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JOHN BERGER AND HIS DECONSTRUCTIVE WAYS OF SEEING AS APPLIED IN HIS WORKS

Ph.D THESIS

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ÖZET

KAZAZ ÇELİK, Gülden. John Berger: Yapıbozucu Görme Biçimlerinin Eserlerine Uygulanışı, Doktora Tezi, İstanbul, 2018.

John Peter Berger dünya savaşlarının doğurduğu endişe ve kaygının derin etkisini üzerinde hisseden birçok önemli düşünür ve yazarlardan biridir; bu sebepledir ki kendisi de var olan dünyayı ve ona ait olan doğruları yeni bakış açıları önenerek altüst eder. 1972 yılında ilk olarak yayınlanmış olan eseri *Ways of Seeing* (*Görme Biçimleri*) kitleleri yeni ve farklı bir görme biçimi kazanmaya ve bunun aracılıyla da daha zengin ve derin okumalara, anlamalara ve yorumlamalara davet eder. Berger'ın bu yaklaşımı tezin yapı bozucu ve alımlama kuramlarını temel alma ihtiyacını doğurmuştur. Dolayısıyla, ilk bölüm önde gelen eleştirmenlerin düşünceleri ve Berger'in kendi kurgusal olmayan eserlerindeki yazıları ve çizimlerden oluşan görselleri eşliğinde yapı bozucu eleştiriyi açıklamaya ve bu tarz yaklaşımın okuyucular tarafından farklı okumaları ve yorumları nasıl sağlayacağını göstermeye çalışır. Bu bölüm Berger'ı yapı bozucu yaklaşıma eğilimi olan bir düşünür ve yazar olarak tasvir ederken, takiben gelen bölüm bunu desteklemek adına Berger'i farklı bakış açılarından, hatta kendi gözlerinden, bu özelliğini vurgulayarak tanıtmayı hedefler. Tezin son bölümü ise, ilk iki bölümün üzerinde durduğu kurumsal yaklaşımların Berger'ın kurgusal yazınına nasıl yansıdığını göstermeye çabalar. Bu amaçla, Berger'ın *Düğüne, Talihli Bir Adam: Bir Köy Doktorunun Hikâyesi*, *Yedinci Adam* ve *Kral: Bir Sokak Hikâyesi* romanları olası okumaları ve yorumlamaları irdeleyerek hikâyeler içerisindeki söylenenleri ve söylenmeyenleri irdeler. Bu tez aracılıyla incelenen bazı görme biçimleri ve onun sağladığı anlamlar ve söylenenler ileride söylenmemiş olan birçok mevzuya söylenen olabilme umudu taşır.

Anahtar Kelimeler:

John Berger, Yapı bozucu eleştiri, Görme Biçimleri, Alımlama Kuramı, Söylenenlere karşı Söylenmeyenler

ABSTRACT

KAZAZ ÇELİK, Gülden. John Berger and His Deconstructive Ways of Seeing As Applied in His Works, Ph.D. Dissertation, İstanbul, 2018.

John Peter Berger is one of the many influential thinkers who are deeply concerned about the anxieties of the post-world war experiences. He offers new ways of seeing life and its realities by suggesting deconstructing the accepted perceptions of reality. Through his 1972 book *Ways of Seeing*, Berger paves the way of having a different way of looking, seeing, reading, understanding and interpreting, which establishes a theoretical background based on deconstruction and correspondingly reader-response theory. Accordingly, the first chapter of the dissertation endeavours to embrace the concept of deconstruction and the theory of potential reader responses not only in the light of the leading theoreticians' criticism but also with the help of Berger's non-fiction verbal texts as well as the images consisting of his own drawings. Since the end of this chapter reveals the fact that Berger has a tendency to hold a deconstructive approach to life, the following one aims to accumulate sufficient evidence to make such a claim as a result of a documentation of Berger's recognition from different perspectives including his own as well. Having presented the literary background, the third chapter attempts to reveal how these deconstructive theories can be applied to Berger's fiction to exhibit the possible reader responses. To this end, Berger's, *To The Wedding*, *A Fortunate Man: A Story of a Country Doctor*, *A Seventh Man: Migrant Workers in Europe* and *King: A Street Story* have been examined with much emphasis on what is said and what is left unsaid in these stories. As Berger's works grant the reader considerable latitude in envisaging different possibilities and meanings, this study strives to offer a series of these in the hope of their positive impact on coming studies.

Key Words:

John Berger, deconstruction, ways of seeing, reader-response theory, the spoken versus the unspoken

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ABBREVIATIONS

BT	*Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*
BWH	*Basic Writings of Martin Heidegger*
BWN	*Basic Writings of Nietzsche*
Gram	*Of Grammatology*
LC	*Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*
LT	*Literary Theory*
IMT	*Image, Music, Text: Essays*
PD	*Politics of Deconstruction: A New Introduction to Jacques Derrida*
SE	*The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*
TLP	*A Theory of Literary Production*
WD	*Writing and Difference*
"SSP"	"Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences"

INTRODUCTION

John Peter Berger born in 1926 in London, England, led a long life with so many inspiring ideas and a vast array of works until his death in 2017 in Antony, France where he spent much of his life. Born and bred as an English man, he has been lionised as an essayist and cultural thinker as well as an artist and screenwriter over the years in the United Kingdom. By the early 1950s, Berger was widely recognised as an art critic working for the New Statesman and New Society and "[he was] an increasingly visible presence in Great Britain, mainly because of his work with independent television and later because of the programs he broadcast for the BBC[1], some of which, as videotapes, [became] standard fare for secondary students in schools throughout the United Kingdom"[2]. Over the years, his *Ways of Seeing* has successfully reached to people at every social status ranging from adults to children and motivated them to grapple with his ways of seeing life. Yet, such a fame has unintentionally overshadowed his personality as a fiction writer although he has produced numerous works of fiction.

It is noticeable that Berger is indeed a prolific writer producing numerous works which are difficult to be labelled according to a specific genre. However, all his books problematize similar issues, concerns and themes. In his evaluation of Berger's works, Richard Appignanesi, contemporary writer, editor and the founder of the Writers & Readers Publishing, unequivocally expresses this aspect of his personality as follows:

[1]This is Berger's BBC TV series of thirty-minute episodes known as *Ways of Seeing*.
[2]Joseph, H. McMahon." Marxist Fictions: The Novels of John Berger". (Contemporary Literature: JSTOR, Spring, 1982). Accessed 16 July 2018, 202.

> John Berger is a writer whose work is noted not only for its diversity- poetry, art criticism, essays, documentary writing, novels, and most recently [referring to the time as to the late 1960s but mostly early 1970s] screenwriting- but also for the originality of its insight, the frequent innovativeness of its technique, and, above all, for its socialist perspective.[3]

As highlighted, Berger has an 'original insight', 'innovative technique' and 'socialist perspective' in any of his works regardless of their genre. In order to keep a close track of those qualities, among so many alternatives, only four of Berger's works of fiction have been chosen as the focal concern of this study. They are *To The Wedding* (1995), *A Fortunate Man: The Story of a Country Doctor* (1967), *A Seventh Man: Migrant Workers in Europe* (1975) and *King: A Street Story* (1998). Besides, these works of fiction have been able to offer a chance of revealing Berger's deconstructive approach to storytelling and his fiction's openness to new interpretations formulated by its reader's responses.

Evidently, these stories are able to depict what has not been told for a long time or suggest a point of view which has not been introduced hitherto. As Joseph H. McMahon notes it down in his article "Marxist Fictions: The Novels of John Berger",

> [all] of John Berger's novels are centered about individuals whose lives are passed on the margins of history; they are attuned in different degrees to the sounds of great events but are not usually among the makers of those sounds.[4]

[3]Richard, Appignanesi. "The Screenwriter as Collaborator: An Interview with John Berger". (Cinéaste: JSTOR, Summer, 1980). Accessed 20 July 2018. [Further explanation is added to avoid confusion about the time.]
[4]Joseph H. McMahon." Marxist Fictions: The Novels of John Berger", 204.

It is so true that Berger's fiction is full of individuals who try to exist on the peripheries of the society and thereby being shadowed by the people having a voice which enables them to be literally present. Among so many works of Berger having similar appeal, these aforementioned works are the ones which are able to make the reader see their presence on the margins and accompany them through their voices. This is one of the determining reasons of choosing these books and another one is due to the fact that these are the works of Berger manifesting not only his ways of seeing life focusing on the unseen and unheard but also his storytelling which seems to be inevitably formed by his deconstructive attitude. When these stories are more attentively read, it can be felt that there are more than what they explicitly tell about the stories of the individuals on the peripheries and this incrementally increases their significance. Accordingly, the act of reading these stories necessitates a theoretical background related to Berger's multiple perspectives.

In order to discuss Berger's myriad ways of seeing, the dissertation is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter intends to have a theoretical background which serves to elucidate the further arguments in the following chapters. Bearing this in mind, the chapter introduces Jacques Derrida who noticeably has ignited the initial spark of deconstruction. The attempts to grasp the idea of deconstruction and how it is able to affect the ways of looking at the literary texts gradually lead to the discussions of reader-response theory emphasizing the significance of possible interpretations. To expound on the reader-response theory further, a variety of critical approaches have been employed but more importance has been given to the critiques of Wolfgang Iser and Pierre Macherey because of the fact that they have had a crucial role in shaping the backbone of the study. In the light of these

influential critics' views, the chapter ends with an assumption of Berger's inclination to hold a deconstructive approach not only towards life but also to his works.

Based on such an assumption, the chapter two has initiated the search for Berger's recognition from his absence rather than his presence since having such a perspective is thought to be a deconstructive look at Berger's life and starting to define him from his absence rather than his presence looks like very Bergerian[5]. Either in his absence or in his presence, when Berger is looked at through different contexts, it can be observed that his evaluation is no different than each other. In the hope of coming up with a conclusion or at least a high possibility of Berger's deconstructionist approach, Berger has initially been looked from other's perspectives which mostly define him as a critic, painter, theorist, teacher or a journalist who has a dissenting voice in his political stance. Through these perspectives, it can be said that Berger is a real polymath working on so many fields and therefore producing various works through which he has very frequently been mentioned as Marxist and sometimes as feminist. The way people around the world know Berger has been so similar to his appeal in Turkey where he has also very frequently been labelled as a Marxist and feminist. In Turkey, Berger has mostly been well-known by his obsession with seeing which offers a considerable potential to change the ways of seeing so many issues. This part of the chapter is essential not only because of showing how Berger has been known in Turkey but also due to the fact that it supplies a kind of brief reference to his personal attachment to Turkey as well as his relations and feelings towards them. This chapter concludes with

[5]The word of "Bergerian" has never been come across during the whole process of the dissertation; nonetheless, it is felt that it has to be coined in order to refer to the ideas, concepts or feelings Berger may have.

Berger's own attempts to assess himself. Even though Berger neither defines himself as a Marxist nor a feminist, one may argue that the way he thinks and expresses himself is so close to a deconstructive attitude. Otherwise, why would he be so sensitive to the ways of seeing most of which are relied on the critique of binary oppositions? In this sense, the reason why Berger does not prefer to label himself as 'something' seems to be due to his deconstructive perception highlighting the fact that there is nothing black and white; that means, nothing can prevent him from being one 'thing' and all concurrently. In the end, no matter how hard it is to prove that Berger is a deconstructionist, what is crystal clear is that he has a deconstructive approach which can be observed not only in his thoughts and feelings but also in his stories.

Owing to the fact that Berger simply defines himself as a storyteller among his so many other qualifications, the last chapter prioritizes his fiction in order to prove that Berger is deconstructive in his storytelling. Fallen under the deep influence of Derrida, Iser and Macherey's views, the chapter scrutinizes Berger's storytelling in two directions: What is said versus what is left unsaid. In the first part, what Berger explicitly says in his fiction has been told and in doing so the common characteristics in his storytelling have been enumerated, described and analysed. In the second part, the books have further been examined according to the aforementioned critics with the aim of ascertaining what is beneath or beyond them. Each of these works is effective to reveal the spoken whilst exploring the unspoken and while doing this each effortlessly deploys one of the basic critiques of binary oppositions between appearance and reality.

Having scrutinised about what is said in correspondence with what is left unsaid, the conclusion part of the dissertation shares some of the closing remarks about Berger's storytelling and its manifold interpretations created by the reader's responses. It is so upsetting that the novels chosen among so many works of Berger unwillingly but compulsorily have left out so many other meanings and interpretations, as Iser's criticism emphasizes. For example, Berger's first two works of fiction, *A Painter of Our Time* and *The Success and Failure of Picasso* have been outside of the scope of this dissertation as well as his non-fiction writings such as *Art and Revolution: Ernst Neizvestny and the Role of the Artist in the U.S.S.R.* (1969) and *Daumier: The Heroism of Modern Life* (2013) due to their arguments on arts. However, some of Berger's works of non-fiction on arts and art criticism have been included so as to shed light on his deconstructive approach to arts and ways of seeing. Since this has been mostly achieved through his namesake book *Ways of Seeing* (1972), the book has been used more not only to grasp Berger's deconstructive ways of thinking, looking and seeing life and arts, thereby fiction but also to mould this study. To this end, Berger's *Bento's Sketchbook* (2011) has been utilised to throw a new light on the congruence of the verbal text with the drawings, the visual, whereas his *Confabulations* (2016) has helped to make sense of Berger's self-recognition as a storyteller. Hence, some parts of those have been employed in the study.

In a similar vein, the collections of Berger's personal writings and essays have mostly been used to better understand Berger and his ways of looking at life though only a few of them, *An Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos* (1984), *Hold Everything Dear* (2007) and "Why Look at Animals" (2009), have been in line with the central arguments of this

dissertation. All the rest of Berger's writings such as *Keeping a Rendezvous* (1992), *At the Edge of the World* (1996), *The Shape of a Pocket* (2001), *Here is Where We Meet* (2005,) *From A to X* (2008) and "Meanwhile" (2008) have been left out of the scope of the study so as to keep its primary focus. Besides these, most of Berger's earliest fiction including the novels of *The Foot of Clive* (1962) and *Corker's Freedom* (1964), his trilogy of novels depicting the life of a European peasant inspired by Berger's own observations in Haute-Savoie, in the French Alps *Into The Labours* [*Pig Earth* (1979), *Once in Europa* (1987), *Lilac and Flag* (1990)] and his Booker prize-winning novel *G.* (1972) as well as his short stories compiled in the book called *Photocopies* (1996) have all been deliberately omitted since they do not directly contribute to the main arguments of the dissertation.

Serving a similar purpose of not distracting attention from the core of the study, most of Berger's joint works such as *Marcel Frishman* with George Besson (1958), *Titan: Nymph and Shephard* with Katya Berger (1996), *Isabelle: A Story In Shorts* with Nella Bleiski (1998), *My Beautiful* with Marc Trivier (2004), *War With No End* with Naomi Klein, Hanif Kureishi, Arundhati Roy, Ahdaf Saueif, Joe Saccoand, Haifa Zangana (2007), *From I to J* with Isabel Coixet (2009), *Lying Down to Sleep* with Katya Berger (2010), *Railtracks* with Anna Michaels (2011), *Cataract* with Selçuk Demirel (2012) and *Four Horizons* with sister Lucia Kuppens, sister Telchilde Hinkley and John Christie (2015) have been excluded in the study. Nevertheless, two joint works of non-fiction have been included to enrich the argument of the study. The first one is *Flying Skirts: An Elegy* which Berger published in collaboration with his son Yves after his beloved wife's death, Beverly Bancroft, (2014) and the second one is *Smoke* which was Berger's last work having been created with worldwide known

Turkish illustrator Selçuk Demirel (2017). Both have been utilised to exemplify how theoretical assumptions work on Berger's non-fiction.

As clearly understood, choosing some of Berger's works unavoidably entails omitting so many others and it is even inevitable that the analyses of the chosen ones have already left out other possibilities and interpretations. Therefore, the dissertation aims to invite the reader to have different ways of seeing and present and produce more interpretations to the reader. In doing this, it is hoped that this dissertation will inspire others to fill the gaps in these four books or encourage them to work on other Berger's works since such an intention has just heralded the beginning of possible studies on Berger and his fiction. Despite the fact that this dissertation is able to offer a specific part of his literary personality, it hopes to strengthen his presence in the academia and contributing to the studies of Berger not only in literature but also in other interdisciplinary fields.

CHAPTER 1

Wor(l)ds Behind What is Revealed

1.1 From Deconstruction to Reader-Response Theory

It has been believed that every cloud has a silver lining. It was after the World Wars when so many influential philosophers, thinkers and intellectuals started to lose their faith in life, truth and religion. As the humanity experienced the worst, they may have thought that there would be no *paradise* either on earth or afterlife. The conception of reality and truth as reflecting the doctrines of religions especially of Christianity became problematic; thus, they have started to be questioned. In other words, "[t]hings fall apart; the centre cannot hold".[6] Hence, once the center loses its hold, Jacques Derrida, who is among one of the leading figures of modern thought and philosophy, changes the way of looking at life.

Having questioned the center, Derrida proposes a new way of thinking emphasizing the fact that "the center could not be thought in the form of a present-being, that the center [has] no natural site, that it [is]not a fixed locus but a function, a sort of nonlocus in which an infinite number of sign-substitutions [come] into play".[7] This approach to life obviously and intentionally damages the reliability of the *presence*. It becomes a critique of seeing or

[6]William Butler Yeats, "The Second Coming" (The Dial, 1920).
[7]Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*. "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1978), 278.

having one specific perspective since while the center holds its center, it concurrently becomes the substitute of an another center, which subsequently requires multiple ways of looking while erasing the confining borders of the center. This seems to be the moment when Derrida in his words has turned against "the metaphysical traditional concept of the sign" and reevaluated the relationship between the signifier and the signified as followed below:

> Differance invites us to *undo the need for balanced equations*, to see if each term in an opposition is not after all an accomplice of the other: "At the point where the concept of differance intervenes… all the conceptual oppositions of metaphysics, to the extent that they have for ultimate reference the presence of a present,… (signifier/signified; sensible/intelligible; writing/speech; speech [parole]/language [langue]; diachrony/ synchrony; space/time; passivity/activity etc.) become non-pertinent.[8]

Suggesting the idea that each opposition may not necessarily oppose each other, Derrida comes up with the critique of binary oppositions by proposing an idea of différance. He objects to all the conceptual oppositions of metaphysics and claims that they are not contrasting but alternating parts of the one. Such a kind of Derridean approach invites people to reconsider all the widely accepted notions of the Western thought and encourages them to reevaluate the signifier and the signified. As in the views of Bressler, Derrida asks "[w]hat if no transcendental signified exists? What if there is no presence in whom we can find ultimate truth? What if all our knowledge does not arise from self- identity? What if there is no

[8]Jacques Derrida, *Positions* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1981), 41. [emphasis added].

essence, being, or inherently unifying element in the universe? What then?".[9] Based on possibilities which were not thought before, Derrida poses similar vital questions enabling people to ruminate on *possible possibilities* of life.

Turning Western philosophy on its head, Derrida aims to attract attention by positing the idea that the subject (presence) should not outweighed the object (absence) because he questions how "writing is nothing but the representation of speech" or how it could only serve as a supplement to speech.[10] It has been believed that speech is related with presence, the subject or the signifier; therefore, it is superior to writing which connotes absence, the object or the signified. Yet, Derrida shakes the reliability of this idea (and all others) since "[…] in each of these binary oppositions or two opposing centers, once concept is superior and defines it by its opposite or inferior center".[11]

Derrida has explicitly stated that he has owed a lot to the philosophers and thinkers living before him. He thinks that whatever he has learned from them is so essential that he could not form his ideas without their thoughts. When needed, he agrees with them and gets inspired to go beyond; however, time to time he very explicitly disagrees with them as in the case of J.J. Rousseau who is one of the most frequently cited thinkers of Derrida. Rousseau praises speech as a living organism and "condemns writing as destruction of presence and as a disease of speech"[12] since he believes "[l]anguages are made to be spoken, writing serves only as a supplement to speech…Speech represents thought by conventional signs, and

[9]Charles E. Bressler, *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice* (NY: Prentice Hall, 1998), 128.
[10]Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1997), 141.
[11]Bressler, *LC*, 125.
[12]Derrida, *Gram*, 141.

writing represents the same with regard to speech. Thus, the art of writing is nothing but a mediated representation of thought".[13] In a stark contrast, Derrida changes this dichotomy between writing and speech hegemony and comes up with the idea that what is the unrevealed, the signified, can be more than the revealed, the signifier.

Despite the fact that there are some philosophers with whom Derrida disagrees, there are some others whose ideas have had a significant impact on him. For example, when he has translated Husserl's "Origin of Geometry" and has written an introduction to it, he seems to be inspired by Husserl who "seems to suggest that expression can never be adequate to the sense which it expresses".[14] That is, in view of Husserl, what if the signifier is insufficient to express itself and needs something more to be properly explained; more precisely, what if it needs its binary opposition to fully express itself. Similarly, Spivak, who is a contemporary literary theorist and critic, speculates on the idea that it is highly likely that the roots of différance may lie at Husserl's work in a meticulously written preface of *Grammatology*. Accordingly, she says, "[t]he idea [of différance] is *perhaps* there in Husserl, and if so, it is only *sketched*"[15]. This echoing might well explain the fact that Derrida has been influenced by Husserl's ideology while forming his own on différance.

Owing to the fact that modern thought and philosophy have cumulatively developed in time, Derrida does not only benefit from Rousseau and Husserl but also from Nietzsche's philosophy, Freud's psychology and Heidegger's ontologist ideas. Susanne Lüdemann, who

[13]Ibid., 144.
[14]Gayatri C. Spivak, "Introduction". *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1997), lii.
[15]Spivak, "Introduction", li.

is a professor of German and Comparative Literature at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich, Germany, expressly explains how Derrida formulates his ideas with the help of them in this way: "Derrida repeatedly [emphasizes] that [they, referring to himself along with other theoreticians] are the heirs of a philosophical and political tradition"[16]. This may explain why Derrida persistently quotes from these "three magistral grammatologues" according to Spivak's terms .[17] Once in his own work entitled as *The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*, Derrida explains its reason in this way:

> […] I would probably cite the Nietzschean critique of metaphysics, the critique of the concepts of being and truth, for which were substituted the concepts of play, interpretation, and sign (sign without truth present); the Freudian critique of self-presence, that is, the critique of consciousness, of the subject, of self-identity and self-proximity or self-possession; and more radically, the Heideggerian destruction of metaphysics, of ontotheology, of the determination of being as presence.[18]

Since these three magistral grammatologues aim to erase the exact presence of the transcendental signified which is "an external point of reference on which one may build a concept or philosophy"[19], Derrida states that he frequently shares their ideas in his works. To clarify, he cites from Nietzsche who puts the consistently changing nature of truth "under

[16]Susanne Lüdemann, Preface, *Politics of Deconstruction: A New Introduction to Jacques Derrida* (California: Stanford UP, 2014). (The page number is not stated.)[The further explanation is added to avoid confusion].
[17]Spivak, "Introduction", lxvii.
[18]Jacques Derrida. *The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and The Sciences of Man*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 2007), 249-50.
[19]Bressler, *LC*, 123-4.

erasure", Freud who aims to erase the unshakable essence of presence by revealing its unconsciousness, and Heidegger who tries to obliterate the exact and constant existence of being as presence. In brief, it appears clear that Derrida has been benefitted from the critiques of these three magistral grammatologues although he does not always concur with their views.

As Lüdemann shares in her Preface, Derrida emphasizes that the legacy he has inherited "cannot simply be taken as a self-evident matter; it is inherently heterogeneous, contradictory, and divided".[20] Each of these three magistral grammatologues have contributed to the idea of Derridean deconstruction in a different way. Spivak succinctly defines how differently each contributes to the emergence of the idea of deconstructing by their critique of binary oppositions in the preface of *Grammatology* with these words: "Heidegger came close to undoing them, 'destroying' them (Heidegger's word), but gave in to them as well. Freud nearly always believed that he worked within them. But Nietzsche cracked them apart and then advocated forgetting that fact!"[21] Obviously, each of them has worked on the ways of 'destroying', 'destructuring' and deconstructing in their own ways.

Nietzsche, who has been defined as one of the influential philosophers "[writing] trenchantly with a heavy and serpentine vocabulary by convoluted reasoning" by Peter Gay, the Sterling Professor Emeritus of History at Yale University, "has turned accepted religious beliefs on their head, thus reshaping the twentieth century belief".[22] Likewise, Christoph Cox

[20]Lüdemann, Preface, *PD*, [The page number is not stated].
[21]Spivak, "Introduction", xxxviii.
[22]Peter Gay, "Introduction". *Basic Writings of Nietzsche* (NY: The Modern Library, 2000), x.

in his book entitled *Nietzsche: Naturalism and Interpretation* agrees with the idea that Nietzsche's deconstructive perception "[has rejected] the corollary to the 'God's eye view': the notion of an absolute ontology, the idea that there must be someone, true way that the world really is".[23] This shows why and how Nietzsche proclaims the death of God and embarks on an inquiry into truth and knowledge,[24] which directly attacks lingering thoughts and values of Europe on religion. Such an approach seems to be an inspiration for Derrida to have his critique of binary oppositions. Spivak shows this affinity with these words: "Nietzsche's undoing of opposites is a version of Derrida's practice of undoing them through the concept of 'différance' (deferment-difference)"[25] and adds that even Derrida himself realizes this similarity and mentions it in *Speech and Phenomena*.

In a similarly deconstructive way, Nietzsche has also had a sceptical questioning of European thought which he feels fully deceptive. According to Cox, Nietzsche tries to"[dissolve] the traditional epistemological dualism of "subject" and "object" into a common field of "interpretation" in which "subject" and "object" are of a piece and boundaries between them are constantly shifting"[26] because Cox believes that by adopting such an approach Nietzsche aims to resist "European thought [which] has attempted rigorously to distinguish "what is" from "what merely seems or appears to be", "what is not yet," and "what is no longer".[27] In other words, due to "[the] volatile sensory experience in which things incessantly appear and disappear"[28], things cannot be precisely defined. On the other hand, Gay expounds

[23]Christopher Cox, *Nietzsche: Naturalism and Interpretation* (California: California UP, 1999), 4.
[24]Cox, *Nietzsche*, 8.
[25]Spivak, "Introduction", xxix.
[26] Cox, *Nietzsche*, 4.
[27]Ibid.
[28]Cox, *Nietzsche*, 19.

on this view by sharing Nietzsche's ideas about truths which are nothing but a useless fiction[29] for Nietzsche and concludes that there are no facts but interpretations for him and "…[these] interpretations can be challenged only by other interpretations, not by recourse to brute facts". As a consequence, the variety in interpretations nourished by uncertainties enables readers and critics to deconstruct the texts to produce more meanings.

Whereas Nietzsche tries to lessen the effects of the traditional epistemological dualism of subject and object by interpretations, Lüdemann shares what Heidegger tries to achieve as follows:

> Heidegger stresses that the "sense of Being" should by no means count as something as self-evident as metaphysical tradition claims. His philosophy does not address beings as beings, but focuses instead on what "is"- the unthought basis of Being that the occidental tradition does not explore, yet which determines our understanding of beings. Heidegger calls his project in *Being and Time* "fundamental ontology"; it represents the attempt to get behind ontology as the supposed first philosophy and to uncover its preconditions. This uncovering requires "deconstruction" – not wholesale annihilation, but rather, following the Latin word destruere, the act of undoing or taking apart…[30]

It seems Lüdemann wants to lay stress on the fact that Heidegger challenges the exact expressions of subject as primary kind of Being through 'the act of undoing or taking apart'.

[29]Gay, *BWN*, "Introduction", x.
[30]Lüdemann, *PD*, 7.

Such an act of doing inevitably entails a deconstructive evaluation of metaphysical tradition; to this end, Heidegger poses questions which he believes they "are paths toward an answer".[31]

To Heidegger, an inquiry into Being is rooted in ancient ontology; however, he never supports the belief that 'Being' is the most universal concept which has the character of an exact and ideal entity. Similar to what Derrida thinks about the misleading perception of the uniqueness of the center, Heidegger claims that 'Being' in traditional logic cannot be simply defined or presented. This makes Heidegger a deconstructionist who strives to prove that 'Being' suggesting presence or subject is superior than nothingness. By making a critique of binary oppositions, Heidegger offers such a new way of seeing:

> […] it is held that 'Being' is of all concepts the one that is self-evident. Whenever one cognizes anything or makes an assertion, whenever one comports oneself towards entities, even towards oneself, some use is made of 'Being'; and this expression is held to be intelligible 'without further ado', just as everyone understands 'The sky is blue', 'I am merry', and the like. But here we have an average kind of intelligibility, which merely demonstrates that this is unintelligible.[32]

Comporting with the beliefs in the traditional existence of being which is only one-sided, Heidegger mentions the intelligibility of the Being which can be easily understood by the examples of 'the sky is blue" or 'I am merry'. However, in doing so, he also emphasises the fact that this is 'an average kind of intelligibility' embracing its unintelligibility as well. In other words, Being may be partially understood by what it says or what we believe we

[31]Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings of Martin Heidegger* (USA: Harper Collins Publishers, 1977), 373.
[32]Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 1962), 4.

understand since there is always something in it we do not comprehend. As a consequence, Heidegger insists that Being should be considered not only by its intelligibility but also its unintelligibility and hence its perception is not easy to grasp. This may justify the reason why Heidegger gets complicated about the use of 'Being' in time in that way at the very beginning of his highly recognised book, *Being and Time*:

> For manifestly you have long been aware of what you mean when you use the expression 'being'. We, however, who used to think we understood it, have now become perplexed.[33]

Attempting at *formulating*[34] Being, Heidegger abandons the idea of precise entity of Being and this enables various different interpretations since when the hierarchies are ruled out, the possibilities of existence and perception come into existence.

Rather than Nietzsche and Heidegger, new ways of looking are proposed to the critique of binary oppositions which have contributed to Derrida's idea of différence by Freud. Freud's impact on Derrida has more obviously felt since Freud is more concerned about "[the] study of the derivatives of the unconscious [which] will completely disappoint our expectations of a schematically clear-cut distinction between the two psychical systems".[35] That is, the possibility of studying the parts of the unconscious will inevitably block the existence of a 'clear-cut distinction between the two psychical systems', namely binary

[33]Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 1.
[34]Ibid., 5.
[35]Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. (London: Vintage, 1959), Vol: 14, 44.

oppositions.[36] Making an objection to the 'clear-cut distinction between the two physical systems, it is evident that Freud disagrees with the exact presence and superiority of speech over writing, for instance. As Spivak views that Freud "speculates that the very mansion of presence, the perceiving self, is shaped by absence, and- writing".[37] Hence, it is this absence where "the verbal text is constituted by concealment as much as revelation, that the concealment is itself a revelation and vice versa".[38] This suggests the coexistence of presence and absence; 'concealment' and 'revelation', which seems to be directly in line with Derrida's critique of binary oppositions. Besides, Freud recommends that:

> […] where the subject is *not* in control of the text, where the text looks supersmooth or superclumsy, is where the reader should fix his gaze, so that he does not merely read but deciphers the text, and sees its play within the open textuality of thought, language…[39]

Here, Freud offers a kind of deconstructive way of looking at the text which can be deciphered as long as the readers keenly observe it and goes beyond what is simply written. In other words, Freud's critical approach on text assigns an active role for the readers to attentively read and further analyse its parts "as if the text could not know itself" as Terry Eagleton, who is an important contemporary literary critic contributing to the discussions of deconstruction and the critique of binary oppositions, expresses in *Literary Theory*.[40] Like a

[36]Barry agrees with the idea that "[…] deconstructive reading uncovers the unconscious rather than the conscious dimension of the text, all the things which its overt textuality glosses over or fails to recognize. This repressed unconscious within language might be sensed" (71). Accordingly, deconstructive reading prioritizes the unconscious of the text behind the clear-cut distinction between the two psychical systems that Freud mentions.
[37]Spivak, "Introduction", xl-xli.
[38]Freud, *SE,* Vol: 5, 525.
[39]Ibid.
[40]This quote does not only reveal the fundamental shift in deconstructive ways of looking at life and accordingly the text but also becomes the seeds of reader-response theory which will be studied in the following pages.

tangle of dream-thoughts which cannot be unravelled, the very text awaits being deconstructed due to Freud.

Apart from these three magistral grammatologues, Derrida benefits from so many other influential thinkers from Plato and Aristotle to the Russian formalists Marcel Mauss in anthropology, Ferdinand de Saussure, N. S. Troubetzkoy, and Vladimir Propp in linguistics. Roman Jakobson and Claude Lévi-Strauss; Hegel and Jacques Lacan; Karl Marx and Michel Foucault have all contributed to Derrida to have his own way of thinking. In the light of all these critics' views, he introduces the word différance which enables him to develop his own critical approach on longstanding binary opposition. The seeds of deconstruction came out by Derrida's essay entitled "Différance"[41] through which Derrida has introduced the idea of différance. There, he suggests to compensate the loss of meaning by the word of différance "[…] for différance can refer simultaneously to the entire configuration of its meanings"[42]. That is, "[in] its polysemia this word […], like any meaning, must defer to the discourse in which it occurs, its interpretive context"[43]. Therefore,

> [différance] is neither simply active nor simply passive, announcing or rather recalling something like the middle voice, saying an operation that is not an operation, an operation that cannot be conceived either as passion or as the action of a subject on an object, or on the basis of the categories of agent or patient, neither on the basis of nor moving toward any of these terms. For the middle voice, a certain non-transitivity, may

[41]Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*. "Différance". Trans. Alan Bass. (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1982).
[42]Ibid., 6.
[43]Ibid.

> be what philosophy, at its outset, distributed into an active and a passive voice, thereby constituting itself by means of this repression.[44]

It is so noticeable that Derrida avoids describing the word différance with stark oppositions and thereby offering to conceive it as the middle voice interacting between the two contrasting sides. In this sense, the middle voice somehow paves the ground for "the play of difference"[45] in the text since it is "[…] the playing movement that 'produces'"[46].

Derrida furthers his arguments on deconstruction in his three reference books: *Of Grammatology, Writing and Difference,* and *Speech and Phenomena*. Derrida's views presented in these books attract the attention to the act of reading by publicly announcing how significant it is to understand that previously written texts accepted as unified artistic artefacts necessitate the act of 'fragmentation' since "[presence] [of anything] can be articulated only if it is *fragmented* into discourse".[47] This could well explain the reason why he attaches more importance to the activity of reading as follows:

> […] the reading must always aim at a certain relationship, unperceived by the writer, between what he commands and what he does not command of the patterns of the language that he uses. This relationship is not a certain quantitative distribution of shadow and light, of weakness or force but a signifying structure that critical reading should produce.[48]

[44]Ibid., 7.
[45]Ibid., 4.
[46]Ibid., 9.
[47]Spivak, "Introduction", lxvi.
[48]Derrida, *Gram*, 158.

This is one of the crucial moments when Derrida overtly puts forward the idea that the act of reading comprises of not only what the writer intends and produces but also what the reader understands and this act is hardly defined through oppositions like 'shadow and light' or 'weakness or force' since it is apt to change as a result of each individual act of reading. Offering such a changeable experience, the text is barely reliable and thus it requires to be 'recreated' every time by a 'critical reading' which denies any fixed meanings. According to Barry's evaluation, this view assures that there is no fixed meaning of the text since he holds a belief that

> […] reading and interpretation […] are not just reproducing what the writer thought and expressed in the text […] Instead, critical reading must *produce* the text, since there is nothing behind it for us to reconstruct. Thus, the reading has to be deconstructive rather than reconstructive in this sense".[49]

This kind of critical reading alerts us to the fact that what is present in the text is also its absence. Hence, the absence of the text may be as important as its presence, which reminds us of a critique of a binary opposition between absence/presence. Additionally, the idea of which the text is not merely constituted by what the writer intends is also an invitation for the readers to have their own reading and interpretation which may not necessarily correspond with what the writer produces.

These discussions started by Derrida in the late 1960s continues with Barthes' contributions to them. Barry assesses their role in the development of the term of

[49]Barry, *BT*, 69.

deconstruction with these words: Derrida "embraces this decentred universe of free play as liberating" in his lectures whereas Barthes "celebrates the demise of the author as ushering in an era of joyous freedom"[50] in his 1968 essay "The Death of the Author". Barry credits that Barthes' essay is the turning point in his theoretical and ideological standpoint since Barthes's views veer into the directions focusing more on the independent and autonomous power of the text over its creator's, author's. This sounds so true when his views in "The Death of the Author" are taken into consideration:

> Thus is revealed the total existence of writing: a text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author.[51]

That the text can be more than what the author intends to tell seems to be the core of Barthes' argument here. As a result of this perspective, the text is no longer a finished product of the writer; in contrast, it is the reader who is able to finalise the process of its production by incorporating his own interpretation.

Barthes claims that "classic criticism has never paid any attention to the reader; for it, the writer is the only person in literature"[52]. The presence of the writer instead of the reader has always been accepted; yet, it is the time for the omnipotent writer to leave his place to the reader and thereby reversing the binary opposition between the writer and the reader.

[50]Ibid., 67.
[51]Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text: Essays*, "The Death of the Author" (NY: Hill and Wang, 1977), 148.
[52]Ibid.

That is to say, the absence of the reader has ruled out the presence of the writer, hence the binary opposition between them. In Barthes' own words,

> [we] are now beginning to let ourselves be fooled no longer by the arrogant antiphrastical recriminations of good society in favour of the very thing it sets aside, ignores, smothers, or destroys; we know that to give writing its future, it is necessary to overthrow the myth: the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author.[53]

In a deconstructive way, Barthes refuses to be deceived by previously set assumptions and asserts that it is high time to subvert the perceptions of writing for its own sake, which leads us to the death of the Author and in return to the birth of the reader. The birth of the reader enables multiplicity of reading which offers "a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and crash"[54] and hence foster multiple interpretations. Believing that there is no "single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God),[55]Barthes invites the readers onto the stage of performance to work on this multiplicity and consequently to have their own interpretation.[56]

If deconstruction entails such a critical reading, the act of an active reading requires producing further meanings and interpretations which heavily depend on the reader and their response. Predicated on what three magistral grammatologues and Derrida and Barthes' criticism on binary oppositions put forward, the deconstructive reading prepares the ground

[53]Barthes, *IMT*, 148.
[54]Ibid., 147.
[55]Ibid., 146.
[56]Such a call reminds a reader-response theory which will be further analysed in the following parts of the first chapter.

for reader response theory which prioritises the reader and their subjective responses and interpretations of the text rather than what the writer merely says. This is definitely not the first time when the idea of interpreting the text has been introduced since hermeneutics which is termed as the "science of art of interpretation" according to Terry Eagleton in his *Literary Theory*[57] was already touched before. In the light of Eagleton's account, the development of hermeneutics has been documented in a nutshell. Due to his brief summary, hermeneutics has emerged against Husserl's phenomenology which claims "the certainty of the immediate appearance of things in our consciousness without any reference to the external world".[58] Husserl believes that the knowledge of phenomena is absolutely certain;[59] therefore, "[it] [does not need to be interpreted], constructed this way or that in reasoned argument".[60]Nevertheless, Eagleton has a strong belief in the fact that hermeneutics is indeed based on the possibility of new meanings and interpretations as a result of deconstructive, active and dynamic readings in contrast to Husserl's views. Hence, he shares how the understanding of hermeneutics has constantly changed in time starting with Heidegger, who is generally accepted as Husserl's "most celebrated pupil,"[61] and continuing with so many others such as E.D. Hirsch according to whom hermeneutics is relied on the numerous different valid interpretations let by "author's expectations and probabilities"[62] unlike Heidegger's assumption of hermeneutics as "questions of historical interpretation rather than on transcendental consciousness"[63].

[57]Eagleton, *Literary Theory*, 57.
[58]Ibid., 48.
[59]Ibid., 49.
[60]Ibid., 50.
[61]Ibid., 53.
[62]Ibid., 58.
[63]Ibid., 58.

Hirsch has a belief that "literary meaning is absolute and immutable"[64] in regard to the author's meaning; in other words, any different meanings or interpretations cannot be attained by the readers without the permission of the author. In this sense, Eagleton appraises that what Hirsh posits is like what Husserl asserts about meaninglessness of "having a private experience" different from what the author intends.[65] Indeed, neither Hirsh nor Husserl realizes the inevitable mutual interaction between the text (or the writer since the text is written by him) and the reader since "meanings are not as stable and determinate as they think […] they are the products of language, which always has something slippery about it" as Eagleton straightforwardly states.[66] Because of the fact that it is highly unlikely to talk about pure intention or meaning of the text aimed to be achieved by the writer, it is improbable to claim a single text simply revealing the author's intention (as if it was possible to be detected). To expound on the development of hermeneutics, Eagleton mentions Hans-Georg Gadamer, who is another critical authority in the field of hermeneutics, and elaborates on his views via his *Truth and Method* in this way:

> […] the meaning of a literary work is never exhausted by the intentions of its author; as the work passes from one cultural or historical context to another, new meanings may be culled from it which were perhaps never anticipated by its author or contemporary audience…All interpretation is situational, shaped and constrained by the historically relative criteria of a particular culture; there is no possibility of knowing the literary text 'as it is'.[67]

[64]Ibid.
[65]Ibid., 52.
[66]Ibid., 60.
[67]Ibid., 62.

Gadamer's suggestion for a literary work which is ready to produce different meanings, which may be out of the expectations and intentions of the author, seems to be akin to what Derrida once claimed about "a certain relationship, unperceived by the writer, between what he commands and what he does not command of the patterns of the language that he uses".[68] Although Gadamer's criticism appears to be as stimulating and promising as Derrida's critique in terms of reader's presence at the act of reading, which was ignored hitherto, Gadamer's hermeneutics "seeks to fit each element of a text into a complete whole"[69] to replace it within the works of the past, as Eagleton lays stress on it in his concise summary. Gadamer believes the interpretation of the text is achievable on condition that it is produced in line with its historical and cultural setting. This looks like to be the primary reason for which he feels that while the text is not 'as it is', its interpretation is bound to history and historical circumstances.

While Gadamer cares the potential of the text to produce new meanings as a result of the reader's understanding, Eagleton highlights the fact that his hermeneutics ignores "the possibility that literary works may be diffuse, incomplete and internally contradictory"[70] regardless of any historical assumptions. Thus, it still allocates a limited place to the reader's interpretation. The reader is able to obtain a more powerful or stable place by the existence of reader response theory which allots a specific room for the reader. Taking such an approach, the act of reading comes to prominence and as Eagleton notes it is understood that

[68]Derrida, *Gram*, 158.
[69]Eagleton, *LT*, 64.
[70]Ibid.

"reading is not a straightforward linear movement, [but] a merely cumulative affair"[71] which requires an active participation of the reader and their deconstructive analysis of the text.

Accordingly, the text is not always easily and necessarily kept under the expectations and intentions of the author since it is not for the author but the reader. To this end, Eagleton refers to Wolfgang Iser who, Eagleton believes, "[forces] the reader into a new critical awareness of his or her customary codes and expectations.[72] In other words, Eagleton echoes Iser's views by clarifying that"[rather] than merely reinforce our given perceptions, the valuable work of literature violates or transgresses these normative ways of seeing, and so teaches us new codes for understanding".[73] Accordingly, Eagleton points out that such a transformative power of literary works suggested by Iser drives the reader "to put [their]beliefs into question and allow them to be transformed"[74] so that the reader is able to respond to the text which offers to acquire deeper self-consciousness and new ways of seeing. As a consequence of such an act of reading, the reader is exposed to new particular horizons which are opening up for them since they are willing and enthusiastic to be transformed. Aiming to replicate Iser's views, Eagleton expands on the act of such a reading and the newly-attained role of the reader and indicates that Iser "[grants] the reader a greater degree of co-partnership with the text"[75] and in doing so he approves different readings of the text caused by its polysemantic nature. This assigns the reader an active role for producing various

[71]Ibid., 67.
[72]Ibid., 68.
[73]Ibid.
[74]Ibid., 69.
[75]Ibid., 70.

meanings and interpretations shaped by their own experience of reading as Iser himself describes in his *The Implied Reader* with these words:

> […] The fact that completely different readers can be differently affected by the 'reality' of a particular text is ample evidence of the degree to which *literary texts transform reading into a creative process that is far above mere perception of what is written*. The literary text *activates our own faculties, enabling us to recreate the world* it presents. The product of this creative activity is what we might call the virtual dimension of the text, which endows it with its reality. This virtual dimension is not the text itself, nor is it the imagination of the reader: it is the coming together of text and imagination.[76]

In the light of Iser's own observation, as long as 'the reality of a particular text' can be described, it is possible to talk about different readers whose ways of reading and interpreting vary and this serves as a proof of the act of reading which is definitely more than what is written, to Iser who cherishes reader's participation and creativity. Hence, instead of having a simple text formed within the intentions of the author, having different readers and accordingly different interpretations are quite stimulating to suggest that the literary work is more than the text itself, which explicitly shows the necessity of a dynamic relationship of the text with the reader with their imagination.

