THE PREDICAMENT OF THE ANTI-HERO AND CÉLINE'S SOLUTION IN *JOURNEY TO THE END OF THE NIGHT*

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***GECENİN SONUNA YOLCULUK*'TA ANTİ-KAHRAMANIN ÇIKMAZI VE CÉLİNE'İN ÇÖZÜMÜ**

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ABSTRACT

In this study, *Journey to the End of the Night* (1932), which was written by Louis-Ferdinand Céline, is examined in order to discuss the predicament of the anti-hero in the modernist period and Céline's solution through the figuration of the doppelgänger to save his anti-hero from the ferocity of life. This study consists of two main chapters. In the first chapter, an analysis of Céline's anti-hero is put forward by starting from Céline's special emphasis on the use of language which he aims to exceed the boundaries of formal French language in order to integrate the language of the streets in the novel. In addition to his subtle style, his choice of the anti-hero as the best means to render the anxieties of the society is analyzed in order to underline anti- *traits* of Bardamu by focusing on his dispossession of the nationalistic values and his quiescent character. As result of this analysis, it is inferred that his dispossession of the norms of the society led him to internalize the violence and evil deeds during his journey. This internalization also functions as one of the ways to save the anti-hero in the decayed society. In the second chapter, the function of the doppelgänger, Robinson, is discussed who represents the evil aspect of Bardamu's character. While analyzing the doppelgänger's contribution to the novel, the themes of *death* and *women* which permeate the whole narration are investigated in order to point out Robinson's function more clearly. At last, it is concluded that Robinson as a doppelgänger in the novel functions to designate the trajectory of Bardamu in the novel. Because of him, the anti-hero Bardamu is not submitted to *women* and *death* which are regarded to belong to the realm of evil by the writer Céline. Instead of him, Robinson is confined in the evil realm of life by having intimate relationship with women and is killed in the very dark moment of the night. Thus, it is be inferred that the writer Céline and his alter-ego Bardamu achieves to preserve their entity thanks to the doppelgänger throughout the whole journey by making him witness all evil deeds of the society.

Keywords: Louis-Ferdinand Céline, anti-hero, dispossession, doppelgänger, death, women.

GECENİN SONUNA YOLCULUK'TA ANTİ-KAHRAMANIN ÇIKMAZI VE CÉLİNE'İN ÇÖZÜMÜ

ÖZET

Bu çalışmada, Louis-Ferdinand Céline'in *Gecenin Sonuna Yolculuk* adlı eserindeki anti-kahramanın çıkmazı; yazarın bu çıkmazı aşmak ve anti-kahramanını kurtarmak için bulduğu yol olan doppelgänger'in (kötü ikiz) rolü incelenmektedir. İki ana bölümden oluşan bu çalışmanın ilk bölümünde öncelikle Céline'in dili nasıl kullandığına vurgu yapılmıştır. Céline bu eserinde özellikle Fransızca'nın sınırlarını zorlayarak, alışılmış dil kalıplarını kırıp sokağın dilini edebiyatın merkezine taşımaya çalışmıştır. Dilde aykırı olanı seçmesine paralel bir şekilde, karakter figürasyonunda da modernist dönemin tüm çıkmazını ve kaygılarını en iyi yansıtacağını düşündüğü anti-kahraman yaratmayı tercih etmiştir. Bu bölümde Céline'in dönemin ruhunu en iyi yansıtacağını düşündüğü karakter figürasyonu olan anti-kahramanın milliyetçi söylemleri reddi ve kayıtsız bir karaktere dönüşme serüveni incelenmiştir. Bunun neticesinde, anti-kahraman Bardamu'nun çevresindeki şiddete ve çürümüşlüğe kayıtsız kalmasının, kötülüğü içselleştirmesine ve banal olarak algılamasına sebep olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Kayıtsızlığa doğru evrilen olumsuz değişimin, çürümüş bir toplumda anti-kahramanı hayatta tutmak için yazar Céline tarafından bulunmuş bir yöntem olduğu iddia edilmektedir. Çalışmanın ikinci bölümünde, Bardamu'nın kötücül yanını temsil eden doppelgänger'i Robinson'un rolü tartışılmaktadır. Robinson'un hikayeye katkısı incelenirken, rolünü daha iyi analiz etmek için romandaki en baskın iki tema olan *ölüm* ve *kadın* konusu ele alınmıştır. Bu tartışmayla, Robinson karakterinin Bardamu'nun romanda alacağı yolu tayin etmesi için kurgulanmış bir karakter olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Onun sayesinde, anti-kahramanımız Bardamu yazar Céline tarafından kötücül olanın yetki alanında değerlendirilen *ölüm* ve *kadın* olgusuna teslim edilmemektedir. Anti-kahraman Bardamu yerine, doppelgänger Robinson kadınlarla yakın ilişki kurup, bunun neticesinde gecenin en karanlık noktasında ölüme teslim edilmektedir. Bu sayede yazar Céline ve onun ikincil benliğini temsil eden anti-kahramanı Bardamu'nun, tüm yolculuğa tanıklık ederek gecenin sonunda hayatta kalmayı başardıkları sonucuna ulaşabiliriz.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Louis-Ferdinand Céline, anti-kahraman, aidiyetsizlik, doppelgänger (kötücül ikiz), ölüm, kadınlar.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER I: FIGURATION OF THE ANTI-HERO . . . 5

A. The Competency of Céline's Idiosyncratic Language in the Formation of the Anti-heroic Novel. 7

B. Survey of the Anti-hero within the Realm of Modernity . . 12

1. Dispossession of the Nationalistic Values . . . 14

2. The Survival Method of the Anti-hero: Passive Tolerance to Banal Evil 21

CHAPTER II: SAVING THE ANTI-HERO THROUGH DOPPELGÄNGER 32

A. The First Mission to Save the Anti-hero: Warding Off the Femininity 34

1. The Problematic Relationship of Bardamu with His Mother 35

2. The Projection of Female Characters as the Heiresses of Mother Figures 37

B. The Pervasiveness of Death and Céline's Solution . . 45

CONCLUSION 54

BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . . .

INTRODUCTION

"A vast and universal mockery" (*J* 5)

Louis-Ferdinand Destouches, who uses the pen name Céline, was born in 1894 and died in 1961 that encompasses the first half of the twentieth century when he witnessed the filthy and disgusting nature of human being both physically and morally. He reflected his experiences and observations in *Journey to the End of the Night (Voyage au bout de la nuit)* which is accepted as one of the foremost World War I novels with its subtle narrative and deep insight to the malicious nature of human being. Although it is not clear how long it took to finish this novel because of Céline's contradictory statements, it can be roughly said that he wrote the *Journey*[1] in the years between 1927 and 1932. And it was published on 20 October 1932. As a sequel to the *Journey*, he later wrote *Death on the Installment Plan* (*Mort à Crédit*) in 1936 which is considered as a bildungsroman. In the late 1930s, Céline published two anti-Semitic pamphlets: "Trifles for a massacre" ("Bagatelles pour un massacre") and "School for corpses" ("L'École des cadavers"). In occupied France, he was identified with the policies of Vichy government because of his letters to the editors of the collaborationist newspapers (Kaplan 117). Since he demanded the extermination of the Jews, he had to flee to Denmark where he was imprisoned by Danes and released into exile (ibid). In 1951, he was amnestied as a veteran of the World War I and returned to live in the Paris suburb of Meudon (ibid). He died in

[1] In the rest of this study, *Journey to End of the Night* will be referred to *Journey*.

1961 the same week with Ernest Hemingway which Nicholas Hewitt states that "Céline's death passed largely unnoticed, overshadowed by the suicide of Ernest Hemingway" (279).

Although his death remained unnoticed in that time, his works inspired many writers including the pioneers of the Beat Generation such as Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs and Kurt Vonnegut. In 2001, the French National Library paid a record $1.5 million at auction for the handwritten manuscript of the *Journey* which proves that the magnitude of his works still maintains their impact on today's readers. With this record, it can be said that France gave up dealing with the notorious legacy of writer Céline. In this regard, Nicholas Sarkozy states in 2008 during his visit to India that "one can love Céline without being an anti-Semite as one can love Proust without being a homosexual!" (France 24). The statements of Sarkozy show us the paradigm shift in the French society towards Céline's works. He is now acknowledged as one of the most influential writers of French literature by literary critics and readers.

Though Céline is notorious for his anti-Semitic views, he condemns all classes and races of people in the *Journey* by "[offering] devastating critiques of Christianity, capitalism, socialism — all the kleptocratic belief systems devised to keep the poor in their place, and the bourgeoisie in theirs as well".(*NY Times*). Thus, it can be asserted that he chooses anti-bourgeois language, deconstructs semiotic rules and hearkens to "vulgar" language in the streets where the real vices of life are experienced. In order to achieve what he intends to reflect, Céline constructed the plot on anti-hero Bardamu and his eccentric doppelgänger, Robinson.

In this thesis, I will focus on the anti-heroic traits of Bardamu by juxtaposing him with Robinson in order to discuss the function of the doppelgänger in the

Journey. This study consists of two main chapters. In the first chapter, I will attempt to put forward the reasons why Bardamu can be regarded as an anti-hero. His anti-heroic character will be investigated with Céline's use of language as a way of violating the established literary forms in the *Journey* which aims to debunk the norms of French society in 1920s. Céline's target is to render what is inherent in society with its all aspects and terror by exceeding the boundaries of the French language. While reflecting the predicament of the ordinary man in society, he makes use of the anti-heroic character formation that embodies all anxieties of the society. In this respect, the differences between *a hero* and *an anti-hero* will be emphasized to draw the framework of the argument more clearly.

Céline posits Bardamu as a witness throughout the whole narration. Like Joyce's anti-hero Stephen Dedalus, Bardamu harshly criticizes religion, language and nationality in the *Journey*. His rejection of the established norms of the society will lead us to discuss his dispossession of the values and its results in the *Journey*. It can be said that his dispossession does not bring him more freedom. On the contrary, he becomes more vulnerable to the evil aspect of life. Instead of being the practitioner of the evil deeds, he is depicted as an observer and becomes more tolerant to ferocious events happening around him. Unlike him, his doppelgänger represents the evil aspect of his character. In this regard, Bardamu's passive tolerance to evil will be discussed in the light of banality of evil in order to figure out whether Céline's designation of the anti-hero in this way can be considered as a survival method or not. This claim will be based on the idea that the contagious nature of evil may cause the internalization of the evil deeds which will be detailed by referring to the experiences of Bardamu.

In the second chapter, I will argue about the projection and the function of the *doppelgänger* in the *Journey.* Regarding Bardamu as Céline's alter –ego and Robinson as the doppelgänger of Bardamu, we can say that both the anti-hero and the doppelgänger may be representing the writer Céline. What Céline attempts to protect Bardamu from has self-reflexive function which means that he attempts to protect his own entity as a writer at the same time. In this respect, I will claim that Céline is not willing to submit his anti-hero to *women* and *death* which might annihilate his anti-hero on the way to the end of the night. This would prevent Bardamu from observing the atrocity of the World War I and postwar suburban life. Therefore, Céline designates a doppelgänger who takes the responsibility from Bardamu by performing the evil deeds if and when necessary and is submitted to women and death instead of him. Therefore, it will be discussed whether Bardamu and Robinson can be considered as a single character who shares all guilty and punishments equally.

