

DE-MONSTRATING BODIES, BESTIAL
MACHINES: THE POSTHUMAN IN HALİD ZİYA
UŞAKLIGİL'S SHORT STORIES

A Master's Thesis

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To Mahsa Amini

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ABSTRACT

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M.A., Department of Turkish Literature

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This thesis explores the posthuman figurations in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's four short stories, "Sevda-yı Sengîn", "Kadın Pençesi", "Mösyö Kanguru", and "Kırık Oyuncak" in comparative and intermedial contexts. The thesis asks the question of how the boundaries between the human and posthuman are constructed, and whether the posthumanization is strengthened or melted these boundaries. For the answers, we visit ancient Greek mythological figures such as Pygmalion and Medusa and come back to the nineteenth century's narrations that intermingled with dance, cinema, art, and poetry. These art forms and texts help us understand and change today's narratives and social structures that oppress others. This thesis also explores the posthuman entanglement with nature and culture in and out of the realms of fiction/reality achromatically while all sorts of forming in texts bend the fixations.

Keywords: Gender Studies, Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil, Humanism-Posthumanism, Intermediality, Patriarchy

ÖZET

CANAVARLAŞARAK GÖRÜNÜM KAZANAN BEDENLER, HAYVANİ MAKİNELER: HALİD ZİYA UŞAKLIGİL'İN ÖYKÜLERİNDE İNSANÖTESİ (POSTHÜMAN)

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Bu tez Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil'in "Sevda-yı Sengîn", "Kadın Pençesi", "Mösyö Kanguru" ve "Kırık Oyuncak" adlı dört öyküsündeki insanötesi (posthüman) figürasyonları karşılaştırmalı ve medyalararası bir bağlamda incelemektedir. Tez, insan (hüman) ile insanötesi (posthüman) arasındaki sınırların nasıl inşa edildiğini sorguluyor. Aynı zamanda bu sınırların posthümanizasyon süreciyle sıkılaştığını mı yoksa gevşediğini mi araştırıyor. Cevaplar için Pygmalion ve Medusa gibi antik Yunan mitolojik figürlerini ziyaret edip on dokuzuncu yüzyılın dans, sinema, sanat ve şiirle iç içe geçmiş anlatılarına geri dönüyor. Bu sanat formları ve metinler, günümüzün ötekini ezen anlatılarını ve toplumsal yapılarını anlamamıza ve değiştirmemize yardımcı oluyor. Bu tez aynı zamanda kurgu/gerçeklik âlemlerinin içinde ve dışında, doğa ve kültürle insanötesi iç içeliğini akromatik olarak araştırırken, metinlerdeki her türlü biçimlendirme saplantılarını esnetiyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ataerki, Cinsiyet Çalışmaları, Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil, İnsan-İnsanötesilik (Hümanizm-Posthumanism), Medyalararasılık

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

“The harmony of soul and body—how much that is! We in our madness have separated the two, and have invented a realism that is bestial, an ideality that is void.” (Wilde 18).

This thesis is about the spiral narration of *us* institutionalized as *the other* through the creation of *the posthuman* who has been tormented with the hunger and the trepidation accompanied by feelings of awe and disgust since ancient times; and the narration of how the metamorphosis of *us/other* returns, scratching the surface of the patriarchal nightmare. My purpose is to explore how conceptions of mind/body dualisms are rooted in the patriarchal and heteronormative ideas of creating “the perfect other for man” with the posthumanist approach through the works of art such as paintings and statues in literary works alongside the images of goddess-like figures which create fear and desire to determine the woman/other. I do not aim to define what human or posthuman is since the definitions are limitations, nor do I offer a literature review or a survey for posthumanism in Turkish literature; instead, I open up a discussion on what constitutes the human and how human/posthuman or man/other dualisms are constructed examining the posthuman figurations in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s short stories, “Sevda-yı Sengîn”, “Kadın Pençesi”, “Mösyö Kanguru”, and “Kırık Oyuncak” in comparative and intermedial contexts.

Still, it is significant to address the common tendencies that have been indicated by scholars and writers of Turkey towards Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's literary works in order to understand what their primary focuses were on in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's texts, what they overlooked or left out that lead not much to comprehend the different aspects of Uşaklıgil's writings and hence, of Servet-i Fünun's and hence of Turkish literature, and finally which doors they opened for us to deal with the posthumanist approach in the literature, especially in Uşaklıgil's short stories as a milestone to go back in time and examine posthumanism in a more embracing way.

Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil is one of Turkish literature's most-read, much-discussed authors: Much of these discussions have centered on his novels such as *Sefile*, *Aşk-ı Memnu*, *Kırık Hayatlar*, and *Mai ve Siyah*. Through these novels, he has been the subject of various topics that lingered over “belated modernity¹”, “realism movement”, “the language”, and “the conflict of individual and society” by academic scholars and writers. Although there are several approaches in subjective levels like “Triangular Desire²” and a handful of psychoanalytic explorations³, the literary works of Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil and “Edebiyat-ı Cedide⁴” in general, were victims of the ongoing east-

¹ See. Nurdan Gürbilek's *Kötü Çocuk Türk*, “Orijinal Türk Ruhu”, Metis Yayınları, 5th edition, İstanbul, 2016. P. 94-134. Gürbilek discusses the reflections of the term “belated modernity” by Gragory Jusdanis translated to Turkish as “gecikmiş modernlik” that directed towards the Servet-i Fünun literati by many critics. She also addresses the other belittlements towards these authors under the roof of realism, romanticism, simplification of the language and individual-social conflicts.

² Koçak in “Kaptırılmış İdeal” explores *Mai ve Siyah* with the concept of “triangular desire” which is a term to describe the desire from subject to object is not linear but triangular: there is a mediator in between that the subject desires what that mediator desires. This theory is suggested by René Girard.

³ See. Jale Parla's *Babalar ve Oğullar*. It is important to point out that Jale Parla also deals with the figurations of metamorphosis (başkalaşım) in Turkish novels in *Türk Romanında Başkalaşım*. She offers a place for Ahmed Cemil from Halid Ziya's *Mai ve Siyah*. However, in this text, she looks at the metamorphosis from a window that I do not explore in this thesis: she focuses on these metamorphosis through the angle of “the lack” or “the gap” in a Freudian way.

⁴ The avant-garde literary movement. New Literature. See. Monica Katipoğlu's “Specters and Circulation of Meaning: Edebiyat-ı Cedide on Modern Literary Language”, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*. Vol. 40, No. 2, 2020

west dichotomy in the Ottoman Empire. Critics and writers who argue that Servet-i Fünunists imitate the western world and life have formed an ideal of how literature should be.

On the other hand, others like Orhan Koçak and Zeynep Uysal argue that the reflections of the individual's inner world in the era's literary works are the projection of social issues. Orhan Koçak begins his article "Kaptırılmış İdeal: Mai ve Siyah Üzerine Psikanalitik Bir Deneme" by emphasizing the prejudices formed on Edebiyat-ı Cedide. He addresses that Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil was subjected to Ahmet Mithat Efendi's ascription of "decadents" for the novelists of Edebiyat-ı Cedide (Koçak 98), as well as Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar and Berna Moran's criticisms of the literary writers of Serveti Fünun as superficial, foreign, and rootless:

“Öte yandan, bu doğru, tekrarlandıkça kendi yarım-doğrularını da üretecektir: Edebiyat-ı Cedide köksüzdür, yabancı ve yüzeyseldir – Tanpınar gibi zeki bir eleştirmeni bile etkisi altına alan bir görüş. Oysa, hakim olduğumu bildiğimiz eleştirel araçları gereği gibi kullansaydı şunu da görebilirdi Tanpınar: Edebiyat-ı Cedide, zorunlu bir yüzeysellik ve yabancılığı konu aldığı ölçüde yüzeysellikten uzaklaşır. Halit Ziya'nın romanlarında, en çok da *Mai ve Siyah*'ta böyle olmuştur.”⁵ (Koçak 94).

In his article, Orhan Koçak takes a psychoanalytic approach to Halid Ziya's novel *Mai ve Siyah* to explain the inner dimension of cultural opposition. “Ama beni burada asıl ilgilendiren, bu romanların en genel teknik yeterliliğinden çok, Halit Ziya ve Servet-i Fünun karşısında alınan ikircikli, bulanık tavidir. Neden, Tanpınar ve Moran gibi yetenekli ve iyi niyetli eleştirmenler bile, Halit Ziya'nın yapıtlarının Osmanlı-Türk

⁵ On the other hand, as this truth is repeated, it will produce its own half-truths: Edebiyat-ı Cedide is rootless, foreign and superficial – a view that fascinates even an astute critic like Tanpınar. However, if he had used the critical tools that we know to be hegemonic, Tanpınar could have seen this: Edebiyat-ı Cedide moves away from superficiality to the extent that it deals with a necessary superficiality and foreignness. This is the case in Halit Ziya's novels, most notably in *Mai and Siyah*.

toplumunun temel sorunlarını “aksettirmedięini” düşünmek zorunda kalmışlardır? (102). It is important that Koçak talks about this ambivalence so that we can move away from this ambivalence and open the way for us to examine Uşaklıgil's works from different perspectives. However, rather than turning to contrary arguments, it is time to move away from the individual-social, east-west dichotomies and deal with literature with interconnectedness, cacophony, and coexistence.

Also, Zeynep Uysal, in her book titled *Metruk Ev*⁶ deals with the destruction of the "home", which is the internal-external reflection of the conflict between individual-society, private-public, reality-imagination/ideal, (which is often discussed for Halid Ziya's texts,) through *Kırık Hayatlar* (Uysal 259). Zeynep Uysal argues in her article that the destructiveness of desires is not revealed from a moralist point of view. What is emphasized is the inevitable collapse of opposing human nature and creating an ideal as a result of social norms. (263). The sacredly attributed family life will lose its meaning with the ideal of a good husband, a good father, and a clean, white, and beautiful house. (279). In fact, the source of these conflicts is the state of being stuck and captive, which arises as a result of not being able to accept the reality that cannot be fully comprehended.

Both Koçak and Uysal also point out the fact that literary works do not necessarily have to be represented under a flag, emphasizing that literature can have uncommitted, reciprocal, and interconnected aspects. There is also a handful of pioneering works on Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil that lead us to a new way of looking at Tanzimat and Servet-i Fünun literature. Especially, the articles about Uşaklıgil's literature as the *fin de*

⁶ Derelict House.

*siecle*⁷ collected in the book called *Siyah Endişe* show that there are already various attempts to see the new potentials by looking at the old ones. One of the articles by Zeynep Uysal entitled “Asır Sonunda Bir Pygmalion Temsili: Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil’in ‘Sevda-yı Seng’ Öyküsü⁸” inspired me to explore the posthuman figurations with Pygmalion archetype in Uşaklıgil’s “Sevda-yı Sengîn”. While she examines “Sevda-yı Sengîn”’s character and structure with a comparative interaction to demonstrate Uşaklıgil’s receptiveness to the world literature, in this thesis, I discuss the Pygmalion myth and the protagonist Refi Nihat in the story in more of an archetypal way in the sense of how the humanization and the desire, as well as the fear of the other, are rooted regardless of time and space. I address indifference of time and space by choosing two figures, one from ancient Greek mythology and the other from the late nineteenth-early twentieth century, Ottoman and Turkish literature writer, Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil so that I can show that despite the different eras and the different areas these figures have emerged, and despite the different social structures that had shaped the historical contexts of given time and space, they have common, archetypal feelings towards the other. Additionally, Fatih Altuğ’s “Mecralar Arasında Hareket, Beden ve Şiddet: ‘La Danse Serpentine’ ve ‘Mösyö Kanguru’yu Birlikte Okumak” took me to the point where I discussed literature, dance and posthumanism with “Tentacular Thinking” in relation with Medusa archetype. It also directed me to explore one of the most disregarded aspects of humanist subordination toward children. Another article by Altuğ “Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil’de Hareket: Trenler ve Dans Eden Bedenler” tackles

⁷ *Fin-de-siecle* is a French term to describe the turn of the century. It is specifically used for the end of the nineteenth century as it was the era of endings and beginnings in cultural respect around the world. See. Zeynep Uysal’s “Osmanlı’da ‘Asır Sonu’ ve ‘Beşer Hayatı’” for the reflections of *fin-de-siecle* in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s and Servet-i Fünun literature.

⁸ A Pygmalion Representation at the End of the Century: The Story of Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil’s ‘Sevda-yı Seng’

how nineteenth century's renovations of both dance and trains are derived in literature focusing on Uşaklıgil's texts, *Bir Ölüün Defteri*, "Şadan'ın Gevezelikleri", "Mösyö Kanguru", "Yırtık Mendil" and "Rakstan Avdet". Even though Uşaklıgil's short stories offer us new perspectives, they are not necessarily the only sources we must look into: For example, Murat Narcı in "Muvazi Anlar ya da Sonsuz Işık: Uşaklıgil Evreninde Zamansız Sadmeler", deviate from the circulations of the similar criticisms for Uşaklıgil's popular novels and focuses on "the light" and "the new ways of looking" with the change in the structures of the society at the end of the century through technical advancements in *Sefile*, *Nemide*, *Ferdi ve Şürekâsı*, *Aşk-ı Memnu*, and *Kırık Hayatlar*. Yüce Aydoğan, in "Halit Ziya'nın Adresleri: Geç 19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Dünyasında Mevcudiyetin Verilme Biçimlerine Dair Bir Kurama Doğru" focuses on the moments and gestures of "the addressing" in Halid Ziya's prose poems and short stories in relation with the notions of the historicizing and the fate not in theological connotations but in a close meaning of what Martin Heidegger uses as *geschick* referring both fate and address. Therefore, it must not be controversial to suggest that the narrative can reshape, transform, and reinvent itself. We can re-understand the past in contradistinctive ways by making retrospective readings with what we learn today and what we experience today without slipping into anachronism. For this reason, Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil readings must be rejuvenated from certain frameworks. A lot of writing on his novels but not presenting new perspectives will exhaust them. In this respect, the neglected short stories are very valuable to us for different prospects.

Hence, instead of creating counter-arguments for the "rootlessness," "foreign or

strange,” we can embrace these notions in literature. The words themselves can have their own “other” connotations, and they would impeccably lead us to the posthumanist approach in Servet-i Fünun literature: for instance, the rootlessness attributed to Uşaklıgil’s literary works can be explored with a Deleuzian way connected with what Donna Haraway already discussed cyborg’s non-oedipal disassociation along with Deleuze’s theory of “deterritorialization”⁹ instead of the fatherlessness anxiety that Jale Parla explains in *Babalar ve Oğullar*, and therefore, it would open a path for us to deal with the rhizomatic aspect of the literary works in narrative, and subjective levels along with historical contexts. Yüce Aydoğan, in his master thesis, *Yazınsal Disko: Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil'in Yeğin Yazısı*¹⁰ already focuses on the deterritorialization as a basic movement in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s writings such as “Rakstan Avdet” with a primary focus on the “intensity”¹¹. (Aydoğan 9). “Jale Parla, *Babalar ve Oğullar*’da, Tanzimat romanının bir babasız kalma tedirginliği içinde doğduğuna dikkat çekmiştir.” (Koçak 100). – We can drag the issues of fatherlessness and rootlessness out of the constantly raised issues, to the posthumanist discontinuity, to the outside of the oedipal. The foreign, strange one is the one that “the other” which is “uncanny” can also be good focalizations in further studies.

I cannot explain what posthuman means or the terminological definition of posthumanism in one or a few sentences; As a matter of fact, I have not met theorists who explain it. The word posthumanism has found its place in many fields and

⁹ For more insights about deterritorialization, see Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s “What is Minor Literature?” *Mississippi Review*, Winter/Spring, 1983, Vol. 11, No. 3, Essays Literary Criticism (Winter/Spring, 1983), pp. 13-33

¹⁰ Literary Disco: Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil's Intensive Writing

¹¹ Also see the relations of intensity and becoming from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s “Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible...” *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, London, 1987.

disciplines, from art to literature, from technology to science, and from culture to anthropology. Following Rosi Braidotti's path, in this thesis, I associate posthuman with the concept of the other, by positioning against the universal understandings of man who has been idealized and situated above everyone and everything else as well as the human (the human as a humanist approach that also excludes women, queers, minorities, ethnicities, children, animals and many more that outside of the supremacy), who is on the top of the hierarchy. My purpose is to illustrate these positionings against the posthuman in narratives. In *A Theoretical Framework for the Critical Posthumanities*, Braidotti states that: "Taking the posthumanities as an emergent field of enquiry based on the convergence of posthumanism and post-anthropocentrism, I argue that posthuman knowledge claims go beyond the critiques of the universalist image of 'Man' and of human exceptionalism." (Braidotti 1).

It will be useful to continue reading the thesis keeping in mind the brief information about the four short stories of Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil. "Sevda-yı Sengîn" is one of the short stories from the book *Bir Yazın Tarihi* (1898). *Bir Yazın Tarihi* had been in circulation by Âlem Matbaası, in İstanbul 1316 (1898), enchastened second edition prepared by Hilmi Kitabevi in İstanbul 1941. The story is about a young poet named Refi Nihad who fell in love with a stone statue, isolating himself from the world. In the story, the narrator is an old friend of Refi Nihad, and one day he meets this young poet, whom he has not seen for years, on a ferry. However, the narrator realizes a fact about this poet: there is no trace of that young and lively poet now; now the light in this young man's eyes has faded, he has aged prematurely, and his excited soul is dead. This young man, who saw the world through a poem, has now turned into an old

boy.

“Kadın Pençesi” is the first story of the same-titled book consisting of six stories which was published six years before Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s death, in 1939 by Hilmi Kitabevi in İstanbul. It is significant to note that *Kadın Pençesi* does not belong to the end of the nineteenth century. However, while contextualizing the texts of Uşaklıgil, we must consider that history does not necessarily open and close the cultural changes sharply. As Yüce Aydoğan states in “Halit Ziya’nın Adresleri: Geç 19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Dünyasında Mevcudiyetin Verilme Biçimlerine Dair Bir Kurama Doğru” that: “Halit Ziya’da tarih, tarih yazımıyla [historiography] sanat arasında ve her biri ayrı birer mevcudiyet sunumu olarak sanatların, disiplinlerin, hatta dillerin arasında bir cereyan olarak gelmenin ve geçmenin tecrübesidir. Halit Ziya yazısının başından sonuna biricik temasının sanatlar arasındaki (imkânsız) geçişme bölgesinin ürettiği algı düzenleri olduğunu kaydetmeliyiz.¹²” (147). My purpose in this thesis is to show the rooted elements of humanism, patriarchy, and hegemonic powers despite the time and place. It is a story about an ill-fated man who marries a beautiful woman who is not loyal to him. The narrator of the story tries to save this miserable man from the claw of this beautiful but dangerous woman. At the end, however, the narrator with two other friends realizes that they cannot save him from the woman and they silently leave the couple alone in despair.

