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**THE UNWANTED SON OF THE SOUTH:
ALIENATION AND DEHUMANIZATION
IN CORMAC MCCARTHY'S *CHILD OF GOD***

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APPROVAL PAGE



DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this master's thesis titled as "The Unwanted Son of the South: Alienation and Dehumanization in Cormac McCarthy's *Child of God*" has been written by myself in accordance with the academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that all materials benefited in this thesis consist of the mentioned resources in the reference list. I verify all these with my honour.

06/01/2023
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ABSTRACT

Master's Thesis

The Unwanted Son of the South: Alienation and Dehumanization in Cormac

McCarthy's *Child of God*

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The themes of alienation and dehumanization have always been an important part of literature which is a great tool to explain human psychology. Throughout the years, many authors have addressed these two interrelated themes from unique perspectives. The theme of alienation depicts characters who are estranged. They cannot integrate into society and gain a sense of belonging to any object both physically or mentally. Although some authors, like Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, stated that alienation is essential, many thinkers like Eric Fromm have claimed that this is a process that makes people irrational. In order to maintain social order, it is considered as an undesirable condition. Similar to alienation, the theme of dehumanization also shows the human condition in pain. Dehumanization is the inability to perceive others as fully human and it reveals a lack of awareness of others' subjectivity. Through this process, the suffering and torture of those who are considered to be less human will be justified. Especially, the American South has been seen as a wasteland that is associated with insanity, degeneration, and desolation. The evils of the antebellum period manifest themselves in corrupted literary characters. This thesis aims to analyze theories of alienation and dehumanization in light of *Child of God* by Cormac McCarthy. With regard to the first chapter of the thesis offers Eric Fromm's theory of alienation with references to Karl Marx, Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Heidegger and G.W.F. Hegel. The second chapter applies the alienation theories to the study of the protagonist, Lester Ballard's different

phases of alienation in which he is isolated from objects, people and himself. The third chapter demonstrates the protagonist's animalistic form of dehumanization by Nick Haslam's "Human Uniqueness" theory.

Keywords: alienation, dehumanization, Cormac McCarthy, *Child of God*, the American South, Eric Fromm, outcast, necrophilia



ÖZET

Yüksek lisans tezi

Güneyin İstenmeyen Çocuğu: Cormac McCarthy'nin *Tanrının Bir Kulu* İsimli
Romanında Yabancılaşma ve İnsandışılaştırma

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Yabancılaşma ve insandışılaştırma temaları, insan psikolojisini açıklamak için harika bir araç olan edebiyatta her zaman önemli bir yer teşkil etmiştir. Yıllar boyunca, birçok yazar birbiriyle ilişkili bu iki temayı eşsiz bakış açılarıyla ele almıştır. Yabancılaşma teması, yabancılaşmış karakterleri tasvir etmektedir. Bu karakterler toplumla bütünleşemezler ve hem fiziksel hem de zihinsel olarak herhangi bir nesneye ait olma duygusu kazanamazlar. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel gibi bazı yazarlar yabancılaşmanın gerekli olduğunu belirtse de, Eric Fromm gibi birçok düşünür bunun insanları akıldışı olmaya iten bir süreç olduğunu iddia etmiştir. Bu, toplumsal düzeni korumak için istenmeyen bir durum olarak kabul edilir. Yabancılaşmaya benzer şekilde, İnsandışılaştırma teması da insanın acı içindeki durumunu gösterir. İnsandışılaştırma, başkalarını bütünüyle insan olarak algılayamamaktır ve başkalarının öznelliğine dair farkındalık eksikliğini ortaya çıkarır. Bu süreçte, daha az insan olarak görülenlerin yaşadığı ızdırıp ve eziyetler haklı gösterilir. Amerika'nın güneyi; delilik, yozlaşma ve ıssızlıkla ilişkilendirilen bir çorak arazi olarak görülmüştür. Savaş öncesi dönemin kötülükleri, yozlaşmış edebiyat karakterlerinde kendini gösterir. Bu tez, yabancılaşma İnsandışılaştırma teorilerini Cormac McCarthy'nin *Child of God*'ı ışığında incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tezin birinci bölümünde Eric Fromm'un yabancılaşma kuramı Karl Marx, Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Heidegger ve G.W.F. Hegel referanslarıyla incelemektedir. İkinci bölüm, yabancılaşma teorilerini, ana karakter Lester Ballard'ın nesnelere,

insanlardan ve kendisinden izole edildiđi farklı yabancılaşma aşamalarının incelenmesini amaçlar. Üçüncü bölüm, Nick Haslam'ın "İnsanın Benzersizliđi" teorisiyle ana karakterin, hayvana benzer bir şekilde İnsandışlaştırma biçimini göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yabancılaşma, insandışlaştırma, Cormac McCarthy, *Child of God*, Amerika'nın Güneyi, Eric Fromm, toplumdan kovulmuş, nekrofil



**THE UNWANTED SON OF THE SOUTH: ALIENATION AND
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INTRODUCTION

Many philosophers like Aristotle and Plato suggested that art imitates life. The concept of art demonstrates a new emotional adventure that contains feelings such as sorrow, loneliness, love, affection. Thus, people seek to experience the sense of catharsis to expose their inner selves through time, much like an Aristotelian theater. The tragedies which were presented in ancient Greek theaters attempted to imitate life in this respect. It still drives people to awe or compassion through theatrical performance arts.

Similar to the ancient Greek tragedies, literature is always a good tool for reflecting the human condition. It is full of conflicts and existential dilemmas that introduce human relations to the universe. In these relations, one of the common themes is alienation, which emphasizes a lack of significant relation with others. Regarding this statement, it is not unexpected to see that a large number of literary theorists have been interested in the theme of alienation.

Alienation is a key term in a number of notable works by important authors and movements, from the German Romantics to the Postmodernists. Although there are different approaches to the term, each author and philosopher added their own unique thoughts and deconstructed the term according to *Zeitgeist*. Their main objective is to understand the human subject and the idea of existence. The presence of human nature should be discussed in order to comprehend what alienation implies. A natural outcome of the existential dilemma is called strong estrangement, which many philosophers and literary theorists have analyzed. According to Eric Fromm, alienation is defined as a passive phase of human existence in which one's projected life as a substance, rather than as the active carrier of his own abilities and wealth. (Fromm, 1955: 121)

There are many thinkers whose ideas have been used in literary theory for analyzing the theme of alienation. Some of them are interested in existentialist approaches, and this leads to understanding the outcomes of estrangement. Georg Wilhelm Hegel, Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Søren Kierkegaard, Martin Heidegger, and Eric Fromm are the founding figures of the theory and developed the term, alienation significantly. While some defined the

concept in terms of economics, others regarded it as having sociological components in terms of interest. Alienation is related to the human psyche and cannot be thought of without material drives. In this sense, it could be studied and changed in different disciplines that contain human existence. It is a literary theme and motif with several interpretations which show strong estrangement from the universe, from oneself, or a thing. The alienated man cannot fit into society and its rules. Man is thrown into this universe without any attachment and gets lost. It is the consequence of loneliness and isolation. Literature will never be complete without the theme of alienation owing to how significant it is.

Alienation could be found in different aspects of literature from Romanticism to Postmodernism; however, its roots went back to the German Romantics, who influenced American Romanticism in the 19th century. German Romanticism was the first Romantic movement that highlighted human subjectivity, emotions, and individuality. Being one with nature and searching for an idyllic past are the main themes of the movement. In regard to the influence of German Romantics in philosophy, aesthetics, and literature, the American Renaissance started to flourish in various ways. Taking the roots of Romanticism and Transcendentalism, there was a new way of emphasizing the importance of subjectivity, emotions, and individualism. Edgar Allan Poe, David Henry Thoreau, and Ralph Waldo Emerson are great examples of this era because they contributed to American literature both in terms of composition and subject matter. First of all, like Emerson, Thoreau contributed to Romanticism genuinely, and he is one of the founders of the Transcendentalist movement, which introduced the idea of being unified with nature and transcending into a higher self. He claims that subjectivity is more significant, unlike the Enlightenment thinking of the 18th century. The transcendental idea is a way of breaking rational thought because rationality did not bring man into anything but war. Because of this, there was a tendency to the idyllic past. The Transcendentalists claimed the significance of subjectivity over objective empiricism, and they glorified spirituality rather than intellectuality. As a result, it was the first time in literature that the binaries of subject and object position were used.

In 1764, Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* was published and Gothic fiction flourished gradually as a result. The Gothic style had huge significance in the

mid-eighteenth century with the emergence of Enlightenment beliefs. The genre took its roots in Romantic poets such as Coleridge, Keats, Shelley, and Byron. Even though Gothic focuses on thoughts and feelings, it is genuinely critical to understand that it appears to be highly reliant on particular settings such as castles, and monasteries with characters like aristocrats or monks in many contexts. Moreover, one of the most important aspects of Gothic fiction also comes with the definition of evil. Not surprisingly, the era was covered with fears or enthusiasm for revolutionary ideas, and Gothic literature was nourished by those concepts of such feelings. (Smith, 2013: 2) The Gothic genre is known as the source of the uncanny as well. The Gothic characters experience the other in a state of consciousness. The alienation theme could be seen in bizarre characters whose stories are full of scary components or supernatural events. Gothic fiction is a good tool for showing the psychological traumas of grotesque characters.

As an influential American author, Edgar Allan Poe is considered the founder of American Gothic literature. From the past to the present, he has been influential in literary theory. First of all, he developed short fiction, which is a revolution for American literature. Moreover, he is famous for his horror stories in which he mixed the elements of horror and romance and created his own formula. His poems and tales, which deal with the anxieties of isolated characters, also contributed to the theme of alienation. His characters are mainly insane, mad, disabled, or necrophiliac. He uses each element of the grotesque to reveal the dark side of common people. His ideal places are decaying castles, monasteries, and isolated mansions far from civilization. In those places, he shows the character's inner psyche by using supernatural elements of literature. His talent for using imagery is strong enough to terrorize the audience. One of his famous short stories, "The Fall of the House of Usher" is influential not only because of its grotesque aspects but also in the theme of alienation. Poe depicts the house as "the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar... which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the grey walls, and the silent tarn" (Poe, 1839: 4). It shows a total Gothic atmosphere which foreshadows the evil that shows up. The Usher family is important for analyzing the theme of alienation in Gothic fiction. The siblings do not respect the law or moral norms; therefore, they establish a false universe in order to exist. Poe adds spooky aspects to this solitude to

show the reader their troubled minds. The story shows the siblings as uncanny characters to mirror the anxiety of their inner selves.

Apart from the Gothic genre, Southern Gothic literature has flourished and become a significant milestone in American literature from the early 19th century to the present day. It is not only magnificent due to its unique style, but also the drastic characters who show the gnawing cry of the Antebellum South. It is a subgenre of Gothic fiction, and its history goes back to the civil war era (1861-1865). The emergence of the American Civil War and its remains are strong literary symbols in American literature because a nation was rebuilt by a new ideology. The communal dynamics were totally changed and there was a new moral code for the Southern people who were not aware of the war's outcomes. The war ended the greatest sin, slavery; however, it was left a destroyed wasteland both socially and economically. Moreover, the subgenre is very rich with terrifying characters whose psychologically unstable conditions mirror the communal Zeitgeist. Cormac McCarthy, Tennessee Williams, Truman Capote, Eudora Welty, Carson McCullers, William Faulkner, Harper Lee, and Flannery O'Connor are great examples of the establishment of the genre.

Alienation is one of the strong themes in Southern Gothic literature that shows the inner mental breakdown of Southern people. There are various approaches to the theme of alienation that enrich its meaning. According to W. Daly, the word "alienation" has several connotations. In general, the premise is that there are lost, absent, or severed linkages or bonds that connect man to himself, others, society, and the technologies and social structures he has developed, and that this situation results in a variety of "pathologies" (Daly, 1973: 164). With regard to this, if somebody cannot attach himself to these structures, he or she gets alienated inevitably. These are the important aspects of being a human who desires to be attached to a meaningful context. Moreover, it could be defined as "a withdrawing or separation of a person or a person's affections from an object or position of former attachment: estrangement" (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2008). From the literary perspective, the alienation theme is parallel to this basic definition; however, this concept has been analyzed by many philosophers in terms of social structures. The term has been defined in various perspectives in literature because it helps people understand the world.

The South may refer to the states of the former Confederacy in addition to Missouri and Oklahoma; however, the concept of the South in literature also might be related to the particular economy (systems of labor), ideologies (unique laws, practices, and codes), and its culture. Even if the genre is usually associated with the regions of the works or the region of the authors, the definition slightly requires more than this explanation. The additional definition might be summarized as alienated characters, decaying places, and the aspects of the grotesque. In order to understand the whole context, the post-civil war condition shows us the fundamental dynamics of the genre. With the abolition of slavery, the standard of living for those in the South was demolished drastically. Plantation owners in the South were seen as members of a wealthy, privileged master class. However, their prosperity began to demolish as well as their cultural norms. Thus, the Southerners who were stuck with the glorious old days in their claim, could not adapt themselves to the new atmosphere. The South, contrary to the past, created a chance for various people who are not landowners to succeed in different areas. This caused major mental breakdowns in elderly, rich Southerners. Many of them simply could not adjust to the New South, thus they became isolated and estranged. In this condition, they were aliens that belonged to the Antebellum period. The decaying of the values in the South was not recognized by the people who already lived in it. With respect to this, one of the greatest authors of Southern Gothic, William Faulkner discussed this decadence and alienation in his short story, "A Rose for Emily".

When her father died, it got about that the house was all that was left to her; and in a way, people were glad. At last they could pity Miss Emily. Being left alone, and a pauper, she had become humanized. Now she too would know the old thrill and the old despair of a penny more or less. (Faulkner, 2012: 10)

In regard to this quotation, Emily's situation is a symbol of her psychological status and her mental breakdown due to her longing for the past. As a Southern character, Emily's self-alienation was pictured in comparison to the past habits of society. One of the biggest deductions of Faulkner and the story itself, a person with a wealthy and noble family name, gradually gets an image of "pity" by the other people in society and goes through dehumanization towards the end of the story. Besides the society's perspective, it can be observed that she lacks self-worth, which is also a common characteristic of Southern Gothic figures.

On the other hand, Tennessee Williams is another representative who embodied the elements of Southern Gothic in his great plays. The literary motives that Williams used are similar to Faulkner's. He also shows the decadence of the South through isolated characters and their psychological journeys. *A Streetcar Named Desire* would be a great example of reflecting those values.

What he wants is my companionship. Having great wealth sometimes makes people lonely! A cultivated woman, a woman of intelligence and breeding, can enrich a man's life--immeasurably! I have those things to offer, and this doesn't take them away. Physical beauty is passing. A transitory possession. But beauty of the mind and richness of the spirit and tenderness of the heart--and I have all of those things--aren't taken away, but grow! Increase with the years! How strange that I should be called a destitute woman! When I have all of these treasures locked in my heart. [A choked sob comes from her] I think of myself as a very, very rich woman! But I have been foolish--casting my pearls before swine! (Williams, 2014: 99)

The situation that is described above resembles Emily's situation in "A Rose for Emily". It actually represents how Blanche inherits lost ideals. Her mental condition gets worse due to the evils of her past. In addition to this, Blanche states that physical beauty is a passing and transitory possession, but in reality, she is obsessed with it. She always optimizes the light of the room where she sits down in order to hide her aging. Her face is not clearly visible in dim light. So, Southern Gothic characters have an obsession with the past and lost ideals of the Antebellum. The anxiety of the past leads them to experience self-alienation eventually because the human psyche is troubled by the pressures from the past that are scarring by social and racial traumas.

Cormac McCarthy is one of the noteworthy authors of Southern Gothic as well as Appalachian Gothic fiction. He is known for his marvelous novels, screenplays, and short stories. His authentic writing style is considered a good tool for revealing the problems of Southerners. He prefers to use sharp dialogue transitions, and this causes a difficult reading experience for the reader. Moreover, many of his works are considered ambiguous by experts due to the lack of punctuation as well as abrupt transitions. Apart from his writing style, the themes that he created in his fiction are challenging and strenuous to comprehend easily. He mainly introduces the stories of Southern outcasts in the post-apocalyptic atmospheres of the South, and he provides nihilist approaches to the current society. The themes that he chose to portray are often associated with existential problems and hyper-masculinity. He prefers to show

closure through violence, rape and assault in order to reveal the evil inside. He also works on understanding morality and ethics and criticizes those strong terms in the stories of the Southerners. McCarthy speaks about the taboos like incest, necrophilia, and rape, which are the unspoken facts for brutalized communities. Moreover, the themes of alienation and dehumanization are introduced in his novels frequently. His fiction becomes a place for revealing the uncanny characters and their anxieties which are reflected in the current condition of Southern society in the 1960s. For example, one of his well-known novels, *Outer Dark* tells the story of two siblings who are extremely alienated from society. McCarthy described the sibling/couple in a dehumanized way due to their immorality and their sinful acts. Considering this, McCarthy questions the notion of good and evil and their deconstructed meanings. Both characters have no attachment to making their life meaningful until they have a baby from their incestuous relationship. Thus, the novel is an important example of highlighting “the humanness” inside people. Another important novel that suggests a nihilistic tone is *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy. The novel tells a story of a place that shows the post-apocalyptic experience. McCarthy again creates a story where people are extremely isolated from each other. The characters are not so varied, and they are dehumanized and estranged from the outside world due to chaos. The novel aims to question the current condition of existence and the human condition. The question of “what makes us human” is raised in many chapters in light of extremely alienated characters.

