



**AN ANALYSIS OF FEMALE REPRESENTATION
AND NOUVEAU ROMAN MOVEMENT IN *THE DRIVER'S SEAT***

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Abstract

This study investigates the characteristics of Muriel Spark's postmodernist art and how her experiences reflected to her writings. This study also gives information about Nouveau Roman applied to her book *The Driver's Seat*. The New Novel or Nouveau Roman refers to a movement in French literature that thrived in the mid-fifties and early sixties. Alain Robbe Grillet, the writer of the Nouveau Roman, published a series of essays in *Pour un Nouveau Roman* (1963). He rejects many of the conventional features of the novel and reckons many earlier novelists as old-fashioned in their focus on plot, narrative, ideas and character. *The Driver's Seat* will be analyzed considering the structure of Nouveau Roman and female presentation.

Key Words: Muriel Spark, Nouveau Roman, Abjection, Julia Kristeva, Anima, Animus

Özet

Bu çalışma Muriel Spark'ın postmodern sanatının özelliklerini ve hayatı boyunca yaşadığı deneyimlerin eserlerine yansımalarını ortaya koymaktadır. Bu çalışma aynı zamanda *The Driver's Seat* isimli kitabında kullanılan yeni roman hakkında da bilgi vermektedir. Yeni Roman ya da Nouveau Roman ellinin ortaları ile altmışların başlarında kendini gösteren Fransız edebiyat akımına göndermede bulunur. Nouveau Roman akımının öncüsü olan Alain Robbe Grillet *Pour un Nouveau Roman* adlı kitabında birçok sayıda eser yayınlamıştır. (1963). Romanın klişeleşmiş taraflarını reddeder ve birçok genç romancıyı da konuya, anlatıma, fikirlere, karakterlere olan bakış açılarındaki gelenekçi bulur. *The Driver's Seat* yeni roman akımının özellikleri göz önünde bulundurularak tartışılacak ve aynı zamanda eserde kadın temsili de incelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Muriel Spark, Yeni Roman, Abjeksiyon, Julia Kristeva, Anima, Animus

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INTRODUCTION

In *The Driver's Seat* the protagonist is an unusual heroine who searches for her murderer. As Norman Page asserts "The object of her quest is in fact her own murderer, and her journey ends in what amounts to a planned act of self-destruction: she is a victim in search of a murderer" (1990:70). In that sense, the novella is the subversion of crime fiction and Spark has called the novella a "whydunnit" rather than a "whodunnit". "Whydunnit" is a type of detective story and the main emphasis is not on who committed the crime but what the motive is for committing it. Lise, the protagonist takes charge of events in her life by setting out to find her murderer and chooses to be murdered. The suspense is taken away in the novella's third chapter when the reader is warned that Lise will be the victim.

Spark's novella is an examination of not what events take place but why they do so. The reason for selecting Spark is to emphasize her female representation and Nouveau Roman style in *The Driver's Seat* since Spark's main focus is on the observation of human behaviour especially of female characters. In the novella, everything goes around the protagonist Lise and she is the woman seeking to take control of her own death. Lise inverts the usual murderer-victim roles by placing herself in the driver's seat.

The story of a self-destruction has been analyzed within the frame of Nouveau Roman combined with female representation. Spark's novella which centers the final hours preceding the death of the protagonist highlights the specificities of time and space in Nouveau Roman. In that sense this thesis studies the use of Nouveau Roman together with female representation. Spark perplexes and shocks the reader through depicting Lise as a bizarre and hysteric woman since what she does is a rejection of life.

When analyzing Nouveau Roman and female representation in *The Driver's Seat*, the theories of Julia Kristeva, Michael Foucault and Carl Gustav Jung have been beneficial as theoretical guides. Foucault's "panopticism" has been used in order to emphasize Lise's behaviour within patriarchy. Lise meets different men during her journey and one of them is her murderer. She is the woman who tries to survive in a patriarchal society. In that sense Kristeva's "abject" theory has been used to highlight female representation. Lise exemplifies an "abject" character since she desperately looks for her murderer but not lover during her journey. She always feels alienated and looks for death but not life. Jung's "anima" and "animus" theory has also been beneficial in order to examine Lise's and Richard's (her murderer) psyche. Her moody behaviour displays how she has been taken by her "animus". Lise has a destructive relationship with Richard whereas he stays passive and obeys Lise's instructions.

While analyzing Nouveau Roman in *The Driver's Seat*, Alain Robbe Grillet has been useful since Nouveau Roman rejects the classic "Balzacian" realism. One of the purposes of Nouveau Roman is to emphasize the fact that human existence is chaotic and there is no order in narration. Lise's problematic nature, her bizarre character together with her enigmatic history have been analyzed within the frame of nouveau roman. Spark's familiarity with Nouveau Roman has given her the possibility of the reduction of individual in society and Lise is one of the examples since she is anonymous. Spark has benefited Alain Robbe Grillet's Nouveau Roman to manipulate space and time. *The Driver's Seat* is Spark's first novella which makes use of the present tense narrative with flashforwards.

MURIEL SPARK'S LIFE AND HER FICTION

Muriel Sarah Camberg (1918-2006) born in Edinburgh, was a Scottish novelist, poet, biographer and literary critic of post modernist era. She was an original, innovative and prolific British novelist writing in the second half of the twentieth century. Spark's being an eyewitness of both the First and Second World Wars had a profound effect in her literary life as she worked for the British military intelligence during the Second World War. In 1954, following a nervous breakdown, she converted to Roman Catholicism. She later said that this was an important step on her path to become a novelist. Spark's writing intersects with the post World War that influences the literary world of Great Britain. Spark's background, both being English and Scottish and her religious state, part Protestant and part Jewish played an important role in her personality. Spark was a writer whose sequential voice speaks from all times. Spark's fiction to some extent is like a reconstitution of her life. Having lived in various locations such as Edinburgh, Southern Rhodesia, Kensington, Aylesford, New York, Rome and Tuscany had also an effect on her literary style.

Spark's main focus is the observation of women and their behaviours and her works incorporate Catholicism addressing the problems of people. Spark is especially known for the cruel ways in which she demonstrates the dark and gloomy destinies of her characters, the most ill-famed being Miss Jean Brodie. As Page states "She acknowledges and owes few literary debts and belongs to no school, group or movement. There is no one quite like her and one rereads her novels in the hope of coming a little closer to their meaning and in the certainty of repeated pleasure" (1990:122).

AN ANALYSIS OF MURIEL SPARK IN THE FRAME OF POSTWAR FICTION

Muriel Spark, being one of the writers of British fiction in the second half of the twentieth century, is the new female literary figure apart from Doris Lessing and Angela Carter in the 1960s and one of Britain's post war novelists. Her sharp observations, peculiar narrative style makes her different from other contemporaries of her age in literary arena. Spark has a variety of fiction including adventure, comedy, detective and murder. Spark's historical background also plays a crucial role in her narration. Her fiction covers the complex social worlds of the characters. In the book *Muriel Spark: Twenty-First-Century Perspectives* Marina Mackay states "Spark is an amphibious figure; in other words, her novels encompasses tendencies displayed both by antimodernists advocating a midcentury return to realism and by postmodernist practitioners who did not share Spark's capacious sociability, (her) meticulous curiosity about the specificities of midcentury manners" (2010:2).

Spark's fiction, in other words her postmodern art has common characteristics that make her novels elaborate. Her works demonstrate a tendency of exploring self realization. Spark's most prominent emphases are on spiritual health and the recognition of the self. Many of Spark's works emphasize individual complexity of emotion and thought.

The contexts, characters' concern with religious issues, experiences of protagonists all make greater contributions to her narratives. All kinds of variations of intertextual techniques adopted by Spark indicate her postmodernist inclination in the literary field. As Dave Lodge states, "She appeared on the British literary scene as the neo-realist novel of the 50s was beginning to run out of steam, and she demonstrated a different style of storytelling we would learn to call postmodernist" (2006). Spark's post modernist approach is different because she did not form a new character, she is

just a trickster of the situations that her characters face in their life. This is what makes her distinguished from other contemporaries of her literary period. The reason for Spark to be a postmodernist is highly clear. In the book *A Companion to the British and Irish novel* Bryan Cheyette states:

Spark gained a good deal from avant-garde movements such as the French Nouveau Roman of Alain Robbe Grillet and the British experimentalism of B.S.Johnson and Christine Brooke Rose in the 1950's and 1960's, feminist Writings of the 1970's and postmodernist and magical realist fiction of the 1980's and 1990's. At the same time she has continued the long tradition of English social realism and literary satire in much of her work and has placed. These more conventional modes alongside the avant-garde (2005:367).

Like Spark's compound background, her characters to some extent have complicated lives and they are always in search of an identity. In this sense, her novels cover many characters who are willing to control their lives. For instance, Caroline Rose in *The Comforters* shows a great effort to escape from typing ghost. In *Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* Sandy Stranger tries to impede Jean Brodie who wants to shape her biography and also the other Brodie Set members. Lise in *Driver's Seat* is another striking character who tries to control and resist the world's shaping narratives in a bizarre fashion and attitude and by organising her own death.

Postmodernist literature requires heavy reliance on techniques such as fragmentation, metafiction, questioning of free will with the omniscient God, pastiche, paradox and intertextuality. Postmodernist authors generally have a tendency for using irony and humour in their narratives and they consider serious subjects such as the Second World War, and the Cold War.

Spark's skeptical approach towards realism is an important element in her novels. As Nick Bentley asserts "Spark's critique of realism also engages with other concerns in 1950s culture and society including the rise of youth culture, the role of

Britain in a rapidly decolonising world, place of women in society and, more generally, the questioning of established models of identity” (2007:164). Spark contributes to her own type of disruption of ideological and moral values of her era. Spark's writing in the fifties is a kind of reaction to some cultural pressures.

Spark's craft which is peculiar to herself and her extraordinary perception of the universe make her unusual as a post war novelist. Spark generally discusses the problem of free will, dualities and inner conflicts in her novels. For instance in *The Driver's Seat* the protagonist Lise prepares her own destiny and plots her murder which is an example of inner conflict. In *Mandelbaum Gate* Spark mentions the Eichmann trial (Adolph Eichmann, a German Nazi SS lieutenant and organiser of the Holocaust) and the novel shows his atrocities during the war period. In *The Prime Of Miss Jean Brodie*, Brodie is depicted as a born-fascist by the Brodie Set. She admires Mussolini and thinks of herself as the God of Calvin and tries to reflect her ideas by controlling the Brodie Set. Brodie even tells one of her students to go and fight for Franco's fascist forces in Spain. *The Comforters* also deals with the problem of free will. These issues are immensely notable in most of her novels.

POST WAR FICTION IN BRITISH LITERATURE

Post war period in Britain includes major political, social and cultural trends and movements in British literature. The Second World War has dramatically changed life in Britain. The war period was the time of economic depression and after many wars and invasions in Europe, fascism came out as a victorious power in Germany, Spain and Italy. In literary ground, it was the end of modernism and the threshold of a new period called as the post war. The profound changes in literary style has a remarkable effect on English literature. The World Wars tremendously influenced people, their life styles and people's point of views, so writers changed their literary taste and subjects. In order to create a new type of art, they searched for the source of inspiration. The main themes were disorder, chaos, loneliness and alienation of war period. Literature of the absurd was on the rise. Human condition was regarded as absurd and meaningless.

First of all, post war literature is usually related to some stylistic techniques such as parody, pastiche, meta-fiction, epistemological issues and self-reflexivity. Feminism and post- colonialism are the other movements of post war era. Secondly, the role of the individual in society is one of the major issues taken into account during the war period.

Literary trends mainly include and focus on themes such as alienation of the individual who tries to find comfort and peace in a complicated, chaotic world deprived of morality. The concept of "reality" is approached suspiciously. There is also the question of authority and free will. The two predominant genres of the period are comedy and dark humour.

