the other protagonists' image as "perfect" beauties. Robert is portrayed almost as an ape-like figure: he is "shorter than Colin;" his arms are "exceptionally long and muscular;" his hands are "large, the backs covered with matted hair;" he has "the thick pelt of chest hair" and some "lines" and "furrows" on his face.⁵⁰⁰ As such, Robert physically occupies the oppositional pole of Colin and Mary, who are "both so finely built, almost like twins," which makes them "a very striking pair" as Caroline puts it.⁵⁰¹ These two grotesque antiheroes (Roberts) are, however, disturbingly attractive, very creepy but also irresistibly tempting, mysterious and unknown, mesmerising thereby inviting the others to discover about them. Here comes the third similarity: both Roberts are divine & satanic figures at the same time. They both extend their helping hands to the other protagonists who get "lost" (literally or metaphorically) and thus need an escape from the present depressive condition. Yet, what they promise to their subjects is ambiguous, either salvation or damnation. Another parallelism is related to their existence as the ultimate model for the voyeuristic perverse gaze. This is the reason why camera is the most essential item for both Roberts to carry out their deviant fantasies on the bodies of others. Last but not least, they both have some "big project" in terms of (perverse) sexuality; their psychic stance on the concept of "the ultimate fantasy" is in this sense very similar—both are obsessed with the meeting of Eros and Thanatos, which will be elaborated on later.

The first impression of Robert in the novel is in fact very suggestive about what lies ahead. While he is introducing himself to Mary and Colin and forcing them to go to the only open place at that time for a drink and food, he shows friendliness and hospitality to a discomforting degree. When they see some feminist posters on their way

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., 26, 31.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid., 67.

to the place Robert's reaction is revealing of his misogynistic gender perception; "These are women who cannot find a man. They want to destroy everything that is good between men and women. [...]. They are too ugly."⁵⁰² Apart from relativity of concepts such as "good" and "ugly," the excerpt indicates how the pervert justifies unbalanced power relations between men and women, how Robert considers his (sexual) violence against Caroline as "natural" and "normal," as the only means of mutual goodness.

As they arrive at his bar, Robert starts to narrate a very long story about his family and childhood by addressing to Mary and Colin.⁵⁰³ This entire chapter (3) is significant since it somehow shows behind the scenes, by uncovering not only Robert's traumatic childhood experiences but also some posttraumatic reflections of his problematic upbringing. It also explains that the oppressive man of the present is indeed the oppressed boy of the past, i.e. oppression as a familial legacy. Robert grows up as the youngest child within the complex power relations amongst a powerful father, a subservient mother, and four elder sisters "hating" him. From this respect, Robert's role in his sadomasochistic marriage and his treatment to Caroline might be read as both an infantile desire for imitation and an adult desire for revenge on the past. At this point, Caroline's subservience is there not only to serve the male hunger for domination but also to alleviate Robert's suffering by re-enacting and reversing his(s)tory.

Robert's story is a case of *like father, like son*. The perverse portrayal of his adulthood makes more sense provided that it is juxtaposed with the details about his childhood. Looking through this logic, Robert is merely another product of a patriarchal succession, namely, the last representative of it for the moment. This hegemonic culture has been created and maintained by fathers, or more precisely, *godfathers* in both senses of the word, which means that the senior male members of the family line are not only the powerful spiritual leaders but also the big bosses executing a mafia-like order within the household. As Robert elaborates on his recollection of the past, the story gives us more and more hints supporting this suggestion about the godlike father figures.

⁵⁰² Ibid., 28.

⁵⁰³ Ibid., 31-41.

Robert's father is not merely a diplomat but also "a big man." He is very authoritarian and typically stands for *the law of the father*⁵⁰⁴ with his strict rules and principles; "And to everything he said No!"⁵⁰⁵ His sombre study room, which hosts some precious and magnificent decoration and ornaments, all secret papers of the state, and other diplomats as well, symbolises the power centre of the powerful; it is as such the forbidden zone, the confined space by the authority. Moreover, all the family members acknowledge that Robert as the only son of the father is "the next head of the family," the following "big Papa" (again divine connotation) who will perpetuate his greatness, his majesty.

The rest of Robert's story is more intriguing since it interweaves the argued religious references with some (Freudian) psychoanalytic implications. It is all about the conflict between Robert and his eldest sisters, "Eva" and "Maria" (biblical allusions as Latin counterparts of English "Eve" and "Mary") who are named, cared, and punished by their *God(the)father*. And then Robert, who was already confronted by his sisters in his childhood for being his father's shadow, is now *God the Son*, who has inherited the divine power and authority and therefore will sustain the immemorial patriarchal order through the tourist Mary, that is, the reincarnated Maria so to speak. Mary will give Robert the opportunity to revisit the past and take his revenge on his sisters, but before that, we need to reconsider the source of this hatred.

One day, Eva and Maria as teenage girls paint their fingernails, put creams and powders on their faces, use lipstick and mascara, comb their hair like adults, and take off their "white socks" to put on their mother's stockings, and as such, look over their shoulders into mirrors and window-panes. While Robert is watching them, they start to tease him; "Are we not beautiful, Robert?"⁵⁰⁶ Here, the little Robert who is now at the forced position of *peeping Tom* in a sense narrates his bewilderment about how his

⁵⁰⁴ Seaboyer has an article entirely on the patriarchal law as the "single organizing principle" (in Mary's own words) prevalent in the world of *Comfort*. To examine how she engages it through the lens of feminist theory heavily drawing on psychoanalysis, see below:

Seaboyer, "Sadism Demands a Story," 957-86.

⁵⁰⁵ McEwan, *The Comfort of Strangers*, 31-41.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.

sisters as “tall schoolgirls” have turned into two “beautiful women,” but this scene of “the fascinating and threatening masquerade of femininity”⁵⁰⁷ transmitted to us through Robert’s own gaze somehow implies homoerotic and incestuous drives at the same time; “They knew I was shocked because these were not my sisters, these were American film stars. They were delighted with themselves. They laughed and kissed each other for now they were real women.”⁵⁰⁸ Robert then tells his father the whole adventure because he believes that “he knew everything like God.”⁵⁰⁹ As a result, his sisters meet the wrath of God and are severely punished by the latter, which makes them vow for vengeance against Robert.

Now, it is the sisters’ turn and they devise a plan to teach Robert a lesson. As a male member of this family, Robert is not permitted to eat or drink sweet things because the holy book of godfathers says; sweet things are bad for boys as they make them weak in character, “like girls.” Knowing that, the sisters fool Robert into consuming huge amounts of lemonade, cake, chocolate, and marshmallows as well as some “medicine” to worsen the situation. Here is again biblical allusiveness since all these are some kind of *forbidden fruits* given by Eve (the sister Eva) to tempt our Adam (Robert) against the commands of God (their father). This parody of *the original sin* finally culminates in defilement of the father’s study and degradation of him through his power centre, which rises God’s fury this time at Robert. All the girls thus combine forces to defeat Robert; “When they were all together my sisters were frightening.”⁵¹⁰ This female solidarity is also significant for its basic strategy is to use manliness against man, to threaten and weaken patriarchy from within by giving it the taste of its own *medicine*; “Only a *man* could drink two bottles of lemonade.”⁵¹¹

Robert’s harsh punishment for breaking the law of the father continues for a long while. *A child is being beaten* here for a number of days and not spoken kindly too; besides, he is no more permitted in the study which is the ultimate zone of

⁵⁰⁷ Seaboyer, “Sadism Demands a Story,” 977.

⁵⁰⁸ McEwan, *The Comfort of Strangers*, 31-41.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

manhood. Robert is not forgiven and cannot enter there until he does it with his future wife. Thus, the grace of God is available for Robert only if he promises to perpetuate the status quo of the fathers, as long as God the Son is able to conserve “the kingdom of the sons.” From this patriarchal perspective, kinship system which is based on the exchange of women as sexual objects (Rubin) or commodities of men’s business among men (Irigaray) becomes a crucial tactic. That is why Robert’s father is willing to marry Robert with Caroline, the Canadian ambassador’s daughter; “Later I discovered that my father had said our families must become friendly for reasons of diplomacy and business.”⁵¹²

Robert’s childhood story might be finalised with the Freudian implications of it. It evidently refers to *the Oedipal complex* with its obvious characters such as a furious father, an angelic and “very beautiful” mother, and a psychosexually developing boy in-between them. While Robert is going through some posttraumatic reflections such as having frequent bad dreams, waking in the middle of the night, and walking in his sleep, the sole emotional supporter is his mother who most often wears white. His love for the mother also brings about *castration anxiety* especially during the bedtimes; “Whenever my father was away I slept in her bed, until I was ten years old.”⁵¹³ At the occasion in which Robert’s family meets Caroline’s, Eva reveals to Caroline that Robert sleeps with his mother, which completely embarrasses him. Yet, Caroline smiles at him and thinks “that is really awfully sweet.” In a quick response to this moment, Robert proceeds; “[...] and from that time on I was in love with her, and I no longer slept in my mother’s bed.”⁵¹⁴ It is so because unlike his sisters, Caroline welcomes the incestuous boy and therefore deserves to substitute for the beloved mother. Robert finishes his story with a happy ending; they are married eight years later.

While analysing object-love phenomenon, Freud recognises “the presence of a sadistic component in the sexual instinct” and suggests that in the form of a perversion,

⁵¹² Ibid.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

it dominates one's entire sexual activity.⁵¹⁵ Besides, it intensifies the blur between two well-known polarities, "the familiar ambivalence of love [or affection] and hate [or aggressiveness] in erotic life."⁵¹⁶ Reminding us of such Freudian implications, the marital bond between Robert and Caroline first comes to light during the conversation between Caroline and Mary. While Mary describes love as trusting one's partner as the closest friend, Caroline's definition is meaningful; "By 'in love' I mean that you'd do anything for the other person, and... [...]. And you'd let them do anything to you. [...]. If you are in love with someone, you would even be prepared to let them kill you, if necessary."⁵¹⁷ Here, she frankly talks about their perverse relationship, their marriage based on SM. Yet, the relationship has its own rules and principles. Upon Mary's comment about if Caroline would also be prepared to kill the person she is in love, Caroline's reaction tells us something; "Oh yes, if I was the man I would."⁵¹⁸ She means that theirs is a consensual SM with mutually accepted sexual roles in accordance with the balance of power: as a woman, Caroline is the masochist while Robert as a man is "naturally" at the sadist position. While narrating in details how their perverse sexual practices have started, Caroline emphasises not only the complexity of pain and pleasure in human sexuality but also how important it might be for the pervert's existential crisis:

Robert started to hurt me when we made love. Not a lot, but enough to make me cry out. I think I tried to stop him. One night I got really angry at him, but he went on doing it, and I had to admit, though it took a long time, I liked it. Perhaps you find that hard to understand. It's not the pain itself, it's the fact of the pain, of being helpless before it and being reduced to nothing by it. It's pain in a particular context, being punished and therefore being guilty. We both liked what was happening. I was ashamed of myself, and before I knew it, my shame too was a source of pleasure. It was *as if I was discovering something that had been with me all my life*. I wanted it more and more. *I needed it*. Robert began to really hurt me. He used a whip. He beat me with his fists as he made love to me. I was terrified, but *the terror and the pleasure were all one*. Instead of saying

⁵¹⁵ Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 47-48.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid.

⁵¹⁷ McEwan, *The Comfort of Strangers*, 63.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

loving things into my ear, he whispered pure hatred, and though I was sick with humiliation, I thrilled to the point of passing out. I didn't doubt Robert's hatred for me. It wasn't theatre. He made love to me out of deep loathing, and I couldn't resist. I loved being punished.⁵¹⁹

As it is manifest through the above excerpt too, Robert is indeed the most dominant character in the novel while the others around him including Caroline are mainly the dominated ones in every aspect. We see him always commanding and dictating something. He continuously desires to be in the upper position against others by speaking sharply, never accepts refusal of his demands, and cannot hide the perverse urge for an immediate satisfaction.⁵²⁰ In a word, he is truly the son of his father and this side of him is visible mostly with regards to his gender perception.

He is an unyielding champion of patriarchy. He often recites nostalgically the pre-existing sexual world order constructed by the fathers; "My father and his father understood themselves clearly. They were men, and they were proud of their sex. Women understood them too. [...] There was no confusion."⁵²¹ However, Robert continues, "Now men doubt themselves, they hate themselves, even more than they hate each other. Women treat men like children, because they can't take them seriously."⁵²² This is in fact one of the reasons that makes Colin the victim of Robert. In other words, Colin is among those who cause "confusion" between a real man and a real woman in Robert's eyes. As an adult man who is mainly portrayed through childish purity and effeminate beauty, Colin offers an alternative room for manhood and as such becomes *the other space* per se to be attacked by Robert. In what follows, Robert unearths how this perverse psychic structure which has been heavily formed by the idea of male supremacy works in the matrix of gender roles and/as power relations and how it creates a particular schema for the "nature" of men and women and their reciprocal commitments:

⁵¹⁹ Ibid., 108-09 (emphases added).

⁵²⁰ Ibid., 70, 100, 103-04, 11. These pages are exemplary to see the dominant Robert.

⁵²¹ Ibid., 72.

⁵²² Ibid.

But they love men. Whatever they might say they believe, women love aggression and strength and power in men. It's deep in their minds. [...]. And even though they hate themselves for it, women long to be ruled by men. It's deep in their minds. They lie to themselves. They talk of freedom, and dream of captivity. It is the world that shapes people's minds. It is men who have shaped the world. So women's minds are shaped by men. From earliest childhood, the world they see is made by men. Now the women lie to themselves and there is confusion and unhappiness everywhere. It wasn't the case in my grandfather's day.⁵²³

Robert's lengthy recital assigns particular roles to both sexes; men should hold sadistic authority while women as members of the secondary sex are already born with masochistic drives and passivity. Upon Robert's monologue on his fathers and their possessions commemorating them in his house, Colin in a slightly mocking way says; "this is a museum dedicated to the good old days."⁵²⁴ It is just at this very moment that Robert strikes him in the stomach with his fist, which instantly expels all the air from his lungs. This is perhaps the most serious foreshadowing element for the future violence in the story, but the actual point here is related to what is previously discussed in the section about Žižek. Colin is punched for the same reason with the lynched newcomer of the village in the story Žižek retells. The unique wrongdoing of all these victims is to step in the fantasy space of their perpetrators, to ridicule the latter's nostalgic desires by reducing their glorified phenomena to simple objects, their secret fantasies to everyday/common reality. It is clear that Robert is "obsessed with his father and grandfather" as Caroline puts it,⁵²⁵ but he is also very sensitive when it comes to the elevated male status that has been inherited from his iconic godfathers as patriarchal idols and that does not allow any confusion, any uncertainty or ambiguity within. Standing on the liminal space as being neither a "real" man nor a woman nor a boy, Colin the degenerate modern man poses an inside threat to masculinity and hence should be destroyed by Robert the last protector.⁵²⁶

⁵²³ Ibid., 72-73.

⁵²⁴ Ibid., 73.

⁵²⁵ Ibid., 111.

⁵²⁶ In his study in which he reviews *Comfort* through a psychoanalytic reading regarding patriarchy, power, and gender confusion, Dominic Head looks from another perspective that discusses Robert's

If *Comfort* is a novel about excessive and extensive gaze and (in)visibility, Robert is the most distinguished fictional agent here. Wandering around the strangers of the city always with his camera and sunglasses, Robert is the master of the perverse gaze and as such the one who enjoys “the fascination of seeing without being seen” at the most.⁵²⁷ Thus, before analysing McEwan’s obsession with the bodies and/as spaces, it is much easier and relevant at this point to recognise his deep meditation on how we perceive our surroundings, on the ways *to see* things. This is in fact the author’s own fascination, realised through his characters’ eyes, with certain perceptual concepts: visibility and invisibility, to see and to be seen, to look and to ignore, day and night, lightness and darkness, whiteness and blackness, and so on. To highlight such concepts as well as the importance of the voyeuristic position in the story, McEwan too (like Ballard) draws on some vitreous items such as cameras, binoculars, eyeglasses, mirrors, windowpanes, sliding glass doors, and the like. In terms of the field of vision, Seaboyer observes the same topic by concentrating on some similar objects together with a plethora of other concepts regarding to the persisting scopophilia in *Comfort*; “narcissism, exhibitionism, voyeurism, performance, and audience, together with such signifiers as mirrors, cameras, binoculars, photographs, and the ‘screen’ of the retina.”⁵²⁸ Hence, Robert Duggan is also right when he says “the novel is haunted by the camera and by the gaze.”⁵²⁹ The deviant couple, Robert and Caroline, take advantage of all these available objects and concepts which are more or less related to human gaze so that they can satisfy their darkest desires on the bodies of Mary and Colin.

masculinity as “channelled into an extreme or exaggerated form of sexual expression” and thereby argues for “the repressed feminine aspect of his identity that he simultaneously yearns to foster and deny” and for “his later cultivation of aggressive homosexuality” as a result. We also see a similar approach from Judith Seaboyer, who argues through the idea of “a repetition of a childhood trauma” that “Robert has had to repress the homosexual desire to be beaten/loved by the father, so that his desire to be destroyed is unavailable to consciousness,” that he “masks an unconscious drive toward his own humiliation and destruction” and the murder of Colin “ensures the annihilation of his castrated self” by stepping into his father’s shoes and thus punishing “his failed, effeminate self once and for all.” To read these particular points of view in details and for more, see below:

Head, “Dreams of Captivity,” 52-69; Seaboyer, “Sadism Demands a Story,” 957-86.

⁵²⁷ McEwan, *The Comfort of Strangers*, 52.

⁵²⁸ Seaboyer, “Sadism Demands a Story,” 964.

⁵²⁹ Robert Duggan, “Ian McEwan: Below the Waves,” in *The Grotesque in Contemporary British Fiction* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 129.

The existence of this tourist couple as strangers on the space of others encourages us to give special attention to McEwan's spatial awareness. The spatiality of *Comfort* is essentially realised through two intertwined media: literally, confining spaces of the others (Robert and Caroline) and figuratively, the bodies as fantasy spaces confined within the former (Mary and Colin). What is more, the author complicates the argued spatiality by enlarging it with the inclusion of a temporal dimension. Consequently, we see characters that have been stuck on the threshold of the nostalgic spaces of the past and the present spaces, still carrying the traces of the former. Especially for Robert, the past continues to echo in the present by means of his estate inherited from the fathers. In the shade of those patriarchal icons, Robert desires to restore the order—which has been recently disrupted due to feminist women, their liberation movements, and effeminate men with feminist sympathies—by eliminating the very source of confusion and ambiguity, i.e. the intruders Mary and Colin. The phantom of the sadistic patriarch returns through his son to haunt the present time-space.

The literal spaces of the novel vary from the past to the present, from the large to the small ones. The past ones are mostly recalled with nostalgic desire. For Mary, for instance, her home in the past means her teenage schoolgirl years when she had only some “modest, achievable tasks;” “She longed for such comfort now, for time and events to be at least partially subject to control.”⁵³⁰ As for Robert, the house where he lived through his childhood merely corresponds to his father's study, the creepy enigmatic room which is what makes him the powerful Robert now in a way but also that which persistently reawakens the repressed infantile traumas. When it comes to the present spaces, they exist for Mary and Colin within a particular structure as argued earlier. Within a rough order, the couple initially meet a strange foreign country, then a strange city, a strange neighbourhood, a strange house, and a strange room in the end. Although there are diverse spaces uttered throughout the story to convey the idea of the discomfort of unfamiliarity (the hotel: their room, balcony, and the café pontoon, the streets and roads, the restaurants and bars including Robert's, Robert's estate: the

⁵³⁰ Ibid., 19.

garden, the gallery, the balcony with sliding glass doors, the kitchen, and the bedroom) McEwan tends to gather all of them under a single uncanny umbrella: “the city.”

Despite the consensus that *Comfort*’s setting to a large extent evokes Venice, the ambivalence in location still increases suspension and tension in the narrative. Nevertheless, as Dominic Head suggests, the novel seemingly draws on a long Western literary tradition, the Venetian tradition, in which that city is a mysterious, confusing, menacing, threatening and dangerous place.⁵³¹ By developing this discussion, Seaboyer makes an analytical association between the narrative topography of Venice and the human psychic topography drawn by significant psychoanalysts;

McEwan’s Venice serves a metaphorical map against which to read and interpret not only western history and culture but also our modernist and postmodernist understanding of the psyche, and at the same time it is a figure for ancient narratives of the labyrinth, that impenetrable space which resists mapping or topographical survey. For reasons that include its decaying beauty and watery, labyrinthine topography, Venice in all *its seductive otherness* has long been read as a figure for death and for the feminine body, hallucinatory object of and liminal obstacle to the hero’s desire. In the second half of the twentieth century that narrative topography accommodates the psychic topography mapped by Freud and redrawn by Lacan: *the centrality of death and the woman* to the Venetian narrative and to psychoanalysis makes them a perfect fit. The fragmentation of the city, which has been reflected in that of fictional Venetian protagonists and culture alike since the Renaissance, is intensified as the crumbling Venetian stage bears witness to allegories of *psychic disintegration expressed in bodily mutilation and murder* and also in a wider politics of social disintegration and environmental degradation.⁵³²

Likewise, while studying the presence of the tradition of the grotesque in McEwan’s fiction, Duggan discusses the same subject by referring to J. R. Banks.⁵³³ In “A Gondola Named Desire,” Banks surveys the English literary canon from Ben Jonson to Henry James and notices the conventional portrayal of Venice as the city of “perversion, decadence, crime and sudden death.”⁵³⁴ To emphasise this dark vision of

⁵³¹ Head, “Dreams of Captivity,” 57-59.