Child of God is the third novel by Cormac McCarthy, who contributes to the Southern Gothic genre in a unique way. *Child of God* was written in 1973 when the genre was very popular in America. The novel tells the story of a brutal murderer who is an example of extreme alienation from society. He loses his humanness due to his experiences. He becomes the face of dehumanization at the end. The book starts with Ballard’s eviction from his family house, which is a conflicting process. McCarthy does not mention anything about the financial status of his family; however, it could be seen that his grandfather was most probably a plantation owner. Ballard's detachment from society starts when he loses his farm. He runs away from people and leaves town more frequently. Losing the house gets him ostracized because he has nowhere to live. He connects with caves, rivers and other wild places where he can find acceptance and

peace. He eventually has no sense of belonging, and his mental condition deteriorates as a result of intense estrangement, and he engages in acts of necrophilia as well as sadism and murder.

The present study aims to offer theories of alienation and dehumanization in light of *Child of God* by Cormac McCarthy. The First Chapter of the thesis shows many theories to understand the protagonist, Lester Ballard's status as an outcast. The main focus will be on Eric Fromm's theory of alienation with references to Karl Marx, Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Heidegger and G.W.F. Hegel.

The Second Chapter analyzes Lester Ballard's different phases of alienation. Firstly, how he experienced existential alienation is described with references to Sartre and Heidegger. Additionally, his alienation from women, space and society is analyzed by the theories of Sigmund Freud, Peter Marcuse and Eric Fromm. The condition of Lester Ballard contains multiple faces; thus, more than one theory should be integrated to demonstrate his estrangement.

The Third Chapter introduces dehumanization theories to explain Ballard as a dehumanized figure. His dehumanization is an example of an animalistic form. The character is analyzed in regard to "Human Uniqueness" by Nick Haslam, who is a well-known psychologist in the fields of infra-humanization and dehumanization.

Alienation, one of the crucial literary themes in literature, shows the characters' estrangement from the universe and other entities. It is a well-known theme because it reflects the direct experience of humanity, from the German Romantics to the Postmodernists. Alienation is also a concept that is intertwined with dehumanization, as both reflect the demonic face of humanity through literary works. The theme of alienation, which appears commonly in Southern Gothic literature, describes the psychological traumas and inner conflicts of southern people. In light of this, Cormac McCarthy tells the story of an unwanted necrophiliac, Lester Ballard's odyssey from the city to the wilderness in *Child of God*.

CHAPTER ONE

ALIENATION THEORIES

1.1. ALIENATION

The concept of alienation has existed in human experience throughout history. It highlights a separation from anything in everyday awareness, losing subjectivity and changing into an object position. Alienation has been studied and analyzed in the fields of sociology, psychology, and economics for many years to understand its effects. According to Oxford's dictionary of Public Health, it is defined as "estrangement or withdrawal from society or family. This may be a manifestation of a mental disorder or of social or political disaffection" (Porta, 2018: 14). In light of this, the concept is related to affection, love, and making connections basically in human nature. The person who feels estrangement also is separated from other people. This powerful feeling leads a person into insanity and passivity eventually in the social sphere.

The meaning of alienation is very controversial because there are a lot of different approaches to the term. In the beginning, the term is only analyzed in ontology. First, the phrase was approached from a Judeo-Christian perspective. Alienation was used for a negative meaning which emphasizes leaving God's way. "Later the Protestants, beginning with Calvin, understood the term as spiritual death, as estrangement of man's spirit from God by virtue of origin" (Feuer, 1963: 128) It describes how the first man was sent from Paradise, the first man's everlasting home. It was a painful journey to home on Earth; however, it explains the reason for the existence of the universe. Adam and Eve's dualistic harmony breaks, and they are thrown to Earth as a punishment. The first men are alienated from God, nature, and each other due to their sinful acts.

Apart from the Judeo-Christian perspective, also Gnosticism shapes the meaning of alienation. According to Gnostics, human beings are strangers, aliens, and spirits trapped in evil. There is a cosmic process that the world's rings were formed by ignorant or malicious creators and people ended up imprisoned in the middle. Finally, the required information is given to returning to the Light which emphasizes our true

home. (Allen, 1993: 95) In regard to this, alienation in Gnosticism is a process for finding the true self.

From the past to the present, alienation has been a significant theme in literature as well. One of the key figures is Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who had a crucial role in the European Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. Although he is considered a thinker of politics and one of the leaders of the French Revolution, he is also famous for his influential ideas on the late eighteenth-century Romanticism movement. In *The Social Contract*, he explains his theories about community and the nature of man. According to him, everyone has unique ideas that reflect their “general will”. He explains that “Every man having been born free and master of himself, no one else may under any pretext whatever subject him without his consent. To assert that the son of a slave is born a slave is to assert that he is not born a man” (Rousseau, 1923: 93). In light of this quotation, it is suggested that community members are not dependent on one another. He claims that the only thing that separates human beings from animals is the idea of “free will”. He reports that “Our will is always for our own good, but we do not always see what that is: the people are never corrupted, but it is often deceived, and on such occasions only does it seem to will what is bad” (Rousseau, 1923: 31). Thus, he believes that the natural man who inherited free will is always good. There is a binary opposition between natural man and modern man. He considers modern man as absorbed in sorrow and dependent in this respect. To provide a legitimate society, complete alienation must be achieved by people to reflect their own self as “free will”. They ought to take over control of their alienation and transform their situation into a unique perspective. He summarizes his theory in the quotation below.

These clauses, properly understood, may be reduced to one—the total alienation of each associate, together with his rights, to the whole community; for, in the first place, as each gives himself absolutely, the conditions and is same for all ; and, this being so, no one has any interest in making them burdensome to others. (Rousseau, 2017: 15)

Moreover, Jean-Jacques Rousseau reveals his ideas about turning into the true self, and alienation from society to find the answers which fulfill his giving meaning to the universe in *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*. He states that “I am a hundred times happier in my solitude than I could be if I lived among them” (Rousseau, 1783:

149). He describes himself as a non-conformist who could achieve to find his authentic self in the wilderness, as an alienated man.

The late 18th and early 19th centuries had seen the emergence of German Romanticism, a major literary and artistic movement. The movement is very influential because it began as a rebellion against the French Enlightenment. Similar to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, German Romantics also considered the term alienation as a positive meaning in the human condition. They suggest that the human condition is based on nature. Nature is a great entity that provides answers in the sublime. With regard to the sublime, there should be a transcendence in which man becomes united with nature. His isolation is necessary because human beings only acknowledge the truth through this. The German romantic poet, Friedrich Hölderlin is a good example for understanding the new approach to the term.

Hölderlin's sense of loss and destitution was not simply due to a personal predilection for suffering, but was part of a larger cultural phenomenon that arose from powerful currents seething under the Enlightenment—an increasing alienation from nature and a growing sense of disenchantment in the face of a triumphant rationality and waning traditions and values. Hölderlin was not alone in perceiving these changes and experiencing them deeply. Hegel, for example, famously wrote of alienated consciousness, and Schiller described modern human beings as "stunted plants, that show only a feeble vestige of their nature. (Hölderlin: 2008: 17)

One of the leading figures of German Idealism, G.W.F. Hegel explained alienation in terms of social philosophy. In his famous work of art, *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, he explains his idea of “alienation”, which is connected with the phase of “absolute knowledge”. Unlike German Romantics, Hegel’s approach to the alienation term is not quite positive. He considered the alienation process of finding the true self as well. However, especially self-alienation should be overcome to be united with the community which is a necessary human need.

The Hegelian approach to alienation is an employable concept in the human condition. According to him, the concept of “self” only succeeds when being in alien form is overcome. It is vital to connect with the community self and discover one's actual self. Only with a successful journey of self-alienation and reintegration into the community can the spiritual self be attained. Hegel states that “This their alienation is pure consciousness or essence. The present actual world has its antithesis directly in his beyond, which is both the thinking of it and its thought-form, just as the beyond

has in the present world its actuality, but an actuality alienated from it” (Hegel, 1998: 295).

In light of this quotation, it could be said that our consciousness alienates itself at first. The aim of this process is to comprehend “nature consciousness” which is explained as “But the ceaseless activity of their own inherent nature makes them at the same time moments of an organic unity, where they not merely do not contradict one another, but where one is as necessary as the other; and this equal necessity of all moments constitutes alone and thereby the life of the whole” (Hegel, 2006: 68). Thus, in order to comprehend “nature consciousness”, experiencing a self-alienation should be needed. This phase contributes to “absolute knowledge” which means self-knowledge or understanding oneself in otherness and otherness as oneself. This is the ultimate type of knowledge. Hegel believes that when a topic has a complete conceptual understanding of itself, the issue of knowing is solved. (Rockmore, 1997: 189) In the communal notion, human beings need to overcome their self-alienation to be one with the whole.

1.2. THE EXISTENTIAL ALIENATION: SARTRE AND HEIDDEGER

Existentialism is a philosophical and literary movement that was established in the 19th and 20th centuries. Famous intellectuals who contributed to the theory's foundation are Søren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Fyodor Dostoyevsky. The movement's popularity was accelerated by the contributions of the French philosophers, such as Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, and Jean-Paul Sartre. They questioned the value of existence as well as the purposes of being a human. In the 5th century, Plato and Aristotle believed that everything has an essence. Before people are created, their essence already exists. Although some existentialist philosophers agreed with the ancient Greek philosophers' perspective on the “essence,” the existentialist approach is a binary opposition to essentialism, which is a theory that always prioritizes essence over existence. Essentialism lost its priority in the late 19th century due to striking thoughts on existentialist philosophers and writers like Nietzsche and Sartre.

Friedrich Nietzsche challenged the theory of essentialism and declared that God had passed away. He was a German philosopher who studied religion, ethics, modern culture and philosophy. His ideas have been very controversial through the years because his teachings were misinterpreted by various defenders. After the Russian writer's contribution to the "Nihilism" term, he expanded its horizon, and turned it into a controversial approach that could be associated with giving a rise to Nazism with his promotion of "the Übermensch." By rejecting the essentialist aspects, he claims that life has no ultimate meaning at all. He believes that the ultimate meaning could not be inherited because there are no points that directing people before the essence.

A nihilist is a man who judges of the world as it is that it ought not to be, and of the world as it ought to be that it does not exist. According to this view, our existence (action, suffering, willing, feeling) has no meaning: the pathos of 'in vain' is the nihilists' pathos – at the same time, as pathos, an inconsistency on the part of the nihilists. (Nietzsche 1968: 318)

In light of this quotation, it is clear that Nietzsche suggests that man is born without possible answers to his existence. Western rationality and epistemology were deconstructed because there is no authority like God in his perspective. Moreover, to show the meaninglessness of existence, Nietzsche wrote *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. The book addresses that "the problem of 'nihilism,'" is a kind of collective failure of desire, bows that have lost their tension, the absence of 'need' or of any fruitful self-contempt, the presence of wretched contentment, 'settling' for far too little (Nietzsche, 2006: 20). He believes that after everything was destroyed, people could live freely. Thus, there is no predetermined set of rules to live accordingly to.

Nietzsche states that "Gott ist tot", which means there is no authoritative force to show any direction to people. God gives a determined purpose, and he is considered a light-bringer for the acts of human beings. However, in the absence of God, how people are supposed to find their ways is a difficult challenge. Existentialists reject the idea that the universe is the source of God. There are no basic purposes that are dictated by an authoritative force. Thus, it leads to meaninglessness.

The term, "Absurd" flourished from this meaninglessness. Man should find an attachment or meaning in his life; however, due to the absence of God, this desire could not be fulfilled. There is no attached meaning to the universe, and the universe itself does not serve a reason. It alludes to the conflict that arose between the regular

order of human thought and the orderlessness that was shown in the outside world. While discussing the term absurd, it is impossible not to mention Albert Camus who is the founder of the theory of absurdity. He wrote *The Myth of Sisyphus* in 1942 showing the painful life of Sisyphus who is condemned to the same insignificant chore of pushing a rock up a mountain. The futility of this chore demonstrates that life is full of absurdity. In regard to Camus' "Sisyphus", there is no guidance for having a meaningful life. Life is filled with absurdities, and humanity is only thrown into the world without any determined set of rules. Human beings are only accountable to themselves which causes despair and suffering.

Moreover, Jean-Paul Sartre identified himself as an existentialist philosopher and introduced his ideas on nihilism. He highlighted the lack of objective meaning. He questioned the ontological formula and tried to find the meaning of life. In order to understand his perspective on existence and alienation, the term freedom should be analyzed first. He stated that "We are left alone, without excuse. That is what I mean when I say that man is condemned to be free. Condemned, because he did not create himself, yet is nevertheless at liberty, and from the moment that he is thrown into this world he is responsible for everything he does" (Sartre, 2007: 52). With regard to this, human beings are responsible for their actions because these actions are not determined by any authoritative force. They are just thrown into the world without any explanation. Thus, this sense of freedom serves a deep sorrow because human beings cannot attach themselves to any meaningful signifier. According to Sartre, "In a world, man must create his own essence: it is in throwing himself into the world, suffering there, struggling there, that he gradually defines himself" (Sartre, 1974: 157). Man should find his own essence to stop his suffering in his sorrowful life. Sartre also believes that human being has no essence or inner function by stating "l'existence précède l'essence".

"The human being can never rely on any given essence, in the sense of an evitable way of acting, not even by assuming an ego. No matter how she acts, she is always freely choosing to act in this certain manner - this is the freedom to which she is, famously, "condemned." (Paulsen, 2011: 47) In this sense, Sartre claims that humans are not born with a predetermined ideal. Accordingly, he deconstructed the

Aristotelian metaphysics upside down and created a new notion of alienation in ontological status.

He starts his argument by questioning the binary opposition of being (*en-soi, being-in-itself*) and conscious being (*pour-soi, being-for-itself*). Sartre reports that “Being-in-itself is logically prior to Being-for-itself; for the In-itself has no need of Nothingness since it is a plenitude, but the For-itself originates only by means of Being and as a rupture at the heart of Being” (Sartre, 1966: 26).

For Sartre, it is the nature of man, the formula of self. There is the predetermined essence that lacks completeness, and it is constructed by nothingness. Paulsen states that “which in other words simply means that the subjective reality is dependent on the objective reality and not the other way around There is, therefore, a dimension of the for-itself which is in-itself and which exists in the same manner as a thing. Sartre calls this the “facticity” of the for-itself” (Paulsen, 2011: 46).

In this sense, Sartre introduced “the other” to describe how people are taken as objects in this world and feel alienated. Because no human being has awareness unless they encounter “the Other”, the subjective and objective realities are constantly intertwined with. Human is responsible for how the other perceives them in their consciousness. The consciousness only exists in relation to another entity other than itself. According to him, we know ourselves through others. Only true judgment could be achieved by the knowledge that we gain from “the Other”. It is something about him that he is fundamental to exist as long as it exists in the world. (Sartre, 1966: 446) Through their own freedom and subjectivity, people continue to shape their life; nevertheless, this process does not function as it is supposed to.

Another influential existentialist philosopher of the 19th century, Martin Heidegger was interested in ontology. He introduced the concept of “Being (Dasein)” and “Fallenness (Das Verfallen)”, which are very significant for existentialist literary theory. He questions the meaning of the being and explains its relation to time. He deconstructs the philosophical tradition and creates a new understanding with the influence of Kant, Hegel, and Husserl's ideas on the being. He states “Existentially, a state-of-mind implies a disclosive submission to the world, out of which we can encounter something that matters to us” (Heidegger, 1962: 177). Regarding this quotation, it is clear that there should be something that matters to us for understanding

the meaning of being. In *Sein und Zeit*, the concept of the human being as a separate entity, Dasein, contains Fallenness as its core category. The theory questions the “thrownness” of humankind to the world, which lacks meaning. He states that there is no meaning in being in this universe because humankind is just a “thrown” entity. The Dasein existence is inauthentic. Therefore, “Fallenness” is an ontological characteristic of a human being according to Heidegger. (Heidegger, 1962: 235).

In every period, a variety of phrases might be used in order to interpret the meaning of the being. It is not given a single meaning, though. For example, Aristotle claims that the term “being” is related to the mind. It is also linked to God, according to medieval thinkers. However, Heidegger did not agree with the Cartesian sense of self. He created a connection to ontology and phenomenology to introduce his thoughts about “Dasein”. Heidegger's approach to “being” is different from the other approaches because there is no Cartesian self for Heidegger. Neither the topic nor the world itself is straightforward. However, it provides a unification of self and the world. In regard to this, this unification is temporary because “Dasein” is thrown into the world. “Fallenness” means losing oneself in the world of others. Dasein falls into the world and loses its meaning. For Heidegger, “It is rather a determination of the structure of the Being which entities possess. But as an investigation of Being, it brings to completion, autonomously and explicitly, that understanding of Being which belongs already to Dasein and which ‘comes alive’ in any of its dealings with entities ” (Heidegger, 1962: 96).