“Mösyö Kanguru” is the second story of Uşaklıgil’s book *Solgun Demet* which was

¹² For Halit Ziya, history is the experience of coming and going as a current between historiography and art, and between arts, disciplines and even languages, each as a separate presentation of existence. We should note that the only theme of Halit Ziya's writing from the beginning to the end is the perception patterns produced by the (impossible) transition zone between the arts.

published in 1901. *Solgun Demet* is also published by Âlem Matbaası, in İstanbul in 1317 (1899). Enchastened second edition prepared by İnkılâp ve Aka Kitabevleri, in İstanbul 1987. It is a story about a boy in France. Throughout his childhood, he has been exposed to bullying, harassment, and mockery because of his kangaroo-like appearance. He finds himself in a circus performing as a clown. However, his childhood trauma of being unloved, and turning back again to being “Mösyö Kangaroo” off-stage haunt him, and lead him to kidnap a girl whom he shares the stage with.

“Kırık Oyuncak ” is also from the book *Solgun Demet* which is an eight pages long short story. A married couple has their first baby: this baby brings joy to their life. The baby grows up into a toddler. However, one day he gets sick, and no matter how hard the couple tries, they cannot find a cure for the toddler. He will live yet he will carry the disease throughout his life. The only laughter the toddler has now is the clown doll that when they press its chess, it starts to laugh uncannily. The couple laments for their ill-fated, sick child.

In the following sub-chapter of the “Introduction”, “Posthuman —not a post-power: The Constructed Other and the Conflict of Boundaries in Nineteenth-century Literature”, I discuss the boundaries that have been set between the privileged humans and others within the posthuman framework to explore how man superiority has constructed the posthuman to strengthen its position to set a background for the posthumanist theory that I will deal with in this thesis. On the other hand, I ask and attempt to answer the question that during the course of conserving the anthropocentric, humanist and patriarchal hegemony, posthuman’s (or the other’s)

separation from the original unity can change the long-standing narratives that undermine the other. In this regard, it is significant to re-discover, re-read and re-invent the past narratives (I choose particularly Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's selective short stories including but not limiting the end of the nineteenth century as a milestone for the transmutation of the social structures around the world with technological and artistic renovations to have a starting point) to see how past, future, and the present are intermingled and they open new ways for us see the potentials.

In the second chapter, entitled “De-monstrating Bodies: Posthuman Figurations and How the Other Became an Artwork?”, I delve into the posthuman figurations in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's two short stories, “Sevda-yı Sengîn” and “Kadın Pençesi”, in dialogue with Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* to emphasize on the man as the creator, the artist, the savor and the others' subjectivities reflected both in works of art and public-private places. From this point, I focus on how posthumans have been created to conserve the man/human's higher position making the others monstrated, subordinated, and fixated through creating discourses that put them in subject positions with their de-monstration.

In order to apprehend posthuman figurations and their performativity in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's short stories, I address the Pygmalion myth to illustrate body/mind dualisms in relation to the artist and the artwork dynamics. Not only the Pygmalion myth but also the artistic expressions of the paintings of Jean-Leon Gerome and Edward Burne-Jones, assist us in visualizing the performativity or the demonstration of the posthuman characters as well as the Pygmalionesque subjectivities as recurring characteristics in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's short stories with an intermedial context.

Then, I shift my focus from past visualities to today's narrations with an example from Jonathan Glazer's movie *Under the Skin* to show the monstrous femininity and the patriarchal gazing towards the other with the feeling of fear and desire, regardless of time and place.

In the sub-chapter "'A Brainless, Beautiful Thing': Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*", I specifically focus on how the posthuman, the one that is outside of the privileged hegemony, are trapped and hidden with a fixation in artworks and their performativity through the character Dorian Gray. Oscar Wilde's novel helps us set a background for the posthumous bodies as "things" that we also see in Uşaklıgil's stories.

In the light of previous discussions, I dig into Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's two short stories "Sevda-yı Sengîn" and "Kadın Pençesi" in the sub-chapter "A 'Thing' to Hide". First, I set sight on the narrators in the stories that have similar dynamics with that of the artist Basil Hallward in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*: Narrators both in "Sevda-yı Sengîn" and "Kadın Pençesi" are portraying the figures of wise, privileged men who either have observations about another man suffering from the posthuman existence or; have a mission to save them from the captivation of the posthuman. I find a correlation between the phallic male artistic creativity and a silent and compliant femininity¹³ in a Pygmalionesque ideal rooted in both Refi Nihad and Dorian Gray, as well as the desire to reach that ideal in the male characters of "Kadın Pençesi". With the help of Foucault's analyses of the nineteenth century's comprehension of sexuality, I concentrate on public and private places in terms of posthuman creation

¹³ See. Amelia Yeats. "Recent Work on Pygmalion in Nineteenth-Century Literature."

and their performativities in these three texts.

Finally, I transit from this subchapter to the last one, “God is an Artist and ‘He’ is Dead: Deconstructing the Power Discourse in Human/Posthuman Dualisms” to show how the boundaries have been set, strengthened, and preserved through the subject positions of the human/man and the posthuman/the other which open a path for us to examine the power discourses in these dualisms, as the man becomes a new god with the Enlightenment idea of humanism and how “he” is born dysfunctional since the hegemonic accomplishments are paradoxical failures. I support my argument with examples from Uşaklıgil’s short stories and Wilde’s novel. In all these texts, posthumans are programmed to be abortive. Nevertheless, at the end of the texts, as they fall down, they take down the gods with them, as well.

In the third chapter “Bodies as the Bestial Machines: The Posthuman Metamorphosis”, I explore the metamorphism of the posthuman from the stable, safe places to the stages with their performativity and monstrosity in Halid Ziya’s “Mösyö Kanguru”, Tevfik Fikret’s “La Danse Serpentine” with Loie Fuller’s Serpentine Dance and Halid Ziya’s “Kırık Oyuncak.” While in the previous chapter, I examine the patriarchal and humanist forces against the others with the Pygmalion archetype, in this chapter, I get help from Medusa and clown archetypes to demonstrate the return of the repressed and outcasted that is posthuman. In order to do that, I deal with not only the subjectivities in the texts but also the Intermediality of dance, literature, and technology.

Before analyzing the texts, in the sub-chapter, “Tentacularity Flailing over Humanity”

I address “tentacular thinking”, the term borrowed by Donna Haraway along with the figurations of Medusa. Through tentacularity, I examine humanism’s fear and disgust towards others with the examples of tentacular, sluggy, and slimy animals that do not make sense of humanist reasoning. These figures also have representations with the distinction-connection in fiction intersecting with Medusa. The representations lead us to the change of narrations both in artistic and social movements. To support my argument, before the texts, first, I offer the change of the narratives of the same story with paintings of Benvenuto Cellini’s *Perseus with the Head of Medusa* (1545–1554) and then, Luciano Garbati’s *Medusa Holding the Head of Perseus* (2021) that lead us to Tevfik Fikret’s “La Danse Serpentine” and Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s “Mösyö Kanguru” as they offer us new ways to look at the end of the nineteenth-century literature and social life.

In the sub-chapter “From Dark Rooms to Giddy Stages: Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s ‘Mösyö Kanguru’ and Tevfik Fikret’s ‘La Danse Serpentine’”, my purpose is to show how Cartesian dualisms in “La Danse Serpentine” and “Mösyö Kanguru” are deconstructed as they go beyond the limitations of the human and the humanist thinking since the subjects intertwining with both nature and plasticity as well as the texts go beyond single mediality along with the cinema, dance, and technology.

In the last sub-chapter “Laughing at the Clown/The Laugh of the Clown: Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s ‘Mösyö Kanguru’ and ‘Kırık Oyuncak’” I focus on children and toddlers who are neglected even within posthuman paradigms in relation with the clown archetype. These stories also indicate that Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil offers us endless sources to understand his texts as well as the cultural and historical context of the

Servet-i Fünun era. Mösyö Kanguru proposes a view of the perception of the human and the world through the eyes of a child who has been subjected to injustice, and suggests a posthumanist insight that shows how children who do not comply with hegemonic needs in the humanization process are pushed out of society and “the human”. Again, although it is a very short story, "Kırık Oyuncak" reveals how fragile the ideals of humanism are and the laughter is thrown against the masculinist dream by forming a coexistence with others who are not included in "human" as of infancy.

1.2 Posthuman —not a post-power: The Constructed Other and the Conflict of Boundaries in Nineteenth-century Literature

The posthuman breakthrough in nineteenth-century literature has appeared as monsters, cyborgs, automata, ghosts, robots, hybrids, and quasi-human, as well as women, queer, animals, and entities attributed to nature. These figurations can be either metaphorical or literal or both in -and out of- literature and art realms. As Donna Haraway puts it, the distinction between fiction and social reality has been blended (6). Zeynep Uysal, in “Osmanlı’da ‘Asır Sonu’ ve ‘Beşer Hayatı’” also focuses on the reflections of the *fin-de-siecle* (which is the French word to describe the end of the nineteenth century), in Ottoman and Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s literature. “Tanzimat’tan Servet-i Fünuna uzanan süreç, diğer bir deyişle “asır sonu”nun edebiyat ve dünya algısındaki değişim, Batı taklitçiliği, Batı’dan ithal, yerel olmayan, milli olmayan gibi kavram ya da nitelermelerle değil, aynı zamanda içeride bulunan çeşitli modeller ve replikalarla biçimlenen, etkileşen bir kimliğin evrilişi olarak görünmektedir.¹⁴” (Uysal 25). Ottoman literature and social life are inseparable from

¹⁴ The process from the Tanzimat to Servet-i Fünun, in other words, the change in the perception of literature and the world at the "end of the century", appears not only with concepts or qualifications

the transmutation of the world, hence the posthuman breakthrough. The other—or the posthuman—can even be seen in the form of the artwork itself. Norah Campbell and Mike Saren, who discuss posthuman biology in the technological age in *The primitive, technology, and horror*, find the correlation between technology and art by referring to Heidegger's statement "that the Greek word *technē* referred to both technology and art (154). In this regard, Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's short stories offer us the *technē*, through characters, form, and content that direct us to explore posthuman figurations at the end of the century.

The historical narratives of “the other” have been created with both artistic and technological tools through the dualistic approach of body and mind. From ancient admiration to nineteenth-century renovations, magical figures, wax dolls, statues, pictures, cyborgs, artificial intelligence with/without bodies, and self-computing operating systems have continued their existence in cinema, art, science, and technology until today. It is not a coincidence that Apple's Siri, Google's navigation voice, application narrators, and Hanson Robotics' humanoid Sofia have been gendered the same way incarnations and reincarnations of Pygmalion's Galatea, Venus paintings and sculptures, dolls, gendered machines, and machined genders.

The posthuman figurations in fiction must not be treated as a separation from one another rather than a cacophony of existence. Nevertheless, Donna Haraway makes the distinction: "Unlike the hopes of Frankenstein's monster, the cyborg does not expect its father to save it through a restoration of the garden—that is, through the

such as Western imitation, imported from the West, non-local, non-national, but also various models found inside. and it appears as the evolution of an interacting identity shaped by replicas.

fabrication of a heterosexual mate, through its completion in a finished whole, a city, and cosmos." (Haraway 9). Donna Haraway's image of the cyborg with the interpretation of Frankenstein's monster in *A Cyborg Manifesto* raises some questions: Why does she separate the monster from the cyborg? If they are both under the posthuman roof, separating the cyborg from the "others," would not her argument prioritize the cyborg from the posthuman?

I will return to these questions, which also problematize retiring the boundaries between human and animal, human and machine, and physical and non-physical, as Haraway discussed (11, 12). I will do so by exploring the constructed other with the layers of; first, the discourse of power between humans and in/non/post-human originated in the Pygmalion myth; second, the rhizomic aspect of the posthuman without an original unity and oedipal desire and fear. Before that, we need to unfold and explain what original unity and non-oedipal mean and how Sigmund Freud's term "uncanny" serves for posthuman discontinuity of the original innocence along with manifestations of the posthuman archetypes.

In his influential essay *Das Unheimliche* (The "Uncanny"), which was written in 1919, Sigmund Freud discusses the term uncanny, examining E. T. A. Hoffmann's novella *Der Sandmann* (1816), which is a story about a university student, Nathanael. Nathanael's traumatic experience he had been through in his childhood resulted in his father's death. The narrator is unreliable about his memories of the Sandman, who seems like a fictional figure that Nathanael's mother made up so that the children in the house could go to bed early. The scary figure Sandman is based on a tale; a fictional character told the children to make them sleep early for centuries. The

uncanny is antonymic in recognition that it gives feelings of homely and unhomely at the same time. (931). According to him, "the uncanny is that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar." (930). He claims that repressed feelings, beliefs, and ideas experienced in childhood, resurface in adulthood in the sense of familiarity and strangeness. He supports his argument by giving an example from *The Sandman*, stating that the uncanny is neither Olympia, who is a wax doll both alive and dead, nor Nathanael's idealization of her but rather, "The main theme of the story is, on the contrary, something different, something which gives it its name, and which is always re-introduced at critical moments: it is the theme of the 'Sand-Man' who tears out children's eyes." (935).

I disagree with Freud in that he dismisses the importance of "others'" subjectivity and sexuality and collective thinking along with how all these lead to the uncanny. The return of the repressed, on the contrary, is the long-standing patriarchal drive for creating and dominating the "perfect other," as well as the dread of being disturbed by their consciousness/body and losing control of the hegemony. Unlike primordial anxieties and desires associated with parents, Olympia, who has no original unity by nature but coexists with "natureculture" as a descendant of Galatea, imparts uncanny feelings of human/man supremacy.

“Historically, Western narratives of making life—whether through mechanical or magical endeavours (Bell 2018)— are oftentimes imbued with fantasies of gender; from Ovid's Pygmalion who, frustrated with the inadequacies of women, 'sculpted a beautiful ivory image of a perfect woman' with whom he fell in love to Mary Shelley's Frankenstein...” (Adams 570).

As Rachel Adams suggests, the perfect woman/other has been constructed by the

privileged human with patriarchal and heteronormative greed and disappointments. Hence, the cyborg image and the posthuman are not tied with the family bonds of longstanding original unity attributed to Oedipus's story. Nevertheless, the posthuman is not a new entity that has started occupying minds with the nineteenth century's technological developments. What has been repressed since Ovid's Pygmalion story (which I will elaborate on in "Posthuman Figurations") has been kept returning through the human in-betweenness for marking "the others" on the one hand, which do not satisfy the hegemonic needs and; molding, perfecting, limiting, embedding, and dividing them on the other. This has resulted in being stuck in a vicious cycle, in a discourse that no single entity wins. The other, the cyborg and the posthuman, have been constructed to strengthen the boundaries.

Howbeit, Haraway also stresses that "cyborg writing is about the power to survive, not on the basis of original innocence, but on the basis of seizing the tools to mark the world that marked them as other" (55). Although the power discourse has tried to sharply decouple the posthuman from the privileged, could a cyborg's (not just a cyborg but all underprivileged ones, the others) disconnection from an original innocence open the door for an alternative dream? If we explore the posthuman in an evolutionary aspect —not with a linear approach but with a proto-atavist touch, can we be regenerated from where we have been injured? In Promod K. Nayar's *Posthumanism*, he explains proto-atavism that "ancient and future evolutionary traits exist in the *present* – both in the aesthetic imagination and in everyday life." (119).

Therefore, the nineteenth century —the era in which, whether magical, semi-divine, artistic, or scientific, we can observe past beliefs, desires, and terrors as well as hints

of technological and aesthetic improvements of the future, can be a good starting point for exploring the posthuman. "This has one important consequence: it shows us how (human) life may not be a singular progression but a cacophony of coexisting, interacting states of past, present, and future existences to a single, reassuring origin." (Nayar 119). As the cyborg's sibling, Frankenstein's monster did not hope for singularity, a unity, but rather, he hoped for coexistence. Still, we need to be cautious about the terms "human" and "posthuman." Posthumanization has also been used as a tool for emphasizing the privilege of humanization. As Rosi Braidotti states:

"We cannot naively take the posthuman as an intrinsically subversive or liberatory category: the "posthuman" is not a post-power. On the contrary, gender, race, class, and age are serious power differentials, and, in order to address them, we need to negotiate new assemblages or transversal alliances. (Braidotti 15).

However, even though we cannot take the posthuman as a liberatory category since, as I discussed before, the posthuman is also marking the higher position of the human, I aim to show their subversive sides in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's texts, "Sevda-yı Sengîn", "Kadın Pençesi", "Mösyö Kanguru" and "Kırık Oyuncak" so that we can see the "loopholes" in humanist practices and therefore, create new alliances with the change of narratives.

CHAPTER II: DE-MONSTRATING BODIES: POSTHUMAN FIGURATIONS AND HOW THE OTHER BECAME AN ARTWORK

Nineteenth-century literature has revisited the ancient admiration and horror of the concept of more/less than human and also blended the figures of the other with the new technological elements of the epoch. Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble* states that "the body" often appears to be a passive medium that is signified by an inscription from a cultural source figured as "external" to that body." (164). Even though there are multiple appearances of posthuman starting from, but not limited to nineteenth-century literature, in this chapter, I will limit my focus to the body as a passive medium and literature and artworks as media for externalizing the body in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's short stories "Sevda-yı Sengîn" (Love of the Stone as the original title of the story referred, "Sevda-yı Sengîn" or Tough Love as the latter one, "Çetin Sevda") and "Kadın Pençesi" (The Paw of the Woman) in dialogue with Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. I aim to show the constituent performativity of the posthuman with examples from Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's short stories in a comparative and intermedial aspect.

