IRIS MURDOCH'S THE BLACK PRINCE IN A POSTMODERN FEMINIST APPROACH

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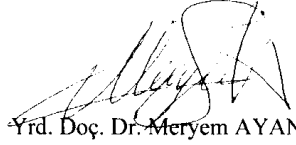**Department of English Language and Literature**

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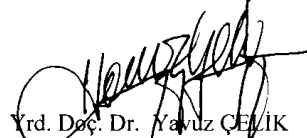
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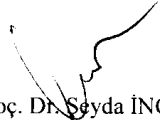Jüri Başkanı (Danışman)

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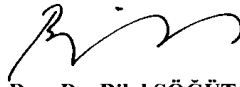
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To My Family

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ÖZET

POSTMODERN FEMINIST YAKLAŞIMINDA IRIS MURDOCH' IN
<u>KARA PRENS' İ</u>

Özer, Reyhan
Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı ABD
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Bu çalışmanın ana konusu Iris Murdoch'ın <u>Kara Prens</u> adlı romanında bulunan postmodern feminist öğelerin incelenmesidir. Parodik ve ironik doğası, bu romanı postmodern bir roman kılar. Murdoch, feminist olarak adlandırılmayı tercih etmese de roman femizmin postmodern bölgesine ait olan izler taşır. Çoğulculuğu kabul ederek, birliği, bütünlüğü ve cinsiyet merkezli anlatıyı reddettiği için roman postmodern feminist alana daha çok yaklaşmaktadır.

Birinci bölüm postmodernizm ve feminizm hakkında artalan bilgisi sunmaktadır. İkinci bölüm, cinsiyet, çoğulculuk ve toplumsal cinsiyetin postmodernist ve feminist algılanışlarını göz önüne alarak postmodern feminizmin ne olduğunu açıklamaya yöneliktir. Üçüncü bölümde, postmodern feminist yaklaşım romana uygulanacaktır. Dördüncü bölüm romanın sonunda yer alan karakterlerin sonsözlerini postmodern feminist açıdan tartışacaktır.

Bu tezin amacı, Iris Murdoch'ın <u>Kara Prens</u> adlı romanında bulunan Postmodern feminist öğeleri fallus merkezci ve mantık merkezcil düşünceleri, büyük anlatıları bakımından incelemektir. Bu çalışma, çoğulculuğu kabul edip birliğin büyük anlatıları reddetmesiyle geleneksel kadın yazınından uzaklaşan <u>Kara Prens</u> adlı romanın postmodern feminist alana nasıl yaklaştığını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Postmodernizm, Feminizm, Postmodern Feminizm, Iris Murdoch, <u>Kara Prens</u>, sonsöz, çokluk ve çoklu gerçeklik

ABSTRACT

IRIS MURDOCH'S
THE BLACK PRINCE IN A POSTMODERN FEMINIST APPROACH

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The analysis of postmodern feminist elements found in Iris Murdoch's The Black Prince is the main topic of this study. The parodic and ironic nature of the novel makes it a postmodern one. Even though Murdoch prefers not to be called a feminist, the novel bears the traces of feminism belonging to the postmodern strand. The novel moves closer to postmodern feminist domain since it rejects gender-centered narrative and denies unity and oneness by acknowledging the plurality.

Chapter one presents background information about postmodernism and feminism. Chapter two is devoted to what postmodern feminism is by distinguishing between postmodernist and feminist perceptions of gender, plurality and sex. In Chapter three the postmodern feminist approach will be applied to the novel. Chapter four discusses the postscripts of the characters placed at the end of the novel in terms of Postmodern Feminism.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze postmodern feminist characteristics in Iris Murdoch's The Black Prince in terms of rejecting phallocentric and logocentric thoughts, grand narratives, and use of postmodern feminist narrative strategies. This study attempts to analyze how The Black Prince departs from traditional woman writing style and moves towards postmodern feminist domain through its acknowledgment of plurality as well as rejecting the grand narratives of unity.

Key Words: Postmodernism, Feminism, Postmodern Feminism, Iris Murdoch, The Black Prince, postscripts, plurality and plural truths

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary writers have written works with modern and postmodern aspects which ground for various controversial novels. Iris Murdoch was awarded with the Black Memorial Prize for <u>The Black Prince</u>, the Whithbread Literary Award for Fiction for <u>The Sacred and Profane Love Machine</u>, and the Brooker McConnell Prize for <u>The Sea, The Sea</u>, is "the most critically acclaimed writer" of Britain (Bove, 1993:1). <u>The Black Prince</u>, her most popular novel, will be taken into consideration throughout this thesis.

<u>The Black Prince</u>, the main focus of this study, the winner of Black Memorial Prize, illustrates Murdoch's literary success. In this novel Murdoch relates the life of an artist whose work has been impacted by love. The novel opens and ends with a scene of violence. Bradley's best friend – a case that can also be refuted – Arnold Baffin telephones Bradley to report that he has just killed his wife, Rachel, with a fireplace poker. However there is no death, and by the end of the novel, the same phone call takes place, but this time it is Rachel claiming that she has just murdered her husband with the same poker. Bradley rushes over to his friend's house for help and console, and he is convicted of the murder of Arnold Baffin. Yet, between this beginning and ending, there appear many events. Bradley is a blocked writer and he is unable to write. With the idea of writing a master piece, he quits his job and wants to be isolated from the society for his muse. On the other hand, his friend Arnold Baffin is a successful writer who is known in public. On the verge of departure for a solitude life, his ex-brother in law and a homosexual ex-psychiatrist Francis, comes and tells the coming of his ex-wife Christian. At the mean time, there appears a phone calling from Arnold. This short delay changes the direction of Bradley's life. Bradley is fixed within the characters of Arnold, his wife Rachel, Francis, Christian and Pricilla. He deals continuously with their problems as well as love triangles among, Rachel-Arnold-Bradley, and Christian-Bradley-Arnold.

The most striking and interesting love is the one for Julian. This love becomes his great muse for his masterpiece. However, strong oppositions lead to their separation. As he is charged with the murder at the end of the novel he is imprisoned. At first glance, the novel seems to be a love story with complex relationships, but the explanations at the end with the postscripts written by the characters of the novel as a response to Bradley's story.

The postscripts and editor's note, notes by Loxias, proves that there is no reliable point of view in this novel because of the different claimed truths in the postscripts by different characters. Thus, there is no single truth but truths in plural. Bradley's story is not given in singular but in plural views which bring the novel closer to postmodernism. In fact, the novel written in 1973 carries many characteristics of postmodern texts such as pastiche, parody, irony, and plurality but at the same time there are feminist impulses and in sum the novel ends with a postmodern feminist point of view.

First of all, the use of pastiche is significant. In the novel, there are letters from the other characters of the novel such as Arnold, Julian and Rachel. Without any omission, edition or inclusion, these letters are pasted into the story of Bradley. Also, in a novel like this, in many ways, is "a touchstone for the entire juxtaposition" of the conventions of the previous traditions. The "same signaling of distance and difference" can be seen in Iris Murdoch's "ironic rehandling" of Hamlet (Hutcheon, 2000: 31). In the novel, there is a parody of Shakespeare's <u>Hamlet</u>, one of the most important plays in the literary history. In the parody of <u>Hamlet</u>, the roles are deconstructed and events are parodied. For this scene, Julian is Hamlet and wears garments which are sexually attractive. Instead of a human's skull, there is a sheep's skull in her hand. Sexually awakened from this scene, Bradley has a sexual intercourse with Julian. This is an important parody since, ironically, there are implications to Shakespeare's homosexuality and a homosexual love affair because Julian is in the guise of Hamlet, in man clothing and this attracts Bradley.

On the other side, there is another parody which is seen throughout the novel in the choice of writer's mouthpiece. This quality can be related with the phallocentric tendency of modernist texts, however, this work of art is written by a female artist giving voice to a male character. Postmodernism challenges modernism and 1970s, the period in which this novel has been written has witnessed the crisis of western thought. This crisis is defined in terms of the deconstruction of the binary oppositions like male/female, white/black, good/evil, rational/emotional or speech/writing. In other words, the novel is written in a time when the values of Western Civilization were being re-evaluated, re-defined or re-shaped under the umbrella term of Postmodernism. Briefly, the duty of the artist also underwent certain transformation. Jean François Lyotard, a prominent theoretician of postmodern condition, defines what postmodern artist is:

"A postmodern artist or writer is in the position of a philosopher: the text he writes, the work he produces are not in principle governed by pre-established rules, and they cannot be judged according to a determining judgment, by applying familiar categories to the text or to the work. Those rules and categories are what the work of art is itself looking for" (Lyotard, 1984: 81).

Lyotard defines the art and the artist on the edge of establishing a new tradition, a new set of rules which is called "postmodernist art" (Lyotard, 1984: 80). Having been published in this period, the novel gives the glimpses of that postmodern movement. The feminist movement that had been flourished before Postmodernism has also grasped some characteristics from the postmodern condition. In fact, Feminism seems to have much in common with Postmodernism. Like Postmodernism, Feminism is a radical movement that challenges the doctrines of modernism and its epistemological foundations of Western thought. Both approaches "assert, consequently, that this epistemology must be displaced, that a different way of describing human knowledge and it's acquisition must be found" (Hekman,1990: 1). Like Postmodernism, Feminism is concerned to challenge one of the defining characteristics of modernism, the definition of knowledge which is based on man as the subject.

Despite the common points between Postmodernism and Feminism, there is an uneasy relation between them. Few feminists voluntarily label themselves as postmodernists, while many postmodernists are skeptical of the feminist movement due to the fact that there are diversities in feminism. Contemporary Feminism is both historically and theoretically a modernist movement. The roots of eighteenth and nineteenth century Feminism lie in the liberal humanism, a philosophy which was strictly challenged and rejected by postmodernism. However, all the Feminisms have something in common, that is the fight against the masculine and feminine opposition which is attacked by postmodernists, too. Namely, postmodernism and feminism present a critique of only one vision focusing constitutive male vision.

Both Feminism and Postmodernism argue that the grand or master narratives of the modernism have lost the legitimating power, and they dismissed legitimating power of grand narratives from their works, because both strands argue that Western representations are the product of access to power instead of the truth. Postmodernism and Feminism represent a critique of binarism in which one term of the opposition must always be devalued, and this leads an insistence on difference. Moreover, both Postmodernism and Feminism seek to heal

the breach between theory/ practice, between the subject/ object and between knowledge/ theory.

The allies between Feminism and Postmodernism give birth to a new strand; Postmodern Feminism. Iris Murdoch's <u>The Black Prince</u> presenting the characteristics of the new strand; Postmodern Feminism is mingled with feminist and postmodernist aspects, and that is why this thesis is devoted to an application of Postmodern Feminism in <u>The Black Prince.</u>

Chapter One presents a general overview on Postmodernism and Feminism. The chapter begins by introducing political, social and economic conditions of Europe in the twentieth century. Then, the rise of the postmodern condition and its effects on the literature of the period are given through a comparison with modernity and Modernism. Especially, prevailing tensions of the 1960s are stressed as the decade paved the way for the appearances of fresh forms of thought and intellectual moods. Feminism, as one of those fresh forms of thought, is analyzed by giving a chronological development of the movement starting from the eighteenth century. Following this chronological order, the major strands of Feminism – Liberal Feminism, Radical Feminism, Marxist/Social Feminism – are defined.

In the following chapter, theoretical insights of Postmodern Feminism are given. The aspects in which Postmodernism and Feminism are consolidated to constitute Postmodern Feminism as rejection of grand and master narratives, use of poststructuralist ideas, acceptance of pluralism through acknowledging diversities are discussed. Following this discussion, the terms, sex and gender, are discriminated in Postmodern Feminist understanding. Then, the psychoanalytic contributions of *French Feminists* are given and the chapter ends with a descriptive part on postmodern feminist epistemology.

Chapter Three will be devoted to an analysis of <u>The Black Prince</u> in terms of Postmodern Feminism. A trivet model on the structure of the novel will be suggested to show how the novel merges the two distinct approaches, Postmodernism and Feminism, to form the postmodern feminist perspective. Mainly, in the chapter, reasons of the use of a male narrator by a women writer will be analyzed.

In Chapter Four, the postscripts which are placed at the end of the novel are discussed in detail. In these postscripts each character writes his/her own version of the story which they assert as the original and accurate one. Each postscript written on behalf of an individual, female or male, indicates the traces of both Feminism and Postmodernism. Thus, the main focus of the chapter will be on the postscripts which combine both the feminist and postmodernist characteristics by constructing the bridge toward a postmodern feminist.

CHAPTER I

POSTMODERNISM AND FEMINISM

1.1 THE EMERGENCE OF POSTMODERNISM

Postmodernism is a debatable term that is difficult to define, because it resists a strict definition due to its "contradictory nature" (Hutcheon, 1995: 25). In fact, to give a solid definition becomes even more hazardous since Postmodernism bears diverse reactions and responses as Brian McHale, one of the most prominent theoreticians of the postmodernist fiction, also justifies:

"There is John Barth's postmodernism, the literature of replenishment; Charles Newman's postmodernism, the literature of an inflationary economy; Jean-Fançois Lyotard's postmodernism, a general condition of knowledge in the contemporary informational regime; Ihab Hassan's postmodernism, a stage on the road to the spiritual unification of humankind; and so on" (McHale, 1987: 4).

Hence, in the light of the above diversities, this chapter will be devoted to the analysis of Postmodernism by comparing the term with modernist movement and by providing some brief background information with reference to the important names of the period like Brian McHale who warns against not to defining Postmodernism "so liberally that it covers *all* modes of contemporary writing" (1987: 4). Then, according to McHale, not all writings in that period can be labeled as postmodernist due to the fact that contemporary literature witnessed most drastic changes parallel to the unprecedented devastating and epoch-making events in the latest century of history of mankind. Especially in the presence of the outcomes of rapid technological, social and political developments of the Enlightenment and industrialization which shaped twentieth century, mankind suffered from the two most horrible wars of the history of the world, causing the death of millions and leaving the rest with the tensions of cold war, nuclear war threat, terrorism and economic crisis.

On one hand, the technological developments, brought forth with the scientific advancements, were facilitating and improving the life standards. The media of transportation and communication were reducing the distance between people, thus helping to accelerate the

knowledge circulation throughout the world. On the other hand, however, these developments provided the great armies of the twentieth century with weapons of mass destruction, atomic bombs and nuclear arms that were quick to leave the whole world in unrest and turmoil. In other words, optimism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had been defeated by the powerful armories of the twentieth century, by the mid-century.

The period which carried such a large-scale social and economic tension, though, became one of the most fertile periods in terms of literary production and activity. Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, for instance, suggest that "few ages have been more multiple, more promiscuous in artistic style" (1991: 23). Broadly speaking, regarding the artistic sphere of life, the century can be divided into two; the first half as Modernism and the latter as Postmodernism. The first half of the century witnessed the impact of the innovative modernist style. The modernist artists not only responded to the social and political panorama of the twentieth century but also rejected the belief that the world is fixed and stable, an idea which had been promoted by Realism. According to Peter Childs, "the hegemony of realism was challenged by Modernism and then by Postmodernism, as the alternative way of representing world and reality" (2000: 3).

While the first half of the century gave way to Modernism in this way, the second half witnessed the decline of Modernism and the rise of a new sensibility: "fundamentally contradictory, resolutely historical and inescapably political postmodernism" (Hutcheon, 1987: 11). According to Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, the crucial turning point is the 1960s in which "a group of intellectuals and activists who became the first major postmodern theorists experienced what they believed to be a decisive break with modern society and culture" (1997: 4). They believed that important changes were taking place in the history of man as new social movements, like Feminism, appeared to fight against "Vietnam War, imperialism, racism, sexism, and capitalist societies" (Best&Kellner, 1997: 4).

Even though such developments have outlined the century among scholars, there is often a controversial discussion concerning the movement of Postmodernism, which is whether Postmodernism has appeared with a break from Modernism or rather Postmodernism has developed out of Modernism as an offspring. For instance, as a prominent theoretician of Postmodernism, Linda Hutcheon claims that "the modern is ineluctably embedded in the postmodern, but the relationship is a complex one of consequence, difference, and dependence

(1995: 38). So, relatively, Postmodernism cannot be evaluated by leaving Modernism untouched.

In fact, Modernism takes place in the literary history as a response to the hegemony of Realism and also to the failures and disappointments of project of modernity that had started with the age of Enlightenment and industrialization (Childs, 2000: 16). Modernism, which is an aesthetic movement, is "often primarily located in the years 1890–1930, with a wider acknowledgement that it develops from the mid-nineteenth century and begins to lose its influence in the mid-twentieth century" (Childs, 2000: 18). Moreover, Modernism appeared not just as a reaction but with a total departure and with a radical break from the established previous traditions. Stressing the uniqueness of the modernist texts, Bradbury and McFarlane assert that "there is no historical parallel when compared to modernist texts" and these texts "were independent of any kind of historical background just flourishing breaking apart with the established conventions, traditions" (1991: 20).

In this new environment of the artistic world, the modernist artists reject the old Victorian standards regarding how to evaluate, create and consume an artistic product. The major figures of Modernism, like James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, and T. S. Eliot, through their experimental works of art, tried to redefine the limits of literature and came up with fresh styles and techniques in order to depict and portray the chaotic and complex twentieth century (Levenson, 1986: 54). Then one is forced to wonder what the innovations presented by these modernist artists are. If Modernism is a movement that moved away from the established conventions of Realism, then it does not sound odd that the modernists undermined what had previously belonged to the realist authors. The most remarkable aspect of difference lies in the use of the first person narrative in the great novels of the modernist artists. That also meant departing from the apparent objectivity provided by the omniscient third person narrators. For instance, the first person narrative is used in the modernist novels of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, such as <u>A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man</u> and <u>Mrs. Dalloway</u>. Then it is obvious that there is an apparent emphasis on subjectivity in the writings of modernist authors (Childs, 2000: 130). By employing the first person narratives, modernist authors swam through the consciousnesses of their characters and relate the contents of inner consciousnesses of their characters, which created the most popular technique of the modernist authors known as stream of consciousness (Childs, 2000: 3). On the other hand, this concern with the inner thoughts of the characters signalled another dimension in modernism. While the realist author

could not ignore the external world – or exteriority of a character – modernist authors were mainly interested in the inner world of their characters. Another important aspect of modernist art is its reflexive nature. Modernist artists created works which turn inwardly themselves, which constantly remind their statuses as the works of art. Thus, many modernist authors' characters were expressing their inner feelings through monologues and inner conflicts.