Heidegger states that “*Dasein exists factically. We shall inquire whether existentiality and facticity have an ontological unity, or whether facticity belongs essentially to existentiality.*” (Heidegger, 1962: 181) Because “Dasein” has a mental state that is uniquely its own and is revealed to itself in its thrownness. However, “thrownness” is also a term that contains a type of belonging.

“Being alongside the ready-to-hand, belongs just as primordially to Being-in-the-world as does Being with Others; and Being-in-the-world is in each case for the sake of itself. The Self, however, is proximally and for the most part inauthentic, the they-self. Being-in-the-world is always fallen.” (Heidegger, 1962: 181) In light of this, “Being-in-the-world” is a type of alienation and estrangement. Man cannot become without being alienated. It is an example of being divergent from the universe. There

is no predetermined set of rules to direct human beings and there are no decided subjects in advance to live accordingly. Similar to Sartrean approach to alienation, Heidegger also considers alienation term as a lost direction for humankind. In the phase of being alien, the man is just thrown into this universe without any explanation.

1.3. KARL MARX'S THEORY OF ALIENATION

Karl Marx, the German-born social and economic philosopher, was born in 1818. Influenced by Frederic Engels' theories, he created Marxism, a socioeconomic philosophy that highlights class conflicts within the established order. Two hundred years after his death, his views are still having an impact on the globe in terms of politics, art, commerce, and other areas. Marxism was strengthened by historical factors, political, and social relationships between people in the early 20th century. Even if Marxism was constructed in the 19th century, its impacts have influenced many systems of ideas that have been embraced by many politicians, writers and thinkers. According to Karl Marx, the ultimate and unavoidable goal for the future is to become classless for society. He considered that capitalism would destroy itself with some environmental and inner causes created by the upper class. In the perception of social status, the proletariat which means "lowest class of citizens" in Latin originally, would take control due to the oppression rising day by day with the effect of "bourgeois". His thoughts were in favor of this consideration based on one large cause: The alienation of working-class people. "In fact, the proposition that man's species nature is estranged from him means that one man is estranged from the other, as each of them is from man's essential nature" (Marx, 1977: 75).

In order to contemplate the alienation theory of Karl Marx, his idea of essentialism must be studied first. He thinks that man is supposed to be in control of his decisions as well as actions and the main issue related to the capitalist world is that they are restricted from authentic control and being directed by another class who is in charge of "deciding". One of the most essential and natural results of being human would be recognizing himself as an individual. Being individual means becoming one as desired and independent from external causes of other control systems. There are essential components regarding this type of self-consciousness such as using

creativity, creating own perspectives, and deciding actions. Even if labor is not seen as a wrongful way to self-awareness, if a man lacks creativity in doing his own work, it will construct a disaster for self-consciousness. It is basically a result of surplus value which is seen as the only necessity of the lower class. Therefore, the process forces the worker to lose the reality of being one in society and to realize himself estranged from the object as well as himself essentially pointing out the alienation of man. The quotation below summarizes the meaning and relation of alienation to the other words. "So much does labour's realisation appear as loss of realisation that the worker loses realisation to the point of starving to death. So much does objectification appear as loss of the object that the worker is robbed of the objects most necessary not only for his life but for his work." (Marx, 1977: 68)

Moreover, Marx divided the alienation types into four to explain man's estrangement in object position. To start with, disengagement from constructive activities which occurs under capitalism affects labor and self-consciousness. "In a capitalist society, man loses the freedom to direct and control his own productive activity. His interactions with the world are no longer "conscious and free", but coerced." (O'Brien, 1984: 21) There is a distorted human activity, and "the human being objectifies himself inhumanly" (Marx, 1977: 139)

The second one is disengagement from his product. As it is stated before, man could easily estrange himself from his creative contribution. There may be a parallel between the product and the labor because he will be alienated from self-creation. As a result, it is stated that "the worker, deprived of his free productive activity, takes on the character of an inert thing, and the product, infused with the magic of capitalism, reigns over men." (O'Brien, 1984: 24) It leads to the triumph of capitalism and absolute alienation. The third one is disengagement from man, which could be seen as the inevitable cause of the estrangement. When the laborer could not manage to have any attachment or conscious act, finds himself in a class-based society where he only earns a wage in return for his product. "He does not experience himself as "in community"; he is an individual pitted against other individuals who represent a threat to his well-being." (O'Brien, 1984: 26) The last one is disengagement from man the species, which summarizes the three approaches to alienation. "It is an expression of

the alienation of man's own nature that results from his alienations from his productive activity, his product and his fellow man.” (O’Brien, 1984: 26)

1.4. ERIC FROMM’S THEORY OF ALIENATION

The 20th-century philosopher Eric Fromm is regarded as one of the most important psychologists and sociologists whose theories are still widely taught today. He was one of the students of Sigmund Freud, and he was influenced by his ideas about consciousness, dreams and power structures. Despite Freud’s influence on Fromm, he constructed and built his unique theories apart from merely following Freud’s teachings and studies on sociological approaches rather than psychoanalysis. He expanded psychoanalysis, which is firmly associated with Freud, by including social viewpoints. Additionally, he makes contributions to Karl Marx's ideas, which primarily defined the concept of "alienated labor." Although Fromm and Marx share many characteristics, a comparison of their views reveals that Fromm's beliefs respectively use a social perspective. Fromm largely endorsed the contributions that Marx and Freud made to social theories, but he disagreed with how they related to society and person.

As a psychologist, he tried to find answers to the relationship between society and individual structures in his famous book, *Sane Society*. The book's immense influence stems from both its scathing social critique and unsettling approaches to the human psyche. Fromm states that “In *The Sane Society* I try to show that life in twentieth-century Democracy constitutes in many ways another escape from freedom, and the analysis of this particular escape, centered around the concept of alienation, constitutes a good part of this book.” (Fromm, 2001: 10)

In regard to this statement, Fromm discussed the concept of freedom and desire by parallelizing them to society’s set of rules and aspects. He analyzes human nature and its relation to what he called a “sane society”. It is a wide-open discussion of happiness among people and the creativity that they truly achieved themselves in. He expressed his opinions regarding the controversial concept of alienation, which many philosophers throughout history have developed while challenging the existing status

quo of society. He states that the current society that we live in cannot build a sane and unique structure yet due to many aspects accordingly.

Fromm defines alienation as “a mode of experience in which the person experiences himself as an alien” (Fromm, 2001: 117) The individual does not perceive himself as the center of the world in this alien form; rather, he submits and adopts a passive attitude toward everything. He is no longer productive and has become estranged from both society and himself. Moreover, Fromm makes a comparison between the current alienated man with the primitive people who practice idolatry. He states that primitive men spend their energy and artistic talent in making an idol and then worship idols that are the result of their own human effort. By doing this, he imports the lively sources into the idol, and it becomes something that he submits with respect. He states that “idol represents his own life-forces in an alienated form” (Fromm, 2001: 118). The person reflects his talent of love and thinking to God and leaves these talents as a trait of a holy being, not belonging to himself. Then, he starts to ask for God’s help regarding loving and thinking. The submissive worship mirrors the estrangement in this sense. The term love also shows alienation in terms of idolatry.

The "loving" person in this type of submissive relationship, projects all his or her love, strength, thought, into the other person, and experiences the loved person as a superior being, finding satisfaction in complete submission and worship. This does not only mean that he fails to experience the loved person as a human being in his or her reality, but that he does not experience himself in his full reality, as the bearer of productive human powers. (Fromm, 2001: 119)

In light of this quotation, when the person reflects his love, strength, and thoughts to another person, he does not consider himself in “productive human powers.” From now on, the acts do not belong to him due to alienation. The alienated person starts to act according to the empowered forces in lack of productivity. He considers the world under a delusional consciousness.

Fromm's theories of how someone could become wholly alienated from the world, oneself, and objects are also explained in *The Art of Loving*. He wrote the book in 1956 to share his ideas about the existential concerns of the human psyche. Fromm views the concept of "love" as a driving force and illustrates how man may become alienated from both society and himself in the absence of love. In order to comprehend the term alienation, Fromm discusses his ideas in *The Art of Loving*, his theory book that summarizes the human condition of making connecting through the world.

According to him, “ANY THEORY of love must begin with a theory of man, of human existence” (Fromm, 1956: 7). Love is the key point of human existence in this world. His ideas are more optimistic than the other existentialist approaches. According to him, the person is gifted with the power of reasoning. He lives his life as a conscious person, and he can realize the other people with the other objects around him. He is aware of his existence in this world. Moreover, he knows that one day he will die or his beloved one will die. He is also alone against society’s power. However, this gift affects the man in a traumatized way, and he has to connect with any person or any object to stay sane.

“The experience of separateness arouses anxiety; it is, in-deed, the source of all anxiety.” (Fromm, 1956: 8) The separated person cannot use his human powers and make meaning out of the things or people in a sensible way. This is an “intense source of anxiety”. To start with existence, man is thrown into the universe without any sign. The place where he comes from is very dark and ambiguous to comprehend deeply. Moreover, there is nothing certain to consider or attach to the past. The most certain thing is death which will be experienced one or another day in the future. Man has the ability of reasoning, and he knows what could happen with possibilities around him. He realizes that he is separated from the others, and he is lost in his existence. As a crisis, man needs to be united with others to protect mental health. He states that “the experience of separateness arouses anxiety” (Fromm, 1956: 8). This assertion suggests that man cannot use his powers if he gets separated. Additionally, he is unable to genuinely understand other people and objects. This leads to feelings of shame and guilt. Fromm provides an explanation of the history of Adam and Eve to support his argument.

This experience of guilt and shame in separateness is expressed in the Biblical story of Adam and Eve. After Adam and Eve have eaten of the "tree of knowledge of good and evil," after they have disobeyed (there is no good and evil unless there is the freedom to disobey), after they have become human by having emancipated themselves from the original animal harmony with nature, i.e., after their birth as human beings—they saw " that they were naked—and they were ashamed. (Fromm, 1956: 9)

In fact, Adam and Eve were not ashamed of being naked, they realized that they are separate entities. They become aliens to each other all of a sudden and they feel anxious due to this situation. Fromm explains that they did not know how to love truly. “The deepest need of man, then, is the need to overcome his separateness, to

leave the prison of his aloneness.” (Fromm, 1956: 9) It is wicked for this separation to hurt a person's inner self. Man has to live with being cut off from others and alone throughout his lifetime. Countless people look for solutions on how to transform into a being with a unified whole. The answer is only related to the existence of human nature.

The infant's I-ness is not developed completely at first. It cannot consider itself as a separate being from its mother. The alienation process is not completed without the realization of the unique “I”. The infant consumes the mother materially by nurturing. After he grows up, he becomes a separate entity, and his separation from this world begins. Like the infant, man considers himself as a whole with nature. The primitive man is a part of animals, he wears animal masks and furs. The more man gets civilized, the more he separates himself from primitive sources. This leads to a new problem called isolation.

Man has been searching for answers to his isolation in the universe for a very long time. There are several types of practices that lead to feeling as a unified whole. These might be religious rituals or activities that temporarily calm the human psyche. Moreover, Fromm states that “The sexual orgasm can produce a state similar to the one produced by a trance, or to the effects of certain drugs” (Fromm, 1956: 12). Modernity brings alcohol and drug usage as a pacifier to society; however, sexual orgasm is also a transcendence process that is a way of dealing with being separated. “But in many individuals in whom separateness is not relieved in other ways, the search for the sexual organ assumes a function which makes it not very different from alcoholism and drug addiction.” (Fromm, 1956: 12) In this sense, sexual orgasm loses its power against the separateness and man tries to be united in vain. In order to prevent the anxiety of separateness, man constantly seeks sexual pleasure, but this approach is aimless without the feeling of love that makes strong attachments. The outcome of this addiction will be nothing but disappointment because “being one with the others” could not be achieved by this.

“All forms of the orgiastic union have three characteristics: they are intense, even violent; they occur in the total personality, mind, and body; they are transitory and periodical.” (Fromm, 1956: 12) According to Fromm, these rituals in a way based on the idea of “conformity” which is the key figure of unifying the whole. In modern

western philosophy, the idea of conformity helps individuals to be one with society. They think that being a conformist in the big circle of the universe prevents them from being isolated and estranged.

In order to gain power against separateness, man should use his talent for “creative activity”. In this activity, man unifies with the other object apart from himself. Man is being one with the universe in his creative process like a craftsman. However, given the nature of modern labor, this problem is impossible to comprehend in all aspects. The workers are alienated from the duties that they have. Man cannot unify with the universe in both creative activity and orgiastic rituals completely. So, he gets into an existential crisis that leads him to separateness from the world. This unification is constructed by society and yet does not satisfy him. The only solution is creating a healthy attachment with *love* in order to be one with the other authentically. There is an inevitable desire to be in a relationship with people in terms of affection and communication. Without love, humans are affected mentally in sorrow, humiliation and pain. They could destroy themselves gradually. In regard to this, Fromm reports that the concept of being one is called “Symbiotic union” which starts in the womb of the mother.

Symbiotic union has its biological pattern in the relationship ship between the pregnant mother and the fetus. They are two, and yet one. They live "together," (symbiosis), and they need each other. The fetus is a part of the mother, it receives everything it needs from her; mother is its world, as it were; she feeds it, she protects it, but also her own life is enhanced by it. In the psychic symbiotic union, the two bodies are independent, but the same kind of attachment exists psychologically. (Fromm, 1956: 19)

Although the bodies are separated, the infant considers himself as the one body with her. Moreover, in “the psychic symbiotic union”, he develops his attachment not physically but mentally to her.

Fromm explains the other types of symbiotic unions that man fulfills in his life. “Masochism” is one of those approaches to fulfilling being one. The man who has this behavioral pattern becomes submissive and attaches his existence to another person. He denies his creative power with authentic existential force and desires to worship another being. He does not take any responsibility for his existence and his authentic self. Masochism blocks creative productivity, and people turn into passive beings in this universe.

On the contrary, the active form of symbiotic union is “sadism”. The term has various phases; however, it is a desire to rule over and make others submissive. In this sense, the person becomes a God-like figure in a mental state. Like “masochism”, the sadist person is strongly connected to the ones that he makes submissive and obedient. “The difference is only that the sadistic person commands, exploits, hurts, humiliates, and that the masochistic person is commanded, exploited, hurt, humiliated.” (Fromm, 1956: 20) When these actions are analyzed, unity could not be achieved in a healthy way. How hard the masochist or sadist tries to be one and attach to something, they cannot fulfill their desire completely. Because the symbiotic union does not serve a fulfilling purpose. To get attached to this world, the only thing that man has to achieve is “mature love”. With the help of “love”, man can fight separation and isolation. In this relation, two different entities exist and do not lose their authenticity.

To avoid alienating himself from society and self, man needs some fundamental principles to connect him to someone and the universe. In *Sane Society*, Fromm divided the basic needs of humans into five to explain how a sane society can be built. They are relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, a sense of identity and the need for frame of orientation and devotion. To start with “Relatedness”, Fromm reports that humankind was born without the instincts telling him how to live according to nature. In this respect, he was separated from animals because after he was born, he got into a completely helpless situation. He is out of harmony between nature and animals. Moreover, he was born with great self-knowledge. He is aware that he was born and will die soon. This power of knowledge also condemns him due to the feeling of void.

“Even if all his physiological needs were satisfied, he would experience his state of aloneness and individuation as a prison from which he had to break out in order to retain his sanity.” (Fromm, 2001: 29) But how will humans solve this problem? This question is answered by Fromm in terms of many ways. He states, “Man can attempt to become one with the world by submission to a person, to a group, to an institution, to God.” (Fromm, 2001: 29) By being connected to a bigger entity, he tries to get rid of his existential “thrownness” and connects himself as one of the handwheels of the system. Apart from uniting with wholeness, man can choose to rule over others. By ruling over the others, he owns the hegemony. However, both these situations never

lead to satisfaction. Fromm states that the realization of the submissive is called masochistic and the domineering passion is called sadistic. If man stays connected to these behaviors, he could not create a real self. Because of this conflict, Fromm states that man must truly learn how to love. "Love" is the only thing "which is the experience of union with another person, with all men, and with nature, under the condition of retaining one's sense of integrity and independence." (Fromm, 2001: 31) In light of this quotation, "love" emphasizes embracing all human entities as a binary opposition to the selfishness. Fromm states that "Selfishness" is the reason for submitting the self directly and it is caused by the lack of self-love in this aspect. He introduced productive love which initially shows care, responsibility, respect and knowledge. (Fromm, 2001: 31) These aspects of love help humans contribute to their well-being. By attaching those concepts of love, a man truly gets involved with the universe.