The Dark Romantic and Gothic movements in literature are especially significant in the sense of visualizing the anxiety and lust for the posthuman. Instead of "performing bodies," I prefer to call these "de-monstrating bodies" in order to stress how monstrosity and performativity are aligned and staged. Norah Campbell and Mike Saren, in *Posthuman Biology*, get to the root of the etymological connotations of the

words *teras* and '*demonstrate*' that "Teratology comes from Greek *teras* (Braidotti, 1997: 61), meaning both horror and marvel, while the term 'monster' comes from the Latin *monstrare*, which means 'to show' (the scientific imperative to 'de-monstrate' is thus a derivative of vision and monstrosity)." (Campbell and Saren 159). The posthumous bodies in Halid Ziya's stories have two aspects: in "Sevda-yı Sengîn" feminine subjectivity is reflected directly in the artwork in a Pygmalionesque way, therefore the body becomes a passive medium for an artistic experience so that Refi Nihad, the poet can practice his desire toward the other without the fear. In "Kadın Pençesi", feminine subjectivity is presented as a warning that it can turn into a bestial demonstration and can set a danger to humanity if immediate cautions are not taken to preserve the body in confined places. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, however, shows the futility of these both aspects since the other has already lost its initial connection with the unity, the oedipal. Hence, these texts offer us both visuality and monstrosity that is the demonstration of posthuman subjectivities.

Before I go further into a close reading of the texts as mentioned earlier, I would like to elaborate on the connections between what we mean by monstrosity in posthuman figurations and the Pygmalion¹⁵ archetype.

"All human societies have a conception of the monstrous feminine, of what it is about

¹⁵ If we are going to explore posthuman figurations in the texts, Ovid and his *magnum opus* (his masterpiece) *Metamorphoses* deserves to take place here. The story of Pygmalion finds its place in the tenth book of *Metamorphosis* out of fifteen. Ovid starts his poetic narration with *In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas / corpora*; ("I intend to speak of forms changed into new entities;"). Since the main theme of this thesis lingers on the posthuman transformation, it is significant to visit Ovid's version of Pygmalion and Medusa stories. For further insights about the change, metamorphoses and transformation, see Roy Arthur Swanson's "Ovid's Theme of Change", *The Classical Journal*, Feb., 1959, Vol. 54, No. 5, pp. 201-205.

woman that is shocking, terrifying, horrific, abject¹⁶.” (Creed 44). What is it that is common among all types of artwork? They all are meant to touch the senses: they are meant to be shown, exhibited, displayed, and heard: to be short, they are for demonstration. One can clearly see the delicate connection between this demonstration and sensations. The experience of an artwork arouses feelings of desire, awe, sublimation, and inspiration, as well as fear, tension, and disgust. Patriarchal fantasies do not wish to be disturbed by the other’s subjectivity, body, and consciousness. In this power relation, the ones appealing to the hegemonic strength carry the tension that the other may return or strike back while they practice their power on passivated, silenced, and animated/deanimated other.

In Pygmalionesque archetypes, we see that recurring incidents of the heterosexual male apply to rape and violence with a romanticized narration. “The pre-Ovidian version of the Pygmalion legend was much less attractive and sophisticated. Indeed, it was rather crude. Pygmalion fell in love with a statue of Venus and actually had intercourse with the statue—an uncomfortable experience one may suppose.” (Griffin 65). Whether pre-Ovidian or not, whether the name of the statue is Venus or Galatea, what has been called an “intercourse” has no side of “inter.” However, instead, it is the application of rape, murder, and violence.

¹⁶ “There looms, within abjection, one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there, quite close, but it cannot be assimilated. It beseeches, worries, and fascinates desire, which, nevertheless, does not let itself be seduced. Apprehensive, desire turns aside; sickened, it rejects. A certainty protects it from the shameful—a certainty of which it is proud holds on to it. But simultaneously, just the same, that impetus, that spasm, that leap is drawn toward an elsewhere as tempting as it is condemned. Unflaggingly, like an inescapable boomerang, a vortex of summons and repulsion places the one haunted by it literally beside himself.” (Julia Kristeva, (1982), “Approaching Abjection”, *Powers of Horror*, Columbia University Press, NY, pp: 1 – 31.)

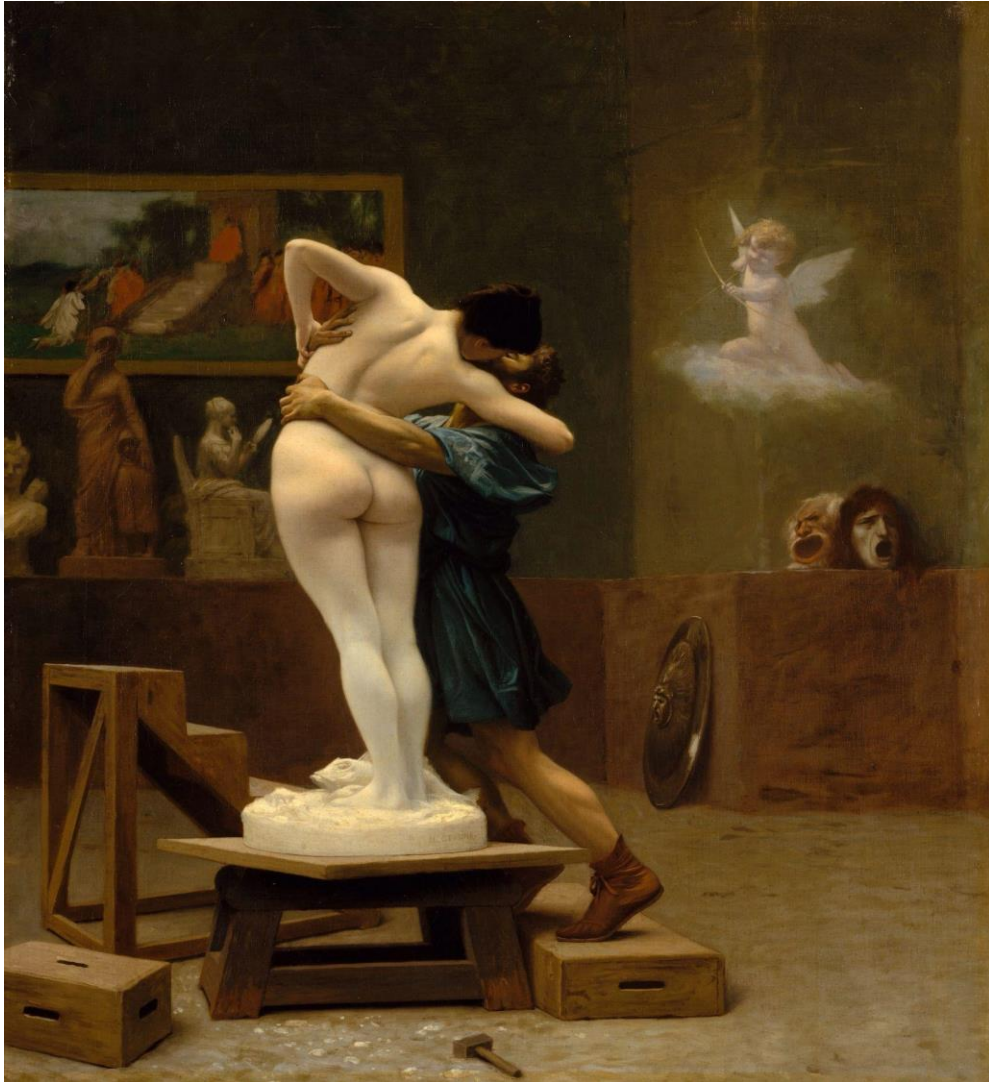


Figure 1. Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Pygmalion et Galatée* (1890), New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The artworks have been created from the part of “the human,” the part that is reasonably related to auto-erotism, and the part that is wished to be thrown away — not so far away, in any case. As we can see in Figure 1, which was painted by Jean-Léon Gérôme in 1890, the artist Pygmalion feels a desire for his own creation, and he wishes her to come to life. Nevertheless, he also is not on the same level as Galatea; he puts a distance between her and himself. Likewise, as Galatea comes to life, on the one hand, she leans toward him, kissing him back; on the other hand, she grabs Pygmalion’s wrist not to embrace him but to be ready to push him back if it is necessary, on the other. It is also important to note that Galatea’s body is turning pinkish, implying that the statue is becoming alive except for her legs. It might suggest that she is still in a passive position both as a woman and a statue, along with the hammer, which once was a tool for her creation, is now behind her back, readily waiting for her destruction in case of emergency, as a danger for Pygmalion. In that sense, the uncanny is not only the return of the repressed but also the return of what has been cast away. This can be explained with Julia Kristeva's term "abjection," as Barbara Creed does in *Horror and the Monstrous-Feminine: An Imaginary Abjection*.

“Kristeva is attempting to explore the different ways in which abjection, as a source of horror, works within patriarchal societies as a means of separating the human from the non-human and the fully constituted subject from the partially formed subject. Ritual becomes a means by which societies both renew their initial contact with the abject element and then exclude that element.” (45).

Therefore, the monstrous others in literary texts are in the disguise either as artwork or as an artist who is feminized, queered, or posthumanized. And we cannot separate monstrous performativity from the feeling of disgust along with the shudder and the will to throw it out in fear, to get rid of it, but also with a desire to possess it at the

same time. This answers Barbara Creed's question; "It scared the shit out of me"; 'It made me feel sick'; 'It gave me the creeps'?" What is the relationship between physical states, bodily wastes (even if metaphoric ones), and the horrific-in particular, the monstrous feminine?" (Creed 45). The reason why the male, hegemonic and patriarchal artists do not apply to this monstrosity is that they are the ones who constitute and sustain the constructed roles. In this sense, exploring others' abject position under the posthuman roof instead of the abject itself or the metamorphosis of the "neither subject nor the object" is crucial to deconstruct humanist hierarchy.



Figure 2. “Pygmalion and the Image: The Heart Desires” Edward Burne-Jones, 1875–

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“When he saw how the sisters spent their days in shame, Pygmalion was disgusted by the greatness of vice which nature had put in the female mind. So he remained for a long time unmarried, with no companion to share his bed. Meanwhile, with wondrous art, he carved snowy ivory and happily endowed it with such beauty as can adorn no woman born; and he was fired with love for his handiwork. The face was that of a real maiden, one would think she was alive and wanted to move, were it not for her bashfulness. So much did art hide behind its own art.” (Griffin 66).

Monstrosity does not always come with disfigured, formidable performativities. In figure 2, female monstrosity is depicted as collective feminine judgment toward the male artist. Unlike figure 1, here in figure 2, we can observe blue tones rather than warm colors, which suggests the coldness, distance, isolation, shame, and blues, as well as the desire for a controllable other that Pygmalion feels. In this painting, we can see that there is this fluidity and continuity between the two women outside and the three female statues that are meant to be displayed inside as if there is a flow of conversation and communication which are about judging and shaming Pygmalion. The fear and disgust of the power that the women may hold cause Pygmalion’s avoidance. The artist, as a male gazer, this time, is not looking at them as if they will turn him into a stone. In due course, he contemplates the idea of another, an almost human but not quietly, so that he can apply his hegemonic, heterosexual male power while keeping his status quo. It means that he must be the creator, the artist, and the

god. Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's male protagonists in most of his literary works hold similar misogynistic patterns and views about women.

In *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Dorian Gray becomes both sides of the medal, who is both monstrous and beautiful, (as well as the ivory statue in “Sevda-yı Sengîn”, which is hidden in a dark room so that nobody witnesses the unleashing of the beast, Sibyl Vane, who Dorian Gray first falls in love with, and Lorans, who is a performing artist whom Refi Nihad describes as a bestial creature,) as well as the no-named woman in “Kadın Pençesi” who hunts down men, are actively monstrous feminine and are meant to be silenced. The implementation of the dangerous woman -or the dangerous other, other than the heterosexual, patriarchal man/human, is a very primal fear that has been in circulation since ancient mythological times through the nineteenth century and until today. Joseph Campbell, in *The Mask of God: Primitive Mythology* makes this distinction by explaining the terms as;

“... there is a motif occurring in certain primitive mythologies, as well as in modern surrealist painting and neurotic dream, which is known to folklore as 'the toothed vagina'-the vagina that castrates. And a counterpart, the other way, is the so-called 'phallic mother,' a motif perfectly illustrated in the long fingers and nose of the witch.” (Campbell 73).

It is also significant to note that the statue of Galatea is made of ivory: the ivory is made by and through animal slaughtering: it is made from the tusk and teeth of the animals like elephants. Male supremacy and desire are connected with colonialist, humanist, patriarchal, and hegemonic violence towards the under-privileged. Hence the imperatives of vagina dentata are also bodily fear of the return of the oppressed as well as psychological; fear that others will return for what has been taken away from

them.

Along with the monstrosity of the demonstrated bodies, in the posthuman figurations of literature, there is also the performativity of the bodies to be gazed at with feelings of awe and desire. “Pygmalion gazed in wonder and drew into his bosom the flame issuing from the semblance of a woman.” (Griffin 66). Faced with the fear of castrating posthumans by becoming a monster, the human/man prefers to idolize them, disturb them from a safe distance, touch and rape them, and take away their rights. But on the other hand, he also burns with the desire for them to be close to the “almost” real one. We can see this in the story of Pygmalion, as Pygmalion's feelings are heated by the delusion that the ivory statue is both alive and dormant.

“Often he lays testing hands on his work, to see whether it is woman or ivory, and yet does not admit that it is merely ivory. He kisses and feels kissed in turn, he talks and embraces, and believes that the limbs yield to the touch of his fingers and fears to bruise her when he presses them.” (Griffin 66).

Indeed, the dire consequences of all this are going to be inevitable. We can interpret the Pygmalion story as interconnected with Medusa’s turning men into stones who directly look at her eyes. If we discuss the posthuman figurations through the Pygmalion archetype for the patriarchal fantasies, we must not ignore the Medusa archetype for the sake of the others themselves. As we can see, the ivory statue’s warmth and her softening cause the man’s stiffness and hardening. This long-standing vicious cycle is still the subject of today’s narration. For example, an alien who visits Earth for a mission in the Jonathan Glazer-made movie *Under the Skin* (2014) takes its vessel as a woman. In *Under the Skin*, the alien uses her sexuality to attract the attention of men. She drives a van through the streets of Glasgow to seduce men who

are alone. In the meantime, a guard with a motorcycle follows her for protection. We do not have any information on whether he is also an alien or not. She takes the men who are lured by her into a gloomy old house. They follow her naked when she slowly takes off her clothes and walks backward.



Figure 3. *Under the Skin*. 2014.

Figure 3 is a shot from the movie where the alien's slow and gradual moments cause men's erections, and the gazers turn themselves into stones, figuratively speaking. In fact, this process leads them to sink into a dark void, a pool, or an abyss of male

desire. The posthuman's mobility, fluidity, or tentacularity arouses feelings in men of both awe and disgust. The movie set an example for fear of the unknown, the unpredictable, and the other. Pygmalion also despises the female mind, as in the other narrations I will discuss followingly. Hence, the dominant male prefers the other to be a stable entity so that they cannot hurt him. And yet, he also fantasizes about not being rejected by others. Refi Nihad in "Sevda-yı Sengîn" sets an example for this representation: He grows an idea about female subjectivities in a way that he despises them. He finds his solution in falling in love with a stone statue that cannot reject him or hurt his masculine feelings. In "Kadın Pençesi", the male characters demonize the woman who does not passively conceive her subject position. Also, Dorian Gray starts to terrorize everything and everyone as a result of the experiment of keeping him forever young and beautiful. As a consequence, the male gazers, the trespassers, and the rapists are becoming stone while the posthuman becomes tentacular like Medusa's hair.

2.1 "A Brainless, Beautiful Thing" Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

"He is a brainless, beautiful thing, who should be always here in winter when we have no flowers to look at, and always here in summer when we want something to chill our intelligence." (Wilde 5). From the very beginning of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Lord Henry Wotton, the friend of the artist Basil Hallward, objectifies Dorian Gray as a "brainless, beautiful thing." Dorian Gray's youth and charm are immediately passivated and feminized, and consequently, he becomes the object of visual pleasure by both Basil Hallward and Lord Henry Wotton. His steady demeanor mirrored the flowers and the gratification of "masculine intelligence." Similarly, we can address

these patterns in Uşaklıgil's short stories in the sense that the posthuman bodies, as well as the male subjectivities who are in the captivation of the monstrous others, are immediately called "things" and "creatures". Refi Nihat in "Sevda-yı Sengîn" shares the same opinion about women: He thinks they are like flowers to watch from a distance, otherwise, they may threaten male supremacy: "Ah! Bu kadınlar, ben onları ne fena tecrübe etmiş oldum. Onlar nedir bilir misiniz? Uzaktan seyrolunacak çiçekler, onlarda aranan şeyler bulunmayacak şeylerdir, bu bir renktir, görürsünüz sizi mest ve bend eder fakat bu renk uzaktan görülmek için yapılmıştır, dokunmayınız, parmağınızın altında solar, orada pejmürde bir lekeden başka bir şey kalmaz...¹⁷" (146). Also in "Kadın Pençesi", the description of the woman passes through a predator from a beautiful, flower-like portrayal in one sentence: "Onun, şaşaaşı halka halka açılan ve açıldıkça gözleri kamaştırın bir güzelliği, sonra bu güzelliğe pek iyi refakat eden bir şuhluğu, ince dudaklarının daima yarı açık bıraktığı düzgün beyaz dişlerinin hayatta ne olursa olsun, zevk namına ne varsa onu ısırıp yemek isteyen öyle bir hırs manası vardı ki hiç kimse onun varlığından taşın cazibe halkalarının kemendinde takılmak cesaretini bulamamıştı.¹⁸" (Uşaklıgil 17).

Thus, we can see how the other is constructed as becoming the object of feminine identity (as we can see, Dorian Gray, his body, and his intelligence is immediately feminized) and how it is queered, sexualized, and posthumanized in relation to non-

¹⁷ Ah! These women, how badly I have experienced them. Do you know what they are? Flowers to be watched from afar, things that you look for, cannot be found in them, it is like a color; you see it, it makes you enchanted and enslaved, but this color is made to be seen from afar, you must not touch it, it will fade under your finger, there will be nothing but a shabby stain there...

¹⁸ She had this flamboyance that was laminating and the beauty that dazzling the eyes as it laminated, a shrewdness that accompanied this beauty very well, her smooth white teeth that her thin lips always left half open, had such a sense of rapacity that wanted to bite and eat whatever was in the name of pleasure that no one had the courage to hang around in the lasso of the charm rings overflowing from her presence.

living objects, works of art, and natural elements like a flower. Just as in other subjectivities, the posthuman is also undermined to underline human superiority. When Dorian Gray realizes his subject position, he complains about it to Basil Hallward. “I believe you would, Basil. You like your art better than your friends. I am no more to you than a green bronze figure. Hardly as much, I dare say.” (Wilde 42). Moreover, from the aforementioned lines, both Dorian Gray and his portrayal become the tool for autoeroticism and self-satisfaction of the male gazer and the artist, emphasizing their intelligence.