CHAPTER ONE

FIGURATION OF THE ANTI-HERO

Journey to the End of the Night, which is the magnum opus of Louis-Ferdinand Céline, holds a pivotal point in the history of Western literature as it epitomizes a shift and split in language as a medium to reflect the condition of the whole of society in the first half of the twentieth century. Céline not only breaks down the traditional rules of language as a medium of communication, representation and expression but also deals with the problem of eliminative representation of literature in the modernist period. Instead of calling the first half of the twentieth century with "modernist" period, which may have affirmative connotations, it seems more appropriate to name it "Chaotic Age" as coined by Harold Bloom in *The Western Canon: the Books and the School of Ages*. In his work, Bloom sets out his version of the Western canon by classifying the history of literature into four chronological ages: Theocratic, Aristocratic, Democratic, and Chaotic. He supports the idea of such a canon by analyzing twenty six major writers whom he sees as central to the canon. At the end of his manifesto, Bloom suggests the list of the works that the canon encompasses. *Journey to the End of the Night* is listed under the

category of the Chaotic Age (549). Because the artistic and literary productions of that period attack the traditional notions of previous centuries, it may be necessary to mention briefly the previous ages he listed in order to comprehend extensively what Bloom means with "the Chaotic Age" and to draw a framework of the milieu that Céline portrays in the *Journey*.

Bloom states that he borrowed the idea of the first three phases – Theocratic, Aristocratic and Democratic – from Giambattista Vico which he posited in *New Science* (1). Works of the Theocratic Age are productions of divinely inspired writings and laws. Under the category of this age, he includes "religious, philosophical, historical, and scientific writings that are themselves of great aesthetic interest" because of their major influence on the Western literary tradition (531). In the *Journey,* Céline depicts a society in which religion does not hold a sublime position and the harsh criticism towards religious institutions constitutes the scope of some modernist works. The Aristocratic Age renders the politics of the upper class and its struggle with the values of the rising middle class. Bloom identifies this phase as "a span of five hundred years from Dante's *Divine Comedy* through Goethe's *Faust*" (534). In this regard, Céline includes in the *Journey* what the works of the Aristocratic Age have ignored for centuries; that is to say, the lives of ordinary people which were not deemed to be worth representation. Although the Democratic Age comprises the period in which individual rights and freedom constitute the main interests of the writers, the language of the works of that period and viewpoint of the writers are not intrinsic to form. On the contrary, writers wander within the same realm of language and subject matters. The last phase – the Chaotic Age - accounting for the modern and postmodern era requires breaking down the vicious circle of the formal language and starting again as a part of the historical recurrence. With the

Journey, Céline aims to deconstruct the whole tradition of the Western ideology mentioned above to lead a dark path paved by a degraded language that is expressed by the author and viciousness of human beings. In the *Journey*, which is named as a "catalogue of adult vice and cruelty" written on the verge of the collapse of Western civilization, Céline shows us that a shift occurred from the pervasiveness of the bourgeois attitude to the pervasiveness of the unspeakable form of evil, which was at last experienced as a result of the rise in totalitarian regimes (Fortier 184).Céline depicts the filthy and disgusting situation of society by starting out with the trauma and innermost thoughts of individuals and expanding it to the whole of society. To achieve this, Céline plots a novel which transcends the form and content of the established literary works in order to reflect the dark side of the human soul with his distinctive choice of language, its content that includes the subject matters of the peripheries, and the configuration of an anti-hero named Bardamu. Throughout the first chapter of this study, I aim to analyze the *anti-* traits of the novel in terms of its language and character projection. Therefore, I will firstly emphasize the significance of the language in the *Journey* which is designed by Céline as a way of violating the established literary language. Then, I will orient my discussion on the modernist traces of Bardamu as an anti-hero in the atrocity of the First World War and its aftermath.

A. The Competency of Céline's Idiosyncratic Language in the Formation of the Anti-heroic Novel

In *Journey to the End of the Night,* Céline tells of an arduous journey pushing the boundaries of formal French language. Similar to his contemporaries like Pound, Woolf and Joyce, Céline has the idea that communication within the eliminating

framework of the formal language is rendered impossible because of the transformations experienced by society on a political, historical, artistic and cultural level. He thus draws his style around neologism, argots and colloquial language. However, he is not the pioneer of narrating through vulgar language, which at first seems to be an innovative approach to the French language. Indeed, when we look back at History of Literature, François Rabelais first brought the voices of the streets into the literary scene writing *The Life of Gargantua and Pantagruel* between 1532 and 1552. In that book, Rabelais succeeded in reflecting scatological imagery and violence within a carnivalesque influence as pointed by Mikhail Bakhtin[2]. According to Bakhtin, Rabelais contributed to French language by inventing hundreds of new words which later became part of the French language (110). In a similar way to Rabelais, Céline gave the language of the poor prominence without minimizing the content in favor of form. Furthermore, Céline especially owes his success to create through language "[s]ymbol and meaning in the dimension of art [. . .] the Word or Logos of the twentieth century" that the culture was unable to produce in modernist period (Freidman 97). There are no delineated lines; no absolute truths in his narratives. He fosters multifaceted narration and accomplishes the role of the modernist writers "as seer" (ibid) who feel themselves responsible for interpreting what they perceive and foresee. Despite Céline's significant contribution to French literature, writing one of the most scathing books in the history of literature with a unique, inclusive, subtle style, he is accepted as a marginal writer because of his political and anti-Semitic thoughts. In the "Preface and Prelude" part of *The Western Canon*, Harold Bloom excludes Céline while he is "[t]rying to represent national canons by their crucial figures" (3). Bloom lists Montaigne, Moliere and Proust,

[2] In *Rabelais and His World*, Bakhtin emphasizes the importance of the carnivals as social institutions and describes the grotesque realism as a literary mode.

instead. Although Céline is not accepted by Bloom as a representative of French literature with the anti-bourgeois content and the language of his works, Céline's works are legitimated and acknowledged by French literary theoreticians and academicians. He is now regarded as a great writer who "wields his pen like a scalpel [. . .] and dissects the human condition, exposing its malignancies, but he offers no treatments or cures" (Solomon 7).

Even if Céline does not suggest any solutions, the formal French language, which belongs to the bourgeoisie and is acknowledged as a medium for comprehending and explaining the world, becomes to him and to many other writers absolutely incapable for depicting the war and the maliciousness in society in the twentieth century[3]. In this respect, Céline may be posited as a transmitter from what is inherent in oral culture to the written one. Since the relation of a group of people to the society and their representation are completely committed to writing, it is significant to transpose their consciousness through language to the written culture. In his essay "Writing is a Technology That Restructures Thought", Walter J. Ong emphasizes the potency of writing and suggests that "literacy is imperious. It tends to arrogate to itself supreme power by taking itself as normative for human expression and thought" (24). Since the languages constitute the integral parts of literacy, it is highly probable to identify the highlighted and ignored discourses within a language. The task of the great writers is to raise the voices of the ignored discourses with their idiosyncratic traits in terms of both their contents and forms. Ong also submits the significance of writing by analogy with death as :

[3] Maurice Blanchot emphasizes in this respect on the inadequacy of language to represent the catastrophe experienced with the breakout of the World War II and the Holocaust by the writers such as Beckett, Celan and Bachmann. Prior to these writers, Cé line concerned the inadequacy of the language to render what he observes during the World War I.

> Once reduced to space, words are frozen, and in a sense dead…removed from the living human life world, its rigid fixity, assures its endurance and its potential for being resurrected into limitless living contexts by a limitless number of living readers. The dead, thing like text has potentials far outdistancing those of the simply spoken word" (22)

Keeping in mind what Ong states by emphasizing the importance of writing, it may be claimed that, in the case of Céline, the expression of the real vices demands its own instrument which necessitates twisting the established phrases and deconstructing the traditional syntax of the French language as achieved by Céline. His writing gains significance as it enables and promulgates the concerns of peripheries within the realm of language. As for the background of his vivid and scathing representation in the *Journey,* his accomplishment in being competent using the daily language resides in his background working as a doctor in the suburbs of Clichy after he spends some time in colonial Africa and experiences the post-World War I America. This episode of Céline's life is recounted by Nicholas Hewitt in the detailed survey of Céline's life as follows:

> [his] surgery only saw queues of poor people, deprived children, cripples of all sorts, old people with no future. [. . . .] He was concerned to understand them and to help them, talking to them about things in their lives, listening patiently to the tales of their suffering. (83)

From this point of view, it can be asserted that Céline partially fictionalizes his life and so his work can be regarded in this respect as an example of auto-fictional narrative. Whereas autobiography portrays the life story of a person who is

also the narrator, the adventure lies in language in auto-fictional writing; that is, the text takes precedence over the 'bios' or 'life' represented (Spear 357). Writing a novel like the *Journey* which carries auto-fictional traits gives Céline an opportunity to dramatize the social problems by overtly transposing the details pertaining to his life. Contrary to this argument and parallels drawn to his life, Céline strictly rejects this correspondence and states in his interview to Merry Bromberger: "My book an autobiography? Not at all! My life is far more simple and far more complicated than that" (qtd. in Hewitt 116). The reason why Céline opposes this claim can be because of the fact that his life may underestimate the scope of his works in which he endeavors to depict the human condition striving in the first half of the twentieth century. Whatever the motives and ways he may have employed in the act of writing *Journey to the End of the Night* are, Céline aims to create an emotional resonance in the reader with the style he referred to as " 'metro émotif,' 'an emotional subway,' trains packed with the heteroclite materials of his fiction" (Solomon 14). To achieve this resonance, Céline is so obsessed with language that he complains: "they want to make me write like François Mauriac!" and asks diligently of his editors that "Old man, I beg you, don't add one syllable to the text without telling me! You'd completely screw up the rhythm – I'm the only one who can relocate it" (Hewitt 111). As a result to his diligent effort, Céline achieves to create the idiosyncratic language he intends. The idiosyncrasy of his unique language is best exemplified with his punning while finding the proper nouns in which he aims to create certain resonances. *Ferdinand Bardamu,* the name he chooses for the anti-hero of the *Journey* is made of the word *Barda* that means *military supplies* in French and the word *mu* that comes from the verb *mouvoir* and denotes *move*; that is, the word "Bardamu" may signify *moving soldier.* In addition to pay special attention to the

resonance of the characters' names, Céline chooses the names of the places according to their function in the novel. During the depiction of the war between Germany and France, soldiers including the anti-hero Bardamu are designated to find a place called Barbigny which possibly derives from "*barbant*", "*barbe*" meaning "boring", "annoying" (*Journey* 438). Besides punning with the words, Céline manipulation of the historical events is an indispensable part of his writing style. He writes that *Mayflower* landed in 1607 in Boston which is considered "a typical of Céline's cavalier treatment of history" although he probably knows that the *Mayflower* landed in New England in 1620 (ibid). The background information to comprehend Céline's language is submitted via footnotes which sometimes dominate the whole of the text. Since the domination of the factual information over the fiction and the comments on punning may disturb the readers, Céline dictionaries are published for the ones who wish to dissect his language in each particle. To conclude this part, it can be summarized that Céline wished to construct a language which would enable him to render the anxieties of the anti-hero he is formulated. In the following part, I will follow the trajectory of Bardamu's travel from innocence to evil which Céline firstly builds within the realm of language.

