

FEMALE SUBJECTIVITY IN THE POETRIES OF EAVAN BOLAND, KATHLEEN
JAMIE AND GÜLTEN AKIN

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
ENGLISH LITERATURE

JANUARY 2019

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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ABSTRACT

FEMALE SUBJECTIVITY IN THE POETRIES OF EAVAN BOLAND, KATHLEEN JAMIE AND GÜLTEN AKIN

Altunsoy, Şafak

Ph.D. Program in English Literature

Supervisor: Assist.Prof.Dr. Dürrin Alpakın Martinez-Caro

January 2019, 203 pages

This study evaluates the facets of female subjectivity through selected poems of Eavan Boland, Kathleen Jamie and Gülten Akin from a comparative perspective. Boland from Irish literature, Jamie from Scottish literature and Akin from Turkish literature poeticize certain images of female subjects who have to adapt into their societies and react against the defining roles in a paradoxical way, which forms the main frame of the study, the dynamism of subjectivity in the poetries of Boland, Jamie and Akin. The study argues how the images of woman subjects undergo a consistent change between the dream-like peaceful atmospheres and nightmarish corporeality.

The study starts with the discussion of comparable qualities that the three poets share by referring to the literary and social sources shaping their poetries. It continues with the reasons behind preferring the early and later collections in order to suggest the transitivity between their first and last

poems. The study analyses the female subjectivity in the poems of Boland, Jamie and Akin in two parts. The first chapter argues how the subject survives against the intrusion of the social by referring to the Kristevan argument of subjectivity within the frames of language and history. The second chapter evaluates the influence of the amative powers subverting the repression of the social into a new fluidity in the subjection process. The study concludes by that three poets' search for a stable paradigm and their failure in each case in their early and later poems offer for them an idiosyncratic sense of unity through their acknowledgement of a continuous disconnectedness.

Keywords: Comparative poetry, subjectivity, fluidity, the social, the amative.



ÖZ

EAVAN BOLAND, KATHLEEN JAMIE VE GÜLTEN AKIN ŞİİRİNDE KADIN ÖZNELİĞİ

Altunsoy, Şafak

İngiliz Edebiyatı Doktora Programı

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Dürrin Alpakın Martinez-Caro

Ocak 2019, 203 sayfa

Bu çalışma, karşılaştırmalı bir bakış açısı benimseyerek Eavan Boland, Kathleen Jamie ve Gülten Akın'dan seçme şiirlerle kadın özneliğinin yansımalarını inceler. İrlanda edebiyatından Boland, İskoç edebiyatından Jamie ve Türk edebiyatından Akın, hem toplumlarına uyum sağlamaya çalışan hem de çelişkili bir şekilde toplumlarının belirleyici rollerine karşı çıkan kadın öznelerinin belirli imgelerini şiirleştirir. Çalışmanın genel çerçevesini şairlerin poetikalarındaki özneliğin devingenliği oluşturur. Çalışma, kadın imgesinin kabus gibi bir bedensellikle düşsel huzurlu ortamlar arasında nasıl sürekli bir değişimde olduğunu tartışır.

Çalışma, şiirlerini şekillendiren edebi ve toplumsal kaynaklara atıfta bulunarak üç şairin karşılaştırılabilir özellikleriyle başlar. İlk ve son şiirlerindeki geçirgenliği göstermek için erken ve son derlemelerinin neden seçildiğiyle devam eder. Çalışma şiirleri iki kısımda inceler. İlk kısım, dil ve tarih çerçevesinde Kristeva'nın öznellik tartışmasına atıfta bulunarak öznenin

toplumsal olanın müdahalesi karşısında nasıl hayatta kaldığını tartışır. İkinci kısım, tabiiyet sürecinde toplumsal olanın baskılamasını yeni bir akışkanlığa çeviren sevginin etkisini değerlendirir. Çalışma sonuç olarak, şairlerin ilk ve son şiirlerindeki sabit bir paradigma arayışları ve her seferinde yaşadıkları yenilgi neticesinde sürekli bir bağlantısızlığı kabul etmeleriyle kendilerine has bir birlik hissini açığa çıkarır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Karşılaştırmalı şiir, öznelilik, akışkanlık, toplumsal, sevgisel.





To the silenced women in Turkey

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deep gratitude, first and foremost, to my advisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Dürrin Alpakin Martinez-Caro, for her patient guidance and constructive suggestions during the development of this study. She consistently allowed this study to be my own work, but steered me in the right direction whenever I needed. It has been a pleasure and an invaluable experience to write this dissertation under her guidance.

I would also like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nurten Birlik for her invaluable comments, and helpful suggestions during the preparation of this dissertation.

I am grateful to the members of my committee, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Fatma Kalpaklı, Assist. Prof. Dr. Kuğu Tekin and Assist. Prof. Dr. Hakan Yılmaz for their time, effort and helpful suggestions in this study.

My heartfelt appreciations are also for my professors, friends and colleagues at the Department of Foreign Language Education, METU and at the Department of English Language and Literature, Selcuk University.

Last, but not the least, I must express my very profound love to my wife and my family for their encouragement when the times got rough.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

WHY- *What Have You Carried Over? Poems of 42 Days and Other Works*

“WT”- “Women’s Time”

AV- *Aeolian Visions/ Versions: Modern Classics and New Writing from Turkey*

MMS- *Mr and Mrs Scotland are Dead. Poems 1980-1994*

BPP- *Besieging Poem in Plain*

TH- *The Tree House*

ITV- *In a Time of Violence*

WH- *The Wind-Hour*

Jl- *Jizzen*

WL- *Waterlight*

NF- *Night Feed*

OL- *Object Lessons*

JTM- *A Journey with Two Maps*

NT- *New Territory*

J- *The Journey*

IHOI- *In Her Own Image*

ICM- *I Cut My Black Hair*

LS- *The Lost Land*

ODS- *On a Distant Shore*

O- *The Overhaul*

LE- *Love is Everlasting*

TIG- *Then I Grew Old*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Aim of the Study

Eavan Boland from Irish literature, Kathleen Jamie from Scottish literature and Gülten Akin from Turkish literature poeticize an idiosyncratic female voice by foregrounding their painful memories or experiences. Since their educational and cultural backgrounds remained within the limitations of hegemonic ideology, the three poets position their poetry in the peripheries of the dominant perceptions and viewpoints defined by a master signifier such as religion and moral values. Boland, Jamie and Akin cherish the margins throughout their poetic careers. But, this perception of the margin has undergone a 'transposition' from glorifying the margin to the acknowledgment of a need for a definite centre. Thus, their poetries have gained a wavering nature, especially by means of polyphonic questioning poetic voices either to reach a definite meaningful unit or to demarcate the impossibility of such a unified structure.

This study engages itself with the analysis of the three poets in order to discuss the notion of flux in their poetic careers in two parts. The early and later poems selected denote a lonely female writer's attempts to shatter the conventions imposed upon her. Her loneliness creates an individual sense of margin. Such an illusionary border also leads to the intention to go beyond the boundaries of the social structure. Thus, the peculiar fluidity in the subjectivity of the poetic personae is the main concern of the study. The social and the amative forces

argued by Kristeva and Barthes clarify the fluid subjectivity in the early poems of Boland, Jamie and Akın, one negatively, the other from an affirmative perspective. Moreover, the poetic personae's efforts to unchain themselves from the delimiting structures of the social and the amative offer a productive process in which the subject has a chance to look into herself from a certain distance by regarding her present situation as a broken mirror, the bright parts of which suggest a distorted image of her and the dim parts allow for reconstructing imaginary connections with their darkness.

Besides defining the recurrent themes in Jamie's, Boland's and Akın's poetry collections, this study aims to evaluate how the female voices are put in different perspectives. The poets' subjective receptions lead to universal yearnings at the end of the poems. In this respect the study tries to read the poems from Boland's *Domestic Violence*, *In Her Own Image*, *The Lost Land*, and her selection *Outside History* and Jamie's *A Flame in Your Heart*, *Black Spiders*, *Jizzen*, *The Tree House*, *The Queen of Sheba* and *Mr and Mrs Scotland are Dead* and Akın's *Ruzgar Saati* (The Wind-Hour), *Kestim Kara Saçlarımı* (I Cut My Black Hair), *Uzak Bir Kıyıda* (On a Distant Shore), *İşte Sonra Yaşlandım* (Then I Grew Old) and *Sevda Kalıcıdır* (Love is Everlasting) against the backdrop of Post-structuralist feminist theories. Such theorists as Kristeva, Irigaray or Braidotti define subjectivity of woman from their own perspectives, which demonstrates the chronological change in the meaning of the subjectivity too. The arguments of the above-mentioned theorists also help to explain the transformation of subjectivity in Boland's, Jamie's and Akın's poetries.

The first chapters of the study draw a theoretical frame for the later comparative analysis of the poems. The third and fourth chapters focus on Boland's *Domestic Violence*, *Night Feed*, *Journey*, *Outside History* and Jamie's *Mr and Mrs Scotland are Dead*, *Jizzen* and lastly Akın's *The Wind-Hour* and *I Cut My Black Hair* in order to read closely the tension created by the intrusions of the social and the amative by cross-referring to other collections such as Jamie's *Queen of Sheba* sharing similar concerns and styles. The fourth chapter also argues the changing attitude of the poets in their later poems with the nomadic

subjectivity in mind. To put it differently, the fluid subjectivity of the early poems leaves its place to a nomadic transposition by keeping the paradoxical unity of continuous disconnectedness. The chapter compares Boland's *Lost Land* with Jamie's *Tree House* and Akin's *Balkon and Kent* sections in *Sevda Kalıdır*.

Time remains as an inextricable problem in Boland, Jamie and Akin. For that reason, the study tries to demonstrate the changing perception of time in early and later poems of the three poets. As Braidotti states, the tension between monistic unity or reduction of the process to a single unity and counter-memory "creates a continuity of disconnected fragments: a discontinuous sense of time, which falls under Nietzsche's genealogical sense of the Dionysiac as opposed to the Apollonian" (151), which creates a peculiar tension in both early and later poems of the poets.

The oscillations between the linear and cyclical perceptions of time position the poetic personae in Jamie's, Boland's and Akin's poems to a "pause, the stop-over, the rest, the stay of the wanderer between two moments of movement, two runs, two sites, two places, two states" (Jorris 7). However, the poets do not reject the influence of history determined by the phallogocentric discourse. Instead, they try to establish an existential stance before the limitations of history through their observant eye in the poems. Thus the poem itself or the act of writing turns into a space in which they can unchain the Apollonian margins through visits to imaginary realms as it happens in Jamie's *The Queen of Sheba*.

The flux in the poems of the three poets chiefly enables the poetic voice to locate itself within the "nomadic ethics" in Rosi Braidotti's words. Moreover, this frequent change also denotes "a world that is no longer organized along the dialectical axis of centre-periphery" (93). In other words, Jamie's, Boland's and Akin's poetic careers evolve from the binaries such as centre-periphery to a more enlarged axis which does not merely rotate among the oppositions. Such a change also delineates their transforming female voice in their early

poems and the later ones. Thus, the study employs Kristeva's theory of becoming in order to demonstrate how female subjectivity is formulated through inner and outer determinants. Although the study does not engage itself with the nomadic side of the subjectivity in Braidottian sense, the poems of Boland, Jamie and Akin reflect certain nomadic features with the poetization of fluidity in them. In this respect, Boland's, Jamie's and Akin's poetries carry most of the attributes ascribed to a nomadic poem as Jorris defines the nomadic characteristics in a poem below,

A nomadic poetics will thus explore ways in which to make & to think about a poetry that takes into account not only the manifold of languages & locations but also of selves each one of us is constantly becoming. The nomadic poem as ongoing & open-ended chart of the turbulent fluxes the dispersive nature of our realities make inevitable. (6)

The notion of process horizontally rather than vertically or the glorification of circularity instead of linearity in Boland, Jamie and Akin is a result of their belief in constant change. The poets' perception of nature is reshaped as an unstatic space thanks to travelling or the idea of transposition. In Jorris' words, the poem presents itself in a "rhizomatic" way, in which it "proceeds via series of images, moving from realm to realm, human-animal-vegetable-mineral& back up, way& around& through, horizontal& vertical, taproots, transfers" (38, 41) as presented in the poems such as "The Wishing Tree" and "Frogs" from Jamie's *The Tree House*. Thus, the poetic personae's corporeal voyages offer a "gateway through which to access this walking-pace world" (McGuire 141).

Additionally, a literally nomadic lifestyle hinders Boland, Jamie and Akin from a deliberate nationalism despite their Irish, Scottish and Turkish origins. For instance, against the dominant nationalist discourse in Irish or Scottish poetries, Eavan Boland clarifies that "Poetry is defined by its energies and its eloquence, not by the passport of the poet or the editor; or the name of the nationality. That way lie all the categories, the separations, the censorships that poetry seeks to dispel" (qtd. in McGuire 144). However, Ireland, Scotland or Anatolia remain as a psychic space in which the poetic personae feel the

glimpses of relief and the sense of wholeness, which occurs only in fractures since this experience is momentary.

The originality of this study lies in the comparison of the poets from the respect of Kristevan subjectivity. Although the poets studied are subjects of certain dissertations, they have been analysed individually without any comparison between the three poets. Moreover, within the Turkish context, Gülten Akin's poetry has been underrated among the academic circles despite the fact that she has been 'labelled' as the greatest living poet of Turkish literature up to the time she passed away in 2015. That only five MA dissertations have been written on Akin's poetry in Turkish universities is another indicant suggesting the ongoing underestimation despite some popularized and decontextualized lines of the poet and perfunctory reviews underlining her 'greatness' without the reasons for such par excellence.

Lastly, it is better to clarify this study's two major limitations before a comparative analysis. The first one is related to the choice of the poems. Since the study focuses on how female subjectivity is visible or invisible in the poems selected, a chronological concern for the selection of the poems for the analysis is not functional in the case of Boland, Jamie and Akin. Because their later poems re-evaluate or reformulate the same subject matter in their previous poems with new perspectives due to their personal experiences, it is difficult to narrow the poetries of Boland, Jamie and Akin into certain linearity. In other words, even by turning back to the similar themes in their later poems, the poets offer an idiosyncratic Kristevan circularity, which necessitates cross-referring to the poems that seem to be out of the scope of this study. The second limitation is about the translation of Akin's poems from Turkish. As Paker puts, "Akin's diction is rooted in the Turkish vernacular, sometimes dialectical, but her syntax, often elliptic, is complex, and connections between reference points can sometimes be obscure" (ix).

Thus, since the poet suggests new connotations for certain words in Turkish besides her employing vernacular language of Anatolia, the conveyance of the

poem's original style and structure through translation stands as a wishful attempt to transmit the original product into another one due to the fact that "a translation cannot have the kind of cultural grounding that an original might demonstrate" (Robinson 37).

1.2. Woman as a Poet and a Subject in the Contemporary Irish, Scottish and Turkish Poetries: Eavan Boland, Kathleen Jamie and Gülten Akin

When Boland, Jamie and Akin are evaluated within their national literatures, their way of handling the ordinary life with some universal suppositions characterizes the poets as unique voices of their local literatures. This shared feature can also be traced in their poems from the early or the later collections. In this respect, the woman's sensibility in Akin's words as the utterance of responsiveness against the defining forces around them demarcates the central concern of the three poets.

However, labelling Boland, Jamie or Akin as feminist, separatist or nationalist cannot go beyond the shallowness of labelling and creates another binary, against which the poets wage war through the power of their poetries by pointing out the use of literature for practical purposes. Moreover, the poets do not support such binaries as male-female opposition. In other words, the transformations and fluidities in their poetries are reflections of their lives' natural flow. As Boland expresses with the words, "I'm not a separatist. I would be much more subversive by inclination" (Interview with Wright and Hannan, 183), the three poets suggest a change through subversion in an attitude to criticize from within. However, they are not after concrete results or stable paradigms, on the contrary, the poets cherish the Kristevan perception of the subject's becoming process.

The idea of nation or the reception of the homeland as a paradox is a common point Boland, Jamie and Akin argue in their poems. But, they are against such labels as "neo-nationalist" (2) as Quinn asserts for Boland's case. As Böss states "Boland's 'nation,' constantly re-imagined through language, is, obviously, not

the political nation-state of the Republic” (133). Although the historical facts influencing their poems and the corporeality of their countries are apparent in their poems, such emphasis on the homeland does not indicate a nationalist stance since the ‘home’ offers a fanciful realm with the paradoxical residue of historicity for Boland, Jamie and Akin. In this respect, besides the convergence of history and myth, Ireland, Scotland and Anatolia visualize the functioning of the imaginary in the symbolic. Thus, as the personal histories offered by the poets in their prose works such as essays and memoirs emphasize, the place images turn into local sources nourishing the poems by both reminding the sorrows of the past and reconfiguring the subject’s connection to nature.

Furthermore, nature stands as one of the basic sources in Irish, Scottish and Turkish literatures. But how such a source is poeticized in the selected poems of Boland, Jamie and Akin underlines one facet of the comparison between the three poets. To begin with, the notion of ‘Romantic Ireland’ is shaped around the natural landscape by creating a sense of wholeness. As Donoghue puts, Romantic Ireland also creates “three Yeatsian unities” causing to “a dream and then a frustration: unity of race, unity of culture, unity of being” (29), all of which are empty signifiers in the case of Boland’s poetry with her emphasis on the unitary “frustration” (Donoghue 29). However, Boland’s speakers in the poems create a romantic perception of Ireland in order to run away from the harassing daily life with certain burdens for the woman subject, which doubles the persona’s sense of loss since she cannot establish a connection with the natural and her outsider position is again confirmed by what she finds as a remedy.

As Gairn points out, “the natural world is a vital component of a diverse Scottish literature (1). Accordingly, for Jamie, nature is a major subject matter in her poetry and maintains its recuperative influence in both her early and later poems. To put it differently, she acknowledges the feeling of wholeness granted by the natural. Nevertheless, similar to Boland, she admits the lost union with the natural since the interaction between human being and the

natural world is blocked through certain apparatuses of the social by leaving the sense of longing as a residue.

Influenced by the folk literature and the Anatolian landscape, Akin reflects her observation of the natural into her poems. As Halman argues, the description of the “beauties of nature” (4; 68; 84; 120) appears as a fundamental feature for both folk poems and the modern examples in Turkish literature. However, Akin’s use of the natural world in her poems is not due to aesthetic concerns. In her “Form and Content in Art” from *Besieging Poem in Plain*, she even opposes the romantic description of rustic life with “the shepherd’s pipe and the river meandering through the valley” (BPP 13) since such a narration excludes another perspective, “the exhausted people, poverty and the dry river” (BPP 13). According to Akin, the first attitude stays within the boundaries of form and the second one becomes content because it reflects the actual. However, both of them are insufficient for Akin since she believes that everything changes, only the image of a “flower remains without a change when it is transposed with delicacy and depth” (BPP 14). Moreover, similar to Jamie and Boland, Akin’s native land, Anatolia sustains its paradoxical meaning by functioning as the return of the repressed and a material reminding the ‘scar’ in the subjectivity process.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Social Contract and Female Subjectivity in Kristeva

According to Toril Moi, Kristeva's productivity changes radically in 1974 when she wrote "About Chinese Women." Her linguistic analysis leaves its place to a psychoanalytic one by means of her attempt to reinterpret the Freudian and Lacanian theories. Her criticism of the political also evolves from "a more general, political engagement" to "a more localized interest in the individual" thanks to her interest in the study of psychoanalysis (6). Kristeva's perception of feminism has always been disputable due to her restlessness about feminism's adequacy in presenting and solving the current problems of the feminine. Such evaluation of feminism exactly reflects the opposing attitude of Boland, Jamie and Akin towards feminism because the three poets emphasize that the present ideologies cannot solve the woman's problem. In other words, the poets suggest not a total radical change. They offer a gradual process renovating the subject's situation instead.

Kristeva's opinion about feminism changes in the seventies as she focuses on the subjection process and the interpretation of the feminine as a position inextricable from the symbolic realm in opposition to Irigaray and Cixous, which expresses how the three poets' stance evolves from a more political discourse to a position in which subject acknowledges her connection with the social and its continuous influence on her. Furthermore, Moi's clarifies Kristeva's concerns about feminism as a movement, which also demonstrates the three poets' attitude towards feminism mostly as follows,

1. Kristeva criticizes feminism's being defined only by a limited group in France (Psyche et Po)

2. Such a definition reflects the needs within the bourgeois ideology since women try to gain sovereignty within the limitations of that certain western political situation. So, French feminism does not serve to express other perspectives from all over the world. Thus, Kristeva reproves the Eurocentric perception of feminism as the dominant and unique voice for all other examples of feminism.

3. Kristeva seeks a "different relation of the subject to discourse, to power" (10). However, creating a new discourse always comes into conflict with the deadlock of language. As a reaction to language's order, such a discourse deliberately tends to be in an unintelligible position.

4. Kristeva believes that whether it be liberal or socialist, any political discourse creates another dominant discourse (9-11).

In "The System and the Speaking Subject" and "Revolution in Poetic Language," Kristeva suggests a definition of 'subject' through her criticism of semiotics and linguistics or what she calls as semanalysis. According to her, the semiotic analysis has contributed to the clarification of the social and political structures and how these orders of power have evolved with the examples from the study of ideologies such as myths and arts. In this respect, Kristeva considers ideology as a language system; the "determinants" of which are defined by "a set of signifying rules" with its "double articulation" between signifier and signified. Because their relation is arbitrary, the fracture between the "referent and symbolic" also delineates the fragmentedness of the "speaking, historical" subject unlike presumed unity of the non-empirical or transcendental ego (25-26). Since Kristeva does not disregard the "historical socializing role of the symbolic" in the formation of subjectivity, she evaluates that the theory focusing on the production of meaning has two options between the theory accepting transcendental ego as the basic cause of meaning by disconnecting it

from “its body, its unconsciousness and its history” and the one focusing on the speaking subject who is disunited in nature and laid open to the influence of both “bio-psychological processes (drives) and social constraints (family structures, modes of production) (27-28).”

By coining ‘semanalysis,’ Kristeva draws attention to meaning not as a “sign-system” but as a “signifying process.” In this respect, she differentiates between two terms “genotext” and “phenotext” (28). Genotext refers to the conveyance of the suppressed drives by the social in the signifying process. Phenotext, on the other hand, is the language itself and can be defined “in terms of structure or of competence/performance.” In a similar way to Kristeva’s later argument of the existence of the semiotic in the symbolic in “Revolution in Poetic Language,” the genotext functions in the phenotext, which is called “semiotic disposition.” In the signifying process of “poetic language” for instance, semiotic disposition appears as a break with the “grammatical rules of the language” such as departures from the regular use of sound in language with more “drive-governed bases of sound-production,” the use of a word with several meanings or “syntactic irregularities such as ellipses, non-recoverable deletions, indefinite embeddings” (28). Thus genotext-phenotext relation also signifies the connection between the “fragmented body of the speaking subject” and the social by assuming a mechanism of a “frontier,” which is the meaning created through the signifying chain in the social structure and “the transgression of that frontier” through cleavage of a new signifying process. Furthermore, such mechanism of action and reaction leads to the “acceptance of a symbolic law together with the transgression of that law for the purpose of renovating it (29),” which exemplifies the boundedness of the genotext and phenotext or the semiotic within the symbolic. In this respect, since “the frontier” turns into a “fissure,” the topology of the subjectivity also undergoes a change. Kristeva maintains that the “fissure” functions as

a transgression of the unity proper to the *transcendental ego*. The subject of the practice cannot be the transcendental subject, who lacks the shift, the split in logical unity brought about by language which separates out, within the signifying

body, the symbolic order from the workings of the libido (this last revealing itself by the *symbolic disposition*). Identifying the semiotic disposition means in fact identifying the shift in the speaking subject, his capacity for renewing the order in which he is inescapably caught up; and that capacity is, for the *subject*, the capacity for enjoyment. (29)

Kristeva develops her argument on genotext and phenotext in “Revolution in Poetic Language” by redefining the two concepts. So, genotext includes the co-presence of the semiotic processes and the symbolic. While phenotext is identified with the intrusion of gradually appearing categories and thus the production of meaning, genotext denotes the conveyance of drives and pre-Oedipal stage through certain sound properties in the text such as repetition of words, rhymes and rhythmic devices within the boundaries of the symbolic. Similar to the absence of a clear-cut separation between the semiotic and the symbolic, the genotext enables to create a “space in which the subject is not *yet* a split unity that will become blurred, giving rise to the symbolic,” which leads to the “generat[ion]” of the subject through a continuum “within the constraints of the biological and social structure” (Kristeva, 120-21).

When the “pillars” (189) of the nineteenth century, Kristeva states, the notion of nation, “economic homogeneity, historical tradition and linguistic unity” (189) crumbled with the wars and the new socio-political structures, they left their place to “interdependence” and “symbolic denominator,” which is explained by Kristeva as “cultural and religious memory forged by interweaving of history and geography” (188). In such a new “social ensemble,” ‘nation’ does not lose its influence and maintains its existence by functioning as a “repressed memory” that reshapes “the most modern type” (189).

However, the definition of ‘nation’ is problematic since in Boland’s words in “Outside History,” “it is, in some ways, the most fragile and improbable of concepts. Yet the idea of an Ireland, resolved and healed of its wounds, is an irreducible presence in the Irish past and literature” (69). According to Bold, “Scotland is still fighting old battles, still obsessed by the past, still trying to convert defeat into victory. Scotland is a country uniquely haunted by history”

(qtd. in McGuire 7). In a similar vein, Jamie's poems in Scots and English on the same page, for instance, reflect how the residue of the local unknown or mythicized past reveals itself through the tension between the local and standard languages.

In Turkish context, such circumstances as the collapse of Ottoman Empire and the establishment of new Turkish Republic with a cultural renovation through its reforms, the intellectual circles conglomerated in the cultural capital city of Turkey, Istanbul, and the ruling bodies' disconnection from the poor Anatolian people's sorrows, also undermine the idea of a unified description of 'nation,' which leads Gülten Akin to be the voice of the unvoiced Anatolian people or the repressed subjects with their disregarded personal memories or histories in opposition to the one offered by the authority¹. In other words, Jamie's, Boland's, and Akin's poems about nation and history implicate the existence of a long-lasting problem tyrannizing the subject with references to the imperial residue of Britain and Turkey in addition to the sense of extirpation within Britain and Turkey contexts.

Kristeva states that the symbolic denominator does not concentrate on the problems of production (material gains) between men and women who share a uniform temporal and spatial perception, but on "those of reproduction, survival of the species, life and death, the body, sex and symbol" (189). Europe, according to Kristeva, is a product of such social ensemble. However, this ensemble is problematic since it leads to two contradictory results. On the one hand, the identity of the European model is a product of a "historical sedimentation" (189). But on the other hand, the "loss of identity" in connection with a universal sharing of memories by escaping the limits of history, creates a supra-national entity, which cannot be described with the linear time but a "monumental" "englob[ing]" time (189). Similarly, as Jung and Piccoli argue, in the Turkish political and social change during the

¹ The description of poor mothers in *The Poems of 42 Days*, can be an example of such concern since the depictions focus on how the illiterate mothers struggle in a totally hostile modern world. Their strangeness is doubled when their presence is not recognized by the authority.

establishment of the Republic of Turkey, the process did not occur in a radical way from the respect of “historical sedimentation” in Kristeva’s words since the new system could not totally break its connection from the Ottoman heritage in spite of many radical changes in social life (103).

Thus, the first part of the third chapter focuses on the connection between genotext and phenotext or the semiotic flow in the symbolic by analysing the poems from *In a Time of Violence* by Boland, *Queen of Sheba* by Jamie and *Ruzgar Saati* (The Wind-Hour²) by Akin in three parts which argue the influence of time, the social or the symbolic and language on the subject. For instance, Eavan Boland’s opening up her collection of *In a Time of Violence* with the words from Plato’s *Republic* becomes more meaningful within the context of genotext and phenotext relation. The words of Plato, as Boland quotes below,

As in a city where the evil are permitted to have authority and the good are put out of the way, so in the soul of man, as we maintain, the imitative poet implants an evil constitution, for he indulges the irrational nature which has no discernment of greater or less (204)

² Akin’s poetry collection takes its title from a poem “The Wind-Hour” in the collection. The title appears in the lines “Aklım ıslıklarla türkülerle/Rüzgar saatleri evde tutamam/ Essin esmesin yollardadır [I am thinking of the whistles, the songs/ I cannot keep the wind hours at home/ It is on the road no matter, it blows or not]” (Akin 14). I have preferred to translate the Turkish word ‘saat’ into English as ‘hour’ although the Turkish word’s lexical meaning also includes the word ‘clock’ by calling to mind such usages as ‘water clock’ or ‘clepsydra’ or ‘sand glass,’ since the word also functions as these archaic inventions used to measure time. However, in the poetry collection *What Have You Carried Over? Poems of 42 Days and Other Works* edited by Saliha Paker and Mel Kenne, the poem is translated as “The Hour of Wind,” the syntax of which stresses on the tension created by wind in a certain period of time by attributing a separate and special time sense observed by the persona (2).

Moreover, the poem stresses on the meaning connected with the concept of ‘measuring:’ in a similar way to Jamie’s employing bird image as leitmotif in *Queen of Sheba*, besides the bird image in *The Wind Hour*, the wind image reappears in most poems such as “Yitikler Gecesi (The Night of the Lost Ones),” “Deli Kızın Türküsü (The Song of The Mad Girl),” “Bir Karınca Başını Çevirdi (An Ant Turned its Head)” and “Alaca Dağlarda Sarı Çiçek (A Yellow Flower on the Dusky Mountains)” always in relation to ‘a certain period of time’ such as daytime or night-time, which will be analysed in depth as the influence of time to subjectivity.

denote not only the threat represented by the poets by means of unleashing the irrational³ as most scholars have reinterpreted the above lines from the perspective of Plato's world of ideas and forms besides his argument of mimicry. This epigrammatic quotation foreshadows the poetic persona's subjection process and political condition within the Irish context through such poems as "Death of the Reason," "In a Bad Light," and "Anna Liffley" in *In a Time of Violence*. Thus, the quotation from Plato can be reinterpreted as the reflection of the local political situation of Ireland and its metaphorical extension, Dublin. The poet's role in such a context in which the evil rules is chivalric since the poet wages war on the authority by means of the poem.

Even though she is marginalized by being accused of "implant[ing] a bad constitution" (ITV 204), she offers a more realistic picture of the subject in 'bad light.'⁴ The 'time of violence' in which the repressed irrational freely moves, enables "the signifying practice" to "inscribe" "within the phenotext the plural, heterogeneous and contradictory process of signification encompassing the flow of drives, material discontinuity, political struggle and pulverization of language" (Kristeva 122).

2.2. The "Amorous Dynamics" in the Light of Kristeva and Barthes

The definition of love as a concept is controversial since the concept itself is elusive in nature and it cannot be limited to certain universal features by indicating a generic homogeneity. Moreover, the dominance of the personal or the individual experiences of love leads to a polyphonic description of the amorous experience. *Tales of Love* by Kristeva is the product of such a combination between the personal, the psychological and the historical

³ As Singpurwalla states, according to Plato, in a similar way to painting, poetry heartens the reader to observe "things from the point of view of appearances, and thus strengthens the irrational part of the soul," which leads to "empathize with the character's point of view." Both painting and poetry are dangerous because in *Republic*, Socrates attributes his negativity to these arts' appealing to the inferior part of the soul, that is appetite and appearance (290).

⁴ *In a Time of Violence* employs many color images and images related to the art of painting in order to create the dichotomy of white and darkness and dominance of grey in their merging points in such poems "In a Bad Light."

perception of love. In *A Lover's Discourse*, Barthes applies a similar pattern in his arguments or figures about love by combining the idiosyncratic with the references to certain philosophers and literary works.⁵ As the epigraph to *A Lover's Discourse*, Barthes defines the discourse of the amorous experience as the one uttered "by thousands of subjects (who knows?), but warranted by no one; it is completely forsaken by the surrounding languages." What he implicates with "the surrounding languages" is the dominant discourse of the "authority," in which lover's discourse is "ignored, disparaged or derided by them" (2).

In *Tales of Love*, Kristeva attempts to provide a "history of subjectivity" in accordance with "diverse *images of love* in the West" through such figures in love as "Narcissus, Don Juan, Romeo and Juliet or the Mother with her child [Virgin Mary]," each figure represents basic forms of love present in western civilization. Like Barthes, Kristeva analyses these "consequences, *for discourse*, of the amorous dynamics of systems that are open to one another, and that open up within their very systematicity in order to manifest the semiotic flow within symbolicity" (16). However, this "systematicity" does not occur on a linear line, in Barthes' words, each fragment of love (amorous dynamics) "explodes, vibrates in and of itself like a sound severed from any tune-or repeated to satiety, like the motif of a hovering music," the duration of which is not defined through any "logic" (6). In this respect, the amorous experience is a threat for the order of the symbolic since "man as a fixed, valorized entity finds

⁵ In the part "How this book is constructed," Barthes explains the three partite structure of his work as figures, order and references. According to him, the lover's discourse is merely apparent in the "outbursts of language, which occur at the whim of trivial, of aleatory circumstances" (3). So he calls these fragments as figures since they can "take shape insofar as we recognize, in passing discourse, something that has been read, heard, felt." Accordingly, a figure's borders can be marked like a sign and can be remembered easily "like an image or a tale" (4). Figures function as reservoirs for the subject to interpret the amorous code "according to his own history." That is, the process of the amorous experience occurs "as if there were an amorous Topic, whose figure was a site (topos)" (5). Barthes explains the order of the amorous as "non-syntagmatic, non-narrative" in which the figures "stir, collide, subside, return, vanish with no more order of than the flight of mosquitoes" (7). Barthes provides his sources as follows, "some come from an ordinary reading, that of Goethe's *Werther*. Some come from insistent readings (Plato's *Symposium*, Zen, psychoanalysis, certain Mystics, Nietzsche, German lieder) . . . some come from conversations with friends. And there are some which come from my own life" (8).

himself abandoned in favor of a search, less for his truth . . . than for his innovative capacities” (Kristeva 15). Therefore, for Kristeva, the amorous experience leads to a “renewal, our rebirth” by offering an alternative perception through “memory-consciousness” and “destabilized-stabilizable auto-organization” (16). Barthes explains the process of the volatile love experience as follows, “the amorous subject draws on the reservoir (the thesaurus?) of figures, depending on the needs, the injunctions, or the pleasures of his image-repertoire” (6).

The accumulation of the fragments through the love experience creates the memory consciousness, which organizes the vacillating images of love. According to Barthes, “every amorous episode” can make sense as it begins, continues and ends. So it can be “interpret[ed] according to a causality or a finality” delineating the authoritative command of the social contract. However, the fragments (figures) of the amorous discourse “cannot be *classified*: organized, hierarchized, arranged with a view to an end (a settlement): there are no first figures, no last figures” (8). Thus, the amorous experience produces its own “postmodern knowledge” in Lyotard’s words since “postmodern knowledge is not simply a tool of the authorities; it refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable” (Lyotard xxv). Moreover, the subject in love feels the operation of chance rather than a logical and causal discourse. When love is involved, the subject disregards such aims as “to succeed” or such fears as “to fail” since they merely keep “contingent, provisional meanings” on him or her. Respectively, Barthes argues that “nothing works out, but it keeps going on” when the amative feeling matters (140).

However, in its whirling situation, love creates its own centre for the subject by offering endurance and hope against the harassment of the grand narratives⁶ of

⁶ As Lyotard describe it, “I will use the term modern to designate any science that legitimates itself with reference to a metadiscourse of this kind making an explicit appeal to some grand narrative, such as the dialectics of Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working subject, or the creation of wealth” (xxiii).

the world, which results in the subject's contentment with his or her sufferings. As Barthes maintains, "always bewildered, never discouraged; I am a Daruma doll, a legless toy endlessly poked and pushed, but *finally* regaining its balance, assured by an inner balancing pin (What is my balancing pin? The *force* of love?)" (141). Thus, the Daruma doll image delineates the amorous subject's position as being both unleashed from the limitative influence of the binaries and his yearning for a stable entity to endure. So "affirmation"⁷ through love creates a positive stance by considering that "beyond truth and falsehood, beyond success and failure," the subject detaches himself from "all finality" by "liv[ing] according to chance (as is evidenced by the fact that the figures of my discourse occur to me like so many dice casts)" (Barthes 22-23).

The "general opinion" regards the amorous experience as a disease⁸. Like a sickness, the amorous experience appears with certain symptoms and needs to be treated. In this way the dynamics of the symbolic through the 'voice of the people,' "disparages any excessive force and wants the subject himself to reduce the great imaginary current, the orderless, endless stream which is passing through him, to a painful, morbid crisis of which he must be cured . . ." (Barthes 59) by demanding the renovation of order. Moreover, the subject wants to comprehend love or his amative experience by deducing that "what I want to know (love) is the very substance I employ in order to speak (the lover's discourse)." But he cannot manage to perceive love's "essence," since by "being inside" he understands "it in existence" (Barthes 59). This perception of

⁷ According to Barthes, the subject experiences the affirmation in the amorous feeling in two ways. In the first situation, the lover sees the other and positive remark about the other promptly appears through "dazzlement, enthusiasm, exaltation, mad projection of a fulfilled future." Thus the subjects "blind[s]" himself by accepting the other wholeheartedly. Then he becomes suspicious about his feelings, which paves the way for the second phase and creates melancholy at the same time. In the second situation, he overcomes his melancholy through the "affirmation of the affirmation," that is to say, the subject regains the positive perspective by recreating the feeling which he has confirmed in the first situation. So the subject "affirm[s]" the first encounter in its difference" by demanding to reclaim it again without repetition and utters "I say to the other (old or new): *Let us begin again*. [emphasis in original]" (24).

⁸ In medieval romances, it is possible to find "general opinion's" analogy between love and sickness. Please see, for instance, *The Duke of True Lovers* by Christine de Pizan, (113,116,120)

the amorous is a “tribute the lover must pay to the world in order to be reconciled with it” (59).

Since the meaning of the images always overflows, by means of the amorous experience (“stabilizable”), the subject finds a chance to stabilize his own feelings (“destabilized”) (Kristeva 16) and so gives a meaning that satisfies the “great narrative Other” (Barthes 7). In other words, the subject tries to catch the meaning of love by means of “flashes, formulas, surprises of expression, scattered through the great stream of the Image-repertoire” (Barthes 59). However, this dynamic of love does not lead the subject to a safer ground, on the contrary, the flow between the symbolic and the semiotic continues because of

a permanent stabilization-destabilization between the *symbolic* (pertaining to referential signs and their syntactic articulation) and the *semiotic* (the elemental tendency) of libidinal charges toward displacement and condensation, and of their inscription, which depends on the incorporation and introjection of incorporated items; an economy that privileges orality, vocalization, alliteration, rhythmicity, etc. (Kristeva 16)

With the failure of language, the experience of love leads to “vertigo of identity, vertigo of words” (Kristeva 3). So the subject cannot write his own love story. He only writes the beginning part of his poem (“I am its poet (its bard⁹)). But the closing lines always “belong to others; it is up to them to write the fiction, the external, mythic narrative” (Barthes 101). In the spinning movement of both language and social pressure around the subject, the two paradigms are destabilized and a new gate becomes available in order to overcome “all the dams of reason” (Kristeva 4), which makes the subject “language-mad” who “go[es] on talking, turning” his “hurdy-gurdy” (101) in Barthes’ words.

⁹ Bard can refer to the flow dominant in the amative experience with his continuous travels from one place to another. In a similar way, the subject “realizes” that “he is doomed to wander until he dies, from love to love” (Barthes 101). “Bard” also functions as the recorder and narrator of the heroic deeds of the subject in this case as the observant of the subject himself or herself.

Barthes describes this whirling of language as “I am (inwardly) voluble,¹⁰ because I cannot anchor my discourse: the signs turn in ‘free wheeling.’ If I could constrain the sign, submit it to some sanction, I could find rest at last” (161). So the subject’s relation to the amorous turns into a therapeutic process since love reformulates the subjectivity by functioning “like the dynamics of a living organism in full growth, of transforming an error into a renewal – remodelling, remaking, reviving a body, a mentality, a life” (4). Accordingly, love leads to a glimpse of “fulfillment.” Barthes claims that “fulfillment is a precipitation.” It occurs suddenly and creates a sense of wholeness. However, it is “something that, starting from totality, actually exceeds it: a totality without remainder” (54). Through love, the subject feels that he is transferred to another paradigm in which he renews his vision without the influence of the symbolic. As Barthes maintains, “when I am fulfilled or remember having been so [“memory-consciousness” in Kristeva’s words (16)], language seems pusillanimous: I am *transported*¹¹, beyond language, i.e., beyond the mediocre, beyond the general” (55). Thus, through such consequences as fulfilment, love is regarded as a disease undermining the stability of the system.

Besides the personal account of the amorous experience, Kristeva adds another criterion, ‘the literary,’ involving in the definition of love by stating that “the language of love is impossible, inadequate, immediately allusive when one would like it to be most straightforward; it is a flight of metaphors-it is literature” (1). Thus the language of love and the language of Boland’s, Jamie’s and Akin’s poetries function in a similar way due to their concern to compete with the “straightforward[ness]” by offering “a flight of metaphors” in their poems (Kristeva 1). In this respect, Barthes differentiates between “unreal” and “disreal” in order to describe the “impossible, inadequate, immediately

¹⁰ Barthes refers to Wilhelm von Humboldt’s “volubility.” When Barthes’ argument is concerned, the word is probably not only as a reference to the philosopher’s eating habit, but also to his diligent attitude towards the study of languages and deciphering Kawi language. Please see *Lives of the Brothers Humboldt* by Klencke and Schlesier, 393.

¹¹ In the moments of fulfilment love offers, the subject feels himself as irreducible, which is named “transport” by Barthes. “Transport is the joy of which one cannot speak,” again he refers to the dysfunction of the language (55).

allusive” (Kristeva 1) language of love. He argues that in the “unreal” the subject refuses reality through “fantasy” as “the lover cuts himself off from the world, he unrealizes it because he hallucinates from another aspect the peripeteias or the utopias of his love.” In other words, the real is countervailed with the reinterpretation of the images from the Image-repertoire. In the “disreal” the subject loses his relation to reality without any substitution, he even digresses from the Image-repertoire since “everything is frozen, petrified, immutable, i.e., *unsubstitutable*: the Image-repertoire is (temporarily) foreclosed.” In the first case, the subject becomes neurotic by unrealizing, and in the second case, he turns into a psychotic by disrealizing (Barthes 91). However, through the power of writing or literature, the subject “begin[s] to live again” by “sing[ing].” In this respect, as Barthes’ words, “a madman who writes is never entirely mad” signify, the subject rebalances the chaotic nature of love through the “reality of the Sentence” and tries to stabilize his amorous experience by formulating certain “powerful sentence[s]” within his “consciousness,” like the one, “what the hell am I doing here” while waiting for the other (91). Even asking such a question positions the amative experience into the realm of the disreal by differentiating this phenomenon of love from the regular order of the corporeality.