In *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, Laura Mulvey examines woman as an image and man as a bearer of the look in the narration of Hollywood cinema with a psychoanalytic approach. She calls a woman's position with visual and erotic impact on the viewer as *to-be-looked-at-ness*. (585). Although she limits her analysis within the cinema and heterosexual dynamics, we can apply all sorts of cultural and artistic elements —such as paintings and literature— along with all sorts of binary oppositions that put one superior to the other. “‘Harry,’ said Basil Hallward, looking him straight in the face, ‘every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist, not of the sitter.’” (Wilde 8). As a sitter, Dorian Gray is now in a passive position, an object to be gazed at and a project to be worked on for the advancement of human/man intelligence. That is why when he feels uneasy about constantly sitting without moving or talking, he has been treated like a wayward child to be tamed.

Basil Hallward criticizes the mind/body dualisms of rationalizing Enlightenment thought when he describes how Dorian Gray is meant to him. “The harmony of soul and body—how much that is! We in our madness have separated the two, and have

invented a realism that is bestial, an ideality that is void.” (18). However, since he elevates Dorian Gray to the position of Ancient Greek Gods like Paris or Adonis, seeing him just as a lad to be looked at, as a perfect object of desire, he fails to get out of this everlasting patriarchal suppression. Haraway claims that “Every story that begins with an original innocence and privileges the return to wholeness imagines the drama of life to be individuation, separation, the birth of the self, the tragedy of autonomy, the fall into writing, alienation—that is, war, tempered by an imaginary respite in the bosom of the Other.” (57).

The Picture of Dorian Gray also starts with original innocence. However, as the story progresses, contrary to returning to wholeness, the body-mind distinction causes horror: first, Dorian falls in love with Sibyl Vane. In fact, what he falls for is her performativity on stage. Like Dorian Gray, in front of male gazers, she becomes the object of their desire, of their idealization of female characters in plays. However, when she tastes love, she expresses how her art and her performance exhaust her. “My love! my love! I am sick of shadows. You are more to me than all art can ever be. What have I to do with the puppets of a play?” (Wilde 94). As a talented actress, Sibyl Vane stops acting well on the stage after the assurance of love. She makes it evident that she is acting; we can interpret that she marks the very construction of acting or performativity.

Nonetheless, Dorian Gray is disgusted by this incident; without her performance, her existence is shredded. “What are you without your art? Nothing.” (95). Since Sibyl Vane is nothing now, she ceases to live. Her suicide inspires the first transversion of the painting: while Dorian Gray’s body is stabilized with perfection, the painting

begins to reflect both the scars in his soul and also his aging body.

The second horror of disconnection from original innocence is Dorian Gray's loss of common sense and the bond with the creator, the artist Basil Hallward.

“Dorian, this is horrible! Something has changed you completely. You look exactly the same wonderful boy who used to come down to my studio, day after day, to sit for his picture. But you were simple, natural, and affectionate then. You were the most unspoiled creature in the whole world. Now, I don't know what has come over you. You talk as if you had no heart, no pity in you. It is all Harry's influence. I see that.” (128).

As a result, very vogue initially, but gradually, Dorian Gray's portrayal shows the nature of his soul; a hideous face. Basil Hallward's dream of a beautiful, young boy who satisfies the artist's artistic, hegemonic and erotic needs and of keeping the original unity and innocence is now broken to smithereens. It is also significant to note that the scar on the soul is also associated with age. While age signifies power for the privileged human—white, heterosexual male—ageism strikes when it comes to the other. The constructed, perfect posthuman of the power discourse must always be young, as well.

2.2 A “Thing” to Hide: Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's “Sevda-yı Sengîn” and “Kadın Pençesi”

In Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's “Sevda-yı Sengîn” and “Kadın Pençesi”, we see similar dynamics in the characters of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Like Harry Wotton, the narrator in “Sevda-yı Sengîn” is a “noble, wise man” in nineteenth-century understanding and a friend of an artist, a relatively young poet Refi Nihat.

Furthermore, as in the portrait of Dorian Gray, the stone statue is doomed to be

invisible, a thing to hide behind the locked doors inside the dark rooms. Conjointly, in “Kadın Pençesi”, the narrator is one of the three males who feel sorrow for another young friend of theirs, who is weak and pitiable by nature with his physical features and whose head is under the claw of a woman. In comparison, the narrator is a wise man who sets himself on a mission to save that poor man from the claw of the woman. Unlike the beginning of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, however, these two short stories start with the observation of the miserable, ill-like state of men. In “Sevda-yı Sengîn”, the narrator immediately focuses on his shock how his young friend Refi Nihat has changed during the course of one year: “Refi Nihat’a Ada vapurunda güvertede tesadüf edince şaşırđım. “Onu hemen bir seneden beri görmüyordum. Bu kadarcık zaman içinde ne büyük tebeddül! Bir vakitler hafif saz simasının meyyâl-I melâl renginde tayyâr bir gâze-I gülgûnun sâye-I neşve-I şebâbı gülümserken bugün çehresi bir incimâd-i anberîn ile sapsarıydı.¹⁹” (Uşaklıgil 130). Refi Nihat, as the narrator describes, has transformed from a femininely beautiful boy to an old and sick-looking boy. While the yellow stains in the faces are motifs that we see in the sad characters in Halid Ziya’s texts (which are the similar description of Frankenstein’s monster), Refi Nihat’s metamorphosis from beautiful to ugly is very much like that of Dorian Gray and his portrait.

In “Kadın Pençesi”, three male friends attempt to save their fourth friend, a miserable man in the grip of a dangerous woman, from her grasp. She is the wife of the main character, but this woman is not loyal to her ugly, long-armed, pale-faced husband. That is why she catches up with the other men every night in bars and hunts them

¹⁹ I hadn't seen him in almost a year. What a change in such a short time! Once smiling with a rose-colored tobacco shadow of youthful joy, flying in the sadness-prone color of a light reed face, today this face was pale yellow with an amber dullness.

down. The three friends cannot stand the poor state of the main character, and they go to the bar with him one night and observe the woman. As the woman wanders from one table to another to hang out with the men, the pathetic man cannot help but begin to cry. The woman realizes this situation, approaches him, and pulls him out of the bar. The remaining three friends will have nothing to do but sigh at that man's tough luck. The relationship between this couple is portrayed with a prey-predator dynamic. Uşaklıgil prefers the adjectives for the woman as beautiful, blithe, coquettish, and gloatery with white teeth which are ready for biting and eating her prey. (Uşaklıgil 10). We see similar female monstrosities in both "Sevda-yı Sengîn" and Jonathan Glazer's movie *Under the Skin*. The monstrous feminine is always hungry for the male.

In "Sevda-yı Sengîn", when the narrator sees Refi Nihat after a long while, on a ferry, he realizes that the poet's charming spirit has gone. He describes Refi Nihat's contraposition as "bu bir şair; hissen, fikren, olanca hüviyet-i maneviyesiyle bir şair idi ki hayatı kâmilen bir tayf-ı şî'r arasından görmek isterdi."²⁰ (131). According to the narrator, Refi Nihat was like a child with wonder and grasping the unrealistic beauty in everything; the social norms about woman and man had not occupied his mind yet: He always saw the world as a poem in the eye of a poet. But now, "O gün bana bu hiçleri böyle Bonmarche'nin hemen bir kenarında ayak üstünde anlatan, bu felsefe-i hedâyânın dairei-makûliyetinden uzakça zarafet-i esirriyesini izah eden, hususiyle bu hiçleri izaha lüzum gören Refi Nihat beş sene sonra bu dalgın dalgın sigarasının külünü silkerek bana bakmak istemeyen ihtiyar gençten ne kadar uzak, ne

²⁰ A poet; sensually, intellectually and with all his spiritual identity, he was a poet, and he always wanted to see life wholly through a spectrum of poetry.

kadar uzak idi...²¹” (134). The man the narrator sees has an old head on young shoulders.

Correspondingly, in “Kadın Pençesi”, the narrator describes the protagonist as if he is a creature with yellow stains on his face and dull eyes, and unproportioned arms and legs, and the narrator portrays a picture of a man who lacks human intelligence. A creature that God was too stingy to be called as beautiful, as the narrator describes.

“Bu üçüncü dost, hilkatın cismaniyetine ait vasıfları pay ederken güzel denebilecek şeylerden en ziyade imsaki iltizam ederek meydana salıverdiği bahtı kara mahlûklardan biri idi. İri bir boyu vardı; yürürken, otururken kollarını, bacaklarını koyacak yer bulamıyor gibiydi. Donuk sarı ve yer yer daha koyu sarı lekelerle dolu yüzünde hiç bir zekâ ışığının parıltısı görünmeyen gözleri varlığına koyu bir hamakat manası verirdi.²²” (Uşaklıgil 16).

We see a parallel outlining of an other with Dorian Gray. This time, however, we encounter a “brainless, ugly thing” instead of a “beautiful” one. He is almost like Frankenstein's monster. Yet, the result is the same: they are here to be looked at to practice human/man intelligence. Yüce Aydoğan, in his master thesis, also deals with the representations of the ugliness and the chaos as opposed to beauty and harmony in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s texts. He suggests that “Kaosun yeğîn mevcudiyeti, şen güzelliği ölçü yitimine uğrattır.” (Aydoğan 59). It means that the intensive existence of the chaos also drags the order and the beauty to the deformity, to the distortion. We

²¹ Refi Nihad, who told me these nullities in haste, on a corner of the Bonmarché that day, explained the subtle elegance of this philosophy of gift away from the cycle of its reason, and felt it necessary to explain these nullities in particular, how far away that Refi Nihad was from this old-young man now who, after five years, is absent-mindedly shaking off the ashes of his cigarette, did not even want to look at me

²² This third friend was one of the ill-starred creatures that the creator released into the stage by being too leniently stingy to allocate the qualities of the whatnesses that could be called beautiful. He was large in size; he seemed unable to find a place to put his arms and legs while walking or sitting. His eyes, with no glimmer of intelligence on his face, flecked with dull yellow and darker yellows in places, gave his presence a deep folly.

also see the representations of the ugliness/chaos against the beauty/harmony in “Mösyö Kanguru” and “Kırık Oyuncak”. He supports his arguments with Uşaklıgil’s story, “Çay Fincanı” which is about a girl who has tuberculosis disease. The relation with disease and the ugliness as threats to harmony, therefore, to humanization keeps resurfacing in Uşaklıgil’s stories: Refi Nihad’s mental state in “Sevda-yı Sengîn” is portrayed as distorted with the existence of a beautiful female stone statue. Similarly, the chaotically beautiful woman against the ugly man in “Kadın Pençesi” creates more danger to the humanist and patriarchal harmony. It is significant here to note that the portrayals of the ugliness are not through the posthuman subjectivities but through the male characters that are under the spell of them. This suggests that they are the mediators to convey the danger from the posthuman to the human. That is why, in these stories, there are also male narrators who tell the stories of these poor men and try to drag them out of their poor state.

In “Sevda-yı Sengîn”, the narrator assumes that Refi Nihad has been changed because the woman he loves is getting married to somebody else. Since he idealizes the woman in his head, he does not want to spoil this with marriage. Like Pygmalion’s views about women and marriage, also for Refi Nihad, the perfect woman should have stayed passively as desired. However, this idealization is broken by her marriage to another person. Now Refi Nihad seizes the idea of women differently. He has passed through from one stage to another of mortification and the other –female subjectivity in this sense. For example, he watches Lorans, who is a performer. On the one hand, he describes her as a naïve creature off the stage; on the other hand, he demonizes her when she acts on the stage. “Bilseniz, Lorans, ne safderûn kızdır, bu mahlûkun bu

derece safvetiyle beraber sahnede şeytani bir tebessüm içinde halka karşı bacağına fırlatarak atlas iskarpininin ucuyla güya küçük bir fiske gönderdiğine ihtimal veremezsiniz.²³” (139).

He cannot even stand the women’s existence anymore, He goes on a date with Lorans, and she immediately arouses a feeling of disgust in him. “Fakat artık gitse; çünkü ben de bu karıdan yorulдум... O kadar çok yiyor ki ikrâh ettim, dudaklarının kenarından az pişmiş biftek parçalarının kanları sızarken görülse...”²⁴” (139). The woman is less than a human in the humanist sense. While she eats her dinner, she appears to Refi Nihad as a wild animal that hunted her prey, holding and eating it bestially as the blood is leaking from the corners of her mouth. Refi Nihad impatiently waits for her to go because he cannot stand the feeling of disgust the woman arouses in him, and he feels deeply exhausted.

Amelia Yeates associates Pygmalion stories with male artistic creativity in *Recent Work on Pygmalion in Nineteenth-Century Literature*, in the sense that: "In the nineteenth century, the myth of Pygmalion speaks about ideals of a phallic male artistic creativity and a virginal, silent and compliant femininity. Critics have thus spoken of the Pygmalion story as means of male reassurance." (Yeates 589). Thereby, isolating himself from the world, with the fear and hatred of the women because their unpredictability and instability threaten hegemonic pleasures, Refi Nihad finds refuge in a female stone statue (where the name of the story comes from *The love of Stone*)

²³ If you knew, what a naive girl Lorans is, you wouldn't be able to think it was possible that this creature, with such naivety, throws her leg against the public with a devilish smile on stage and sends a supposedly flick with the tip of her atlas shoes.

²⁴ How I wish she goes now; because I'm tired of this twat too... She eats so much that I'm disgusted, if you could see the blood oozing from the underdone steak pieces from the corner of her lips...

which comes to alive kept in his room.

Michel Foucault, in a section of *The History of Sexuality* entitled “We Other Victorians,” claims that in the nineteenth century, contrary to previous centuries, with the Victorian bourgeoisie, sexuality has receded into homes and rooms, and it has been hushed. For the seventeenth century, he states that

“It was a time of direct gestures, shameless discourse, and open transgression when anatomies were shown and were intermingled a will: it was a period when bodies “made a display of themselves.” But twilight soon fell upon this bright day, followed by the monotonous nights of the Victorian Bourgeoisie. Sexuality was carefully confined; it moved into the home.” (Foucault 3).

His statement about sexuality in the Victorian age is significant to focus on while examining the texts, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, “Sevda-yı Sengîn” and “Kadın Pençesi”. In the sense that the other’s sexuality, along with human desire and fear, body/mind, human/posthuman, nature/culture, male/female, all these dualisms and boundaries have been constructed inside claustrophobically confined spaces.

So far, I have tried to explain how posthuman has been created to enhance the boundaries at a discourse level. Now, we as readers must look into how and where the posthuman was created in nineteenth-century fiction. Whether in laboratories or bedrooms, the settings in all stories, in the creation of posthumans to keep them and gaze at them, must be in a man’s cave, a secret room private to the creator. Hence, showing the sin is somehow monstrating. These dark, secret rooms are full of monstrous bestial elements. Foucault questions why sex and sexuality have been repressed and attributed as sin. (Foucault 9). And it is very much related to power relations. The making of posthuman, posthuman body, and sexuality is explicitly

related to power construction. The creators, scientists, and artists in the stories are the ones who hold power. Humanization has been made through working on the enhancement of everything that surrenders the human.

“Hallward glanced round him, with a puzzled expression. The room looked as if it had not been lived in for years. A faded Flemish tapestry, a curtained picture, an old Italian cassone, and an almost empty bookcase—that was all that it seemed to contain, besides a chair and a table. As Dorian Gray was lighting a half-burned candle that was standing on the mantel-shelf, he saw that the whole place was covered with dust, and that the carpet was in holes. A mouse ran scuffling behind the wainscoting. There was a damp odor of mildew.” (Wilde 202).

The room Dorian Gray keeps his portrait in creates a contrast with the studio in which Basil draws his picture at the beginning of the novel. However, now, while the “Prince Charming” is turned into a material to be gazed at, the room becomes the home for Dorian Gray, who has been captured -doomed to decay inside the picture for years. The empty bookcase, carpet with holes, and the tussling mouse are the connotations that no masculine human intelligence has visited this degenerated room.

In “Kadın Pençesi”, there are no dark rooms or confined places. Instead, the setting takes place in a bar, a public space. This shows that the hegemonic power is not in its secure space. Female or the other’s publicity, especially when they are not passively conceived but instead actively take part in society, gives the patriarchal man the feeling of uneasiness and despair. As a result, the woman in the story becomes uncanny, a dangerous animal who needs to be tamed.

Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil
Kadın Pençesi



Figure 4. *Kadın Pençesi*. Dorlion Publishing Edition. 2022.

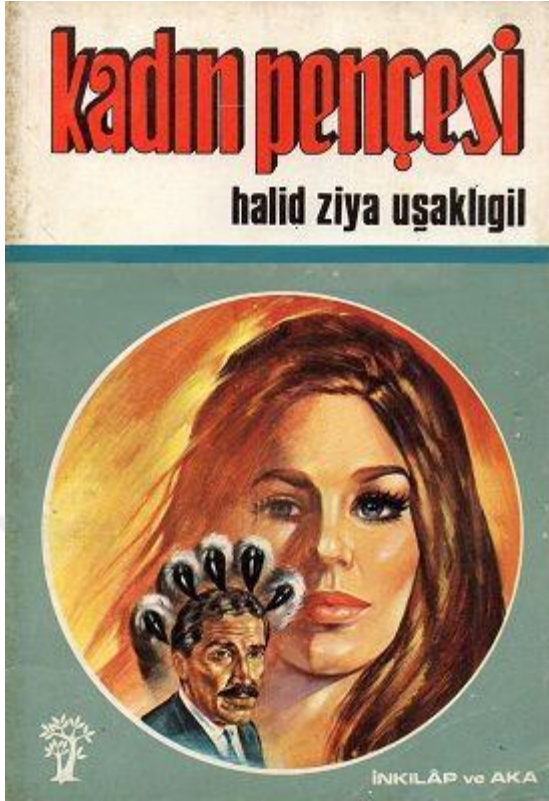


Figure 5. *Kadın Pençesi*. İnkılap ve Aka.
1980.