Besides, there are certain aspects in which the modernist and postmodernist fictions overlap and it is possible to come across characteristics which belonged to the modernist tradition within Postmodernism. Moreover, the use of pastiche, parody and irony is abundant and common in postmodernism, just as in the works of its predecessor. Both modern and postmodern works characteristically are self-reflexive and self-conscious and both handle with fragmentation and ambiguity. In the narrative structures of Postmodernism and Modernism, the discontinuous style is common, too. In spite of such similarities between the two movements, there are explicit differences that come to the surface in technique and style.

The basic difference lies in their perception of fragmentation and evaluation of differences and multiplicity in the society (Hutcheon, 1995: 62). For instance, modernist authors presented fragmented subjects but with a tragic sense. They still carried the hope that somehow they could achieve a kind of wholeness through depicting the fragmented consciousness of their characters. Thus, in the novels of the modernist authors, like Woolf and Lawrence, it is observed that the characters are either in search for a union with other characters, or a possibility of a communication. In this respect, modernists could be said to be optimistic as they believed that they could provide through their art the unity, meaning and order that modern life lacks. In the modern world, which was disordered, disarrayed and driven into chaos and crisis, they sought to create order in their work to set "form over life, pattern and myth over the contingencies of history" (Bradbury & Fletcher, 1991: 394). Postmodernism, in contrast, does not lament the idea of fragmentation or incoherence, but rather celebrates the idea as Hutcheon emphasizes that "the different and the paradoxical fascinate postmodern" (Hutcheon, 1995: 47). In a way, Postmodernism welcomes differences and acknowledges their existence, but what are these considered as different? "Ex-centrics", calls Hutcheon, are the "differents" and they are comprised of "blacks, feminists, ethnics and gays, native and "Third World" cultures" (Hutcheon, 1995: 57-62). Those were the ones who had been labelled as marginal by the dominant western bourgeois ideology which has traditionally held the idea that the center of the world is white, male, western-European

individual (Bertens, 1994: 196). However, with Derrida's groundbreaking works and other post-structuralist thinkers, who promoted and advocated the trend of deconstruction, the previously-silenced, banished, abhorred, marginalized margins were able to find place to have their sounds heard and their demand of existence acknowledged. That is why Hutcheon "[hails] to the edges" (Hutcheon, 1995: 58). Similarly, maybe more provocatively, Jean-François Lyotard utters:

"The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have given us much terror as we can take. We have paid a high enough price for the nostalgia of the whole and the one, for the reconciliation of the concept and the sensible, of the transparent and the communicable experience. … Let us wage a war on totality; let us be witness to the unpresentable; let us activate the differences and save the honor of the name" (Lyotard, 1984: 81-82).

According to Hutcheon, many opponents of Postmodernism direct their criticism from this point because Postmodernism is generally criticized for "a humanist belief in the universal human urge to generate systems to order experience" (Hutcheon, 1995: 58). Fredrick Jameson, on the other hand, perceives Modernism and Postmodernism as cultural formations, which take place simultaneously with new forms of Capitalism. For Jameson, postmodern is:

"… a periodizing concept whose function is to correlate the emergence of new formal features in culture with the emergence of a new type of social life and a new economic order-what is often euphemistically called modernization, postindustrial or consumer society, the society of the media or the spectacle, or multinational capitalism" (Jameson, 1992:165).

Jameson's conceptualization requires clarification among the terms, postmodern and Postmodernism, which are sometimes used interchangeably. In order to avoid such confusion, it may be best to make use of the distinction made by Raman Selden, Peter Widdowson and Peter Brooker in their collaborative work A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory. They propose using the term, "postmodern" as a period marker and to demarcate "post-war developments in advanced media societies and capitalist economies". As for the term "postmodernism", they aim to use it to refer to "developments in culture and arts" (Selden et al, 1997: 201). Many scholars, opponents or defendants, agree that this postmodern condition as drawn by Selden et al started in 1960s. (Jameson, 1992: 166; Best and Kellner, 1997:7) Best and Kellner define the atmosphere of 1960s:

"The postmodern turn contains a mutating mixture of risks and excitement, losses and gains, resulting from destruction of the old and creation of the new. Many individuals are celebrating the emerging technological society as a new era of job and profit possibilities, with exciting new forms of culture and communication, promising a technological utopia. Others stress the downside, emphasizing in apocalyptic fashion the collapse of the old modern society in a new postmodern scene of 'panic', 'spasm', and 'crash'" (Best and Kellner, 1997: 16).

The focus of importance here is, then, the 1960s that attacked on racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice, which are credited with having created fresh postmodern discourses. Through these discourses, margins and differences, the excluded voices and new subjects of revolt sharpened their weapons against the discourse of the fixed, white, Western European male subject constructed in the Age of Enlightenment. The common ideas of the Enlightenment can be associated with the basic ideas of Humanism. First of all there is a stable, coherent, knowable self and this self is conscious, rational, autonomous, and universal. This self, or the individual, relies on his reason and approaches his surrounding trusting on rationality and positivistic sciences:

"Like his enlightenment predecessor, the 19th century liberal humanist assumed that Man was moral by nature and endowed with a power of rationality which enabled him both to unlock the secrets of Nature and to exercise control over himself. Having dispensed with God, the enlightened 19th century free thinker filled that gap with Man, who, he assumed, was measure of all things, at home in and entitled to do what he pleased with the world of which he was the securely centred mid-point" (Sheppard, 1993: 18).

According to this belief, science can provide the universal truth about man and his nature and can, thus, equip man with the quality to control the nature and the world. Then, in this world, there would be no conflict between what is good and bad, what is right and wrong and what is beautiful and ugly. All these justifications can be provided by science and its medium; language.

Language, or the mode of expression used in producing and transmitting knowledge, must be rational. To be rational, language must be transparent and a stable connection between the objects of perception and word should be secured, that is between the signifier and the signified. These fundamental assumptions of Liberal Humanism serve to designate and explain social structure of the modern society, including law, aesthetics and institutions. These assumptions all strive towards wholeness, unity and order. In order to maintain the welfare of the society, the order must be preserved and this could be done through establishing and maintaining binary oppositions. In the construction of these binary

oppositions the rational – according to Western European Culture – is privileged and the irrational as "the Other" is devalued. Thus anything non-white, non-male, non-heterosexual and non-rational becomes part of disorder and has to be eliminated from the ordered, rational modern society. However, Lyotard believes that these efforts necessarily result in "totality". According to Lyotard, the stability or totality in the modern society has been preserved through "grand narratives, such as the dialectics of Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working subject, or the creation of wealth" (Lyotard, 1984: xxiv). Marxism, Christianity and Liberalism are also among other grand or meta-narratives which are the stories of a culture or of a set of beliefs which talk about its own condition and its better future prospect of the modern society. For instance, the grand narrative of Marxism is that the capitalist system would eventually collapse and a utopian, socialist and classless society would emerge (Childs, 2000: 28). Both Christianity and the other great religions of the world promise a metaphysical world of heaven in which people of virtue would reside eternally. Then every belief system bears in itself its grand narrative. However, the world in the twentieth century witnessed the failure of these grand narratives. In other words, the twentieth century faced the collapse of the ideals of the project of modernity as Lyotard emphasizes:

"The narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal. It is being dispersed in clouds of narrative language elements — narrative, but also denotative, prescriptive, descriptive, and so on" (Lyotard, 1984: 25).

Within the frames of modernism grand narrative lost its function and Postmodernism, then, began to question the grand narratives which serve to hide the instabilities and oppression which are inherent in any social formation. The order and the unity promised by these grand narratives, in fact, demanded the creation of a disorder for those who were left outside the circle of white, Western-European male world. Rather than universal grand narrative, postmodern proposes provisional and local mini-narratives. Then "there was a turn away from modern discourse of truth, certainty, universality, essence and system and a rejection of grand historical narratives of liberation and revolution" (Best and Kellner, 1997: 6).

To sum up, after the dissolution of the old paradigms of modern society and new forms of thought emerged in the 1960s witnessed the rise of new intellectual moods. New political ideas were formed against the established ideas of patriarchal western-European society. The

feminist movement of the 1960s is one of the most important revolutions that were deconstructed with the provocative works of post-structuralist philosophers and the established binary oppositions of women previously oppressed and labelled as the "other". In Postmodernism, there is a stress on differences ignoring the quality of otherness. Postmodern theory and practice, in Hutcheon's words, reject the concept of "the other" "in favor of more plural and deprivileging concept of difference and the ex-centric" (Hutcheon, 1995: 65). The discourses created in this decade were associated with margins, differences and excluded voices.

Moreover, there was an attack against racism, sexism and other forms of oppression and prejudices. Gradually the scene was now ready for woman, who has been oppressed, banished, excluded and silenced constantly within time. It will be useful, in the presence of the above mentioned assumptions, here to follow the historical development of feminist movement within the next part of this chapter.

1.2 THE HISTORY OF FEMINISM

Feminism is a movement which generally emphasizes the struggle and oppression of woman in a patriarchal society and it deals with the consequences and reasons of societal differences between men and women. Undoubtedly, these differences are the results of politics of patriarchal society which have varied throughout history. It is even said that it is out of these differences and the dictation of them over woman that Feminism emerged as the struggle of woman to express herself in the face of man. The main purpose in feminist struggle, for women, is to escape the roles that the patriarchal society imposes upon women and, then, to create an identity of their own. In a sense, this struggle is the attempt of woman to save herself from being a secondary sex or an *other* of the male, because through the politics, patriarchal society has always degraded woman as "secondary sex" a term coined by French feminist Simone De Beauvoir. Thus, the main focus of this part is to follow historical development of feminist movement with the references of important names and events of the periods.

It was in the eighteenth century that the first steps of women's liberation movement were heard as "the revolutionary zeal in France began to influence writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft whose Vindication of the Rights of Woman is seen as the foundation of modern feminism" (Osborne, 2001: 7). Thus, the first traces of the feminist movement can be traced back to the eighteenth century with the appearance of certain figures who are well listed by Josephine Donovan in her Feminist Theory : The Intellectual Traditions of American Feminism:

"On January 3, 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft completed the first major work of feminist theory in history: A Vindication of the Rights of Woman. It was to dominate subsequent feminist thought. Four months previously, in September 1791, during the early phases of the French Revolution, Olympe de Gouges had issued a street pamphlet in Paris entitled "Les Droits de la femme" (The Rights of Woman). She was later guillotined. The year before, in 1790, Judith Sargent Murray, an American, had published "On the Equality of the Sexes" in Massachusetts. And even earlier, in the midst of the American Revolution, Abigail Adams suggested to her husband, John, that women should have some "voice, or Representation," in the "new Code of Laws" being drawn for the nation" (2000: 17).

The eighteenth century was the time when the foundations of Modern Feminism were built. Feminists in this period hoped that women could break down certain inequalities and within this fever of revolutions women could gain certain natural rights as man did. However,

this feminist proposal was not accepted by the doctrines of the period which had also been produced by male theoreticians. The doctrine proposed that there are two worlds; "rational and nonrational" (Donovan, 2000: 18). The dominant idea of the period was that the rational world is the superior one, and must control the nonrational and that order must be imposed upon the non-ordered, the marginal, and the "Other" world (Donovan, 2000: 19).

According to the Enlightenment's understanding of identification, male was the rational one and the public sphere should be governed by him. Female, on the other hand, represented the nonrational and sentimental, which should be governed by the rational side of the society, in other words, by men. It is a striking point that these ideas were promoted and advocated by many liberal thinkers of the period such as John Locke "who espoused, at least theoretically, natural rights for all people" but also believed that "husbands are to be allowed authority over their wives and children" (Donovan, 2000: 20). In a broader sense, the discrimination between men and women began with the universal idea that women belonged to home and were associated with domestic affairs. Moreover, with the advent of industrialism, working place was separated from home and this fact isolated women from their domestic world. As the number of mechanized factories increased, the cottage industry dramatically decreased and left woman alone at home and separated the public sphere (work place) and private sphere (home) drastically. Indeed, before industrialization men and women worked together though men were paid better than women. After industrialization the dichotomy of men's work and women's became much more visible and sharper. In the rational, public sphere there were no longer any jobs or space for women. These events took place at a time when Mary Wollstonecraft published her A Vindication of the Rights of Women, in which she criticized "the education available to women and the assumptions surrounding marriage and family life" (Osborne, 2001: 11).

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, women continued to gain certain roles like working in the factories in the public sphere but the advance had been rather slow. Up to the 1820s, there had been no legal attempt in pursuit of emancipation. In the 1820s, a period of legal reforms, William Thompson appeared with his Appeal Of One-Half of the Human Race, Women, Against the Pretensions of the Other Half, Men (1825), to retain them in Political and thence in Civil and Domestic Slavery, and she compared women's situation to the slavery referring to "abolitionist movement taking place in America" (Osborne, 2001: 13). After that, the link between the feminists and the abolitionists grew stronger. Osborne's comment on the

issue in question reflects the panorama successfully: "Not only were women delegates not allowed to take part in the debate; they were forced to suffer the indignity of listening to the proceedings from behind a curtain" (Osborne, 2001: 15). Hence, feminists of the period set for themselves two main targets in their pursuit of emancipation: education and enfranchisement.

First of all they fought to have the right to get the same education as men, because education was the only medium whereby women could equip themselves with the necessary qualities that would give them a chance for employment facilities equal to men's. Thence, women could also achieve financial independence. The second main target was enfranchisement. If women could achieve the right to vote, necessarily, they would have the right to induce their own views in the policy of the state. However, women's opportunities for their education were minimal. In the eighteenth century, women were likely to be educated at home. By the middle of the nineteenth century there was a good deal of debate on the issue of woman being educated at home. In 1854, there appeared some establishments like "The Langham Place Circle" (Osborne, 2001: 16) to debate educational and legal issues for women, as well as platforms like *The English Woman's Journal* to attract many feminists to the circle. Members of the *Langham Place Circle* had a lot of struggle to persuade universities to offer more opportunities for women students. Moreover, the campaigns for equal educational opportunities ultimately succeeded in establishing colleges and gaining the right for women to register universities. On the other side, from the mid-nineteenth century, the battle for the vote occupied the women's movement; "British women over thirty were enfranchised in 1917, it was not until 1928 that equal voting rights with men were achieved" (Osborne, 2001: 17). This movement for gaining rights was followed by suffragists in England.

The British women's suffrage campaign, arranging the provoking meetings for women, illegally "spanned sixty-one years from 1867, when the first *National Societies for Women's Suffrage* were set up in Manchester and London, to 1928 when full voting rights for women were finally secured by the *Equal Franchise Act*" (Osborne, 2001: 18). As a founding member of the London branch of *National Societies for Women's Suffrage*, the influential philosopher John Stuart Mill became a strong character of women's suffrage and argued in his book The Subjection of Women (1869) that enfranchisement was the key to freedom for women. Over time, two strands had emerged in the campaign for women's suffrage in Britain. The moderate strand was led by Millicent Garrett Fawcett, a fervent supporter of John Stuart Mill. The other more effective and better-known strand was led by Emmeline Pankhurst, who

set up the *Women's Social and Political Union*, attracting women from all sections of life including teachers, clerks, dressmakers and textile workers (Osborne, 2001: 20). Activists in this union began to highlight problems that working-class women faced. Whereas the movement had previously been almost exclusively composed of middle class feminists, as they were coming to be known, they began to understand the diversity of women and of the problems that they faced, such as the issue of women's employment. However, when the war broke out in 1914, the campaign was called to a halt. Many women became involved in the war effort, such as working as voluntary nursing assistants. Those women who had found jobs in areas of work previously done by men, found themselves out of the job once the war was over.

As the Depression began to loom in the late twenties, opportunities for advances in women's rights began to close down; therefore, with little more achievement, woman during the war years of 1914-1918 stepped into men's jobs. As in the World War I, payments and conditions did not match "what had been on offer to men. This was such a concern that an *Equal Pay Campaign Committee* was set up in 1943" (Osborne, 2001: 24). On the whole, the independence, which many women had relished, slipped away when men, looking for work, returned from the war, and then, the emphasis in the following years was very firmly on the joys of marriage and motherhood. Although some women continued to work, the image of women as wives staying at home and mothers as the controller of a stable household was encouraged as the ideal.

It was not until the late 50s and early 60s that the 'woman question' came to the fore. With the publication of Simone de Beauvoir's <u>The Second Sex</u> (1954), and Betty Friedan's <u>The Feminine Mystique (</u>1963), the debate became intense. The birth of *Women's Liberation* which "grew into a vibrant, sprawling movement that eventually seemed to encompass as many factions as there were women in it" (Osborne, 2001: 25 – 6) often called the 'second wave', while the suffragists were categorized as being the first wave. Just as the suffragists had found themselves in the spotlight, the second wave of feminists attracted a good deal of attention. They were regarded with suspicion and never more so than when they attended the consciousness-raising groups which aimed to help women understand the nature of their oppression, as well as being the core of the movement.

In contrast to the nineteenth-century Feminism, which was largely united around the cause of suffrage, the women's liberation movement was extraordinarily diverse. These

diversities were far too numerous to mention but three of them were the major ideologies; Liberal Feminism in which feminists placed the emphasis on change from within society rather than revolution by putting forward positive role models for girls, establishing equality in their own relationships and lobbying parliament for legislation on equal rights, Marxist/Socialist Feminism in which feminists linked the male domination with class exploitation arguing that equal rights for men and women would not improve a lot of poor women, and Radical Feminism in which the problem was defined as patriarchy dominating women.