B. Survey of the Anti-hero Within the Realm of Modernity

At the beginning of the twentieth century, every notion and truth which previous centuries had held as sacred and regarded as indisputable came under assault as a result of the failure in fulfilling the promises of previous centuries. To render the anxiety of modernity and of the "modern man", Céline projects Ferdinand Bardamu as an anti-hero who contains all the traits of a desolate individual, and the novel describes his experience following a cycle which begins in the course of the

First World War and continues successively in colonial-Africa, in industrialized America and finally returns to post-war France. By choosing three different continents as settings to complete this cycle, Céline aims to show the conflicts of the individual in the twentieth century epitomized in the character of Bardamu. Europe, Africa and America have different cultural backgrounds and the relations of the continents to modernity differ from each other. By positing Bardamu like a compass, Céline follows the traces of modernity in the abyss of human soul. Thus, Bardamu holds a vital position in the novel being portrayed as impotent, misanthropic, unpatriotic, and as expected, antimilitarist. In this part, I will discuss Bardamu's anti-heroic deeds and how the character is transformed from innocence to evil by emphasizing the atrocity of war-torn Europe and the predicament of modernity.

On Bardamu's travel from innocence to evil, it is essential to mention and draw the argument around his dispossessed being because all his anti-heroic deeds can be related to it. Prior to detailing the excerpts from the *Journey*, it is necessary to elaborate what will be signified with *possessed* and *dispossessed* to clarify my discussion. The concept of possession is meant to belong to, firstly, a set of ideas and beliefs which will be called *ethos* in the following lines. Through this *ethos,* the individual becomes a part of a group and internalizes their ideologies. In fiction, heroic characters can be classified into the committed group. They fight for an ideal and belong to a community[4]. The heroes may sacrifice or risk their lives for the greater good. Even if they sometimes clash with the ethos of their communities, they struggle to change the conditions. When they fail to alter the flow of events, they do

[4]It is noteworthy to mention the qualities of the romantic character to delineate his distinctive features from the classical tragic characters. The romantic hero is projected to reject the established norms and conventions and in return he is rejected by the society. In this regard, Northrop Frye stated that the romantic hero is often "placed placed outside the structure of civilization and therefore represents the force of physical nature, amoral or ruthless, yet with a sense of power, and often leadership, that society has impoverished itself by rejecting" (qtd in Wilson). Based on Frye's statements, it can be claimed that the anti-heroic character can be considered within the category of romantic characters.

not give up fighting. Instead, they are posited into another ethos and continue to fight for their new *logos*[5].

As for being *dispossessed,* it is meant to be without having any property and status. It denotes the anti-heroic character who is rootless and suffers from the loss of expectations and relationships. As a result of these, the alienation of the anti-hero becomes inevitable. To discuss Bardamu's dispossession clearly, I will divide this part into two subsections. In the first subsection, the dispossession of *self* which is performed as a result of the rejection of nationalistic values will be explored. In the second subsection, I will analyze the passive tolerance of Bardamu to evilwhich is designated by Céline as a way to survive in the atrocity of the modernist era.

1. Dispossession of Nationalistic Values

To comprehend the dispossession of Bardamu, we ought to start with the World War I in which the roots of his anti-heroic deeds reside. In the *Journey,* Bardamu's story starts with his enrolment in the military service that is why we do not know the previous personal history of him. It can be thus stated that his personal history is intermingled with the history of the World War I. Therefore, Céline inaugurates the story in the midst of a battle between Germany and France. At the outset of the *Journey*, we see Ferdinand Bardamu as a naive and innocent character standing at the threshold of cruelty and vices in the status of witness. One single event is enough to cross over the border. Once he sees the marching of the troop in the street, he determines to be a part of the war and goes beyond, oversteps the border saying that "[e]nthusiasm lifted me to my feet. 'I'll just go see if that's the way it is!' I sing to Arthur, and off I go to enlist" (5). The reason why Bardamu acts

[5]With *logos,* it is referred to the logic of people as suitable for the definition of Aristotle and the way of individuals' or communities' understanding of the world are meant.

eagerly to join the army may seem obscure at the beginning of the novel and his first step can be interpreted as a wish to get involved on the side of power.

Despite his enthusiasm for joining the army, Bardamu is positioned as a witness to the events. It can be speculated that Céline deliberately portrays Bardamu abstained from the war in order to prevent his death because he intends to depict the prevalence of evil in all aspects of life via Bardamu. However, every kind of terror and brutal manners including war are actually beyond Bardamu's comprehension so that the atmosphere during the butchery of war and its causes seem too meaningless to be grasped by him. He naively states that "[t]his war, in fact, made no sense at all. It couldn't go on" (7). As a result of the fact that he cannot attribute any meaning to what happens around him, the war causes a revelation in Bardamu about the brutality of life and underlines, in contrast, his own innocence. He confesses to himself that : "You can be a virgin in horror the same as sex. How [. . .] could I have imagined such horror? Who could have suspected, before getting really into the war, all the ingredients that go to make up the rotten, heroic, good-for-nothing soul of man?" (9). Since he is devoid of any patriotic feelings to justify himself the causes of war, he therefore does not commit any crimes throughout the war and repents in one sense of joining this brutal war.

In this context, Bardamu abstains from acting in support of the ideals of France because he believes that the notion of race is only utilized to justify nationalistic causes to fight for and ruin people's lives, so there is no point in sublimating it. To emphasize the futility of racism, he denigrates the French race as "[w]hat you call a race is nothing but a collection of riffraff like me, bleary-eyed, flea-bitten, chilled to the bone"(3). Being an anti-hero provides Bardamu a realm of freedom in which he can even call himself a "riffraff" and thus criticizes harshly the

established norms of the society. Actually, it can be asserted that Bardamu is a representative of the majority who have heroic deeds on the surface but adapt anti-heroic manners in their actions.

As a result of his insight to the war, Bardamu is filled with pessimism rather than enthusiasm. He says : "I was suddenly on the most intimate terms with the war. I'd lost my virginity"(10). He would prefer to be in jail instead of fighting in the war since, at least, there's a possibility to come out alive from jail. He emphasizes his desire by claiming "[h]ow pleasant it would be in a cozy little jailhouse [. . .] where the bullets couldn't get in. Where they never got in!" (ibid). He loses his faith in humanity and says that: "Never again will I believe what they say or what they think. Men are the thing to be afraid of, always, men and nothing else" (ibid). Seeing that the masses have no significance and just signify numbers to their superiors reinforces his pessimism. Bardamu overhears a conversation between a soldier and a commander about the death of a sergeant that highlights the unworthiness of the human being as follows:

> "Colonel, sir, Sergeant Barousse has been killed."
>
> "So what?"
>
> "He was on his way to meet the bread wagon on the Etrapes road, sir."
>
> "So what?"
>
> "He was blown up by a shell!"
>
> "So what, dammit!"
>
> "That's what, colonel, sir."
>
> "Is that all?"
>
> "Yes, sir, that's all, colonel, sir."

"What about the bread?" the colonel asked. (12)

Such an indifferent attitude mentioned in the conversation above towards the death of masses justifies once more Bardamu's degrading attitude towards the war phenomenon. His justification of the futility of war and the insignificance of the individual does not manifest itself as a rebellion; on the contrary, it undermines his own potency. Modernity, as Ihab Hassan asserts in *Radical Innocence,* brings about the demise of characters causing a split between the *self* and the *world* so that it increases the crisis of the anti-hero because "[m]ediation between Self and World appears no longer possible — there is only surrender or recoil. In his modern recoil, the hero has become an anti-hero" (327). In that perspective, Bardamu is transformed into an impotent, a quiescent, centrifugal character and henceforth dwells on his own benefits which promote his own life in exchange for the loss of the masses. They are insignificant for him and he does not have anything in common with them. In this regard, it can be said that Bardamu represents subjectivity- "I"- contrary to the masses that are anonymous, nameless, impersonal and formless. In this context, Bardamu states about his fellow soldiers that "[s]eeing they refuse to understand anything whatsoever, the best solution would be for them all to get killed instantly . . . The war would be over, and we'd go home . . . Maybe we'd march across the Place Clichy in triumph . . ." (13). Based on Hassan's anti-hero definition, it can be pointed out that Bardamu's acceptance of the victory of evil by seeing no harm of the killing of many soldiers makes him an exemplary figure of the anti-hero who is both surrendered and recoiled by the war itself.

The war conditions in which he feels himself confined in a vicious circle have important impact on Bardamu's recoil as an anti-hero. He is fed up with carrying out the same orders every day which are exemplified by the search for a

place called Barbigny. Major Pinçon assigns soldiers including Bardamu to find this place. When Bardamu and his fellow soldiers ask where it is, he yells at them saying that: "Over there!" (17). Bardamu comments looking out the direction he points "[t]here'd be nothing but darkness, same as everywhere else, an enormous darkness" (ibid). Céline may make use of this place as a metaphor of futile struggle displayed in the course of wars. During their search for this place, Bardamu comes to the conclusion that: "We'd never, absolutely never, forget that we had discovered on earth a man shaped like you and me, but thousand times for ferocious than crocodiles and sharks" (18). The failure in finding Barbigny can signify the loss of *logos* for Bardamu and his disappointment in human beings. In that sense, he expresses his despair as "[w]e never did find Barbigny. We went around in circles until morning and ended up in another village [. . .]" (21). They may be intentionally moved around the same places over and over again to overlook the focal point of the war. The less the masses think, the more ferocious deeds they are able to carry out. The difficult task is to survive against the implications of the evil doers as a desolate individual. One may have to risk his/her own life to set him/herself free otherwise one can be transformed to an evil doer as stated by Nietzsche in *Beyond Good and Evil* that "whoever fights with monsters should see to it that he does not become one himself. And when you stare for a long time into an abyss, the abyss stares back into you" (69). Nietzsche emphasizes on the contagious nature of evil which draws everyone into its realm. However, it is almost impossible to keep any figures away from evil which is prevalent in every lines of the *Journey*.

The contagious nature of evil shows its indications as the internalization of terror. This internalization of terror avoids Bardamu from being transformed into active evil doers in the novel and brings about the sublimation of the deeds. One

night, Bardamu and his fellow soldiers are dismissed from the troop as usual. They pass through the burning villages which are recounted as "a crazy carnival" and express fascination. Bardamu depicts the houses in flames as "you can't imagine how impressive it can be when it's on fire at night! [. . . .] A village, even a small one, takes at least all night to burn, in the end it looks like an enormous flower, then there's only a bud, and after that nothing" (22). The sublimation of the burning villages by Bardamu can be based on a paradigm shift in culture which was experienced with the World War I, as it was the first total war which had broken out since the Napoleonic Wars in 1815. Whereas the weapon industry enabled a revolutionary shift from horses to artillery forces leading to maximize the extent of butchery, it certainly minimized the *common sense* of society, which is instrumental in analyzing the internalization of indifference.

Another incident which shows the lack of common sense and internalization of the indifference takes place when Bardamu stops by a village to carry out a duty assigned to him. He comes across a family whose son is killed and riddled with holes. Bardamu realizes that the sister of the family never cries and is insensitive to the corpse of her brother. The mother suffers but she is pretentious about her mourning. Her pretentiousness is revealed as Bardamu requests for some wine. She leaves her grief aside and starts bargaining saying that "[t]here's nothing left but the best! [. . . .] It costs five francs a bottle" (31).The family's internalization of the grief astonishes Bardamu and shows the superficiality of the sensitivities. He adds that "[f]ive francs is reason enough to hate people and make you want them dead . . . There won't be any love to spare in this world as long as there's five francs" (32). It can be said that this superficiality violates the sacredness of *death*. The death does not any more signify a loss for the majority, on the contrary, it is considered as a

salvation from the ferocity of the world. The hardest thing is to survive against the animosity in life.