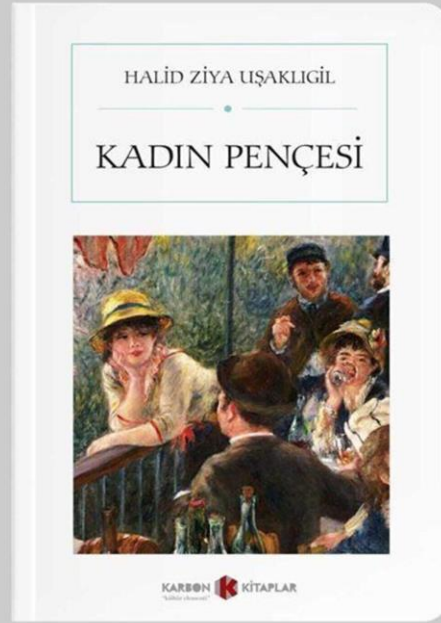


Figure 6. *Kadın Pençesi*. Karbon Kitaplar.
2021.

Before we continue to unfold the story since it will guide us in understanding female subjectivity, I would like to focus on the three editions of *Kadın Pençesi*. In figure 4, we see a white background and red outlines. First of all, the color red seems alarming, the alarm of the female danger, a bestial being; and it is a matter of time that a “poor

soul” might be into the woman’s clutch, which also holds the reflection of a gaped mouth with red lipstick and white teeth. This image also connotes the “vagina dentata,” a castrating vagina that we discussed earlier referring to Joseph Campbell. It is not a coincidence that in “Kadın Pençesi”, the men who are friends with the quailed man attribute themselves to a mission to save their friend. In fact, their mission is to save masculinity, patriarchy, and humanity from the monstrous woman, the vagina dentata, and also the phallic mother who has red nail polishing which is directly associated with being a wild animal since the title of the story is the “female claw.”

Comparing figure 5, although it seems they both put the other into the same position, this image in figure 4 immediately identifies femininity with beastliness because while figure 5 specifies a certain woman with certain features and literally having a claw who is the woman of the story, figure 4 has more of an essentialist approach toward the female identification and stereotyping. Indeed, this does not mean that the edition shown in figure 5 is less intimidating in the patriarchal sense.

On the other hand, unlike the first two images, in figure 6, an entirely different image of description meets us. This time, there is no focalization on the female claw or a close shot of the female body parts, but instead, we are apprised of the woman’s positioning in a public space, the bar that the woman hangs out in the story. Although, it fits the setting of the story since the woman seems to flirt with a man (we do not understand from the picture if the man is her miserable husband or a random person she picks,) and the man behind observes her (possibly the narrator of the story,) we do not immediately see a femme-fatale figure in the image. Nevertheless, the cropped image also suggests that the female publicity can be ostensibly innocent as a deception

for the title says that “this is a story, telling more than what your eyes can see!”

Although in “Kadın Pençesi”, we do not see direct Pygmalionesque relations in terms of an artist and an artwork, the story shows a clear mindset of the three characterizations: the first one is the aspect of a sick and weak man who suffers from a monstrosity of the other, the female, the second one is the other (woman/animal/queer/posthuman) who is both desired and terrified and needs to be either destructed or passivated, tamed, and the third one is the observer, god-like figure, the narrator who wants to save the man from his pathetic situation.

“O, hep öyle, omuzları körüklenerek, yüzü masanın üzerine kapanmış ağlıyordu. Sonra, kadın yavaşça eğildi ve bu kadın pençesi, şu biçare erkeğin başının üzerinde onu avutmaya çalışırken, kim bilir neresinden gelen bir dakikalık kadın merhameti ona ancak işitilebilen bir sesle:

-Kalk, dedi; beraber gidelim. Bu gece sen benim misafirim olacaksın...

Üçümüz de birbirimize baktık ve yavaşça, hiç bir kelime söylemeden, onları kendi hallerine, bu bedbaht erkek başını o kadın pençesinin altında bırakarak, yüreklerimizde burkulan bir düğümle silinip çıktık.²⁵” (Uşaklıgil 20).

After seeing the man crying, the woman bends down and consoles him -in “female compassion” that the narrator cannot make any sense of, with her paw over his head. Three men look at each other and, without saying any word, leave their friend at the mercy of the woman’s paw and sweep away with a knot in their hearts. This

²⁵ He was always like that, his shoulders stifled, his face covered on the table, and he was crying. Then she bent down slowly, and as this woman’s paw tried to console him over that poor man’s head, with a moment of female compassion God knows where it came from, in a barely audible voice:

-Get up, she said; let’s go together. Tonight you will be my guest...

The three of us looked at each other and slowly, without a word, faded away, leaving them alone, leaving this unhappy male head under that woman’s claw, with a knot that twisted in our hearts.

description of the two sides of the story has the documentary-like narration where the predator shows mercy to the prey right before she kills and eats him, and the audiences/watchers cannot help doing anything but leaving them there.

“Koyu kırmızı kâğıtlarla kaplı duvarların üzerinde bir heves-i gayr-ı muttaride tebean türlü levhalar, hücreler, tabaklar, çevreler, heykeller, yelpazeler, bin renkte hiçler yayılmıştı, şurada bir karlı ormanın kırık dallarına uzun boynuzları ilişerek kaçmağa çalışan bir geyik, mürtesim tabağın yanında bir sedefli hücreye kurulmuş Vişnu-nunn heykel-i mahûfu, beride siyah bir zemin üzerinde kaybolmuş güya uçlarından katarât-i hûnîn damlayan saçlarıyla nısf-ı vech-i müstetir vahşi bir kız simasının altında iki Japon yelpazesinden yapılmış azim bir kelebek...”²⁶ (Uşaklıgil 144).

In this narration from “Sevda-yı Sengîn”, all these eclectic objects and animal-like descriptions in this bizarre room seem animated and connected with each other and with the poet, Refi Nihat; they have uncannily created their own habitus. In a marble statue, he finds his ideal love and the perfect woman inside this room. According to the narrator, he loses track of reality, and the animated statue is in Refi Nihat’s mind. “Pygmalion has appeared as a particularly powerful trope for writers and artists concerned with the fashioning of an ideal from the imagination and all of the pleasures and perils that act brings.” (Yeates 594). All these aforementioned stories are Pygmalionesque in the sense that whether artists, scientists, or writers/narrators, they have a dream of creating, perfecting, preserving, and taking control of the other to sustain their privileged positions. The boundaries have been structured for a transgression from the superior side. However, the gazers who trap the others in

²⁶ Various plates, cells, dishes, circles, statues, fans, nothing of a thousand colors were spread over the crimson wallpapers-clad walls that are contingent upon a disorderly whin, there a deer trying to escape by hooking its long horns into the broken branches of a snowy forest, reserved a gruesome statue of Vishnu-nunn which was set up in a mother-of-pearl cell next to the mulled plate, to the side. A determined butterfly made of two Japanese fans under the face (half of the face is hidden) of a wild girl, who disappeared on a black background with the blood supposedly dripping from the ends of her hair...

confined spaces end up being gazed back at them by the others.

2.3 God is an Artist and "He" is Dead: Deconstructing the Power Discourse in Human/Posthuman Dualisms

“God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him!” (Nietzsche 120).

In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche claims the death of God after Enlightenment ideology had changed the power relations between man and the divine entity. Humanism exalted, and it centered the man above all. The institutions, politics, science, technology, and art –and all other discourses among these– have references from man’s rationality instead of God and religions. Man is the new God; he is god as an artist, scientist, and politician. However, if we explore the posthuman with proto-tavist aspect both from the past and future, from fiction and reality, we can see that this new God is born dead, he exists enough to cause harm as an aspect of discourses, but he is too dysfunctional to call him alive. Maybe Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* can be an excellent example of these thoughts.

“I collected bones from charnel houses; and disturbed, with profane fingers, the tremendous secrets of the human frame. In a solitary chamber, or rather cell, at the top of the house and separated from all the other apartments by a gallery and staircase, I kept my workshop of filthy creation; my eyeballs were starting from their sockets in attending to the details of my employment. The dissecting room and the slaughter-house furnished many of my materials; and often did my human nature turn with loathing from my occupation, whilst, still urged on by an eagerness which perpetually increased, I brought my work near to a conclusion.” (Shelley 39).

We can see this in the lines from *Frankenstein*. Like a slaughterhouse, the room is full of animal body parts to create similar to or less than a human form later to be demonstrated. Victor Frankenstein’s scientific greed to create a life similar to or less

than human causes the loss of everyone he loves in his life. To take revenge on the monster he begets, he chases after him until the arctic sea. When he gets closer to him, a block of ice breaks, and it puts a distance between them. Finally, Frankenstein falls sick and dies on the ship at the North Pole.

Basil Hallward in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is killed by his own artwork he created. His wish to adore Dorian Gray, freezing him the way he sees him as an innocent, beautiful lad, is the consequence of trapping Dorian Gray inside the picture he draws. In “Kadın Pençesi”, female subjectivity is demonized and must be destroyed before it goes too far. She is now a monstrous animal that puts human superiority in jeopardy.

“When Pygmalion returned home he went to the statue of his girl, and lying along the couch he gave her kisses. She seemed to grow warm. Again he kissed her and with his hands, he touched her breasts. The ivory grew soft to his touch and, its hardness vanishing, gave and yielded beneath his fingers as Hymettian wax grows soft under the sun, and moulded by the thumb, is easily shaped and becomes usable through use itself. The lover stands amazed, rejoices still in doubt, fears he is mistaken, and tries his hopes again and yet again with his hand. Yes, it was real flesh!” (Griffin 66).

In “Sevda-yı Sengîn”, Refi Nihat, in a Pygmalionesque way, imagines the statue returning his kisses back to him. However, it should not be mistaken as a happy ending story for both Pygmalion and Refi Nihat. The posthuman’s liveliness means danger as well as desire. They are the mockery of the patriarchal dream. Refi Nihat’s death is also symbolic in the sense that he isolates himself inside an uncanny room. With his withdrawal from the world, he lives a delusion in his mind with a marble statue that is both dead and alive.

The constructed posthumans in these texts are not triumphant either; they are also

programmed to be abortive. Among all the desires, human/man also has another strong feeling toward posthuman and technology; it is horror. Norah Campbell and Mike Saren call this horror techno-anxiety. “In Baudrillard’s eyes, humans unconsciously produce technologies that are partly dysfunctional, and hence will never be infallible, because humans are terrified of the potential infallibility of the technological.” (153). The posthuman has been constructed to highlight the boundaries.

However, it has never been happily ever after for the power, either. The patriarchal, heteronormative, hegemonic accomplishments are paradoxical failures as well. Dorian Gray stays young and beautiful for a long time. However, he goes far away from the man’s dream of an innocent other connected to the father. He kills the artist, kills the artwork, and kills himself. In “Kadın Pençesi”, the three friends of the main character watch their friend in the grasp of the woman whose hand is metaphorically associated with a claw that is over the head of the man, which means that she is about to kill her prey. The marble statue as the love of Refi Nihad’s life -even though she is just in his head, is strong enough to pull him into the darkness where he has no power over the world at all. “But basically machines were not self-moving, self-designing, autonomous. They could not achieve man’s dream, only mock it. They were not man, an author to himself, but only a caricature of that masculinist reproductive dream.” (Haraway 11).

CHAPTER III: BODIES AS THE BESTIAL MACHINES: THE POSTHUMAN METAMORPHOSIS

“In one another we will never be lacking.” (Cixous
2056).

The nineteenth century, especially the end of the century, had become a milestone in history as it was an era when the “others” who had not been included in the “main” had come onto the stage with the development of science, technology, and new ways to look at and handle art and literature. I will discuss the tentacular entanglement of the dance of technology and literature with the constant metamorphosis of humans harmonized with other species and machines in an intermedial and comparative aspect, examining Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s short story “Mösyö Kanguru” in dialogue with Tevfik Fikret’s poem “La Danse Serpentine” (which is inspired by Loie Fuller’s Serpentine Dance,) and Uşaklıgil’s another short story, “Kırık Oyuncak”.

In the previous chapter, I have discussed how the posthuman figures emerged, with which tools they were fixated and placed in a safe area, and how hegemonic powers, such as artists, scientists, or just humans/men, reflected the fears and desires they had accumulated, into their works of art, and how they dominated the others. The story of Pygmalion embodied all this and helped us understand the end of nineteenth-century texts, especially Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s short stories. However, there is another mythological figure that will destroy patriarchal practices; and that is Medusa. I mentioned Rosi Braidotti’s statement that posthuman does not mean post-power. On the other hand, I also discussed Haraway’s description of how the cyborg mocks the

illusion of masculinist reproduction.

In this chapter, with the help of Medusa, I examine the return and metamorphism of the posthumans, how they turned those who hold power, who exploit the others (the gazers and the oppressors), into stone, with tentacular movements (La Danse Serpentine both Fikret's poem and Fuller's Dance), with their laughter (The toddler in "Kırık Oyuncak"), through their performativity and monstrosity (Mösyö Kanguru).

In a historical sense, we have come to believe that, in order to understand the definitions; we require limitations and differentiate them from the rest. This has resulted in understanding and examining the entities in monolithic ways. However, the boundaries between natural and artificial; texts and other mediums and art forms, along with humans and others, have long been integrated into one another. "Art historians as well as literary theorists have long believed that literature differs from visual art chiefly because words are conventional and pictures natural: because words are supposed to represent things by convention alone while pictures are supposed to represent them by natural resemblance." (Heffernan 70).

3.1 Tentacularity Flailing over Humanity

In order to understand the posthuman paradigms, before we dig further into Uşaklıgil's and Fikret's texts, we need to elaborate on "tentacular thinking" and the figuration of Medusa.

When humans ignore the parts in themselves and throw them (we can call them the others in another word) out, what stays out starts to fear and disgust humans because

they cannot make sense of the others, equate them and fit them into patterns. In the book *Spaces and Fictions of the Weird and the Fantastic*, the chapter entitled “Ecologies, Geographies, Oddities,” Eugene Thacker makes the observation that “without any previous knowledge of biology, we feel a sense of belonging to our phylum whenever we step on a mollusk, on the one hand, or when we hear, on the other, a crackling bone under our shoe. We feel a connection with life-forms supported by bones, while other forms of life disgust us.” (Thacker 21).

In the meanwhile, humans cannot be wholly separated from others either. Hence, they are torn between destroying them and controlling them. Helene Cixous says that when we look into Medusa's eyes, we will see that she is not scary; on the contrary, she is laughing. “You only have to look at the Medusa straight on to see her. And she’s not deadly. She's beautiful and she's laughing.” (Cixous 2048). However, looking straight into Medusa’s eyes requires first deconstructing the power discourses and then reconstructing our relations with the dismissed ones through collective thinking. “Such disgust is also, of course, a sign of the human being’s failure to appreciate or relate to that which is not human, other than in terms of utility for us as human beings.” (Thacker 22). The term “human” is significant in the sense that what is other than human is not only other life forms but also everyone and everything other than the ones who hold hegemonic power.

In the meanwhile, Donna Haraway also stresses the differentiation and intersection of tentacular figures in nature, such as jellyfish, octopus, and squid, with the representations of them through the distinction/connection in fiction and, indeed, with Medusa.

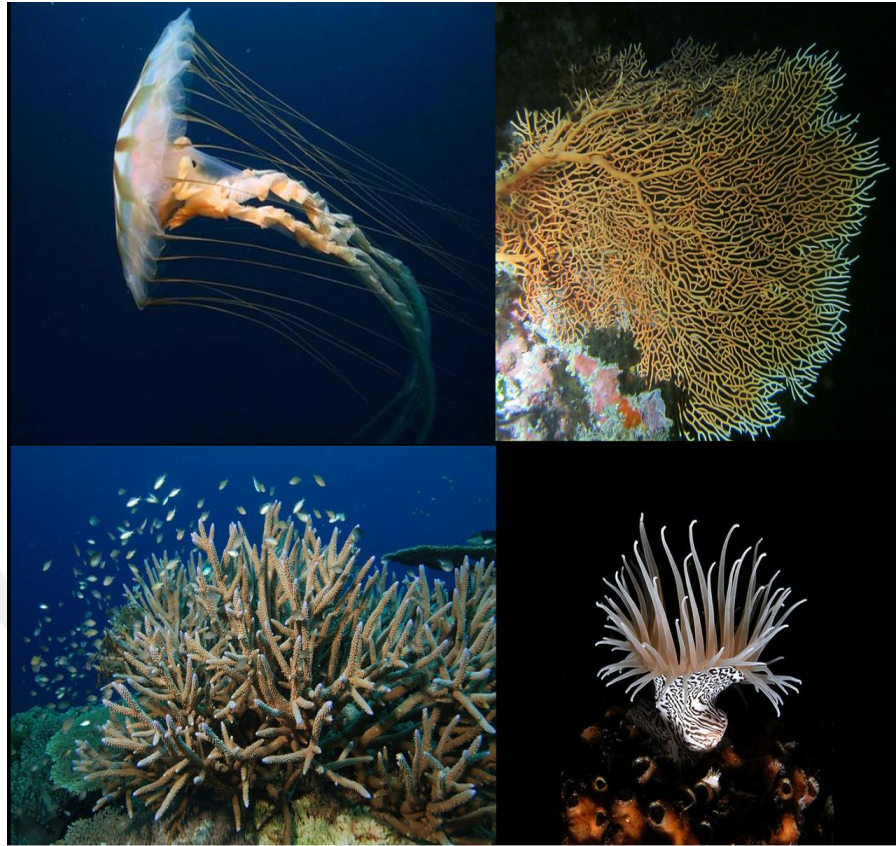


Figure 7. Frédéric Ducarme. Four examples of Cnidaria: A jellyfish *Chrysaora melanaster* (2002), A gorgonian *Annella mollis* (2013), A rocky coral *Acropora cervicornis* (2007), A sea anemone *Nemanthus annamensis* (2005).

“There’s another set of figures that I want to bring up here that are in a kind of Venn diagram relationship with string figures. They partly intersect, but they

also pull against and are different. And that is tentacular figures. The tentacular ones, the tentacled ones, like jellyfish, extravagant marine worms, the Hawaiian bobtail squid, like the Ood in Doctor Who, like the Cthulhu in H.P. Lovecraft, like many things. I'm working a lot these days with the tentacular ones and with the face as a feeling, entwining, tentacular, negatively curving/waving hyperbolic surface. Medusa is my friend these days." (231).