Through this interaction, Iser feels that the reader's imagination and creativity are most needed when the unwritten part of the text surpasses the written part of it since it is the exact place where the reader's creative participation is encouraged.[77]That could be the reason why

[76]Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1974), 279, [emphasis added].
[77]Ibid., 275.

Iser credits that "[…] it is only through inevitable omissions that a story gains its dynamism"[78] since

> whenever the flow is interrupted and we are led off in unexpected directions, the opportunity is given to us to bring into play our own faculty for establishing connections- for filling in the gaps left by the text itself. These gaps have a different effect on the process of anticipation and retrospection, and thus on the 'gestalt' of the virtual dimension, for they may be filled in different ways. For this reason, one text is potentially capable of several different realizations, and no reading can ever exhaust the full potential, for each individual reader will fill in the gaps in his own way, thereby excluding the various other possibilities; as he reads, he will make his own decision as to how the gap is to be filled.[79]

In accordance with Iser's approach to the act of reading, once 'the flow' of ideas 'is interrupted', the text starts to offer its gaps to the reader and invites him to 'establish connections' by 'filling in the gaps' shaped by the reader's own faculty. At this time, it is possible to have 'several different realizations' as each individual may have their own way of reading and interpreting which focuses on some part(s) of the text selectively whilst omitting some others. Due to Iser, these gaps and omissions are as inspiring and interesting as they are for Gadamer even though Iser gives more authority and freedom to the reader to surmount the challenges of interpreting the unwritten text full of indeterminacies.[80]

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[78]Ibid., 280. [In a deconstructive way, this could also be considered as a critique of one of the binary oppositions, dynamism (action)/omission (passivity)]

[79]Ibid.

[80]At this moment, Eagleton compares Iser with Roman Ingarden who thinks the text is already equipped with the indeterminacies settled by the author and asserts that "Iser is a much more liberal kind of employer than

Yet, the reader still has a limited freedom and does not fully obtain autonomy for interpretation according to Iser's criticism. The reason why Iser's criticism restricts the reader is that it forces the reader to construct an internally consistent interpretation based on the text within the limits imposed by its author. That is, Iser defends the idea that the reader cannot produce any interpretation which comes out of the control of the author and his written text and in order for elucidating this he states that:

> [the] author of the text may […] exert plenty of influence on the reader's imagination […] but no author worth his salt will ever attempt to set the *whole* picture before his reader's eyes. If he does, he will very quickly lose his reader, for it is only by activating the reader's imagination that the author can hope to involve him and so realize the intentions of his text.[81]

Positing the idea that it is the author who attaches meaning ('influence') into the text and controls how much of it ('not the whole picture') could be comprehended by the reader is as restrictive as Hirsch's understanding of hermeneutics which can only be formulated as long as the typical expectations and probabilities of the text are adhered to the author's intentions. In this sense, Eagleton thinks that Iser grants permission to the reader for "a fair degree of freedom" as he believes that "[the reader is] not free simply to interpret as [he wishes]"[82]. Instead, he mentions Stanley Fish who gives a kind of feeling of complete freedom and authority to the reader by claiming that the true writer is the reader himself. However, he does not completely assent with Fish due to the fact that "[l]anguage is not in fact something

Roman Ingarden" (Eagleton 70) since Iser's reception theory… is based on liberal humanist ideology (Eagleton 69).

[81]Iser, *Implied Reader*, 282.

[82]Ibid., 73.

we are free to do what we like with"[83]. As a result, Eagleton comes to the point where the reader can make a literary text mean whatever they like and concludes his brief summary of hermeneutics with his views.

Nonetheless, it seems that once more importance is attached to the reader and the writer is ignored, another binary opposition is about to be created. Considering all the attempts to reverse the binary oppositions, there is no need to form a new one; instead, more authoritative and autonomous power should be assigned to the reader to work on the literary text which is produced by the writer with and without his intentions. Such a responsibility is given to the reader by Pierre Macherey who is one of the most noticeable French literary critics nourished by Althusserian and Marxist criticism. Macherey's believes that "the relationship between the author and the work… is…deceptive"[84] unlike Iserian theory since what the author describes, his own intentions, cannot simply be what the reader produces in meaning.[85] Therefore, "[…] the work is by no means what it appears; it lurks, deceptively, behind its real meaning".[86] To put it simply, "[t]he work is not what it appears to be".[87] Perhaps, as once a famous French-Cuban essayist and memoirist, Anais Nin, says "[t]he role of a writer is not to say what we can all say. But what we are unable to say", the ideal role of the reader is not to read what is written or said; instead, to go beyond the text and explain what it does not or could not say.[88]

[83] Eagleton, *LT*, 76.
[84]Pierre Macherey, *A Theory of Literary Production* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 29.
[85]Ibid., 88.
[86]Ibid., 24.
[87]Ibid., 22.
[88]Ibid., 87.

It is unlikely to determine any truth of the text meant by the author which does not necessarily correspond to the reader's understanding of it. Consequently, it is impossible to talk about any single meaning of the text, that is to say, the polysemantic nature of the text is approved. So, "it is not a question of confronting the work with some external truth… this truth is not there in the work, like a nut in its shell; paradoxically, it is both interior and absent".[89] Precisely expressed, the truth which is nothing more than a plenitude of meaning is both present and absent; that is, it is present for some readers but absent for some others. Therefore, different meanings and interpretations are possible due to the reader's deconstructive reading.

> Interpretation is repetition, but a strange repetition that *says more by saying less*: a purifying repetition, at the end of which a hidden meaning appears in all its naked truth. The work is only the expression of this meaning, an ore which must be smelted to extract its precious content. The interpreter accomplishes this liberating violence: he dismantles the work in order to be able to reconstruct it *in the image* of its meaning, to make it denote directly what it had expressed obliquely…[90]

Because of the fact that the text may say different things or it may persistently be founded on the multiplicity of meanings,[91] its interpretation can be described as the act of 'saying more by saying less'. In other words, through the deconstructive reading, the reader selects some meanings and interpretations from the text and in doing so they reach new perspectives, most of which may not be anticipated by the author. Nevertheless, this selection is the unavoidable

[89]Ibid.
[90]Ibid., 85.
[91]Ibid., 88.

acceptance of some of the omission from the text, which means while choosing some meanings, the readers ignore some others which can be prioritised by some other readers and interpreters. This selection of the meaning(s) of the text which could be conceived as smelting 'an ore' 'to extract its precious content' requires a meticulous process through which a deconstructive look at the text can be targeted in order to divide the text into the parts first and then to reconstruct them to form and reveal the meaning(s) which is (are) not explicit enough beforehand.

Contradictorily, Macherey mentions 'a hidden meaning' which can be revealed by the interpreter as a result of a deconstructive reading although he claims that "this idea of a hidden truth or meaning remains unproductive and misleading"[92] at another time. He reinforces this idea when he talks about the difference between complexity and mythical depth. He believes that "[…] unevenness is characteristic of every text"[93] and this leads to multiplicity which can be examined by the reader; however, this multiplicity or complexity, should not be regarded as 'mythical depth' since

> […] the [text] is not like a form which so simply hides a depth. The [text] hides nothing, has no secret: it is entirely *readable*, visible, entrusted […] Loquacious with an obstinate silence, the work is not immediately accessible: it cannot say everything at once; its scattered discourse is its only means of uniting and gathering what it has to say.[94]

[92]Ibid., 111.
[93]Ibid., 25.
[94]Ibid., 111. [Here, Macherey describes the text as 'loquacious with an obstinate silence' and this could be seen as a critique of another binary opposition related to the presence/absence since the text can express itself or can be present when it deals with its 'obstinate silence', namely its absence.]

Accordingly, there is nothing concealed in the text; the text is there to be read and analysed.[95] However, it is not easily accessible either for it is so insufficient and incomplete that the meaning derived from the text cannot be effortlessly gained. "Rather than that *sufficiency*, that ideal consistency, we must stress that determinate insufficiency, that incompleteness which actually shapes the work. The work must be incomplete in itself".[96] Within this insufficiency and incompleteness, the gaps and breaks, silences and absences of the text come into play 'within the open textuality of thought [and] language', as once Freud states.

Macherey "[teaches] us to interpret the gaps and silences, the unconscious of the work" as Alan Sinfield enounces.[97] Macherey masters the art of deploying the critique of binary oppositions between absence/presence and silence/speech, thereby talking about the absence of speech as "the prior condition of all speech"[98]. In his own words:

> The speech of the [text] comes from a certain silence, a matter which it endows with form, a ground on which it traces a figure. Thus, the [text] is not self-sufficient; it is necessarily accompanied by a certain absence, without which it would not exist. A knowledge of the [text] must include a consideration of this absence. This is why it seems useful and legitimate to ask of every production what it tacitly implies, what it does not say. Either all around or in its wake the explicit requires the implicit:

[95]While quoting from Macherey, the expression of 'book' has been intentionally changed into the *text* since the use of 'book' is found a little bit confusing here since it is possible to talk about not only the speeches and silences of books but also their implications on images, photographs or drawings as previously studied through Berger.
[96]Macherey, *TLP*, 88.
[97]Terry Eagleton highlights how much Macherey has been affected by Freud and Freudian unconsciousness in the Preface of Macherey's *Theory of Literary Production*; here Alan Sinfield mentions Macherey and his guidance to interpret the gaps and silences of the text in relation to the unconsciousness of the text. Such an affinity has also been demonstrated in the beginnings of this part.
[98]Macherey, *TLP*, 97.

> for in order to say anything, there are other things *which must not be said* […]To reach utterance, all speech envelops itself in the unspoken.[99]

Due to Macherey, the text can only be formed with the help of its silence since it does not exist alone. In other words, as long as the text is produced with its absence, it will be present. Here, Macherey seems to play with the text by manipulating a critique of binary oppositions especially between presence/absence and speech/silence and in doing so he wants to show that the text can serve as the combination of the spoken, 'the explicit', and the unspoken, 'the implicit'. 'In order to say something', to exist, the speech of the text needs to be escorted by its silence; hence, without the presence of the one, the other cannot be present.

Macherey even advances that the speech needs its silence more than the silence needs what is said as "[silences] [indeed] shape all speech".[100] If it is not possible to obtain any sufficient and complete text, it is certain that the text always presents its insufficiency and incompleteness by its gaps and breaks. So long as the text is embedded with these plays, more importance to the silence of the text should be attached by the readers. Thus he asks:

> Can we make this silence speak? What is the unspoken saying? What does it mean? To what extent is dissimulation a way of speaking? Can something that has hidden *itself* be recalled to our presence? Silence as the source of expression. Is what I am really saying what I am not saying […] After all, perhaps the work is not hiding what it does not say; this is simply m*issing*.

[99]Ibid., 95.
[100]Ibid.

> Yet the unspoken has many other resources… By speech, silence becomes the centre and principle of expression, its vanishing point. Speech eventually has nothing more to tell us: we investigate the silence, for it is the silence that is doing the speaking. Silence reveals speech — unless it is speech that reveals the silence.[101]

Suggesting the idea that silence is the source of expression is difficult to be grasped first or trying to understand what the silence is saying while reading what the speech is uttering is quite challenging; yet, such an argument is worth holding onto. Accordingly, the text does not conceal anything; on the contrary, everything is already there. If it does not say something, it could be due to what is missing, not because of the secrets which are deliberately hidden to be discovered by the readers. This missing, 'the unspoken' can be gained by 'many other resources' provided that the silence of the text becomes 'the centre and principle of expression' by speech. As a reminder of Derrida's critique of binary oppositions, Macherey mentions that shifting the center allows the reader to look at other centers in a deconstructive way. When the fact of 'nothing more to tell' about previously accepted centers like speech is considered, it is anticipated that the reader looks forward to investigating new center(s).

Gaps and silences, contradictions and absences may seem to complicate the text but their function is to enable readers to rediscover the missing meaning by deconstructing the text, that is, what it says. Hence, this 'missing' should not be regarded as something the text lacks or a mistake which is expected to be corrected. On the contrary, it is one of the basic

[101]Ibid., 96.

requirements of the text which demands a collaboration between the spoken and the unspoken. In Macherey's terms,

> [the] silence of the [text] is not a lack to be remedied, an inadequacy to be made up for. It is not a temporary silence that could be finally abolished. We must distinguish the necessity of this silence.[102]

According to this view, the silence of the text is neither a deficiency nor a fault or weakness but in contrast it is one of the necessities of the text as a counterpart of the speech. In brief, this reciprocal relationship between the spoken and the unspoken inspires various different interpretations as a result of a deconstructive reading which is formed by the creativity and imagination of the reader.

1.2 A Contemporary World of Deconstruction

Whilst Derrida paves the way for a new *interpretation* of the world by virtue of the criticisms of the three magistral grammatologues (and even more prominent thinkers and philosophers), he also sets the stage for the discussions on reader response theory which offer new interpretations. In doing so, he encourages so many contemporary influential critics and intellectuals to ruminate not only on the idea of deconstruction and the critique of binary oppositions but also on the new possibilities and interpretations of the text. Some of them have started with making an attempt to define deconstruction as a term. For example, Jonathan Culler who is a renowned Cornell expert in literary theory and criticism defines the

[102]Ibid., 93.

idea of deconstruction in reference to Derrida's views in *On Deconstruction*. According to his definition,

> [the] term *deconstruction* was one of the flash points in critical and cultural debates of the last quarter of the twentieth century, a rallying point and term of abuse, the name of a body of difficult, deeply influential theoretical writings and also the name for a broad movement in twentieth century thought in which assumptions or presumptions of a millennial philosophical, literary, and critical tradition have been put in question. Most simply, deconstruction is a mode of philosophical and literary analysis derived from the work of the philosopher Jacques Derrida, which interrogates basic philosophical categories or concepts. Deconstruction is never simple, however; it is not, Derrida insists, a school or a method, a philosophy or a practice, but something that happens, as when the arguments of a text undercut the presuppositions on which it relies or as when the term *deconstruction* … takes on a life of its own, escaping the control of the author and coming to refer to a broad intellectual process or movement that the end of the twentieth century by no means exhausted.[103]

Culler's definition of deconstruction develops on the critique of binary oppositions since whereas it is *a* 'rallying point' which invites people to come together to support what they believe in, it is simultaneously 'a term of abuse' having the potential of misleading people. Similar to what Peter Barry states in his *Beginning Theory*[104], Culler highlights that

[103]Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism* (NY: Cornell UP, 2008), 6a-b.

[104]Jonathan Culler furthers his arguments by explicitly expressing how deconstruction comes out of philosophy in a very similar way Peter Barry explains in his *Beginning Theory*. He says "[d]econstruction arises in philosophy as reading of philosophical texts against the grain of the philosophical tradition, contesting its hierarchal binary oppositions (meaning/form, soul/body, inside/outside, speech/writing, and so on) by exploring

deconstruction is *something* nourished by not only philosophical but also literary analysis mostly derived from Derrida himself. However, it is certainly neither *a school* or *a method* nor *a philosophy* or *a practice* but an autonomous presence which is challenging to be fully comprehended. Thus, Culler demonstrates that as long as deconstructive reading leaves out 'the control of the author', the text is able to reach numerous contemporary concerns and issues.

Owing to the fact that deconstruction aims to 'interrogate basic philosophical categories and concepts' well-known as binary oppositions and to dismantle them to have new meanings, it necessitates to unravel the binary oppositions whose presence is not stable and permanent but fluid and volatile. In this sense, deconstruction strives to hold its place while dismantling and dissecting itself like Prometheus whose existence is bound to his continuous suffering as Michal Fram Cohen vividly portrays in his review in this way:[105]

> Like Prometheus, who was not allowed to die so that the eagle could keep eating his liver, the sign has to be kept in existence in order to keep being critiqued…[s]igns could not exist independently of what they signify…Derrida wants to save philosophy for the same purpose he wanted to save the sign: for endless deconstruction.[106]

What Cohen states here is that the continuity of the sign and its presence are able to assure their criticism; that is, as long as the sign or the text and the spoken are present, its signifiers

how they are already deconstructed- shown to be constructions- by the texts that assert or depend on them" (Culler 66).

[105]Michal Fram Cohen, "Deconstructing Derrida: Review of 'Structure, Sign and Discourse in the Human Sciences' (The Continental Origins of Postmodernism: The Atlas Society, Accessed 28 Feb. 2011), 3.

[106]Ibid.

can be questioned signifiers since 'signs could not exist independently of what they signify'. This is precisely what Derrida wants to achieve by keeping the ambiguous sign open to numerous signifiers 'for endless deconstruction'.

According to Cohen, the word deconstruction connotes the unpleasing image of Prometheus in pain whose presence has to be accompanied by his eternal fragmentation. Contrary to such an image, there are some other critics and theoreticians like Thea Bellou who believes "[d]econstruction is an immanent reading of Western metaphysics which traces the way in which the systemic closure that the concept attempts to 'deconstructs itself'".[107] This suggests reading Western metaphysics, binary oppositions, within today's perceptions which aim to deconstruct themselves. Therefore, Bellou's definition of deconstruction stresses the importance of the act of reading as a consequence of deconstructing the text, which offers multiplicity of meanings. In this sense, how Bellou defines deconstruction overlaps with J.A. Cuddon who says:

> […] a text can be read as saying something quite different from what it appears to be saying…it may be read as carrying a plurality of significance or as saying many different things which are fundamentally at variance with, contradictory to and subversive of what may be seen by criticism as a single 'stable' meaning. Thus a text may 'betray' itself.[108]

[107]Thea Bellou, *Derrida's Deconstruction of the Subject: Writing, Self and Other* (Switzerland: Peter Lang AG, 2013), 16.
[108]J. A. Cuddon, *Dictionary of Literary Terms* (NY: Wiley-Blackwell Press, 2012), Page number is not stated.

Echoing Macherey's views, Cuddon emphasizes that the power of deconstructive reading produces the meanings which are different from what the text intends. He believes that since the text is different (or even more) than what it is, deconstructive reading is able to foster plurality and diversity in meanings.

Among these critics, Terry Eagleton has had a more comprehensive analysis of the concept of deconstruction and the criticism of binary oppositions through which he shows how much he has benefitted from Derrida's views. In his *Literary Theory*, he shares his understanding of deconstruction as a term in this way:

> Deconstruction, that is to say, has grasped the point that the binary oppositions with which classical structuralism tend to work represent a way of seeing typical ideologies. Ideologies like to draw rigid boundaries between what is acceptable and what is not, between self and non-self, truth and falsity, sense and nonsense, reason and madness, central and marginal, surface and depth. Such metaphysical thinking…cannot be simply eluded: we cannot catapult ourselves beyond this binary habit of thought into an ultra-metaphysical realm. But by a certain way of operating upon texts - whether 'literary' or 'philosophical' - we may begin to unravel these oppositions a little, demonstrate how one term of an antithesis secretly inheres within the other…Deconstruction tries to show how such oppositions, in order to hold themselves in place, are sometimes betrayed into inverting or collapsing themselves, or need to banish to the text's margins certain niggling details which can be made return and plague them.[109]

[109]Eagleton, *LT*, 115-6.

As a critique of classical structuralism working on 'drawing rigid boundaries' between the binary oppositions such as acceptable/unacceptable, self/non-self, truth/falsity, sense/nonsense, reason/madness, central/marginal and surface/depth, Eagleton expresses that it is not easy to get rid of these oppositions at once. These binary oppositions widely accepted for a long time cannot be easily avoided or erased; nonetheless, it is possible to work on them by 'a certain way of operating upon texts'. This needs to be practised so as to 'unravel these oppositions' to show that 'one term of an antithesis' is a natural part of its other and deconstruction sets a target for showing how these oppositions interact with each other to supersede one another for existence.

Eagleton does not define and clarify deconstruction as a term but instead he stresses the potential of a deconstructive reading for new possibilities and meanings which can be produced with the joint participation of the reader and the text. In order to demonstrate how this works, Eagleton focuses on the first two sentences of a novel (John Updike, *Couples*):

> "What did you make of the new couple?"
>
> "The Hanemas, Piet and Angela, were undressing."[110]

While commenting on these two sentences, Eagleton concentrates on the speculations and inferences of the unspoken of the text in more than a few pages. He asks "[what we are to make of this]"[111] and continues with questioning these two lines thoroughly in this way:

> We are puzzled for a moment, perhaps, by an apparent lack of connection between the two sentences, until we grasp that what is at

[110]Ibid., 65.
[111]Ibid.

> work here is the literary convention by which we may attribute a piece of direct speech to a character even if the text does not explicitly do this itself.[112]

Eagleton's deconstructive reading and analysis of these two lines are embedded with the language of possibility and probability such as the choice of grammar, more precisely his use of modals of uncertainty and the choice of words evoking assumptions like the verbs of assume, suspect, imagine or like adverbs of possibility like perhaps, maybe, probably. It is obvious that even two simple sentences are sufficient to offer further assumptions to Eagleton who elaborates on the gaps of this text in such an elevated fashion:

> […] although we rarely notice it, we are all the time engaged in constructing hypotheses about the meaning of the text. The reader *makes implicit connections, fills in gaps, draws inferences* and *tests out hunches*…The text itself is really no more than a series of 'cues' to the reader, invitations to construct a piece of language into meaning…*Without this continuous active participation on the reader's part, there would be no literary work at all*…The work is full of *'indeterminacies'*, elements which depend for their effect upon the reader's interpretation, and which can be interpreted in a number of different, perhaps mutually conflicting ways.[113]

As Eagleton clearly puts, the reader always conceives of the speculations or possibilities of the text owing to the polysemantic nature of the text. Hence, he is intrigued by what is written to explore the unspoken. In spite of the fact that he hardly realises such an act of doing, he is playing with the gaps and breaks of the text which attract his attention for further 'implicit

[112]Ibid.
[113]Ibid., 66, [emphasis added].

connections' and 'inferences' at the time of reading what is said. In this process, the 'active participation' of the reader is required and this becomes one of the most valuable moments when the reader is publicly appointed to read and work on the meaning(s) of the text.

Freud has already mentioned such a necessity of an active reading for the reader especially at the time when the text does not provide sufficient information about itself. He has claimed "[…] where the subject is not in control of the text, where the text looks supersmooth or superclumsy, is where the reader should fix his gaze, so that he does not merely read but deciphers the text, and sees its play within the open textuality of thought, language".[114] Here, Eagleton seems to reiterate Freud's opinions about the significance of the reader who are exposed to all the possible meanings of the text. Like Freud who warns the reader to be more alert at the time when the text has no boundaries or limitations, Eagleton encourages the reader to 'make implicit connections, fill in gaps, draw inferences and test out hunches' to witness the play within the text. Besides, Eagleton recognises the reader as an inevitable part of literature; that is to say, "[f]or literature to happen, the reader [is believed to be] quite as vital as the author".[115] The mutual relationship between the two is very much alike the critique of all the binary oppositions mentioned so for. In this sense, provided that there is a text, something written, there must be a reader who is capable of interpreting not only its utterances but also its silences which is ready to be deciphered.

[114]Spivak, "Introduction", xlvi.
[115]Eagleton, *LT*, 64.

1.3 John Berger: A Deconstructionist?

In terms of attaching more importance to the reader and his act of reading and interpreting the text, John Berger, who is one of the significant figures of our contemporary world, has had a substantially important place. Deeply inspired by Derrida and his views on deconstruction and critiques of binary oppositions, Berger helps people to have a new way of seeing life by his breathtaking work of nonfiction *Ways of Seeing*, which was first broadcast as a 1972 BBC television series of thirty minute films and then adapted into a book of the same name. Through this book, he has been able to introduce a new perspective over life which recommends the idea that "seeing comes before words" like Derrida's suggestion on how writing is able to signify more than speech. Berger explains how seeing is critical for each reader with these words:

> […] It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled. Each evening we *see* the sun set. We *know* that the earth is turning away from it. Yet the knowledge, the explanation, never quite fits the sight.[116]

To Berger, neither speech nor writing but the way of seeing determines ourselves; that is, seeing assists us to place ourselves within the world we live in, thereby explaining our presence accordingly. Obviously, Berger believes that the nature of seeing is an indication of the fact that everything is so tentative and open to consistent changes and therefore nothing

[116]John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: Penguin Classics, 2008), 7.

can be explained by the binary oppositions, in the same way Derrida offered. In other words, seeing does not ensure what we know as the outcome of what we see; hence, what we see cannot be a fixed reference to what is known.

In this regard, Berger has managed to change our way of seeing life especially through arts with the help of *Ways of Seeing*. According to the writers of the *Conversation*[117], Berger has changed our way of evaluating art by a different way of seeing life. In the second chapter of *Ways of Seeing*, Berger exhibits some of the European women paintings in comparison to the women posters of our contemporary world and culture in order for discussing them in the following chapter to make us realise how woman is conceptualised within the binary oppositions between the man as the subject and the woman as the object. In this way, Berger seems to have a similar Derridean critique of binary oppositions between man/woman, subject/object, seer/seen, active/passive etc. since he observes that:

> [in] the art-form of the European nude the painters and spectator-owners were usually men and the persons treated as objects, usually women. This unequal relationship is so deeply embedded in our culture that it still structures the consciousness of many women. They do to themselves what men do to them. They survey, like men, their own femininity.[118]

As it can be understood, men are either the painters or the spectator-owners, the subject/seer/active, whereas the women are the object to be watched because "the 'ideal'

[117]*The Conversation* is an online academic and research community. This joint article belongs to Yasmin Gunaratnam who is the reader in sociology at the University of London and Vikki Bell who is the professor of sociology there.
[118]Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 63.

spectator is always assumed to be male and the image of the woman is deliberately designed to flatter him".[119] This assumption based on such a binary opposition is often deeply rooted in our culture and it has not been questioned enough yet.

In addition to the binary oppositions between men/women, subject/object, seer/seen, active/passive, Berger makes a critique of another misleading binary opposition focusing on the 'rigid boundaries' between the conqueror/colonizer/powerful/superior and conquered/ colonized/ submissive/inferior and suggests to have a deconstructive way of seeing them. In his own words, "[these] relations between conqueror and colonized [tend] to be self-perpetuating. The sight of the other [confirms] each in his inhuman estimate of himself…The way in which each sees the other confirms his own view of himself".[120] That is, the signifier aims to define itself in contrast to the other, signified, whereas the signified could only define itself contrary to the signifier.[121] Such a reciprocal relationship between the two echoes Derridean perception on decentering as following:

> […] it has been thought that the center, which is by definition unique, constituted that very thing within a structure which while governing the structure, escapes structurality. This is why classical thought concerning

[119]Ibid., 64.
[120]Ibid., 96.
[121]This idea sounds like a reminder to Edward Said's *Orientalism* where he talks about how the conqueror, the colonizer tries to define himself in a stark contrast to the colonized, the inferior. Just a few years before the publication of *Orientalism*, Berger states that "[t]he way in which each sees the other confirms his own view of himself" (*WS* 96), which becomes one of the leading arguments of Said.
In addition, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, who has devoted significant amount of her life time and energy to work, understand, and translate Derrida's works, has also focused on having a critique on this binary opposition. She has kept her concentration on the Western, the transcendental signifier, which is expected to be understood "without being compared to other signifieds or signifiers… [as] the center of meaning". [Bressler, *Literary Criticism*, 124]. As a response to this binary opposition, she assigns a role to herself to express what is not expressed heretofore and speaks in the name of the Eastern since the Eastern cannot articulate what it thinks and feels. In the end, she manages to be one of the voices of the East as a result of a deconstructive look at life.

> structure could say that the center is, paradoxically, *within* the structure and *outside* it. The center is at the center of the totality, and yet, since the center does not belong to the totality (is not part of the totality), the *totality has its center elsewhere*.[122]

The center cannot possibly be the center as when it is the center of itself, it paradoxically becomes a part of the other centers. In other words, the center is the center regardless of its components because its uniqueness is destroyed at the time of its relation to the others declaring their own uniqueness. Hence, the center of "what you [see] [depends] upon where you [are] when. What you [see] [is] relative to your position in time and space"[123]as Berger puts in his *Ways of Seeing*. Therefore, both criticism on deconstructive way of seeing overlap in terms of decentering the center.

In the light of Derrida's critique, Berger persistently works on deconstructing widely accepted binary oppositions in his non-fiction. In his distinctive non-fiction writing "Why look at Animals?", for instance, he challenges the long-lasting religious and classical doctrine believing that man is the noblest of all creations. He obviously and intentionally dethrones the privileged position of the man and puts him nearby animals which are both like and unlike.[124] To show this subversion, he analyses man in comparison with animals in such a straightforward way:

> What distinguished man from animals was the human capacity for symbolic thought, the capacity which was inseparable from the

[122]Derrida, *WD*, "SSP", 279.
[123]Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 18.
[124]John Berger, *About Looking*, "Why Look at Animals?" (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1980), 4.

> development of language in which words were not mere signals, but signifiers of something other than themselves.[125]

Man seems to be different than animals especially in terms of his 'symbolic thought' or the "development of [his] language";[126] yet, he is as 'sentient' and 'mortal' as animals.[127] Thus, man and animals take after each other at some points. It might be more inspiring and interesting to claim that man and animals are two entities each of whose existence is recognised in the acknowledgement of the other. Berger shapes this argument as follows:

> What were the secrets of the animal's likeness with, and unlikeness from man? The secrets whose existence man recognised as soon as he intercepted an animal's look… If the first metaphor was animal, it was because the essential relation between man and animal was metaphoric. Within that relation what the two terms- man and animal- shared in common revealed what differentiated them. And vice versa.[128]

Similar to the attempt of the conqueror/colonizer/ powerful/superior to define themselves over conquered/ colonized/submissive/inferior, Berger criticizes man's definition of himself while opposing himself to animals and he proposes the idea that man can only understand himself if he 'intercepts an animal's look'. Unless he sees himself in the eyes of animals, he will not be able to identify himself. On the other hand, animals need to be encountered with man to know themselves. Hence, this relation is mutual: both need each other to be present; that is, one is able to exist in his relation to the other.

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[125]Ibid., 9.
[126]Ibid., 4.
[127]Ibid.
[128]Ibid., 6-7.

According to Berger, who '[has] taught us to see' as Andrew Salomone, who is an artist, writer and teacher working on popular culture, defines,[129] deconstruction can hardly be restricted by either an attempt of unravelling binary oppositions or a pursuit of having numerous meanings and interpretations solely in literary texts. It has myriad functions in so many fields. To illustrate, drawing is such a deconstructive work of art when the drawing, or the sketch, is conceived of as a text. Once the fact that Berger believes each of his drawing or sketch has its own text is considered, it will be highly possible to assess how his drawing functions in a deconstructive way. As he remarks:

> For the artist drawing is discovery. And that is not just a slick phrase, it is quite literally true. It is the actual act of drawing that forces the artist *to look at the object in front of him, to dissect it in his mind's eye and put it together again*; or, if he is drawing from memory, that forces him to dredge is own mind, *to discover* the content of his own store of past observations.[130]

To Berger, drawing requires a deconstructive process through which the artist finds a chance of 'looking at the object in front of him' and dividing it into smaller parts to scrutinise each fragment in more detail, thereby connecting them once again to find further potential meanings through the relations between the parts.

In his illustrated colour book, *Bento's Sketchbook*, for instance, Berger incorporates his drawings with the texts each of which challenges some of the binary oppositions such as

[129]Andrew Salomone, "Celebrating John Berger, the Storyteller Who Taught Us to See" (Creators: Creators Vice Online, 2017), Accessed 3 Nov. 2017.
[130]John Berger, "Drawing is Discovery" (Newstatesman: New Statesman Online, 1953), Accessed 3. Nov. 2017, The page number is not stated. [emphasis added].

Fig. 1. Berger's drawing of his right hand

the uniqueness and omnipotence of human beings. Besides, whilst Berger working on this, he encourages readers to think on all the possible meanings of the drawings before he presents the texts pertinent to them. To be more specific, in one of his drawing, Berger's right hand drawn by his left hand is shown to the readers without any text at first. At this moment, the reader is free to produce any meanings as long as they are in line with the drawing.[131] Subsequent to the drawing, Berger presents a text regarding human power and he states "[…] human power is considerably limited and infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes, and therefore we do not have an absolute power of adapting things which are outside us for our use".[132]Associating the hand with the power, Berger stresses how fragile and vulnerable humans are contrary to the people's expectations since they are neither limitless nor omnipotent. Thus, they are not the center holding the whole; on the contrary, they are the helpless ones exposed to the fragmentation of all external forces.

[131]Here, Berger gives limited freedom to interpret the drawing, the sketch or the text like Iser because he implicitly shows that the reader is free as long as he interprets the text within the intentions set by the creator, the writer, himself.
[132]John Berger, *Bento's Sketchbook* (NY: Verso, 2015), 139.

Fig.2. Berger's drawing of a human body

In another drawing, Berger exhibits a human body drawn out of an inspiration from a statue in a tomb: what the readers see is a sketch of a human body looking like erratic, unstable, and ambiguous, which is in a stark contrast to what we previously see in arts depicting excellent, flawless, and impeccable human bodies. By this drawing, it seems that Berger wants to highlight that nothing including the human body is perfect any longer. While presenting a text onto it, Berger reveals the complexity within the human body. As he expresses:

> The human body (corpus humanum) is composed of many individuals (of different nature), each one of which is highly composite. The individuals of which the human body is composed are some fluid, some soft and some hard. The individuals composing the human body, and consequently the human body itself is affected in many ways by external bodies. The human body needs for its preservation many other bodies from which it is, so to speak, continually regenerated. When a fluid part of the human body is so determined by an external body that it impinges frequently on another part which is soft, it changes its surface and as it were imprints on it the traces of the external impelling body. The human

> body can move external bodies in many ways, and dispose them in many ways.[133]

That the human body is formed by the contributions of many individuals having different personality traits seems to be Berger's main argument reverberating what Eagleton says "[p]erhaps what is outside is also somehow inside".[134] To him, human body is not only the combination of 'some fluid/soft' and 'some hard' but also the mixture of the internal and the external. It is also possible to observe how some definite parts of a human body are consistently changeable. Therefore, the human body is no longer accepted as an autonomous being whose presence is able to assert itself without any external factors. This reveals how Berger challenges the uniqueness and omnipotence of a man by assigning a more vulnerable role to him against all the expectations formed as a result of binary oppositions.

Berger does not only work on binary oppositions in a deconstructive way but also questions implicit connections, gaps and hunches which fuel possible speculations about the text. For instance, in one of his short writings, he tells his day at the library where he wanted to get Dostoyevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov*. It was so unfortunate for him to learn that two of the copies of the novel were unavailable and hence he did not have a chance of getting it. Once he learned the absence of the novel, he started speculating about people who may have borrowed the book. Calculating all the population of the Paris suburb in which the public library located, he came up with the idea that "one person in ten" out of 60,000 people might have borrowed it. He voices his concerns via these following questions:

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[133]Ibid., 141.
[134]Eagleton, *LT*, 115.

> I wonder who's reading *The Brothers Karamazov* here today. Do the two of them know each other? Unlikely. Are they both reading the book for the first time? Or has one of them read it and, like myself, want to reread it?
>
> Then I find myself asking an odd question: if either of these readers and myself passed one another – in the suburban market on Sunday, coming out of the metro, on a pedestrian crossing, buying bread – might we perhaps exchange glances that we'd both find slightly puzzling? Might we, without recognising it, recognise one another?
>
> …Somebody in this Paris suburb, perhaps sitting tonight in a chair and reading The Brothers Karamazov, may already, in this sense, be a distant, distant cousin.[135]

Here, the language Berger uses reminds us of Eagleton's use of language describing what the Hanemas are doing in Updike's story. The grammatical structures such as the use of modals of possibility (might or may) or the word choice including adjectives of uncertainty like 'unlikely' and 'perhaps' functions in a similar vein. Moreover, the attempts to discover the people who had borrowed the copies of the book before Berger are quite encouraging for the reader's responses and interpretations.

[135]Berger, *Bento's Sketchbook*, 84.

This absence of the book also reveals how absence speaks of itself while inviting the readers for deconstruction. Berger does this not only in his writings but also in his drawings. As mentioned before, provided that each of Berger's drawings has been accepted as an individual text - which is indeed what Berger himself believes they are, it can be possible to claim that his drawings have a similar appeal. For example, just after this short writing Berger draws an empty armchair which simultaneously signals what the written text says and what the reader interprets. With regard to the written text, this could be the 'chair' through which Berger imagines the people who borrowed the copies of the book doing at that night or it might be the 'chair' he conceives of sitting and reading *The Brothers Karamazov* if he had borrowed it. On the other hand, regardless of the written text, the chair could belong to a beloved husband who once spent his nights reading his newspapers there but not any longer exists. It may be for a breastfeeding mother whose baby gets older enough to feed himself and

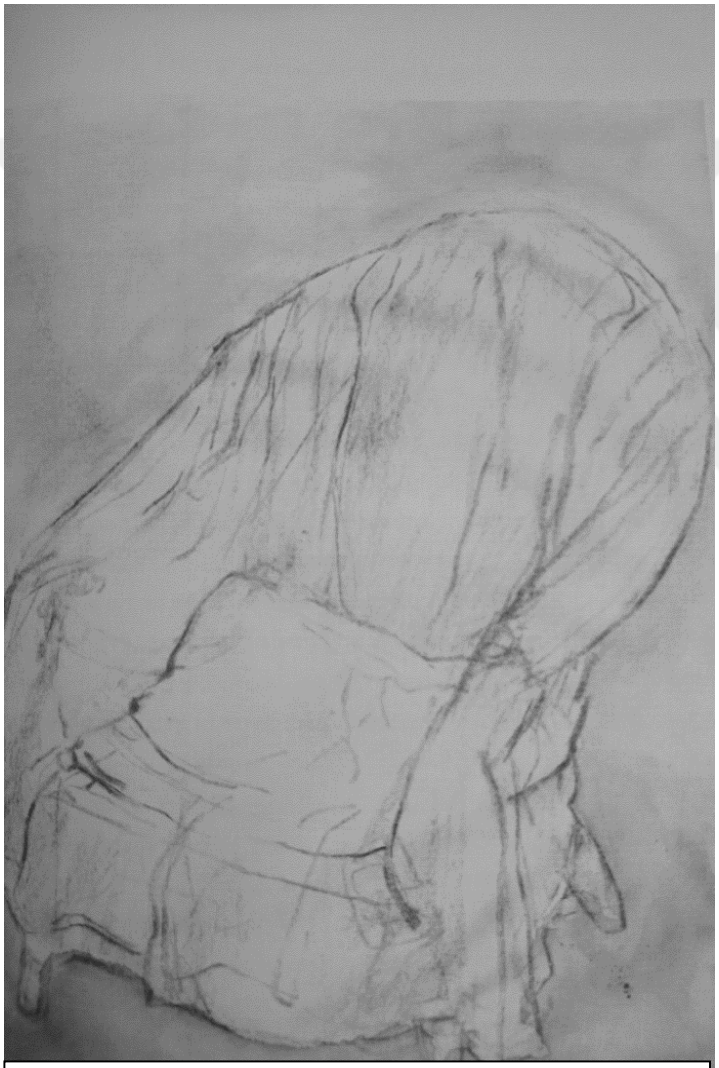

Fig.3. Berger's drawing of an armchair

therefore it is no longer occupied. Perhaps it gives shelter to a long-haired tabby cat leaving its home for a short while for wandering around. It can also be assumed that the chair can be a token of life standards or conditions: how many houses lack armchairs as well as other necessities- if these armchairs can be accepted as a necessity. What kind of an armchair does the house have? How much does one of them cost? How many colours does it have? Additionally, this empty chair can evoke the feelings of loneliness, disillusionment and frustration of the modern man who is worn out by the hectic and stressful demands of life. All in all, these are some of the interpretations of the absence which may (not) have been anticipated by Berger himself. There could be more interpretations since the armchair is there as a text to be interpreted. Consequently, it is most likely to oppose what Terry Eagleton claims about the indeterminacy of the text: Maybe the more information the work provides does not cause the text to get more indeterminate;[136] on the contrary, the less information the text includes, the more interpretations the readers may have.

Bento's Sketchbook is not the only work of Berger working on deconstructing and multiple meanings based on reader's responses; Berger spent years and years to have a different way of seeing through which he was able to challenge against what had been previously shown. He continued working on deconstructing all the signifiers until his last breath. In *Smoke* jointly created by Berger and worldwide known Turkish illustrator Selçuk Demirel in 2017, the year when Berger died, Berger analyses the multiple meanings and interpretations of smoke in collaboration with Demirel's drawings aiming to reveal how fluid

[136]Eagleton, *LT*, 66.

and unreliable meaning is. For example, both Berger and Demirel display how smoke can variously be interpreted in a positive setting through several drawings and texts. For example,

Fig.4.

Fig.5.

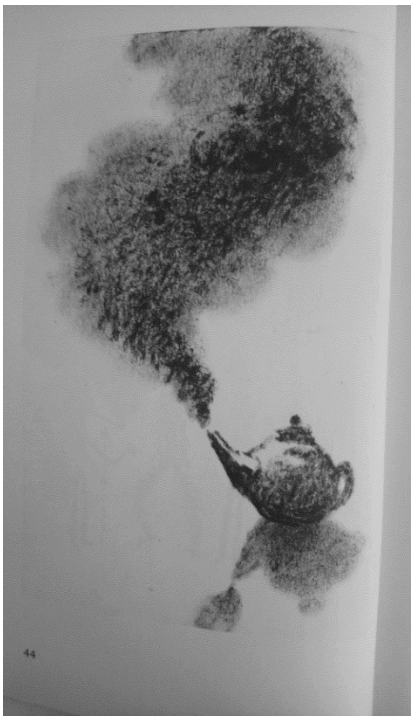

Fig.6.

in figure 4 and 6, smoke may have a meaning or a connotation of home, warmth, shelter, and safety whereas in figure 5, it might evoke the feelings of individual pleasure, bliss, satisfaction, and contentment. Nevertheless, it is also possible to have some negative associations of smoke. Although the way the smoke is drawn and coloured in each picture is similar, its connotations may vary depending on reader's response. For example, on one hand the illustrations of smoke evoke positive feelings, on the other, it may suggest some more negative emotions. To illustrate, when the reader is exposed to a drawing of smoke in figure 7, he may imagine some of the negative aspects of industrialisation or the smoke coming out

Fig.7.

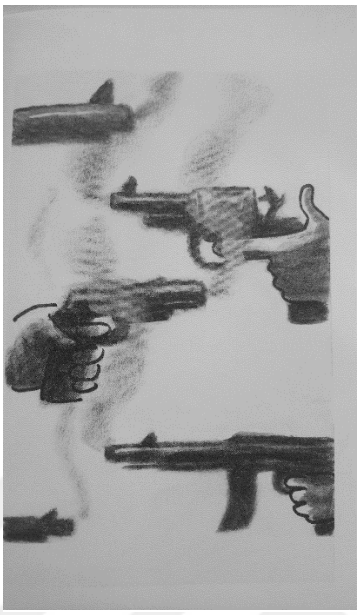

Fig.8.

Fig.9.

of guns in figure 8 might be a sign for existing wars and their devastating effects on people. Furthermore, the smoke of cars' exhausts in figure 9 could function as a negative image which can be related with some environmental problems such as air and noise pollution. In brief, there is more than one fixed meaning as long as the reader response is taken into consideration. Since the whole book intends to work on revealing such a multitude of meaning, it is highly likely to find more interpretations in the course of the book. In the light of these meanings and interpretations, the smoke is the combination of grief and bliss, suffering and contentment, disillusionment and hope, loneliness and hospitality, all at the same time according to the interpretations of the reader. Hence, the smoke serves as a critique of binary oppositions which offers possible meanings and interpretations varying the reader's responses.