The animosity reveals itself both inside and outside war. Bardamu is faced with the animosity in the society after he leaves the army because of his dispossession of patriotic ideals. Ordinary evil outside of the war can be more common and depends on different factors. One of these factors that define the medium of evil is the scale of Bardamu's bravery and his patriotic feelings. He acquaints with an American nurse called Lola. In that respect, Lola's origin is significant because America represents symbolically the body for Bardamu in the midst of the devastation of the World War I, while the Continent renders the dark soul of humanity. Bardamu is attracted by Lola since he needs a fresh start, a frame for his life which has been ruined by war. As for Lola, she seems to be attracted by the war that reminds her of being alive. That is why she is interested in Bardamu, considering that he is a veteran of the First World War. She longs for what lacks in America, a soul that will provide her the meaning of life. However, Bardamu does not believe in the soul she longs for that is why he states that "I believed in her body, I didn't believe in her soul. I thought of Lola as a charming goldbrick, miles away from the war, miles away from life"(45). Contradicting her projection of Bardamu as a hero, he disappoints her with his ideas about the war.

What Lola considers amusing like an old shooting gallery in the carnival reminds Bardamu of the devastation of the war he has witnessed. According to him, the Continent and the whole of humanity stand at the core of the shooting gallery. He thinks that the best way of salvation from this world is either death or insanity. It is not possible to go on living in this world without inflicting evil and keeping one's mental health sane. Bardamu says in this regard that: "The best thing to do when

you're in this world [. . .] is to get out of it. Crazy or not, scared or not" (49). As a result of articulating his unpatriotic ideas, he is labelled as "an anarchist" who should be kept under control until the war is over (50). His stand against the war in that period is quite a marginalized attitude that is identified with cowardice within a culture in which the supporters of war are classified as sane, brave and patriotic. Nevertheless, he utters his rejection to the war emphasizing that: "Even if there were nine hundred and ninety-five million of them and I were all alone, they'd still be wrong and I'd be right. Because I'm the one who knows what I want: I don't want to die" (53). Similar to being incompetent to execute his own death, he states that "I felt so incapable of killing anyone that I thought I might just as well give it up right away and abandon the whole idea" although he has held the idea of death as a salvation for himself during the war so as to extricate himself from butchery.

One way or another, having an ideal makes individuals more inclined to death which is experienced in the heroic character contrary to Bardamu's position in the novel. Since Bardamu does not have any ideal to fight for, it can be claimed that Bardamu has not already started to live. As a result of the ideas asserted in the previous paragraphs, Céline's first solution to keep Bardamu alive in the *Journey* as an anti-hero will be discussed in the following subsection since Bardamu preserves his sanity and cannot die until the end of the novel.

2. The First Survival Method of the Anti-hero: Passive Tolerance to Banal Evil

Because he denigrates the race doctrine and nationalistic ideals, it could be argued that Bardamu is a pacifist. In this subsection, Bardamu's passive tolerance to evil will be explored which is functioned as a means to survive. Because of his antimilitaristic ideas, it can be thought that Bardamu is against all evil deeds

committed in society, but it is the contrary that happens in the *Journey.* The character's indifference prevails the story and keeps him alive. To clarify the position of Bardamu in the novel, it is necessary to note that there is a distinction between the concepts of anti-militarism and pacifism. Paul B. Miller defines anti-militarism as "ideology and activities [. . .] aimed to reduce the civil power of the military and ultimately, preventing international war" (8).Indeed, Bardamu opposes the sublimation of military values and its practices by defending the autonomy of the individual against society. Based on this distinction, he may not be accepted as a pacifist as he does not strongly react to the violence in general in all aspects of life. He sometimes prefers to remain silent and to be reluctant to take an action in order to prevent evil deeds. His tendency to be indifferent to evil deeds can be explained by the normalization of the traumas which causes "the banality of evil" (Arendt 252).

To express my argument clearly, it is useful to mention about the scope of "banality of evil" which is a term coined by Hannah Arendt in her report on the trial against Otto Adolf Eichmann who was one of the principal organizers of the extermination of Jews. Her reports are published in a book named *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil.* In her essay regarding the banal nature of evil, Arendt claims that:

> "Eichmann was not Iago and not Macbeth. [. . . .] Except for an extraordinary diligence in looking out for his personal advancement, he had no motives at all. He was not stupid. It was sheer thoughtlessness – something by no means identical with stupidity – that predisposed him to become one of the greatest criminals of that period. [. . . .] That such remoteness from reality and such

> thoughtlessness can wreak more havoc than all the evil instincts taken together which, perhaps, are inherent in man". (287)

Deeming the evil banal, Arendt asserts that banal means thoughtlessness; that is, when man has no capacity to question his actions. Above all, he lacks a sense of self and a moral sense. In this context, Eichmann is indeed reflective of the common man as there are many like him who are neither sadistic nor perverted; on the contrary, these "common men" are precisely terrifyingly normal. In the *Journey*, Céline offers us a book which is full of sheer thoughtless characters that epitomize the validity of the "banality of evil" in the twentieth century. In the following paragraphs, Bardamu's passive tolerance to evil will be analyzed by focusing on his experience in France, colonial-Africa and America since these places have sui generis traits related to the occurrence of banal evil.

To exemplify Bardamu's passive tolerance to evil, we should focus on the scene where he blasphemes against God which constitutes the source of his indifferent manners. He has an argument with his friend Arthur Ganate where he postulates God as a man-like figure "[. . .] who counts minutes and pennies, a desperate sensual God, who grunts like a pig" (4). In that excerpt, Bardamu presents God as an ordinary individual who has drives and is anxious about his profits. With this degrading depiction, Bardamu underlines the strict relation lying between what is sacred and the nature of evil. The more an individual employs sacred notions, the more inclined he becomes to do evil deeds because he has a feeling that the ideas upon which he constructs his identity are in danger. Therefore, we can classify people roughly into three main groups: the first one carries out the evil deeds; the second group reacts to these deeds and endeavors to prevent them; the third group prefers to remain silent in the presence of evil as long as they are not involved in it. It

should be noted that the boundaries among these groups are not certain and are permeable since the evil remains as an inherent part of ordinary life. Thus, by looking at these three groups of people, it can be put forward that the people in the first and the third group share the same amount of responsibility in the results of evil deeds because the first group fulfils the act and the third one covers it. Throughout Bardamu's travels in Africa and America, and also in France, we never confront the second group of people who react to evil. Céline deliberately highlights the dark side of humanity by portraying the scenes with characters that participate from the first and third group of people.

As a war-torn individual, Bardamu decides to travel in colonial-Africa after he is released from the mental institution in which he is kept because of his unpatriotic ideas. Africa, which is depicted as the core of hopelessness by Céline, is instrumental in undermining Bardamu's orientation in life and it contributes one more step to his *experience.* While the Continent represents the *self*, the people in Africa are posited as *the other*. Bardamu's travel to Africa may aim to show the widespread nature of evil. When we examine the practitioners of evil in Africa, we see that the colonial perspective reinforces the implications of ordinary evil in there. Thus, it may be claimed that Africa is posited as a periphery place where war-torn individuals of Europe like Bardamu are sent to keep them away from the centre. While these individuals are subjected to *otherness* in Europe, they enact the same role by marginalizing the natives of Africa. The dichotomy between slave and master justifies the evil deeds. The natives do not oppose the cruel implications of colonialism as if it was their duty to obey the rules. In essence, it can be said that the ones who are subjected to the exercise of power during the war carry out the same role by torturing the natives in Africa. To exemplify this claim, we can refer to the

incident experienced between Grappa – one of the chief employees of the colonizer company- and a native who is willing to be punished. The insistence of the native to get punished is expressed by Bardamu as follows "[. . .] we were disturbed again by a native who'd been sentenced the week before but was late in having his sentence carried out [. . . .] he'd come of his own free will to get his thrashing [. . . .] he had no intention of going back to his village with his business undone. (133). Grappa refuses to punish the native stating that "I sentenced the motherfucker to those fifty strokes last Thursday, not today" (ibid). Because of Grappa's relation to the native, he can be considered as an evil man. However, Bardamu is confused when he learns that Grappa endures the harsh conditions of Africa to save money for helping his niece to have a good education in Toulouse. Bardamu comments on that "[Grappa] slept like everybody else. He looked quite ordinary. There ought to be some mark by which to distinguish good people from bad" (138). On his journey from innocence to evil, Bardamu needs a guide to show him the path to be taken. Religion may have fulfilled that function but it becomes self-reflexive and indicates itself as the evil doer. When Bardamu contracts malaria in colonial Africa, he comes across a priest while he is about to die in San Tapeta who sells him as a slave to Infanta Combitta, a ship heading to the States. He recounts that "the priest filled me with *tisanes*, a long gilded crucifix dangled over his belly, and when he came near me a loud clinking of coins rose from the depths of his soutane" (155). He is literally at the mercy of the priest who represents the "sensual God". However, the priest, who represents in one sense *God* - divine authority, leaves him alone and Bardamu says that "nothing can be explained. The world only knows how to do one thing, to roll over and kill you, as a sleeper kills his fleas. That would be a stupid way to die, I said to myself, to let myself be crushed like everybody else. To put your trust in men is to get yourself

killed a little" (152). The center is not solid for Bardamu at anywhere. Wherever he goes, he comes across the centripetal ideology of the Continent. He is healed on his way to America and sets out a new beginning in there a cogged of the mass production.

As for industrialized America, Bardamu's story starts with his effort to set himself free from the ship he was kept as a slave. He considers that he can be employed to count fleas, which is a subtle skill for him that he acquired during his voyage to America. He is willing to experience America, a promising country where he can break with his past by exchanging the war memories with the new ones. However, he is disappointed in America where the logos of people are replaced by machines and capital. He yearns for the disembarrassment of his *self* stating that "If it were possible for a man to jump out of his skin, I'd have done it then, once and for all. There was nothing to hold me back" (167). The mass production in America which reinforces the unworthiness of human being causes to deepen Bardamu's split in his character. He confesses that "[the] loneliness in Africa had been pretty rough, but my isolation in this American anthill was even more crushing" (175). He also adds his worry about being lost in the crowd of people stating that:

> "I'd always worried about being practically empty, about having no serious reason for living. And now, confronted with the facts, I was sure of my individual nullity. In that environment, too different from the one where my petty habits were at home, I seem to have disintegrated, I felt very close to nonexistence." (175)

The feeling of his nonexistence reaches its climax when Bardamu starts to work in Ford factory in Detroit where he is assigned to follow the same routine and to work like a machine. He is said that "you're not here to think, you're here to make

movements you're told to. We don't need imaginative types in our factory. What we need is chimpanzees"(193). Based on Bardamu's experience in American society, we can say that the dynamics of the society and the parts of the machine resemble each other. While the mechanisms of European culture were built on nationalistic ideals and wars in the first half of the twentieth century, American society was operated like a machine which constituted the epicentre of capitalism in the nineteenth century. Both these mechanisms have tendency to break down but they keep working despite the hindrances and interruptions like wars and economic crisis. What remains of Bardamu after his journey to America is the dehumanization of all his personal traits which strengthen his quiescent character that leads to the way his passive tolerance in France.