Moreover, Kristeva emphasizes the connection between love and poetry in *The Tales of Love* since love “suggests a state of instability in which the individual is no longer indivisible and allows himself to become lost in the other, for the other” and poetry helps unleashing the fluctuation of meanings and identities by creating a sense of wholeness in its fractured nature (4). Seemingly paradoxical, poetry functions in a similar way Deed-Ermarth describes Henry James’ use of language as follows,

. . . the point is the way language operates, through uneasy referents and displaced concretia like the Rocky Mountains to produce the sense of torque and strain invisibly formulating a set of subjective relationships which hardly find anything like “accurate” material expression. This entirely kinetic subjective realm is rarely marked by symbols, emblems, or other objects;

instead, it is simply carried by a language that accumulates but refuses to 'come to the point.' (407)

Accordingly, 'song' or poetry in general gains an important place in the utterance of the unutterable love. In other words, it turns into a voice in order to speak of the unspeakable or functions as an unrealizing tool (as a literary work) to express the disreal (love). Barthes underlines that "powerless to utter itself, powerless to speak, love nonetheless wants to proclaim itself, to exclaim, to write itself everywhere . . . And once the amorous subject creates or puts together any kind of work at all, he is seized with a desire to dedicate it" (77-8). Thus, the literary does not only fulfil the amorous subject's desire to express his feelings through a stabilizing means, but it also turns the tension created by the inexpressible love experience into a therapeutic effect. Subsequently "my body (my voice) and the silence into which you cast that body (Love is mute, Novalis says; only poetry makes it speak)" compromise at last (Barthes 78).

Kristeva explains the relation between love and subjectivity by referring to the "impossible" and the "inadequate" which bring both a sense of fulfilment and a sense of lack in a paradoxical way (1). Similarly, in "Atopos¹²" fragment, Barthes argues that the subject perceives the other as "Unique, the singular Image." This image is a complement to the subject's yearning for the other and creates the sense of Kristeva's "impossible" in the subject because he regards the other as "atopos" or "unforeseen originality" (34). However, the other as atopos leads to "inadequa[cy]" (Kristeva 1) since "being Atopic, the other makes language indecisive; one cannot speak *of* the other, *about* the other; every attribute is false, painful, erroneous, awkward: the other is *unqualifiable*" (Barthes 35). So, the tension occurs in the moments when the subject finds a passage to discern the other's nature. As Barthes argues, "each time I unexpectedly glimpsed the other in his 'structure' (sistemato), I was fascinated: I believed I was contemplating an *essence*: that of conjugality" (46). But he cannot wholly sustain such a unification with the other. In other words, the

¹² Barthes explains the word as follows, "the loved being is recognized by the amorous subject as 'atopos' (a qualification given to Socrates by his interlocutors), i.e. unclassifiable, of a ceaselessly unforeseen originality" (34).

feeling of finding a stable centre (essence) through love creates only a temporary relief for the subject (46).

With the amorous experience, the subject finds a way to communicate freely with the other. This kind of relation also founds an “aggressive link with¹³” the other “whose indifference unmasks and irritates my subjection” (Barthes 40). However, this communication poses a challenge to the subject’s existence since it foreshadows the dependence on the other in a narcissistic way. That is to say the subject creates a positive image of the other through which he or she tries to cope with the harassment caused by the undecidable nature of love. Even though the subject endeavours to build an affirming pattern or structure of the other, the other becomes inaccessible for the subject, so the subject’s free communication with the other turns into a mere soliloquy of the subject. As Barthes explains,

The being I am waiting for is not real. Like the mother’s breast for the infant, “I create and re-create it over and over, starting from my capacity to love, starting from my need for it”: the other comes here where I am waiting, here where I have already created him/her. And if the other does not come, I hallucinate the other: waiting is a delirium. (39)

In this respect, Kristeva reveals the contradiction of love’s both healing and deteriorating influence on the subject. Since the two effects are embedded in the love, the subject experiences the feeling of winning and losing at the same time, which is both pathological and promising for ‘I’ by creating the problem and solution in the same context. According to Barthes, happiness is not the subject’s concern in the curing and damaging effect of love: thus, “I can simultaneously complain and endure.” Moreover, “I” can experience a “perverse liking this behaviour of the system” (46). As Kristeva questions,

¹³ Especially in the act of ‘waiting’ for the other’s communicating with the subject. Barthes exemplifies such a tension with the act of waiting before an airport kiosk for the ticket and reactions of the flight attendant as follows: “I depend on a presence which is shared and requires time to be bestowed-as if it were a question of lowering my desire, lessening my need” (40).

Actually, the feeling, during love, of having had to expend if not give up desires and aspirations, isn't this in fact the price we must pay for the violence of our passions about the other? . . . Although such love is aptly called *wild*, it goes, just the same, with keen, superegotistical, ferocious lucidity, and yet it alone can temporarily interrupt the latter. A hymn to total giving to the other, such love is also, and almost as explicitly, a hymn to the narcissistic power to which I may even sacrifice *it*, sacrifice *myself*. (1-2)

One definition of love for Kristeva is the consumption of feelings in an entropic way since "to expend if not to give up desires and aspirations" creates a disorder in which the energy is dispersed freely and "wild[ly]" (1). In this respect, her discourse between the symbolic and the semiotic can also be applicable to the violent conduct of the amorous experience. Accordingly, the perception of love towards the other does not exclude either the semiotic or the symbolic. Instead, they function on the same line. So, this fracture apparent in the symbolic "temporarily" influences "my" relation to the sense of reality. As Kristeva points out, "in the rapture of love, the limits of one's own identity vanish, at the same time that the precision of reference and meaning becomes blurred in love's discourse" (2). For Barthes, the subject suffers from the borders built through such stereotypes as being 'the lover' who needs "to be jealous, frustrated, like everyone else. But when the relation is original, then the stereotype is shaken, transcended, evacuated" (35-6). As stated before, Barthes' description of the other as 'atopos' does not only refer to the subject's perception of the other as the singular but also as the undefinable, which ends the clash of the identities in a holistic way. As he maintains, "the amorous subject perceives the other as a Whole . . . and at the same time this Whole seems to him to involve a remainder, which he cannot express" by disbursing the semiotic to the symbolic (19).

Although the rationality and policing of the symbolic powers reaffirm "my" subjectivity and regain the control over "I" after the short moments of the subject's departure from the referential language, "the ordeal of love" with its unstable metaphoric structure stands as a dominant force against the univocal language of the symbolic (2). (Deleuze's univocity of being; folding, unfolding,

refolding vs. univocity of language in Kristeva) Moreover, love “as a crucible of contradictions and misunderstandings –at the same time infinity of meaning and occultation of meaning-” functions as a means for coping with the idea of death, which causes a momentary separation from the linearity. Thus love enables the subject to come closer to the realm of chora by being both prelingual and chaotic through the most essential drives.

The subject is put into a questionable position when the amorous feelings matter since his or her identity is always under the attack of the totalizing power of love. However, if love is ambiguous in nature, its expression and the way it is experienced by the partners become “solitary” since it is “incommunicable.” That is to say, the expressive power of language fails in the case of love by causing the amorous to be regarded as a personal experience (Kristeva 3). In this respect, Barthes evaluates the amorous subject’s situation within the frame of madness and the social. According to him, the subject positions himself both as a mad person and not so since he is aware of his madness, which turns madness into a “metaphorical madness” (120). Madness as an effect of love demarcates the limits of subjection and the subject’s idiosyncrasy through love is both the source of harassment and submission. His efforts to dominate over the other or his desire to control the uncontrollable merely underlines his subjectivity. As Barthes maintains,

For hundred years, (literary) madness has been thought to consist in Rimbaud’s “*Je est un autre*¹⁴”: madness is an experience of depersonalization. For me as an amorous subject, it is quite the contrary: it is becoming a *subject*, being unable to keep myself from doing so, which drives me mad. *I am not someone else*: that is what I realize with horror . . . Subjection, though, is my business: subjected, seeking to subject the other, I experience in my fashion the will to power, the *libido dominandi*. (121)

If the partners’ loves are “essentially individual,” then they need a “third party” which offers a common ground for their love and gives a certain meaning to their amorous act. Nevertheless, the third party such as our principles, beliefs

¹⁴ “I am someone else” in Rimbaud’s letter to Georges Izambard.

or ideologies limits and distracts love's basic capability of invalidating the organized and definite mechanisms which impose certain ideologies upon the subject. Then similar to Barthes' words about love as wholeness which outstrips itself or is "a totality without remainder" (54), Kristeva suggests that,

Finally, to speak of love may be, perhaps, a simple condensation of speech that merely arouses, in the one spoken to, metaphorical capabilities –a whole imaginary, uncontrollable, undecidable flood, of which the loved one alone unknowingly possesses the key . . . what does he understand me to be saying? *Everything?* –as one tends to believe in those moments of merging apotheoses, as total as they are unspeakable? Or *nothing?* . . . (3)

The clear-cut attitude between "everything" and "nothing" problematizes the amorous relations by signifying a cryptic meaning which is encrypted by love itself. For Barthes, the lover alleges that he is the only person who understands the other totally than anyone else and also the one who experiences most of the time that the other is "impenetrable, intractable, not to be found" in paradoxical way. In Barthes' words, "I am then seized with that exaltation of loving *someone unknown*, someone who will remain so forever: a mystic impulse: I know what I do not know" (134-5). Thus, the implied meaning does not show itself clearly for a long period of time. It is discernible only in the glimpses of the "unspeakable" (3). The momentary experience of understanding the amorous causes a vacillation between a sudden enlightenment in which the subject perceives her feeling as a whole and meaningful picture and an ambiguous space which is incomprehensible with its "uncontrollable" and "undecidable" nature (3). However, As Irigaray puts it, "this space is not emptiness but a silence [or Kristevan unspeakable] deliberately safeguarded for the task that the relation with the other represents" (88).

2.2.1. Love and Politics: "No Clergyman Attended"

When Werther's body is taken by night to a corner of the cemetery, near two lindens (the tree whose simple odor is that

of memory and sleep), “no clergyman attended” (the novel’s¹⁵ last sentence). Religion condemns in Werther not only the suicide but also, perhaps, the lover, the utopian, the class heretic, the man who is “ligatured” to no one but himself. (210)

As Barthes argues in the above lines, the subject is on his own in the troubles created by the amorous experience. The religious as the voice of the symbolic in Werther’s case not only reflects the aggressive attitude of the symbolic apparatuses when love is concerned but also signifies the hostility towards the existence of such phenomenon as love. In other words, the enmity is originated from the fear that the wilderness and uncertainty unleashed during the amorous experience which threatens the stability of the present systems persistently trying to police and reshape the subject’s feelings and thoughts. Moreover, in the present-day philosophical systems, the amative cannot find its true place. According to Barthes, “Christian discourse,” for instance, dictates the subject to suppress his amorous feelings or “psychoanalytic discourse” forces him to accept that his image reservoir cannot be regained. With regard to “Marxist discourse,” love does not appear even as subject matter. In such a situation, the subject also experiences a philosophical loneliness¹⁶ because when he demands “recognition *somewhere* (wherever it might be) for my ‘madness’ (my ‘truth’),” he discovers “these doors close one after the other.” Moreover, language, too, creates another barrier for the subject by “oppress[ing] and repuls[ing] me unless I *repent* and agree to ‘get rid of X’ respectively (Barthes 211).

Similarly, although Kristeva’s words as “love never dwells in us without burning us” can be regarded as a threat for the subject’s singularity, when love is concerned, this threat is converted into an “accepted, normalized, made fully reassuring” means for coping with the limitative symbolic apparatuses (4). For Barthes, the stereotype of melodrama, love’s residing as if it scorches the

¹⁵ *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) by Goethe.

¹⁶ However, Barthes acknowledges that “the lover’s solitude is not a solitude of person (love confides, speaks, tells itself), it is a solitude of system: I am alone in making a system out of it (perhaps because I am ceaselessly flung back on the solipsism of my discourse) (212).

subject's heart is reinterpreted with a Freudian description of the "amorous languor." That is to say, such lack of vitality or stagnation delineates not only the passive position of the subject when love matters but also delineates his change from "narcissistic libido" to "object libido" in which the subject's self disappears in the desire for the other. Moreover, while "narcissistic libido" demonstrates the "desire for the absent being," "object libido" expresses the yearning for "the present being." Barthes' "languor" of love is located in the overlap of "two desires," which creates the sense of "absence within presence. Whence a state of contradiction: this the 'gentle fire'" (156). In this respect, Margoroni questions Kristeva's shift from the political to the psychoanalytical as follows,

. . . when Kristeva's understanding of art as well as of politics shifts from a revolutionary to a therapeutic paradigm, the questions raised relate to the determination of "the power and limits of psychoanalysis." What happens, critics ask, when we transpose psychoanalytic concepts (such as fetishism, abjection, or psychic alienation) onto the realm of the political? Can this transposition do justice to the strategies of oppression and the disciplinary technologies by means of which subjects are produced? (793)

As Barthes and Kristeva argue in their works, *A Lover's Discourse* and *Tales of Love* with various references to the historical figures, events and accounts, the amorous experience can demonstrate Margoroni's concern about the processes and the apparatuses "by means of which subjects are produced" (793). Thus, the definition of love cannot be thought without its political connotations. Love's relation to "reality as a system of power" puts pressure on the subject since this system expects the subject to accept the sense of 'reality' imposed upon the amorous subject (Barthes 89). However, love creates another system which is an alternative to the one protected by the symbolic. Because the subject is closer to madness rather than the logocentric structure, he feels the pressure two times stronger than the one who has internalized the notion of reality offered by the symbolic. That is, the 'normal' subject is only subject to the order of the outer system. But the amorous subject is the victim of both the inner (love) and the outer (the symbolic) systems. Since "it lies outside of my

reach to change systems,” the subject feels himself as being “trapped” in both structures (143). Thus, the therapeutic and malignant effects of love mingle again. In other words, as Barthes argues, this system is presented as a ‘nature’ with which I must sustain good relations: in order to be ‘normal’ (exempt from love) (89).

Kristeva attracts attention to the policing of the political powers so as to redefine the limits of love and that of Barthes’ “normal” (89) subject through such apparatuses as “gynaecological surgery rooms and television screens” (5). She also adds that we have withdrawn from love itself (as if it is a dangerous act) for “the benefit of pleasure” and that “of Politics.” However, it is not the sexual intercourse or the carnal raptures Kristeva opposes but it is the way love’s function is eliminated in human relations in order to keep the present system of values sound and safe. Accordingly, Barthes regards such a perception as a “historical reversal” since “it is no longer the sexual which is indecent, it is the *sentimental*-censured in the name of what is in fact only *another morality*¹⁷” (177). In this respect, Foucault’s analysis of the hatred among people when they hear two men love each other in his *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, clarifies Kristeva’s argument although she does not imply any difference of heterosexuality or homosexuality in love¹⁸. Foucault argues that “to imagine a sexual act that does not conform to the law or nature is not what disturbs people. But that individuals are beginning to love one another –there is the problem” (136-7). Kristeva in a similar way maintains that “we discover under the rubble of those ideological structures . . . that they were extravagant or shy attempts intended to quench a thirst for love” (5).

¹⁷ With references to Bataille and Nietzsche, Barthes criticizes the modern understanding of morality: “he [Bataille] judges his contemporaries as so many *innocents*: they are innocent, those who censure amorous sentimentality in the name of a new morality” (176).

¹⁸ Barthes expresses a similar idea by uttering that “for me the other is neither *he* or *she*; the other has only a name of his own, and her own name. The third person pronoun is a wicked pronoun: it s the pronoun of the non-person, it absents, it annuls” (185).

2.2.2. Love and Temporality

Besides being regarded as a threat to the conveyance of the symbolic's power upon the subject, love also offers a different time space and a spatiality in which the subject feels that she has a certain but at the same time indefinite sovereignty. Thus, 'I' become "extraordinary" since she relieves herself from the ordinariness or the orders of the social contract. For that reason, "in the lover's very tears, our society represses its own timelessness, thereby turning the weeping love into a lost object whose repression is necessary to its 'health'" and thus interpersonal relations are also reinterpreted with the appearance of love (Barthes 181). As Kristeva's following words "divisible, lost, annihilated" (5) indicate, "there is a deception in amorous time" since the episodic structure of the historical time fails in the amorous experience (Barthes 193). Thus, love does not begin and end in a specific way. Rather, as being a posteriori experience, the amorous is just the recreation of a past image in the present time, which blurs the logocentric boundaries in its circular nature. Kristeva maintains that,

Love is the time and space in which "I" assumes the right to be extraordinary. Sovereign yet not individual. Divisible, lost, annihilated; but also, and through imaginary fusion with loved one, equal to infinite space of superhuman psychism. Paranoid? I am, in love, at the zenith of subjectivity.

As a bonus of desire, on the far and near side of pleasure, love skirts or displaces both in order to expand me to the dimensions of the universe. Which one? Ours, his and mine mingled, enlarged. Expanded, infinite space, where out of my lapses, I utter, through the interpolated loved one, the conjuring up of an ideal vision. Mine? His? Ours? Impossible and yet maintained. (5)

Being both fractured and in harmony with the beloved (other), the subject creates a new relation with the other. Thus, Kristeva's question "paranoid" indicates not only the subject's situation vacillating between the pathologic and the therapeutic but also describes the intersubjective situation of the amorous subject. In this respect, as Bonnie Craig states in her analysis of Isabelle

Allende's perception of love, "it is by experiencing love that a person lets go of imagined notions of individual subjectivity and sees subjectivity as relational," which reformulates the otherness as an entity based on "the perpetual copresence of interlayered subjects" (37). Therefore, the paranoiac reaction of love originates from this kind of inter-subjectivity. Barthes demonstrates the complicated relation of 'I' with the other in a formulaic way as follows,

I devour every amorous system with my gaze and in it discern the place which would be mine if I were a part of that system. I perceive not analogies but homologies: I note for instance, that I am to X what Y is to Z; everything I am told about Y affects me powerfully though Y's person is a matter of indifference to me, or even unknown . . . (129)

However, the experience turns into a productive process since love cracks the borders of the subjectivity by offering an expansion towards the other. This expansion is a homogenous one and the two parties' limits or borders cease to hinder their mutual interaction. In other words, unlike that of Irigaray, Kristeva's description of the subject's connection with the other or their mutuality is not based on the existence of two identities together by accepting their difference. Barthes shares a similar idea with Kristeva as he expresses with the words "not analogies but homologies" (129). Nevertheless, such a union does not totally exclude the difference between 'I' and the other or difference in others since "X and Y are incomparable; it is in their difference, that I find the energy to begin all over again" (103). As Irigaray argues, "but this difference that ensures the becoming of a dialectic of two subjects recognized in their alterity¹⁹. The movement there will be no longer be circular but elliptical, given the duality of focuses and sources of impulse, of resistance, of withdrawal, of restraint" (100).

¹⁹ Irigaray's alterity can be traced back to Simone de Beauvoir's argument of the body and the individual's existence in the world. As Secomb explains, we develop two attitudes towards our existence in the world according to Beauvoir. On the one hand, we are conscious of our inter-subjectivity, so "we are exposed to the world and the world is disclosed to us." On the other hand, we thrust "my-ness" upon the other through negotiation and manipulation (44).

However, when love matters, as Kristeva maintains, the subject cannot establish a dialectical relation with the other, thus she cannot define her own limits through those of the other as the words “Ours, his and mine mingled, enlarged” demonstrate (5). That is to say, there is not a process of becoming through “alterity” (Irigaray 100) in Kristeva’s explanation of love’s influence on the subject. However, the progressive movement of the subject’s becoming is both “elliptical” and “circular” (Irigaray 100) in Kristeva’s argument as well.

Barthes discusses in the part “The Ghost Ship” that “though each love is experienced as unique and though the subject rejects the notion of repeating it elsewhere later on, he sometimes discovers in himself a kind of diffusion of amorous desire; he then realizes he is doomed to wander until he dies, from love to love” (101). Accordingly, love’s elliptic nature also changes the subject’s perception of time by leading to an emotional and corporeal flux. Thus, love “overwhelms me with a flow in which the upheavals of body . . . are mingled with a whirling thought, as vague, supple, ready to pierce or to wed the other’s as it is vigilant, alert, lucid in its impetus” (Kristeva 6). Barthes visualizes the flux of the amorous with ‘tear’ image by referring to Werther’s readiness to shed tears. He maintains that “by releasing his [Werther] tears without constraint, he follows the orders of the amorous body, which is a body in liquid expansion, a bathed body: to weep together: to flow together” (180). As Kristeva’s words, “expanded, infinite space, where out of my lapses, I utter, through the interpolated loved one, the conjuring up of an ideal vision” delineate, the subject’s slips from the linearity by means of the intervention and cryptic nature of love, creates an unnameable wholeness²⁰ and a safe ground for him. Thus, love offers an integrative perspective for the subject to understand his subjectivity process besides the gains of “desire” and “pleasure” (5). Furthermore, Barthes’ question, “the amorous body is doubled by a historical one. Who will write the history of tears?” (180) represents how the amorous irritates the historical time by being “out of” its locus (177). In other

²⁰ Similarly, Barthes states that, “by a singular logic, the amorous subject perceives the other as a Whole . . . and at the same time this Whole seems to him to involve a remainder, which he cannot express” (19).

words, the involvement of the linear time in order to ascribe a certain meaning and origin to this anarchic act of crying does not function properly. Thus, the amorous is regarded as a mythic structure that needs to be marginalized by the linear time as an entity belonging to a lost past. In other words, the “anachron[ism]” of the amative disturbs the symbolic with its ‘abject’ nature as follows,

Whatever is anachronic is obscene. As a (modern) divinity, History is repressive, History forbids us to be out of time. Of the past we tolerate only the ruin, the monument, the kitsch, what is *amusing*: we reduce this past no more than its signature. The lover’s sentiment is old-fashioned, but this antiquation cannot even be recuperated as a spectacle: love falls outside of *interesting* time . . . (177-8)

In this respect, there is a close relation between the time sense forced by the symbolic, the amorous experience and the abject. For instance, in *Powers of Horror*, Kristeva argues that the abject stays in a totally obliterated portion of time, which irritates and spoils the present time continuously. Thus, “the clean and proper . . . becomes filthy . . . Then, forgotten time crops up suddenly and condenses into a flash of lightning . . . The time of abjection is double: a time of oblivion and thunder, of veiled infinity and the moment when revelation bursts forth” (9). Barthes states “what echoes in me is what I learn with my body: something sharp and tenuous suddenly wakens this body,” (200) which means the amorous experience stimulates the corporeal through certain memories burst open suddenly. So the body sways unsteadily again by means of the amorous time sense in which “time is jerked forward (catastrophic predictions flood to my mind) and back (I remember certain ‘precedents’ with terror)” (200). Moreover, Barthes exemplifies the connection between the amorous and the abject in his *A Lover’s Discourse* by referring to the fluidity of the amorous experience from both corporeal and psychosocial perspectives such as tear image, suicidal tendency or symptoms of borderline personality disorder. Similarly, in *Tales of Love* and *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* by Kristeva it is possible to find the traces of the flux or fluidity originated from the subject’s amorous experience. Thus, the last subsection focuses on the

relation between subjectivity and love with references to the notion of abject and the subject's desire to resist the symbolic through the amorous.

2.2.3. Love and Abjection

Love's liberating power also brings the feeling of fear with it as Barthes' words "I remember certain 'precedents' with terror" signify (200). In other words, the lover is exposed to certain physical reactions, which call to mind our responses to fear. Kristeva defines 'fear' as "fluid haze, an elusive clamminess, no sooner has it cropped up than it shades off like a mirage and permeates all words of the language with nonexistence, with a hallucinatory, ghostly glimmer," which also demonstrates how love and abjection as being "repellent and repelled" function in the subject's amorous experience (6). She maintains that the change is "present in all its limbs through a delightful absence –shaky voice, dry throat, starry eyes, flushed or clammy skin, throbbing heart" (6).

Furthermore, since the subject is freed from the forces of the symbolic, her body reflects the psychological change during her experience of love. In the subject's attempt to see "what was inside" of the other's body, the abject position of love is reaffirmed through "the process of fetishizing a corpse" and her "return to an Image, to a Whole" leads her to love more powerfully (Barthes 71-2). In other words, besides a corporeal reaction, when love operates, the subject experiences the feeling of the sublime in the sense the nineteenth century Romantics exemplify it. In this respect, Kristeva differentiates between "symptom" and "sublimation" while describing abjection. She defines symptom as "a language gives up. . . a non-assimilable alien, a monster, a tumor" and sublimation as "the possibility of naming the pre-nominal, the pre-objectal" (11). Similar to the totalizing influence of love over the subject, "I" becomes "abject" in the symptom since it passes through every part of the subject without any escape from its totality. On the other hand, through sublimation, the subject can regulate her overflowing feeling of love, which creates a protecting space for the subject by stabilizing the

wavering meanings around love. In the case of the amorous experience, symptom and sublimation entwine like a helicoid structure. Thus, similar to Barthes' words "Whatever is anachronic is obscene," (177) and her previous definition of 'fear,' according to Kristeva, sublime functions like an abject effect on the subject apparent especially in her focus on the flux created through therapeutic influence of memory as follows,

. . . When the starry sky, a vista of open seas or a stained glass window shedding purple beams fascinate me, there is a cluster of meaning, of colors, of words, of caresses, there are light touches, scents, sighs, cadences that arise, shroud me, carry me away, and sweep beyond things that I see, hear, or think. The "sublime" object dissolves in the raptures of a bottomless memory. It is such a memory, which from stopping point to stopping point, remembrance to remembrance, love to love, transfers that object to the refulgent point of dazzlement in which I stray in order to be. (12)

As Kristeva points out, "abjection is above all ambiguity. Because while releasing a hold, it does not radically cut off the subject from what threatens it—on the contrary, abjection acknowledges it to be in perpetual danger" (9). Love creates the fear of both losing and gaining on the same line in a paradoxical way: "the dread of transgressing not only proprieties or taboos, but also and above all, fear of crossing and the desire to cross the boundaries of the self" (Kristeva 6). Thus, according to Kristeva love vacillates between two extremes, narcissism and idealization. Since love's origins are in "desire" and "pleasure" between the boundaries of the symbolic and the imaginary realms, it fluctuates between "narcissism" and "idealization" (6).

Narcissism and idealization do not contribute to the healing power of love. On the contrary, they lead to a negativity in the end as stated with such rhetorical questions as "Narcissistic wound? Ordeal of Castration? Death unto oneself?" by Kristeva (4). In other words, narcissism and idealization lead the subject to the complicated feeling of a negativity since while the Ego cherishes itself in "the mirror of an idealized Other," and thus confirms its own being, it also

perceives Other as “sublime, incomparable, as worthy (of me?)” (6). With the fear of being “unworthy of him,” the subject experiences the split of death.

When love surmounts the difficulties created by the Ego cherishing only itself, it causes the Ego to immerse in the Other and exalt itself in the “mirror of an idealized Other –sublime, incomparable, as worthy (of me?) as I can be unworthy of him, and yet made for our indissoluble union” (Kristeva 7) in which its self-exaltation is broken. However, by keeping the desire within herself, she gains a more moderate attitude towards the other subject (6-7). Thus, a borderline effect emerges out of the amorous experience since “topographically, the borderline is where the sovereignty of the sign is threatened and where something wild, something irreducible to language, emerges” (Barzilai 295). However, as Barthes argues in the fragment “I am odious,” such a fear can turn into a “monstrous” reaction of the subject towards “the loved object” as follows,

Sometimes, in terror, I become aware of this reversal: I who supposed myself to be pure subject (subjected subject: fragile, delicate, pitiable) find myself turned into an obtuse thing blindly moving onward, crushing everything beneath his discourse . . .

The other is disfigured by his persistent silence, as in those terrible dreams in which a loved person shows up with the lower part of his face quite erased, without any mouth at all; and I, the one who speaks, I too am disfigured: soliloquy makes me into a monster: one huge tongue. (166)

As Barzilai maintains, “borderline discourse is an effect or outbreak of what Kristeva calls ‘abjection.’ Described briefly and oversimply, abjection entails an absence (the normative condition of the pre- mirror-stage infants) or a collapse (the condition of the borderline patient) of the boundaries that structure the subject” (295). Kristeva defines abjection not only as “filth, waste or dung” or “body fluids” that need to be removed out of the body but as “what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules” (2-4). It operates like the amorous experience felt by the subject in an anarchical way. As Barthes exemplifies with the “tear” image (182), “the body’s inside, in that

case, shows up in order to compensate for the collapse of the border between inside and outside," which spoils the "own and clean self" (Kristeva 53). Barthes maintains that "by my tears I tell a story, I produce a myth of grief . . . by weeping, I give myself an emphatic interlocutor who receives the 'truest' of messages, that of my body, not that of my speech" (182). So, tear image by paving the way for the "suffering as the place of the subject" and "abjection whose intimate side is suffering" (Kristeva 140) creates a gap in the symbolic by threatening the discursive power of language, therefore "a challenge to symbolization" (51). Moreover, similar to love, the abject slips from the restraint of any certain definition by containing both corporeal and emotional-spiritual aspects, which create "the in-between, the ambiguous, the composite" (4). So abjection and love drag the subject "toward the place where meaning collapses" (Kristeva 2).

Love and abjection influence the formation of subjectivity by triggering the progression of becoming in negative and positive ways at the same time. As Kristeva explains abject's role in the development of a child, the process of infantile pangs such as vomiting or crying does not only reflect the abject position on the corporeal level, but it also signifies I's process of becoming. Thus, "I expel *myself*, I spit *myself* out, I abject *myself* within the same progression through which 'I' claim to establish *myself* (Kristeva 3). However, while the body reacts through various muscular contractions, the subject "is inscribed in a symbolic system, but in which without either wanting or being able to become integrated in order to answer to it, it reacts, it abreacts. It abjects (3).

In a similar way, Barthes explores how the amorous subject welcomes the emotional stress of recalling any traumatic experience like a "whiplash" which "suddenly wakens this body" through abjection. As the whiplash image denotes, he does not deny the somatic side of the painful progress. However, the corporeal pain leaves its place to a kind of consciousness in which "I see myself in the future in a condition of failure, imposture, scandal." Despite his pessimism about the future, the subject verifies his outsider position through

his depressive feelings. Therefore, “I let myself be filled by them, I indulge their bitterness to the full,” which leads him, on the one hand, to continue without the notion of precision, and on the other hand, to respond to his problematic inscription in the symbolic (200-1).

In *Tales of Love*, Kristeva questions the relation between death and love by referring to the both entities’ intense influence on the lovers. Moreover, since the lover or “the loving Self” identifies himself with the other, he experiences a metaphorical death “as extravagant in its pride as in its humility, that exquisite lapse is at the heart of the experience.” In this respect, Barthes exemplifies the elapsed period of fulfilment through the amorous experience with the word “embrace” which is described as “the gesture of the amorous embrace seems to fulfil, for a time, the subject’s dream of total union with the beloved being” (104).

However, for Barthes and Kristeva death has two meanings. The first meaning refers to losing one’s own being by immersing in the other as in the moments of rapture. The other meaning delineates the tension of absence and presence on the same ground due to the “amorous mourning” of the vanishing love. In that case, the subject is put into a two-sided paradoxical situation; “to suffer from the fact that the other is present (continuing, in spite of himself, to wound me) and to suffer from the fact that the other is dead (dead at least as I loved him) (107). Another issue Kristeva raises with “that exquisite lapse” (4) is the metaphorical death’s power to offer a new ground for the subject to renew her perspective.

Although love and abjection indicate themselves through certain “body fluids” such as “smell of sweat,” they put the subject into the borders of meaning where the subject goes “beyond the limit- *cadere*, cadaver” by eluding any strict definition (Kristeva 4). For Kristeva corpse is the embodiment of the ultimate form of abjection. She argues how ‘I’ exist without this notion of the border since “‘my’ world” ends with the cadaver. Accordingly, the cadaver or the passivity of the body (in fainting or sleeping for instance) resembles the lovers’

vertiginous stance. Despite a cliché in medieval romances²¹, the act of fainting can symbolize the desire for going beyond the limits of consciousness or the corporeal 'world,' which is always reordered through the rationality. As Kristeva explains, "deprived of world, therefore, I *fall in a faint*. In that compelling, raw, insolent thing in the morgue's full sunlight, in that thing that no longer matches and therefore no longer signifies anything, I behold the breaking down of a world that has erased its borders: fainting away" (4). Thus, like the influence of abjection, love opens up a new path by ending I's subjectivity to the dominant power of logos and its 'worldly' instruments through death or metaphorical form of death, fainting.

Thus, since both abjection and love slip away from the definition, they create a situation in which binaries fail to function through the sense of the in-betweenness of the two extremes. As Kristeva puts, abjection is "a terror that disassembles, a hatred that smiles, a passion that uses body for barter instead of inflaming it, a deceptor who sells you up, a friend who stabs you," which also describes the influence of love upon the subject (4). Similarly, in *Tales of Love*, Kristeva evaluates love as "state of hardy fragility, serene strength emerging out of love's torrent, or which love's torrent has cast aside, but which still harbors, under the appearance of reconquered sovereignty, a degree of psychic as much as physical pain" (4).

²¹ In Medieval Romances, either the lover or the beloved one dies, sleeps or faints. In such works as *The Duke of True Lovers* by Christine de Pizan, for instance, a character, Sebile de Monthault, (Dame de la Tour) who is the embodiment of allegorical figures, Reason or Rectitude appearing in the room of Christine to show her the straight way and console her troubles in *The City of Ladies*. This old lady is unlike the Old Lady in *The Romance of the Rose*, from whom guidance and "comfort him for this young man and make him a present of warm salute" are demanded (de Lorris and de Meun 217). Thus, she explains love's pejorative influence on the young lady with such words as ". . . and though these qualities and manners suiting a high ranking princess may have been yours in the past, you are at present completely changed, according to what people say," which means "your heart has, somewhere, fallen into love [which reflects the attitude of 'general opinion' towards love]" (113).

Then she starts enumerating the dangers of love by stating that "There is a hundred thousand times more grief, searing pain and perilous risk, especially on the ladies' side, than there is pleasure" (116).

She also adds the girl's groundless fainting due to her love besides such problems as gossiping, and "fear of losing honor" originating from love (de Pizan 114-120)

Love, in this respect, establishes a sense of wholeness with the other through its chaotic nature and “through the threat and pleasure it lays in store for me, and before I withdraw into my shell again, temporarily I suppose, in the expectation of another love,” which, in Boland’s, Jamie’s and Akın’s poetries, confirms the struggle against the harassment of the symbolic.

Consequently, the subsections of this chapter discussed love’s prominence by means of an attempt to define the phenomenon, and its relation to politics, temporality and abjection by referring to the methodologies offered and argued by Kristeva and Barthes. Although the two words, love and methodology contradict each other since love invalidates any organized form with an assumed underlying principle in general, Kristeva and Barthes stress that the amorous experience achieves a teleological point through its inconsistency and reverberations.

CHAPTER 3

THE SUBJECT: THE SOCIAL

3.1. Introduction

Kathleen Jamie, Eavan Boland and Gülten Akin poeticize the problem of woman's situatedness in a network that fails to offer a reconciling place either in city or in nature for them. With their continuous questioning tone through poetic personae or personifications, the three poets express the conflict and discontent with the existing structure of their societies. However, Jamie, Boland and Akin do not cling to a grand narrative in an essentialist way with the mere aim of demonstrating the present harassment they feel through their cultural, socio-historical and geographical dependence by giving prominence to certain ideologies.

This chapter discusses the poems of Jamie, Boland and Akin by concentrating on the semiotic-symbolic relation and how they reflect the process of becoming subject, woman's situatedness in history, and subjection through language as dominant discourse. This chapter also prepares the ground for "The Subject: The Amorous" chapter that analyses the poems in relation to the poetic persona's becoming subject through the amorous experience. In other words, how the amative experience underlines the tension in Jamie's, Boland's and Akin's poetries is the main concern of the fourth chapter. The fourth chapter takes Kristevan perception of the amative as its main theoretical background with certain references to Barthes' argument of love since Kristeva acknowledges Barthes' contribution to her own idea of the amative

subjectivity. In this vein, the social contract and language sustain their impact by transforming the functionality of the amorous dynamics for the personae. Furthermore, since the historical sedimentation, language of the symbolic and limiting roles attributed to the woman subject function in the process of amative subjectivity, the social and the amative demonstrate two dimensions of the continuous subjection for the woman personae in Boland, Jamie and Akin.

To begin with, the poems from Boland's *In a Time of Violence*, Jamie's *The Tree House*, *Jizzen* and *The Queen of Sheba*, and Akin's *Kestim Kara Saclarımı* (I Cut My Black Hair), *Ruzgar Saati* (The Wind-Hour) and *Uzak Bir Kıyıda* (On a Distant Shore) are collection of poems trying to reach a safe ground between the radical supporters of women's rights, the efforts of whom underline the binaries and the ones attempting to go beyond the dualistic thinking by means of cherishing the difference.

Another main point the three poets share in their poems is the perception of time and how the concept of time is conceived in their early and later poetry collections. Their general attitude is that time stands as a *primaeval* issue in order to demarcate the situatedness of woman through history. Poetry, in this respect, creates an aesthetic ground at least for confronting with their restlessness with the concept of time imposed by the dominant ideology of the social. However, poetization is not an absolute solution since there always remains a residue they cannot express through language. This residue is reflected through certain recurring images such as certain elements of nature, wind, birds, folk songs, and references to primordial memories or archaic topographies.

3.2. "The Unnameable Repressed by the Social Contract" and Time-Space

Kristeva, in her "Women's Time," starts with the double meaning of the word 'time.' She focuses on the women's perception of time but also takes the word as a time space in which the historical imposes its own rules often by creating

new subjectivities so that they cannot threaten its order. In “Women’s Time,” Kristeva clarifies temporal concerns and how this temporality is accepted or rejected by women. She continues her argument on the different generations of feminists with the efforts of changing the degraded position of women. In addition to the previous struggles about women’s rights, she suggests that a third generation combining the gains of the past two feminist ideologies is also available. She analyses the impetus causing the change in the perception of woman by referring to socialism and Freudianism, especially through their defects. Kristeva concludes her argument with the conception of power, its functionality in terrorist acts and sacrificial system inflicted on the women subjects, which are popular issues in both Irish and Scottish politics and literary circles.

In the case of Akin, the existence of an authoritarian power mechanism is denoted through her poems about the political detainees in Turkey, one of whom is her own son²². She retells an example of sacrificial system Kristeva argues in “Women’s Time” within the context of the mothers²³ waiting for their sons’ and daughters’ release during the eighties. By means of this personal experience that she feels with the separation from her son, the cruel treatments against the prisoners due to their ideological tendencies and the lawsuits taking years of trials in Turkey, Akin writes poems about the harassing politics of the junta government after the coup d’état in the eighties.

Although the section analyses the early poetry collections of Akin in order to exemplify how the female subjectivity is inscribed through several apparatuses such as the phenomenon of time, her poems written in 1986 under the name of *The Poems of 42 Days* and the later ones stand as the dilution of the poet’s previous concerns related to the subject’s inevitable connection with what

²² Akin’s son, Murat Cankoçak was arrested with the claims of his committing a bank robbery and then his case was added to another lawsuit named Şentepe Revolutionary Way. Cankoçak’s case resulted in life sentence. Later on, the charge was reversed by supreme court of appeals.

²³ I evaluate the maternal boundaries of woman subject from the perspective of the amorous in the fourth chapter of the thesis.

Kristeva generalizes through the word 'symbolic' besides the tension created through the vacillations between the personal and the political. Thus, most of the poems in *The Poems of 42 Days* share similar messages and recurrent images with *The Wind-Hour* by focusing on the sorrows of the mothers yearning for any kind of information about their sons and daughters before the locked doors of the jails.

In *The Poems of 42 Days*, Akin employs prose and poetry hand in hand as if she tries to explain the respectively ambiguous poems by means of the clearly depicted stories with the concerns of reaching crowds from different sociocultural layers. For instance, in the part "Honor," Akin depicts two different voices of the subject and her subjection before a metaphorical extension of the dominant power. The story also denotes how the mother channels her semiotic flow (love and longing) into the soldier who stands as a gatekeeper of the symbolic. Such projection of the mother collapses due to the fact that the two subjects occupy different time spaces and the mother's intrusion is regarded as a direct threat to the dominance of the symbolic as follows,

Then they saw him stepping down the stairs. Stately and good-looking "Exactly like my son!" thought the mothers who had sons. Holding a piece of paper in his hand, Good-looking moved toward the chain. What next, how did all happen? One mother, stepped quietly up to Good-looking and took hold of his arm. "My dear child," she began and started to say something. Good-looking pushed her back. "I'll ... in your mouth," he said. He pushed her again. The mother fell . . . "Oh my son, my son he's dying there. So this is where I'll die . . ." The words were flung back and forth across the chain, from this side to that. "Did you bear this bastard crop? They're all from the same batch of rotten seeds" (In *What Have You Carried over*, Akin 55)²⁴

Moreover, such reactions poeticized as how the mothers are marginalized by the officer of high rank, the mothers' act of waiting, their attempts to produce a uniform voice in order to resist the humiliations of the authority do not only

²⁴ Translated by Saliha Paker and Mel Kenne in *What Have You Carried Over? Poems of 42 Days and Other Works*

demonstrate the political endeavour of a relatively undereducated group of women coming from the peripheries of Anatolia, but they also denote the focal points this chapter covers with the role of time and language in subjectivity in a similar way to the poems Boland and Jamie present in *In a Time of Violence* and *The Queen of Sheba*.

Through the power of poetry as an alternative means for language formulated by the phallogocentric power mechanisms, Jamie, Boland and Akin question the degrees of female subjectivity with the risks of conforming to the symbolic (as the mothers' reaction "Stately and good-looking 'Exactly like my son!'" (WHY 54) can exemplify) or holding a harassing in-between position (as in "the words were flung back and forth across the chain, from this side to that" (WHY 54)) since endeavouring to modify the dominant configuration totally is doomed to "fragility" and "loss of identity" (Kristeva 189). According to Beardsworth, "what has been ignored, or has received little attention, is Kristeva's account of the process of the formation, deformation, and transformation of meaning and the subject, is the *extent* of the social-symbolic dimension of the fragility of the symbolic function," (92) which denotes the reciprocal influence of the fragility.

Furthermore, the revolting mother both collapses and shocks the officer with her scream in Akin's "Honor." The officer's reaction is in the form of a swearword, but such item of phenotext fails as expressed with the ellipsis and his defence mechanism also breaks down since the mother's response both forms and deforms him. In this respect, the three poets' expressing the femininity and the idiosyncratic sorrows results in the fragility of the symbolic. Moreover, Kristeva clarifies the power of literature with the question as follows: ". . . the truth itself about an otherwise repressed, nocturnal, secret and unconscious universe? Because it thus redoubles the social contract by exposing the unsaid, the uncanny?" ("WT" 207). Hence the fragile subject, paradoxically, causes the symbolic to become fragile with the intrusions of the semiotic similar to the flow of genotext into phenotext as Kristeva argues in "The System and the Speaking Subject" (28).