⁵³² Seaboyer, “Sadism Demands a Story,” 961 (emphases added).

⁵³³ Duggan, “Ian McEwan: Below the Waves,” 126.

⁵³⁴ Banks, “A Gondola Named Desire,” 27.

Venice in Western literature, Banks mentions a number of prominent literary works, but two of them are justifiably at the forefront; “Two of the spookiest and most tragic of such works have been much in the popular consciousness in recent years because they have inspired successful films and an opera, and both bear strong resemblances to *The Comfort of Strangers: Don’t Look Now* and *Death in Venice*.”⁵³⁵ Malcolm too remarks on “this aspect of Venice as literary topos,” but also adds that McEwan’s text “teasingly withdraws from any specific reference” to maintain ambiguity and incomprehensibility, “the intrigue, the deception, the trap at the novel’s heart.”⁵³⁶ In Malcolm’s view, this makes *Comfort* “a deeply allusive work, allusive to a whole range of twentieth-century and earlier texts that have chosen Venice as a setting” and thereby involves it in “a complex intertextual web;” “By not quite naming the city; McEwan both draws attention to the cliché and refreshes a setting that might otherwise be automatized and dead.”⁵³⁷

Thus, no matter if this anonymous site is recognisably Venice or not, McEwan’s choice of the place for his particular fictional universe is not for nothing. With its narrow roads, ghastly back streets, and desolate passages, this “ancient” city truly reflects the spatial ambience McEwan tries to create, which is puzzling, misleading, depressing, suffocating and brooding. As such, McEwan’s setting becomes “an unnamed fantasy city” as Seaboyer suggests, “an illegible labyrinth, confusing and sinister as it collapses back into a womblike enclosure of narrow streets and canals.”⁵³⁸ Almost each detail about this city is carefully chosen to mirror strangeness and otherness regarding the confrontation between tourists and the local people.⁵³⁹ The city, with its claustrophobic labyrinthine structure,⁵⁴⁰ stands as the macrocosm of Robert’s

⁵³⁵ Ibid.

⁵³⁶ Malcolm, “Fiction and Evil (II),” 75-76.

⁵³⁷ Ibid.

⁵³⁸ Seaboyer, “Sadism Demands a Story,” 961.

⁵³⁹ Paul Schrader’s cinematic adaptation of *Comfort* (1990), scripted by Harold Pinter, well achieves to transmit that “otherness” by means of its impressive film score. Angelo Badalamenti’s soundtracks with some oriental tones contribute to the mysterious and “strange” atmosphere of the story.

⁵⁴⁰ Head, “Dreams of Captivity,” 57-59; Judith Seaboyer, “Ian McEwan: Contemporary Realism and the Novel of Ideas,” in *The Contemporary British Novel Since 1980*, eds. James Acheson and Sarah C. E. Ross (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 24.

house: both are very magnificent, yet seriously gloomy at the same time. The presence of the Gothic in the novel, moreover, might further intensify this dark atmosphere. Malcolm claims that McEwan draws on a number of gothic elements (sudden appearances, gruesome bodies and dresses, an intrigue involving protagonists, cemetery in the background, and a macabre death) to emphasise “the intrusion of past into present and the eruption of the brutal and the macabre into the seemingly everyday.”⁵⁴¹ The *other spaces* as constituents of this crepuscular city are all unknown to Mary and Colin, but they are also very charming. It is perhaps due to this fatal attraction that Mary and Colin cannot escape from the city despite the feeling of confinement to the core. From this regard, “confined spaces [in McEwan’s fiction] are metaphoric of the imprisonment of consciousness and functional to its obsessive unfolding” as stated by Laura Colombino.⁵⁴² The couple’s vacillation at this point, their position in limbo, is what clears the way for the tragic climax. Remaining there, their bodies somehow become spatial extension of the city as confining site and as such serve to its inhabitants’ perverse fantasies.

Literally, the city is “one of the eating capitals of the world” as Colin states, but the statement also connotes that this place swallows strangers.⁵⁴³ The recursive sentence, “we should have brought those maps,” by Colin and Mary signals the confusing and menacing existence of this city. At this point, a spatial comparison between *Comfort* and *Crash* might be useful: McEwan’s is an ancient city with “the total absence of the traffic;” however, Ballard’s city is a metropolis famous for its highly heavy traffic.⁵⁴⁴ The road metaphor therefore takes its shape in accordance with this chasm. While McEwan’s roads with “no signs” cause the visitors to get lost easily while walking, Ballard’s characters on the contrary find themselves on the roads, discover their instinctual selves in their car cabins as fantasy spaces while driving on Ballard’s highways. From this associative perspective, it is easier to understand why

⁵⁴¹ Malcolm, “Fiction and Evil (II),” 79.

⁵⁴² Laura Colombino, “The Body, the City, the Global: Spaces of Catastrophe in Ian McEwan’s *Saturday*,” *Textual Practice* 31, no. 4 (2017): 787.

⁵⁴³ McEwan, *The Comfort of Strangers*, 25.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

travelling might be perceived as a brutality for McEwan as opposed to Ballard's suggestion that travelling, with all its possibilities of brutal crashes, with all (sexual) opportunities meanwhile, might satisfy one's escapist fantasy.

Moving from the macrocosmic level to the microcosmic one in terms of *Comfort's* spatiality, Robert's estate has a central role for this narrative of confinement. As soon as Colin and Mary are seen completely naked while sleeping "in a stranger's house," the reader may foresee that some sort of deviancy is very close. It cannot be merely a coincidence that a detailed description of Colin's perfectly beautiful body has not been done till Chapter 5 (55-65). His body is introduced to us inch by inch (as described earlier in this chapter) only when he is in Robert and Caroline's "room," that is, the latter's fantasy space. The pervert's space makes us see things through their voyeuristic eyes; thus, we perceive Colin and Mary just as Robert and Caroline do, i.e. the bodies as flawless spectacle. As it later becomes clear, Robert and Caroline were really watching Colin and Mary while they were sleeping in the nude: the perverse gaze has been, is, and will be on the desired bodies of these strangers. Being stark naked, Colin and Mary stand closer to the natural/instinctual condition of humanity, to the unrepressed sexual body with free drives and urges, and as such, captivate the perverse couple. This pleasure of nudity is spoiled when Colin (then Mary) wears the dressing-gown or *nightie* intentionally left there by Robert and Caroline. They are no more naked but still in the desired form by the perverts. Within that *nightie*, Colin looks "like a god" as Mary puts it;⁵⁴⁵ that god must be *Eros*, the Greek god of love, lust, desire, and sex. At the tragic end of the story, *Eros* will meet *Thanatos* in the scene of the ultimate fantasy.

Robert explains that the whole house once belonged to his grandfather. Yet, the perpetual presence of the view of the cemetery island where his grandfather and father were buried side by side suggests that the fathers have never left either Robert or his house: their shadow has always been on them. This particular space—his own power zone reminding of his father's study—has been inherited from the patriarchal idols and therefore, should be maintained in the same order. The fathers were big men with some great deeds and possessions; hence, the house has been decorated in such a way that

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid., 58.

will bear their traces. Especially the gallery is “a family museum” with its quite sombre atmosphere, with all heavy furniture and ostentatious items. The balcony on the other hand is not only dead in itself but also foreshadows the tragic death in the end. It stands face to face with a graveyard, also above “a deserted courtyard,” and the flowers there have “a penetrating fragrance, almost sickly.”⁵⁴⁶ The overall sombreness and bleakness of Robert’s estate, its confining aura, makes one intuit that something bad is coming closer and closer. Nevertheless, the tourist couple’s first impression about the comfort of these strangers is not that bad except the perpetual presence of Caroline’s cringing gaze on their bodies.⁵⁴⁷ It would have been the other way around, certainly, if Mary could have recognised that the many-times-enlarged photo at Robert’s bookcase was of Colin. Despite their wish to keep the private space within the other space of these strangers, Mary and Colin cannot help the “kindly forcing” attitudes by Robert and Caroline and decide to stay there for a dinner.

When they are back to the hotel after their first visit to Robert and Caroline’s house, Mary and Colin do not leave their room for the next four days except for a few short breaks. They spend these days by making love, but what is surprising even for them is that their lovemaking is now much more pleasurable with painful sensations. It might sound haphazard or bizarre to directly associate the couple’s sadomasochistic tendency in the present with the perverse space they have been recently. Yet, it is undeniable that Colin and Mary are in a sense “contaminated” by Robert and Caroline as Duggan puts it well.⁵⁴⁸ Their private conversations on pain and pleasure meanwhile, their “out of the dark” stories on some deviant and violent fantasies over each other’s body including sexual practices and concepts such as handcuffing, subjection, and humiliation, strongly support the possibility of such an association;

Mary muttered her intention of hiring a surgeon to amputate Colin’s arms and legs. She would keep him in a room in her house, and use him exclusively for sex, sometimes lending him out to friends. Colin invented for Mary a large,

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid., 60.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid., 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 70, 75.

⁵⁴⁸ Duggan, “Ian McEwan: Below the Waves,” 130.

intricate machine, made of steel, painted bright red and powered by electricity; it had pistons and controls, straps and dials, and made a low hum when it was switched on. Colin hummed in Mary's ear. Once Mary was strapped in, fitted to tubes that fed and evacuated her body, the machine would fuck her, not just for hours or weeks, but for years, on and on, for the rest of her life, till she was dead and on even after that, till Colin, or his solicitor, switched it off.⁵⁴⁹

While Mary's perverse fantasy is to transform Colin's body into a kind of giant phallus available only for the desire of others, Colin (evoking Robert) fantasises to torment his partner to the death with the agency of sex(uality), namely, by drawing on the sexual body as an instrument.

These sequential scenes and dialogues might be really shocking for the reader since they encourage creating a particular bond between the imaginary perversion of Colin & Mary and the perverse realities of Robert & Caroline. Accordingly, Colin & Mary with their explicitly huge potential and proclivity for sexual deviancy yet to be unearthed might be the psychologically and socially (more) repressed versions of Robert & Caroline. In other words by Seaboyer, "the dark, pure perversity of Robert and Caroline's relationship is the overt expression of that which, repressed, structures the somewhat dishonest, somewhat dull, occasionally passionate, largely comfortable normalcy of Colin and Mary's."⁵⁵⁰ No matter if it happens consciously or unconsciously, the tourist couple desires to be surrogate for the perverse couple by adopting the corresponding sexual roles: Colin wishes to take the position of "the sadist male" as his fantasies reveal while Mary somehow submits herself to the masochistic principles as her words of contentment suggest; "Everyone knows how much women enjoy being beaten up."⁵⁵¹ However, their perverse desires are to be repressed by the superego and civilisation. Here is a textual implication for it; "Afterwards, once they were showered and perfumed and sat sipping their drinks on the balcony, staring over the geranium pots at the tourists in the street below, their muttered stories seemed quite

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., 81.

⁵⁵⁰ Seaboyer, "Sadism Demands a Story," 961.

⁵⁵¹ McEwan, *The Comfort of Strangers*, 91.

tasteless, silly, and they did not really talk about them.”⁵⁵² It means, when they are out of their private space, the fantasy space, or as soon as they are again connected to the cultural/symbolic order, the access to innermost desires buried in the id/unconscious ceases too. To be able to continue to live as “normal” human beings once again within the civilised society, they should suppress any lustful or violent fantasies by reducing them to trivialities.

In fact, before the second and last visit to Robert’s estate, some alarm bells already ring for Mary and Colin. Alongside their imaginary scenes of sexual violence foreshadowing the catastrophic future, Mary’s presentiment of what might lie ahead increases the tension in the narrative. As it is clearly recognised by Colin, Mary now appears troubled; and as they both agree, there is something “at the back of her mind, just beyond her reach [...] like a vivid dream that cannot be recalled.”⁵⁵³ She frowns during their conversation which becomes desultory at that day and they go to bed earlier than usual. Mary then wakes with a shout since she has had a nightmare; she begins to tremble and her eyes are fixed on Colin; “her look startled and remote, as though witnessing a catastrophe from a hilltop.”⁵⁵⁴ At this point, Mary whispers; “You’re very beautiful, Colin.”⁵⁵⁵ Upon her nightmare (most probably) about a violence scene between Colin and Robert, *beauty and the beast*, she mentions Colin’s unspoiled beauty, but it also stands for an unsettling *spoiler*, which previously notes that Colin’s heavenly pure body will be eventually spoiled by Robert the spoiler: *beauty would be killed by the beast*. What follows strengthens this suggestion. Throwing her arms around Colin’s neck and kissing his face and head with desperate repetition, Mary says; “‘I’m so frightened. I love you and I’m so frightened,’ she cried. Her body grew tauter and shook till her teeth chattered and she could no longer speak.”⁵⁵⁶ This is nothing but Mary’s goodbye kiss for her beloved one. Foreseeing his death, seemingly, Mary says her farewell to Colin.

⁵⁵² Ibid., 81-82.

⁵⁵³ Ibid., 84.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid., 85.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.

After Colin's insistent questions about the nightmare, Mary explains what she has recognised in horror: the photograph at Robert's is of Colin. Upon this revelation, the terror spreads to Colin as well. His legs twitch violently; he just lies still and his breathing is barely audible. It is terrifying for both because this is the second time⁵⁵⁷ they have been subjected to the perverse gaze, i.e. to the forced spectacle position by the voyeuristic couple. When they later return to the subject on the beach, the greatness of the peril is more visible through their remarks; "Had Robert been following them around with a camera? Was he following them now? [...]. There were cameras everywhere, suspended like aquarium fish against a watery background of limbs and clothes [...]. 'Perhaps', Mary said, 'he thinks you have a nice face.'"⁵⁵⁸ These contemplations are crucial for they suggest, on the one hand, the couple's paranoid condition due to the continuous possibility of perverse/voyeuristic gaze anytime and anywhere and in addition to that, the inclusion of homoeroticism complicating this already perverse scene. While they are talking about the relationship between Caroline and Robert, Colin innocently states; "She's a kind of prisoner / She is a prisoner."⁵⁵⁹ He feels sorry for Caroline, still unknowing that he himself will be the real victim in this story of confinement.

As soon as the tourist couple arrives at Robert and Caroline's house for the last time, Robert takes Colin to his bar while Mary stays at home with Caroline. Holding Colin's hand tightly, Robert chooses "yet another unfamiliar route" in which "everyone seemed to know Robert," which "include the maximum of encounters" pleasing him.⁵⁶⁰ During the walk, Colin thoroughly feels the discomfort of unfamiliarity because this is the other space in every sense. All people around him are "strange" to him at their best; the gaze of the unknown is constantly on him and they speak an unfamiliar language due to which "Colin was not able to follow the conversations."⁵⁶¹ His sole "familiarity"

⁵⁵⁷ "Second time" in terms of the couple's recognition of voyeurism, but chronologically, the photograph itself precedes the voyeuristic act during their stay at Robert's.

⁵⁵⁸ McEwan, *The Comfort of Strangers*, 96.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*

within this nest of other spaces, Mary, is not with him at the moment. When someone pinches Colin's buttock hard on their way, it becomes the concrete equivalence of the sense of uneasiness, the physical indicator of the psychological pressure from the outside. He is haunted and disturbed by *otherness*.

At the bar, one of the first conspicuous novelties is "the number of large black flies which cruised silently between the tables like predatory fish."⁵⁶² It must be a bad omen of things yet to come. Robert then smiles "in simple delight" and reveals what he actually did on their way to the bar; "Everyone we met, I told them that you are my lover, that Caroline is very jealous, and that we are coming here to drink and forget about her."⁵⁶³ This might be considered simply as a male joke perhaps, but as they say *there is a grain of truth in every joke*. The little bit of truth behind this seemingly innocent joke will eventually come out not only as Robert's homoerotic fantasies but also as a turn in his perverse marital bond with Caroline (to be elaborated on later). Upon this and other suspicious details about Robert such as Colin's photograph taken by him, Colin struggles in vain to learn about all the secrets. Every time, Robert is evasive and changes the subject. Colin's restlessness in this enigmatic space is now at the highest level, which shows itself in his own words through nostalgia and desire for homecoming; "The thing about a successful holiday is that it makes you want to go home."⁵⁶⁴

Meanwhile, Caroline explains to Mary in detail how her sadomasochistic marriage has left her body covered in bruises, cuts, and weals, her ribs cracked, her teeth knocked out, her finger broken, and so on, all of which are what gives Robert "some status round the places where he drank" while rendering Caroline "just another beaten wife."⁵⁶⁵ Despite some perverse sexual practices in private, Caroline's statements imply that there is still some kind of repression on social arena, consciously or not, in terms of alternative sex(uality);

⁵⁶² Ibid.

⁵⁶³ Ibid., 103.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid., 105.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid., 109.

When I was alone for long enough, or when I was out with *ordinary people doing ordinary things*, the madness of what we were doing, and my own acquiescence in it, terrified me. I kept telling myself I had to get away. And then, as soon as we were back together again, what had seemed mad became inevitable, even *logical*, once more. Neither of us could resist it. Quite often I was the one to initiate it, and that was never difficult. Robert was longing to pound my body to a pulp.⁵⁶⁶

This is what exactly happens in Mary and Colin's case as argued before; the superego and civilisation strike back. When the perverse couple is out of their fantasy space, once they are on symbolic, cultural, social, "civilised" arenas, some sort of denial and self-restraint step in. All their "abnormal" sexual practices or unorthodox perceptions temporarily fade away. As soon as they are back to the fantasy space, however, the perverse logic takes the control again and *justifies* whatever they desire for satisfaction, even at the cost of unbearable pain.

After Mary is served some drugged herbal tea in the kitchen, she is taken to the bedroom by Caroline. She finds there a wall covered with numerous photographs of Colin, overlapping like a collage, mostly black and white. "We both think he's very beautiful" says Caroline, revealing gradually what has actually been in their minds.⁵⁶⁷ The pictures are black and white, but they are meant to colour the marriage of the perverts. To this end, Colin becomes a medium functioning as the (imaginary) third party for the married couple. Photography serves here as a versatile instrument enabling multifaceted perversion. The act itself, Robert's peeping at the desirable body of Colin as spectacle through a camera lens, is the first phase of the voyeuristic pleasure. Photographing Colin at that moment provides Robert with an opportunity to share this pleasure with his partner Caroline, whose gaze is "contaminated by his" as she would see the body "through the lens of his camera;" "As she looks, she crosses from the position of masochistic object to share the visually active role of voyeur and begins to

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid. (emphases added).

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid., 113.

plan with Robert how to transform sadomasochistic fantasy into deadly reality.”⁵⁶⁸ By *freezing* the very moment of perversion on digital space, Robert is able to carry their object of desire to their own bedroom where they can perpetuate the perverse scene whenever they lust for. Moreover, this photographic feature of “freezing” offers one more possibility for the pervert, as suggested in this excerpt from the story;

Together, the pictures seemed to have *frozen* every familiar expression, the puzzled frown, the puckered lips about to speak, the eyes so readily softened by endearments, and each picture held, and appeared to celebrate, *a different aspect* of that fragile face – the eyebrows that met at a point, the deep-set eyes, the long, straight mouth just parted by the glint of a tooth.⁵⁶⁹

It means, photography promises not only immortalisation of the perverse experience but also celebration of the desired body through the chance of a partial focus. The scope and size of pictures can be adjusted, as Robert and Caroline do here, in accordance with the pervert’s preference of the body parts as *erogenous zones*.

While Mary is losing herself by the paralysing effect of the drug, Caroline starts to speak more frankly about their intentions and fantasies on the tourist couple. Hugging Mary tightly, she states; “Then Robert brought you home. It was as if God was in on our plan. I came into the bedroom. I never concealed that from you. I knew then that *fantasy was passing into reality*. Have you ever experienced that? It’s like *stepping into a mirror*.”⁵⁷⁰ The emphasised phraseology is so inviting here. It is previously discussed in this study that vitreous items (such as mirror, windowpane, and camera lens) help realisation of fantasies and thus gives the pervert an opportunity for a temporary escape from everyday realities. However, Caroline’s approach takes it one step further. It implies that fantasy simulates and then substitutes reality. It is like stepping into the other side of mirror, like passing into another dimension, because there is no more “*the objectively real*” but only subjective fantasies. That is the reason why

⁵⁶⁸ Seaboyer, “Sadism Demands a Story,” 974.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid., 114 (emphases added).