Eventually, Bardamu returns to post-war France as having receded one more step from religion, less innocent and more indifferent to the reality. His experience in America does not enable him to behave in a prudent manner. Since Bardamu is dispossessed from all his sensitivities towards life in there, he is amenable to be indifferent to the environment he lives in. However, remaining silent and retaining irresponsible attitudes towards evil deeds may be accepted as equivalent to be a perpetrator of evil. When we think of the conditions of French society in the aftermath of the World War I, it can be said that passive tolerance to evil may be more common than carrying out the deed personally.

In the suburbs of France, as a quiescent character deprived of any religious beliefs and any ideals that make life meaningful for him, Bardamu observes what happens around him and the ferocity of the poverty on the ordinary people. After he completes his medical degree, he begins to work as a doctor in La-Garenne Rancy indicating the role of his profession as "medicine, even if I wasn't very gifted, had

brought me a good deal closer to people, to animals, everything" (207). We can say that Rancy is depicted as a microcosm of the world in the period when Bardamu is faced with the deeds of ordinary evil at every corner.

One of the most noteworthy events that should be mentioned related to his passive tolerance to evil takes place during the abortion of a girl who is about to die because of her massive bleeding. Bardamu suggests the girl's family to take her to hospital. However, her parents try to keep this incident a secret because of moral anxieties and refuse to take her to hospital while she is slowly dying in her bed. Similar to the mother who pretentiously grieves for her dead son in the war mentioned in the previous subsection, the girl's mother complains about having such a girl saying that: "Oh, doctor, what have I done to deserve such a daughter! Oh, doctor, you won't breathe a word to anyone in the neighborhood, will you? ... I trust you . . ."(224). The pretentiousness of the mother's grief is strengthened with Bardamu's emphasis on her showing off. He depicts this view as "she was delighted with the theatrical aspect of the disaster. Her mournful tremolos monopolized the attention of our little group [. . .]"(225). Bardamu keeps his promise by risking the death of the girl and never reveals this incident to anyone.

Bardamu confronts many incidents similar to that during his time in Rancy. As a result of the passive tolerance of many people embodied mainly in the character of Bardamu, the act of evil spreads like fungus in the society. Like the family mentioned above that ignores the death of their daughter, dysfunctional families in the *Journey* epitomize the practitioners of evil; that is to say, the families become the core of evil instead of being the most secure and exemplary institution. Another terrifying incident in the novel that depicts the terror in the family takes place while Bardamu is passing by a window and witnesses the torture of a little girl by her

family. This event constitutes one of the most scathing scenes in the novel. Bardamu recounts this event firstly like a cold blooded journalist, depicting it from the outside step by step and saying that: "First they tied her up; it took a long time, like getting ready for an operation. That gave them a kick. 'You little skunk!' cried the father. 'The filthy slut!' went the mother. [. . . .] Meanwhile the child was squeaking like a mouse in a trap." (229). As a result of this incident, Bardamu at last accepts his passive tolerance to evil which comprises the argument of this subsection. He confesses to himself that "I listened to the end to make sure I wasn't mistaken, that this was really happening. [. . .] I couldn't close the window either. I was no good for anything. I was helpless. I just stayed there listening, same as everywhere and always" (ibid).

The final event that depicts Bardamu's passive tolerance to evil takes place during his collaboration with a priest called Protiste in exchange for money to persuade Grandma Henrouille and Robinson – Bardamu's doppelgänger as it will be argued further on in this study- to settle down in Toulouse. Before moving onto this compromise with the priest, it is useful to mention the background of the event that forces Robinson and Grandma Henrouille to send Toulouse. Throughout the novel, we sometimes encounter Robinson as an alter-ego of Bardamu. Their relation and the function of Robinson in narration will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. It is essential to mention Robinson in here to render another example of Bardamu's passive tolerance to evil. While pursuing his medical career in the suburbs of Paris, Bardamu visits a family called Henrouilles which is portrayed as a self-enclosed family including Grandma Henrouille, her son and daughter-in-law. For this family, the outer world holds great dangers and they save money for their pension and to pay the mortgage on their home. However, Grandma Henrouille constitutes a hindrance

for them as an obstinate old woman who refuses to die. Mr. Henrouille and his wife plans to kill Grandma via Robinson. Even though Bardamu knows this brutal plan, he again remains silent and pretends to be ignorant. However, his ignorance causes his doppelgänger –Robinson - to lose his eyesight as a result of his falling into the trap they have prepared for Grandma Henrouille. After these incidents, Grandma and Robinson pose a great danger for the family and need to be kept away from home. With the collaboration of the priest and Bardamu, they are persuaded to go to Toulouse. Although he turns a blind eye to the events and lets them go by, Bardamu repents in one sense and underscores the darkness they have experienced as "[w]e were all in the same boat now. The priest would have to learn to walk in the dark like the rest of us. [. . . .] We'd get to the end together [. . .] That's what life is, a bit of light that ends in darkness" (294). About the priest's wisdom to find a solution to this horrible event, Bardamu adds that: "You've got to admit it, those priests know how to bury the worst scandals" (296). In Bardamu's passive tolerance to evil, the role of religion and triggering factors cannot be denied. He is the embodiment of the common man who pretends to ignore the vices experiencing near him. As different from the majority, Bardamu has at least the ability to repent and share his guilt which may be a hope for the future.

To conclude this chapter, it can be summarized that Céline aims to show the identical nature of evil in all places. In France, the source and drives of evil deeds are because of the war and its outcomes. In Africa, the mad and untamed personas of so-called Western civilization become the masters and start to rule the native people who are portrayed as savages tied to monstrous rituals. To base the reasons and outcomes of evil in colonial Africa on nature is a deterministic approach that ignores the responsibility and guilt of the people who hold the power. On the trajectory of

evil after Africa, the essence of the evil deeds never changes in America. Mass production and the mechanization of human beings make everyone akin to each other and reinforce the split in Bardamu's character. In short, Bardamu's *journey* as an anti-hero is a quest to find a place which will make life meaningful for him. Related to his indirect infliction of evil, Bardamu is able to criticize himself and is aware of his flaws and what his quiescent character brings about. He shares his guilt in the presence of the evil deeds he witnesses saying that :"I could never feel entirely innocent of any horrible thing that happened" (239). *The end of the night* somehow signifies *the death* for Bardamu. It is the projected destination that Bardamu wants to reach. The death would in one sense provide a base to integrate him with the society at the end of the night. That's why he is so eager to travel and longs for his death but he fails to die and is condemned to endure life.

CHAPTER TWO

SAVING THE ANTI-HERO THROUGH DOPPELGÄNGER

In the previous chapter, we have discussed Ferdinand Bardamu's passive tolerance to evil and his dispossession of values within the parameters of the anti-hero; this leads us to analyze in this chapter his relationship to women and death. In the course of the narration of the *Journey*, Céline interweaves these two themes from all of which he aims to protect Bardamu. In the first chapter, the auto-fictional traits of the *Journey* having been mentioned, we are able to infer that the character of Bardamu is shaped upon the life of the author himself. This auto-fictional dimension helps us to understand some aspects of the novel more clearly, such as the drives lying behind the portrayal of female figures. In the writing process of the *Journey,* reality and fiction are sometimes intermingled; that is to say, Céline fictionalizes some aspects of his own life over Bardamu who represents his alter-ego. Therefore, Bardamu is designed as an observer to the ferocity of life who experiences all evil aspects of life without interfering directly. Since Bardamu and Céline may embody the same persona, Céline seems to aim at protecting his own entity as a writer by keeping his anti-hero alive by the end of the novel. To achieve this, Céline sets a boundary between events and Bardamu which is transparent enough to see but too thick to exceed. In the course of the construction of this boundary, Céline utilizes a

*doppelgänge*r – named Léon Robinson - who functions as an insurance against death and women, and thus protects Bardamu and eventually Céline himself.

Besides his function of protecting the anti-hero by both being a practitioner and subject of death which will be mentioned in detail in the next paragraphs, Robinson helps us to decipher the codes of Bardamu's anti-heroic character which is inseparable from his doppelgänger. In this respect, it is noteworthy to mention two crucial scenes in which Robinson is staged and employed in order to comprehend Bardamu's trajectory in the novel. Bardamu encounters with Robinson firstly during the war and is astonished by him. Bardamu says pointing out Robinson that "[h]e was the first reservist I'd met in the war. We'd always been in with the Regular Army men. I couldn't see his face, but his voice was different from ours, sadder, which made him sound nicer. Because of that, I couldn't help trusting him a little. Which was something." (*J* 33). Similar to being a reservist in the army, Robinson holds the reservist role in the novel and completes Bardamu's anti-heroic character with his distinctive voice. During their conversation, Bardamu learns that Robinson is decisive on leaving the army. This triggers Bardamu's unpatriotic feelings which lead him a way of being considered as an invalid soldier and result in quitting the army like Robinson. This scene is significant for it shows us the pattern which Bardamu follows during the rest of the novel. We can say that Bardamu traces the same pattern as the one carried out in his first encounter with Robinson in the war whenever Céline wants to change the setting and the flows of events. It can thus be inferred that the use of a *doppelgänger* in the *Journey* signifies a shift and a split in the course of narration. Thus, we can conclude that the *doppelgänger* serves both to save the anti-hero and to bring a fresh angle to the narration.

After their first encounter in France, Bardamu and Robinson come across again in the depths of the jungle in Africa where Bardamu is assigned to take over Robinson's job. They do not at first recognize each other. Bardamu recounts the scene and describes Robinson as "[he] revealed a body, a posture, a voice I had known [. . . .] (*J* 146). Throughout the novel, Bardamu seeks for the voice of Robinson when he feels confined and looks for a way to abandon his qualities in order to free himself via his doppelgänger.

In this chapter, the problematic of women will be firstly discussed from the perspective of threat and danger for the formation of the anti-heroic character if Bardamu is submitted to any one of the female figures. In the second subchapter, the theme of death, which permeates almost all lines and constructs the backdrop of the novel, will be investigated in terms of its possibility to annihilate the anti-hero and how it is prevented with the means of the *doppelgänger*. As belonging to a woman is considered to be equivalent to *death* by Céline, these two themes may foreshadow each other; that is to say, the reason why Céline delays the construction of the intimate relationship with women until the end of the novel is that female figures may lead to the demise of the character when he is submitted to any one of them.

A. The First Mission to Save the Anti-hero: Warding Off Femininity

As the *Journey* is entirely and solely constructed upon a patriarchal ideology and employs the language of men by subduing the voices of women and incorporating them into the spheres of male dominant ideology, it can be claimed that the roles of both sexes are intermingled into each other in the novel. However, this unity which can be described rather as an *amalgam* does not hold a balance. On the contrary, patriarchy takes advantage of this distorted amalgam. This brings about

the acquisition by the female characters of the male language and roles. As Céline aims to integrate the language of the streets in the novel, it can be said that it is impossible to fictionalize a novel in which patriarchy does not reign. When we think of Céline's misogynist viewpoint, it becomes more arguable to discuss the position of women in the *Journey*. In this part, I will set out my discussion by briefly investigating the roles of mothers in the novel which may help us to understand Bardamu's and Robinson's relationship with women. Mothers do not represent the nurturer and provide safe haven for the anti-hero and his doppelgänger where biological and psychological needs are met. Unlike Adam's submission to Eve who represents the first female figure, the anti-hero and his doppelgänger are cautious to all women and attempt to avoid eating the forbidden fruit as it might prevent them from seeing the "end of the night". However, Bardamu and Robinson are diverged to have distinctive attitudes towards female characters that appear to be crucial in designating the route of the *Journey*. Céline aims to make Bardamu witness the entire *Journey* that is a microcosm of life itself. Therefore, he submits the *doppelgänger* to women that brings about his death at the end of the novel.