However, Kristeva's "fragility" gains another function when it is regarded as a means for escaping the identity created by the "historical sedimentation" (189) and the failure of such an enforcing entity as 'identity' through elements such as memories or extralinguistic items such as silence and scream. Therefore, as Kristeva maintains, "we confront two temporal dimensions: the time of linear history or *cursive time* (as Nietzsche calls it), and the time of another history, thus another time, *monumental time* (again according to Nietzsche)" (189). Additionally, such a difference between the two aspects of temporality also calls to mind the Deleuzian separation between the molar and the molecular temporalities. As Braidotti suggests, "the former is related to being/ the molar/ the masculine, the latter to becoming/ the molecular/ the feminine" (151). Thus, this section tries to demonstrate "the latter" (Braidotti 151) sense of time poeticized in the selected poems of Boland, Jamie and Akin.

Although "fragility" seems to be opposite of the "englobing" monumental time, it enables the subject to experience "another time" with its curative influence ("WT" 189). As Schippers argues, "Kristeva avers, challenges the stability of the subject, emphasizing instead its fragility and precariousness" by glorifying the "(semiotic) negativity, disruption and instability" in a revolting manner (77).

Jamie's, Boland's and Akin's another main concern is the perception of time and its influence on female subjectivity besides the issue of how a woman is inserted into a cage-like construction. Similar to the way the chain and the cage images in *The Poems of 42 Days* function, time concept contributes to the creation of impeding constructs for the subject. In other words, Jamie's, Boland's and Akin's poems in *The Queen of Sheba*, *In a Time of Violence*, and *The Wind-Hour* verbalize the tension between monumental or cyclical time and linearity of history as Kristeva argues in "Women's Time."

Kathleen Jamie's poem "Perfect Day" in *Queen of Sheba* exemplifies the dual influence of fragility on the subject. The poem describes how the woman subject is marginalized through images signifying the sense of space in addition to the time sense. Thus, such merging of "imaginary space" and "temporality"

(“WT” 191) leads to separation of time into two different perceptions when the female subjectivity is concerned. Kristeva’s argument of female subjectivity can be reread as the persona’s perception of time and her situatedness in “Perfect Day” as follows,

On the one hand, there are cycles, gestation, the eternal recurrence of a biological rhythm which conforms to that of nature and imposes a temporality whose stereotyping may shock, but whose regularity and unison with what is experienced as extra-subjective time, cosmic time, occasion vertiginous visions and unnameable *jouissance*. On the other hand, . . . there is massive presence of monumental temporality . . . all-encompassing and infinite like imaginary space. (“WT” 191)

Thus, the poem combines the local spatiality with the idiosyncratic sorrow of the woman subject. The persona observes her surroundings and accordingly, the kinesthetic image of flakes falling in wintry weather brings her experience to the “biological rhythm” and “cosmic time” that she senses in the “imaginary space” (WT 191). Such a sensibility of the persona in “Perfect Day” reminds Akin’s famous lines in “Spring” from *Kırmızı Karanfil* (Red Carnation) as below:

Oh, no one’s got the time
To stop’n think about fine things

With broad brush-strokes they move along
Sketching homes kids graves onto the world
Some are obviously lost when a rhyme starts up
With one look they shut it all out
And the rhyme enters the night, as fine things do (WHY 18)

The translators, Saliha Paker and Mel Kenne of the poem prefer to translate the Turkish word “ince” as “fine.” But the word “delicate” can be more suitable for the original word since “ince” in Turkish turns into a very striking expression by leading to a richness in meaning when the whole reception of “Spring” is concerned. In other words, the single word “ince” expresses how the persona criticizes the ideology of her day with a more universal aim. Accordingly, Akin’s word choice also reflects her poetic stance as well. She expresses in a conversation in 2006 that

I also believe that the poet's diction is a means for reorganizing ordinary language in the same way that plain language organizes life and nature. This finer rearrangement of language improves communication between people in an age of tensions, where people and nations fail to understand one another as they engage mechanics of war, and of self-defense against aggression. All of which leads to a loss of conscience. (In *Aeolian Visions/ Versions*, Akin 27)

The translator of the above excerpt, Saliha Paker, again prefers the word "fine" for the Turkish "ince." Now the word gains a quality that can be tuned in accordance with the tension created through personal experiences. However, Akin's argument about poet's diction is problematic in her own poetry since her word choice as well as her ideology are "like the sap of a tree, which cannot be seen but only imagined" (AV 27), which keeps her poetry away from the banality of everyday life and from the straight manner of political poetry. Thus, in opposition to her own word, Akin "rearrange[s]" (AV 27) her diction not to offer a remedy for miscommunication, but to demonstrate her opposition to a coarse world with her delicate lines.

Thus, the word "fine" in "Spring" by Akin emphasizes the opposition of "delicate" and "broad" throughout the poem. It also keeps the poem's imagery related to the plastic arts²⁵. Moreover, the word "fine" turns the persona's criticism of the common apathy into a 'measurable' sensibility that is shared by very few people, among whom the persona positions herself as an observer.

However, the word "delicate" carries the implication of 'fragile' nature of the subject. As "delicate" signifies, the hopeful connotations of the title of "Spring" by Akin are replaced with the coldness of winter in Jamie's "Perfect Day." Then both titles reflect an ironic voice shared by the two personae. Thus, the two female subjects of "Perfect Day" and "Spring" become constructs by being 'fine' in texture. For that reason, the last line "one more flake, they'd break" (MMS 132) in "Perfect Day" does not visualize a natural event but conveys how the persona is like "loaded sky" (MMS 132) and on the verge of an emotional

²⁵ Similar to Boland's use of painting in her poetry as well as her emphasis on 'witnessing' position of the woman persona in the collections such as *Journey*.

collapse. Because their word or reaction is so 'subtle' as the line "Some are obviously lost when a rhyme starts up" (WHY 18), they cannot receive any reply from the other and they feel their loneliness by being marginalized.

The translators of "Spring" choose the word "rhyme" for the original word "türkü," which means folk song in Turkish. In opposition to the word "rhyme," the original word carries the duality of the local and the city or periphery-centre and such an opposition is the characteristics of three poets especially in their descriptions of the landscapes of Ireland, Scotland and Anatolia. Unlike the image of subject's being inscribed as the lines "With broad brush-strokes they move along/ Sketching homes kids graves onto the world" (WHY 18) denote, the folk song's oral nature, its being carried over from one singer to another one through generations and its locality present the tension between the semiotic and the symbolic or genotext and phenotext. Furthermore, folksong in Akin's poem reflects the monumental temporality that escapes from the limitation of historical time by distracting the notion of certainty with its mythical beginning and possible end through loss. In a similar way, such locality disturbing the symbolic in "Spring" is expressed with "oyster-catcher" image and "still grey waters of Loch Morar" (MMS 132) in "Perfect Day" by Jamie.

Moreover, the opening lines of "Perfect Day," "I am just a woman of the shore/ wearing your coat against the snow" (MMS 132) both show the persona's marginalized position and her subjectivity with the implications of her fragility influenced not only by the cold weather but by her partner. Her wearing the other's coat can be regarded as the symbolic expression of the subject's voluntary loss of identity or her gain of another identity which does not suit her. However, this act also symbolizes how the fragile subject makes the other fragile too by exposing him to the coldness of nature. In other words, Akin's reproach in the lines "Oh, no one's got the time/ To stop'n think about fine (delicate) things" (WHY 18) finds a response in "Perfect Day" since the subject and the other begin to consider the 'delicate things' by observing the flakes of snow. Then the romantic cliché act of offering one's coat for the beloved one

turns into a passage to perceive the unique monumental moment together with the other because an element of nature, snow, in this case, erases the 'footprints' of the subject by offering her "vertiginous visions and unnameable *jouissance*," (WT 191) in which the linear time momentarily loses its influence as follows,

that falls on the oyster-catchers' tracks
and on our own: falls on the still grey waters
of Loch Morar, and on our shoulders
gentle as restraint: a perfect weight
of snow as tree-boughs

and fences bear against a loaded sky:
one flake more, they'd break. (MMS 132)

Although "Perfect Day" belongs to the first poetry collection of Jamie, it bears her later concern of presenting the idiosyncratic with the natural or representation of the inner reaction with the outer effects, which is also related to her reaction to the linear time through the flow of the semiotic. To put it differently, as the example of "Perfect Day" demonstrates, the persona experiences two different time spaces together. Furthermore, "Kristeva constantly underlines the connection of those temporalities with the phantasmatic as a reassertion of lost nature *and* a figure of distortion" (Beardsworth 257).

However, such a marginal position of the persona leads to be on the verge of an emotional collapse. Akin and Boland share a similar response with Jamie since the three poets are aware of their ideological loneliness and that they have to maintain their routines in daily life. In other words, they acknowledge the power of the outer. To illustrate, as Kerridge argues, Jamie depicts her encounter with a peregrine falcon in *Findings* by combining her observation of the bird with the "bustle and interruption of family life" (277) since her child's intrusion results in her losing the sight of the bird.

Similarly, Boland's poem "This Moment," poeticizes the persona's inner flow through her observations of the natural and her being interrupted by an outer determinant, a mother and her child again:

One tree is black.
One window is yellow as butter.

A woman leans down to catch a child
who has run into her arms
this moment. (ITV 213)

As in the case of "This Moment," the interruption of social structures such as family or religious traditions in three poets turns into a recurrent image since the poets do not exclude the roles given to them by the symbolic. However, in "This Moment," the observant persona is interrupted by a mother caring for her child. The mother's act in the above lines also underlines the beginning of an uncanny temporality, in which the ones who internalize the symbolic are disturbed. The well-lighted house and the tree in darkness also contribute to the creation of a so-called dangerous moment by creating the inside-outside dichotomy too.

However, through darkness image, Jamie, Akin and Boland develop an alternative or semiotic reaction that does not bypass the influence of the symbolic but spoils its functioning through their poetic sensibility. Similarly, as Sielke puts it, "according to Kristeva, the major dilemma of feminism is that neither the identification with nor the rejection of power is likely to escape the symbolic contract" (169) and the linearity of the historical time in this case. Moreover, such an existential stance creates borderline personae, who make the idea of 'perfect' and exactness of linear time problematic too. Like the argument of "Perfect Day," "This Moment" starts and ends with the observation of a specific natural element, the "dusk," (ITV 213) which also contributes to the feeling of marginality as the lines below signify,

Things are getting ready
to happen
out of sight (ITV 213).

In the mysterious atmosphere of the twilight, the persona finds a passage to grasp the monumental time in 'this moment.' If the specular experience is taken as an instrument of the symbolic, its gradual disappearance rescues the "things" (ITV 213) from the boundary of the stability by eroding the exactitude. In a similar way, Akin's "Capricious" from *The Wind-Hour* reflects the yearning for the return of the lost thing in the lines "On the other side of visible things you're there/ Darkness has grown so large don't ask return" (WHY 7). As the wish of "don't ask" (7) signifies, the rational boundaries malfunction by leading the persona to grasp "the other side of visible things," (7) which destabilizes the subject and makes her feel the "biological rhythm's" merging with the "monumental temporality" ("WT" 191).

Furthermore, the bird image²⁶ presents another perspective of the notion of fragility. Besides, the recurrent bird imagery in Jamie, Akin and Boland delineates the attempts to destroy the cage construction of subjectivity coerced by the symbolic in addition to the bird imagery's connection with the monumental time. In other words, especially Jamie and Akin use birds to reflect the desire for an unconditional freedom the subject expects in addition to their efforts to demonstrate the peculiar "fragility" (189) before the ones holding the power of the symbolic in Kristeva's words. Thus, as the title *The Queen of Sheba* by Jamie demonstrates, the subject's position is snatched away from what the symbolic defines as reality towards the borders of the mythical or primordial semiotic in which time offered by the symbolic loses its meaning and linearity with such images as the flocks of birds circling around. In the title poem, "The Queen of Sheba," for instance, the socio-historical is problematized with references to a biblical character from the middle east. Thus, the national/ international, or local/ global dichotomies collapse when the pronoun 'she' appears in the poem. Moreover, the bird imagery solidifies the continuous change of the subject by cherishing the instability on the corporeal level, which

²⁶ The bird imagery also appears in such poems as "A Season, A Branch, Two Sparrows" by Akin in order to convey the difficulties originated from the maternal boundaries of the subject.

makes the subject to be considered dangerous, inconsistent and fluid in terms of the symbolic.

The undeductible nature of woman is emphasized by means of the multiplicity of woman voices and symbols in most of the poems by the three poets, which enables going beyond the arguments of the first two generations of feminism Kristeva argues and the possibility of a third one justifying the attempts to find a consoling space in combination of the linear and eternal times. Accordingly, even the title of Akin's essay "Yes to the Female Creativity with Human Sensibility" in *Besieging Poem in Plain* is an emblematic example of the merging third possibility with the poet's emphasis on the words 'female' and 'human' on the same level (64).

"Wishing Tree" from *The Tree House*²⁷ by Jamie, "Singers" from *In a Time of Violence* by Boland and "An Ant Turned its Head" from *The Wind-Hour* by Akin waver between circularity of the monumental time and causality of history. Jamie's "The Wishing Tree" visualizes a corporeal entity of nature, a tree in order to symbolize the vacillating position of the woman observant. In a similar way, Boland's "Singers" recounts the difficulty of finding a true voice that will express the feelings of women due to the fact that it is demarcated with a "symbolic denominator" (Kristeva 188). Furthermore, Akin's "An Ant Turned its Head" visualizes the gap between the subject and symbolic denominator with the kinesthetic image of an ant's turning its head, which also delineates the reactive attitude of the persona. In this respect, Kristeva's use of a mathematical term, the relation of the denominator to the numerator in a fraction sustains the idea of female situatedness. Accordingly, by incarnating "The Wishing Tree," Jamie subverts the symbolic denominator and its linearity. The opening couplet "I stand neither in the wilderness/ nor fairyland" (TH 3) delineates the poetic persona's reacting position to her situatedness within the corporeal world.

²⁷ Although "Wishing Tree" appears in a later collection of Jamie, *The Tree House*, the poem exemplifies Jamie's insistence on a recurrent theme of the temporal and the natural with the persona's paradox of going beyond the limits and staying within those limits.

Similar to Entwistle's argument for the depictions of Boland's rustic landscape in "Home,"²⁸ from *The Lost Land*, "The Wishing Tree" also combines "human/non-human, local/remote, atemporal 'spaces of being and becoming'" (150). As the lines "To look at me through a smirr of rain// is to taste the iron in your own blood" (TH 3) suggest by means of the olfactory images, the personification of a tree talking about its experiences problematizes the relation between denominator and numerator. In other words, the smell of earth after rain and that of human blood lead to a rethinking of the structure glorifying the binaries rather than a holistic perception. In addition to that, the wishing tree's place "in the fold of a green hill// the tilt from one parish/ into another" (TH 3) merge the local [parish] into the remote [fold of a green hill] (3). The wishing tree image also visualizes an alternative process through its roots moving in the land of Britain as denoted in the lines "I draw into my slow wood/ fleur-de-lys, the enthroned Britannia" (3) with its political implication to the imperial past of Britain. In this respect, the wishing tree stands as a threat to the historico-social structure of "enthroned Britannia" (3) and vice versa since,

And though I'm poisoned
choking on the small change
of human hope,
daily beaten into me
look: I am still alive-
in fact, in bud.²⁹ (TH 4)

As the last lines of "The Wishing Tree" maintain, the poetic persona acknowledges her position in the fraction, which "poison[s]" and "choke[s]" her (4). While "small change/ of human hope" (4) signifies the act of the people throwing coins for their wishes as depicted with "My limbs lift, scabbed/ with greenish coins," "small change" (3) also implicates the status quo maintained by the linearity of history. However, the persona develops an existentialist

²⁸ The poem "Home" by Boland oscillates between two landscapes, California (the persona as an outsider) and Ireland (the persona still an outsider)

²⁹ The balanced feeling of hope is also sustained in "Mother Ireland" from *The Lost Land* by Boland as follows, "Night and day/words fell on me. / Seeds. Raindrops./ . . / I had been/ that they misunderstood me./ *Come back to us/* they said./ *Trust me* I whispered" (LL 261-2)

stance in the “common currency,” (3) thus achieves a hopeful state in hopelessness or by being marginalized within the circle of the dominant discourse.

Like Jamie, Boland uses a symbolic language by employing multi-layered words and grammatical structures. The opening lines of Boland’s “The Singers,” demonstrate the questionable fraction suggested by the dominant model which is a combination of history and a larger shared cultural heritage. As the word denominator suggests, the number below the line of a fraction is already there and does not promise either a sense of feeling at home or relaxation for the women who sing other songs than the ones taught by the historico-social ensemble. It reflects the common reception towards women no matter which culture or geography,

The women who were singers in the West
lived on an unforgiving coast.
I want to ask was there ever one
Moment when all of it relented,
When rain and ocean and their own
sense of home revealed to them
as one and the same? (ITV 203)

The linear time which can be divided into “moment[s]” (ITV 203) is not constructive since it works for the severe acts of the “West,” epistemological centre of the phalocrats according to Boland. Moreover, it just clarifies the sufferings of women in a hostile world. The question in the last lines reflects another sense of time which is more holistic than being fragmentary, and more eternal than being momentary. Similarly, in “The Wishing Tree,” Britain’s depiction as “fleur-de-lys,” (TH 3) three separate parts of a flower, signifies this fragmentedness as the representation of Ireland, Scotland and England. Thus, in both poems ‘West’ and ‘Britannia’ historicize the blocking nature of linearity. As Kristeva points out “as for time female subjectivity would seem to provide a specific measure that essentially retains repetition and eternity from among the multiple modalities of time known through the history of civilizations” (191). The lines “After which every day is still shaped by weather,/ but every

night their mouths filled with Atlantic storms and clouded-over stars and/ exhausted birds” (ITV 203) demonstrate the psychology of the women not reconciling with the dominant discourse which “still shape[s]” (ITV 203) each day and leaves no place for their voice within the borders of linear time. But another temporal space is also possible and the symbolic cannot impose its own rules in that space, which leads to a kind of *jouissance* for the women singers (or “The Wishing Tree”) through these cycles and recurrences experienced “on an unforgiving coast” (ITV 203) by creating in Kristeva’s words, an “extra-subjective time, cosmic time, occasion vertiginous visions and unnameable *jouissance*” with “all encompassing and infinite like imaginary space” through songs (191),

And only when the danger
was plain in the music could you know
their true measure of rejoicing in
finding a voice where they found a vision. (ITV 203)

In a similar way to Jamie’s personification of a wishing tree, and Boland’s image of singers who sing an alternative song other than the one suggested by the dominant discourse, Akin employs ‘ant’ image in order to demonstrate the endeavour of the subject within the present social structure through an epic recount of its deeds. Thus, “An Ant Turned its Head” from *The Wind-Hour* combines the arguments of “Wishing Tree” and “Singers” as follows,

It had a milky-white heart,
With a true generosity out and out

Its palms smelled of earth
It belonged to this earth, born and bred

It had tiny friends
No one knows the number of them
It said a song slowly
About grains not grown yet (WH 26)

Similar to Boland’s singers, Akin’s ant sings another song which tells a different story from that of the social. While the symbolic denominator seeks a definite meaning or certainty in every act, the ant’s deeds always lead to an ambiguity

or uncertainty. Its “milky-white heart” (WH 26) is in harmony with nature and describes its innocence in the beginning lines. However, the ant or the subject it represents on metaphorical level lives on “an unforgiving coast” (ITV 203) similar to the singers of Boland and its “milky-white” is smeared with its inevitable interaction with the symbolic denominator as the following lines, “A breeze blew softly/ Unbelievable! But true/ It changed overtly” (WH 26).

3.3. Reactions to the Historico-Social Structure

“Cultural and religious memory forged by interweaving of history and geography” (Kristeva 188) territorializes the experiences with the dilution of history. Similar to Europe as the construct of this “historical sedimentation,” (188) Ireland for Boland, shares the problematic issue of “identity” and “loss of identity” (189). In the poems, “That the Science of Cartography is Limited” and “In Which the Ancient History I Learn is not My Own,” from *In a Time of Violence*, a yearning for the unmapped space is expressed through the image of map with its hegemonic connotations. Furthermore, “Boland converts her own story into a historically representative one” (Haughton 529). Accordingly, in Jamie’s “Forget it,” the poetic persona, a questioning child, in this case, underlines the significance of memories by asking questions to her teacher and mother, which problematizes the meaning of history or linearity through monologues and dialogues.

“For Boland place becom[es] simplified into a single loss” (Allen 14) and the personae in the poems demonstrate the lack they feel with the borders drawn by the symbolic denominator. In a similar way, “Forget It” from *Jizzen* by Jamie depicts some derelict buildings and battered houses with the implications of a post-war period. In the depiction of the house the child and her mother live in, dissatisfaction is notable as the lines “. . . Nana/ and me toiled past windows/ smeared in blackout, condemned/ empty stone” indicate (JI 5). So, their location does not provide them a safe space even on a corporeal level.

As the opening lines of "That the Science of Cartography is Limited" suggest, the reason for the insufficiency of mapping or putting into a certain predefined form is not only that ". . . this shading of/ forest cannot show the fragrance of balsam," (ITV 204) which means 'map' cannot convey the subjective perception. However, the persona combines the linear and monumental times together by relating her own memory with the lines "When you and I were first in love/ we drove/ to the borders of Connacht/ and entered a wood there," (ITV 204) which "was once a famine³⁰ road" (204).

The persona's remembrance of a dialogue with her lover as "I looked down at ivy and the scotch grass/ rough-cast stone had/ disappeared into as you told me/ in the second winter of their ordeal" (ITV 204) consolidates how the linear time is immersed into the monumental one. Through the revitalization of the sufferings of the Irish workers who died when constructing the road on the map, which is the identity of the nineteenth century of Ireland given as "1847" (204) in the poem, the persona perceives that the historical data and the road on the map lead to a "loss of identity" by "memories escap[ing] history" (Kristeva 189) since the lines of map in combination with linear time cannot demonstrate the other "line which says woodland and cries hunger/ and gives out among sweet pine and cypress, and finds no horizon" (ITV 205).

Correspondingly, the poetic persona's reflections in "Forget It," vacillate between linear and monumental times. While referring to political turmoil in such lines as "The neighbours had flitted/ to council-schemes, or disappeared" (JI 5), the persona instantly remembers how she is "washed like a dog/ with kettle and one cold tap" (JI 6), which shows that memory as a surplus of history does not function in a constructive way.

"Forget It" starts with the line "History in a new scheme," (JI 5) with the desire to redescribe the meaning of history. The persona asks her teacher, Mr Hanning,

³⁰ With reference to 'Great Famine' in Ireland between 1845 and 1852.

'Sir! Sir! Sir!
- He turns, and I claim
just one of these stories,
razed places, important as castles,
as my own. *Mum!*

We done the slums today!
...
What for? Bangs the oven shut,
Some history's better forgot. (JI 5)

The child's enthusiasm for the ruined buildings and suburbs underlines the margin-centre opposition. However, her desire for the periphery is counterbalanced with her mother's reaction, which diverts her attention from a romanticized safe space to "*What for? bangs the oven shut, Some history's better forgot*" (JI 5). Then the child expresses what Kristeva means by "historical sedimentation" (Kristeva 188) by asking "How come/ we remember the years before we were born?" (JI 5). While she yearns for an 'identity,' her mother desires a "loss of identity" (Kristeva 189) by denying history. In the following four parts, the poetic persona tries to remember her own very limited history, dreams about her sister who went to America and the lost family members. However, her mother's words,

Who wants to know? Stories
spoken through the mouths
of closes: who cares
who trudged those worn stairs,
or played in now rubble back greens? (JI 6-7)

demonstrate that the romantic recollection of the memories fails and does not grant a reconciliation with the past experiences.

that stories are balm,
ease their own pain, contain
a beginning, a middle-
and ours is a long driech
now-demolished street. Forget it! (JI 7)

The child's voice is interrupted with a change from the childlike innocence to a mature voice towards the end of the poem with an emphasis on "stories" (JI 7)

in the above lines. She acknowledges that mapping or linearity poeticized in Boland's "That the Science of Cartography is Limited," creates a sense of wholeness with "a beginning, a middle-" (JI 7). Since keeping away from history is blocked with "Forget It," the child's voice resumes her narration as a conversation with her mother has never occurred, "History, Mr Hanning. The garden shrank for winter, and mum stirred our spaghetti hoops..." (JI 7).

"Nahit Hanım³¹" from *On a Distant Shore* by Akin poeticizes a fragile child who gains power through literature and silence. The poem opens with a lectern image at school. The lines such as "Why/ did the desk so high?/ to cow a classful of kids in black uniforms" (WHY 112) stands as another expression of Jamie's Mr Hanning. The highness of the lectern hierarchizes "a classful of kids" (WHY 112) before a metaphorical extension of the social, the lectern. However, unlike Jamie's Mr Hanning image, Akin's Ms Nahit is not a representative of the social order. On the contrary, she demolishes the accustomed values expected from a teacher by the social through her invisibility "like a spectre" (WHY 112) and silence.

Moreover, Ms Nahit tries to change the teachings of the social by offering the experience of monumental time through the other world of literature conveyed with Kafka, Dostoyevsky or Silone (112). Unlike Mr Hanning who tells the history imposed by the social, Ms Nahit offers an alternative realm with her symbolic invisibility, which grants her to change from within as visualized with "from inside her invisible armor" (WHY 112). To put it differently, as the lines "we didn't shy away from her" and "we girls breathed freely" (WHY 112) signify, Ms Nahit image suggests a liberating woman image for the children since Ms Nahit's words "transported us beyond that lesson" (112), which seems an open threat to the functioning of the social. Thus, while Mr Hanning consolidates the status quo, Ms Nahit creates a rupture by staying inside the borders of that status quo.

³¹ Translated by Saliha Paker and Mel Kenne in *What Have You Carried over?*

In “In Which the Ancient History I Learn is not My Own,” Boland maintains the map image in order to solidify the historical time that is, as Kristeva defines, “time as project, teleology, linear and unfolding; time as departure, progression, and arrival” or as the combination of causality and linearity (192). The map in the classroom can also describe the symbolic and the cracks darkened by the dirt can stand for the semiotic in chora, or “nonexpressive totality” as “the cutting up of the corporeal and social continuum as well as that of signifying material (Kristeva 30),

The linen map
hung from the wall.
The linen was shiny
And cracked in places.
The cracks were darkened by grime. (ITV 222)

According to Kristeva, the temporality suggested by history “renders explicit a rupture, an expectation or an anguish which other temporalities work to conceal” (192). In the lines,

Ireland was far away
and farther away
every year.
I was nearly an English child
I could list the English kings
I could name the famous battles
I was learning to recognize
God’s grace in history (ITV 223)

such a sorrow originating from being aware of the interrupting linearity is conveyed through configuring power of the dominant discourse. Thus, as the lines below suggest, without memories or memories not configured but experienced in an intuitive way, the persona cannot escape history. Accordingly, the symbolic is not disrupted in any way; on the contrary, subjectivity is affirmed,

And the waters
of the Irish sea,
their shallow weave
and cross-grained blue green

had drained away
to the pale gaze

of a doll's china eyes-
a stare without recognition or memory. (ITV 223)

However, the persona tries to subvert the mapping of history by asking the right question with "where exactly/ was my old house?" (ITV 224) and by desiring to "trace/ over and over the weave of my own country" (224). While she tells the memories about her garden with "its lilac tree whose scent/ stayed under your fingernails/ for days," her voice is interrupted with that of the Ancient History teacher, "for days-/ she was saying/ even months, the ancients travelled/ to the Oracle," (224). The slight difference in their use of "for days" (224) denotes the coexistence of monumental and linear times and the convergence of the semiotic and the symbolic. The change in the voice also delineates the existence of a discursively dominant structure that blocks any impetus threatening its own control over the subjects. In this respect, considering Ireland as a space in which the persona finds a consolation for the sense of origin is an open menace for the symbolic denominator since Ireland interrupts the fraction (equation calculated by the denominator).

Similarly, Jamie's "Mr and Mrs Scotland are Dead," from *The Queen of Sheba* poeticizes the relation between the symbolic and the semiotic through Britain and Scotland. The persona acknowledges Scotland's death, but there remain some tools presented in a surrealistic atmosphere,

And here, Mr Scotland's John Bull Puncture Repair Kit;
those days when he knew intimately
the thin roads of his country, hedgerows
hanged with small black brambles' hearts;
and here, for God's sake, his last few joiners' tools,
SCOTLAND, SCOTLAND, stamped on their tired handles. (WL 96)

The tools left, "puncture repair kit" and "joiners' tools"(WL 96) symbolize the remedy for linear history's "explicit rupture" in chora (Kristeva 192). As it happens in "In Which the Ancient History I Learn is not My Own" too, the persona remembers the memories with romantic depictions of nature. Thus,

Scotland offers a unity against the fragmentedness of history defined by the dominant discourse. Because it threatens the network of the symbolic, Scotland as a 'shanty town' is demolished with "bulldozers" or "that person" (WL 96) as expressed in the following lines,

Do we take them? Before the bulldozer comes
to make more room, to shove aside
his shaving brush, her button tin.
Do we save this tool box, these old-fashioned views
Addressed, after all, to Mr and Mrs Scotland? (WL 96-7)

According to Kristeva, language as "the enunciation of sentences (noun+ verb; topic-comment; beginning-ending) is closely related to the linear time and she maintains that "a psychoanalyst would call this 'obsessional time,' recognizing in the mastery of time true structure of the slave" (192). But the hysteric goes beyond this temporality by "suffer[ing] from reminiscences" (192) and identifies his or her self with other cyclical or monumental temporalities. In this respect, language as a construct solidifies the gap between the linear time of history with the monumental time of hysteria. In Boland's and Jamie's cases, linearity is vocalized through language and its functionality assures the subjectivity. In the last lines of "Mr and Mrs Scotland are Dead," the persona tries to persuade or protect herself by rejecting the curing tools as follows,

Should we reach and take them [tools in toolbox]? And then?
Forget them, till that person enters
our silent house, begins to open
to the light our kitchen drawers,
and performs for us this perfunctory rite:
the sweeping up, the turning out. (WL 97)

Similar to Boland, Jamie employs light and darkness as well as silence and conversation dichotomies in order to signify the realms of the symbolic and the semiotic. The instruments of the symbolic rushes into their "silent house" with "that person[s]" "perfunctory rite [language]" (WL 97) and the persona accepts the entrapment in her subjectivity again by advising herself "forget them" (WL 97).

3.4. Social Contract and Language

In the poems “In a Bad Light,” and “Writing in a Time of Violence” from *In a Time of Violence* by Boland, the poetic persona amalgamates her personal experiences or impressions with a more universal reflection on the currently situated woman through the ending lines. The personal memories in the first lines of the poems lead to a generalizing concern for the woman locked in language, sign or syntax. Similarly, in Jamie’s “Whale-watcher” from *The Tree House* and “Rooms” from *The Queen of Sheba*, the persona presents her desire for a departure from her situatedness in language. However, the personae in the four poems try to fix a meaning through upholstery buttons in Lacanian sense, which delineates their midway position between being linear [normal] and monumental [psychotic] experiences. In other words, the personae paradoxically cherish the slipping signification and express their desperate longing for the illusion of a fixed meaning.

The title of “In a Bad Light” calls to mind the Impressionism of the late nineteenth century, the aim of which is to depict persons, places or objects in accordance with the light’s effect on them. The persona explains her actual stay in “St Louis” where “the light is in its element of autumn” and “there is always a nightmare. Even in such a light” (ITV 207). But in the following stanza, her talking about Dublin as “The weather must be cold now in Dublin” (207) signifies that she does not feel at home in her present place and creates a space with which she can identify herself, but it fails too. The persona’s seeing “In one glass case plastic figure/ represents a woman in dress,/ with crepe sleeves and a satin apron./ And feet laced neatly into suede” (207) unleashes her own positioning and subjectivity in linear time and language. In this respect, as Shifrer suggests, “Fabric in Boland’s poetry is an honored token of exchange between women and an emblem of their connectedness; but it also signifies the troubled entanglements of human relationships, the trouble of class, for instance, and oppressive economic and sexual relations” (327). Thus, the

nineteenth-century French woman denotes that only appearances have changed but the essence has remained intact,

I see them in the oil-lit parlours.
I am in the gas-lit backrooms.
We make in the apron front and from
the papery appearance and crushable
look of crepe, a sign. We are bent over
in a bad light. We are sewing a last
sight of seashore. We are sewing coffin ships.
And the salt of exile. Our own
death in it. For history's abandonment
we are doing this. And this. And
this is a button hole. This is stitch. (ITV 208)

The persona sustains the nostalgic and pessimistic atmosphere of the autumn through her identification with the plastic woman “stand[ing] in a replica of cabin/ on a steamboat bound for New Orleans” (ITV 207). The figure in the museum functions as a *point de capiton* for the persona. Since she is aware of the constructed nature of signification and that the signifiers revolving around without any possibility of reaching the signified, she consciously creates a sign and thus a meaning, which leads to a merely illusionary process. As the lines “for history's abandonment/ we are doing this” (ITV 208) suggest, the woman persona constructs another temporality out of history or linear time that would regard “sewing coffin ships” (208) as absurd and unreal.

Thus, the persona formulates a survival mechanism in a constructed world through the textile imagery. By subverting language's noun-verb combination by means of surrealistic elements such as “sewing a last sight of seashore” or “the salt³² of exile” (208), she also consolidates her attempts to save herself from the time “which is at once both civilizational and obsessional” to the monumental time (Kristeva 193). “Our own death in it” (ITV 208) draws the border between the symbolic order and the ruptures to exit out of it. The coexistence of “button hole” and “stitch” (208) images emphasizes the

³² In “Voiced Lament” from *Laments and Songs* by Akin, in a similar way, the salt image underlines the negative change of mood from the preceding happy moment.

sacrificial position devoted to the woman, and the implacable subjectivity only leading to questions, the answers of which are ambiguous as well.

Similarly, the persona in “The Whale-watcher” by Jamie consciously creates a *point de capiton* through the whale image. Her specular experience in nature signifies the borderline between continuing signification, thus subjectivity and the momentary exit out of it as poeticized in the opening stanza: “And when at last the road/ gives out, I’ll walk-/ harsh grass, sea-maws, lichen-cruste bedrock-” (TH 25). As the lines below demonstrate, the persona desires to eliminate the gaze consolidating her subjectivity and tries to reconnect with her inner self through nature by watching the movements of the whales. In other words, she wants to see the whales not through her eyes since they are the instruments of her subjectivity,

Till my eyes evaporate
and I’m willing again
to deal myself in:
having watched them
breach, breathe, and dive
far out in the glare,
like stitches sewn in a rent

almost beyond repair. (TH 25)

In those moments of *jouissance*, the persona revisits Boland’s button hole and stitch imagery with a slight difference. The persona defines the signification and the symbolic denominator as an illusionary whole since it does not provide a sense of wholeness as a large hole torn from a greater textile [chora] by being “almost beyond repair” (TH 25). However, despite the obvious fracture or fraction when the symbolic denominator is taken into account, there she experiences the paradoxical movements of the whales. In other words, while “breach[ing], breath[ing] and div[ing]” (25), they repair the hole by functioning as “stitches” (25). Their cyclical movements interrupt the linearity of the “road giv[ing] out” (25). The double meaning of “the glare” (25) as ‘look’ and ‘strong light,’ calls to mind Boland’s “In a Bad Light,” which presents an alternative temporality other than that of the “oil-lit parlours” or “gas-lit backrooms” (ITV

208). In spite of the ruptures created by the whales, as the line “far out in the glare” (TH 25) signifies, the persona acknowledges her distance with the holistic relief and her reluctant return to the symbolic.

Thus, the two mutually excluding relational opposites, button hole and stitch in “Whale-watcher” and “In a Bad Light,” give way to a “mutation” (199) expressing doubts about “our place in the symbolic contract,” (199) through the crucial question, in Kristeva’s words as,

No longer wishing to be excluded or no longer content with the function which has always been demanded of us (to maintain, arrange and perpetuate this socio-symbolic contract as mothers, wives, nurses, doctors, teachers. . .), how can we reveal our place, first as it is bequeathed to us by tradition [stitch], and then as we want to transform it? [button hole] (199)

Boland’s and Jamie’s personae return to the symbolic order after the hysterical moments with the rash of surrealistic images. But they also indicate that they are conscious of their constructedness in the linear time and of jouissance that promises the glimpse of a reconciliatory monumental moment as in the persona’s totalizing tone expressed with “we” (ITV 208) pronoun, which universalizes her subjective experience in “In a Bad Light,”

We dream of a woman on a steamboat
parading in sunshine in a dress we know
we made. She laughs off rumours of war.
She turns and traps light on the skirt.

it is, for that moment, beautiful. (ITV 208)

In “Writing in a Time of Violence,” the persona problematizes language and its trapping influence on the subject through words³³ by poetizing her experience about “writ[ing] an essay on/ the Art of Rhetoric” (ITV 211) in her last year in college. According to Kristeva, there are two options for women who develop a “counter investment” (199) to the domination of the socio-symbolic contract with “attempts to take hold of this contract, to possess it in order to enjoy it as

³³ The misleading influence of language is also maintained in the muse image in such poems as “Tirade for the Mimic Muse” and “Lyric Muse” by Boland.

such, or to subvert it” (199). However, there is one more option and Boland prefers that road in her poetic career in general and in “Writing in a Time of Violence” in particular. Kristeva describes the third way as below,

On the other hand, another attitude is more lucid from the beginning, more self-analytical which- without refusing or sidestepping this socio-symbolic order- consists in trying to explore the constitution and functioning this contract, starting less from the knowledge accumulated about it (anthropology, psychoanalysis, linguistics) than from the very personal affect experienced when facing it as a subject and a woman. (200)

The act of writing an essay on rhetoric in Boland’s poem conveys the persona’s endeavour to “break the code, to shatter language and to find a specific discourse closer to the body and emotions, to the unnameable repressed by the social contract” (Kristeva 200). As it happens in the most poems in *In a Time of Violence*, Ireland is placed in a terrain out of the dominant discourse and it is the embodiment of subjective experience and intuition for the persona. In the lines, “I had yet to find// the country already lost to me/ in song and figure as I scribbled down/ names for sweet euphony/ and safe digression,” the persona reflects how language inscribes her into the socio-symbolic contract while she is inscribing or using language. However, language does not provide any meaning, only “sweet” (ITV 211) nothings.

And when I came to the word insinuate
I saw that language could writhe and creep
and the lore of snakes
which I had learned as a child not to fear-
because the Saint had sent them out of Ireland-
came nearer. (ITV 211)

The persona identifies language with the feeling of fear. Language “as the fundamental social bond” (Kristeva 199) is associated with a snake sneaking through its prey. The snake-language comparison can also bring into mind the entry into the phallogocentric discourse. According to an Irish folktale, St Patrick drew all snakes out of Ireland by means of a shamrock, a three leaf clover. Although this tale can be interpreted as the saint’s banishing all the pagans out of the country by evangelizing the whole island, in the poem’s

context, it can be taken as an association related to the persona's childhood memory of a soothing place. What the persona emphasizes is the emptiness of words since the signifiers cannot lead to certain signifieds in the existing structure, but it is only presumed to be so, which is consolidated with the persona's remembering definite terms of the rhetoric, "Chiasmus, Litotes, Periphrasis. Old indices and agents of persuasion," (ITV 212) delineating the illusionary state proliferated through the syntactic plays, understatements and the use of unnecessary expressions. The persona looks at her personality from a distance in order to demonstrate her previous unconscious situation to the one perceiving the functioning of language around her with the lines,

... how
I remember in that room where
a girl is writing at a desk
with dusk already in
the streets outside.
I could say to her-

we will live, we have lived
where language is concealed. Is perilous. (ITV 212)

However, she does not suggest a 'woman's language,' which is, according to Kristeva, "more the product of a social marginality than of a sexual-symbolic difference" (200). Instead, the persona yearns for a temporality and territory or a "wilderness" as Elaine Showalter describes "in terms of consciousness, it has no corresponding male space since all of male consciousness is within the circle of the dominant structure and thus accessible or structured by language" (200). Thus, from a male perspective, the 'wild' is inaccessible as being a reflection of the female unconscious, in which she can save herself from the boundaries of enunciation.

In the short poem, "Rooms" from *The Queen of Sheba* by Jamie, the persona expresses her vacillating position between rejecting the symbolic and the wish to be accepted by it "without refusing or sidestepping this socio-symbolic order" (Kristeva 200). She desires for a space in which she can realize herself within the boundaries of the symbolic. On the one hand, she identifies herself

with the “ships docked” (WL 105) waiting for the ocean. But on the other hand, she “long[s] for rooms to open with my [her] bare hands” (WL 105). The room image creates a paradox since it does not provide any space for the persona, on the contrary, it blocks the persona’s interconnection with the “wilderness” (200) in Showalter’s term. However, her “yearn[ing]/ like ships docked” (WL 105) for the extra-linguistic realm remains as a repressed desire, even though it is not possible to reach by staying in the room signifying the socio-symbolic contract as follows,

I’m all rooms at present, all doors
fastened against me;
but once admitted start craving
and swell for a fine, listing ocean-going prow
no man in creation can build me. (WL 105)

In a similar vein, the persona in “Writing in a Time of Violence” concludes as “But it is too late,”

to shut the book of satin phrases,
to refuse to enter

an evening bitter with peat smoke,
where newspaper sellers shout headlines
and friends call out their farewells (ITV 212)

due to the fact that she does not deny her formulation in the socio-symbolic contract like the one in “Rooms” by Jamie. As the lines “we will be- we have been- citizens of / of its [language’s or the symbolic] hiding place” (ITV212) in “Writing in a Time of Violence” suggest, an ontologically free place is also possible within the dominant structure despite its influence and function even in the rebel zone. But it is a freedom of the subject within the walls of “Rooms” by experiencing the ruptures of monumental time within the linearity.

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter tried to analyse the influence of the social theorised by Kristeva through the comparison of the selected poems from the early and later

collections of Boland, Jamie and Akin. The fragility of the woman personae, the function of history with the language of the symbolic stand as the main points for the origins of the harassment the personae feel in their becoming process. The semiotic-symbolic opposition or convergence of the semiotic into the symbolic demonstrates a peculiar subjectivity in the poems. The tension between the genotext and phenotext besides the monumental and linear time spaces reflects the consistent attitude of the poets in their early and later works by underlining the marginalized and silenced position of the woman personae. Accordingly, while history reminds the speakers what they try to forget, they find a shelter in the ruptures of causality and linearity.

As a consequence, the woman subject attempts to go beyond the borders drawn by the socio-symbolic contract through the narration of an alternative story that would replace the one offered by the symbolic denominator. However, in spite of her efforts to subvert the meaning imposed by the symbolic, the persona turns back to the departure point, but with a new phase in her subjectivity. Thus, she achieves a reconnection with the imaginary realm of Kristevan chora without denying her situatedness.