Liberal Feminism, the moderate face of Feminism, has been the most widely known form. In this approach, the explanation for women's position in society was treated in terms of unequal rights which were directly related with the "artificial barriers to women's participation in the public world beyond the issues of family and household" (Beasley, 1999: 50). Thus, in the Liberal Feminist thought there was a focus on the public sphere, political and institutional struggles for the rights of individuals. In Liberal Feminism, there was also "a critical concern with the value of individual autonomy and freedom from supposedly unwarranted restrictions by others" (Beasley, 1999: 51). More often, the freedom was seen as freedom from the bonds of custom and prejudice. Liberal Feminists' issues included "reproductive rights and abortion access, sexual harassment, voting, education, fair compensation for work, affordable childcare, affordable health care, and bringing to light the frequency of sexual and domestic violence against women" (hooks, qtd. in Beasley, 1999: 53). In fact, equality with men in the public arena was the core of Liberal Feminism. There is the presumption of the sameness between men and women in the Liberal Feminist thought because there was a conception of "fundamentally sexually undifferentiated human nature" (Tapper, 1986: 39). Feminist writers associated within Liberal Feminism are, for instance, Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill, second-wave feminists Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem, and the Third Wave feminist Rebecca Walker. Among these, Mary Wollstonecraft has been very influential in her writings such as A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, in which she commented on society's view of the woman and encouraged women to use their voices in making decisions separate from the ones previously made for them. Wollstonecraft denied that:

"women are, by nature, more pleasure seeking and pleasure giving than men. She reasoned that if they were confined to the same cages that trap women, men would develop the same

flawed characters. What Wollstonecraft most wanted for women was personhood" (Tong, 2009, 15-6).

Mill believed that men are not intellectually above women and much of his research centered on the idea that women, in fact, are superior to men in knowledge. Mill frequently spoke of the imbalance, and wondered if women are able to feel the same "genuine unselfishness" (Tong, 2009: 17) that men do in providing for their families. This unselfishness, which Mill advocated, was the one "that motivates people to take into account the good of society as well as the good of the individual person or small family unit" (Tong, 2009: 17).

Betty Friedan, an American feminist who wrote The Feminine Mystique, which was published in 1963, came to be acknowledged as the core of the "second wave" of the women's movement, and significantly shaped national and world events. The book depicted the roles of women in industrial societies, especially the full-time housewife and house-folder role which Friedan thought suffocating. With her psychological background, Friedan offered a critique of Freud's penis envy theory (uttered by Freud in his essay "On the Sexual Theories of Children") by noting paradoxes in his work. Moreover, she attempted to offer some answers to women wishing to pursue an education. Friedan "noted that women are as capable as men to do any type of work or follow any career path" (Perumalil, 2009:305).

The second major movement of Feminism, Radical Feminism, offered a real change in and rejection of the liberal orientation towards the public world of men. In fact, it gave a positive value to womanhood rather than assimilating women into the arenas associated with men. Radical Feminism paid attention to women's oppression in a social order dominated by men. Hence, the explanation for women's oppression was seen as laid in sexual oppression, because women were oppressed because of their sex, and this was connected with the emphasis on sisterhood. On this issue, Johnson commented that "one of the basic tenets of Radical Feminism is that any woman …has more in common with any other woman – regardless of class, race, age, ethnic group, nationality – than any woman has with any man" (Rowland&Klein, 1990: 281).

Radical Feminism stressed that in a social order dominated by men, the process of changing sexual oppression must involve a focus on women and sexual oppression which was "seen as the oldest and even the most profound form of inequality" (Atkinson, 1974: 73).

These inequality and power relations were derived from patriarchy which had different comments. J. Stacey notes that there were different feminist groups; the first group employed patriarchy to trace the historical emergence and the development of systems of male domination while the second group used the term to explore the sexual division of labour. The last group perceived the term as "enabling a recognition of the deep – rooted nature of male dominance in the very formation and organization of our selves [the psychological or unconscious internalizing of social patterns of sexual hierarchy]" (Stacey, 1993: 57).

Radical Feminists, moreover, adopted an approach in which the recognition of sexual oppression (patriarchy) was crucial, "in part at least, as a counter to the politics of the radical left in the 1960s and 1970s which either ignored sexual inequality or deemed it of secondary importance" (Morgan, 1978: 13). Since men were considered as the beneficiaries of the system which made them the representatives of the power, "any man, who is in a position of power, relatives to all women and possibly some men" (Rowland&Klein, 1990: 280). Radical Feminists perceived all men without exception as sharing the benefits of social system of patriarchy. This "does not mean that all men are invariably oppressive to all women all the time", nor does this approach deny that some men at least may struggle to overcome this system of domination (Thompson, 1994: 173). In other words, feminists in this approach saw a difference between men and women as inevitable or established historically. In fact, sexual difference has been neither socially insignificant nor something irrelevant, and this approach of Feminism stressed the interconnection between bodies and society. In focusing on the issue of control over bodies, Radical Feminism was inclined to "distinguish self from the body in certain aspects" (Caddick, 1986: 81). By comparison, the latter groupings of feminists such as Postmodern/Poststructuralist Feminists tended to give more attention to the ways in which the self and the body are indistinguishably bound up.

The last major feminist movement was Marxist/Socialist Feminism. It is possible, though difficult, to distinguish the feminist thought between Marxist and Socialist approaches. Marxist feminists' works were laid out by Marx, Engels, Lenin and other nineteenth-century thinkers. They regarded feminism as the fundamental cause of women's oppression. On the other hand, Socialist Feminists were not certain whether Classicism was women's worst enemy. They followed the doctrines of Russia's twentieth century failure to achieve Socialism's ultimate goal which was the replacement of class oppression with "an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all" (Marx,

1967: 791). Women's work in workplaces had not made them men's equals either at home or at work. For these reasons, Socialist Feminists decided to move beyond relying on class as the mere category for understanding women's subordination to men. They tried "to understand subordination in a coherent and systematic way that integrates class and sex, as well as other aspects of identity such as race/ethnicity or sexual orientation" (Holmstrom, 2002: 1).

Indeed, the impact of Socialism on feminist thought is a factor necessary to mention because Marxist Feminism was based on the Socialist ideals. Affirming the ideas of Marx and Engels, Classical Marxist Feminists tried to use the analysis of class rather than gender to explain women's oppression. In Marxist Feminism, following the work of Karl Marx, hierarchical class relations were indicative of power and oppression. In fact, class division historically gave rise to male dominance and class oppression predating from sex oppression. Sexual oppression, in a way, was seen as a dimension of class power. Evelyn Reed in her work <u>Women: Caste, Class, or Oppressed Sex</u>? mentioned about this issue by stressing that the same capitalistic economic forces and social relations that "brought about the oppression of one class by another, one race by another, and one nation by another" also brought about the oppression of one sex by another (1970: 17).

Marxist Feminists, who decided that sex, class of women as well as economic class played a role in women's oppression, began to refer to themselves as Socialist Feminists (Beasley, 1999: 56). Socialist Feminists can be analyzed under three strands. The first strand involved a concern with the social construction of sex that tended not to perceive sexual oppression through the point of view of women's unequal socio-economic position, but rather conceived that oppression as the effect of psychological functions. In other words, they dealt with the psychological model of sexual power presented alongside economically based on the account of class power. The second major strand of Socialist Feminism attempted to draw the work of Radical and Marxist Feminists into one theory of power and described a unified system. By contrast, the third strand, like the first one, described a dual system model in which both sex and class power had a material aspect. Namely, patriarchy was not seen as simply a psychological matter. These versions of Socialist Feminism were identified by their views of the relationship between class and sex, which has been also the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy. Hence, the emergence of private wealth with capitalism and therefore of class hierarchy led men to treat women as property.

By the 1980s Feminism could no longer be simply divided into the three general categories of Liberal, Radical and Marxist/Socialist traditions, because Modern Feminist thought sought to challenge the traditions and conventions of patriarchal society or the society dominated by males. This was what once Virginia Woolf had done through her fiction by arguing that women have been able to obtain neither time nor the privacy to write. A woman writer needs to have a room of her own in which she could write without interruption as seen in her work; A Room of One's Own. In fact, Woolf attempted to explain why the Western literature was under the domination of patriarchy and male writers. For this question, Woolf posed two basic answers which concerned Anglo-American and French Feminist literary criticism. Woolf anticipated French Feminist critics by suggesting that the traditional masculine dominance had been related with the dominance of language by male writers, a man's sentence. In response to man's sentence, Woolf combined masculine and feminine elements in writing in order to develop woman's sentence. This attempt for a new feminine discourse anticipated the works of French Feminist theorists such as Héléne Cixous, Luce Irigaray, and Julia Kristeva who had been under the influence of Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan. In fact, they challenged their masculine sources by focusing on the necessity of forming a feminine discourse. As Irigaray explains;

"if we continue to speak the same language to each other, we will reproduce the same story. Begin the same stories all over again. Don't you feel it? Listen: men and women around us all sound the same. Same arguments, same quarrels, same scenes. Same attractions and separations. Same difficulties, the impossibility of reaching each other" (1980: 69).

French feminist theorists such as Cixous and Kristeva insisted that feminine language is not related to biological gender but to certain anti-patriarchal thoughts. Thus feminist theorists like Cixous and Irigaray have sought to resist the submission of patriarchal law by exploring a different mode of discourse that arises not from the *symbolic* but from the *imaginary order*.

"If woman has always functioned "within" the discourse of man, a signifier that has always referred back to the opposite signifier which annihilates its specific energy and diminishes or stifles its very different sounds, it is time for her to dislocate this "within", to explode it, turn it around and seize it; to make it hers, containing it, taking it in her own mouth, biting that tongue with her very own teeth to invent for herself a language to get inside of" (Cixous, 316, qtd. in Parsons, 1996: 169).

Kristeva accepted the fact that women and men were constrained to speak and write within the "Symbolic Order" (Selden et al., 1997:162-5) which was uttered by Lacan. For

Lacan, each infant becomes a person by internalizing Symbolic Order, which occurs through the formation of a separate and sexually specific self in the process of learning language. According to Lacan, male and female infants share an "Imaginary Order" (Selden et all., 1997:162-5) in which they "move away from the real world towards comparatively abstract philosophical analysis of culture and specifically towards the symbolic meaning encoded in language" (Davies, 1994: 126). Moreover, in Lacanian thought, the self and the sexuality are socially constructed in that there can be no sexed self. Within Lacanian framework, gender identity is determined not by biological but by linguistic construct.

It is proposed that meaning in Symbolic Order is not inevitable or intrinsic but is constantly being culturally and linguistically produced through the setting up of differences characteristically organized in oppositional pairs such as man and woman with one term. The concept is shaped out of the invisible exclusion of the feminine *Other*. In this context, French Feminists borrowed from the existentialist writings of Simone De Beauvoir the notion of woman as "the second sex" or "Other"; thus, the male opposes himself as "spirit to the woman as flesh, as the "Other" who limits and denies him" (De Beauvoir, 129 qtd. in Booker, 1993: 77). The notion of "Other" led the later groupings like Postmodern Feminism to the problem of identity as a core of their thought.

Consequently, Feminism is a very wide term difficult to define in a narrow sense, because it is hard to say exactly what Feminism covers. Feminism grows with each period and with new doctrines on it from different critiques, philosophers and writers. Moreover, feminist thought has increased in diversity in time. Each approach gave birth to another one by shaping Feminism that is no longer an adolescence but a mature adult, not searching but shaping its own way in its modernized notion as Rosemarie Tong uttered "it [feminism] is no longer in its adolescence; indeed it is adult in its maturity" (2009: 270).

CHAPTER II

POSTMODERN FEMINISM

2.1 WHAT IS POSTMODERN FEMINISM?

Feminism gathering necessary requirements to be considered as a movement produced its variations which led the critics to talk about Feminisms in plural rather than Feminism in singular. There appeared types of feminist writings which illuminated an understanding of the status of women in a patriarchal society, sexist biases in social and behavioural theories through references to the dominant theories. While Liberal feminists sought for equality with men with a presumption of the sameness between men and women, Radical feminists presented a clear-cut difference between men and women by privileging the latter. On the other hand, Marxist feminists, following the doctrines of Marx, focused on the sameness of men and women like Liberal Feminists but emphasized class conflicts, labour and power. For them, power led to class distinctions and "sexual oppression was seen as a dimension of class power" (Beasley, 1999: 60). In fact, Feminism aimed at changing the existing power relationships between men and women. Its starting point dates back to the years when Maggie Humm in her book Feminisms: A Reader asserted that "women are less valued than men" (qtd. in Sim, 2005: 24). In their concern with empowering women and with finding explanations for and solutions to women's oppression, feminist theories frequently developed theories of the nature of women's oppression, its origins, or women's identity. These characteristics were challenged by postmodern theorists because they believed in that women have an essence or nature which is collectively shared by all women without regard to their ethnicity, race or socio-economic position. Therefore, in this chapter theoretical insights of Postmodern Feminism will be given.

Indeed, Feminism and Postmodernism have emerged as two of the most important political-cultural currents of the last decade. So far, however, they have kept an uneasy distance from one another by remaining sceptical and ambivalent about their relationships. Thus, each of the two perspectives suggests some important criticism of the other. As Nancy Fraser and Linda Nicholson claim in their article "Social Criticism Without Philosophy: An

Encounter Between Feminism and Postmodernism", "a postmodernist reflection on feminist theory reveals disabling vestiges of essentialism, while a feminist reflection on postmodernism reveals androcentrism and political naiveté" (1989: 84). On the contrary, one of the crucial intersections between Feminism and Postmodernism rests in their ties to material cultural practices and their "insistence on the link between the textual and the social" (Wolff, 1990: 6). In addition, the constructed nature of both Postmodernism and Feminism is important to consider not only because these terms cover a broad spectrum of interrelated but distinct practices but also because these terms are constructed strategically. Although the contemporary phases of both Feminism and Postmodernism are plural and constructed, they are the products of, and simultaneously, "contribute to the present global climate" (Michael, 1996: 14). They have been shaped, among other things, by the recent history of the two World Wars, racially and ethnically motivated genocides, the threat of atomic annihilation, the cold war and the wars it created such as Vietnam War, the growing gap between first and third world nations, multinational corporations, the proliferation of mass media, and the recurrent clashes between right and left wing thought and their policies (Michael, 1996: 11 – 23). Furthermore, the philosophical shifts that these historical events and transformations have engendered, particularly the questioning of the Western metaphysics which underlies them, also have affected the recent forms of Feminism and Postmodernism. In addition, contemporary forms of Feminism and Postmodernism are situated in the public domain as well as in private elitist institutions such as universities. This public presence results in part from the very public eruptions of "cultural and ideological conflicts" such as "the student and the civil rights movements of the sixties", "the growth of the women's movement in the seventies", and the gay movement and the abortion rights campaigns in the eighties and into the nineties: movements directed at "prevailing cultural modes" and highlighting the "multiplicity of arenas of oppression within [existing] social and personal life" (Felski, 1989: 74). In their concern "with a critical deconstruction of tradition", their questioning of "cultural codes" and their exploration of "social and political affiliations" (Foster, 1983: xii), most postmodern theories and aesthetics directly engage cultural practices.

In fact, both Feminism and Postmodernism participate within cultural practices and in the theoretical assault on Western metaphysics that has increasingly characterized much of the intellectual life and most of the activist campaigns in the decades after the 1960s. As Ihab Hassan suggests, the only pattern that can be discerned in postmodernism is its "revisionary will in the Western world, unsettling/resettling codes, canons, procedures, beliefs" as it

reaches "for something other, which some call posthumanism" (1987: xvi-xvii) something it has in common with recent Feminism. Indeed, Singer asserts that the recurrent practice in both feminism and postmodernism is "an explicit discursive strategy of challenging the terms, conventions, and symbols of hegemonic authority in ways that foreground the explicitly transgressive character of this enterprise" (1992: 469); and Wolff echoes Singer's words, adding that this challenge "is the promise of postmodernism for feminist politics" (1990: 87).

The most basic relation between Feminism and Postmodernism is the rejection and the devaluation of the grand and master narratives of the Enlightenment. By devaluating and rejecting the grand narratives, both Feminism and Postmodernism imply that these narratives have lost their power in legitimating. Both argue that Western representations are the products of access to the truth instead of power. Women, as Owen points out, "have been presented in countless images throughout the western culture such as nature and sex, but have rarely seen their own representations" (Thornham, 2005: 26).

Aims of many of postmodern theories and aesthetics, which are to expose and subvert Western metaphysics and its cultural products, are in fact similar to those of Feminism although they do not focus primarily on the construction and the role of gender and sexuality. The challenge to the Western notion of the subject, however, leads directly to issues of gender and biology, since Western culture has traditionally associated the subject or self with man, while woman has been relegated to the position of object or "other". As Linda Hutcheon suggests, one of the things that "feminisms have brought to postmodernism" is "an increased awareness of gender differences" (1989: 167). Furthermore, postmodern theories' energetic critiques of the system of hierarchical binary oppositions that undergird Western thought destabilize the classic dichotomies between men and women, male and female, masculine and feminine. Furthermore, Feminism and Postmodernism also meet at this point where they provide "a critique of only one vision, that of the constitutive male subject" and in the critique of binarism "in which one term of the opposition must always be devalued" (Thornham, 2005: 26). Like Postmodernism, Feminism also insists on the value and recognition of differences and incommensurability. Finally, both terms are after the rehabilitation of the divide between theory/practice, and subject of theory/ knowledge and its object. Thus, women are both the subjects and objects of feminist theory and women's sense of self is far more relational than that of men. Rather than an essentialist, universal man or woman, both Feminism and Postmodernism offers, as Jane Flax utters, "a profound scepticism regarding universal claims

about the existence, nature and powers of reason, progress, science, language and the subject/self" (qtd. in Sim, 2005: 27).