CHAPTER 2

Looking At John Berger Through Different Contexts

By his *Ways of Seeing* and his non-fiction works including his drawings, Berger intends to deconstruct binary oppositions where the superiority or hegemony of the signifier is eliminated while the signified blurs the accepted and known aspects of life with its passivity and absence. With such a way of looking at reality, Berger invites the reader to have a deconstructive look at life focusing more on the absence rather than the presence. It therefore encourages people to question what is present rather than what is absent. As a man who is always obsessed with seeing[137], which is a presence, Berger questions even his own birth with reference to the dead[138]. Therefore, Berger seems to be more interested in absence since he, like Macherey, believes that absence is the prior condition of all[139] existence. Berger thinks that it is more crucial to attach more significance to the absence since it is what needs further clarification. In this respect, it is more appropriate to understand and recognize him by laying more emphasis on his absence instead of his presence.

[137]It is proper to describe him as obsessed with seeing since his first essays *Permanent Red* has an additional title of "Essays in Seeing" and his poetry is deeply embedded in the idea of seeing such as in "Troy" where he paradoxically says "[my] eyes can see that sound". Besides, the way of seeing a recurrent motif in his non-fiction. For example, in *Hold Everything Dear*, he talks about Nazım Hikmet, who is a famous Turkish poet, and continuously checks whether he once saw him or not in hesitation. (The way of seeing and how we, the readers, interpret it are noticeable in his fiction as well; this will be further analysed and studied in Chapter 3.)
[138]In his poem entitled "Self-Portrait" written between the years 1914 and 1918, he says "I was born of the look of the dead/ Swaddled in mustard gas/ And fed in dugout" referring to the fact that he was born just eight years after the First World War when its terrifying impacts were still felt.
[139]Macherey, *TLP*, 97.

It is significant to note here that the writers of the Guardian introduced him with an implication of his absence on a very day when he passed away. On that day, three different writers published three different articles within three hours on his death in a way to articulate its absence itself. Michael McNay,[140] one of those three Guardian writers shares Berger's biography as a reminder or a proof of his presence once while defining him as a "critic whose TV series *Ways of Seeing* [have posed] questions about art and society, and a writer whose fiction [has reflected] his life in rural France"[141]. In regard to this document, Berger is defined as a boy who was born in Stoke Newington, north London into an affluent middle class family. At the age of sixteen, he started studying at the Central School of Arts against his father's expectations of his becoming a priest. He neither satisfied his father's expectations nor realized his own dreams because of the call to arms to a Belfast training depot. During these days, he witnessed the life conditions of the working classes and interacted with so many working class people and the influential thinkers whose ideas helped him shape his own political ideology. After the World War II, he continued his education at Chelsea School of Art and once he completed his education there, he embarked on a career in teaching drawing at St. Mary's teacher training college at Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, southwest London while continuing painting and exhibiting his works at the galleries in Leicester, Redfern and Wildenstein. In 1950s, he became an influential art critic writing art reviews in the journal of *New Statesman*, a left-of-Labour Weekly Newspaper. Ten years later, he

[140]Michael McNay, "John Berger Obituary". (The Guardian: The Guardian Online, 2 Jan. 2017) Accessed 26 Dec. 2017.
[141]Ibid.

published his first collection of essays *Permanent Red: Essays in Seeing* mostly taken from the reviews which were published in the *New Statesman*.

McNay may have felt that on the very first day of his absence such a biographical data would not be enough to prove Berger's presence since he continues with Berger's works to reveal that 'the empty chair', drawn by Berger as a result of the lack of the book he had asked to obtain, was once occupied by Berger himself and his absence today does not necessarily show his absence as it is able to speak of itself. To this end, McNay lists the works of Berger chronologically as: *The Foot of Clive*, 1962, *Corker's Freedom*, 1964, *G*, 1972, *A Seventh Man*, 1975, his trilogy *Into their Labours* (*Pig Earth*, 1979, *Once in Europa*, 1987, *Flag*, 1990), *To The Wedding*, 1995, his short stories collected in *Photocopies*, 1996. In doing so, McNay confirms his presence in his absence. In order to provide the reader with the sufficient data proving Berger's presence, McNay ends his article with the names of Berger's children-Katya and Jacob from his marriage to Anya Bostock and Yves from his marriage to Beverly to whom he dedicates his *Flying Skirts: An Elegy* after her death-as the real, observable and tangible proof of Berger's presence once.

The other Guardian writer, an art correspondent, Mark Brown[142] seems to strengthen the presence of Berger by focusing on what others think and feel about his absence. Having described Berger as "[the] Booker-Prize winning novelist and visionary writer who [has helped] transform the way a generation looked at and perceived art, has died aged 90"[143],

[142]Mark Brown, "John Berger, art critic and author, dies aged 90". (The Guardian: The Guardian Online, 2 Jan. 2017) Accessed 26 Dec. 2017.
[143]Ibid.

Brown shares how others perceive his death as an absence. For example, without any comment Brown presents the tweet of Simon McBurney, the actor and the director, in this way:

> Listener, grinder of lenses, poet, painter, seer. My guide. Philosopher. Friend. John Berger left us this morning. Now [he is] everywhere.[144]

By sharing McBurney's tweet, Brown is able to show that Berger is more than one person while he is alive according to McBurney for whom he has a powerful place in his life. Nevertheless, it can also be suggested that in his death Berger becomes more omnipotent in his absence since he is 'everywhere' beyond any actual limitations of time and place.

In reaction to the death of Berger, Brown also cites from Jarvis Cocker, who is a contemporary English musician and actor. Cocker stresses the uniqueness of Berger with these words: "There are a few authors that can change the way you look at the world through their writing and John Berger is one of them".[145] So as to talk about how unique John Berger is, it appears to be appropriate to mention his obsession of looking at life from different perspectives, which Berger aims to work on both in his nonfiction and his fiction. In addition to Cocker, Brown reveals that there are others who have similar feelings such as David Shringley, the contemporary British visual artist, and Jeanette Winterson, the contemporary award-winning English author, who showed her admiration to Berger with these words "[he was] an energy source in a depleted world". In this way, Brown brings all those comments

[144]Ibid.
[145]Ibid.

The third Guardian writer publishing an article in response to the death of Berger is Nicola Slawson who prefers to publicize some of Berger's most memorable quotes to reinforce his presence on the very first day of his absence.[146] In doing so, he gives an account of what has been left behind Berger. Slawson quoting Berger seems to demonstrate how hopeful Berger is: "Hope is not a form of guarantee; it is a form of energy, and very frequently that energy is strongest in circumstances that are very dark".[147] Believing in the power of hope, Berger finds it necessary to have it for the survival in the darkest moments of life. Although hope itself does not assure anything, with its powerful energy one can stand against the difficulties of life. According to Berger, during the most negative and the darkest moments of life, hope serves all its potential to reveal their most positive and brightest feelings in a most deconstructive way. Looking at life in such a deconstructive way, Berger is in line with the critique of Derridean binary oppositions in the way that the oppositions interact and coexist with mutual responsibility; hence, it is clearly seen how the duality in meaning is reflected even in Berger's shortest quotes.

Similarly, Slawson quotes Berger's idea that: "[death] changes the facts qualitatively but not quantatively"[148] meaning that the death and absence of a person may change the facts of his life even though it may not affect the number of facts recorded or experienced in life. Furthermore, as a clarification of this view, Berger informs the reader that:

> A man's death makes everything certain about him. Of course, secrets may die with him. And of course, a hundred years later somebody

[146]Nicola Slawson, "A Life in Quotes: John Berger". (The Guardian: The Guardian Online, 2 Jan. 2017) Accessed 2 Jan. 2018.
[147]Ibid.
[148]Berger, *A Fortunate Man* (Great Britain: Canongate, 1967), 161.

> looking through some papers may discover a fact which throws a totally different light on his life and of which all the people who attended his funeral were ignorant… One does not know more facts about a man because he is dead. But what one already knows hardens and becomes definite. We cannot hope for ambiguities to be clarified, we cannot hope for further change, we cannot hope for more. We are now the protagonists and we have to make up our minds.[149]

In this regard, Berger expresses that it is improbable to gather more facts about one's life after his death. However, it is possible to have a different perspective about a dead person's life with the help of the secrets revealed.[150] That is, after death no more facts cannot be obtained about that person; however, the quality of the meanings of the facts could be improved. For that reason, there should be no hopes for 'further change or more'- for that person since'[a] man's death makes everything certain about him'.[151] However, so as to reveal the secrets of one's absence, that is his death, for a better understanding that absence needs to be put into words.

In the absence of Berger, in other words in his death, what is spoken which is articulated by the writers of the Guardian in the articles telling his life story and the list of his works, exposes how others feel about his absence and how his own absence speaks of itself. Having been informed about the spoken in his absence, now it is worth searching how

[149]Ibid.
[150]Berger mentions the same idea when he had a conversation with Susan Sontag in 1983, "To Tell a Story". There, he expressed that "[death] is a place where the story actually begins" because of the fact that after death, life gets certain and becomes readable and therefore recountable.
[151]Ibid.

his presence has been articulated by the others "[in] our brief mortal lives, [as]… the grinders of [the] lenses"[152].

2.1 John Berger: Through the eyes of others

Not only in his absence, but also in his presence Berger has always aroused considerable interest for others; hence, he is constantly tried to be defined and introduced by so many people abroad. For instance, Berger is acknowledged as "an art historian, novelist, playwright, critic, teacher, painter"[153] by Josephine Livingstone whereas he is an influential "theorist"[154] for Joshua Sperling, a visiting assistant of cinema studies at Oberlin College and Conservatory. Once, for example, Sperling more specifically talks about him as "the archetype of the angry young man to become an honorary world elder and spiritual lodestar of the anti-globalization movement"[155]and therefore Berger is considered as "a political propagandist"[156] who holds "a belief in the communal and redemptive power of everyday work".[157] According to another critic Kate Kellaway, for example, Berger is a unique intellectual with his prolific nature having bright eyes for details[158]. Through the eyes of others, Berger is well-known by all of these avatars and even more.

[152]John Berger, *And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos*. (NY: Vintage International, 1991).
[153]Josephine Livingstone, "Beyond John Berger's Ways of Seeing". (The New Republic: The New Republic Online, 4 Jan. 2017. Accessed: 16 Jan. 2018.
[154]Joshua Sperling, "The Transcendental Face of Art". (Guernica Online: Arts & Culture, 15 Feb. 2017). Accessed: 16 Jan. 2018.
[155]Ibid.
[156]Ibid.
[157]Ibid.
[158]Kate Kellaway, "John Berger: 'If I'm a Storyteller it's because I listen'". (The Guardian: The Guardian Online, 30 Oct. 2016). Accessed: 16 Jan. 2018.

Additionally, Berger is defined as "an essayist, novelist, scriptwriter and peasant" by A. Sivanandan [159] while Ali Smith emphasizes him as a "a leading radical writer on art" while introducing him[160]. On the other hand, Serena Smith, an English artist and lithographer, talks about him as "a poet" [161]. No matter how he has been appraised in time, it is clear that he has always attracted the attention of literary circles as well as the public as a writer who "[has] that rare and wonderful gift of being able to make complex thoughts simple"[162] and who is "a truth-sayer in an age of lies and deceit and spin and disinformation. An intellectual".[163] Besides these qualifications, Berger through the eyes of others is believed to have a significant role in people's lives as a kind of leader easing the ways of communication and guiding people truly without having any personal benefits. That is, he is a genuine person on whom people have a trust. For example, to Sally Potter, the contemporary Guardian journalist, Berger is "John the encourager, John the enthusiasts, John the friend"[164]. One of Berger's closest companions and collaborators Jean Mohr agrees with Potter about evaluating Berger in such an intimate manner. In the foreword of the book entitled *A Jar of Wild Flowers*, a collection of Berger's essays, Mohr says:

[159]A. Sivanandan, "John Berger 1926-2017 Truth-sayer in an age of lies." (Tribute: Race & Class, 2017). Accessed: 2 Jan. 2018. (In addition to these, Sivanandan describes Berger as a story teller; however, this information is intentionally omitted here since Berger is very rarely described in this way through the eyes of others. Besides, his being as a story teller will be discussed later in more detail.)
[160]Ali Smith, "A Gif for John Berger". (The Statesman: The Statesman Online, 2 Oct. 2015). Accessed: 25 Jan. 2018.
[161]Serena Smith, "How John Berger helped us to be feminists". (The Tab Online, 2016). Accessed: 16 Jan. 2018.
[162]Kate Kellaway, "John Berger: 'If I'm a storyteller it's because I listen'".
[163]Sivanandan, "John Berger 1926-2017 Truth-sayer in an age of lies."
[164]Sally Potter, "Artist, visionary and writer- John Berger is undimmed at 90". (The Guardian: The Guardian, 5 Nov. 2016). Accessed: 18 Jan. 2018.

> I don't know how to describe John Berger: a writer, a poet, an essayist, a painter, a drama writer, a scriptwriter. For me, it is all summed up in one word, friend. [165]

In this sense, through the eyes of others Berger manages to create strong bonds with either people whom he knows in person or with those whom he does not know intimately; and in doing so, it seems that he succeeds in creating a kind of fraternity he always wants to achieve.[166]

No matter how Berger has been defined through the eyes of others, the common sense among those is his Marxist self. That is, so many critics put emphasis on his Marxist concerns and interests. For example, Levy always refers to Berger as a man who is proud of being a Marxist[167] and Kellaway insistently calls him as a life-long Marxist[168]. In one of her articles, Kellaway even shares two reminiscences of Berger's childhood or youth memories in order to strengthen her claims on Berger's Marxist self. There she tells that one day a young man on a bicycle came to buy some chocolate from his mother's shop but could not afford to buy it. He was deeply moved by this man who did not afford to buy some chocolate. This moment, according to Kellaway, became one of Berger's one of the earliest socio-economic awareness which questions the dynamics of power and equal social status. Kellaway elaborates on this incident by recounting another memory about Berger depicting a day when he was at the age of sixteen and went down to the coal mine to see what kind of lives the miners had there.

[165]Jean Mohr. "Foreword". Yasmin Gunaratnam, *A Jar of Wild Flowers: Essays in Celebration of John Berger*. London: Zed Books, 2016.
[166]Philip Maughan, "The Art Critic in the Margins". (New Statesman: Observations, 6-12 Jan. 2017). Accessed: 18 Jan. 2018.
[167]Levy, "The Ways John Berger saw".
[168]Kellaway, "John Berger: 'If I'm a Storyteller it's because I listen'".

This experience made him understand the value of labour and workforce and thereby respecting the ones who physically work hard in challenging circumstances.[169] These stories show that Berger was inclined to have a Marxist awareness even in his early ages. It can even be argued that these firsthand experiences evoking Marxist concerns lead Berger to work at the *New Statesman* nearby a Marxist environment and afterwards push him to take a refuge in a rural life in the Haute Savoie where he had so many admirations for the peasants' life and their labour[170].

Berger's Marxist inclinations have been brought up so many times through the eyes of others who concur with each other on Berger's Marxist interests. Sivanandan, for instance, declares that Berger is a genuine and "intrepid" Marxist[171]; Andrew Salomone trumpets Berger as a "self-proclaimed [Marxist] [having] strongly held anti-capitalist beliefs often came out in his actions as well as his works"[172]; Asokan and Sperling both agree on Berger's Marxist self because each clearly asserts that Berger "[is] explicitly Marxist in his views"[173] and "he [consistently stays] true to a line of Marxist humanism"[174]. In line with what these critics put forward, Berger admits that he is a Marxist who owes Marx a lot in the formation of his own ideas especially on the sense of history. In his conversation with Gavin Esler, Berger clearly states this as follows:

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[169]Kellaway, "John Berger: 'If I'm a Storyteller it's because I listen'".
[170]Haute Savoie, which is a region of south-eastern France, is the place where Berger wrote his Triology: *Into Their Labours*. Berger had these books while he was staying there and including himself among the peasants for whom Berger respected and admired for their physically hard work under demanding and tough conditions.
[171]Sivanandan, "John Berger 1926-2017 Truth-sayer in an age of lies."
[172] Andrew Salomone, "Celebrating John Berger, the Storyteller Who Taught us to See". (Creators: Vice Online, 5 Jan. 2017). Accessed: 18 Jan. 2018.
[173]Asokan, "The Many Faces of John Berger".
[174]Sperling, "The Transcendental Face of Art".

> My reading of Marx … helps me enormously understand history, and therefore to understand where [people] are in history.[175]

In a very similar way, Berger shares how deeply he has been under the influence of Marx and his views at another platform where he was interviewed by Lisa Appignanesi[176], a contemporary prize-winning novelist and cultural commentator. Therefore, it is evident that Berger does not repudiate the claim that he is a Marxist.

However, although he does not deny such a fact, he seems to avoid defining himself solely through one of his qualifications. To this end, Berger tries to define himself against the label of a Marxist and explains how he can be seen as a Marxist and not simultaneously at his conversation with Jeremy Isaacs, a Scottish producer of some of the British television programmes including BBC series "Face to Face". By evaluating the possibility of having two qualifications at the same time, Berger responds Isaacs' question which is posed to clarify whether he is still a Marxist or not in such a clear manner:

> Well, it all depends how much you've read Marx and how much you've studied Marx because this label has been put on me for nearly fifty years and it really means two things […] Those who say are you a Marxist […] in the sense that I think they mean the term, I would say 'No'. I never was really but if somebody asks me who really studied Marx like I have then I would say 'Yes' […] I was a Marxist and insofar my thinking hasn't profoundly changed about the world. I'm sure I still am.[177]

[175]Gavin Esler, "John Berger on Ways of Seeing, Being an Artist, and Marxism". (BBC Newsnight Archives: Youtube, 3 Jan. 2017). Accessed: 18 Jan. 2018.
[176]John Berger. "Writers in Conversation". Interview by Lisa Appignanesi, 3 Jan. 2017.
[177]Jeremy Isaacs. "Face to Face". (BBC TV Series: Youtube, 27 Mar. 2014). Accessed: 26 Feb. 2018.

As it has been clearly understood here, Berger is fully aware of the fact that he has been very frequently called as a Marxist for a long time; nonetheless, he is cautious about being labelled as one of his qualifications since that would be a limitation on his multiple personality which is formed as a consequence of his numerous ways of seeing the world. This might be the reason why Berger says "I'm still among other things a Marxist"[178], when inquired. In line with this assessment, it could be suggested that Berger is both a Marxist and not a Marxist and therefore such a view can be considered as a determining factor for his deconstructionist approach which decenters all the other centers.

Through the eyes of others, it is noticeable how Berger's deconstructive stance rejects to be pinned down to one qualification. For instance, Ratik Asokan, an American freelance writer, explains Berger's deconstructive approach in a way which states how he "finds all absolute judgments…futile"[179]in an article whose title significantly implies deconstructionist assumptions, "The Many Faces of John Berger". In this article, Asokan highlights how Berger challenges the long-standing truths similarly to what Derrida did before: Like Derrida who is against all the binary oppositions predicated on generalisations and assumptions, Berger holds a similar approach when he invites the reader "to see and know the world differently"[180]. Such a mindset of Berger echoes what the three grammatologues had claimed before Derrida. Like Nietzsche, Berger avoids accepting anything as fact since he also believes that everything has multiple meanings and interpretations according to the different

[178]Sperling, "The Transcendental Face of Art".
[179]Ratik Asokan, "The Many Faces of John Berger". (New Republic: New Republic Online, 30 Dec. 2015). Accessed: 18 Jan. 2018.
[180]Yasmin Gunaratnam and Vikki Bell, "How John Berger Changed our Way of Seeing Art". (The Conversation: The Conversation Online, 5 Jan. 2017). Accessed: 18 Jan. 2018.

ways of seeing. Additionally, akin to Heidegger's perspective, Berger does not have a trust on one way of interpretation of presence since such an attitude obliterates the fixed and constant meaning of presence. On the other hand, Berger's keen interest in the psyche is so much in line with Freud whose perceptions attach significance to what underlies beneath what is revealed. In the light of all these views, Berger is ultimately lionised as an "eye-opener"[181] when looked through the eyes of others.

Berger is conceptualised as a deconstructionist primarily because of his groundbreaking BBC series and its book, *Ways of Seeing*. Even in one of the articles jointly written by Gunaratnam and Bell, Berger's deconstructionist self is stressed in the title "How John Berger Changed our Way of Seeing Art"[182] in a direct reference to the book. The article reminds the very beginning of the book which proposes to have a different way of seeing not only the world, but also the art. To this end, the first sentence of the book stating that "[t]he relation between what we see and what we know is never settled" is emphasized to make a claim that the book is a radical one "both in style and content"[183] belonged to a writer with deconstructive sights "[which] opens, reveals and reverses the given power relationships". Likewise, Serena Smith tries to reveal how Berger's deconstructionist attitude can be observed through the book as follows:

> [Berger's] work, *Ways of Seeing*, revolutionized the way art was perceived…[Berger] simply encouraged us to open our eyes; bringing older works of art into the 20th- and now 21st- century, pointing out what

[181]Asokan, "The Many Faces of John Berger".
[182]Gunaratnam and Vikki Bell, "How John Berger Changed our Way of Seeing Art
[183]Asokan, "The Many Faces of John Berger".

> no other critic had considered noteworthy: the world had changed…Berger drew attention to all the new, different 'ways of seeing'; his words almost became a lens to look through.[184]

Accepting the fact that the world has changed, Serena Smith highlights the importance of Berger's encouragement to his readers to have 'a new, different ways of seeing' by "[turning] a light on that which was previously in darkness"[185]. In this sense, both Gunaratnam and Bell and Serena Smith appear to be fully aware of the deconstructive side of Berger through his book *Ways of Seeing*.

This realization is indeed a prevailing sense among the others who come to terms with the idea that Berger has a deconstructive perception on life traced simultaneously in his art and works as well. To illustrate, Ali Smith notes in his article ,"A Gift for John Berger" that Berger makes us see changes[186] in time. As "an insister on open eyes"[187], Ali Smith believes that Berger "[has written] warningly about how much we are led to accept the total system of publicity images as we accept an element of climate"[188]. Similarly, Josephine Livingstone emphasizes how "Berger [intends to take] his readers beyond the visible, towards a closer understanding of the world as it really is- the one capitalism, patriarchy, and empire try to hide from [them]"[189]. Sivanandan also assents with Ali Smith and Livingstone while talking about how Berger gives "eyes to see with"[190]. In a same vein, Kellaway describes how Berger's deconstructive approach to life enables people "to rethink what they have

[184]Serena Smith, "How John Berger helped us to be feminists".
[185]Ibid.
[186]Ali Smith, "A Gift for John Berger".
[187]Ibid.
[188]Ibid.
[189]Josephine Livingstone, "Beyond John Berger's Ways of Seeing".
[190]Sivanandan, "John Berger 1926-2017 Truth-sayer in an age of lies."

thought they know"[191] about art, history, politics, and the act of looking and she claims that "[such a reevaluation] is what everything [Berger] … asks us to do"[192]. This is a relevant remark when Berger says: "[What] I have shown, and what I have said…must be judged against your own experience".

Berger's deconstructive stance clearly manifesting itself through *Ways of Seeing* may nourish an assumption about Berger's feminist self as well. The fact that Berger's *Ways of Seeing* has been produced in collaboration with the feminist Eva Figes, an influential English writer and literary critic famous for her feminist studies and second-world war experiences, is considered, such a feminist assumption should not be overlooked[193]. This book enables Berger to have a well-established reputation along with leading feminist figures through the eyes of others. In her article entitled "How John Berger helped us to be feminists", Serena Smith, for instance, underlines Berger's feminist approach in a direct relevance to his *Ways of Seeing* in this way. She says that:

> [in] a world where 'old white men' are so often vilified and seen as the antithesis to a 'feminist', it is definitely worth pointing out that Berger's *Ways of Seeing* was in many ways the precursor to Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"- i.e. the hugely influential essay which coined the term 'the male gaze'…[Parts] of *Ways of Seeing* almost read as a feminist manifesto.[194]

[191]Kate Kellaway, "John Berger: 'If I'm a Storyteller it's because I listen'".
[192]Ibid.
[193]Maughan, "The Art Critic in the Margins".
[194]Serena Smith, "How John Berger helped us to be feminists".

Here, Serena Smith attaches significance to Berger's *Ways of Seeing* as a harbinger of feminist perspective trying to mitigate the lingering effects of 'the male gaze' which is an attempt of describing the world and women from a masculine point of view by objectifying women, especially in the visual arts and literature. In a similar vein, Levy agrees with what Serena Smith says and ascribes a feminist identity to Berger asserting that:

> [at] a time when critics only concerned themselves with 'aesthetics', Berger set about revealing the capitalist and colonial ideologies behind much Western art, as well as putting forth a major feminist critique of it.[195]

While Levy brings these issues into focus, she makes a close analysis of the parts of *Ways of Seeing* as follows:

> In the second episode of the series, Berger [has put forward] a revolutionary feminist analysis of how women are seen that still resonates today…Berger [has deconstructed] the classical 'nude' in Western painting and compared this to modern images of porn and women in advertisements, as a way to begin a conversation about the place of women in society, both when the 'classics' were painted and today… Halfway through the episode, Berger asserts that it's illogical to only have male voices talking about these issues, and invites a group of women in to discuss the topic.[196]

What Levy stresses most is the fact that Berger deconstructs the image of the women in classical Western art by comparing it with the modern images seeking women's place in

[195]Sarah Levy, "The Ways John Berger saw".
[196]Ibid.

society. In doing so, Berger seems to stimulate all women to take an active part in their lives giving a voice to their rights. As a consequence, since the book is perceived to transmit a kind of feminist call to women, Berger has been rightly evaluated as a feminist through the eyes of others.

However, no matter how he has been defined through the eyes of others, it is evident that Berger closely corresponds with all and none of the evaluations including his Marxist and feminist qualifications owing to his deconstructive attitude. That is, his deconstructionist approach prevents him from being one person and therefore labelling him by one of his qualifications. This would be a misleading assessment of his personal interests and attachments. Accordingly, when looked at through different contexts through the eyes of others, Berger can be recognized by his numerous remarkable characteristics along with his Marxism and feminism.

2.1.1 Berger in Turkey

Not only around the international borders has Berger been appraised, he is also well-known in Turkey. However, before focusing more on how he is perceived in Turkey and through which qualifications has he been recognized, it is worth concentrating on what Turkey means for him and how he feels about this country where his sixteen books were published within ten years[197]. In accordance with Müge Gürsoy Sökmen's interview, Berger

[197]Serhan Yedig, "John Berger: Türkiye'nin farkı, tükenmeyen trajedi". (Kültür Servisi Online, 3 Jan 2017). Accessed: 5 Jan. 2018. [Translation: Gülden Kazaz Çelik]

visited Turkey three times for different reasons[198]. He was firstly invited to Istanbul by the owner of the Yankı Publishing House[199], Kemal Demirel and stayed there for a month with his beloved wife Beverly and their two-year-old son Yves. During this time, he met so many Turkish intellectuals and artists. For example, once he had a meal with Cihat Burak, a significant Turkish painter, architecture and writer; Can Yücel, a famous Turkish poet, and a well-known actor Mehmet Ulusoy. He confabulated with Yaşar Kemal, one of the greatest Turkish writers notable for his novels of social realism, on folk songs at the tavern of "Kör Agop" in Kumkapı, İstanbul. He liked to to Turkish music and musicians like Ruhi Su, a Turkish opera and folk singer and saz[200] virtuoso, and he enjoyed watching a play of Beklan Algan, a Turkish actor, screenwriter and director.

In his travels to Turkey, he wanted to visit İstanbul with a journalist companion to closer cities to Istanbul such as Adapazarı, Bolu and Mudurnu. When he was in Adapazarı, the municipality introduced him to the cousin of Sait Faik Abasıyanık, one of the leading Turkish writers of short story and poetry. The cousin gave Berger a story book of Sait Faik translated in French and Berger devoured all of it at one night. On their way back, Berger, unexpectedly, had a chance of attending and watching one of the most significant meetings of Bülent Ecevit[201] called as the "Rural-Urban", which was a project about improving the

[198]According to Müge Gürsoy Sökmen, who is the co-founder, editor and translator of the Metis Publishing House, Berger visited Turkey twice; however, she mentioned that he had been in Turkey once before she met him.

[199]Yankı Publishing House was one of the earliest publishing houses in Turkey, İstanbul, which was founded to publish only one hundred books. Having achieved their goal, they decided to close down their publishing house.

[200]"Saz" which is one of the traditional musical instruments in Turkey is a stringed musical instrument also known as "bağlama".

[201]Bülent Ecevit was the prime minister of Turkey and the leader of the democratic left party at that time, the last three years before the 1980s' coup.

physical and social conditions of the rural with the support provided by the urban. These were only some of Berger's experiences in Turkey at his first visit.

Despite so many other invitations[202], Berger visited Turkey two more times: once for the International Istanbul Film Festival as a jury member and once for the International Istanbul Book Fair at TÜYAP. During these visits, Berger eagerly observed the paintings of Şeker Ahmet Paşa, a talented Ottoman painter, and met more intellectuals and artists such as Tomris Uyar, one of the most courageous Turkish women writers, and Latife Tekin with whom Berger communicated by drawing as she was not able to speak any English. He was listening to the traditional Turkish music more when he was invited to the house of Uğurtan Aksel, one of the first Turkish harpists. There, he explored the joys and pleasures of the sounds of the nay[203],the tambur[204] and the kemence[205] while listening to the performance of Niyazi Sayın, Necdet Yaşar and Reşat Uca[206]. Besides, he was watching a 1983 Turkish political film, *A season in Hakkari*, directed by Erden Kıral.[207]

[202]Although Berger was invited to Turkey so many times by different people including Müge Gürsoy Sökmen, he was not able to come once again since he was always busy with doing something or going somewhere. Nevertheless, he always kept his contact with Turkey via his telephone calls or interviews.
[203]The nay (ney) is a long end-blown flute which is widely played in Turkey.
[204]The tambur is a fretted string instrument whose history rooted back to the Ottoman times.
[205]The kemence (or sometimes kemenche) is a stringed bowed musical instrument mostly played in the Black Sea region of Turkey.
[206]Niyazi Sayın, the Turkish ney flautist and music educator, Necdet Yaşar, the Turkish tambur lute player and teacher and Reşat Uca, the Turkish kemence player and producer.
[207]All the information up to this moment could be gathered and translated thanks to Cevat Çapan's article, "John Berger'a armağan: 'Gökyüzü Mavi Siyah'".
[Cevat Çapan, "John Berger'a Armağan: Gökyüzü Mavi Siyah". (Cumhuriyet Gazetesi: Cumhuriyet Gazatesi Online, 18 Nov. 2016) Accessed 12 Feb. 2018.]

One of Berger's experiences of his visits to Turkey was shared in Philip Maughan's article, "The Art Critic in the Margins" in a way which shows Berger's ability to reach people in different places through his works. Maughan relays this anecdote as follows:

> […] a visit to Istanbul, to the draughty cabins of economic migrants hoping to find work on the outskirts of the city. [The people there] had invited him in for tea. Incredibly, on a rickety wooden shelf, sat one of his books, translated into Turkish- not that his hosts had any idea that he was the author. This is precisely what Berger meant by fraternity: even in greater solitude, against the dehumanizing reality of servitude to capital or war, connections can be formed. Our differences diminish.[208]

As Maughan tells, Berger unexpectedly saw *A Seventh Man* in one of the wretched houses of the suburbs of Istanbul[209]during his visits to Turkey and he surprisingly realized that the experience of the owner of the book who is getting ready to go to Germany as a migrant worker is reminiscent of the subject of the book itself. This indicates how Berger has succeeded in forming a sense of fraternity among his readers with whom he shares common concerns and anxieties even if he has not had a chance of meeting each of them in person.

Berger himself tells another anecdote about how well this sense of fraternity has been working in Turkey when he was interviewed by Serhan Yedig just after the publication of *King* in Müge Gürsoy Sökmen's translation. When asked, Berger recounts this story in this way:

[208]Maughan, "The Art Critic in the Margins".
[209]This is also mentioned in Yücel Göktürk's interview with John Berger published in *İstanbul'dan Gelen Telefon: Müzik Eşliğinde Bir Söyleşi*. (İstanbul, Metis Yayınevi, 2016), 15-6.

> At one time I was staying at a small hotel in Istanbul and had to come back very late. The moment I got in, the girl in the reception instantly recognized me asking "Are you John Berger, the writer?" in amazement. I thought that she would be a student because she gave me my book to sign at that time of the night. I was deeply marked, [and as a response to what he felt, he later stated that] nowhere in the world at midnight had I greeted in such a nice and warm way.[210]

Similar to his previous experience, Berger was recognized by someone whom he had not met before; he was not known in a foreign land by his books. It is evident that such a sense of fraternity can only be achieved by literature and Berger succeeds in reaching so many people from different social backgrounds in Turkey via his fiction.

All these references show that Berger does not only value his experiences in Turkey, he is also fully aware that he is widely read, closely followed and clearly understood within the borders of this country embracing its own tragedy caused by the multiplicity of its cultures.[211] This emotional attachment to Turkey has always been strengthened by Berger's lifelong friend Cevat Çapan, a Turkish translator and intellectual, and his close friends Murat Belge, a contemporary Turkish intellectual, academician, translator and literary critic; Abidin Dino, a well-known Turkish painter, writer and a film director; and Selçuk Demirel, with whom he has published his latest book, *Smoke* in 2016. While Turkey carries such a special meaning for Berger, it is unfortunate that he is mostly known as an artist by the intellectuals and literary circles in Turkey.

[210]Yedig, Interview with John Berger, 2017. [Translation: G.K.Ç.]
[211]Ibid.

Even though Berger certainly deserves more recognition in Turkey, Ayşegül Sönmez, one of the contemporary journalists and art critics in Turkey, claims that Berger has been read, loved, appreciated and respected more than his own hometown in Turkey[212]. It would be true to say so since he has been widely known in Turkey as one of the influential contemporary artists, more particularly as a painter and a drawer mostly noted for his inspiringly different ways of seeing. In time, articles and reviews about Berger and his ways of seeing have been written; even specific programmes have sometimes been prepared and aired on Turkish channels. Once, for example a well-known journalist and photographer Özcan Yurdalan was invited to a programme of Servet Dilber and Sinan Çakmak, two significantly well-educated photographers and art critics in Turkey, to talk about what Berger has taught them in arts and thereby life. Through the whole programme, Yurdalan appropriately introduces Berger as a genius of art as Berger suggests that whatever we see is worth questioning before being accepted as truth[213]. Laying emphasis on Berger's decentering truth, Yurdalan seems to concur with Temel Demirer's views focusing on how Berger is able to interact seeing, thinking and commenting and thereby being capable of reforming personal experience[214].

Berger's deconstruction inviting people to have a different way of looking at life, or more specifically at arts can be observed not only in his thoughts but also in his own appearance. This could be the reason why Sönmez states that Berger looks more like a

[212]Ayşegül Sönmez, "Statükocu değil insan'dan taraftı". (*Cumhuriyet* Online: Haber Kültür, 3 Jan. 2017)
[213]Servet Dilber and Sinan Çakmak, Conversation with Özcan Yurdalan. "John Berger Ne Öğretti?". (Youtube: Göz Kararı, 12 Jan. 2017). [Translation: G. K. Ç.]
[214]Temel Demirer, "Şiir Gibiydi John Berger". (Edebiyat Bahçesi Online, 26 June 2017). [Translation: G. K. Ç.]

manager of a rock group than an art historian or a critic. By his unusual appearance with radical thoughts, Berger is conceived as a key figure encouraging different ways of observing life and making further interpretations and meanings.

In addition to these attempts to make Berger known in Turkey, Berger is introduced to a larger Turkish audience through translation one of which is belonged to Cevat Çapan. The most comprehensive biography of Berger including the details which can be hardly attained without Çapan's comments can be presented to the Turkish readers and the unknown facts about Berger's life such as his escape from the school of St. Edwards because of its rigid educational system and his being enrolled in Central School of Arts on a scholarship could be revealed. Furthermore, the Turkish readers are able to learn that in the 1950s when Berger was writing for the *New Statesman*, he met so many intellectuals of the time including his Hungarian Marxist teacher Frederick Antal whose communist ideas helped him form his own philosophical ideology. Hence, Çapan does not only present a wider range of details of Berger's life, his description of the 1950s world in theatre, cinema, and fiction also guides Turkish readers to understand Berger and his works better.

The other person who devotes a great amount of her energy, attention and time to Berger is Müge Gürsoy Sökmen who once had an opportunity of meeting him through Çapan[215]. Berger attracted the attention of Mrs. Sökmen and all the other members of the Metis Publishing House who have been concerned about how to present Berger to the Turkish readers. To this end, they published a collection of Berger's essays under the title of *O Ana*

[215]Not only Müge Gürsoy Sökmen but also all the other translators and editors of the Metis Publishing House has had such a nice chance of being in touch with him.

Adanmış in 1986 when the Turkish translation of *Ways of Seeing* was launched. Besides, the Metis Publishing House was the first one who compiled Berger's essays and published them in a book entitled *Hoşbeş*[216]; after two months from its publication, in October, 2016, the Penguin published the same book in English with the title of *Confabulations*[217]. Accordingly, Mrs. Sökmen has not only helped the Turkish reader have an access to Berger's writings in Turkish, she has also introduced his personality traits to them.

Due to Mrs. Sökmen's views, Berger is such a humble and modest person that he is always able to adapt himself to new environments very easily. Accordingly, he is a man belonging not only to one nation or community but the whole world. In other words, he is portrayed as a man of the world who is able to communicate with anyone everywhere. For instance, when he came to visit the Metis Publishing House, his first contact was with the dog of the Sökmen family and then to their daughter. Having had such an interaction, he continued communicating with the others who were not able to speak any English. After the preliminary interactions with a dog, a little girl and people unable to speak English, he came to talk to the ones with whom he felt he could communicate much more comfortably. This is an incident which indicates that Berger knows how to reach others by different mediums of communication.

In addition to this, Mrs. Sökmen believes that Berger is an incredibly generous man who thinks whatever he gives to people is not giving but a sharing. In her view, this could be

[216]In Turkish, "hoşbeş" is the act of having a nice conversation on different issues.
[217]Considering its Turkish meaning and its connotation, the Penguin has had a nice and proper expression and translation for it.

the reason why he never claimed any profit on the copyright of his books and writings. Instead of making use of this profit, Berger always preferred to donate it to the charities. Moreover, Mrs. Sökmen defines Berger as a real communist who continuously aims to destroy bourgeois society and always defends, respects and admires work force and rural life. One may argue that this is the reason for which Berger abandoned the prestigious life in England and decided to simply live in the rural parts of Europe, the southern France. As a token of his appreciation of a life which is fair to all people offering equal working conditions to anyone, Berger has the courage of reshaping his life in line with his communist concerns. Furthermore, Mrs. Sökmen evaluates Berger as a man of his time although his fiction is timeless reflecting present realities about the current concerns and anxieties of people like a mirror. In other words, both Berger and his writings are beyond the limitations of time; while describing any contemporary aspects of humanity, each of them is able to refer to any particular time or place.

In the light of all these evaluations, it is noticeable that Berger is highly appreciated in Turkey. As it is observed, he has a special kind of emotional bond with this country because of the fact that he was deeply influenced by Nazım Hikmet whose works he started reading at the age of fourteen or Emine Sevgi Özdamar for whose novel, *Haliç'te Bir Köprü*, he wrote a preface[218]. Thus, Turkey has always taken a special place for him and his fiction. To illustrate, in one of his novels *King: A Street Story*, he describes a carpet from Konya

[218]Berger even wrote a preface to one of Özdamar's novel, *Haliç'te Bir Köprü* (Yücel Göktürk*, İstanbul'dan Gelen Telefon*, 20) on which he made a comment stating that "Özdamar's stories are just the contrary of whatever the mothers are telling to their children; they are rather the ones the mothers have to cope with in their daily lives" (İletişim Publishing House Online).

which has typical Anatolian motifs. In brief, Berger's interaction and interest in Turkey is mutual as he is reciprocally followed by the Turkish readers or the Turkish literary circles as a hardworking, meticulous writer with provocative and stimulating ideas as Demirer puts it in a nutshell[219].

2.2 John Berger's Self-Portrait

On one hand, through the eyes of others, Berger has been defined by his numerous qualifications including his Marxist and feminist views which simultaneously deconstruct each other; on the other, in Turkey, he is known as a painter and a drawer noted for his radical views deconstructing the ways of seeing life, truth and experience. However, he has never restricted himself to any accepted norms or evaluations. Still his strenuous attempts to feel and understand the world from different perspectives through multiple gazes is sufficient to prove his deconstructive stand. In one of his essays, Berger shows how he is able to hold different gazes coming together to have a stronger and deeper effect in producing new meanings. To this end, he describes what people concurrently do in different parts of the world as he comments:

> I write in the night, but I see not only the tyranny. If that were so, I would probably not have the courage to continue writing. I see people sleeping, stirring, getting up to drink water, whispering their projects or their fears, making love, praying, cooking something whilst the rest of the family is asleep in Baghdad and Chicago. (Yes, I see too the forever invincible Kurds, 4,000 of whom were gassed – with US compliance- by Saddam Hussein.) I see pastry cooks working in Teheran and the

[219]Demirer, "Şiir Gibiydi John Berger". [Translation: G. K. Ç.]

> shepherds, thought of as bandits, sleeping beside their sheep in Sardinia, I see a man in the Friedrichshain quarter of Berlin sitting in his pyjamas with a bottle of beer reading Heidegger and he has the hands of a proletarian, I see a small boat of illegal immigrants off the Spanish coast near Alicante, I see a mother in Mali, her name is Aya which means Born on Friday, swaying her baby to sleep, I see the ruins of Kabul and a man going home, and I know that, despite the pain, the ingenuity of the survivors is undiminished, an ingenuity which scavenges and collects energy, and in the ceaseless cunning of this ingenuity, there is a spiritual value, something like the Holy Ghost. I am convinced of this in the night, although I don't know why.[220]

Holding various perspectives reflecting one specific time depicted through different places would strengthen the likelihood of Berger's deconstructive mindset and this could well explain why Berger tends to grasp everything without being limited to the binary oppositions suggesting fixed perception and settled meaning.

In one instance he wants to describe his own potential in a direct relevance to his own weakness in a way to criticize the settled relationship between the binary oppositions. At the time of his conversation with Eleanor Wachtel, he professes his own strength and weakness together in this way:

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[220]John Berger, *Hold Everything Dear: Dispatches on Survival and Resistance*. London and NY: Verso, 2007. [39]

> Probably like most things that are given spring from the weakness […] Maybe I do have that capacity because actually capacities are usually born of a certain weakness.[221]

Thus, Berger believes that one's weakness could turn into a strong motive for possessing a person's capabilities. Keeping a critical eye on binary oppositions, Berger continues making a critique of them. In a conversation with Susan Sontag with whom he thinks he "[has] lots of things in common"[222], he talks about life which becomes readable and therefore recountable after one's death. In this deconstructive thinking, Berger "[makes] absent present"[223]. Similarly, he explains the fact that a sense of loss is no different than a sense of possession as he says when interviewed by Michael Silverblatt, an American broadcaster well known as an avid reader:

> [loss] has a very strange and not contradictory relationship with the opposite of loss which is possession. In fact, when we lose something of somebody if that thing that we have lost is important we begin to possess it internally more strongly when we possess it externally.[224]

In this regard, since Berger has such a deconstructive Derridean approach to life, he seems to echo the criticism of binary oppositions which are not contrasting but alternating parts of the whole. Accordingly, Berger here suggests the idea of possessing something while he feels

[221]John Berger. "Writers and Company". Interview by Eleanor Wachtel, 3 Jan. 2017.
[222]Sontag, "To Tell a Story".
(At the beginning of the interview, Berger introduces Susan Sontag with these words: "Susan and I have lots of things in common I think; we both write essays, about literature about ideas; we both have worked for films […] We both have written quite a lot about photography, about the visual- photographical image and finally and perhaps most important of all tonight, we both write fiction, novels and short stories.")
[223]Ibid.
[224]John Berger. "John Berger with Michael Silverblatt". Interview by Michael Silverblatt, 2 Apr. 2013.

he completely losses it and this possession at the time of loss appears to be much stronger since it is ultimately gained more internally than externally.