Fromm also states that "narcissism" means being unattached from the aspects of love. "For the narcissistically involved person, there is only one reality, that of his own thought processes, feelings and needs. The world outside is not experienced or perceived objectively, i.e., as existing in its own terms, conditions and needs." (Fromm, 2001: 34) Thus, the narcissistic person who is separated from love perceives the world and other entities objectively. He does not use the power of reason and love because these aspects lose their meaning due to his selfish needs. He leaves his talent for love and considers everything in a subjective world.

It can be concluded that Fromm's approach toward "Relatedness", to be reasonable and truthful to this world could only be achieved by relating with others. By making strong and productive connections, people could escape from being insane. To fit into the social realm makes the man attached to great unity.

The second principle of basic needs is "Transcendence", which empowers creativity in the human mind. Fromm calls a man a creature who wants to transcend the state of being passive. "He is driven by the urge to transcend the role of the creature, the accidentalness and passivity of his existence, by becoming a "creator." (Fromm, 2001: 35) Man is aware of the fact that he was created; however, he is incapable of creating. While creating life and worldly entities, he overcomes the passivity of his

being. Behind man's need to transcend himself, there is love besides religion and material production.

“The enormous power of the will for destruction which we see in the history of man, and which we have witnessed so frightfully in our own time, is rooted in the nature of man, just as the drive to create is rooted in it.” (Fromm, 2001: 36)

Regarding this quotation, the desire for destruction is considered an internalized behavior of human nature according to him. Fromm considers the opposition of creativeness as destructiveness which means the destruction of creation. Creation and destruction, love and hate, are existed dependently. While the desire to create cannot be fulfilled, the desire to destroy appears. Finally, the destroyer ends up with a great sorrow.

The third principle is “Rootedness”, which means that somebody loses his root in everything. Fromm explains this principle by starting with human birth.

According to him, man loses his connection after birth. It is a beginning of a lonely phase of life. Losing the natural roots is terrifying because nobody can survive without connections. He finds himself in an insecure and helpless condition that challenges his life drastically. In order to feel a connection, man should find his human roots. It is a pacifier for his insane feelings. Fromm reports that “Is it surprising, then, to find a deep craving in man not to sever the natural ties, to fight against being torn away from nature, from mother, blood and soil?” (Fromm, 2001: 37)

In these first easy years of his life, he experiences his mother as an all-encompassing, protective and nurturing force. The mother signifies many things including food, love and warmth. If the man is loved by his mother, this means he is rooted in a secure nest. Additionally, like a bird’s leaving its nest, growing up means losing the protective forces of the mother. Fromm calls human existence accidental. The meaning is arbitrary. In this arbitrary existence, man is dispersed from place to place with insecurities. Although he is an adult, he is still in need of help, warmth, and protection. In order to find those needy aspects, he should find new human roots to please himself. “In psychopathology, we find ample evidence for this phenomenon of the refusal to leave the all-enveloping orbit of the mother. In the most extreme form, we find the craving to return to the mother's womb.” (Fromm, 2001: 38) Returning to the mother’s womb is one of the strongest desires of man. It even leads to

schizophrenia. Due to this conflict, man would like to be in a dark cave, under a submarine and dive into deep waters. These are all famous motifs in literature to highlight this longing. According to Fromm, death means a return to mother earth and man is terrified of both death and life. Moreover, the mother's fixation could be seen after the separation. The man should find a person who could care for him like a mother. However, it might lead to an obsession.

People who have become stuck at this stage of birth, have a deep craving to be mothered, nursed, protected by a motherly figure; they are the eternally dependent ones, who are frightened and insecure when motherly protection is withdrawn, but optimistic and active when a loving mother or mother-substitute is provided, either realistically or in phantasy. (Fromm, 2001: 39)

As a student of Sigmund Freud, Fromm keeps his argument by explaining the “Oedipus Complex”. According to Freud, the fixation to the mother is the most challenging trauma that man experiences. He claims that the incestuous relationship has always taken place and the child seeks the desire of being one with the mother. However, due to the rule of the father, the child is castrated and desires unity in his adult life. It shows that a person longs for maternal love. The importance of attachment to the mother is explained by highlighting the desire for inter-sexual intercourse. “Whenever fixation to the mother is also sexual—and this undoubtedly happens—it is because the affective fixation is so strong that it also influences the sexual desire, but not because the sexual desire is at the root of the fixation.” (Fromm, 2001: 41) In light of this statement, it could be said that sexual desire does not reflect being rut, it implies an emotional obsession. Although missing the experience in the mother’s womb could lead to death, sexual urges keep the person alive. “One is saved from the fear of the threatening womb by the nearer-to-life phantasy of entering the vagina with the appropriate organ.” (Fromm, 2001: 41) The man does not desire to be with the mother, in fact, it is a passive type of intercourse. The man gets vulnerable in front of a higher being.

Apart from the maternal problems, the man has a dilemma with the father whose expectations are already set. In order to get the affection of the father, the child has to behave according to the patriarchy. The son should grow up and take responsibility accordingly. He should be obedient under the rule of his father and resemble his father in behavioral conditions. In this respect, Freud only states that the super-ego is constructed by the father. The conscious is built by the denominators of

the father due to the fear of castration, However, Fromm is against the Freudian approach and states that “But there is not only a fatherly but also a motherly conscience; there is a voice which tells us to do our duty, and a voice which tells us to love and to forgive—others as well as ourselves” (Fromm, 2001: 46). By being affected by both figures, the man develops a self-conscious and takes responsibility for his own actions. His inner voice starts to tell him what is wrong. This is not about only the family connections, but also the other people around the man.

Although the image of man cannot be characterized by nature anymore, their relationship is still developing. He mirrors himself with nature and tries to find security in the woods. This concept also could be parallel to mysticism and ritualistic tribes. Moreover, this relationship emphasizes a passive nature. If a man has no economic drives like making tools or fire, they are like a passive animal that consumes only.

The fourth principle is the sense of identity which highlights the importance of independent “I”. According to Fromm, in order not to be alienated, man should consider himself in a subjective position in his actions. The child, who identifies himself as a united being with his mother, cannot develop a sense of identity. He cannot see himself as a separate being and there is no authentic “I” for him.

In the development of the human race the degree to which man is aware of himself as a separate self depends on the extent to which he has emerged from the clan and the extent to which the process of individuation has developed. The member of a primitive clan might express his sense of identity in the formula "I am we"; he cannot yet conceive of himself as an "individual," existing apart from his group. (Fromm, 2001: 59)

The need to feel identity arises from human existence. It begins with birth and lasts until death. The man needs to find his place in society and reflects his own unique soul for existing. This mental state is sometimes more important than the physical condition of man. To stay healthy, man has to be one of the members of the herd and live accordingly. He should contribute to a bigger circle. Although it is pseudo, he should develop a sense of identity in society.

Last but not least is the need for a frame of orientation and devotion. In order to explain why humans have needs, Fromm distinguished between binaries, reason, and irrationality. According to him, man always needs a string of thoughts to understand what is occurring around him. Through his relationships and thoughts, his existence gains significance. He could not live a healthy life if he could not connect

himself to anything gratifying. Thus, he needs to establish a relationship with reality through reason and understand the world objectively as well.



CHAPTER TWO

THE UNWANTED SON OF THE SOUTH, LESTER BALLARD

2.1. WHO IS LESTER BALLARD?

Child of God was written in 1973 by Cormac McCarthy. The story takes place in 1960s Tennessee, where the elements of the Southern Gothic genre prevailed astonishingly. The book is about the chronicles of Lester Ballard, who is an aggressive 27-year-old Southern murderer. He is depicted as “a child of God much like yourself perhaps” (McCarthy, 2010: 6); however, he has no resemblance to any holy figure in terms of morality. The story shows the gradual alienation and isolation of a common man who seeks to live his life in Sevier County. Ballard has a tendency to violence and aggression, which is stated by the third-person narrator in the story. However, the evil side of his psyche is established by society. The story especially covers how he could not fulfill his life and find any attachment to humans. He is seen as less than a human, just a mountain troll or gnome, nothing more. Although the narrative provides little information about Ballard's early years, it is clear that he comes from a prominent Southern family. The Ballard family owned a farmhouse where the past members of the whole family grew up. Ballard is left alone by his mother and his father commits suicide next to nine-year-old Ballard. It is not clear whether he has been an outcast from his childhood or becomes estranged from the people after this trauma; however, he experiences a loss of significance. Due to strong alienation, his mental state worsens, and he finds himself in the act of sadism and necrophilia.

2.2. EXISTENTIAL ALIENATION OF BALLARD

The condition of Lester Ballard in this universe is a great example of showing the existential dilemma in human psyche. He is alienated from many values that make it worthy to live among people. As a typical rootless individual, he cannot grasp any meaning of the universe. The more he fails to find the attachment, he encounters badness and inherits those evil actions. Although *Child of God* does not imply an existential story to the reader, it is clear that McCarthy's tone in the novel emphasizes Ballard's internal conflict of being a lonely entity in this world.

To start with the existentialist approach, Ballard is sick of living. Ballard sometimes questions his existence like a nihilist and cannot find any answers to fulfill his curiosity. The narrator states, “When they were gone he watched the hordes of cold stars sprawled across the smokehold and wondered what stuff they were made of, or himself” (McCarthy, 2010: 133). In light of this quotation, it could be said that Ballard has no relatedness to God or any higher entity to pacify his existential questions. Existentialists argue that rather than human nature, life's circumstances decide what kind of person we are. However, when Ballard's actions are analyzed, it is clear that he does not take responsibility for any of them. Although he murders, rapes or steals, he never acknowledges the outcomes of his actions, and he escapes in anxiety which finally leads him to extreme alienation, like living in a cave in the wilderness. Thus, it could be said that he is only thrown into this universe without any sense of belonging.

His alienation has layers that are covered in the existential context; however, the most obvious aspect of his status is “anxiety”. According to Søren Kierkegaard, alienation leads to anxiety. It evolves into despair, and this despair is a fatal illness. This suggests that current skepticism turns people inside and causes them to feel hopeless in contrast to modern man's spiritual past. He asserts that this sorrow is disproportionate to one's own self. When a man is in despair, he is forced to acknowledge that he faces an emptiness and that he is solely to blame for this void and his immoral state. When a person loses faith in himself and in others, he is confronted with an implied emptiness that cannot be filled by moral or de-aesthetic standards. (Anjum, 2019: 12) In light of this definition, Ballard lives his life in despair, and he is sick to death. He is alienated from society as a homeless sadist, he is depicted as pale day by day. In order to explain the nature of his sickness, there is a dog metaphor that is parallel to Ballard's condition. Bill and the sheriff go hunting together, and one day the sheriff notices that the dog Suzie is severely ill. “I said: Well, Suzie was sick today. He said yes, she was. I said: Suzie was sick yesterday. Suzie has always been sick. Suzie will always be sick. Suzie is a sick dog.” (McCarthy, 2010: 47) This motif of sickness is repetitive for the dog and so for Ballard. There are many chapters that highlight his way to death among other people. Like the dog, Ballard is empty as a lonely wanderer. He is cursed by a “malign star” because he is estranged from himself as a haunted man.

In Ballard's situation, his existence is only void. According to Sartre, "If the human existence has no objection ground nor has any reference of a system of value then the conscious human existence is pure nothingness" (Anjum, 2019: 12). When his life and actions are analyzed, it is clear that there is no value or reference system in his life. As a 27-year-old man, he has no connection to anything except his rifle. The meaning of his life is just a blank sphere that he spends time in. He cannot even feel sad about the things that he encounters. The more he is isolated, the more he starts to lose his humanness. Even his cry starts to sound like an ape's cry. McCarthy depicts his dehumanized characteristics in detail, which are demonstrated in the last part of my thesis.

Existentialist alienation is also linked to the absence of God. People are in great despair because God is considered divine support.

It is a certain way of treating others when one has no other relation to others except the purely ontological relationship. Therefore, it appears when my relation to others is defined by the purely formal recognition of his universal personhood. But this universal personhood is itself defined by his freedom (Sartre, 1992: 103)

In this sense of freedom, man is the independent creator of all values and all purposes in human existence, there is no God, and hasn't been since the beginning of time. (Anjum, 2019: 12) Thus, Lester Ballard is a child of God; however, God does not exist. In the freedom of existential nothingness, Ballard easily loses his way to being a human and is completely alienated from both himself and society.

Ballard is thrown into a projected world that he does not attach himself to anything. He takes the family name arbitrarily, and he has no roots in this family. Moreover, he does not conform to society's expectations of him. He has no job, home, or money to share some common values with society. He is stuck in this sense of "throwness", and he has not adapted himself to this environment since his childhood. With respect to Heidegger's approach to the term "Fallenness", Ballard's many actions reflect the authenticity of being in this universe. Since his childhood, he has not been aware of his actions and he has not taken responsibility for his being. He lives his life according to the default behaviors. He only plays the role of subject and object in the world. Ballard falls into the universe; in other words, he is thrown into this place. Nobody asked him whether he desired to be in or not. Therefore, there is no authenticity in his relationship. Heidegger, as a questioner of existence, never mentions

the term “alienation” in his essays. However, understanding the term “Falleness” is a path that makes it easier to understand Ballard’s alienation. He only dwells in this world after his fall, but he could not make a strong bond with it. He cannot exist among the people both materially and psychologically.

“When they were gone he watched the hordes of cold stars sprawled across the smokehold and wondered what stuff they were made of, or himself.” (McCarthy, 2010: 133) In light of this quotation, there is no explanation for him to be alive. He is like a cold star that glides into the universe without any human connection. There is no authenticity in his creation because he lacks something that purifies his importance. It is clear that he does not unify with the world due to the conflict between his actions. He could not get the subject position of his own will and his actions are all the cause of his falleness. As a person, after many acts of murder and necrophilia, he begins to question the reason for his existence.

2.3. ALIENATION FROM SOCIETY

In the first chapter of this thesis, Eric Fromm’s theories related to separation and alienation are explained in detail. In terms of his teachings, man has to find an attachment to this universe in order to be mentally sane. After the separation from the mother, man always desires to be one with the mother and placed in her womb. However, he loses his bond and comprehends himself as other than being united with his mother. In this sense, man always longs for a type of unity or attachment. The sense of being one cannot be achieved anymore because he is thrown into this world without any meaningful attachment. When Ballard’s situation is analyzed in light of Fromm’s theories, it can be said that he is an example of an outcast who cannot have any attachment to this universe.

According to Fromm, one of the biggest challenges in human existence is “relatedness” which separates people from animals. A human being should find his own unique way to survive because he is gifted with self-knowledge. In this respect, he should find a relatedness to the universe. This connection could be achieved by submission to a person, any kind of institution, or God. He joins himself as one of the handwheels of the system in an effort to overcome his existential thrownness by

becoming part of a larger entity. However, man has the option to govern others with strength rather than coming together to become entire. In light of Fromm's relatedness, it is clear that Lester Ballard fails to build any relatedness in this universe or even in his hometown. He cannot develop any healthy relationships with people. The interaction between Ballard and other people in town is insufficient to fulfill any need. He is lonely and sometimes he does not talk to anybody for days. He is depicted as a wanderer who seeks affection and care on his trips to the Appalachian Mountains and woods. His boredom always takes him somewhere he could find attachment. However, the only human interaction that he could find is voyeurism. He begins to stare at strangers who are placed in their cars and longs for human interaction. When he finds a couple having sex in the car, he cannot stop himself from getting involved. It is not only for the beginning of necrophilia but also for longing to be unified. As an outcast, Ballard has no connections to feel like a part of the big picture. According to Fromm, many people would like to live an experience to release their souls from this inconvenient feeling. In order to be unified, there are orgiastic rituals to transcend him or herself into a different phase.

“The sexual orgasm can produce a state similar to the one produced by a trance, or to the effects of certain drugs. Rites of communal sexual orgies were a part of many primitive rituals.” (Fromm, 1956: 11) In this sense, Ballard experiences orgasm as soon as he sees the couple that is having sexual intercourse. This orgasmic phase pacifies his desire to be one with someone. Although it is temporary, every time Ballard has an orgasm, his lonely soul gets pacified. This experience keeps him alive and human. McCarthy depicts him after he had an orgasm as “misplaced and loveless” (Fromm, 1956: 21) because he cannot achieve a healthy and strong connection with people. This incident is also the beginning of his habit of voyeurism because the more he was estranged from people, the more he spent time looking at people distantly.

Ballard is also not accepted in the place of God, at Sixmile Church. The congregation actually is here to help poor and disabled people. They collect money for charity and follow the rule of God to help people. Although their aim is good, the community cannot fulfill this mission. They also host Ballard, who is in bad condition due to a cold; however, nobody pays any attention to his disease. Nobody even sees him as another human entity. The narrator states “Ballard had a cold and snuffled loudly

through the service but nobody expected he would stop if God himself looked back askance so no one looked” (McCarthy, 2010: 31). He is totally ignored and humiliated even in a church. People are scared of speaking and they never try to help him. Thus, he gets a totally alienated object position from other human beings. Fromm reports that being cut off and unable to use human abilities is what it means to be apart. Therefore, being apart from the world means being powerless and incapable of actively grasping things and people in it. (Fromm, 1956: 8) In light of this, Ballard cannot use his human powers, and this leads to nothing but anxiety.