The post war era has also produced some novelists including William Golding, Doris Lessing, Kingsley Amis, Irish Murdoch and Muriel Spark. Literature during the war exemplifies and mirrors the changes the society was undergoing. Many of the novelists have reflected the traces of social, political and economical changes in their narratives. As Sara Martin Alegre asserts in her book *Post-War English Literature* that “The post war English novel is polyphonic. If there is anything that defines the English novel of the last fifty years it is its protean essence: thanks to its flexibility, the novel can now accommodate the experiences of different social classes, different genders, different nationalities and different literary projects, from realism to experimentalism” (1999:19).

Angry Young Men is another important movement of post war era. The group came out in the 1950s and reflected the political upheaval and the disorder of the day. Their novels generally include working class or lower class male protagonist who has mocking humour and continuous conflicts with the authority. As Alegre states “Leaving aside the beginnings of the post-colonial novel, what happened in the 1950s novel is that the margins of culture moved to the centre, expressing a generalised discontent, which was paralleled in the plays of the Angry Young Men and some of the poetry of The Movement” (1999:15).

The Second World War is like a transition period for many of genres. Drama, novel, poetry and theatre have included important changes. For instance, new styles of acting and new trends in theatre management have given way to the writing of modern plays. Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1955) and John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* (1956) are some examples of this transition period. Alegre states “ It could be said that the distinguishing mark of the English post-modern novel is, its reluctance to totally abandon realism. (...) At any rate, it is essential to understand that the coexistence of widely diverging novelistic genres is the main characteristics of the post-war English novel and, perhaps, of post-modernism itself” (1999:18).

The role of the individual in society, dark humour and comedy, alienation of the individual searching for identity or trying to find peace in a world deprived of moral values and blurry reality are the major themes of post war British fiction.



FEMALE REPRESENTATION OF MURIEL SPARK

In Spark's novels, there is a variety of female characters who are always at the centre. This is the result of Spark's coming from a different social milieu and her vivid childhood experiences which greatly contributed to her novels. When Spark was a child she was aware of her mother's dressing quite differently for her age. Spark's mother had also a nervous situation and could not stay alone in the house. Spark's perception as a child is outstanding because her childhood memories shed light to her novels to an extent.

Spark was also influenced by the social events and tales told by her acquaintances and family members. The figures and events of those years helped Spark shape many of her characters so Spark's contact with teachers play an important role in creating both her novels and her literary life. As Judy Sproxton states "Spark has a brilliant capacity for creating plots out of the raw material to which she is so sensitive in the course of her life" (1992:14).

In Spark's novels, the reader encounters the characters he is not acquainted with before. Spark analyzes different types of personalities of modern women and her main concern is the twentieth century morals and human behaviour in a world lacking moral values. Spark's style is either ironic or satiric when portraying characters. As Sproxton states "It is the irony of the child's perception, seeing beyond the fatuous myth of adults, that Spark uses to dissolve the mystique of adult hypocrisy"(1992:10). That's why Spark's reflects a full understanding of the feminine life and mind. In one of Spark's interviews she says "- I find women most interesting, really-especially strong women, strong bossy women. I'm not sure I do men so well but there are also quite a lot of diabolic men" (1987:445). Apart from

having been inspired by her childhood and school years, Spark's main turning point in her life is her conversion to Catholicism which is an inspiration for her novels. After her conversion Spark found her way in literary world and was able to devise plots and different personalities in her narrative. Her conversion to some extent enriched and contributed to her in literary ground. In one of Spark's interview she said "finding my writing voice coincided with my becoming a Catholic. I think becoming a Catholic made me feel more confident, because it took care of a lot of problems" (1987:445). Sproxton states "Her achievement in constructing female character is unrivalled in the twentieth-century Catholic novel. (...) Spark is not a feminist nor is she interested in decrying a society which might seek to repress women. However, she has, in several of her novels, depicted women in a search for a dignity and possession of mind which in its own way, vindicates a woman's spiritual integrity (1992:18).

In that sense, Spark is able to reflect her woman characters deeply and makes an emphasis on their standing in life, grasping and understanding of life, their needs and capacity to face challenges.

NOUVEAU ROMAN

In the years following the Second World War, postmodern period has gained a new status together with the Nouveau Roman which was initiated primarily by the fiction of Alain Robbe Grillet, Claude Simon, Michael Butor and Nathalie Sarraute. The remarking point of these novelists has been their common desire to question the ongoing hegemony of classic “Balzacian” realism whose emphasis is mainly on plot and characterization. Together with the Nouveau Roman storytelling has dramatically changed. The novelists of the Nouveau Roman movement primarily repelled the idea of the novel as storytelling. They accepted that storytelling generated an unreal image of coherency. For Alain Robbe Grillet, the pioneer of the Nouveau Roman movement, the critical task of Nouveau Roman is to emphasize and display that “There is no natural order, no moral, political or narrative, there are only human orders, created by men, which are necessarily provisory and arbitrary” (1972:160). So the focus is on repeated descriptions of details and thoughts. In a conventional novel, there is a chronology of events but Nouveau Roman is a radical reversal of the established forms of traditional novel and it questions the omniscient author and narrator. The theorists of Nouveau Roman assert that dependence on an omniscient narrator and adherence to the unities of place and time which are central to the traditional novel, creates order in the novel. The task of the Nouveau Roman is to impose specific interpretation on events and Nouveau Roman invites the reader to re-reading together with re-interpretation of texts. At that point, the theoreticians’ policy match with the theory of Roland Barthes’ “The Writerly Text” in which the reader is usually in control and takes an active role in the process of constructing meaning. In his essay “The Death of the Author” (1963) Barthes is against conventional literary criticism and asserts that writing and creator are independent which supports the policy of Nouveau Roman theorists. Alain Robbe Grillet rejects the established features of the traditional novel. Grillet regards the earlier novelists as old-fashioned regarding their stress in action, ideas, character, plot and narrative.

Instead, Grillet asserts his theory which focuses on external world rather than human interest so in that sense, Nouveau Roman is a modern break with tradition. The difference from the conventional is, nothing is definite in the narration and it is the task of the reader to make a conclusion and find out what happened and why in the fiction which means reader is challenged more. The Nouveau Roman intimately associated with postmodernism, is mainly based on Bertolt Brecht's "alienation effect" which means the audience is never permitted to forget that they are watching a play, and what Nouveau Roman wants to highlight is this "alienation effect" in which the distance between the text and the reader has been focused on to display just the presentation of reality instead of reality itself in novels. In that sense Roland Barthes's defending Alain Robbe Grillet leans on Grillet's revolutionary distancing of his novels from the conventional techniques of the bourgeois novel. Nouveau Roman and its successors try to illustrate the notion of reality in terms of Lyotard's view in his book *The Postmodern Condition* "flight of reality out of the metaphysical, religious and political certainties that the mind believed it held" (1979:77). In Nouveau Roman the notion of reality has been devastated and unlike traditional novel, there is subjective reality in order to deceive the reader's perception. As Victor Carrabino states "Reality is reported in a matter-of-fact way. This technique consists in describing reality with the impartiality of a cinematographic camera. This means that the selection is subjective but the description of that subjectively-selected reality is objective" (1973:95). In that sense the narrator does not explain what he observes but simply narrates, so the new type of reality is subjective reality. As Nathalie Sarraute states "Although the nouveaux romanciers assert that we can not know anything for certain, at the same time they maintain, similarly to the Nietzschean- Deleuzean tradition, that reality in fact is a chaotic, dynamic flux of perpetual change" (1963:435).

Postmodern writers generally neglect the traditional notion of time and space in Nouveau Roman. Psychological aspects have also been eliminated. In *The Driver's Seat*, there is no explanation of the character's mental state which is remarkably valued as a crucial point of traditional writing. Instead of a detailed character

description, an objective approach takes place in Nouveau Roman. The use of language is simple because the aim is to express a lot with fewer words.

Nouveau Roman is applied jointly to the novels of some contemporary French writers such as Alain Robbe Grillet, Michael Butor and Nathalie Sarraute whose works are generally in detective fiction genre. Postmodernism has employed detective stories and Nouveau Roman has adopted some techniques from the detective novel and Nouveau Roman, to some extent, subverts the detective fiction. As Holquist asserts “After World War Second, Robbe was searching for ways to overcome the literary tradition of the novel, he so naturally turned to the detective story as a mode. What myth was to experimental fiction before World War Second, detective fiction is to avantgarde prose after World War Second” (1971:148). Alain Robbe Grillet’s debut novel *Les Gommages* (1953) has also benefited from the detective genre. For Grillet, Nouveau Roman is a subverted detective story in which the details are twisted. At that point postmodernism does not thoroughly turn to pre-war detective fiction but utilizes detective stories by developing and changing them. (1984:40). Detective fiction is suitable for an interpretive strategy intrinsic in reading. According to Linda Hutcheon detective fiction is to some extent related to the hermeneutic reading and self-reflexivity. Detective fiction for Hutcheon functions as “covertly” to reflect its own process and it is in this way, receive the attention of readers to produce their own meaning. In the book *Detecting Texts* Michael Sirvent asserts “The writer is certainly the author of the crime and the reader the detective of the text” (1999:162). Once the reader associates events with each other and solves the mystery, which means the deconstruction of the text, the writer and the reader share this creative process together.

As *The Drivers Seat* by Muriel Spark is a kind of inverted detective fiction, Spark calls the book a “whydunnit” rather than a “whodunnit”. There is a transformation of classical detective ficiton into a “whydunnit” type, since the main emphasis is not on who committed crime but what the motive is for committing it. At the same time in *The Driver’s Seat* suspense is taken away in the novella’s third chapter when the

reader is warned that Lise, the protagonist is soon to be the victim of a murder investigation. So Spark's novella is an examination of not what events take place but why they do so. In that sense detective fiction appears to satisfy the purposes of literature. As Karin Kukkonen and Sonja Klimek assert "The strong generic conventions that mentioned as typical of detective fiction could very well be one of the reasons why postmodern writers use the genre; the subversive techniques are more conspicuous when there is a clear frame to be broken" (2011:43). Spark's character Lise is consistent with the postmodernism's new policy since it is the task of nouveau roman to bring forth the chaotic mode of reality and question the narrative order together with ontological issues. At that point man's accepting of the meaninglessness of his life has had a crucial impact on the conversion of the detective's role in fiction. As Stefano Tani asserts "The detective novel that is supposed to please the expectations of the reader, becomes the ideal medium of postmodernism in its inverted form which frustrates the expectations of the reader, and substitutes for the detective as central and ordering character the decentering and chaotic admission of mystery, of nonsolution" (1984:40). In the novel, there is not a close ending like the one in conventional detective fiction but an open ending. The protagonist Lise pulls the strings of her destiny and she upsets both coherency of the text and closure in the novella. Modernism rebuts the teleological predestination of theme by advancing open-ended narratives. At that point as Maria Vara asserts "the novel turned inwards, to examine its own structure and presuppositions, to expose the backbone of its making. It is at this point that the ending came back, but not as finality. The purpose is not to see what happens at the end. Instead, fiction is much concerned with different versions of ending" (2001:4).

Michael Holquist, in his article claims that an unresolved and upsetting detective story stands for postmodernism's primary thematic problems. In that sense, Lise in *The Driver's Seat* is consistent with the chaotic and unsettling condition of postmodern period as she always yearns for alienation from society and she plans her own demise meticulously which arouses impulse to detect in order to find out "whodunnit" in the novella. At that point as Holquist states "If, in the detective story,

death must be solved, in the new metaphysical detective story it is life which must be solved” (1971:155). In that sense from the very beginning of the novella the reader tries to decipher the mystery of Lise’s tragic demise. It is also intriguing that Lise struggles for her posthumous recognition.