Despite the fact that his being evaluated through so many qualifications such as his Marxist and feminist views as well as his identification as an art historian, novelist, playwright, critic, teacher, painter or a theorist, Berger defines himself simply as a storyteller. At the time of his conversation with Esler, he courageously states that "[he feels] that [he is] a storyteller. That's all. That's all".[225]Neither in the eyes of others nor in the Turkish circles Berger has not been sufficiently noticed although he himself has consistently mentioned this aspect. In one of the chapters of *Confabulations* under the title of "Self-portrait", he makes a reference to his own passion for telling and writing stories:

> What has prompted me to write over the years is the hunch that something needs to be told and that, if I don't try to tell it, it risks not being told.[226]

Hence, Berger clearly demonstrates that the urge which enables him to write letters, poems, speeches, stories, books and eventually notes[227]for about eighty years is due to his urgent need. As he explains such a need through his short essay "Self-Portrait", Berger explains what the act of writing means for him and eventually comes up with the sense that as a constant and closest companion, "[…] the activity of writing has been a vital one […] [for

[225]Isaacs, "Face to Face".
[226]John Berger. *Confabulations*. (UK: Penguin, 2016). (The same chapter, "Self-portrait" was published under the title of "Writing is an off-shoot of something deeper" in the Guardian Online. (The Guardian: The Guardian Online, 12 Dec. 2014)
[227]Ibid.

him]" since "it [helps him] to make a sense of things and to continue"[228]. In his conversation with Silverblatt, Berger confesses that writing enables him to make a sense of the world we have been thrown into[229]. This approach can be a justification of his reason why he prefers writing and telling fiction to painting as he says in an interview by Asokan:

> The reason I stopped painting at the end of the 40s was what was happening in the world: the threat, above all the threat of nuclear war. This was before the Soviet Union had parity. This threat was so pressing, that painting pictures- that somebody would go hang up on the wall- seemed… [dismissive hand gestures]. But to write, urgently, in the press, anywhere, everywhere, seemed so necessary.[230]

The reason which supports his preference of writing in lieu of painting is the meaninglessness of painting pictures and selling them for someone who would buy them to hang up in their room. This would mean to remain silent and it is unacceptable for him if he could not make people know about what is happening in the world. Hence, when being interviewed by Wachtel, he expresses that "[it] [is] not such a shift [but rather] a development"[231]in his career since he holds a belief that it is a more meaningful decision to take. In other words, it implies that painting gets a kind of luxury in a world where there is too much pain which Berger feels that he needs to share this suffering through his writing.

[228]Ibid.
[229]Silverblatt, "John Berger with Michael Silverblatt".
[230]Asokan, "The Many Faces of John Berger". (The same quote was also in Sarah Levy's article "The Ways John Berger saw".)
[231]Wachtel, "Writers and Company".

Even though Berger opts for writing, he is consistent in expressing that not only his writing but also his painting shares the same concern of telling stories.[232] For instance, even years before his interview by Wachtel, he had shared similar views to Geoff Dyer while voicing that:

> [perhaps] I am like all people who tell stories- and I often think now that even when I was writing on art, it was really a way of story-telling- story tellers lose their identity and are open to the lives of other people.[233]

As it can be clearly understood, Berger's storytelling contributes a lot to his writing since through his writing he has always been in a close contact with the lives of others. It is significant that Berger is always a modest and humble man when he unpretentiously says that he is no different than other storytellers reminding us Mrs. Sökmen's evaluation of him. Besides, when in touch with all the others, the storytellers empathize with them and through this interaction a channel of communication starts between the storyteller and all the others. This justifies Mrs. Sökmen's another assessment of Berger having a keen interest in communication. Inevitably, this further underlines the fact that Berger cares about human interaction thereby 'open to the lives of other people'[234] with whom he in fact shares his own life.

[232]Ibid.
[233]John Berger. "Ways of Witnessing". Interview by Geoff Dyer, 5 Nov. 2014.
[234]Berger was also talking about storytelling as a powerful motive for making a person shareable in his conversation with Susan Sontag, "To Tell a Story".

Due to the fact that storytelling is such an intimate activity keeping all people together, Berger feels that each story helps people get closer to each other. In an interview conducted by Isaacs, he suggests that:

> […] maybe all the books I've written is to get in very close and then to bring something back. […] I am not a politician, I am just somebody who tries to go close to experience and bring something back[235].

By reaching out at people's life, Berger's writing and telling stories are central to his way of seeing since each story 'brings [him] something back'. It would mean that Berger's writing and storytelling are the outcome of his observation through which he obtains the specific subject to tell so as to share it with the others. Therefore, the act of writing and storytelling formed as a medium for sharing experiences have myriad roles: On one hand, the stories are able to gather people around the experiences people may have and make these experiences spread through the people who have been suffering from it. On the other, the experiences circulating around by storytelling are so powerful that they are even able to reach people who are unfamiliar to them. While the stories play such leading roles, they also allow Berger, as a storyteller, not only to reflect but also to internalise what others experience. This is why Berger feels obliged to write: he has written so that he could find a meaning to survive. As he has repeated on so many different platforms such as while being interviewed by

[235]Isaacs, "Face to Face".

Silverblatt,[236] Isaacs[237] and Sontag[238], what he mostly cares is to write to share the life which he wants to preserve its meaning at the heart of his stories.

[236]Berger mentions such an obligation to write as a result of the experience of pain in his conversation with Silverblatt as well. He says "[…] another kind of writing which is a duel with the world to do with something happening […] Witnessing that, reacting to it and then there is the obligation to write. This has to be said […] because it is needed, […] this needs to be read at this moment."
[237]Isaacs, "Face to Face".
[238]Sontag, "To Tell a Story".

CHAPTER 3

Berger's Deconstructive Ways of Seeing and Saying in His Fiction

3.1 What is Said

Having defined Berger as an avid observer and an emotional man whose main concern is to share the experiences of people, it is worth focusing on the aspects of his storytelling and analysing what it mostly says. First and foremost, what Berger says in his fiction is deeply embedded in the experience of pain and suffering. Deeply concerned, Berger has made several remarks to reveal this anxiety. While being interviewed by Silverblatt, for instance, Berger says that "[life] is full of pain"[239]. In a conversation with Wachtel, he clearly states that whatever he writes is almost always related to the painful experiences of people[240]. As he tells in an essay entitled "Where are we?" published within the collection of his other essays under the title of a book *Hold Everything Dear*, "[he] is writing about the pain in the world"[241] in order to deal with this pain. In this sense, Berger conceives of writing as a kind of consolation for the world surrounded by sufferings of many people as he aired his views on the Meridian BBC World Services[242]. In line with this perception, Berger believes that he

[239]Silverblatt, "John Berger with Michael Silverblatt".
[240]Wachtel, "Writers and Company".
[241]Berger, *Hold Everything Dear*, "Where are we?", 41.
[242]Meridian, "BBC World Services".

could soothe away the pain and suffering of people by telling and writing stories; otherwise, he feels there would be no way of putting up with this pain and continue living. Consequently, how would it be possible to overcome the pain of a lovely young girl contracted AIDS at the age of early twenties? How would somebody respond to the pain of a girl who "[has been contaminated] by the HIV"[243] and could not accept her illness and thereby rejecting it by falsely claiming that "[the doctors] must have mixed up the bloods"?[244] How would anyone tolerate the helplessness of that girl crying to her father in such a pathetic way: "Papa, can you hear me? I'm twenty-three and I'm going to die"[245]? Only writing may alleviate this suffering and that is why Berger tells her story in one of his novels, *To The Wedding*.

To The Wedding is a touching story of a young girl called Ninon, the protagonist. As it can be inferred from above statements, she is condemned to excruciating pains from which she ceaselessly suffers until she dies. Through the whole story, Ninon's pains are accompanied by other character's emotional suffering like his father's Jean Ferrero who is so helpless that he has no idea about how (or whether) he can bear his daughter's suffering. Like a frail old man, he cries that:

> [p]raying is not what I'm used to…She's going to die. Die horribly after getting sicker and sicker. Defenceless. This illness is not like others. They don't say this, they call it a retrovirus. As if this says it. In other illnesses death comes one day and snuffs you out. This illness, the illness of Ninon, is the job of being slowly abandoned by life. It's the job of life letting you down, one part after another failing. Do you follow, Holy

[243]Berger, *To The Wedding* (London: Bloomsbury, 2009), 75.
[244]Ibid.
[245]Ibid.

> Mother of God? Her capacities go out, one by one, and there's no night, no starts, only a cellar from which she can never walk out and in which nobody else can stay. She's given medicines which make her ill but which stop her dying for a little while. In this little while there's pain and time but no hope.[246]

Despite the fact that Ferrero is not a religious or a pious man, he seeks refuge from Holy Mother of God for his daughter since there is nothing more he can do. He is well aware of his daughter's possible pains and sufferings; he knows that she will inevitably undergo all the troubles day by day and her health will be deteriorating in a short while. Yet, '[in] this little while, there's pain and time but no hope'. While Ninon's father is in pain of her suffering, her mother, Zdena, feels the same. She accuses herself of not being with her daughter enough because she believes if she had been with her, she would never have experienced any of these and therefore she would not be suffering from this disease now.[247] However, what is done cannot be undone and her pain continuous until her last breath.

Not only her parents' presence but also her beloved, Gino's support provides the necessary amount of strength Ninon lacks. In spite of Ninon's wishes, Gino persists marrying her due to the fact that he believes "[he] will be marrying a woman, not a virus"[248] as his father, Federico sympathetically says. The story of Ninon is one way of revealing a shot of one of the pains of the world and Berger's telling the story aims to reach as many people as possible. While making a conversation with Wachtel, Berger passes a remark that through the story of Ninon he wishes to connect the pain and suffering of the people who are afflicted

[246]Ibid., 89.
[247]Ibid., 131.
[248]Ibid., 100.

with this disease; that is, he finds a meaning and a value in someone's life and wants "[to share] the suffering of [these people] (with the others)"[249].

As a remedy for the pains of the world, Berger writes another story of suffering of a whole community living on the outskirts in *A Fortunate Man*. There, the pain of a woodman who is trapped beneath a tree[250] and a woman of about thirty-seven suffering from insomnia, asthma and emotional stress[251] are told. Besides, an old woman whose face is ashen-coloured because of the pain she feels[252], the suffering of a nubile woman who wants to do anything but not doing the laundry[253] and even more are recounted. At the heart of these stories of pain and suffering, Berger puts Doctor Sassall who is not only a doctor treating physical pain but also a sort of consultant trying to help his patients getting through their emotional downfall. Not the beginning of the book which is indeed "a series of case studies" showing "[…] glimpses of the situations Sassall responds to every day, which are recognizable to any doctor"[254] but the

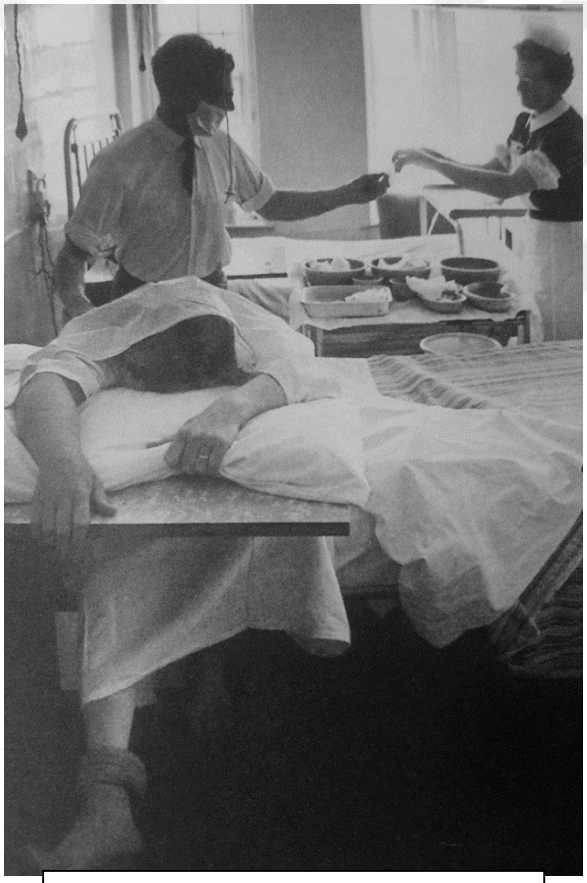

Fig.10.

[249]Wachtel, "Writers and Company".
[250]Berger, *A Fortunate Man*, 23.
[251]Ibid., 26.
[252]Ibid., 32.
[253]Ibid., 37.
[254]Berger, *A Fortunate Man*, "Introduction", 12.

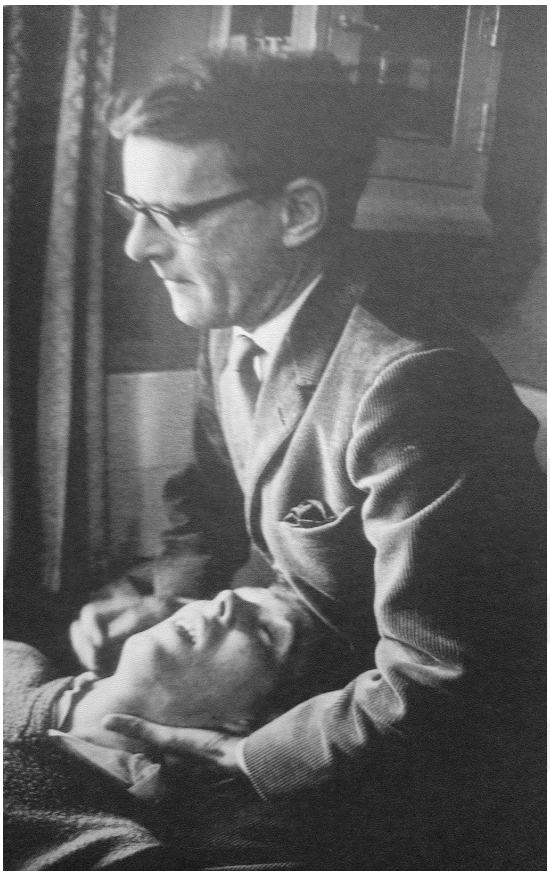

Fig.11.

second part of the book is enriched by the photographs taken by Jean Mohr a talented Swiss documentary photographer, or photojournalist and these photographs expose the pain of these people with whom Doctor Sassall has to live in such an underprivileged environment. Berger's collaboration with Mohr to produce such an image-text has a similar purpose in *A Seventh Man* although *A Seventh Man* is a more comprehensive study which deals in a bigger group of people and their reality.

Unable to disregard the pain and suffering of the migrant workers of Europe who have to leave their beloved hometown to go to the unknown lands to become commodities of the capitalist system, Berger focuses on their lives which are full of both physical and emotional pains and sufferings. Divided into three chapters, the book firstly describes the departure of these people to the foreign lands with a glimmer of hope for a more promising future. As Mohr has

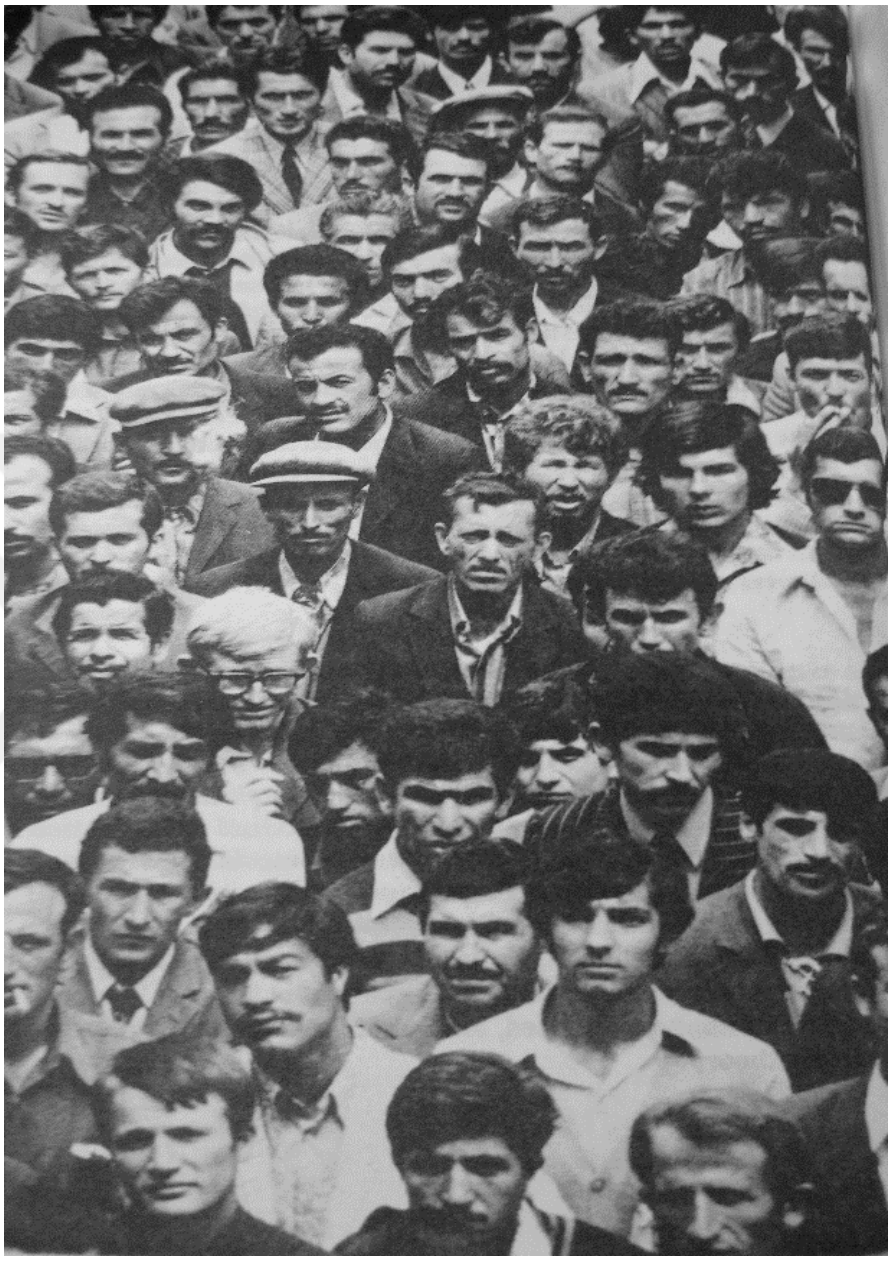

Fig.12.

photographed, the migrants need to be informed about their journey to the countries they apply for working and then they are subjected to have a several tests approving whether they

are physically healthy enough to work or not. (All these tests are carried out in the most

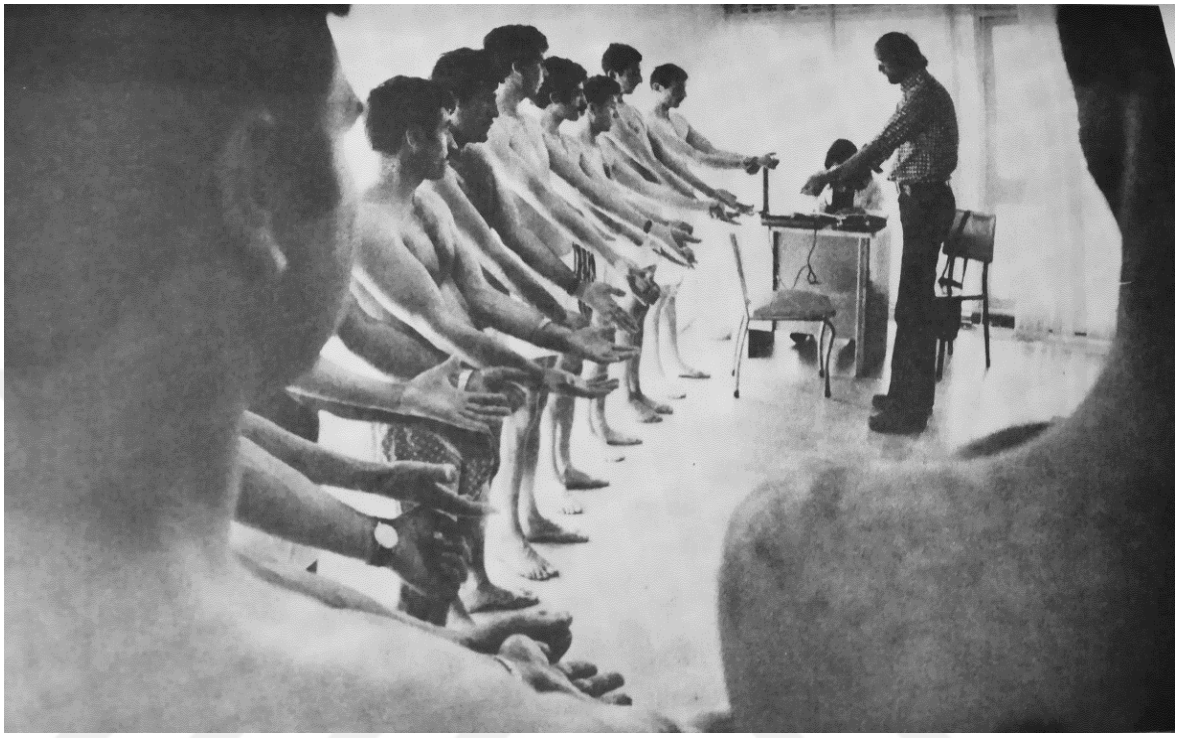

Fig.13.

inhumane way which lead today's readers to reconsider the pervading impacts and consequences of capitalism.)

Once the governments of the countries for which the migrants apply give their assent to them, they are able to set out and this starts the process of their suffering. The migrant has no choice but to accept to go thinking that this is his only chance. In

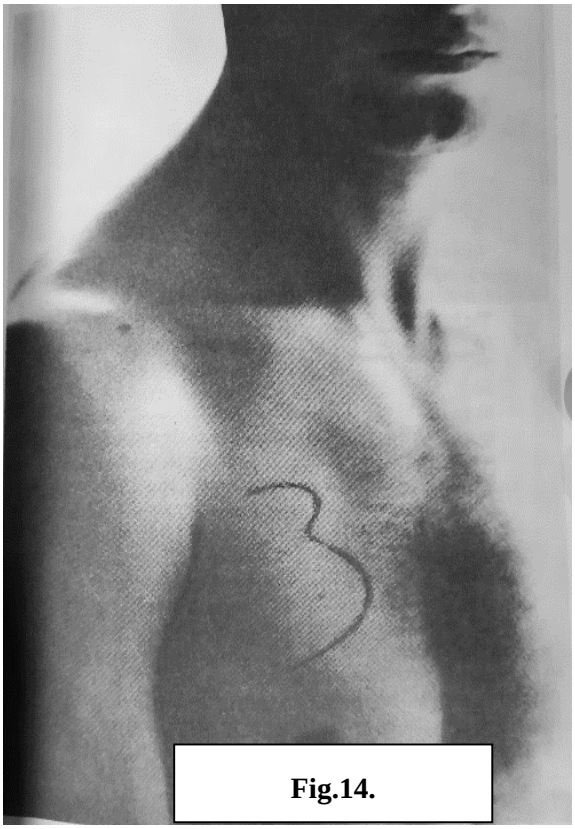

Fig.14.

other words, as "[he] is free to sell his labour power like a commodity"[255], "[he needs to sacrifice his] present for the future"[256] and "[the] only present reality for [him] is work and the fatigue which follows it"[257].Therefore, "his departure [is] like a death"[258].

Berger focuses on the painful work life of the migrant in the second chapter of the book. He thinks that the migrant "[suffering] in a kind of imprisonment in a prison"[259] is assigned a job which is "often frustrating and dehumanized"[260]. Among these migrants, he observes that:

> [two] thirds work in industry, building or construction […] A few work in agriculture. The rest in the service sector. In France 20 per cent of all industrial workers are migrants: in Germany 12 per cent: in Switzerland 40 per cent. They are concentrated in the hardest, most disagreeable and less well-paid jobs, for example in the plastics, rubber and asbestos processing industries in Germany. On the assembly line of the Ford factory in Cologne 40 per cent of the labour force are migrants: in the Renault workshops in France 40 per cent; in the Volvo factory in Gothenburg 45 per cent.[261]

As the statistical data obviously demonstrates, the migrant is forced to work at the most challenging and demanding jobs under very difficult conditions in a foreign land. With regard to the quote above most of them are expected to work in industry 'in the hardest, most disagreeable and less well-paid jobs, for example in the plastics, rubber and asbestos

[255]Berger, *A Seventh Man* (London and NY: Verso, 2010), 86.
[256]Ibid., 191.
[257]Ibid., 175.
[258]Ibid., 183.
[259]Ibid.
[260]Ibid., 124.
[261]Ibid., 90.

processing factories'. In addition to the unsatisfying working conditions, the migrant has to stay at ragged barracks around which he is being othered as "Zigeuner (gypsy), Lumpenpack (rag-pack), Kameltreiber (camel-rider), Zitronenschüttler (lemon-squeezer), or Schlangenfresser (snake-eater)"[262]. Since he is the other, he is condemned to live in one of these wretched barracks where "there is no room for anything else" apart from "[doing] what he is told how to do"[263].

Fig.15.

[262]Ibid., 119.
[263]Ibid., 92.

By sacrificing himself at that time in such a kind of place, the migrant imagines how he will be able to change his own life as well as his family's when he returns. As compensation for his pain and suffering, he finally returns to a place to which he truly belongs and there he regains his self-esteem since he "[returns] to himself at last acknowledged"[264]. Thus, Berger ends the book with the chapter entitled as "Return" as a token of the migrant's rightful honour to some back to his homeland after all the difficulties he has experienced in a place where he is accepted as a nobody. Even at that blissful moment when the migrant is able to return, Berger attracts the reader's attention to the other side of the medallion by voicing how the recently arrived migrant feels about his arrival. The migrant utters "[if] only the wages at home were a bit higher and if everyone could find work there, [none of us] would leave to go abroad"[265]. That is, he is sad about his experience even if he comes back and indeed he prefers not to go at all.

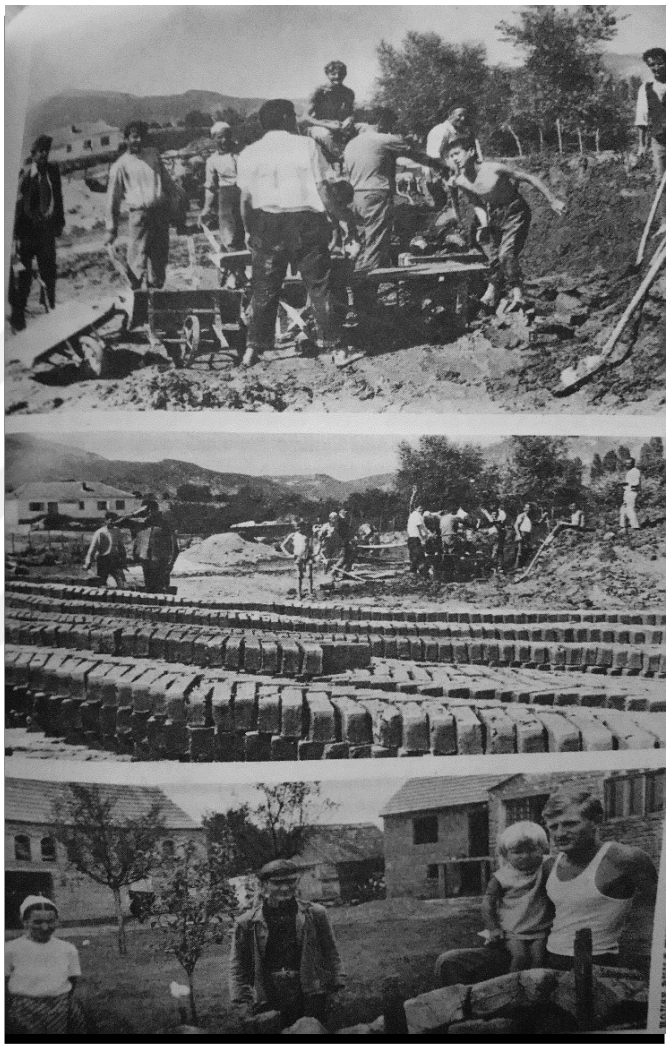

Fig.16.

[264]Ibid., 213.
[265]Ibid., 209.

However, he quickly realizes that "[the] economic conditions which [has formed] his decision to leave have not improved; they may have deteriorated"[266]. Hence, if he needed to make another decision to go abroad to work for some savings, he would most likely agree on going again due to the fact that he has no other chances in his homeland. Therefore, it is still worth going despite suffering and being exposed to all the pains of the capitalist system as long as a more promising future is possible when he comes back to the place to which he is emotionally tied.

Despite the fact that the migrant accepts such a dehumanizing system to which he is imposed, Berger seriously criticizes this issue and wants to draw people's attention. Probably, this is the reason why Berger wants to work with Mohr once again. He feels it is significant to have these photographs to reveal the actual sufferings of those people. Although Berger does not continue collaborating with Mohr in his other works, the focal center of his interest remains the same. Thus, he has a story of another group of people whose life is full of pain and suffering in *King* where he trusts on the reader's perception and imagination without the help of photographs. As it can be understood from its full title: *King: A Street Story*, Berger wants to share the difficulties of the life of homeless people living in streets. The book tells a day of a group of homeless people who come together "in the coat of Saint Valléy"[267] which is a terrain "used as a dump [including] smashed lorries, old boilers, broken washing machines, rotary lawn mowers, refrigerators which don't make cold any more, wash-basins which are cracked[268]… "The earth [there] […] smells of abandonment, like a

[266]Ibid., 217.
[267]Berger, *King: A Street Story* (London: Bloomsbury, 2000), 7.
[268]Ibid., 4.

house which hasn't been lived in for fifty years"[269]; "[in] these places there's death […] there's fighting for life, there's hiding, there's running away, there's being hungry"[270]. In brief, Saint Valéry is a place where so many inhabitants have pain and suffering primarily because of being deprived of the basic necessities of life. "Fresh water [, for example,] is a problem for everyone in Saint Valéry and [therefore] each one finds his own solution"[271].

In spite of all their painful experience, all the inhabitants of Saint Valéry have "an insist for survival", even Jack who is the first inhabitant of the terrain charging everyone a rent for the land[272] or King, the dog. Jack cares about money (or the items he may need like cans of beer) which, he believes, enables him to maintain his living, whereas King worries about the risk of being with another person or in love with anyone else since he feels this may prevent him from his own fight for surviving[273]. Not only both of them are concerned about life, but all the others have anxieties about it such as Anna who has to live in a shabby place without any windows[274], Danny whose "place is a wrecked container" heated "with a brazier when it's freezing"[275] and so many others. As if the life in Saint Valéry is not difficult enough, their presence there is threatened by a military jeep sent by the government. Ironically, the inhabitants of Saint Valéry feel that they are exposed to a threat while they are perceived as the threat itself by the government which believes the necessity of annihilating these people. In this case, it seems that Vico, who is one of the important main characters of

[269]Ibid., 93.
[270]Ibid., 13.
[271]Ibid., 35.
[272]Ibid., 7.
[273]Ibid., 40.
[274]Ibid., 8.
[275]Ibid., 11.

the book, is quite right to claim that they are their mistakes; thus, "[a mistake …] is hated more than an enemy and it, accordingly, needs to be terminated.

Not only the military jeep with its men in uniforms but also the frightening sound of the massive engine, the Crawler scares everyone in Saint Valéry. Hence, all its inhabitants are unsure about what to do or where to go. In a moment of hesitation, they are subject to gas which "[is] as sinister as the Crawler"[276] turning air into their enemy silently[277]; its poison "pushes the body which it attacks, to self-destruction"[278]. In spite of pain they experience, the inhabitants cannot be persuaded to leave their home behind; even the promise of being taken to somewhere safer does not change their mind. As a result, they stay in "what remains of the coat" until the day when another decision will be made to "[flush] out of illegal squatters from land which [will be sold] for investment"[279] (although King who "[is] possessive about the pain […]of others"[280] prefers to flee from the terrain alone[281]).

Owing to the fact that all these four stories reveal challenging life experiences full of pain and suffering, Berger wants to eliminate any characteristics which make the books fictive. Indeed, this forms the second aspect of his storytelling or what is primarily spoken in his fiction: Berger's stories are nourished by facts. Berger passionately and patiently explains how he has created his stories out of real life experiences while having a conversation with Sontag. Unlike Sontag who believes that storytelling is the act of invention, imagination and

[276]Ibid., 220.
[277]Ibid.
[278]Ibid.
[279]Ibid.,223.
[280]Ibid. 14.
[281]Ibid., 230.

lies, Berger asserts that it is the activity of revealing the truth. In such a sharp disagreement with Sontag, Berger explains that:

> [the] story exists somewhere between fiction and truth […] My personal experience of telling and writing stories I think it has to begin off as truth […] It started inventing (after observing) in relation to the truth […] Why would it be fiction? Because it exists everywhere and nowhere and it is that displacement of place and time which makes something fiction, it seems to me […] (In other words,) [the] fiction is something which exists […] which goes beyond the immediate time or the immediate place. That is exactly what makes it fiction or what we call fiction.[282]

As seen here, the relationship between fact and fiction is the source of storytelling; in other words, Berger believes that the story is the combination of both, fact and fiction. He thinks each story starts with a part of reality which can only be acquired by observation, looking and seeing. Berger has expounded on this issue years later when being interviewed by Jeremy Isaacs and there he has remarked that "[he has] always thought that this sort of category between fiction and [fact] […] is not a very deep one" and concluded that "everybody finally writes about real people"[283]one way or another. Therefore, the story is not invented and the activity of inventing is not the thing which makes the story fictive, unlike the belief of many people including Sontag. Instead, what makes a story fictive is the perception of time and place since the story 'goes beyond the immediate time and immediate place' and bring people

[282]Sontag, "To Tell a Story".
[283]Isaacs, "Face to Face".

together on the platform regardless of any specific time or place. Apart from this, Berger contends that the story is relied on facts not on imagination.[284]

Holding this belief, Berger does not find any differences in writing different genres since each of them tells a story based on pain and suffering of people, thereby talking or writing about the reality, by hook or by crook. At the time of his conversation with Sontag, he elucidates the fact that "[writing] essays or fiction, these two acts are not so different"[285] and years later he elaborates on this while having a conversation with Appignanesi uttering that:

> […] I think that when I'm writing a story, fiction, or when I'm writing so-called reportage or when I'm trying to write something closer to a biography or even when I'm pursuing an idea in a theoretical essay, I don't feel any very very different activity taking place somewhere in my body or in my head, this is always the same kind of struggle […] Anyway that is how I see my own activity of writing and that process […] is not very different whether I am writing a story or whether I'm trying to explain why constable didn't paint portrait.[286]

As clearly understood, Berger believes that the idea of writing different genres including a story, reportage, biography or even a theoretical essay does not appear as a 'very very

[284]On this issue, whilst having a conversation with Silverblatt, Berger makes a criticism on other story tellers who believe that storyteller is supposed to invent stories.

> "[…] often often I have the feeling that the role of a storyteller is misunderstood because […] storytellers don't invent stories […] The story is found or told with somewhere there and then you take it and you write it or tell it and it goes there. You have delivered it. You are simply a channel for that."

Accordingly, the story teller needs to attentively observe their surroundings to realize a story to write or tell about and get it to present to the reader and in doing so they become the 'channel' to provide this transference instead of being the real possessor or inventor of them.

[285]Sontag, "To Tell a Story".

[286]Appignanesi, "Writers in Conversation".

different activity' to each other owing to the similarities of their process and struggle. Such an approach may also justify the reason why Berger's writing is indefinable since when his attitude towards writing is considered, it is noticeable that the form of the writing is not as important as its content. In other words, whatever he writes is his central concern at the time of telling stories. This is why Berger's writing comprises of "awe-inspiring array of forms [ranging from] photo-texts, broadcasts, novels, documentaries, feature films [to] essays"[287] as Sperling points out. On a different platform, Asokan agrees on Berger's "unclassifiable books" [including] collaborations with photographers, polemics on the migrant experience [and] personal essays that are really political essays"[288]. This aspect of Berger may be a significant indicator of his deconstructive approach to writing which fundamentally serves for storytelling.

Indifferent to the genre or form of his writing, Berger also seems to be unruffled by the subjects of what he has written. As he clearly expresses at his interview aired on Meridian BBC World Service, he thinks that "[subjects] choose [him] rather than [he chooses] subjects"[289]; thus, his concern never appears to find a subject to think, tell and write on owing to the fact that he, as a man who is a keen observer of life, has always had some issues to ruminate on.[290] In this sense, as Silverblatt says in his conversation to Berger, [it] is not a surprise that the storyteller creates; it is a surprise that life offers"; that is to say, "[what] the

[287]Sperling, "The Transcendental Face of Art".
[288]Ibid.
[289]Meridian, "BBC World Services".
[290]Instead, Berger believes that he has a difficulty in writing. Disregarding its genre, what is challenging for him is not to have a different act of writing but the nature of it since he credits that "[he has] no facility, really verbally very little gift" to write as he makes his modest remarks during his conversation with Appignanesi. [Appignanesi, "Writers in Conversation"].

artists make is the production of the world"[291]. Berger could not agree more on that as he is the one who is so sensitive towards life and thereby paying attention not only to observing others but also listening to them. On another platform, Berger emphasizes the significance of observing as well as listening in this way: "[The] characters [are] what [I] could listen to […]; it is a question of listening- not only listening to words people say but also listening to what people are"[292]. Such a talent of Berger lets people imagine that "[these] people [he] writes about [literally] live and survive and exhibit their various strengths within the system"[293] as Isaacs once comments in his conversation with Berger. This approach to fiction seems to justify the factual side of Berger's storytelling.

To The Wedding, for instance, is a real concern for Berger; he intentionally chooses to think and write on it among so many other issues. He feels that he has to write about it as there is a need which he thinks he can meet it in one way or another by writing. He expresses such an urge to write in his conversation with Isaacs with these words:

> I didn't say to myself but something said to me. There is a book that needs to be written about AIDS. A novel. Some kind of book […] So, I began thinking about it […] I had quite a number of friends who had AIDS […] Then, strange relation between life and invention and then in fact my daughter-in-law discovered that she was positive and then I actually I asked myself whether I could go on writing this book but eventually I decided I could and would.[294]

[291]Silverblatt, "John Berger with Michael Silverblatt".
[292]Isaacs, "Face to Face".
[293]Ibid.
[294]Ibid.

It is so evident that Berger has already had the idea of not choosing the subjects but being chosen by them. As long as he finds a kind of meaning in the experiences of people, he feels he is obliged to write about it. *To The Wedding* is such a story for him. After observing his own environment including some of his friends, he has exposed to the experience of his own daughter-in-law and this becomes the moment when the fiction based on invention through observation is surprisingly combined by the fact, reality. In the end, what he produces is a real life story of a young girl in spite of all its fictive aspects.

In this sense, the stories in *A Fortunate Man* and *A Seventh Man* are not so different than *To The Wedding*. To illustrate, when Isaacs asks Berger what has attracted him most to write about the doctor in *A Fortunate Man*, Berger responds him by these words:

> Well, first he was a very good doctor. Because he really cared about people. He was working in the forest […] in a quiet underprivileged area.[295]

As clearly understood, John Sassall was real; he was not invented or created. He had already been there, alive before even Berger noticed him. When Berger realized him, he must have found a meaning in his life in the outskirts of England which was on the one side of the hill overlooking the river and the large wooden valley and which was from the other side of it getting too small to be seen[296]. As a consequence, he wanted to tell and write his story to retain it and while doing this, he preferred collaborating with Mohr so that he could create a kind of image-text form or genre which would strengthen the impacts of its reality. In other

[295]Ibid.
[296]Berger, *A Fortunate Man*, 49.

words, Berger's collaboration with the photographer whose photographs prove the realities is so meaningful to reveal the fact that one part of fiction is always anchored in realities.

As it has been justifiably claimed , Doctor Sassall was a real man Berger met when "[he] was living in rural Gloucestershire" with Anant, the writer from whom he had received 'a marvelous essay' and with whom he had decided to meet afterwards[297]. At that time, "Sassall was the single-handed general practitioner who attended the two men"[298]. Berger "became friends with Sassall after going to him with some minor medical problem […] [Sassall] cured [him] and [they] became friends. [He] used to meet regularly with him and with Anant to play bridge"[299] and

> [one] day, Anant suggested that Berger write a book about their friend, his medical practice, and his determined pursuit of the universal […] 'You know, this man is really remarkable,' Anant told [Berger], 'but one day no one will know of him. His goodness will have consequences, of course, but unless you write about him, the specifics of his life and his attitude may not be preserved'[300].

Accordingly, what concerns Berger most in his storytelling is to write to avoid being forgotten. With regard to this, the life of Sassall is worth telling for Berger since he is not only good at his expertise but also dedicates himself to his job which prioritizes to help people in the community with whom he lives. As a result, he easily and eagerly agrees on doing it so that 'the specifics of his life and his attitude' will be preserved forever.

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[297]Berger, *A Fortunate Man,* Introduction by Gavin Francis (Great Britain: Canongate, 1967), 10.
[298]Ibid.
[299]Ibid.
[300]Ibid.

In a collaboration with Mohr, "who was at that time also living in Geneva"[301], Berger went to visit Doctor Sassall and his family for six weeks at Sassall's invitation. This becomes a wonderful opportunity to observe Sassall's professional life which is full of pain and suffering. Therefore, the fictive story of a country doctor recounted in *A Fortunate Man* is indeed a part of reality which is inextricably entwined with the fiction. However, this fiction reciprocally has an unpredictable impact on the reality of Doctor Sassall. At the interview done by Isaacs, Berger conveys how the real life story of Doctor Sassall turns into a fiction by *A Fortunate Man* which ultimately altering the real life of him in this way:

> […] that book was written and [Doctor Sassall] saw it and liked it […] because the life he was living there had been formulated because it had a kind of profile, a portrait […] He wanted to change it and he wanted to go elsewhere because it was defined and because he was essentially a very adventurous man. He was no longer satisfied with it. He wanted then to go and be a doctor in the third world and from that moment onward things began to go badly, very badly, for him[302].

It is remarkable that the book tremendously changed the life of Doctor Sassall. It made him abandon his life there and set out on an unknown journey to the third world, which tragically ended with his suicide. Just one week before he passed away, he had told Berger that he was going to get married soon[303]; therefore, this was so unexpected by Berger. Briefly put, the

[301]Ibid.
[302]Isaacs, "Face to Face".
[303]Berger told that Doctor Sassall was a widower. His Pakistani wife to whom Berger had met died some time ago.

story of Doctor Sassall is the real life story of a man called John Eskell whose real life story has significantly changed as a result of the fiction.[304]

On the other hand, *A Seventh Man*, which was published eight years after, has a very similar taste of form, content and intention. It has been created once again in close cooperation with Mohr with the amount of money Berger was awarded by the Booker Prize for Fiction in 1972. There, he talked about this novel as a real project about the migrant workers of Europe. First, Berger cast doubt on the form of the book stating that "[he did not know] what form the final book will take. Perhaps a novel. Perhaps a book that fits no category"[305]but then he showed his determination about its content as well as his collaboration with Mohr. By doing this, he somehow made it clear that the story aims to reach real life experiences and facts instead of any fictive stories. This could not have been introduced to the public in a better way than audaciously telling the real concerns of financial needs to produce such a book since it attributes more reality and real concerns to the book. To this end, Berger spent some time on describing the possible fiscal requirements of creating and publishing such a book while he was accepting the Booker Prize for Fiction. There, he made a rough calculation about how much they would possibly need in the meanwhile with these words:

> For this project it will be necessary to travel and stay in many places. I will need sometimes to take Turkish friends with me who speak Turkish, or Portuguese friends, or Greek. I want to work again with a

[304]Isaacs, "Face to Face". (At the time of his conversation with Jeremy Isaacs, Berger uttered the real name of Doctor Sassall as John Eskell. At that point, it is possible to suggest that not only life has a direct impact on fiction but also fiction has a significant influence on reality!)
[305]"Speech by John Berger on Accepting the Booker Prize for Fiction", Gostbustere Online.

> photographer, Jean Mohr, with whom I made the book about the country doctor. Even if we live modestly as we ought to and travel in the cheapest way possible, the project of four years will cost about ten thousand pounds. I did not know exactly how we would find this money. I did not have any of it myself. Now the award of the Booker Prize would make it possible to begin.[306]

As clearly stated, Berger is deeply worried about how to produce such a book and his concern about the production of the book is as real as the stories of the migrant workers of Europe whose main goal is also to financially support themselves.