There are a few people that talk to Ballard as a person. One of them is Kirby, who sells cheap alcohol to the town’s people. He is also not a part of the community because he is selling alcohol illegally. However, even Kirby does not want to talk to or sell alcohol to him. He is “a man much for himself.” (McCarthy, 2010: 39). The people that visited Kirby saw him in his desperate mad situation, but no one was concerned. He gets alienated from the people with whom he wants to connect, and he loses his root in human beings.

Apart from his alienation from society, he has no attachment to any institution to give a meaningful connection. Ballard is unemployed and the narrator never mentions whether he has a job or not. He does not fit into the universe also economically. For instance, there is a dialogue between the storekeeper and Ballard to emphasize his pathetic situation. Ballard tries to shop for provisions on thrust and the storekeeper asks for the other debts that he has never paid before. After that, he asks his age and humiliates Ballard. He states “Twenty-seven. And in twenty-seven years you’ve managed to accumulate four dollars and nineteen cents?” (McCarthy, 2010: 118). It is indicated that the only problem is not his social awkwardness; however, he could not fit into any institutional entity, like jobs, volunteering, or church.

When his early adolescence years are analyzed, the narrator states that he is cruel to other children. In this childhood memory, Ballard forces a kiddie boy, Finney, to bring the ball back to him. However, the boy resists his command and is then physically bullied. Ballard resists until he gets what he wants to do. It is clear that he wants to rule over Finney and tries to have a relationship. According to Eric Fromm, “sadism” is also a way of achieving a “symbiotic union”. Ballard is a cruel child whose desire to be with the whole cannot be achieved completely. The reason why he beats

the boy and hurts him is his psychological condition and his desire to be connected with others. The action seems an evil act; however, Ballard does not want to harm the boy intentionally. His sadistic feelings captivate him and, due to his separateness, he tries to dominate the other people in order to transcend into a state of unity. Fromm states that

The sadistic person wants to escape from his aloneness and his sense of imprisonment by making another person part and parcel of himself. He inflates and enhances himself by incorporating another person, who worships him. [...] The sadistic person is as dependent on the submissive person as the latter is on the former; neither can live without the other. The difference is only that the sadistic person commands, exploits, hurts, humiliates, and that the masochistic person is commanded, exploited, hurt, humiliated. (Fromm, 1956: 20)

In regard to this quotation, since his childhood, Ballard has wished to be liked and admired by people. The incident with Finney shows that he was not welcomed when he was in school. As the deprivation of finding a strong attachment, Ballard practices physical bullying towards him and tries to place him under his command. However, by doing this, he only achieves a symbiotic union that temporarily satisfies his longing.

The second challenge that Eric Fromm explains in *Sane Society* is “Transcendence” and its relation between “creativity” and “destructiveness”. Man desires to transcend from passivity. Apart from the animals, only man is aware of being both creator and created, making him the only conscious living being. (Fromm, 1956: 35) The story of Ballard could also be seen as a helpless effort to escape from this passivity. In Ballard’s situation, he cannot be described both as a creator or a created entity. Although he has inherited some kind of wisdom inside, he has never achieved using any creative power. Ballard is described as always in an object position apart from his murders and this position highlights his “destructiveness”. He cannot practice any dependent action like growing something to eat or building a place to live. Fromm states that “the satisfaction of the need to create leads to happiness” (Fromm, 1956: 36). However, Ballard is never in place of creating something. He steals his food from fields and lives like a poacher in a deserted cabin and finally, he tries to poach Mr. Greer’s home by killing him. Ballard only suffers from his “destructiveness” because “destructiveness to suffering, most of all, for the destroyer himself” (Fromm, 1956: 36) The main reason for Ballard’s “creativity” might be his incapability of love and

attachment, because Fromm explains the incapability by this quotation. “To create presupposes activity and care. It presupposes love for that which one creates. How then does man solve the problem of transcending himself, if he is not capable of creating, if he cannot love?” (Fromm, 1956: 36)

One of the breaking points in Ballard’s perspective is being accused of rape without any detailed proof. After a while, he finds a fainted woman whose clothes are torn apart. He tries to touch her body while she lays in the woods. As soon as the woman wakes up, she starts to blame him for raping her. Although he has not raped her, the court finds him guilty and jails him. As an outcast, Ballard is labeled as a rapist and criminal who is not aware of his actions. Moreover, the sheriff accuses him of other crimes. He states that “*Let’s see: failure to comply with a court order, public disturbance, assault and battery, public drunk, rape. I guess murder is next on the list ain’t it? Or what things is it you’ve done that we ain’t found out yet.*” (Fromm, 1956: 54).

Apart from Kirby, there is another person that Ballard talks to called Ralph. There are not so many things to understand their relationship; however, Ballard visits their home from time to time to get some warmth. One day, he finds a little bird and decides to give it to Ralph’s son as a gift. Ralph has one daughter and one son who is disabled mentally. Due to his mental illness, he is merciless toward everything. Although he is warned by his sister, Ballard insists on giving the bird but the boy kills the bird by biting its legs. The girl mentions “I told ye not to let him have it” (McCarthy, 2010: 76). With regard to this, Ballard finds a parallel experience between him and the disabled boy. Both of them are merciless outcasts among people. He feels an intimacy with him and decides to gift him to bond a relationship. He intentionally insists on giving him the bird because the boy reflects his inner self which is cruel to innocent beings. There are many references to his cruelty against animals. For instance, he kills a cow or kicks dogs for no reason. They resemble each other in many ways. Thus, the only person whom Ballard has sympathy for is Ralph’s boy and he wanted to create a bond with him. Both of them are symbols of evil.

As his necrophilic impulses accelerate, his human condition demolishes. He stops seeing Ralph, Kirby, and the man with many daughters. In this extreme isolation, he only talks to the dead woman. Before he finds the corpse, he talks to himself like a

madman. However, the cabin and the dead woman are burnt due to the fire, and Ballard's mental status worsened. His separateness arouses anxiety, and he wants to escape from his loneliness. Thus, his first kill emerges from this anxiety. As a lonely wanderer, Ballard is in great despair. He has nowhere to go and walks around the woods on his own. After a while, he knocks on Ralph's house and his daughter invites him in. The only person that he loves is the disabled boy and he tousles his head and states that "*Why that boy's got good sense*" (McCarthy, 2010: 110). He believes that the boy is special like him. However, after he spends some time with the boy, Ballard starts to insult Ralph's daughter verbally. First of all, he asks whether the disabled boy is her son or not. After a squabble, he harasses her verbally. It is stated "Why don't you show me them nice tities, he said hoarsely" (McCarthy, 2010: 111). With regard to this statement, Ballard tries to have an attachment to the girl. However, she yells and states that "You ain't even a man. You're just a crazy thing" (McCarthy, 2010: 111). Due to many reasons, Ballard realizes that he cannot be loved by her or be respected. He could not get affection as a human being, and he is just an uncanny figure who weirdly stares at her. In a "symbiotic union", Ballard desires to command, exploit, hurt, and humiliate her in order to bond. Moreover, his desire to see her sexual organs is a way of experiencing unity. This strong feeling makes him anxious and insufficient in his inner self and he seeks instant joy from the girl. When he is threatened with punishment of Ralph, he shoots the girl without a second thought. As a sadist, he longs for "symbiotic" indefeasibly. He wanted to be loved and cared for by another person. He seeks unity and root for his own self. As the last act of his sadistic behavior, Ballard kills the girls without mercy. He carries through without guilt as it is stated "She was lying in the floor but she was not dead. She was moving. She seemed to be trying to get up. A thin stream of blood ran across the yellow linoleum rug and seeped away darkly in the wood of the floor. Ballard gripped the rifle and watched her. Die, goddamn you, he said. She did." (McCarthy, 2010: 113)

2.4. ALIENATION FROM SPACES

The first chapter of the *Child of God* begins with the auction which is the first phase of his residential alienation. The place is a heritage of his dead family, and it is

built before the civil war, which also highlights Ballard's economic condition. The house is owned by Ballard's grandfather who is a respected war veteran by the town's people. Ballard is not willing to give up the place; however, the ownership is changed by the verdict, and he has no right for owning the place. He strongly argues with the auctioneer and the people that come to buy the house. He tries to convict them in order not to lose his house and he even tries to shoot the auctioneer. He does not accept the fact that he is not the owner of the house anymore and states "I done told ye. I want you to get your goddamn ass off my property" (McCarthy, 2010: 8). After he insulted the people, the auctioneer states that "I didn't take your place off of ye. County done that. I was just hired as auctioneer." (McCarthy, 2010: 9) Ballard family has owned the house for years until this moment. Ballard has no place to stay and take care of himself. This episode marks the beginning of his alienation from the idea of property which becomes a symbol that emphasizes a strong connection to the world that he lives in. In order to analyze his mental separation, the idea of property should be analyzed first.

Peter Marcuse was an American lawyer and professor of urban planning who was born in Germany. He was interested in residential alienation in ontological status due to the influence of his father, critical theorist Herbert Marcuse. In his famous article, "Residential Alienation, Home Ownership and the Limits of Shelter Policy", he searches for the idea of property and how complicated people feel against owning land. He claims there could be a "residential alienation" which highlights the state of being estranged from one's home in this context. The Hegelian concept of understanding property serves as the foundation of his case.

Hegel then uses the word "property" to comprehend the "embodiment of freedom" in objective reality. He speaks of taking possession of things, as we might speak of "making a home," in three different ways: "we take possession of a thing (a) by directly grasping it physically, (b) by forming it, and (c) by merely marking it as ours. (Marcuse, 1975: 184)

In regard to the Hegelian idea of property, this incident shows that Ballard cannot mark this place as his own property anymore. Direct possession cannot occur, and this place is taken by the authoritative forces of the government. The only place where he can find coziness and affection does not serve him.

In addition to mere separation, there is a parallel understanding between Marx's labor alienation and Ballard's separation from his own property. The house

was built and protected by his family through the years. It is a production symbol for what the previous generations worked for. It could be seen as the elbow grease of those generations. However, this production becomes a totally alienated space for the last offspring, Ballard. Marcuse summarizes the idea of labor alienation below.

In the same tradition, the product of labor is spoken of as being alienated when "it exists independently, outside its producer, i.e., outside of his control, and alien to him." Two outside powers render it alien and outside of his control: the first is the power of the person for whom it is produced; this comes about for the product of labor when, not its actual producer, but "another alien, hostile, powerful and independent man is lord of this object. (Marcuse, 1975: 185)

As it is stated, the place becomes the product of powerful men who are the flagmen of an authoritative force. The connection between the property and the producer is arbitrary from now on. Following this incident, Ballard moves into a dirt-floored hut with just two rooms. He declares possession and marks the place. He eventually locates a spot to stay, but the cabin is in awful shape. Compared to his own farmhouse, this place is uncanny to stay in. The narrator states that "He swept up old newspapers and he swept out the dried dung of foxes and possums and he swept out bits of brickcolored mud fallen from the board ceiling with their black husks of pupae" (McCarthy, 2010: 14). In light of this condition of the cabin, Ballard has already lost the ideal property and the only place that he could stay is a creepy cabin that looks like a dreadful barn. This strange place implies the future actions of Ballard because his closeness to crime accelerates. Marcuse states "This set of concepts is extraordinarily suggestive if applied to the evolution of housing. Primitive shelter arrangements indeed represent what may be called an unself-conscious unity between the shelter and its occupant." (Marcuse, 1975: 185).

According to Marcuse, when we contemplate the concurrent growth of the condition of alienation between the housing market and both internal and external factors, it must now be reabsorbed, reintegrated, and its unity with him restored from the person, which is now perceived as foreign and separate from him. (Marcuse, 1975: 184) The residential alienation continues in the cabinet of Ballard. The place is previously abandoned, and it is destined for the wild animals, not for the people. After his alienation in the house, he commits his first crime and brings the dead woman to the cabin. He gets socialized with her and even achieves his sexual desires. He started to spend much of his time with her. He does makeup and dresses her like a baby doll.

Moreover, he talks to the dead woman and asks whether she wants him. The condition of the place starts to change, and it looks like a home to him. However, the cabin burns down because of the fire he builds. Moreover, Ballard loses her lover as well. This is the second separation between him and his home.

After this incident, he has no attachment to any place. There is nowhere to stay or feel any intimacy and security. He is all alone in the wilderness. He gathers all of his belongings and starts to be a wanderer. He has no connection to the social atmosphere of his town. He always finds himself in the wilderness even though nature is brutal to him. Returning to the primitive self begins gradually with depictions of the wilderness. “He launched himself down the slope, slewed up in snow to his thighs, wallowing in the drifts with the rifle held overhead in one hand. He caught himself on a grapevine and swung about and came to a stop.” (McCarthy, 2010: 72)

Ballard begins to visit the new proprietor of the old Ballard house after the cabin burns. He starts to monitor what he is doing inside the house on a regular basis. He pays him a visit at night and keeps an eye on him from the kitchen window. Everything he previously had is represented by the home, the only connection to the universe. Even though Greer has no wrongdoing in purchasing the house, Ballard begins to consider Greer as an adversary in an effort to drive him away from his cozy home. He keeps pointing his pistol at him while he is there, but he does nothing. Greer is a malicious pattern that drives Ballard away from his safe haven.

Ballard begins residing in the old cave that runs parallel to the mountains. He has acclimated to being a primitive man and is currently in the third phase of residential estrangement. The analysis of Ballard's living in a cave reveals that he has been dehumanized because it is a symbol of spatial otherness in the literary aspects. Caves are the destinations for many characters in literature from Frankenstein to Odysseus. They could highlight different spatial meanings according to the plots. In fact, these places are not fit for human living. They also emphasize a binary opposition between wilderness and civilization. In Ballard's situation, the place that he lives in does not serve any purpose other than outside protection. As a human being, Ballard needs human affection in a social place; however, he is estranged from society, and finally, he cannot continue his life in a humane place. In the *Cave: Nature and Culture*, the caves are considered “places of concealment” or “that are used as symbols of the womb

and the tomb”. They are also the doors to the underground. (Crane and Fletcher, 2015: 127) In this sense, caves are the spatial others to Ballard who actually belongs to being one with his community in town. Thus, there might be two different approaches to the reason for his living in a cave. First of all, the cave might be a symbol of the mother’s womb. In psychoanalysis, man has a constant longing to be united with and inserted into the mother’s womb after being separated from her. In *The Art of Loving*, Eric Fromm explains the connectedness and love of being in a mother’s womb. “Closely related to the development of the capacity of love is the development of the object of love. The first months and years of the child are those where his closest attachment is to the mother.” (Fromm, 1956: 41) According to Fromm’s theory, being in the womb means the strongest attachment to the mother, the first human. He believes that the child has to grow and separate from the mother’s womb eventually. Being one with the mother starts in the womb and the child has to alienate himself from this place of comfort. This relation is called “fixation to mother”.

In a still more severe form of pathology, the fixation to mother is deeper and more irrational. On this level, the wish is not, symbolically speaking, to return to mother’s protecting arms, nor to her nourishing breast, but to her all-receiving—and all-destroying—womb. If the nature of sanity is to grow out of the womb into the world, the nature of severe mental disease is to be attracted by the womb, to be sucked back into it—and that is to be taken away from life. (Fromm, 1956: 96-97)

As separated from the outside world both socially and physically, Ballard desires to return to his mother’s womb and as a result, he starts to live in caves. He desperately wishes to return to his state of being one with his mother because he had totally alienated from human affection. He fails to independently take any actions which show his humanness in the outside world. Moreover, he cannot attach himself to anybody or anything to make his life worthy. Thus, his only choice is to live in a cave without any people.

Secondly, the cave might be a symbol of a tomb. Ballard gradually estranged from the outside world, and he loses his humanness due to the evil things that he has done. Moreover, his physical and mental condition gets worse day by day. He is not like an alive human being anymore. They hurry Ballard to the hospital after the conflict between him and Mr. Greer left him wounded. During his hospitalization, his physical status is not well, and his body looks decaying. He feels humiliated by the way his legs look. They seem pale and yellow like a dead man’s legs. The narrator states that he

“tugged at the hem of his nightgown to hide himself” (McCarthy, 2010: 169). It is obvious that he loses both mental and physical conditions of being a human. His body starts to turn yellow like a dying leaf. He tries not to show his decayed body to the others; however, he becomes a dead man who belongs to the caves accordingly. There are also other examples foreshadowing his condition. The narrator states that “He had resolved himself to ride on for he could not turn back and the world that day was as lovely as any day that ever was and he was riding to his death” (McCarthy, 2010: 162). It is clear that he is close to both his death and his salvation. Ballard cannot stop this process because he has already inherited the cave, which is a symbol of going into the underground. In addition to Ballard’s condition, the cave image is also connected to dead people. Ballard feels his dead family members being in those caves for the first time.