There are some particular reasons for Spark to use some certain kinds of plot, style and structure. Arguably Spark’s approach towards the conception of time affects the structure of her work. This approach can apparently be seen in her narratives. Spark brings out the ending at the beginning in order to redirect the reader’s attention to the questions “how” and “why” in her narratives. The concept of time has always been a perpetual engrossment of French writers. This is peculiarly true of the nouveau roman. As David Bond asserts “ Nouveau Roman which tries to convey the chaos of lived experience as it is perceived by the human consciousness. Time is a vital part of that experience, and writers of the nouveau roman try to capture it as it appears to the consciousness” (1982:26). In *The Driver’s Seat*, there is no past, present and future for Lise and everything happens as if a camera is recording her actions. As Ann Jefferson points out for the use of present tense “The recognition of the present tense of narration made a linear cause and effect model of narrative impossible to adhere to and gives rise to an image of a different narrative order. Successivity, linearity and casuality are replaced by an attempt at simultaneity” (1980:38). In that sense present tense narration undermines our familiarity with the notion of time unlike in conventional novels.

Spark’s attendance to the Eichmann trial (Adolph Eichmann, a German Nazi SS Lieutenant and organiser of the Holocaust) is the base of her employing nouveau roman in her narratives. As Victoria Stewart states “The practitioners of the nouveau roman could take Eichmann’s ‘dead mechanical’ use of language as a model, and certainly this suggestion would be consonant with Spark’s later praise for the ‘exactitude’ of an author such as Alain Robbe Grillet” (2011:48). By drawing the attention to the Nouveau Roman technique, Spark tries to enounce uneasiness unique

to the post war world through the protagonist Lise. Spark utilizes nouveau roman as a means of portraying Eichmann's blind faith to represent the extreme chaotic system of the post war world. The language of the Nouveau Roman is mechanical like the system itself which produces automated and unemotional humans. In that sense, with its unusual treatment of language, mixed up narratives and combining of assorted strategies in the novella, Nouveau Roman has a prominent place in postmodern realm. In *The Drivers Seat*, estranged part of human after post war world has been highlighted by Spark through utilizing nouveau roman as a means of substituting conventional concerns of the classical novels.

In conclusion, the character has been invalidated in the novel which results in voiding of the human elements from the novel and anonymity has taken place instead of individuality to highlight the triviality of human in postmodern world. In that sense, a sense of turmoil in society has also been reflected to display the disorder of postwar period.

FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN *THE DRIVER'S SEAT*

Muriel Spark brings up different issues referring to the individual in the postmodern world and one of them is the protagonist Lise in *The Driver's Seat*. It is the story of a young woman in her thirties Lise, who suffers from a nervous breakdown and has a tendency to manic laughter, flies to an unknown city and leads her own brutal murder. At that point Spark situates Lise as an enigmatic character for she organizes her own demise but makes a man responsible for her death-drive. With the image of Lise, the protagonist, Spark arouses the contradiction such as free-will and predestination. Lise throughout the novel, incorporates this contradiction. In other words, Lise is designed to play with the established rules of patriarchy. In that sense, Spark makes Lise struggle and subvert these issues through the postmodern perspectives. The novella centers around victimology, blooming in the 1970's, that focused on the victims' role in their own victimization. The term "victim precipitation" was developed by Hans Von Hentig and he states "In a sense the victim shapes and moulds the criminal. (...) Although it looks one-sided as far as the final outcome goes, it is not a totally unilateral form of relationship. They work upon each other profoundly and continually even before the moment of disaster. (...) Often victims seem to be born. Often they are society made" (1948:384-385). In that sense Lise goes beyond the term "victim precipitation" and she invites her "type" of man for her tragic demise. Lise makes Richard murder her. Lise drives off him to the park. He is scared and admits that he has attacked women before but he wishes to have a normal life since he has been cured but Lise tells him all the details of her murder meticulously and gives him the paper knife his aunt bought for him. The centre idea in victimology is that victims are responsible for the crime. The idea lying behind it is that to consider the victim guilty can be perceived as a system of control over the female body. Lise herself is the power mechanism on her body since she intentionally expands her own individualisation by choosing psychedelic colours for her dresses. Lise in this way aims at her visibility in society which means how

control is exercised. Victimology is brought up as one of the images of the new kinds of complicated scrutiny and supervision by Michael Foucault. It is an additional mode to regulate and control sexuality. Lise's garish effect with her bizarre appearance visually disrupts the concept of "normalization" in society.

Disciplinary systems determine individual behaviours for the purpose of separating the normal and the abnormal. As Foucault has stated, normalization necessitates "individualization" and at that point Lise enrolls her own individualization intentionally for the purpose of revealing the social tendency to perpetual labelling and classification. She expands the code of individualization through her flashy clothes and strange behaviours.

What makes *The Driver's Seat* subversive is that it represents a female character who uses the sex paradigm to gain control over patriarchy since women's life has been inspected and judged by the patriarchy. Lise tries to exert power and her body is handed to a murderer, (Richard who sexually has assaulted women, has just emerged from an asylum after treatment) displays an extreme and disturbing version of control. Lise's struggle to exert power can be associated with Foucault's "Panopticon" theory. "Panopticon" causes a sense of perpetual visibility that insures the functioning of power and for Foucault "panopticon" designed by Jeremy Bentham is the centre of the authoritarian society. At that point Lise subverts the social norms and denotes an explicit stance towards this disciplinary society, the patriarchy. Patriarchal society stands for the panoptical institution that disciplines women to expose them to the constant observation by the invisible that is male gaze and performs social control over women. The main effect of "panopticon" is as Foucault states "to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automate functioning of power" (1977:201). Lise in this context, denotes an extreme mechanism of power by controlling every moment of her brutal demise. Visibility is the most apparent "panoptic" principle and Lise achieves this visibility both with her weird behaviours and flashing clothes. In the "panoptic"

system, disciplinary power is achieved by regularisation through the way of visibility and Lise carries out this visibility in a successful manner in a way that she does not become the target of patriarchal tormentors, she handles power and disturbs gender roles in society. Lise does not want to be under the control of the male gaze. As Sandra Lee Bartky states:

In the regime of institutionalized heterosexuality woman must make herself 'object and prey' for the man. ... In contemporary patriarchal culture, a panoptical male connoisseur resides within the consciousness of most women: they stand perpetually before his gaze and under his judgement woman lives her body as seen by another, by an anonymous patriarchal other (1998:101).

What Lise tries to do is to control her body and instead of being a prey, she acts as a hunter in that sense the roles have been subverted by Lise through her behaviours. Lise creates her own discourse through her bodily act and tries to free herself from the repressive system. Lise's control of her body does not function as Foucault's "docile bodies". As Foucault asserts "A body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved" (1995:136). Lise manipulates the situation and she does not adopt a passive female figure in society. Foucault's "docile bodies" are subjected bodies that reject the feasibility of freedom and resistance. Lise disturbs the social norm by conducting and controlling her life and she manipulates the issues of power dynamics between genders.

Throughout the novella Lise refuses the viability of having heterosexual relations and owing to this tendency she does not reflect the typical woman figure and rejects every sexual offer from Bill and Carlo. Lise's body exceeds her assigned gender role since she does not want to be consumed by the dominated male ideology.

Stop at once, Lise says. ' Or I put my head out of the window and yell for help. I don't want sex with you. I'm not interested in sex. I've got something on my mind that's got to be done I'm telling you to stop' She grabs the Wheel and tries to guide it into the curb (472).

Lise does not act according to Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity. Society enrolls on bodies, gender and sexuality and according to Butler functions as a personal prison for individual identity. Butler's gender performativity is consistent with Foucault's "panopticism" since gender identities are carried out by society. "Panoptical" institution for women attributes to a model of patriarchal society since it makes women subject to the perpetual surveillance which means an invisible gaze performing social control over women. Foucault sees bodies as disciplined by many techniques of power and bodies are effects of power that must be freed from an oppressive system of male power. In that sense Lise perverts the performativity of the role she is appointed to perform. As Diane Long Hoeveler states " Women earn their superior social and moral rights in society by positioning themselves as innocent victims of a corrupt tyrant and an oppressive patriarchal society" (1998:104). Lise does not act the way that society dictates her and she makes patriarchal system responsible for her traumatic life and she becomes alienated in society. In order to implement her queer perception she orchestrates her death which means escaping from the male dominated society. Richard, her murderer is the man that Lise has personalized the social pressure by. Lise begins to fight against gender identity that names Lise as the Other. She represents a strong female identity and refuses what Butler calls a heterosexually-based society which aims at the production of gender roles and identities. Lise tries to assert different identities. She says " I'm only a tourist, a teacher from Iowa, I'm a widow and an intellectual. I come from a family of intellectuals" (469/470). In this context, Lise is successful at reflecting one of the major issues of the 1970's writing; the problem of identity. In addition, Lise has an alienated psyche, she also has an abandoned identity. She says " It's best never to be born. I wish my mother and father had practised birth-control. I wish that pill had been invented at the time. I felt sick, I feel terrible" (470).

Julia Kristeva's description of the "abject" can be a good frame for the protagonist Lise since she asserts different identities and her abjection occurs when she separates her sense of "self" both physically and socially from which she regards unbearable and infringes on her "self". The term "abject" in the novella represents

the woman and the maternal body. In one of Kristeva's more impressive definitions, abjection is, "Not me. Not that. But not nothing, either. A 'something' that I do not recognize as a thing. A weight of meaninglessness about which there is nothing insignificant, and which crushes me" (1980:2). It is the same in Lise's situation since as a subject she is unable to identify with anything in the world and as a result denotes diverse identities. At that point, the identification of the self with the abject seems the final throwing away through suicide which evokes the question of Lise's death. The "abject" person powerfully feels alienated and he has the idea that he is not a part of the world and the sequent personality is a "stray" who is always confused and "dejected". In this context Lise questions her existence in the novella. "Abject" may be perceived as those who diverge radically from the social norm. Lise is the abject in society since she has been dehumanized and estranged by the patriarchy that is the power mechanism. The "abject" is perceived as "disgusting and irresistible" as "outraging and fascinating" (Holmes 2006:308). In this context Lise represents an overwhelming figure for Richard since he submits to Lise's instructions and is forced to be an attacker. They have changed their roles in society and Richard has become the tortured male as Lise has made a man responsible for her death. He has been subdued by Lise. She has positioned herself as a blameless victim of oppression. The "abjection" process occurs when the system plans to stop people from employing their abilities to behave as independent subjects. At that point, Lise is portrayed as dehumanized in society and a figure for horrifying effects of abjection since she is viewed as monstrous. The "abject" person usually envisions his dilemma spatially and questions his existence. Lise's quest for freedom exemplifies her being a "stray" since she travels from the North to the South. At the same time Lise is consistent with Kristeva's term "foreigner". In her book *Powers of Horror*, the "foreigner" is considered as "abject". When discussing the term the "foreigner" Kristeva points out that the "foreigner" is a "hidden face of our identity" and she states that we should see ourselves as foreigners and immigrants in the society. Lise stands for the term "foreigner". She says "I can speak four languages enough to make myself understood" (434). In spite of her speaking four languages we do not know anything about her including her nationality, mother tongue and background. As Kristeva asserts "Abject is what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not

respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” (1982:4). This is a description which could be matched to the experience of the protagonist Lise since she has also been stuck in the callous hierarchy of the system in which gender determines the roles and the rules in society. In a society a person demonstrates a tendency to internalize the values of the authoritative culture. In that sense Lise becomes an “abject” in that controlling culture since in order to acquire hegemony, the masculine represses the feminine as the Other, that is the abject and women are categorized as faulty, impure, transgressed and evil by patriarchy. There is also “abjection” at work when Lise chooses carnivalesque outfit for herself. A woman says “Are you going to join a circus?” (431). As her wish is to be unforgettable, she aims at not going with the flow and she desires to be different in a bizarre way.