CHAPTER 4

THE SUBJECT: THE AMOROUS

what have you seen is beyond speech,
beyond song, only not beyond love
"Journey," Eavan Boland

4.1. Introduction

This chapter engages itself with love's influence in the formation of subjectivity in Boland's, Jamie's and Akin's Poetries. Love or the amorous experience establishes new possibilities to reveal the subjectivity process with its multifaceted influences on the poetic personae in both affirmative and negative ways. The chapter, in this respect, focuses on Eavan Boland's *Night Feed*, *Journey*, *In Her Own Image*, Kathleen Jamie's *Jizzen* and Gülten Akin's *I Cut My Black Hair* and *The Wind-Hour*. In order to demonstrate the changing meaning of love for the poets, the chapter tries to analyse certain poems from Boland's *The Lost Land*, Jamie's *The Overhaul* and *The Tree House* besides Akin's *Then I Grew Old* and *On a Distant Shore*. The part also cross-refers to Boland's *Against Love Poetry*, *In a Time of Violence* and Akin's *Love is Everlasting* with the aims of demonstrating that love as a subject matter functions as a leitmotif either through recurrence or transformation. To put it differently, the amorous either repeats itself in the same way or evolves into another feeling by keeping the previous emotion as its basis or with traces from the former experience.

This chapter focuses on how Boland, Jamie and Akin perceive the concept of love and to what extent the amorous experience dominates their early and

later poetry collections. It also concerns itself with such questions as whether love creates new realms for confirming the subject positions or not and whether the bliss felt through the amorous experience is a bubble, the fragility of which also reflects the vulnerable mood love drags the personae into a sense of being lost in an extremity they cannot cope with.

Although Eavan Boland would object to such generalized definitions of love as the one suggested by a Hollywood person, Elinor Glyn, "love is beautiful and terrible . . . it gilds dark places . . . of all the emotions which Human beings feel, Love is the most divine" (12), love as a subject matter is always susceptible to personal depictions which cannot be totally affirmed or rejected. As she argues in "Irish Woman Poet: Her Place in Irish Literature," Boland formulates her poems through "personal perspective on some of the tensions in the Irish poem" with her independent (imagination) and bounded (ideological tendency) "expressive of intelligence" (JTM 106). Accordingly, the amative demonstrates another dimension of "expressive of intelligence" (JTM 106) since the amative dynamic brings together the personal experience and the "historical sedimentation" (Kristeva 189). In this respect, such theorists as Kristeva, Irigaray and Barthes, analyse the amorous experience or the "perennial Freudian topic" (113) in Ives' words, from both personal experiences, historical and psycho-social data.

As a basic problem in Irish poetry, according to Boland, both male and female poets are under the pressure of an "expressive of intelligence" which "often obstructed the experience in the poem and turned the woman as subject into the image as object" (JTM 106). When the influence of the amative experience in Boland's poetry is considered, it can be said that Boland's poems convey the tension between "the woman as subject" and "the image as object" (JTM 106) through a fluctuating mood dominant in them. Because in the functioning of amative dynamics, the subject is repositioned with a consistent change and her identity is under the influence of the totalizing love. Thus, the "incommunicable" (Kristeva 3) amorous experience also forces the "expressive intelligence" (JTM 106) by shattering it through its unspeakable or

inexpressible nature. Moreover, in such fragmentary moments, the personae of poems represent not only the woman's being turned into certain stereotype image as an object but also into another subject mood in which a conscious and nurturing madness prevails.

Kristeva's and Barthes' methodologies stand as appropriate means for the criticism of Boland's, Jamie's and Akin's poems related to the amorous experience since the three poets do not only express their idiosyncratic reactions towards love through memories, but they also combine the amorous experience with the historical sedimentations of their societies. Although the chapter does not focus on Eavan Boland's later poetry collection *Against Love Poetry* (2001), the poems in this collection can be regarded as a continuation of her early poems related to love.³⁴ In other words, the personal melts into the

³⁴ I resemble the continuation of the three poets' former poems in the later collections to a brewing process. That is to say, the poems similar to the previous ones can be called 'brewed poems' since the later ones carry the tension to a more condensed degree. In the preface of *Object Lessons: The Life of the Woman and the Poet in Our Time*, Eavan Boland explicates her writing strategy which can be applicable for her style in prose and poetry as follows,

I have put this book together not as a prose narrative is usually constructed but as a poem might be: in turnings and returnings. In parts which find and repeat themselves and re-state the argument until it loses its reasonable edge and hopefully becomes a sort of cadence . . . Not so much because of an aspiration to give a definite shape to the book but because each revisiting has offered me another chance to clarify the mystery of being a poet in the puzzle of time and sexuality and nationhood . . . (OL xiii)

For instance, the so called 'brewed poems' of Boland in *Against Love Poetry* in this regard, keep the basic texture of the poems written in eighties and nineties about love. But the patterning texture also transforms into a new argument tuned subtly to a more optimistic mood since the melancholy in the poems gradually leaves its place to a wise resignation. To exemplify, we can regard most poems in *Against Love Poetry* such as "In which Hester Bateman, 18th Century English Silversmith, Takes an Irish Commission," "Irish Poetry," "Quarantine" on a similar level with the poems in the collections *Night Feed*, *Outside History* and *In a Time of Violence*. Then does Boland's poetry turn into a Deleuzean 'toolbox'? Can these continuations contradict with Deleuzean multiplicities? Although "Is it Still the Same" reminds the poems in *Night Feed*, it goes beyond the "pivot"al position of the former poems but 'still' complements one "dimension" of *Night Feed* as follows:

young woman who climbs the stairs,
who closes a child's door,
who goes to her table
in a room at the back of a house?
The same unlighted corridor?
The same night air
over the wheelbarrows and rain-tanks?
The same inky sky and pin-bright stars?
You can see nothing of her, but her head
bent over the page, her hand moving,
moving again, and her hair.

social and then the melancholy dominant in the poems unveils a huge dissatisfaction with the norms or patterns of the social, which is always insufficient for the conveyance of the amorous. Similarly, this section cross-refers to the poems in *Love is Everlasting* by Gülten Akin while analysing her early and later poems. As Akin's later poetry denotes again, the social hinders the desire for a sense of wholeness that can be achieved with the amative experience. However, the tragedy lies in the conscious subjects' situation or the tension conveyed in the poems by underlining even indefinite love marks the subjectivity of them.

Furthermore, in the construction of the subjectivity, the process of the repression of the Kristevan 'unnameable' is not only configured by the limitative power of time defined by the male-centred ideology but also by the phenomenon of love which cannot be contained into any definite definition. In this regard, love's sense of wholeness on the personae is both healing and destructive since the amative offers a new ground for the speakers in which they can both express their sorrows and become silent subjects with their encounter with the 'wild' chora by being prelingual in the realm of the semiotic.

Accordingly, besides the persona's relation to her lover as an other, her becoming a mother and regarding the child as her amorous counterpart reshapes her perspective of love as a source of affirmation or negation. While the first days of motherhood grant a semiotic rupture for the harassment of the mother subject, as the later poems of the three poets signify, the sense of loss negates the previous happy moments of maternity. Since the personae cannot erase the remembrance of the wholeness brought with the maternity in their later phase of subjectivity, they have to endure the sense of loneliness and loss.

In the poetries of Boland, Jamie and Akin, the issue of love is always apparent in a controversial way. In other words, the subjection process is reshaped

I wrote like that once.
But this is different:
This time, when she looks up, I will be there. (NF 305)

through the love experience as “the amorous subject perceives the other as a Whole . . . and at the same time, this Whole seems to him to involve a remainder, which he cannot express” (Kristeva 19) by scattering the semiotic into the symbolic. Thus the personae in the poets’ early and later collections question how love enables a freedom in which they can recuperate their revolving sorrows in their harsh routines and how it creates another border for the subjects in the form of loving someone or something besides the borderlines of history and language.

4.2. Love and Tension among Social Bonds

Eavan Boland’s *Night Feed* starts with a poem about love. Although the marriage as a limitative institution for the personae is going to be analysed through certain poems by the three poets, Boland’s “Domestic Interior” attracts attention with a postnuptial setting by referring to Jan van Eyck’s painting, “Portrait of Giovanni Arnolfini and his Wife.” Such an intertextuality from a Renaissance painting does not surprise Boland’s reader. Imagery related to painting with a peculiar focus on light is a recurrent device in Boland’s early and later poems. Her mother, Frances Kelly’s being a painter sets the ground for such a continuation in imagery as well. As McElroy states, “Frances Kelly, was an artist with the Post-Expressionists in Paris in the 1930s” and “Boland’s intimate relationship with painting is very visible in the 1982 collection *Night Feed*” (34). In a similar way, especially in *New Territory* (1967) and *The War Horse* (1975), Martin underlines Boland’s interest in painting in her early poetry (75). However, as Boland states in *A Journey with Two Maps*, “My mother hardly ever spoke to me about her painting. We did not talk about aesthetics or ethics. We had a common bond; not a common language” (7).

However, by referring to a portrait like Jan van Eyck’s, the poem achieves another argument, that is, expanding historicity to the realm of subjectivity. As Jody Allen-Randolph points out “By summoning up a tradition of artists like Chardin and van Eyck,” Boland clarifies “her identification with the female

subjects, rather than the male painters, she also subverts their tradition” (20) as in the case of “Self-Portrait on a Summer Evening” in *The Journey*.

The National Gallery introduces van Eyck’s “The Arnolfini portrait” as

This work is a portrait of Giovanni di Nicolao Arnolfini and his wife, but is not intended as a record of their wedding. His wife is not pregnant, as is often thought, but holding up her full-skirted dress in the contemporary fashion. Arnolfini was a member of a merchant family from Lucca living in Bruges. The couple are shown in a well-appointed interior. (nationalgallery.org.uk)

Because paintings unavoidably allow different interpretations similar to poems by means of visual expressiveness and figurative language, the historical authentication can contradict the personal reception as in the case of Boland’s poeticizing the Arnolfini portrait as a wedding scene. Accordingly, Boland emphasizes the painting’s spatial richness by referring to her mother with the words “A painting lives in space. The frame encloses it. But when the canvas is stretched and nailed, when the frame shuts around it, the life inside continues. I knew that from my mother” (7) in her prose work, *A Journey with Two Maps*. As Bilinge and Campbell suggest for van Eyck’s painting, “theory that the painting tells a story, that is more than a portrait, needs to be reconsidered” (59), Boland’s opening poem, “Domestic Interior” from *Night Feed* allows for rethinking the relation between the merchant and his wife from the respect of love. Moreover, Bilinge and Campbell’s interpretation is also acceptable in the case of Boland’s poem since “Domestic Interior” is not only a reinterpretation of the portrait but is an attempt to go beyond the hindering influence of historicity. In other words, the poem starts with a historical artefact and then universalizes it by emphasizing the subjectivity of “the woman” (NF 91). However, at the end of the poem, the universalization of the woman subject stops with an emphasis on the locality of material objects.

“Domestic Interior” consists of seven stanzas. The first three ones describe a similar Jan van Eyck woman with her posture reflecting the features of a middle-class Renaissance woman. Even though the opening lines “The woman

is as round as the new ring” (NF 91) is attractive enough to interpret the hostile attitude apparent in the following lines, Boland trivializes the first three stanzas by uttering “all of them supplied by Van Eyck” (NF 91) as if in a tone nothing to say more for the specular reflection of the artist.

However, what is dominant in these stanzas is the materialization of woman as a commodity. Since the woman in the Arnolfini portrait is married to a merchant, she is presented as one of the stock of goods her husband merchandizes and similar to “a despised utensil” (NF 91), her appearance in the portrait is “unexpected” (NF 91) when the focus of the picture, Arnolfini’s perspective is in mind. In Thurston’s words, “Caught by the painter’s gaze and the application of his craft, the woman is silent and powerless. She cannot help but signify the painter’s sense of her; she cannot help but symbolize the quiescent fertility Van Eyck bestows upon her” (234).

Despite their detailed evaluation, neither Thurston nor Hagen and Zelman do not argue the last line of the fourth stanza “Love, turn” (NF 91). While their discussions develop through Boland’s permanent discontent with the current position of the woman subject and the problematic heritage of Ireland with the re-description of history, the critics above do not evaluate the line seeming to stay on its own when the whole tone of the poem is concerned. But, when the formative influence of the amative experience is reconsidered, the line “Love, turn” gains multiple meanings in order to demonstrate the timeless subjection of “the woman” (NF 91).

Similar to van Eyck’s portrait, Boland’s poem is symmetrical in structure. The position of the fourth stanza below, in this respect, functions as a turning point for the whole poem since the persona’s tone differentiates from the previous negative descriptions.

by whose edict she will stay
burnished, fertile,
on her wedding day,
interred in her joy.
Love, turn. (NF 91)

Is “Love, turn” an utterance of exclamation or beyond interjectory expression, is it a yearning for expostulating with a friend about her decision at hand? The line can contain the answers to such questions altogether in a paradoxical way. In both cases, the utterance of “Love, turn” (91) denotes the observant position of the poem’s narrator and her effort to awaken “the woman” (91) from her material-like situation as it appears in the picture of Jan van Eyck. But the woman in the picture is already transformed into a simple object and thus she is immune to the speaker or narrator’s endeavour. The non-responsive attitude of the woman is poeticized with references to the ‘convex’ mirror in the middle of Arnolfini portrait and certain images related to the painting art as follows,

The convex of your eye
That is so loving, bright
And constant yet shows
Only this woman in her varnishes,
Who won’t improve in the light. (NF 91)

In “Domestic Interior,” addressing changes in accordance with the turn in tone and point of view. In other words, the third person of “she will stay” (91) in the fourth stanza is followed by the second person in “the convex of your eye” (91). At the end of the stanza above the narrator again prefers the third person of “only this woman in her varnishes” (91) in order to underline the stagnation from her “given shape” (JTM 103). Then, the woman figure is no more than a bunch of flowers in opposition to Boland’s aim in poetry. As she recounts a memory of her in *A Journey with Two Maps*,

As a painter’s daughter I had memories of my mother arranging flowers, fruit; getting them ready for a still life. I wanted the opposite: to feel that those atoms and planes could be thrown into a fever of spatial dissent; that they moved, re-arranged themselves, threw off their given shapes. I thought of that as the starting point for my poems. (JTM 103)

In another poem from *Night Feed*, “Woman Posing,” the observant speaker depicts not a woman but the stagnation of a woman. Similar to “Domestic Interior,” the poem is based on a painting named “Mrs. Charles Badham” by

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres as the small note under the title demonstrates. The speaker keeps her critical tone in “Woman Posing” too with her adverse attitude against such materialization woman as the one “posing” (NF 110) in her typical 19th century garments based on a “reckless fashion” (110). Then the woman becomes reducible into any other object as being “a swept, tidied, emptied, kept woman” (NF 110) like the “unexpected shine of a despised utensil” of “Domestic Interior” (NF 91).

The “convex of your eye” (NF 91) gains a multi-layered meaning in “Domestic Interior.” On the basis of Arnolfini portrait, the line refers to the reflection of the merchant and his wife on the convex mirror appearing in the centre of the picture with other controversial guests (when the depicted scene is regarded as a wedding event, priest and his attendant and/or their witness and/ or as a simple visit scene, a friend and the painter van Eyck himself). But in a more universal concern, the woman of the picture represents the darkness in which the woman subject is prisoned, with the implication that there is no chance to crack the mirror in order to disturb the role given to her. As Umberto Eco points out, “the mirror is a threshold-phenomenon marking the boundaries between the imaginary and the symbolic” (203). In this respect, the image of mirror becomes an agent suggesting the presence of a radical baseline for the subject between one liberating realm and the other limiting one.

The amorous grants a chance with its immediacy, but the woman cannot go beyond her artificial appearance, which positions her in a despicable state by the observant eye. In the lines “that is so loving, bright/ and constant yet shows” and “who won’t improve in the light” (NF 91) the speaker does not only reflect her disapproving attitude but she also puts the “light” image into a questionable meaning. Unlike the affirmative meaning of light as “bright,” (NF 91) it cannot convey the meaning of true knowledge with its dysfunction.

“Degas’s Laundresses” in *Night Feed* bears a similar argument with “Woman Posing” and “Domestic Interior” by originating its poetic sphere from a painting. In this poem too, the speaker observes the minute details of a

'domestic interior' in which the woman workers washing and ironing the clothes as Edward Degas depicts in his *The Laundresses* in the late 19th century. The structure also changes from the bodily details of the woman workers to a warning about their situatedness. Like the observant eye of "Journey," the speaker witnesses the harmony of "roll-sleeved Aphrodites" (NF 108) who mostly talk about "brides" and "wedding outfits" (NF 108) as poeticized in the first three stanzas. Moreover, the use of "Aphrodite" is functional when Boland's other poems about certain paintings are reconsidered.

The selection of a figure from classical mythology does not only allude to the laundresses' beauty and how these women are involved in the dynamics of the amorous but also foregrounds how the poem takes sides with history against myth as two contradicting temporal elements when the amative is concerned in Boland's case. The poem, in this respect, stays in the actuality of history by excluding the fantastic temporality of myth. In other words, the appearance of Aphrodite image in the opening line leaves its place to the image of the working women who seem entrapped "in the folds of wash" and "sweated into the folds" (NF 108). Accordingly, Boland clarifies the difference between myth and history in her "Outside History" by combining her autobiographical narrative to the problematic visibility of woman in the context of Irish poetry as "What had happened? How had the women of our past- the women of a long struggle and a terrible survival- undergone such a transformation? How had they suffered Irish history . . . only to re-emerge in Irish poetry as fictive queens and national sibyls? (33)" Thus, in the particular sphere of "Degas's Laundresses," the history of laundresses is related through their efforts to survive unlike "fictive queens" (Boland 33). However, their being an object of desire for the male perception of the amative remains the same with the advances of men towards "fictive queens" (33) in the romances.

Similar to "the convex of your eye" in "Domestic Interior," love functions in the prey-predator relation, which is poeticized as seduced-seducer tension in "Degas's Laundresses." Beyond the stereotype of women seduced and being ruined in the 19th century, the poem signifies how the amative turns out to be a

means of death, corporeal or metaphysical for the woman subject as the last line “it’s your winding sheet” (NF 109) delineates similar to the warning tone of the speaker in “Domestic Interior” as follows,

Wait. There behind you.
A man. There behind you.
Whatever you do don’t turn
Why is he watching you?
...
See he takes his ease
staking his easel so,
slowly sharpening charcoal,
closing his eyes just so,
slowly smiling as if
so slowly he is
unbandaging his mind. (NF 109)

The painter in the poem is presented as a seducer making advances towards his victim. But according to Kristeva, “the phallus, a symbolic power, is the true seducer. Without fulfilling, without disappointing, it seeks you out only to leave you to your own more than autoerotic capabilities- imaginary or symbolic” (201). Since the above lines are full of phallic images, the painter’s preparation to draw the women workers is poeticized in a negative way as if he “divert(s) them from their own path (*se-ducere*³⁵) all women he meets” in the words of Kristeva arguing the acts of Don Juan (201). Moreover, as the lines “staking his easel so” and “slowly sharpening charcoal” (NF 109) indicate, the process of reproduction of woman subject from the male eye through artistry starts when “he is unbandaging his mind” (NF 109). To put it differently, the painter “unbandage(s) his mind” in order to cover the women completely with those bandages on the symbolic level by means of ‘his’ perception. For this reason, the speakers of Boland’s poems about certain paintings glorify their focus on daily life but, by the same token, they criticize the ideology concealed under the canvas.

³⁵ The word “*se-ducere*” in italics refers to the Latin origin as a combination of “*se*” as ‘apart’ and “*ducere*” as ‘lead’ with the meaning of ‘lead apart from its way.’

Accordingly, Gülten Akin's "Osman Hamdi Bey" with a subtitle in the form of an explanation following it as "A Woman Portrait" from *Then I Grew Old*, calls to mind the amative dynamics and the male perspective in "Degas's Laundresses" by focusing on the painter himself. An Ottoman painter, Osman Hamdi Bey who was influenced by the 19th century French orientalist painters and the painted woman creates two different realms for the poem. Similar to Boland's Chardin or Degas, Osman Hamdi Bey draws the pictures of some women in their daily circumstances in such works as "The Travelling Women," "Two Musician Girls," "Naile Hanım," "The Woman of Istanbul" and "The Girl Picking Lilacs." What attracts attention is the painter's aim of stabilizing a woman into his canvas. Thus, his canvas defines the limits of that woman portrayed as the opening lines "a stance bounded to the frame/ a moment of waiting" (TIG 23) signify. Additionally, the painter feels the immense through his artefact, the woman depicted since "While Osman Hamdi Bey in that frame/ touching the eternal" (TIG 23). However, the woman stays in his frame and cannot go beyond the reproduction of the male gaze similar to Boland's doll image,

a solemn chin a stubborn nose
the stature has been ignored,
but a long face
how obtained when young this much
increased with a love coming from outside?
the countenance deep
transparent-like eyes, due to the shades of light?

as if the winter lakes
the face
has said that "I have come into being" (WHY 23-24)

Thus, the depicted woman in "Osman Hamdi Bey" gains a 'meaning' from the painter's viewpoint and the amative's influence is problematic since it comes from an outer source. Like the dress imagery put on the woman subject in the poems of Boland and Jamie, the amorous feeling does not belong to the woman herself but to the force reproducing her and its affirmative influence is questionable as the line "increased with a love coming from outside?" suggests.

In “From the Painting *Back from Market* by Chardin” from Boland’s another collection, *New Territory*, a woman worker is described with references to Chardin’s painting, *Back from Market*. Although the painters are different, van Eyck in “Domestic Interior” and Chardin in “From the Painting”, Boland’s evaluation is maintained in such lines as “I think of what great art removes:/ Hazard and death, the future and the past,/ This woman’s secret history and her loves” (NT 17) by underlining the closed situation of the woman as a subject and combination of the amative with ordinary life. In this respect, the poem stands as the primary form of “Self Portrait on a Summer Evening” from *The Journey* and “Woman Posing” from *Night Feed*. In other words, the three poems from different collections develop a similar argument with references to certain paintings. However, what is poeticized in the poems is the act of drawing a woman portrait from the male perspective, which figuratively reproduces the image of woman. In such a circumstance, the woman subject in Boland’s poems is described with a desperate mood since either she is not conscious of being a colourful product of male gaze as in the case of the women in the paintings by Chardin and van Eyck or she has to carry the burden of beholding the loyal woman subjects as in the case of the observant speakers in the poems.

The act of painting by the male gaze stabilizes the destabilizing amative power of the woman subject. Thus, as the following lines denote, the maid is “fix”ed (NT 17) by the painter’s brush on an everyday occasion,

Dressed in the colours of a country day-
 Grey-blue, blue-grey, the white of seagulls’ bodies-
 Chardin’s peasant woman
 Is to be found at all times in her short delay
 Of dreams, her eyes mixed
 Between love and market, empty flagons of wine
 At her feet, bread under her arm. He has fixed
 Her limbs in colour and her heart in line. (NT 17)

As a typical presentation of a maid in the 18th century France, the hard life of a “peasant woman” (NT 17) and a dull kitchen³⁶ scene are visualized with the colour imagery. As the lines “. . . her eyes mixed/ between love and market” (NT 17) signify, the amative experience appears in the daily routine of life. In other words, the amorous sustains its influence within the borders of ordinariness. When “love” and “market” are reconsidered as the extensions of Kristevan semiotic and symbolic, their mixture in eyes of the maid does not only demonstrate the vacillations of a woman subject in a short resting time but also reflects the basic feature of the amative as being momentary, fractured and paradoxically beyond the borders of the symbolic.

The speaker of “From the Painting *Back from Market* by Chardin” criticizes the act of “fix”ing (NT 17) by the painter. However, she also supports the visualization of the ordinary life in its so-called unimportant details. In those details, the persona finds a voice to express or to revitalize her subject situation. Similarly, as “Self-Portrait on a Summer Evening” from *The Journey* deals with, Chardin draws a woman from his own perspective and perception of light but such a depiction of woman or stabilization also gives a new vitality to the expression of the unstabilizable through the amorous experience and the identification between the woman painted and the persona speaking. Thus the descriptive lines below,

Jean-Baptiste Chardin
is painting a woman
in the last summer light. (J 129)

calls to mind the opening lines of “From the Painting” in *New Territory* with its concentration on the corporeality of an ordinary woman as though to signify nothing special for drawing that woman. However, the following lines demonstrate how the speaker uses such an opening to delineate that her ‘witness’ position leads to a different perception since “Truth makes shift” (J 130) with another presentation of glass image,

³⁶ The kitchen image is sustained in Boland’s poems about mother-daughter relation in her early and later poems. Similar to Jamie, the kitchen localizes the mother’s ‘domestic’ difficulties within the safe space granted by the kitchen.

What you are watching
is light unlearning itself,
an infinite unfrocking of the prism. (J 129)

The images of reflection and deflection such as light and prism above question the functioning of daily life in order to create a refreshed sense of perspective by focusing again on 'light' in painting as a reiterated theme in Boland's poetry. Thus, the phrases "light unlearning itself" and "an infinite unfrocking of the prism" (J 129) offer a different description of the amative by stressing on its disintegrating nature. In the amative's disillusioning force by demythologizing woman and giving voice to her "secret history and her loves," (NT 17) the speaker also grasps "what great art removes" (NT 17).

Furthermore, in another title poem "Journey" from Boland's poetry collection *Journey*, the poet revisits her recurrent images related to painting in "Domestic Interior." Unlike the woman in "Domestic Interior," the persona in "Journey" is enlightened through the presence of love and "bad light" (ITV 208) that offer her not only a new perspective but also a means for undermining the stability of reason and temporality through "love's archaeology" (J 149). In her own digging process, she comes upon a new space through which her "witness" (NF 91, J 149) turns into a gist as a collecting point in the random circulation of the events and states she experiences.

As Thurston suggests, "instead of a revisionary way of *seeing* (an epistemology), which would liberate the woman from the limits of her representation, Boland offers a praxis, a *lived knowledge*: a 'way of life / that is its own witness'" (234). Accordingly, Boland's collection, *Night Feed* discloses a connected meaning for the title; dark, disappearing or unknown side of the amorous experience nurtures the subject by granting her at least a semiotic witness position by isolating her from the influences of the social in Kristeva's words as the sixth stanza of "Domestic Interior" demonstrate as follows,

But there's a way of life
that is its own witness:
Put the kettle on, shut the blind.

Home is a sleeping child,
An open mind (NF 91)

and through the persona's conversation with Sappho in "Journey" as,

I whispered, 'let me be
let me at least be their witness,' but she said
'what you have seen is beyond speech,
beyond song, only not beyond love; (J 149)

As Hagen and Zelman argue, "inspired by works of Renoir, Canaletto, and Chardin, among other artists," Eavan Boland, "problematizes what she sees, extending the two-dimensional canvas in a further dimension to include that which the artist simplifies away, i.e., the subject's interior complex" (450). Similarly, in "Domestic Interior," the speaker of the poem starts with the frame or dimension offered by a Renaissance painter and re-evaluates the woman subject from a third dimension, that is, from her subjectivity by negating the simplified outer borders through the image 'home'³⁷ and its complicated wisdom.

Christy Burns points out that 'home' in Irish political history is divided into two clear-cut realms as being a means for a practical place to conduct the pre-determined national policies and a private zone of the women due to "the government's equation of womanhood with marriage" (222). However, in practice, such a definite division collapses with "domestic interior" (NF 91). As Thurston suggests, "home is a fragile haven continually threatened but constantly enabled by its constitution through absence, its composition through historically tainted language . . . unceasing effort into 'pieces' that fit into usable wholes" (235). Thus, as stated before, the universalization of woman subject is counterbalanced with the daily routines of "home" (NF 91)

³⁷ The argument of home and the ordinary is developed in "A Ballad of Home" from *Night Feed* by Boland. 'Home' changes its meaning from an affirmative emptiness to a harassing plenitude as the speaker of the poem remembers in such lines as "How we kissed/ in our half-built house!/ It was slightly timbered,/ a bit bricked, on stilts" and complains about both corporeal and emotional fullness as in the lines "Ten years on/ you wouldn't find now/ an inch of spare ground./ Children in their cots// books, cats, plants.(NF 104)

and home in its limited circle supplies for the subject a liberated area to recover from her timeless or universal boundaries and sorrows.

Similarly, as the lines “what you have seen is beyond speech, /beyond song, only not beyond love;” (J 149) in “Journey” clarify, love contributes to the creation of such rebel zone.

and our effects,
shrugged and settled
in the sort of light
jugs and kettles
grow important by (NF 92)

In the last stanza of “Domestic Interior” above, the speaker completely focuses on the locality of home as an image. Thurston comments on the word “effects” as “at once their property and their impacts” (235) but the word conveys not only the meaning of agency but also of efficacy with an emphasis on the functional capabilities of the ordinary things on the subject. Furthermore, as Burns states, “When Boland began focusing her writing on women's voices early in her career, she started with descriptions of her own domestic environment” by depicting “the small and often mundane details of home” (221). However, these ordinary details at home made their presence felt especially at night. Through their shadows, they regain a new shape, which operates as an “open mind” (NF 91) by creating new possibilities to cope with the subjectivity confirmed consistently during the daytime. Thus, the ordinary things become “important” (NF 91) affects through which the subject perceives the crumbles of a stable meaning in these objects’ seemingly apathy as the line “shrugged and settled” (NF 92) suggests.

As Burns maintains, “Boland draws directly on her own experience as a woman in Ireland, she has also felt compelled to represent lives that have greatly differed from her own—those of the poorer, the rural, and the working-class Irish” (222). Accordingly, Boland’s opening poems in *Against Love Poetry*, “In Which Hester Bateman, Eighteenth-Century English Silversmith, Takes an Irish Commission” and “Against Love Poetry” do not only denote Boland’s

continuing concerns about the national and the political but also exemplify the subjection lost and re-established through the simplicity and complexity of love. In other words, cherishing the commonplace is conveyed through the poetization of a simple life of Irish woman, which is disturbing for the “mainstream” (104) understanding as Boland discusses in “Irish Woman Poet: Her Place in Irish Literature” as follows,

The poem I inherited contained passive, ornamental images of women. This was particularly true where the woman in the Irish poem in any way suggested the generic, the national, the muse figure . . . The life of the Irish woman-the ordinary, lived life-was invisible and, when it became visible, was considered inappropriate as a theme for Irish poetry . . . (104)

In Boland’s poetry, “Muse” (104) both as a “figure” (104) from mythology and a recurrent image in her early poems grants new possibilities for understanding how Boland opposes the construction of woman through certain suppressing paradigms. The personae, for instance, in such poems as “Tirade for the Mimic Muse” from *In Her Own Image*, “The Muse Mother” from *Night Feed* and “Tirade for the Mimic Muse” from *The Journey* reflect how the image of Muse functions within the spaces of nation, language and subjectivity. The Muse image also underlines Boland’s perception of history and myth. Her crude opposition to ‘Muse’ in her early poetry leaves its place to a softer one in the later poems. But, Boland’s desire to produce by staying within history never changes since “the poet’s vocation- or, more precisely, the historical construction put upon it- is one of the single, most problematic areas for any woman who comes to the craft” with the limiting power of the dominant male literary circles (OL 76). Then the speakers do not call Muses for creating new compositions in the manner classical poets did. However, when such woman Romantic poets as Mary Robinson and Landon are considered, Boland’s use of muses reminds the functionality and “fluidity” (DeLong 49) the muse image provides for the poet. In this respect, DeLong’s analysis of the subjectivity in Robinson and Landon is also applicable to Boland’s employing the muse image as follows,

. . . both opens herself to the muse's penetration and projects her own subjectivity onto her muses. In contrast to the masculinist Romantic tendency to Other and objectify the muse, the Romantic deployment of the Sapphic construct implies that the poet can be her own muse, a creative response to the anxiety of inspiration that permeates the Romantic discourse of spontaneity. (49)

Unlike Robinson's *Sappho and Phaon*, Boland's muses underline the harassing mechanism of the social as "The Journey" illustrates. In other words, the amative experience operates as a combination of Robinson's 17th sonnet, "Tyranny of Love" and 28th sonnet, "Describes the Fascinations of Love" by referring to its both healing and destructing influence on the female subject. In Boland's case, although the speakers of the poems identify themselves with the muse or Sappho functioning like the muses, they remain as a permanent outsider even if they can observe the surrounding experiences. Then the muse image does not grant a source of the imagination but it unleashes often sorrowful memories from the forgotten past. Then, the speaker's tone changes into an accusative mood even up to the degree of swearing as "Tirade for the Mimic Muse" from *In Her Own Image*, denotes with the lines "I've caught you out. You slut. You fat trout/. . . Anyone would think you were a whore-/. . . kind-hearted tart" (IHOI 71).

Besides a criticism of the traditional literature with its obsolete conventions and the yearning for a new voice, "Tirade for the Mimic Muse," offers another dimension of the amative experience with its originality and rootlessness. As Rodriguez points out, "The muse, a conventional symbol of poetic inspiration, has been considered as a major intervening force in translating experience into art" (91) and in the case of "Tirade for the Mimic Muse," the experience cannot be transferred into the poetry by means of the muse since it merely leads to the recognition of the wrongly accepted values rather than a productive inspiration. Thus, the persona voices her restlessness with the stereotypes through auditory images as follows,

With what drums and dances, what deceits
Rituals and flatteries of war,

Chants and pipes and witless empty rites
And war-like men
And wet-eyed patient women (IHOI 71)

The noise-silence opposition in the above lines also reflects the preference of silence against language since language confirms the prescriptive subjectivity without offering an outlet for the persona. The rumble of “empty” “rituals” and “chants” (71) consolidates the well-worn roles assigned for man and woman by muffling the sound coming from inside of the persona. In other words, the speaker tries to come out of the stabilizing system of language by listening to her inner world instead of the muse’s assistance. Thus, the speaker regards the muse as a false guide for her progress into “womanhood” (72). Moreover, the speaker deliberately accuses the muse for detaining her from a self-realization.

Akın’s “The Mad Girl’s Song I” in *The Wind Hour* in a similar manner demonstrates how the mad girl’s exhaustion leads her to a wish for a radical separation from the social signified with the cities and a crowd of senseless people. However, the persona’s desire for a nurturing silence and loneliness is hindered by the social in her process of self-realization as follows,

I do not want lights, confetti, or fiesta
No need to go somewhere far away
Now all cities resemble each other
If I rested, if you hushed tonight
Where on earth! (WH 19)

Although Akın’s persona wants a darkness in which she can find an inner peace, she also accepts that there is no such a chance to reach the safer ground of tranquillity. The lines in “Tirade for the Mimic Muse,” “The hubbub and the shriek of daily grief/ That seeks asylum behind suburb walls-” (IHOI 72) voice the stuckness felt by the mad girl in Akın’s poem. However, the personae find the solution to cope with their sorrow only through love. Since love offers a kind of originality with its unknown nature and the personae attempt to get out of “daily grief” (72), the amative experience functions in a similar way to Barthes’ Daruma doll image that is “a legless toy endlessly poked and pushed, but finally regaining its balance, assured by an inner balancing pin” (141) for

the speakers of the poems. In other words, while the instruments of the social “poke” and “push” (141) the personae in the chores of daily life, they cling to the protecting sphere of the amorous. But, the muse poeticized in “Tirade for the Mimic Muse” deliberately conceals the knowledge of “inner balancing pin” (Barthes 141) by obstructing the possibility of “transforming an error into a renewal–remodelling, remaking, reviving a body, a mentality, a life” (Kristeva 4).

In the penultimate stanza of “Tirade for the Mimic Muse,” the speaker both yearns for a radical break from the accustomed perspective of life with its already manipulated knowledge and tries to regain the knowledge of the amorous which appears in “flashes, formulas, surprises of expression, scattered through the great stream of the Image-repertoire” (Barthes 59). Then, the persona’s effort turns into an epic journey in which she acknowledges the false reflection of the muse with its “halls of mirrors” (IHOI 72) and decides to move along another road as below,

And I who mazed my way to womanhood
Through all your halls of mirrors, making faces,
To think I waited on your trashy whim!
Hoping your lamp and flash,
Your glass, might show
This world I needed nothing else to know
But love and again love and again love.
In a nappy stink, by a soaking wash
Among stacked dishes
Your glass cracked, (IHOI 72)

As Rose Atfield argues, “the harsher aspects of suburban domesticity are voiced in Boland’s virulent denunciation of the conventional muse created by male poets in “Tirade for the Mimic Muse” (174) and the last lines of the above stanza draw attention to the hard life the woman subject has to endure. Moreover, by reworking the same subject in “Envoi” in a different collection, *The Journey*, Boland poeticizes her perception of the muse with an emphasis on “myth” as “My muse must be better than those of men/ who made theirs in the image of their myth” (J 150). Even the last stress on the ordinary in “Tirade for

the Mimic Muse” is kept in “Envoi” with the lines “If she will not bless the ordinary,/ if she will not sanctify the common” and with “then here I am and here I stay” (J 151) the speaker deliberately defies the authority of the muse.

Furthermore, in Boland’s early poetry such evaluation of the ordinary is nourishing for the speakers. As the images “nappy stink,” and “stacked dishes” (IHOI 72) denote, a new consciousness comes out within the borders of the domestic sphere. Thus, the influence of the muse as the mouthpiece of the dominant ideology in Barthesian sense is “cracked” (IHOI 72), unleashes the desire for prevailing the knowledge of the amateur as it is poeticized with the repetition of the word love three times in the poem. Repetition of love also signifies Kristeva’s “vertigo of words” “in the rapture of love” (3). Similar to Akin’s persona uttering “I do not want lights, confetti, or fiesta/ No need to go somewhere far away” (WH 19), the speaker rejects the “lamp and flash” of “Mimic Muse” (72) and remains at the suburb domesticity without searching “somewhere far away” (WH 19). The closing lines, “I will show you true reflections, terrors./ You are the Muse of all our mirrors” (IHOI 72) do not only express a confrontation scene but also underline the recognition of the woman subject’s false image which “maze(s)” the “way to womanhood” (72) by being organized within the patterns of the male-oriented symbolic. Then, the roles of the muse and the speaker switch with “I will show you true reflections” (72). Additionally, the similar idea of switched roles is handled in “Tirade for the Lyric Muse” of *The Journey*. The speaker leads the muse to “truth” (J 159) in a hopeful way and a softer tone to “share” her “music” (J 159) as,

You,
you with your smocked mouth
are what your songs left out

We still have time.
Look in the glass.
Time is the flaw.
Truth is the crystal. (J 159)

The images of mirror and stitch as a leitmotif in Boland’s poetry signify the women’s situatedness and in “Lyric Muse,” these images are supported by the

song motif. Similar to the glass at the centre of “Domestic Interior,” the mirrors of “Tirade for the Mimic Muse” and “Tirade for the Lyric Muse,” visualize the wrong reflection of the woman subject in which the images of the women speakers or personae are mere productions of a male gaze. Thus the amative experience shatters the ideology reflected in the mirror of man; since it is “crystal[lized]” “truth” (J 159) appears in the fragments of experience.

In “From Blind Mirror to the Fine Girl,” from *The Wind-Hour*, Akin does not employ the mirror image in order to express the situatedness of woman by focusing on the reflective function of glass. On the contrary, the poem concentrates on the mirror’s dysfunction. Similar to the speaker’s identifying herself with the Muse in Boland’s case, the poetic persona of “From Blind Mirror to the Fine Girl,” identifies herself with the mirror itself. Similarly, when the last lines of “Tirade for the Mimic Muse,” “You are the Muse of all our mirrors/ Look in them and weep” (IHOI 72) are reconsidered, it can be said that the speaker also associates herself in the mirror. However, the woman’s position does not change in both poems: the speakers of the poems have to suffer from their loneliness, they have to experience an alienation of their own children and they have to bear a fragmented consciousness of knowing what goes on behind the mirror image and lastly they yearn for reaching the hidden knowledge by staying in the nonmysticism of dailiness.

“From Blind Mirror to the Fine Girl,” demonstrates the functionality of mirror image in its two-partite structure. In other words, the second part of the poem subverts the argument of the first part by taking love into its centre with its presence and absence or what is gained or lost in the subjectivity process by reformulating the same sentence structure as follows,

I am one of those mirrors showing full-length of the human body
Six-way in dimension and depth
I know it from your face and hands
All love inside your heart
Your heart against me
...
I am one of those mirrors showing full-length of the human body

Six-way in dimension and depth
Where is the girl, little, delicate and beautiful
Where is the one overflowing with fervour
I have forgotten your hands and face
Neither love inside your heart
Nor does it stand against me (WH 16)

At the end of the poem, the speaker does not appear in the same way, through the process of confrontation she grasps a momentary meaning of what she has lost by focusing on the absence of love, which exemplifies the Kristevan definition of love as a source of fulfilment and loss for the subject. Such coexistence of opposing forces in love also signifies the destabilizing impact of the amative experience for the woman subject as “From Blind Mirror to the Fine Girl” poeticizes the fluidity of the amorous.

Does Akın’s speaker take the role of Sappho in Boland’s “Journey” or the woman unmasking Muse with her warnings for “the delicate girl” or does she caution herself as the image of “the delicate girl” (WH 16)? The answer to such questions is paradoxical since the speaker both identifies herself with the mirror and the girl at the same time. In this respect, the mirror’s fragility visualizes that of the speaker. Furthermore, it grants a kind of consciousness in which the persona finds the chance to confront with the overwhelming reality of what she has lost through the crossing lines “All love inside your heart” and “neither love inside your heart” (WH 16). Since the poem is an attempt to demonstrate the woman subject’s loss through her progress on the “way to womanhood” (IHOI 72) by means of love, the co-operation of the Kristevan semiotic and symbolic is also underlined with “where is the girl, little, delicate beautiful” (WH 16) a reference to the mutuality of nostalgia and the present time. In other words, what the speaker encounters is the “true reflections, terrors” (IHOI 72) behind the glass in “From Blind Mirror to the Fine Girl.”

In an interview by Alice Quinn in *The New Yorker*, Boland clarifies why she objects to love defined in traditional patterns as follows, “Love poetry, from the troubadours on, is traditionally about that romantic lyric moment. There is little about the ordinariness of love, the dailyness of love, the steadfastness of

love” (newyorker.com). Her questioning of a superficial love, in this respect, also reflects Jamie’s and Akin’s deconstructing the elements of their idiosyncratic love in which the amative process turns into a journey to come across with a subjectivity “in her own image” (IHOI 73) with the implications of a radical change at hand as the lines below express,

...
She is not myself
anymore she is not
even in my sky
anymore and I
am not myself (IHOI 73)

Similarly, “From Blind Mirror to the Fine Girl” expresses the line of “she is not myself” (IHOI 73) in its own poetic sphere through the mirror image. But in both cases, the image is shattered with the acceptance of a life in which love is either immune to their feelings or ineffective with the predominance of the symbolic. Thus, the poets define the amorous experience without idealizing it and they concentrate on the reciprocity of the ordinary with an extraordinary (Cannon 37) journey of the subject.