Is Medusa terrifying? To answer that question, we must take a look at her story. Jay Dolmage, in *Metis, Mêtis, Mestiza, Medusa: Rhetorical Bodies across Rhetorical Traditions*, explores the etymological roots and the rhetorical bodies of the ancient Greek mythological figures such as Metis and Medusa, who set roles for the understanding and returning of the oppressed bodies. In Dolmage's narration, Poseidon is haunted by Medusa's beauty; he either manipulates (Dolmage prefers the word "seduce") or rapes her in Athena's temple. Athena finds this out and feels her temple has been dishonored, and as a consequence, she punishes Medusa. After this punishment, Medusa who once was "beautiful," is now disfigured with writhing snakes in her head and possibly octopus-like arms. The ones who looked at her would be turned into stone. She is turned into a winged monster with flaring eyes, massive teeth, beetled tongue, sharp claws, and serpent hair whose ogle turns men into stone. (Dolmages 15). Medusa's appearance has a correlation with the posthuman figures I have examined, such as Dorian in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Lorans in "Sevda-yı Sengîn", and the woman in "Kadın Pençesi", as well as the figures I will explore in this chapter.

"Medusa and Cthulhu and the Ood aren't so terrible or terrifying. The non-Euclidean horrors that Lovecraft feared lurked beneath the sea—they were there. And they were these (potentially) solar-powered sea slugs that fascinated Margulis, and these mucous-secreting corals that are now at risk of extinction, and they are not horrible, although they are definitely slimy. So outside the hero story...." (Haraway 242).

Haraway also addresses that head-born Athena, Zeus' favorite daughter, is the traitor to the "Earthbound." Medusa becomes dangerous to the ancient Greek God's authority. Perseus executes Medusa, slicing her head off her body with the help of Athena.

"...We expect no better from motherless mind children. But great good came of this murder-for-hire, for from Medusa's dead body came to the winged horse Pegasus. And from the blood dripping from Medusa's severed head came the rocky corals of the western seas named as Gorgonians composed in symbioses of tentacular animal cnidarians."

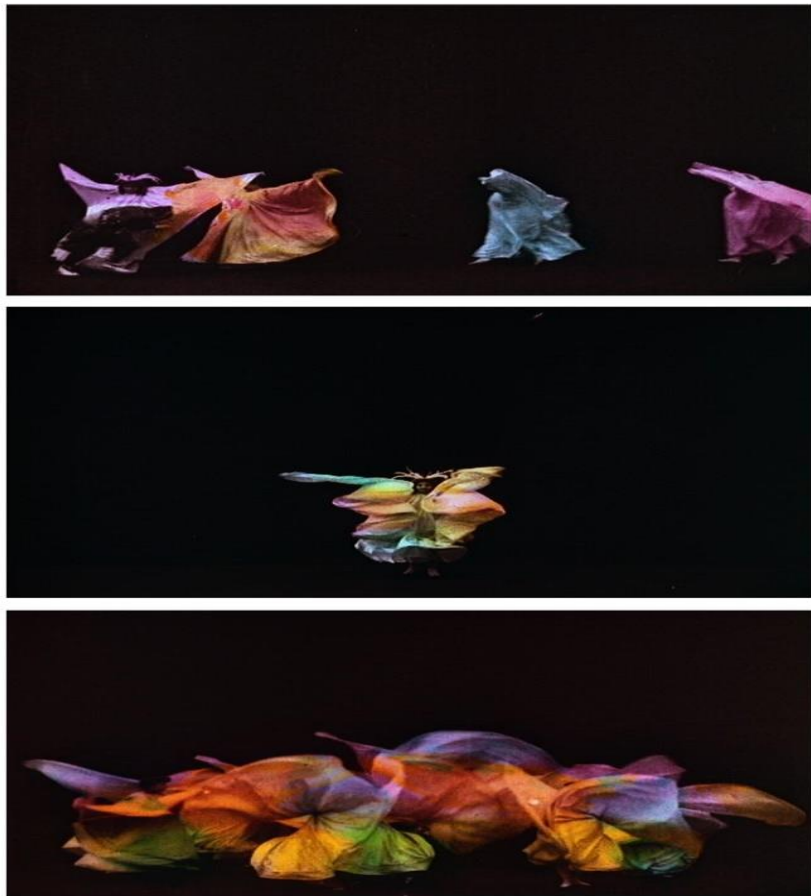


Figure 8. Frame enlargement from *Le Farfalle*, 1907 Photography
courtesy of Lobster Films

Gorgons, Gorgonians, corals, tentacular animals, as well as monstrous others in a fiction-reality blur the distinction between genders, animal and human, the other and human, machine and human, and machine and animal; they are beyond these definitions. “The Gorgons are also ambiguous about gender. They are earlier than, or other than, Chaos. Gaia/Terra are offspring of Chaos, and they don’t really have a gender, despite their iconography as goddesses. Gaia is not he or she, but it. They are forces of generativity, vitality, and destruction.” (Haraway 241). That is falsely terrifying for human-centered earth-living: as we can clearly see, what is actually horrific is the human-centered -or Anthropocene world that is first, mining, and then undermining the others with various attempts to control, suppress or destroy them. The four cnidarians in figure 7, the dancers in figure 8, the posthuman figures, Medusa, and the nature-culture-technology-art, are all intermingling, merging, separating, disappearing, and emerging again, extending beyond the limitations of the body, the text, and any forms of fixations.



Figure 9. Benvenuto Cellini *Perseus with the Head of Medusa* 1545–1554.

This bronze statue was made by Benvenuto Cellini in the sixteenth century depicting Perseus's victory over Medusa. While Perseus steps onto Medusa's body, looking

down on her dead body, he holds her head up with pride, and the sword is tightly grabbed still, pointed out directly to the viewer saying that this heroic story will continue with his victory.

“But the dreadful ones are even more powerful. The Gorgons are dreadful—the word gorgones translates as dreadful.” (241). Nevertheless, this patriarchal gaze, examination, and toshreding bounce back to humans with abyssal dreadfulness.

Nietzsche’s statement in *Beyond Good and Evil*, “He who fights with monsters might take care lest he thereby becomes a monster. And if you gaze for long into an abyss, the abyss gazes also into you.” (146). will perfectly fit in this human/posthuman conflict. “I think the abyssal and elemental dreadful ones are the figures that we need to inhabit in these moments of urgency, which we tried to sketch at the beginning of our conversation, this living in a time of excess mass death, much of it human-induced. (241). Haraway, with this statement, addresses the mass destruction of earthlings, of the ecological catastrophe caused by human and human-centered living. However, although it is interconnected and inseparable, the urgency must also be inhabited towards the man/human-induced carnage towards others, other than white, heterosexual male hegemony. The connotations of Medusa are that the others’ tongues are tentacularly monstrous and must be silenced. However, the monstrous body and the face are agile and hard to grasp, disappearing into the abyss and emerging back from there, which terrifies the patriarchal man and the woman (like Athena in this case).

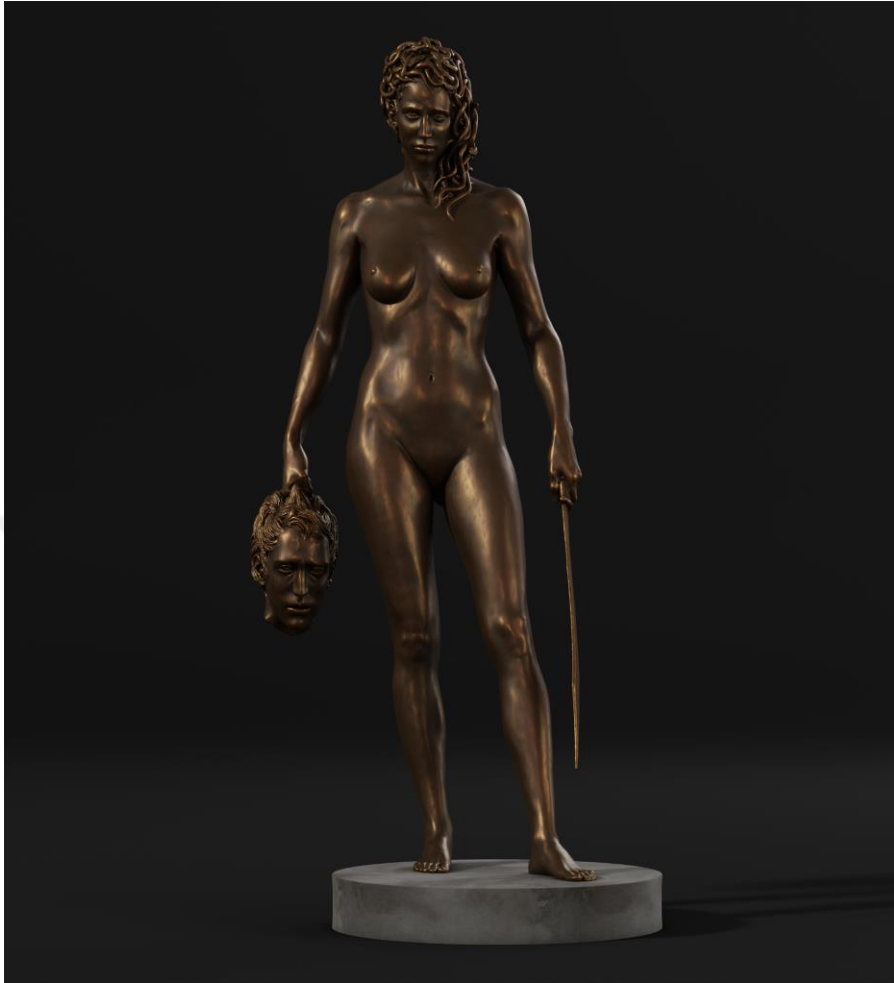


Figure 10. Luciano Garbati. *Medusa Holding the Head of Perseus*, Bronze, 2021

Benvenuto Cellini was not the only one who had been spurred by the story; not the story of Medusa, but the story of the heroes and gods, the story of Perseus, Poseidon,

and Athena. They have been subjects of art and literature. Centuries later, however, people have realized how they overlooked Medusa's story inspired by their own stories. Luciano Garbati, in 2008, created the clay statue of Medusa holding the head of Perseus. Figure 11 is the remake version by the same artist, created in 2021. This statue has become the symbol of the #MeToo movement that takes place on social media (such as on Twitter, Instagram, and Reddit). The #MeToo movement is about people's voices over rape culture, harassment, violence, and sexual abuse. People have shared their stories, hashtagging, "MeToo" to show the patriarchal torment they have been through to create a collective awareness. Therefore, in this artwork, Medusa, who holds Perseus' head, has changed the long-standing recurring narrative of the hero stories. Unlike Cellini's statue, instead of the sword, Medusa's eyes are the ones that look straight at the viewer and the viewer looks at her back. Although she holds the head of Perseus in one hand and the sword in the other, contrary to the previous figure, we do not see a victory, a pride; we see more of a reflection of the patriarchal fear²⁷ of the other's monstrosity coming from the other side, not from Medusa. Even though there are several criticisms about the artwork, because of the standardized body depiction of Medusa, or it may seem as retaliation, or she holds the head of Perseus, not the rapist, Poseidon, (or even the patriarchal goddess, Athena); this artwork is significant for it is changing, reversing, deconstructing the never-

²⁷ In the Basilica Cistern or Yerebatan Sarnıcı in Istanbul, there are two Medusa's heads which were used to support the columns of the cistern: one of them is lateral and the other one is upside down. Although, there are various rumors about why the decapitated Medusa heads are reversed, scholars suggest that it was possible for practical reasons to support the columns. Still, the way the narrations and speculations continue about Medusa's heads shows the power of the narration against the fear of the monster. Some even find a connection between Medusa and another mythical figure from Iran, Shahmeran who has a female head and a snake's body. Today, this unfinished stories of the others, Medusa's heads in Yerebatan Sarnıcı for instance, being kept recreated or rediscovered through the studies of 3D models and virtual reality. See. Ricci, Ylenia, et al. "A Petrified Petrifying Eyesight: A Story for the MEDUSA'S HEADS from Istanbul, Turkey".

ending heroic narratives and it becomes a tool or symbol for “the feel,” “the feeler,” “the other,” and “the posthuman.” And it is also important to point out that both the change of narration creates a social impact and the social, collective movements help the change of the long-standing narrations. We do not see a masculine power or victory; she directly looks at us to show that she is not deadly for those who have nothing to fear.

3.2 From Dark Rooms to Giddy Stages: Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s “Mösyö Kanguru” and Tefik Fikret’s “La Danse Serpentine”

“Thought becomes strangely impersonal and nonhuman, just as the human subject becomes at once the one who thinks nature and that which is thought by and through nature.” (Thacker 14).

Descartes’ catchphrase about “being” and “thinking” now is extended beyond the limitations of what is called “human.” Mösyö Kanguru’s contemplation about his body and his subjectivity will take its shape by and through both nature and plasticity; in other words, by and through natureculture breaking the Cartesian dualism. The confined space that is called home he has lived with his parents will be a cage for him, and he will find his refuge first outside of the home (attribution to nature) and then on a stage of a circus, he will perform his fluid identities, he will de-monstrate.

Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s “Mösyö Kanguru” (Monsieur Kangaroo) tells a story about a boy who has been ostracized and labeled as a kangaroo by his friends at school, by his family, and by society. Throughout his life, he has been exposed to violence and

abomination. He questions his ugliness and puts the blame on society because he thinks that everyone steals a piece of himself from him. At that point, the idea of “becoming” the metamorphosis has started. He completes his body by leaning toward the plum tree, watching his peers while they are playing among themselves, and mocking him. His family is not different, either. They abuse him and also make fun of him as a kangaroo.

“O gün eve gelince doğru aynaya koştu, kendisini muayene etti, kulaklarında bir terane hâlâ "Mösyö Kanguru" tahkirini tekrar ederken o sivri kafasına, dışarıya çıkık çenesine, yüksek elmacıklanndan çukurlaşarak, çukurlaştıkça yeşile benzer bir saye-i ismirar [kararan bir gölge] altında kalan yanaklarına, iki tarafında kenarları müstevi [düz] uzun ve sarkık kulaklarına baktı; bu sima [yüz) ile o levhada görülen kanguru resmi arasında bir münasebet [benzerlik] buldu. O dakikadan itibaren, bu tahkire istihkakının derecesini vuzuh [aşagılamayı ne kadar hak ettiğini açıklıkla] ile gördükten sonra, henüz bir çocuk olan bu mahluk-ı sefil [alçak yaratık] nihayet kendi nefesine [kendisine] de adavet etti.²⁸” (Uşaklıgil 30).

As we can see from these lines, he examines his body; instead of attempting to fit into society with their cultural norms, he erases the boundary between animal and human accepting being the other. He takes the insulting labeling and makes it part of his identity.

Therefore, it is not a coincidence that Mösyö Kanguru, who is an abominated animal off the stage, finds himself with the idea of fragmented selves performing the different roles that society takes seriously, in exaggerated, grotesque, and foolish ways: he

²⁸ Coming home that day, he ran straight to the mirror, examined himself, while a repeating voice still in his ears continued to insulting him with “Monsieur Kangaroo!”, he looked at his pointed head, his protruding chin, his taut and almost black face with what appears to be parched skin, his cheeks that were hollowed out from his high cheekbones, under a shadow of a greenish blackening as they dimpled, his long and drooping ears with flattened edges on both sides. He found a resemblance between that face and the kangaroo picture seen on that sign. From that moment on, after clearly seeing the extent to which he deserved this contempt, this poor creature, still a child, finally felt enmity with himself as well.

becomes part man part woman with costumes and make-ups, he travels through the time being chivalry of medieval times, being a dancer, a musician without music and with an imaginary guitar. He transcends beyond the limitations of the body, and his soul vomits forth out of the body.

Fatih Altuğ, in his article, “Mecralar Arasında Hareket, Beden Ve Şiddet: ‘La Danse Serpentine’ ve ‘Mösyö Kanguru’yu Birlikte Okumak²⁹” analyzes Mösyö Kanguru's art which is based on kneading the body and giving it plasticity beyond embellishing and painting the outer appearance of the body. The dancer of La Danse Serpentine, who became paralyzed, turned into a butterfly, became a flower, and was replaced by a clown; The clown's original body, his ugly face, has been transformed into a "rag," a floor that can take any form. This rag is like Loie Fuller's body, which Ranciere speaks of through Mallarmé, which produces everything but is positioned as the "dead center." In La Danse Serpentine, the effect of visual effects on the body has been replaced by the clown's paints. (Altuğ 183).

However, this constant state of becoming is not limited to the stage and is not merely straightforward. Just like in the *Serpentine Dance*, the way the dancer disappears into the darkness and comes out of the void, the character in the short story also turns into Mösyö Kanguru, who has not been loved since his birth.

“There is never just one tentacle, but many. And yet, the many tentacles always seem to trail off into nothing, into a distant ocean abyss as black as the ink it secretes. The cephalopod occupies this duality, a multiplicity of seemingly incongruous features—tentacles and multiple “arms” with suckers, a razor-sharp “beak,” a complex nervous system, rows of intestinal “teeth,”

²⁹ Intermediality among Movement, Body and Violence: Reading 'La Danse Serpentine' and 'Monsieur Kangaroo' Together.

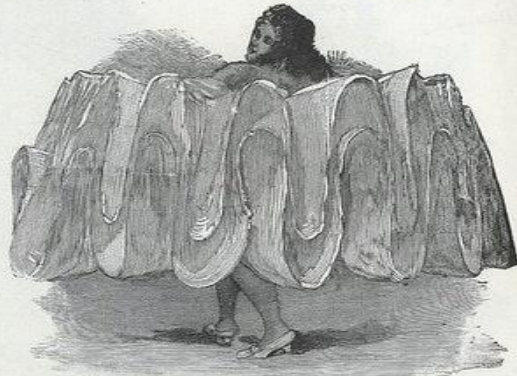
and a formless “head”—whose coherence falls apart once one tries to make sense of the whole creature.” (Thacker 18).