In *The Driver’s Seat* Lise is portrayed as a gothic figure which is also related to the “abject” theory. The gothic, as in the “abject” theory, is also engaged in what is cast off, what determines the boundaries of society and identity. In the novella, female gothic depicts abject sexuality which means masochistic. In that sense, *The Driver’s Seat* manifests a female sexuality that demolishes the established codes of relationships defined by male hegemony. Hence, the female body constitutes a kind of horror in the prevalent culture in order to demonstrate a rebellion against the patriarchal restrictions that encompass female sexuality. The gothic criticizes the restraints of society through its vague representation. Lise symbolizes a frightening portrait of woman. She expresses in the novella “Why is everybody afraid of me?” (445). Lise symbolizes the gothic figure both physically and mentally in order to display the fear which menaces identity and society. In this context, Kristeva’s “abject” theory unfolds that what is thrown off arouses horror and corresponds with the cultural, social and psychological menaces and desires the gothic has practised. Lise, as a gothic female, weakens the power dynamics that compose the gender difference. As a result, Lise is always involved in the suppression and revolts against her being defined as the Other by patriarchy. As Diane Long Hoeveler asserts “The gothic heroine’s status as a reified object, a commodity, reifies her economic and

social status in a capitalist system. If the gothic heroine can not reform the economic system, she has the option of fictionally transforming her role and complicity in it or escaping it altogether through death” (1998:119). Lise, in order to escape from the consumerist ideology of female body becomes the gothic heroine and her quest for the desire of freedom culminates in her demise.

In the novella “abjection” occurs also by violating the hegemonic systems. Lise through her dreadful behaviours, discourses and weird appearance (her psychedelic clothes) functions as disrupting and violating the system identified by patriarchy. Lise is depicted as an ostracized individual by the controlling ideology and she posits herself as a kind of residue, lack of an identity and she does not obey the hegemonic system. At that point she is regarded as the “abject” and throughout the novella she struggles to constitute her subjectivity in order to maintain her borders. Lise’s “abject” representation unfolds how patriarchal system titles women and within the system how women can protest. In this context, Lise acts as an unusual heroine who exemplifies the brutal erasure of the self. As a gothic female figure she denotes the position of women in a repressed society to unfold how the dominant ideology determines the borders for female identity.

The sexuality in *The Driver’s Seat* is an “abject” sexuality since it is masochistic and Lise is depicted as a hysterical woman. Female sexuality that is regarded as passive in the traditional novels is inverted in Lise’s story. And it functions as actively that diverts from the social patterns. In this context, Kristeva’s “abjection” portrays the female gothic as revolutionary. As Kristeva asserts “The abject does not cease challenging its master” (1980: 2). In the patriarchal system, female sexuality is regarded as repressed and female identity becomes the object of desire. The “abject” has a corrosive and transgressive control that can unnerve the identity system and disturb the prevailing ideologies in order to maintain its hegemony. Lise adopts the “abject” image for the purpose of disrupting established norms of patriarchal system. At the end of the novella, Lise is murdered by Richard and Lise’s corpse which is the

utmost site of the “abject” also exemplifies Kristeva’s theory since when Lise is murdered by Richard she becomes a corpse. Thus “I” becomes an object and is no more a subject and being the victim of brutality and imposing brutality on herself, Lise conveys a message about her mental agonizing. The abnormal behaviour of Lise is an indication of a death desire, a wish for an entire annihilation of the individual since male dominated ideology constructs Lise as an “abject”. As Barbara Creed asserts “The corpse is also utterly abject. It signifies one of the most basic forms of pollution- the body without a soul. As a form of waste it represents the opposite of the spiritual, the religious symbolic” (1993:10).

In the novella, there are thirteen depictions of Lise’s parted lips which plays a significant role. When she wants to disapprove something they are pressed together and when she is about to speak they are slightly parted. As Jonathan Kemp points out “Lise carries to the unspoken thoughts of all the novel’s characters, unspeakability is expressed not only through the novel’s form but also its content” (2008:554). In fact Lise’s speaking four languages and her slightly parted lips represent the ineffability and the pain of this ineffability. Lise’s speaking four languages highlights her inarticulation ironically. As Elaine Scarry asserts “Whatever pain achieves, it achieves in part through its unsharability, and it ensures this unsharability through its resistance to language. Physical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it” (1985:4). At that point the experience of Lise’s pain avoids language, making the sufferer confused and quietened by the harsh reality of its inexpressibility. Lise’s language is destroyed by the pain that is the pain of infuriating female alienation and oppression since woman has been regarded as an object not a speaking subject. Lips represent the ineffability of the self in the social discourse. They are the only nonverbal signals of her psyche. Lise’s closed lips sometimes display that no one can initiate a dialogue with her so there is a failure in communication with the society. The structure of language for Jean François Lyotard guides him to the decision that the structure of language requires that particular facts rest inexpressible and unexpressed. These inexpressible facts are signified by what he calls in his book titled *Le Différend* (1983). Lyotard asserts that the book covers

violence or injustice applied to people who, owing to the nature of discourse, can not verbalize their needs or condition in common. Lise's parted lips can be analysed within this frame since the lips are the signifiers of the inexpressibility of the brutal expunction of the self. Lise's parted lips are also the metaphor for Luce Irigaray's labia. Irigaray enrolls the symbol of the labia: two lips which provide the essence for speaking as woman, to enunciate a feminine imaginary. Sexuality is the common denominator that women share under patriarchal system and it is also a communal system that creates and manages desire. Woman is developed through this system as an object whose intention is merely to satisfy men. In the novella lips are not the symbol of multiplicity that challenges and rejects patriarchy since they represent the ineffability. Lips which are the symbols of verbal communication in fact stand for her silence. As Butler states "Within a language pervasively masculinist, a phallogocentric language, women constitute the unrepresentable" (1999:14). Thus Lise's lips can be observed as infuriating female oppression and alienation since women are regarded as objects rather than speaking subjects in society.

Spark's novella has also embodied binary oppositions to emphasize male and female behaviour. The yin and yang is one of the binary oppositions in *The Driver's Seat*. When Bill, the man Lise sits on the plane with talks to Lise about the food on the plane and he separates the food according to yin and yang philosophy. As Issitt and Main assert "The yin-yang bifurcation of reality symbolizes the many dualities observed in nature, such as the relationship between light and dark, male and female, or active and passive. (...) As representations of duality of male and female, the yin-yang also symbolizes the sexual union that leads to procreation" (2014:252).

In the novella Lise's refusal of any sexual relation is apparent in many of her dialogues. At that point, the yin and yang do not symbolize the sexual union, on the contrary Lise does not want sex when she meets the men Bill and Carlo but they approach to Lise from sexual side and at that point there is the objectification of woman by male gaze. As Fredrickson and Roberts point out "Being female in a

culture that objectifies the female body may impact women's subjective experiences in negative ways" (1997:185). So Lise is the product of corrupted society and her demise to an extent represents woman's sexual victimization. Although Lise does not want sex she is raped by her murderer in the end.

The second binary opposition is the scarf and necktie. Lise buys two black neckties and white and black scarf. She wants Richard, the murderer tie her hands with the scarf and her feet with the necktie. Scarf is the symbol of female and necktie is the male power. The third and the most important binary opposition is the male and female which also forms the basis of the novella. Lise is the leading actor of this novella and these binary oppositions stand for the male and female relations. In the end it is interesting to see that it is a man that leads to Lise's death but at the same time it is a man chosen by Lise's will to kill her. The question is who the person is sitting in the driver's seat as the title of the novella states.

The Driver's Seat can also be analyzed within the frame of the notion of queer. Davih Halperin states that "Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence" (1995:62). In this context Lise's being in an inferior and "abject" status, can be observed as queer since Lise is a woman who does not adapt behavioural norms and regarded as odd and queer within the dominant culture. In the novella the women are also reduced to the level of animals that act violently. " Her lips are slightly parted and her nostrils and eyes, too, are a fragment more open than usual; she is a stag scenting the breeze" (467). As Kemp points out for the novella "The normal is reversed, the usual distorted: the world in which the female hunts the male, the victim her murderer, eagerly and leaving clues behind her as she does so" (1974:123). Since queer can be seen as embracing of all bodies that are built as inferior or "abject", Lise's deviation from the social norms exemplifies her abnormality. Her queerness is drastically subversive since she dresses and behaves in an anomalous manner and transgresses the

dominant culture as a marginalised person. Lise defies the normative practices that construct and fortify repressive relationships. Lise's "abject" status plays a critical role in constituting her subjectivity. As Tylor asserts for "abjection" that "(...) strips people of their human dignity and reproduces them as dehumanised waste, the dregs and refuse of social life" (2009:87). Lise's desire not for sex or love but for her demise displays her becoming dehumanised in this situation since she also does not want to live a life and wants to go back to her loneliness. Her murder gives her the chance to take the driver's seat in her life and evades her anonymity. It is crucial that Lise intentionally leaves her passport in a taxi which signifies the loss of her identity and she personates different identities during her journey until her death. She is the victim, the intellectual, the street prostitute, the secretary, the widow, the rape victim and a murder victim. Lise in a way wants to experience the Otherness. As Dave Holmes states "(...) what we usually find disgusting is a perceived threat of some sort to our bodily or self-integrity and central to this feeling of disgust is the sense that our boundaries have been transgressed" (2006:311). Lise transgresses the male hegemony by initiating her death and in order to construct her subjectivity, she chooses her freedom through her death and determines her fate. Lise is depicted by her yearning for absence and she initiates her journey towards her final. Desire and death reach its climax in the novella since it is the desire of death of the protagonist. The novella portrays Lise's striving to dominate the rest of her life through self-destruction which ultimately triggers the narrative. In the novella we witness her knowing the sanatorium and this familiarity of knowledge throws light on her suicide endeavor. Lise says to her murderer Richard "Were the walls of the clinic pale green in all the rooms? Was there a great big tough man in the dormitory at night, patrolling up and down every so often, just in case? Stop trembling. It's the madhouse tremble. It will soon be over. (487). It can be understood that not only the people but also the society is sick and Lise is dragged within this turmoil.

The Driver's Seat is queer since it proposes no essence to the self. As Jonathan Kemp asserts:

The Driver's Seat that focuses on the symbolic meaning of Lise's murder as a kind of existential comportment that gestures toward the ineffability of the death drive's compulsion to transcend the isolating fact of death through the continuity offered by lust. A gesture, that is, toward the unsayability of self-erasure as a limit experience on which sociality as such is predicated (2008:545).

At that point, since Lise is portrayed as an "abject" and a victim she rejects conventional behaviour and manipulates culturally accepted concepts of gender. As the novel was written at a time when the second-wave women's movement was obtaining momentum, Lise appropriates the male role as a director and initiator of her activities. Within a phallogocentric language women represent the unrepresentable and Lise does not obey the rules of the heterosexual society since she becomes estranged in that heterosexual society.

It is also substantial that Spark wrote *The Driver's Seat* during political violence called "Years of Lead" which lasted from 1960s to 1980s. In this context in the novella not only Lise but the whole society is in tumult. There is a decay in the system and disintegrated people are present everywhere in the society. As Helene Meyers points out "Significantly Lise's search for her destroyer reflects her creator's belief that violence is both a fact of life and a novelistic necessity" (2001:75). In the novella Spark expands violence to an extreme condition. Although Lise does not want to be approached sexually, she is raped by Richard, her murderer in the end. By raping Lise, Richard maintains his authority in society and replaces Lise in the driver's seat in figurative sense. Her passion to control her life by conducting her own victimization fundamentally fails since Richard (called Dick by his mother) drives sexual violence into Lise's ending. Lise's demise in fact displays both her social and psychological death. In the patriarchal system, woman is the one that is humiliated and in Lise's story Richard is the man that is humiliated by a woman and in this context Lise's masochistic instincts are due to her being submitted to the same humiliation by the system. Lise sees herself in Richard and he is not the ideal man loved by a woman but a desired murderer. Lise in this game plays the active role

whereas Richard plays the passive one. Ultimately women's bodies represent the objects of male violence and women particularly are entrapped in deep power relations with the hidden face of patriarchy performing their destinies. In Lise's world, men have usually been portrayed as sex-freaks. Bill says "I haven't had my daily orgasm. It's an essential part of this particular variation of the diet, didn't I tell you?" (482). The situation is same for Carlo as well. He grasps her and kisses her powerfully and at the same time she kicks him and tries to thrust him, burbling her protest. In that sense Lise takes over the driver's seat three times when she tries to escape a sexual attack. In this process Lise becomes dehumanized accommodating herself to a life attaining an animalized perception of existence. She behaves as if she has evacuated her humanness completely in this new awareness of existence, growing indifferent to everything and everyone. In stead of moving towards an integrated identity, Lise advances a fragmented sense of identity.