“Domestic Interior” and “The Journey” by Boland belong to different poetry sequences with similar themes in different periods of time. The two poems are title-poems of the collections *Domestic Interior* (1982) and *Journey* (1987), but beyond the shared feature of being a title poem, the two poems should be evaluated together from the respect of the amorous experience. Both poems are suitable to the frame of amative experience drawn by Barthes with the words “outbursts of language, which occur at the whim of trivial, of aleatory circumstances” (3) although such frames collapse in different contexts due to contingencies. Thus, Boland’s suggestion of the amorous as “ordinariness of love, the dailyness of love, the steadfastness of love” (newyorker.com) describes what is lost in “Domestic Interior” and “Journey.” Furthermore, the poetic persona observes this lack of love in her ‘witness’ position. Sappho’s explanation to the witnessing persona in “The Journey” as,

'love's archaeology- and they too like you
stood boot deep in flowers once in summer
or saw winter come in with a single magpie
in a caul of haws, a solo harlequin.' (J 149)

poeticizes a romantic past through the coming of summer and winter. Since the preceding lines describe the sorrows of 'domestic' women with their predetermined duties or "brute routines" ("Monotony," NF 102) in a bleak Irish historical context, the above "love archaeology" (J 149) transforms the tone from a distressing mood to cherishing one through minute details of the seasons. Similarly, such a change reminds another poem, in "Energies" of *Night Feed*, the lines "But the energy of flowers!/ Their faces are so white-" (NF 94) counterbalance the troubles denoted through "in chores left to do: the soup, the bath, the fire" (NF 94). However, in the end, so-called reality imposed by the social prevails with its own "light" in which "jugs and kettles/ grow important by" (NF 92). "A single magpie" as "a solo harlequin" (J 149) of "Journey" reminds the colourful stereotype of the *Commedia Dell'Artes*, but it is in harmony with nature unlike the artificial colours of the woman in "Domestic Interior."

Although the amorous experience is a phenomenal act for the subject according to Kristeva and Barthes, Boland, Jamie and Akın formulate their early poems around the 'ordinariness' of the exceptional love. In this way, they draw love back to earth by dismantling its commonly romanticized nature. In other words, love does not appear in such scenes as the reunion of the lovers in a hilarious backdrop, but it occurs in remembrances in the gloomy atmosphere of a kitchen between the noises of machines and the crying children.

"Love's archaeology" (J 149) suggests a secret knowledge hidden under the layers of various emotions and demands the act of 'digging' figuratively. It is deliberate that the critics of "The Journey" have omitted either what is meant with love and archaeology or had a cursory glance at a few quotations from the

poem itself³⁸. As a shortcoming for the criticism of Boland's poetry, Dillon argues that critical response to the collections of Boland is based on the poet's own manipulation on the reception of the poems with certain interviews or pieces of critical reviews written by the poet herself (309). Although such an attitude hinders new interpretations since the poet's own words create a rigid point of reference with its encompassing centrality, the pattern Boland employs in her own prose writings enables a productive starting point for the evaluation of her poems. To exemplify in general, *Object Lessons: The Life of the Woman and the Poet in Our Time* by Boland demonstrates the poet's own reactions to the poems besides foregrounding their poetical spheres. Peculiarly, "About 'This Moment'" and "A Question" can be good exemplary writings of Boland to clarify Dillon's criticism of Boland's huge impact on the critics of her poems. However, Boland's saying almost nothing about the emblematic phrase "love's archaeology" (J 149) in the interviews or reviews attracts attention and clues the reader in how the phenomenon of love is presented in the poetry of Boland with its openness to new evaluations. Since Boland's poetry is interlinked with the notions of the nation, its historical impulse and the woman's subjectivity, the perception of the amorous needs to be handled within the three-folded circle in which the woman subject or the speakers of the poems act or react to build new "armories" or "barricades against regret and anxiety" (OL 77).

Furthermore, Foucault's analysis of discourse not with the history of ideas but with archaeology³⁹ is a productive starting point for the discourse of the

³⁸ For instance, Sheila C. Conboy in "'What You Have Seen Is beyond Speech': Female Journeys in the Poetry of Eavan Boland and Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin" (70); Tom Clyde in "The Journey and Other Poems by Eavan Boland; Opia by Alan Moore" (25); M. Louise Cannon in "The Extraordinary within the Ordinary: The Poetry of Eavan Boland and Nuala NíDhomhnaill" (37); Jody Allen-Randolph in "Outside History: Selected Poems 1980-1990 by Eavan Boland" (20); Augustine Martin in "Quest and Vision: The Journey" (78-80); Pilar Villar-Argáiz in "Recording the Unpoetic: Eavan Boland's Silences" (482).

³⁹ For Foucault, the term 'archaeology' stands as a leitmotif in his studies as it can be seen in *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, and *The History of Sexuality* (as "archaeology of psychoanalysis" (*The History of Sexuality*, Foucault 130))

amorous experience. In other words, Foucault's interpretation of archaeology in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* bears some similarities with Boland's "love's archaeology" besides the remarks of Kristeva and Barthes. Foucault defines the history of ideas as a limitative entity as follows, "The history of ideas, then, is the discipline of beginnings and ends, the description of obscure continuities and returns, the reconstitution of developments in the linear form of history" between people interacting with each other through "*langage*" and within the boundaries of "genesis, continuity, totalization" (137-8). He continues to explain why he prefers the discipline of archaeology in order to clarify the discursive entities. Foucault consolidates such a preference by stating that archaeology does not try to demystify certain "thoughts, representations, images, themes, preoccupations" within a discursive structure (138). Thus, it does not evaluate discourse as a "document" which has to be interpreted and given a certain meaning but as a "monument" which needs to be handled in its unity by focusing on that certain discourse rather than some hidden discourse beneath it ("allegorical") (138-9). Secondly, archaeology is not based on a cause and effect relation with linearity. Besides, "It does not proceed, in slow progression, from the confused field of opinion to the uniqueness of the system or the definitive stability of science; it is not a 'doxology'" (139). As a third point, Foucault argues that archaeology "does not wish to rediscover the enigmatic point at which the individual and the social are inverted into one another" and "lastly, archaeology does not try to restore what has been thought, wished, aimed at, experienced, desired by men in the very moment at which they expressed it in discourse" (139).

In the light of Foucault's interpretation of 'archaeology,' the lines in which Sappho recounts the ordinary women with their chores and poor lives with a seemingly unrelated phrase "love's archaeology," (J 149) denote that Foucault and Boland evaluate the term similarly. In other words, Foucault's history-archaeology opposition can be an equivalent of Boland's history-myth comparison. In this vein, Foucault's term is an attempt to break with the

boundaries of history and Boland's "The Journey" is a process of historicity⁴⁰ that focuses on the real sorrows in both past and present time spaces. As Sappho tells the 'witnessing' woman-poetic persona such historicity within the borders of a domestic life and child-care as follows,

'But these women who went out like you
when dusk became sweet with leaves,
recovering the day, stooping, picking up
teddy bears and rag dolls and tricycles and buckets-

'love's archaeology'- and they too like you
stood deep in flowers once in summer
... (J 149)

Moreover, the personae in "Domestic Interior" and "The Journey" try to unearth what is covered in the routines of their lives (historicity and the act of a seemingly archaeological excavation). In the case of "The Journey," although the amative experience moves like a quicksilver and its destination cannot be predetermined, the persona tries to consolidate the timeless sorrows of the women in the locality of Irish history through language. As Clutterbuck states, "the 'I' in her own poems rarely designates the primary experiencing individual, the 'other' themselves, even when that other is herself. Instead, the 'I' in her texts functions as a means of access -a self- consciously limited vehicle of entry - to the experience of that other" (73). Accordingly, the persona's finding a way to reveal the lost link between her and other 'domestic' women in history turns into a failure as the hopelessness of 'I' as the line "I could not reach or speak to them" (J 149) denotes. The failure of language and time in the last lines does not only demonstrate the crisis of expression for the speaker but also shows that such a failure underpins the crisis of expression when the amative experience is involved.

⁴⁰ Although how Boland, Jamie and Akin poeticize the perception of time and history is the subject of the previous chapter "The Subject: The Social," when the amorous experience matters, it can be said that the poets interpret history as historicity with a more emphasis on the subjectiveness. I take Ranajit Guha's (3 and 91) and Andrew Abbott's (2-4) definition of historicity as basis for "love's archaeology" (J 149).

Accordingly, through the closing lines in "The Journey," Sappho warns the persona with the words "what you have seen is beyond speech" (J 149) since the amative is not apparent in language but in "outbursts of language" (Barthes 3). As the words "beyond speech" (J 149) delineate, the subject feels herself as irreducible, which is named "transport" (55) by Barthes. Since "transport is the joy of which one cannot speak" (Barthes 55), the amorous experience transports the subject beyond the border of language. Thus, as Thurston argues, such situation of "beyond speech" (J 149) creates a "generative silence" (98) in which "untold generations of maternal and familial suffering" find a voice to come out (98). But whether silence is constructive for the subject or not is also questionable for Boland since she expresses another subversive argument towards language as "in this language, most of all, with its syntax, its complete and structured perceptions, there are no small spaces for a childhood, an exile, to get through" (OL 77). However, Boland paradoxically forms her poems in those "small spaces" (OL 77) in order to verbalize the long-lasting memories of personal sorrows. Thus, as a poem, "Anna Liffey" in Boland's later poetry collection, *In a Time of Violence* underlines, "the truth of a suffered life" continues for the woman subject in "the body of an ageing woman" (ITV 233). Because trusting in love as a cure for her sorrows 'becomes' an optimistic vision even if it is not a mere illusion as the poeticized in the lines "And in my late forties/ Past believing/ Love will heal/ What language fails to know" (ITV 233).

As the examples of "Domestic Interior" from *Night Feed* and the title poem, "The Journey" of *Journey* denote, the poetic personae as both speakers and observers, discuss the influence of love through personal reactions or personal histories (by means of memories) and the historical residue of the social. The 'unnameable' nature of the amative experience does not contribute to solving the problems in subjection process with its vagueness but it offers a new perception of subjectivity in which the persona finds a way to observe the idiosyncratic sorrows by positioning herself as an outsider in love. Thus,

although her subjection is confirmed even in an act of intimacy, it grants a new vision that shatters the convex mirror of van Eyck for the speaker of the poems.

4.3. The Relationship between the Mother and the Child

In *Night Feed* by Boland, *Jizzen* by Jamie and Akin's early poetry collections, *The Wind Hour*, *I Cut My Black Hair*, and *At Shallow Depth*, the interaction between mother and child is always dominant in the poems. In other words, the early collections of Boland, Jamie and Akin offer a new space of subjectivity through a major border in the image of a little child that needs to be cared with a self-sacrificing attitude.

According to Villar-Argaiz, "when women poets speak about their female experience, a recurrent subject matter appears in their work: the love between mother and child" and description of maternity is sustained in the poetry of Boland greatly in amount (89). In a similar way, Memet Fuat, an influential Turkish critic, defines Gülden Akin's poetry as a production of "the constructive anger of woman's sensitivity⁴¹, and of motherhood" (qtd. in Paker 276).⁴² It seems problematic to define and label woman subject as 'mother' by creating a limitative category with the implications of male-centred discourse⁴³. In the

⁴¹ Akin's poetry in general, can be read under the light of the key term "woman's sensitivity," which makes her poetry marginal and close to those of Jamie and Boland.

⁴² This argument is developed with the theme of anger and its variations argued by Saliha Paker in her "Unmuffled voices in the shade and beyond: women's writing in Turkish" (276). Memet Fuat's criticism of Akin is as follows "She wrote with a modern perception of the traditional elements of the Anatolian popular epic, elegy and song and became the spokesman of resistance to brute force and repression. She reflected the constructive anger of woman's sensitivity, and of motherhood" (translated by Paker 276).

⁴³ Eavan Boland opposes such labelling definitions as "anger of woman's sensitivity" by Memet Fuat for the woman poets. As Wright and Hannan state, although there is a tendency for acceptance of Boland as a poet from male centred literary society throughout her career, this fact "has not eliminated vestiges of Irish patriarchal gender prejudice from attacking Boland as a 'separatist' and/or 'angry' woman" (174). However, I see a difference between two expressions, labelling a woman poet as separatist angry woman and anger of woman's perception of the world since both Akin and Boland do not advocate for a purely separatist male-female opposition. They do not ignore the natural flow of their lives. The first labelling is a mere accusation of the woman poet with sentimentalism, but the second expression shows the urge to take action and the decisiveness to change as Boland expresses with the words, "I'm not a separatist. I would be much more subversive by inclination" (Interview with Wright and

case of Boland, Jamie and Akin, motherhood offers a new ground to poeticize their harassment in the blocking atmosphere of the house with its routines and childcare attributed to woman-mother and paradoxically a warm sense of home, which grants momentary relief to observe the 'outside' from the margin.

The amative experience realized in a "compassionate" (McWilliams 315) care for the child creates a peculiar submission to the child as the other. Thus, the roles of lover and beloved one occur in the relation between the mother and the child. Accordingly, Boland, Jamie and Akin transfer their personal experience of motherhood to the poems dealing with the theme of mother and child, which grants another definition for the amative by keeping the dichotomy of the lover and the other. For instance, as in her "Out of My Womb," McWilliams suggests that

Certainly from the evidence we find in her writings, as far back as her 1982 poetry collection, *Night Feed*, it is clear that familial issues are prominently accented in Boland's literary discourse. What's more, Boland's own confessions about the joys and fears, the limits and the longings that are the creative and intrinsic to a woman's odyssey are conceded to procreative force in her private disclosures about the journeys of the female an aging woman and a compassionate mother. (315)

Then whether the love for the child provides a realm of relief and wholeness is the basic question of the poems dealing with the desire to have a child. Accordingly, McWilliams discusses that "For Boland, not only are her children the fruit of her womb, but children, in general, are the 'blossom to the root': the thriving source of promise the flowering of possibilities" (320). McWilliams' constructive evaluation of mother-child relation is problematic. Because, while having a child and the process of childbearing are productive in the sense they create an original experience intertwined with the amative, such love and sincere commitment towards child also bring the destructive emotion of melancholy and loss in spite of its affirmative influence.

Hannan, 183). Both poets, thus, support a change through subversion in an attitude to criticize from within.

In this respect, Barthes' "the affirmation of the affirmation" (24) demonstrates the prevalent tension between the mother as the speaker and the child. The speakers of the three poets' early poems firstly react to the amorous totalization of the child with a "dazzlement" in Barthes' words (24). At the first phase the subject "blinds" (24) with the sense of wholeness originating from her love for the child. However, such a 'blind' love leaves its place to the probability of loss, which creates a sense of melancholy. Beyond the Barthesian pattern, the poems about the tension between the mother and the child signify 'the negation of the negation,' which means that the poem starts with a negative notion about the mother-child connection and in the end, such negation is maintained with the idea of separation, which confirms the previously poeticized negation. Furthermore, such separation shatters the sense of a total unity with the other in the form of child functioning like quicksilver by creating the illusion of possession.

In the title poem of *Night Feed*, Barthes' "the affirmation of the affirmation" (24) appears both in structure and the tension of the poem, "Night Feed" by taking its starting point with a positive remark of 'feeding' the baby. To put it differently, the act of feeding also nurtures the mother subject by fulfilling the desire to merge into the other in the process of amative experience. Similar to the early poems of Akin and Jamie, 'night' is signified as a privileged time for the personae since it neutralises the influence of the symbolic by reminding the symbiotic relation between the child and the mother as follows,

This is dawn.
Believe me
This is your season, little daughter
The moment daisies open,
The hour mercurial rainwater
Makes a mirror for sparrows.
It's time we drowned our sorrows. (NF 92)

The night does not belong only to the mother but also to the daughter in the tranquillity of a so-called romantic depiction of "daisies," "sparrows" and "rainwater" through which "we drowned our sorrows" (NF 82). Accordingly,

the above lines reflect the positive perception of the Kristevan “maternity” as “the disruptive potential of the semiotic” (Butler 175). The unity of the lover and the other is also consolidated in the harmony of dawn. The relief created through the act of feeding and the silent night even cause a happy acceptance of the woman’s situatedness as the lines, “This is the best I can be,/ Housewife/ To this nursery” (NF 92) suggest. Her love for her baby is indirectly affirmed with the cosiness of the room and the “suckl(ing)” baby’s effort to “hold on” (92). But, the mother as the speaker also acknowledges that her relief is momentary and ends when “Earth awakes” and “the feed is ended” (NF 92). Like the “mercurial rainwater,” (NF 92) the speaker perceives the special time of night as an entity impossible to catch similar to the love for the other, “the child, warm mercury in my arms” (“Stabat Mater,” Kristeva 246). As the last stanza of “Night Feed” demonstrates, the advent of a new praxis through the day is inevitable and the elements of the semiotic withdraw into their shells. In its most instinctive way of protection, the mother puts her baby into the warm bed⁴⁴ as if the speaker tries to shelter her from the dangers of the symbolic with the implications of being expelled from heaven,

Worms turn.
Stars go in.
Even the moon is losing face.
Poplars stilt for dawn
And we begin
The long fall from grace.
I tuck you in. (NF 93)

In the end, the speaker both affirms her amative experience of “first encounter in its difference” (Barthes 24) and confirms her previous sense of wholeness with endurance although her amorous experience is blocked by the influence of the social. However, her positive feeling leaves its place to two times confirmed melancholy, and Barthes’ “let us begin again” (24) is poeticized with the lines “And we begin/ the long fall from grace” (NF 93). Nevertheless, such a beginning seems to be a repetition without any change rather than a difference within repetition. The poem signifies a shift from one reality to another that is

⁴⁴ Similar to ‘jizzen’ image in Jamie’s poetry.

represented not only on the corporeal level. On the contrary, the 'shrinking' elements of nature visualise the change in mood. Thus, the semiotic flow also ends when the day breaks and "the feed is ended" (NF 92). However, the mother as the speaker of the poem has to maintain her daily routines by sacrificing for the other. As Kristeva states in "Stabat Mater," the suffering on both psychological and corporeal levels continues for the mother since "one does not give birth in pain, one gives birth to pain: the child represents it and henceforth it settles in, it is continuous" (241).

Boland's perception of the maternal is argued in the poems about mother-child relation with an interchanging attitude. While a desperate mood is dominant in some of the poems, a measured happiness appears in the others as "Night Feed" exemplifies. The change of mood poeticized with the last lines "And we begin/ The long fall from grace" (NF 93) and the tension created in "Night Feed" are expressed by Kristeva in an intimate way as follows,

Nights of wakefulness, scattered sleep, sweetness of the child, warm mercury in my arms, cajolery, affection, defenseless body, his or mine, sheltered, protected. A wave swells again, when he goes to sleep, under my skin-tummy, thighs, legs . . . The wakeful tongue quietly remembers another withdrawal, mine: a blossoming heaviness in the middle of the bed, of a hollow, of the sea . . . (246-7)

Is "another withdrawal" (Kristeva 247) a different connotation of "let us begin again" (Barthes 24)? In the case of Boland and Akin, Barthes' "the affirmation of the affirmation" (24) does not operate properly since the phases of the amorous experience does not follow each other in order. On the contrary, the personae as the mothers, affirm the amative's constructive influence towards their children, they even "blind" (Barthes 24) themselves before the fulfilling impact of the amative. Nevertheless, they are conscious of the transitory happiness created through their love for the daughter or the son. In other words, the personae affirm their inevitable negation in the end, which is expressed with the act of awakening from a dream. However, the dream of a symbiotic relation with the child or sharing the phantasy of the child

underlines a return to the external reality waiting for the mother, which is poeticised with “Partings” by Boland,

we are one more
and inseparable again.
Day begins.
...
and light finds us
with the other loves
dawn sunders
to define (NF 96)

Although the nightly harmony is ended, it brings a new sense of endurance for the mother in “Partings.” In other words, she acknowledges that her separation from the child in daytime also brings “other loves” (NF 96) with the implication that the love for the child is not hierarchized among other sorts of the amorous. Thus, the child does not monopolise the mother’s amative experience. In this respect, the personae of Boland and Akin in their poems about mother-child relation subvert the definition of motherhood as a conventional image of self-immolation. However, they also problematize such subversion with their self-sacrificing attitude and instinctual reactions. Like Kristeva’s changing attitude from unity with the child to separation from her in “Stabat Mater,” even the maternal love transforms in the flux of the amorous experience since love for the child cannot be totalised, “for such an other has come out of myself, which is yet not myself but a flow of unending germinations” (Kristeva 262). Then the mother’s words “we are one more/ and inseparable again” (NF 96) do not go beyond an attempt for fixing the amative for a moment through affirmation or by “blinding” (Barthes 24) herself. But even the act of blinding indicates a conscious act of the subject, which interrupts the semiotic. As the lines “dawn sunders/ to define” (NF 96) suggest, the prelinguistic elements stop functioning with the appearance of the daylight that symbolises the entrance into the symbolic through “partings” (NF 96).

“A Season, A Branch, Two Sparrows” from *The Wind Hour* by Gülten Akin, poeticizes the tension created in “Night Feed” through a metaphorical language based on visual images. Similar to the early collections of Boland and Jamie, the

bird imagery is abundantly employed in Akin's poetry too. In this respect, Adam O'Riordan's proper questions "What is that draws poets to birds? And why have so many turned to them at critical points in their own writing?" (O'Riordan, "Why are poets so fascinated with birds?" the guardian.com) do not only signify the vastness of examples from British and Turkish literatures but also shows the need for an answer about the bird imagery's functionality in the early poetries of Boland, Akin and Jamie. Since the bird images in their poems are functional, they need to be evaluated within the specific poem the bird imagery appears. In that vein, "A Season, A Branch, Two Sparrows" demonstrates the lost connection between the lover and the other with the residue of the amative experience through the sparrow image signifying the alertness and vulnerability,

The last drop in the blue sky
Was drinking itself
On a branch two lonesome⁴⁵ sparrows
Something was missing, we knew that

On a branch two lonesome sparrows
Two persons were understanding each other
-It is forbidden to touch the flowers-
The warden was lying, we knew that (WH 23)

Similar to the descriptive lines from nature in "Night Feed," "A Season, A Branch, Two Sparrows" demonstrates the change in mood starting from the elements of nature. The act of shrinking or turning back to the inner side is visualised with a raindrop draining itself. The speaker as the observant eye of the poem focuses on the loneliness of the sparrows. Besides projecting her own isolation to the alienated position of the birds, the speaker also establishes a similarity between two sparrows and two people on the metaphorical level. Bird image employed in the poem reminds Derek Walcott's "The Season of

⁴⁵ I preferred to translate the Turkish word "garip" into English as "lonesome." The word 'garip' means 'lonely, poor, stranger, away from home, and sorrowful'. The word also connotes Akin's poetic origins, Garip Movement in Turkish literature. For the word's significance in the movement please see one of the founders of Garip Movement, Orhan Veli Kanik's preface to *Garip* (1941). Similarly, the word "lonesome" with the meanings of 'depressed, alone, and isolated' can be a proper choice for the translation of "garip."

Phantasmal Peace” in which the freedom of the birds is consolidated through the men who cannot grasp the underlying meaning behind the birds in the sky,

And men could not see, looking up, what the wild geese drew,
what the ospreys trailed behind them in silvery ropes
. . . or a mother drawing
the trembling gauze over the trembling eyes
of a child fluttering to sleep; (Walcott 217)

The meticulous care of the mother bird towards its nestling reflects the mothers’ self-sacrificing efforts to raise their children in the poems of Boland and Akin. In other words, Walcott’s poetization of a bird’s protecting its baby which is about to sleep shares a similar emotion with Boland’s mother speaker who “tuck(s)” her baby “in” (NF 93). Furthermore, the repetition of the line “we knew that” (WH 23) underlines the consciousness similar to the mother’s attitude in “Night Feed” about that the world outside waits for the mother who has to endure.

The symbolic presence expressed with a warning “-It is forbidden to touch the flowers-” (WH 23) obstructs the semiotic flow denoted with the raindrop image and the flowers. Moreover, the line poeticises the dynamics of the symbolic by means of the warden’s voice since the symbolic “disparages any excessive force and wants the subject himself to reduce the great imaginary current, the orderless, endless stream which is passing through him” (Barthes 59). However, the warden’s interference as an instrument of the symbolic is subverted by the “two persons” (WH 23) in a paradoxical way since they gain a different perception of reality by disproving the symbolic discourse. However, like the line “This is your season, little daughter” (92) in “Night Feed,” the season in “A Season, A Branch, Two Sparrows” reminds what the mother has lost through the process of revolt as follows,

Mommy wanted to leave and go far away
She wanted to forget the beginning of the song
She could not leave she could not forget
She knew that (WH 23)

Besides the mother's effort to shatter the causality by forgetting how to sing the song that is taught by the dominant discourse, the last lines of the poem remind a similar end with "Night Feed" since both personae acknowledge that they cannot "leave and go far away" (WH 23). Accordingly, the mother's role in Irish and Turkish contexts does not change since she "is the heart of the family. She is the cohesive force who holds it together. She loves her children and is often their bridge to the father" (Bourke 335).

Do the mothers poeticized by Boland and Akin actually want the role assigned to them? The answer to this question is problematic since they are already aware of their situatedness and what binds them is the strong love for their children. Thus, although they accept the reconstructing influence of the amative experience, they also "knew that" (WH 23) the amative underlines their subject position when the child matters. Accordingly, Lojo-Rodriguez's discussion of "In Her Own Image" is also valid for "Night Feed" and "A Season, A Branch, Two Sparrows" since the speakers of both poems "move" "away from superficial idealizations of motherhood to look into its contradictory feelings, its ambivalent dynamics of coexistence and separation" (111). In this respect, Kristeva's words, "the lover gone, forgetfulness comes" and "a hunger remains, in the place of heart . . . A thirst" (249) express the melancholic endings of "Night Feed" and "A Season, A Branch, Two Sparrows" by focusing on the obstructed jouissance.

In another poem, "Before Spring" from *Night Feed* maintains the season imagery with a similar melancholic end. The poem opens with the description of sprouting plants in detail and how to protect them from the unfavourable weather conditions in the first six stanzas. However, the long depictions of the "seedlings" can be read as the identification of the seed image with the growing child. As Horowitz suggests, "vegetative transformation, considered asexual and rising to the Divine, symbolically suggests a superior path for humanity" as exemplified with Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (79). But in the case of "Before Spring," the transformation process is questionable since "little seed-head" (NF 94) is genderized and "risen to" (Horowitz 79) the symbolic order and whether such

a change is for the good of the child is doubtful in the poem. Thus “seedlings” (NF 93) turn into a metaphoric extension of the child image with a measured sense of “melancholy” as follows,

It won't be long.
No, it won't be long.
There is a melancholy
in the undersong:

Sweet child
asleep in your cot,
little seed-head,
there is time yet. (NF 94)

The word “undersong” (NF 94) as “metaphor of nonspeech” (Kristeva 249) describes the two levels of experience through the subordinate melody of the repetition “it won't be long/ No, it won't be long” (NF 94). In relation to the “wisdom of a melancholic woman,” Anderson points out “melancholia that follows after the loss of love can generate great psychic potential for intellectual performance” (204). Accordingly, the repetitive lines create a sense of ambiguity within “wisdom” (Anderson 204) since they can be appreciated as the expression of either an apocalyptic end or an affirmative act of waiting for the future. In this respect, “Before Spring” shares the poetic spheres of “Night Feed” by Boland and “A Season, A Branch, Two Sparrows” by Akın in its subversion of the Barthesian affirmation of the affirmation. Moreover, the poem stands as a continuation of “Night Feed” with its poetization of a child in her bed and a mother feeling herself as an outsider. As Smith argues, “melancholia involves a paralysis of symbolic activity. The melancholic's energy is displaced from the social code” (40). Thus the mother persona stays as “other, fallen” by striving against “symbolic order” (Kristeva 248) but she also acknowledges the process of losing connection with the child and “the complexity of being divided, of heterogeneity (248). Furthermore, the sleeping child in “Before Spring” arouses the similar feelings with Kristeva's affectionate depictions in “Stabat Mater” as

. . . without fold or shadow, neither being nor unborn, neither present nor absent, but real, real inaccessible innocence, engaging weight and seraphic lightness. A child? -An angel, a glow on an Italian painting, impassive peaceful dream- . . . sickness has caused you to join our species (247-8)

“Dying-Living”⁴⁶ from *The Wind-Hour* by Akin develops its argument through the vegetative imagery similar to “Before Spring.” The poem tells a post-mortem scene from the perspective of the dead woman. The persona confesses that she has not felt her liveliness up to the time when a child with big eyes smiles and three leaves fall upon her dead body,

A woman in black so young and fresh
A child opened his big eyes and laughed
On me three green leaves of the bitterest hue
That’s how in that final moment I sensed the pleasure of living
From top to toe
Suppose if you can that I’m not dead. (WHY 5)

The persona of “Dying-Living” grasps what “there is time yet” (NF 94) in “Before Spring” means at the end of her life or her metaphorical resurrection of “the immeasurable, unconfined maternal body” (Kristeva 253). In other words, through vitality of “so young and fresh/ a child” and “green leaves” (WHY 5), the persona regains her joy of life, death loses its influence upon her and binaries stop functioning for that special moment when she “sensed the pleasure of life” (WHY 5). Similar to the seed image in “Before Spring,” the woman in “Dying-Living” is buried and left to decay but she regards burial as planting in order to sprout again thanks to the child and green leaves. Again, the child image reminds the ‘seasons’ the mother personae have lost in “Before Spring” and “Dying-Living.”

Child as “neither being nor unborn, neither present nor absent, but real, real inaccessible innocence, engaging weight and seraphic lightness” (Kristeva 247) is poeticised by Akin in her “Selim’s Foot” from *I Cut My Black Hair*. Akin states in *Besieging Poem in Plain* that she regards her own children as miracles having changed her totally (BPP 144). Reminding the speakers of Boland’s poems in

⁴⁶ Translated by Saliha Paker and Mel Kenne in *What Have You Carried Over?*

Night Feed, “as knowing a profound love for this ‘other’ within” (McAfee 82), the persona expresses her admiration for a living body and due to the excessive feelings she feels, a gate is opened to the semiotic through the image before her:

The child’s foot is naked
The child’s foot is mischievously lovely
The bottom of water is lovely and shiny
The child’s foot is the loveliest under water

The child’s foot is naked
The child’s foot will be hurt
The soil dry and covered with thorny plants
This is the foot
But what a foot (ICM 88)

“Selim’s Foot” follows a similar structure with “Night Feed” and “Before Spring” by starting with an affirmative perception of the child image and ending with the feeling of disillusionment. The persona observes the child’s foot in a holistic setting of nature. Although she focuses on a part rather than a whole, she feels a sense of wholeness with “Selim’s Foot” as “unbounded liveliness, rhythm and mask” (Kristeva 254). The flowing water image suggests the dominance of the semiotic experience in the fluidity visualised in the lines. The melody prevalent in the opening stanza also delineates the functioning of prelinguistic elements. However, “The child’s foot is naked” (ICM 88) signifying “real, real inaccessible innocence” (Kristeva 247) in the first stanza leaves its place to vulnerability of the child symbolising her inevitable entrance to the symbolic order consolidated through “The soil dry and covered with thorny plants” (ICM 88). Then, the mother’s witnessing position drags her into a threshold that negates the amative experience realised by means of the child with the prevalence of “the abandon” (97) ‘in the end’ as in the case of “Endings” by Boland,

If I lean
I can see
What it is the branches end in:

The leaf.
The reach.

The blossom.
The abandon. (NF 97)

Furthermore, in “Endings” from *Night Feed*, the title stresses the final residue from the amative and the maternal with the pun of “end in” (97). The “cot” image is sustained similar to “Before Spring” with the lines “A child/ shifts in a cot” (97). The repetitive childbed image calls to mind Jamie’s *Jizzen* that means cradle in Scots too. Similar to Jamie, the bed image not only visualises the protected space in which child sleeps but also signifies the separation between the mother and the child in “Endings” and “Before Spring” by creating the conflict of being insider and outsider. Furthermore, the last stanza expresses the child’s development through vegetation imagery and underlines that the mother paradoxically remains as an outsider by denying Kristeva’s “suffering lined with jubilation” (260) as a mother, and she is neither a “guarantee of the social order” nor “a threat to its stability” (Smith 30).

“In the Garden” from *Night Feed* and “Apple-Sparrow-Child” from *The Wind Hour* question the mother’s role in the signification process and her contribution to the maintenance of “social order” (Smith 30). The speaking mothers do not introduce the child to the symbolic order in the poems. As Barthes points out, the amorous is “non-syntagmatic, non-narrative” (7). “In the Garden” by Boland, the persona deliberately takes her child away from the syntagmas to the world of nature by being “a strange fold that changes culture into nature, the speaking into biology” (Kristeva 259). The instructive role of the mother in reproducing/reinforcing conventions in the signification process is also subverted in the lines below,

I want to show you
What
I don’t exactly know.
We’ll find out. (NF 106)

Since the mother learns from the child what she has lost and then regained a residue of it with her love for the child, she resists any codification by trying to keep the child’s perspective without any change. In other words, instead of

attributing meanings to the objects from the real world such as entities in a garden, the mother recognises that “you’re happy/ as it is” (NF 107). For that reason, the child both grants wisdom and nurtures her in the reciprocity of the amative. However, she knows that it is impossible to hinder such a transformation visualized with the child’s turning head towards distracting outer things and the mother’s imminent loss of her organizing principle is expressed in a begging tone,

Turn to me
your little face.
It shows a trace still,
An inkling of it. (NF 107)

The woman in “Apple-Sparrow-Child” by Akin maintains her resisting tone throughout the poem. She reacts to the act of ‘knowing’ by counterbalancing it with the images of apple, sparrow and child. Sürsal interprets the poem’s structure as follows, “the unnecessary repetition of the lines, at times, is cumbersome taking away from the strength of a poem otherwise successful, such as in “Elma-Serçe-Çocuk” [Apples-Sparrow-Child]” (83). Contrary to Sürsal’s opinion, the repetitive line “you shall not know how and from where” (WH 25) at the beginning of each stanza is functional in order to emphasise the speaker’s intentional and rhetorical ignorance,

You shall not know how and from where
A branch will swing nearby
Completely fresh and wet
A child sucking its thumb
Will look at with eyes wide open (WH 25)

In “Voiced Lament⁴⁷” from a later collection of Akin, *Laments and Songs* (1976) reformulates the recurring themes such as the woman/the mother’s loneliness or her deeply felt subjectivity tested every day in the routines attributed to her as mother or wife as in the case of “A Season, A Branch, Two Sparrows” in Akin’s poetry. But, the poem also establishes a similar argument with “Night

⁴⁷ Translated by Nermin Menemencioglu in the anthology, *The Flag of Childhood: Poems from the Middle East*

Feed,” “Endings” and “Before Spring” through milk image and daybreak as if it waits in a hostile manner. The questions at the end of stanzas function as rhetorical ones because the persona already knows that she asks questions to an Other. Kristeva argues in *In the Beginning was Love* that “the Other is Me: I am an Other” “in order to survive” (55). Thus, her voice turns into a ‘lament’ of the disconnected symbiotic relation with the child. As the lines “Who’s sprinkled salt in our children’s milk/ Who’s muddied our waters” (LS 23) visualize, the amative’s nurturing influence is negated⁴⁸. In other words, the “feed is ended” (NF 92) with the disruption of “salt” (LS 23) by suggesting the impending suffering through a gustatory image. Unlike the clear water in which “Selim’s Foot” plays, water becomes tainted with earth in “Voiced Lament” as the signification begins in the daytime,

The light of day comes to our room unbidden
Wakes us and takes us away, forces
A pick-axe, a pen into our hands
The wagonloads go past, go past
Pushed into harness, we climb the slope (LS 23)

The lines above signify an obligation similar to Boland’s “Night Feed.” Unlike the ‘domestic’ sphere in which the child sleeps peacefully, the mother has to get out of that safe realm, which confirms her subjectivity. Similar to “Night Feed,” “the light of day” (LS 23) in “Voiced Lament” again negates its affirmative perception since its lightness does not foreshadow the sense of hope with a new beginning but underlines a harassing repetition of Sisyphean “we climb the slope” (LS 23) with a departure from the homogeneity of mother and child towards “heterogeneity” (Kristeva 248).

“Murat” from *I Cut My Black Hair* poeticizes Akin’s experience of motherhood with the final “abandon” (NF 97) by choosing a title carrying her own son’s name. Like Boland and Jamie, her poetry from earlier collections to the later

⁴⁸ In “Mr and Mrs Scotland are Dead” by Jamie from *The Queen of Sheba*, the lines “. . . Dictionary for Mothers/ M:-Milk, the woman who worries...;” (WL 9) focus on the negating side of nurturing similar to salted milk image in “Voiced Lament” by Akin.

one includes many traces from her own personal experiences⁴⁹ and journeys. For instance, her difficulties in the pathless villages of Anatolia and her visits to the eastern parts become a vivid source for some collections such as *The Sagas of Maraş and Ökkeş*.

“Murat” also takes its origins from the poet’s domestic sphere not only as a loving mother but also as a loving wife. In this respect, unlike Boland’s poems about mother-daughter relation, instead of prioritising the mother’s sorrows of separation and her efforts to raise the child, “Murat” expresses a shared fate of suffering among the parents by means of the pronoun “we” (ICM 87). Moreover, they sacrifice not only their love for each other but also their way of life. Similar to the lines “She wanted to forget the beginning of the song/ She could not leave she could not forget” (WH 25) in “A Season, A Branch, Two Sparrows,” the mother as the speaker in “Murat” confesses their inability to leave the responsibilities brought by the child. The poem also states a divided experience of the amative, which contradicts with the homogeneity of love. In other words, the poem signifies a love that multiplies through splits. But, such disintegration of love impairs the sense of wholeness felt by having a child. The poem indicates the degree of self-sacrifice that reshapes the parents’ life by decentring their own expectations and “passions, fires for only this,” (ICM 87)

But for this, we have removed from our life
The passions, the fires for this
The random living
The pink clove air
For this

We have divided our love into parts
We couldn’t make ends meet
No matter whatever comes out from our inside,
We could not run and go away (ICM 87)

⁴⁹ In an interview titled as “We will participate in life by writing,” Akın states that “my every single poem comes out of the experience whether it be individualist or socialist. Each line corresponds to my life, our life” (BPP 141).

Contrary to Boland's use of 'we' in order to articulate a voice for the persisting sorrows of women as exemplified with Sappho speaking in "The Journey," "we" in "Murat" both localizes the subjectivity into the boundaries of the domestic and degenderizes the situatedness caused with emergence of the child as a centre. Thus, the melancholy dominant in "Murat" suggests an unconventional love story based not on two lovers but on a beloved one, the child. However, the above lines do not cherish the child. As the repetition of "for this" (ICM 87) indicates, "the child, whether *he* or *she*, irremediably an other" (Kristeva 255) and the speaker feels such sense of dividedness through the amorous experience. Then unlike definitions of the amative by Kristeva and Barthes, the segregated love does not enable a way to escape from the symbolic. On the contrary, love confirms the symbolic's pressure on the subject as the persona stresses her lost connection with the semiotic flow of "passions" and "fires" (ICM 87).

In *Jizzen*, Kathleen Jamie recounts her intimate experiences with a balanced political stance. Although the poems in *Jizzen* are about the persona's connection with man and child, they also reflect how the social operates in an underhand manner. Thus, the historical sedimentation in the Scottish context is also apparent in the choice of Scottish words that function as the return of the repressed as exemplified in "Bairnsang" of "Ultrasound" sequence in *Jizzen*. As Blewitt suggests, "Jamie draws upon an aural/oral tradition of Scots poetry" and "her poems mix cotemporary English with Scots" (49). For instance, the archaic *Jizzen* meaning 'childbed' in Old Scottish language combines the historical with the idiosyncratic response of a mother as the speaker of most poems in the collection. Moreover, in Dosa's interview with Kathleen Jamie in 2001, Jamie explains the political and personal meaning of 'jizzen' as follows,

It is an old Scots word for childbirth, for the act of being in labour with a child. I chose the word because at the time of writing I was having my own two children. So the very physical, organic business of giving birth was in the front of my mind. Also, it was the time of the Devolution Referendum when it seemed to be that Scotland was having a rebirth of its own. So the title functions both ways: personally and politically. (143)

Like the use of “cot” image in Boland’s poems, “Jizzen” creates the image of a cosy place and saved space for the subject. The childbed also reminds the personae that the insider-outsider segregation both underlines the persona’s subjectivity and creates a sense of desire to stay in the insider’s realm. The childbed or “jizzen” localises the yearning for a fulfilling warmth of the amative. Similar to Boland and Akin, Jamie employs a style that binds the mythical to the ordinary through the images visualising their routines and “jizzen” image functions in the same vein. Thus, Jamie’s poetry is a direct reflection of daily life. As Michael Longley points out,

Her poetry is full of body-words, in English and Scots; her poetry is full of sky and hills, rock pools, glimmerings, plum trees, holly, birds and birds’ nests, lochs and rushy shores. But there is reluctant room too for supermarkets and multi-story car parks. In *her* Nativity there's a pile of nappies in the corner of the stable. (73)

However, the objects like jizzen do not only underline the corporeality, they go beyond the corporeal realm in order to express the desire for the mellifluous unity with the other, the child in this case. However, whether the persona actually establishes such a harmony or not is questionable because the feeling of separation prevails despite the momentary relief achieved through the child. Nevertheless, Jamie’s poems about childbirth, mother-child relation and the perception of maternity stand as the most constructive perspective when compared to the evaluations of Boland and Akin.

Jamie’s sequence poem, “Ultrasound” from *Jizzen* narrates the speaker’s own experience about childbearing in a similar process Kristeva expresses in *Stabat Mater*. As the opening part of the sequence, “i. Ultrasound” suggests, the mother’s first impression in the scene of an ultrasound imagining is poeticised through an analogy with the story of Pandora in Greek mythology. As Blewitt argues, “her allusion to the Greek myth of Pandora’s box thus identifies ultrasound with a potentially dangerous, specifically female compulsion to open things and look within” (200). Although the arguments of the poems are not comparable, “Ultrasound” reminds the style of a poem, “Daphne with her

thighs in bark” from *Night Feed* with its reformulation of a well-known myth. Moreover, “Daphne” (NF 115) does not only subvert the Daphne myth but also the image goes beyond a poem with the same title by Ezra Pound as below,

“Daphne with her thighs in bark
“Stretches toward me her leafy hands,”—
Subjectively. In the stuffed-satin drawing-room
I await The Lady Valentine's commands,

Knowing my coat has never been
Of precisely the fashion
To stimulate, in her,
A durable passion; (69)

Pinkney states that “Pound values the Daphne myth as just such a phantasy of female immobility. The myth even presents such immobilising as the woman’s own desire. . . Daphne myth is a phantasy of male mastery” (70-71). Thus, against the “subjective” (Pound 69) moves and “immobility” (Pinkney 70) of Daphne in Pound’s poem, the speaker of ““Daphne with her thighs in bark”” by Boland starts with a warning tone in the lines as,

I have written this
so that,
in the next myth,
my sister will be wiser.
...
I can be cooking,
making coffee,
scrubbing wood . . . (NF 115)

the prevalent ironical tone both enables a vivid rereading of the classical myth and combines the myth into the reality of the subject exemplified with the daily routines like cooking or cleaning. Thus, “I” of the poem as Daphne herself or the speaker trivialises the original myth by advising for the contemporary woman to struggle within the borders of the symbolic instead of being transformed into a laurel tree. In other words, the woman subject accepts her situatedness and endeavours by staying within the system in “Daphne” by Boland.