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid. (emphases added).

Mary wakes there "as though into another time in history."⁵⁷¹ She opens her eyes in the pervert's bedroom, i.e. the ultimate fantasy time and space.

As it has been occasionally suggested thus far, the doom of Mary and Colin is foreshadowed one way or another throughout the narrative. Besides what has been hitherto referred, there are some other symbolic elements and instances that might portend the tragic end of the couple: the general sense of regret/compunction, anxiety, and depression often felt by them during the whole holiday, Colin's dreams of "appearing naked before a seated stranger," certain "dead" landscapes (elderly tourists moving around "in reptilian slow motion" and "old [local] women in black shawls, wrapped in silence"), their unpleasant encounters with a cemetery and a hospital, an unknown something biting Mary and the sharp odour of dead fish, Mary's developing some disease symptoms such as cracked lips, narrowing bloodshot eyes with the darkened skin round them, and exhaustion, the feeling of confinement ("It's like a prison here"), the eerie atmosphere and attitudes in Robert's estate, the perpetual focus on and transitions between "whiteness" (doctors/nurses/sickness, shroud/death) and "darkness" (uncanniness, evil, violence, death) along the story, and so on.⁵⁷²

Last but not least, the contribution of the repeatedly accentuated part of "the virile, sentimental song" heard at Robert's bar is undeniable here: "a sardonic 'ha ha ha'."⁵⁷³ As Malcolm suggests, the song itself might be read as a clear allusion to *Death in Venice* in which Aschenbach hears a similar laughing song by a group of musicians on the hotel veranda.⁵⁷⁴ As such a song redolent of a parallel story⁵⁷⁵ which is also

⁵⁷¹ Ibid.

⁵⁷² Ibid., 12, 16, 42-50.

⁵⁷³ Ibid., 29-30, 102-03.

⁵⁷⁴ Malcolm, "Fiction and Evil (II)," 77.

⁵⁷⁵ As my occasional allusions suggest, to a degree we might draw some parallelisms between McEwan's *Comfort* (1981) and Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* published in 1912. Despite the similarities based on their common presence as Venetian narratives (remember the Venetian literary tradition), it should not be neglected that McEwan's is, vis-à-vis Mann's, a *post-modern* story of Venice, of the city of perversion: the space is same, but the time is different. After all, Robert is not Aschenbach and Colin is not Tadzio either. Aschenbach's platonic relationship with Tadzio, his passivity and emotions, are replaced here by Robert's pornographic desire for Colin's body, his aggressive manner and destructive actions. In *Death*, social constraints and a sense of authority are still palpable: Aschenbach's "perverse" inclination, the potential "abnormality" in the eye of the community, can never be realised. It even brings about the aberrant individual's own destruction and death in the end. Yet in *Comfort*, the

about an extremely beautiful male character (Tadzio) pursued by an older man (Aschenbach), which again combines death with homoerotic elements as Malcolm puts it,⁵⁷⁶ it may allude to the inevitability of an analogous tragedy for the protagonists of *Comfort* as well. Apart from that prophetic role, this ironic gesture (“ha ha ha”), strongly evoking the iconic grin of *the Cheshire Cat*, functions in the narrative to convey possession of knowledge; satisfaction, power, and dominance for the owner as opposed to discontent, weakness, and vulnerability for the beholder. During the scene of Robert and Colin at the bar, for instance, it ingeniously supports tension and suspension. While Colin is helplessly and naively inquiring (“Why did you take that picture of me?”), Robert confidently and effortlessly disregards his questions; “Robert was all smiles once more. He leaned back, one arm slung over the back of his chair, beaming self-satisfaction.”⁵⁷⁷ It is in this exact moment of queries that “‘ha ha ha’ was starting again at even greater volume.”⁵⁷⁸ The music may then disappear in the narrative just as *the Cheshire Cat* does in *Alice*, but the pregnant sense of “ha ha ha” persists till the end like the cat’s mischievous smile. “The ready smile” of Caroline upon Mary’s question, “What did you do to your back?,” works in the same way.⁵⁷⁹ The mastery of Robert and Caroline against Colin and Mary is rooted in the unbalanced level of knowledge and reflected through the smiling faces of the former contrasting the bewildered faces of the latter. In *Comfort*, *ignorance is not bliss*, rather *hamartia*, the tragic flaw of Colin and Mary.

Their late recognition of the secret plan of the perverse couple is of no use in reversing the situation to prevent the downfall. If so, what is that secret plan of Robert and Caroline, what is their big project that causes Colin and Mary to be their sacrificial victims? To comprehend it, we need to go back to the conversation between Caroline and Mary to review what she has disclosed about their innermost fantasy:

winner is Robert the pervert, namely, deviant deeds rather than platonic emotions. The absence of any authority mechanism in this new Venice of the postmodern age reverses the situation and culminates in the death of Colin, the desired object of the perverse subject.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁷ McEwan, *The Comfort of Strangers*, 103.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid., 103-04.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., 107.

Robert confessed one night that there was only one thing he really wanted. *He wanted to kill me, as we made love.* He was absolutely serious. I remember the next day we went to a restaurant and tried to laugh it off. *But the idea kept coming back.* Because of that possibility hanging over us, we made love like never before. One night Robert came in from an evening drinking, just as I was falling asleep. He got into bed and took me from behind. He whispered he was going to kill me, but he'd said that many times before. He had his forearm round my neck, and then he began to push into the small of my back. At the same time he pulled my head backwards. I blacked out with the pain, but even before I went I remember thinking: it's going to happen. I can't go back on it now. Of course, I wanted to be destroyed. My back was broken and I was in hospital for months. I'll never walk properly now [...]. When I came out, the idea was that we were going to be sensible. We were shaken up by what had happened. [...]. But of course, we couldn't forget what we'd been through, nor could we stop wanting it. We were the same people after all, and this idea, I mean the idea of death, wouldn't go away just because we said it had to. We didn't talk about it, it was impossible to talk about it, *but it showed through in different ways.*⁵⁸⁰

In other words, Robert passionately dreams (just as his namesake does in *Crash*) of combining orgasm and death, Eros and Thanatos. It becomes not only his but also his wife's ultimate fantasy to enjoy the conjoined Eros and Thanatos, the repressed phenomena by the "civilised" society. It is such a great desire that in spite of restraining attempts by the superego and civilisation, the idea keeps coming back as *the return of the repressed*. Even the possibility of it, as an unrealised ambition, means greater orgasmic pleasure for the perverse couple since it becomes some kind of revolt against any social constraints on deviant fantasies. It is so far so good, but what might Caroline mean by adding that "it showed through in different ways?" Their ultimate fantasy persists, yet the ways to achieve it transform. The main new direction for the couple to that end is substitution in sexual roles through the non-consensual inclusion of Colin into the dangerous game.

Colin represents an important milestone in the sadomasochistic marriage of Robert and Caroline; he initiates a new turn in their sexual life. Until his entry as the third partner (once as imaginary) into the relationship, Robert has been the absolute

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid., 109-11 (emphases added).

sadist while Caroline has played the masochistic role. As such, however, the couple's ultimate fantasy would be possible just for once. It would definitely end with Caroline's death during one of their violent sexual intercourses. Upon this recognition, the couple spends days by looking at the beautiful pictures of Colin and profoundly "making plans" as Caroline admits.⁵⁸¹ According to the plan that will start the new phase in their SM fantasies, Colin as the couple's object of obsession in common would substitute for Caroline to perform the passive victim while the latter would collaborate with her husband to play the possessor, the sadistic aggressor. In doing so, the couple would be able to perpetuate the ultimately perverse scene forever since they can always find another person to victimise after Colin. Caroline says that Colin makes them "closer and closer again,"⁵⁸² but he is probably only a pioneer of all the future victims through which the perverse marriage will survive.

The torture scene at the end of the novel stands for the ultimate fantasy of the perverse couple as well as for the ultimate multilayered perversion example throughout the narrative. First, Caroline arranges Mary's body in such a way that she can easily watch what will happen soon (bringing to mind the HOME scene in *Clockwork*). Both Mary and Colin are now worried about each other. Colin supposes that she is in pain, but the real pain derives from foreseeing the painful future of her beloved one. She knows it, yet cannot speak about it owing to the negative effect of the drug. During the whole scene, she is physically paralysed whilst Colin is mentally so. The tragic flaw of ignorance comes to the end with an unbearable knowledge, at the cost of a painful wisdom. Robert and Caroline start to touch and kiss Colin by force. The ugly monster and his accomplice desire to discover and disturb this new territory, Colin's body, to spoil the unspoiled beauty. At this point, Caroline asks Mary; "Still awake?"⁵⁸³ It signals not only Mary's but also our (as readers) position of the voyeur meanwhile; besides, it indicates the importance of the said position for the perverse drama of the couple: the greatest pleasure deriving from the pain of the other, seen through the

⁵⁸¹ Ibid., 113.

⁵⁸² Ibid.

⁵⁸³ Ibid., 120.

helpless gaze of the victims. Colin's words here encapsulate this helplessness; "I'll do whatever you want [...]." ⁵⁸⁴

Robert then draws his razor lightly, "almost playfully," across Colin's wrist and opens wide the artery, which leads him to death. The literal breaking of Colin's flawless complexion also means a metaphorical break in the ideas of perfection and purity. At this very moment of Thanatos, Eros steps in: Robert and Caroline (impliedly) begin to make love in the presence of Colin's dying body. They realise their ultimate fantasy at last, albeit through the agency of another's body. Thus, this sacrificial ritual finally culminates as such: Colin becomes the sadistic (false) patriarch's, Robert the God's, victim in his "shrine." ⁵⁸⁵ Caroline is somehow promoted from the position of victim to that of "goddess" who will cooperate with Robert the God in his destructive pursuits hereafter. This serious turn in their lives, the transition to the new chapter of sexuality in their marriage, is symbolised spatially as well. We learn that they move from this house to another. In a word, their *fantasy space* will never be the same after this extreme sexual experiment; it will change both literally and figuratively.

It might be really puzzling for the reader to figure out why Robert and Caroline leave the crime scene without killing Mary, the sole eyewitness of the sexual murder. Indeed, the answer lies in disguise inside the very question: Mary survives because she is the lone spectator of this perverse scenario. She will never forget even the slightest details of this terrifying experience. Whenever she tells anybody what happened there (to the police for instance), she involuntarily becomes the narrator of the perverse scriptwriters, their unwilling agent to transfer and perpetuate the deviant drama. The ultimate fantasy of Robert and Caroline will live forever in and through the memory of Mary.

As such, that torture scene is the perversion *par excellence* in the novel. There is a dramatically complex perverse structure formed by McEwan. SM might be the umbrella term here, but we have also a number of other subcategories complicating the scene. First of all, the participants are divided into two groups: on the one side, Robert

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid., 121.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid., 105.

and Caroline as masters, as subjects of consensual SM practices; on the other side, Colin and Mary as slaves, as objects of non-consensual SM practices. Second, heterosexuality is disturbed along the scene by alternatives and possibilities: homosexuality and bisexuality. Robert lusts for Colin as well as for Caroline. This is a threesome sexual activity, but the third partner is included forcefully. Therefore, some concepts such as violence, sexual abuse/rape, and confinement prevail there only to cause more entanglements within that orgiastic performance. What is more, we have Mary as the forced voyeur of all these perversions involving her boyfriend: shame and humiliation become other parts of this perverse scenario. Encircling the whole of this perverse fiction, or the fictional perversion, is us as readers, holding our own voyeuristic position as porn-spectators of McEwan.

The last lines of the novel, as well as of this chapter of my study, are to suggest how delusive first impressions might be, especially with regards to travelling in this context. When Mary wakes after the tragic death of Colin, she realises that the perverse couple has already run away. What she also recognises disappointedly is that “[...] the packed, chaotic city concealed a thriving, intricate bureaucracy, a hidden order of governmental departments with separate but overlapping functions, distinct procedures and hierarchies [...].”⁵⁸⁶ She is questioned by the officials over and over again, photographed, dictated statements, and bothered with numerous documents and pictures. Furthermore, the officials ask her some absurd questions and make irrelevant comments about the case. Their discourse implies not only sexism, but also paranoia and schizophrenia attributed to Mary’s claims about the murder. This is a beautiful ancient city in appearance, but the discomfort of unfamiliarity turns it into a maddening labyrinth.

Going back to the hotel room for the last time, Mary folds and packs the clothes into bags; and then “[s]he crumbled the remaining marihuana, and washed it down the hand basin.”⁵⁸⁷ Marihuana is focussed here implicitly to convey how illusory the tourist couple’s holiday has come out. Besides, the statement suggests that their initial hopes

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid., 122.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid., 124.

and dreams now sink into deep frustration just like the washed down marihuana. Much harsher symbolism is confronted in the hospital where Mary is supposed to identify Colin's dead body lying on his back covered by a sheet. The story which starts happily with the hotel room sheet ends sadly with the hospital sheet. "The sheet" itself is the same thing after all, but perceiving it as a particular image, the conjunctures appear very dissimilar: hotel and hospital, pleasure and pain. It must be McEwan's idiosyncratic way of paraphrasing that "travelling is a brutality." Despite a myriad of threatening experiences they have gone through there, the tourist couple's indecisiveness and unwillingness to escape from the dreadful city is very absorbing, even thought-provoking. That is the reason why Malcolm raises some baffling questions on the sexual murder of Colin who stands still there and unresisting and on Mary's watching "every nuance of a private fantasy" meanwhile with only partial "explanations" afterwards and silence in the end: "whose fantasy? Is it solely Robert's, or Robert's and Caroline's? Or is it at least hinted that Colin and Mary are partly complicit in their own fates? [...]. To what degree is this murder Colin's and Mary's own fantasy of escape, of thrill, gone terribly wrong?"⁵⁸⁸ Similarly, upon their powerlessness and inability to resist "the strange allure of the machismo Robert" and the idea of going back to his house of horror, Head argues that "Like Aschenbach [from *Death in Venice*], Colin and Mary seem to desire their own destruction at some deeper level [...]."⁵⁸⁹ Considering all of these arguments by juxtaposing them with Cesare Pavese's statement of brutality, maybe travelling is rather some sort of masochism, a consensual way of getting painful pleasure.

⁵⁸⁸ Malcolm, "Fiction and Evil (II)," 86-87.

⁵⁸⁹ Head, "Dreams of Captivity," 57, 59, 65.

4.4. An Excursus on Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* (2005): Cloned Bodies and/as Nonsexual Perversion

We're modelled from *trash*.
—Ruth⁵⁹⁰

Poor creatures. What did we do to you? With all our schemes and plans?
—Madame⁵⁹¹

I can see [...] that it might look as though you were simply pawns in a game.
[...] But think of it. You were lucky pawns.
—Miss Emily⁵⁹²

It might be just some trend that came and went [...]. But for us, it's our life.
—Kathy⁵⁹³

Set in the 1990s' England, *Never Let Me Go* is narrated by Kathy H.—now a thirty-one-year-old woman—who introduces herself as a carer looking after organ donors. She retrospectively tells her story including her childhood and adolescence memories with her best friends Tommy and Ruth, with whom she grows up together at a boarding school named Hailsham. During their childhood, Kathy is the one who has been fond of Tommy; however, Ruth starts to date him after a while. In their school where the clones are called special “students” while the teachers are known as “guardians,” the children are disciplined and educated; they are supposed to produce art (to be displayed in exhibitions, chosen by Madame for her “Gallery,” and used in Exchanges with other students) and spend their time in Sales (during which they can buy small things), but more importantly, they are dictated to maintain their bodies healthy. Though the students vaguely acknowledge what is in fact intended about them, the real purpose of their existence is never completely revealed to them. When they are sixteen, Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth are taken to the Cottages where they are expected to live with other students from other similar institutions and to gradually get used to

⁵⁹⁰ Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (New York: Vintage, 2010), 166.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 254.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*, 266.

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*

social life and “normal” people around before their training (to become first carers, then donors). One day, they all go on a trip to see Ruth’s “possible” (the original model she is cloned from), a decent woman resembling her, but only to find out that she is not, which heavily disappoints Ruth and causes her to angrily say that they all must have been cloned from “trash” human originals. After some unsettling experiences in her relationship with Ruth, especially about Tommy, Kathy decides to apply to become carer, leaves the Cottages, and does not see her friends for a long time. About ten years later, before Ruth’s second donation which will be probably more painful than the first, Kathy becomes her carer. By taking Tommy (who is now, as a good donor, at another recovery centre) with them, they go on a trip during which Ruth expresses how she regrets for keeping Kathy and Tommy apart for years, how she can now correct her mistake by giving them Madame’s address to apply for “deferral” (they believe that true lovers, if they can prove it with their art works, can get donations postponed for a few years). Shortly after this instance, Ruth “completes” (dies and “donates” her remaining organs) and Kathy, who now becomes Tommy’s carer, begins to date him. When the couple goes to Madame’s house for deferral with Tommy’s drawings that will hopefully be proofs of their love, they also see Miss Emily, the headmistress at Hailsham, and the two women disclose not only the fact that there has never been any possibility for deferral but also all hidden truths and motivations behind the various donation programmes formulated so far. While Hailsham (which is now closed) was there to provide the clones with more humane treatment than the previous executions, art works were there only to prove that the clones too, like “normal” human beings, have souls, all of which causes a great disappointment particularly for Tommy. After Tommy’s fourth donation and completion, Kathy (who is now waiting for her own donations) finishes her story at Norfolk, “the lost corner of England,” where she nostalgically fantasises everyone and everything she has lost.

This supplementary chapter on Ishiguro’s *Never* will be at once both separate from and related to the main subject of my dissertation. So far, the discussions on the perverse logic have mostly revolved around the axis of sexuality. In other words, either sex or sexuality has somehow been at the centre while analysing the perverse characters and their deviant actions in the fictional works covered throughout this study. For the

first time, the main focus will be on nonsexual perversion, that is, *bodily but not including any sexual motivation or intention*.⁵⁹⁴ In addition to this turn in the course of the study, another move will come to the fore in terms of the phenomena of pain & pleasure. Unlike the previous cases in which perversion has been rather considered in the complexity of pain and pleasure, perversion in *Never* is regarded and confronted as an almost purely painful experience. While, in the trio of *Clockwork*, *Crash*, and *Comfort*, there are many sadistic characters getting pleasure from the pain of others, even masochistic ones satisfied through his/her own pain, we can never encounter the pleasurable part of the story in *Never*. In Ishiguro's novel, there is not any pervert character, at least no *visible* personae, to reflect perversion as a delightful practice.⁵⁹⁵ On the contrary, perversion here is presented as a truly terrifying experience or tragedy, as a unique ideological apparatus to victimise "the others" of the novel. To strengthen this approach, Ishiguro chooses Kathy, a cloned body, as the first-person narrator of her own tragic story. It means that this time, we will see perversion directly through the eyes of its victims, from the subjective perspective of the sufferer. Last but not least, this chapter will also complete the contemporary fictional journey of this dissertation regarding the perverse representation of the human body in the post-1950s' English literature. The novels studied hitherto shed light on different decades of the same era, respectively, the 1960s (*Clockwork*), the 1970s (*Crash*), and the 1980s (*Comfort*). Ishiguro's *Never*, set in the 1990s and published in the 2000s, will function as both a literary and a historical bridge between the second half of the twentieth century and the

⁵⁹⁴ However, it does not mean that *Never* has nothing to do with sexuality or that it cannot be analysed from that perspective. In fact, the novel directly or indirectly conveys a number of different approaches to sexuality such as procreative, heteronormative, and religious. Already, there is an exemplary study reading this novel as a critique of heteronormative constructions of heterosexuality while considering the clones as "queers," as the "abnormals" existing against reproductive human sexuality with their artificial "birth" and inability to give birth. For this and other debates of the same work, see below:

Rachel Carroll, "Imitations of Life: Cloning, Heterosexuality and the Human in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*," in *Rereading Heterosexuality: Feminism, Queer Theory and Contemporary Fiction* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 131-48.

⁵⁹⁵ At this point, perhaps, one might indicate the patrons of the clone programmes—who are sometimes referred as "they" by Kathy—as the representatives of sadistic pleasure regarding the perverse case in question, but even so, do not forget that "they" are never seen in person along the novel.

new millennium. In so doing, this chapter will be truly supplementary for the contextual integrity of my study.