LYING AWAKE in the dark of the cave he thought he heard a whistling as he used to when he was a boy in his bed in the dark and he'd hear his father on the road coming home whistling, a lonely piper, but the only sound was the steam where it ran down through the cavern to empty it may be in unknown seas at the center of the earth. (McCarthy, 2010: 162)

Although there is no chance to hear that kind of exact whistling, Ballard begins to hear the voices of his dead father. As it is stated before, the caves are the doors to the underground where dead people belong to. In light of this argument, the caves become a tomb for the victims of Ballard. They become places for different seven dead people who are stored and taken care of by him. When he is asked to show the places of the corpses, Ballard calmly answers their question for the second time by saying “I put em in caves” (McCarthy, 2010: 147). This also emphasizes that Ballard likes to keep them in there because he thinks that the corpses and himself belong to caves.

Aside from the symbolism, Ballard previously thinks that the caves are alien places. He is not fit to live in a cave, despite the fact that he is portrayed as an imbecile or a mountain troll. Ballard's only choice was to declare the caves his own property and adapt himself since he is unable to meet the social and economic requirements of contemporary society. He ceases to be a human by changing his physical and mental state and now lives in the wilderness. He even achieved to slip his body into the rocks inside the cave and covered his traces, unlike the other human beings.

2.5. ALIENATION FROM WOMEN

Lester Ballard is a misogynist necrophiliac who chooses his victims generally among young women. He is the embodiment of evil due to his creepy desires against them. The narrator does not tell any clue about his tendency to kill women and his sexual desire for dead ones. However, it is clear that Ballard is a symbol of strong estrangement from society and his inner psyche. In order to understand his evil actions related to women, his psychological status should be analyzed.

Misogyny is a term that forces male supremacy and hatred against women. The origins of misogyny, a prevalent subject across all eras of English and American history, may be found in the antiquity of Jewish and Greek stories in ancient Greece. (Rogers, 1966: 10) It is clear that there are many clues to their belief in the inferiority of women. However, this idea of inferiority is not limited to itself. It demonstrates hatred of women and discrimination towards women. Women are stereotyped as submissive, inferior, psychologically weak, mad-minded, and sinners. All these negative stereotypes are attached to them due to male domination in history. There are also many stories related to misogynist practices in holy books, the Quran, the Bible, and the Old Testament. Many teachings of religious texts emphasize the inferiority of women, and it shows how hatred flourished gradually. The examples are not limited to the holy books but to the social norms like gender roles, politics, and art. It is still a contentious issue that is studied in terms of gender roles, sexual harassment, and hate speech in our day and age.

In the 19th century, Sigmund Freud, who is called the father of psychology, established the term, psychoanalysis to diagnose disorders in the conflicted human psyche. He has radical ideas related to human psyche and these ideas turned Western metaphysics upside and down. “The unconscious mind” started to be analyzed and studied to comprehend human actions and feelings. The development of three energies, “the ID, Ego, and Super-ego” are the most significant contributions of Freud to psychoanalysis. Although many people are against his theories, he gained prestige and support in the social spheres.

The development of “the Oedipus complex” is another significant contribution made by Freud. It means basically, the inevitable desire to possess the mother by

eliminating the rule of the father. It demonstrates how the unconscious mind works in psychology by showing this controversial dilemma. The term is summarized as

The boy's initial erotic attachment to his mother, and attachment which she inevitably frustrates in favor of another male, helps to explain why men have so often reproached women for faithlessness, for failure to respond to their love. If, in addition to this inevitable strain on the relationship, the mother should be cold, sadistic, irrational, possessive, or inadequate, the boy is apt to feel her deficiencies so deeply that he will generalize them to all women and will never free himself of hostility in his relationships with them (Rogers, 1966: 14).

In regard to Freud's "the Oedipus Complex", Lester Ballard could not achieve his desire to be one with his mother because he is left alone with the other devious male figure, his father. The narrator states that "The mother had run off, I don't know where to nor who with" (McCarthy, 2010: 22) He longs for unity for his mother throughout his life but she leaves him before his adolescent age. As a motherless nine-year-old child, Ballard never develops a real relationship with any women around him. For him, it is clear that the women are "cold, sadistic, irrational, possessive, or inadequate" (Rogers, 1966: 14) like her mother who departs from the family without explanation. Additionally, after she leaves the house, he loses his father as well. Mr. Ballard commits suicide in a room that he shared with his little son. Due to his father's suicide, Ballard may also blame her mother for being careless and uncaring. Because after she departed, his father is unable to reintegrate into society. Ballard is completely cut off from the lady he wants in his life and is left in sorrow with a dead father. Owing to his estrangement from his mother, he begins to consider female characters as cold and vicious in his subconscious.

Ballard is a social outcast for having a love relationship with any woman, apart from his distorted connection to his mother. Due to his lack of genuine ties, he perceives women as unattachable and frightening. He begins voyeurism as a result of his sexual urges since he doesn't think he might be loved. After he loses his family's house following the first event, he becomes an outcast who travels alone in the woods. One day, he comes upon a couple having sex in a car. As soon as he witnesses the sexual intercourse, he whispers in shock as "It's a nigger." and "spent himself on the fender". (McCarthy, 2010: 20) These two statements demonstrate that, as a result of his experiences with his mother, he subconsciously views this woman as terrifying and unapproachable. As a white racist, whose grandpa is a KKK member, he is astonished when he sees her having sex with a Black guy because he dehumanizes the Black man

and even uses the n-word to refer to him. He is so entirely cut off from women, he cannot even touch them.

Furthermore, there is another event that demonstrates his contempt for women has to do with voyeurism. However, the degree of his actions accelerated, and he harasses a woman. The narrator states

One cold morning on the Frog Mountain turnaround he found a lady sleeping under the trees in a white gown. He watched her for a while to see if she were dead. He threw a rock or two, one touched her leg. She stirred heavily, her hair all caught with leaves. He went closer. He could see her heavy breasts sprawled under the thin stuff of her nightdress and he could see the dark thatch of hair under her belly. He knelt and touched her (McCarthy, 2010: 40).

It is clear from his behavior that he is approaching the women tentatively, much like a predator. His need for survival makes him uncomfortable, yet he is unable to control his urges to torment her sexually. He has only touched a woman's body once in the novel, but this is against her will. She awakens when he touches her and stands up for herself against the male attacker. Ballard grabs a handful of the delicate rayon in her undergarment and snatches it up.

After this incident, he is accused of being a rapist in court and has stayed nine days in prison. However, he cannot explain himself clearly and he repeats that the woman is a "whore". According to Ballard's perspective, the woman "ain't nothin but a goddamned old whore" (McCarthy, 2010: 49). He is slut-shaming and he justifies his action by calling her a prostitute. He said, "I was supposed to of raped this old girl. She wasn't nothin but a whore to start with." and John responds "White pussy is nothin but trouble" (McCarthy, 2010: 51). This shows how the two Southern characters are slut-shaming due to their misogynist ideology. Slut shaming is defined as "the practice of maligning women for presumed sexual activity" (Armstrong et al., 2014: 100) Thus, by using those terms like slut, whore, or prostitute, the dominant ideology separates women from the power structure. The aim of slut-shaming causes the trivialization of the victim. "From a social psychological stigma approach, sexual labeling is primarily about distancing the self from a stigmatized, and thus low-status, sexual category." (Armstrong et al., 2014: 101) In this sense, slut-shaming serves for distancing and isolating oneself from another. It also legitimizes rape as not a crime.

As it is mentioned before, Ballard is a symbol of toxic masculinity which is connected to his strong belief in white supremacy. One of the significant aspects that

imply his ill-minded penis obsession is his connection with the rifle. It is the most important thing that Ballard cares about in his life.

He had that rifle from when he was just almost a boy. He worked for old man. Whaley settin fenceposts at eight cents a post to buy it. Told me he quit midmornin right in the middle of the day he got enough money. I don't remember what he give for it but I think it come to over seven hundred posts. (McCarthy, 2010: 55)

For Ballard, it is an obsession to have the rifle and he is not hesitant to point it at women. According to literary symbolism, a gun is a phallic-shaped object which signifies manhood and power. Ballard is a good shooter and the only thing that he accomplishes is earning two teddy bears from the carnival by shooting the right points. Moreover, as a part of misogyny, “Psychoanalytically, gun ownership amongst women could be explained in terms of “penis envy” (Kirkham, 1996: 71). Freud explains “penis envy” as a desire to have the male sexual organ and anxiety of being other. The rifle clearly builds a power structure for his enemy, women.

2.4.1. Lester Ballard as a Necrophiliac

Necrophilia is defined as “sexual gratification by having sex with the dead, is one of the weirdest, most bizarre and revolting practices of abnormal and perverse sensuality” (Aggrawal, 2010: 1). Because that raises ethical issues, necrophilia is one of the most uncomfortable themes in Southern Gothic literature. It also appeared in other grotesque aspects like “sadism, cannibalism, vampirism, and necrophagia”. (Aggrawal, 2010: 1) In Ballard’s situation, the reason why he is into this action might be about the inherited misogyny developed by the power struggle between him and women. Ballard’s first necrophilia starts when he hears the voice of the radio and chases it until he finds the two naked dead bodies in the woods. It is very crucial for him to their nakedness because as it is stated before, he gets aroused by dead bodies. As a necrophiliac, the first thing that he does is touch the dead woman’s body. The narrator states “He could see one of the girl’s breasts. Her blouse was open, and her brassiere was pushed up around her neck. Ballard stared for a long time. Finally, he reached across the dead man’s back and touched the breast. It was soft and cool. He stoked the full brown nipple with the ball of his thumb” (McCarthy, 2010: 83).

After he finds the dead woman, he is immediately aroused and has intercourse with the body right there. His sexual desire for a dead woman could be explained by extreme fear. As it is stated in the "Alienation From Women" part, Ballard is scared to connect with women, both sexually and mentally. He is deprived of speaking to them or looking at their face. He puts the dead woman into an objective position and considers her as "the other" which triggers his anxiety. The fear inside him against the women is also due to extreme alienation because the more he loses his attachment to them, the more he gets brutal. His fear is previously triggered by his mother in his childhood and then the "old whore" who blames him for rape. In order to analyze Ballard's actions, his dilemma in "the ego, id, and superego" structure should be explained.

In order to illustrate the structure that composed personality, Sigmund Freud authored the article, "the Unconscious" in 1915. He introduced the idea of consciousness and states that it is the surface of the mental apparatus by highlighting the significance of the subconscious. Freud analyzed the power relations of the human psyche and divided personality into three components: the ego, the super-ego, and the id. These three components have a power structure that affects the personality directly and each of them serves an aspect. To start with the id consciousness, Freud states that it is the primitive and instinctual part of the being. It consists of sexual urges and aggressive drives which are accompanied by the personality from birth. Freud states that "The ego represents what may be called reason and common sense, in contrast to the id, which contains the passions" (Freud, 1926: 30). There is always a power struggle between the ego and the id, and this struggle is a significant aspect of how the personality occurred. The ego consciousness "controls the approaches to motility-that is, to the discharge of excitations into the external world; it is the mental agency which supervises all its own constituent processes, and which goes to sleep at night, though even then it exercises the censorship on dreams" (Freud, 1926: 15). In this regard, the ego acts in the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious mind. The ego appears to exert external influence on the id and its impulses. It attempts to replace the pleasure principle, which penetrates the id with reality. The reality principle analyzes the benefits and costs of any action before it happens. The id's impulses can be satisfied with a delayed gratification process, and the ego eventually allows the behavior, but it

only happens at the appropriate time and place. (Fast, 1985: 235-238) The last one is super-ego consciousness which is also very significant in the power structure. According to Freud, “The superego is, however, not simply a residue of the earliest object-choices of the id; it also represents an energetic reaction-formation against those choices.” (Freud, 1926: 44) It reflects the moral codes and ideals which are inherited by family upbringing unconsciously. The function of the super-ego is to be a router for any action. To understand this deeply, the conscience term is explained by Freud. It is moral censorship that demands performance against the actual action of the ego. It leads to a sense of guilt. It consists of ideas about what is considered as unorthodox by parents and society.

With regard to the Freudian approach to personality and the unconscious mind, in Ballard’s situation, there is a huge conflict between his ego and id. As it is mentioned before, the id consciousness is considered as the animal drives, aggressive impulses, and instincts that should be controlled inherently by the ego. It also covers the term libido, instinctual energy. It is not logical or challenging. In the book, there is a representation of Ballard as “a winter gnome” (McCarthy, 2010: 102) which also highlights his personality that is ruled mainly by the influence of the id. His id consciousness looks like “a winter gnome” which is ready to get instant pleasure from future actions. It is clear that he is incapable of controlling this drive and he is described as willful necrophilia who seeks instant gratification. In light of this statement, after Ballard finds the dead lady, he immediately starts to rape the dead woman. The narrator states that “A crazed gymnast laboring over a cold corpse. He poured into that waxen ear everything he’d ever thought of saying to a woman. Who could say she did not hear him?” (McCarthy, 2010: 84). With respect to this, it is clear that his ego could not make a balance between the psyche and the world. Ballard’s judging faculty is demolished, and his actions begin to be decided by the id consciousness due to extreme isolation and misogyny. He does not fit into society and so, he started to believe the social norms and faculties of it. He completely isolates himself from the moral codes and back to his inner, primitive self who says that women are scary and the only choice of owning them is murder.

His breaking up with the moral code is also not an immediate decision because he brings the dead woman into the cabin. Ballard takes the squirrels that are hiding in

the car, and he also takes makeup products before they leave. The products are especially lipstick and blush to make her more alive, which shows the extreme pleasure-seeking desire of his id. When he gets home with the corpse, the first thing he does is take her clothing and stare at her for a bit. He has never been close to any naked woman before it triggers his libido which implies instinctual energy. Moreover, it is a triumph over the opposite sex. According to the psychiatric approaches to necrophilia, "The necrophile develops poor self-esteem, perhaps due in part to a significant loss; (a) He (usually male) is very fearful of rejection by women, and he desires a sexual object who is incapable of rejecting him; and/or" (Rosman and Resnick, 1989: 161). It is clear that Ballard is a motherless child who grows in rejection, and this constructed his hatred toward women. Moreover, he is falsely accused of rape, and he is punished by another woman, whom he tries to interact with. Ballard cannot take the women into his hegemonic structure and is alienated from them. As a result, he only desires dead women both in a romantic and sexual way. In his id consciousness, he is aroused by a dead naked body primitively.

The next morning, Ballard goes shopping with the stolen money that belongs to the dead couple that he found in the woods. He comes across a lingerie shop that is beyond his dreams. He buys a blowsy red dress and panties for the dead woman. The sales assistant asks for his girlfriend's size, and he answered the questions like he is not a necrophiliac. He pretends like he is actually buying those things for an alive person. In this incident, there is a strong denial of her being dead. Ballard could be in love with her even further. He also asks for every clothing that is red because he would like to get more pleasure and joy while he is having intercourse. It implies his pleasure-seeking id that as a literary symbol, the red color means passion, invasion, and hegemonic forces. Thus, Lester Ballard, who only acts according to the pleasure principle, cannot control his inner psyche.

By taking the dead woman into his life, Ballard gets more isolated from society. He gets socialized with her and even achieves his sexual desires. He starts to spend much of his time with her. The last night that he spends in the cabin is satisfying and delusional to him. Stuck within desire and pleasure, "He opened a can of sausages and set them in the fire and he put a pan of water on to make coffee with." (McCarthy, 2010: 96) He looks as if he was celebrating something morally right and virtuous. His

celebration is depicted as “After a while, he just sat holding her, his hands feeling her body under the new clothes. He undressed her very slowly, talking to her. Then he pulled off his trousers and lay next to her. He spread her loose thighs. You been wantin it, he told her.” (McCarthy, 2010: 98). He talks to the dead body as if she was alive and takes joy from this unity. Necrophilia is also associated with grotesque monsters like vampires, who obtain feelings of power from their victims. (Rosman and Resnick, 1989: 153) In light of the Dracula tales, it can be said that Ballard desires to obtain power over his woman victims. However, he also would like to be owned in a romantic relationship.

After Ballard loses the dead woman and his cabin, his joy-seeker id consciousness loses power to his ego consciousness. He should find a place to live and survive the evils of winter. He lost everything that he has due to the fire which breaks out in the attic of the cabin. He cannot find anything from the woman, even a bone. He is in deep sorrow and tries to find any attachment to feel like a human among the people who labeled him as an outcast. As a wanderer, he encounters a couple who are terrified of his coming from the darkness. At first, he sneaks hesitantly to the car. The moment that the boy realizes him he says “You ain’t the law” and Ballard responds, “I’ll be the judge of that” (McCarthy, 2010: 141). After this small talk, he shoots the boy, and he dies immediately. It is clear that he desires to enforce his power upon him, and he knows that he will be beaten if he does not act as soon as possible. He only cares about the women that he needs; however, he should kill the man in order to have ruling power. “I told that fool, he said. Didn’t tell him? I don’t know why people don’t want to listen.” (McCarthy, 2010: 142) This quotation emphasizes that he tries to justify his action in the light of the women. However, she is so scared that she even messes up her clothes in this terrifying moment. Ballard realizes that he cannot possess her if she stays alive. After he shoots her, “He laid her down in the woods not filthy feet from the road and threw himself on her, kissing the still warm mouth and feeling under her clothes. Suddenly, he stopped and raised up. He lifted her skirt and looked down at her. She had wet herself.” (McCarthy, 2010: 143) It is clear that he is completely isolated from any moral code or social norm. He behaves totally animalistic, and he is driven by his evil id unconsciousness which seeks immediate pleasure. Ballard desired to have the woman before she gets cold to get more

instinctual pleasure. The only human being that he could make connections with is the woman who is murdered in dreadful fear.