“i. Ultrasound” employs a similar rearrangement of a mythical material with “Daphne,” notwithstanding the themes seem different. Pandora or the first woman made out of the earth is presented with a technological equipment, ultrasound machine, which creates one perspective of the tension in the poem since “Like the Xray, the ultrasound scan is uncannily familiar and potentially unsettling for the pregnant subject” (Blewitt 168). The analogy between Pandora’s box or jar (pithos) and the pregnant’s belly in the poem locates the mother into Pandora’s position and the child into Hope’s.

Pandora’s opening the box is accounted in two ways by the classical writers such as Homer, Aeschylus, Aesop or Hesiod. They either accuse Pandora for unleashing all malignancies such as diseases and wars or regard her as a cause for scattering all gifts granted by Gods into heaven. Whether the box includes all evil or good things, in each account Hope (Elpis) remains inside the box as an only goodness to alleviate the sorrows of humankind and the speaker of “Ultrasound” focuses on this bounty as a child,

If Pandora
could have scanned
her dark box,

and kept it locked-
this ghoul’s skull, punched eyes
is tiny Hope’s, (JI 11)

The first specular experience of the mother through ultrasound imagining paradoxically leads the speaker to mythologize her baby in such words as “shilpit ghost,” “an inner sprite,” “a seer’s mothy flicker” (JI 11). Moreover, “The ghost - neither fully present nor absent, both homeless and at home, from the past and appearing repeatedly in the now - challenges the notion that the foetal image is a stable representation of the child to be born” (Blewitt 50). Accordingly, the speaker’s using Old Scots words demonstrates how the persona saves herself from the boundaries of a linguistic imperialism through the uncanny momentary photos of her unborn child and prefers Scots for the vocalisation of a semiotic experience as the marginal language of repressed

material to deviate from a dominant discourse (“language-in-use,” Gee 7). The black colour image underlined in Pandora’s “dark box” (JI 11) also leads us to a different interpretation when Jamie’s reception of darkness in *Findings* is taken into consideration as follows,

I imagined travelling into the dark. Northward-so it got darker as I went. I’d a notion to sail by night, to enter into the dark for the love of its textures and wild intimacy. I had been asking around among literary people, readers of books, for instances of dark as a natural phenomenon, rather than as a cover for all that’s wicked, but could find few. It seems to me that our cherished metaphor of darkness is wearing out. The darkness through which might shine the Beacon of Hope. (4)

“A seer’s mothy flicker” (JI 11) signifies the semiotic interruption. The lines such as “hauled silver-quick/ in a net of sound” (JI 11) underline the experience’s momentariness like a “luminous flow . . . silk, mercury, ductile copper” (Kristeva 240) by means of auditory and kinesthetic images besides the tactile ones⁵⁰. Child image as being both visual and perceptual rupture relieves the persona by granting her a sense of “Hope” for “tomorrow” (JI 11). Then, Barthesian affirmation as “dazzlement, enthusiasm, exaltation, mad projection of a fulfilled future” (24) is completed for speaker of “i. Ultrasound” through the mother’s unreturned love as the line “Oh whistle and I’ll come to ye,/ my lad” suggests (JI 11).

The speaker of “i. Ultrasound” idealizes having a child by overlooking her other ‘actual’ difficulties. In this respect, the poem is too optimistic when compared to Boland’s and Akin’s poems dealing with maternity and child. In other words, the persona isolates her amorous experience triggered by an ultrasound imagining from praxis. Thus, the whole poem changes into an encomium of a compassionate mother to an unborn child, which is negated through the disillusionment in the last lines reminding the ending style of Boland and Akin.

⁵⁰ Blewitt takes the ultrasound imagining technology as another version of the gaze and metaphorises the act of looking as an inner discovery of the subject. She maintains that “Poetry and ultrasound scanning therefore can be identified as different modes of tactility – different ways of ‘touching’ and looking within the pregnant subject’s body. Indeed, ultrasound poetry’s pregnant subjects offer several different ways of looking both within and from the pregnant body” (173).

The second poem of “Ultrasound” sequence, “ii. Solstice” brings Jamie’s poeticising the mother-child relation closer to the perspectives in Boland’s and Akin’s poems with the implications of a gradually developing separation from the unity felt with the amative. In other words, “ii. Solstice” does not present a mother figure who “blinds” (Barthes 24) herself with the encompassing love for her child. On the contrary, she regains her sense of reality by focusing on the outer hardships of her domestic sphere. Nevertheless, the affirmative feeling of her unborn child is kept through a balanced hopefulness, which creates a vacillation between constructive and negative feelings. Accordingly, as the title suggests, an astronomical term, “solstice” demonstrates the powerful obscurity brought with the love for the other, child. “Solstice” creates both duality and oneness at the same time. The term also maintains the yearning for knowing the unknown that is consolidated by means of “an unborn thou” (JI 12). Similar to Boland’s and Akin’s using the word ‘season,’ solstice signifies the coming of a new season that offers a different epistemology for the subject by triggering her to question her current situation. Even such questioning tone deepens the gap between the amorous subject and the other since she cannot insert ‘her-self’ into the other,

To whom do I talk, an unborn thou,
Sleeping in a bone creel.

Look what awaits you:
stars, milk-bottles, frost
on a broken outhouse roof. (JI 12)

The act of sleeping also supports the duality created in the poem; the sleeping unborn baby is detached from the mother awake and the mother’s speech occurs in a weird interlocution with a vague addressee. “bone creel” (JI 12) is a kenning for the speaker’s body. Moreover, the metaphor does not only refer to the woman’s body as container both from corporeal and psychological perspectives but also it alludes to the collection’s title, ‘jizzen’ image. In other words, the woman’s body maintains the symbiosis and keeps the child away from the influence of the inevitable symbolic just for a while. In this respect, starting from “to whom do I talk” (JI 12) to the ending lines, the mother’s

instinctual protectiveness and apprehensions about an unpromising future create a tension. Then the future mother's hopeful tone in "i. Ultrasound" leaves its place to hopelessness consolidated through the depressing poverty.⁵¹ Moreover, the persona's yearning for "a touch more light" (JI 12) in the last lines reflects her desire to regard the child as a triggering element for a radical change in her life. The colour images support the contrast between the darkness of a ragged house and the light brought with the child's coming to visualise the "paradox: deprivation and benefit of childbirth" (Kristeva 243). The question of "can you tell the days are opening" (JI 12) in the last stanza maintains "a seer's mothy flicker" (JI 11) image in "i. Ultrasound" by signifying the occultism in the poems. Thus, "Solstice" presents the tension of the unknown for the subject and the blinding magic of having a child leaves its place to a gradual despair consolidated through unfavourable conditions.

The third poem of "Ultrasound," "iii. Thaw" functions as a turning point in the sequence by expressing a postnatal experience through the persona's memory. The poem consists of two experiences; the memory of coming home with the child wrapped in a blanket and the remembered moment just before the parturition. Whilst the first two poems "Ultrasound" and "Solstice" are about an "unborn thou" (JI 12), "Thaw" recounts the impression of a born 'you.' Accordingly, the flow of the quivering ultrasonic images in the first poems is maintained with the fluidity in "the steel-grey thaw" (JI 12) image. The poem maintains the imagery related to astrology with "stars of Orion" (JI 13) similar to the first two poems but it also changes the sequence's focus from the abstract and the impalpable to the concrete and the tangible, from heaven to ground.

To put it differently, the depiction of natural setting supports the poetization of childbirth experience together with the influence of an observed outer world.

⁵¹ In the early poems of Boland, Akın and Jamie, the harassment caused by certain economic problems is visualised by means of the suburbs. The poets as mothers feel an obligation to perform their duties to raise their children with insufficient allowances. Their poverty doubles their sense of loneliness. Thus, "Poor and Offended Days" from *In the Shallows* is a "voiced lament" (LS 24) for being a 'conscious' mother by both accepting and denying the roles given to the women similar to Jamie's begging tone in "a touch more" of "days" (JI 12).

In this respect, Severin argues that “But Jamie’s initial nature writing, in volumes such as *Jizzen* (1999) and *The Tree House* (2004), is often disappointing in its abstraction of nature and its use of poetic structures that objectify nature for human needs and purposes” without establishing an original “natural-human connection” (99). However, the problem lies in the question whether Jamie really has such an aim to reflect nature as it is seen or she just gives voice to her impressions in their ‘ordinary’ setting in her early poetry. Thus, it can be said that her political stance prevails over her perception of nature in her early poems. Contrary to Severin, “abstraction of nature” in Jamie’s early poetry enables the expression of subjectivity deeply felt by the personae. In the case of “iii. Thaw,” for instance, the speaker’s eye focuses on the small details of her garden in a hard winter day, which sustains the theme of poverty in “ii. Solstice” but with a sense of complacency,

it was I, hardly breathing,
who came through the passage to our yard
welcoming our simplest things:
a chopping block, the frost-
split lintels: though it meant a journey
through darkening snow,
arms laden with you in a blanket,
I had to walk to the top of the garden, (JI 13)

“Welcoming our simplest things” (JI 13) connotes the speaker’s cherishing the ordinariness in the way Boland presents in *Night Feed*. “Sleeping in a bone creel” (JI 12) in “Solstice” leaves its place to “you in a blanket” (JI 13) by keeping the protective sphere of the child. Again, the juxtaposition of darkness and light signifies the affirmation and negation of the amative in its own paradoxical dialectics. As the use of an obligatory modal verb in the line, “I had to walk to the top of the garden” indicates, the speaker as the new mother feels that she ‘has to’ take the first step when the child matters. Moreover, the mother’s corporeal “journey” (JI 13) also turns into a metaphorical excursion. Then the mother rediscovers a new phase of her subjectivity “for this” (ICM 87) in a conscious submission as poeticised in “Murat” and “A Season, A Branch, Two Sparrows” by Akin.

...
and as the rising stars of Orion
denied what I knew: that as we were
hurled on a trolley through swing doors to theatre
they'd been there, aligned on the ceiling,
 ablaze with concern
for that difficult giving,
before we were two, from my one (JI 13)

The above lines not only describe a specific scene of 'giving' birth to a child, but they also indicate the mother's 'difficulty' to leave from the unity she establishes with the baby during pregnancy period. Then for the first time, birth brings the feeling of split by consolidating the opposition between the self and the other. As Kristeva expresses,

Then there is this other abyss that opens up between the body and what had been inside: there is the abyss between the mother and the child. What connection is there between myself, or even more unassumingly between my body and this internal graft and fold, which once the umbilical cord has been severed, is inaccessible other? ("Stabat Mater," 254)

As the last line of "iii. Thaw," "before we were two, from my one" (JI 13) describes, the mother's "internal graft" (Kristeva 254) shatters the feeling of oneness with the act of birth. The mother's questioning tone starting with "Solstice" part is continued in "Thaw." In other words, the affirmative tone in "i. Ultrasound" leaves its place to negation of the amative. Similar to Kristeva's argument of pregnancy as an outburst (in "Stabat Mater," 254-5), "Thaw" in the sequence indicates the threshold of a radical change. This change occurs on psychological and corporeal levels. However, as the use of "we" pronoun signifies, the mother is not alone in her new journey with the child and her difficulty is shared by the husband, which recalls Akin's "Murat."

Although "Ultrasound" as poem sequence does not implicate any prioritization of motherhood by genderizing the amorous feeling for the child, the line "I had to walk to the top of the garden" (JI 13) suggests that it is the mother who has to bear the heaviness of both raising the child and the pressure of separation from the other (child). The mother's taking the baby on her lap and carrying it

through an unfavourable pathway visualise the endurance brought with the amative influence of having child. Thus, in “Thaw,” the mother’s pain is not only implicated on corporeal level by means of childbearing or child caring, but her “difficult giving” (JI 13) is also expressed with hard conditions of domestic life. Although the third poem of the sequence, “Thaw” voices the lost symbiotic relation after childbearing, it also poeticizes the poetic persona’s fluctuating mood triggered by her love for the child by suggesting an idiosyncratic stoicism that underlines a voluntarily accepted subjectivity.

Although “February” part follows “Thaw” in the “Ultrasound” sequence, “St Bride’s,” a poem appearing towards the end of *Jizzen*, poeticizes the particular experience of giving birth. Accordingly, in her “Clearing Space: Kathleen Jamie and Ecology,” Gairn suggests by referring to the first lines of “St Brides” that “in their contemplation of ‘women’s work,’ particularly pregnancy and motherhood, the poems in *Jizzen* do not only celebrate cultural and political change, but seek to bind together women’s experience, creativity and the natural world” (239). Since “St Bride’s” completes the mother’s feeling implicated in “Thaw” by means of certain analogies between the human and non-human elements, it can be read as a part of “Ultrasound,” especially as a smooth pass of the tension from “Thaw” to “February.”

“St Bride’s” also carries the flux in the act of melting in “Thaw” into a shapeless image of “placenta” as “a fist of purple kelp” (JI 45), which visualises the inexplicable nature of female subjectivity when the maternity is concerned. Thus, the poem starts with “So this is woman’s work: folding/ and unfolding” (JI 45) by calling to mind Barthes’ “inwardly voluble” (4) subject for whom the signifiers move freely. For that reason, since the social forces the subject to put her unstable emotions into words by “anchor[ing]” her “discourse” (Barthes 4), the persona of “St Bride’s” tries to stabilize her feeling with certain metaphors. However, her leaping into one element of nature to another one denotes her failure in expressing the fulfilment she experiences through birth. Then, the act of birth becomes a problematic state for the woman subject since she feels separation and unity in the same experience, which leads to “folding and

unfolding” (JI 45). By uttering “Consider” (JI 45), the speaker of the poem urges us to share her special experience as follows,

the hare in jizzen: her leveret’s ears
flat as the mizzen of a ship
entering a bottle. A thread’s trick;

adders uncoil into spring. Feathers
of sunlight, glanced from a butterknife
quiver on the ceiling, (JI 45)

The above lines poeticizing the mother’s giving birth leap into one signifier to another in order to describe the complicated feeling of pain and fulfilment. As Gairn points out, “The imagery, drawn from the natural world, goes through a series of metamorphoses, identifying with ‘the hare in jizzen,’ then ‘adders uncoil into spring’ and finally, the placenta ‘like a fist of purple kelp’” (347). In this regard, the semiotic flow combines the human and non-human elements as the persona establishes analogies between a hare’s whelp and her future baby. Accordingly, the act of “uncoil[ing] into spring” (JI 45) reflects the persona’s exerting strength while bearing her child as the line in the last stanza “a sharp twist for the shoulders” suggests (JI 45). The poem maintains ‘jizzen’ image as a saved realm of the maternal as it appears in “Ultrasound” sequence. Thus, what the human and the non-human share is the union with the other in the isolated space granted by “jizzen” (JI 45). However, the persona’s finding similarities between her experience and that of a hare is unchained from the starting point, nature into the mystified depiction of “her leveret’s ears” (JI 45) and a “thread’s trick” (JI 45) underlining the mother’s complicated mood. As “feathers of sunlight” reflected “from a butterknife” (JI 45) signify, the persona’s perspective merges the romanticized perception of nature with the domestic realm. Thus, the speaker both mystifies and demystifies her experience of childbearing through realistic and grotesque images.

Furthermore, “St Brides” fills the emotional gap between “Thaw” and “February” by means of its balanced pessimism. In this respect, the poem takes the last line of “Thaw,” “before we were two, from my one” (JI 13) to a

complicated feeling of a split just after bearing as the persona describes her baby as “a fist of purple kelp” (JI 45). As “purple kelp” image delineates, “St Bride’s” stands as an answer to Severin’s criticism of Jamie’s failure in building an authentic “natural-human connection” (99) in her early poetry.

The title “St Bride’s” is also used in “to the day of St Bride” (JI 14) in “February” part of “Ultrasound” sequence. The use of an image heralding the first days of the spring signifies a turn to the affirmative emotions of maternity poeticized in “February.” “The placenta” (JI 45) of “St Bride’s” both keeps the unknown quality of the amative experience and “that difficult giving” (JI 13) or separation in “Thaw.” Moreover, the placenta image transforms into a baby to whom the mother “willingly surrender[s]” (JI 14). However, unlike “Ultrasound” sequence addressing to the baby as the second person singular by monopolising the experience between a lyrical I and the definite addressee up to the last “Prayer” part, “St Bride’s” demonstrates the concern of participating the reader into her peculiar experience of childbearing through the images of nature.

The fourth poem of the “Ultrasound” sequence, “February” starts with the domestic problems originated from the newcomer, “a mid-winter child” (*Findings*, 4). Similar to the preceding parts of “Ultrasound,” “February” keeps its final striking argument to the ending line in its unrhymed tercet form. The poem reminds Akin’s “Murat” in both its repetitive structure and message. Moreover, the poem reflects the amative’s destabilizing power through child image by sustaining its balanced stanzaic form. The recurrent “To the” (JI 14) structure functions in a similar way to “for this” (ICM 87), the opening word in each stanza of “Murat” by procrastinating the impact of the remarkable ending, which also offers a definition of subjectivity peculiar to Kathleen Jamie when “I” in the poem is regarded as the lyrical ‘I.’ The pattern is maintained throughout the whole poem as follows,

To the heap of nappies
carried from the automatic
in a red plastic basket

to the hanging out, my mouth
crowded with pegs;
to the notched prop (JI 14)

In “February,” conventional perception of motherhood is signified by means of certain images such as “heap of nappies,” “my mouth/ crowded with pegs” and “the wash” (JI 14). Even the mother’s outspoken expression in the last line “I willingly surrender” does not overwhelm the reader with amazement as a statement of self-sacrifice. However, her utterance of “willingly” (JI 14) clarifies that her act of “surrender” does not occur due to the blinding conventions and the attributed roles for the woman subject. On the contrary, the last line “I willingly surrender” (JI 14) signifies a degree of consciousness that brings both the freedom of choice and the conventional norms of motherhood in a paradoxical way. In other words, the mother in “February” shatters the conventionality through vocalising her voluntary submission, but she also conforms to the rules of motherhood by “surrender(ing)” (JI 14). Then her stance turns into an ideological resistance in opposition to a concrete praxis materialized with the images of the daily routine.

The above lines exaggerating the childcare with “heap of nappies” and “crowded with pegs” (JI 14) do not sensationalise the duties of maternity, but transform the motherly obligations into a sincere expression of love for the child, which calls to mind the sardonic tone in Akın’s “Murat.” In the last two triplets of “February,” the pessimism in the opening lines leaves its place to a new optimistic voice,

to spring’s hint sailing
to westerly, snowdrops
sheltered by rowans-

to the day of St Bride, the first
sweet-wild weeks of your life
I willingly surrender. (JI 14)

As “the day of St Bride” (JI 14) suggests, the beginning day of spring also brings a new mood that can be called a Barthesian affirmation with the amorous gratification of the mother. Similar to the liquidity of “Thaw,” the depictions of

nature in "February" visualises the flux offering a different space for the mother. The poem's focus from inner space to the outer world of nature in the last lines offers a threshold for the persona, which is poeticized in the following poem, "Bairnsang" of the "Ultrasound" sequence. Thus, the natural depiction is employed for practical purposes again. As Gairn argues, for Kathleen Jamie, "the idea of the natural world" (157) stands as "a philosophical and political matter of vital importance, with poetry as a crucial 'line of defence'" (157). The persona of "February" does not submit to the child but she yields to nature. However, when the amorous is involved, both the influence of nature and poetry collapse since every item begins to dissolve or 'thaw' in the semiotic flow. In other words, the outer natural world in turn, leads the persona to a semiotic voyage triggered by her love for the new-born baby.

In "Bairnsang," the fifth poem of the sequence "Ultrasound," the mother's love for the new-born baby appears in the form of a lullaby in the Scots language. "Bairnsang" means 'child poem' in Scots. When "Bairnsang" is taken as a cradle-song, it contributes to the cradle leitmotif in *Jizzen*. Similar to the common concern in the sequence, the poem conveys the mother's yearning for the child in an epic tone as if the poetic persona gains the role of a bard praising the hero's deeds, or the child's future doings.

Before analysing "Bairnsang," the use of Scots language in the poem attracts attention. Why does Jamie write "Bairnsang" in Scots while she keeps a standard English in the other seven poems of the sequence? The answer to such a question can be explained with the persona's being on the verge of a rupture or semiotic flow opened by means of the amorous impact. In the duality of English and Scots, one language represents the oppressor and the other one the oppressed. Thus, the persona of "Bairnsang" prefers to express her overflowing love not through a historically limiting language but through a so-called 'wild' language. To put it differently, the persona turns back to the locality of Scots against the totalizing power of English. Her attempt also refreshes the ambition to recover the forgotten roots that are reminded by the fluidity of the amative. In this respect, the poem "Bairnsang" written in Scots

calls to mind Akin's use of Anatolian dialects⁵² in order to mediate the voice of the suppressed against the overwhelming language of the symbolic functioning in the form of the governmental authorities. Similar to Akin's use of 'türkü,' which means 'folksong' in Turkish, "Bairnsang," surpasses any logical boundaries by keeping an ironical and in some stanzas, an absurd tone to externalize the immense amative surplus for the child.

Scots language contributes to the musical quality of "Bairnsang" by consolidating the semiotic flow. The change from English to Scots after the preceding poem "February" also supports the persona's confessing last words as "I willingly surrender" in "February" (JI 14). To put it another way, the mother's leaving herself to the amative flow leads her to change the language that stands as a barrier to utter the unutterable. Scots in this respect, deciphers the mother's feelings towards the child by turning into a suitable means of articulation. However, it also encodes this particular emotion for the general reader who has no knowledge of Scots by triggering them to decode the hidden message of "Bairnsang." Thus, similar to the mother's voyage from a certain mood to another one, the reader also participates in the backward process of the semiotic directed by the amative reflux, which promises a sheer originality for them. In other words, Scots nullifies the hegemonic discourse in its locality. Moreover, the language choice is supported by the regional names demarking the borders of Scotland in the poem. Scotland as a common concern of Jamie and a determining force behind the poet's motives appears again even in a poem full of love between the mother and the child. Additionally, Scotland's visibility through certain towns from opposite directions signifies an escape from the repression similar to the recovering Scots and the freeing language of the amative.

"Bairnsang" maintains an unchanging structure from the first stanza to the last one. As the title suggests, the poem implements its nursery rhyme style with the reiteration of the same balladic structure. The poem's tone also calls to

⁵² In *Laments and Folksongs*

mind a private prayer repeated by the mother. The first three stanzas keep an octaval verse form up to the last line. The structure of “Bairnsang” for each line can be analysed as follows,

1. Each stanza starts with a salutation line. The first line in each stanza underlines which process the child experiences in his development. But the word “wee” (JI 15) stays the same by gaining a new adjective that supports wee’s meaning up to the last line.
2. The second lines of the stanzas liken the child to a certain corporeal entity such as tree, fish, bird or stars.
3. The third lines start with consistent “if” structure by attributing a special action to the child and are followed by a supposition in the fourth lines.
4. The fifth lines change the tone with “but” (JI 15) by stressing on the inability of the child for realizing that certain action in the third and fourth lines.
5. The penultimate line draws an assumption from the previous line by stressing the inevitable dependence on the mother. This line crystallizes the protective role of the mother and primordial form of the amorous between the mother and the child.
6. The ending lines keep a childish provocation through certain acts and regional names selected from various directions of Scotland.

To sum up, a repetitive poetic structure prevails “Bairnsang.” The reason behind the structural conspicuousness of “Bairnsang” is the effort to countervail the imaginary and symbolic registers clashing in the poem. The repetitions also form an allegorical language vacillating between the speech of a child and that of an adult. In other words, the mother in the poem employs a language used by both the child and the parent. Thus, the mother does not only equate her position with that of the child by creating an unshattered unity, but she also suggests her inability to break with the threat of the symbolic language expressed by means of an allegorical structure. As Machosky argues, “allegory is not merely an *other* language to the language of the logos. Allegory is itself

the basis of the logos; allegory makes possible the possibility of logocentric language” (19). However, in “Bairnsang,” utterance of the external reality through language is put into a questionable position with the use of allegorical regional names since the Derridean traces underline the appearance of the other absent non-linguistic entities (non-stabilizable) through the present (and definite) signifiers.

The opening stanza of “Bairsang,”

Wee toshie man,
 gean tree and rowan
gif ye could staun
Yer feet wad lichtsome tread
granite an saun,
but ye cannae yet staun
se maun courie tae ma airm
an greetna, girna, Gretna Green

[Little peaceful man,
 Gean tree and rowan
if you could stand
your feet would tread light-heartedly on
granite rather than sand,
but you cannot stand yet
so you must nestle to my arm
and weep,
be green with envy, Gretna Green] (JI 15)

starts with “wee toshie man” (JI 15) by gendering the child from the beginning. However, such emphasis on gender does not prioritize one sex over another. The word “man” (JI 15) signifies a backward process from manhood to childhood in the poem. In other words, the poem recounts the development of a child in a reverse timeline by subverting the linearity of the process. But contrary to the progress the child has to experience, the mother’s love remains the same from the beginning to the ending lines. Even the contradiction in the first line expressed with the words “wee” and “man” (JI 15) reflects how the mother is afraid of losing the symbiotic connection established with the child. Thus, the mother strives to keep her amative power that would be forgotten in

the socialization process by reminding the amative the child feels when he is a 'little' baby.

The mother in "Bairnsang" is the trace of the absent destabilizing amative force. As the poem is a narration of the child's development in a backward way, the first stanza starts with tree images, "gean tree and rowan" (JI 15) by signifying the presence of root and ground. This notion of stability is supported by the following images "staun," "feet," "tread," and "granite" (JI 15). To put it differently, the manhood of "toshie man" (JI 15) is consolidated through stable entities of the external world. Even "Gretna Green" located in the southwest border of Scotland contributes to the stability conveyed in the opening stanza in spite of the village's historical background connected with the runaway marriages in the 18th century. So, although Gretna Green is the embodiment of a break from law,⁵³ the place signifies the fixed condition of marriage in opposition to its historical connotation of a destabilizing realm in the poem.

Peedie wee lad
 saumon, siller haddie
gin ye could rin
ye'd rin richt easy-strang
ower causey an carse,
but ye cannae yet rin
sae maun jist courie in
and fashna, fashnai Macrahanish Sand

[Small little young man
 salmon and silver fish
if you could run
you would run right easy-strong
over cobble stone rather than bottomland,
but you cannot run yet
so you must just nestle in
and be angry, be angry, Machrihanish Sand] (JI 15)

⁵³ Some new regulations such as age limit for marriage and familial consent by means of Marriage act of 1754 and Act of 1856 in England forced couples to run away and marry in Scotland that has no strict marriage regulations when compared to England in 18th century and the border village, Gretna Green thus became a famous place for English couples.

The second line introduces “little young man” (JI 15) and the focus of the poem changes from the stabilized images of the earth to the fluidity of the water. In other words, the man of the first stanza transforms into a young man by means of the aquatic images. The resemblance of the child to “salmon and silver fish” (JI 15) is the expression of the mother’s yearning for becoming a fluid subject and she projects her desire upon her child by wishing him to experience the thing she fails. However, the mother’s instinctual protectiveness is reflected through her insistence on the concrete and rigid elements in the first and second lines as expressed with the mother’s preference of granite and cobblestone over sand and bottoms, which suggests a paradoxical barrier for the semiotic fluidity between the mother and the child. Like Gretna Green, Macrahanish Bay dysfunctions since the amative power of the mother undermines its conventional meaning too by taking its geographical stability to the fluctuation of a subjective comparison. Similar to the first stanza, the mother deduces that the child needs her motherly shelter in his “peedie wee lad” (JI 15) phase in the second stanza.

Bonny wee boy
 peeswheep an whaup
gin ye could sing, yer sang
wad be caller
as a lauchin mountain burn
but ye cannae yet sing
sae maun courie tae ma hert
an grieve nat at aa, Ainster an Crail

[Handsome little boy
 lapwing and curlew
if you could sing, your song
would be fresh
as an intoxicating mountain stream
but you cannot sing yet
so you must nestle to my heart
and do not grieve at all, Ainster and Crail] (JI 15)

The third part starts with bird imagery by following the arboreal and aquatic imageries of the first two parts. The mother of “Bairnsang” recounts her child’s “bonny wee boy” (JI 15) stage by likening him to two local birds in Scotland.

The part also signifies the increasing degree of amorous fluidity when compared to the root images in the opening lines. However, "Bairnsang" establishes a texture that interchanges regularly between its preceding and following stanzas. Thus, the alternating parts contribute to the unity of the poem's argument besides a consistent transformation taking place throughout the poem. In this respect, the line likening the child's prospective song to "an intoxicating mountain stream" (JI 15) both connects the stanza to the previous water imagery and transforms the preceding tactile experience to a more affective realm. Imaginary breach is visualised through a town in Fife, Ainster and its harbour. Thus, the geography of the border delineates the yearning for going beyond that border. However, the mother also acknowledges that her experience of unity with the child is not long lasting. For that reason, her child as a bird that will desert the mother's present nest in the first lines turns into a boat anchored by the mother's heart in the last line. As "at aa" in last the line "an grieve nat at aa, Ainster an Crail" (JI 15) denotes, the mother implicates that the child will turn back to the borders of the symbolic stability and her privilege in the imaginary realm is doomed to disappear with the intrusion of the symbolic. The mother's acknowledgment of loss and failure demonstrates both her momentary reconciliation and innate borders of her subjection.

The last stanza of "Bairnsang" is the final stage of the mother's retrospective analysis of her amorous experience with her child. In opposition to the root images such as "gean tree and rowan" (JI 15), the part starts with the metaphors of "sternie an lift" (JI 16). In other words, the gradual poetization of flux through fish and bird images culminates in the heavens, which partially fulfils the speaker's aim and suits Jamie's poetics. As Eleanor Bell argues, "to make the unknown somehow manageable, comprehensible, to partially domesticate the wild without usurping its innate magic" (132) are main traces of "Jamie territory" (132) and the speaker's turn from the corporeal to the heavenly exemplifies the desire to tame the wild in "Bairnsang." Thus, the mother's idealisation of her child and her persistent attempts to concretize the slippery amative experience reach the highest degree in the poem. Moreover,

the future deeds of the child recounted in the previous stanzas accumulate in the dance image. Then, as the lines “yer daunce/wad be that o life itsel” (JI 16) signify, the child stands as the epitome of perfection and harmony. Additionally, kinesthetic imagery in the last stanza contributes to the dynamic structure of the part. The dance image also calls to mind the free space granted by the Kristevan semiotic chora. As Prud’homme and Légaré suggests,

A sort of “dancing body” (from the Greek khoreia, meaning “dance”), the semiotic chora is in perpetual motion. It energizes the sign (as well as the subject) by placing expulsion at the core of its structure. Just as dance allows the dancer to explore an infinite chain of body movements, the semiotic chora is an infinite potential for creating signifying movements. (“The Subject in Process,” *Signo*)

Thus, all the above-mentioned efforts of the mother are “Atopic” (Barthes 35) since she yearns for the child as an other but through its “unforeseen originality” (34), her metaphors to “speak of the other, about the other” (35) lead her to other signifiers because her attribution is “false, painful, erroneous, awkward” (35) but the process is productive for the amorous mother subject. For that reason, in the child’s “sistemato,” (Barthes 46) she “glimpse[s]” “an *essence*” (46).

What makes the repetitive “wad be” (JI 15) structure tragic is that the mother is aware of her prospective disconnection from the child. Since she stays as an outsider in the child’s future experiences, she monopolizes her love for the child as poeticized in the reiterative “sae maun courie in my erms” line (JI 16).

My ain tottie bairn
sternie an lift
gin ye could daunce, yer daunce
wad be that o life itsel,
but ye cannae yet daunce
sae maun courie in my erms
and sleep, saftly sleep, Unst and Yell

[My own toddling child
stars and sky
if you could dance, your dance

would be that of life itself,
but you cannot dance yet
so you must nestle in my arms
and sleep, softly sleep, Unst and Yell] (JI 16)

The fifth section of "Ultrasound," "Bairnsang" describes the mother's amative experience completely from an imaginary perspective in which there is no sense of lack or separation. That kind of fulfilment creates Kristeva's "impossible" (1) and Barthes' "atopos" (34) at the same time since the amative experience of the mother both consoles her with its wholeness and also brings a peculiar tension of loss with its flux in her attempts of naming. Thus, the amative dynamic functions in paradoxical way. On the one hand, in such whirling of the amative because of that "the signs turn in 'free wheeling' (Barthes 161), the mother's comparisons (attributions) reflect the Kristevan "flight of metaphors" (1) and positions her love for the child as "an inner balancing pin" (Barthes 141). On the other hand, as the last stanza of "Bairnsang" suggests, the poem turns back to the "flicker[y]" and "silver-quick" (JI 11) imagery of the first section "Ultrasound," "in a net of sound" (JI 11).

The place images of the last part, "Unst and Yell" (JI 16) completes the topography of the previous part, "Ainster an Crail" (JI 15). In other words, the last two stanzas of "Bairnsang" remaps the mother's desire for going beyond the borders as consolidated with a coastal town and two islands of Scotland. Thus, they function as materialised forms of the innate borders of subjection for the mother. The mother's wish as expressed with "sleep, softly sleep" (JI 16) attracts attention to the double meaning of the sleeping act. While sleeping offers a gate for the imaginary realm, it also demonstrates that the child will remain within the borders of the symbolic when he wakes up, which is personified with the temporary ineffectuality of the symbolic interference.

The amative experience poeticized in the sequence poem "Ultrasound," appears as a healing and destructive dynamic for the woman subject. Her love for the child creates an "aggressive link" (Barthes 40) with the other. But such connection's therapeutic influence on the mother is questionable. In this

respect, "Sea Urchin," the sixth section of "Ultrasound" dilutes the tension of "Bairnsang" vacillating between a pessimistic and optimistic perception of the amorous conveyed through a newly born baby image. The last section of "Ultrasound," "Prayer" recreates the portray of a self-giving mother by concentrating on the act of 'giving' both in its literal and connotative sense. Additionally, the poem following "Ultrasound," "The Tay Moses," summarizes the mother's concerns about the undefinable amative experience by referring to the biblical narrative of Moses and a Scottish landscape miniaturised with the Moses basket through a multi-layered figurative language.

"Sea Urchin," the sixth poem of "Ultrasound" goes back to the standard English instead of Scots employed in the previous poem, "Bairnsang." The poem also signifies a reversion from the imaginary realm in "Bairnsang" to the clear sensemaking intrusion of the symbolic with its end-stopped last line. In other words, "Sea Urchin" functions as a wake-up from a romantic dream by stressing on the harsh actuality of separation in the end. Unlike totally enjambed "Bairnsang," "Sea Urchin" underlines the grammatical breaks with its emphasis on "cast up/ broken" (JI 17) at the last line. However, the poem appears as a full sentence with its highly enjambed lines

Between my breast
and cupped hand,
 your head

rests as tenderly
as once I may
 have freighted

water, or drawn
treasure, whole
 from a rockpool

with no premonition
of when next I find one
cast up
 broken. (JI 17)

by keeping the tension up to the last line. Enjambment in “Sea Urchin” also conveys both the amorous fluidity and the despair brought with it through the aquatic imagery employed similar to “Bairnsang.” In other words, “Sea Urchin” poeticizes the delayed sensemaking of the motherhood. Similar to “sae maun courie in my erms” (JI 16) in “Bairnsang,” the first four lines of “Sea Urchin” describes an experience of holding the baby in a peaceful atmosphere as “rests as tenderly” (JI 17) suggests. However, such feeling of unity with the child also brings the presentiment of losing as the persona depicts through the simile of the baby’s resting and the mother’s ‘findings⁵⁴’ in nature. Unlike Boland’s “It’s time we drowned our sorrows” (NF 92) in “Night Feed,” Jamie’s “Sea Urchin” reminds a time space in which “premonition” (JI 17) of separation is doubled through the “Voiced Lament” (LS 23) of the amorous mother. Furthermore, although the mother protects the baby in her arms by consolidating the symbiotic relation between ‘I’ and the other, the other becomes an unknown or totally ungraspable entity as the sea urchin image visualises with its spines. Then, the mother’s act of taking out “treasure, whole from a rockpool” (JI 17) suggests the disillusionment of finding “one cast up/broken” (JI 17). In other words, the breach of the semiotic flow by means of the amative dynamics is replaced with the intrusion of the excluding symbolic. Thus, the remembrance of an outer observation of nature leads the persona to the beginning of an inner query in which the poetic persona as a mother acknowledges the upcoming break from the unity with the child. Moreover, despite the mother’s repeating lines such as “gretna, girna, Gretna Green” or “fashna, fashna Macrahanish Sand” (JI 15) in “Bairnsang” delay the inevitable end in “Sea Urchin,” Jamie exemplifies the mother’s becoming an outsider when her children grow up through the recount of her own experiences in *Sightlines* as below,

The baby days are over. My son is old enough to have his own
mobile phone, and to be droll . . . He can look me level in the eye

⁵⁴ *Findings: Essays on the Natural and Unnatural World*, a nonfiction work of Jamie, is about the personal account of the poet’s visits to certain spots in Scotland and her observations of certain animals like peregrines, salmon or some phenomenal events in nature. Jamie achieves a delicate combination of outer observations with the routines of domestic life. In the following years, the poet gradually focuses on ecological issues and maintains a similar environmental concern in another work, *Sightlines: A Conversation with the Natural World*.

now, and laugh and say: 'In three years I'll be able to get married!
Drive a car! (80)

. . . My son grows tall, my daughter lives in a girls' web of thrills
and tensions invisible to me. She frets about who said what to
whom . . . sometimes whole days are spent in fallings out and
makings up and social anxiety. I want to say it doesn't matter. 'It
does matter!' says my daughter and she's right. (84)

similar to Eavan Boland's following lines in "Anna Liffey",

...
A vision in a brick house.
Is it only love
That makes a place?

I feel it change.
My children are
Growing up, getting older.
... (ITV 234-5)

However, the last poem of "Ultrasound," "Prayer" consolidates the image of a protective and self-giving mother again. Unlike the disappointment "Sea Urchin" signifies in the previous part, "Prayer" turns back to the idealization and positive influence of the amative through the unified love between the mother and the child. The poem sustains the "cupped hand" (17) image of "Sea Urchin" by underlining the protective ground of 'jizzen' (childbed) in the collection, *Jizzen*. Additionally, the mother's holding the baby in her hands does not only visualise the close corporeal connection, it also precedes the idea of being "cast up/broken" (JI 17) when "the baby days are over" (*Sightlines*, 80), which opens a new phase in the woman's subjectivity with the prevalent sense of loneliness.

"Prayer," the last poem of "Ultrasound" sequence, finalises the mother's whirling emotions before an unspeakable amative power with a plea for the child's living longer than her in three couplets structured in the form of an introduction-body-conclusion style. In this way, unlike the highly enjambed lines of the previous poems, "Bairnsang" and "Sea Urchin," the poem does confirm the expected patterns of maternal behaviour with the ending line, "and

I prayed: this new heart must outlive my own" (JI 18) deliberately in similar to the mother's clear expression of "I willingly surrender" (JI 14) at the last line of "February." Thus, although the poem repeats a similar argument in the sequence, what "Prayer" achieves is to combine the domestic and the mythic together from the point of love for the child that is regarded as the unknown amative dynamic for the woman subject in "Bairnsang" sequence. As Bell suggests for the poetry of Jamie, "domesticat[ing] the wild without usurping its innate magic" (132) operates in "Prayer" too by means of the analogy between the mother and St. Kevin.

Why does "Prayer" employ an Irish saint figure in order to signify the compassion of the mother towards her child? St. Kevin seems to be the most suitable figure for Jamie's "Prayer" with his close connection with nature by completing his hermitage among trees and remote corners of rocks besides his desire to be away from people.⁵⁵ Likewise, the mother in "Ultrasound" sequence tries to re-establish a bond with the natural and she always stands as an outsider with her problematic relation to the social order. Moreover, the famous story of St. Kevin's holding the nest of a blackbird in his hand up to the time the last hatchling of the bird flies away as poeticized in the lines "I thought of St Kevin, hands opened in prayer/ and a bird of the hedgerow nesting there," (JI 18) offers a proper ground to symbolise the mother's utmost tender-heartedness and patience in "Prayer."

The first lines "Our baby's heart, on the sixteen-week scan/ was a fluttering bird, held in cupped hands" (JI 18) go back to the first poem of the sequence, "Ultrasound," and demystify the metaphorical extension of the amative, "our baby's heart" (JI 18) through a technological instrument. But the second couplet referring to the story of St. Kevin and the Blackbird mystifies the amative experience again by melting the domestic into the natural and the sacred.

⁵⁵ As O'Hanlon describes, St. Kevin built a "stony bed" on the unreachable rock near the lake and used it as his place of reclusion. "St. Kevin remained praying beneath a tree, while many birds were seen perched upon his head and shoulders" and "Even branches and leaves of trees were said to sweet hymns to St. Kevin" (49).

Furthermore, it is possible to find a correlation between Seamus Heaney's "St Kevin and the Blackbird" and "Prayer" by Jamie. Besides dealing with St. Kevin as an ecclesiastical figure, the two poems go beyond a historical narration with the poetization of the inner worlds of a saint and a mother on a similar emotional degree. In this respect, Heaney's St. Kevin,

Is moved to pity: now he must hold his hand
Like a branch out in the sun and rain for weeks
Until the young are hatched and fledged and flown.

And since the whole thing's imagined anyhow,
Imagine being Kevin. Which is he?
Self-forgetful or in agony all the time (24)

conveys the mother's contemplation in "Prayer" as follows,

I thought of St Kevin, hands opened in prayer
and a bird of the hedgerow nesting there,

and how he'd borne it, until the young had flown
-and I prayed: this new heart must outlive my own. (JI 18)

In both poems, the young birds flying away signify the sense of lack. But in both poems, such feeling of loss visualised with the empty hands is relocated to the sphere of the amative affirmation as it appears in Heaney's "Alone and mirrored clear in Love's deep river" (24). Accordingly, the implied egg image conveys the notion of reproduction in which "prayer" (JI 18) becomes a therapeutic wish and restores the mother's sense of wholeness. In other words, although she loses the unified image of an egg when it cracks and then the young bird leaves the nest, as an amative subject, she cherishes the residue left after the affirmative symbiosis. Thus, as St. Kevin image maintains, when motherhood is concerned, the affirmation of the loss makes Jamie's poetry different from those of Boland and Akin with the mother subject's self-abandonment without any trace of second thoughts about maternity as it happens in "Prayer."