Accordingly, the book documents how most of these European migrants had to leave their towns and villages behind with their families and relatives, under what kind of circumstances they were condemned to work in an unknown land and how they felt about the life they had to sustain there. In this sense, it can be perceived that these were as real as Berger's financial concerns mentioned in the above quote. Therefore, the story in *A Seventh Man* is a fictive story which is formed out of real economic anxieties of the writer as well as the migrant workers of Europe. Besides, when the fact that the award Berger had been given was nothing more than the profit gained by Booker McConnell's "extensive trading interests in the Caribbean for over 130 years"[307] is considered, the line which separates the fact from the fiction blurs more because the monetary reward was able to be offered to Berger as a result of "[hundreds] of thousands of West Indians (who) have been forced to come to Britain as migrant workers"[308]to cause "modern poverty of the Caribbean"[309] while making others

[306]Ibid.
[307]Ibid.
[308]Ibid.
[309]Ibid.

richer. Therefore, Berger reckons that "[his] book about migrant workers would be financed from the profits made directly out of them or their relatives and ancestors"[310] and hence he suggests "[turning] this prize against itself"[311]; namely, to share the amount of money given with the London-based Black Panther Movement whose main goal was "to put an end to [the migrant's] exploitation"[312].

When asked, Berger indicates that among all his books *A Seventh Man* is the one which makes him be proud of most[313] owing to the fact that it is in close touch with realities and real concerns of the time. To clarify, at the time he was writing about migrant workers, they were on the agenda of the world and Berger wanted to touch on their reality in that book. With the aim of reaching as many people as possible, Berger shares the stories of the migrant workers of Europe with others and once a man in one of the wretched houses in Istanbul is considered[314], it could be noticeable that he has achieved his goal to a great extent. In an interview conducted by the Meridian BBC World Services, Berger tells that he has managed to reach some people in Britain and in many other places and he is so glad that even the second edition of the book has already published at the time of their interview in Turkey[315]. In brief, Berger finds a meaning in the life of the migrant workers of Europe and feels that their stories which are full of pain and suffering should not be forgotten. Hence, Berger transfers their reality into his fiction, *A Seventh Man*.

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[310]Ibid.
[311]Ibid.
[312]Ibid.
[313]Meridian, "BBC World Services".
[314]For the further details, it is suggested referring back to Chapter 2 p. 80.
[315]Meridian, "BBC World Services".

As a consequence of a similar kind of need for writing about the real pain and suffering of the homeless people who have to live under very devastating conditions, Berger creates *King: A Street Story* to tell these people's real life stories to others. During his interview on the Meridian BBC World Services, he has introduced "[his] last novel *King* (as a book) about homeless people […] (who) have been obliged to live in streets" and attached importance to their reality as "[the poverty they have to undergo […] is (currently) increasing everywhere"[316]. This is a severely real concern which Berger believes there is nothing fictive in itself. It can also be a probable reason why Berger wanted to publish this book anonymously although it was flatly rejected by the publishers especially in Germany, Sweden, and Turkey. At his conversation with Yedig, Berger justifies his wish to namelessly publish the book in this way:

> When you write a book, you want to be read by as many people as possible. The idea of not having my name on the cover of the book is the wish that I want to directly reveal the facts of the streets without adding any fictitious characteristics or elements in it. I do not want others to find this book as a novel, a fiction and to compare and contrast it with the other books I have and discuss it. Instead, what I want them to do is to talk about the realities of the streets, how the poor is getting poorer and poorer every day and therefore how they turn into the invisible, and what horrible things they have to experience and bear[317].

These are real concerns of real people whom Berger finds meaning to tell so that their reality cannot be ignored or forgotten. Hence, telling their stories without any 'fictitious

[316]Ibid.
[317]Yedig, "John Berger: Türkiye'nin farkı, tükenmeyen trajedi". [Translation: G.K.Ç.]

characteristics or elements' is significant 'to directly reveal the facts of the streets'. In this sense, Saint Valéry is not a fictive place; in contrast, it is created in line with reality with its inhabitants who have real pains and sufferings. As Berger once shares with Sontag, "[he wants] the story stop things being carried away into oblivion and into indifference"[318]; that is, none of the fictive elements in the story should conceal its relevance to the reality. In this regard, Berger contributes to this by reflecting the real life stories purified from any fictitious characteristics in his stories. In the stories of a girl suffered from a fatal illness, of a country man working in an underprivileged area with limited facilities, of migrant workers of Europe left their beloved countries and families behind to be anyone else in an unknown land or of the homeless people who have to survive against everyday challenges, this is the way how Berger is nourished by the facts in his storytelling. That is to say, under the influence of the facts, Berger writes stories so as to stand against people's real pain and suffering.

Last but not least, what Berger says in his fiction is transferred through a voice which is almost always belonged to a character whose life is full of pain and suffering. It is not a coincidence that Berger meticulously chooses each story's voice in accordance with its story since he believes finding the appropriate voice for the story is much more challenging than finding the subject to tell. Believing that "[subjects] choose [him] rather than [he chooses] subjects"[319], he explains the real difficulty of finding the most proper voice for each story in this way:

> One of the problems after a subject has chosen you is to find the voice to tell the story. Everything depends upon finding the right voice and

[318]Sontag, "To Tell a Story".
[319]Meridian, "BBC World Services".

> you often begin off with the wrong voice and the story just wouldn't work.[320]

Accordingly, the decision to have the right voice for the story is the hardest to make as it is hardly attainable and tentative to change even when the story starts. This could be one reason why Berger feels that "[when he begins] a book, it is terrible. [Nobody could] believe how bad all [his] beginnings are[321]. Unlike Sontag who has the belief in the fact that all stories start with the writer who has voices in his mind,[322] Berger has no voices in the beginning of his stories. In order to get the right motivation and inspiration to write, he has to be provoked by a story first and then this story to which he is somehow exposed needs to grab its own voice. Berger further describes this in his conversation with Wachtel as follows:

> When there is a story there, this is even the beginning of the task because then the voice for telling that story has to be found and that's the most difficult part of all because each story has its right voice.[323]

As clearly indicated, although the story is found to be told, it is just the beginning of the act of writing for Berger. It can be inferred that Berger feels having a subject to tell is the easiest stage for the storyteller because of the fact that the more challenging one which is the search for the appropriate voice for the story has not started yet. Thus, it is apparent that the voice has such a significant role in storytelling: On one hand, it shows parts of reality which is full

[320]Ibid.
[321]Isaacs, "Face to Face".
[322]Sontag, "To Tell a Story".
[323]Wachtel, "Writers and Company".

of pain and suffering; on the other, it decides and authorizes whose voice needs to be heard throughout the whole story.

Berger explicitly states that 'each story has its right voice' and this right voice obviously belongs to himself in *A Fortunate Man* and *A Seventh Man*. This could be because of the fact that both of these books are predicated on realities and real experiences bristled with pain and suffering of a group of people. As Berger wants to reinforce the credibility of these stories by the photographs taken by Mohr, he keeps his own voice instead of others which would deploy some fictive characteristics. Although Appignanesi thinks that "[both of these imaginative documentaries] give evidence of the writer of fiction [who possesses] fictional methods and perceptions"[324], it appears that Berger has a different aim to realize in or via these two books than the other two, *To The Wedding* and *King*. Through the former stories, Berger becomes the voice of the people who are incapable of articulating themselves. When carefully considered, it can be realized that it is the starting point of the story in *A Fortunate Man* because when Berger had been working as a commentator on art for the *New Statesman*, he had received "a marvelous essay from an Indian writer called Victor Anant"[325] who later requested him to give a voice to Doctor Sassall. Why Berger agrees on being the voice of Doctor Sassall is quite clear when the fact that he is fond of telling real life stories to retain its meaning so as to share it with others is taken into account but still the reason for which he has chosen himself as the voice of these stories is worth considering nonetheless.

[324]Appignanesi, "Writers in Conversation".
[325]Berger, *A Fortunate Man*, "Introduction", 10.

Suggesting the idea that "[one] is witness of others but not of oneself"[326] at his conversation with Dyer, Berger seems to feel that he can assign himself such a role in order to tell the story he has witnessed but not personally experienced. By doing so, he does not mean to distort the reality nor harm its reliability. This appears what he intends to achieve in *A Seventh Man* as well. As he has explained at his acceptance speech at the Café Royal in London where he was given the Booker Prize for Fiction, he aims to be the voice of these people to whose life stories he has substantially exposed. There, he says:

> [what] I know is that I want some of *the voices of the eleven million migrant workers in Europe* and of the forty or so million that are their families, mostly left behind in towns and villages but dependent on the wages of the absent workers, *to speak through and on the pages of this book*.[327]

It is evident that Berger cares about these people and their life stories which are full of challenges and troubles and therefore he wants to be the voice of their presence through this book. At the interview on the Meridian BBC World Service, he airs his concerns about that in this way: "I felt that I could understand and maybe *articulate* some of their experiences when they arrive metropolis and the cultural shock of that and the forms of courage of endurance which is necessary for them to continue"[328]. Provided the fact that the book has been published several times in many places has taken into consideration, it can be said that

[326]Dyer, "Ways of Witnessing".
[327]"Speech by John Berger on Accepting the Booker Prize for Fiction", Gostbustere Online). [emphasis added].
[328]Meridian, "BBC World Services". [emphasis added].

Berger achieves his goal of being the voice of these people by revealing their real pain and suffering without adding any fictitious elements in it.[329]

In lieu of having his own voice, Berger decides on a voice of a blind tamata[330] seller, named by Tsobanakos, in *To The Wedding*. Believing that the blind narrator is the right voice for this story, Berger invites the reader to reconsider about what he once claims stating that "[seeing] comes before words"[331]. As quoted before, this is what he asserts in his groundbreaking book *Ways of Seeing* where he claims "[it] is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words"[332]. However, in *To The Wedding*, Berger suggests a room for counter argument: Here, Berger deconstructs his own way of seeing by offering an act of hearing rather than seeing to articulate what is happening in one specific context, namely a story. In other words, seeing is superseded by hearing since "[sights] are ever-present. That's why eyes get tired. But voices- like everything to do with words- they come from far away"[333] and they are, therefore, limitless. As a consequence of

[329]Even though it is an evident fact that Berger succeeds in articulating these people's experiences and their challenges in life, it should not be ignored that both texts include the voices of other people as well. For example, it could be a little bit ironical to realize that while Berger gives a voice to Sassall, Doctor Sassall helps his community to articulate themselves since he believes "[these people] are deprived of the means of translating what they know into thoughts which they can think" [*A Fortunate Man*, 100]. Therefore, "[he] is privileged because of the way he can think and can talk" [Ibid., 103]. On the other hand, *A Seventh Man* rarely shares the voices of some of the European migrants since they are unable to express themselves or they are not given any opportunity to do this. One of the rarest voices heard belongs to a Turk migrant who says "[for] six months a year in the countryside you sleep because there is no work and you are poor" [*A Seventh Man*, 47]. In short, in both books, the background voices of the people can hardly be heard without the efforts of Berger's own voice.

[330]What the tamata is vividly described at the beginning of the story as follows:

> "Tamata are appropriate objects for a blind man to sell for [he] can recognize one from another by touch. Some are made of tin, others of silver and some of gold. All of them are as thin as linen and each one is the size of a credit card. The word *tama* comes from the verb *tazo*, to make an oath. In an exchange of a promise made, people hope for a blessing or a deliverance" (Berger, *To The Wedding*, 4).

[331]Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 7.

[332]Ibid.

[333]Berger, *To The Wedding*, 9.

this, it can be said that this is a story whose sounds are more reliable than any sights that the book would ever produce.

In his conversation with Wachtel, Berger tells that there is music in it this story[334] as so many voices which effortlessly flow throughout the whole story are continuously heard. This coincides with what Gerry, a retired college teacher living in Liverpool, UK, shares on her blog telling that *To The Wedding* is "[a] novel of distinct voices- voices that weave and dance around each other" and these voices brilliantly form "a world of voices, of sound and noise"[335]. Providing a similar perspective on this story, Rowan Righelato, a journalist and picture editor for the Guardian, mentions "[the] chorus of voices in the book [which] comes to the story's blind narrator unbidden" and praises Berger how "[he] simply allows each person to speak" under the control of the blind narrator who decides which voices to articulate themselves while authorizes which ones to be spoken by others[336]. In this sense, Berger gives credit to the blind narrator to transfer all the voices of the novel in a way he prefers; however, according to the reader, it is not so easy to rely on what he tells since they may feel that any story which is told in that way is limited relative to any other people who are able to see. Hence, the reader may cast doubts on his capabilities and capacities to reveal the spoken. What they feel can be true when what he says at the very beginning of the story is taken into consideration: He utters that:

[334]Wachtel, "Writers and Company".
[335]Gerry, "Rereading John Berger: *To The Wedding*". (4 Feb. 2017) Accessed 27 Mar. 2018.
[336]Rowan Righelato, "Books to give you hope: To The Wedding by John Berger". (The Guardian: The Guardian Online, 12 Aug. 2016) Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.

> I remember most of what I hear, and listen all day but sometimes I do not know how to fit everything together. When this happens I cling to words or phrases which seem to ring true.[337]

As if confirming the reader's suspicion, Berger shares this possibility or risk at the very beginning of the book while defining the main voice of the book belonged to a man who seems incapable of articulating what is precisely happening around. Nonetheless, Berger intends to show how such a vision or a way of seeing of the reader can or should change in the course of the book.

Berger seems to have no hesitations in choosing Tsobanakos as the right voice of the book since he persistently tries to prove this in the course of the whole story. The reader may have a sense that he is incompetent to process what is happening around due to his imperfect vision; however, Tsobanakos is a man who thinks "[voices], sounds, smells bring gifts to [his] eyes […] [He listens or he inhales] and then [he watches] as in a dream"[338]. That is, all the sounds he has exposed to turn into the sights for him[339], which can be highly possible when the fact that he was not born blind[340] is considered . This could also well explain how this blind narrator Tsobanakos strongly describes the places around such as the kitchen of Federico in such a detailed way:

> The kitchen is not big and seems smaller because of a larger motorbike on its stand behind the front door which gives on to the street. The way the saucepans have been left on the stove shows that the cooking is done

[337]Berger, *To The Wedding*, 3.
[338]Ibid., 7.
[339]In one of Berger's poems entitled as "Troy", Berger mentions a similar way of seeing when he talks about how he visualizes the sound of cracking of an egg which is ready to come out [Berger, *Collected Poems* and *Gökyüzü Mavi Siyah*, Trans. by Cevat Çapan, p.122].
[340]Berger, *To The Wedding*, 5.

> by a man. In his room, […] there's no trace of a feminine touch. A room where a man lives without a woman, and a man and room are used to it.[341]

The blind narrator portrays the kitchen much better than anyone else who has a flawless sight; in other words, his way of seeing outweighs the average perception of a man who is able to see since he feels more than what he would see. He is able to decode the sights in a way to decipher that the way the saucepans left on the stove is the signifier of the fact that it is a man's job. Once the reader is exposed to such vivid descriptions, he starts to depend on this blind narrator as the main source of all the other voices of the book including his own.

Keeping this in mind, Tsobanakos has been accepted as a gifted narrator by the literary critics as well. For example, while Michelle Bailat-Jones celebrates "[Tsobanakos' godlike ability to see"[342] everything around even "the past and future actions of the novel's characters"[343]. Besides, his ability to "[hear] voices across the years and places" is highly praised in the Kirkus Review[344]. These compliments would be so righteous especially when Tsobanakos is conceived during the story. By way of illustration, Tsobanakos could hear piano being played in another city[345] while going back to Athens. He is also able to hear a voice of Ninon when she was a little girl at the time of his present conversation with Ferrero. He shows how he can instantly recognize her with these words:

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[341]Ibid., 11-2.
[342]Michelle Bailat-Jones, "John Berger, *To The Wedding*". (17 Nov. 2010) Accessed 29 Mar. 2018.
[343]Ibid.
[344]Kirkus Review (1 May 1995) Accessed 29 Mar. 2018.
[345]Berger, *To The Wedding*, 13.

> The motorbike has a blanket draped over its saddle. On the blanket three cats are asleep.
>
> Jean Ferrero comes down the staircase into the kitchen wearing his boots and black leathers. Opening a trap at the bottom of the backdoor he claps his hands and, one after another, the cats jump down from the bike and slip out into the garden. He made the trap fifteen years ago when Ninon had a puppy she called Majestic.
>
> Then I heard the voice which had reminded me of the slices of a melon. The same voice but belonging to a girl of eight or nine. She says: Majestic is under my jacket as I walk past our railway station…[346]

There is no question about what else a capable and competent voice of the story could tell. He has a shifting vision formed primarily by the sounds and voices; he can even hear "a completely silent voice spoke"[347]. Thus, beyond any shadow of doubt that the blind narrator is the right voice of the story which enables other voices to be heard as well.

Despite the fact that the whole story is characterized by the voice of the blind narrator, his voice frequently coincides with the other voices. As Gerry enounced in her blog, "Tsobanakos hears voices drifting on the ether from distant places and across the years, […] it is he who weaves the voices of Ninon, Jean and Zdena which form this story"[348]. Leading such a role, Tsobanakos lets us hear different voices and see different perspectives throughout the novel which provides the reader with a more reliable story telling the real pain and suffering felt by the characters. To illustrate, listening to Ninon's first flight of her life to see

[346]Ibid., 17-8.
[347]Ibid., 11.
[348]Gerry, "Rereading John Berger: *To The Wedding*".

her mother to Bratislava[349], her time with the mussel man[350], her first sexual intercourse[351] and its outcomes[352] and even more should all be told by Ninon so as to retain its realistic effects evoking her naivety at one hand and her pain and suffering on the other. All the other voices including the voices of Ferrero, Federico and Zdena have been heard for generating such a similar effect. Therefore, it can be claimed that the story is obtained by the cooperation of all the voices of the story since, as Gerry puts forth in her blog, [throughout] the novel, the voices interweave like a part-song, subtly connecting with each other"[353].

Still, why the voice of the blind narrator is the most dominant one in Ninon's story is open to question: Is not it possible to recount the same story from Ninon's ways of seeing and hearing? Why not transferring the spoken by Ninon? Bailat- Jones satisfactorily responds to these questions in this way:

> [it] is within [Ninon's] tragedy that the Greek peddler's [Tsobanakos's] voice becomes relevant to the story […] Despite the fact that his voice is compelling and highly effective, no one else could tell her story with as much empathy as a man who was not always blind but is now condemned to a life of darkness and helplessness.[354]

As speculated here, the reason why the main voice of the story is chosen as the blind narrator can certainly be due to his empathy towards Ninon; however, there should be more determining factors such as his extraordinary power of transferring all the voices of the book

[349]Berger, *To The Wedding*, 22.
[350]Ibid., 35.
[351]Ibid., 38.
[352]Ibid., 75.
[353]Gerry, "Rereading John Berger: *To The Wedding*".
[354]Bailat-Jones, "John Berger, *To The Wedding*".

across years and places as a blind man or his talent for seeing through voices and telling the inexplicable like the pain in people's eyes. Hence, the primary voice of the story is not definitely arbitrarily chosen; Tsobanakos is the capable narrator who is able to see by touching[355] or hear what is even not said.

Owing to the fact that the voice of the story is the most fundamental step to tell a story according to Berger, he has chosen each of the voice of his stories with utmost care: Whereas it is himself in *A Fortunate Man* and *A Seventh Man*, it is a blind man selling tamata in the market in *To The Wedding* since Berger feels that these are the right voices revealing the facts of the stories with their pain and suffering. In *King*, Berger has another deconstructive way of seeing which leads him to choose a dog as the primary voice of the story articulating the spoken. This is against all the expectations of the readers who are once again in doubt about the credibility and capability of the voice they hear throughout the story.

The first time when the voice of the story is heard is just the very beginning of the story saying that "*I am mad to try*"[356] and then the voice tries to explain itself as follows:

> I hear these words in my sleep and when I hear them I coo like a pigeon somewhere at the back of my throat, where the gullet joins the nose. The part that goes dry when you are frightened. I am mad to try to lead you where we live.[357]

Accordingly, it can be perceived that the voice of the story belongs to an animate form since he is able to hear, sleep, imitate and 'coo like a pigeon' but more importantly as something

[355]Berger, *To The Wedding*, 9.
[356]Berger, *King: A Street Story*, 2.
[357]Ibid.

which is alive he is able to think whether he is insane to try to tell. Although not explicitly informed about the voice, the reader is provided with useful clues about where and with whom that 'voice' lives. For example, when the voice utters that "[at] the top [of the mountain where they live] [he] systematically [barks]"[358], the reader can make an inference that the voice must belong to a dog since the language the dog has makes the reader feel in that way. However, the voice never precisely defines himself as a dog on the contrary to his barking and growling. Therefore, in order to define or justify the voice of the story who is also its narrator, the other characters aim to name him.

Accordingly, the voice of the story is first named as a dog by the yachtsman who refuses the job application of Vico, who is one of the main characters of the story in his mid-sixties[359], in such an insulting way:

> [The yachtsman say] We don't need your dog, your map, or you, is that clear?
>
> [Vico responds] He's not my dog.[360]

In response to what the yachtsman says, Vico accepts the fact that the voice of the story belongs to a dog. Even if he does not possess him as his dog at first, he somehow acknowledges that he is a dog. Later, the dog and Vico turn their backs and walk away together and Vico decides to possess him as his own dog by giving a name to him, King. After Vico's acceptance of the story's main voice as a dog, he is abruptly approved by Vica, who is the wife of Vico, when she unexpectedly appears one day. She instantly notifies others

[358]Ibid., 5.
[359]Ibid., 26.
[360]Ibid., 25.

that "[he] is [her] dog!" calling him as her own pet[361]. Once the two main characters of the story describe the voice of the story as a dog, it becomes easier to follow the story accepting the fact that the story is granted from first person point of a dog's view.

In the course of the story, it is indisputable that King is either addressed as a dog or is attributed to its canine characteristics. For example, when Jack, the Baron, has a conversation with Vico about the possibility of his staying in one of the parts of Saint Valéry, he refuses Vico as he "[looks] like a loose nut" while he is eager to accept King, the dog saying that "I'll take the dog but not you. Scram!"[362]. Besides being defined as a dog by others, King also continuously talks about dogs and their peculiar characteristics and this makes the reader to surmise that he has some possible canine features. Once, for instance, he talks with Luc, one of the earlier inhabitants of Saint Valéry whose story ends with a suicide, he makes a comment on what makes a dog tremble and says that "[a] dog trembles when he doesn't know what to do"[363]. On another day when two men come to the mountain, the Boeing, King senses them as a threat and therefore frightens them to make them get away from their terrain. He succeeds in his attacks on his terrain, thereby becoming proud of a dog's timing which requires learning for others[364].

In the light of sufficient evidence supporting the fact that the voice of the story belongs to a dog, there is still a question which is worthy of further consideration: why is the right voice of this story belonged to a dog? Or is choosing the voice of a dog an intentional

[361]Ibid., 27.
[362]Ibid., 51.
[363]Ibid., 13.
[364]Ibid., 62.

decision as it is in Berger's other stories? In response to those questions, it can be inspiring to propose that in *King* Berger works on a similar issue of human-animal gaze which is described in his non-fiction writing "Why look at Animals?" [365]. Katelyn Keating, the editor of Lunch Ticket which is an online magazine offering inspiring writings, insightful interviews and thought-provoking art, seems to agree on that stating that King looks around through the whole story attributing his canine characteristics to the humans,[366] whereas humans address him by his canine characteristics; hence, this may reveal how the story revolves around the idea of human-animal gaze. Yet, it seems that Berger has a different argument or a concern here.

As quoted before, while being interviewed by the Meridian BBC World Services, Berger talks about his last novel *King* and its main issue as the increasing number of homeless people and their worsening life standards[367]. He is so upset that he wants to write their story in order to endure the pain and suffering they have to cope with. Once he settles on the issue, he ruminates on the right voice of the story as he usually does. At his conversation with Serhan Yedig, he clearly expresses that when he has a story of King in his mind, he deliberately wants to depict him from a dog's perspective[368]. He is so sure about it; thus, the choice of the voice belonged to a dog is a definitely deliberate decision although it is still uncertain why it should be from a dog's perspective.

[365]John Berger, *About Looking*, "Why Look at Animals". [For the further details, it is suggested referring back to Chapter 1 pp:23-4]
[366]Katelyn Keating, "Writers Read: King: A Street Story by John Berger". (Lunch Ticket: Lunch Ticket Online, Date of publication not given) Accessed: 6 July 2018.
[367]Meridian, "BBC World Services".
[368]Yedig, "John Berger: Türkiye'nin farkı, tükenmeyen trajedi". [Translation: G.K.Ç.]

Believing that "[…] dogs accompany because under certain circumstances dogs are a kind of protection and dogs are warmth and dogs don't judge and dogs live on the street"[369], Berger feels that only a dog can be the best voice of a story recounting the experiences of the homeless people living in streets. In this sense, in accordance with Bailat-Jones' explanation about the choice of the voice in *To The Wedding*, it can be claimed that there cannot be any other appropriate or true voice of the story in *King* except for the dog which is a part of this vagrant community and thereby directly witnessing their painful experiences [370]. As a result, it is not unintentional that"[Berger finds] King, a dog who is called King"[371], as a primary voice of this story.

All in all, the spoken in Berger's fiction obviously displays Berger's ways of seeing which prioritizes the realities of life with its pain and suffering articulated by the right voices. On one hand, the spoken utters the demanding life story of Doctor Sassall who strives to alleviate the pains of people with whom he lives in *A Fortunate Man* while it tells the suffering of European migrants who are forced to leave their beloved hometowns to work in foreign lands in *A Seventh Man*. These two stories are recounted from the first person point of view which is apparently belonged to Berger himself. Unlike these two, in *To The Wedding*, the spoken narrating the naïve story of a young girl who is about to die because of a terminal disease she contracted is articulated by the blind narrator, Tsobanakos. Likewise, the spoken reporting the realities of homeless people and their challenging life stories is unexpectedly uttered by a dog in *King*. All those four stories do not only describe the basics

[369]Meridian, "BBC World Services".
[370]Bailat-Jones, "John Berger, *To The Wedding*".
[371]Ibid.

of Berger's storytelling but also reveal how Berger's deconstructive approach functions in his fiction. Therefore, those stories, on one hand, serve as a medium for telling the pain and suffering of people and thereby telling a part of their reality through the most appropriate voice. On the other, they show how Berger's deconstructive stand works in a way which combines the verbal text with the visuals to have a stronger impact on the credibility of their reality in *A Country Doctor* and *A Seventh Man* and which shakes the reader's confidence by offering a blind and a dog narrator, rather than the omnipotent one, in the stories of *To The Wedding* and *King* in order to offer a much more reliable way of seeing. In the end, what Berger says through those stories becomes a breeding ground for the unspoken; that is to say, it is not the end but the beginning of Berger's storytelling since the spoken in his fiction has a considerable potential to produce new ways of reading and seeing which enables the reader to have different interpretations and meanings.

3.2 What is left unsaid

Berger seems to be certain that the spoken is not only significant for what it says, it is also vital for its potential to produce some other issues unsaid. Hence, going beyond what is within the text determined by the intentions of the author is highly required for multiple meanings and interpretations. In his conversation with Michael Ondaaje, Berger has described the act of writing in line with its capabilities to offer not only the explicit but also the implicit meaning of the text. In doing so, he has put it into a place where it is not definitely expressed because of its amorphous nature[372]. Keeping this in mind, it can be purported that

[372]Michael Ondaaje, "Readings and Conversations" (27 Apr. 2010) Accessed 1 Apr. 2018.

what is not said or the unspoken ('the inarticulate') may be a lot more crucial than what is said as Yasin Sofuoğlu commented on whilst translating Berger's conversation with Wachtel into Turkish:

> Stories are not merely bound to the told; they, indeed, rely heavily more on the untold, the silences and absences.[373]

This is not what Berger precisely has remarked at his conversation with Wachtel. However, it is highly likely to come up with such an interpretation in the end owing to the fact that Berger is a storyteller believing that what is said in the text is already there and ready to be read and understood. In contrast, what is left unspoken requires a more active reading to be understood through all possible meanings and interpretations which are not always determined by the writer contrary to what Iser claims.

In this sense, building on what Iser has theorized about the reader response towards the text ruled by the intentions of the author, Berger has neared Macherey's criticism more especially on the significance of the unspoken as well as the spoken. Berger has put a high value on the unspoken since it encourages more dynamic and therefore deconstructive readings which suggest more interpretations for the readers. In one instance, being at the conversation with Silverblatt, Berger has affirmed that the text is a combination of the incidents, words and silences none of which can separately be formed. He has expressed that:

> [He has] difficulty in talking about anyway linear time because somewhere deeply in [his] imagination or in [his] soul it seems to [him]

[373]This is the idea which was suggested by the translator of the conversation of Eleanor Wachtel with John Berger first broadcast in 1995 and later published in Turkish in Notos Öykü in 2017 in Beyoğlu, İstanbul. [Translation: G.K.Ç.].

> that all instance coexists. And if you ask [him] about writing stories or novels, the aim is not necessarily what [he achieves] […] [The] aim is that every incident, every word, every silence, above all every silence in that story coexist.[374]

It is clear that Berger is not fully satisfied about his achievement in telling the story he has in his mind since he foregrounds the silence of the text as well as its spoken uttering each incident or word. That means, what the text says involves its own silence too and this silence is more important than all the spoken. Obviously, Berger has defended the idea that as long as the text has something to say, it concurrently keeps its unspoken to be told. This is why Berger feels that they need to 'coexist'. That is to say, the presence of the one, the spoken, entails the other, the unspoken or the silence, although the other is already the absent one.

In the light of the arguments above, it seems that Berger's deconstructive seeing and saying observed in his fiction have corresponded with Derrida's criticism on binary opposition primarily between the presence and the absence suggesting that one needs the other to exist. Besides, Berger's deconstructive approach to the text has echoed Macherey's criticism on the coexistence of the speech and the silence which inevitably has formed a kind of collaboration of the spoken with the unspoken in his fiction.[375] Bearing this in mind, the absence (unspoken or the silence) of the chosen novels has been entailed into this study to offer new meanings and possibilities.

[374]Silverblatt, "John Berger with Michael Silverblatt".
[375]As quoted before, Macherey believes that "[the) speech of the [text] comes from a certain silence, a matter which it endows with form, a ground on which it traces a figure. Thus, the [text] is not self-sufficient; it is necessarily accompanied by a certain absence, without which it would not exist" [Macherey, *TLP*, 97].

3.2.1 Sounds of the Sights: *To The Wedding*

In his storytelling, Berger is deeply concerned about "[how] to explain the world with a Madonna who [knows] no evil and a devil whose horns [are] invariably visible"[376]. Accordingly, he perceives storytelling as a medium for understanding the world; however, such an act seems quite challenging for him since it involves being in a partnership with naïve Madonna and malevolent devil at the same time. Keeping both of them together as constant companions to each other offers at least two different perspectives over each story. When holding grace on his one hand and the cruelty on the other, Berger opens up new readings and possible meanings in his stories, thereby presenting what the text indeed means according to each individual reader besides what it literally says.

In a similar way Berger alternates good with evil in his perception of storytelling, he concurrently deploys so many binary oppositions in the story of *To The Wedding*, offering each of them as the alternating parts to each other. In this sense, Berger has Derrida's criticism on binary oppositions in that story in order to reveal its unspoken as well as what it says. The story of *To The Wedding* is, therefore, a carnival of binary oppositions through which Berger makes a claim that nothing has a fixed center or everything exists with its alternating parts. Among so many critiques of binary oppositions in line with Derridean views, it appears that the major criticism is heavily relied on the theme of the book which is evidently shown by the simultaneous feelings of loss and hope. Since Berger presumes that

[376]John Berger, *Collected Poems* (Middlesbrough, England: Smokestack Books, 2014), 62.

"[hope] and loss are a pair" like the music heard in the wedding ceremony in the story[377], he juxtaposes them with each other throughout the story as a way of showing his own criticism of binary oppositions echoing Derrida's views: On one hand, a story of Ninon who is gradually losing her life is told. The loss of life, health, energy and enthusiasm. The loss of her days when she is able to do anything alone including combing her hair[378], walking[379] or even talking. On the other hand, there is hope in Ninon's story. The hope of finding a true and pure love. The hope of getting married and celebrating its joys of love with the beloved ones who make Ninon tireless and truly enjoy herself while the musicians are playing their instruments[380]. At different platforms, Berger has expressed that this story keeps a ray of hope in itself. For instance, in a conversation with Ondaaje, he has uttered that "[most] of the stories that [have been written] are in fact laments but they are laments that have a curious small cargo of hope in them"[381] and four years later at his interview carried by Isaacs, he has specifically cited an example of Ninon's story which Berger believes that "[there] is [mostly] hope in it[382].

In addition to the critique of this binary opposition which does not obviously oppose but alternate with each other, so many different binary oppositions still pertinent to the sense of hope and loss can be indicated. The feelings of happiness and cheerfulness emerged as a result of a preparation of a wedding blend with the feelings of sadness and melancholia because of Ninon's fatal disease which condemns her to death. Hence, her wedding ceremony

[377]Berger, *To The Wedding*, 196.
[378]Ibid., 199.
[379]Ibid., 197.
[380]Ibid., 190.
[381]Ondaaje, "Readings and Conversations".
[382]Isaacs, "Face to Face".

somehow reminds a farewell gathering for her anticipated funeral. Such a sense of togetherness between these binary oppositions, for example, is even felt when Zdena, Ninon's mother, is asked where she goes:

> Where do you go afterwards? (says "a bald man seated next to her"[383]).
> To my daughter's wedding.
> A happy occasion, then.
> Scarcely. My daughter is HIV-positive.[384]

As depicted here, the story of Ninon puts the idea of wedding, a joyous celebration, nearby a disease which connotes loss and death. Additionally, it is even possible to claim that Ninon's wedding feast "is the happiest because something new is beginning"[385] and hence it serves as a meeting point signifying her presence and life while evoking a separation moment signaling her absence and death as well.

It is such a story which mingles with two alternating sides of everything and anything; that is to say, the whole story is embedded in contrary feelings or in feelings which look like opposing each other. This could explain why Zdena, for instance, "wants to *weep* at the absurdity of [the situation to which she is exposed] and *smile* with the relief"[386] at the same time or how she *leaves* Tomas "in the Piazza San Marco, the Square in Venice where most people rendezvous and *meet*"[387]. Keeping this in mind, it is also probable to have such a critical look at these: On one hand, the reader witnesses Ferrero's driving and "the screech

[383]Ibid., 127.
[384]Ibid., 129.
[385]Ibid., 180.
[386]Ibid., 149. [emphasis added].
[387]Ibid., 152. [emphasis added].

of [his] motorcycle"[388] which imply the action and continuity of life in addition to the image and the sound of the Po, the river, and its "immense energy [and] irresistible [nature]"[389] all through the story. On the other hand, the reader encounters "the illness of Ninon [which] is the job of being slowly abandoned by life"[390] that somehow overlaps (or less likely contrasts) with the action or continuity of the story. This Derridean type of play among binary oppositions into the story might well explain why Ninon wants everything and nothing simultaneously[391]like the bald man in the train indicates: "[we] have nothing to fear and we are frightened of everything"[392] since "[for] something to die ... for something to be dead, it has first to be alive"[393].

In addition to all the aforementioned binary oppositions criticized, the most recurrent one in the story being well manipulated is the use of five senses each of which supplement each other in the course of the whole story. Among these, the most dominant one is the sense of hearing in lieu of seeing which is closely related to the voice of the story whose perception is nourished by sounds rather than sights. In other words, although the act of seeing as well as other senses are still needed, it is definite that seeing is not the sole source of the story any longer. In this sense, blindness of the narrator is not a lack for the story; on the contrary, it is its richness to produce more unspoken of the text as once Macherey has put forward[394]. It

[388]Ibid., 8.
[389]Ibid., 94.
[390]Ibid., 89.
[391]Ibid., 131.
[392]Ibid., 140.
[393]Ibid.
[394]Macherey, *TLP*, 93.

seems that the main voice and narrator of the story, Tsobanakos assents to this idea stating that:

> [blindness] is like the cinema, because its eyes are not either side of a nose but wherever the story demands.[395]

Hence, the blindness of the narrator does not offer a blurred vision or an imperfect sight to the story; instead, it provides a multidimensional perspective for the readers in a very similar way that the cinema supplies to its audience.[396]

To offer such a multidimensional perspective over the story, the act of seeing is supported by other senses, especially by hearing in the course of the whole story. To illustrate, when the coach driver drives, he has a very poor visibility like Tsobanakos and he is unable to make out anything clearly. Thus, he has to slow down to move on [397]. As soon as he lowers the speed, he starts to have a stronger sense of hearing helping him to continue driving as depicted in this way:

> With the engine cut, the noise of the sleeping passengers sounds louder: snores, the bubbling of deep breaths, murmurs like those of an organ after the organist has stopped playing. Outside the coach, silence, a silence of feathers.[398]

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[395]Ibid., 32.
[396]Indeed, at one point when going back to Athens, Tsobanakos says "[on] the platform at Athens somebody offered to escort me. I pretended to be deaf as well as blind" (15). Hence, none of the readers could be sure whether Tsobanakos is really blind or pretending to be blind since he very explicitly states there that he does not only pretend to be deaf but also blind. This has to remain ambiguous as well as so many issues of the story.
[397]Berger, *To The Wedding*, 139.
[398]Ibid.

As clearly portrayed, once the vision of someone is blurred, the sense of hearing takes it over and the one starts to hear the sounds much more clearly. This explains why the driver is able to hear the sounds of the engine, the sleeping passengers and their snores, breathes and murmurs better. He even notices the sound of the silence in a surprisingly similar way of Tsobanakos' recognition of "a completely silent voice [spoken]"[399].

In spite of a poor visibility, the sense of seeing is still active in the whole story by repetitive background images. The image of water, for instance, is deployed as a recurring motif which attracts the reader's attention throughout the story: The water of the river Danube in Bratislava[400], the waterfall along the road of Jean Ferrero[401] and the pool at which Ferrero stares mesmerized[402], the river Po[403] and the water which protects the life of a city[404]. All the various images of water served as a background image seem to hint another criticism on the binary opposition between the change and stability since the idea of"[the] waters [which] change all the while and stay the same only on the map"[405] prevails the whole story. In addition to the image of water, a wide range of trees are depicted as visual background all over the story. The tree of acacia, for example, signifies Ninon's naïve childhood and her stay with her mother after her first flight of her life[406], the trees of apples located nearby the small house of Emanuela where Ninon and Gino get married raise the reader's hopes for blissful days[407] and even a massive plane tree which is opposite to the church porch seems to

[399]Ibid., 11.
[400]Ibid., 22.
[401]Ibid., 26.
[402]Ibid.
[403]Ibid., 52, 64, 106, 133, 137, 172, and 184.
[404]Ibid., 157.
[405]Ibid., 173.
[406]Ibid., 22, 32, 40, and 104.
[407]Ibid., 173, 184, and 185.

promise a would-be family with numerous members for Ninon and Gino. Nevertheless, the trees do not always denote positive feelings. Once, for instance, Zdena confabulates with a taxi driver about her lovely daughter and son-in-law and their sorrowful love story which inevitably ends tragically and at that time "the trees [get] blacker than the sky"[408]. In this sense, it is clear that the trees as a visual background are still needed to strengthen the critique of binary oppositions between hope and loss and all the other binary oppositions related to them. Besides, this can prove that the sense of seeing is not replaced by the sense of hearing; indeed, this can hardly be in line with what Derrida asserts since he does not precisely ask for subverting the presence or hegemony of one sign over the other. Instead, he favours the idea of having each sign gaining its meaning in its relationship with the other signs. Hence, it is the richness of employing each sense individually and collectively at the same time.

In this regard, it is more likely to detect such continual motifs in sounds as well as the repetitive background images throughout the story. Background voices supporting ways of seeing suggest action and chaos on one hand and inertia and stillness on the other. Therefore, the reader is exposed to "a cascade of sounds in which everything slows down"[409] while attending "[the] cascading noise of feasts"[410]. Like the background images portrayed in the course of the whole story, these sounds are mostly transferred by nature. Water, for instance, is not only a repetitive background image but also a continual motif in sounds. By way of illustration, once "[Jean Ferrero] runs down [the road], and there he is cut off from all sound except that of the water"[411]; that is, the sound of the water- the water along the road, the

[408]Ibid., 132.
[409]Ibid., 199.
[410]Ibid., 182.
[411]Ibid., 114.

waterfall and the Po- is audible in almost every page of the story. Besides, the sounds of birds are sometimes accompanied by the sounds of the water like "[a] blackbird sings in a tree a little downstream"[412] and they sometimes coexist with the repetitive background image of trees as in the sound of the thrush singing in the acacia tree[413].[414]This might indicate that the sights of the story supplement its sounds and the other way around; however, as long as the whole story is taken into consideration, it could be proposed that the sounds of the story overweighs its sights. Therefore, there are so many different voices in the story apart from the ones echoing the nature.

The story includes not only the sounds of nature but also the voices of so many different machines, engines or vehicles such as "the screech of a motorbike"[415], the motonave[416], "the sound of the engine" which prevents the signalman, Jean Ferrero hearing his motor[417], "the noise of the traffic on road"[418], and "[a] vehicle swaying, a sizzling of wheels that are not running on rails but asphalt, an engine purr"[419]. These artificial sounds do not only fuse with the sounds of nature but also merge with the sounds of people: a whistling man[420], a man's laughter[421], a voice of an old woman telling a quarrel of three wise men[422],

[412]Ibid., 115.
[413]Ibid., 40.
[414]In addition to these birds, the sandpiper and swallows are mentioned in the story as well as other birds like "[cormorants], grebes, terns, herons, ducks, little egrets, [and] gulls" (173) so as to reinforce the effects of both the sense of hearing and seeing.
[415]Ibid., 8.
[416]Ibid., 91, and 157.
[417]Ibid., 81.
[418]Ibid., 55.
[419]Ibid., 127.
[420]Ibid., 48.
[421]Ibid., 59.
[422]Ibid., 65.

an unrecognizable voice of a man, a voice of a drunk man[423], and a whispering man[424]. In the end, all these sounds buzz with music through the whole story: the music of the rembetika which has such a strong impact on the listener that it makes him feel like being tattooed[425], the piano whose sound transgresses the borders of the city where it is played[426], the cassette which has a more distinctive voice than a record or a compact disc[427]or the klaxon[428] and the music performed by the musicians[429]. Therefore, the sounds of the story preponderate over its sights.

Offering such a rich background in sounds, the story deals with more voices within the flow of the story. For instance, the story starts with a voice which determines the whole story. It is the voice of Jean Ferrero whose coming is heard by the blind narrator Tsobanakos from his clothes squeaking and his motor screeching. What Ferrero utters first is a question asking for anything for his daughter who is not expecting to have a baby as Tsobanakos correctly guesses.[430] As a result of this first utterance, the reader is provided by further details such as who Ferrero is and why he is looking for a special gift for her daughter in a very melancholic mood. Through this information, the reader is indeed able to learn the whole story from the very beginning. Believing that"[all] stories begin with their end"[431], Berger opts for beginnings with clear endings to let the reader involve in the story. The reader, then,

[423]Ibid., 136.
[424]Ibid., 165.
[425]Ibid., 10.
[426]Ibid., 13.
[427]Ibid. [Another music is heard from the cassette of a Verdi opera in the taxi Zdena takes in the following pages of the story (132).]
[428]Ibid., 148, and 174.
[429]Ibid., 190, 191, 196, and 200.
[430] Ibid., 5.
[431]Silverblatt, "John Berger with Michael Silverblatt".

has a chance to anticipate the rest of the story. In Ninon's story, these first sounds of the book offers sufficient clues to the reader without any need for sights: With the help of these sounds, it is clear that Ferrero is a railwayman whose accent "[makes] [Tsobanakos] think that he [is] French or Italian [and he guesses] he [is] [his] age, perhaps a little older"[432] and he is in great pain because of his beloved daughter's, Ninon's, illness which causes her to suffer from 'everywhere' and hence condemns her to death[433]. Accordingly, it can be inferred that the first sounds of the story set the stage for the rest of the story especially thanks to Tsobanakos who identifies his surrounding through sounds and thereby hearing as a way of seeing.

Besides the story of Ninon, the reader receives some background information about Tsobanakos by these first sounds. For example, the reader finds out that Tsobanakos is not born blind[434] (although the reader does not obtain any information about what happens to him to cause his blindness). Moreover, with the aid of these first sounds, the reader realizes that Tsobanakos is able to recognize the noises coming from distant places and across the years since through the end of this conversation Tsobanakos immediately hears a sound from the past and he says:

> His daughter must have been elsewhere in the market. Now she was beside [her father].
>
> [Ninon says] [my] new sandals- look! Handmade. Nobody would guess I've just bought them. I might have been wearing them for years. Maybe I bought them for my wedding, the one that didn't happen.