1. The Problematic Relationship of Bardamu with His Mother

Considered as a controversial theme in literature, motherhood is often discussed through the problematical bond between mothers and daughters. Unlike this widespread discussion, the problematic of motherhood in the *Journey* is argued over the mother and son relationship that leads to prevent and negate Bardamu's relation with women.

We can start investigating Bardamu's relations with his mother by emphasizing Céline's negligence to name Bardamu's mother in the novel. Since the

Journey is constructed on the character of Bardamu, the presence of his mother and their relations hold great significance to comprehend his distorted relationship with women. When we think of the role of Bardamu's mother in the novel, it can be claimed that Céline's preference not to name her is not arbitrary. Céline intentionally fictionalizes Bardamu's mother by ignoring her name in order to focus on her entity and what she represents as a motherly figure over her relations to Bardamu who embodies all agents of the patriarchal system. In that sense, we can claim that Céline intends to prevent Bardamu's mother from including in the symbolic order by configuring her nameless mother. His mother is depicted as a woman who is incapable of protecting her son against the dangers and the atrocities of life. Her attitude towards war and the transformation of the society she is part of drives us to comprehend her as the proponent of the male ideology. In this context, Bardamu's mother is depicted as a woman who supports nationalistic ideals and shares the same sensitivities with the majority of the people who stand in favor of the war and are satisfied with the life they have to endure. The character of Bardamu's mother first appears in the course of narration when she visits Bardamu in the mental institution where he is kept because of his lack of patriotic ideas. Bardamu describes his mother as "whimpered like a bitch whose puppy has been given back to her" (*J* 79). He has been resenting her since she believes what the authorities tell about the causes of the war and approves their explanation of war without realizing the catastrophe that his son experiences. Thus, Bardamu compares his mother to a dog, valuing the latter more since "she believed what they said when they took me away from her. A dog only believes what it can smell" (ibid). As a result of remaining alone in a war-torn society and considering the suffering he has gone through, Bardamu does not agree with his mother on the idea that "poor people like her were born to suffer in every

way, that was their role on earth" (*J* 80). In contrast to his mother, he is aware of the fact that the ordeal of ordinary people has nothing to do with fate but is rather tied to the profits and losses of the ones who support nationalistic ideals. Bardamu concludes by deciding to define his mother as being "untouchable", because of her belief that "[the poor] must have been very naughty [. . .] they were guilty all the same, and giving them a chance to expiate their transgressions by suffering was a great kindness" (ibid). In this regard, it can be said that Bardamu's mother is the quintessence of the female figure in the *Journey* who does not have distinctive voices and is depicted with the instruments of the male dominant ideology. Although they are affiliated by blood ties, Bardamu and his mother have nothing in common. She functions as a mirror that transforms Bardamu's character negatively. They depart from each other by following different paths of life and the context of the war renders their viewpoints to two opposed extremes. Céline's way of depicting the character of Bardamu's mother as a crucial one and an extreme figure shows us that he aims to subvert the bonds of the mother and the son. And Céline achieves to do it by fictionalizing the mother figure as a supporter of the nationalistic ideals. The opposition that is set between the two characters brings about a split and a lack between the two and reinforces, in return, the relation between Bardamu and his doppelgänger.

2. The Projection of Female Characters as the Heiresses of Mother Figures

The occurrences of the mother figure are complemented by the different female characters that are staged in the *Journey* and the complex relationships of Bardamu and Robinson to these female characters are always subjected to distortion. Taking Céline's personal ideas into consideration by looking at his interviews, it can

be argued that he intentionally projected a misogynistic novel which concurrently reflects his viewpoint towards women over his alter-ego - Bardamu. In this context, the boundary between the fictional character and the author can be discussed by referring to Wayne C. Booth who discusses the distinctions among the *narrator* of a text, the *implied author* and the *real-life* author in his essay *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Booth claims that it is not possible to consider and interpret a text without taking into consideration the author since the existence of the author is implied by the existence of the text. Considering what we can conceive as the shadow of the writer in his works, Booth states that:

> However impersonal he may try to be, his readers will inevitably construct a picture of the official scribe who writes in this manner - and of course that official scribe will never be neutral toward all values. Our reaction to his various commitments, secret or overt, will help to determine our response to the work. (Booth 71)

In the *Journey*, Céline creates a diaphanous layer between his individuality and the fictitious world. In the light of Booth's theory, it seems possible to analyze to what extent Céline's own opinions about women influence the depiction of the female figures in the *Journey*. In this respect, Céline's choice of words and description of women in one of his interviews may help us to understand the *Journey* in a more lucid way. Céline degrades women harshly in his interview by stating that:

> "woman is very troubled, because clearly she has every kind of known weakness [. . . .] She has her menopause, her periods,[. . .] she bleeds, she doesn't bleed, she goes and gets the doctor, she has operations, she doesn't have operations, she gets re-operated, then in between she gives birth, she loses her shape, all that's important [. . . .] She doesn't

> want to do a thing and she can't do a thing. She hasn't any muscle [. . .] But it doesn't present an interesting medical situation, woman's decline. It's obviously a fading rose, [. . .] when you see a rose fade, you accept it. Another one will bloom. Whereas in woman, she doesn't want to die. That's the hard part. ("The Art of Fiction")

We can clearly state that Céline, as a *real-life author,* approaches femininity only over bodily aspects and that he builds his misogynist argument over negation of the body pointing it out as a degrading subject. Whereas the act of giving birth or menstrual bleeding is commonly regarded as something that is inscribed within the cycle of nature and as distinctive abilities and physical features that make women unique, Céline considers femininity with abjection and in a rather deterministic way. In one sense, his approach to women can be considered as a form of *objectification,* a notion that appears to be significant in feminist theory. *Objectification* can be defined as "the seeing and/or treating a person, usually a woman as *an object*" (Stanford Encyclopaedia). In our debate related to Céline's objectification in the *Journey*, the focus is mainly on *sexual objectification,* meaning an objectification that is carried out in the sexual realm.

Before investigating Bardamu and Robinson's relationships with women, it is necessary to clarify what sexual objectification means as both characters regard women as an object of desire, which prevents them from tying intimate bonds with the female figures they encounter. Martha Nussbaum describes seven distinguished features in the process of treating a person as an object, almost all of which can be observed in the *Journey,* through the relations of male figures with the female ones. These features can be briefly listed as: *instrumentality, denial of autonomy, inertness, fungibility, violability, ownership* and *denial of subjectivity.* All of them will be

developed when necessary in the next paragraphs when analyzing the female figures (Nussbaum 257). Regarding these features of objectification, we can say that they are not only employed to degrade femininity. Quite the contrary, they can be observed in many groups which have power relations among them in all fields of life. In the *Journey*, the objectification that starts out with mother figures continues to be carried out over other female figures in which the male figures such as Bardamu and Robinson represent potent figures and are depicted as the practitioners of the sexual objectification.

In the light of the issues discussed hitherto, Bardamu's unsuccessful relationship to women can be traced back to the objectification of mother which inevitably leads to the sexual objectification of the female figures. In addition to Nussbaum's classification of treating a person as an object, Rae Langton contributes to the description of objectification by adding three features which are directly related to the sexual realm. Langton puts forward these three features: *reduction to body, reduction to appearance* and *silencing* which are also utilized to estrange Bardamu from female figures in the *Journey* (228). Throughout the novel, five prominent female figures who are subjected to sexual objectification because of their relationships with Bardamu and Robinson are depicted. These figures can be respectively stated as: Lola, Musyne, Molly, Madelon and Sophie. Each woman brings her own story to the narration to portray and complete Bardamu's and Robinson's character.

In parallel to his refusal to identify himself with any ideologies, Bardamu is hesitant to belong to any women in the novel. His refusal shows its first epitomes with Lola in France after he leaves the army. Lola is an American nurse who serves during the First World War in favor of France and thus meets Bardamu. He describes

Lola as : "[her] heart was tender, weak, and enthusiastic. Her body was sweet, it was adorable" (*J* 40). As suitable for Langton's proposed features of sexual objectification, Lola's bodily traits are elevated and juxtaposed with her soul who is fond of nationalistic values and admires the veterans of the war. However, Bardamu is not interested in her soul and complains about her insistence, stating that "[Lola] kept bothering me with the soul, she was always going on about it. The soul is the body's vanity and pleasure as long as the body's in good health" (*J* 43). On the contrary to Bardamu's expectation, she hopes to reveal the patriotic feelings of Bardamu which would result in disappointment because he stands on the opposite side of the war confessing to himself that "if I'd told Lola what I thought of the war, she'd have taken me for a monster and banished me from the ultimate joys of boudoir" (*J* 43). Thus, he continues to sublime her body rather than her soul which is depreciated and built upon the clichés. According to Bardamu, the body is more valuable than the soul which can be related to objectification. However, it may have relation with Céline's profession as a doctor who experiences and observes the suburbs of Paris over the bodies of the poor people during his examinations.

Lola's insistence on the shooting gallery drags Bardamu on the verge of delirium. She imagines all soldiers as a good shot and presumes Bardamu as one of them. As a result of her constant emphasis on shooting, Bardamu turns out to be a paranoid and yells at people that "they're going to shoot! They're going to kill you! The whole lot of you! [. . . .] there'd be shooting from every side, no one would escape, not this one, not that or the other. The time for joking was past..."(*J* 49). While he is ascending to the steps of delirium by being diagnosed as an insane and anarchist which have intermingled meanings in that time, Lola's affection towards him descends from the other stair as a disappointed girl longing for the soul of the

brave men who would sacrifice their lives for their nations. As a desolate individual who lacks of any family and friendship bonds, Bardamu avoids risking his relationship with Lola and endeavors to hide his unpatriotic feelings to satisfy his bodily needs, which results in failure and eventually requires breaking down his bonds with her.