"The Tay Moses," a poem following the "Ultrasound" sequence, deals with how the persona perceives the motherhood that appears in a sporadic mood

between dreadful and sweet dreams. In this realm, the poem complements the poetic sphere of "Ultrasound" in a concise way. "The Tay Moses," in other words, conveys a future mother's concerns in a dreamy atmosphere together with the vivid imagery employed in the stanzas changing the poem's tension from a serene dream to the depiction of a kidnapping scene with a cinematographic narration.

The poem's title referring to the River Tay calls to mind Boland's poetization of the River Liffey in "Anna Liffey." Although the major concern of "Anna Liffey" is different from that of "The Tay Moses," the parts recounting the woman's disappointment about love and children together with the contradiction created in the meaning of 'liffey' as 'life' in Irish English enable to find certain similarities between the two poems when their emotional impact on the reader is concerned. Moreover, the description of both rivers with a colourful visual imagery prepares the ground for the poetic persona's melancholic mood and positions her into that of an observer but not that of a participant with the implicated problematic connection to one's native land. The poem starts with an obligation towards the baby as follows,

What can I fashion
for you but a woven
creel of river-
rashes, a golden
oriole's nest, my gift
wrought from the Firth – (JI 19)

"Moses" in the title of "The Tay Moses" both refers to the wickerwork basket in the locality of Tay and the Hebraic story of "Moses's mother sending her threatened infant downriver in a basket" (Mulligan 766). Furthermore, the above lines also stand as a reformulation of Moses' birth in the Bible or the birth of Sargon of Akkad in the Sargon Legend. According to Harvey, although two stories display certain features such as being "placed in reed baskets with caulking to float down a river" and being adopted by surrogates" (31), the Sargon Legend precedes the story of Moses, which makes Moses' birth story another form of adaptation. However, the two legends and "The Tay Moses"

share a mother figure, which dehistoricizes the selfless love for her child. That is to say, the third verse of the second chapter in Exodus, “when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river’s brink” (66) tells the story of a protective mother similar to the one narrated in “The Tay Moses.” As Jakob and Elman interpret, the second chapter of Exodus delineates “the subjective feelings of the mother” (25) and in the moments of rapture, “Moses’ mother asked herself, shall this child perish?” (25). In a similar manner, the mother in “The Tay Moses,” asks the same question and maintains this fear of “perish[ing]” (Jakob and Elman 25) up to the last lines in which the mother keeps her child entirely to herself. Recalling the other poems about the mother-child relation in *Jizzen*, “creel of river” and “a golden oriole’s nest” (JI 19) contribute to the childbed leitmotif in the collection by underlining a safe space just before the emergence of threatening forces causing the child to forget the maternal symbiosis.

“The Tay Moses” poeticizes the momentum forced by the amative dynamics in “Ultrasound” sequence by focusing on the influence of being a mother for the woman subject. As “Ultrasound” signifies, in some circumstances the mother persona feels the distressful sides of maternal responsibility. In others, she feels the senses of wholeness and lack occurring at the same intersecting plane. Accordingly, “The Tay Moses” employs “tide” and “ebb” (JI 19) images in order to express the mother’s destabilizing apprehension of loss originating from the amative power of maternity. In other words, the mother always falls into a complicated duality. When she chooses one leg, she also feels the lack of the other leg. Then, she creates a “hallucinatory” (Kristeva 6) space in which any duality merges into a unity through amative fluidity.

Similar to St. Kevin’s story in “Prayer,” the mother subject in “The Tay Moses” domesticates the mythic story by establishing an analogy between these mythic figures and herself within the minute details of everyday life. Additionally, the poem localizes the biblical narration too. As “my gift/ wrought from the Firth” (JI 19) denotes, the Firth of Tay or the narrow strait of Scotland

takes the place of Nile or Euphrates rivers in the birth stories of Moses and Sargon. The emphasis on the river image backdrops the persona's ambivalence between two opposite directions of "tide" and "ebb" (JI 19) in the poem by referring to the fluid nature of the subject,

and choose my tide: either
the flow, when, watertight
you'll drift to the uplands –
my favourite hills; held safe
in eddies, where salmon, wisdom
and guts, withered in spawn,
rest between moves – that
slither of body as you were born –

or the ebb, when the water
will birl you to snag
on reeds, the river-
pilot leaning over the side:
'*Name o God!*' and you'll change hands:
tractor-man, grieve, farm-wife
who takes you into her
competent arms (JI 19)

Although the persona of "The Tay Moses" cherishes the dysfunction of dualities, she paradoxically creates binary oppositions with "either the flow" "or the ebb" (JI 19). She feels obliged to make a decision between her "favourite hills" and "snag on reeds" (JI 19). In other words, the poetic persona glorifies one leg (tide) of the binary against the other one (ebb). In both cases maintained in the above stanzas, the persona imagines that she leaves her baby to the mercy of two different forces. However, since the mother regards herself as the extension of 'the natural,' she does not object to the baby's "drift[ing] to the uplands" (JI 19). In this respect, "The Tay Moses" exemplifies the "felt correspondences between female experience and the natural world" (Gairn 345). Furthermore, the mother affirms the seeming negativity of departure since "the flow" of "tide" (JI 19) suggests a rootless source in which becoming of the child is possible. For that reason, the mother complies with the idea of separation from the child. Accordingly, the tide takes the baby to a 'nowhere' in which no entity can keep its peculiarity. To put it another way, as the lines "in

eddies where salmon, wisdom/ and guts withered in spawn” (JI 19) denote, the entities in “The Tay Moses” become floating or empty signifiers.

Furthermore, the figurative language employed in the poem can lead the reader to associate “salmon, wisdom” (JI 19) with a book of Apocrypha, “Wisdom of Solomon.” The book is a philosophical and historical work about journeys of Moses and certain events or miracles occurring among Egyptians and Israelites in order to “demonstrate the operation of Wisdom and its consequent benefits in the lives of Israel’s ancestors” (Cheon 15). As Cheon maintains, the stories revolve around “thirst and water,” (26) “dying and healing” (47) or “God’s punishment and blessing” (45). It is obvious that “Wisdom of Solomon” keeps its arguments by creating certain dualities. When the lines “in eddies where salmon, wisdom/ and guts withered in spawn” (JI 19) are reread with the association of “Wisdom of Solomon” is in mind, it can be suggested that ‘the natural’ offers its particular ‘righteousness’ beyond the categorizing oppositions of ‘the cultural.’ Thus, as the spawn image visualises, any category or difference is diluted into the unity of innumerable mass of eggs by suggesting the absence of the symbolic intrusion. The spawn image also metaphorises the amorous expansion of the subject as Kristeva states that “Sovereign yet not individual. Divisible, lost, annihilated; but also, and through imaginary fusion with loved one, equal to infinite space of superhuman psychism. Paranoid? I am, in love, at the zenith of subjectivity” (5).

Accordingly, as “the flow” and “eddies” suggest, the baby becomes detached from any duality and in this way, it can “rest *between* moves [emphasis added]” (JI 19). Similar to the identification of the baby as an egg disappearing in “spawn” (JI 19), the flow of the water also protects the child like a mother. Then, as “slither of body as you were born” (JI 19) delineates, the river transforms into a huge maternal body by reminding the mother’s bearing experience.

While the second stanza romanticizes the child’s separation from the mother into the wild regions of Scotland, the third stanza recounts the other side of

amative dynamics when the motherhood is concerned through the ebb image. The third stanza also foregrounds the mother's hysteric voice in the last stanza. In other words, her sense of relief in the second stanza leaves its place to an emotional outburst of fear originated from the feeling of loss. Unlike the baby's being dragged among the currents towards an unknown place, the lines "the water/ will birl you to snag/ on reeds, the river" (JI 19) underline the presence of a threatening stability with water image. Thus, the semiotic flow is interrupted with the intrusion of the cultural signified by means of the captain, tractor man and farm wife in the poem. Although the lines above are also a direct reference to Moses' being found by a servant, they go beyond that historical account by focusing on the act of being found. Similar to the root imagery in the "Bairnsang" part of "Ultrasound" sequence, "reeds" (JI 19) hinder the flow or journey of the baby, which symbolizes the baby's first encounter with the social order. Moreover, the prelinguistic elements in the second stanza are counteracted with the captain's exclamation "*Name o God!*" (JI 19). Such a phrase does not function as a simple expression of astonishment in "The Tay Moses." On the contrary, it suggests the intrusion of God the Father and language as two organising principles. As Crawford argues, Jamie "is able to call on traditional religious imagery in "The Tay Moses"" (721) and "help[s] that strong sense of spirituality in contemporary Scottish verse -a spirituality often as open to Buddhist, pagan and other beliefs as it is to Christianity" (723). To put it differently, a neopagan multiplicity of the previous stanza leaves its place to the monotheistic description vocalised through "*Name o God!*" (JI 19). From Derridean perspective, such simple exclamation phrase denotes the unity of "the *phoné*, the *glossa*, and the *logos*" (Derrida 29) and connotes the Logos or the Word by combining the phonocentric with the logocentric (Spivak 68) since "this originary and teleologic presence has customarily been found in the voice, the *phoné*" (68). "*Name o God!*" (JI 19), from another point of view, calls to mind the Althusserian interpellation of the subject since such a call ratifies the recognition of the subject to include him/her in the system of dominant ideology.

Additionally, when the maternal concerns of the persona in “The Tay Moses” is concerned, Derrida’s argument of that “the immediate and privileged unity which founds significance and the acts of language is the articulated unity of sound and sense within the phonic” (29) is poeticized with the “competent arms” (JI 19) of another mother. The choice of the adjective “competent” (JI 19) underlines the maternal “unity of sound and sense” (Derrida 29), which is not felt by the future mother “I” (JI 19) of the poem up to the ending lines.

The persona’s tendency to establish new dualisms by regarding the other mother, “farm wife” as “competent” (JI 19) and thus implicating herself as an incompetent mother goes beyond a shallow comparison. As it happens in the tide-ebb duality, the comparison of two different mother figures can be associated with the ideal ego of the imaginary realm and ego ideal of the symbolic order. As Rosemary Jackson points out,

Many fantasies of dualism are dramatizations of precisely this conflict, their ‘selves’ torn between an original, primary narcissism and an ideal ego, which frustrates their natural desire. Many of them fantasize a return to a state of undifferentiation, to a condition preceding the mirror stage and its creation of dualism. For prior to this construction, in a state of primary narcissism, the child is its own ideal, and experiences no discrepancy between self (as perceiving subject) and other (as perceived object). To get back, on to the far side of the mirror, becomes a powerful metaphor for returning to an original unity, a ‘paradise’ lost by the ‘fall’ into division with the construction of a subject. (89)

Furthermore, the captain’s taking the baby out of “a woven/ creel of river” (JI 19) demonstrates the child’s entrance into the symbolic on two levels; one is the corporeal, the other is the linguistic. The baby’s being drawn out of its protected ‘jizzen,’ delineates its primary encounter with the sense of lack as well. Accordingly, “you’ll change hands” (JI 19) prophesizes the child’s lack of fulfilment. The line also foretells the child’s leaping from one desire to another in its future life in order to search for being “held safe/ in eddies” (JI 19).

When “original unity” and “a paradise lost” (Jackson 89) are re-evaluated from the persona’s perspective in “The Tay Moses,” they signify the mother’s desire

to return the previous imaginary realm since “dualism and dismemberment are symptoms of this desire for the imaginary” (Jackson 90). While the mother’s fantasy about pregnancy and bearing visualised with “tide” (JI 19) affirms the separation as if she sends the baby to a better place, her imaginary projection with “ebb” (JI 19) subverts her amative fulfilment by replacing the feeling of unity with an abortion-like termination. However, as Jackson puts it, “a fantasy of physical fragmentation corresponds, then, to a breakdown of rational unity” (90), which leads the mother to take the initiative to repossess her child as follows,

even as I drive, slamming
the car’s gears,
spitting gravel on tracks
down between berry-fields,
engine still racing, the door wide
as I run toward her, crying
LEAVE HIM! Please,
It’s okay, he’s mine. (JI 19)

The last stanza reconsolidates the “imaginary fusion with the loved one” (Kristeva 5) by transcending the fear of loss that appears as “a hallucinatory, ghostly glimmer” (6) throughout the poem. In *Jizzen*, the “poems’ meanings are highly dependent on both the aural and the visual” (Blewitt 49). When Dosa asks Jamie about the “strong sense of detail” (139) in her poems, she answers as follows, “I think about precision more and more. Recently, I am thinking that precision is acutely important to good writing. You take notes almost like a naturalist who observes something, whether it is a flower or a street scene” (139) and in “The Tay Moses,” the persona’s narration of a fictitious scene in which she saves her child from the ‘wrong’ hands of the farmer’s wife delineates the meticulous care of conveying the details. However, the detailed description in the last stanza is functional in two ways. In the first place, the details reflect the future mother’s impetuosity triggered by her emotional breakdown and suspend the striking ending lines “*LEAVE HIM! ./He’s mine*” (JI 19). In the second place, the descriptive language prevalent in the last lines conveys the future mother’s will to power of possession. In other words, she

projects her sense of loss into a complete sense of ownership carrying the pejorative connotation of unity with the beloved one. Thus, such handling of possession separates Jamie's poems related to the maternity from those of Boland and Akin. To clarify, the poems about motherhood in *Jizzen* confirm the Barthesian paradox of "I know what I do not know" (134). Although the woman subject presented in the poems such as "Ultrasound" sequence and "The Tay Moses," internalizes the "exaltation of loving someone as unknown" (Barthes 134) by regarding the other as mostly knowable in its unknowable nature through amative unity, the mother figures in the analysed poems of Boland and Akin stress upon the transitory feeling of unity with the other by vocalizing the residue of desperateness remaining behind the experience of motherhood.

4.4. Motherhood as a Myth to Be Demystified

Is the maternity always promising for Boland, Jamie and Akin? When the early works of the three poets are compared to the later ones, the feeling continuing to exist is the sense of an empty space due to the obstructed amative dynamics. In other words, the flux in the amative is hindered with the sense of loss felt by the poetic personae and thus, they fall into the pessimism of nostalgia in the later poems of the three poets.

Although the poets acknowledge that the lost experience cannot be relived with the same emotional density, they attempt to reconstruct the lost amative fulfilment through the curative function of the memories. In this regard, the vacillating voices of the mother figure in Boland's and Akin's poems leave their places to a negating stability the mother speakers find in the absence of the amative. McWilliams suggests that "For Boland, not only are her children the fruit of her womb, but children in general are . . . the thriving source of promise the flowering of possibilities" (320). However, unlike McWilliams' interpretation of Boland's later poems related to mother-child relationship, the child as a lost image cannot function as "source of promise" (McWilliams 320) and problematizes the persona's previous sense of motherhood. In other words, the child as a symbol sustains its conventional connotation, innocence.

But since its innocence is doomed to be stained by the social, the child's innocence is only kept in order to be falsified. For instance, "What We Lost" from *Outside History* by Boland summarizes the three poets' perception of maternity by means of a woman figure telling a story but with a suspicion on story's recuperative side as it happens in Jamie's lines, "that stories are balm,/ ease their own pain" (JI 7 in "Forget It." As Shifrer argues, "'What We Lost' is about the hidden records of women and the fragmentary state of their personal histories" (330). For that reason, the poem does not focus on the mother-child relationship directly. However, since in the poem, "Boland, as it were, attempts to pick up lost threads of the story so that an alternative lineage, one that is passed through women, can be discovered" (Shifrer 330), the poetization of the indifference in the lines below underlines the negated motherhood in the poets' later poems through the connotative meaning of 'story' as the woman's subjectivity,

...

The woman settles and begins her story.

Believe it, what we lost is here in this room
on this veiled evening.

The woman finishes. The story ends.

The child, who is my mother, gets up, moves away.

In the winter air, unheard, unshared,
the moment happens, hangs fire, leads nowhere
The light will fail and the room darken,
the child fall asleep and the story be forgotten. (*Outside History*, Boland
187)

Then, Clutterbuck's argument in "What We Lost" as "crucially, the poem, like the child, does not retell the story itself. Instead, it recounts the story's occasion and its loss: the countrywoman in the evening kitchen who lays down her sewing to talk to a child who then moves away and falls" (74) points to the representation of a similar indifference the mothers endure in the three poets' later poems.

This section evaluates the later poems of Boland, Jamie and Akin with the intention of reading them as a counter-argument to the early poems analysed in the previous part. This part also tries to demonstrate the highly permeable nature of the later poems reconsidering the previous recurrent images from new perspectives. For instance, the three poets share a similar concern to express their loneliness rooted in both corporeal and emotional breach from the peaceful days of infancy. Although the early poems reveal that the domestic issues harass the personae as new mothers in limited opportunities, they also manifest the feeling of fulfilment triggered by the amative flux. Nonetheless, the later poems of the three poets reflect the helplessness of replacing the previous affirmative state of motherhood with any equivalent means nurturing psychodynamics of the amative subject. This section, after all, engages itself with the comparison of the three poets' later poems in order to argue the negating influence of the motherly love by focusing on certain poems selected from Boland's *The Lost Land*, Jamie's *The Overhaul* and *The Tree House* and lastly Akin's *The City in Love is Everlasting* and *On a Distant Shore*. But before the evaluation of their later poems, it is possible to find examples from the early poems reflecting the ironical tone towards the motherly feelings. Accordingly, even though the poets emphasize the healing capacity of motherhood when they are asked about maternity in interviews as in the case of Boland, their poems signify an antagonistic voice that deglamorizes the romanticizing attitude towards motherhood.

For instance, in *Object Lessons*, Eavan Boland expresses the meaning of motherhood for her and how this notion has influenced her poetry in an affirmative way. However, considering the desperate voice in her later poems related to maternity, her own expression seems awkward because the affirmative feeling of maternity leaves its place to the sense of a Sisyphean challenge. For instance, she recounts her own experience of motherhood as "the difference between love and a love which is visionary. The first may well be guaranteed by security and attachment; only the second has the power to transform" (17). Her vision of "a love which is visionary" (OL 17) romanticizes

the love felt for the child even though there are too many 'domestic' concerns coming with the child. Thus, the early poems of Boland underline the imaginary influence of the amative and vocalise the nurturing side of the maternal experience despite the timidity originated from the possibility of loss. To exemplify, "Pomegranate" from *In a Time of Violence*, is an emblematic poem in order to demonstrate the complex evaluation of maternity as a source of changing power (OL 17) and hopelessness from the respect of the amative subject. As McCallum argues, "the relationship between myth and history in Boland's poetry is a close one. If history, as Boland recognizes, is often a site of forgetting, then retelling myths, legends, and other culturally shared stories in poetry becomes an act of recovery" (39). Keeping the amorous dynamics in mind, the subject retells her personal history by mythologizing it through associations with the legendary figures such as Ceres and her daughter Persephone as it happens in "Pomegranate."

It is obvious that motherhood offers a site of relief in the early poems of Boland. In an interview, Boland explains the influence of maternity on her poetry by creating a link between the personal and the natural similar to the arboreal imagery employed in the early poems of Jamie and Akin as follows,

. . . I don't think I realized at the beginning how much the perspective of motherhood could affect the poem in strictly aesthetic ways. Take for example the nature poem: when I was young and studying poetry at University I had a very orthodox, nineteenth century view of the nature poem. That the sensibility of the poet was instructed in some moral way by the natural world. And it was an idea I just couldn't use. I couldn't get close to it. But when my daughters were born, that all changed. I no longer felt I was observing nature in some Romantic-poet way. I felt I was right at the center of it: a participant in the whole world of change and renewal. (smartishpace.com)

As the lines "It is winter/ and the stars are hidden" (ITV 215) of "Pomegranate" signify, it is questionable that Boland achieves the thing she alleges in her poems when the desperate atmosphere of her early poems is concerned. Nevertheless, the maternal love depicted in her poems such as "Pomegranate," enables a close connection with the natural world just as a

glimpse of wholeness since the persona goes back to her hopeless mood in the end. Then, her perception instantly changes from despair to hope as the lines below demonstrate,

The veiled stars are above ground.
It is another world. But what else
can a mother give her daughter but such
beautiful rifts in time? (ITV 216)

The natural causes the persona to feel a fissure in time, an idiosyncratic time-space in which she feels herself as a whole with her daughter due to the amative intensity of that special moment. However, the persona's observation of the natural world does not locate her into the "center of it: a participant in the whole world of change and renewal" (smartishpace.com) since the mother persona deliberately declines such an opportunity by uttering "I will say nothing" (ITV 216). Correspondingly, "What Love Intended" from *Outside History*, paves the way to the disappointed voice of the mother image in Boland's later poetry. The poem conjoins history, memory and nature in order to explain "the history of my pain,/ my ordeal, my grace" (197). She transposes herself into a ghost of "the suburb" (OH 197) by dreaming about a complete destruction that hinders the conveyance of any positive image in her memories such as "this October morning,/ full of food and children/ and animals" (OH 197). As Kilcoyne suggests, "this failure to connect with memory, in turn, serves as illustrative of powerlessness" (90). Accordingly, the reiterated verb "gone" (OH 197-8) in the triplets underlines the impossibility of reliving that specific happy moments, which can indicate the voice in the poem still sustains a "Romantic-poet way" (smartishpace.com) even after having children. Unlike the previously mentioned affirmative feelings triggered by the amative, "love" (OH 198) becomes an enemy of the subject since the amorous offers "beautiful rifts in time" (ITV 216) in presence and "ruin" (OH 197) in absence. Then, the persona hopelessly understands that nostalgia created through the desire to return to past days is a fallacy of love by regarding "this/ is what love intended" (OH 198) as below,

from then to now and even
here, ruined, this
is what love intended-

finding even the yellow
jasmine in the dusk,
the smell of early dinners,

the voices of our children,
taking turns and quarrelling,
burning on the distance,

gone . . . (OH 198)

Like the Barthesian “whiplash” image “suddenly waken[ing] the body” (200), the natural surrounding reminds the persona what she has lost along with the absence of ‘domestic’ sphere and “the voices of our children” (OH 198). Subsequently, the loss expressed with “gone” (OH 198) causes a “gap” (Kilcoyne 90) in the fluidity of the amative power similar to the perception of memory as “it creates and signals between the sought after memory and that same memory unattained, the memory which is desired but always out of reach” (Kilcoyne 90). Similarly, “a participant in the whole world of change and renewal” (smartishpace.com) is again subverted in Boland’s later poem “Home” in *The Lost Land*. The poem reflects an affinity with the poetic sphere of “What Love Intended” in such lines as,

Atmosphere. Ocean. Oxygen and dust
were altered by their purposes.
They had changed the trees to iron.
They were rust.

...
I once thought that a single word
Had the power to change.
To transform.

But these had not been changed.
And I would not be changed by it again. (LL 259)

Thus, the above lines suggest the disbelief in change. Since she rejects any idealization such as motherhood, the subject in process endures a new phase

in her life. Furthermore, similar to the persona's "I would not be changed by it again" (LL 259), Boland's evaluation of memory delineates the impossibility of going back to the former situation, which creates the main focus of the tension in the poems such as "Love" from *In a Time of Violence*. Either being mother or wife or lover does not matter since the amative dynamics does not function in the same way it does before. For that reason, the experience of having child operates like a "whiplash" (Barthes 200) by offering another reality and recreating its own suffering point for the poetic persona, which signifies the amorous melancholy as it happens in such lines from "Love,"

I am your wife
I was years ago.
Our child is healed. We love each other still.
...
And yet I want to return to you
on the bridge of the Iowa river as you were, (ITV 214)

Thus, the pessimistic tone in Boland's later poems can be traced back to her early poems about mother-child relation besides the ones poeticizing the lost amorous bond between lovers. In other words, similar to Akın and Jamie, her early poems "defer the grief" (ITV 216) of losing that is openly expressed in their later poetry collections.

To begin with, the title poem, "The Lost Land" of *The Lost Land* stands as a counter argument not only to her early poems but also to the understanding of maternity in Jamie's "The Tay Moses" and "Ultrasound" sequence from *Jizzen*. The poem spatializes the amative fluidity of the maternal by combining having child with having a piece of land, both of which come out to be momentary imaginary ruptures saved from the symbolic consolidating the ultimate loss felt and impeded fluidity in the end. As the opening words of the mother persona confess that,

I have two daughters.

They are all I ever wanted from the earth.

Or almost all.

I also wanted one piece of ground.

One city trapped by hills. One urban river.
An island in its element.

So I could say *mine. My own.*

And I mean it.

Now they are grown up and far away. (LL 260)

However, the above lines visualise how hardly the mother confesses that she has lost the fulfilling unity with the child and the 'land' as a motherland. The use of a pausing versification and full stop in each line function as if the mother's words stick in her throat too. Additionally, the persona underlines the fallacy of possession when the amative is concerned. Her words, "So I could say *mine. My own*" (LL 260), remind the exclamation of "*LEAVE HIM! Please, / It's okay, he's mine*" (JI 20) in Jamie's "The Tay Moses" from *Jizzen*. Unlike the re-established connection with the child in "The Tay Moses," the mother in "The Lost Land," admits that she has been defeated not only by the child but also by the land. To put it differently, the persona's sense of possession and sense of belonging fail at the same time since she connects her love for the child and the love for her country all together with absence. Thus, in the end, both sources of love appear to be mere idealization triggered by the amorous feeling in which "'I' assumes the right to be extraordinary" (Kristeva 5). Moreover, "indissoluble union" (Kristeva 7) with the loved one as the other dissolves like the amative feeling itself as follows,

and memory itself
has become, emigrant,
wandering in a place,
where love dissembles itself as landscape.

Where the hills
are the colours of a child's eyes,
where my children are distances, horizons. (LL 260)

Boland "likenes memory to language" (Kilcoyne 92). As Kilcoyne maintains, "the signifier 'memory' becomes unstable and has no connection to its assumed signified Memory and displacement reveal constitutive factors which establish

the meaning of home" (94). Thus, memory becomes a "wandering" (LL 260) image with no definite signifier-signified relation. However, when memory appears "in a place/ where love disassembles itself as landscape" (LL 260) followed by the remote memories of the person's children, its association goes beyond "imagining the land in terms of the family member" (Kilcoyne 94). In this respect, memory makes the former agents of the amative fulfilment, children, atopic by alienating the remembered happy moments and localizing them in the "distances" (LL 260). Then, "being Atopic, the other makes language indecisive; one cannot speak *of* the other, *about* the other; every attribute is false, painful, erroneous, awkward: the other is *unqualifiable*" (Barthes 35). Accordingly, the persona's attempts to consolidate the disconnection with the other creates a nostalgic yearning not only for the other but also for the amorous feeling itself as the lines "shadows falling/ on everything they had to leave?/ And would love forever?" (LL260) suggest. The words "*Ireland. Absence. Daughter*" (LL 260) in the closing line merges Boland's early poetic concerns into her later poetic realm. Thus, the lines above reflect the subject's problematic relation to history. But "The Lost Land" does more than conveying the harassing interaction between the coloniser and the colonised. As Riley points out, "within these shadows, past and present blur and reconfigure themselves in the poet and, in turn, the Irish poem as Boland writes her experience into Irish history, thus also defusing the hierarchy between history and individual experience" (64). However, such "reconfigure[ation]" (Riley 64) is not productive when the amative is concerned since the other's "absence" (LL 260) connotes the presence of a void that cannot be filled with memories.

Another poem, "Daughter," ending with "*Daughter*" (LL 264) in italics similar to "The Lost Land," signifies Boland's changing attitude towards maternity in her later poetry. In other words, the poem subverts the affirmative tone of "Night Feed," "Before Spring" or "Energies" from *Night Feed*. But they share the same pessimism in the end even if the earlier ones lightly implicate the possibility of losing the symbiotic connection with the child, the later ones

openly poeticize such a huge loss for the mother personae. For instance, “Daughter” reminds the opening lines of “Night Feed” in a subversive way by means of a sequence of “i. The season,” “ii. The Loss” and “The Bargain.” The tripartite structure also reminds the “Ultrasound” poems by Jamie. In opposition to Jamie’s early poems, the sequence does not glorify the amative experience of childbearing and motherhood by only focusing “The Bargain” side. On the contrary, the sections in “Daughter,” stress upon “The Loss” by creating a radical phase in the woman’s subjectivity.

The meaning of “season” (NF 92) in “Night Feed” as below,

This is dawn.
Believe me
This is your season, little daughter
The moment daisies open,
The hour mercurial rainwater
Makes a mirror for sparrows.
It's time we drowned our sorrows. (NF 92)

transforms into another time-space in which the persona experiences the sense of loss intensively even up to point of regretting the former experience of having a child in “Daughter.” The poem starts with the depiction of the natural world like “Night Feed.” However, the melancholic signification of darkness nullifies the positive feeling connoted with spring as the opening lines of “Daughter” suggest,

The edge of spring
The dark is wet. Already
stars are tugging at
their fibrous roots.
...
My first child
was conceived in this season.
If I wanted a child now
I could not have one. (LL 263)

The mother’s repentance originates from the amative void she feels when she observes nature. Accordingly, her past domestic interior contrasts with her present exterior. In this respect, “memory, her present reconstruction of the

past, enlightens Boland to the significance of that time” (Kilcoyne 96). Likewise, “The Season” of “Daughter,” points to the paradox of remembering by emphasizing that the constructive influence of memory also brings the despair of loss, the loss of mother-daughter relation in the poem. The mother wants “a child now” (LL 263) only through memory. Thus, the mother’s unwilling attitude towards having child at the present time reflects her idealisation of the past experience. To put it differently, the persona frees that peculiar moment from the bondage of corporeality by means of “memory” and “myth” as “ghost” (LL 263) image.

Except through memory.
Which is the ghost of the body.
Or myth.
Which is the ghost of meaning. (LL 263)

Thus, motherhood turns into a haunting experience in “i. The Season” of “Daughter” and its influence is kept throughout the other two poems, “ii. The Loss” and “iii. The Bargain.” As Kilcoyne suggests, “Any mythologizing necessitates a loss of meaning, an erasure, a forgetting, which the poet should acknowledge” (97). Moreover, unlike Jamie’s “Oh whistle and I’ll come to ye/ my lad, my wee shilpit ghost” (JI 11) in “Ultrasound,” the ghost image does not delineate a promising amative source for the persona in “The Season.” On the contrary, the image signifies how the persona cannot save herself from the constant reappearing of maternity. In addition to that, her present mood becomes more complicated because she yearns for the thing she disregards intentionally by desiring not for a child but for the image of that child through “memory” and “myth” (LL 263).

The second poem of “Daughter” sequence, “ii. The Loss” suspends the suffering of a mother to the last line through the depiction of the outer world. The poem establishes an association between the loss felt in the inner world of the persona and a cut tree, a loss in nature. The poem starts with a fact, “All morning/ the sound of chain-saws” and a result “My poplar tree has been cut down” (LL 264). The narration of a tree cut is followed by the memory of that

specific tree as “its sap rose/ thirty feet into the air” “in dark spring dawns” (LL 264). But, the imaginary fluidity of memory conveyed through “sap⁵⁶” (LL 264) image is blocked with the restriction of factuality. To put differently, the persona identifies her poplar tree with the memory of her child since both of them underline the isolation the poetic persona feels as,

I go out to the garden
to touch the hurt wood spirits.
The injured summers.

Out of one of them a child runs.
Her skin printed with leaf-shadow.

And will not look at me. (LL 264)

Then, since the memory of “summers” is “injured” (LL 264), the persona mythologizes the historical fact in order to re-establish the lost connection with the imaginary residue of the child. In each attempt of the persona, the specular experience turns out to be a mere misrecognition of the past amative unity with the other. The third part, “Bargain” keeps the desperate tone of “The Loss” in its ironic title. Additionally, in opposition to the long stanzaic form of “The Loss,” the shortness of “The Bargain” implicates the imbalance between the profit and loss as follows

The garden creaks with rain.
The gutters run with noisy water.
The earth shows its age and makes a promise
only myth can keep. *Summer. Daughter.* (LL 264)

The poem opens with a metallic auditory image similar to the chainsaw rumble in “The Loss.” The harsh resonance of the rain depicted also contrasts with “summer” (LL 264) that becomes an instrument of “myth” like “daughter”

⁵⁶ “A Woman Painted on a Leaf” from *In a Time of Violence*, employs a similar nature imagery with “The Season” and “The Loss” for visualising the despair and loneliness of the woman subject in such lines as “A leaf falls in a garden/ The moon cools its aftermath of sap/ The pith of summer dries out in the starlight// A woman is inscribed there” (ITV 242) similar to “stars are tugging at/their fibrous roots” (LL 263) in “The Season” besides “the injured summers” and “leaf-shadow” (263) images from “The Loss.” While the former poem signifies a suicidal desire to come out her situatedness, the later ones acknowledge that situation, but the intensity of loneliness felt does not change in the three poems.

(LL 264). In this respect, contrary to Boland's previous perception of nature as the way 19th century Romantics do, and as feeling in the centre of it after having child, the above lines suggest a different evaluation of nature. Unlike the previous evocations of nature, the natural world underlines her outsider position without offering any relief or sense of wholeness besides. Accordingly, myth gains another functionality for the persona by leading her to the demystification of the romanticized sensation of both motherhood and nature as the ending lines "*Summer. Daughter*" (LL 264) can suggest. In other words, the mother confirms her new phase of subjectivity through a life on the edge of the mystifying maternity and nature and reconstructing myth.

Furthermore, "Ceres Looks at the Morning" is another poem dealing with the image of 'summer.' The poem expresses not only the distance between the inner world of the persona and the outside world of nature but also the disparity felt with the daughter's lost or transformed love by referring to a mythological figure, Ceres in the title. Namely, although the poem is about the persona's reception of "a summer day" (LL 264) morning, her association of "the beautiful morning" with "a daughter" (LL 264) prevents the poem from an idyllic description of nature. Then, the poem becomes a symbol of the mother's isolation. Moreover, such a comparison between morning and daughter turns the poem into a cluster of oppositions between the elements of nature signifying peace and fulfilment and a depressed persona. Unlike the affirmative signification of darkness in *Night Feed* and in Jamie's former poems as a space for the imaginary contentment with the other, the line "At the edge of a larger darkness" (LL 264) manifests the persona's desperation through the simple binary of darkness and light besides the coldness of inside and warmth of outside. Relatedly, "Summer" and "I Would Have Smiled" from *On a Distant Shore* by Akin exemplify the changing meaning of darkness and summer with their emphasis on the loneliness of the personae. In "Summer," for instance, the perception of the season alters in accordance with the present mood of the speaker similar to "the injured summers" (LL 264) image in Boland's "The

Loss.” Moreover, the sound association⁵⁷ of “Yaz” (Summer) with “Yazı” (Writing) in Turkish is functional in order to demystify the summer and to mystify the writing that can be taken as the reflection of the social in Kristevan sense or the rational. Thus, the short poem in four lines negates the previously productive connotation of darkness conveyed in the early poems of the three poets as below,

The summer was read and we were dazed
the writing is unreadable, darksome
the season is desolate with our sorrows
and crowded with the ones we love (ODS 29)

besides the opening and closing lines in “I Would Have Smiled”⁵⁸ as follows,

I don't like the dark, if it were me
I'd have switched on all the evening lights
...
the room is too dark, if it were me
I'd have switched on all the evening lights (WHY 111)

However, even the meaning of darkness changes in the course of their poetic careers, the amative remains as a determining element for the tension of the poems created with its presence or absence. For instance, in such lines as “I cannot find you/ in this dark hour/ dear child” (LL 265), “Tree of Life” from *The Lost Land* by Boland enables a completely different representation of darkness in opposition to the poems in *Night Feed*. Moreover, while the emergence of light denoted with the “dawn” (NF 93; LL 265) image ends the nurturing power of the amative in the poet's early poems such as “Night Feed,” in “Tree of Life” and other later poems by Boland, the same image connotes the nostalgia originating from the love for the child as the lines “Wait/ for dawn to make us clear to one another” and “Let love/ be the light that shows again/ the blossom to the root” (LL 265) can suggest. Accordingly, when the later poems of Boland, Jamie and Akın are evaluated from the impact of the amative

⁵⁷ Even the sound association of “Yaz” (summer) and “Yazı” (Writing) can be regarded as a clang association by implicating the speaker's being on verge of psychosis.

⁵⁸ Translated by Saliha Paker and Mel Kenne in *What Have You Carried over?*

dynamics, the absence of it conveyed through the lost mother-child connection comes to the fore by underlining the loss of an essence.

In *The Tree House* and *The Overhaul*, Kathleen Jamie lays particular stress on an internalized loss felt by the personae in their current social relationship and interactions with nature. The perception of motherhood also undergoes a change from the previous heavenly experiences to the mere sense of loss gradually. To illustrate, the poet revisits her early themes or images in *Jizzen* with a new perspective as it happens in “The Galilean Moons” from *The Overhaul*. In other words, the poem calls to mind certain extra-terrestrial images from “Ultrasound” sequence from *Jizzen* but with a renewed aspect of the maternity by leading to the erasure of the fulfilment felt through childcare. On the contrary, the child seems to be a barrier for the persona’s sensing the natural as a whole.

The speaker of “The Galilean Moons,” starts with the description of a special moment in which Jupiter is “uncommonly close” (O 34). The “blaze” of the Jupiter’s moons and “the south sky shin[ing]” (O 34) attract the attention of the observant eye “in the dark” (O 34). Moreover, “The telescope lens” (O 34) takes the place of the ultrasound imagining device in *Jizzen* for the persona’s specular experience of the unknown. Thus, the speaker cherishes the outer mystifying space of “the stern white lamp/ of planet Jupiter rather than the domestic inner sphere, which creates a deliberate contrast with the following stanza as below,

In another room,
my children lie asleep, turning
as Earth turns, growing
into their own lives, leaving me
a short time to watch, eye
to the eye-piece,
how a truth unfolds-
how the moonlets glide
... (O 34)

Unlike the poetization of serenity and warmth through the child image sleeping in its protected sphere, its cradle in *Jizzen* and in *Night Feed* by Boland as well, the speaking mother seems to take an accusing stand on her own children. As the words “in another room,” “lie asleep,” “their own lives,” leaving me/ a short time to watch” (O 34) indicate, the opposition between the mother speaker and the child is emphasized contrary to the symbiotic relation in the early poems of Jamie. Furthermore, the image of a self-giving mother in *Jizzen* is substituted with the one feeling as if frustrated with the domestic responsibilities in “The Galilean Moons.” Thus, the child appears not as an agent of the imaginary and the amative power triggered by means of it, but as an instrument of the blocking symbolic to grasp “how a truth unfolds-/ how the moonlets glide” (O 34). Similar to Boland’s “Daughter” sequence, children’s “growing/ into their own lives” (O 34) brings the mother persona down to “Earth” (O 34) by disenchanting the idealized maternity with the intrusion of the “inevitable” temporality. Furthermore, the heavenly (as it happens in the last parts of “Ultrasound”) association of the mother and the child is impeded since the amative fluidity cannot function as poeticized in another poem “A Raised Beach” from *The Overhaul* in the lines “Ah, you’re a grown-up now/ I’ve sung to you/ quite long enough” (O 18). Like the sharp truth of loss signified in “A Raised Beach,” the speaker in “The Galilean Moons” questions her subjection process as below,

Tell me, Galileo, is this
 what we’re working for?
 The knowing that in just
 one Jovian year
 the children will be gone
 uncommonly far, their bodies
 aglow, grown, talented-
 mere bright voice-motes
 calling from the opposite
 side of the world. (O 35)

by underlining the natural flow of life with the huge disappointment felt by mother speaker similar to the lines, “So I could say *mine. My own.*/ And I mean it./ Now they are grown up and far away” (LL 260) from “The Lost Land.” As

“the opposite/ side of the world” (O 35) suggests, the speaker acknowledges that assuming her child as her “own” (LL 260) is a delusion. Additionally, the above lines are reflected in Akin’s “But for this, we have removed from our life/ the passions, the fires for this” (ICM 87) in “Murat” but with a more emphasis on the negation and the futility of self-sacrifice when the love for the child matters. In a similar way, the persona wants “to watch” Jupiter’s moons “for hours” (O 35) but she has to leave “the passions/the fires” (ICM 87) since her routines during the day “plucks at my elbow/like a wakeful infant” (O 35). Thus, the persona endures her assigned role as a mother without the implication of the fulfilment felt through the early days of motherhood.

In the title poem, “The Tree House” from *The Tree House*, the speaker reformulates the meaning of ‘home’ by transforming the domestic into the natural. Similar to kitchen image in the early poems of Jamie and Boland, the tree house enables a safe space for the woman subject. However, this new form of the home is not defined by means of the selfless love to the children, on the contrary, the new saved space excludes the familial bonds by regarding them as boundaries for the self-realization of the speaker. The first two stanzas of the poem position the persona as an outsider observing both the natural (“tanged branches,” “a bletted fruit,” “sullen hills,” “the firth drained/ down to sandbanks” (TH 41)) and the cultural (“the town clock toll,” “a car/breenge home,” “house roofs” (TH 41)). The height of the tree house also grants the persona a godlike omnipotent perspective. The persona also cherishes her invisible position as the lines “here/ I was unseeable” (TH 41) by invalidating any form of the gaze. Accordingly, the influence of sleeping also changes, which excludes not the speaker as it happens in “my children lie asleep” (O 34) from “The Galilean Moons” but the familial bonds in “The Tree House” as below,

I lay to sleep,
beside me neither man
nor child, but a lichened branch
wound through the wooden chamber,
pulling it close; a complicity

like our own, when arm in arm
on the city street, we bemoan
our families, our difficult
chthonic anchorage
in the apple-sweetened earth, (TH 34)

Similar to the last lines “the trees grew in a circle,/ elegant and mute” (TH 31) in another poem, “Pipistrelles” from the same collection, “a lichened branch” (TH 34) unleashes the feeling of the monumental time with its circular moves for the mother speaker. In addition to that, the act of sleeping draws attention to a threshold the speaker transgresses by means of dreaming in which she sets herself free from the hindrance of the social denoted with “man” and “child” (TH 34). Moreover, in her vision, the speaker has a heart-to-heart talk with the branch embracing her as a confidant and an accomplice. However, the choice of the words, “complicity” and “chthonic anchorage” (TH 41) indicates the degree of the internalized responsibilities the mother persona suffers from. What makes the speaker’s stance tragic is that another possibility can only occur in her vision,

without whom we might have lived
the long ebb of our mid-decades
alone in sheds and attic rooms,
awake in the moonlit souterrains
our own minds; without whom

we might have lived
a hundred other lives,
like taxis strangers hail and hire,
that turn abruptly on the gleaming setts
and head for elsewhere. (TH 34)

The speaker glorifies the loneliness against the crowdedness demonstrated with her familial duties. As the “taxi” (TH 34) image suggests, the persona yearns for an intersubjective experience blocked by the monotony of the domestic sphere. As Braidotti suggests, “subjectivity is a process that aims at flows of interconnections and mutual impact” (154). However, with the intrusion of the child, such possibility of “interconnection” (Braidotti 154) is hampered. The repetitive “without whom” (TH 34) again echoes the

repentance in the recurrent “For this” (ICM 87) in Akin’s “Murat.” Although the persona desires for an intersubjective freedom from her bonds, she paradoxically achieves a specific intersubjectivity through the use of “we” (TH 41-43) by universalizing the mother’s sorrows. Then, she wakes up from her dream, and an alternative becoming of the speaker stops functioning. In other words, she turns back to the hampering gardens instead of the tree house and “our settlements” (TH 42),

where we’re best played out
in the gardens of dockens
and lady’s mantle, kids’ bikes
stranded on the grass (TH 42)

Furthermore, the flowers, “dockens/ and lady’s mantle” (TH 42) do not console the mother persona as the plants around the tree house do. On the contrary, they delineate the gap between her and the natural world besides reminding her domestic duties in a similar way to the “kids’ bikes” (TH 42) image. However, the floral imagery functions as a backdrop for the questioning tone of the mothers in “The Tree House” and other poems such as “The Buddleia” from *The Tree House*. In the opening lines from “The Buddleia,” for instance,

When I pause to consider
a god, or creation unfolding
in front of my eyes-
is this my lot? Always
brought back to the same
grove of statues in ill-
fitting clothes: my suddenly
elderly parents, their broken-down
Hoover; or my quarrelling kids? (TH 27)

the speaker observes a natural phenomenon and looks back to her own situatedness preventing an authentic unification with nature. In other words, similar to the desperate position of the woman in “The Tree House,” the rhetorical question “is this my lot” (TH 27) doubles her subjection by “always [bringing]” her “back to the same/ grove of statues” (27) as parents and children, both of whom hinder the semiotic fluidity of the speaker with their

stability as constructed replicas of the symbolic order. Moreover, the speaker tries to question another construct, “the masculine God of my youth” (TH 27) in order to grasp “the divine/ in the lupins, or foxgloves, or self-/seeded buddleia” (TH 27). But, in the end, the persona has to accept that her interpellation is done as poeticized in the lines “it’s almost too late/ to walk in the garden” (TH 27) implicating the lost chance of a productive alterity. Thus, despite the persona desires for an essence fulfilling her lack through nature, her otherness remains within the boundaries of the symbolic and she feels unsatisfied with the way of life compelling her to accept without any objection.