[432]Ibid., 5, and 6.
[433]Ibid.
[434]Ibid., 6.

> The strap between the toes doesn't hurt? the railwayman asked.
>
> Gino would have liked them, she said. He has good taste in sandals.[435]

As followed, Tsobanakos hears the sound of Ninon and her conversation with her father while buying a new pair of sandals once upon a time in the past. Another time, for instance, Tsobanakos hears Ninon's voice

> which [reminds him] of the slices of melon. The same voice but belonging now to a girl of eight or nine. She says: Majestic is under my jacket as I walk past our railway station […] I carry him under my jacket and he rests his chin on my top button and flaps his ears against the lapels. If I don't count the snails, the worms, the caterpillars, the tadpoles, the ladybirds and the crayfish, he is my first pet. I call him Majestic because he is so small.[436]

The sense of hearing, therefore, serves as a medium to see or visualize what is happening not only in the present time and at the actual locations but also in the past times and places. This explains how Tsobanakos is able to hear "[the] piano music being played in another city [on the train going back to Athens]"[437] and "a glass object being polished" in Ferrara, Italy at the same time. As explained above, since the whole story of Ninon is crammed full of sounds, Berger believes music appears in *To The Wedding*[438]; the music is within the story and it is so significant that the way of hearing it shapes the ways of seeing disregarding its times and

[435]Ibid., 7.
[436]Ibid., 18.
[437]Ibid., 13.
[438]Wachtel, "Writers and Company".

places and therefore the cooperation between the two somehow contributes to revealing the unspoken of the text which is otherwise overshadowed by what the text says.

In order to tell the story, the voices of Tsobanakos, Ferrero and Ninon are not the mere source; the story juxtaposes so many different voices of the characters with them. Among those voices, Zdena has a distinctively beautiful voice (according to her daughter, Ninon[439]) which "doesn't fit her reticent appearance. [She has] the voice of a born singer which doesn't have to search for expression, since expression is the gift of that voice"[440]. Moreover, her voice is the one which cannot lie[441] and as the story stresses, it is one of the voices of the story which is closest to Tsobanakos as Zdena has a similarly powerful sense of hearing in spite of having closed eyes. Tsobanakos shows this affinity between them with these words: "Eyes shut, [Zdena] finds, as I do, the sounds unmistakably true[442]". In doing so, Berger plays with the idea of seeing and hearing through the whole story by suggesting a probability of hearing as a way of seeing.[443]

In line with Tsobanakos' assumption of the fact that "[voices], sounds, smells (altogether) bring gifts to [his] eyes"[444], the story does not only offer voices and sounds but also builds on the sense of smelling in order to perceive the environment. Thus, the sense of smelling has a contributing effect on the perspective of the story transferred by Tsobanakos

[439]Ibid., 22.
[440]Ibid., 128.
[441]Ibid., 130.
[442]Ibid., 50.
[443]Once, Berger has proposed a counter argument by stating that "[his] eyes see the sound" in one of his poems entitled "Troy" written in the 1970s and published in *Collected Poems*, 76. This might show Berger's deconstructive approach towards any ideas which cannot be accepted as fixed entities.
[444]Berger, *To The Wedding*, 7.

who recognizes his environment through smells as well as sounds. This could also justify the reason why the whole story is embedded in both odours and scents. For example, the reader is exposed to the stink of ammonia, damp hair, lacquer, and paste at the hairdresser,[445] and "the smell of tar coming off the road"[446] while he is satisfied by the smell of newly baked bread which the woman driver of the first tram of the day and Zdena smell at the same time[447]. Through the whole story, the reader is accompanied by different smells such as "[the] faint acrid smell of wine"[448], "[the] smell of the fire [hanging] everywhere"[449] or the perfume of Ferrero's gift to Ninon, Saba whose fragrance does not stay long[450]. When all these odours and scents are considered, it seems apparent that they supplement the story by offering an alternative to the senses of seeing and hearing and this encourages new possibilities in the senses of tasting and touching as ways of seeing for telling a specific story.

Compared to the other senses, the sense of tasting seems to fall behind. Yet, it is also as significant as other senses to form a full picture of the story so as to grasp more than what the text says since it means more than eating as one of the basic necessities of humans (although it works in that way for some of the characters of the story such as Tsobanakos, Ferrero, Zdena's taxi driver etc.). To illustrate, Ninon's eating of Les Coussins de Lyon appears to be more than something to simply eating to survive once how passionately she talks about it is considered. She recounts that:

[445]Ibid., 68.
[446]Ibid., 85.
[447]Ibid., 32.
[448]Ibid., 86.
[449]Ibid., 185.
[450]Ibid., 155, and 156.

> [her papa] got off his bike and from his leather jacket he pulled out this box which had a ribbon around it. Inside were Les Coussins de Lyon […] They were too small and the silver was sugar and the green was mint and the fabric was marzipan. When you bit into one, your teeth went through the skin of marzipan and found truffle chocolate. What I didn't eat that night when Papa came back from Grenoble, I took next day to school to share with Gyel and Jeanne and Annette, and we all agreed we'd only marry men who could promise us a constant supply of Les Coussins de Lyon.[451]

The taste of Les Coussins de Lyon, in this sense, signifies Ninon's naïve childhood when her beloved father gives a box of chocolate to her as a gift through which Ninon dreams of having a husband like her father who never neglects to buy Les Coussins de Lyon to her. Thus, its taste is the flavour of her childhood. If the taste of chocolate is an indicator of her childhood, it can be adumbrated that the taste of moules "called Hungarian because of paprika" [in it][452]given to Ninon by the Mussel Man is the signal of her callow transition period from childhood to adulthood since it is the time when Ninon has experienced her first abrupt sexual intercourse which augurs badly.

Allotting a specific place to the sense of tasting, the whole story enables the reader to follow the growth of Ninon. Starting with her naïve childhood memory of tasting the chocolate and following it with her eating of the moules reminding her unexpected first love experience, the story elaborates on the sense of tasting through a wedding scene. The long wedding feast scene through the end of the story celebrates Ninon's adulthood with her

[451]Ibid., 85.
[452]Ibid., 37.

beloved Gino, his real and pure love. Besides referring to her life which is roughly phased in accordance with her tasting of different meals and drinks, the sense of tasting serves for a different purpose because Ninon is not the only one who continuously tastes what is served there; "[everyone] is eating and talking, joking and drinking"[453] and "[e]veryone at the table in the orchard sits down to eat. With the meat they will drink the dark wine of Barolo"[454]. "With the eating of the meat something changes at the feast"[455] and everyone starts to eat more. Ninon, then "[offers] a slice of the cake to everyone who has come to the wedding, [and then] [offers] it to herself"[456]. With Ninon's service and Federico's, Gino's father, command, everybody is forced to eat more cake since Federico believes "it's the best [they]'ll taste in [their] lifetime"[457]. As if they had no other chance of eating or they were compensating what they felt lost, everyone gets frantic about eating. In the end, "[the] wedding guests are becoming a single animal who has fed well"[458] and Ninon manages to satisfy her insatiable appetite as if she felt it would be unlikely to do it so in future.[459] That is to say, the sense of tasting is presented to reveal not only the spoken but also the unspoken story of a young immature girl craving a box of chocolate in her childhood and eventually turning into a mature woman (not because of the years passing by but owing to what she has

[453]Ibid., 182.
[454]Ibid., 185.
[455]Ibid.
[456]Ibid.
[457]Ibid., 188.
[458]Ibid., 186.
[459]Whereas the whole wedding scene can be a gathering to eat for the celebration of a wedding for the newlyweds, it can be interpreted as a gathering of a group of people to commemorate the dead by eating together. In this sense, the act of eating and the sense of tasting make a criticism of a binary opposition between eating and living because one does not necessarily eat to live or celebrate to other's new life. One might eat to honour one's absence by eating as well.

experienced) who becomes unable to eat at the dinner table due to her first sexual intercourse with a man who has AIDS.[460]

Lastly, the sense of touching is also of critical importance to the wholeness of the story in addition to the sense of tasting (as well as the other senses mentioned previously). Indeed, since the whole story is about Ninon and her terminal disease which prevents her from touching and being touched, the sense of touching is already within the story from the very beginning until the end. This is why Ninon says that "[nothing] can touch [her] any more"[461]. What she possesses including the freedom to touch has been taken away from her because she has been touched by someone whom she does not want to be touched at all[462]. Thus, even though she is still able to touch and feel the coldness of the water[463] or "[feel] a pattern of coolness where the lace holes of her stockings have let the water through"[464], she mostly feels pain when something touches her like the air which hurts her whole body[465].

In the most deconstructive fashion, the story compensates what Ninon lacks by touching with what Tsobanakos has and in doing so it makes a criticism on another binary opposition between the absence and presence in a way Derrida did before. Accordingly, the sense of touching signifies the absence in Ninon's life, whereas it implies the presence in Tsobanakos'.[466] In other words, the lack of touching makes Ninon die gradually while its

[460]Berger, *To The Wedding*, 197.
[461]Ibid., 80.
[462]Ibid., 81. [Instead of the Mussel Man, Ninon expects to be touched by Gino since she really likes him. Yet, Gino does not touch her on their first meeting and this makes Ninon desire him and his touches more although she also does not touch him on that day (51).]
[463]Ibid., 93.
[464]Ibid. 189.
[465]Ibid., 197.
[466]At that moment, in the light of feminist criticism, it is worth considering why the text associates the lack and absence with the female character while it attributes the gain and presence to the male character.

presence becomes the proof of Tsobanakos' presence. Remembering that Tsobanakos is a blind man who sells tamata which "are appropriate objects for a blind man to sell", it is easy to anticipate that touching is indispensable for him "for [he] can recognize one [tamata] from another by touch"[467]. Besides, since Tsobanakos sees by touching, he leads his everyday life with the help of it. For example, every morning, as soon as he wakes up, he touches the chair to get his clothes onto it[468] and every evening, he touches his pot plants including hibiscus, begonia, asphodels, and roses "to see how they are doing and how many new flowers have come out"[469]. That is to say, he is a man who sees not only hearing but also touching; these help him see and identify his surroundings.

In a similar way Tsobanakos needs more than one sense to tell something, one sense should never be accepted as the center of the storytelling according to Berger's views. That is, the sense of seeing does not always suffice to tell a story; it needs other senses to provide multidimensional perspective to offer richer meanings enabling different readings of the unspoken as well as the spoken. Indeed, as Çapan has noted it down in his article written just after the publication of his collection of poems in Turkey, what Berger strives to achieve as a writer, thinker, and an artist is looking and seeing whilst touching; listening to hear; tasting, and smelling simultaneously, like Tsobanakos who puts efforts into achieving the reality of the story of *To The Wedding* in that way. Çapan has also remarked that this is the serious effort helping Berger understand the reality with all its complexity[470]. In regard to this, the story of *To The Wedding* is in line with Derrida's approach to binary oppositions through

[467]Ibid., 4.
[468]Ibid., 21.
[469]Ibid., 9.
[470]Cevat Çapan, "John Berger'a Armağan: Gökyüzü Mavi Siyah". [Translation: G.K.Ç.]

which Berger challenges one way of telling a story heavily based on the sense of seeing especially from the perspective of an omnipotent figure. Instead, Berger proposes a new way of telling a story with the help of all the senses (but predominantly the sense of hearing) supplementing each other and in doing this he opens up so many possible interpretations of the unspoken besides the spoken.

3.2.2 Gap-Filling with photography: *A Fortunate Man: The Story of a Country Doctor* and *A Seventh Man: Migrant Workers in Europe*

In lieu of having a Derridean critique of binary oppositions, Berger reveals what the text implicitly says through the photographs, images, taken by Mohr in *A Fortunate Man* and *A Seventh Man*. With the help of Berger's collaboration with Mohr, the meanings of the text multiply and therefore the text is able to produce numerous interpretations. However, in order to achieve such a performance, the text entails the active participation of the reader as Iser's criticism on reader-response theory has insistently put forward. According to Iser's views, the text requires "a greater degree of [his] co-partnership with the text"[471]; that is, the reader is supposed to be ready to be in contact with the text "to transform [his] reading into a creative process that is far above mere perception of what is written"[472]. In this sense, what the text does not say gets more significant than what it openly says since it encourages more possibilities to show the unspoken. When considering such an approach to reading, both of Berger's image-texts assume importance despite some of their distinctive characteristics. In Berger's *A Fortunate Man*, reading the verbal text with images offers the reader to gain "a

[471]Eagleton, *LT*, 70.
[472]Iser, *The Implied Reader*, 279.

new critical awareness of his/her customary codes and expectations"[473] in the most deconstructive manner and thereby acquiring a deeper self-consciousness and new ways of seeing.

As Lloyd Spencer has realized, Berger has mainly concerned with "[exploring] relationships between visual and verbal meaning, between words and images"[474] to reveal and share what the text tacitly says besides its utterances. In the introductory remarks of *The Sense of Sight*, Spencer has made a note of Berger's 'preoccupation with visual description' indicating that "writing is [always] his main vehicle, his own means of communication, but in a sense his primary reality and his constant concerns [are always] visual"[475]. In such a cooperation, it is probable to put the verbal text of Berger nearby the visual images of Mohr so as to reach richer meanings. Accordingly, it could be postulated that the coexistence of the verbal text and the visual image allows the reader to gain more in the course of reading. That is to say, only if there has been a partnership between the two, is the meaning able to generate new possibilities of interpretations especially for what the text does not say although whichever meaning is obtained needs to be in line with the intentions of the author as Iser's criticism has claimed.

In another joint work of Berger and Mohr entitled *Another Way of Telling*, Berger shares his feeling about using the verbal text with the visual image in such a brief way:

> In the relation between a photograph and words, the photograph begs for an interpretation, and the words usually supply it. The photograph,

[473]Eagleton, *LT*, 68.
[474]Lloyd Spencer, "Introduction". *The Sense of Sight: Writings by John Berger* (NY: Vintage International, 1993), xiii.
[475]Ibid.

> irrefutable as evidence but weak in meaning, is given a meaning by the words. And the words, which by themselves remain at the level of generalisation, are given specific authenticity by the irrefutability of the photograph. Together the two then become very powerful; an open question appears to have been fully answered.[476]

Accordingly, Berger believes that despite its particular power of credibility, the photograph needs words to articulate itself. In other words, the photograph lacks meaning without any verbal text. Therefore, it needs to acknowledge itself through a specific text which is able to fill its lack. Only then it avoids being perceived as mere generalisations far away from any authenticity. Berger suggests that the reader can gain such a meaning only at the interaction of the images with the verbal text. It is even possible to obtain more powerful meaning which is produced as a result of their interplay. In this sense, Berger claims that the combination of the visual with the words is able to bring out new opportunities to the reader in a similar way the coexistence of the binary oppositions do and therefore he believes that this cooperation offers a chance to the reader to concentrate on the unspoken more.

Serving such a purpose, the story of *A Fortunate Man* is created by Berger, the voice of the story, and Mohr, the story's sight and the reader who is as free as these two allow. In line with Iser's criticism, there is a collaboration of the author (and the photographer) with the reader in that story. On one hand, Berger's verbal text tells the story of a country doctor while Mohr shares the photographs of him. On the other, their interaction engages the reader to produce as many meanings as possible in accordance with the intentions of both producers.

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[476]John Berger and Jean Mohr, *Another Way of Telling*. (NY: Vintage International, 1995), 92.
(Some of this quote has already been cited in Richard Turney's dissertation. Its reference is as follows: Richard Turney, *Reading Berger, Responding to the Literary*. (University of York: Dissertation, 2015), 88.)

Here, Berger recounts a life story of a country doctor who is involved in a project to be the Universal Man[477] by helping a community of people not only for their physical and emotional health but also their social growth and capabilities. In doing so, he integrates the verbal texts with the images of Mohr so that the images of the doctor and the community do not suffice to obtain the meaning which the reader is expected to get. Consequently, a kind of unique sequence between the two is formed for the reader through the whole story.

In this regard, *A Fortunate Man* has an original form demonstrating two different but somehow complementary studies of two creators whose final product is still open to produce more meanings which can be obtained by the reader's active participation. Therefore, its formation is so challenging that it persistently tries to endow the reader with a unity. At the introductory statements of his book, Gavin Francis passes a quite realistic comment about the real limitations of working someone jointly to create something looking inseparable. He has expressed that:

> […] the two men returned to Geneva and worked in isolation from one another for just a month- Berger recalls the text flowing fairly quickly. 'When we got together again, and compared what I'd written with the photographs Jean had chosen, we found we'd replicated one another's work entirely,' he said. 'They were tautologous- as if my text was a series of captions to his images. We had both tried to write the book on our own. That's not what we wanted at all, so we reworked it so that the words and pictures were like a conversation; building on, rather than mirroring, one another.'[478]

[477]Berger, *A Fortunate Man*, 144.
[478]Berger, *A Fortunate Man,* "Introduction" by Gavin Francis, 11.

It is evident that Berger and Mohr had been working on the book separately before they came together to compare what they had produced and when they met, they were surprised to notice that they somehow duplicated each other's work. This was something they had not meant. So as to avoid its redundancy, they decided to develop the book in a way which has helped it to turn into a type of 'conversation' between the two which are not reflecting but instead supplementing or supporting each other.

Such an approach seems to justify how the transitions between the texts and images do not overlap through the whole book. Instead, when they juxtapose each other, they are able to offer more than what each may present alone since their cooperation is able to suggest various chances of reading and interpreting the unspoken of the text as well as its spoken. In Berger's conversation with Isaacs, Berger has explicitly explained how the book serves to achieve such a goal in this way:

> I suddenly saw that in fact probably none of the people around [Sassall] and whom he tweeted *would ever be able to define* or *really talk about what [Sassall] did for them*. It is not that they weren't grateful but to *formulate* it. Maybe even I wanted to formulate it for them and for [Sassall].[479]

Through Berger's cooperation with Mohr, Berger wants to give a voice to a country doctor, Sassall who is paradoxically unable to utter how he feels or what he thinks. As previously mentioned, Berger accepts to write the story of Doctor Sassall when an Indian writer, Victor Anant requests him to do so in order to avoid the fact that "one day no one will know of

[479]Isaacs, "Face to Face". [emphasis added].

him"[480]. As a storyteller who always feels the need to tell the story of a life which is worth spreading through people, Berger tells the story of Doctor Sassall to make others remember him and his story.[481]

Keeping this in mind, Berger has a goal of voicing doctor Sassall first with his accomplishments in his profession, expertise, and medical practice while describing "his insatiable appetite for knowledge"[482] to help his patients better because he is incapable of articulating himself. In regard to this, Berger says that:

> […] the price which Sassall pays for the achievement of his somewhat special position is that he has to face more nakedly than many other doctors the suffering of his patients and the sense of his own inarticulacy […] His sense of inarticulacy is larger than the professional. Do his patients deserve the lives they lead, or do they deserve better? […] It is from questions such as these- and a hundred others that force their way up through the pauses between these questions- that the disquiet, which finally leads to Sassall's sense of inadequacy, first arises.

Based on Berger's observation, Sassall has experienced the suffering of his patients more deeply than many other doctors. He is concerned about not only their physical pains but also their harsh life conditions which cause great disquiet to him. This eventually leads to Sassall's sense of inarticulacy and inadequacy and drifts him into depression[483].

[480]Berger, *A Fortunate Man*, Introduction by Gavin Francis, 10.
[481]Berger, *Confabulations*, 12.
[482]Berger, *A Fortunate Man*, 144.
[483]Ibid., 146.

In regard to this, it can be assumed that Sassall's own inarticulacy becomes the core reason of his depressions instead of his experiences with his patients since

> [it] is the virtue of the community's backwardness that he is able to practice as he does. Their backwardness enables him to follow his cases through all their stages, grants him the power of his hegemony, encourages him to become the 'consciousness' of the district, allows him unusually promising conditions for achieving a 'fraternal' relationship with his patients, permits him to establish almost entirely on his own terms the local image of his profession.[484]

The slower the community develops, the more Sassall masters his profession; in other words, Sassall boosts his profession because of the 'backwardness' of the community since the community extremely seeks his medical help besides his guidance in social relations. Sassall instantly turns into Kurtz of *The Heart of Darkness* who promises to bring civilization and development to the darkest part of the world. Although he favors a kind of fraternity between himself and his people in lieu of becoming a commander leading them, he inevitably finds himself as a commander at one point[485].

This could also explain why Sassall is portrayed as a man who "is privileged because of the way he can think and can talk"[486] in comparison to the people around. Despite the fact that he is the one who is unable to express himself, he becomes a proper medium to transfer the voice of his people. "His own self is often his most promising starting-point. His aim is

[484]Ibid., 145.
[485]Ibid., 113.
[486]Ibid., 103.

to find what may be hidden in others"[487], namely the unspoken about the people around. In the light of this, Berger's verbal text with Mohr's images holds enormous power for revealing the inarticulacy of Sassall's people as the beginning of the book exemplifies. To clarify, the first six stories of the book illustrate how some parts of Sassall's community is articulated with the help of Sassall's attempts; that is, those people whose existence is acknowledged by the words and the photographs of the book become present and real within Sassall's story. Serving as specific case studies, these stories document Sassall's treatment of his patients and his help for alleviating their physical and psychological suffering and pain. However, in doing so, none of them is accompanied by the images of the doctor himself or his patients. Instead, the texts over these forty-nine pages telling how terribly people are in pain and how hard Sassall tries to help them are juxtaposed with the images of the

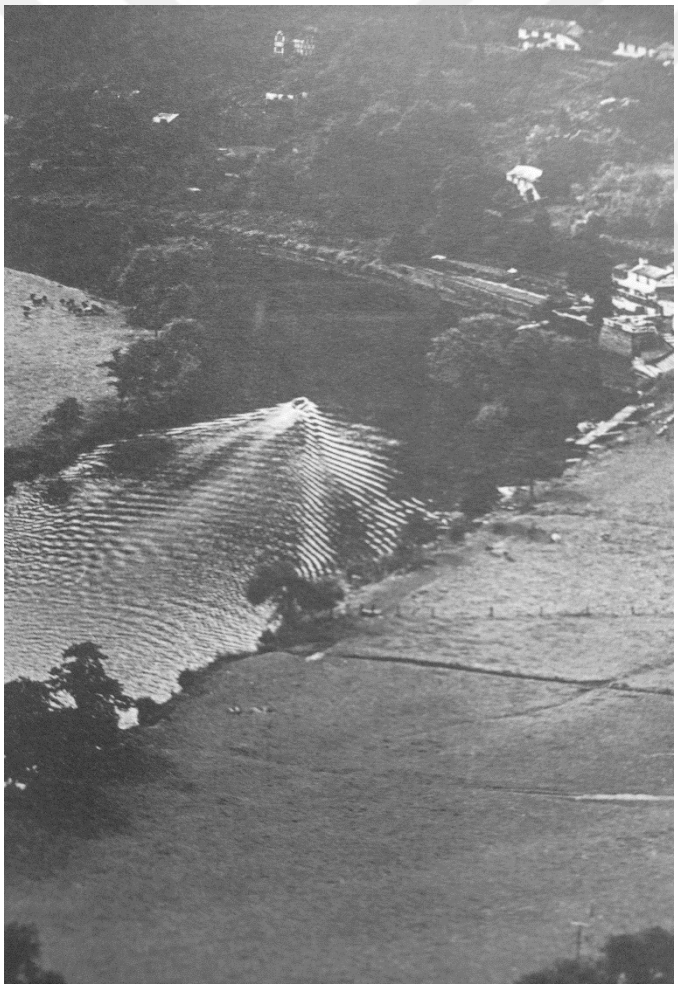

Fig.17. A photograph of a landscape

[487]Ibid., 104.

landscapes which "can be deceptive"[488] as Berger emphasizes at the beginning of the book. He says:

> [sometimes] a landscape seems to be less a setting for the life of its inhabitants than a curtain behind which their struggles, achievements and accidents take place.[489]

Here, the way Berger formulates the idea of a curtain sounds quite interesting owing to the fact that it activates the reader's imagination to seek what is behind it and how the behind can be seen or read in a deconstructive way.

In a rough estimation, it is possible to say that what the reader sees is what is shown in front of the curtain and it is the images of landscapes which exhibit pleasing visuals of nature mantled by trees and waters. Nevertheless, these images seem to be in a stark contrast to something which is behind the curtain. When revealed, the suffering of the community due to the lack of modern advancements and developed life standards and their physiological and psychological suffering primarily because of the sense of being isolated and deprived could be observed. At this moment, it seems that these are intentionally kept behind the curtain by the verbal text of Berger and the images of Mohr for a strong impact on the reader to encourage them to further question the issues beneath what is seen. In his dissertation, Richard Turney has already recognized such a concealment in the book by demonstrating that "the absence of visual portraits of the patients to accompany the verbal portraits is a

[488]Ibid., 19.
[489]Ibid.

striking absence"[490] almost in one-third of the book. However, as Macherey has perseveringly put forth, such a hiding referring to its absence is not a lack or insufficiency of the book. In contrast, it has a contrary effect on the text which emboldens the reader to ruminate on the unspoken more. The reader, for example, is puzzled by "the contrast between the vivid language and the accident's graphic invisibility"[491] at one point and hence questions the possible reasons of "Sassall's tendency to associate cases with the landscape"[492] while speculating on possible interpretations. To provide a more specific example, once the photograph of a misty landscape taken by Mohr is put nearby Berger's verbal text which shares the moment when Sassall is informed about a woodman who is crushed beneath a tree and therefore is suffering from an excruciating pain. Unlike the effects of the blurry image, the reader is exposed to a vivid language describing the event in details. According to its depiction, the doctor wants to reach the badly injured man as soon as possible; however,

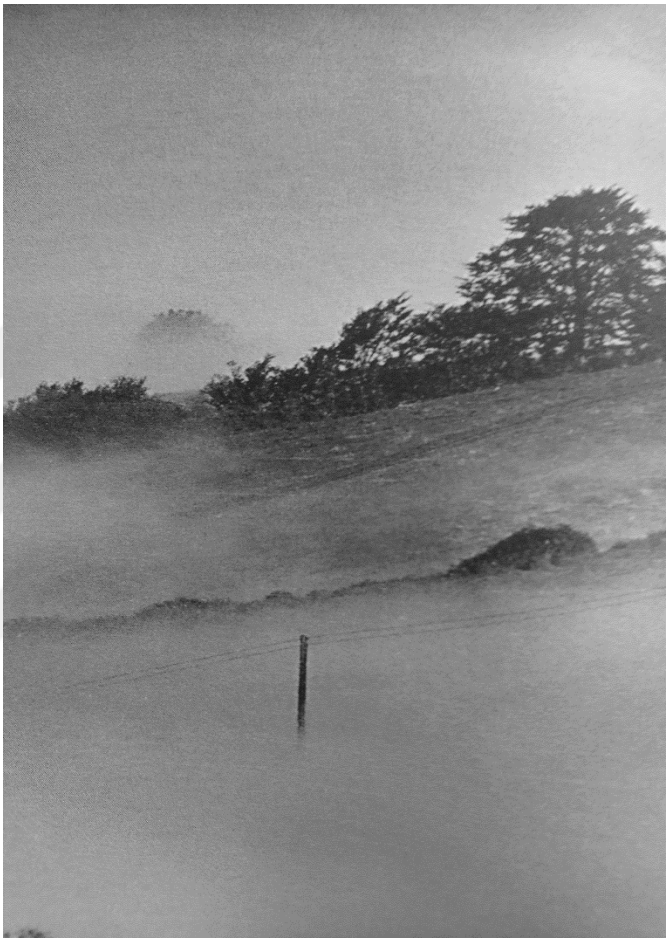

Fig.18. A photograph of a misty landscape

[490]Turney, *Reading Berger, Responding to the Literary*, 86.
[491]Ibid., 85.
[492]Ibid., 86.

it is not so easy to do so because of the mist which blurs the visibility on road where "[some] sheep, startled, appeared and disappeared into the mist"[493]. "[All] the while [the doctor] had his thumb on the horn for the woodman to hear"[494] and finally Sassall arrives there on time to help the woodman to mitigate the pains of his wounds after having a challenging time on road. As it can be noticed, the vivid language of Berger is a companion to the blurry images of Mohr and this invites the reader for new ways of looking and interpreting what is beneath the text.

As Turney further argued, "[none] of the pictures (in the book) is referred to explicitly in the verbal text"[495] as Berger and Mohr plan to achieve in order not to have a mirroring but a complementary effect throughout the book. This could also well explain the sequence between the text and the images through the whole book. Otherwise, how can the reader interpret the transition between the images of the landscapes and the photographs of Sassall at the consulting rooms with the images of his patients? Those six stories accompanied by the images of the landscapes surprisingly follow a series of images belonged to seven different portraits two of whom are women and the rest is men. In this transition, the reader does not receive any verbal text about these portraits; instead, he continues to be informed about how doctor Sassall performs his profession and how his intimate relationship not only with his patients but also with all the members of the community affects his own self[496]. Thus, the reader is left without any clues about these portraits and this enables him to come up with some speculations. For instance, the first portrait belonged to a middle-aged

[493]Ibid., 23.
[494]Ibid.
[495]Turney, *Reading Berger, Responding to the Literary*, 85.
[496]Berger, *A Fortunate Man*, 79.

man is a complete mystery. Why the reader is exposed to this image while Berger talks about something else is worth considering. On may argue that it is the portrait of the woodman who is trapped beneath a tree and medically assisted by doctor Sassall at the beginning of the book because at the end of his story, the reader learns that the woodman will be alive and will not lose his leg as a consequence of Sassall's treatment (although the reader is not absolutely sure whether what the doctor says will be true or not).[497]What this photograph ultimately proves is the fact that he is alive although it does not show whether he has still his leg. However, it is less likely to make a generalization about the correspondence between the first six stories with these seven portraits since six case stories are the stories of three men, two women and a couple while these portraits belong to a young man and four old men as well as one young

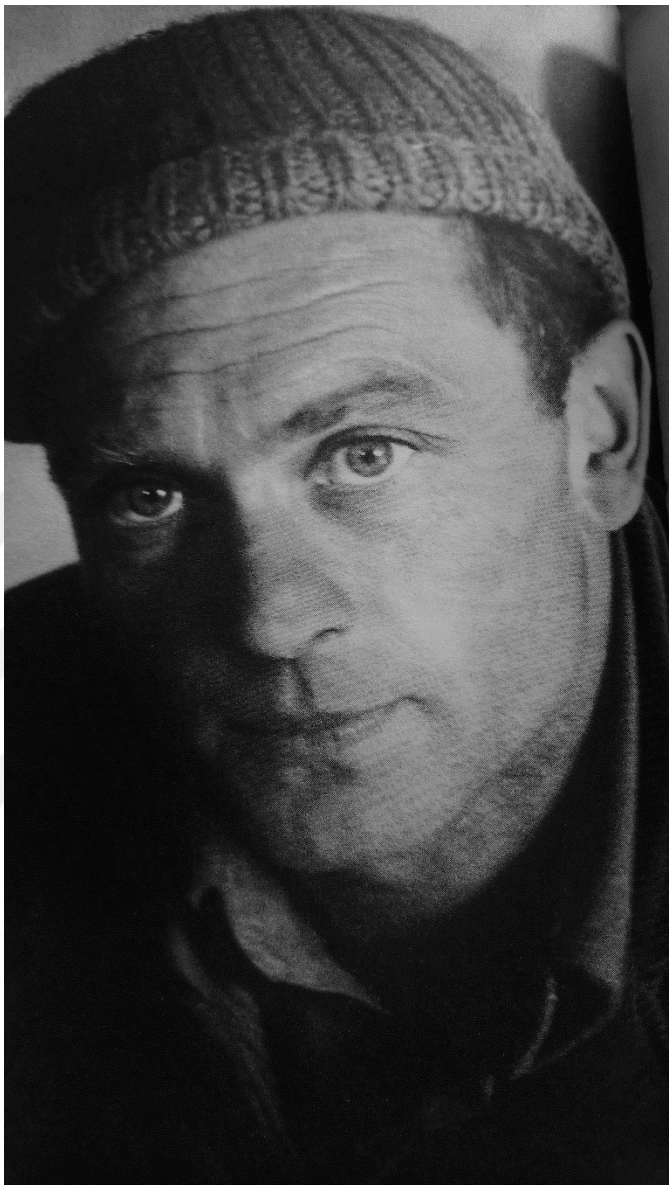

Fig.19. A photograph of a middle-aged man

[497]Ibid., 25.

and one middle-aged woman. Therefore, it is hard to claim that what the text says directly reflects what the images show despite the fact that there can be some interesting matchings at some points.

These points give each individual reader an incentive to realise the dynamics of the texts with the photographs and this in return lets them fill the absence, namely gaps, of the text in a way they prefer. However, each of his realization or interpretation needs to be in line with the text's internally consistent structure defined by Iser's criticism.[498] Hence, the reader is not as free as he thinks or believes. The reader is offered a series of photographs among so many others while he is presented a specific pattern of a text decided by Berger; this means Mohr and Berger "exclude the various other possibilities"[499]and put the reader in a position to choose how to fill the gap by the options they offer. To illustrate, through the whole story of Sassall, the absence of his wife with his children is so striking; yet, there is something which is more astonishing than this: It is the way Berger tries to control even the absence of them by leading (or manipulating) the reader to its justifications. As to their absence, for example, Berger puts a footnote stating that "[he does not] attempt in this essay to discuss the role of Sassall's wife or his family [;instead, he clarifies that his main] concern is [Sassall's] professional life"[500]. In accordance with this, Berger seems to provide the reader with a valid reason for omitting Sassall's wife with his children. Nevertheless, it is unacceptable for some critics like Philip Toynbee who believes that "[Sassall] would have collapsed long ago, and perhaps irretrievably, if it hadn't been for his wife […] [her] role is

[498]Iser, *The Implied Reader*, 280.
[499]Ibid.
[500]Berger, A Fortunate Man, 58.

as archetypal as his"[501]. This shows that even Berger's statements explaining the reason of the absence of a specific text seem to allow the reader (in this sense Toynbee and the others who think similarly) to contemplate more about what is not spoken. Indeed, Sassall has never been photographed or written whilst supplying his basic needs to survive such as eating, drinking or sleeping through the whole book. That means, not only Sassall's wife and children but all the details disregarding his professional life are excluded from the text in order not to distract the reader. In this sense, such an omission can be rationalized since its inclusion would overshadow Sassall's story telling his profession and his qualities indicating how passionate and dedicated he is towards his patients and community.

It is certain that the book has a particular flow which Berger does not want to ruin with weakly relevant issues like Sassall's family or his daily routines. However, it seems that the images somehow already interrupt this flow and lead the reader to the unexpected directions which give him an opportunity to create new connections to fill the gaps left by the text, as Iser has affirmed[502]. For example, once the reader is exposed to Sassall's sad feelings towards his people because of the undeveloped conditions of the region in which he stays with the people who are condemned to live there without "better education, better social services, better employment, better cultural opportunities, etc."[503]to the accompaniment of the photograph showing a couple sitting next to each other without noticing that they are photographed. As quoted before from Berger's remarks on *Another Way of Telling*, the this photograph definitely shows an element of truth in itself but its meaning is so vague for the

[501]Berger, *A Fortunate Man*, Introduction by Gavin Francis, 14.
[502]Iser, *The Implied Reader*, 70.
[503]Berger, *A Fortunate Man*, 137.

reader due to the fact that the verbal text does not provide any clues about it. In order to attach some meaning into it, the reader tries to establish connections to fill in the gaps despite its difficulty. It can be presumed that unpleasant living conditions do not only bother foresters

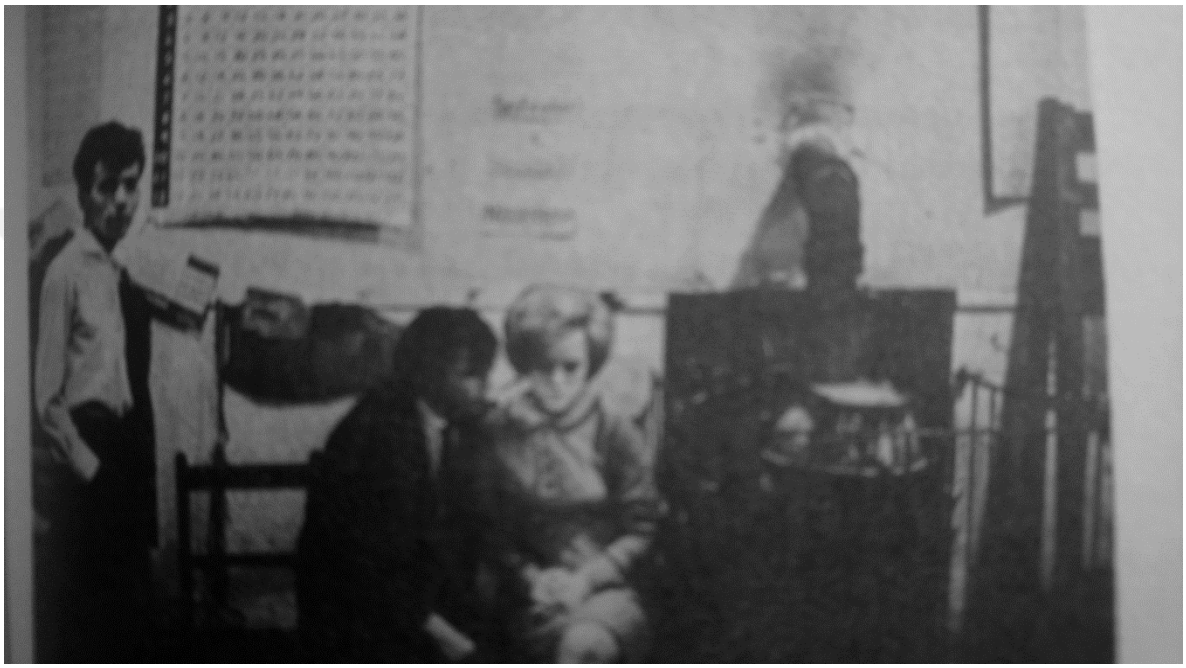

Fig.20. A photograph of a middle class couple

whom Berger mostly talks about but also the middle class people who are dissatisfied with the conditions they are obliged to live in. If the photograph is attentively looked at, the poor physical conditions can be easily realized: the ruinous state of the wall and the torn posterns carelessly hung onto it, the raggedy coal-burning stove and very old furniture. At that moment, it can even be argued that these poor living conditions are more disturbing to the middle class people than the others like the man standing nearby this couple since he does not lack what the couple had once. Therefore, he is fully aware of his surroundings noticing that he is being photographed unlike the couple.

The following images in the book belong to a group of people who are definitely not the foresters although the verbal text continues talking about them. In contrast to the foresters, the people in these photographs seem to have better life standard: Men shown in these photographs are having a conversation while holding ping-pong paddles or playing table tennis, whereas women are dancing, having fun as well as socializing. This juxtaposition sounds a little bit contradictory but indeed it is this contradiction which encourages the reader to think more on the unspoken. In Iser's reader-response criticism, this is explained as the indeterminacies of the text which forms one of the distinctive advantages of active, dynamic and deconstructive reading producing numerous alternative interpretations. In *A Fortunate Man*, if the images show what is in front of the curtain as a grain of truth in a way the landscapes exhibit, the verbal text utters what is behind it, the unspoken about Doctor Sassall, his patients as well as his community. The congruence of the two never exhausts the potential of the text; on the contrary, it permits the text to be interpreted differently so that new realizations of the unspoken besides the spoken can occur.

Despite its considerable potential, the reader is still not as free as he wishes while reading and interpreting *A Fortunate Man* predominantly owing to two reasons. The first reason is the fact that the reader has to make an interpretation which is internally consistent with the text whose limits are set by its creators. As mentioned before, he is supposed to pass his comments in line with what the text says and what the images show since those are the chosen ones among so many other alternatives. The second reason is that Berger does not leave any space for the absence or omission of anything in the course of the book. That is, even if there is something which falls outside the scope of his intention of writing such as

leaving Doctor Sassall's parents aside, he is still in control of its absence. This exactly demonstrates what happens at the end of the story. In the end, Berger talks about the possibility or necessity of omitting the concluding part of the book since he believes its absence is essential to emphasize Doctor Sassall's presence. Hence, he unequivocally explains the reason for which he is neither able to conclude nor omit the concluding part of his work with these words:

> I wish I could write a conclusion to this essay, summing up and evaluating what has been noticed. But I cannot. It is beyond me to conclude this essay. I could end another story about Sassall and perhaps most readers would then not notice the omission.[504]

Here, the text seems to be out of its creator's control contrary to Iser's criticism for it is incapable of being manipulated in accordance with its creator's intentions. Berger very confidently admits the fact that he can conclude any story related to Sassall but not that one since

> [nothing] has in fact been concluded. Sassall, with the cunning intuition that any fortunate man requires today in order to go on working at what he believes in, has established the situation he needs. Not without cost, but on the whole satisfactorily. In it he is working. He is working now at this moment as I write. He may be prescribing a routine cure to a routine infection, he may be listening, taking a few drops of blood from a thumb, imagining himself to be the woman or man opposite him,

[504]Ibid., 159.

> talking to a sales rep from a drug firm, testing some urine, hoping to learn more, learning more.[505]

Berger justifies the reason why he is unable to omit or conclude Sassall's story by underlining the fact that *A Fortunate Man* is a story of Doctor Sassall who continues leading his life by pursuing his professional career. It is evident that if Berger was in the shoes of an autobiographer or Doctor Sassall was a fictional character, it would be much easier to conclude the book. Yet, now in this case "[the] conclusion [has to be] inconclusive and simple"[506]. Therefore, Berger is only able to come to an end with a quote demonstrating the logic of Sassall who confesses "[whenever he is] reminded of death- and it happens every day- [he thinks] of [his] own, and this makes [him] try to work harder"[507]. Berger feels that these statements could only serve as concluding remarks of the book and Mohr reciprocally seems to pass the same message to the reader by sharing a photograph of Doctor Sassall whilst going to another house to cure someone else. This very end of the book appears to be quite promising for the reader-response theory because of the fact that it somehow gets independent from its creator's intentions by fading their autonomy and hegemony over the text.

As expounded above, the reader is exposed to the photographs of Mohr through Berger's verbal text and this combination proposes "a new critical awareness (to the reader) of his […] (own) customary codes and expectations"[508]. As a result, the reader is stimulated by an active and deconstructive reading which offers opportunity for having an access not

[505]Ibid.
[506]Ibid., 168.
[507]Ibid.,
[508]Eagleton, *LT*, 68.

only to the spoken but also, maybe more importantly, to the unspoken. As previously cited, Iser believes in such a power of the act of reading which is formed and manipulated by its reader's intervention enabling to obtain "the virtual dimension of the text"[509]. Such a partnership is also forged in *A Seventh Man* where the reader is supposed to read both the texts and the images to simultaneously see what is in front of the *curtain* and what is behind it.

It seems that the way Berger wants to use his verbal text nearby Mohr's photographs has a similar purpose with *A Fortunate Man* since Berger wants both images and words of the book to be read "in their own terms"[510]. This seems to justify the reason why he is so decisive about working with Mohr once again no matter what the form of the book would be. Hence, even before deciding the form of the book and start working on it[511], Berger makes his decision to create a similar effect on the reader by forming a kind of conversation between words and images. Rather than mirroring each other, Berger wants to produce a book which "[only] occasionally (includes] an image used to illustrate the text"[512]. Except for that,

> [the] photographs, taken over a period of years by Jean Mohr, say things which are beyond the reach of words. The pictures in sequence make a statement: a statement which is equal and comparable to, but different from, that of the text.[513]

[509]Iser, *The Implied Reader*, 279.
[510]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, "A Note to the Reader", 11.
[511]"Speech by John Berger on Accepting the Booker Prize for Fiction", Gostbustere Online. [He touches on the same issue at the very beginning of *A Seventh Man*, in the part entitled as"A Note to the Reader", 12: There he says that "[he wanted] to work again with a photographer, Jean Mohr, with whom [he had made] the book about the country doctor." Then, he elaborates on the fact that "[a few] photographs were taken, not by Jean Mohr, but by Sven Blomberg, who also contributed much to the design and visual structure of the book."]
[512]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, "A Note to the Reader", 11.
[513]Ibid.