Lise's demise is an upheaval against patriarchy. As Hoeveler asserts "Women earn their superior social and moral rights in society by positioning themselves as innocent victims of a corrupt tyrant and an oppressive patriarchal society" (104). Throughout the novella, apart from being masochist, Lise at the same time represents female gothic. As Hoeveler asserts "Any analysis of the female gothic novel, unfortunately, has to confront the mystique of female masochism" (114). She positions herself as blameless victim of oppression and horror is apparent in many parts of her expressions. "He is afraid of me, Lise whispers, indicating with a jerk of her head the man behind her. Why is everybody afraid of me?" (445). As Hoeveler states "What we call masochism became a stock characteristics of the situation for the gothic heroine. These young women not only tolerate all manner of abuse; they actually seem to seek it out" (114). Lise is a heroine relishing her triumph through myriad strategies over patriarchy and she is portrayed as the figure of an evil in patriarchal system which creates gothic females. Gothic in a sense the story of tormented woman and Lise is depicted as a gothic heroine. As Hoeveler asserts "If the gothic heroine can not reform the economic system, she has the option of

fictionally transforming her role and complicity in it or escaping it altogether through death” (119).

Lise as a gothic heroine refuses her reification and in order to reconstitute her subjectivity she plays her game according to her rules. Lise also rejects “the viability of heterosexuality” in the novella and she always says that she does not want any sex. (1998:118). Lise tries to act as a “feminine feminine”. As Irigaray argues “Rather than listening only to what men or patriarchal discourse tells women about their sexuality or their fantasy lives, that is, rather than continuing to be “masculine feminine” women, they need to create themselves instead as “feminine feminine”. In that sense Lise acts according to her beliefs and values throughout the novella.

In the novella, there are some references to prostitution. When Lise meets Carlo at the garage he advises her to go home to the brothel where she came from. It is apparent from these discourses to see that the female body has been utilized as the object of sexuality and cultural structures thoroughly controlled by male ideology. In this condition, Lise as a subject experiences an appalling loss of separation between herself and the others. In that sense her “abjection” signifies not just a spiritual process but a social practice. Horror turns to be a vehicle for Lise to struggle with the patriarchy and at that point Lise’s morbid obsession with her death creates a perilous atmosphere in society. Lise, in order to gain power as a woman usurps patriarchy and her demise turns to be the locus of desire since she shares a kind of seductive relationship with death that gives the assurance to liberate her body from an imprisoning discourse. At that point Lise is seduced to surrender to masochistic desire and the death drive. The reason for her masochistic impulses is her being mentally harmed by her past experiences since we witness that she has been mentally ill some time in her life. As Freud asserts “Suppression of women’s aggressiveness which is prescribed for them constitutionally and imposed on them socially favors the development of powerful masochistic impulses which succeed, as we know, in binding erotically the destructive trends which have been diverted inwards” (1933:123). Lise as a masochist is the product of society so it seems that within the

patriarchal system female masochism is like an illness and since Lise is always harrassed sexually by the men she meets during her journey. In this context there are some similarities between Lise and the mythical figure Medusa. As Susan Bowers asserts “The patriarchal images of women from Greco-Roman mythology will continue to oppress as they remain encoded within our consciousness” (1990:217). In mythology, Medusa is indeed the symbol of female subjectivity and ingenuity and at the same time represents female wisdom. Medusa is a mighty goddess of her time. As Bowers states “The snakes on her head are strong mythological symbols associated with wisdom and power, healing, immortality and rebirth” (1990:220). Medusa symbolizes power of woman to be feared. Lise also has a gothic side and when people look at her they are afraid of her. Lise in the end raped by her murderer which was not her desire. Medusa has also been victimized by Poseidon and Perseus and her slaughter symbolizes the destruction of female power like the one in *The Driver's Seat*. As Charlotte Currie states “ Medusa’s transformations from beautiful maiden to monster and from monster to emblem are thus both forced on her by males” (2011:173). In that sense Lise’s transgression from a woman to a gothic and masochist female can be regarded as Medusa’s transgression. Spark’s protagonist Lise can be observed as a modern Medusa of her time.

Animus and Anima

Carl Gustav Jung posits that each individual has both feminine and masculine constituents of the psyche, anima and animus. These constituents are crucial in the psychological development of individuals. In *The Driver's Seat* these constituents can be observed both in Lise and her murderer Richard. Lise is the woman who tries to gain opportunities to handle her life. Throughout the novella Lise repeatedly looks for her type to murder her and she manages and instructs Richard in her way to death. Lise's quest for her murderer, repeating her demand "kill me", handing the knife to the murderer, meticulously marking the place of murder denotes her unification of animus with her psyche since the male and the female roles have changed in the novella. Lise adopts a position that puts her in authority and taken over by the inner self, Lise leads Richard. Her animus reflects insecure, opinionated, ruthless and brutal sides of Lise and she is at the same time, psychologically inaccessible since it is stated in the novella "Who knows her thoughts? Who can tell?" (452). Lise's altered behaviour and psyche demonstrate how she has been possessed by animus. In the patriarchal system women find themselves in control of a tyrannical and strong judgemental power that weakens their individual identity. At that point negative animus that leads a woman into destructive relationship emerges. For Jung negative animus is described "as being obstinate, harping on principles, laying down the law, dogmatic, world-reforming, theoretic, word-mongering, argumentative, and domineering" (2014:124). Her destructive attitude, her driving Richard to the murder display her negative animus and she compels Richard to acknowledge her agency. Lise can not consciously embody her anger, she can not let go off it and since her psyche can not be removed, her anger descends to the unconscious in which it triggers her animus and captures her. Her animus works as a beast, mirroring an untamed animus. Since it is unconscious, it operates destructively and remains uncivilized and unexploited. Her animus is her excluded masculinity

and it functions in a destructive manner that is her self-destruction. Lise is heading on a journey of self-destruction which goes deeper and deeper into issues of identity. Lise alternatively finds a man whom she can reflect all the rage and anger, permitting him to drive her dark sides for her. Women are generally regarded as inferior by male dominated system that arouses rage since women do not want to be perceived as innately inferior. Owing to this problem it is not possible to repress anger which needs enormous effort and energy. At that point it may not be feasible for a woman to be connected to the positive animus until she corresponds with the reality that is being innately inferior. So this often causes fatigue and depression and even malady and disorder. Lise's negative animus reveals her personality through combative tendencies, ruthlessness, subversiveness and insensitivity. Within her animus it is the desire to become a power mechanism hence she develops disruptive behaviours. Lise is sexually abused by both Carlo and Bill which affects her introjection of the masculine and that type of invasion by the masculine infects her animus. In that sense the animus turns against her and she becomes obsessive about her death since she is perpetually in search of her type of man to kill her. She feels herself worthless that mirrors her damaged femininity. Lise's animus becomes quarrelsome for the purpose of evoking man's masculine reaction in case where the male is passive. In her quest, Lise turns to be rigid, aggressive and is more interested in power since the cause of her lurid psychology and suicidal inclination is her being sexually repressed and presenting masochistic impulses.

On the other hand, Richard does not have a healthy anima since he becomes the prey of Lise and is not qualified to handle difficulties. He is touchy and sentimental. His dark side of anima appears when he oppresses his female nature. His anima appears in the figure of a fey character and a decoy. Anima is the sign of psychological development of a man and Jung thinks that the animus in women is stronger than the anima in men since the tendency of the Western Culture is to overestimate masculinity. As Emma Jung asserts "What we women have to overcome in our relation to the animus is not pride but lack of self-confidence and the resistance of inertia. For us, it is not as though we had to demean ourselves, but as if we had to lift

ourselves” (1985:23). At that point Lise is not the one who is taken over by the male power. Richard is taken over by her and she leads him. Richard’s anima functions as receptiveness to the unreasonable, his anima expresses itself as passive, insecure and touchiness. He acts like a puppet of Lise. His dark anima leads him to submit an unstable and controlling woman. He says “ I’ve had six years’ treatment. I want to start afresh. My family’s waiting to see me. I don’t want to come. I want to get away” (487). Richard is easily controlled and exploited by Lise since she acts like a community leader. According to Jung, anima possessed man acts like a “second rate woman”. Richard behaves like an inferior woman and he wants to distance Lise from himself since he is afraid of Lise. He says “ She sat beside me on the plane. I moved my seat. I was afraid” (489).

Lise’s animus represents the invisible voice of the patriarch and its mystifying power and she says “ I’ve been looking for you all day. You’ve wasted my time. What a day! And I was right first time. As soon as I saw you this morning I knew that you were the one. You’re mytype” (487). Her desire for separation and to become autonomous mirrors her psyche and Lise is seduced by her negative animus that promises her power and drives her beyond her limits which means her self-destruction. As Polly Young Eisendrath and Florence Wiedemann assert “All females living in a patriarchal society contend with alien animus, just as all female children are separated from Mother by the alien presence of men. (...) If actual males in the developing girl’s environment are threatening, aggressive or abusive to a girl or her mother, then the male Other (animus) is associated with aggression and violence” (1987:74/75). Lise as the production of this kind of society experiences a powerful sense of self-determination to reconstruct her female authority but her negative animus perspective results in self-hatred and self-destruction. As Jung states “ A woman possessed by the animus is always in danger of losing her femininity, her adapted feminine persona” (1966:209). Spark in *The Driver’s Seat* situates Lise as an extreme example of self-destruction and Lise has a subordinated femininity since she does not approve any sexual affair in her discourses. Her morbid obsession with death is her primary goal. Female sexual desire is undermined in the novella.

In conclusion, Lise is portrayed as a character who is subdued by situations. Apparently, as a woman Lise desires power and wants to display her dominance over the situations but she becomes a victim of herself. Lise's morbidity displays the fear of her negative use of free-will. It is the journey of a disturbed woman and her self-annihilation. The novella focuses on both victimization and empowerment of the female. It is important to analyze female representation within the frame of power relations in order to perceive the sources of women's subordination since the female body has been transformed into a body which can easily be exploited. So the female body becomes subservient rather than desirable. Spark situates Lise as an obsessed, nervous and isolated character which also supports Judy Little's statement. "In a world that humanizes people and turns them into objects, such manic obsessions and self-destruction are inevitable" (1983:154). *The Driver's Seat* is the story of using victimization to reconfigure one's identity against hegemonic discourses through her self-destruction, her demise. The novella specifies the last days of a woman who surrenders her own life which means acting a womanly position in order to gain a status in society. In this context Lise does not play the typical victim role. By creating her own death Lise wants to be the agent of her breaking up. Through this act Lise subverts the passive victimization which is known as the sole road to have authorization. Lise's masochistic impulses function as a strenuous submission which means directing her self-destruction. Her submissive fighting allows Lise to practise a shred of power in patriarchy but sex which Lise does not want ultimately applied to her by Richard (called Dick). "All the same, he plunges into her, with the knife poised high" (490). This expression of "all the same" displays that Richard has disobeyed Lise's instructions at the final moment and male sexuality is presented as a compelling weapon of domination. Richard maintains his authority by raping Lise and her wish to control her life by orchestrating her own victimization finally becomes unsuccessful as violence occurs at the last moments of her life, hence Lise symbolically sits in the driver's seat. Lise experiences her otherness through her death which means a kind of escape from the system gazing and controlling women.