In order to explore further the transcendental sublime of becoming and the tentacularity in the texts, first, we need to focus on the considerable effect of Loie Fuller’s invention, *Serpentine Dance*, through the instrumentality of technology. Loie Fuller’s dance has become a breakthrough in the sense that it was innovative not only with the usage of lights and colors projecting on the dancer who wears floaty costumes with serpent-like (or tentacular, one might suggest) flowing extending beyond the boundaries of the body but also with becoming an inspiring art form transcending from the stage to pictures, movies, poems, and short stories. Patrizia Veroli describes Loie Fuller’s *Serpentine Dance* (1892) as follows:

“Her *Serpentine Dance* (1892) made use of artificial extensions of the dancer’s arms, allowing her to move the hem of an enormously large costume into the surrounding space, and employed magic lanterns that projected varying coloured lights onto the costume’s cloth. By these means, her dance achieved the suggestion of a prosthetic body, exploiting electricity in a phantasmagoric way. Fuller made her costumed body shift in space as if it were a rhythmically moving shape that existed independently of herself as an animated, chromo-luminous mechanism.” (Veroli 125).



The Spanish Dance.



The Basket.



The Butterfly Dance.



At Rest.

SKIRT-DANCING.—M^{LE}. LOÏE FULLER AND HER TRANSFORMATIONS.

From L'Illustration.

Figure 11. Illustration from *The Picture Book* (1893).

Hence, the lights and machines turn into the extension of a woman; with movements of the dance, the woman becomes a butterfly, spider net, flowers, and waves, she transits into a child or a baby who has been ostracized by society, becoming a kangaroo and clown, and finally, these metamorphoses are getting reflected in a text with dancing lyric form. In figure 11, we only see the four stages of her transformation: the Spanish Dance, the Basket, the Butterfly Dance, and at Rest.

Although, since the performance is circular and these transformations come with stages and may seem orderly, they are also chaotic and entropic in the sense that when she is “at rest” stage, it is not the end of the performing; she disappears in the darkness and comes back from the abyss, always surprisingly, never being stable. *The Serpentine Dance* not only tells us about the metamorphosis of the posthuman on a subjective level, but it also shows us how the narrativity overflows the single mediality. “It transcended the traditional limitations of specific disciplines, merging dance with optical machinery, early cinematic and technological innovations, esotericism, the discovery of the unconscious, early mass media, and anti-naturalistic impulses in theatre and the visual arts.” (Veroli 127).

Along with the amalgamation of dance and literature, Laura Marcus in *Literature and Visual Technologies: Writing After Cinema*, in the chapter entitled, “How Newness Enters the World: The Birth of Cinema and the Origins of Man,” concentrates on the intermedial approach to early cinema attributed to Epstein’s adjuration for the dream of a ‘universal language’ which started blooming in the seventeenth century and resurrected in the nineteenth century nourished by the Egyptologists’ discoveries and translations. She finds a correlation between cinema and ancient Egypt hieroglyphs

questioning whether cinema deep down is a “pictorial language” that we have sporadically permeated but still, we do not know all that we do not know. She shows us the connection between the image of (silent) movies and hieroglyphics as a way of “thinking in pictures rather than words.” (Marcus 33). The universal language of the text and image, which Marcus traces back to hieroglyphics, resurrects with the flickering of technology, with the movements of the fluid body, with the ekphrasis of the text, and with the kinetophone of the cinema.

“Filmed and hand-coloured versions of the *Serpentine Dance* circulated very early. These recordings, made by pioneers of early cinema, such as Edison, the Skladanowsky Brothers, Gaumont, and Nadar, could be viewed publicly in music halls or privately in *kinetophones*, another of Edison’s marvelous inventions, which were widely available in the amusement parks of the time.” (Veroli 128).

Consequently, unlike much-debated topics about the belated modernity in Turkish literature, with the improvement of technology, we see the simultaneity of the intermedial aspect in the Servet-i Fünun era, as well. Fatih Altuğ states in his article that: “Tevfik Fikret ve Halid Ziya, *La Danse Serpentine*’i Şehzadebaşı’nda bir sirkte seyredirken, sirkten hemen yakınında başka bir mekânda birilerinin muhtemelen Edison yapımı bir *La Danse Serpentine* filmi izlemesi gayet mümkündür.³⁰” (Altuğ 169). As we can see, on those Ramadan nights in nineteenth century İstanbul, while some could watch *La Danse Serpentine* in a circus as Tevfik Fikret and Halid Ziya did, it was possible that others could watch the Edison-made movie version of *La Danse Serpentine* in the venue next to the circus. From that point, we can also address the fact that with the assistance of machines and technology; the boundaries have been

³⁰ While Tevfik Fikret and Halid Ziya were watching *La Danse Serpentine* in a circus in Şehzadebaşı, it was quite possible for someone to watch an Edison-produced *La Danse Serpentine* film in another venue right next to the circus.

gradually crossed and exceeded in terms of not only between medium and body politics but also national approaches to art and literature.

Tevfik Fikret, in “La Danse Serpentine ”, goes beyond the category and enters into the metamorphosis along with the Serpent Dancer in the poem. The poetry turns into the dance and the dancers themselves extend beyond their limits. Yüce Aydoğan explains this with the term “intensity” to illustrate the anonymity of Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s texts. “Yeğınlığı deneyimleyen özne, içsellliğini kuran ve belirleyen sınırları yitirmekte ve böylelikle sınırların eridiğı, uzamın (extension) ya da uzam algısının sonsuzlaşma içinde belirsizleştiğı, bu sebeple de tekinsiz olan bir alan olarak beliren dışsallığa açılmakta, özneliğın istem güçlerini iptal edecek bir biçimde hâlden hâle geçmektedir.³¹” (Aydoğan 25). The intensity that causes the loss of the boundaries and carries the subject to the uncanny area where the internal exceeds to the external, can be applied to Tevfik Fikret’s “La Danse Serpentine ”, as well.

Mahmûr ü müzehher, mütelevvin, mütenevvir,
Bi fecr-i behârî gibi zulmetler içinden
Reyyan-ı tebessüm doğuyor; şimdi muayyen
Bir şekl-i sehabide melekler gibi tâir,
Derken mütegayyir,
Bin hey’ete birden giriyor, berk-ı hırâmı
Hatfeyliyor enzar-ı heves-dâr-ı garâmı³² (Fikret 241, 242).

³¹ The subject, experiencing intensity, loses the boundaries that establish and determine their interiority, and thus opens to the externality, which appears as an uncanny area, where the boundaries melt, the extension or the perception of extension becomes uncertain in infinity, and goes into a state in a way that cancels the will power of the subject.

³² Sleepy and flowery, colorful and light
Through the darkness like a dayspring
She is born smiling; appearing now
Flying like angels in the form of a cloud

Uykulu ve çiçekli, renkli ve ışıklı
Bir bahar tanrı gibi karanlıklar içinden
Gülümseyerek doğuyor; şimdi beliren
Bir bulut biçiminde melekler gibi uçuyor
Derken değişiyor.
Bin kılığa birden giriyor, salışının şimşegi
Kamaştırıyor aşka istekli gözleri.

We can see that the perception of singularity disappears in Tevfik Fikret's poetry. His poem gives the impression that everything seen in the dance *La Danse Serpentine* is expressed with words. The lights and colors, the re-emergence of the dancer out of the darkness, and the objects and clothes thus gained poetry. In the lines above, Fikret describes the dancer's birth out of the darkness into the light with her sleepy eyes. She becomes clouds, flowers, spring, and angel. Suddenly she turns into something else. It is hard for the eyes that follow her to track down her becoming. While it has been said she is something, she turns into something else and disappears again. There is a close relationship between her movements and tentacular thinking. She cannot make sense of the human eye. And humans have this ancient fear of what is not ocular but tentacular. The dancer of the Serpentine Dance and Tevfik Fikret's narration of the awe can be explained through Donna Haraway's reading of Medusa with tentacular bodies in *Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulhucene: Donna Haraway in conversation with Martha Kenney*,

She is changing just then.
She takes on a thousand disguises, the lightning of her release
Dazzling the eyes eager for love.

Since human beings are often proposed as facial because of the eyes, what happens when the faciality is tentacular, not ocular? Then there is Medusa, whose head is tentacular and snaky. Medusa is a Gorgon, of whom there are three and only one is mortal—Medusa. And she is killed in a murder-for-hire instigated by Athena. Medusa’s body is decapitated, her head drips blood, and out of that blood sprang the coral gorgone reefs of the Western Sea, onto which the ships of the hero-explorers are dashed. So, her blood generates the coral reef—Eva Hayward pointed that out to me. From her decapitated body springs Pegasus, the winged horse, and of course feminists have big stakes in horses. So I’m interested in the figure of Medusa as a tentacular, Gorgonic figure full of feely snakes, who threaten the children of Zeus, most certainly including the head-born daughter of Zeus, Athena. The head-born daughter is not a feminist—quite the opposite. (241).

Therefore, the serpentine dancer in the eye of Tevfik Fikret’s observation is not ocular but is tentacular. In the performance, there is no hero to catch her, to stop her; with her constant transformation, her metamorphosis, she is a confusion to the eye, to reason. One must just feel or experience her performativity outside of the boundaries. It is also possible to see this fluidity and the tentacularity in the structures of the words.

San’at sarı, mor, penbe, yeşil, kırmızı, mai
Elvân-ı ziyâiyeye bir kudret-i cevân
Bahşeyliyerek hepsi perîler gibi mahfî
Mahfî ve sükûnetli adımlarla şitaban³³

Sanat sarı, mor, pembe, kırmızı, mavi
Işıklı renklere bir dolaşma gücü veriyor;
Hepsi de periler gibi gizli,
Gizli ve sessiz adımlarla koşuyor.

³³ Art yellow, purple, pink, red, blue
She gives a wandering power to luminous colors;
All hidden like fairies,
She runs with stealthy and silent steps.

Surrounded by colors and light, she becomes the colors and lights themselves. In the poem, she transforms into yellow, purple, pink, red, and blue, symbolizing the colors of the rainbow. She enters the circulations, becomes what she has been made of, and then changes quickly, all over again. She flickers like a bulb that is about to fade out. At the very time when it is thought that she disappears, she flourishes as a lily.

Ey sıhr-i nazar -perver-i san'at, mütenevvir
Bir fecr-i bahari gibi zulmetler içinden
Doğdun, yine zulmetlere döndün; ebediyyen
Fikrimde seher-hiz olacaktır sana dair
Bir leyl-i serair;
Bir leyl-i serair ki, bütün şuh u mülevven
Güllerle, güneşlerle, emellerle müzeyyen!³⁴

Ey sanatın gözü okşayan büyüsü, aydınlık
Bir bahar sabahı gibi karanlıklar içinden
Doğdun, yine karanlıklara döndün sonsuza dek;
Düşüncemde sabahı getirecektir sana ilişkin
Bir sırlar gecesi
Bir sırlar gecesi ki, bütün kıvrak ve renkli
Güllerle, güneşlerle, isteklerle bezenmiş!.. (Translated into modern Turkish by
Asım Bezirci).

In the last stanza, we hear the voice of the speaker of the poem, who is talking to the art itself as if he is talking to the dancer. He has been drawn into the mysterious night.

³⁴ O eye-pleasing magic of art, luminous
Through the darkness like a spring morning
You were born, you turned into darkness again forever;
It will bring the morning in my thoughts about you
A night of secrets
A night of secrets, all lithe and colorful
Adorned with roses, suns, wishes!

The ending is similar to that of “Mösyö Kanguru.” The dancer, the others who have been differentiated by society, the animals, the young girls, and nature have been withdrawn into the night. However, just like the Moon in the short story, the dancer who comes back onto the stage, the speaker of the poem, imagines that art will come with the spring and will bring the light and the day. He contemplates the everlasting circulation of life and death.

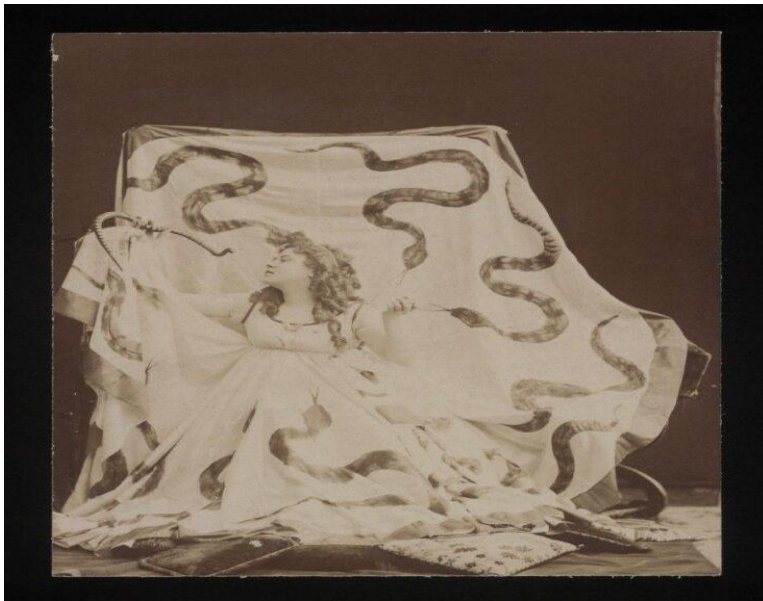


Figure 12. Photographic portrait of the dancer Loie Fuller (1862-1928), late nineteenth century.

The words in the poem also contribute to the circulation with the serpent-like structure while the poet gives hustling words and punctuations resembling pausing, twisting, and going backward. The idea of self and the body, which are becoming and performing in "Mösyö Kanguru," ended with a tendency to violence, are now created with sensory images without giving a character in this poem. In other words, the perception of the destroyed self we encounter in "Mösyö Kanguru" is established again in the poem. In this context, these two texts, written with the influence of the same artwork, look at art from two different points with the movement of character and poetry they create. One creates tension by disrupting the integrity of the unstable self; the other is with its motifs that help us visualize light and colors and the sound of the words used; It creates a movement both literally and musically, appealing to the senses and centering the reader on creating meaning. However, as I stated above, this should not trick the reader because this situation is not stable, nor is what has been constructed in the texts deconstructed again. In both texts, we do not see an ending to the conclusion. Like the characters, the texts are in metamorphosis, as well.

The nineteenth century is the era of the exponential rebirth of art types with the transmediality of cinema, dance, music, and photography between performers and media. The dancer, the words, and the subjects of the poem are in a constant state of motion through light, color, and clothes. The subject is a fluid perception of the "self" that is in a constant state of transformation at the basis of all these movements and transitions. In the Serpentine dance, the body at the center disappears. The female dancer deconstructs the male gaze with the help of flowing, long clothes, playing with the lights and color. She transforms into the other entities. Fatih Altuğ, in his article,

calls this vanishing of the body a “dead center.” “Tüm hareketin ortasındaki “ölü merkez” gibi duran beden kendini kendi dışına yerleştirerek, yepyeni formlar vücuda getirmektedir. Tıpkı müzik gibi, La Danse Serpentine de maddi olmayan, hissedilebilir bir ortam üretebilmek için maddi bir aracı kullanmaktadır.³⁵” (Altuğ 176). Altuğ, when he addresses the “dead-center,” points out the tangible tools to produce the intangible. What you cannot grasp tangibly, you feel them. Haraway shows this connection of “the tentacle,” “the feel,” and the “feelers.” “Tentacle comes from the Latin tentaculum, meaning “feeler,” and tentare, meaning “to feel” and “to try”; and I know that my leggy spider has many-armed allies... The tentacular are not disembodied figures; they are cnidarians, spiders, fingery beings like humans and raccoons...” (Haraway). Here again, with the undeniable innovations and developments of the nineteenth century, we see how the body, art, and perception of the self are intertwined with the technical one; that is, they are constantly in motion, sometimes moving away and eventually coming into life again. Based on all of these, we can say that the relationship between the ongoing literary and artistic works with the sense of self changed during this period. Technological developments and their adaptation into art or their interactions with art have a significant impact on historicizing the posthuman in Turkish Literature because the representation of the body and the self in art and literature had entered into circulation through cinema, photography, lights, and other technical methods.

³⁵ The body, which stands like the "dead center" in the middle of all the movement, places itself outside of itself and creates new forms. Just like music, La Danse Serpentine uses a material medium to produce an immaterial, palpable environment.

3.3 Laughing at the Clown/The Laugh of the Clown: Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's "Mösyö Kanguru" and "Kırık Oyuncak"

"But I do desire the other for the other, whole and entire, male or female; because living means wanting everything that is, everything that lives, and wanting it alive. Castration? Let others toy with it. What's a desire originating from a lack? A pretty meager desire." (Cixous 2054).

We have discussed the idea of more/less than a human/man through the reflections about women, queer, animals, and earthlings with the concept of otherness which is interrelated with the mythological figures, fictional figures, string figures, and monsters merged with artworks and technology. Nonetheless, there are other figures which are overlooked and must be included in the posthuman paradigms: children and toddlers, especially in relation to the clown archetype who challenges the orders of the gods, heroes, and humans.

Mösyö Kanguru is a child who is exposed to violence by his parents, and his friends mock him because of his appearance. And since he does not fit into the patterns of a potentially ideal man for society, he is dismissed by his environment. In "Kırık Oyuncak", the newborn baby brings joy to his family with his cheerful spirit.

"Bütün eğlenceleri ondan ibaretti: Çocuğu köşeye oturturlar, karşısına geçerler, saatlerce maskaralık yaparak güldürürlerdi. Onun taze ve hayatta sürurdan başka bir şey duymayan kalbinden kopmuş mesut ve şatır

kahkahaları odanın içine döküldükçe bu pederle validenin yüreklerine çiçeklerden, nurlardan mürekkebe bir yağmur yağardı.³⁶” (Uşaklıgil 77).

However, one day he gets sick, and no matter what his parents and doctors try, he cannot be fully healed. His charm is replaced by pain and agony, and he does not laugh and cannot make his parents laugh anymore. The only amusement he has is the toy he insists on wanting to have, which is a clown doll that laughs uncannily when it is pushed to its chest. For the couple, the clown’s laughing is the sinister mockery of the wretched state of the toddler. They lament for the idea of an ideal human raising is now shattered. Erica Burman, in *Towards a Posthuman Developmental Psychology of Child, Families, and Communities*, discusses childhood education and development through posthuman critical thinking and deals with how a child functions for the humanist, western construction of family and community. She states that:

“The child functioned both as the anchor for humanist models of subjectivity under modernity and the nostalgic guarantor of the unalienated part of ourselves we have (supposedly) lost. Sentimentalised images of children and childhood populate not only our screens but also our imaginations, aligned with notions of inner, or even authentic, selfhood.” (Burman 1604).

Additionally, children and toddlers are subjected to domestic violence, peer bullying, sexual abuse, and harassment; and they are also open to diseases and sicknesses.