According to Flax, Feminist theories, "like other forms of postmodernism, should encourage us to tolerate and interpret ambivalence, ambiguity and multiplicity as well as to expose the roots of our needs for imposing order and structure no matter how arbitrary and oppressive these needs may be" (qtd. in Sim, 2005: 27). In this sense, Postmodernism turns into "a sort of therapeutic corrective to Feminism's universalizing tendency" (Sim, 2005: 27). Similarly, Nancy Fraser and Linda Nicholson want to adopt the critique of meta-narratives for a Feminist criticism theory because such a theory would eschew the analysis of grand causes of women's oppression. Moreover, it would also "replace unitary conceptions of woman and female identity with plural and complexly structured conceptions of social identity, treating gender as one relevant strand among others, attending also to class, etc." (Sim, 2005: 27). These pluralities seen in Feminist theory give birth to emergence of the new strand; Postmodern Feminism, whose roots go back to Poststructuralism, Postmodern Philosophy, and French Feminist theory, all of which emerged spontaneously around the same time. Although Postmodern Feminism is related to these, it bears an uneasy relationship both to the mainstream Feminism and Postmodernism.

"Let me start addressing that question by stating that postmodern feminism emerges from two main sources. First, out of criticisms of modernist feminist theorising and second, perhaps obviously, from postmodern and poststructural thought. Following from this, postmodern feminists are especially keen to expose the flaws and weaknesses of traditional feminisms, particularly in regard to their modernist commitments. One of the significant areas in which this takes place is through the destabilisation of the category of woman" (Zalewski, 2000: 22).

First of all, Poststructuralists look at the meaning which is "multiple, unstable, and open to interpretation" (Weedon, qtd. in Fook, 2002: 12) in relation to the particular social, political, and historical contexts in which language is spoken or written. They view discourses (bodies of language or texts) and readers as situated, rather than neutral. Poststructuralists move away from grand theory, which claims to assert the universal truth with the theorists like Derrida, Foucault, and the French Feminist Kristeva. The Poststructural theorists whose works interest both the French Feminists and Postmodern Feminists have developed several themes; criticism of *logocentrism,* the nature of *difference*, deconstruction of texts, multiple discourses, and the nature of subjectivity. They call logocentrism as the belief which is "a

fixed, singular, logical order" (Derrida, qtd in Grosz, 1989: xiiiv) that can be found in the immediate presence in "real," "true," and "unmediated" forms (Grosz, 1989: xix).

In fact, Western logocentric thought promotes thinking of differences in terms of binary oppositions, such as identity/difference, male/female, and reason/emotion, which are perceived as mutually exclusive, oppositional, and hierarchical instead of interdependent. A major source of categorical thinking is language, which is infused with meanings derived from the logocentric culture. Language embodies and maintains the perspective of the "Symbolic Order" (Lacan), which is patriarchal ("phallocentric"; Cixous, and Derrida). In this respect, the terms within binary categories are valued differently. One of the terms, for example "male", is "privileged" or dominant, resulting in the relegation of the second term to a negative state, for example "whatever is not male is female" (Grosz, 1989: 115). The privileging of one term results in the suppression, marginalization, or devaluation of the other and one way to recover suppressed meanings is through deconstruction which is a way of analyzing texts sensitive to contextual dimensions and marginalized voices. Through deconstruction, the presumed fixity of the existing social order is "destabilized" and the perspectives of the "marginalized can be articulated" (Grosz, 1989: xiv). This process interrupts the hegemony of the dominant order and gives prominence to suppressed voices.

The philosophical perspectives of the French Feminists, such as Cixous, Irigaray, and Kristeva, share some common ground with Poststructuralist writers such as Derrida and Foucault, as well as Lacan, who is considered a Structuralist. These French Feminists are, like Derrida, deconstructionists. They are particularly interested in the relation of psychoanalytic theory to subjectivity and the gendering of the body. Using Lacan's vision of a phallocentric Symbolic Order, they reconstruct the missing female voice in psychoanalytic theory.

The emphasis on differences, criticism of logocentrism, and the use of deconstruction are apparent in the writings of contemporary postmodern philosophers, for example, Lyotard and Rorty who describe their work as a departure from the "search for universals" that has been the project of *Liberal Humanism*, which has characterized the modern era that began in the eighteenth century. Postmodernists view their humanist predecessors as essentialists who assumed that there were innate rather than historically contingent meanings. Furthermore, they criticize the "pursuit of science to provide objective knowledge" of the world (Lyotard, 1984: 27). They devalue the search for universal laws and theories and focus on local

meanings that are socially constructed. Postmodern philosophers object to binary categories and emphasize "diversity, multiplicity, and pluralism" (Hutcheon, 1995: 65). Postmodern philosophers do not recognize the significance of gender, race, and class because these are categories that must be viewed as diverse. Even though this omission is a source of concern for Postmodern Feminists, they recognize, with Postmodern Philosophers, the problems that develop when categories become fixed universal explanations of reality. Consideration of these categories; gender, race and class, as multiple, diverse, and irreducible has been both a contribution and a source of conflict to Postmodern Feminist theorists on the subjects of gender discourse, marginality and epistemology.

2.1.1 Gender Discourse in Postmodern Feminism

Feminists who sought to dismantle the structures of women's oppression made use of a crucial distinction between sex and gender. The term *sex* is used to refer to anatomical differences, while the term *gender* is used to discuss the set of socially constructed meanings, beliefs, behaviours, practices which are assigned to sex. With such a distinction, Feminists point out that gender could vary from one society to another, and historically within cultures. The subject of gender within cultures has shown that it not only distinguishes men from women, but is also instrumental in placing men above women, as well as valorising the qualities attributed to males. Therefore, demolishing gender becomes the intention of Feminists who could easily demonstrate how arbitrary the beliefs of any given society were about the assumptions made about femininity and masculinity.

Postmodern Feminism has been critical of Feminism about demolishing gender for several reasons. Firstly, the replacement of sex by gender can amount to a masculine repudiation of the body. For Postmodern Feminists, women may be unique in many ways which are significant, and as a result, the denial of difference is not necessary. The second argument which Postmodern Feminism develops against the gender split is that such a discourse suggests that there is sex which exists separately from gender. This position does not recognize even the categories of male and female as a way of delineating the differences between bodies and discourse.

Postmodern Feminists view previous feminists' ideas because the latter's repudiation of gender assumes that it is possible to replace gender with sex. In fact, if domination is

structured along gender lines, then Postmodern theory believes that it can contest that domination, while it cannot rationally replace it with a preferred discourse of its own. Theorists, then, suggest that what may be required is not an abolition of gender to render physical sex meaningless, but a proliferation of genders and of sexes accomplished through a repetition of the discourses. Hence, it is the only way to destroy the opposition or dualism. These arguments have been developed in two recent Feminist works dealing with the discourse of gender; Zillah Eisenstein's <u>The Female Body and The Law</u>, and Judith Butler's <u>Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity</u> that both begin with a discussion of the importance of Postmodern theory to an analysis of gender, and conclude with thoughts about the needs and possibilities for subversion of the binary oppositions of gender, sex, and sexualities. Eisenstein's deconstruction of gender is based on her own adaptation of Foucault's discourse theory. She argues that Foucault's method clarifies the materialist and idealistic gender discourse and it erases the distinction between;

"…the realms of concrete facts and non-concrete ideas do not exist in complete opposition. Instead they are mixed within a continuum. The recognition of how language is used to name, to represent, to think, relocates power in a place somewhere in between the real and the ideal: between truths and closure and truths and openness. This place is the realm of discourse, where politics and language, homogeneity and heterogeneity, theory and practices, sex and gender intersect". (Eisenstein, 1988: 7-8)

In her introductory chapter, she asserts that without some notion of unity and centrality, it is impossible to conceptualize hierarchy or the inequality of differences. She says "after all the male body takes its engendered privilege with it to particular sites; the privilege is not uniquely and independently constituted in each instance. There is an aspect of continuity through the locations" (Eisenstein, 1988: 19). Her analysis makes use of two conceptions of male domination: "patriarchy" defined as the economic, social, and cultural relations, in which men have power over women and "phallocracy" defined as the symbolic power which is awarded to men by virtue of anatomical difference (Eisenstein, 1988: 21). For her, these two cannot be equated, nor can they be dissociated just as her analysis resting "uneasily, somewhere in between them", so does the law, which "constructs and mirrors patriarchal social relations through its phallocratic interpretations" (Eisenstein, 1988: 20-22).

For Eisenstein, the problem with the discourses of the sameness and difference is that women are both of them. In other words, women are seen as both the same as men and different from men. She hopes that "a radical sex or gender pluralism will eventually

reconstitute the meaning of equality without the necessity for sameness" (Eisenstein, 1988: 199), and accepts a notion of;

"sexual heterogeneities—in the realm of sexual practices or physical potentialities – our vision of sex equality will not be limited to a notion of women's sameness. Difference and sameness will no longer necessarily be seen as opposites. This is exactly what conservative forces fear: the loss of a hierarchical, oppositional sexual order" (Eisenstein, 1988: 158).

Eisenstein's postmodern vision of a future of radical sexual heterogeneity is important for the challenges which it represents to feminists to rethink the acceptance or rejection of difference from the perspective of gender. Unlike Eisenstein, Judith Butler, in her book, takes a different approach to the question of gender. She argues that gender has been maintained by the discourses of phallogocentrism and compulsory heterosexuality:

"The problematic circularity of a feminist inquiry into gender is underscored by the presence of positions which, on the one hand, presume that gender is a secondary characteristics of persons and those which, on the other hand, argue that the very notion of the person, positioned within language as a "subject," is a masculinist construction and prerogative which effectively excludes the structural and semantic possibility of a feminine gender. The consequence of such sharp disagreement about the meaning of gender (indeed, whether gender is the term to be argued about at all, or whether the discursive construction of sex is, indeed, more fundamental, or perhaps women or woman and/or men and man) establishes the need for a radical rethinking of the categories of identity within the context of relations of radical gender asymmetry." (Butler, 1990:11)

In her analysis, Butler suggests that feminists are undermining their own struggle and she argues that woman is a concept produced by the representational discourses which serve to dominate women. Therefore, in her book, she reveals the production of subjects depending on binary oppositions such as male/female, and the political regulation and ongoing construction of those subjects depended, in turn, upon the accordance between "sex, gender, and desire" (Butler, 1990: 1). In fact, detaching gender from sex or desire is to throw the entire system into disarray because gender is performative; "the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence" (Butler, 1990:25). However, there are some problems with Butler's discursive solution to the discourse of gender. The first is that Butler's proposal appears to return real agency to subjects who are able to choose their gender and discourse. This agency would imply a subject who is restricted in her analysis from choosing in any other way, and who retains

uncertain freedom. Moreover, this freedom is chosen by recognizing the truth lying behind the discourse. Butler accounts for this subjective freedom by including it within the understanding of subject construction. She says "construction is the necessary scene of agency" (Butler, 1990:17). For the second difficulty, Butler acknowledges that parody in and of itself is not necessarily subversive. It becomes subversive when used in particular ways and specific contexts.

What both Eisenstein and Butler's analyses suggest is a crucial component of discourses which cannot be understood within the terms of discourse theory. Butler and Eisenstein have used discourse theories to stress the manipulation of discourse as a means of the creation of sexual and gender diversity and plurality. Their arguments demonstrate ambivalence about whether it is the disruptive discourse which has power, or whether the subversive effects of that discourse become powerful when used in particular contexts or by specific people with deliberate intentions. However, the question of power has another aspect in relation to sex which is also seen as an exercise of power. This focus of feminist theory on power has desired an end to women's oppression. Feminists have wished to change the structures of domination, with a desire stemming from power.

In appropriating postmodern insights into power, feminist theorists have been concerned not just with changing the mechanism of power. Postmodern theorists, including Derrida and Foucault, have appeared to dispute the possibility that power could ever be exercised in an ethical way. Nancy Fraser, a feminist theorist, has attempted to combine feminist ethics with Foucault's theory of power. Fraser, who is critical of Foucault's bracketing of normative considerations from his general theorization of power, states that theorization of power may be necessary because;

"Foucault has no basis for distinguishing, for example, forms of power that involve domination from those that do not; he appears to endorse a one-sided, wholesale rejection of modernity as such. Furthermore, he appears to do so without any conception of what is to replace it ….Clearly, what Foucault needs, and needs desperately, are normative criteria for distinguishing acceptable from unacceptable forms of power." (Fraser, 1989: 32-3)

Not all of the Feminist appropriations of postmodern theory have been concerned, like Fraser, with changing the new forms of power. Nor have all Feminist Postmodern theorists proven to be ready to eschew biological essentialism in the determination of sexual and

gender identity as writers like Butler. By contrast, the works of Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray and Gayatri Spivak have valorized the position of marginality in which women generally have found themselves. Their work differs from Derrida's theory, which locates marginality within texts, or Foucault's work, which makes marginality the element of discursive power relations. Instead, these Feminist Postmodern theorists directly link marginality with an interpretation of the female body.

2.1.2 Women Critics on the Margins

Women critics on the margins are a group of theorists in France. This group is after linking the insights of Jacques Lacan's postmodern reading of Freudian psychoanalytic theory with the growth of the women's liberation movement, named *French Feminists* whose works attempt to associate women's subordinate position within society. The entry into language (*symbolic realm*) and society coincided with the resolution of *Oedipal desires* and repression of the femininity. The feminist theory became, not unlike the psychoanalytic theory, an attempt to restore to consciousness of society. For Julia Kristeva, the theory consisted, in part, "in a retrieval of *pre-oedipal* experience", in which the "link to the mother and the body was yet unbroken" (1980: 235-7). She argued that this experience could still break through into the Symbolic in the form of language, what Kristeva called the "Semiotic" in which "the undulating rhythms and meaningless syllables express the unlimited physical pleasure, jouissance of the relationship to the mother" (1980: 238) during infancy and early childhood. This *jouissance* returns to women in their adult experience of becoming mothers.

"By giving birth, the woman enters into contact with her mother; she becomes, she is her own mother; they are the same continuity differentiating itself. She thus actualizes the homosexual fact of motherhood. …The homosexual-maternal facet is a whirl of words, a complete absence of meaning and seeing; it is a feeling, displacement, rhythm, sound, flashes, and a fantasied clinging to the maternal body as a screen against the plunge" (Kristeva, 1980: 238-9).

On the other hand, Luce Irigaray associated the difference and marginal experience of women, not with their reproductive role and access to pre-Oedipal relationally, but with their physical sexuality. In Irigaray's view, men's essentialist approach to the world is "predetermined by their phallic and unitary sexuality; they have or sex in only one organ" (1985: 27) which is penis. She thinks that women naturally escape phallogocentrism and

essentialism because their bodies do not have only a single sexual organ, but a multiplicity of organs and sexualities. Women's sexuality is, therefore, not fixed, hard or visible as a unity, but fluid, diffuse and indeterminate;

"So woman does not have a sex organ? She has at least two of them but they are not identifiable as ones. Indeed, she has many more. Her sexuality, always at least double, goes even further: it is plural. …woman has sex organs more or less everywhere. She finds pleasure everywhere. … 'She' is indefinitely other in herself" (Irigaray, 1985: 28).

French Feminism moves the discourse of Feminism away from its focus on reproduction in the sense of fertility control. This move, in Spivak's essay "French Feminism in an International Frame", registered something important about female sexuality, which is that "more so than men's sexual pleasure which entails the male reproductive act of insemination"; women's sexual enjoyment is quite distinct from the female reproductive functions of "ovulation, conception, gestation, and so forth. In order to understand such practices, it is necessary to deny clitoris" (Spivak, 1987: 147).

"All historical and theoretical investigation into the definition of women as legal object – in or out of marriage; or as politico-economic passageway for property and legitimacy would fall within the investigation of the varieties of the effacement of the clitoris. … The pre-comprehended suppression or effacement of the clitoris relates to every move to define woman as sex object, or as means or agent of reproduction – with no recourse to subject – function except in terms of those definitions or as "imitators" of men" (Spivak, 1987: 146).

Actually, it is doubtful whether Spivak believes that women really have a meaningful difference on the basis of their physical difference from men. Certainly, she is not interested in speaking from the subject and position of woman in any sort of universalizing sense. Rather, Spivak declares a deconstructive privilege for the concept of woman. Then, in the writings of each of these feminist postmodern theorists, Irigaray, Kristeva and Spivak, there is an emphasis on physicality, plurality, uniqueness of the female body which permits escaping from phallogocentric language.

2.1.3 Feminism and Epistemology

An engagement of Feminist theory and postmodern theory has also emerged in the arena of Feminist epistemology. The feminists who propose a postmodern epistemology, nevertheless, state some reservations that abandon the previous models of feminist sense.

Their concerns are partly strategic. Feminist standpoint theory is sensitive to women's representation in knowledge of their own experience. Yet postmodern theory contributes a critique of the entire Enlightenment project, in which knowledge is connected to power and to truth in a way that has resulted in domination as an accepted epistemological practice.

The original feminist challenge to epistemology points out the omission of women from scientific study. For example, the studies that take male behaviours as normal in a culture would take women's abnormal or deviant. Science is required to reflect the world more accurately and to eliminate male prejudices. For scientific objectivity, recognition of women's differential position in society would become an important element. Scientific attention to gender and women is compatible with the reproduction of theories about women. Moreover, having shaken up the voice of the male scientific observer, feminists wondered also whether that voice must be inherently male. The desire for objectivity and universal knowledge is destined, either to neglect or to colonize women's voices. Feminist theory, therefore, had a role to play not only in calling on science to include women, but in encouraging women to express their own perception of the world.

In fact, feminist theory deals with the new problems, because feminist empiricism has been replaced by a Feminist standpoint theory. The first one is the assumption that women share common concerns. The second one is equating a feminine consciousness with a feminist consciousness. In other words, if women really said what they thought or felt, this knowledge would be progressive and feminist. The third one is its privileging of women's knowledge. The problem of accounting for the feminist privileging of feminist knowledge sets out some important debates among feminists and between Feminism and its critics. An alternative view of women's knowledge claims that women had a distinctive acquisition of knowledge based on their acquisition of gender in childhood. Feminist psychoanalytic theorists argue that the intense early bonding of mother and child affects male and female children differently when they come to the crucial developmental stage of gender acquisition. Female children are more likely to acquire gender as a relational, continuous element in their development while male children learn their maleness only through differentiation and disruption of the maternal bond.