In the light of these introductory notes, I will discuss how and why *Never* stands as a very pregnant literary source to analyse *the spatial body* (one of my basic concepts throughout the dissertation), but this time in the context of bodily nonsexual perversion. In this narrative, the notion of body occupies such a significant position that it nearly becomes the protagonist of the novel by itself. The prevalent perverse gaze of the novel—for which the ultimate desire is organ harvesting at any cost—transforms human body into organ field. As a result, private bodies of the minority are perversely meant to function as public arenas for the good of the majority.

The spatial awareness in the novel draws attention in the very beginning. Hailsham, the place where the clones spend the whole of their childhood and early adolescent period, represents the confined space *par excellence*. Just like the following spaces of the narrative such as the other “schools,” the Cottages, the hospitals, and the recovery centres, Hailsham is under the perpetual surveillance of the medical authorities (to whom Kathy occasionally refers as “they,” or whom Tommy defines as “people higher up than [Madame], people who never set foot in Hailsham”⁵⁹⁶). For Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth as well as their friends, these are all forbidden zones ruled with certain principles and restrictions, yet Hailsham is the one that has laid the foundation of confinement. It intentionally constructs a predestined world for the clones to form and manipulate their consciousness. That is the reason why Kathy reminds us, her readers, of the fact that to them, “[...] any place beyond Hailsham was like a fantasy land” and they had “only the haziest notions of the world outside and about what was and wasn’t possible there.”⁵⁹⁷

At Hailsham, the boundaries between the inside and the outside are marked and maintained through respectively two basic strategies or mechanisms: control and self-control. For the first one, the primal step is to enclose the garden with wire-mesh fences. Then, “they” set a number of strict rules to protect the order (such as no

⁵⁹⁶ Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, 177.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 66.

smoking, no closed doors except sleeping times, and so on). For the second one, some sort of *false consciousness* helps the system. From the cradle to the grave, the clones are educated and disciplined in such a “special” way that they unconsciously internalise the confinement. This conditioning manipulates how the clones make value judgements. A prominent example is related to the record of donation. Among the clones, one of the greatest “shames” is to complete very early, during the second donation for instance. Likewise, they glorify “pretty good donors” (on their fourth donation), who are therefore “treated with special respect,” even by doctors and nurses.⁵⁹⁸ The students cannot truly comprehend, even “until they switch them off,” that this is in fact a “horror movie” which is scripted by others on their bodies, in which they are neither the saviours of humanity nor the heroes deserving medal of honour but merely the pawns of the powerful, the victims.⁵⁹⁹ Such a false consciousness is the product of a long process, the outcome of automatisisation and intensification of the control through the mechanism of self-control: continuously circulating among the students through oral transmission, there are “all kinds of horrible stories about the woods” beyond Hailsham; there is also “an unspoken agreement” among them about some unspeakable subjects and unquestionable topics—so much so that there would be “severe punishment for any idiot” that carelessly breaks the unwritten rules.⁶⁰⁰ It seems that the clones are fully assimilated into the culture of *discipline and punish* imposed on them from scratch. This is in a way *cultural hegemony* executed by the ruling class of Hailsham which draws on Foucauldian mechanisms. In his detailed reading of *Never* from Foucault’s point of view, Kai Yan defines such an authority as “bio-power” that is body-politically able to manipulate the clones, to make them *docile bodies* by the agency of *panopticon*-like construction of Hailsham.⁶⁰¹

This perverse structure, founded on the literal space of Hailsham, is perpetuated through metaphorical space, i.e. the cloned human body. More exactly, the bodies of the

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid., 225-27, 278.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid., 279.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid., 50, 84, 123.

⁶⁰¹ Kai Yan, “Posthuman Biopredicament: A Study of Biodystopia in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*,” *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 9, no. 5 (2019): 594-602.

students physically confined within the borders of the school turn into figurative confined space on which the medical authorities are able to carry out their perverse fantasies under a cloak of donation. It immediately evokes the case of *Clockwork's* Alex, whose body is (ab)used by some politicians in the guise of scientific experimentation. Indeed, both novels offer some sort of medical programmes including their protagonists; yet, the condition of Kathy and her friends is worse than Alex's. In Burgess's speculation, Alex at least *volunteers* to attend, but Ishiguro's clones are doomed to go through a preordained fate. Here are two novelists and two similar but still exclusive visions from two different parts of the same period, the contemporary era: 1960s and 2000s. This discrepancy must be related to changing perceptions and the waning of hope on humanity as time flies destructively in the century. While explaining why she was weeping when she noticed Kathy, playing the song "Never Let Me Go," clutching a pillow to her breast and dancing by herself in melancholia at Hailsham, Madame's words tell us something about the issue; "I saw a new world coming rapidly. More scientific, efficient, yes. More cures for the old sicknesses. Very good. But a harsh, cruel world. And I saw a little girl, her eyes tightly closed, holding to her breast the old kind world, one that she knew in her heart could not remain, and she was holding it and pleading, never to let her go."⁶⁰² As suggested by Ishiguro through his character's mouth, the new world order might be more "scientific" and efficient in a way, but it also means much more powerful -and more perverse- domination of individuals and less free will for the latter on their own bodies. The gradually decreasing right to one's own body in real life brings about much darker dystopian vision in fictional world as vividly depicted throughout *Never*.⁶⁰³

Thus, when Madame finishes her above words with an important statement ("Poor creatures. I wish I could help you. But you're by yourselves"⁶⁰⁴), she in fact portrays the general human condition during the late contemporary period, how we as

⁶⁰² Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, 272.

⁶⁰³ To see all dystopian aspects of *Never*, see below:

Kalina Maleska, "Clones are Humans: The Dystopian Elements in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*," *Journal of Contemporary Philology* 2, no. 1 (2019): 123-38.

⁶⁰⁴ Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, 272.

the contemporary subjects are helpless against some crucial but cruel “improvements” *transcending* us (not only in science but also in any other domains). The present macrocosmic crisis in human subjectivity is therefore represented by the microcosm of a clone colony in the novel. From this perspective, Yan is right when he perceives Ishiguro’s narrative as “a biodystopian narrative that reflects universal human conditions and reveals the posthuman predicament.”⁶⁰⁵

In this “special” clone commune consisting of artificially produced subjects, there are only predestined bodies and lives. A particular life scenario about their bodies has been already written by others long before their creation by the same others; that is why, they have nothing but “the natural course to follow.”⁶⁰⁶ In a nutshell, these are the successive stages every single cloned body has to go through to be a useful subject for the system: to be copied from an original/model→ “studentship” in a “school” (more humane nurture; institutionalised disciplinary education, production and protection of healthy bodies by means of weekly medical examinations and medicines)→ distribution to different districts / transition to social (but still restricted) life→ training to become a carer and then taking care of donors at medical institutions→ to become a donor, shuttling between hospital and recovery centre, nonstop donations till “completion”/death→ extraction of the remaining organs (a useful subject even as a dead body⁶⁰⁷). Moreover, during such a monotonous life course in which various subject positions are regulated with official forms to be filled by every student, each cloned body is forced to endure endless medical analyses and laboratory tests. As such, the clones merely function as small gears of the gigantic machinery called donation

⁶⁰⁵ Yan, “Posthuman Biopredicament,” 594.

⁶⁰⁶ Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, 197.

⁶⁰⁷ J. Paul Narkunas comments on this idea from the perspective that the clones have already been trained, as their life goal, to virtue and achieve “full selfhood” only by means of “completion.” This is indeed how they become “full subjects;” “They live on through the bodies of others; their death paradoxically ‘completes’ their subjectivity.” For this point of view and more, see below:

J. Paul Narkunas, “Reification of the Human: Global Organ Harvesting and Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*,” in *Reified Life: Speculative Capital and the Ahuman Condition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2018), 227-47.

programme.⁶⁰⁸ The machine should always work at any cost; therefore, any “dead” part of it should be immediately substituted with a new one. Just like lab rats, the clones get trapped in this vicious circle *exceeding* their own existence and their own realities. This association brings to mind Charlie Chaplin’s *Modern Times* (1936) and its pivotal scene where the tramp as a worker is maddened and eventually swallowed by the rapidly running huge machinery he tries to keep up with. As the products of the very system they operate in, the clones are also its ultimate victims doomed to be systematically swallowed, consumed, and exterminated at last.

Ironically, they are as such both indispensable and expandable at once. The donation system which has been completely founded on their existence cannot work without them, but they are needed merely as the bodies, as the flesh and the blood rather than the mind or the soul. Within this organisation based on such a perverse fragmentation and reduction, the clones paradoxically become the ostracised others, albeit their constituent status as donors.⁶⁰⁹ They are the minority, the sacrificial lambs for the good of the majority, and in a way the scapegoats of society to mask and gratify its deficiencies. They are deemed martyrs of the community from which they are excluded. They are ordained to “donate” their vital organs to complete a lack of a “normal” citizen, but this “completion” oddly renders their own bodies incomplete, even inanimate in the end.

This perverse body politics that requires strict social control over the cloned bodies stands side by side with social hypocrisy, selfishness, and self-delusion in *Never*. Despite their essential contribution to humanity, the clones are popularly considered and treated as if they were nonhumans. “Carers aren’t machines” says Kathy and neither are donors, but they are all socially positioned as robots having only one

⁶⁰⁸ Here, we can also count the rest of the “visible” characters in the narrative (such as the doctors, the nurses, the coordinators, and even the guardians) as mere servants of the “invisible” powerful, as ignorant contributors to a huge organisation beyond their limited knowledge. Remember that there are some other people “who never set foot in Hailsham,” who are superior to all these subjects in hierarchy.

⁶⁰⁹ There is also a study wholly on the problematic presence of clones as “the other” in clone narratives, see below:

Maria Aline Salgueiro Seabra Ferreira, *I am the Other: Literary Negotiations of Human Cloning* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2005).

necessary function: to donate, to be good donors “to be chosen and picked.”⁶¹⁰ The society in the novel fancies and ostracises the cloned body either as commodity or as *xenomorph* (a strange form, an alien creature). Kathy explains us how they are always the abnormal other or the grotesque in the eyes; “[Madame] was afraid of us in the same way someone might be afraid of spiders;” “I don’t know if [Madame] recognised us at that point; but without doubt, she saw and decided in a second *what we were*, because you could see her stiffen—as if a pair of large spiders was set to crawl towards her;” “Madame never liked us. She’s always been afraid of us. In the way people are afraid of spiders and things;” “[Miss Emily says] We’re *all* afraid of you. I myself had to fight back my dread of you all almost every day I was at Hailsham. There were times I’d look down at you all from my study window and I’d feel such revulsion...”⁶¹¹

Chapter 22, in which Madame and Miss Emily eventually reveal what “the project” was really about, all its achievements, disappointments, and disillusionment, is indeed the part where the argued problematic social reactions to the donation programmes and the clones are the most explicit.⁶¹² While claiming their own project’s superiority to the earlier programmes as being “a more humane and better way of doing things,” Miss Emily reminds that in the early days, all clones or students existed only to supply medical science and they were merely “shadowy objects in test tubes” to most people.⁶¹³ For a long time, she continues, people appreciated all these new possibilities and all these ways to cure so many previously incurable conditions by believing that “these organs appeared from nowhere, at most that they grew in a kind of vacuum.”⁶¹⁴ However, she adds, people then started to question and feel uncomfortable about the clones’ existence, about “how [they] were reared, whether [they] should have been brought into existence at all.”⁶¹⁵ Even so, since they were more concerned about their relatives in need of healthy organs, the same people did their best not to think about the

⁶¹⁰ Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, 4.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, 35, 248, 268-69.

⁶¹² *Ibid.*, 256-75.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*

clones by keeping them in the shadows; “And if they did, they tried to convince themselves you weren’t really like us. That you were *less than human*, so it didn’t matter.”⁶¹⁶ Miss Emily concludes by stating that society definitely requires the clones to donate, but “there would always be a barrier against seeing [them] as *properly human*.”⁶¹⁷

Last but not least on this discussion, “the Morningdale scandal” is indeed scandalous, yet from a different perspective, by being another illustration of social uneasiness about human cloning and a possible future crisis in human condition. As clarified by Miss Emily, a scientist called James Morningdale wanted to offer people, by going far beyond legal boundaries, the possibility of having children with enhanced characteristics such as superior intelligence and superior athleticism, but it only created a negative atmosphere among society; “It reminded people, reminded them of a fear they’d always had. It’s one thing to create students, such as yourselves, for the donation programme. But a generation of created children who’d take their place in society? Children demonstrably *superior* to the rest of us? Oh no. That frightened people. They recoiled from that.”⁶¹⁸ It means that the donation programmes and the clones are all good and consensual as long as they just function to help anthropocentric desire and its fantasies. Whenever they threaten the notion of human –its presence, uniqueness, and future– they should be stopped and wiped out urgently.

The whole narrative of Ishiguro thus unearths a perverse social gaze at the cloned body, publicly making the latter confined space for the welfare of the majority. The result of such a spatio-bodily perversion by society becomes existential crisis for the cloned subjects, which also causes a sense of alienation from their own bodies. The confusion starts for them at the very early ages when, in Kathy’s words, “[...] we knew a few things about ourselves—about who we were, how we were different from our guardians, from the people outside—but hadn’t yet understood what any of it meant.”⁶¹⁹

⁶¹⁶ Ibid. (emphasis added).

⁶¹⁷ Ibid. (emphasis added).

⁶¹⁸ Ibid.

⁶¹⁹ Ibid., 36.

Estrangement from other people around goes hand in hand with estrangement from “the self;”

So you’re waiting, even if you don’t quite know it, waiting for the moment when you realise that you really are different to them; that there are people out there, like Madame, who don’t hate you or wish you any harm, but who nevertheless shudder at the very thought of you—of how you were brought into this world and why—and who dread the idea of your hand brushing against theirs. The first time you glimpse yourself through the eyes of a person like that, it’s a cold moment. It’s like walking past a mirror you’ve walked past every day of your life, and suddenly it shows you something else, something troubling and strange.⁶²⁰

That is, while the clones are idly and absurdly *waiting* (not for *Godot*, still as fruitless as Vladimir and Estragon’s existential wait) for things to be clarified and get better for them, they are in fact just waiting for the ultimate end, i.e. donations and death. Meanwhile, the gaze of other people not only reflects but also intensifies the bizarreness of their existence. The clones are born into a pre-constructed world where they are accepted neither as “properly human” nor as definitely nonhuman.⁶²¹ They are as such innately confined within a liminal space that brings nothing but an everlasting enigma and grief.⁶²² They suffer *too* just like “normal” people out there; the fact that they are not out of sexual reproduction does not ease the pain.

⁶²⁰ Ibid.

⁶²¹ This world is described by Chi-she Li as “the (new) biotech world” which is governed by “the biotech regime.” Reading *Never* as an example of ontological fiction, Li points to a fundamental distinction between humans and clones and argues about the latter’s unavailing attempts for socialisation. For these points and more, see below:

Chi-she Li, “Altered Realism in Ontological Fiction: *Never Let Me Go* and *Point Omega*,” in *Digitalizing the Global Text: Philosophy, Literature, and Culture*, ed. Paul Allen Miller (Columbia, South Carolina: The University of South Carolina Press, 2019), 147-70.

⁶²² As Narkunas argues, this is the way the bio-ethically problematic biotechnological world works. This world positions the clones “external to any legal protections.” As such, they are always somewhere in-between “natural” human and nonhuman; as “nonhuman others,” “the ahumans,” “posthumans,” “technohumans,” “biological-machine things,” and “vivisected objects” in Narkunas’s terminology. To view this and more, see below:

Narkunas, “Reification of the Human,” 227-47.

For the clones, this existential pain and alienation from the body turn into a lifelong trauma and disappointment. That they have no surnames (only initials added to first names as in “Kathy H.”) implies that they have no sense of belongingness to any family line or to any place. They are all alone by themselves; they have nothing except their bodies as their one and only asset, even as the purpose of their existence. Their bodies are biotic after all, yet these bodies are meant to be marketable commodity for the sake of organ harvesting. The clones are intentionally and systematically cultured into this capitalistic idea of commodification, eventually alienating them from their own bodies. They are taught that they can buy things by selling their art works in Sales. During that, they use tokens earned in exchange with their paintings and the like; therefore, they get used to the motto that everything has a price, with *use value* and *exchange value*. They gradually internalise the capitalist system imposed on them and start to think in that way.⁶²³ In this sense, the idea of *unzipping* body “like a bag opening up” goes beyond a funny childish joke among the students, as Kathy comments on it; “The idea was that when the time [of donations] came, you’d be able to just to unzip a bit of yourself, a kidney or something would slide out, and you’d hand it over.”⁶²⁴ In a word, the cloned body metaphorically and spatially transformed into an organ field serves as a public domain, a public property.

⁶²³ There have been two significant studies reading *Never* through Marxist theory as a whole:

First, Mark Rollins’s analysis of the novel considers it as a critique of “the labor and consumer practices of contemporary capitalism.” Accordingly, by the agency of the clone experience, Ishiguro aims to demonstrate “how the principles of gift exchange can be perversely appropriated by the practice of commodification,” and how this “perversion of gift exchange” becomes one of the primary strategies “to condition the clones to accept their fate,” the removal of their organs as gifts out of generosity (Hail-sham is therefore suggestive: the exchange of art as a sham, a deception). To see this class-conscious approach to the novel, see below:

Mark Rollins, “Caring is a Gift: Gift Exchange and Commodification in Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*,” *CEA Critic* 77, no. 3 (2015): 350-56.

Second, Narkunas’s study analyses the novel mostly through the universal “ahuman” condition in the free-market system. Accordingly, both this fictional world and the real world are dominated by the idea of “the body as a site of political, economic, and social policies,” by “the reification of humans as an assemblage of parts readied for capital valuation,” and by “the instrumentalisation of the human body through global organ harvesting.” For this extensive examination of the organ donation market, see below:

Narkunas, “Reification of the Human,” 227-47.

⁶²⁴ Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, 85, 87-88.

The crisis goes on after Hailsham and peaks when the clones seriously acknowledge the “possible” issue for the first time. Among the students, the basic idea behind the possibles theory is this; “Since each of us was copied at some point from a normal person, there must be, for each of us, somewhere out there, a model getting on with his or her life. This meant, at least in theory, you’d be able to find the person you were modelled from.”⁶²⁵ This theory makes the clones keep an eye out for their possibles whenever they are out there in social life. Yet, their quest for the origin(al) poses a myriad of existential questions, let alone any satisfactory explanation;

Then there were those questions about why we wanted to track down our models at all. One big idea behind finding your model was that when you did, you’d glimpse your future. [...]. Nevertheless, we all of us, to varying degrees, believed that when you saw the person you were copied from, you’d get *some* insight into who you were deep down, and maybe too, you’d see something of what your life held in store. There were some who thought it stupid to be concerned about possibles at all. Our models were an irrelevance, a technical necessity for bringing us into the world, nothing more than that. It was up to each of us to make of our lives what we could. This was the camp Ruth always claimed to side with, and I probably did too. All the same, whenever we heard reports of a possible—whoever it was for—we couldn’t help getting curious.⁶²⁶

The existential quest results in huge disappointment for the clones. When they recognise that the decent woman who might hopefully be Ruth’s clone model is not indeed, Ruth goes through a violent outburst;

They don’t ever, *ever*, use people like that woman. We’re not modelled from that sort... [...]. We all know it. We’re modelled from *trash*. Junkies, prostitutes, winos, tramps. Convicts, maybe, just so long as they aren’t psychos. [...]. A woman like that? Come on. [...]. If you want to look for possibles, if you want to do it properly, then you look in the gutter. You look in rubbish bins. Look down the toilet, that’s where you’ll find where we all came from.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁵ Ibid., 139.

⁶²⁶ Ibid., 139-40.

⁶²⁷ Ibid., 166.

A similar tantrum is experienced by Kathy during the period when she gets sudden strong feelings to have sex. In order to retrace it by thinking that it must have something to do with her actual clone model, she looks through, in tears, some old porn magazines and scans faces of the porn stars for some similarity. In brief, the students' search for clues about their past, present, and future is all vain because the masters of donation programmes have perversely desired and regulated the system in that way. The cloned subject is doomed to be *the body from nowhere*.

Concluding this chapter, a few additional remarks on *Never* might be helpful to make its finalising commentary. First of all, Hailsham provides Ishiguro with a unique opportunity to observe the contemporary world and its subjects. To this end, it becomes *simulation* of the real world where the author can allegorically challenge the notion of human and taken-for-granted ideas of humanity through *simulacra*, cultural (artificially-produced) copies of natural (procreated) human beings.⁶²⁸ Especially by means of some key phrases intentionally uttered throughout the narrative (such as “normal people,” “properly human,” and “fully human”), Ishiguro draws attention to how normality is culturally constructed, so much so regarding anthropocentric humanity and its essentialism. With its educated and cultured clones whose life scenarios have been already devised by the powerful others within a particular system,⁶²⁹ Hailsham (re)presents the contemporary human subjectivity in a nutshell.