Considering Bardamu's relationship to women, it can be inferred that he functions as a character that swings on two axes. Either he conceives women only as objects of desire by sublimating their bodily traits or as means that would enable him to resurrect and remove his loss of faith towards life. In this respect, Bardamu states that "love is harder to give up than life. In this world, we spend our time killing or adoring or both together. [. . . .] One way or another, kissing is as indispensable as scratching" (*J* 59). Despite the failure in the notions of nationality and motherhood, both of which represent invalid institutions for Bardamu, he seems to still persist his faith in love. In the search of this hope, Bardamu meets with Musyne who is depicted as "a very shrewd little angel" (*J* 63). Thanks to her, he hopes to acquire the ideals he lacks. He expresses his expectancy and optimism about Musyne as follows:

> I thought being in love with somebody as adorable as Musyne would give me every kind of strength and virtue, especially the courage I lacked, just because she was so pretty and such a gifted musician. Love is like liquor, the drunker and more potent you are, the stronger and smarter you think yourself and the surer you are of your rights. (*J* 64)

In his relationship with Lola and Musyne, Bardamu makes use of these women as means or instruments to satisfy his own needs; Nussbaum explains this feature – named *instrumentality* - as "the objectifier treats the object as a tool of his

purposes" (257). In each woman, Bardamu alters his focal point, which indeed shows us that he is in a dilemma to posit women. Whereas he valorizes the bodily traits of Lola, Bardamu does not reduce Musyne to mere appearance. Despite his efforts to sustain this relationship, it still ends and Bardamu states that: "Musyne vanished with the rest. I waited in our apartment, a night, a whole day, a year . . . She never came back to me" (*J* 69). Céline traces hitherto the reason of Bardamu's unsuccessful relationships to extrinsic factors. After Musyne, Céline implies that it will be almost impossible for his anti-hero to tie intimate bonds with women in the rest of the novel as Bardamu says: "[f]rom that time on I became harder and harder to please" (ibid). As a result of the failed relationships with Lola and Musyne, Céline converts Bardamu irreversibly revealing that he will be designated as reluctant to be in accord with any women in the rest of the novel. Before setting out for Africa, which leads him up to America where he meets with Molly, Bardamu concludes about Lola and Musyne saying that: "I never heard from Lola, or from Musyne either. Those sluts were on the good side of the situation" (*J* 81). In this regard, it can be said that the real-life author and the narrator comprise in misogynist viewpoints.

As for Bardamu's relationship with Molly who is depicted as a prostitute, the roles are reversed. As desolate individual in America, Bardamu is gratified by Molly in Detroit while he is working in Ford Factory. The depiction of Molly's character is entirely grounded on her body because of the fact that her body is her means of work. At first, Bardamu and Molly's relationship seems to go on a balanced line. Bardamu has feelings and affection for her and says: "I soon developed an uncommon feeling of trust, which in frightened people takes the place of love. I remember her kindness as if it were yesterday, and her long, blond, magnificently strong, lithe legs, noble legs" (*J* 196). However, as in the case of Lola and Musyne, he cannot prevent

himself from equating Molly's value with her body's appearance and sexual dimension, either. Molly tries to keep Bardamu with herself, so that she may free herself from being reduced to body thanks to a stable relationship developed with Bardamu. On the contrary of her expectation, Bardamu states that he may return to France. Bardamu's decisiveness against Molly's efforts forms a *denial of subjectivity,* which is one of the features of objectification proposed by Nussbaum. This feature involves "the treatment of a person as something whose experiences and feelings (if any) need not be taken into account" (Nussbaum 257). Bardamu neglects her attachment and seeks for the voice of Robinson once more. Nevertheless, Molly tries to dissuade him from returning to Europe by stating that "life can be just as pleasant here as in Europe, Ferdinand. We won't be unhappy together [. . . .] We'll be like other people" (*J* 197). In one sense, she hopes to have an ordinary life with Bardamu. Both Bardamu and Molly are casted out from society; the former is casted out because of the war experience, and the latter she is a prostitute. They could heal each other; however, Céline utilizes Robinson once more in the novel in order to shatter the fragile bonds between Molly and Bardamu, so that Bardamu attains the harbinger - Robinson - that clarifies his mind.

Towards the end of the part with Molly, Bardamu experiences similar feelings tothe ones he felt when he recognized his doppelgänger Robinson in the jungle. Bardamu has longed for Robinson, he says: "after that I expected to meet Robinson any minute. I felt it in my bones. Molly was as kind and affectionate as ever [. . .] she was even nicer than before. There was no point in being nice to me" (*J* 199). As a result of these words, it becomes more certain that Bardamu will quit Molly. In this respect, we can assume that Robinson functions like a *deus ex machina* to save Bardamu from the entrapment he is in. In contrast with Lola and Musyne,

Molly is designed as a more profound and layered character. She should have met all expectations of Bardamu because he is esteemed by her despite the fact that he does not represent the heroic male figure. If it happened so, it would mean that Bardamu is turned into an ordinary figure, something that Céline particularly avoids.

In this regard, Molly proposes one of the most accurate analysis of Bardamu by saying that: "I know you try hard not to be as beastly as other people, but I sometimes wonder if you really know what you want" (*J* 202). With these words, Molly actually sums up the essence of the journey, which is to witness the ferocity of life. And she diagnoses Bardamu's dilemma as "you've got this sickness. . . always wanting to know more and more… That's all. . . Anyway, you have to live your own life. . . Out there, all alone" (ibid). He yearns for learning more about life. However, the more he witnesses, the more pessimistic he becomes towards the humanity and the life in general. Like the mythological figure Icarus, which can be interpreted on a metaphorical level as a figure that shows and embodies the results of negligence and stubbornness of men, Bardamu flies towards the end of the night that certainly signifies death and he burns his wings. In the next part, the road that goes to the final destination of the journey, leading to the death of Robinson instead of Bardamu's will be proceeded to highlight the function of the doppelgänger in the novel.

B. The Pervasiveness of Death

In the *Journey*, the *death* theme which permeates the narration thoroughly has a function that can be seen as reflecting the milieu of the novel and depicting the characters. It is implied that the end of the night certainly signifies death, but it is not certain whose death will be implemented until the end of the novel. Death oscillates between Bardamu and Robinson, leaving the reader in suspense. As Céline does not

submit his anti-hero to any women, he does not let Bardamu die at the end of the novel, as well. The unavoidable dimension of death in human life is thus performed through the doppelgänger. In this part, the trajectory that Bardamu and Robinson follow towards the end of the night will be discussed in detail.

While analyzing the death theme, it is essential to investigate the figure of the *doppelgänger,* which has been put forward and analyzed by Otto Rank as a literary device for the first time in 1914 in his essay named "Der Doppelgänger". Rank's study helps us to understand the relation of doppelgänger with the death in the *Journey*. According to Otto Rank, the study of the figure of the double has two main aspects: anthropological and psychopathological. Regarding the anthropological aspect, Rank clarifies that the double is omnipresent as a representation of the soul and is therefore staged as a guarantor of survival. In this respect, Rank states that "the double has with reflections in mirrors, with shadows, guardian spirits, with the belief in the soul and the fear of death" (qtd "The Uncanny" 9). In other aspect, Rank underlines a paranoid state under the psychopathological category which revolves around the persecution of the ego by its double. In accordance with this paranoid state, " 'the double' [functions] an insurance against destruction to the ego, an 'energetic' denial of the power of death" (ibid). To emphasize the relation of 'the double' with death, Freud stresses that "from having been an assurance of immortality, he becomes the ghastly harbinger of death" (ibid). By referring to what Rank and Freud have stated in their respective study, it can be said that Robinson is performed as an insurance against Bardamu's death until the very end of the novel. Throughout the *Journey*, Bardamu and Robinson witness numerous deaths, some of which are experienced during the war and others are observed during their travels. Among them, I will focus on two distinctive epitomes in order to show how Céline

deals with the death theme; the first is the death of Grandma Henrouille which is significant because it is carried out by Robinson who is an insurance against Bardamu's death but acts like the angel of death towards her. The second one is Robinson's own death, which inevitably waits at the farthest edge of the *Journey*.

Before analyzing the death scene of Grandma Henrouille, it is necessary to remind the background that leads to her death which is mentioned in the first chapter. After Bardamu returns from America, he completes his medical degree and starts to work in Rancy as a doctor. He is invited to examine Grandma Henrouille by her son and the daughter-in-law in order to get a report that proves her "insanity" so that they can keep her money legally. Contrary to Bardamu's mother who is oppressed and accepts the dominance of patriarchy, Grandma Henrouille is portrayed as an obstinate and manly figure, and Céline prefers to give her a distinctive place in the novel instead of subduing her voice. Despite her old age, Grandma Henrouille is determined not to die and embraces the traits which are attributed to the males and is figured in the novel as a grumpy old woman who has quarreled with the outer world; that is, she even does not trust on her own son and prefers to live in an isolated place apart from the main house, which may be an emblematic opposition towards the centripetal approach that posits the male at the core of the society. As an obstinate character, she indeed does not allow the male ideology to expectorate her outside of the society. She heretofore cuts all her ties with the social order and reigns by herself. She believes that "death could come to her only from [outside world] and not from within "(*J* 220). Bardamu describes her isolation as "she wouldn't admit anyone to her antrum[6], not even her son, she was afraid of being murdered" (*J* 217). She actually attempts to challenge her own death which is regarded as the perfect and the

[6] Antrum: a natural chamber or cavity in a bone or other anatomical structure (Oxford Dictionary).

plausible ending for females. Bardamu recounts her as "she had no fears, not even the fear of her own death, which she couldn't conceive of" (*J* 216). With her courage, she achieves to defy being examined by Bardamu and avoids to be labeled as a "mad woman". Given the misogynistic aspect of the novel, we can say that there is no place for women who are more potent than men in the *Journey*. When the voice of a female character is not subdued by making her recall the vicious circle she is confined in, two ways occur in the novel to degrade women: either by reducing them to the *body* or by ending their life in the course of narration which is the most effective way to remove their potency. In Grandma Henrouille's situation, Céline prefers the second option, and to devise a plan to end her life as she is too potent to be discredited by only emphasizing her body.

The death of Grandma Henrouille is significant not just because is it carried out by Robinson but also because of the fact that her displacement to Toulouse leads Robinson to meet with Madelon who kills him at the end of the novel. While devising a plan to end the life of Grandma Henrouille in order to remove one of the hindrances on the way to the end of the night, Céline does not let his anti-hero be involved in this murder. He makes use of Robinson who functions as the harbinger of death in the novel. After Robinson loses his eyesight while he is trying to set a trap for Grandma Henrouille in Rancy which might kill her, both Grandma Henrouille and Robinson pose a great danger for her son and the daughter-in-law. Thus, they are sent to Toulouse where they begin to work in Saint-Eponime church. They take care of mummies and show them to visitors in exchange of money. Grandma Henrouille's direct relation with the dead bodies drives her to be more enthusiastic about life rather than to be reminded her own mortality. In parallel to the revival of Grandma Henrouille, Robinson'e eyesight gets better day by day and he finally meets with

Madelon. However, the revival of Grandma Henrouille does not last for a long time. As a result of a well-organized plan, she is killed in Toulouse by Robinson who acts as the practitioners of evil deeds. Considering the death of Grandma Henrouille's, we can say that neither dominant nor submissive mother figures are able to survive in the *Journey* which might be constructed in this way to highlight the superiority of the male position.

In the novel, Madelon is the fourth prominent female figure after Lola, Musyne and Molly whose relationships with Bardamu are paralyzed. At the beginning, Robinson has intimate relationship with Madelon, in contrast with the pretentious and failed ones of Bardamu. In the case of Bardamu's affairs with women, one of the factors that disrupt his relationships was Robinson's presence. Whenever Robinson occurs in the novel, Bardamu's attitudes towards female figures shift conversely. With the irruption of Madelon, for the first time, we see that their roles have changed. After Robinson sets out for Toulouse, Bardamu feels himself unease again and decides to leave Rancy as soon as possible. He says: "I'd slip quietly away, naturally without a word to anyone, and I'd never be seen again in La Garenne Rancy. I'd leave without trace or address" (*J* 298). After spending some time with trivial things, he decides to visit Robinson in Toulouse. From what we know of Robinson's unexpected appearances, they are not meaningless and they function as means to change the setting and flows of the events. This pattern does not change in Bardamu's immediate visit in Toulouse. Upon Bardamu's visit, Madelon feels the danger that he brings and tries to persuade Robinson by pointing out Bardamu that: "You're not going to be such good friends anymore . . . From now on! . . . It's going to stop! It is going to stop, isn't it, pussycat? . . . From now on I'll be your only companion . . . Understand? . . . How about it, sweetie?" (*J* 354). After

him, the relationship between Robinson and Madelon is disrupted and Robinson leaves Madelon without providing any logical reasons.