The critique of feminist empiricism and the problems raised within it set the stage for a Feminist Postmodern epistemology. French Feminism, explained in marginality part, criticized the Feminist standpoints created as if the views of women had been unconditioned

by language and dominant discourse. While their work retains ambivalence about the connection between identity, physicality, and socialization, they nevertheless seek to problematize these relations. For example, identities are suspected because they presuppose the unity and coherence of the subject. Theorists like Kristeva and Irigaray seek to connect this incoherence to the physical aspects of women's reproductive or sexual existence; however they do not do this is in order to produce a new female identity. For postmodern feminists, knowledge is not something one possesses but something outside of the subjects which produce them. Therefore, rather than seeking feminist knowledge, Feminists can deconstruct the knowledge.

Sandra Harding who attempts to make a connection between feminist theory and postmodern theory, develops databases. Her book, The Science Question in Feminism, seeks to plot out the insights of postmodern theory without abandoning disciplines made by feminist theorists. She elides the postmodern theory of reality with a feminist expression of women's knowledge. While postmodern theory premises that everyone has a fractured and incoherent self, and all knowledge is perspectival, feminist theorists are able to recognize this in their awareness that the belief in identity and truth has formed part of the history of women's oppression. So with this new approach, feminists no longer need to attempt to tell one true story.

"For this feminist postmodernist epistemology, we must begin from diametrically opposite assumption from those routinely invoked to justify modern science's legitimacy. The greatest resource for would be "knowers" is our nonessential, non-naturalizable, fragmented identities and the refusal of the delusion of a return to an original unity" (Harding, 1986: 193).

Moreover, she finds postmodern theory useful for a variety of philosophical tasks, but she creates ambivalence and uncertainty about a wholesale adoption of the postmodern approach. She applauds it because it directs feminist theory away from a need to universalize about women's experience. On the other hand, she worries about the fact that "postmodernists tend to lose (argue against the very desirability of) feminist theory altogether" (Harding, 1987: 82).

Harding's use of postmodern theory for Feminism is echoed in the work of Jane Flax, Thinking Fragments: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and Postmodern in the Contemporary West,

who supports combination of postmodern critiques of knowledge with the feminist ethics and psychoanalytic insight into the women's oppression. What she is critical of in Postmodernism is that it locates its struggle against power and reason principally within the boundaries of philosophy itself. In doing so, it cannot help but neglect the voices of the oppressed.

"The problem is rather that postmodernists repress, exclude, and erase certain voices and questions I think should be heard and included. This excluded or repressed material includes many of the ideas and social relations feminists and psychoanalytic theorists correctly believe are essential to understanding self, knowledge, and power. Hence postmodernist discourses must be supplemented and interrogated by the others" (Flax, 1990: 192).

The voices which postmodern theory excludes turn out to be important ones. Like Harding, Flax contests that postmodernists tend to use interpretive models which exclude everyday reality. She points out that "it is questionable whether any of the spaces opened up by postmodernism would be comfortable to or inhabitable by those concerned with issues of gender and gender justice" (Flax, 1990:210). She also attempts to construct some alternative space for the subject between postmodernism's presentation of choices; a false self and no self.

"The nature of this dichotomy itself is partially determined by the absence of any systematic consideration of gender or gender relations. Within postmodernist discourses there is no attempt to incorporate or do justice to the specificity of women's experiences or desires as discussed by women ourselves. Women's experiences of subjectivity suggest there are alternatives to the two presented within postmodernist discourses." (Flax, 1990: 210)

Feminism and Postmodernism have been brought together for a number of reasons. Many believed that Postmodernism's interest contained a natural affinity to their own. They witnessed it in postmodern theory's rejection of the Enlightenment, sensitivity to dualistic hierarchies including that of male and female. On the other hand, postmodern feminist theory presents a different estimation of the value of Postmodernism for Feminism. For example, Eisenstein looks outside of postmodern theory to understand the different discourses which are connected and united. Butler restricts discursive possibilities to those already available, and yet reserves the hope that subjects may become aware of these as performative discourses which can be subverted by choice. Fraser suggests that it is possible to make power conform to chosen ethical discourses, or to discriminate the various uses of power. Harding and Flax maintain a belief in the rational, ethical decision maker. Feminist theory may not occur with the Enlightenment presentation of the subject, but it is clear that neither do they agree with

postmodernist nor feminist have also taken a different approach from postmodernists in adopting the categories of Postmodernism. The effects of Postmodernism on Feminism have rarely clarified these databases. Rather, the questions which are central to feminist theory and practice are often relegated to the margins of postmodern theory, or left un-theorized. Whether postmodern feminists can help overcome binary opposition, phallocentricism, and logocentricism is not certain. What is certain, however, is that the time has come for a new conceptual order. Bending on achieving unity, women have excluded and alienated so called abnormal and deviant and marginal people. As a result, human has been impoverished. It seems that men as well as women have much to gain by joining a variety of Postmodern Feminism in their attempts to shape a Feminism that meets people's needs in the contemporary period.

CHAPTER III

## <u>THE BLACK PRINCE</u>: A POSTMODERN FEMINIST NOVEL

Iris Murdoch has stirred the minds with her complex narrative structure presented in her novels. Murdoch's writing patterns and strategies have changed over the years, and she has become more and more nonconventional and even radical (Heusel, 1995: 118). As she reaches her potential as a novelist, she uses "unobtrusive ways of expanding the boundaries of the novel form" (Heusel, 1995: 118). She does not limit herself to one mode or genre or style as her contemporaries such as Margaret Atwood and Doris Lessing.

"Murdoch refuses to confine herself to narrow definitions of genre, expanding such categories as "philosophical novelist", "realistic novelist" , or even "comic novelist"; any such potential for sensationalism is clearly part of larger pattern" (La Capra, 1983: 315).

To free her discourse from the monological style, she "grafts" voices of the carnivalesque onto her own voice (Kristeva, 1980: 83). The Black Prince is the example of her works in which Murdoch mingles the female and male voices and the discourse which represent these voices. In fact, the relationship between the feminine side (author's) and the masculine side (narrator's) of the novel is quite complex and complicated, therefore a conflict emerges between the male narration of narrator and the female writing of the author who is in guise due to the fact that female voice has been silenced and defined as "messy, smelly, and soft" (Murdoch, 2003: 389) for years. Thus, in her novel The Black Prince, she creates a fictional world where she, as a female author, stands behind the male narrator as a disguised character. Murdoch's complicated narrative structure of her novel, The Black Prince, which turned the traditional literary trends inside out, will be analyzed within the frame of Postmodern Feminism that has altered the traditional principles of two controversy approaches: Feminism and Postmodernism by combining these under a single discipline. Thus, within this part of the thesis, the focus will be on how Iris Murdoch's The Black Prince can be labelled as a Postmodern Feminist novel by giving examples from the text via a visual illustration.

The Black Prince is, as a Postmodern Feminist novel, bears in itself both postmodernist and feminist impulses. Actually the novel is like a trivet of which three legs are based on three different sides: feminine, postmodern and postmodern feminist. In the novel, feminine side is represented by Murdoch while postmodern side is represented by Bradley Pearson and finally the two sides – Feminism and Postmodernism – are mingled under the approach of Postmodern Feminism which is presented by Loxias.
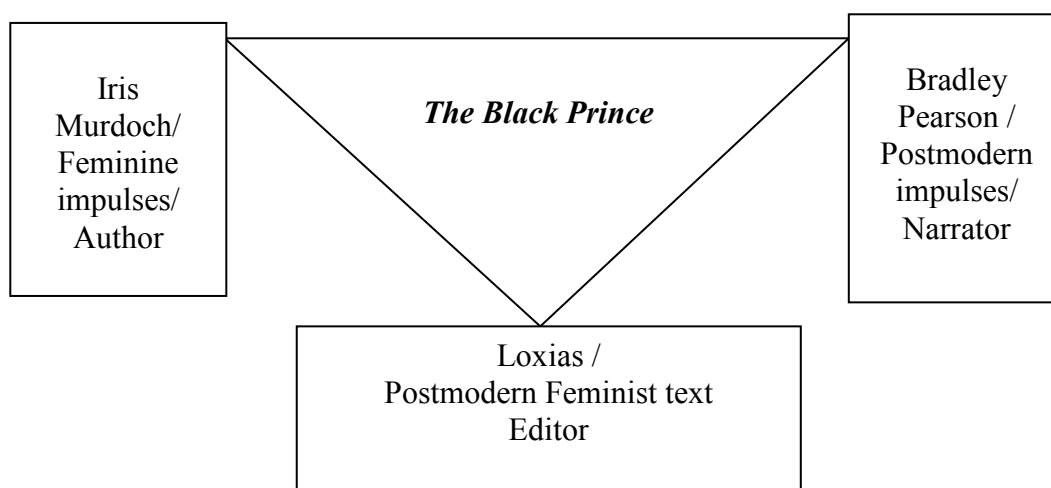
Illustration 1. The trivet of The Black Prince

The Black Prince which has been written by a female author has feminine impulses in it. Murdoch, like the novelists of the nineteenth century, disguised herself and made a male voice her medium to communicate her thoughts and experiences. In other words, the author employs Bradley "as a mouthpiece" of her (Heusel, 1995: 127). She clarifies that she is more comfortable with the male personas because the patriarchal society believes more in what male voice says rather than a female due to the fact that females are thought as the unreliable ones. In the interview, "Recontres avec Iris Murdoch", edited by Jean-Louis Chevalier, she reveals the reason about her choice of male personas as her narrators rather than female ones:

"About writing as a man, this is instinctive. I mean, I think I identify more with my male characters than my female characters. I write through the consciousness of women in those stories which have different narrators, so I write as women also in those stories as well as men; but I suppose it's a kind of comment on the unliberated position of women … I think I

want to write about things on the whole where it doesn't matter whether you're male or female, in which case you'd better be male, because a male represents ordinary human beings, unfortunately as things stand at the moment, whereas a woman is always a woman!" (qtd. in Dooley, 2003: 82)

By using a male narrator as her mouthpiece, she treats the feminine issues under a male persona. In other words, she is a female writer who prefers to put on male masks in order to reflect her ideas freely because; "… The mask of the male narrator … allows the author both the pleasure of projecting herself in a dramatic role and protection in exploring difficult and dangerous regions" (Johnson, 1987: 45-6). Moreover, male narration or male masks in her novels can be read as liberating devices, subversive of male-dominated structures and modes of perception. This view totally opposite of male impersonation is the way what Anglo-American Feminists do (Johnson, 1987: 48). They see male impersonation as a form of evasion and historically the tradition of male impersonation had also been favoured among the women novelists of the nineteenth century by using a male pseudonym. As Annis Pratt writes:

"Male woman novelists have been succeeded in hiding the covert or implicit feminism in their books from themselves. …as a result we get explicit cultural norms superimposed upon an authentic creative mind in the form of all kinds of feints, ploys, masks and disguises embedded in the plot structure and characterization" (Pratt, 15 qtd. in Johnson, 1987, 52).

The novel, <u>The Black Prince</u>, explicitly deals with the limits of articulation, speech, theory, language itself, and to trace the painful tension between the author's own need for communication and her simultaneous need for self-concealment, the forms like masks, voices and disguises are used within the plot structure of the novel. With the voice of a man, that is Bradley in the novel, a silent woman has managed to reveal her thoughts freely and bravely. As Murdoch indicates in her novel;

"Men truly manifest themselves in the long pattern of their acts, and not in any nutshell of self-theory. This is supremely true of the artist, who appears, however much he might imagine that he hides, in the revealed extension of his work. And so I am too here exhibited whose pitiful instinct is alas still for a concealment quite at odds with my trade" (Murdoch, 2003: 12).

In fact, Murdoch's preference of a male narrator as her mouthpiece sets her free to make ironic criticism of the male thoughts about women, because with the male voice she can reflect the defects of male thoughts about women. Furthermore, her preference "to be male" is

in many ways "central to her art" (Cohan, 1982: 223). Her choice of male narrator allows for a "playful act of male impersonation as an ironic commentary on the paradox of fiction writing" (Cohan, 1982: 223). In the beginning of the novel, there is a part that is directly related with the writing style of women which is mocked by men. Murdoch attempts to criticize the understanding of men which proposes that women can only write or cope with trivial writing styles such as diary:

"A sort of Seducer's Diary with metaphysical reflections might have been an ideal literary form for me, I have often thought. But the years are spent and gone to oblivion that might have filled it. So much for women" (Murdoch, 2003:8).

The assumption that women are not capable of writing is criticized with the words from the novel; "she is not good at writing letters, never has been", but she has a great faith in the ability of woman to write and she asks for the permission to "give her time. She will write" (Murdoch, 2003: 349). Moreover, the place of women in the novel is reminded with the words; "Of course men play roles, but women play roles too, blanker ones. They have, in the play of life, fewer good lines" (Murdoch, 2003: 34). The significance of the women in the life scene is tried to be pointed out without any claims that women are superior to men, instead in a humble way; she highlights the significance of these "fewer" but "good" lines. Moreover, the difficulties that women come across are reflected both through the utterances of Bradley and the author's, Murdoch's, own comments embedded in the text. She refers to the hard times of women writers of the past, which reminds the cases of women writers like Mary Ann Evans who wrote under the pseudonym of a male name George Eliot. "I look forward to and toiled for my freedom to devote all my time to writing. Yet on the other hand, I did manage to write, and without more than occasional repining, during my years of bondage…" (Murdoch, 2003:9). Murdoch also manages to imply and celebrate the long history of woman writing with the words; "-'I discovered him!' I shouted. 'I was writing long before him, I was well known when he was in the cradle'!" (Murdoch, 2003: 45). However, since women reflect their thoughts and feelings orally instead of writing, there is nearly no evidence of women's writings. Thus, it is certainly significant that the women in the novel, who perform most of the crucial actions, are introduced after the men, because women "have a sort of abstract quality about them" (Murdoch, 2003: 26).

Bradley mentions about women, "about whom" he "shall not speak since they are irrelevant and unimportant" (Murdoch, 2003: 7). Indeed, there is a despising situation for women due to the fact that "all men despise all women really" (Murdoch, 2003: 32), because at the end of the novel it is clear that the women have been the motivating forces behind Bradley's metamorphosis which can be listed as his ability to perform sexually "when sexual desire is also love it connects us with the whole world and becomes a new mode of experience" (Murdoch, 2003: 203), his inspiration to write a novel "through the door that Julian opened my being into another world" (Murdoch, 2003: 382), and his acceptance of his indictment for murder; "I gave myself up to the course of events with a certain resignation and without screams of protest, for another and deeper reason too, which had to do with Julian" (Murdoch, 2003: 380). For instance, Rachel Baffin, the wife of Arnold, is crucial because her murder of her husband whether it is intentionally or unintentionally results not only from her jealousy of Arnold and his extramarital affairs but from jealousy caused by the love affair between Bradley and Julian. Indirectly these circumstances bring the death of Arnold. If Bradley had renewed his love affair with his ex-wife Christian, then Christian could not have enticed Arnold into an extramarital affair, thus Bradley would not have had time to be enamored of Julian. Thus, Bradley experiences his other metamorphoses which are directly related with Julian who is Bradley's love and his muse. With the help of her love, Bradley gains the inspiration that he needs for writing.

"…and through the door that Julian opened my being passed into another world. When I thought earlier that my ability to love her was my ability to write, my ability to exist at last as the artist I have disciplined my life to be…" (Murdoch, 2003: 382).

Though Julian is Bradley's inspiration for writing, he mistreats his own muse and he experiences a sexual performance with her. Bradley admits his sexual experience - a wild one - with Julian by referring it as a characteristic of being an artist; "every artist is a masochist to his own muse, that pleasure at least belongs to him intimately" (Murdoch, 2003: 382). So, he goes through climaxes of his life with female characters in the novel, though he associates them with hell; "women are hell" (Murdoch, 2003: 104). In general, he hates women and regards them as "death-bringers" (Murdoch, 2003: 17), and "destroyers" (Murdoch, 2003: 355), and "smelly" beings, while men are "stronger" (Murdoch, 2003: 32), "clean" (Murdoch, 2003: 389), and the ones "who live by words and writing" (Murdoch, 2003: 346).

In fact, Murdoch, as a female, uses Bradley to criticize and undermine the male understanding and thoughts about women. Therefore, Murdoch behind the persona of Bradley can freely declare her thoughts without any concealment. Moreover, Deborah Johnson finds it an opportunity for Murdoch to speak through or mimic a male narrator, and according to her, Murdoch's novels "trace the painful tension between the author's own need for communication and her simultaneous need for self – concealment" (1987: 36). The self concealment of Murdoch which is used for the need of communication is a direct reference to mimetism which is a concept derived from French theoretician Luce Irigaray.

In this sense, the novel illustrates the concept of 'mimetism'; "which is the acting out or role playing within the text which allows the woman writer the better to know and hence to expose what it is she mimics" (Jacobus, 1981: 210). In doing so, Murdoch uses mimetism as a way of exploring and ironically undoing the dominant male encoding. This acting out or role playing within the text is embedded in the actual structure of the novel.

"To play with mimesis, is, therefore, for a woman, to attempt to recover the place of her exploitation by discourse, without letting herself be simply reduced to it. It is to resubmit herself . . . to "ideas," notably about her, elaborated in/by a masculine logic, but in order to make "visible," by an effect of playful repetition, what should have remained hidden: the recovery of a possible operation of the feminine in language. It is also to "unveil" the fact that, if women mime so well, they do not simply reabsorb themselves in this function. They also remain elsewhere" (Jacobus, 1981: 210).

The male mimicry which is seen as a potential means of undoing the repressive is related with the terms of the current psychoanalytical based theories of sexual difference which is encoded in language itself (Lacan's symbolic order), as a way of exposing through imitation that paves the way to the problem of language in feminine writings. Namely, it can point out the feminine in language. Furthermore, Jacobus indicates that the feminine in writing is:

"utopian attempts to define the specificity of woman's writing – desired or hypothetical, but rarely empirically observed – either founder on the rock of essentialism (the text as body), gesture towards an avant-garde practice which turns out not to be specific to women, or, like Héléne Cixous in " The Laugh of Medusa", do both. If anatomy is not destiny, still less can it be language" (Jacobus, 1981: 37).