⁶²⁸ The contemporary era indeed offers us a multitude of possibilities and alternatives to suggest this perception. To illustrate it, first as bodily artificiality, think about the obvious explosion in the popularity of cosmetic surgery along the period. While individually distinguishing characteristics have disappeared day by day, physically-identical people have become more and more unexceptional. Biotechnological innovations have eased and accelerated the production of those cultural copies of natural human beings. It is also relevant and true in terms of behavioural imitations of celebrities and influencers meanwhile. The boom in the access to social media has made affectations more common while idiosyncrasies more scarce.

⁶²⁹ This patronising system in *Never* is called “bureaucratic” by Emily Johansen. In her article that examines the bureaucratic state in *Never*, Johansen reads Ishiguro’s narrative as an illustration of “bureaucratic narrative” (“that which poses the subject as an administrative subject and emphasizes the depersonalized and routinized repetition of formulaic rhetoric”). Accordingly, while narrating the story as a government employee by being a carer, Kathy indeed cites bureaucracy and thus somehow works “to naturalize and neutralize sovereign power.” For the details of this narrative-focused approach to the novel, see below:

Emily Johansen, “Bureaucracy and Narrative Possibilities in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*,” *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 51, no. 3 (2016): 416-31.

Such an order has perverse implications for its subjects, i.e. bodily but nonsexual fantasies or anomalies. The deviant intentions masqueraded as donation programme perpetually haunt the cloned body, even possess it. The scale of this possession shows itself through the deformed body of a donor; “[It becomes] part of you, so everyone can see it, in your posture, your gaze, the way you move and talk.”⁶³⁰ As Kathy notices and narrates from time to time, the haunted cloned body on which a number of successive donations are imposed falls into the clutches of an endless physical pain: various aches in the body (even bone pains), general weakness and constant exhaustion, local troubles related to organ extraction, laboured breathing, and sleepless nights accompanied by certain drugs. What is more to that, the clone experience is spiritually painful as well. As suggested earlier, the clones are not born out of reproduction and as such they have no sense of belonging, which in turn triggers existential crisis and emotional pain.

Yet, the perverse case in *Never* needs to be elaborated in terms of the concept of “the other,” in relation to the centre-periphery dichotomy as well. As it has been discussed thus far, the so-called perversion is attributed exclusively to the peripheral subjects in question. In this novel, however, the central authority or the oppressive centre with its abusive power and transgressive desire intentionally constructs peripheral spaces on which the cloned bodies are inescapably positioned as the ultimate other. In other words, the donation system based on clones as artificially produced human beings (unable to give birth too) intrinsically and perpetually produces its own other, namely, the “perverse” subjects nonconforming to the procreative norms of humanity with their eccentric existence. Hence, the argued “perversity” deriving from the very presence of the cloned body might be read as an inevitable outcome of the structural ostracism inherent in the prevalent medical organisation.

Lastly, the thematic structure of the novel paves the way for biopolitical controversies, interrogations, and suggestions regarding our biotechnological world. Ishiguro makes it possible to question how human body or living as a citizen is, and will (or at least might) be more, subjected to authorities, in this case, to medical barons. In this sense, *Never* is not just a critique of the ethics of donation, rather that of the whole

⁶³⁰ Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, 208.

of scientific and medical methods and practices from a larger perspective. At this point, the foremost problem is in regard to autonomy of anybody over his/her own body. Authorities, taking refuge in a variety of justifications, are prone to attempt to oppress subjects by (ab)using their bodies. This perverse strategy, which is theorised throughout this dissertation by drawing on the concept of the body as confined fantasy space, transforms the human body into social arena. The justification may vary, but the outcome is still the same: domination of the individual body. In Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), for instance, the authoritarian and totalitarian pretext is survival of the human race through the fertile female body (sexual perversion); when it comes to *Never*, it is curing illnesses and organ failures through the healthy clone body (nonsexual perversion).⁶³¹ Two differently dystopian justifications converge on the same path, on the same ideological apparatus: the spatial body, the human body as confined (fantasy) space by the hegemony for the hegemony. Hence, private bodies become public arenas in both narratives; while the subjected bodies of Atwood serve as baby harvesting fields (*reproductive slavery*), Ishiguro's function as organ harvesting fields (*productive slavery*).⁶³²

Finishing this discussion on human subjectivity, another analogy might be drawn between *Never* and *Clockwork*. It seems that the speculated image of a queerly mechanised human body (being "a clockwork orange") in Burgess's novel is materialised through the cloned bodies in Ishiguro's novel. For these artificially produced subjects, everything progresses within an automatic order in its entirety, previously specified and perfectly routinised. This automation/automatisation of the human body throughout *Never* is reflected more incisively in its film adaptation (2010) by the director Mark Romanek, who adds to Ishiguro's narrative some extra scenes

⁶³¹ Reminding us of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947) in which Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno are highly critical of the celebration of reason, of the 20th century's fascist and totalitarian regimes (as the former's inevitable outcome) that maintain technologically sophisticated but oppressive and inhumane modes of governance. For more, see below:

Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002).

⁶³² Here is a fascinating irony that the clones are productive (able to produce healthy organs), but not reproductive (unable to produce babies).

where the clones have to have the chips on their arms scanned by machines during their in and outs of the institutions. It does nothing but emphasises institutionalisation of the body as well as its mechanisation. The deferral of donation is absolutely out of the question for Kathy and Tommy because those institutional authorities will not grant them, even for a few years, any right to their own bodies. When they return empty-handed from Madame's house, Tommy gets out of the car and goes through a violent outburst on the road. This is indeed his cry for freedom, albeit in vain.



CONCLUSION

Cinema is the ultimate pervert art. It doesn't give you what you desire – it tells you how to desire.

—Slavoj Žižek, *The Pervert's Guide to Cinema* (2006)

In his documentary *The Pervert's Guide to Cinema* (2006), Žižek by drawing on psychoanalysis introduces some of his most controversial ideas not only on cinematic form but also on a myriad of concepts such as reality, subjectivity, sexuality, fantasy, and desire. As his words in the epigraph suggest, the art of cinema in accordance with his particular perception of cinematic fiction is to arouse human desire and to play with it, but at the same time to keep it at a safe distance by domesticating it, rendering it palpable. To argue how our desires are *artificially* and *perversely* articulated by cinema, Žižek analyses some of the greatest films ever made by the most famous directors including Charlie Chaplin, Alfred Hitchcock, Stanley Kubrick, David Lynch, and many others. Doing that, Žižek indeed implies that cinematic perversion is not about content, rather related to structure or form itself. It is therefore that a film does not intend to fully satisfy its spectator's desire. Full gratification is impossible and that is the real point in fact; the point is *to desire*, not to fulfil your desire. Telling us how to desire without giving us the desired object, cinema is the ultimate pervert art and we are its pervert subjects, constantly yet vainly seeking absolute satisfaction.

The cinematic pleasure, just like sexual one, hence comes from the process (not merely embedded in the end) and this is more or less true for the art of literature as well. When we associate what Žižek argues with Kristeva's idea of desire (as essentially perverse, as infinite and impossible, always exceeding its object and articulating itself transcendently), the implications become much stronger and more relevant. What Žižek does here is to reveal the "perverse" ways used by cinematic fiction, namely, cinematic tools and methods which render us perpetually desiring subjects and reflect us so on the screen at the same time.

This is exactly at this point that the journey of my dissertation begins. Inspired by Žižek's attempts to guide how to read perversion in cinema (as well as in ideology:

The Pervert's Guide to Ideology, 2012), I have dared to study perversion in literature and to offer my work as a humble guidance to its representation in the contemporary English fiction. Reading the perverse logic and its gaze in fiction requires an equally perverse logic and gaze in reality. This is what Žižek makes use of in his documentaries while surveying either films or ideologies and also what I have attempted to achieve in my dissertation regarding the novels in question. Besides this methodological contribution, Žižek's theories on *the anamorphic object*, especially his terminology offering some phenomenal phrases such as *empty space* and *fantasy space*, has been helpful on the theoretical basis of my dissertation. Re-evaluating his object-related ideas and terms by both applying them on the notion of the body and combining them with the ideas of confinement (mostly Foucault's), I have constituted my basic structure.

From this perspective, my purpose throughout my study has been to conceptualise *the spatial body* through a perverse logic and gaze, i.e. adopting an equivalent perverse strategy to uncover those perverse strategies and mechanisms that perceive *the human body as confined fantasy space*. I present my work to better understand how contemporary English novelists represent this perversion by the agency of the complexity of pain and pleasure, that is, through their characters as enjoying subjects, as suffering subjects, and sometimes as both at once. If desire is essentially perverse as Kristeva puts it, my approach sounds a valid way to comprehend humanity consisting of desiring creatures, so to speak.

Thus, far from being complete, my study might moderately serve as *the pervert's guide to literature*, as another daring attempt to both see and show how human subjectivity has been perversely (sexually or nonsexually) constructed in the contemporary world and what its reflections might be in the period's fiction.⁶³³ The title of my dissertation deliberately includes "fiction" (not just novels) for I have also referred to and drawn on some films in doing so. Moreover, I have sometimes

⁶³³ I have chiefly studied on prose fiction, the novel as a genre of fiction. To observe perversion in the other literary genres, either in poetry or in drama for example, might be another intriguing experience, but it would also require a distinctive way of thinking and researching. In fact, if it is possible to suggest what I have done throughout my dissertation as a part of *perversion studies* to loosely categorise it, my approach might be much more pregnant, even to the extent of being useful in humanities as a whole. Such a perverse critique of humanity might be helpful for any academic disciplines that study aspects of human society and culture, namely, *humanities*.

considered and commented on the novels as if they were cinematic narratives—while positioning the reader as porn-spectator of the writer, for instance. The reason is partly that novelists, just like directors, from time to time play with and blur the boundaries between fiction and reality, in a way between diegetic and non-diegetic elements of the narrative in cinematic terms (common metafictional techniques). Besides, doing that, I have aimed to *visualise* fiction so that I can examine the novels as voyeuristic narratives. In other words, just as Žižek analyses cinematic narratives through *pictures* on the screen, I try to first imagine and then explore narratives as pictures on the pages, namely, pictures made of words, drawn by writers. I have used this strategy as an efficient tool mostly during my attempts to decode the multilayered perverse structures/scenes in the novels (remember the HOME scene in *Clockwork*, Vaughan-Catherine sex scene in *Crash*, or the torture scene in *Comfort*). To put it differently by looking through Žižek's eyes, I have not simply indicated the sexual content or the pornographic material presented by those novelists; I have rather endeavoured to disclose how their erotic representations are materialised through certain narrative strategies and techniques, or broadly speaking, to search for *how to read desire*. In this sense, cinematographic elements and methods might be functional in literature and literary criticism too, as they considerably are throughout my study. Taking into consideration not only that literature is the most fruitful source of cinema but also that the contemporary era has witnessed a great number of film adaptations, such an interdisciplinary approach would be convenient, if not inescapable.

Spatiality, or more precisely spatial awareness, has been argued as one common ground for the novels I have examined.⁶³⁴ It is indeed undeniable that these narratives offer a particular relationship between space and the individual. I have illustrated some characters that are literally confined within certain spaces, but my argument has rather focused on how bodies are somehow transformed into those spaces; they figuratively become spatial extensions in/of/for perverse fantasies. Such a spatial approach to perversion has also encouraged me to review both the emergence and the position of

⁶³⁴ The generosity of all the novels in question in terms of space imagery supports my approach to them as voyeuristic/cinematic narratives.

“the other” through a clash between the centre and periphery, from which I have inferred that the abusively powerful and oppressive central authorities somehow produce their own peripheral subjects, the others of the system, namely, the “perverse” nonconforming to the codes of “normality.” Still, this is not the only thing in common for these novels.

Except for *Comfort*, all these novels are speculative fiction to some degree. If so, what they speculate on and why? To clarify it, *Crash* might be read as a loose implication of an age of *cyborg* within a foreshadowed *posthuman condition*. When it comes to *Clockwork* and *Never*, they carry similar sensibilities: “objectivity” and ethics of science, reliability of medical methods, namely, biopolitical questions in such a biotechnological world. Some of these might seem simply as futuristic fears, at least, for the times those novels were written in. Yet, time itself justifies these science-fictional prophecies—mostly throughout these two decades after the new millennium, during which science and technology have paved the way for the most dramatic sociocultural changes in history of humanity. Technoscience has gradually made human life easier, but only at the cost of individuality and free will.⁶³⁵ To emphasise this negation and reduction during my analyses of human subjectivity in the novels, I have obfuscated the situation through a play on words; *perverse science/scientific perversion*. This chaotic possibility, on the one hand, makes us infer that science might not always be progressive; it may reach to a dead end at some point. Related to that, on the other hand, the so-called civilisation and its constituent institutions could very well fail.

Such sort of alternating possibilities have encouraged me to perceive perversion from a larger frame and to consistently question who the pervert really is. I have primarily discussed individual cases of perversion such as the violent deeds of Alex for instance, but what about the violence of the authoritarian regime in the same case? Or should we ignore the perverse sanctions on the cloned bodies in *Never* only for they are governmental regulations and seemingly serve utilitarian purposes? I have tried to avoid making such partial judgments throughout my dissertation which embraces perverse

⁶³⁵ That if human beings have ever had some ability like “free will” at all has been another hot debate recently. However, the confining effect of the contemporary “developments” in medicine or science over individuals is undeniable.

subjects *and* widespread systematic(ally) perverse practices, i.e. universal disciplinary mechanisms and organisations oppressing individuals to obey arbitrary rules or severely punishing them otherwise. It is quite likely that the greatest perversion is to reduce *Promethean* humankind to a mass of *docile bodies*.



WORKS CITED

- Adams, Carol J. *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*. New York and London: Continuum Books, 2010.
- Airaksinen, Timo. *The Philosophy of the Marquis de Sade*. Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2001.
- Arthurs, Jane. "Crash: Beyond the Boundaries of Sense." In *Crash Cultures: Modernity, Mediation and the Material*, 63-77. Edited by Jane Arthurs and Iain Grant. Bristol and Portland, OR: Intellect Books, 2003.
- Ballard, James Graham. *Crash*. London: Harper Perennial, 2008.
- . "Introduction." In *Crash*. London: Harper Perennial, 2008.
- Banks, J. R. "A Gondola Named Desire." *Critical Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (1982): 27-31.
- Baudrillard, Jean, and Arthur B. Evans. "Ballard's *Crash* (*Crash* de Ballard)." *Science Fiction Studies* 18, no. 3 (1991): 313-20.
- . "Simulacra and Science Fiction (Simulacres et science-fiction)." *Science Fiction Studies* 18, no. 3 (1991): 309-13.
- Beard, William. "*Crash* (1996): 'A benevolent psychopathology beckons towards us'." In *The Artist as Monster: The Cinema of David Cronenberg*, 379-422. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2006.
- Beckmann, Andrea. *The Social Construction of Sexuality and Perversion: Deconstructing Sadomasochism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Berktaş, Fatmagül. "Feminist Teorinin Önemli Bir Alanı: Cinsellik." In *Cogito: Feminizm* 58, 58-72. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2009.
- Bhugra, Dinesh, Dmitri Popelyuk, and Isabel McMullen. "Paraphilias Across Cultures: Contexts and Controversies." *Journal of Sex Research* 57, no. 2-3 (2010): 242-56.

- Boczar, Ana, Barbara Goecking Ferreira, Cristina Pereira Moura, Danielle Lopes Vianna Costa, Elga Rosalva Silva, Geralda Barroso França Costa, Marília Madureira Lucas, Olimpia Helena Costa Couto, Rita Terezinha Dos Santos Oliveira, and Yvonne Louise Coulaud Coelho Da Rocha Muzzi. "Discontent in the Era of Consumption: 'I enjoy, therefore I exist'." *International Forum of Psychoanalysis* 14, no. 1 (2005): 206-09.
- Botting, Fred, and Scott Wilson. "Sexcrash." In *Crash Cultures: Modernity, Mediation and the Material*, 79-89. Edited by Jane Arthurs and Iain Grant. Bristol and Portland, OR: Intellect Books, 2003.
- Brickell, Chris. "Sexology, the Homo/Hetero Binary, and the Complexities of Male Sexual History." *Sexualities* 9, no. 4 (2006): 423-47.
- Brooks, Peter. *Body Work: Objects of Desire in Modern Narrative*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Brottman, Mikita, and Christopher Sharett. "The End of the Road: David Cronenberg's *Crash* and the Fading of the West." *Literature/Film Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (2002): 126-32.
- Burgess, Anthony. *A Clockwork Orange*. London: Penguin Books, 1972.
- Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*. Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2011.
- . "Critically Queer." In *Identity: A Reader*, 108-17. Edited by Paul du Gay, Jessica Evans, and Peter Redman. London: SAGE Publications, 2000.
- . "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution." In *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, 900-11. Edited by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan. Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.
- Byatt, Jim. "Being Dead? Trauma and the Liminal Narrative in J. G. Ballard's *Crash* and Tom McCarthy's *Remainder*." *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 48, no. 3 (2012): 245-59.

- Cahn, Steven M. "A *Clockwork Orange* is not about Violence." *Metaphilosophy* 5, no. 2 (1974): 155-57.
- Canguilhem, Georges. *The Normal and the Pathological*. Translated by Carolyn R. Fawcett and Robert S. Cohen. New York: Zone Books, 1991.
- Carroll, Rachel. "Imitations of Life: Cloning, Heterosexuality and the Human in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*." In *Rereading Heterosexuality: Feminism, Queer Theory and Contemporary Fiction*, 131-48. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
- Chasseguet-Smirgel, Jeanine. *Creativity and Perversion*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1984.
- Cocks, Harry G. "Approaches to the History of Sexuality since 1750." In *The Routledge History of Sex and the Body: 1500 to the Present*, 38-54. Edited by Sarah Toulalan and Kate Fisher. London and New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Cojocaru, Daniel. *Violence and Dystopia: Mimesis and Sacrifice in Contemporary Western Dystopian Narratives*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015.
- Colombino, Laura. "The Body, the City, the Global: Spaces of Catastrophe in Ian McEwan's *Saturday*." *Textual Practice* 31, no. 4 (2017): 783-803.
- Cornea, Christine. "David Cronenberg's *Crash* and Performing Cyborgs." *The Velvet Light Trap* 52, no. 1 (2003): 4-14.
- Craik, Roger. "'Bog or God' in *A Clockwork Orange*." *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews* 16, no. 4 (2003): 51-54.
- Crozier, Ivan. "(De-)constructing Sexual Kinds since 1750." In *The Routledge History of Sex and the Body: 1500 to the Present*, 142-60. Edited by Sarah Toulalan and Kate Fisher. London and New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Davis, Murray S. *Smut: Erotic Reality/Obscene Ideology*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983.

- Davis, Todd F., and Kenneth Womack. ““O my brothers’: Reading the Anti-Ethics of the Pseudo-Family in Anthony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange*.” *College Literature* 29, no. 2 (2002): 19-36.
- De Block, Andreas, and Pieter R. Adriaens. “Pathologizing Sexual Deviance: A History.” *Journal of Sex Research* 50, no. 3-4 (2013): 276-98.
- De Masi, Franco. *The Sadoomasochistic Perversion: The Entity and the Theories*. Translated by Philip Slotkin. London: Karnac Books, 2003.
- Delville, Michel. “An Alphabet of Wounds.” In *J. G. Ballard*, 34-47. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1998.
- DeRosia, Margaret. “An Erotics of Violence: Masculinity and (Homo)Sexuality in Stanley Kubrick’s *A Clockwork Orange*.” In *Stanley Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange*, 61-84. Edited by Stuart Y. McDougal. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Downing, Lisa. “Eros and Thanatos in European and American Sexology.” In *Genders and Sexualities in History: Bodies, Sex and Desire from the Renaissance to the Present*, 201-20. Edited by Kate Fisher and Sarah Toulalan. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Duffy, Christopher. “Hidden Heterotopias in *Crash*.” In *J. G. Ballard: Landscapes of Tomorrow*, 112-25. Edited by Richard Brown, Christopher Duffy, and Elizabeth Stainforth. Leiden and Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2016.
- Duggan, Robert. “Ian McEwan: Below the Waves.” In *The Grotesque in Contemporary British Fiction*, 117-49. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013.
- Eren, Zerrin. “The Uncivilizing Process of the West and Burgess’s Suggestion for Stopping This Process in *A Clockwork Orange*.” *folklor/edebiyat* 24, no. 96 (2018): 141-57.
- Feldmann, Hans. “Kubrick and His Discontents.” *Film Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (1976): 12-19.