However, Madelon is not a submissive figure that may accept Robinson's unexpected and unexplained disappearance. It is said about her that "death didn't mean a thing to that cutie. She had been born during the war, when death came easy" (*J* 334). Bardamu describes her with these words and he indeed foreshadows that *death* will be implemented by her at the end of the night. As a result of Robinson's leaving, Madelon's obsession with him intensifies and she decides to find him wherever he goes. She reaches her goal and finds Robinson in the mental institution in which Bardamu is working. Despite Bardamu's reluctance to hide him in the mental institution, he feels obliged to let Robinson live with him. In this respect, we may question the reason for Bardamu's reluctance. Before Robinson appears in Rancy, Bardamu has stated that "you'd have a hard time talking me out of the idea that Robinson wasn't mostly to blame for my trouble starting up again" (*J* 232). It is arguable to blame Robinson as the source of problems because he represents the evil aspect of Bardamu's character. What is claimed about Robinson points out at the same time Bardamu's himself although he posits himself as a separate entity. Related to unity of the characters and death, we can refer what George Battaille said about the death and continuity in *Eroticism*. He states emphasizing on the discontinuity that:

> "Each being is distinct from all others. His birth, his death, the events of his life may have an interest for others, but he alone is directly concerned in them. He is born alone. He dies alone. Between one being and another, there is a gulf, a discontinuity. This gulf exists, for instance, between you, listening to me, and me, speaking to you. We

> are attempting to communicate, but no communication between us can abolish our fundamental difference. If you die, it is not my death. You and I are discontinuous beings." (12)

As for the Bardamu and Robinson, we cannot say that they are discontinuous beings. On the contrary, they bring into existence each other. Whereas communication becomes almost impossible among characters after Bardamu starts to work in the mental institution, Bardamu and his doppelgänger can preserve their communication as they seek for each other's voice throughout the whole novel.

In spite of their continuous figuration, Bardamu suggests Robinson that "You haven't any spirit, Robinson [. . .] you ought to get married, maybe that would give you some zest for life" and adds that " if he'd got himself a wife, it would have taken him off my hands" (*J* 255). Bardamu suggestions remains pretentious and futile as it is not possible to divide their intermingled identities. In this context, he behaves to disrupt Robinson's relationship with Madelon which may end with marriage. The reason why Céline portrays Bardamu with these inconsistencies can be based on the disposition of setting him as an anti-hero. Otherwise, a consistent figure without having any flaws may be incapable of reflecting some aspects of the common man. As a result this *inconsistent* manner, Robinson and Bardamu reunite towards the end of the night.

After Madelon finds Robinson in the mental institution, the close relation between Bardamu and Robinson is once more displayed. Madelon implies that they may have homosexual relationship and threatens them to reveal this *fact* to the public. Upon this claim, Bardamu harshly states that "homosexuality wasn't my line, and Robinson didn't give a damn about sex one way or the other. If anything was bugging him, it certainly wasn't sex" (*J* 401). As both characters are diverged in

many instances, they show different attitudes towards sex because Bardamu believes that "that's all we think about! In the cradle, at the cafe, on the throne, in the toilet. Everywhere! Everywhere! Our peckers! Napoleon or not! Cuckold or not! Pleasure first!"(*J* 305). By taking Bardamu's words about sex and his statements about the inevitability of death into consideration, which he says that: "Nobody can really resist music. You don't know what to do with your heart, you're glad to give it away. At the bottom of all music you have to hear the tune without notes, made just for us, the tune of Death" (*J* 256), it can be said that the psychological dimension of his character involves both *Eros* and *Thanatos* which were put forward by Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* as the principal drives that lead to a negation between life and death. Considering Eros which represents life drives, Freud means that it signifies a tendency towards cohesion and unity. In contrast to Eros, Thanatos which represents death drives operates in the opposite direction so as to undo connections and destroy things.

Related to death drives, Freud points out that there is in certain organisms a wish to return to a simpler and earlier stage of physical existence. Freud emphasizes that: "I begin inanimate and I end inanimate" and thus argues that "[t]he aim of all life is death". As a parallel to what Freud says about death, Bardamu states that "that's what life is, a bit of light that ends in darkness. But on the other hand, maybe we'd never know, maybe we wouldn't find anything. That's death" (*J* 294). Death signifies nothingness for Bardamu and he experiences the whole of this journey to arrive this final destination. The femininity which Céline attempts to protect Bardamu from throughout the whole novel brings about death inevitably. Bardamu invites Madelon to join them in a carnival so that they can solve their problems with her and he can evade the threats of Madelon about their being homosexual. The

events do not happen as he has expected and Madelon goes crazy when she learns that she means nothing for Robinson. While they are returning from the carnival, a fierce quarrel breaks out between Madelon and Robinson in the taxi. She tries to reveal Robinson's feelings towards her. However, Robinson do not hesitate to express his ideas and disgust towards her by saying that "if you want the whole truth. . . everything, absolutely everything! disgusts me and turns my stomach! Not just you! . . . Everything! . . . And love most of all! . . . Yours as much as anyone else's! (*J* 425). During the *Journey,* we hear for the first time what Robinson thinks extensively. He explains his disgust towards life and love, which are in common with Bardamu's ideas. As a result of Robinson's long soliloquy, Madelon shoots him and the death which oscillates between Bardamu and Robinson reaches its target. By looking at Robinson's corpse, Bardamu recounts that scene as "[he] was like a stranger in the room, someone who had came from a horrible country and you wouldn't have dared to speak" (*J* 429). At the very end of the night, the death as the most absolute power occurs with all its terror and causes an irreversible split between Bardamu and Robinson. The doppelgänger completes his function by enabling Bardamu to observe the ferocity of life without making him interfere directly and leaving stage for him.

CONCLUSION

In this study, I focused on *Journey to the End of the Night* which is regarded as the magnum opus of Louis-Ferdinand Céline and as one of the most scathing books ever written in the History of Literature. This work holds a pivotal place in terms of its detailed depiction of the World War I and the postwar urban societies in three different continents. I discussed the reason why Céline preferred to include Africa and America in the narration besides France. He may intend to show the identical nature of evil in all countries which may be thought by Céline to be inherent in the acts of majority of human beings in the first half of the twentieth century. Therefore, he utilizes his pen like a mirror to render what he experienced in Africa and America, and observed eventually as a doctor in the suburbs of Paris.

With regard to modernist aspect of the novel, Céline might think that only an anti-heroic character best exemplify the situation and predicament of *modern man* which he witnessed. Therefore, he designs Bardamu who embodies most of the inconsistencies and flaws of the ordinary man in his anti-heroic character. In the first chapter, it was argued that Céline aimed to exceed the boundaries of the formal French language which prioritized the concerns of the bourgeoisie by excluding the anxieties and recoil of the ordinary people. Céline thus included the anti-bourgeois content and integrated the language of the streets in the *Journey* in order to reflect the experiences of the anti-hero - Bardamu. In this respect, I emphasized the impotency of Bardamu and the reasons of his indifferent manners which resulted in because of

his placement as an observer to events. To exemplify Bardamu's impotency, I mentioned his avoidance to integrate with the masses. In this regard, it was claimed that he does not have any ideals in common with the majority of the people who persist their faith in religion and nationality. In contrast with them, Bardamu endeavors to cut all his ties with the society in the *Journey* by avowing his disagreement with religion and French race explicitly.

As a war-torn individual, Bardamu is not able to sustain a well-balanced communication with the society. The war with all its terror brought about a split between his *self* and the *world*. Based on the absence of the meditation between his identity and society, I asserted that Bardamu is transformed into a quiescent and centrifugal character who dwells on his own benefits by ignoring the loss of the masses. In this respect, I inferred that Céline proposes two possible solutions to save his anti-hero in the novel. The first one is to design him as a character that has passive tolerance to evil acts who ignores and remains silent instead of taking action to prevent them. To be more precise, I mentioned the dysfunctional family that tortures their daughter and Bardamu's attitude towards this incident; the brutal plan of the son Henrouille to kill his mother, both of which epitomize clearly his indifference to the reality evolving around him.

In the second chapter, I discussed Céline's second solution to save his anti-hero with the figuration of a doppelgänger named Robinson and his contribution to the *Journey*. I supported the idea that Céline might consider even anti-hero insufficient of reflecting what he aims to render and thus projects an alternative voice to Bardamu's by devising a doppelgänger. Therefore, it was stated that Robinson is formulated as a doppelgänger who completes and reinforces anti-heroic features of Bardamu. Otherwise, he might easily be turned into an ordinary character which may

be captured by women and death. These themes may be regarded by Céline as phenomenon that may bring down a character into the realm of stereotypical figures which he definitely tries to avoid.

By analyzing the function of the doppelgänger, I firstly discussed the relationships of Bardamu and Robinson with women which follow similar trajectories but ends in distinctive ways. While analyzing their avoidance to have intimate bonds with women, I investigated the problematic relationship of Bardamu with his mother who is depicted as an oppressed woman and the proponent of the male dominant ideology. Therefore, I put forward the idea that the absence of the protective mother figure has impact on shattering his relationship with women.

In this regard, I referred to Céline's personal ideas as a writer by focusing on his misogynistic statements. It was claimed that Céline deploys his own prejudices and judgments on his anti-hero and the doppelgänger. One way or another, he fictionalizes the events that lead to the shattering Bardamu's relationship with women; either the female figures like Lola and Musyne break up with her since they long for the heroic character or Bardamu does not submit himself to women even if they have intimate feelings towards him as in the case of affectionate Molly. As a result of these failed relationships, I concluded that Céline hesitates to let Bardamu belong to any women because femininity is included in the evil aspect of life by Céline which inevitably brings about *death.* Therefore, Céline submits Bardamu's doppelgänger to a woman named Madelon who is depicted as an obstinate and evil figure. At the end of the *Journey* which definitely signifies *death,* Céline prefers to sacrifice Robinson instead of Bardamu. By this way, Céline achieves to keep his anti-hero alive, who represents his alter-ego at the same time, within the predicament

of the modernity by making him witness the repugnance of the society at the very last moment of *Journey to the End of the Night.*

To sum up, it can be said that Céline dealt with the inadequacy of the language and the character formation throughout the *Journey.* By concentrating on the language of the streets and creating an anti-hero with his doppelgänger, he attempted to overcome the notion of the inadequacy of the language and the problematic of representation in the first half of the twentieth century. We can be sure of his success as one of the greatest writers of the History of Literature by looking at the writers he inspired such as Henry Miller, Allen Gingsberg and Jack Kerouac. As an ordinary reader, I am really glad to read the *Journey* also in Turkish thanks to the devoted translation of Yiğit Bener who aimed to catch the same resonance in Turkish which Céline accomplished in French and achieved to translate the novel without minimizing the content and form.

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