NOUVEAU ROMAN ANALYSIS IN *THE DRIVER'S SEAT*

Postmodern literature signified both ideologically and elaborately by a dependence on some literary traditions inclines to refuse absolute meanings in novels and stories. Postmodern literature has dramatically affected by the Second World War and postmodernist authors incline to depict the world as a disastrous place. Postmodern ideology tends to conceive the world as being inconceivable to interpret or understand and it is unavailing and impossible to strive to locate any exact meaning to any idea. Within this perspective, postmodern narrative has lots of discrepancies in character representation, time, space, plot, representation of reality and narration. In that sense postmodern period has gained a new status together with the Nouveau Roman which has questioned the narrative function of the novel. Nouveau Roman, thrived in the mid-fifties and early sixties, initiated by Alain Robbe Grillet rejects many of the conventional features of the novel and reckons many earlier novelists as old fashioned in their focus on plot, narrative, ideas and character representation. Together with Alain Robbe Grillet, Nathalie Sarraute and Claude Simon, perpetual hegemony of classic "Balzacian" realism has been examined. A fundamental motive for the rejection of traditional novels is that they generate a faulty delusion of the certainty, consistency and expressiveness of reality. As Hanna Meretoja asserts "The nouveaux romanciers repudiate storytelling in the name of a new realism, that is, in order to bring forth the fundamentally chaotic, fragmentary nature of reality" (2006:97). According to Nouveau Roman novelists reality is in a position of perpetual transformation. In this context the crucial aspect of Nouveau Roman is the rejection of the form of a linear, consistent narrative since Nouveau Roman novelists have adopted the ontological premise that there is no substantial order in the world and it is not possible to know this order. The common point of Nouveau Roman theorists is that reality and existence of human being are basically confused, lacking any fundamental meaning and narrative order. Besides, the world that is perceived to be profoundly nonhuman is a world that evades the human capacity to understand the

narrative order, appears as an order incorrectly reflected onto the world. At that point nouveau roman functions as a means of portraying Eichmann's blind faith to represent the extreme and uncompromising order. Within this frame the language of nouveau roman is automated like the system itself which generates mechanic and reticent humans. So Nouveau Roman is the denial of the certainty of knowledge and integrity of the human subject and elements such as character representation, setting, time and plot are invalidated in nouveau roman. Storytelling has turned to be impossible for Alain Robbe Grillet since its narrative represents order and generates as he states "the image of a stable, coherent, continuous, unequivocal entirely decipherable universe" (1965:63).

Nouveau Roman novelists' purpose is to jettison the principals of the nineteenth century fiction and in this context subversion of narrative that controls the representation of space and time is the authoritative force in the organization of textuality by defying traditional notions of the novel. The concept of narration becomes the crucial structure to configure Nouveau Roman since the use of indeterminate or inconstant narrations generates textual situations that examines the idea of verisimilitude by developing arbitrary or changeable textual realities. As Carrabino states "The new author's preoccupation is centered mainly on the objective vision of reality not omnisciently maneuvered but presented in its multiple aspects without the author's interference" (1973:95).

Postmodern period has lead to the subversion of some novels including detective ones and in this context Nouveau Roman has a close relation with the detective story genre. The detective novel which is assumed to satisfy the expectations of the reader turns to be the idealistic means of postmodernism in its reversed form that thwarts the anticipations of the reader. Within the traditional detective story there is the triad of the detective, procedure of detection and the solution that establishes the principal elements of the fiction. In that sense the concept of solution is the most significant component since it is the ending and accomplishing element in the detective novel's succession, the one that contributes sense to the genre. It is this concept of solution

that nouveau roman theoreticians give attention and the way of their handling of the solution discriminates the conventional detective fiction from Nouveau Roman whose focus is mainly on the detective story genre. The concept of solution becomes nonsolution together with the renewal of the detective story and no answer is given to the “why” questions that the narrative arouses in the reader’s mind which displays the characteristics of Nouveau Roman. The reason for Nouveau Roman’s adopting numerous techniques from detective fiction stands for a crucial reason. The discovery process is hardly ever figured out. By contrast, in conventional detective fiction the reader is ensured of accomplishing a solution and reaching an absolute reality that will combine the countless lines of the investigation and unravel everything. Aside from the concept of solution, suspense is also significant that is different from the conventional use in novels. In *The Driver’s Seat* Muriel Spark states that the novella is a “whydunnit” touching to the fact that suspense is taken off in the third chapter when the reader is informed that Lise will be the victim soon. This subversion of solution and suspense also exemplifies the changes in the function of the conventional suspense as the reader is gradually included in the mystery and is not favoured by a credible culmination in the detection.

Together with the renewal of solution and suspense, time is also altered which is destined and recurrent in conventional detective fiction in which the detective just unravels the past and the past has already passed. Future is not included and the same process is repeated. By contrast, present tense narration provides simultaneous narration whose aim is to generate the impression of telling events the moment they occur. By rejecting chronological order Spark highlights the artificial form of the novel and keeps the reader informed about the novel’s artificiality. Present tense permits Spark to make use of future willingly in order to give a complete play of flashforwards. Spark’s insistence on present tense also reveals the narration’s detached and callous tone together with the protagonist’s emotional violence since Lise has no thoughts and feelings. As Ann Jefferson states “The recognition of the present tense of narration made a linear cause-and-effect model of narrative impossible to adhere to and gives rise to an image of a different narrative order. Successivity, linearity and casuality are replaced by an attempt at simultaneity”

(1980:38). The employment of the present tense in *The Driver's Seat* attributes to the rejection of the successive plot since present narration undermines our familiarity with the notion of time. Spark's use of present tense narration mixed with the future indicates that before man's action the result is predestined. It can be said that Spark makes use of Alain Robbe Grillet's device together with her metacommentary. Future tense reflects Spark's fatalistic approach and present narration indicates her insistence on the fictionality of her text. As David Lodge states "Muriel Spark's combination of frequent time-shifts with authorial third person narrative is a typical postmodernist strategy, calling attention to the artificial construction of the text, and preventing us from "losing ourselves" in the temporal continuum of the fictional story or in the psychological depth of the central character" (1991:77). The novella's refusal of the past and its placing the crime as well as the unveiling of the murderer's identity at the end builds the text as future oriented which is highlighted by prolepsis. At that point without prolepsis the reader would not be aware that it is a crime novel until the end. In that sense the recovery of narration is significant and as the cultural theorist Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth asserts "Postmodern narration (...) is an enactment that redefines time as a function of position, as a dimension of particular events. While all narrative is temporal by definition because its medium is temporal, postmodern sequences make accessible new temporal capacities that subvert the privilege of historical time and bind temporality in language" (1997:54). Within this new type of narration of the Nouveau Roman, Spark portrays Lise in her searching struggling to move closer to the reality that has been missing in her life. Spark's exposes ending at the beginning through the flashforwards for the purpose of drawing the reader's interest and attention to "why" and "how" since she is engaged in the nature of reality. As Ruth Whittaker states " Spark uses tenses unconventionally because she thinks that chronological time is not "an adequate metaphor for conveying her awareness of the world sub specie aeternitatis" (1982:130). Flashforwards are significant for Spark and they are depicted as means of a religious and moral question for reflecting the absolute truth. In the novella present tense narration also displays that Lise in search of her murderer, is in control and struggling to occupy an autonomy. It is contrasted by the analeptic function of the future tense which uncovers her "end" to the reader.

In the novella, at the moment of Lise's shopping for a dress, we first do not know the reason for her depressive and bizarre behaviour and the stainless dress does not symbolize her tragic death at first. So there is no retrospective motif in the novella in order to comprehend her manners which also match with her plan to make an impression in society. In this context the ratiocinatory mode is intentionally touched for the purpose of disturbing the traditional linearity of the conventional detective fiction and the novella turns to be a sort of enigma waiting to be unraveled. As Maria Vara asserts "It is there in the present tense, proleptically emptying the narrative future" (2001:2). Spark tries to manipulate the concept of time with this present-tense narrative with future tense flashforwards. "She will be found tomorrow morning dead from multiple stab wounds her wrists with a silk scarf and her ankles bound with a man's necktie" (1970:437). In conventional detective fictions, all misleading clues are combined to confuse the reader not to figure out the mystery beforehand which functions as a trick. Conventional detective novel operates from confusion to the certainty of clearness and reason but Spark's model does the opposite. By contrast, Spark adopts it for the purpose of upsetting the delusion of linearity. Spark's use of flash-forwards stems from her Catholic belief. It is a characteristics of Spark's narration to distance suspense from the very beginning of her novels. The story goes between the two tenses. Lise's actions before her boarding the plane are introduced through present tense and the presentation of the murder is in future tense. Spark does this intentionally to deviate the reader's focus from the plot to think on the matters in the novel. She answers for this early denouncement. "That device is quite deliberate. To give the show away in a strange way, strange manner, creates suspense more than the withholding of information does. Secondly, I think that it has an eschatological function, as you indicate-mentioned before" (2005:150). Spark builds the victim as her heroine instead of watching the detective disclosing clues which are the residuum of the past, the reader follows the clues being established. On the contrary, in classical detective fiction process of detecting is retrospective as the purpose is to lay down a series of events.

Nouveau Roman refuses the prescriptive teleology of “Balzacian” novel together with the nineteenth century realism. Spark adopts the detective fiction to disturb the teleology which is regarded as lost in postmodern fiction since postmodern writers subvert conventional modes of teleology and delay meaning by thwarting the reading habits and by masking the reader’s fixed analytical moves. With the rebutting of teleological predestination closed ended plots have been changed with the open ended ones which means the novel’s moving inward to investigate its own formation. The goal is not to observe what happens or read the events but alternatively, fiction encompasses divergent forms of ending with postmodernism. Metafiction mistrusts the concept of cohesion, affirming that closed ending with its coherency of meaning and the stability of characters’ actions and the cohesion of plot must be resolved that leads to a sort of open ending. Metafiction is the type of novel in which non-linearity is adopted and rather than reading from the beginning to the end, the reader can read it in a diverse order and in this context metafictional writing challenges closed endings and presents various kinds of open endings. These endings are various. As David Lodge asserts “ (...) we get the multiple ending, the false ending, the mock ending or parody ending” (1977:226). In that sense the reader starts from the theme of death which functions perversely in the novella. From the very beginning the attention is focused on Lise’s absurd manners and her desire to die. As Gerardine Meaney states “ Spark’s narrative practice is rooted in her insistence that a story can only be told when its end has come” (1993:164). In the novella it is the power of the destined and shocking ending which is her demise since Lise associates herself with the violence and forces that drives her toward death. At that point Nouveau Roman through abandoning linear narration, teleological plot and an organized ending invites the reader to take part in building possible explanations to the questions of “why” and “how” which displays that the hermeneutic code works in reverse. By breaking up the linearity Spark refuses to adopt a successive plot which is a characteristics of nouveau roman. Spark’s treatment of time in Nouveau Roman can be compared to Henri Bergson’s notion of time. Bergson developed a new concept of time that is not relevant to clocks, but rather with a mental dimension or a comprehensible present, and most of the twentieth-century writers have been influenced by this new concept of time. In the novella the narrator functions as a

camera stalking the heroine wherever she goes. The narrator does not struggle to disclose the inner side of Lise but focuses on recording her movements. Duration is the real time for Bergson since it is the time that flows and indivisible. In one of Spark's interview she states "I express it in the past tense but in the actual process, as far as I am concerned, it happens in the present tense. Things just happen and one records what has happened a few seconds later (...) events occur in my mind and I record them" (1977:134). Past tense narration allows the events to occur in an organized way of cause and effect and carries off the chaos of the present moment. On the contrary present narration is iterative, eternal, unrestrictive and instant, in this way every moment of Lise's actions are carried out to reveal temporality. As James Bailey asserts "While the historical mode of time consciousness, as described by Ermarth, must entail a constant transcendence of the depth and detail of the moment at hand, the isolated present has the power to seize and envelop the reader" (36). At that point Bergson's concept of time contributes considerably to present narration of the fiction since it builds the simultaneous narration of incidence, all the present moment of occurrence possible so it problematizes the traditional description of plot.