- Ferreira, Maria Aline Salgueiro Seabra. *I am the Other: Literary Negotiations of Human Cloning*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2005.
- Forceville, Charles. "The Metaphor 'COLIN IS A CHILD' in Ian McEwan's, Harold Pinter's, and Paul Schrader's *The Comfort of Strangers*." *Metaphor and Symbol* 14, no. 3 (1999): 179-98.
- Foster, Dennis A. "J. G. Ballard's Empire of the Senses: Perversion and the Failure of Authority." *PMLA* 108, no. 3 (1993): 519-32.
- Foucault, Michel. "Discipline and Punish." In *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, 549-66. Edited by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan. Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.
- . *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*. Edited by Paul Rabinow. Translated by Robert Hurley and others. New York: The New Press, 1997.
- . *The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction*. Translated by Robert Hurley. New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.
- Francis, Doreen M. *The Psychomatrix: A Deeper Understanding of Our Relationship with Pain*. London: Karnac Books, 2015.
- Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Translated and Edited by James Strachey. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1961.
- . *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Aylesbury: Chrysoma Associates Limited, 2000-2005.
- . "Fetishism." In *Collected Papers Vol.5: Miscellaneous Papers, 1888-1938*, 198-204. London: Hogarth and Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1924-1950.
- . *Three Contributions to the Sexual Theory*. Translated by A. A. Brill. New York: The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Company, 1910.
- Gehrke, Pat J. "Deviant Subjects in Foucault and *A Clockwork Orange*: Congruent Critiques of Criminological Constructions of Subjectivity." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 18, no. 3 (2001): 270-84.

- Girard, René. *Violence and the Sacred*. Translated by Patrick Gregory. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977.
- Goettsch, Stephen L. "Clarifying Basic Concepts: Conceptualizing Sexuality." *The Journal of Sex Research* 26, no. 2 (1989): 249-55.
- Gray, Robert. "Sex and Sexual Perversion." *The Journal of Philosophy* 75, no. 4 (1978): 189-99.
- Gupta, Kristina. "Compulsory Sexuality: Evaluating an Emerging Concept." *Signs* 41, no. 1 (2015): 131-54.
- Hankiss, Elemér. *Fears and Symbols*. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001.
- Hardin, Michael. "Postmodernism's Desire for Simulated Death: Andy Warhol's *Car Crashes*, J. G. Ballard's *Crash*, and Don DeLillo's *White Noise*." *Literature Interpretation Theory* 13, no. 1 (2002): 21-50.
- Head, Dominic. "Dreams of Captivity: *The Comfort of Strangers*." In *Contemporary British Novelists: Ian McEwan*, 52-69. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.
- Hearn, Jeff, and Viv Burr. "Introducing the Erotics of Wounding: Sex, Violence and the Body." In *Sex, Violence and the Body: The Erotics of Wounding*, 1-14. Edited by Viv Burr and Jeff Hearn. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
- Horkheimer, Max, and Theodor W. Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Edited by Gunzelin Schmid Noerr. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002.
- Irigaray, Luce. "Women on the Market." In *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, 799-811. Edited by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan. Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.
- Ishiguro, Kazuo. *Never Let Me Go*. New York: Vintage, 2010.

- Johansen, Emily. "Bureaucracy and Narrative Possibilities in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*." *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 51, no. 3 (2016): 416-31.
- Jung, Carl Gustav. *Psychology of the Unconscious: A Study of the Transformations and Symbolisms of the Libido*. Translated by Beatrice M. Hinkle. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1949.
- Jureidini, Jon. "Pathological Play." *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 5, no. 4 (2000): 606-12.
- . "Perversion: Erotic Form of Hatred or Exciting Avoidance of Reality?." *Journal of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis* 29, no. 2 (2001): 195-211.
- Kutzbach, Konstanze. "The Two-..., One-..., None-Sex Model: The Flesh(-)Made Machine in Herman Melville's 'The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids' and J. G. Ballard's *Crash*." In *The Abject of Desire: The Aestheticization of the Unaesthetic in Contemporary Literature and Culture*, 181-96. Edited by Konstanze Kutzbach and Monika Mueller. Amsterdam and New York, NY: Rodopi, 2007.
- Lacan, Jacques. *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*. Translated by Bruce Fink. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006.
- . *Formations of the Unconscious*. Edited by Jacques-Alain Miller. Translated by Russell Grigg. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017.
- . *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. Edited by Jacques-Alain Miller. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998.
- Laplanche, Jean, and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis. *The Language of Psychoanalysis*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. London: Karnac Books, 1988.
- Lee, Julian C. H. *Policing Sexuality: Sex, Society, and the State*. London and New York: Zed Books, 2011.
- Levinson, Jerrold. "Sexual Perversity." *The Monist* 86, no. 1 (2003): 30-54.

- Lewis, Jeremy, and J. G. Ballard. "An Interview with J. G. Ballard." *Mississippi Review* 20, no. 1/2 (1991): 27-40.
- Li, Chi-she. "Altered Realism in Ontological Fiction: *Never Let Me Go* and *Point Omega*." In *Digitalizing the Global Text: Philosophy, Literature, and Culture*, 147-70. Edited by Paul Allen Miller. Columbia, South Carolina: The University of South Carolina Press, 2019.
- Lichtenberg, Illya, Howard Lune, and Patrick McManimon Jr. "'Darker than Any Prison, Hotter than Any Human Flame': Punishment, Choice, and Culpability in *A Clockwork Orange*." *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* 15, no. 2 (2004): 429-49.
- Malcolm, David. "Fiction and Evil (II): *The Comfort of Strangers*" In *Understanding Ian McEwan*, 66-87. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002.
- Maleska, Kalina. "Clones are Humans: The Dystopian Elements in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*." *Journal of Contemporary Philology* 2, no. 1 (2019): 123-38.
- Marcuse, Herbert. *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*. Boston, MA: The Beacon Press, 1966.
- McDougal, Stuart Y. "Introduction: 'What's it going to be then, eh?: Questioning Kubrick's *Clockwork*.'" In *Stanley Kubrick's A Clockwork Orange*, 1-18. Edited by Stuart Y. McDougal. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- McEwan, Ian. *The Comfort of Strangers*. London: Picador, 1982.
- Millett, Kate. *Sexual Politics*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000.
- Musser, Amber Jamilla. *Sensational Flesh: Race, Power, and Masochism*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2014.
- Narkunas, J. Paul. "Reification of the Human: Global Organ Harvesting and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*." In *Reified Life: Speculative Capital and the Ahuman Condition*, 227-47. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

- Penney, James. *The World of Perversion: Psychoanalysis and the Impossible Absolute of Desire*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006.
- Punday, Daniel. "Foucault's Body Tropes." *New Literary History* 31, no. 3 (2000): 509-28.
- Quindeau, Ilka. "Female Sexuality beyond Gender Dichotomy." In *The Female Body: Inside and Outside*, 223-41. Edited by Ingrid Moeslein-Teising and Frances Thomson Salo. London: Karnac Books, 2013.
- Ray, Philip E. "Alex Before and After: A New Approach to Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange*." *Modern Fiction Studies* 27, no. 3 (1981): 479-87.
- Rich, Adrienne. "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence." *Signs* 5, no. 4 (1980): 631-60.
- Roden, David. "Cyborgian Subjects and the Auto-Destruction of Metaphor." In *Crash Cultures: Modernity, Mediation and the Material*, 91-102. Edited by Jane Arthurs and Iain Grant. Bristol and Portland, OR: Intellect Books, 2003.
- Rollins, Mark. "Caring is a Gift: Gift Exchange and Commodification in Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*." *CEA Critic* 77, no. 3 (2015): 350-56.
- Ross, Fiona. *Perversion: A Jungian Approach*. London: Karnac Books, 2013.
- Rubin, Gayle. "The Traffic in Women." In *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, 770-94. Edited by Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan. Maiden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.
- Schaffner, Anna Katharina. *Modernism and Perversion: Sexual Deviance in Sexology and Literature, 1850-1930*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Schaffner, Anna Katharina, and Shane Weller. "Introduction." In *Modernist Eroticisms: European Literature after Sexology*, 1-22. Edited by Anna Katharina Schaffner and Shane Weller. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

- Seaboyer, Judith. "Ian McEwan: Contemporary Realism and the Novel of Ideas." In *The Contemporary British Novel Since 1980*, 23-34. Edited by James Acheson and Sarah C. E. Ross. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005.
- . "Sadism Demands a Story: Ian McEwan's *The Comfort of Strangers*." *Modern Fiction Studies* 45, no. 4 (1999): 957-86.
- Shaw, Daniel. "Nihilism and Freedom in the Films of Stanley Kubrick." In *The Philosophy of Stanley Kubrick*, 221-34. Edited by Jerold J. Abrams. Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2007.
- Simon, William. "Deviance as History: The Future of Perversion." *Archives of Sexual Behavior* 23, no. 1 (1994): 1-20.
- . *Postmodern Sexualities*. London and New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Sketopoulou, Avgi. "To Suffer Pleasure: The Shattering of the Ego as the Psychic Labor of Perverse Sexuality." *Studies in Gender and Sexuality* 15, no. 1 (2014): 254-68.
- Stoller, Robert J. *Perversion: The Erotic Form of Hatred*. London and New York: Routledge, 2018.
- Synnott, Anthony. *The Body Social: Symbolism, Self and Society*. Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002.
- Taylor, Gary Wilson. "The Discursive Construction and Regulation of Dissident Sexualities: The Case of SM." In *Body Talk: The Material and Discursive Regulation of Sexuality, Madness and Reproduction*, 106-30. Edited by Jane M. Ussher. Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002.
- Tellier, Stephanie. "Advancing the Discourse: Disability and BDSM." *Sex Disabil* 35, no. 1 (2017): 485-93.
- Thomas, Mark. "The Rules of Autogeddon: Sex, Death and Law in JG Ballard's *Crash*." *Griffith Law Review* 20, no. 2 (2011): 333-61.

- Toulalan, Sarah, and Kate Fisher, editors. *The Routledge History of Sex and the Body: 1500 to the Present*. London and New York: Routledge, 2013.
- Trotter, Robert J. "A *Clockwork Orange* in a California Prison." *Science News* 101, no. 11 (1972): 174-75.
- Ussher, Jane M. "Framing the Sexual 'Other': The Regulation of Lesbian and Gay Sexuality." In *Body Talk: The Material and Discursive Regulation of Sexuality, Madness and Reproduction*, 131-58. Edited by Jane M. Ussher. Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2002.
- Van Haute, Philippe. "Lacan Meets Freud? Patho-Analytic Reflections on the Status of the Perversions in Lacanian Metapsychology." *Studies in Gender and Sexuality* 17, no. 4 (2016): 274-84.
- Weeks, Jeffrey. *Key Ideas: Sexuality*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Welldon, Estela. "Perversions in Men and Women." *British Journal of Psychotherapy* 12, no. 4 (1996): 480-86.
- Williams, Christopher. "Perverted Attractions." *The Monist* 86, no. 1 (2003): 115-40.
- Williams, Linda. "Power, Pleasure, and Perversion: Sadomasochistic Film Pornography." *Representations* 27, no. 1 (1989): 37-65.
- Yakeley, Jessica. "Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Paraphilias and Perversions." *European Journal of Psychotherapy & Counselling* 20, no. 2 (2018): 164-83.
- Yan, Kai. "Posthuman Biopredicament: A Study of Biodystopia in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*." *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 9, no. 5 (2019): 594-602.
- Yilmaz, Mesut. "A Cinematic Approach to the Sociology of Deviance: *A Clockwork Orange*." *Journal of Humanities and Tourism Research* 10, no.4 (2020): 884-900.
- Youngquist, Paul. "Ballard's Crash-Body." *Postmodern Culture* 11, no. 1 (2000): 1-18.

Zavitzianos, George. "The Perversion of Fetishism in Women." *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (1982): 405-25.

Žižek, Slavoj. "Looking Awry." *October* 50, no. 1 (1989): 30-55.



INDEX

A

Adams, Carol J., 19, 20, 199
 Althusser, Louis, 50
 Althusserian, 87, 108
 anthropology, 22
 anthropocentric, 186, 190
 anthropological, 25
 anthropologist, 21
 familial, 94, 98, 150
 family, 31, 37, 39, 46, 58, 69, 94, 98, 122, 123,
 137, 138, 144, 146, 150, 151, 152, 153, 163,
 188, 202
 incest, 23, 25, 31, 39, 55
 incestuous, 2, 152, 153
 kinship, 22, 23, 24, 30, 39, 49, 153
 relatives, 42, 185
 art, 28, 31, 36, 52, 53, 59, 79, 112, 113, 177, 188,
 194
 artist, 32, 52, 113, 133, 199
 artistic, 112, 124
 Atwood, Margaret, 192
 The Handmaid's Tale, 192
 authority, 4, 10, 12, 70, 79, 80, 84, 86, 88, 90, 95, 98,
 100, 107, 108, 116, 117, 124, 139, 151, 156, 180,
 181, 182, 191, 203
 authoritarian, 78, 151, 192, 197
 discipline, 4, 15, 63, 82, 88, 90, 140, 181, 203
 disciplined, 177, 181
 disobedience, 88
 dominance, 20, 63, 171
 dominant, 6, 19, 20, 27, 55, 61, 64, 75, 101, 135,
 141, 155
 free will, 76, 86, 87, 88, 89, 95, 182, 197
 freedom, 36, 38, 89, 95, 156, 193, 208
 government, 76, 78, 88, 89, 97, 190
 governmental, 40, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 96, 97,
 116, 117, 175, 197
 institution, iii, 7, 29, 31, 38, 69, 70, 78, 83, 87,
 91, 92, 93, 101, 105, 117, 124, 177, 183, 193,
 197
 institutional, 100, 193
 institutionalisation, 193
 institutionalised, 69, 96, 183
 obedient, 37
 oppressed, 97, 150
 oppressing, iii, 198
 oppression, 20, 22, 23, 24, 28, 49, 75, 81, 150
 oppressive, 12, 19, 107, 150, 191, 197
 oppressor, 97
 regime, 78, 91, 97, 187, 192, 197
 state, 2, 3, 5, 11, 21, 34, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85,
 86, 87, 88, 90, 95, 96, 97, 112, 123, 124, 151,
 190, 205, 207
 submission, 63
 submissive, 64
 totalitarian, 76, 97, 192

B

Ballard, J. G., i, iii, iv, 9, 11, 12, 104, 105, 106, 107,
 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117,
 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 128, 129,
 130, 131, 132, 135, 136, 138, 140, 141, 145, 157,
 161, 162, 199, 200, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 208,
 209
 Crash, iii, iv, 9, 11, 12, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108,
 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117,
 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126,
 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 134, 135, 136, 138,
 140, 141, 148, 161, 172, 179, 196, 197, 199,
 200, 201, 202, 204, 205, 207, 208
 Baudrillard, Jean, 66, 111, 115, 136, 199
 Baudrillardian, 101, 105, 111
 beauty, 120, 121, 122, 124, 147, 148, 155, 159, 165,
 173
 abject, 121, 122, 205
 abjection, 121, 122
 aesthetic, 112, 113, 120, 123, 124
 beautiful, iv, 12, 81, 120, 122, 123, 142, 144, 146,
 147, 151, 152, 153, 162, 165, 168, 171, 173,
 175
 flawless, 122, 148, 162, 174
 flawlessness, 148
 grotesque, 127, 149, 159, 185, 202
 perfect, 85, 101, 120, 122, 147, 149, 159
 perfection, 121, 122, 131, 148, 174
 ugliness, 120, 122
 ugly, 81, 121, 123, 148, 149, 150, 173
 biology, 20, 38, 66
 anatomy, 20, 21, 34, 42, 111
 biological, 5, 10, 14, 18, 20, 22, 23, 38, 41, 45,
 119, 131, 187
 biopolitical, 191, 197
 biotechnological, 187, 191, 197
 biotic, 188
 physiology, 42, 111
 body, iii, iv, 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15,
 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29,
 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 41, 42, 46, 54, 55, 56,
 57, 58, 59, 61, 62, 64, 66, 68, 69, 72, 73, 76, 77,
 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 89, 90, 96, 97, 98,
 99, 100, 101, 104, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111,
 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123,
 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 130, 132, 133, 134, 137,
 138, 139, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149,
 157, 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 167, 168,
 169, 173, 174, 176, 177, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183,
 184, 185, 186, 188, 190, 191, 192, 193, 195, 200,
 201, 204, 207, 208, 209
 bodily, 13, 38, 41, 42, 58, 59, 62, 69, 72, 73, 84,
 127, 132, 148, 159, 179, 180, 186, 191
 corporeal, 6
 corporeality, 28

Burgess, Anthony, i, iii, iv, 9, 11, 76, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 91, 94, 97, 98, 99, 100, 102, 138, 140, 141, 182, 192, 200, 202, 207
A Clockwork Orange, iii, iv, 9, 11, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 108, 112, 124, 128, 136, 138, 140, 173, 179, 182, 192, 196, 197, 200, 201, 202, 203, 206, 207, 209
 Butler, Judith, 43, 50, 200

C

Chaplin, Charlie, 184, 194
Modern Times, 184
 Chasseguet-Smirgel, Janine, 70, 201
 cinema, 104, 110, 113, 194, 196, 199
 actor, 132, 133
 actress, 102, 111, 129
 audience, 84, 92, 102, 114, 118, 125, 132, 134, 137, 138, 157
 camera, 131, 132, 136, 137, 139, 149, 157, 165, 166, 168, 169
 cameraman, 137
 celebrity, 104, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 123, 129, 130, 137, 139, 190
 cinematic, 89, 112, 132, 160, 194, 196, 209
 cinematographic, 196
 director, 91, 112, 133, 137, 192, 194, 196
 film, 59, 76, 84, 91, 97, 101, 102, 103, 110, 114, 129, 131, 132, 134, 137, 138, 147, 152, 160, 192, 194, 195, 196, 200, 202, 208, 209
 lens, 132, 168, 169
 screen, 17, 102, 136, 138, 157, 194, 196
 spectator, 83, 84, 108, 124, 125, 130, 133, 134, 174, 175, 194, 196
 star, 104, 110, 114
 video, 8, 101, 112, 113, 117, 131, 132, 136, 137
 civilisation, iii, 1, 10, 35, 51, 55, 69, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 114, 123, 124, 139, 148, 164, 168, 172, 197
 civilised, 1, 11, 23, 35, 36, 75, 77, 86, 91, 93, 100, 102, 107, 114, 122, 165, 168, 172
 uncivilised, 91, 124
 clone, 13, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 206
 cloned, iv, 12, 177, 178, 179, 181, 183, 184, 185, 186, 188, 190, 191, 192, 197
 confinement, iii, iv, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 81, 90, 142, 144, 161, 162, 166, 170, 175, 180, 181, 195
 confined, iii, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 22, 33, 68, 77, 80, 81, 85, 99, 106, 107, 144, 145, 148, 151, 158, 161, 180, 182, 186, 187, 192, 195, 196
 confining, 90, 158, 161, 163
 construction, 3, 4, 29, 38, 42, 46, 49, 51, 59, 60, 61, 82, 98, 137, 179, 181, 199, 203, 208
 constructed, iii, 10, 12, 14, 18, 20, 41, 46, 59, 64, 82, 99, 100, 119, 132, 155, 187, 190, 195
 constructing, 4, 46, 106, 201
 constructionist, 38, 41, 66

contemporary, iii, iv, 8, 9, 11, 13, 29, 31, 40, 42, 43, 44, 66, 67, 68, 70, 76, 100, 104, 105, 106, 112, 115, 128, 130, 140, 145, 179, 182, 183, 188, 190, 195, 196, 201, 202, 204, 205, 206, 208
 Cronenberg, David, 113, 114, 119, 132, 199, 200, 201
 culture, iii, 1, 3, 4, 10, 11, 14, 19, 21, 24, 25, 27, 29, 32, 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 49, 55, 62, 66, 67, 68, 69, 75, 80, 86, 90, 92, 93, 95, 100, 101, 102, 105, 108, 121, 129, 136, 140, 141, 150, 159, 181, 194, 199, 200, 205, 206, 207, 209
 cultural, 3, 4, 11, 14, 21, 25, 28, 32, 38, 42, 52, 53, 59, 66, 91, 92, 93, 110, 116, 122, 140, 165, 168, 181, 190
 cultured, 1, 35, 188, 190
 subcultural, 47, 128
 subculture, iv, 11, 62, 76, 108

D

desire, iii, 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 54, 55, 57, 58, 62, 65, 67, 77, 78, 79, 83, 85, 90, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 102, 104, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 113, 114, 115, 119, 122, 124, 134, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 144, 145, 147, 150, 156, 157, 158, 159, 162, 164, 165, 167, 169, 172, 176, 180, 186, 191, 194, 195, 196, 199, 200, 202, 204, 205, 207
 aphrodisiac, 118
 desired, 24, 90, 99, 109, 111, 113, 122, 125, 130, 148, 162, 169, 190, 194
 enthusiasm, 80, 86, 147
 enthusiastic, 126
 lust, 162, 168
 lustful, 10, 79, 165
 dystopia, 109, 129, 201
 biodystopia, 181, 209
 biodystopian, 183
 dystopian, 76, 109, 182, 192, 201, 206