Additionally, Jacobus mentions that women can write with many plural sides unlike men and their phallogocentric writings because women, as well as Murdoch, reject everything

finite, definite, structured, loaded with meaning in the existing state of society, and persist in challenging the discourses of the past. This challenge can be done merely by abolishing the grand narratives. In fact, she tries to show that woman represents not so much a sex as an attitude, any resistance to man's conventional culture and language which is only focused on phallus. Actually, Murdoch in her text, as stated by Cixous in "The Laugh of the Medusa", admires the sexuality in women that is remarkably constant and almost mystically superior to the phallic single-mindedness it transcends:

"Though masculine sexuality gravitates around the penis, engendering that centralized body (in political anatomy) under the dictatorship of its parts, woman does not bring about the same regionalization which serves the couple head/genitals and which is inscribed only within boundaries. Her libido is cosmic, just as her unconscious is worldwide" (Cixous, qtd. in New French Feminism, 1979: 259).

These theoretical insights, certainly, suggest ways of exploration and role-playing in Murdoch's novels; they also help illuminate the significant gap between male and female narrative styles. Murdoch as an exponent of feminine writing examines how far male narration in female writing can become a liberating device for modes of perception. In a broader sense, the use of male narration is much more a flamboyant subversion of explicit traditions of feminists and may be closer to what Murdoch is doing with her male narrators. Then, the question of Murdoch's use of male narration as a form of evasion, and a way of subverting the patriarchal structures and assumptions reflected in the texts comes to mind.

The playfulness of Murdoch's narrative operates precisely to expose the female subject behind the male mask or role playing. This acting out or role playing or subversion of gender roles within the text is embedded in the actual structure of the novel, because "it is a freer world that you're in as a man than a woman" (Chevalier, qtd in Dooley, 2003: 82). The novel foregrounds the problems of femininity deliberately by framing the female figures within the text as figments of imaginary from the masculine perspective. In containing women within a figure of a man, Murdoch demonstrates how woman is trapped inside the gender, but her strategic engagement with fictions of male subjectivity demonstrates what it means to be outside hegemonic representations of gender.

Indeed, self concealment or adoption of a male persona by a female writer is "quite at odds with" contemporary "trade" (Murdoch, 2003: 4), because of the fact that Murdoch is a

writer of postmodern age and there is no need for impersonating. Especially in her novels of the 1970s and 1980s, Murdoch relieves her omniscient voice and sacrifices some of her authority and allows the characters to be a part of the dialogical play of the text, thereby embodying contingency (Heusel, 1995: 208). Thus, narrated from the perspective of the first person, the novel turns into an example of postmodern narrative style as well as its other references to postmodern fiction. Therefore, this constitutes the other leg of the trivet of The Black Prince. Murdoch's need for a male voice, then leads the narrative structure of the novel towards a postmodernist one which takes the first person narration as an indication of postmodern technique.

Postmodern fiction, in fact, makes use of almost every technique that has so far been employed in the narrative tradition of literature. However, postmodern narrative theory invents a new terminology that deconstructs the whole narrative tradition, focuses on the fictionality of a work (surfiction), on the writing process (metafiction), on the ambiguity of meaning (narrative within narrative), on the lack of authenticity (intertextuality), and plays with the narrative language (parody and pastiche). These techniques of postmodern narrative tradition are in a way representations of the examples of past that take place within the structure of present. In other words, by constructing the past within the present, postmodern narrative tradition constructs its characteristics, and intertextuality is the best example of this tradition.

Intertextuality is first used by Julia Kristeva (Allen, 2005: 11) to refer to the distinction between creativity and productivity. She argues that creativity does not assume the existence of an earlier process, material and model. Productivity, on the other hand, assumes a pre-existing raw material. Each so-called new text is a reworking of the existing body of literature. Texts have discrepancies and inconsistencies arising from the fact that their various elements, parts, and layers are brought together (Connor, 2004: 208).

"The fundamental concept of intertextuality is that no text, much as it might like to appear so, is original and unique-in-itself; rather it is a tissue of inevitable, and to an extent unwitting, references to and quotations from other texts. These in turn condition its meaning; the text is an intervention in a cultural system. Intertextuality is therefore a very useful concept – indeed some would say essential – for literary study, as it concerns the study of cultural sign systems generally" (Allen, 2005: 1)

The Black Prince has intertextual connotations embedded in it either as direct references or indirect allusions and implications. First of all, reference to Hamlet and *Der Rosenkavalier* opera are the examples of intertextual traits. *Der Rosenkavalier* is a comic opera in three acts by Richard Strauss (Fisher, 2001: 1). It is a special and significant image of the novel and directly takes place in the scene where Bradley and Julian attend the same opera. The opera has a special symbolic role because it contains a love story and lovers of thi story are of different ages; woman is older than his young lover. This situation is directly similar to the love affair that takes place in The Black Prince, though the roles are vice versa. In other words, contrary to the characters of the opera, in the story of Bradley and Julian, Bradley is the older lover while Julian is the younger lover of him.

"I was asking to you if you knew the story.'
What story?
'Of Rosenkavalier.'
'Of course I don't know the story of Rosenkavalier.'
'Well, quick, you'd better read your programme – '
'No, you tell me.'
'Oh well, it's quite simple really, it's about this young man, Octavian, and the Marschallian loves him, and they are lovers, only she's much older than he is and she's afraid she'll lose him because he's bound to fall in love with somebody his own age – '
'How old is he about twenty and she's about thirty.'
'Thirty?'
'Yes, I think, anyway quite old, and she realizes that he just regards her as a sort of mother-figure and it begins with them in bed together and of course she's very happy because she's with him but she's also very unhappy because she knows she's sure to lose him and - " (Murdoch, 250-1).

Bradley tells the story of the opera to Julian, and since Bradley realizes the similarity between the story of opera and his own tendency towards Julian, this causes him to vomit after watching it only several minutes later. In away, since he is aware of his hidden sexual desires for Julian, he cannot stand this repressed sexual feelings and vomits. Moreover, the use of this reference to the plot of *Der Rosenkavalier* foreshadows the events which will take place later in the novel. While Bradley and Julian will have a love affair, as the Princess and Octavian did, both Julian and Octavian will eventually leave their older lovers and find partners of their own age.

Likewise, there is another reference to a literary text: Shakespeare's Hamlet. In the novel, Bradley gives a "Hamlet tutorial" for Julian; "Bradley,…I've come for my Hamlet tutorial" (Murdoch, 2003: 185). Indeed, there is a direct reference to Shakespeare and his

work by glorifying Shakespeare as a great literary man, "Shakespeare knew better than any man. Hamlet is a wild act of audacity, a self-purging, a complete self-castigation in the presence of god" (Murdoch, 2003: 192) and also Bradley implies that "Hamlet is the most famous and accessible of his plays" (Murdoch, 2003: 190). In the scene of his lecture to Julian on <u>Hamlet</u>, Bradley is transfixed at her announcement that she once played Hamlet at school. He becomes intensely interested in the details of her costume, questioning her at length, but with a new tone in his voice.

"I played Hamlet once,' said Julian.
'What?'
'I played Hamlet once, at school, I was sixteen.'
…
"I got up. I felt suddenly exhausted, almost dazed damp with sweat from head to foot as if I were outlined with warm quicksilver. I opened the window and a breath of slightly cooler air entered the room, polluted and dusty, yet also somehow bearing the half-obliterated ghosts of flowers from distant parks. …I opened the front of my shirt all the way down to the waist and scratched in my curly mat of grey hair. I turned to face Julian.
'So you played Hamlet. Describe your costume'" (Murdoch, 2003: 192-93).

Bradley is sexually excited by the thought of Julian in the position of <u>Hamlet</u>. However, the feeling Bradley experiences is more than a thrill of lust for Julian disguised as Hamlet into whom Shakespeare poured his soul for perfect incarnation of love and art as one. In those "watery-blue eyes" (Murdoch, 2003: 48) of Julian as Hamlet, the love of wisdom is fused with erotic love. Indeed, attributing sexual implications to Hamlet shows that Murdoch, indirectly, mocks or ridicules the heroic behaviours of Hamlet. She erases the heroic and powerful man figure of Hamlet by associating him with a sex object. Thus, there appears juxtaposition between classical Hamlet figure and new constructed Hamlet figure. In fact, the use of <u>Hamlet</u> in a contemporary work of an art means juxtaposition of the Elizabethan and the postmodern novel. The "theological" and "cultural" assumptions of these ages "as manifest through their literary forms" are ironically compared by the reader "through medium of formal parody" (Hutcheon, 2000: 31). Thus, the scene of <u>Hamlet</u> placed in the novel is also an example of parody of the Shakespeare's <u>Hamlet</u>, because parody is:

"the imitative use of the words, style, attitude, tone and ideas of an author in such a way as to make them ridiculous. This is usually achieved by exaggerating certain traits, using more or less the same technique as the cartoon caricaturist. In fact, *it is* a kind of satirical mimicry. As a branch of satire, its purpose may be corrective as well as derisive" (Cuddon, 1979: 483).

In the novel, there is also another reference to a literary text; Dante's poem, <u>Rime Petrose</u>[1]. Yet, Dante's poem is given directly without any change and there is no satire in its use in the novel. Thus, this is different from the parody; it is an example of pastiche. As Hutcheon asserts, "parody does seek differentiation in its relationship to its model" while "pastiche operates more by similarity and correspondence, … pastiche is imitative" (38). Therefore, unlike parody, there is not an adaptation in pastiche rather the inserted texts should remain loyal to the original model without modification, alteration or paraphrasing.

"S'io avessi le belle trecce prese,
che fatte son per me scudiscio e ferza,
pigliandole anzi terza,
con esse passerei vespero e squille:
e non sarei pietoso né cortese,
anzi farei com'orso quando scherza;
e se Amor me ne sferza,
io mi vendicherei di più di mille.
Ancor ne li occhi, ond'escon le faville
che m'infiammano il cor, ch'io porto anciso,
guarderei presso e fiso,
per vendicar lo fuggir che mi face;
e poi le renderei con amor pace" (Murdoch, 2003: 366).

English translation of the poem:[2]

"Oh, if I could but seize those lovely tresses
which have become both whip and lash for me,
from very early matins
I'd make them ringing bells unto the night:
and I would not be pitying or kind,
but like a playful bear with her I'd play;
and, since Love whips me still,
I would avenge myself a thousandfold.
Into those eyes, from which the sparks come forth
that burn this deadened weight that is my heart,
I very close would stare,
thus to avenge the cowardice of my past,"
and then with love I'd give her peace at last

---

[1] Dante's poem Rime Petrose is translated into English as "Poems for Stone Lady". There are other poems within this poem. "Così nel mio parlar voglio esser aspro" is one of them which is translated into English as "I Want to Charge My Words with So Much Harshness".
[2] This quotation is taken from this poem. English translation of the poem is retrieved from:
http://www.italianstudies.org/poetry/st4.htm

Since parody and pastiche base on the imitation of an earlier text or object, there is an impulse to imitate the serious manner and characteristic features of a particular literary work, or the distinctive style of a particular author, or the typical stylistic and other features of a serious literary genre. Thus, Murdoch has an impulse to imitate the features of <u>Hamlet</u> and Shakespeare's style by applying the imitation to a lowly or comically inappropriate subject. The same character is narrated from different points of view to reveal the fictionality of the text, because "Hamlet is words, and so is hamlet". Therefore, words are a character's being as well as its author's. "Words are Hamlet's being as they were Shakespeare's" (Murdoch, 2003: 191). Each author writes with his or her perspective because writing is an author's medium to communicate with readers. "Men who live by words and writing can, as I have already observed, attach an almost magical efficacy to a communication in that medium (Murdoch, 2003: 346). Moreover, Murdoch through the medium of Bradley writes her thoughts, and this medium enables her even to mention about the love of men as seen in the example of Bradley.

"This book has been in some way the story of my life. But it has also been I hope an honest tale, a simple love story. And I would not wish it to seem at the end that I have, in my own sequestered happiness, somehow forgotten the real being of those who have figured as my characters" (Murdoch, 2003: 384).

Bradley tells the story of his life through the medium of writing. Furthermore, he mentions about his writing process and he draws a thin line between fact and fiction with the words "I forget the real being of those who have figured as my characters" (Murdoch, 2003: 384). This indication of writing process and relationship between real and fictional characters are the examples of metafiction and self-reflexivity which directly refer to the writing and narrative process.

"Metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality. In providing a critique of their own methods of construction, such writings not only examine the fundamental structures of narrative fiction, they also explore the possible fictionality of the world outside the literary fictional text" (Waugh, 1984: 2).

Metafiction violates the standard novelistic expectations by experimenting with subject matter, form, and temporal sequence; departs from the traditional categories of realist romance, insists on the fictionality of the novels and betrays the construction of reality. Likewise, self-reflexive narrative incorporates into its narration reference to the process of

composing the fictional story and openly refers to the writing process by exposing the process of composition (Hutcheon, 2000: 89). Thus, Murdoch in the novel uses the process of composition as an outcome of what is narrated in the novel. For instance, in the novel, Bradley directly addresses to the reader several times.

"The reader may think it was unconsciously stupid of me not to have foreseen that I could not continue simply to derive happiness from this situation. But the reader, unless he is at this moment of reading himself madly in love, has probably merciful forgotten, if indeed he ever knew, what this state of mind is like" (Murdoch, 2003: 235).

In fact, the author of the postmodern text demands an active role from the reader. The reader participates in the narrative and brings his/her own comment. Sometimes there are blank pages to be filled by the readers; sometimes the reader becomes a textual element within the narrative. In the novel, for instance, the author uses different readers who are both other characters of the novel and readers of Bradley's story. This is done to betray the fictionality of the text and to indicate that the same story may have different meanings and interpretations for different readers.

The flexibility of interpretation for different readers, indeed, is an evidence of abolishing grand or metanarratives, because as Bradley points out, "when you used words they conveyed something which simply was not true" (Murdoch, 2003: 352). "Metanarratives or grand narratives are, broadly speaking, the supposedly transcendent and universal truths that underpin Western civilization and that function to give that civilization a legitimation" (Bertens, 1994:119). The totalizing theory, which purports to be universal, is seen by postmodernists as an "unwelcome hangover from the Enlightenment – humanist quest for total explanation, prediction and control" (Brooks, 1997: 26). Hence, with the plurality of postmodernism, the idea of totalizing oneness or only one truth is abolished. Truths in the plural or rejection of a single truth is emphasized in Murdoch's novel with the postscripts placed at the end of the book. Postscripts from the other characters in the novel prove the rejection of a single truth. At the end of the novel, each character tells the story or events from their own perspectives and each claims that his point of view is the single truth. This reflects Murdoch's adherence to the idea that there is no single truth but truths in plural. The theory of the plurality of truths reminds the prominent postmodern theoretician Linda Hutcheon, who famously remarked, in her book A Poetics of Postmodernism, that "there are only *truths* in the plural, and never one Truth" (1995: 109). Truths in the plural which is achieved at the end

with the postscripts also create an ambiguity in the narrative, which is another characteristic of postmodern novel and stresses fictionality of a work as a surfiction:

"And so, for me, the only fiction that still means something today is the kind of fiction that tries to explore the possibilities of fiction beyond its own limitations; the kind of fiction that challenges the tradition that governs it; the kind of fiction that constantly renews our faith in man's intelligence and imagination rather than man's distorted view of reality; the kind of fiction that reveals man's playful irrationality rather than his righteous rationality. This I call surfiction" (Federman, 1993: 37).

Bradley's story and his narration of his story is totally a fiction constructed by Murdoch. There appears firstly a fictionalized love story of Bradley Pearson narrated by himself and contradicted by the other characters of the novel within the postscripts, then foreword and last word of an editor which reveal the unspeakable facts (indeed these facts are fiction too) and some corrections, revisions and concluding remarks come. In the final frame a book comes into being written by Iris Murdoch with the name The Black Prince which is a fiction. Within these narrations in narration and fiction in fiction, there is one thing concrete: all these are fictionalized lives and characters, or in other words surfiction.

The novel of Murdoch is such a fiction that it mocks with the limits of fact and tries to exhibit that there is no single reality. Her fiction explores the limitations of fiction beyond its borders, turns the traditional doctrines upside down, and lastly her novel turns into such a fiction that it is barely possible to express with a single approach and discipline. Thus, the novel written by Murdoch is declared by Bradley as writing beyond the borders. Moreover, the novel that is formed from on three legs is also a representation of an unnamed approach which has shifts and borrowings from other strands such as Feminism and Postmodernism for the future.

"How little most so-called psychologists seem to know about its shifts and its borrowings. At some point in a black vision I apprehended the future. I saw this book, which I have written,…I saw myself a new man, altered out of recognition. I saw beyond and beyond" (Murdoch, 2003: 381).

Thinking of beyond the norms constructs the last leg of the trivet, because in this novel Murdoch goes beyond the common conventional language and the common conventional world due to the fact that these are impotent in describing and communicating the issues she wants to explore. In her early analysis of Murdoch's work, A.S. Byatt says that Murdoch

seeks an experience and a language "independent of our ordinary modes of understanding" (1965, 15).

Murdoch redefines the boundaries of the novel of formal realism to address moral issues that are still unresolved at the end of the twentieth century. Murdoch has always defied categorization. Unlike many contemporary novelists, she refuses to console readers by fulfilling their expectations, whether those expectations are feminist or postmodernist. In her essay, "Against Dryness", she reminds the reader that only "the greatest art invigorates without consoling, and defeats our attempts…to use it as magic" (Murdoch, 1961: 20). Murdoch in her struggle to avoid any kind of blindness indulges in a search for fresh methods and patterns unfamiliar to reader. Her independence and her security as a thinker give her the authority to subvert and enrich the novel with forms from other genres. She has not only published in many genres but is an expert at mixing modes. Murdoch interjects a strong and irreverent flavor into her texts. Furthermore, when she mixes genres, and mixes techniques within genres, a homogeneous structure occurs rather than a physical or heterogeneous change. Indeed, she has been breathing a new life into the novel form by mixing two approaches, Feminism and Postmodernism, in her novel, <u>The Black Prince</u>.