In conventional novels, an essential outcome of the teleological feature of plot is that, the story (in which the ending is known) is told covertly or overtly in retrospect and is finished before the narration. At that point past tense narration is crucial for Roland Barthes since it ensures reality, causality and consequence. The control of the narration belongs to the author and through the past tense there is the voiding of the unknown. On the contrary Barthes' "exploded reality" of the simultaneous narration is exactly without complete knowledge and readers undergo some different stages of moments. As James Bailey asserts "Readers experience an immersive series of moments in time arranged as a series of separate 'nows' rather than clearly demarcated stages within a temporal line. This is certainly what takes place in *The Driver's Seat*" (2011:34). While the historical time requires a determined superiority of the profundity and moments in detail, the isolated present tense narration has the control to hold and enfold the reader. Lise's chaotic world and her ambiguous character and enigmatic history is reduced through present tense narration.

Apart from the refusal of a coherent narrative Spark reveals her unbiased attitude in her fiction. In the novella, by rejecting to display any feelings, emotions and thoughts regarding the character, Spark mirrors her unbiased narration which is a typical characteristics of Nouveau Roman. So the reader in this kind of narration, is encouraged to engage in actively during reading and interpretation. At that point Nouveau Roman has turned into a stimulus behind Roland Barthes' definition of the "writerly" text. The text has gained a new status in postmodern period. The character seems to be annuled in the novel for Nouveau Roman theoreticians and Alain Robbe Grillet thinks that there is a character reduction which means that the description of the character is reduced in the novel related to the social changes in the world. In this context anonymity takes place instead of individuality. Anonymity and invisibility are the circumstantial evidences of a protagonist in nouveau roman. Lise's anonymity is the portrayal of Spark's unbiased writing since we do not know anything about the protagonist, even her full name unlike in conventional novels. Lise is sometimes introduced as "the customer", "she" or "the young woman" in different parts of the story. Spark does not tell Lise's exact age. Spark says "She might be as young as twenty- nine or as old as thirty- six, but hardly younger, hardly older" (432). There is no detailed information about her family ties or relatives. There is no proof of her nationality and mother tongue. The only datum we know is Lise's ability to speak four languages; French, English, Danish and Italian. In the novella the narrator is heterodiegetic which displays that the narrator adopts the power of omniscience. In the beginning of the novella the narrator can see the inside of Lise. "She turns to look back and says, with a look of satisfaction at her own dominance over the situation with an undoubtable excuse, 'I won't be insulted!'"(426). The narrator turns to be more and more uncertain of what goes in her mind since the narrator uses phrases such as presumably, might be, it seems, in the novella. In stead of introducing the inner side of the character, Spark employs a lot of external descriptions which is also a feature of postmodernism. "She has added very little to the room; very little is needed, for the furniture is all fixed, adaptable to various uses, and stackable. Stacked into a panel are six folding chairs, should the tenant decide to entertain six for diner" (429). There is a detailed description of her flat on the contrary Lise is portrayed isolated and alienated. Even her snack on the

plane and the bellpushes in her bedroom are highlighted. With these representations, Spark is in accordance with Grillet who stresses the description of the external realm in his literary works. We can not enter Lise's inner world but the descriptions of the objects such as her room and dress have been presented in detail. " She puts the bunch of keys in her hand-bag, picks up her paperback book and goes out, locking the door behind her. Who knows her thoughts? Who can tell?" (452). These presentations strengthen what kind of world Spark wants to highlight. It is a hollow world devoid of feelings, emotions, sensations which is peculiar to human. Spark exposes her postmodernist art and unbiased attitude towards Lise through some flat recurrences which remind a kind of Grillet style in the novella. " Her lips are slightly parted; she whose lips are usually pressed together with the daily disapprovals of the accountants' office where she has worked continually" (426). These recurrences about Lise's lips have been repeated seventeen times in the novel. When Lise's lips change according to her momentary feelings, Spark repeats the same lines in the book. As Douwe Wessel Fokkema states "Qualification and overprecision through repetition and rephrasing, as in the Nouveau Roman, can also be subsumed under this item (the item of multiplication, permutation, and enumeration which is 'one of prominent themes and connotations in postmodernist texts')" (1997:37). Not only the introduction of Lise's room, but also the dress she is buying has been touched elaborately to mark aloofness from existence and feelings. In a society deprived of feelings, emotions, values, interiority has been replaced by exteriority. In a depthless society we can only perceive exteriority in stead of interiority.

Robbe Grillet argues for an impartial examination of sensations rather than paraphrasing of events or characters. In that sense, Lise's feelings in the novel are never apparently given and there is no clear indication of emotions exposed. In stead of the explanation of her manners, we have just a description of what Lise does in each case while approaching her dead-end and for the reader it is puzzling to understand Lise's real intentions because of her bizarre manners and talks. There is not a detailed description of Lise's spiritual state because, psychological aspects have been eliminated in Nouveau Roman. In the novel, meticulous description and the

effect of overprecision proves Spark's postmodernist tone. As Fokkema puts forward "Its indifference to modernist goals of precision and authenticity that makes the postmodernists turn to either imprecision or overprecision with the French new novelists, for instance, displaying over precision" (1997:36). In the novel, Lise as a character is introduced in such a way that not only the author but also the reader is distant from Lise, which illustrates the influences of Spark's impartial writing in the novel as the Nouveau Roman technique. In this context the plot and the character representations emerge as complex tasks and they mock the norms of realism. In conventional detective fiction, understanding is based on an experimental reasoning and consecutively unravelling forms of cause and effect but Robbe Grillet discusses that the order and coherence of plot have the tendency of creating a false view of the world. Robbe Grillet states "To have a name was doubtless very important in the days of the Balzacian bourgeoisie. A character was all the more important as it was also a weapon in any confrontation" (1970:28). In this context Spark benefits from Robbe Grillet to construct Lise's anonymity. While Grillet finds reason in the change of status of individuals in modern society Spark supports the changes from psychological frame. Spark with her anonymous protagonist Lise represents a world without stable relationships and there is no sense of home in society. As Judy Sproxton asserts "Nowhere in Muriel Spark's work is a character presented so remotely as Lise in *The Driver's Seat*. (...) Her very inaccessibility is a disturbing yet compulsive feature of the narrative. The style of the account is as bizarre as Lise herself; it is in the present tense, which emphasized the narrator's detachment as each moment is carefully picked out without comment" (1992:137). Lise is nearly dehumanized which causes her inevitable devastation. Postmodern period turns people into objects and Lise is one of them so not only the people but also the postmodern society is confusing, chaotic and disordered. At that point identity crisis has emerged within the postmodern era. Lise is portrayed as mentally ill and she is a character who yearns for her posthumous recognition. As Jean Baudrillard states "The identity crisis is related to the schizophrenic nature of the present epoch of postmodernity. Delirium and dizziness associated with the feeling of being lost are other conditions linked to the loss of identity" (1994:113). Spark exemplifies a deranged female through the character Lise. In this context formal strategies related

to nouveau roman are situated in a restless juxtaposition together with the elements of the tragic plot which Lise tries to mastermind. In a world identified by its dominant sense of objectification Lise is never perceived as a subject even by her murderer. Together with the complex and turbulent organization of the system and identity crisis, indeterminacy is also a very significant element of Nouveau Roman since in the novella there is not an easy summary or closure. In the novella the world that the author created is deprived of meaning and the relationship between people and the objects actually displays this lack of meaning. The individual is made lost between objects and himself. In that sense Spark uses the word driver's seat both its figurative and actual meaning. She denotes both the object and sense of power. In the novella Lise figuratively takes the driver's seat and in reality it is the symbol of authority and Lise tries to occupy the seat in order to become an autonomous agent in her life. Lise on the contrary becomes a hunted object as she is raped which means that she is involved in an objective world. It is interesting to see that it is merely possible through her death that her life can achieve meaning and depth.

In this context Spark handling of freedom is highlighted in the novella. As Patricia Waugh asserts "For Spark freedom is limited to self-conscious role playing because in fiction characters are trapped within the novelist's script, and in 'reality' people are part of the book written by the hand of God" (1984:119). So Spark reveals her use of Nouveau Roman through combining her metacommentary style in the novella. That is the reason for Spark's novels being end directed since she is engaged in endings as they are associated with the problem of freedom. The novella has a gruesome power since Spark makes her heroine the victim and leads her up to the crime in stead of letting Lise away from her death. Spark subverts the crime fiction by bringing down the traditional literary narrative style and reveals the end in the beginning. This style reflects her difference in applying Nouveau Roman. Lise's faith presented through flashforwards, displays Spark's distortion of narrative since the reader is grounded outside chronology. Spark's character Lister in *Not to Disturb* tells that "What's done is about to be done and the future has come to pass" (1971:9). In that sense Spark's twisting of narrative is highly unusual. Lise's struggle to write her own story is culminated in her death which means that her fate is preplanned.

Lise is exposed to an order outside her control. Spark's use of flashforwards associate with her faith that there is an explanation for what happens whether we know the case or not. As Gerardine Meaney asserts "The cinematic connotations of 'flash-forward' transform the concept of time as a sequence of events into time as a series of images. The underlying concept is that of an actual beginning, middle and end which are cleverly transposed" (1993:177). In this context in Spark's fiction the author is displayed as God which is achieved through flash-forwards exposing the end of the character in the beginning of the book. Kermode states that Apocalypse is an example of the "fictions of the end" (1968:6). In *The Driver's Seat* the ending is the controlling of the plot construction. Spark's ending focused fiction denaturalizes the whole detective fiction in the novella and being obliged to witness the events from the end deprives us of the possibility to consider the heroine as an envoy of human freedom. Lise is the one who disturbs the reader's prospects of closure, coherence and order in the novella.

Spark's revealing of violence, dehumanization, death, misogyny are all the confirmations of an irredeemable authorial harshness in the novella. Through the use of Nouveau Roman, Spark draws attention to the ominous sense of objectification peculiar to the Nouveau Roman to portray the insidious corrosion of a character. Lise from the very beginning of the novella searches for her self destruction. Spark is influenced by a variety of techniques including reflexiveness, circumstantially detailed descriptions presented in an impartial tone, incoherent narrative regarding suspense. There is no refusal of omniscience since Spark believes in God and her reality is that of God's being immanent and she reflects her fatalist side through this mysterious purpose. Spark redefines reality by presenting new challenges to the structures of control. Bailey asserts that "Drawing upon the sense of compression and obliqueness that she so admired in Grillet's writing thus enabled Spark to further explore her preoccupation with the reduction of humanity to a set of rigidly defined character types" (2014:47). Lise is one example of this character type with her strange behaviours throughout the novella. In the novella the author turns to be a suspicious figure and the reader is asked to become a sort of detective figure struggling to have a sense of the inconsistencies in the narration. This is made clear

by addressing to the detective genre in *The Driver's Seat*. Richard is the man Lise is looking for her murder and she will be stabbed with a gift (the knife) which was given to Richard by his aunt Mrs. Fiedke. This is something relevant to the cosmos being created by Spark since it displays that the individual has a limited freedom and authority. It can be said that in the novella application of Nouveau Roman is offset through the existence of God's almighty power.

The use of language in Nouveau Roman is also crucial since the Eichmann trial and the discourse remind Spark of the *modus operandi* of Nouveau Roman and its refusal of plot. Barbara, one of Spark's character in *The Mandelbaum Gate* attends to the Eichmann trial and says "The actual discourse was a dead mechanical tick, while its subject, the massacre, was living" (1965:59). Many theorists have employed the Eichmann's "dead mechanical" use of language as an example. The language is plain since the purpose is to reveal a lot with less words in the novella. Spark uses Nouveau Roman in order to depict the hectic and disordered system of the post war world. The language of the Nouveau Roman is mechanical like the system which creates reticent and automated individuals as Lise.