E

economy, 16, 24, 25, 31
 economic, 3, 15, 22, 24, 25, 28, 30, 32, 39, 45, 188
 economics, 3, 24
 epistemology/epistemological, 29, 30, 85, 111
 eroticism, 5, 68, 100, 107, 108, 117, 119, 121, 126, 128, 130, 140, 207
 erogenous, 42, 57, 77, 110, 111, 169
 Eros, 2, 4, 10, 35, 52, 65, 92, 114, 149, 162, 172, 174, 202, 206
 erotic, 6, 7, 12, 28, 30, 38, 39, 45, 48, 57, 62, 63, 66, 69, 70, 105, 107, 108, 109, 114, 116, 118, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 148, 154, 196, 201, 205, 208
 eroticised, 57, 58, 99, 115, 148
 erotics, 49, 58, 59, 98, 202, 204
 homoerotic, 96, 123, 152, 167, 171

homoeroticism, 98, 118, 119, 123, 135, 166
 ethics, 191, 197, 202, 203
 ethical, 93, 94, 95, 103, 107
 exhibitionism, 5, 139, 157
 exhibitionist, 77
 existence, 1, 6, 7, 8, 18, 27, 31, 32, 37, 61, 71, 78, 88,
 112, 122, 149, 158, 161, 177, 184, 185, 187, 188,
 191, 207
 essence, 121
 essential, 21, 22, 58, 73, 74, 91, 110, 143, 149,
 184
 essentialism, 20, 190
 essentialist, 4, 20, 38, 50
 essentialisation, 70
 existential, 45, 154, 186, 187, 188, 189, 191

F

fantasy, iii, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 20, 38, 47, 54, 57,
 58, 60, 62, 66, 70, 73, 74, 77, 81, 86, 90, 101,
 104, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114,
 115, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 124, 125, 127, 128,
 129, 131, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 139, 140, 145,
 148, 149, 156, 158, 160, 161, 162, 163, 165, 167,
 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 176, 180, 182,
 186, 192, 194, 195
 fantasy space, iii, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 70, 77, 86,
 106, 107, 110, 115, 118, 125, 128, 129, 131,
 134, 140, 145, 148, 156, 158, 161, 162, 165,
 168, 174, 192, 195
 feminism, 20, 201
 female, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 32,
 33, 44, 49, 50, 56, 57, 81, 83, 122, 126, 127,
 128, 130, 131, 152, 192, 207
 feminine, 30, 32, 49, 147, 156, 159
 femininity, 44, 147, 152
 feminist, 8, 19, 20, 22, 31, 149, 150, 158, 199
 misogynistic, 150
 fetish, 26, 47, 53, 54, 56, 58, 59, 90, 110
 fetishism, iv, 5, 12, 19, 53, 55, 56, 57, 74, 104,
 110, 128, 130, 132, 140, 203, 210
 fetishist, 10, 53, 54, 56, 74, 119
 fiction, iii, iv, 8, 9, 11, 39, 66, 74, 76, 99, 105, 106,
 112, 136, 138, 139, 159, 161, 175, 187, 194, 195,
 196, 197, 199, 201, 202, 206, 207, 208
 fictional, 13, 38, 99, 101, 102, 103, 108, 117, 126,
 128, 129, 136, 137, 138, 139, 147, 157, 159,
 160, 174, 178, 179, 182, 188, 197
 Foucault, Michel, 4, 5, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 29, 30, 31,
 36, 37, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 61, 62, 74, 81, 82, 97,
 99, 117, 181, 195, 203, 207
 Foucauldian, 16, 36, 82, 88, 100, 181
 Freud, Sigmund, 2, 7, 9, 10, 15, 16, 22, 34, 35, 36,
 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 69, 72, 73, 77, 93, 94, 153,
 154, 159, 203, 206, 209
 Freudian, 35, 53, 55, 71, 72, 77, 82, 91, 92, 94,
 106, 112, 114, 148, 151, 153, 154

G

gaze, iii, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18, 55, 59, 84, 101, 111, 117,
 125, 126, 127, 128, 134, 135, 138, 144, 146, 148,
 149, 152, 157, 163, 166, 168, 174, 180, 186, 187,
 191, 195
 perverse gaze, 9, 12, 13, 126, 127, 128, 135, 144,
 149, 157, 162, 166, 180
 gender, 21, 22, 23, 24, 38, 40, 44, 49, 50, 59, 66, 120,
 150, 155, 156, 200, 202, 207, 208, 209
 queer, 50, 81, 85, 96, 120, 200, 201
 Girard, René, 4, 204
 Gothic, 161
 Gupta, Kristina, 8, 18, 19, 43, 204

H

history, 1, 2, 14, 32, 36, 38, 40, 48, 65, 89, 97, 121,
 137, 159, 170, 197, 200, 201, 202, 203, 207, 208,
 209
 historian, 8, 14, 34
 historical, 4, 13, 38, 48, 66, 73, 74, 137, 179
 nostalgia, 167
 nostalgic, 17, 106, 137, 156, 158
 humanity, 1, 2, 11, 43, 75, 78, 98, 113, 119, 122, 128,
 129, 141, 162, 181, 182, 184, 190, 191, 195, 197
 ahuman, 183, 187, 188, 206
 ahuman condition, 183, 188, 206
 cyborg, 119, 197, 201
 human condition, 68, 87, 119, 135, 145, 182, 183,
 186
 humane, 178, 183, 185
 inhuman, 91, 141
 nonhuman, 184, 187
 posthuman, 118, 181, 183, 187, 197, 209
 posthuman condition, 119, 197

I

identity, 3, 5, 11, 22, 28, 34, 38, 41, 43, 46, 49, 50,
 51, 60, 87, 89, 91, 101, 111, 120, 157, 200
 disidentification, 90
 identification, 59, 82
 image, 4, 31, 36, 68, 110, 111, 113, 122, 127, 129,
 130, 148, 149, 176, 192
 imaginary, 14, 18, 50, 55, 86, 90, 101, 106, 111,
 113, 123, 132, 134, 135, 137, 164, 165, 168,
 172
 imagination, 7, 86, 112, 113, 136
 individual, iii, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 19,
 21, 30, 35, 36, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50,
 51, 54, 57, 63, 64, 68, 69, 75, 77, 78, 82, 84, 85,
 86, 87, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100, 103,
 105, 107, 112, 116, 122, 126, 128, 135, 140, 141,
 145, 182, 192, 196, 197
 internet, 8, 29
 Irigaray, Luce, 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 153, 204
 Ishiguro, Kazuo, i, iii, iv, 9, 11, 12, 13, 177, 178,
 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 185, 186, 188, 190, 191,
 192, 201, 204, 205, 206, 207, 209

Never Let Me Go, iii, iv, 9, 11, 12, 13, 177, 178,
179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 187, 188, 190,
191, 192, 197, 201, 204, 205, 206, 207, 209

J

Jung, Carl Gustav, 71, 72, 205
Jungian, 71, 72, 73, 207

K

Krafft-Ebing, Richard von, 5, 7, 34, 46, 48, 50, 62
Kristeva, Julia, 34, 47, 140, 194, 195
Kubrick, Stanley, 80, 82, 83, 84, 91, 92, 102, 194,
202, 206, 208

L

Lacan, Jacques, 9, 10, 17, 18, 55, 159, 205, 209
Lacanian, 18, 55, 209
language, 35, 37, 38, 60, 65, 71, 80, 81, 94, 107, 140,
166, 181, 200, 205, 209
lingual, 81
lesbianism, 8, 31, 128
lesbian, 7, 8, 31, 32, 66, 128, 135, 207, 209
Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 22, 24
literature, 7, 8, 13, 31, 52, 59, 100, 105, 160, 179,
194, 195, 196, 200, 202, 204, 205, 206, 207
literal, iii, 9, 85, 144, 158, 174, 181
literary, 7, 8, 13, 106, 143, 159, 160, 179, 180,
196, 200, 203, 204, 207
logic, 6, 11, 12, 37, 48, 50, 67, 68, 70, 75, 100, 106,
107, 118, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 130, 134, 135,
138, 150, 168, 178, 195

M

Marcuse, Herbert, 1, 2, 35, 206
Marxism/Marxist, 22, 25, 188
capitalism, 140, 188
capitalist, 8, 29, 188
capitalistic, 188
commodification, 29, 188, 207
commodity, 25, 26, 27, 29, 153, 185, 188
consumed, 184
consumer, 8, 26, 29, 68, 121, 188
consumerism, 140
consumerist, 105
consuming, 69, 152
consumption, 25, 54, 67, 140, 200
false consciousness, 181
product, 8, 9, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 36, 38, 49,
60, 116, 150, 181, 184
value, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 181, 188
McEwan, Ian, i, iii, iv, 9, 11, 12, 142, 143, 144, 145,
146, 147, 151, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163,
164, 166, 170, 174, 175, 176, 201, 202, 203, 204,
206, 208
The Comfort of Strangers, iii, iv, 9, 11, 12, 142,
143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 151, 156, 157,

158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 166, 170, 171,
179, 196, 197, 203, 204, 206, 208
mechanisation, 89, 118, 127, 140, 193
automated, 140
automatic, 87, 133, 192
automation, 141, 192
automatisation, 88, 90, 181, 192
automobile, 107, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 122,
123, 127, 131, 133
car, iv, 12, 104, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111,
112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 121,
122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 131,
132, 133, 134, 137, 138, 139, 161, 193
machine, 12, 16, 85, 89, 95, 97, 106, 107, 115,
118, 119, 121, 129, 136, 164, 184, 187, 193
machinery, 88, 119, 123, 127, 140, 183, 184
mechanical, 85, 87, 93, 100, 119, 126, 128
mechanised, 118, 122, 140, 192
mechanism, iii, 5, 6, 11, 24, 26, 36, 37, 45, 71, 73,
74, 75, 82, 87, 88, 110, 140, 180, 181, 195,
198
medicine, 40, 95, 117, 152
medical, 30, 38, 43, 46, 63, 70, 76, 78, 81, 87, 90,
98, 101, 102, 103, 111, 180, 182, 183, 185,
191, 192, 197
Millelt, Kate, 94, 206
modern, 1, 5, 10, 15, 29, 34, 50, 59, 60, 67, 69, 83,
87, 89, 100, 101, 105, 107, 119, 120, 148, 156,
170, 184, 200, 208
postmodern, 11, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 100, 101, 105,
106, 107, 113, 118, 119, 120, 121, 123, 124,
126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 134, 135, 136, 139,
140, 146, 171, 206, 208, 209
postmodernism, 99, 105, 110, 129, 136, 204
postmodernist, 11, 12, 70, 100, 105, 106, 119,
139, 159
postmodernity, 11, 66, 67, 68
music, 8, 39, 77, 79, 101, 116, 124, 171
musician, 170
song, 170, 182

N

narcissism, 53, 157
narcissistic, 54, 68
narrative, iii, 9, 11, 12, 13, 23, 28, 30, 52, 82, 96, 99,
101, 138, 144, 147, 149, 159, 162, 165, 170, 171,
173, 180, 183, 184, 186, 190, 192, 196, 200, 201,
205
narration, 76
narrator, 13, 84, 99, 104, 115, 121, 125, 128, 130,
131, 134, 138, 174, 179
reader, 77, 79, 80, 83, 84, 92, 94, 95, 96, 99, 110,
121, 128, 132, 134, 143, 149, 162, 164, 173,
174, 175, 180, 196, 200
reading, 15, 22, 54, 72, 75, 77, 80, 81, 82, 83, 91,
92, 100, 156, 179, 181, 188, 195, 201
scenario, 14, 18, 86, 104, 108, 109, 112, 113, 128,
136, 137, 174, 175, 183, 190
script, 42, 137
scripted, 109, 160, 181

scriptwriter, 112, 174
 writer, 77, 83, 95, 97, 196
 writing, 8, 82, 96, 106
 nature, 1, 5, 25, 30, 39, 47, 51, 57, 67, 72, 79, 86, 91, 92, 93, 155
 natural, 1, 3, 4, 10, 11, 26, 27, 36, 37, 38, 39, 48, 51, 61, 92, 116, 120, 121, 125, 131, 150, 162, 183, 187, 190
 unnatural, 4, 49
 norm, 7, 10, 11, 41, 43, 44, 45, 47, 49, 50, 53, 70, 75, 86, 116, 123, 124, 128, 191
 abnormal, 1, 4, 5, 6, 10, 41, 48, 52, 65, 91, 110, 114, 128, 135, 168, 185
 abnormality, 11, 51, 112
 normal, 4, 5, 11, 19, 30, 31, 38, 41, 43, 46, 47, 48, 51, 52, 63, 65, 67, 70, 73, 86, 103, 110, 119, 146, 150, 165, 178, 184, 187, 189, 190, 201
 normalised, 15, 41, 47, 52
 normality, 4, 11, 48, 51, 65, 89, 114, 190, 197
 normative, 3, 4, 44, 47, 62, 63
 novel, iii, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 60, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 115, 116, 119, 120, 121, 122, 125, 126, 127, 128, 130, 131, 132, 135, 136, 138, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 155, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 173, 174, 175, 179, 180, 182, 183, 185, 188, 190, 191, 192, 195, 196, 197, 208
 novelist, iii, 11, 106, 139, 182, 195, 196, 204

O

object, 1, 6, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 23, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 41, 47, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 83, 99, 101, 113, 124, 125, 145, 148, 153, 156, 157, 159, 168, 169, 173, 175, 185, 194, 195, 200
 objective, 7, 17, 18, 36, 37, 46, 48, 70, 75, 95, 100, 105, 112
 objectivity, 197
 ontology, 6, 51, 120
 ontological, 187, 206
 order, iii, 3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 25, 27, 37, 54, 55, 70, 75, 77, 87, 88, 90, 91, 92, 94, 102, 105, 106, 107, 108, 116, 117, 120, 124, 141, 144, 145, 150, 151, 155, 158, 162, 165, 175, 180, 182, 192
 chaos, 105
 chaotic, 69, 75, 105, 175, 197
 crisis, 68, 74, 82, 154, 183, 186, 189, 191
 disorder, iii, 10, 43, 48, 70, 73, 75, 90, 94, 95, 105, 145
 other, iii, iv, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 24, 36, 38, 44, 45, 49, 51, 52, 54, 55, 58, 64, 66, 70, 75, 77, 78, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 90, 96, 99, 103, 105, 106, 107, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 125, 128, 130, 131, 132, 133, 135, 141, 142, 144, 145, 148, 149, 154, 155, 158, 159, 160, 161, 164, 166, 167, 173, 179, 181, 183, 184, 185, 187, 190, 191, 197, 203, 209
 majority, 46, 63, 75, 88, 180, 184, 186
 marginal, 96, 104
 marginalisation, 10, 19, 65

marginalised, 126, 128
 minority, 13, 180, 184
 mysterious, 17, 20, 34, 57, 96, 106, 109, 110, 121, 130, 149, 159, 160
 otherness, 12, 144, 148, 159, 160, 167
 scapegoat, 4, 184
 strange, 62, 144, 158, 160, 166, 176, 185, 187
 strangeness, 12, 144, 160
 stranger, 143, 144, 146, 156, 157, 158, 161, 162, 163, 170
 uncanniness, 148, 170
 uncanny, 144, 159

P

pain, iii, 1, 5, 9, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 68, 74, 76, 77, 84, 102, 121, 126, 142, 154, 163, 168, 172, 173, 176, 179, 187, 188, 191, 195, 203
 painful, 12, 16, 54, 59, 64, 90, 107, 110, 124, 125, 126, 129, 163, 172, 173, 176, 178, 179, 191
 suffered, 63
 sufferer, 13, 83, 179
 suffering, 1, 5, 60, 84, 102, 114, 150, 195
 tragedy, 171, 179
 tragic, 124, 126, 129, 160, 161, 162, 163, 170, 171, 173, 175, 179
 patriarchy, 20, 152, 155, 156
 male, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 31, 32, 33, 44, 48, 50, 56, 57, 59, 61, 83, 84, 98, 126, 132, 148, 150, 152, 155, 156, 164, 167, 171
 masculine, 25, 27, 32, 49
 masculinity, 44, 83, 98, 99, 156, 202
 patriarch, 158, 174
 patriarchal, 19, 20, 21, 25, 27, 60, 150, 151, 153, 156, 158, 162
 Pavese, Cesare, 143, 176
 perversion, iii, iv, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 34, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, 83, 84, 94, 96, 99, 100, 105, 110, 112, 117, 120, 121, 124, 126, 128, 129, 131, 132, 134, 135, 136, 139, 140, 153, 159, 164, 168, 169, 173, 174, 175, 177, 179, 180, 186, 188, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 207, 208, 209, 210
 deviance, 47, 57, 74, 94, 106, 133, 135, 202, 207, 208, 209
 deviancy, 82, 162, 164
 deviant, 7, 18, 38, 43, 46, 56, 63, 67, 70, 82, 88, 91, 94, 100, 104, 105, 108, 110, 116, 121, 122, 127, 128, 129, 132, 139, 141, 144, 149, 157, 163, 172, 174, 178, 191, 203
 paraphilia, 6, 47, 65, 199, 209
 paraphiliac, 114
 perverse, iii, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 19, 30, 34, 46, 47, 48, 51, 52, 54, 55, 57, 58, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74, 75, 79, 81, 83, 84, 91, 92, 97, 98, 100, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 139, 140, 143, 144, 146, 149, 150, 154, 155, 157,

- 161, 162, 163, 164, 166, 167, 168, 169, 171,
172, 173, 174, 175, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182,
184, 186, 190, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196, 197,
198, 208
- perversity, 45, 65, 98, 122, 126, 134, 164, 191
- pervert, iii, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 45, 46, 47,
48, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 66, 67, 70,
74, 75, 77, 81, 84, 85, 86, 89, 90, 91, 93, 95,
96, 100, 101, 103, 106, 107, 110, 112, 114,
115, 116, 118, 121, 124, 125, 127, 131, 134,
140, 144, 148, 150, 154, 162, 168, 169, 170,
179, 194, 195, 197
- perverted, 6, 76, 103, 129, 209
- subversion, 40, 46
- subversive, 96, 117, 124
- transgression, 17, 40, 46, 49, 58, 75, 108
- transgressive, 1, 113, 191
- transgressor, 5, 47, 102
- photography, 59, 131, 132, 168, 169
- photo, 112, 113, 131, 163
- photograph, 117, 123, 127, 130, 131, 132, 143,
148, 157, 166, 167, 168
- photographer, 112, 117
- photographic, 131, 169
- Pinter, Harold, 147, 160, 203
- pleasure, iii, 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 12, 14, 18, 20, 26, 28, 30,
34, 35, 36, 43, 44, 46, 48, 52, 54, 55, 60, 61, 62,
64, 67, 68, 70, 75, 77, 79, 83, 84, 88, 89, 100,
102, 107, 108, 110, 112, 115, 121, 124, 133, 134,
135, 139, 142, 154, 162, 163, 168, 172, 173, 176,
179, 194, 195, 203, 208, 209
- contented, 100
- contentment, 164
- discontent, 35, 54, 55, 67, 69, 91, 92, 114, 171,
200, 202, 203
- dissatisfaction, 55, 100, 140, 145
- dissatisfied, 105, 140
- enjoyed, 54
- enjoying, 145, 195
- enjoyment, 35, 55, 68, 69
- gratification, 2, 6, 35, 56, 58, 63, 64, 83, 92, 100,
104, 116, 126, 140, 194
- orgasm, 31, 42, 113, 114, 115, 118, 122, 133, 135,
139, 147, 172
- orgasmic, 12, 79, 100, 107, 124, 135, 172
- pleasurable, 16, 54, 61, 64, 107, 124, 125, 126,
129, 138, 163, 179
- satisfaction, 2, 36, 54, 57, 64, 68, 73, 83, 84, 139,
140, 155, 168, 171, 194
- satisfied, 22, 179
- satisfying, 35
- politics, 3, 19, 24, 40, 60, 94, 105, 159, 184, 199, 206
- policy, 78, 85, 87, 144, 188
- political, 3, 7, 10, 11, 15, 22, 24, 28, 30, 39, 40,
45, 76, 77, 81, 82, 85, 86, 91, 93, 95, 97, 98,
106, 188
- pornography, 57, 67, 106, 112, 125, 133, 209
- porn, 124, 134, 175, 190, 196
- pornographic, 31, 39, 67, 79, 80, 105, 106, 112,
120, 125, 129, 132, 133, 138, 170, 196
- power, iii, 4, 5, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18, 23, 26, 27, 29,
30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 40, 45, 46, 50, 52, 53,
61, 62, 64, 67, 70, 79, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 88, 90,
95, 97, 98, 99, 108, 109, 118, 132, 140, 143, 144,
146, 149, 150, 151, 152, 154, 155, 156, 162, 171,
181, 190, 206, 209
- powerful, 11, 63, 70, 75, 77, 81, 82, 88, 90, 95,
97, 99, 105, 106, 115, 124, 150, 151, 158, 181,
182, 184, 190, 197
- powerless, 79, 146
- powerlessness, 62, 176
- psychology, 9, 34, 40, 71, 82, 205
- castrated, 53, 54, 110, 157
- castration, 53, 54, 55, 56, 74, 94, 153
- drive, 1, 2, 10, 36, 52, 114, 152, 156, 157, 162
- instinct, 2, 19, 30, 35, 36, 48, 71, 72, 153
- instinctual, 3, 92, 93, 141, 148, 161, 162
- libido, 3, 72, 114, 205
- neurophysiological, 61
- neurosis, 52, 73, 74
- neurotic, 2, 63
- obsessed, 110, 116, 140, 142, 149, 156
- obsession, 14, 29, 63, 90, 104, 112, 114, 115, 129,
130, 131, 134, 138, 139, 157, 173
- obsessive, 52, 161
- Oedipus/Oedipal, 7, 58, 82, 153
- psyche, 16, 38, 54, 66, 67, 72, 73, 113, 123, 159
- psychiatrist, 5, 7, 56, 76, 103
- psychiatry, 48, 73, 205
- psychic, 6, 50, 66, 71, 72, 83, 110, 122, 124, 132,
139, 149, 155, 159, 208
- psycho, 189
- psychoanalysis, 18, 22, 34, 35, 54, 71, 72, 73,
150, 151, 159, 193, 200, 205, 207
- psychoanalyst, 2, 56, 107, 159
- psychoanalytic, 6, 25, 31, 56, 71, 151, 156, 209,
210
- psychological, 5, 7, 38, 43, 52, 61, 78, 81, 85, 91,
92, 103, 139, 167
- psychopathological, 46
- psychopathology, 63, 104, 113, 199
- psychopath, 128
- psychosexual, 10, 14, 51, 52, 57, 114
- psychosis, 74
- psychosurgery, 103
- repressed, 2, 36, 52, 98, 114, 122, 141, 148, 157,
158, 164, 172
- repression, 1, 2, 35, 49, 94, 167
- unconscious, 2, 14, 18, 34, 36, 41, 42, 54, 55, 56,
57, 71, 72, 73, 106, 107, 112, 147, 157, 165,
205