Furthermore, they are outside of human/man reasoning: they are outside the boundaries of language, rules, and, order. However, in a humanistic sense, they must be trained to be human to be included in definitions, into the linear time, and, must be prepared to be adults to either become a human or serve the human, otherwise, they

³⁶ All their fun was just that: they would sit the boy in the corner, stand in front of him, and make him laugh for hours with their buffoonery. As his happy and joyful laughter, broken from his fresh and joyful heart, poured into the room, a rain of flowers and lights would fall into the hearts of this father and mother.

are seen as incomplete, not part of the unity, the whole; therefore they must be excluded from the society.

Likewise, the clowns are also outside the man's order. On the stage, they perform absurdity mocking the rules of the human, not making sense to the human eye and mind; they are always in a state of transformation, being laughed at by people and laughing at the people back. The laughter comes after the suffering: the clown might be beaten, might fall down, and be humiliated on the stage. These return with laughter, laughing at the authority. The clown archetype is also significant in examining the concept of becoming with being other. From being ostracized by society to becoming a clown, has been a pattern of performativity on the stage from the primitive examples to the Joker movies. In "Mösyö Kanguru ", we see the similar integration of a person who has been outcasted by society and becomes a tool for spectacle on the stage.

"In spite of wide local and temporal variations, this figure has some universally characteristic features. He evokes laughter and gives some strange psychological satisfaction by an appearance and behavior that elsewhere in society are repudiated, abhorred, and despised. He is not only allowed but even expected to act and to speak in a way which his audience while being amused, considers entirely improper, inadequate, and out of order." (Zucker 310).

Mösyö Kanguru contemplates how he is unloved, how his heart gets heavier with the depreciatory laughter he has been exposed to. At that moment, he sees a clown in a circus, and his thoughts are distracted by what he sees there. Amazed by a clown he encounters at the fair, he decides to escape home and become a clown.

"Birden bu soytarı onun nazarından başka türlü göründü. O da böyle bir yere çıkıp herkesin tahkirine sebep olan bu çirkin çehreyi kırmızıya siyaha

boyadıktan sonra şu nikab-ı temashurun [maskaralık maskesi] altında herkesle eğlenmek için bir meyelan-ı şedid [şiddetli bir istek] duydu. Buraya girdi. Oyunun müddet-i devamınca [sonuna kadar] ne ipte oynayan çocuğa, ne atın üstünde parende atan güzel kıza baktı. Bütün ruhuyla soytarıyı seyretti, ona âşık oldu, şimdi bir humma [ateş] ile yanan elleri hep onu alkışladı; onu alkışladıkça güzel olan şeylerden, ale'lumum cemiyet-i beşeriyyeden ahz-r sâr etmişçesine latif bir itminan [bütün insanlıktan intikam almışçasına hoş bir tatmin duydu.³⁷] (34).

The body becomes a tool for the poetic or artistic self. Mösyö Kanguru, who is excluded from society due to his physical appearance and is animalized by not conforming to any pattern, is literally fascinated by the clothes, make-up (paints on his face), and movements of a clown, and finally, he finds a medium to express himself. “İşte o bu iki uçurumun arasında tabiata, hayata, güzel olan bütün şeylere; insanlar için bu sefil ömrün cimriliğini saklayan, bütün itminanlara bi-hatime bir kahkaha-ı husume fırlatan bir heykel-i nefrin şeklindeydi.³⁸” (37). The performing becomes a resistance to everything that masks human hypocrisy, everything that is called beautiful, that is proper. Through clothes, dyes, objects (such as swords), and movements, as well as through his fusion with technology, art, and animalism, the self has ceased to be fixated and whole; socially constructed norms have become a certain kind of performance, a demonstration.

“Discussions of the posthuman not only critique prevailing exclusionary and restrictive definitions but, taking up the reworking (or queering) of human, animal and technology relations, also suggest how other sets of relationships

³⁷ All of a sudden this buffoon looked different in his eyes. After he went to a place like this and painted this ugly face red and black, which caused everyone to snore; he had a tendency to have fun with everyone under the mask of shenanigans. As the play went on to the end, he looked neither at the boy playing on the rope nor at the beautiful girl who was slewing on the horse. He watched the jester with all his soul, fell in love with him. His hands, now burning with fire, always applauded him; as he applauded him, he felt a sweet relief, as if he were taking revenge on the beautiful things, mostly human society.

³⁸ Here is nature, life, all the beautiful things between these two abysses; for people, it was a form of cursing that hid the stinginess of this miserable life, throwing an endless laugh of hostility at all trustworthy.

could be acknowledged and mobilized. This invites a redrawing of kinship relations not only across non-biologically connected individuals and groups but also across species. It is no accident that stories of savage children and wolf boys became sources of cultural fascination from the mid-nineteenth century.” (Burman 1612).

His childhood trauma accompanies him with the tendency to violence toward everything he finds beautiful. The comedy turns into a tragedy in those times when he faces that his otherness will always create uncanniness in the eye of society. “After all, notwithstanding the creative and transgressive work underway, the project to attend to and reconfigure animal-human relations is not immune from familialist and colonialist (re)constructions.” (Burman 1615). This leads him to instinctively possess the young girl who shares the stage with him. Fatih Altuğ, in his article, finds an interconnection between Mösyö Kanguru’s dance with the young woman and the *Serpentine Dance*. He states that Mösyö Kanguru gave spirit to the young girl, who is defined by her lightness and poetry, and he turned into an eighteen-year-old lover when he was on the same stage with her. She is now a young fairy whose body is excelling. Elements in the duo's performance are pretty serpentine-like, such as flashing and scattering bubbles, plays of light, and the body's lightening as if it does not exist. (Altuğ 187).

Nevertheless, when he realizes that his hands give her a chill while he attempts to hold her hand, this libidinal desire turns into violence. “When the tentacles are not reaching down, they are reaching up, for prey— fish, crustaceans, a whale, a sea-borne ship, a flailing human body” (Thacker 18). He cannot help himself imagining killing her. Consequently, he kidnaps her while she is sleeping and takes her to the roof.

“Demek bu kadar kötüleşmiş, demek o çehrenin sahibi, Kanguru, o vahşi hayvan-ı hayatı sonunda bu hayat-ı sanattan nihayet çıkararak yırtıcı pençelerini göstermişti. O zaman bu adam, bütün hayatında kendisine bigâne olan bir his duydu. Ta çocukluğunda dövüldükçe bir köşeye çekilip ağlayamadığı için dişlerini gıcırdatan, o vakte kadar hiç ağlayamamış olan bu mahluk bu gece şu genç kızın bir cesed-i meyyite benzeyen vücudunun kenarında yavaş yavaş, uzun uzun, güya bütün bir hayat-ı mahrumenin müterakim acılarını boşaltıyormuşçasına ağladı, ağladı...³⁹” (52).

Before he attempts to kill her, he gets illuminated by the moon's light. He gets integrated with nature again. Coming out of the darkness, his entanglement with the “other” continues to be as an entity with the assistance of the personified Moon. He lets her go and bursts into tears. “Yukarıda kamer sarı handesiyle sırtıyor, güya acı bir istihza ile: “Mösyö Kanguru! Ağlıyor musunuz, Mösyö Kanguru?” diyordu.⁴⁰” (Uşaklıgil 52).

Initially, in “Kırık Oyuncak”, the couple sees the baby as a toy for occupations for themselves: The narrator also uses “this” as a pronoun for the baby because he is not fully perceived as a person or “human” yet. The miserable couple’s life changes with the baby; all day, they clown and goof around so that the baby laughs, and his laughing makes the couple laugh in return. The baby is something to have fun with, a toy; his acting is like staging, performing. The idea of the “lack” will be diminished both in themselves and in the baby as he grows up. Nonetheless, the toddler will destroy the idea of unity, the human, with his sickness. The idea of humans creating humans is shattered, which is similar to Frankenstein’s attempt to create an almost

³⁹ So it's gotten this bad, so the owner of that face, Kangaroo, that wild animal life finally came out of this art life and showed its predatory claws. It was then that this man felt a feeling that had been alien to him all his life. This creature, which, as a child, was beaten, and gnashing his teeth because he couldn't cry, cried and cried slowly, for a long time, next to the dead-like body of this young girl, as if it was draining the accumulated pain of a whole deprived life...

⁴⁰ Above, the moon smirks with its yellow laughter, with bitter irony so to say: “Monsieur Kangaroo! Are you crying, Monsieur Kangaroo?”

human and his disappointment with the result of his creation. Just like Frankenstein's monster, the toddler looks like a body made with pieces, with his yellow skin and dead-like body.

In "Kırık Oyuncak", the toddler's sickness and the laughing in relation to the clown doll are connected with the limits of being human. The toddler's first words are "Acıyı anne!.. Acıyı anne!.." ⁴¹ (79). In "Sevda-yı Sengîn" and "Kadın Pençesi", the male narrators had the mission of saving humanity and masculinity from dangerous others. Here, the couple laments for the loss of humanity in the sense that even in the end, the toddler gets healed, he will always be a broken toy. "Demek o güzel, pür-neşe tombul çocuktan şimdi ellerinde bir tıknefes ihtiyar, bir kırık oyuncak kalmış, bütün o mücadelelerinin neticesi onlara işte böyle her gün yüreklerini parçalayacak bir şey bırakmıştı. ⁴²" (84). The clown motif is recurring in this story as well. The clown, thereby the child, turns into those dangerously uncanny others who can never meet the parents and the institutions' expectations. The toddler laughs at the clown the way the baby's peals of laughter amused the parents before the sickness.

"Lakin bu kahaahalar, hış hış öten göğsünün, o biçare çürük körüğün hırıltıları arasında boğula boğula yuvarlanarak gelen kahaahalar, o kadid omuzlarını kırarcasına sarsan bu çirkin kahaahalar; ellerini çırparak başını sallayarak, tahta göğsüyle omuzları neşvedar cik ciklerle inip çıkan, bu sakat çocuğa vahşi bir istihza ile gülen soytarının karşısında öyle bir acılık, öyle bir mana-yı elem kesb ediyor; o mariz ve hır hır eder kırık oyuncakla bu pür-surur u istihza oyuncağın tezat ifadesinden öyle bir facia-yı vahşiye çıkıyordu ki pederle valide aynı sahne-i his ile birbirlerinin yüzüne baktılar ve artık iyileşip kurtulan, fakat hayatlarının ihtimal daimi bir kırık oyuncağı hükmünde kalacak olan bu çocuk için, bu çocuğun ölümüne benzeyen sıhhati için, karşı karşıya

⁴¹ Mom, it hurting! It hurting mom!

⁴² So, from that beautiful, joyful chubby boy, they now had a little gasp of gaffer, a broken toy left, and the result of all their fighting and toil had left them something that would break their hearts every day.

sakin gözyaşlarıyla matem tuttular.⁴³” (Uşaklıgil 85).

The parents are mistaken by the clown’s laughing as a mockery of the toddler’s ill-fated state. However, if we go back to the beginning of the story, the baby was laughing at the couple’s ridiculous gestures to amuse him. The baby becomes a toy in their hand; he laughs back at their attempt the way he laughs at the clown. In fact, the clown is the mockery of the parents’ attempt at their “masculinist reproduction dream.”

We see this similar strangeness/familiarity in Medusa, as well. She has been seen as deadly, and terrifying and must be destroyed if humanity cannot make use of her. Here, I use Medusa as a general symbol of the posthuman, the dangerous other, and the animal-machine-human integration. However, as Cixous suggests, she was laughing. Cixous also points out human shock and trepidation of the women’s drives and man’s accusation for them of being monsters and sick. Although she focuses on women and women’s writing, it can be applied to the toddler in “Kırık Oyuncak” and “Mösyö Kanguru”, and all the dismissed ones from humanization.

⁴³ But these laughter, those strangled laughter amid the wheezing of his shrieking chest, that poor rotten bellows, those ugly laughs that shake his skeletal shoulders as if they were crushed; shaking its head, clapping its hands, the clown whose wooden chest and shoulders go up and down with joyful squeaks, laughing wildly at this crippled child, gains such bitterness, such anguish, and contrasts that sick and wheezingly broken toy with this joy, vivacity and mockery toy. There was such a wild, pathetic state from his expression that the father and mother looked at each other with the same emotion filled in them, and they faced silent tears for this child, who is now healed and survived, but who will perhaps be the value of a permanent broken toy of their life, for this child’s death-like health, they mourned.

CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION

I chose only four short stories by Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil because I did not want the thesis to turn into an exhaustive writing. Nevertheless, it does not mean that his texts are ever-limited sources for new researches to comprehend his writing; his works still need to be discovered and re-discovered for different perspectives and to get new ideas and aspects about his writing. I explored these four stories out of the single mediality: While I was discussing the posthuman subjectivities, I, first visited the ancient Greek mythological figure, Pygmalion, and his love for the ivory statue, Galatea. This helped me to understand the similar patterns of an artistic male desire toward the other that we also see in the artist Basil Hallward from *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and the poet Refi Nihad from “Sevda-yı Sengîn”.

I continued to travel in time to see the other Pygmalion representations in visual arts from the nineteenth-century artists Jean-Léon Gérôme and Edward Burne-Jones and attempt to show Pygmalionesque anxiety overflowing from all these narrations. From the nineteenth century, I jumped forward to the twenty-first century as the continuum of visuality and the monstrosity of the posthuman with an example from Jonathan Glazer’s 2014-made movie, *Under the Skin*. The de-monstrating bodies I have discussed took me back to the twentieth century when Uşaklıgil’s other short story, “Kadın Pençesi” went into the circulations. In this story, I found a correlation with the conflict between public-private places and the perception of the posthuman as a monstrous feminine subjectivity. Since the texts overflow from the scripts, it was significant for me to explore the conceptualizing of this fear and desire toward the

other through the visuality, I explored the cover pictures from three editions of “Kadın Pençesi”. Finally, I drag the posthuman imprisonment from the dark, gloomy spaces and carry them to the stages to illustrate their performativity.


As the thesis continued, the posthuman subjectivities went through the stages of their metamorphosis. This time, another mythological figure, Medusa assisted me to explore beyond the realm of human/man reasoning. Her serpent-like, tentacular hair reached out with the tentacular creatures which arouse the feeling of disgust in the human eye and, that their existences are in danger due to human exploitation. These tentacular arms are also entangled with the others who have been subjected to injustice and subordination. The entanglement, however, is significant in the sense that it breaks the singularity, and Cartesian dualism as the others are becoming one and multiple, disappearing and reappearing and intermingling with nature and culture; and while Loie Fuller dances, Tevfik Fikret’s poetry melts the subject, Mösyö Kanguru plays his air guitar and the toddler and the clown throw laughter at the parent’s idealizations, the texts turn into the dance, cinema, and art with the posthuman subjectivities that confuse enlightened men’s reasoning.

At the beginning of the thesis adventure, I decided to examine posthumanism on a much larger scale in terms of both sources and the time period in Turkish literature and cinema comparing them with the British and American ones. I aimed to limit 19th-century literature with the example from Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil’s “Sevda-yı Sengîn”. Following chapters, I was going to focus on 20th-century literature and cinema discussing the portrayal of the female body in Metin Erksan’s *Sevmek Zamani* and Sabahattin Ali’s *Kürk Mantolu Madonna*. In the light of previous discussions, as

opposed to the discursive practices in texts, my purpose was to explore gendered technologies along with body/mind subjectivities and personas as a stance for socially constructed norms in Latife Tekin's *Muinar*, Spike Jonze's *Her* and Alex Garland's *Ex Machina*. Then, I wanted to explore the 21st century's digital identities on the one hand, and the real-life cyborgs, hybrid persons, and the official acknowledgment of other entities as persons, on the other. With the co-existing of these post-human figures alongside the fictional ones from literature and culture, I aimed to discuss the existence or the possibility of a post-gendered and post-human world in cooperation with science and technology. However, after I made my research for the first chapter, I realized that Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's short stories offer me enough sources and they served better insights for understanding the posthuman paradigms starting from scratch, which is from Servet-i Fünun literature. Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's literary works single-handedly open doors for us to discover new potentials. What I aimed at the beginning can be discussed comprehensively in more than one thesis. And I hope this thesis set a road map for future studies.

I believe, every writing, even the academic ones, including master theses, reflects the personal story of the writer. Before I started to write this thesis, I asked two general questions: Why am I stuck in certain frameworks, and why are Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's writings also stuck in certain circulations in academia? These questions led me to write the posthuman figurations in Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's short stories. As I was writing, I realized my second question was partially because of my lack of knowledge since there are a handful of writings about Uşaklıgil which go beyond the repetitions. As for the first question, I tried to answer it by examining how and why the others are

constructed and conserved for the sake of the privileged ones with the representations of these subjectivities in Uşaklıgil's short stories. I argue in this thesis that the boundaries have been built to reinforce the power differentials between the human and posthuman, and all the other oppositions; and these boundaries, the walls are still there; they are still undermining, torturing, and destroying whomever they can oppress, including animals and the planet earth in general. However, if we look at past and today's narratives to mark the higher positions of the human/manpower if we try to understand how we, as the others are pushed to the other sides of the walls, the fear and the desire that Mr. Sad Man feels toward the others will turn into a mockery; we will see that the walls and the boundaries will only be the caricature of that fragile ideality.



“I wished that that woman would write and proclaim this unique empire so that other women, other unacknowledged sovereigns, might exclaim: I, too, overflow; my desires invented new desires, my body knows unheard-of songs. Time and again I, too have felt so full of luminous torrents that I could burst—burst with forms much more beautiful than those which are put up in frames and sold for a stinking fortune. And I, too, said nothing, showed nothing; I didn't open my mouth, I didn't repaint my half of the world. I was ashamed. I was afraid, and I swallowed my shame and my fear. I said to myself: You are mad! What's the meaning of these waves, these floods, these outbursts? Where is the ebullient, infinite woman who, immersed as she was in her naiveté, kept in the dark about herself, led into self-disdain by the great arm of parental-conjugal phallocentrism, hasn't been ashamed of her strength? Who, surprised

and horrified by the fantastic tumult of her drives (for she was made to believe that a well-adjusted normal woman has a divine composure), hasn't accused herself of being a monster? Who, feeling a funny desire stirring inside her (to sing, to write, to dare to speak, in short, to bring out something new), hasn't thought she was sick? Well, her shameful sickness is that she resists death, that she makes trouble."

—Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa." *Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics*, p. 2040.

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