Thus, the text and the images complement each other in a way they do in *A Fortunate Man*. This might be true when what the text says is juxtaposed with the images since what the text says is obviously different than what the images say. To illustrate, the text shares some statistical data and documentary evidence about the existence of the migrants in Europe such as their population and their spread to the countries "according to [their] local tradition"[514]. Besides, the text includes some quotes of migrants articulating how they feel about their life in an unknown land where they lose their own self. For example, a British worker at Fords harshly criticizes the capitalist system in which he is involved and expresses how badly and meaninglessly he feels. He sadly utters that:

> [you] (referring to any migrant worker) don't achieve anything here. A robot could do it. The line here is made for morons. It doesn't need any thought. They tell you that. 'We don't pay you for thinking' they say. Everyone comes to realize that they're not doing a worthwhile job. They're just on the line. For the money. Nobody likes to think that they're a failure. It's bad when you know that you're just a little cog. You just look at your pay packet- you look at what it does for your wife and kids. That's the only answer.[515]

This is the text which does not need anyone to articulate itself; that is, it is so clear from the words of the migrant that his life lacks any meaning since he does not mean anything to anybody. In brief, his existence only serves as 'a cog' in the system.[516]

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[514]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, 86. ["If he is Turkish he is likely to go to Germany; if he is Portuguese, to France; if he is Greek he may go to Sweden."]
[515]Ibid., 103.
[516]In a very similar way, Berger shares another quote of a Yugoslav migrant expressing how he feels about returning home (209).
As a response to Berger's texts, Mohr interestingly shares a photograph of a cog which is captioned by "Apprentice Workshop, Tunisia" through the end of the book (105).

In addition to these, the text presents scientific reports based either on observations or analytical methods. For instance, Berger's text consists of several pieces of essay-like writings on "reasons for immigrant workers' high accident rates"[517], three different calculations on the migrants existence in Europe and some "contradictory facts"[518] about them and "a report from under Geneva" proposing a construction of a drainage system "which could serve, not only the new suburbs, but all that part of Geneva which lies on the right bank of the lake"[519] and these texts literally mean what they say as Geoff Dyer has approved in his work *Ways of Telling* with the statement that "*A Seventh Man* is a fiercely political book [which] more than any other work of Berger's […] speaks for itself"[520]. Therefore, since the text apparently shows what it says, the photographs do not intentionally reflect them (except for the part of the report from Geneva). For example, the photographs exhibit the facial expressions of the migrants and their parents left behind whilst the text giving some statistical data and documentary evidence about their presence in Europe or when Berger quotes from a British worker at Fords, a photograph of a factory canteen full of migrants waiting in queue for the meal is exhibited. As to the time when Berger reports some analytical observations, Mohr does not mirror him; instead, he presents a pile of photographs of migrants in their lodgings. These can substantiate the claim that the text and the photographs do not reflect each other; on the contrary, they build on one another as intended in that way by Berger himself.[521]

[517]Ibid., 130.
[518]Ibid., 150.
[519]Ibid., 159.
[520]Geoff Dyer, *Ways of Telling: The Work of John Berger* (UK: Pluto, 1986), 111.
[521]Berger, *A Fortunate Man*, "Introduction", 11.

However, when the part telling the report from under Geneva is considered, it is hard to claim that they do not mirror each other. Even the names of the photographs listed at the very end of the book prove this since they are captioned by the expression of "[working] and living conditions of migrant workers constructing a tunnel under Geneva, Switzerland"[522]. Therefore, it is highly likely to put forward that what Berger and Mohr aim is hardly achieved at that part of the book. However, it would be so unfair to claim that what Berger and Mohr intend to achieve in that book in terms of the collaboration of the words with the images is all in vain like Roger Rajeeve Mehta did in his dissertation. With regard to this, Mehta seems to make a sort of snide remark making a claim as follows:

> Simply consider *A Seventh Man* 'a book of images and words about the experience of migrant workers in Europe'. Berger and Mohr's hope was that the images and words in the book would 'be read in their own terms'; that the 'pictures in sequence make a statement: a statement which is equal and comparable to, but different from, that of the text' (Berger and Mohr 1975, 7). *It was a vain hope however*. The images and the words are, at the very least, *in continual dialogue*, and, more often than not, *the words threaten to overwhelm the images - reducing them to the status of illustrations*. As Sontag notes, 'words do speak louder than pictures' (Sontag 1979, 108).[523]

At this point, what seems crucial is to realize that what Berger and Mohr want to achieve by letting words and images to be read in their own terms is not a 'vain' attempt at all. Considering the whole book, it is so noticeable that this is such an attempt which is sometimes

[522]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, "List of Illustrations", 237
[523]Mehta, *Telling Stories and Making History*, 153. [emphasis added]

achieved but sometimes deliberately failed. Berger explains this by accepting the fact that "[Mohr and himself] weren't tempted to eliminate the ambiguities, the friction or the recalcitrance of the real"[524] through the story. That is to say, they admit that some ambiguities exist through the book or at some points they can't help forming a kind of 'continual dialogue' between the words and the images contrary to their estimations and expectations. Nevertheless, they prefer to present them as they are instead of correcting them.

Here, in Mehta's analysis, what seems to be more misleading is his inference that the effects of the words overshadow the images: he deduces that 'the words threaten to overwhelm the images'. However, the images are time to time (or even more frequently) a lot stronger than the words as Berger wants. By way of illustration, the images of the migrants being medically examined by German doctors, most of which are shared in the part of "What is Said" at the beginning of this chapter, influence the reader more than the text although both tell similar but not exactly the same issues.[525] This is an intended effect which wants to be realized by Berger himself. In the cover of Penguin Book's 1975 edition, Berger explains how and why he needs photographs while bringing the experience of the migrant workers of Europe to the reader in this way:

> To bring this experience directly to the reader we needed political analysis and poetry. We needed to quote economists and to write fiction. *Above all we needed photographs*. Jean Mohr and I have continued the *experiment* begun in *A Fortunate Man* and continued in *Ways of Seeing*.

[524]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, "Preface", 9.
[525]Ibid., 51-55, 57-59.

> We hope that the way this book is made - not just what it states - may question any preconceptions about its subject.[526]

Berger believes that besides its political analysis, poetry, quotes from economists and fictive story, photographs are more needed in the creation of this book to carry out a kind of experiment started with *A Fortunate Man* and continued in *Ways of Seeing* and concluded by *A Seventh Man*. Thus, unlike Mehta's views, Berger places more value and significance to images to have a more meaningful text including words which are incapable of conveying such a message without images.

These three texts incorporating words with the images meet on a common ground because each of them gives a voice to the unspoken whose presence has been ignored previously. By offering a deconstructive perspective, these books enable the reader to witness the unspoken articulating itself in the accompaniment of the words and the images. *A Fortunate Man* is the beginning of the project to attract the reader's attention to the inarticulacy of not only a British country man but also a whole community to which he belongs. Thanks to this book, they manage to raise awareness about the need of hearing and seeing the ones who have been accepted as absent hitherto. Maybe because of its fictitiousness, *A Fortunate Man* has not been as popular as *Ways of Seeing* where Berger works on not only the photographs of Mohr but also the paintings mostly exhibited in the art galleries such as in the National Art Gallery in London, the Louvre Museum in Paris, the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna etc. Despite Mohr's absence, Berger seems to sustain the same project there. With the help of the images, Berger invites the reader to question the

[526]John Berger, *A Seventh Man* (USA: Pelican, 1975). [emphasis added].

relationship especially between man who is always depicted as a superior and a woman who is always described as submissive and inferior; and a colonizer who holds the power and a colonized whose presence is exploited to strengthen the power of the colonizer. By making a kind of social criticism in line with the critique of Derridean binary oppositions, Berger and his different ways of seeing have become more accessible in the 1970s and his reader has been gradually getting involved in his project. Therefore, Berger's reunion with Mohr to continue working on creating image-texts is not surprising for the reader.

In their joint work[527], *A Seventh Man*, Berger and Mohr come together to argue the place of the European migrant. Since Berger believes that "[the] migrant is not on the margin of modern experience [any longer; in contrast,] he is absolutely central to it"[528], he decenters the center to put the migrant at the heart of it to compensate its lingering absence. To this end, Berger suggests filling this absence with the photographs which are in cooperation with the text. As a consequence of it, photographs in *A Seventh Man* play a decisive role to fill in these gaps where the text and words do not suffice to do it so. For instance, one of the earliest images of the book does not accidentally belong to an old photographer "cigarette in mouth, busy with the lens cover of an archaic camera" as Mehta portrays[529]. The image of the camera is there because it implicates multiple virtual dimensions of seeing the text. Once clearly observed, it can be noticed that the old photographer gets ready to take a photograph of the people whom the reader is unable to see while Mohr shoots a photograph of him during when

[527]Indeed, *A Seventh Man* is not only produced by John Berger, the writer and Jean Mohr, the photographer. As Berger stated at the beginning of the book, without the contributions of Sven Blomberg, the painter and Richard Hollis, the designer, this book would not have been achieved.
[528]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, Cover Page.
[529]Mehta, *Telling Stories and Making History*, 67.

Fig.21. A photograph of a photographer

some other people behind watch him. Keeping this in mind, it seems inspiring to claim that even a single photograph can be sufficient to show the power of the image which offers different ways of seeing. At this moment when Mohr emphasizes the importance of having numerous perspectives with the help of the image of a camera, Berger responds to him with a statement associating photographs with "a form of transport"[530] over one's absence to its presence or vice versa.

[530] Berger, *A Seventh Man*, 17.

In the light of the above argument, Berger tries to initiate a discussion over how absence works in the book and what is its relevance to the photographs. First, he states that "[the] photo defines an absence"[531], then he explains that "the photographs in this book work in the opposite way"[532] and gives an example to clear up what he means: "A photograph of a boy in the rain, a boy unknown to you or me. Seen in the dark-room when making the print, or seen in this book when reading it, the image conjures up the vivid presence of the unknown boy. To his father it would define the boy's absence."[533] So, this is the photograph of a boy whom neither Berger nor the reader knows; yet his presence there is undeniable. He is there for the writer, Berger; the photographer, Mohr; and the reader; that is, his presence is acknowledged with the help of a photograph. However, the photograph simultaneously gets the valid proof of his absence as well especially to the ones who intimately knows him like his father. This is why the photograph is the most proper

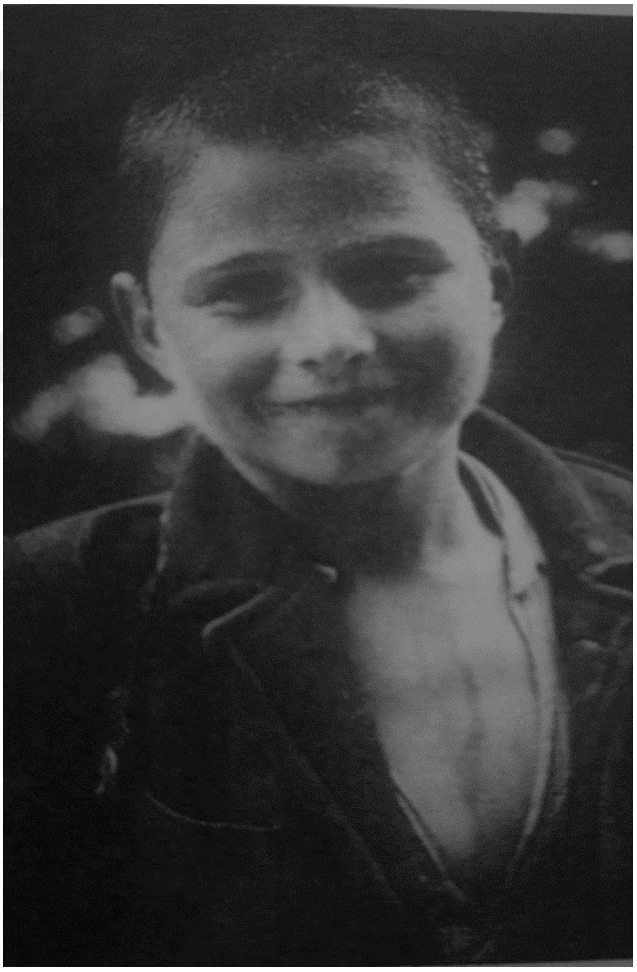

Fig.22. A photograph of a boy

[531]Ibid., 20.
[532]Ibid., 21.
[533]Ibid.

and effective medium to convey the messages of the absent, to make him seen. Such an approach towards the effects of the visuals could also justify the reason why Berger and Mohr initially thought of shooting a film instead of writing a book although they did not have such a chance owing to financial problems.

Due to the fact that Berger and Mohr are unable to shoot a movie of *A Seventh Man*, they prefer to "set out to make a book of moments (recorded in either images or words), and [they arrange] these moments in chapters which [resemble] film sequences".[534] Accordingly, the book presents

> the images (which) are sometimes black and white and photographic, and sometimes purely verbal, (and) the instantly recognizable moments refer to different experiences: the continual dream of the return home, the shared tears because of the knowledge that this dream can never come true, the courage of the departure, the endurance of the journey, the shock of arrival, the later legendary invitation to come and join (ticket enclosed), the deaths far away, the black foreign nights, the proud obstination of survival.[535]

Different than each other, all these images are able to show various experiences of the migrants. Some of them depict their facial expressions[536], their families left behind[537], their departure[538] while the others reveal their lodgings and barracks[539]; their working places[540]

[534]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, "Preface", 9.
[535]Ibid.
[536]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, 18, 19, 46, 49, 80, 81, 96, 97, 99, 100, 202, and 203.
[537]Ibid., 23, 28, 29, 65, 66, and 67.
[538]Ibid., 43, 32, 34, 35, 36, 38, 69 [the cover photograph of the book belonged to a man seated in the train], and 72-79.
[539]Ibid., 85, 87, 89,112, 118, 125, 131, 146, 152, 153, 154, 155, 188, 193, 194, 195, and 201.
[540]Ibid., 90, 96, 97, 98, 102, 106, 110, 111, 113, 114, 116, 120, 121, 134, 135, and 143.

and their daily life[541] there and eventually their return to home[542]. However, these photographs still hardly reflect the text since the text seems one-dimensional compared to what these photographs tell. Instead of demonstrating numerous perspectives over migrants' lives, the text focuses on the story of 'he'. According to this story,

> [he] has a fiancée. He is married.
>
> He has no children. He has six children.
>
> During his absence his wife bore his first child.[543]

Considering these descriptions, it is evident that he hardly refers to one person since he cannot have a fiancée and be married at the same time or have six children while meeting his first-born child. Hence, the story of 'he' eventually comes to a point where it turns into a story of all migrants who are unable to define himself except for his self-identification as a seventh man[544]. Despite his ongoing story through the end of the book, Berger seems to confirm that he has nothing typical to himself and thence his story is not so different than the other migrants'.

Nonetheless, it is still crucial to transmit their voice to the others since it is one of the primary reasons of producing this book according to Berger. He has openly aired his opinions

[541]Ibid., 125, 126, 127, and 189.
[542]Ibid., 211, 214, 216, and 217.
[543]Ibid., 212.
[544]Why Berger defines a migrant as a seventh man is a little bit ambiguous. When the poem entitled as "The Seventh" written by Atilla Jozsef is shared at the beginning of the book, the reader may connote it with the Biblical story of the creation of the world within seven days: On the seventh day, the migrant is present on the earth to be seen and heard by the others. (How this poem relates to the book is also the unspoken of the book which is open to the reader's interpretations formed by his own ways of seeing.)

about this at the Booker Prize Speech in this way:

> I have begun a project about the migrant workers of Europe. I do not know what form the final book will take. Perhaps a novel. Perhaps a book that fits no category. What I do know is that I want some of the voices of the eleven million migrant workers in Europe and of the forty or so million that are their families, mostly left behind in towns and villages but dependent on the wages of the absent workers, to speak through and on the pages of this book.[545]

As clearly demonstrated, no matter what the form or the genre of the book is, it is certain that it aims to be the voice of 'the eleven million migrant workers in Europe' with their families left behind. To that end, Berger becomes the voice of these migrant workers and his book looks as if a megaphone declaring their presence which has been ignored for a long time. Consequently, Berger fills their absence with their voice to reach so many others who may share a similar faith with them. Although the book achieves its goal to a large extent in this sense, it still leaves out so many voices. As Iser has pointed out in his reader-response criticism, these omissions are so inevitable that each attempt to fill in the gaps of the text excludes various other possibilities[546]. In accordance with this, *A Seventh Man* excludes women migrant workers of Europe.

The exclusion of women migrant workers is a definitely conscious decision since Berger is completely aware of their absence in their work. Yet, their absence in the book does not implicate that Berger either ignores or devalues them. On the contrary, he believes their

[545]"Speech by John Berger on Accepting the Booker Prize for Fiction", Gostbustere Online.
[546]Iser, *The Implied Reader*, 280.

significant role in this context. However, due to the limitations of the book, they need to be left out. Berger explicitly explains its reason in the "Preface" of the book as follows:

> Among the migrant workers in Europe there are probably two million women. Some work in factories; many work in domestic service. To write of their experience adequately would require a book in itself. We hope this will be done. Ours is limited to the experience of the male migrant worker.[547]

Berger clearly states how the scope of the book has been determined within the experience of male migrant workers in Europe. However, he is still unable to disregard these "probably two million women" working mostly at factories and domestic services since he allows the integration of some of their photographs in the course of the book. In contrast to the absence of women migrant workers in the verbal text, photographs remind the reader about their presence in such a surrounding. For example, Mohr displays a leaving of a woman at a railway station in Istanbul[548]; he shares a few photographs of women working at factories[549] or a café[550] and of some others when they are at their barracks[551] or outside[552]. As these images show, the photographs could articulate more than what the verbal text shares and this ultimately justifies the necessity of deploying the images nearby the words throughout the whole book.

[547]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, "Preface", 12.
[548]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, 67.
[549]Ibid., 96, and 100.
[550]Ibid., 194.
[551]Ibid., 146, 154, and 155.
[552]Ibid., 202, and 203.

In addition to these photographs proving women migrant workers' presence in Europe, Mohr appears to initiate a new discussion over women's presence in the context of European migrant workers. Different than what the verbal text presents, Mohr shows women photographs which are so unlike at first glance but quite similar in deep and encourages the reader to have more speculations about what is unspoken about woman. In this regard, beyond the scope of Berger's verbal text in *A Seventh Man*, Mohr seems to echo Berger's arguments in his *Ways of Seeing*. Similarly, Mohr juxtaposes the images of women in real life, at arts and in popular culture there. First, for instance, he exhibits the photo of an old woman sitting on the pavement, eyes downcast nearby the image of holy Madonna looking after her beloved Son. At first glance, the reader is amazed by the relevance of these two images. No matter how hard he tries, he hardly acknowledges the precise reason of being

Fig.23. A photograph of an old woman

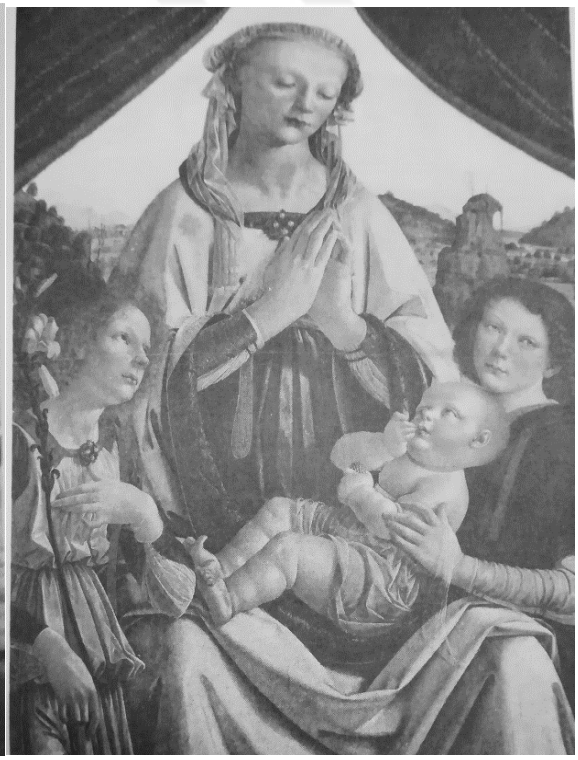

Fig.24. Madonna by Perugino

exposed to these two women images consecutively. Still open to many interpretations, it seems that these are the images of woman in real life and at arts. The old woman sitting on the pavement in the bazaar which is the center of the new neoliberal system Berger criticizes most is put nearby the image of Madonna. Unlike the image of the old woman, the painting of Madonna drifts the woman to the extreme, namely to the phase of sublimity or sanctity which is far away from any shades of reality. In this sense, Mohr appears to have these images to remind the reader about the possible places of woman and in doing so he implies their presence hidden under the hegemony of man.

In the course of the book, Mohr continues sharing the photographs of the woman in a way to prove their presence. In contrast to the images of woman in reality and sublimity, Mohr displays a photograph of a wall above bed in the barracks which is full of the images

Fig.25. A photograph of a wall above bed in barracks

of naked women depicted as sexual objects.[553] By reminding the harsh reality about the woman's presence, Mohr successively shares an image revealing a young naïve peasant girl working in the fields and in doing so he somehow reinforces the reader's perception of women by offering different perspectives. Like an old woman in the market, this young girl is a part of the reality of the capitalist system but she has to undergo its difficulties and

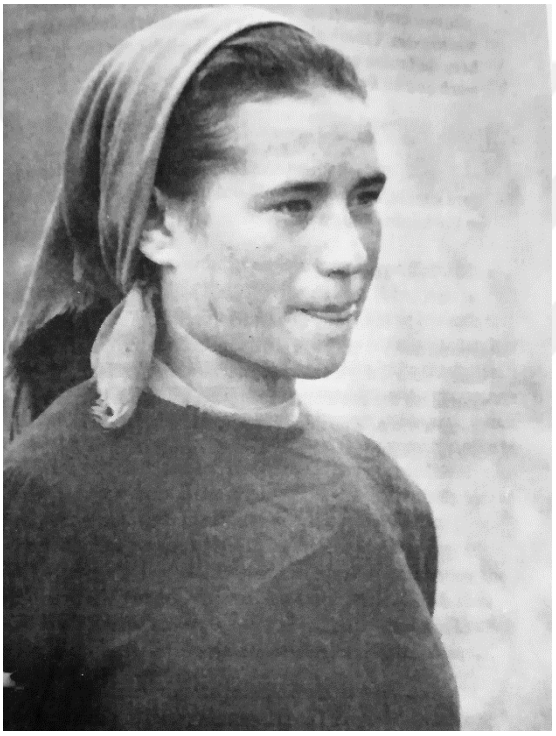

Fig.26. A photograph of a peasant girl working in field

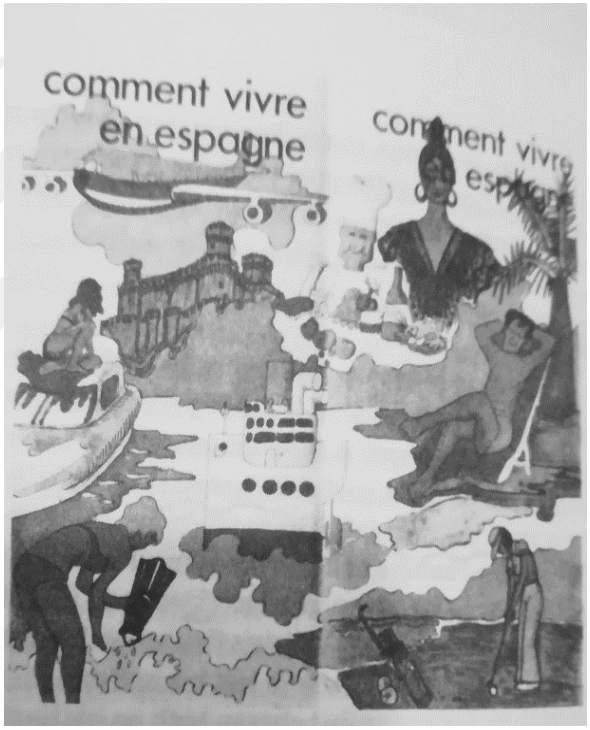

Fig.27. A photograph of a brochure for holidays

challenges at first hand, unlike the image of the old woman in the market. As a response to the image of a peasant girl, Mohr surprises the reader with another photograph of women

[553]Ibid., 133, and 178.

who are very different than the previous ones. There, women's grandiose depiction serves a purpose of attracting people's attention for holidays; that is, women are shown as appealing and tempting figures for such holidays.

Considering all women images shared by Mohr, it can be claimed that Mohr wants to alert the reader about the presence of the woman in reality, society, arts and culture. Besides, Mohr makes the reader observe what has been decided to be concealed in the book. In this regard, he makes a sort of Derridean criticism on binary oppositions in line with Berger by revealing what is hidden through some of the fixed or settled portraits of women. At this point, it is noticeable that these images of woman have not radically changed in time since they are always either a part of reality of hard work or sublimity or sexuality. Briefly put, Mohr's concern with these images overlaps with Berger's major arguments in *Ways of Seeing*, especially in the ones told in the first two chapters where Berger critically analyses the woman paintings in comparison to the images of woman in popular culture. For example,

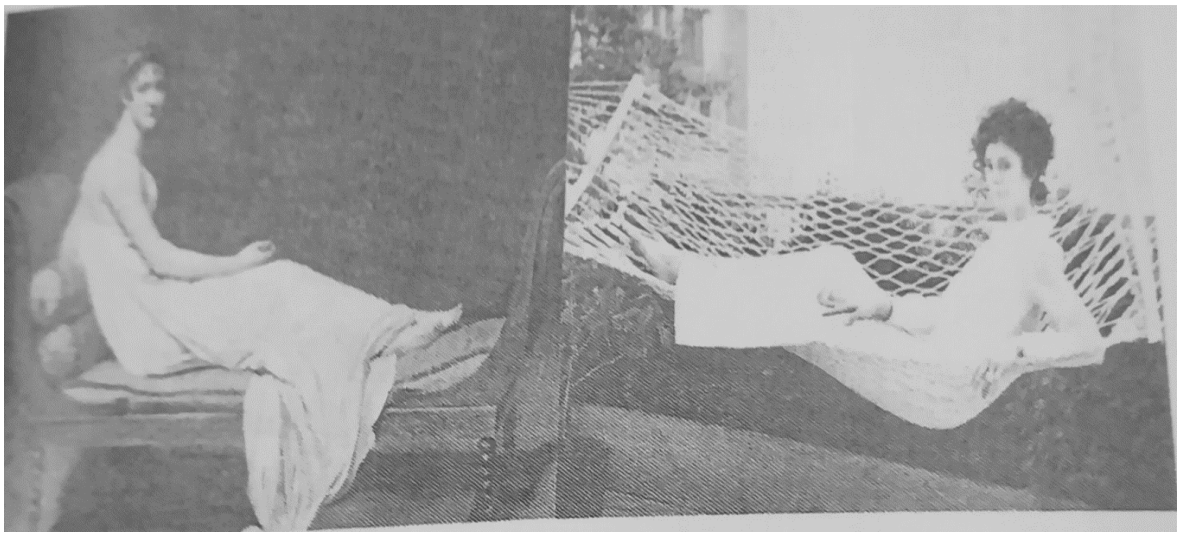

Fig.28. A photograph of a contemporary advertisement captioned by "If women knew then…what they know now"

once Berger puts an ideally perfect image of a woman next to a beautiful young lady in an advertisement poster. In doing it so, Berger does not only aim to obtain the unspoken about the woman, he also provides the reader with different ways of seeing enabling him to (re)evaluate how these images have been duplicated over the years regardless of time, place or purpose. Hence, Mohr, like Berger, shares the visuals on which women are depicted to emphasize woman's presence which is so much ignored in real life thereby in arts.

While reiterating Berger's critical views on woman images, Mohr continues working for what Berger chooses to deal with in *A Seventh* Man. Instead of complementing the text simply with some reflective photographs, Mohr deploys the images in a quite contrasting manner so as to stimulate the reader to pore over the unspoken which implicitly describes the neoliberal system, thereby its implementation and outcomes. Once, for instance, a photograph of a migrant worker in the soldiering factory is put nearby a photograph of the farm whereby a young girl looks after her child[554]. At first glance, two images

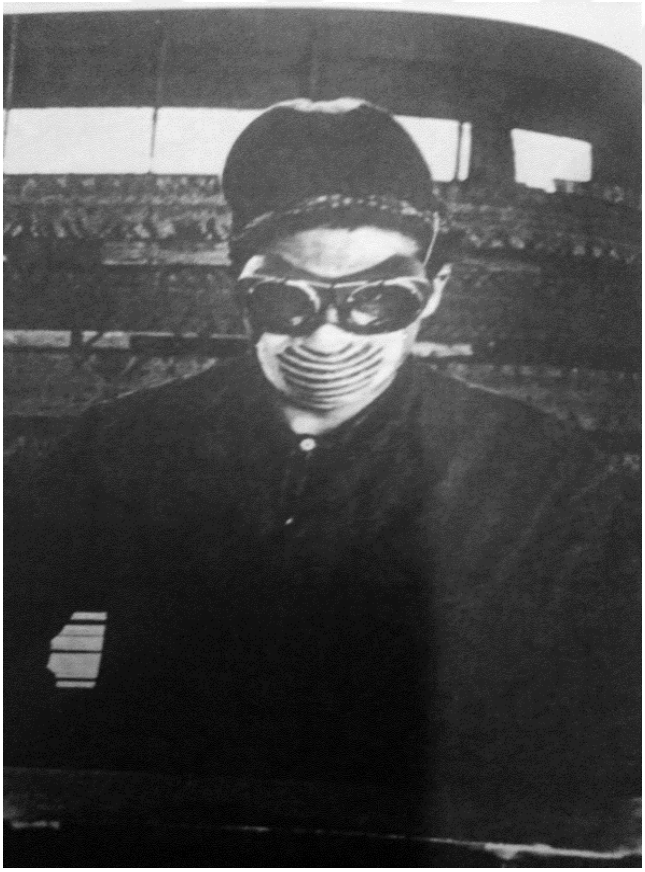

Fig.29. A photograph of a migrant worker in soldiering factory

[554]It is worth realizing that a photograph of a woman is once again typically taken within a sphere which is described for her around her undeveloped surrounding with her baby.

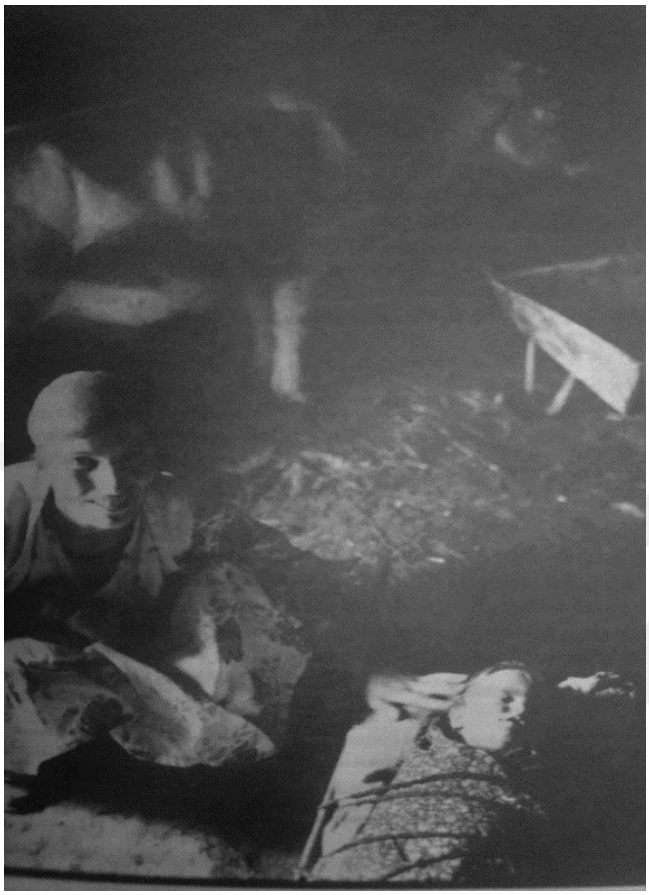

Fig.30. A photograph of a farm

seem to be in a sharp contrast not only with the verbal text but also with each other; nevertheless, once they are carefully looked at, the reader may realize how each photograph builds on the other by making a tacit critique of a new dominant system which makes so many migrant workers aggrieved and frustrated. Both the migrant worker who has left his hometown to go and work into the unknown land and the abandoned one who is subjected to the undeveloped conditions and limited work in their homeland are upset about this system despite their helpless acceptance.

All in all, *A Seventh Man* is a book to air the voice of the unspoken: the voice of the migrants (although it primarly articulates the voice of male migrant workers while very rarely hinting at the presence of the woman migrant workers) and the voice of the impacts of "the new global economic order"[555]. While doing it so, the book has been enriched by the power of the words and the strong influence of the images. In their cooperation, different lives and experiences of different people are documented by putting considerable emphasis on

[555]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, "Preface", 7.

transmitting the same message which is still open to any possibly different interpretations.The relationship between the text and the images or the releavance between the consecutive images is worth further considering as in the case of these following photographs. The first image, for example, reveals a bus stop in Yugoslavia full of passengers most of whom are migrant workers ready to go to the unknown land leaving their families behind, whereas the second one displays an underground station in Stockholm with a few men in modern suits waiting for a subway.[556] Both images strengthen the differences

Fig.31. A photograph of a bus stop

[556]There is benefit in looking and seeing what is on the walls of the underground station: A wall full of woman images on posters used for the advertising purposes. Although implicitly put, these images are within the whole of the book as if it was put there to remind the reader about Berger's criticism on the depiction of women in arts, namely popular culture and Mohr's sensibility towards it.

Fig.32. A photograph of an underground station

between the lives people have to maintain because of the neoliberal system. Therefore, one may argue that these images lead the reader to the most striking unspoken of the book which

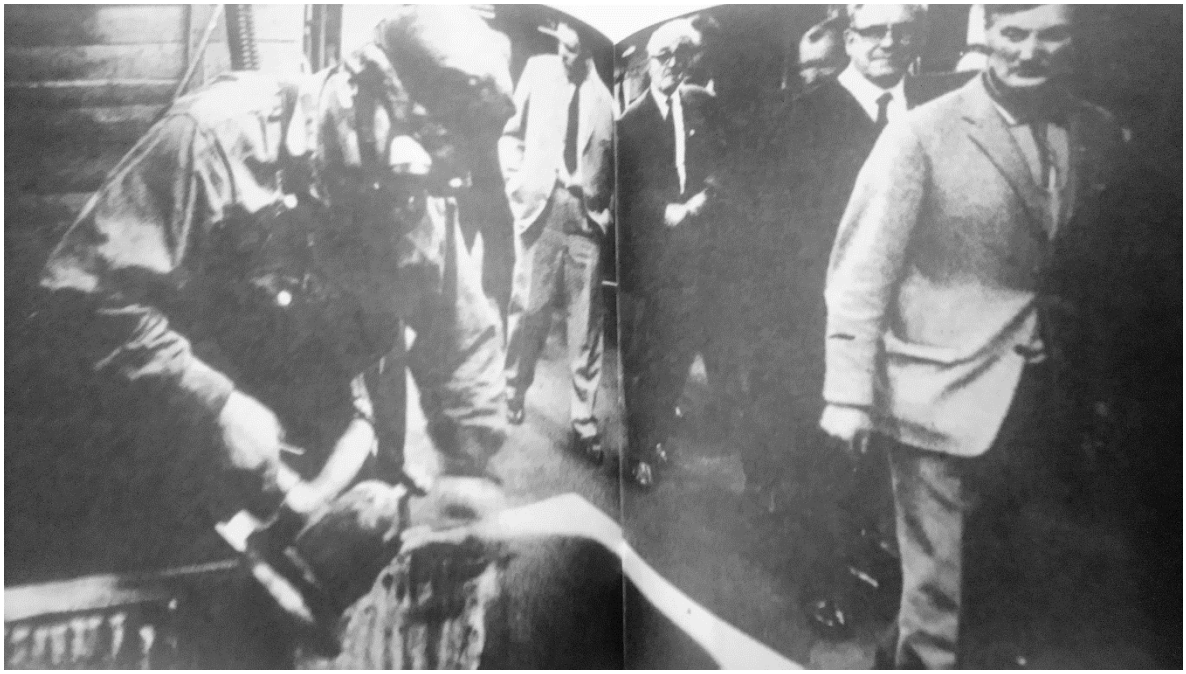

Fig.33. Managers inspecting Swedish factory

is the image of a working migrant at a Swedish factory while his managers are at the tour of inspection. There, the migrant worker is so busy doing what he is supposed to do and hence he is unaware of the inspection. As a token of this new neoliberal system, the migrant worker strives to make the inspector, the employer or the owner richer and richer. In this sense, the photograph says more than what it shows: as a way of criticizing this system which is defined as a kind of economic fascism[557] by Berger himself, it emphasizes how it makes the powerful more powerful while dragging many poor people into a more serious poverty and hardship. In other words, the rich man gets richer and richer every day by the hard work of the poor who is gradually becoming more indigent. Once the whole of the book is taken into account, this appears to be one of the central concerns (or probably the most significant one) of Berger since it is mostly related to the outcomes of this new economic system. In this sense, it makes the reader remember his criticism on the unfair relationship between the colonizer and the colonized in *Ways of Seeing*[558]. As a result, Berger ends his experiment, carried out with Mohr, with *A Seventh Man* and in the end he eventually succeeds in voicing the unspoken by filling in the gaps in his own verbal text with Mohr's images to fulfill the long-standing absence of the European migrants.

3.2.3 Untold Story of a day: *King: A Street Story*

Even if Berger's collaboration with Mohr has ended by *A Seventh Man*, his insistence on voicing the unspoken has continued in his following works. One of these works belongs to a story of a group of homeless people living in a dump under life-threatening situations

[557]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, "Preface", 7.
[558]Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 96.

and it is ironically entitled *King* referring to *A Street Story*. As clearly described in the beginning of this chapter, *King* is a story which can articulate itself; in other words, what the story says is so clear since there is no figurative sense in it. Berger prefers to present this story as much as real to reach so many people and this could be the reason why he wanted to anonymously publish this story since having his name on it may have attributed some fictitious characteristics to the book.[559] The harshness of the reality depicted in the story involves a lot of pain and suffering which Berger would not have put up with unless he had written about it[560]. By writing, Berger has not only managed to console himself but also raised awareness about these people whose presence has been ignored or accepted as absent for a long time like the migrant workers of Europe told in *A Seventh Man*. Being the voice of these people living in streets, Berger achieves to articulate their voice while making a serious social criticism.

The voice of these homeless people becomes a landmark announcing their presence in reality although this is seemingly (and ironically) succeeded through the voice and narration of a dog. Yet, this perspective and his description as a dog are significant because he has a bark and "[a] bark is a voice which breaks out of a bottle saying: I'm here. The bottle is silence. The silence is broken, the bark announces: I'm here"[561], as quoted before. That is to say, a bark, a voice needs to be articulated to assert its presence but in order to do this the bottle should be broken. Otherwise, it is kept hidden and unable to voice itself and therefore it is enveloped by a complete silence signifying its absence. Because of this, this silence

[559]Sökmen, "John Berger Anısına: Müge Gürsoy Sökmen ile Söyleşi". [Translation: G.K.Ç.]
[560]Meridian, "BBC World Service".
[561]Berger, *King*, 227.

needs to be broken which can only be carried out by the reader who is eager to go beyond what the text says through a deconstructive way of seeing. Macherey and his criticism of the reader-response theory give this authority and autonomy to the reader and encourage him to explore new interpretations and meanings of the text which come out of the broken bottle.

If a person becomes a voice of others and it is being heard, his utterance gets a useful source of numerous interpretations since what it says inevitably results in so many implications each of which can hardly be under the control of its author as Macherey has argued over the relationship of the explicit with the implicit[562]. In this regard, *King* presents a story which enables the reader to discover what the explicit tacitly says and accordingly what the text does not say. Among so many issues unsaid, there a few of them which should not remain unsaid. One of them is certainly pertinent to the voice of the story which Berger intentionally chooses to directly transfer the unheard voice of the homeless people: The voice of King. As shown at the beginning of this chapter analysing what is said in *King* (nearby the other aforementioned novels), there is sufficient evidence through the story which makes the reader to think that King is a dog who has canine characteristics. He barks and growls and he has a distinctive sense of smelling and hearing as well. Besides, he is defined as a dog by the other characters of the story such as Vico, Vica, Jack or the others. However, he never defines himself as a dog and if the text is attentively read in order to have an access to the unspoken, it can be inferred from a few clues that King can barely be a dog. For instance, once King

[562]Macherey, *TLP*, 95.

says, "[he has] a strange way of talking, for [he is] not sure who [he is]"[563]and this makes the reader conceive of him more as a man rather than a dog.

This ambiguity might be rooted in Macherey's interest in Derrida and his critique of binary oppositions between appearance and reality, namely what is seen and what it actually is. Sharing similar correspondences, Berger may be inspired to search more on how something looks like and what it is indeed by portraying a blurry image of a dog. In the light of such an approach, like Kafka's Gregor Samsa waking up one day believing that he is a cockroach, one may argue that Berger's King seems to be a dog but in fact a man who feels that he has a life unworthy of respect or attention like a dog may have. Having a similar impression of King, Keating reviews such a possibility with these words:

> On the one hand, King's consciousness is beyond what contemporary science and humanity are willing to attribute to dogs. But on the other, true to his canine narrator, Berger never reveals the type of details that a dog wouldn't know, like what year the action is set in, or what the historical or political significance might be for King's particular group of companions to be living homeless in Saint Valery.[564]

Keating accepts that King's consciousness is more than an animal sense; hence, neither science nor humanity can accept him as a dog. Even though this seems to be a precise judgment about King, it might be so true when its capabilities are considered: King is a dog which is able to make a social criticism about people talking about their past[565]; have a

[563]Berger, *King*, 70.
[564]Keating, "Writers Read: King: A Street Story by John Berger".
[565]Berger, *King*, 7.

memory storing details about his past with Vico and Vica[566]; make others speechless while having a conversation with Vico and Vica about God[567]. He can even pretend to be deaf[568], and hear not only the spoken but also the unspoken, like the blind narrator, Tsobanakos, in *To The Wedding*. "One of (the) […] mornings [for example] when at Saint Valéry [he hears] the soil outside, before it is light, cracking with its ice, […he asks] both Vico and Vica] if they can hear it and they say, No"[569]. He does not only hear the unspoken but also understands what it is not said but meant as what he does when he is with Vico whilst he is trying to sell his camera. He evaluates the situation they get into as follows:

> The shopkeeper is beginning to hate us. He wants to say to Vico, You have red eyes and there's no flash and there never will be, get out of my shop! He is preparing to say this.[570]

Despite the silence of the shopkeeper, King utters what the shopkeeper would want to tell them and shares this with the reader to provide him with a valid clue about what he actually is beyond how he is seen. However, as Keating also stresses, Berger obviously attributes a lot of canine characteristics to King as well. Keating claims that these capabilities or senses prevent the reader from envisaging him as a man since he precisely knows the year when the action sets in or the significance of these homeless shelters in the historical and political context. Yet, are these the details which a dog or a man would know? Keating prefers not to render any judgements on this despite many others who firmly claim that King is a dog and

[566]Ibid., 44, 75, and 151.
[567]Ibid., 80.
[568]Ibid., 141.
[569]Ibid., 107.
[570]Ibid., 55.

this story is narrated by his voice and perception[571]. In this sense, this is still open to any interpretation of each individual reader but when the implications of the text are read in detail, it is more likely to consider King as a man rather than a dog.

When clearly observed, there are several clues within the text which approve the fact that King can't be a dog. Once, for instance, he says "[where] I'm not human at all, is that I'm possessive about pain"[572]. This explicit statement is sufficient to deduce that there is a place where King was human once, that is to say he was not born as a dog. Another time, King confesses that he believes he is a dog[573]. Instead of saying "I am a dog", he opts to say that "I believe I am a dog" which is a statement quite open to discussion since it is his belief which can be different for others. Besides, Vico offers "a tin of Fanta" to King to drink. Who would give Fanta to a dog to drink or which dog can possibly drink Fanta?[574] It is not as possible as the fact that a dog would know "a gold ring with a large blue stone" and its specific type as "a lapis lazuli"[575]. Ergo King is not a dog but a man who feels himself like a dog.

In spite of his feeling, King is not an ordinary man; on the contrary, he is quite gifted in his senses like the blind narrator Tsobanakos who is the primary voice in *To The Wedding*. Similar to Tsobanakos, King has a strong ability to see and describe his surroundings. He

[571]"King by John Berger". (The Complete Review Fiction: The Complete Review Online, Date of publication not given) Accessed: 6 July 2018.
[572]Berger, *King*, 14.
[573]Ibid., 129.
[574]Ibid., 26, and 27.
[575]Ibid., 49.

describes the place where he stays with Vico and Vica in such a meticulous way that it reminds how Tsobanakos defines Ferrero's kitchen[576].