R

- reality, 2, 7, 17, 18, 26, 35, 36, 45, 46, 48, 54, 59, 60,
65, 67, 68, 70, 72, 73, 74, 75, 80, 99, 100, 101,
105, 108, 131, 136, 137, 138, 139, 156, 169, 194,
195, 196, 201, 205
- real, 62, 66, 67, 79, 86, 93, 99, 101, 102, 103,
104, 105, 106, 108, 122, 124, 127, 129, 131,

135, 136, 137, 138, 147, 152, 155, 156, 166,
169, 173, 177, 182, 188, 190, 194
religion, 3, 47, 60, 87, 95, 96, 100
Bible/biblical, 151, 152
damnation, 149
damned, 96
divine, 95, 109, 147, 149, 151
divinity, 109
God/god, 22, 70, 79, 80, 89, 95, 108, 109, 147,
148, 151, 152, 153, 162, 169, 174, 201
goddess, 28, 174
godfather, 150, 151, 152, 156
godlike, 108, 109, 150
martyr, 86, 184
prophecy, 197
prophetic, 171
Qur'an, 22
religious, 1, 3, 5, 21, 22, 40, 60, 70, 72, 96, 110,
151, 179
ritual, 39, 109, 116, 134, 174
ritualised, 27
sacrifice, 109, 201
sacrificed, 10, 68
sacrificial, 109, 171, 174, 184
salvation, 149
Satan/satanic, 109, 149
saviour, 181
spirit, 14, 81, 89, 93, 143
spiritual, 60, 95, 96, 109, 121, 132, 146, 150
spirituality, 121
worshipper, 95
representation, iii, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 28, 29, 39, 54, 59,
67, 77, 119, 121, 126, 148, 179, 195, 196, 209
Rich, Adrienne, 7, 8, 31, 32, 43, 143, 207
Romanek, Mark, 192
Rubin, Gayle, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 43, 49, 153, 207

S

Sacher-Masoch, Leopold von, 7, 60
masochism, 5, 60, 62, 63, 176, 206
masochist, 10, 77, 154
masochistic, 56, 59, 156, 164, 168, 173, 179
Sade, Marquis de, 7, 60, 102, 199
sadism, 5, 7, 60, 63, 114, 148, 151, 152, 157, 159,
160, 164, 169, 208
sadist, 10, 77, 128, 154, 164, 173
sadistic, 31, 57, 59, 78, 79, 84, 91, 114, 142, 153,
156, 158, 172, 173, 174, 179
sodomasochism, 4, 59, 199
BDSM, 63, 64, 208
consensual, 63, 64, 114, 123, 126, 134, 154, 172,
175, 176, 186
sodomasochist, 60
sodomasochistic, 59, 70, 77, 79, 98, 100, 108,
115, 126, 142, 150, 163, 167, 169, 172, 202,
209
SM, 59, 60, 61, 62, 154, 173, 174, 175, 208
Schrader, Paul, 147, 160, 203
science, iii, 8, 32, 34, 91, 95, 100, 111, 112, 113, 135,
183, 185, 197, 199, 209

scientific, 10, 15, 76, 81, 82, 85, 87, 91, 103, 111,
112, 117, 182, 192, 197
scientist, 95, 103, 104, 111, 112, 123, 186
Seaboyer, Judith, 148, 151, 152, 157, 159, 160, 164,
169, 208
self, 32, 42, 56, 57, 63, 67, 72, 73, 79, 85, 86, 87, 88,
89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 97, 99, 100, 113, 114, 121,
138, 141, 146, 157, 161, 168, 171, 180, 181, 184,
187
sexuality, iii, iv, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 20, 21,
22, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38,
39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52,
53, 57, 58, 60, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, 72, 73,
74, 75, 77, 83, 98, 100, 105, 106, 107, 110, 114,
115, 116, 119, 120, 123, 125, 126, 127, 128, 130,
131, 134, 135, 136, 140, 141, 148, 149, 154, 164,
167, 174, 178, 179, 194, 199, 201, 202, 203, 204,
205, 207, 208, 209
asexual, 43, 63, 126
asexuality, 43
bisexuality, 119, 175
heteronormative, 4, 46, 62, 63, 179
heterosexual, 4, 31, 41, 43, 46, 49, 50, 51, 60, 73,
119, 120
heterosexuality, 7, 26, 31, 32, 49, 50, 51, 53, 60,
175, 179, 201, 207
homosexual, 25, 41, 49, 51, 54, 77, 96, 97, 103,
104, 118, 123, 135, 157
homosexuality, 5, 25, 51, 61, 65, 66, 98, 119, 157,
175, 202
nonsexual, iv, 6, 12, 13, 19, 41, 42, 71, 73, 177,
179, 180, 192
nonsexuality, 43
procreation, 23
procreative, 5, 21, 30, 48, 119, 179, 191
reproduction, 42, 43, 48, 70, 187, 191, 208, 209
reproductive, 27, 34, 38, 42, 43, 44, 46, 48, 179,
192
sexological, 7, 21, 51, 52
sexologist, 1, 34, 46, 50, 51, 56
sexology, 4, 7, 9, 50, 51, 65, 66, 200, 202, 207
sexual, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 17, 19, 21,
22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35,
36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49,
50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63,
64, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77,
79, 80, 83, 91, 100, 101, 104, 105, 106, 110,
111, 114, 115, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 124,
125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134,
135, 136, 140, 141, 143, 150, 153, 154, 155,
162, 163, 164, 165, 167, 168, 172, 173, 174,
175, 176, 179, 187, 192, 194, 196, 199, 200,
201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209
sexualisation, 8, 9, 18, 52, 118
sexualised, 5, 9, 19, 25, 83, 118, 134
simulation, 66, 68, 101, 129, 131, 133, 136, 137, 139,
190
copy, 66, 67, 101, 102, 131, 136, 137, 190
hyperreal, 67, 129
hyperreality, 66, 67, 135, 136
paranoia, 105, 139, 145, 175

paranoid, 69, 101, 140, 166
 schizophrenia, 105, 138, 145, 175
 schizophrenic, 66, 67, 101, 128, 140
 simulacrum/simulacra, 66, 67, 68, 101, 102, 105,
 110, 129, 136, 190, 199
 simulated, 110, 115, 129, 131, 132, 139, 204
 simulating, 129, 136, 137
 society, iii, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 16, 22, 23, 30, 31,
 32, 36, 39, 40, 42, 43, 46, 47, 49, 51, 55, 62, 66,
 68, 70, 75, 76, 77, 78, 82, 83, 86, 87, 88, 90, 91,
 93, 95, 96, 100, 101, 102, 107, 120, 128, 136,
 165, 172, 184, 185, 186, 195, 205, 208
 homosocial, 25, 98
 social, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 18, 22, 23, 24,
 25, 27, 28, 32, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43,
 45, 46, 48, 49, 55, 61, 62, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70,
 71, 74, 75, 77, 78, 81, 85, 86, 88, 92, 94, 95,
 96, 105, 108, 116, 118, 123, 124, 128, 134,
 159, 167, 168, 172, 178, 183, 184, 185, 186,
 189, 192, 199, 208
 sociology, 89, 209
 sociocultural, 8, 116, 197
 sociohistorical, 47, 97
 sociological, 72
 sociologist, 8, 14, 34, 45
 space, iii, iv, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21,
 22, 27, 29, 31, 33, 36, 54, 55, 58, 63, 65, 70, 77,
 81, 85, 86, 101, 106, 107, 110, 111, 112, 115,
 116, 117, 118, 120, 124, 125, 128, 129, 132, 134,
 136, 140, 142, 144, 145, 148, 151, 155, 156, 157,
 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169,
 170, 174, 180, 181, 182, 186, 187, 191, 192, 195,
 196, 201
 empty space, 17, 18, 19, 21, 54, 55, 195
 spatial, iii, iv, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 113, 118,
 134, 144, 158, 160, 161, 180, 192, 195, 196
 spatiality, iii, 9, 12, 116, 144, 145, 158, 162, 196
 Stoller, Robert J., 57, 58, 208
 structure, 2, 3, 10, 12, 23, 36, 37, 40, 46, 55, 66, 71,
 72, 83, 84, 92, 94, 99, 108, 110, 116, 121, 122,
 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 144, 155, 158,
 160, 164, 174, 181, 191, 194, 195, 196
 poststructuralist, 66
 subject, iii, 1, 4, 5, 10, 12, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24,
 25, 26, 29, 37, 40, 41, 43, 50, 55, 66, 67, 68, 69,
 70, 71, 77, 81, 82, 86, 87, 88, 98, 99, 100, 101,
 102, 104, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 113, 114, 117,
 119, 124, 125, 127, 128, 136, 139, 140, 141, 146,
 149, 158, 159, 166, 167, 171, 175, 183, 184, 186,
 190, 191, 192, 194, 195, 197, 198, 203, 207
 subjected, 15, 30, 41, 81, 99, 166, 191, 192
 subjection, 15, 16, 21, 100, 163
 subjective, 10, 13, 41, 42, 55, 58, 64, 70, 72, 95,
 137, 169, 179
 subjectivity, iii, 10, 14, 32, 38, 61, 82, 97, 98, 99,
 183, 190, 192, 194, 195, 197, 203
 symbol, 14, 33, 47, 49, 113, 114, 115, 117, 129, 132,
 147, 203, 204
 symbolic, 25, 55, 59, 75, 165, 168, 170
 symbolisation, 28
 symbolised, 174

symbolism, 3, 176, 205, 208
 system, 3, 8, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 37, 39,
 43, 50, 72, 75, 87, 94, 116, 117, 129, 153, 181,
 183, 184, 188, 190
 systematic, iii, 22, 24, 27, 198

T

technology, 15, 30, 32, 104, 105, 106, 115, 118, 119,
 121, 127, 129, 134, 135, 136, 140, 197
 techno, 115, 117, 118, 121
 technological, 8, 106, 119, 126, 128, 131, 140
 television, 8, 129
 TV, 68, 104, 111
 tradition, 22, 30, 32, 51, 65, 93, 134, 159
 convention, 50, 60, 120, 124
 conventional, 49, 50, 51, 60, 67, 72, 84, 106, 114,
 119, 120, 126, 128, 129, 130, 134, 139, 159
 traditional, 50, 62, 71, 106, 119, 120, 121, 122,
 123, 128, 131, 135, 136
 traditionalist, 1
 unconventional, 105
 trauma, 57, 58, 71, 85, 108, 144, 156, 158, 188, 200
 posttraumatic, 150, 153
 traumatic, 107, 110, 126, 142, 150

V

violence, iii, iv, 4, 6, 9, 11, 15, 31, 58, 59, 62, 76, 77,
 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 87, 88, 96, 98, 99, 102,
 103, 108, 109, 116, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 136,
 137, 138, 150, 156, 165, 170, 175, 197, 201, 202,
 204
 abuse, 56, 57, 63, 81, 175
 abused, 11, 76, 77, 85, 96, 106, 182
 abusive, 57, 60, 61, 191
 aggression, 20, 58, 62, 79, 80, 101, 154
 aggressive, 1, 35, 62, 79, 117, 137, 156
 aggressiveness, 154
 ashamed, 154
 brutal, 76, 77, 78, 88, 91, 93, 160, 161
 brutality, 97, 143, 162, 176
 dead, 20, 86, 93, 111, 124, 132, 160, 163, 164,
 170, 176, 183, 184, 197, 200
 death, 2, 3, 31, 35, 85, 104, 108, 109, 110, 114,
 115, 124, 129, 132, 136, 143, 159, 160, 161,
 163, 164, 165, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175,
 176, 183, 187, 204, 208
 destruction, 2, 31, 85, 86, 114, 156, 176, 207
 destructive, 2, 35, 79, 93, 94, 97, 104, 106, 148,
 174
 hatred, 57, 58, 73, 77, 96, 151, 155, 205, 208
 humiliation, 31, 155, 157, 163, 175
 punished, 151, 152, 154, 155
 punishing, iii, 3, 83, 156, 198
 punishment, 3, 14, 31, 37, 75, 77, 78, 84, 96, 97,
 145, 152, 181, 206
 rape, 31, 32, 59, 82, 83, 84, 175
 savage, 92, 93, 148
 scar, iv, 12, 97, 104, 106, 107, 110, 111, 123, 129,
 134

scarred, 108, 110, 113
shame, 83, 84, 154, 175, 181
shameful, 91
Thanatos, 2, 4, 10, 65, 92, 114, 149, 162, 172,
174, 202
torture, 15, 78, 85, 97, 101, 144, 173, 174, 196
violent, 10, 11, 76, 77, 79, 80, 95, 96, 103, 121,
163, 165, 173, 189, 192, 197
wound, 58, 59, 97, 110, 111, 115, 123, 130, 132,
139, 202
wounded, 58, 59, 68, 112, 113, 127, 128, 130,
132, 134, 138
wounder, 58, 59
wounding, 58, 59, 113, 115, 204
voyeurism, 5, 131, 132, 139, 157, 165
scopophilia, 157

voyeur, 68, 77, 83, 84, 126, 131, 132, 134, 168,
173, 175
voyeuristic, 125, 131, 132, 133, 142, 146, 149,
157, 162, 166, 168, 174, 196

W

Weeks, Jeffrey, 1, 8, 9, 14, 34, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45, 46,
65, 209

Z

Žižek, Slavoj, 10, 12, 17, 18, 106, 107, 156, 193,
194, 195, 210



TEŞEKKÜR

Şüphesiz teşekkürlerin en büyüğünü, bu doktora tezi sürecinin başından sonuna kadar bana güvenen, beni destekleyen ve cesaretlendiren tez danışmanım Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Funda Civelekoğlu'na ediyorum. Gerek tez konusu seçimimde, gerekse tez yazım sürecinde hocam yanımda olmasaydı şayet, cesur bir tavırla ele alınması gereken böylesine bir tez de yazılamazdı. Bazı zamanlarda tatlı sert, lakin daima beni ve çalışmalarımı geliştirmeye yönelik katkılarınızı asla unutamam. Üniversitemizde bölümümüzün birçok mekânı bizim sayısız ve süresiz tez okuma randevularımıza şahit olmuştur ve bunların her biri, kulak misafiri oldukları vakit başkalarına çılgınca gelen tartışma konularını da içeren çok özel anlar olarak tarihe geçmiştir. Bana ayırmış olduğunuz kıymetli vaktinizin her bir dakikası için size minnettarım hocam.

Ayrıca, tez izleme komitemde bulunan ve toplantılarımız esnasında değerli görüşleri, yorumları, tavsiyeleri ve soruları ile tezimin daha kapsamlı hale gelmesinde büyük emekleri olan sayın hocalarım Prof. Dr. Nevin Yıldırım Koyuncu'ya ve Prof. Dr. Nilsen Gökçen Uluk'a da teşekkürlerimi sunuyorum. Bu tezin ortaya çıkış hikâyesindeki rolleri tez yazım aşamasından ibaret değildir. Doktora ders aşamasında sayın hocalarımdan almış olduğum derslerin, o derslerdeki okumalarımızın, analizlerimizin ve saatlerce süren tartışmalarımızın hem yazım sürecindeki katkıları hem de doktora tezimdeki yansımaları yadsınamaz.

Ege Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü'ndeki diğer hocalarıma ve özellikle yıllarca meslektaşım olan arkadaşlarıma da teşekkür ediyorum. Hepimizin benzer aşamalardan geçtiği bu zorlu süreçte birbirimize olan anlayışımız, desteğimiz ve her daim saygı çerçevesinde tutumumuzun yanı sıra sohbetlerimiz esnasında araya sıkıştırdığımız ve tezlerimiz üzerine yapmış olduğumuz fikir alışverişlerinin de motivasyon açısından anlamı büyüktür benim için.

Son olarak, her daim başımın tacı olan aileme de en samimi şükranlarımı sunmak istiyorum. Belki de bu süreçte bazen sizleri ihmal ettim veya sizler ile yeterince ve gerektiği şekilde vakit geçiremedim. Hayatım boyunca üzerimdeki emekleriniz ve sevginiz olmasaydı ne bu tez olurdu ne de ben. Siz hep var olun ve hep benimle olun.

ÖZ GEÇMİŞ

Mustafa Demirel, 2009 yılında Osman Nuri Hekimoğlu Anadolu Lisesi'nden mezun oldu. İlk yurt dışı tecrübesini 2007 yılında kardeş şehirler arası kültürel bir gezi programı kapsamında Güney Kore'de, profesyonel seviyedeki ilk iş tecrübesini ise 2011 yılında kültürel bir değişim programı olan Work & Travel kapsamında mağaza reyon görevlisi olarak ABD'de yaşadı. ÖSS (Öğrenci Seçme Sınavı) ilk 100 derecesi ile 2009 yılında tam burslu olarak kazanmış olduğu Fatih Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Ana Bilim Dalı'ndan 2013 yılında 4.00 ağırlıklı not ortalaması ve üniversite birinciliği derecesiyle, 2014 yılında ise aynı üniversitenin Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü'nden ÇAP (çift ana dal programı) kapsamında mezun oldu. YÖK-ÖYP (Yükseköğretim Kurulu-Öğretim Üyesi Yetiştirme Programı) kapsamında Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit Üniversitesi'nde 2013 yılında araştırma görevlisi olarak çalışmaya başladı ve 2014 yılından beri Ege Üniversitesi'nde aynı unvan ile görevine devam etmektedir. TÜBİTAK-Yurt İçi Lisansüstü Burs Programı bursiyeri olarak Ege Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Ana Bilim Dalı'nda yüksek lisans çalışmalarına 2014 yılında başladı ve bu derecedeki çalışmalarını 2016 yılında "Plurality, Subjectivity, and Relativity in John Fowles' Novels: A Study on Postmodernism" başlıklı tezi ile tamamladı. Aynı yıl içerisinde Ege Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Ana Bilim Dalı'nda başlamış olduğu doktora programı çalışmalarına tez aşaması ile devam etmektedir. Bugüne kadar, organizasyon komitesinde bulunduğu ya da katılımcısı olduğu bilimsel etkinliklerini ve editörü ya da yazarı olduğu bilimsel yayınlarını içeren akademik faaliyetleri genellikle Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları alanında yoğunlaşmaktadır.