Spark is different from Robbe Grillet in the application of Nouveau Roman since she sees realism subjective and myopic and she believes that something is present behind surfaces and on this critical point she conflicts with Robbe Grillet. On the contrary he emphasizes the disconnected delirious apprehension of the reality established in his narratives. As Bailey asserts "The obsessively rendered environments depicted in Robbe Grillet's fiction bear traces of a narrative violence, whereby what is described with apparent objectivity is rendered inert and inhuman" (2015:44). For Spark Robbe Grillet is haunted with exactitude since he gives millimetrical details in his narrative. On the contrary Nouveau Roman for Spark does not intend to give an entire objectivity but conveys instead a predicting sense of its narrator's dangerous existence. In this context Spark combines both violence and

voyeurism cunningly in the novella as Spark through Nouveau Roman carries a foreboding sense and reflects her myopic side.

Spark's novella which has benefited from the detective fiction is different from Alain Robbe Grillet's oeuvre since the novella has been depicted as an inverse detective novel which functions as ratiocinative form. As Ruth Whittaker states "When she describes things in clinical, neutral detail, it is a method of alerting us to the mood of a situation, or to the neurosis of a character. In other words, she subverts the original function of techniques designed in part to convey stasis and quiddity, by using them dynamically towards an end" (1982:9). In that sense Spark's touching of Nouveau Roman becomes sophisticated in that she moves from the retrospective model of the conventional detective fiction to a ratiocinative one. The reader does not explore Lise's life and her behaviours retrospectively and the novella does not begin with death or crime as in the conventional detective fiction in which the detective's investigation starts with a question and closes with an answer as usual. *The Driver's Seat* is always filled with questions and the novella is not a "whodunnit" but a "whydunnit" as Spark has named. In this context the novella challenges the hermeneutic code of Roland Barthes by disturbing the codes of traditional detective fiction since the novella does not have a progressive disclosing. In that sense Nouveau Roman turns to be a stimulus for Barthes' explanation of the "writerly" text in which the reader becomes more active in the production process. At that point, the genre of the detective story is an example in which the narrative functions chiefly through the hermeneutic code. Together with Nouveau Roman, the novel turns to be open ended in stead of a closed one as in Spark's oeuvre. The death enigma is decisively removed with Lise.

In conclusion, appearing in France in the 1950s, the Nouveau Roman is usually described as a subversion of traditional plot and character, its differentiation between the imaginary and the real and submitting of types of representation to odd and self-reflexive kind of narration. Spark's preoccupation with Nouveau Roman has given her a means of advancing her existing engagement with the reduction of the

individual in a variety of stifling societal roles and one of the examples is the protagonist Lise. Lise as an “abject” and surrogate of the author can be seen as the representative of God, since there is an invisible power reflected through the protagonist. Lise is a psychotic female that practices with tenacity, dedication and all her stigmatised manners resulting in the overt incentive of her murderer. She is intentionally guilty which mocks the fact that women are regarded as only victims by society. Spark’s use of Nouveau Roman has allowed her to convert the disparity of narrative, which determines the depiction of the English novel since in traditional novels men have perpetually been in the driver’s seat. Together with the use of flash-forwards also the reduction of the character and a mixed type narration which are the characteristics of Nouveau Roman, Lise has been highlighted in order to reveal Spark’s worldview. Lise’s portrayal is an example of character representation of Nouveau Roman. In one of Spark’s interviews with Frank Kermode she says “Robbe Grillet’s methods are useful if you want to present obsessed or manic states” (1970:425). Lise and her murderer Richard try to assume the power of God. *The Driver’s Seat* portrays a world where individualism has become alienation and where absurdity and disorder replace certainty of God including an ordered universe. Lise with her small world (even her room seems inhabited) is driven to her ideal demise. Spark by employing Nouveau Roman has raised various questions pertinent to the nature of female victimisation and authorization including sexual, social and religious values of modern society. In that sense, Spark by employing the detective genre displays the novelist’s capacity to govern the narrative and she uses prolepsis deliberately. As Bailey asserts “The ability of metalepsis to “promote” or “denote” a character’s ontological status, and thus to reproduce mimetically the process of subject construction and desubjectification operating in the world outside of the text, is especially relevant to Spark’s fiction” (2015:39). Nouveau Roman whose purpose is to subvert the realist novel also rejects to supply further interpretation of the world. In that context the loss of teleology is a differentiating characteristics of postmodern fiction and postmodern writers subvert conventional forms of teleology. Spark makes it by using Nouveau Roman and the detective genre to subvert its teleology since the purpose is not to perceive what exactly happens at the end and the reader does not read for the plot. In the novella, Spark’s employing Nouveau Roman becomes

successful since it both interrupts and triggers the reader's sense of teleology through the protagonist's eyes. Spark by employing Nouveau Roman aims at replacing traditional concerns with the inner self since we witness Lise's psychological war to handle control in her self destructive journey. The evidently contingent incidents told in the present narration and lack of coherency have been expressed through the proleptic declaration of Lise's murder. The distinctive, non-linear tone of Spark's narrative operates in order to divert the reader's concentration to his or her own productive imagination on the topic and the text. Briefly, the objective writing of Spark, her rejection of plot, the protagonist's depiction as an undistinguished and a postmodern figure have all contributed to female representation combined with Nouveau Roman in *The Driver's Seat*.

Abjection and Nouveau Roman in *The Driver's Seat*

Lise as an "abject" figure wanders endlessly without reaching a certain destination. Spark's protagonist can be observed as a literary instantiation of "abjection" combined with Nouveau Roman narration. As an "abject" person Lise desires her demise and questions her identity, solidity and subjectivity. Her subversion during her journey to her death signifies her as a gothic and psychotic woman who is also sexually abused in patriarchal society. The "abject" which means cast off also exemplifies the usage of Nouveau Roman since nouveau roman does not give importance to individuation and there is a reduction of inner states of mind of characters, Lise is not only an "abject" woman but also an anonymous one in society. Anonymity is also an important feature of Nouveau Roman.

CONCLUSION

This thesis starts with a concise overview of Muriel Spark's life that is highly associated with her writing career due to her conversion to Catholicism. Her writing career showed fluctuations throughout her life and each of Spark's novels' contribution to the British literature is beyond dispute. Spark has a wide spectrum of writing which began in the fifties, flourished in the sixties and came to an end in 2004. Spark's fiction and style and her pivotal role during the Second World War and people she has been influenced by have also been analyzed.

In each of Spark's novels the reader faces with different and extraordinary characters unlike conventional ones. For instance the protagonist Lise in *The Driver's Seat* is a complete shock at first sight because of her chaotic inner life and tormented psyche. Her behaviours, outlook on life, her search for the ideal murderer not the lover, trigger such various emotions that the reader is always in alert when reading. The novella gradually becomes a puzzle. For instance Lise's journey gets more baffling and shocking to the end and it is difficult to solve the plot in a patient manner. When analysed from many perspectives *The Driver's Seat* is the novella which elucidates her grasp of the postmodern condition and demonstrate her postmodern narrative style. In the novella everything turns around only Lise who tries to direct her life and is in a competition with her destiny so Spark's novella in that sense is the reflection of her endless vision and uncertainty of contemporary society.

Detective story is the major form of Spark's novels and the study of detective fiction is a means of exploring the connection between philosophical ideas and their manifestation in fictional narratives. In that sense Spark's novel is not a "whodunnit" but a "whydunnit". Both Lise and Richard, her murderer, try to assume the power of God and they are the figures who look for agency. In the figure of Lise, it has been suggested that women who choose freedom are punished by both God and

patriarchy. Spark's reality is a mixture of temporary reality in which we can control, perceive and explain and absolute reality which we can not fully perceive because of our lack of knowledge. In that sense Spark emphasizes the protagonist's free-will in the novella and Lise's morbidity displays the fear of the negative usage of free-will. In the novella, Lise has been designed to illustrate how mankind goes wrong due to the deficiency of moral belief. As a result, heroine's unavailing challenge to patriarchy, society and destiny has been emphasized. In that sense, Lise overpoweringly tries to take the driver's seat to play her own game. It can be said that there are two different situations in the novella. One is the desire to have power, the other is to destroy like the God. The connection between Lise and the narrator highlights the connection between God's will and free-will. In that sense, the protagonist Lise is both creator and created and in Spark's novella God works in a mystifying way and Spark wants to display the divine plan that is inconceivable to mankind.

Lise's morbid end can be interpreted as silencing of self as a reaction. Her self-destructive act is the cause of her sadist attitude. She satisfies her sadism by her victimization. Lise's self-tormenting act is the signifier of her satisfaction. Lise's repression of her aggressiveness results in her having masochistic impulses. As Bettelheim asserts "Turning aggression towards the self is the safest way to cope with it" (1988:131). Lise boards at gate 14 to travel to the South and according to Christianity, number 14 represents salvation. In that sense it can be said that Lise who is a cast-aside and oppressed figure because of the weight of suffering in the meaningless of her life, tries to rebuild her identity in the universe. Lise as an "abject" character finds solution through demise which means her salvation in the patriarchal system. *The Driver's Seat* is the novella which shows characteristics of Nouveau Roman as a postmodern work. Spark has been incorporated with experimenting fictional techniques and unlike the conventional practice Spark upholds innovative and particular devices in her works. In the novella Spark apparently embraces an unbiased attitude which is a common postmodern feature. The protagonist Lise's feelings and thoughts are unclear. Even her full name is not presented and in that sense Lise's anonymity exemplifies Spark's impersonal

narration in her fiction. In stead of character description, there is a detailed description of places. Apart from unbiased attitude, Spark rejects the successive plot in the novella which is an example of her being influenced by Nouveau Roman. Spark interrupts the chronological order and highlights the artificial conception of the novella. With the flash-forward technique blended with the third person narration *The Driver's Seat* displays Spark's postmodern strategy. The dominant use of the present tense is the example of rejecting the successive plot. As Jefferson states "The recognition of the present tense of narration made a linear cause and effect model of narrative impossible to adhere to and gives rise to an image of a different narrative order, successivity, linearity and causality are replaced by an attempt at simultaneity" (1980:38). So *The Driver's Seat* perverts the typical concept of time supported by the conventional fiction. According to Nouveau Roman theoreticians common use of the linear narration displays a false representation of time and they reject the coherence in the plot. With flash-forward technique and incoherent plot Spark draws the attention of reader and the question is not "what happens" but "why it happens". The reader is often alerted in the novella. For instance, the reader does not know why Lise's photo will appear in the newspaper in four language at first. Until the reader finds out that she will be killed her photo's appearing in the paper perplexes the reader. The shift from the present tense to the future tense declares the reader what will happen next time and raises the readers' interests. Spark asserts in an interview with Robert Hosmer "I think suspense is often heightened if the author 'gives away' the plot from the very beginning. The reader is then all the more anxious to find out how the conclusion came about. I adopted this method in my book *The Driver's Seat*" (2005:146). The acceptance of Robbe Grillet's Nouveau Roman, *The Driver's Seat* is regarded as the most successful example of Nouveau Roman in postmodern fiction. In the novella female representation has been blended with Nouveau Roman in order to highlight the protagonist Lise and her bizarre manners together with her chaotic world and psyche.

In conclusion, it seems that women seem to have taken a backseat when compared to their male counterparts in traditional novels, whereas in most of Spark's works, protagonists try to play the role of God. They are usually disappointed if they forget

their roles outside determined borders or patterns. Spark generally foregrounds their mental positions rather than the social status. In *The Driver's Seat* Spark highlights the mystery in the problem of agency and control in the woman's suicide. In Spark's fiction violent and abhorrent events occur suddenly and the characters overwhelmingly exemplify how mankind goes wrong. Lise's manipulation as an active submissive is one of the examples. Lise yearns for her freedom through death and wants to be noticeable in patriarchy. The very beginning of the novel does not provide the name of the protagonist as in traditional novels. Lise is referred to as "the young woman", "she", "the customer" in the novella. Spark tries to highlight through the image of Lise that in a world that dehumanizes people and make them objects, a kind of self-devastation is unavoidable.

Throughout this study female representation and Nouveau Roman movement have been investigated in *The Driver's Seat* within the postmodern frame. This study contributes the readers a basic knowledge of Spark's fiction and her indisputable function in British literature.

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