Ballard's journey in id consciousness comes to an end. He is helpless and gets lost due to the result of his actions. He has no attachment or meaningful signifier to understand what is happening. He gets delusional day by day.

Nothing moved in that dead and fabled waste, the woods garlanded with frostflowers, weeds spiring up from the white crystal fantasies like the stone lace in a cave's floor. He had not stopped cursing. Whatever voice spoke him was no demon but some old shed self that came yet from time to time in the name of sanity, a hand to gentle him back from the rim of his disastrous wrath. (McCarthy, 2010: 149)

The "old shed" self implies that his super-ego, conscience talks to him. As it is stated before, Ballard has no balance between his inner psyche and moral codes. He is like an animal with aggressive impulses who only lives according to the pleasure principle and now he starts to feel guilty about what happened.

CHAPTER THREE

DEHUMANIZATION IN LESTER BALLARD

3.1. DEHUMANIZATION

As a theory, dehumanization briefly means considering a group of people unworthy in moral respect. It is a process through which normal people interiorize to be wicked against others. Dehumanization is the act of doing physical and mental harm to someone, although it should not have to be done actively. Remaining insensitive might be a dehumanizing act as well. The meaning of the term cannot be explained in a single type of behavior because there are many approaches in psychology, sociology, and literature. “The verb ‘to dehumanize’ is defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary as the act of ‘depriv[ing] of positive human qualities’” (Pearsall, 2001: 377). It is a cruel method to dismiss and ignore someone's human traits. It also emphasizes disqualifying a person in terms of human acts. A dehumanized person might be economically, politically, and culturally excluded from society. Thus, there might be a consideration for a sub-human which means deprivation of human capacity in someone.

In order to understand the deprivation, S. Oliver states that “standard definitions of dehumanization define the concept in terms of a negation of such positive “human” qualities as individuality, autonomy, personality, civility, and dignity” (Oliver, 2011: 85). If someone lacks those aspects, his or her estrangement process immediately occurs. In general, there are different practices of dehumanization like genocide, torture and rape. These practices could be experienced without any moral concise because of considering those people as sub-humans. The people who are labeled as “the other” experience moral disengagement from the rest of society which considers them less human.

According to Oliver, the degree of dehumanization is separated into two. The first one is the hard practices like torture, rape, massacre, and genocide. However, there are mild ones which are denial, humiliation, defamation, and exclusion. In both approaches, dehumanization is “the total denial of the humanity of an individual or group” (Oliver, 2011: 87). Regarding this quotation, the dehumanized person is not

considered fully human anymore. He loses the values of being human, then he is considered less than a human being.

In other words, Aliza Luft stated that our impressions of other people's emotional capacities are particularly in the presence of both universal and human emotions. People who are deemed to be subhuman or “de-human” are said to be completely devoid of any feelings. When any person observes dehumanized individuals in social cognition—the view of others as people with their own thoughts and feelings—fails to be active. Thus, this could cause a failure to consider one as a complete human being due to the judgmental layers which are embodied by cultural connotations itself. (Luft, 2022: 4-5)

One of the famous psychological theorists, Herbert C. Kelman defined identification and community in terms of humanness in his famous article, “Violence without Moral Restraint: Reflections on the Dehumanization of Victims and Victimizers”. According to Kelman, “identity” defines a person who is autonomous and separate from others in terms of determining. In other words, it is a rule of choosing unique decisions. In the term, the community is a part of an interrelated bond of people who interact with one another. In this respect, if someone's agency and involvement in society are rejected, they lose their capacity to arouse sympathy or any other moral behavior which could lead to violence in the end. (Kelman 1973: 48) In this respect, people who are considered incapable of human traits, will be treated as excluded from the rest of society. They lose the chance of being a part of the community due to their incapacities and their containment to social aspects will be limited. Thus, this segregation process leads to brutality as the final action.

3.2. THE ANIMALISTIC DEHUMANIZATION

In “Dehumanization: An Integrative Review”, one of the leading figures in psychological theories, Nick Haslam suggested that a term called “humanness” means the attribute withheld from others when they are treated inhumanely. (Haslam, 2006: 252) He claims that there is a unique model for understanding dehumanization which has been proposed in deficiency before. According to him, there should be a degree for being human. It could be associated with basic human acts or acts that

belong to animals or animated objects. These are classified as cognitive and noncognitive behaviors to highlight how dehumanization is proceeding in two different ways. In this sense, dehumanization finds some aspects in race, gender and ethnicity studies as well as literature.

Haslam defines the dehumanization of race problems with an example of Jahoda (1999). He states that there is “a consistent theme in this work is the likening of people to animals. In racist descriptions, Africans are compared to apes and sometimes explicitly denied membership of the human species” (Haslam, 2006: 252). In light of the quotation, some groups of people are compared to disgusting animals in order to consider and show them as less human. Moreover, they are seen as children who have no cognitive talent and take their responsibility for actions. These people are labeled “polluting threats to the social order” which led to the holocausts in human history. By pointing out their inhuman traits, there is approval for doing evil things against those people. Especially in racial segregation, the “groups are compared to dogs, pigs, rats, parasites, or insects” (Haslam, 2006: 252) By attaching animal traits to people, the groups are marginalized and excluded from the rest. The excluded groups are seen as the embodiment of immoral sub-humans. Apart from the racial approach to the term, dehumanization could be seen in people with disabilities. Animalization of these people starts with comparing them to parasites which are creatures that inhabit or live inside a host. In regard to this, this comparison highlights an extreme form of dehumanization in terms of existence. Their humanity is completely denied.

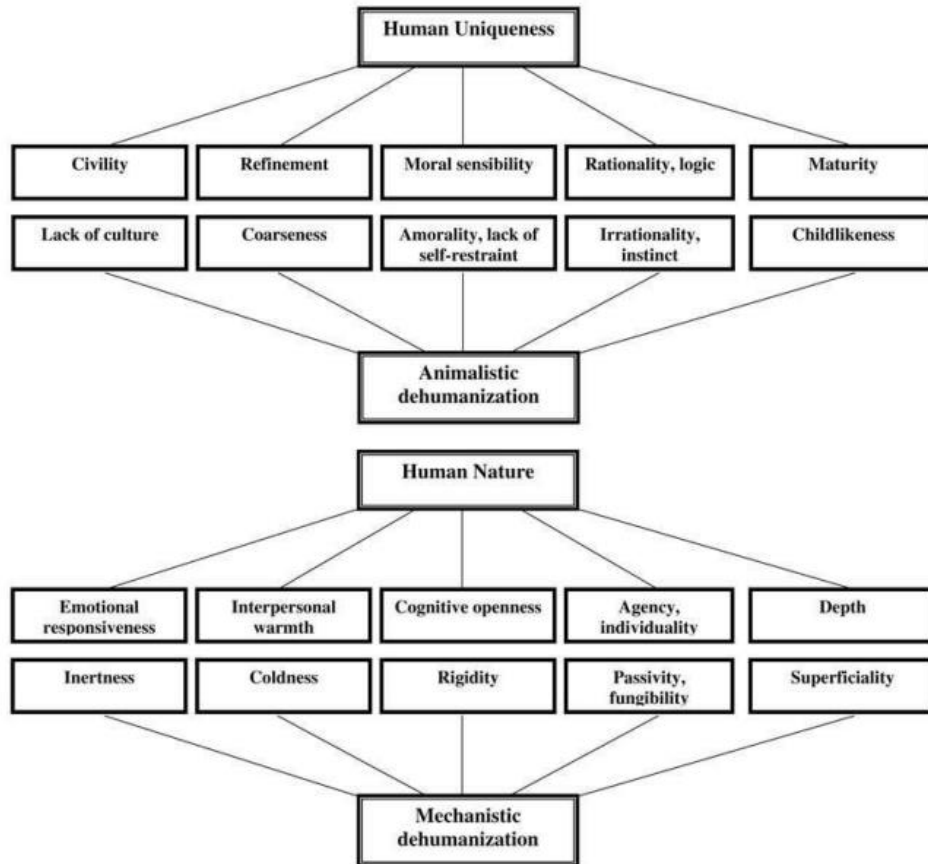
In addition to these, Haslam states that there are other psychological dimensions of dehumanization that are common in social studies as well as literature. To start with, “Moral Exclusion and Disengagement” which demonstrates unconnectedness as the result of moral exclusion, causes psychological isolation for the dehumanized group. Kelman reports that animosity causes violence indirectly by degrading victims. There is no moral connection to the victim that prevents the victimizer from acting violently. (Haslam, 2006: 254) Thus, there are no more moral sanctions and moral views against certain victims. They are also considered objects rather than living entities and inferior beings with mental disabilities. Thus, it leads to

the destruction of individuality because they are taken into the object position as sub-human.

There is another form of dehumanization that is called “infra-humanization”. It means that there is a lack of human essence which separates human beings from animals. Haslam reports that infra-humanization “is subtle, requiring no explicit likening of outgroup members to animals, and is not reducible to ingroup favoritism (positive and negative secondary emotions are both denied to outgroups)” (Haslam, 2006: 255). It is again the general conception of an isolated individual who seeks to connect with society. In this respect, infra-humanization could lead to violence because it is a way of taking moral responsibilities away from a group of people and legitimizing their harmful evil actions. Thus, the term extends the concept of dehumanization beyond hateful behavior such as racism and sexual harassment.

To explain the scope of dehumanization, Haslam defines a model that is called “Evidence for Two Senses of Humanness”. It is used for showing the definitions of humanness and how these traits are interpreted. He states that there are some characteristics of being human in two senses. Thus, dehumanization occurs in two senses as well. Haslam combines binary oppositions in order to show the distinction between humans and animals or inanimate objects. “Human Uniqueness” is a binary opposition to “Animalistic dehumanization” and “Human Nature” is to “Mechanistic dehumanization”.

Figure 1: Proposed Links Between Conceptions Of Humanness And Corresponding Forms Of Dehumanization By Nick Haslam



Source: Haslam, 2006: 257

According to the chart above, Haslam introduces the projected behavioral characteristics of dehumanized groups in terms of humanness. These people’s behaviors are seen as less cognitive and intellectual compared to human attitudes. When the “Human Uniqueness” attributes are analyzed, many human beings are considered morally less than humans. In addition to this, “Mechanistic dehumanization” highlights being other in front of the community. There are some vivid aspects of human nature, and these are rejected by the rest of society. Haslam reports that “A person who is denied HN—cognitive openness, warmth, agency, emotion, depth—is seen as nonhuman more than subhuman” (Haslam, 2006: 259).

In light of Haslam’s “theory of humanness”, animalistic dehumanization might appear when “Uniquely Human” traits cannot be applied according to the perception of the

majority. This kind of wrong perception leads to hostility towards an excluded group of people. Uniquely, human traits are defined as civility, refinement, moral sensibility, rationality, and maturity, which are components of what humanness emphasizes. The excluded group is denied having those traits. They are labeled as “uncultured”, “lacking in self-control, and “unintelligent”. Moreover, those groups tend to be immoral because they are not considered to be in the moral dimension.

“If “Human Nature” traits are not verified to one group, they are considered lacking in “emotionality, warmth, cognitive openness”, and individual agency” (Haslam, 2006: 257). In terms of “individual agency”, their actions are not a result of an and are taken into an object position like the parasite metaphor. Thus, the theory suggests that humans can be compared with machines regarding the traits of humanness and distinctive characteristics that separate human beings from machines.

3.4. LESTER BALLARD, A DEHUMANIZED FIGURE

In light of Nick Haslam’s “Human Uniqueness”, Lester Ballard is an example of animalistic dehumanization. The novel, *Child of God*, is written in colloquial first-person narration. The nameless narrative tells the story and there are also memories of people who lived in the same town as Ballard. In light of this, the reader is unable to get a clear picture of Ballard's actions or appearance. The facts about him depend on the subjective accounts of the townspeople. With regard to this, he is described in a very dehumanized way. The reader only relies on the stories written by the common people who considered Ballard as a sub-human for various reasons. However, the attached adjectives and descriptions might emphasize a false consciousness about Ballard and label him in a dehumanized way.

There are many forms of dehumanizing aspects in Ballard's nihilistic journey. When his position in the story is analyzed, it is clear that he gets alienated from society day by day. With this dreadful outcome of alienation, there are some points that suggest he lacks “Human Uniqueness”. He is totally ghosted by others in town except by a few people who are redundantly talking to him. The narrator does not define Ballard's situation exactly as dehumanized; however, there are various symbolism describes him as a dehumanized figure.

According to Haslam's theory about dehumanization, it is clear that Ballard is seen as less human compared to the others. He is the unwanted child of the South in terms of his animalistic attributes that have been constructed by the people. He inherits those and transforms gradually. Both his physical and mental being are separated and ghosted. He becomes "the other" who reflects the anxieties of the town. His physical and mental condition deteriorates as the novel progresses. Ballard is described in animalistic features while his actions get severity, and he eliminates his rationality. Nothing remains to define him as a human being at the conclusion of the narrative.

To start with, by analyzing the aspects of "Human Uniqueness", Ballard's situation as a civilized man is not healthy. It is difficult to consider him a civilized person because there are some attributes that emphasize his lack of cultural points. Ballard is a poacher who lives wherever he finds due to the one-chamber system of municipal authorities who take his family's farmhouse and leave him alone to survive in this town. He is evicted from his home and humiliated in front of the town's people. The municipal's eviction leads him to be a homeless poacher that seeks to find a place to survive. With respect to this, there is an immoral act toward the owner of the house, and he is left all alone as a homeless. According to Haslam, "When people are divested of these agentic and communal aspects of humanness they are deindividuated, lose the capacity to evoke compassion and moral emotions, and may be treated as means toward vicious ends" (Haslam, 2006: 254). It is clear that there are no moral codes for Ballard's situation or the other do not consider him as a full individual. He is just somebody that should be got rid of, nothing more. By considering him as inhuman, their acts are legitimized, and they abandon the place.

Eviction is significant for Ballard's transformation into a monstrous figure in the story. The narrator states that "Lester Ballard never could hold his head right after that. It must of thawed his neck out some way or another" (McCarthy, 2010: 10). One of the aspects of dehumanization could also be physical. Due to the disability of holding his neck, he might be considered an uncanny figure by others. This incident marks him also physically and he starts to be separated from the community that his family and he belong to. After this incident, he starts to live in a two-room cabinet in the wilderness. Society labels him as a sub-human and sends him to another place to

become a ghost. The conditions are not proper for human living; however, Ballard is helpless.

Ballard trampled a path through the weed to the back door. A hornnest hung from the corner of the porch and he knocked it down. The hornet came out one by one and flew away. Ballard went inside and with a piece of cardboard swept floor. He swept up old newspapers and he swept out the dried dung of foxes and possums and he swept out bits of brickcolored mud fallen from the board ceiling with their black husks of pupae. (McCarthy, 2010: 14)

In light of this quotation, Ballard is forced to live like an animal. This place is no longer proper for human living, and it has become a place for possums, dogs and other wild animals. However, as a poacher, he has no choice but to live in another place. Apart from being alienated from the place, he was also dehumanized due to the conditions. By being isolated in this cabinet, Ballard is “seen as distant, alien, or foreign: displaced away rather downward” (Haslam, 2006: 259). Moreover, he cannot feed himself properly. He eats raw potatoes, squirrels, and stolen corn. Sometimes he could not even drink water to survive in the wilderness. In this sense, there is nothing to define him as a human. He has no capacity to buy anything to feed himself or grow to care for himself. He acts like a predator who is only obsessed with finding some food to survive. There are a lot of days that he starves; however, he does not take responsibility for caring for himself. He lives like a nomadic animal as a result of how he is treated by the people. “He watched a cornpicker go snarling through the fields and in the evening he and the doves went husbanding among the chewed and broken stalks and he gathered several sackfuls and carried them to the cabin before dark. (McCarthy, 2010: 39) It is clear that he is like the other animals, gathering food from the fields, which shows that he lacks the behavioral aspects of humanity. “He’d been on a diet of stolen fieldcorn and summer garden stuff for weeks save for the frogs he’d shoot in the clear water on wimpling fins.” (McCarthy, 2010: 32)

After the cabinet burns down, Ballard has nowhere to reside. As it is stated in The Second Chapter, Ballard makes his home in a cave that runs parallel to the mountains. His life in a cave is emphasized to show that he has been dehumanized since the cave reflects a spatial otherness in literature. The caves emphasize the dichotomy between wilderness and civilization; therefore, are unfit for human habitation. He starts living there like an animal that prevents himself from the other predators. According to Haslam’s “UH” values, it is clear that Ballard’s description of

those caves demonstrates his uncivilized personality. He rejects the cultural aspects of the community in which he resides, or he is dismissed from that community to reside in another place but a cave. In this respect, his situation is directly linked with animalistic dehumanization because living in those caves shows his being less than human. For the culture that Ballard belongs to, living in a cave is not something proper for people.