The mixture is concluded with a new technique or an approach. However, Murdoch, who combines and mixes techniques within her novel with the desire for a new approach, is unable to label this new construction that she uses in her novel, and therefore she uses an editor; Loxias, whose name is "one of the epithets used for Apollo, god of art, leader of the muses" (Conradi 1989: 185), to form third leg of this study where <u>The Black Prince</u> is denoted as Postmodern feminist novel.

Furthermore, Murdoch creates, "in a great cauldron of ideas and images, impulses and feelings", Loxias, so that a god enters the text to facilitate the production of the text (Heusel, 1988: 9). At first, with the entrance of Loxias, at face value as the editor of the novel, Murdoch's written story and Bradley's narrated story find shape in his editing. Loxias's ambivalence indicates his many ontological possibilities and his being in the text awakens questions: Is Loxias a character, a figment of Bradley's imagination, an inspirational voice in Bradley's head? Or Murdoch's aim or mean? The possible answer may be uttered as Loxias's being something other than a real editor. By the end of the novel, the purpose of this figure is revealed, and Loxias becomes the extraterrestrial or imaginary person who is rising above the

novelistic world. Indeed, Loxias is never on stage, but he does serve as a self-reflective and alienating framing device.

Loxias is placed as the central figure of the text, because he is the uniting force of the approaches embedded in the text. He is the representation of the new breath in the novel that Murdoch seeks for within the words "I [Murdoch] saw this book, which I have written… beyond and beyond…At some point in a black vision I apprehended the future" (Murdoch, 2003: 381). In fact, this black vision that "altered out of recognition" creates an ambiguity or a different task to define for Murdoch and this ambiguity is tried to be solved with the character Loxias. Therefore, Loxias is a uniting force of the novel and representative of Postmodern Feminism. In a broader sense, Loxias is the jointing point of the disguised female writer and male voiced first person narrator of the novel. Thus, while these two sides occupy the roles of the feminist side and the postmodernist side, Loxias functions as the Postmodern Feminist side.

It is seen that feminist part and postmodernist part are united under the term of Postmodern Feminism likewise female and masculine voices are combined within the name of Loxias. In other words, the name Loxias is a key concept in the pattern of the novel. Loxias has a mythological reference to Apollon; "Loxias is a proxy for the god Apollo himself" because "Loxias is one of Apollo's common epithes" (Murdoch, 2003: xx). Moreover, within the novel, there are references to Apollo's characteristics "No doubt Mr Loxias has influenced him [Bradley]. Music is an art and a symbol of all art" (Murdoch, 2003: 408). Apollo is known as the "god of music and poetry" (Grimal, 1990: 50). Furthermore, Apollo, specifically as "god of prophecy" (Sacks, 2005: 35), was known as Loxias which means the obscure. The striking point of the novel is that Murdoch searches for a new medium and experiences ambiguity in labelling her novel. The ambiguity in The Black Prince is associated with the editor, Loxias whose name also means obscure. This obscurity can be solved by referring it with the Postmodern Feminism which is unknown during the time this novel was written. Postmodern Feminism has been announced and begun to be used first in the 1980s and since this novel was first published in 1973, it is natural for Murdoch to be unaware of such an approach. Hence comes the obscurity and Loxias takes his symbolic name after this obscurity. Loxias, as a representative of Postmodern Feminism, is a combination of Feminism (Murdoch) and Postmodernism (Bradley) due to the fact that there occurs an integration between these two approaches.

"In fact, each of these tendencies has much learn from the other; each is in possession of valuable resources that can help remedy the deficiencies of the other. Thus, the ultimate stake of an encounter between feminism and postmodernism is the prospect of a perspective that integrates their respective strengths while eliminating their perspective weakness. It is the prospect of a postmodernist feminism" (Fraser&Nicholson, 1989: 84).

Postmodern Feminism is a new strand with a growing popularity as Chris Beasley also expresses that "Postmodern feminism represents the strongest and most strict employment of the postmodern trajectory in Feminism" (Beasley, 2005: 100). Loxias also believes that "he [Bradley] added dimension to my being" (Murdoch, 2003: 405). Furthermore, it is essential to recognize Postmodernism as plural rather than a singular entity and the same can be said of Feminism. As Ihab Hassan claims that Postmodernism must be viewed as both "an artistic tendency" and "a social phenomenon", it is, for instance, also an apt formulation of Feminism (1982: 266). However, feminists who classify themselves as postmodern feminists have difficulty in explaining what it is like to be both a postmodern and a feminist.

"As for my own identity: I can scarcely…be an invention of Bradley's, since I have survived him. I hear it has even been suggested that Bradley Pearson and myself are both simply fictions, the invention of a minor novelists. Fear will inspire any hypothesis. No, no. I exist" (Murdoch, 2003: 405).

At the end of the novel, while Loxias makes a summary of the Bradley's story and postscripts, he also summarizes the relationship between Feminism and Postmodernism in the name of "editor" who is there to utter truths, not a singular but in plural; "the reader will recognize the voice of truth when he hears it. If he does not, so much the worse for him" (Murdoch, 2003: 404). The truth will come in the presence of Postmodern Feminism and to reveal this Loxias deals with the questions and answers that may be brought out within time. Loxias questions the females in the Bradley's story. For him, the understanding of womanhood conceals the truths; Mrs Baffin lies to protect herself, Mrs Belling to protect Mrs Baffin" (Murdoch, 2003: 404). Moreover, he asks the question of "would she admit that her literary style was influenced by Bradley? This too she is trying to, hard to conceal" (Murdoch, 2003: 405). He highlights the influences of Postmodernism on Feminism. On the other hand, Loxias criticizes Feminists' discrimination of woman with the question that "Why are you so anxious to divide that blackamoor in two, what are you afraid of?" (Murdoch, 2003: 406), because for the previous Feminist thought, there is an understanding of general sisterhood or

womanhood only among the women who are European and white. However, with the universalizing acceptance of Postmodernism, the limits of Feminism are extended. Therefore, postmodern feminists welcome "each woman who reflects on their writings to become the kind of feminist she wants to be" (Tong, 2009: 270), because the aim is universalism and there is no division in Postmodern Feminism.

By this way, the three dimensional structure of the novel is established. While Murdoch represents the feminine part of the trivet Bradley represents the postmodern part with intertextuality, surfiction and other narrative techniques. Then, as the compilation of both, Loxias comes to stand for Postmodern Feminist part which completes the trivet with editing. Loxias, in the final part of the novel, as the editor, brings together the creativity of author, productivity of narrator. With this new editing perspective and out of this interaction, a Postmodern Feminist perspective is thus created. In other words, Loxias can be named as the heralder of a new approach which was unknown at that time and the obscurity of the remarks of Loxias lies in this fact. Then, it can be asserted that what makes The Black Prince a Postmodern Feminist novel is the effort of Loxias to merge and blend the two approaches separately represented but uniquely produced in a single work; The Black Prince.

CHAPTER IV

POSTMODERN FEMINISM HIDDEN WITHIN POSTSCRIPTS

Iris Murdoch's novel, <u>The Black Prince</u>, which has both feminine and postmodern qualities, can be classified as a postmodern feminist novel which is an approach combining the two in a single one: Postmodern Feminism. The novel written by Murdoch, narrated by Bradley, and edited by Loxias at the end of the novel with postscripts presents postmodern feminist tendency. Each postscript written on behalf of an individual, female or male, indicates the traces of both Feminism and Postmodernism. Thus, the main focus of this chapter will be on the postscripts combining both the feminist and postmodernist characteristics constructing the bridge toward a postmodern feminist approach of Murdoch's <u>The Black Prince</u> written by the characters of the novel.

Within the novel, <u>The Black Prince</u>, there are six postscripts; four of them are written by the characters; Christian, Rachel, Julian, and Francis Marloe, one of them by Bradley Pearson, and the last one by the editor, Loxias. These fictional postscripts give an idea upon the content of the novel. Particularly, the postscripts by the four characters counter Bradley Pearson's story by reinforcing the unlikely aspects of his tale. Bradley's story is narrated from different points of views of the characters with the devices of 'editor', 'forewords,' 'postscripts' and the first-person narration (Lamarque, 1996: 99). Each postscript writer classifies Bradley in accordance with his or her psychological mood and according to their view of him. In fact, this plurality is the indicative of the Postmodernism which welcomes plurality. Moreover, these plural fictionalized truths create "circumstances from one into another" (373).

The postscripts, indeed, help to guide an appropriate interpretation of Murdoch's novel, because "each of these functions as a kind of *apologia* for its narrator, justifying his or her actions in the main story in such a way that casts serious doubt on the motivations behind Bradley's account and its veracity" (Nicol, 2006: 159). Moreover with the postscripts, the truth suggested by Bradley is demolished due to the fact that each character writes their own

truths with his or her perspective. Therefore, "in this novel, one never can tell: all the acts of criticism it contains – from Bradley's partial reviews of Arnold's novels to the postscripts analysing his own narrative – contain insights, "truths", but which are skewed by desire" (Nicol, 2006: 161). Through postscripts, the only truth, presented by Bradley, turns into truths in plural with the traces of each character. As Lamarque points out:

"…through the device of postscripts, purportedly written by other characters we are presented with another picture of him rather different from his own. His former friends, more down to earth, though variously self-interested, depict him as a pitiful, even contemptible, charlatan lost in fantasy and delusion and a suitable case for psychoanalysis" (Lamarque, 1996: 93).

In the first postscript, given under the title "Postscript by Bradley Pearson", deals with the accusation and trial of Bradley who is accused of murdering his friend Arnold Baffin a "fluent and prolific writer" (Murdoch, 2003: 138), therefore he is imprisoned. As Bradley declares; "I was in a prison, I was in a concentration camp (Murdoch, 2003: 253). Bradley's story is "narrated by him [Bradley] from prison…" (Murdoch, 2009: xv). After the story of Bradley written in the prison, Bradley goes to the court and is found guilty at his trial.

"In a purely technical sense I was condemned for having murdered Arnold. (The jury was out of room for less than a half an hour. Counsel did not even bother to leave their seats.) In a more extended sense, and this too provided fruit for meditation, I was condemned for being a certain awful kind of person. I aroused horror and aversion in the bosom of the judge and in the bosoms of the honest citizens of the jury and the sturdy watchdogs of the press. I was heartily hated. In sentencing me to life imprisonment the judge gave general satisfaction. It was a mean crime of an unusually pure kind: to kill one's friend out of envy of his talents" (Murdoch, 2003: 379).

The jury of the trial argues that Bradley murdered Arnold Baffin out of jealousy of his success. They even show the ripped up pieces of Arnold's books. Bradley's fingerprints were found all over the murder weapon, the fireplace poker. Furthermore, Bradley never truly defends himself by suggesting that Rachel committed the crime. The court pities Rachel "for whom everyone felt such lively sympathy" (Murdoch, 2003: 378), considers Christian glamorous; "the judge, who patently found her attractive, compliment her…the jury liked her" (Murdoch, 2003: 377), and laughs at Francis Marloe who "became in the end something of a figure of fun…the jury treated him with a heavy irony" (Murdoch, 2003: 377). At the end of the trial, everyone believes that Bradley is a cold, calculating figure and so he is sent to jail.

"In any case, everyone, the judge, the jury, the lawyers, including my own counsel, the press and the public had all made up their minds before the trial even began. The evidence against me was overwhelming. My threatening letter to Arnold was produced and the most damning part of it, which contained an explicit reference to a blunt instrument, was read out with a blood-curdling intonation. But I think what impressed the jury most of all was my having torn up all Arnold's books. The fragments were actually brought into a tea chest. After that I was done for" (Murdoch, 2003: 376).

Although Bradley did not kill Arnold, he admits that he did bad things in the events leading up to Arnold's death; "anyone who is quite suddenly on public trial for a murder he has not committed is likely to be a disturbed state…but I did not protest it" (Murdoch, 2003: 376). Moreover, he admits that, the "dreadful things had happened for which" he "was in part responsible" (Murdoch, 2003: 380), he "neglected Priscilla" (his sister), treated Rachel (Arnold's wife and his ex-lover) unfairly; "I had failed Rachel and abandoned her", and "envied Arnold (a successful writer and his friend)" (Murdoch, 2003: 380). Still, he is no longer the man who treated others so contemptuously. He says that his love for Julian (his muse and lover) has transformed him because "love is one of the gateways to knowledge" (Murdoch, 2003: 381). By loving her, he gains the mystical energy to write "when I thought earlier that my ability to love her was my ability to write, my ability to exist at last as the artist I had disciplined my life to be" (Murdoch, 2003: 381). His ability to write which he seeks for his entire life gives him such a "sublime sense" (Murdoch, 2003: 381) that although he is in prison, he feels content.

"I do not know whether I shall see the "outside world" again. (A curious phrase. The world is, in reality, all outside, all inside.) The question is of no interest to me. A truthful vision finds the fullness of reality everywhere and the whole extended universe in a little room. The old brick wall which we have so often contemplated together, my dear friend and teacher: how could I find the words to express its glowing beauty, lovelier and more sublime than the beauty of hills and waterfalls and unfolding flowers? These are indeed vulgarisms, coomon places. What we have seen together is a beauty and a glory beyond words, the worlds transfigured, found. It was this, which in the bliss of quietness I now enjoy, which I glimpsed prefigured in madness in the water-colour-blue eyes of Julian Baffin. She images it for me still in my ageing sage. May it be always so, for nothing is lost, and even at the end we are ever at the beginning" (Murdoch, 2003: 382).

He finds the happiness and reverence in the prison, thus he compares being in prison to being in a "monastery" (Murdoch, 2003: 382) and considers his ability to write to be an almost religious experience. His only sadness comes when he considers his poor dead sister,

Priscilla, and when he considers that blue-eyed Julian is still out wandering in the world. Finally, he declares that "his book" he has written "in some way the story" of his life (Murdoch, 2003: 383) and based on "an honest tale, a simple love story" (Murdoch, 2003: 383). Bradley, whom has been associated with postmodernist qualities, in his imprisonment has written a book exposing his life story which is centering on his past love relationships that influenced his present and caused him to become a narrator as in postmodernist features Bradley is recalling the past and uniting the present with ironical life/love story that is open, playful and based on chance that has no certain process. There is deconstruction, absence of reality, combination and misreading of desires. These terms reflect the postmodern features that have been uttered by various postmodernist, especially by Ihab Hassan.

In the second postscript, Christian narrates another story claiming that Bradley did not represent her properly, and she declares that events are narrated "in the eye of the beholder" (Murdoch, 384). She utters that the story told by Bradley is "not all like that real life" (Murdoch, 384), because according to postmodernists stories are scriptable. She, also, claims that their marriage is a dull one and contrary to what Bradley narrates in his story she tells the events from her perspective. Christian believes that Bradley had been fond of her; "really it is obvious I think from the book that he was in love with me again, or had always been in love with me" (385). However, for her, this lascivious fondness turned into hatred when Christian left Bradley.

"Bradley never hated me during our marriage. I think he never hated me during our marriage. I think he never really hated me at all, but because I left him (which he does not say in the book) he had to pretend that he did. He describes how I dominated him or stole him from himself or something, these are very eloquent parts of the book and very well written I dare say. But it was not at all like that in real life" (Murdoch, 2003: 384).

Christian, at least for her, retells the truth that she thinks Bradley misrepresented, for instance Bradley claims that Christian came back London for him, but for her, this is a misunderstanding: "of course he is quite wrong when he thinks that after I came back to London at the beginning of his 'novel' I was really interested in coming together with him again. I was not. I came to see him because I was curious to see what had happened to him in the between time" (Murdoch, 2003: 385). Likewise, she says that there was "no sort of battle between" Bradley and herself "as he [Bradley] tells in the book" (Murdoch, 2003: 385), and

she announces that she "decided to leave him though he begged me [Christian] and begged to stay" which "Bradley does not tell" (Murdoch, 2003: 386).

In her postscript, Christian announces that Bradley "was jealous of her second marriage" and for this reason he tells lies about her, because, for her, "people never like to think their wife was happier with someone else" (Murdoch, 2003: 386). In fact, Christian's postscript is devoted to make the misinterpretations and lies correct with a pitiful sense; "I was very unhappy indeed and very sorry indeed for poor Bradley" (Murdoch, 2003: 387). The feeling of pity leaves its place to hatred in the postscript of Rachel Baffin, the third postscript, due to the fact that her "life has been ruined" (Murdoch, 2003: 393). Rachel, whose husband was murdered, feels no sympathy towards Bradley. Moreover, she believes that Bradley Pearson's story is full of lies. According to her, Bradley misrepresents the relationship between her husband, herself and Bradley.

"Of course he turns everything topsy-turvy in his account of his relations with our family. He says rather coyly that we needed him. The truth was that he needed us and was a sort of parasite, an awful nuisance sometimes. He was very lonely and we all felt sorry for him. And I can remember occasions to when we made absurd excuses when he wanted to see us or hid when he rang the door bell. His relations with my husband were crucial of course. His claim to have discovered my husband is ridiculous. My husband was already quite famous when B.P. after much begging, persuaded an editor to let him review one of my husband's books, and after that he made himself known to us and became, as I think my daughter one put, 'the family pussy cat'… Of course he never helped Arnold, but Arnold often helped him. His relation to myself and my husband was virtually that of a child to its parents" (Murdoch, 2003: 397).

She insists that Bradley, Arnold and she had never been so close to each other as represented in the story; "he naively himself admits that he had to be friends with Arnold, and so somehow identify with him and take credit for his writing, so as not to be driven mad with envy and hate" (Murdoch, 2003: 397). Bradley, she comments, is not a writer with talents but an old man who evokes pity only in respect to his age. In fact, like Christian, Rachel deciphers the lies of Bradley as well as revealing Bradley's love for herself: "Bradley Pearson was of course in love with me" (Murdoch, 2003: 398).