> Between the table and the bed there's very little space- just enough for your knees and feet if are sitting on the edge of the bed as Vica is now […] The bed takes up a quarter of the ground space of the Hut and is in the corner opposite the door. The window […] runs along the wall above the bed. It's a window which doesn't open, and it faces south-east towards the sea. The sea is never visible but the fishy clouds above it are. In the corner by the foot of the bed…[577]

Calculating the distance and space and knowing the directions, namely which direction is called as what, are special personal traits that still most people lack. Therefore, he has a special sense of sight focusing on not only the big picture but also its details. King is also good at hearing and identifying sounds: The sounds of "some kids shouting towards Ardeatina Street, a sparrow warning other sparrows about a crow, a train on the tracks to the north" all reach to his ears. Besides these sounds, he is able to classify "faintly a ship's siren" among other sounds and he even realizes the sound of "the howl from the M.1000"[578] like Tsobanakos who hears sounds over different places and times.

Additionally, King has a similarly powerful sense of smelling; he perfectly recognizes smells of "high octane- a little like the smell of diamonds"[579], mushrooms like the "smell of earth and the breadth of old women who tell fortunes for a bar of black chocolate"[580];

[576]For the further information, it is worth revisiting pages 126 and 127.
[577]Berger, *King*, 46.
[578]Ibid., 5.
[579]Ibid., 3.
[580]Ibid., 18.

abandoned men like sour milk[581]; urine[582]; daffodils like leeks[583]; chestnuts like the "smell of scorched wood and good meat"[584]; graves[585]; geraniums like "smell of wet silver"[586]; diesel oil and spilt water[587]; kelp forest[588] and sulphur and ammonia[589]. Highly sensitive, King is able to identify the smells of so many different things and this can be associated with his canine characteristics since dogs are mostly known by their exceptional sense of smelling. This is actually in line with Berger's own statement announcing his intention to create King in this way. As he has explicitly indicated in his conversation with Yedig, he wanted to have this story from a dog's perspective[590] so that the reader is amazed by its distinctive sense of smelling. Therefore, such details pertinent to senses have been deliberately presented in the course of the book.

Still, the depiction of King can be very hardly conceived as a dog despite Berger's wishes. When his special sense of smelling is conscientiously considered, it can be realized that each scent and odour evokes different things to him. That is, he is able to compare each smell with something else in a way that a dog is so unable to do it. For example, high octane smells more like diamonds, mushrooms smell like earth and the breadth of old women; abandoned men smell like sour milk; daffodils smell like leeks; chestnuts smell like scorched wood and good meat and geraniums smell like wet silver. Accordingly, each smells more

[581]Ibid., 22.
[582]Ibid., 23.
[583]Ibid., 41.
[584]Ibid., 75.
[585]Ibid., 90.
[586]Ibid., 128.
[587]Ibid.,179.
[588]Ibid., 195.
[589]Ibid., 223.
[590]Yedig, "John Berger: Türkiye'nin farkı, tükenmeyen trajedi". [Translation: G.K.Ç.]

differently than how it is supposed to smell and this indirectly suggests another criticism of the binary opposition between what it is and how it is perceived.

In addition to the senses of seeing, hearing and smelling, tasting makes King's perception beyond a dog. For example, King knows the taste of "macaroon biscuits made from almonds, doughnuts the colour of brass covered in silver sugar, wafers the size of cats' tongues "and how they taste similar to "lemon, amoretti morbidi"[591], which tastes like Italian almond-and-egg-white cookies. Through the detailed description, it can be noticed that King does not only try to depict the taste of the biscuits, but also attempts to describe what its taste resembles to. Having such a natural inclination enables the reader witness the dynamics of the text while applying the binary opposition between the appearance and reality on different issues. As a result, he becomes ready to obtain some further meanings from the text; in this case, he can deduce that King is not a dog. Yet, if King is not a dog, how can he possibly recognize the taste of blood[592]? Considering little likelihood of knowing the taste of blood, King, in this regard, can be very hardly a man. This indeterminacy continues through all the story keeping the reader in suspense about King's presence. In a way approving this uncertainty, Berger has shared how he feels about King in his conversation with Yedig as follows:

> King, yes, it is a dog but I thought that he is simultaneously a homeless living in streets. A homeless pretending to be a dog, feeling to be metamorphosed into a dog or believing to be a dog. I do not really know

[591]Berger, *King*, 167.
[592]Ibid., 128.

> which one is King. I also feel that this part of the story is vague. Thus, the reader may choose whatever he wants.[593]

Accordingly, Berger shows his deconstructive approach once again while depicting King both as a dog and a homeless living in streets; he even introduces the possibility of visualizing him as a homeless behaving as if a dog. Admitting its vagueness, he leaves the final judgement to the reader. The reader, therefore, is free to choose whatever he wants to believe.

Berger strengthens this uncertainty throughout the story with the help of blurry words. As to the sense of touching, for instance, when King, Vico, and Vica are threatened and thereby disillusioned by the jeep and the Crawler, King says that he does not want to lick or touch Vica. By juxtaposing licking with touching, Berger makes the reader question what King actually is since while dogs show their love by licking, people do that by touching[594]. Hence, whether King is canine or human is intentionally left ambiguous by Berger who prioritizes the reader's response over so many other issues put forward by others like what the Complete Review claims. It states that:

> [the] marginalized other- human, canine, blurred- is alone within community and then ultimately alone. It doesn't matter if King is a dog or a man. Or if Vico and Vica and the others are human or canine. They are all the dogs of society, living in the "Age of Dogs", the last period of civilization.[595]

[593]Yedig, "John Berger: Türkiye'nin farkı, tükenmeyen trajedi". [Translation: G.K.Ç.]
[594]Berger, *King*, 210.
[595]"King by John Berger", The Complete Review Fiction.

In accordance with this view, it can be inferred that no matter what King is or appears to be, *King* is already a story full of characters whose presence is not clearly set; hence, what is significant in this story, according to the assessment of the Complete Review, is the fact that these characters are 'all the dogs of society' and this is the harbinger of "[…] a civilization already irreparable as seen through Berger's lens"[596]. Instead, this blurry personification of King, or of the others, could refer to their disillusionment about life. That is to say, this ambiguity helps the reader see the real exhaustion of these people for leading trashy lives. Besides, if the Age of Dogs was 'the last period of civilization' as claimed, Vico would not explain "in his butterfly voice" that "the cycle will begin again".[597]

In this regard, Berger keeps the vague image of King for a more meaningful purpose in contrast to what the Complete Review has stated. In doing so, Berger involves the reader in the act of reading and thereby creating the meaning he prefers. By giving this authority and autonomy to the reader, Berger invites the reader to have their own ways of reading the text and read it in a deconstructive way they like. As a consequence, he manages to produce more than one text which is limited by one specific perspective. In this sense, what Berger aims to achieve overlaps with Macherey's criticism suggesting new opportunities for the unspoken which can only be gained by the reader's participation. Besides, Berger leaves all the gaps, silences and contradictions to the reader in a way Macherey's criticism suggests. Therefore, the missing of these are not something the text lacks or a mistake expected to be corrected or its author's weakness, as Macherey claims[598]; on the contrary, it is for the

[596]Ibid.
[597]Berger, *King*, 180.
[598]Macherey, *TLP*, 93.

multiplicity of meaning and richness in interpretation which open up numerous individual reader's responses.

If the reader is free to produce the text in a way he wants, he can come up with other utterances left unspoken. Following the clues of the text and what the text explicitly says, high possibility of King's man-like presence comes to the fore. In the light of these implications, one may even argue that King is a man who loses his self-esteem because of the things he may have experienced like Vico who has already undergone a serious economic downfall. This could also justify the reason why King shows sympathy towards Vico when he tells his own respectable life once as follows:

> Then let me introduce myself […] I'm called Vico. I'm a descendant of the great Giambattista. I had my own factory, that's true for certain. A small factory and my neighbours were Philips, they were good neighbours […] We made clothes, working clothes. Polyester, polycarbamide, elasthanne, polytetrafluoroethylene, vinyl… […] We made blouses, trousers, capes, caps, and our great speciality gloves in Europe…[599]

King is impressed by Vico's words because he has never heard anyone talking in this way[600] and thereby accepting to accompany him. In his accompaniment, the reader realizes that he is not an ordinary man like Vico owing to his various talents. For instance, King has philosophical approaches to life[601]. Besides, he is fully aware of socio-economic status of

[599]Berger, *King*, 25, and 26.
[600]Ibid.
[601]Ibid., 13, 40, 72, 104, 114[He even once says that "[s]ome dogs go blind and others lead the blind"], 122, 195, and 198.

people with whom he lives[602] and therefore he frequently criticizes the current economic system defining power relations[603]. Furthermore, he has a poetic discourse[604] and witty responses[605] as well as comparison skills[606]. Among those, what seems to be more important is his animal gaze besides his humanly perspective as he "[knows the] living quarters as well as a dog can feel while he also knows it in a way a man knows how to wear on something"[607]. As a consequence, the ambiguous image of King, intentionally created in this way with the help of equivocal words, enables the reader to have different way of seeing to interpret the unspoken by having a critique of binary opposition between appearance and reality. In doing so, it encourages the reader to produce more unspoken by exposing him to dig out what is beneath the text.

As a whole, *King* is apparently a story of a homeless community living under very disadvantaged conditions: An empty wasteland, on which everything "is smashed and has been thrown away"[608], shelters so many homeless people who have nowhere to go. They lack any fresh water[609] or any electricity[610]. They stay in a wrecked container like Danny does[611]

[602]Ibid., 20, and 57 [He knows that Jack is their leader since he always refers to ["Jack's soldier's mind"].
[603]Ibid., 24.
[604]Ibid., 70, and 81[By using an elevated language, he says "[t]he silhouette of the steel blade is like a woman dancing the tango"].
[605]Ibid., 94.
[606]Ibid., 100, 177
[607]Ibid., 7
[608]Ibid., 4.
[609]Ibid., 35
[610]Ibid., 22 "[Marcello] talks a lot about stealing electricity for himself and the rest of us". Even this statement needs to be interpreted since what it says makes the reader think on what it does not say. That is, the text here does not state that the homeless people of the Saint Valéry do not have any electricity; however, Marcello's insistence on speaking about stealing electricity implies that these people lack electricity. Thus, this is a meaningful statement to show how the spoken is accompanied by its silence and unspoken.
[611]Ibid. 11.

or in a place "covered with a giant tarpaulin" like Joachim stays[612] or stay in any other primitive ways like all the others have to do. Setting such a background, *King* narrates a day of these people starting at 6 a.m. and ends after 8 p.m. ("[King doesn't know] how late it is" at the end of the story[613]). Beneath what the text says and what is appeared within it, the whole story also provides a crucial socio-economic criticism focusing on how this new economic system results in so much poverty in society. Echoing Berger's criticism in *A Seventh Man*, King's story deals with the outcomes of this new economic system which is getting everywhere by making the poor poorer[614].

One of these criticism has been expressed through the title of the book, King, but indeed this is not a royal king who is expected to be adored and respected by his citizens; on the contrary, King is a story of a dog living in streets. Therefore, even from the very beginning, there is a marked contrast between the two socio-economic status (if the homeless has any status at all) and this is ironically emphasized by the cover image of a silver-covered crown[615] which mainly signifies the power and authority. Through the whole story, the reader is exposed to such a socio-economic experiences of people from different layers of the society. Being alert to these implications, the reader notices the same sociological order based on economic power in King's society at the act of his reading. To illustrate, Jack is the King of Saint Valéry to whom so many residents are subjected since "[he is] the first inhabitant"[616]. In this sense, as he is a kind of a landowner of the terrain, "[nobody] can settle [there] without

[612]Ibid.,10.
[613]Ibid.,184.
[614]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, "Preface", 7.
[615]Berger, *King*, The Cover Page.
[616]Ibid., 7.

his agreement, and he charges everyone a rent for the land"[617]. Only his law is valid there instead of others. Very rarely, his authority is challenged. Once, for instance, "Anna [moves] in without asking Jack"[618] accusing him of pretending to be a "housing estate"[619]; yet, very soon "she [of course starts] to pay him"[620]. Another time, for example, when Saul wants to take over Luc's Rancho after his death, he can do this only with Jack's permission[621]. Hence, everybody is under Jack's control in Saint Valéry including Vico who is not welcomed first by Jack owing to his "[looking] like a loose nut"[622]. However, when Jack learns that Vico has a wife coming to meet him soon, he grants him a chance to stay. In this regard, there is no one in the coat of Saint Valéry who may challenge Jack's kingdom.

Because of the fact that Jack, "the Baron"[623] is the King, he is the most privileged one in the terrain as expected. To illustrate, he "has floorboards and a proper gutter system"[624] and he is the one who "never gets wet". Besides, "his house has not only floorboards, but a wattle roof and a front door which can really be locked". Furthermore, there are people who work for him like Vica who "cooks for him once or twice a week"[625] or Marcello who "works on Sunday cleaning out tanker lorries [to supply] him with a full gas cylinder whenever he needs one"[626]. These people either serve for him or live in a way Jack wants simply because this is the world of the powerful, namely Jack's own kingdom. Nonetheless, Jack is not the

[617]Ibid.
[618]Ibid., 8.
[619]Ibid., 9.
[620]Ibid.
[621]Ibid., 18.
[622]Ibid., 51.
[623]Ibid., 56.
[624]Ibid., 7.
[625]Ibid.
[626]Ibid.

only king of Saint Valéry because the story surprisingly presents more Kings who assert power to possess things like King who claims that "[Saint Valéry] is what [he calls his own] mountain"[627] to guard alone[628]. Ironically, while he announces himself as the King of Saint Valéry, he is abruptly possessed by his mistress Vica[629] who publicly announces that "[he] is [her] dog! […] [her pet]"[630]. Taken all these into consideration, it can be postulated that the story plays with the power relations determined by economic status in line with social roles. To this end, the story questions the dynamics of power relations in one society not only through the major characters but also the minor ones. Corina, for instance, is so proud that she has her own van [631] and "wooden chair"[632] since she feels that possessing these differs her from the others. Hence, she declares herself as a queen whose words justify her royalty[633].

Accordingly, everyone in Saint Valéry is glad to celebrate the joy of their own kingdom. While Jack enjoys others' presence in his kingdom as his own subjects or states, all the others are quite satisfied with leading such lives. No one is disturbed until one day when their own kingdom is threatened by another external force which does not let them continue having this life. It is the force belonging to the most powerful who holds not only the economic but also the political power. That is to say, this force has four mobile guards

[627]Ibid., 4.
[628]Ibid., 60, and 186 [Another time King shows how deeply he possesses the terrain by referring it as his own mountain. He says "[the] officer climbed my scrap mountain".
[629]Ibid.,31.
[630]Ibid. 27.
[631]Ibid., 20.
[632]Ibid., 190.
[633]Ibid.

with their Famas sub-machine guns"[634], the military jeep and its officer[635] and the Crawler[636] and each obviously serves for the needs and interests of the power appertaining to the government. Although the text does not tacitly say this and leaves it silent, the reader deduces this meaning from its absence since the jeep is a military property and anything military belongs to the government. To clarify, if the jeep is there ready to collapse the surroundings in which these homeless people illegally stay, it must be because of the government's will or decision. Indeed, the government is already within the story. For example, at the very beginning of the story, King introduces the environment in which he lives and while doing it so, he mentions the rumour about "building a stadium, the biggest ever, to hold a hundred thousand spectators"[637]in a place where they live. Besides, in his conversation with Vica, King foreshadows that the people in Saint Valéry have not undergone the biggest pain yet referring to the coming of these people forcing them to evacuate their home.[638]

Although hidden behind what the text says, the presence and thereby its power have always been felt through the story. Sometimes, it has even been strengthened by its financial concerns and profits gained by the sales of the empty lands to the businessmen. As a result of each selling, the government is inevitably able to exert more power over the others. In this regard, "[flushing] out of illegal squatters from land which [has been bought] for investment"[639] is a regular action to take for the government although it is a matter of life and death for the ones staying there. In order to achieve its goal, the government makes use of all

[634]Ibid., 184.
[635]Ibid.
[636]Ibid., 185.
[637]Ibid., 2.
[638]Ibid., 44.
[639]Ibid. 223.

the sources it has including the guards and officers. Perhaps it is a little bit harsh to claim that guards and officers are also possessions of the government; nonetheless, it seems that they are like other objects being aimed at succeeding what the government commands. In this sense, these people appear to be in a better situation than the homeless people of Saint Valéry at least because of the fact that they have home to go[640] but they are, in fact, in such a restrictive condition that they do not choose what they want to do. That is to say, these are simply yes-men of the system dependent on their King, who is obviously the government in this context.

Keeping a tight hold on these people, the government does not allow anyone to stake out a claim to itself; in other words, it wants everyone and everything to be subjected to its hegemony. In order to maintain its power, the government pursues any policies including having a manipulative discourse on the homeless people of Saint Valéry. In doing so, it pretends to sympathize with them while actually stressing its own superiority. At first, for instance, the government calls out to them in such a sympathetic manner:

> No reason for distress. We are asking you to come out, all of you. We are inviting you to a hot meal, like you don't often have. A hot meal. We are taking you to a better accommodation. Transport is available.[641]

Due to the intentional choice of the words, it is so difficult to believe in the government's good intentions. To clarify, it does not simply provide them with something to eat; instead, it offers a hot meal. This could appear as a nice approach at first glance but if how it is

[640]Ibid., 216.
[641]Ibid., 186.

commented is taken into account, its discourse would be sufficient to reveal its real intention which indeed underrates the value of these homeless people. It is true that these people do not often have hot meal or Saint Valéry is not the best place to accommodate; yet, these people do not ask for help since they meet their basic necessities in one way or another and hence they do not need for any saviours. In this sense, this sounds more like an offer of a bribe rather than a token of a sincere help.

When they understand that their discourse, intending to suppress the weak whilst approving its power, does not reach to these people and finally make them leave the land voluntarily, they carry out a different plan. This time, they falsely claim that:

> [tests] have been carried out where you are living here and they show the soil is contaminated. There are noxious gases. We insist that you come out.[642]

They appear to be worried for them owing to the dangers of the land contaminated by the toxic gases. However, this exactly happens when the Crawler starts to dominate the land and the sinister gas[643] covers the surroundings by posing a real danger to these people's health. Therefore, people of Saint Valéry get frightened of not only the threats made against them but also the uncertainty of the situation and their helplessness. King[644] is one of those people who "feels […] trembling" since "[the] terrible slowness of the Crawler [threatens]

[642]Ibid., 187.
[643]Ibid., 220.
[644]From now on, as there is enough evidence that King is a man rather than a dog since he is addressed as a man. In addition to the previous references, King is the man who talks about a woman "at about his age" [Ibid., 77], he responds to Vico's inexplicable look as "[Vico looks] inexplicable. Like we all do" [Ibid., 23] by addressing himself and remembers "vague memories of another life with sailors" [Ibid., 96]. Each of these strengthen the likelihood of his manlike presence.

annihilation and its slowness [announces] there [is] no escape."[645] It is clear that what King experiences is his nightmare from which he escapes; as he explicitly says at the very beginning of the story, "[he runs] to the places where there's no fear"[646] but now he is in a danger once again. This may enable the reader to infer another unspoken about King: Considering the aforementioned issue, one may argue that King is a man who continuously goes to the places where he can feel himself safe and in this sense his escape from Saint Valéry is not his first running. As this new neoliberal system, which makes the poor poorer and the rich richer, spreads through the whole world, his running from one place to another one is so inevitable to sustain his living in a relatively safer place.

Unlike King, there are some other characters who challenge against the power and attack of the government. Corina, for instance, resists its control in a way Anna confronts Jack's authority in his kingdom. She swears as follows:

> Mother-fuckers, get out of there! There's nothing left for you to lay your fucking hands on. Get out! […] She [runs] towards the Crawler. God-forbidden beast! she [cries] and [starts] to throw stones at it. God-forbidden beast![647]

Corina fends for herself and her friends by throwing stones to the Crawler while cursing the officers on behalf of the government. Nevertheless, she is finally caught and led towards the jeep by the guard.[648] In spite of her attempts to withstand, she does not show as much

[645]*King*, 190.
[646]Ibid., 12.
[647]Ibid., 188, and 189.
[648]Ibid. 190.

resistance as Jack offers. “Jack’s soldier mind”[649] as well as his presence as a “general”[650] let him try harder to repulse this invasion[651]. To counter the threat of being ruled out by any other external force which leads him to abandon all his powers, he stands up to them by reflecting a similar discourse. In such a tone, he shouts that:

> [He’s] not going to stand for it, not here […] [They] have no right to touch these shelters when people are living in them, and there are people in every one of them, is that clear? All the shelters are inhabited. Some of them even receive letters! [They] have been misinformed, Superintendent, [none of the people of Saint Valéry is] going to be flushed out like shit.

By saying these, Jack tries to convince the officers to let them stay there; he even tells a lie about their numbers falsely stating that the total number of people living in Saint Valéry is “[one] hundred and seventeen”[652]. Jack believes that he has nothing to do more except for telling a lie since “[there] are moments in life when an invented lie is the only thing you have to hang on to”[653] and he hangs on this one though in vain. No matter how hard he tries to call off the invasion, he does not succeed and eventually he has to accept their supremacy by addressing them as “Superintendent”, “Comandante”[654] and “Sir”[655].

[649]Ibid., 57.
[650]Ibid., 62.
[651]Ibid.
[652]Ibid., 195.
[653]Ibid.
[654]Ibid., 196.
[655]Ibid.

As a consequence of a "slow, blind and close-up wiping-out"[656], all the homeless of the Saint Valéry literally become homeless because of the new Kingdom in which they are not welcomed. Even though these people look like homeless people at the beginning of the story, they are not actually homeless for Saint Valéry is their home. However, at the end of the story, they really get homeless when leaving their home behind. Therefore, "[they are all] barking as they lay there and King "[listens] to the names of their barks: Danny, the terrier, Joachim […] They [have] nothing, like [King has] nothing. [They are] the same and [they are] all barking"[657]. They all feel that they lead a life which is similar to a dog whose life is definitely not defined by themselves but by the others; they have nowhere else as their home. With regard to that, such an ending would remind the comment passed by the Complete Review suggesting the idea that not only King but also Vico and Vica (among all the others) are canine because of the fact that

> [toward] the end of the novel, King's human companions begin to morph into dogs, as the encampment at Saint Valéry is destroyed by authority in the spotlight of a bulldozer. The characters begin to bark.[658]

Yet, such a claim is still very hardly met since having such a remark unavoidably results in some implications of magical-realism revealing how everyone in Saint Valéry turns into dogs. Instead, this is the end of the story which stimulates the reader to consider more so that he is able to fulfill the gaps and absence of Berger's text by uttering its unspoken.

[656]Ibid., 209.
[657]Ibid., 228.
[658]"King by John Berger", The Complete Review Fiction.

The ending of the story resembles the finalé of *A Seventh Man* whose last words are "[to] be homeless is to be nameless"[659] since everyone in King's story becomes homeless therefore nameless at the end. This is highly likely why King "[listens] to the names of their barks: Danny, the terrier, Joachim[…]"[660] before they leave their land as once they get out of the land, they lose their names and become unidentifiable like "[the] existence of a migrant worker"[661]. In addition to this affinity, the last image of *A Seventh Man* somehow overlaps with Berger's verbal text describing the last scene in King. The photograph in *A Seventh Man* shows the villagers coming from Anatolia to Ankara to build shacks on the city outskirts as they

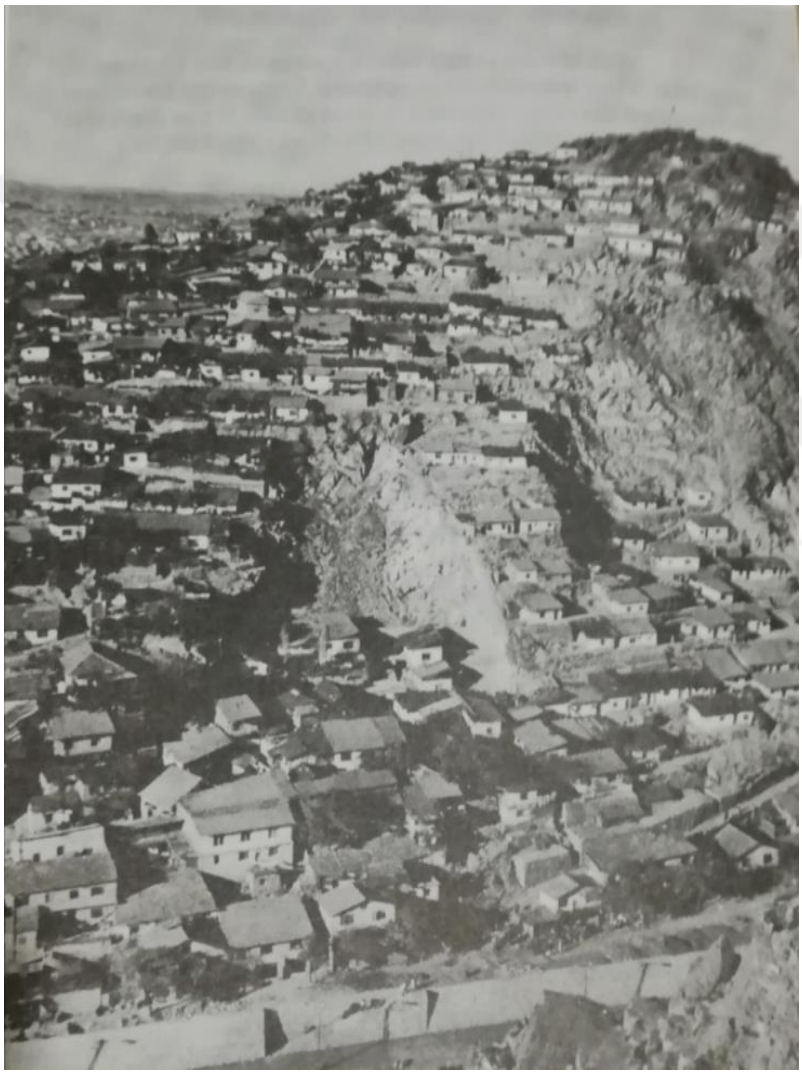

Fig.34. Villagers from Anatolia come to Ankara

[659]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, 233.
[660]Berger, *King*, 228.
[661]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, 233.

have no other home to stay safe and sound. Although illegally built, their stay there cannot be prevented by the city authorities as long as the home has the roof on the first night of its building[662]. However, these houses are deprived of any reasonable standard of construction and sanitation and therefore these people have to live under very challenging conditions. Still, they are glad to have a place where they can stay and feel safe until the time when some governmental policy is formulated to evacuate them.

Neither Berger's text nor Mohr's photograph reveals this fact; however, since both are keen observers of life, they are fully aware of the fact that these illegal shelters are the outcomes of the new neoliberal system. The collapse of these places and their evacuation, therefore, have been very frequently observed in so many places including Turkey and this photographs shows a part of this reality. Besides the similarities in the final utterances and images of the books, what is so striking is how each shares a similar criticism of this new socio-economic order causing so many people suffer from poverty. In fact, it is so evident that *A Seventh Man* is a more serious work than *King* owing to the fact that it focuses on numerous criticism about "the global economic order, known as neoliberalism- or, more accurately, economic fascism"[663]. Yet, it is noticeable that *King* makes the same critique while telling the story of King and homeless people living in streets.

Despite the fact that *A Seventh Man* is a work which depends more on reality than imagination, the characters of *King* are more conscious about the socio-economic realities of

[662]These structures are called as "gecekondu" in Turkish because of their illegal way of building in one night starting at 5pm (the time when the officers officially stop working) and finishing at 8 am (the time when the officers officially start working).
[663]Berger, *A Seventh Man*, "Preface", 7. [Here, it is quoted again with the purpose of indicating the common points between *A Seventh Man* and *King*.]

their surroundings. That is to say, they are conscious of the significance of money and wealth which help people possess a more privileged position in society. King, for example, knows that "Alfonso is the richest man in Saint Valéry"[664]; "[he's] the richest inhabitant because he can sing"[665]. Since Alfonso has a financial power, his place is much better than the others who do not have "a tiled roof […], a chimney pipe […], and a wooden doorstep"[666]like him. Throughout the story, King keeps on reviewing this neoliberal system and its negative impacts on people, especially on the ones who are not wealthy and thereby powerless. To make his own assessment, he shares how people get taller when going to work and shorter while coming back[667] since he believes that hard work is always expected from socially and economically disadvantaged people for the powerful people who never work under similar conditions.

The worst part of this system is that it creates hatred of the strong towards the weak, which King assumes it is "particularly human; it doesn't happen with animals"[668]. This antipathy polarizes people and make them marginalize each other. One can observe this at the end of the story when the voices of people get so distinctive that each can be easily detected due to their power. The scene describes these voices as follows:

> All around, voices [start] shouting and it [is] easy to distinguish between them. The difference between the weak and the strong should not be so clear. The cries from the coat were anxious, furious, insistent; the shouts

[664]Berger, *King*, 20.
[665]Ibid., 21.
[666]Ibid., 20.
[667]Ibid., 140.
[668]Ibid., 24.

> of the Guards were relieved and jubilant because waiting [is]over, the mission would soon be accomplished...[669]

Because of their different feelings caused by their different experiences, even the voice of the weak is noticeably different than the strong. Thus, the 'anxious, furious, [and] insistent' cry of the homeless people of Saint Valéry sounds much more different than the 'relieved and jubilant' shout of the Guards. If the Guards shout in that way, the voice of the government which is not spoken in this text must be a lot gladder and more pleased since it is supposed to be the most powerful of all.

To conclude, Berger recounts a story of a group of homeless people who have been accepted absent because of their inarticulacy. By granting them their own voice, Berger informs the reader about a typical day of these homeless people whose presence has been threatened by various external forces such as physical conditions of a place in which they live or the military jeep coming to collapse their home by the command of the government. In doing so, Berger allows the story to articulate itself so that there is nothing unsaid about it. Yet, when their silence is broken and their presence is voiced, there would be more interpretations of that unspoken. Considering the silences of the text as well as its gaps and contradictions, the spoken reveals what the text does not explicitly say. Therefore, as Macherey's reader-response theory has suggested, the reader establishes his own authority by deducing any meanings he prefers to obtain from the text. Accordingly, the unspoken says that King is not a dog but a man who feels that he has a dog-like life and through the end of the story he becomes the epitome of a typical man who is exposed to the new neo-liberal

[669]Ibid., 215.

system defining all the power relations among people by setting them specific places determined in accordance with their economic and social status. In this sense, the story of King is as critical as Berger's other works since while giving voice to these people to confirm their presence, he makes a serious socio-economic criticism of the current system through its absence in the text.

CONCLUSION

In the assessment of reality, Berger's views are appropriately in line with Yeat's "Second Coming" when it says: "[t]hings (start to) fall apart (and) the centre cannot hold (itself any longer)". Such a change in perception and perspective has led to reconsider the arguments of deconstruction, particularly that of Derrida and his own critique of binary oppositions through which new ways of seeing life have been suggested. As a consequence, different ways of reading formed by each individual reader's seeing, understanding and interpreting the text have come to the fore and accordingly the role of the reader has become as crucial as the writer.

By decentering the position of the writer, the reader has been assigned a more interactive role to explore each and every possible meanings of the text and this has opened up various discussions over the reader-response theory. Considering the primary goal of *Ways of Seeing*, Berger supports the newly-attained authority of the reader. In one of his poems entitled "Pages", Berger encourages the reader-response theory as follows:

> Word by word I describe
>
> You accept each fact
>
> And ask yourself:
>
> What does he really mean?[670]

[670]Berger, *Collected Poems*, 14.

Addressing to the reader, Berger invites each reader to question any fact stated so as to discover what it actually means to him. In doing this, Berger demonstrates how he has a tendency to make the reader acknowledge a fact to have more meanings in his non-fiction some of which are exemplified in the study in the light of Berger's *Bento's Sketchbook* and *Smoke*.

All the aforementioned arguments have offered good grounds for suspicion over Berger's deconstructive approach. With the aim of providing necessary proof for confirming such a claim, this part has compiled the views documenting how he has been recognised both in his absence and in presence through different perspectives due to different ways of seeing. Believing that evaluating someone's life through his absence first would not be more proper to anyone except for Berger who reckons that "[all] stories begin with their end"[671], this part of the study has given light to Berger's evaluation through different contexts. As a result, many different perspectives over Berger have been achieved through two perspectives: On the one hand, almost all the valid or justifiable views about him including his recognition through the eyes of others and the Turkish circles have been evaluated; on the other, Berger's own self-recognition has been assessed. The first part aims to have a significant role to serve as a reference book since it involves the ideas of the others about Berger. Here Berger's interactions in Turkey have been introduced whilst telling how he is acknowledged there. In this way, this part provides so opportunities for knowing him and his mindset that would shed an important light on the evaluation of his fiction in the third chapter. For example, Cevat Çapan, one of Berger's closest friend, reports that Berger visited Şeker Ahmet Paşa's

[671]Silverblatt, "John Berger with Michael Silverblatt".

exhibition during one of his visits to Istanbul. In his own essay, Berger makes a detailed analysis of one of Şeker Ahmet Paşa's paintings entitled "Ormanda Oduncu"[672]. His keen interest in this particular painting which is so distinctive in its artistic appeal attracts Berger's attention so much so that he visited the exhibition more than once. Despite the fact that Berger

Fig.35. "Ormanda Oduncu" by Şeker Ahmet Paşa

is fully aware that Şeker Ahmet Paşa was well-educated in Paris and thereby was under profound influence of the schools of Barbizon and Courbet and impressionism. Berger, having multiple ways of seeing, deconstructs what is seen at first sight and concentrates on the power of observation through many different perspectives. Hence, he considers the

[672]John Berger. "On the Painting of Şeker Ahmet Paşa". Trans. by Cevat Çapan. (İstanbul: Vesaire Online Literature Journal, 2017). Accessed: 24 September 2018.

(beech) tree as an example of revealing how it is concurrently the closest and the farthest image of the painting. In other words, Berger shows how from one perspective the tree is depicted as a central image and from another as distant. Berger believes that Şeker Ahmet Paşa's skilful reflection of distance works on imagination strenuously striving to attain two contrasting aspects at the same time.

The second part of this chapter, after having evaluated him through the eyes of others, enables the reader to learn how Berger assesses himself at so many different platforms such as his interviews, conversations and television or radio programmes. All these different mediums justify his tendency to deconstruct observation and truth which eventually makes him an unconventional story teller. Accordingly, the dissertation aims to look at Berger's fiction with a new critical approach influenced deeply by Macherey. To this end, the four representative Berger's fiction are scrutinized by considering two different aspects which on the one hand presents the explicit, the spoken and on the other the implicit, the unspoken in regard to Macherey's critical approach. While focusing on the former, Berger's aforesaid works have been examined to describe three common characteristics of his fiction which have not been studied up to now. In the light of so many different and possible readings and interpretations, one cannot help noticing how Berger's fiction is crammed with pain and suffering while mirroring the real life experiences through a particular voice which is chosen with the utmost care. It is as if each of these novels has similar matters to deal with, no matter how different stories they tell. Consequently, this part illustrates how Berger's fiction paves the way for the unspoken, what is left unsaid.

Ultimately, the focus of the study enables a new analysis of the interactions between the theory, introduced in the first chapter, and its practice by the chosen four works of Berger's fiction. Hence, the theoretical assumptions of the dissertation are aimed to be proven with the specific works of Berger's fiction. To this end, this part, divided into three parts, elaborates on the criticism of Berger's deconstructive ways of seeing and saying in his fiction. In the light of three influential theoreticians including Derrida, Iser and Macherey, the aforementioned works of Berger's fiction have been analysed. Firstly, *To The Wedding* has been analysed by the critique of Derrida's binary oppositions with an emphasis on Berger's subversion of the sense of seeing through the sense of hearing. Offering a new way of telling a story not only through one's way of seeing but also through a close cooperation with all the other senses including primarily hearing and smelling but also tasting and touching as well, it has been revealed how Berger fiction connotes Derrida's criticism which enables the reader to have more possible meanings so as to produce more interpretations for the unspoken. Secondly, the arguments of Berger's image-texts *A Fortunate Man* and *A Seventh Man* have been brought up to share the unspoken through the interactions of Berger's verbal text and Mohr's visual images. To this end, Iser's criticism on the reader response theory has brought a considerable contribution to the analysis of these works. By suggesting the reader to get involved in the production of the text by using his imagination and creativity during the act of reading, Iser's criticism encourages the reader to fill the gaps of Berger's text with Mohr's photographs. In doing so, it is possible to put the explicit, the spoken, together with the implicit, the unspoken. With the help of Iser's critical view, the reader is able to articulate the absence and silence of the book with its presence and voice.

Iser's reader-response theory is somewhat a restriction on the reader since Berger expects the reader to be more free in his interpretations. At this point, Macherey's reader response theory offers more possibilities for the reader to wield his authority in reading and interpreting the works according to their own preference. Bearing this in mind, *King* has been examined in the light of Macherey's views. Besides what it says, the story of *King* reveals what is left unsaid by its untold story of a day. There, the unspoken says that King is a man rather than a dog and his story, including so many other characters' stories, is nothing more than a tacit social criticism of poverty and power relations in modern societies. In addition to this, it is possible to claim that the unspoken in *King* reverberates the critique of Derrida's binary oppositions, especially the one between reality and appearance, namely what it is and how it is seen. Furthermore, the central premise of this study is to voice the absence in a way King once says: "[a] bark is a voice which breaks out of a bottle saying: I'm here. The bottle is silence. The silence is broken, the bark announces: I'm here"[673]. Therefore, the voice coming out of the bottle asserts its own presence as well as its own reality. On condition that the bottle remains unbroken, it never grasps its voice and thereby asserts its own self. This is indeed the main focus of this study that is to give a voice to Berger and his works letting them articulate themselves in a way to affirm their presence within the academic environment. To this end, the study has strived to offer as many ways of seeing, reading, understanding and interpreting as possible in a way Berger has suggested. However, from Berger's perspective, nothing has been finalized since all the arguments keep their silence which is hopefully hoped to be heard one day by the others.

[673]Berger, *King*, 227.

Fig.36. "Rotating Mirror Object II" by Jeppe Hein

Recently, that silence is heard at a quite different platform where thirty-three international artists came together to exhibit their own ways of seeing over the centuries at the exhibition curated by Sam Bardaouil and Till Fellrath in 2017 in Istanbul, Turkey.[674] Having a flash of inspiration which has served to create an exhibition in the name of Berger's Ways of Seeing, the whole gallery has intended to present new or different ways of seeing which re-configure perceptions of life. Among seventy multi-disciplinary works exhibited there, there is one object which is worth considering for its importance of multiple ways of seeing and understanding life. It is the image of a rotating mirror which is designed by the Danish artist Jeppe Hein[675]. The mirror appears to suggest that whatever the seer observes there and what is simultaneously seen by other observers are in fact so tentative to change according to the 'rotating' perspectives. Such an approach to life overlaps with the aims of all the artists whose works have been exhibited there as well as the curators of the exhibition since they keep reminding us the fact that "the connection between what we see and what we

[674]Exhibition entitled as "Ways of Seeing". Curators: Sim Bardaouil and Till Fellrath. (Istanbul, ARTER, 2017).

[675]The photograph has also been published on the website of ARTER. [<http://www.arter.org.tr/W3/?sAction=PastExhibitions&iExhibitionId=68>. Accessed 3 Oct 2018].

think we know is never that simple", as stated in the webpage of the gallery[676]. With this awareness, the reader is able to look at life from many perspectives as the image of the rotating mirror implies. Consequently, this study opens a vista to new interpretations of Berger's storytelling as the verse of Khalil Gibran suggests:

> The reality of the other person lies not in
>
> what he reveals to you but in what he cannot reveal to you.
>
> Therefore, if you would understand him,
>
> listen not to what he says but rather to what he does not say.[677]

[676]Ibid.
[677]Kahlil Gibran. *Sand and Foam*. (Delhi: Rajpal & Sons, 2008), 20.

FIGURES

Figure 1 Berger's drawing of his right hand

Berger, John. *Bento's Sketchbook*. NY: Verso, 2015. p. 138.

Figure 2 Berger's drawing of a human body

Berger, John. *Bento's Sketchbook*. NY: Verso, 2015. p. 140.

Figure 3 Berger's drawing of an armchair

Berger, John. *Bento's Sketchbook*. NY: Verso, 2015. p. 85.

Figure 4

Berger, John, and Selçuk Demirel. *Smoke.* England: Nothing Hill Editions, 2017. p. 7.

Figure 5

Berger, John, and Selçuk Demirel. *Smoke.* England: Nothing Hill Editions, 2017. p. 9.

Figure 6

Berger, John, and Selçuk Demirel. *Smoke.* England: Nothing Hill Editions, 2017. p. 46.

Figure 7

Berger, John, and Selçuk Demirel. *Smoke.* England: Nothing Hill Editions, 2017. p. 17.

Figure 8

Berger, John, and Selçuk Demirel. *Smoke.* England: Nothing Hill Editions, 2017. p. 39.

Figure 9

Berger, John, and Selçuk Demirel. *Smoke.* England: Nothing Hill Editions, 2017. p. 51.

Figure 10 Doctor Sassall treating one of his patients with his assistant

Berger, John. *A Fortunate Man*. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2016. p. 87.

Figure 11 Doctor Sassall while treating one of his patients

Berger, John. *A Fortunate Man*. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2016. p. 67.

Figure 12 Turkish migrants listening to instructions about their journey to Germany

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 46.

Figure 13 Turkish workers being medically examined by German doctors, Istanbul

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 51.

Figure 14 Turkish workers being labelled for medical tests

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 55.

Figure 15 Lodgings for twentieth-century migrants (Shanty town, France; Lodging House, Switzerland; Barracks, Germany)

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 87.

Figure 16 House built with savings of Yugoslav migrant

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 211.

Figure 17 The photograph of a landscape taken by Jean Mohr

Berger, John. *A Fortunate Man*. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2016. p. 29.

Figure 18. The photograph of a misty landscape taken by Jean Mohr

Berger, John. *A Fortunate Man*. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2016. p. 22. .

Figure 19. A photograph of a middle-aged man taken by Jean Mohr

Berger, John. *A Fortunate Man*. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2016. p. 92. .

Figure 20. A photograph of a middle class couple taken by Jean Mohr

Berger, John. *A Fortunate Man*. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2016. p. 137. .

Figure 21. A photograph of a photographer taken by Jean Mohr

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 17.

Figure 22. A photograph of a boy taken by Jean Mohr

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 21.

Figure 23. A photograph of an old woman in market taken by Mohr

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 176.

Figure 24. Madonna by Perugino, National Gallery, London

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 177.

Figure 25. A photograph of a wall above bed in barracks taken by Mohr

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 178.

Figure 26. A photograph of a peasant girl working in field taken by Mohr

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 179.

Figure 27. A photograph of a brochure for holidays in Spain taken by Mohr

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 184.

Figure 28. A photograph of a contemporary advertisement captioned by "If women knew then…what they know now"

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin Classics, 2008. p. 29.

Figure 29. A photograph of a migrant worker in soldiering factory taken by Mohr

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 106.

Figure 30. A photograph of a farm in Kosovo, Yugoslavia taken by Sven Blomberg.

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 107.

Figure 31. A photograph of a bus stop, Yugoslavia taken by Sven Blomberg.

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 123.

Figure 32. A photograph of an underground station taken by Mohr.

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 123.

Figure 33. Managers inspecting Swedish factory taken by Mohr

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 109.

Figure 34. Villagers from Anatolia come to Ankara taken by Mohr

Berger, John. *A Seventh Man*. London and NY: Verso, 2010. p. 232.

Figure 35. "Ormanda Oduncu" by Şeker Ahmet Paşa

Şeker Ahmet Paşa. "Ormanda Oduncu". İstanbul: İstanbul Arts and Sculpture Museum.

[Its photograph is taken from a website entitled as https://vesaire.org/seker-ahmet-pasanin-bir-resmi-ustune/]

Figure 36. "Rotating Mirror Object II" taken by Murat Germen

Hein, Jeppe. "Rotating Mirror Object II" exhibited at the art gallery entitled as "Ways of Seeing". ARTER: ARTER Online, 2017.

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