In Ballard's situation, living in caves could be difficult at first; however, he adapted himself because these are the places where he could be accepted as the way he is. Although he cannot fulfill the social and economic demands of modern society, he could easily enter the hollow rocks or use the tunnels as they are the places that he knew before. On a survival basis, he has no choice other than caves or tree hollows. While Ballard is questioned by Otis and Ernest about the location of the corpses, Ballard calmly states that he has hidden them in the caves. At that moment, these two people who are accepted in society are very surprised and they repeat "In caves" (McCarthy, 2010: 174). Additionally, Ballard claims that he knows where they are stored. Regarding this aspect, he is linked to the caves more than any other human being. These places are complex and difficult to memorize because they are proper to the civilized life conditions. It shows that Ballard is no longer described as a human being.

Moreover, Ballard's physical conditions are also adapted to living in those caves. When the authorities track the place of the corpses, they encounter a small hole. The description of the hole is somewhere any human being cannot fit. Ballard is able to be fit, though.

Abruptly Ballard stopped. Balancing with one arm, the flashlight in his teeth, he climbed a ledge and went along it with his face to the wall, went upward again, his bare toes gripping the rocks like an ape, and crawled through a narrow fissure in the stone.

They watched him go.

Goddamn if that there ain't a awful small hole. (McCarthy, 2010: 175)

So first, Ballard is able to walk by shifting her body in a way that is impossible for a person to do. Then, Ballard demonstrates a gorilla's clinging trait in order to squeeze through the specified tiny hole. While the others are unable to get through the hole in any way, Ballard finds it to be a piece of cake. Ballard is now entirely animalistic in the narrative descriptions. They could not do what Ballard achieves, even if the

smallest among them tries to pass. Because they still possess human traits, unlike Ballard. One of the authorities stated that “Godamn if that little bastard ain’t played us for a bunch of fool” (McCarthy, 2010: 177). By managing a spatial talent, Ballard can seek shelter by displaying his animalistic qualities in an environment where humans cannot live.

Apart from spatial dehumanization, Ballard is a man of instincts, and he cannot be considered a rational person. There are many aspects of his insanity from the people. He is defined as a loveless simian shape, mad man, insane, and retarded by other people. He lacks the intellectual capacity to live his life according to social rules and standards. He only follows his instincts, and he is immoral due to instinctual behaviors that desire pleasure from the outside. The narrator tells the story of the Ballard family and defines them as the reason for Ballard’s status. It is clear that the whole family is considered in a sub-human category because they are mentioned without humanness. The narrator explains Mr. Ballard’s death;

We went up there and walked in the barn and I seen his feet hangin. We just cut him down, let him fall in the floor. Just like cuttin down meat. He stood there and watched, never said nothin. He was about nine or ten year old at the time. The old man’s eyes was run out on stems like a crawfish and his tongue blacker’n a chow dog’s. I wisht if a man wanted to hang hisself he’d do it with posion or somethin so folks wouldn’t have to see such a thing as that (McCarthy, 2010: 22).

In regard to this quotation, it is clear that Mr. Ballard is dehumanized in the accounts of the townspeople. The depiction of his body resembles meat, not human flesh. The narrator also compares his body parts to animals and does not mention anything about his being a human. There is no sorrow or grave for the man, rather he is angry at the man because he does not poison himself and forces him to see his disgusting dead body. There is no moral sensibility for the dead man or his son, Lester. He even ghosts the boy although he experiences a difficult situation, the death of his father. He has no mercy for the family, and he has no moral responsibility for the incident. There is nothing to distinguish Mr. Ballard from other animals.

In addition to his family’s dehumanization, Ballard loses his humanness due to the forces of society. Although he has some main characteristics, the evilness inside him reveals itself after totally being rejected by society. He becomes a self-restraint man who commits murder and acts of necrophilia as an example of immorality. All of his actions become desire-based like sexual desire, ownership desire, and dominating

the people. Before he commits his first crime, he is falsely accused of being a rapist. He is stereotyped as a rapist long before he commits the crime. However, he kills the couple, and he tries to bring the dead woman into his cave and chase the person who starts the car's engine. "Scuttling down the mountain with the thing on his back he looked like a man beset by some ghastr succubus, the dead girl riding him with legs bowed akimbo like a monstrous frog." (McCarthy, 2010: 144) According to the quotation, it is clear that Ballard loses all of his humanness and self-restraint in order to get sexual satisfaction from the dead body. According to Haslam, "when UH characteristics are denied to others, they should in principle be seen as lacking in refinement, civility, moral sensibility, and higher cognition. They should therefore be perceived as coarse, uncultured, lacking in self-control, and unintelligent." (Haslam, 2006: 258) It is clear that considering Ballard as an alien, leads to transforming him into a monstrous figure who has no self-control, intelligence or culture to be connected to the universe.

After these terrifying actions, Ballard starts to be an animal-like person both physically and mentally. He does not interfere with any human activity and there is nothing to be able to call him a person. He becomes an object who scatters around without any intellectual thoughts. It is stated that "He sat there soaking his feet and gibbering, a sound not quite crying that echoed from the walls of the grotto like the mutterings of a band of sympathetic apes." (McCarthy, 2010: 150) His cry is described as an ape muttering by the narrator who uses a simile to make a comparison between human and animal traits. According to Haslam, there are some characteristics that separate people from animals in terms of "UH" figures, and they are only referred to human nature. This kind of behavior belongs to wild creatures that could not be attached to any human being. However, Ballard's dehumanization is demonstrated by the narrator by revealing his transition into animalistic traits.

Ballard is also in a conflict with Mr. Greer. He considers Mr. Greer a poacher who unlawfully gains possession of the property. He plans to kill him after watching the home for some time. His arrival in this chapter is highly peculiar. When he approaches Mr. Greer to fire, he wears a fright wig and skirt. In addition to the narrator's previous assertion that Ballard wears his victim's underwear, in the last act, Ballard is wearing a dead human scalp. The narrator states that "At the foot of the steps

he picked up what appeared to be a wig and saw that it was fashioned whole from a dried human scalp” (McCarthy, 2010: 164). In regard to this quotation, Ballard’s humanness is totally denied by his embodiment of other victims’ body parts. Ballard totally abandons his human traits and starts to change into a strange life form by associating the scalp of a victim with himself. He begins to resemble a corpse more and more by donning the victim's garments. He adopts the persona of a dead man in addition to the descriptors that are applied to him, such as crazy, troll, and strange.

After his death, his body is shipped to a medical school to be analyzed and studied by med students. The narrator explains the procedure that his body goes through in detail, and this shows that he is still not considered a human being. He is an object that serves the students’ lessons and the community. It is not surprising to see that nobody is mentioned in sorrow; however, his dead body’s process is described as a usual thing by the narrator.

There is a basement room he was preserved with formalin and wheeled forth to take his place with other deceased persons newly arrived. He was laid out on a slab and flyed, eviscerated, dissected. His head was saved open and the brains removed. His muscles were stripped from his bones. His heart was taken out. His entrails were hauled forth and delineated and the four young students who bent over him like those haruspices of old perhaps saw monsters worse to come in their configurations. (McCarthy, 2010: 184)

His human background is no longer highlighted by anything, leaving him a nameless, desolate figure. He is examined and eviscerated like a laboratory animal for a serving purpose. Ballard is not viewed as a human creature at all, as evidenced by the thorough depiction of his anatomy and the complete lack of any reference to his humanity. The narrator also claims that the pupils have seen creatures in Ballard's bowels, which shows the dehumanization that his even physical body has after his death. Besides, no one attends his funeral, and the priest ends the funeral with a prayer, even a short one. Regarding his journey to death, his position in the eyes of the people does not change even if he dies.

CONCLUSION

The basic definition of alienation is a process of isolation or separation from family or society. The process could manifest itself both physically and mentally. In literature, the theme of alienation is significant because it is directly linked to the human psyche.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, alienation was analyzed and studied by many philosophers and theorists. One of them was Friedrich Nietzsche who questioned essentialism's doctrines and declared that there is no superior being to provide a determined set of rules. Nietzsche, like many existentialist philosophers, concerns himself as a lonely being in this universe without any signifiers. Moreover, Jean-Paul Sartre claimed that existence comes before essence and he destroyed the accepted Western tradition. According to him, man is incapable of relying on any essential value. Furthermore, he asserted that we learn about ourselves only from others. The subjective and objective realities are always linked with one another. Nobody gains knowledge without interaction with "the other". Martin Heidegger also analyzed the human condition in terms of alienation although he never mentioned the alienation term. He stated that "Fallenness" is enough to explain "Dasein" consciousness. The fundamental structure of his theory is based on the helplessness of man in this universe. Humanity is only a "thrown" entity in this world; hence, there is no purpose in existence. Heidegger viewed the concept of alienation as a lost orientation for humanity, much like Sartre did.

Apart from existentialist philosophers, according to Karl Marx's theory of alienation, alienated labor is forced labor that lacks creativity in doing his own work. In this condition, the process compels the worker to lose the sense of himself as a member of society. He feels his distance from the object, and sees himself as a powerless entity. There are four types of alienation: alienation from the product, alienation from the production, alienation from the nature of species and alienation from man or society. All of these stages are barriers against individual growth and authenticity.

One of the most influential psychologists and sociologists of the 20th century, Eric Fromm discussed his idea of alienation from different perspectives. According to

him, a man who experiences alienation does not see himself as the center of the universe. He draws parallels between the modern, isolated man and the prehistoric man who worshipped idols. Prehistoric men devoted their time, energy and artistic talent to the creation of an idol, which they then worshipped. He transfers the active energies into the idol in this way. He starts to seek God's guidance. Therefore, devotion reflects distance. This process is an example of alienation. Moreover, Fromm discussed the idea of "love" and "attachment" by explaining man's endless search for being united with his mother. Man always looks for solutions to his universal loneliness. There are various methods that help one feel harmony. Fromm outlined how to create a sane society by dividing human needs into five categories. These are relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, a sense of identity and the need for frame of orientation and devotion. Fromm declares that even if all of man's physical demands are satisfied, there will be a state of disconnectedness. Fromm states that "Relatedness" is a rational and truthful need for a man who becomes dedicated to harmony in order to integrate into society. By developing long-lasting relationships, people could emerge from their states of insanity. Another basic need is "Transcendence", which stimulates the human mind's capacity for creativity. In this phase, man is conscious of his creation, but he is not capable of producing anything. In order to overcome this condition, love is what lies at the heart of man's urge to transcend himself. The third concept, "Rootedness," states that one will eventually lose roots in everything. According to Fromm, man needs to discover his human beginnings in order to connect. It calms his irrational emotions. "The sense of identity", which emphasizes the significance of an independent "I," is the fourth concept. Man should think of himself as acting in a subjective capacity in order to avoid alienation. He ought to support a wider community. He should establish an identity in society, despite the fact that it is fictitious. "The requirement for frame of orientation and devotion" is the final basic need of man. Fromm made a distinction between binary, reason, and irrationality to clarify why people have needs. He claimed that man always needs a series of thoughts in order to comprehend what is going on around him. His existence becomes meaningful through his interactions with others and his ideas.

Dehumanization is the idea that a group of people does not deserve moral respect. It is a process by which regular people interiorize their desire to behave

immorally toward others. Economic, political, and cultural marginalization from society is possible for someone who has been dehumanized. As a result, someone may be considered a sub-human, which implies that they lack human capacity.

Nick Haslam, who is a significant figure in social psychology, suggested that the concept of "humanness" refers to the traits denied by others when they are treated cruelly. He asserts that there is a special model for comprehending dehumanization that has already been put forward in insufficiency. It might be connected to fundamental human behaviors, animal behaviors or behaviors of animated objects.

Haslam creates a concept known as "Evidence for Two Senses of Humanness" to explain the severity of dehumanization. It serves as a demonstration of what constitutes humanness and how these characteristics are seen. Haslam states that being human has some traits in both senses. Human Nature and Human Uniqueness are in binary opposition to "Mechanistic dehumanization" and "Animalistic dehumanization". According to Haslam's "theory of humanness," when "Uniquely Human" features cannot be used in accordance with the perception of the majority, animalistic dehumanization may manifest. As distinct characteristics of what humanness stresses, human features are defined as civility, refinement, moral sensibility, reason and maturity. They are described as "illiterate," "poor self-control," and "uncultured." Furthermore, because they are not regarded as belonging to the moral dimension, those groups have a tendency to be immoral. Human traits and distinguishing qualities set humans apart from machines.

Lester Ballard, the protagonist of the *Child of God*, is a significant example of how a person completely loses his humanity in various aspects. As an outcast, his story demonstrates an escape from the city to the wilderness where he leaves civilization and cultural values as well as moral codes.

Ballard gets alienated slowly and painfully. When his ontological status is analyzed, it is clear that he was "thrown" into the universe without any sense of belonging. He lacks a value or reference system to value his existence. His condition is called "Falleness" which demonstrates a feeling of falling. There is no determined set of rules in his existence, and he is a lonely wanderer. His condition of alienation triggers "anxiety" which is also the result of the existential dilemma. There is no

meaning to Ballard's existence and his existence is only absurd. The reason why he exists is a "malign star" which condemns him as being alive.

His relationship with the people in Sevier County is unhealthy. Most of the time, he is rejected or ghosted. The residents generally refuse to talk to him or ignore his existence. He is a figure for "the other" in the eyes of the Southern people. Thus, he could not achieve to have a real attachment to any person or even anything. According to Eric Fromm, "relatedness" distinguishes mankind from others. In order to relate, man should find a connection with the universe. This relationship might be established by obedience to a person, an institution, or God. However, Ballard is even ignored at the church although he is in a helpless situation.

Ballard experiences "residential alienation", which is associated with losing a sense of belonging to a home. He cannot designate this location as his own property anymore in terms of Hegel. Since direct possession is impossible, the governing authorities have taken control of this location. There are no accommodations or places to experience intimacy or security. He is not a part of his community's social environment. Even if nature is cruel to him, he always ends up in the wilderness. He settles down in the cabinet and then starts to live in caves which symbolize his desire to back to his mother's womb. He is utterly isolated from human affection and longs terribly to be united once more with his mother. Caves are also metaphors for moving underground, which shows a connection to death. For the first time, Ballard senses the presence of his deceased relatives in those caves.

Lester Ballard typically targets young ladies as his victims. As a misogynist and necrophile, he is the embodiment of an evil figure. Ballard fears making a mental and sexual connection with women. He is prevented from conversing with them or viewing their faces. He views the deceased woman objectively and labels her "the other," which causes him anxiety. Ballard's wish to be one with his mother is denied in accordance with Freud's "the Oedipus Complex" since he was left alone with his father, another manipulative masculine figure. It is obvious that the women, like her mother, who abruptly leaves the family, are cold and cruel to him. He is also falsely accused of being a rapist because he cannot explain himself properly and spends nine days in jail. His relationship with women is too poor and insufficient to make a healthy connection.

Compared to the others, Ballard is thought to be less human. He is depicted as inheriting animalistic characteristics because his acts become more intense. He loses his rationality after he leaves his family's house. He is viewed by society as a child who lacks the cognitive ability, and he cannot accept responsibility for their acts. When his conditions are analyzed under the theory of "Human Uniqueness". After the municipal official takes his family's farmhouse and left him alone to exist in this town, Ballard becomes a poacher who lives wherever he finds. Since caves indicate a spatial otherness in literature, it is highlighted that he lives in a cave to demonstrate how dehumanized he has become. The caves are unsuitable for human habitation since they highlight the contrast between nature and society. However, Ballard's physical characteristics are also suited to residing in such caverns at the end. The authorities come across a little hole when they follow the bodies' trail. Any human cannot fit in the hole, according to the description. Ballard is managed to escape due to his animal shape body. Even if the smallest among the crew tries to pass, none of them could accomplish what Ballard does. because, unlike Ballard, they still exhibit human characteristics.

After his death, nothing draws attention to his human heritage. The narrator leaves him a faceless and lonely figure. He is dissected and then used as a serving tool like a lab rat. Ballard is not thought of as a human being at all, as seen by the detailed description of his anatomy and the absence of any allusion to his humanity. Moreover, students have seen animals in Ballard's guts further demonstrating how dehumanized even his physical body has become. No one shows up for his funeral, and the priest concludes it with a brief prayer. His dehumanization starts within society with false perceptions of the people in Sevier and Ballard embodies all of these perceptions throughout his journey to death.

Cormac McCarthy is one of the most prominent authors of Southern Gothic literature. Most of his novels are regarded as canonical because his distinct voice contributed to the genre's historical popularity. His third book, *Child of God* tells the story of Lester Ballard, a necrophiliac serial killer who is alienated from women, society and his home violently. He is labeled and considered sub-human by the people of Sevier County; therefore, he emphasizes an animalistic form of dehumanization. As

an outcast, he interiorizes the conceptions of people. In extreme isolation, he abandons his human qualities and transforms into an animal that lives in the wilderness.



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