"His general picture of himself really could not have been more false. He pictures himself as ironical and sardonic and restrained and idealistic. To admit to being puritanical sounds like self criticism, but is just another way of asserting that he was a high principled man. In reality he was a person quite without dignity" (Murdoch, 2003: 396).

The fourth postscript is written by Francis Marloe who labels himself as a psychoanalyst. Francis attempts to present a psychoanalytic analysis of Bradley in terms of Freudian sense. Francis claims that Bradley can be described as a homosexual with repressed feeling and as a character who also bears tendencies towards Oedipus complex: "not to skirt the obvious Bradley Pearson presents, I need hardly say, the classical symptoms of the Oedipus complex" (Murdoch, 2003: 389). Francis points out his hatred towards women with the words "what a vocabulary of physical disgust he uses conjure up the ladies of tale" (Murdoch, 2003: 389), and his sexual stimulation for Julian when she appeared in male outfits which also indicates homosexual tendencies of Bradley Pearson.

"When he catches sight of this young lady (Julian) he mistakes her for a boy he falls in love with her when he imagines her as a man. He achieves sexual intercourse with her when she dressed up as a prince. (And who incidentally is Bradley Pearson's favorite author? The greatest homosexual of them all (Shakespeare). What sends Bradley Pearson's fantasy soaring as high as the Post Office Tower? The idea of boys pretending to be girls pretending to be boys!) (Murdoch, 2003: 390).

Interpreting Bradley's life in terms of Freudian psychoanalysis, Francis indicates sexual imagery in his life. For instance, while Francis describes the Post Office Tower as a phallic image appearing "a sort of human Post office tower, erect and steely" (Murdoch, 2003: 390), he interprets Bradley's mother's shop as a womb "the shop, that the stale interior, symbolic of the rejected womb of a socially inferior mother" (Murdoch, 2003: 390).

Like the psychological reading of Bradley's story which "deserves a thoroughly detailed commentary… from a talented pen" (Murdoch, 2003: 389), another talented character, Julian, who is "a poet" (Murdoch, 2003: 401) writes the fifth postscript of Bradley's story. In her postscript, Julian announces her marriage with her old boyfriend and her departure for Europe leaving England behind. She relates how her father's death shocked with the words "human beings forget much more than is usually recognized, especially when there is a shock" and how it was hard for her to overcome this crisis. She relates all events as "reactions of the child" which are "childish" (Murdoch, 2003: 400) and she "cannot recognize" (Murdoch, 2003: 400) herself. In the later parts of her postscript she comments on the nature of art and process of creation in which she discards Bradley's view that art comes out of passion which is associated with Eros.

"Most important of all. Pearson was wrong to identify his Eros with the source of art. Even though he says one is mere shadow of the other. Indeed it is the hottest of the book that I feel, not its coldness. True art is very very cold. Especially when it portrays passion. For only so can passion be portrayed. Pearson has muddied the waters. Erotic love never inspires art. Or only bad art. To be more precise. Soul energy may be called sex down to the bottom. (Or up to the top.) That concerns me not. The deep springs of human love are not the springs of art. The demon of love is not the demon of art. Love is concerned with possession and vindication of self. Art with neither. To mix up art with Eros, however black, is the most subtle and corrupting mistake an artist can commit. Art cannot muddle with love anymore than it can muddle with politics. Art is concerned neither with comfort nor with the possible. It is concerned with truth in its least pleasant and useful and therefore most truthful form." (Murdoch, 2003: 402)

Julian because of being a poet interprets Bradley's story from an artistic point of view which for postmodernists it is a performance but for feminists it is a production, and for postmodern feminist it is a combination of performance and production leading to a new creation. Julian, besides discussing the concept of art, in a way, mentions about all postscripts that have been written by the other characters of the novel.

The editor of the novel, Loxias writes the last postscript. Loxias, indicated as postmodern feminist figure throughout the text, edits all the postscripts from different point of views; three of the postscripts written by the female characters are looking at Bradley's story from a feminist point of view, Bradley's own story that represents postmodern point of view and his own postscript from a postmodern feminist view. In his postscript, Loxias reports that "since the foregoing documents were collected" (Murdoch, 2003: 404), Bradley Pearson died of "a quick-growing cancer" (Murdoch, 2003: 404). Right before he dies, he asks Loxias if Octavian, the younger lover in *Der Rosenkavalier,* ever left the older Princess and found a young love of his own. After Loxias confirms that Octavian did, Pearson tumbles into a slumber from which he never awoke. This is in fact a metaphorical question because he makes a relation between the context of the opera and his love for Julian.

"On the morning of the last day he said to men, 'My dear fellow, I'm sorry – to be still here – so boring.' Then he said, 'Don't make a fuss, will you? – 'What about?' – 'My innocence. It isn't worth it. It doesn't matter now.' We listened to some Mozart on Bradley's transistor. Later he said, 'I wish I had written *Treasure Island*.' Towards the evening he was much weaker and could hardly speak. 'My dear, tell me –' 'What?' 'That opera –' 'Which?' – '*Rosenkavalier*.' After that he was silent for a while. Then, 'How did it end? That young fellow – what was his name -?' 'Octavian.' 'Did he stay with the Marschallin or did he leave her and find a young girl of his own age?' 'He found a young girl of his own age and left Marschallin.' 'Well, that was right, wasn't it.' Then, after a while he turned, still holding my hand, and snuggled down as if to sleep. And slept." (Murdoch, 2003: 407).

Loxias, additionally, comments on the other postscripts written by the other characters. In particular, he calls attention to the way that Francis, Rachel, Julian, and Christian all try to promote and glamorize themselves; "how little the postscript-writers have been able to avail themselves of this decency" (Murdoch, 2003: 404). Furthermore, they all suggest that Bradley was partially in love with them: "each lady, for instance, asserts (or implies) that Bradley was in love with her. Even the gentleman asserts it" (Murdoch, 2003: 404). Loxias suggests that much written in the postscripts is in corporation of fragments of other stories in the novel that intersects between the old and the new fragmented stories that are shaped in the postscripts.

Loxias wants to publish Bradley Pearson's story because he wants to give Bradley to opportunity to defend himself. Through Bradley's creation of a piece of literature, Bradley, with Loxias's assistance, is presenting the world with a form of truth, through art. Loxias rebuffs Julian Baffin's assertion that desire cannot motivate art, by saying that it obviously did for Bradley Pearson. At the end, Loxias offers this book as a form of truth that has no originality, which is something that all people seek and for which purpose art serves: "Art tells the only truth that ultimately matters. It is the light by which human things can be mended. And after art there is, let me assure you all, nothing" (Murdoch, 2003: 408).

The postscripts, attempting to give overzealous interpretations, remind that there is no verified truth in the novel; everything told by Bradley is subjective fiction. Specifically, Rachel and Christian interpret events very differently than Bradley. Although their versions may be equally false, as their constant denials seem to be, their different accounts force us to question the concept of truth in Pearson's story. On the other hand, Francis Marloe's analysis is a Freudian one which Murdoch mocks both the Freudian thoughts and Francis Marloe's Freudian analysis because his postscript states that Bradley is a homosexual whose sexual desires can be satisfied only through viewing disguised Julian. By presenting Francis's interpretation in a comic light, Murdoch represents a comic treatment of Freudian theory in the novel. Murdoch revolts against simpleminded, reductive readings of the Freudian allusions in her fiction in general and of Francis's postscript in this novel in particular.

Therefore, an analysis of Murdoch's style in the novel raises doubts about how this novel should be classified because within the postscripts, there are feminine impulses, postmodern impulses and united postmodern feminist impulses which reflect different views. Each impulse is reflected with the different postscripts because each postscript writer is

"minor poets of their little world, who have only one voice and can sing only one song" (Murdoch, 2003: 373). Female postscript writers, Christian, Rachel and Julian, reflect the feminine impulses in their utterances. Female postscript writers criticize the story of Bradley who "has a way of seeing everything in his own way and making it all fit together in his own picture" (Murdoch, 2003: 385). Indeed, they accept doing the same thing with a satirical reference to men's writing: "perhaps we all do that, but we do not write it down in a book" (Murdoch, 2003: 385). Moreover, there is an explicit understanding of men for women criticized with the utterances "he [men] could never understand women" (Murdoch, 2003: 386). The accusation of men is followed with the explanation that women do not need men, on the contrary men need women's help; "I did not need him!! But it was jolly clear at once that he needed me…" (Murdoch, 2003: 386). In addition to women characters' explanations, the postscript of Francis Marloe's reveals the reasons why "many men hate and fear all women in adult life" (Murdoch, 2003: 389) with the help of psychoanalysis, he tells the relationship between men and women in an exaggerated and in a humiliating way by calling "women are liars, traitors and cowards" (Murdoch, 2003: 390). According to his reading of women, he thinks:

"Many men, often without consciousness thereof, see women as unclean. The idea of menstruation is sickening and appalling. Women smell. The female principle is what is messy, smelly, and soft. The male principle is what is clear, clean and hard. So with our Bradley. We find him gloating (I fear there is no other word) over the physical discomfiture, the uncleanliness, the ailments of his women" (Murdoch, 2003: 389).

Reflection of men's real thoughts for women within the psychoanalytic approach within the frame of plural truths reminds the fact that the novel is written beyond the borders and expectations of traditional feminine or postmodern writing styles. Accordingly, the novel of Murdoch cannot be simply classified as a conventional feminine writing or a postmodern writing. Loxias's obscurity further complicates the issue. However, Loxias's editing, or merging of different points of views becomes the key for understanding the text. In his postscript, Loxias says that he is the "editor criticizing and drawing morals" like the postmodern feminism which criticize and draws the moral of feminism and postmodernism. The combination of postmodern side and feminine side "presented with a new mode of being and I was anxious to explore it. I had been confronted (at last) with a sizeable ordeal labeled with my name" (Murdoch, 2003: 375). Then, by representing the postmodern feminist aspect of the novel, Loxias functions as the key to the complexities of the novel. While each

character relates his/her own version of the story, Loxias collects and edits them. He warns the reader against taking any of these views for granted. The key to understand is to accept the plurality of truths. Loxias compromises these distinct truths and heralds a new emerging thought, that is Postmodern Feminism.

CONCLUSION

This study, limited within the frames of postmodern feminist approach, has attempted to shed light on the question that whether Iris Murdoch's master piece, <u>The Black Prince</u>, is a postmodern feminist novel in terms of both postmodernist and feminist scopes. The general idea of the study is that, in the novel, it is possible to come across with both postmodernist and feminist elements, because the writer, Iris Murdoch, is a female writer disguised behind a male persona and she writes this novel in a period called postmodern era. Thus, the questions of what Postmodernism is, the common features that it shares with Feminism and, in relation what Postmodern Feminism is, are the main questions that construct this thesis. Under the light of the answers given to these questions, the main target of the thesis is to seek how Murdoch's <u>The Black Prince</u> can be read under the umbrella term of a Postmodern Feminism. Therefore, in order to understand what Postmodern Feminism is, firstly the development of Postmodernism and Feminism were discussed in the Chapter I and then the new strand Postmodern Feminism has been defined as the Chapter II of the thesis.

With the emergence of Postmodernism, Modernism was accused of offering a certain universalistic drive that identifies certain meaningful orientation common to all human beings. Another accusation brought by Postmodernism against Modernism is that Modernism proceeds from a general strategy of striving for the truth, since Postmodernism rejects any claim that texts correlate with any given reality because texts are correlated only with other similar texts, namely intertextuality. Therefore, it becomes difficult to define the concept of the representation of reality, since it is no longer clear if reality is objective. Relatively, attacks on racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice created fresh postmodern discourses due to the pluralization of truths. Through these discourses, margins, differences, excluded voices of and new subjects of revolt sharpened their weapons against the discourse of the fixed, white, Western European male subject constructed by the foundations of which were established in the Age of Enlightenment. This style based on stability, and oneness gave birth to grand narratives. Postmodernism, then, questions the grand narratives which served to hide the instabilities and oppression which are inherent in any social formation. In other words, the order and the unity promised by the grand narratives, in fact, demanded the banishment of those outside the circle of the white, Western-European male world. Hence, there was a

rejection of modern discourses such as truth, certainty, universality, essence and system, briefly all grand narratives.

After the dissolution of the old traditions, new forms of thought emerged and 1960s witnessed the rise of new intellectual moods such as the new ideas, like Feminism which was formed against the established ideas of patriarchal western-European society. The feminist movement of 1960s is also one of the most important revolutions of the period. Like in Feminism, there is also a stress on differences ignoring the quality of otherness in Postmodernism. There is a rejection of the concept of "the other", in Hutcheon words, "in favor of more plural and deprivileging concept of difference and the ex-centric" (Hutcheon, 1995: 65) which were associated with margins, differences, excluded voices. Therefore, the second part of the Chapter I has been devoted to history of feminism and its growing process.

Feminism in general emphasizes the struggle of woman in a patriarchal society and deals with the societal differences between man and woman and the roles that the patriarchal society imposes upon them and, then, through which it creates an identity of woman. With the publication of Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex (1954), and Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique (1963), the debate between men and women became intense. In fact, classic modern feminist thought challenged the traditions and conventions of patriarchal society which is dominated by males, and attempted to explain why the Western literature was under the domination of patriarchy and male writers with the dominance of language by male sentencing. In contrast to the to man's sentence, masculine and feminine elements are combined in writing in order to develop woman's sentence attempting for a new feminine discourse which is anticipated in the works of French feminist theoreticians such as Héléne Cixous, Luce Irigaray, and Julia Kristeva.

Moreover, French feminist theoreticians, such as Cixous and Kristeva, have insisted that feminine sentencing, accordingly language, can be formed with certain anti–patriarchal thoughts in order to invent a language to get inside of the patriarchal domain. In this context, French Feminists take the notion of woman as "the second sex" or "Other" (De Beauvoir, 1964: 129) which led the strand, Postmodern Feminism, to take the problem of identity as the core of their thought. Hence, the following Chapter focused on the definition and exploration of the Postmodern Feminism.

In Postmodern Feminism, there are number of points in which Postmodernism and Feminism come closer. The first meeting point, and the most basic one, is the rejection and the devaluation of the grand and master narratives of the Enlightenment. By rejecting the grand narratives, both Feminism and Postmodernism implies that the narratives have lost their power, and they argue that western representations are the products of access to truth instead of power. Briefly, both terms postmodernism and feminism, are after the rehabilitation of the divisions between theory, knowledge, practice, subject, and object. Moreover, they also "replace unitary conceptions of woman and female identity with plural and complexly structured conceptions of social identity, treating gender as one relevant strand among others, attending also to class, etc." (Sim, 2005: 27). These pluralities gave birth to a new strand; Postmodern Feminism the roots of which go back to Poststructuralism, Postmodern philosophy, and French feminist theory, all of which moving away from grand theory claim to assert universal truth and have developed several themes such as criticism of logocentrism, the nature of difference, deconstruction of texts, multiple discourses, and the nature of subjectivity.

Accordingly, postmodern feminists, recognizing that woman is a cultural construct with which only some women identify, have deconstructed the category woman. Furthermore, postmodern feminists recognize that feminists of the past, who generally focused largely on the idea of the middle class, white, and heterosexual female, mistakenly assumed that when they used the term woman they were speaking for all women. To avoid making such assumptions, postmodern feminists have found it necessary to be specific about the women, about whom they are speaking for, and in this way, one can speak about particular women rather than of a universal woman. Postmodern Feminism acknowledges that there is a multiplicity of women and women's movements representing diverse and multiple interests. Nevertheless, the postmodernist emphasis on the different and multiple voices conflicts with the pursuit of feminist political activities which requires unity and action on defined women's issues. The emphasis on diversity in Postmodernism, however, ignores the oneness and unity that can pursue collective action on women's issues. In other words, Feminism's strong idea of woman and its politics gained diversity under the umbrella term of Postmodernism. In fact, as De Beauvoir announces in her preface of The Second Sex, that "enough ink has been spilled in quarreling over feminism, now practically over, and perhaps we should say no more about it" (1974: xix).

Feminism is trying to negotiate its way out of the impasses of the postmodern and Postmodernism's doctrines that give much freedom to writers like Iris Murdoch who is in search for a model of radical embeddedness which is Postmodern Feminism. Although Murdoch shares ambivalence about writing as a woman and her preference for the male narrators, she also uses her fiction to demonstrate the assumption that a person should not be categorized in accordance with its biology just like her novel, <u>The Black Prince</u> should not be classified accordance with biologically female writer, fictionally a male narrator. Namely, a novel written by a female can not be categorized as a feminist one nor can it be classified as a postmodern one because of its narration but needs to be analyzed on various layers in order to intersect a female work with a male voice which can be done under the umbrella of postmodern feminism.

The postscripts, which are written by the characters of the novel and replaced at the end, provide the reader with the commentaries of the character on the related story. Each character insists that Bradley misrepresents the event and accuses his story of lacking accuracy. Thus, they set forth to tell their own account which they assert to be the authentic and the original one. However, these accounts also differ in themselves. Loxias, the editor, collects and revises them. This fact points out the acceptance of the plural truths in postmodern thought. What is more, while the postscripts written by female characters represent feminist side of the novel, Bradley's postscript constitutes the postmodern side. Loxias's collection of these postscripts or melting these diverse ideas in a pot heralds Postmodern Feminism.

As a result, this thesis focused on the growth of a new strand; Postmodern Feminism, and related this new strand with the novel of Iris Murdoch <u>The Black Prince</u>. The main target of this study was to analyze Murdoch's work as a postmodern feminist novel, and finally, after various discussions, it can be uttered that Iris Murdoch's <u>The Black Prince</u> is a postmodern feminist novel constructed with feminist and postmodernist qualities that have mingled in one strand as Postmodern Feminism. The most striking point of this thesis is that <u>The Black Prince</u> is analyzed with the postmodern feminist approach. Through this study the traces of Postmodern Feminism is followed, because the main body of the novel narrated by a male, the postscripts told by all characters, examining the reason of Bradley Pearson's story from different point of views is edited by Loxias that intertextualizes the three trivet

dimension of the novel that combines Feminism to Postmodernism and both to one approach; Postmodern Feminism.

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