In Gülten Akin’s later works such as *Love is Everlasting*, *On a Distant Shore* and *Then I Grew Old*, two different child images are conveyed through a shared longing for the lost previous happy situation. On the one hand, the first child image⁵⁹ appears as the criticism of the modern world with the scenes of dying children as it happens in such lines as “Leave the children alone, wherever they go or whatever they do/ somehow the missiles and bombs find them” (LE 462) in “While Waiting for the War” or the ones such as “I saw the falling children/ half-smile in their eyes” (LE 468) in “The Witness of the Day” from *Love is Everlasting*. This sort of the child image poeticized leads to a political criticism against the cruel deeds of the humankind and represents the oppressed side. On the other hand, the second child image in Akin’s poems reflects the private sorrows of the speakers in the poems unlike the ones impersonalising the child image. In other words, the child image denotes the speaker’s feeling of separation and the longing for the previous harmonic unity with her children. In “Short Poem/ Eight” from *Then I Grew Old*, for instance, the speaker concedes in the couplet form that “When the child is inclined to foreign land/her mother is inclined to longing” (TIG 19). Unlike an indirect language signifying the possibility of amative loss when the child matters in the early poems of Akin, the later ones employ an unreserved language in order to convey the suffering originating from the motherhood. Even in a short

⁵⁹ Employing the child image as a criticism of the socio-political order can be traced back to Akin’s *Laments and Songs* in such poems “The Elegy of the Child Whose Mother Works,” “The Elegy of Fury” and “Welcoming for the Baby.”

poem like “Short Poem/ Eight,” the speaker equates the child with the extrinsic order and the mother with the intrinsic throes of agony. Thus, the mother has to suffer alone.

“Girlhurt”⁶⁰ from *On a Distant Shore* by Akin starts with the happy memories the persona experiences with her daughter with “how many years we lived together” (ODS 34). But her reconstructive remembrance is immediately followed with the present separation between the mother and her daughter. Like Boland’s “Daughter” sequence, the feeling of loss becomes prominent with the dysfunction of the maternal love. Moreover, similar to Jamie’s early poems dealing with the mother-child connection as the tension between the lover and the beloved other (child), “Girlhurt” expresses the mother’s amative feeling as an unrequited love since the repetitive “hasret” (longing) in the poem conveys the speaker’s unfulfilled desire for the unattainable,⁶¹

your heart, I don’t know, is concealed from me
an exhausted longing
stuck by piling up constantly in mine
...
let your distance suffice me there
seeing that it never vanishes
seeing that we never met while living in the same city

thus far who has learnt
the chemistry transforming longing?
I by myself by myself
learnt to converse with the longing for you (ODS 34)

Thus, the lines above demystify the nostalgia of motherhood by emphasizing the oppositions between the persona and her daughter. Unlike two hearts beating at the same time, the speaker of “Girlhurt” feels the sorrow of separation deeply because her daughter’s heart is inaccessible to her now. Moreover, the persona admits the fallacy of ‘owning’ the daughter’s love as it

⁶⁰ I preferred to translate the original title of the poem, “Kızkırgın” as a single word since the poet suggests an original word for the persona’s despondent mood with a certain amount of poetic licence.

⁶¹ As stated in the poem, that the mother cannot see her daughter even if they live in the same city connotes the emotional gap the love for the daughter causes.

happens in Boland's "So I could say *mine. My own*" (LL 260) and Jamie's "*It's okay, he's mine*" (JI 20).

In Akin's later poetry, the mother persona suffers from her inability to forget the maternal love in her way of life completely. To put it differently, the maternal appears as a return of the repressed in each case. In this new stage of her subjectivity, the persona tries to replace the maternal with an acceptance of her loneliness. However, similar to the representation of the child in the later poems of Jamie and Boland, the child as the amative centre of a beautiful past in spite of its daily difficulties in Akin's poem occupies so huge place that its absence always leaves a negating remainder of the amorous feeling. In other words, as the last lines "I by myself by myself/ learnt to converse with the longing for you" (ODS 34) can indicate, the mother's tragedy lies in her failure to abandon her maternal position. As a sort of defence mechanism, she "transform[s]" (ODS 34) her longing for the daughter into the essence of longing by changing the agency of that feeling. However, similar to Jamie's "Galilean Moons," "stuck by piling up constantly in mine" (ODS 34) clarifies a cornered image of the mother who cannot go beyond her present unfavourable situation as her attempts to recover "constantly" (ODS 34) remind her of what she has lost.

4.5. Conclusion

As the comparison of the three poets from the respect of the amorous feeling demonstrated, the subject found a new gate to encounter with her situatedness, which brought her a renewed sense of consciousness. Accordingly, the chapter evaluated the situatedness of the woman in the poems from three perspectives; the possible meanings of love for the personae, thus becoming an amorous subject, becoming a mother and becoming a lonely mother with the lost sense of maternity.

The amative dynamics led to both alleviating and aggravating emotions for the woman subject. As the early poems of Boland, Jamie and Akin suggested, the

amative feeling made the woman persona's life more bearable by destabilizing the borders of the social. In other words, the amorous situation of the personae disrupted the symbolic realm through a restored awareness of unity in a paradoxical way since the amative triggered the sense of wholeness with its dislocating impact on signification. By pushing the limits of referentiality in the whirling amative mood, the subject reconstructed and deconstructed certain centres such as being a lover or a mother. Additionally, the child stood as a metaphorical extension of the amative by both granting the feeling of an original unity and fragmenting such a wholeness with its absence for the mother subject in the poems.

Consequently, the analysis of Boland's, Jamie's and Akin's poems related to love indicated how the ordinary (the praxis) converged with the extraordinary (the amative) by creating a ground for the woman persona to reconsider her subjectivity from within despite the dominant hopelessness in the end.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION: "FOLDING AND UNFOLDING"

This study attempted to explore the similarities and the differences between Eavan Boland, Kathleen Jamie and Gülten Akin primarily from a Kristevan perception of subjectivity with cross-references to Barthes and Foucault. Since the dissertation took its starting point from the simple definition of subjectivity as a way of life or *The Way We Live* as the title of Kathleen Jamie's poetry collection in 1987 suggests, the study tried to demonstrate the poets' personal experiences as reflections of an idiosyncratic voice coming out of the multiplicities the poems' speakers vocalise.

Although Boland, Jamie and Akin were raised in different localities and influenced by seemingly unrelated cultural heritages, the comparative analysis of the poems selected from the poets' early and later poetry collections suggested that the poets shared a rich imagery originating from the idyllic realm of their homelands, Ireland, Scotland and Anatolia with similar poetic tensions or concerns towards the clash of the subjective with the social. However, the fallacy of 'home' as an idealistic space granting relief doubles the sorrows conveyed through the exterior and interior (domestic) images of the speakers' surroundings.

The comparable qualities of the poems selected from the early and later works of the three poets underlined the conveyance of a fluid subjectivity that was one of the major focuses of this study. Accordingly, how the poets employed the notion of a consistent flux expressed on both corporeal and psychological levels formed the basic argument of the study as well. Similar to Jamie's lines

“So this is women’s work: folding and unfolding” (JI 45), Boland’s emphasis on “turnings and returnings” (OL xiii) led to a complex and mostly paradoxical evaluation of certain grand narratives for the poets. Additionally, the study showed that the poets dealt with their older themes with new perspectives by reflecting even the minute changes of their lives into their poetic spheres. Moreover, the study suggested that even though the poets re-evaluated their previous concerns, they also tried to transform those arguments or personal conflicts into a “New Territory” by sustaining their basic stance.

The theoretical part of the study tried to draw the critical limitations of the study with its focus on the subject’s relation to the social order and the amative dynamics. The part also tried to explain certain concepts such as language, history and time with Kristeva’s related arguments in the subject’s becoming process. As Boland vocalises “the mystery of being a poet in the puzzle of time, sexuality and nationhood” (OL xiii), such notions as language, politics or temporality are always liable to uncertainties and redefinitions in the poetries of the three poets with the tension between the semiotic and the symbolic or different perceptions of time. Thus, the study analysed the poems of Boland, Jamie and Akin in two parts, the social and the amative boundaries of the woman subject. In the signification process, the social represented the defining force behind the idea of domination over the subject in the form of phenotext and the amative as a reflection of the genotext offered a recuperating realm for the personae of Boland, Jamie and Akin. However, the evaluation of the poems selected showed that any sort of generalization did not work for the poets as it happened in the changing attitude towards motherhood in the early and later poems of the poets.

The first part of the study evaluated the poems from *The Queen of Sheba*, *In a Time of Violence*, *The Wind-Hour* with cross-references to *The Poems of 42 Days*, *The Tree House* and *Jizzen*. This part focused on the persona’s fluctuations between the symbolic and the semiotic or the imaginary in the symbolic with the influences of monumental and linear time spaces in order to illustrate the fractured nature of the subject in the early poems of the three

poets. Their turning back to similar arguments in the later works offered that the woman subject's positions remained intact when the social matters and the affirmative connotations of the progress for her merely deepened her sorrows with artificial boundaries or maps. In other words, her endeavour to break with the limits forced by the symbolic order, history or language resulted in failure and the speakers acknowledged such failure with certain passivity before an existential impasse.

The second part dealt with another key argument of this study, the influence of love in the intersubjective relations of the poets' speakers. To put it differently, what love meant for the woman subject with her inner and outer borderlines such social bonds and maternity formed the basic discussion of the part. The analysis of the poems from *New Territory*, *Night Feed*, *Jizzen*, *I Cut My Black Hair*, *The Wind-Hour*, *In a Time of Violence* and *The Journey* suggested that the healing power of the amorous both maintained the fluidity in the subject and balanced the harassment caused by the symbolic. However, the comparative analysis of the poets' later collections, *Love is Everlasting*, *Then I Grew Old*, *On a Distant Shore*, *The Lost Land*, *The Tree House* and *The Overhaul* indicated that the subject's amorous fluidity was again blocked by the social order and she was left with a sheer loneliness. In addition to that, motherhood loses its previous recuperative capacity by evolving into the feelings of obligation, repentance and separation for the woman subject.

Furthermore, the comparison of the selected poems demonstrated that the subject poeticized by the poets held an unfavourable position with her tendency towards the thresholds and inability to go beyond them. In this respect, both the oppression of the symbolic and the unchaining amorous triggered the possibility of a rapture in the subjectivity of the woman persona, which granted an outlet for the persona's repressed feelings by unleashing the momentary semiotic flux. The persona's attempts to establish organizing centres such as home, maternity or love for her chaotic situatedness accentuated her fragmentary way of life, which also emphasized the different facets of fragility for the woman persona.

The outcomes of the fragmentariness such as disunity, use of an elliptical language and decentred perception of centres with the whirling world of signifiers were also cherished by the personae in both early and later poems of the three poets. Moreover, the productive residue of dissolved language and history enabled a saved space for the persona to stop and reconsider the constructs operating around her in an omnipotent way. Thus, the analysis of the poems also indicated the silent voice of the woman subject which functioned as a paradoxical departure from the symbolic realm with the inevitable return in her mind.

As a last remark, future studies on the comparative analysis of Boland, Jamie and Akin can be conducted in order to demonstrate the nomadic ethics suggested by Deleuze & Guattari and Braidotti. Further studies might reveal another facet of the subject's fluidity in addition to the way this study tried to discuss. In other words, future studies might offer an explanation for the fragmented nature of the subject by means of a nomadic analysis. Furthermore, how the poets interact with nature might be considered from an ecocritical perspective with the discussion of human and nonhuman elements in the three poets' especially later poems.

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APPENDICES

A. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Altunsoy, Şafak
Nationality: Turkish (TC)
Date and Place of Birth: 17 June 1986, Tokat
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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	Selcuk University English Culture and Literature	2010
BA	Selcuk University English Language and Literature	2007

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2017- Present	Selcuk University English Language and Literature	Research Assistant
2011-2017	METU Department of Foreign Language Education	Research Assistant
2008-2011	Selcuk University English Language and Literature	Research Assistant

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English (Advanced), German (Intermediate), Spanish (Beginner)

PUBLICATIONS

1. Altunsoy, Şafak. "Conflict of Day and Night in Isaac Rosenberg's Poems." *Molesto: Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Vol.1 (3), 2018, pp. 1-14.
2. Altunsoy, Şafak. "Love as a Threat: Christine de Pizan's Reflections on Courtly Love in *The Book of the Duke of True Lovers*." *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi/ The Journal of International Social Research*, 10(54), 2017, pp. 6-12.
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5. Altunsoy, Şafak. *Opponent Voices: Robert Bly and Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca: A Comparative Study of Light Around the Body and Our Vietnam War*. Lambert, 2010.
6. Altunsoy, Şafak. "Cultural Reception of the Place Images in the Poems of Mark Doty and Murathan Mungan, a Turkish Poet." *One World Many Cultures: Reflections on the Cultural Aspects of Globalization*. Eds. Bednarz Marek and Jurkiewicz Wojciech, KPU (Kujawy-Pomorze University) Publishing House, 2010.

B. TURKISH SUMMARY/ TÜRKÇE ÖZET

İrlanda edebiyatından Eavan Boland, İskoç edebiyatından Kathleen Jamie ve Türk edebiyatından Gülten Akin eserlerinde kendi deneyimleri temelinde kadın öznelliğini şiirleştirir. Eğitim ve kültürel altyapıları hegemonik ideolojinin sınırlandırıcı etkisinde kaldığından dolayı üç şair şiir dünyalarını inanışlar veya ahlaki değerler gibi ana göstergelerin tanımladığı hakim algılayış biçimlerinin uzağında konumlandırır. Böylece Boland, Jamie ve Akin şiir kariyerleri boyunca sınırlardan beslenmişlerdir. Ancak bu hudut algılaması sınırın övülmesinden belirli bir merkeze olan ihtiyaca dönüştüğü söylenebilir. Böylece şairlerin şiirleri, çok sesli sorgulayan seslerin belirli bir anlam bütünlüğüne ulaşmak ile böyle bir bütünlüğe ulaşmanın olanaksızlığı arasında gidip gelen bir hal içerisinde olmasını anlatır.

Bu çalışma iki kısımda üç şairdeki devinim olgusunu incelemeye çalışır. İlk ve son şiirlerine baktığımızda yalnız bir kadın yazarın tek başına kendisine dayatılan basmakalıp fikirleri yıkmaya çalıştığını görürüz. Yalnızlığı da sınır kavramının kişisel olarak duyumsanmasıdır. Bu şekilde kurulan hayali bir hudut aynı zamanda toplumsal yapının sınırlarının ötesine geçme niyetine yönlendirir. Bu bakımdan çalışmanın ana konusunu şiir kişinin öznellik sürecinde deneyimlediği kendine has devinim oluşturmaktadır.

Akışkan öznelliğin tanımını Kristeva ve Barthes'ın toplumsal olan ve sevgi ile ilgili tartışmalarında bulabiliriz. Toplumsal olan akışkan öznelliğin olumsuz tarafını yansıtırken sevgisel olan genel olarak olumlu bir devinimi ifade eder. İlaveten şiir kişilerinin kendilerini toplumsal ve sevgisel olanın sınırlarından kurtarma istekleri üretken bir sürecin başlangıcına işaret eder. Bu yararlı süreci kırık ayna metaforuyla açıklayabiliriz. Ayna imgesinin gösterdiği üzere özne kendisini belli bir uzaklıktan görme fırsatını elde eder. Ancak söz konusu

ayna kırık olduđu için parlak kısımlar mevcut durumunun bozuk bir yansımasıdır. Yani düzenli ve bütüncül olan kırılmaya, bozulmaya başlamıştır. Kırık aynanın dađınık vaziyette görünen siyah kısımları ise siyah renginin özne üzerinde bıraktığı etkiyle onun imgesel bağlantılarını yeniden tesis etmesine olanak tanır.

Boland, Jamie ve Akın'ın şiirlerinde yinelenen konuları incelemenin yanında bu çalışma kadının şiirlerdeki sesinin nasıl farklı açılardan verildiğini değerlendirmektedir. Bu bakımdan çalışma, Boland'ın *Eysel Şiddet, Kendi İmgesinde, Kayıp Yer*, Jamie'nin *Kalbinde Bir Alev, Beşik, Sheba Kraliçesi, Ağaç Ev* ve Akın'ın *Kestim Kara Saçlarımı, Rüzgar Saati, Uzak Bir Kıyıda* ve *İşte Sonra Yaşlandım* gibi şiir kitaplarından seçilen şiirleri post-yapısalcı feminist kuramlar ışığında okumaya çalışır. Kristeva, Irigaray, Braidotti gibi kuramcılar, kadının öznelliğini kendi bakış açılarından tanımlarlar. Bu tanımlamalar kadın öznelğinde kronolojik bir deđişimin olduğunu da gösterir. Adı geçen teorisyenler ayrıca Boland, Jamie ve Akın şiirlerindeki özelliğın deđişim sürecini anlamamıza katkı sağlarlar.

Çalışmanın ilk bölümü kuramsal bir çerçeve çizmeye çalışır. Üçüncü ve dördüncü bölümler, toplumsal ve sevgisel olanın sürekli müdahaleleriyle yaratılan gerilimi şairlerin çeşitli dönemlerindeki eserlerini merkeze alarak yakından okumaktadır.

Zaman kavramı Boland, Jamie ve Akın şiirlerinde çözülmez bir sorundur. Bu yüzden çalışma şairlerin ilk ve son şiirlerinde zaman kavramının nasıl deđiştirdiğini de incelemeye çalışmaktadır. Braidotti'nin de belirttiği gibi zamanın algılanması parçalı ve kopuk bir zaman kavramının sürekliliği şeklindedir, yani Diyonizyak ve Apollonyan zamanların çatışmasıdır (151).

Doğrusal ve döngüsel zaman kavramları arasındaki gitgeller şiir kişilerini Jorris'in ifadesiyle bir "durmaya, dinlenmeye, ikili durumlar arasında başıboş vaziyette dolaşmaya" (7) itmektedir. Bununla birlikte şairler mantık merkezci söylemin belirlediği tarihin etkisini de göz ardı etmemektedir. Bunun yerine,

şairlerindeki gözlemleyen kişi vasıtasıyla tarihin sınırlarına karşı varoluşsal bir duruş sergilemektedirler. Böylece, Jamie'nin "Sheba Kraliçesi"nde başardığı gibi şiirin kendisi veya yazma eylemi, öznenin Apollonyan sınırları zorlayıp imgesel alana tekrar ulaşacağı bir uzama dönüşmektedir.

Üç şairin şiirlerindeki akışkanlık genel olarak şiirdeki sesin kendisini Braidotti'nin ifadesiyle göçebe etiği içinde konumlandırmasına olanak tanır. Dahası, bu sürekli değişim "merkez-sınır ekseninin ötesinde bir dünya" (93)'yü ifade eder. Diğer bir deyişle, Jamie, Boland ve Akın şiirleri merkez-sınır karşıtlığının ekseninden sadece karşılıklar etrafında dönmeyen daha geniş bir eksene evrilmiştir. Bu şekilde bir değişim ilk ve son şiirlerindeki değişen kadın sesine de işaret eder. Böylece çalışma, iç ve dış belirleyici etkenlerle kadın öznelliğinin nasıl yeniden düzenlendiğini Kristeva'nın oluş kuramını kullanarak açıklar. Her ne kadar çalışma Braidotti'nin tartıştığı göçebe öznellik üzerine odaklanmasa da, göçebe öznellikte görülen akışkanlık Boland, Jamie ve Akın şiirlerinde de görülür.

Dikey olmaktan çok yatay olarak ilerleyen bir süreç algısı veya doğrusallıktan çok döngüsellüğün değerli görülmesi üç şairin sürekli değişim fikrinde yatar. Şairlerin doğayı algılaması da sürekli seyahatleri neticesinde durağan olmayan bir uzam olarak yeniden şekillenir. Jorris'in ifadesiyle şiir kendisini "kök gövdeli" olarak sunar ve böylece "bir alandan diğerine, insan-hayvan-bitki-mineral yatay& dikey geçişler" (38, 41) şeklinde ilerler. Örneğin Jamie'nin "Dilek Ağacı" ve "Kurbağalar" gibi şiirlerinde bu durumu görebilmekteyiz.

Bunlara ek olarak, şairlerin fiziki anlamda göçebelikleri de, İrlanda, İskoçya ve Türk kökenlerine rağmen açık açık milliyetçilikten uzak tutar. Eavan Boland'ın dediği gibi "şiir enerjisiyle ve güzel diliyle tanımlanır, şairinin pasaportuyla değil" (McGuire 144) diyerek bu şekilde bir milliyetçiliği reddederler. Ancak, İrlanda İskoçya veya Anadolu şiir kişilerince bütünlük ve rahatlama hissettikleri psikik bir alan olarak yansıtılır. Bu deneyimleri anlık olduğundan kendisini parçalanmışlıklar içinde gösterir.

Çalışmanın kısıtlılıklarından bahsedecek olursak iki nokta ön plana çıkmaktadır. Birincisi şiirlerin seçilmesi ile ilgilidir. Çalışma kadın özneliğine odaklandığı için analiz için ilk veya son eserlerden seçmek gibi bir yöntem pratik değildir. Yani, şairler şiirlerinde benzer konuları değişik bakış açılarından bakarak tekrar tekrar ürettikleri için seçimde kronolojik bir ayırım fonksiyonel değildir. Aslında bu kısıtlılık bile Kristevacı bir döngüsellğin şairlerce kişisel yorumlamasıdır. İkinci bir kısıtlılıksa Gülten Akin şiirlerinin Türkçeden İngilizceye çevrilmesi ile ilgilidir. Parker'ın vurguladığı gibi Akin'ın şiir yazım tarzı karmaşık ve referans noktaları belirli olmadığı için (ix) İngilizceye çevrilmeleri de zordur. Ayrıca, Anadolu ağızlarını şiirlerinde kullanan şair Türkçenin inceliklerini ve kelimelerdeki çok anlamlılığı yansıtmaktadır. Bu yüzden asıl şiirin anlamsal ve duygusal bütünlükle çevirisinde verilmeye çalışılması iyi niyetli bir amacın ötesine geçememektedir. Çünkü Robinson'un da ifade ettiği gibi çeviri orijinal metnin kültürel altyapısını tamamen gösterememektedir (37).

Ulusal edebiyatları ekseninde değerlendirildiğinde, Boland, Jamie ve Akin'ın evrensel olanı gündelik yaşama harmanlamayı başarmaları ve dillerini çok yönlü olarak kullanmaları bakımından kendi edebiyatları içerisinde önemli yerlere sahiptirler. Paylaşılan bu özellik ilk eserlerinden son eserlerine kadar görülebilir. Bu bakımdan, hayatlarını belirleyen güçler karşısında kadınca duyarlılıkları üç şairin ana odak noktasını belirtmektedir.

Bununla birlikte, Boland, Jamie ve Akin'ı feminist, ayrımcı ve milliyetçi olarak etiketlemek sadece başka bir karşıtlık yaratır ve damgalamadaki sığlığın ötesine gidemez. Hatta şairlerin kadın-erkek gibi ayrımlara karşı olduğu bile söylenebilir. Bir tarafı sürekli yererken diğer tarafı yücelten bir üslup çoğu şiirde görülmez. Diğer bir deyişle, şairler hayatlarının doğal akışlarını şiirlerine yansıtmaktadır. Boland'ın da belirttiği gibi, "ayrımcı değilim, olsam olsam, bozguncuyumdur" (183). Yani şairler mevcut düzeni sürekli eleştirerek içeriden/ sistemin içinde kalan bir değişimi önerir. Bununla birlikte, somut sonuçlar veya sabit paradigmlar peşinden gitmek yerine öznenin Kristevacı oluş sürecini ön plana çıkarırlar.

Ulus fikri de üç şairin paylaştığı bir unsurdur. Yeni-milliyetçi gibi bir yakıştırmayı kabul etmezler. Böss'ün de belirttiği gibi ulus Boland için politik olan ulus devleti değil de dil yoluyla tahayyül edilen bir alanı (133) ifade eder. Her ne kadar şiirlerde tarihsel gerçekler ve ülkelerinin fiziksel özellikleri işlense de anavatan vurgusu milliyetçilikten çok hayal edilen rahatlatıcı bir yer olan 'yuva'yı anlatır. Bu bakımdan tarihsel ve mitik olanın karışımı yanında İrlanda, İskoçya ve Anadolu simgeselin içindeki imgeselin fonksiyonunu da görselleştirir. Böylece, şairlerin hatıra ve denemeler gibi düzyazılarında belirttikleri kişisel tarihlerinin de vurguladığı gibi yer imgeleri hem öznenin geçmişini hatırlatan bir bağlantı noktası olarak hem de onun doğa ile olan ilişkisini yeniden düzenleyerek şiirleri besleyen yerel kaynaklara dönüşür.

Dahası doğa şairler için başlıca kaynaklardan birisidir. Bu kaynağın nasıl kullanıldığının seçilen şiirlerde gösterilmesi de şairler arasında karşılaştırılabilir bir nitelik olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Boland'ın şiir kişileri Romantik bir tutumla doğayı bir kaçış/çıkış alanı olarak görür. Gündelik yaşamın sıkıntılarından ve kadın olmanın getirdiği sorumluluklardan kaçacağı bir uzamdır. Ancak bu durum şiir kişinin kaybetmişlik hissini iki katına çıkarır çünkü ne doğayla hayal ettiği gibi bir bağ kurabilir ne de toplumsal olandan tamamen kendini soyutlayabilir.

Gairn'in ifade ettiği gibi İskoç edebiyatında doğal dünyanın önemli bir yeri vardır (1). Jamie şiirinde konu olarak doğa büyük bir yer tutar. Şair ilk eserlerinden son eserlerine kadar doğanın iyileştirici etkisini işlemiştir. Başka bir deyişle, doğanın bahsettiği bütünlük hissiyatını şair kabul eder. Ne var ki, Boland'a benzer bir şekilde doğal olanla insanın bağlantısının kaybolduğunu ve toplumsal olanın çeşitli vasıtalarla bu bağın tekrar kurulma ihtimaline fırsat vermediğini de ifade eder. Sonuç olarak hasret insanın içinde bu durumun bir kalıntısı olarak işlevini sürdürmeye devam eder.

Hem Anadolu'nun topografyasını bilen hem de halk edebiyatının etkilerini şiirlerine taşıyan bir şair olarak Akın, doğal olanla ilgili gözlemlerini şiirlerine taşır. Ancak Halman'ın halk edebiyatı için söylediği doğanın güzelliklerinin

işlenmesi (4) konusu Akında tek başına yer bulmaz. Yani Akın doğayı sadece estetik bir amaçla kullanmaz. Doğa insanların acılarını anlatmak için gerçek bir ögedir. Ancak doğanın sadece fiziki düzlemde değil aynı zamanda simgesel olarak da bir değeri ve anlamı vardır. Jamie ve Boland'a benzer bir şekilde Anadolu hem bastırılanın geri dönüşü hem de öznellik sürecinde alınan yaraların uzamsal bir hatırlatıcısıdır.

Jamie, Boland ve Akın, ne şehirde ne de doğada kendine iyileştirici bir yer bulabilen kadının durumunu şiirleştirir. Şiir kişileri ve kişileştirmeleri vasıtasıyla üç şair toplumlarının mevcut yapısına duydukları memnuniyetsizliği anlatırlar. Ancak üç şair, hissettikleri mevcut bunalımları belirli bir ideoloji eksenine bağlı kalarak işlemezler ve özcü bir biçimde her hangi bir üst anlatıya bağlı kalmazlar. Bu bakımdan toplumsal olanla öznenin ilişkisini irdeleyen üçüncü bölüm şiirlerdeki semiyotik-simgesel ilişkileri, kadının tarih içindeki yerleşikliği, öznenin oluş süreci ve hakim bir söylem olarak dilin tahakkümünü analiz etmeye çalışır. Bu bölümün diğer bir odak noktasıyla zaman kavramının şiirlerde nasıl görüldüğüyle ilgilidir. Toplumsal olanın dayattığı zaman ile öznenin deneyimlediği zaman algısı bölümün inceleme konusudur.

Üçüncü bölüm şairlerin ilk ve son eserlerinden seçilen şiirler ile toplumsal olanın Kristevacı bir yorumunu irdelemiştir. Kadın şiir kişilerinin kırılğanlığı oluş sürecinde dil ve tarihin yarattığı bunalımının bir yansımasıdır. Semiyotik-simgesel karşıtlığı veya imgeselin simgesel içine dağılması şiirlerde şiir kişilerinin şahsına münhasır öznelliklerinin bir ifadesidir. Muazzam ve doğrusal zaman arasındaki ilişkiden ortaya çıkan gerilim de şiir kişilerinin ötekileştirildiğinin ve sözlerinin kesildiğinin bir göstergesidir. Sosyo-sembolik olanın sınırlarını zorlayan kadı şiir kişisi alternatif bir hikaye anlatmayı dener. Ancak simgeselin dayattığı anlamı yıkma çabalarına rağmen, özne başlangıç noktasına döner, ancak öznelliğinde yeni bir aşamaya girmiştir. Böylece kendi yerleşikliğini reddetmeden imgesel ile bağlantısını yeniden kurmayı başarır.

Dördüncü bölüm, sevginin özne üzerindeki olumlu veya olumsuz etkileri üzerine yoğunlaşır. Böylece sevgi şiir kişilerinde yeni öznellik alanlarına imkan tanır. Sevgi şiirlerde ya aynı şekilde kalır veya ilk deneyimin izlerini taşıyarak başka bir hisse dönüşür. Sevginin yeni bir tahakküm alanı yaratıp yaratmadığı ve özne için kaybetmişlik hissine neden olup olmadığı da bölümün tartışma konusunu kapsar. İlaveten sevginin etkisini tartışmak için Kristeva ve Barthes'ın kuramlarına başvurulmuştur. Şairler, sevgiyle ilgili şiirlerinde sevginin kendilerine has bir tanımını ifade ederler. Aynı zamanda bu kişisel alımlamalarını toplumlarının tarihsel çözültisi denilebilecek deneyimler ile de birleştirirler. Öznelğin inşasında sadece Kristeva'nın tartıştığı şekilde sadece ifade edilemeyen bastırılması şeklinde değil de aynı zamanda tanımlama yapmanın zor olduğu sevgi olgusunun etkisiyle de şiir kişileri yeni bir süreç içerisine girerler. Kişinin öteki olan sevdiğiyle ilişkisinin yanı sıra anne oluşu ve çocuğunu sevgisinin bir parçası olarak görmesi de hem olumlu hem de olumsuz bir kaynak olarak ortaya çıkar. Anneliğin ilk günleri özne için semiyotik bir kırılma yaşatır. Ancak bu mutlu anılar son dönem şiirlerinde görüldüğü gibi yerini çocuktan ayrılma süreciyle birlikte kaybetmişlik hissine bırakır.

Böylece Akın, Jamie ve Boland şiirlerinde sevgi meselesi her zaman tartışmalı bir şekilde değerlendirilebilir. Diğer bir deyişle öznellik süreci sevgi ile yeniden şekillenir. Kristeva'nın ifade ettiği gibi "seven özne ötekini bir bütün olarak algılar ve aynı zamanda bu bütünlük onda kelimelere dökemeyeceği bir kalıntı bırakır" (19). Böylece ilk ve sonraki şiirlerdeki kişiler gündelik yaşayış biçimlerindeki bunalımlarından kurtulabilecekleri bir özgürlüğe sahip olurlar ancak özneler için sevgi de tarih ve dilin yanında başka bir sınır yaratır.

Jamie'nin *Beşik* ve Akın'ın *Rüzgar Saati* gibi eserlerde anne ile çocuk arasındaki ilişki dikkat çekicidir. Diğer bir deyişle, Boland, Jamie ve Akın'ın ilk eserlerinde büyük bir fedakarlık içinde bakılan bebek öznelğin etrafında yeniden şekilleneceğini görselleştirir. Villar-Argaiz'e göre "kadın şairler dişil deneyimlerini dile getirdiklerinde eserlerinde şu konu tekrar tekrar görünür: anne ile çocuk arasındaki sevgi" (89). Ancak bu çalışma sadece anne ile çocuk arasındaki sevginin öznellik üzerine etkilerine odaklanmaz. Aynı zamanda

anne ile çocuk arasında var olan ve anne tarafından deneyimlenen sevginin sonradan kaybedilmesi veya eski işlevini yerine getirememesinin özne için nedensiz yıkıcı olabileceğini de ortaya koymaya çalışır.

Türk edebiyatında etkili bir eleştirmen olan Memet Fuat, Gülten Akın şiirinden bahsederken kadın hassasiyetinin yapıcı öfkesi ve anneliğin bir ürünü (Paker 276) olarak bir tanımlama yapar. Anca bu şekilde bir yorum sorunudur. Çünkü kadın öznesini sadece annelik üzerinden yorumlamak erkek egemen söylem imasını içeren sınırlayıcı bir kategori yaratmanın ötesine geçemez. Boland, Jamie ve Akın özelinde baktığımızda, annelik kadının gündelik problemlerinden kaynaklı yorgunluğunu şiirleştirmeye olanak tanır, ayrıca kadının kıyıda 'dışarıyı' gözlemlemesini sağlayan 'yuva' hissiyatı onun için rahatlatıcı bir uzam sağlar.

Sevgisel deneyim "şefkate" (McWilliams 315) gerçekleştirildiğinde öteki olarak çocuğa tam bir bağlılığı ve boyun eğmeyi ifade eder. Böylece seven ve sevilen rolleri anne ve çocuk ilişkisinde yeniden kurulur. Ayrıca üç şairin kendi annelik deneyimlerini de seven ve öteki olarak yansıttıkları da söylenebilir. McWilliams'ın Boland özelinde ifade ettiği yapıcı annelik deneyimi (320) problemlidir. Çünkü ilk başlarda hissedilen bütünlük hissi zamanla yerini parçalanmış bir ruh haline bırakır. Bu bakımdan Barthes'ın "olumlamanın olumlama" (24) düşüncesi şiirlerde anne ile çocuk arasında gösterilen gerilimi açıklar niteliktedir.

Öncelikle şiirlerde anne-özne daha önce çocuk sahibi olma hissiyatını yaşamadığı için bu duyguyu hayranlıkla karşılar. Bu birinci aşamada özne çocuğa duyduğu bütüncül sevgi neticesinde kendisini "körleştirir" (Barthes 24). Bununla birlikte öznenin çocuk için duyduğu körlemesine sevgi bir zaman sonra yerini böyle bir sevgiyi kaybetme olasılığına bırakır ve bu durum özne melankoliye neden olur. Barthes'ın bu kalıp tersten okunduğunda 'olumsuzlamanın olumsuzlaması' şeklinde düşünülebilir. Yani üç şairin annelikle ilgili şiirlerinde hem Barthes'ın bahsettiği yapı hem de bunun tersi yapı vardır. Örnek verecek olursak, şiir anneliğin olumsuz etkisiyle başlar,

karamsarlık hakimdir. Açılış mısralarını takip eden kısımlarda da ayrılıktan bahsedilir. Böylece ilk başta şiirleştirilen olumsuz durum son kısımlarda tekrar olumsuzlanır. Bazı şiirlerde ise bu her iki kalıp paradoksal bir biçimde aynı düzlemde gösterilebilir. Boland'ın "Gece Emzirmesi" şiiri böyle karmaşık şekilde çocuğa duyulan sevginin ifadesi için örnek olabilir.

Anne-çocuk arasındaki olumlu ilişkinin yanı sıra çocuk büyüdükçe ve anne yaşlandıkça aralarında ilk zamanların tam tersi bir durum ortaya çıkar. Bu bakımdan çalışma anneliğin her zaman olumlu bir etkisi olup olmadığını sorgulamaktadır. Şairlerin annelik üzerine yazdıkları ilk şiirleri ve son şiirleri birlikte ele alındığı zaman sevginin deviniminin engellendiği duygusu dikkat çeker. Diğer bir deyişle sevgideki akış şiir kişisinin duyumsadığı kaybetme hissiyle engellenir ve böylece üç şair son şiirlerinde geçmişin nostaljisi karamsarlığına düşer. Ancak her ne kadar şairler kaybedilmiş bir deneyimin aynı duygu yoğunluğuyla yaşanamayacağını kabul etmesine karşı, kaybedilen sevgisel doygunluğu anılar vasıtasıyla tekrar inşa etmeyi denerler. Fakat çocuk kayıp bir imge olarak şiir kişisinin önceki annelik fikrini sorunsallaştırır. Örneğin Boland'ın "Kaybettiğimiz Şey" ve Jamie'nin "Unut Gitsin" şiirlerinde görüldüğü gibi annelik olumsuz bir şekilde işlenir ve ilk başta hissedile sevgi yerini ötekinin yani çocuğun ilgisizliğine dönüşür. Bu dönüşüm de üç şairin son eserlerinde kadın özneliliğinin şekillendirici bir unsuru olarak karşımıza çıkar.

Anneliğin şiir kişileri için anlamı değiştiğinden anne-çocuk ilişkisinden bahseden şairlerin son dönem şiirleri ilk şiirlerine karşı bir tez olarak okunabilir. Son şiirlerin şairlerin ilk dönem şiirlerinin konularını tekrar değerlendirmesi bakımından oldukça geçirgen olduğu söylenebilir. Örneğin üç şair de bebekliğin huzur dolu günlerinden kopmalarından kaynaklı bedenen ve duygusal olarak hissettikleri yalnızlığı paylaşır. İlk şiirler, yeni annelerin fakirlik ve kısıtlı imkanlar gibi zorlaştırıcı etmenlere rağmen sevgisel akış sebebiyle belli bir doygunluğu duyumsadıklarını anlatırken sonraki şiirler şiir kişilerinin bir şekilde bu annelik boşluğunu dolduramadıklarını gösterir.

Ancak ilk dönem şiirlerinde şairlerin tümüyle anneliği övdükleri söylenemez. Her ne kadar anneliğin iyileştirici yanını kabul etseler de anne olmayı tamamen romantik bir şekilde şiirleştirmezler. Belirli bir dengede ironik tonun arka planda var olduğu söylenebilir. Bu durum özellikle Akın ve Boland şiirlerinde daha belirgindir.

Sevgi ekseninde üç şairin karşılaştırılması öznenin üç şekilde kendi konumunu kabul ettiğini gösterir. Bu konum sevginin muhtemel anlamları, anne olmak ve yalnız bir anne olmak içinde hem görünür vaziyettedir hem de bazı koşullarda görünmeden işlevini sürdürmektedir. Sevgiyle ilgili dinamikler kadın özneyi hem iyileştirir hem de daha kötü hale getirir. Bunu toplumsal olanın sınırlarını zorlayarak ve bu şekilde öznenin yaşamını daha katlanılır yaparak başarır.

Anlam üretme süreçlerini bozan sevgi dinamikleri bütünlük ve doygunluk hissi yarattığından şiir kişilerinin durumu simgesel alanı rahatsız eder. Döngüsel bir biçimde göndergeselliğin de sınırlarını zorlamış olan özne hem aşık hem de anne olarak belirli merkezleri bozup yeniden kurar. İlâveten, sevginin metaforik bir uzantısı olarak çocuk hem bilinmeyen bir orijinallik sağlar hem de anne özne için yokluğuyla önceden hissedilen bütünlüğü parçalar. Böylece sıradan (praxis) ve sıra dışı (sevgi) iç içe girdiğinden sevgisel dinamikler, kadın şiir kişilerine öznelliklerini tekrar değerlendirme fırsatını verir.

Çalışmanın genel bir sonucu olarak bir değerlendirme yapmak gerekirse şiirler benzerlik ve farklılıklar yönünden temelde Kristevacı bir kuramla irdelenmiştir. Çalışma özneliği çok basit ifadeyle yaşam biçimi olarak aldığından, şairlerin kişisel deneyimlerinden kaynaklı bir şahsına münhasır sesi şiirleştirdiklerini göstermiştir.

Şairler arasındaki karşılaştırılabilir niteliklerde akışkan bir öznellik ön plana çıkmaktadır. Böylece hem fiziksel hem de psikolojik düzlemde şairlerin bu akışkanlığı nasıl işledikleri temel tartışma konusudur. Her ne kadar eski temalarını işleseler de bu eski kaygılarına yeni bakış açıları getirmiş ve böylece öznelliklerinde 'yeni bir alan' açmışlardır.

Çalışmanın kuramsal kısmı toplumsal düzen ve sevgi dinamiklerine yoğunlaşarak bir çerçeve çizmeye çalışır. Öznenin oluş sürecinde dil, tarih ve zaman gibi belirleyici unsurları Kristevacı bakış açısıyla değerlendirir. Analiz bölümlerinin ilk hem simgesel-imgesel ilişkisine hem de zaman algılamaları üzerine odaklanır. İkinci kısım ise sevgi ekseninde bir incelemeyi kapsar. Akışkanlığı sevgisel boyutu değerlendirilir. Böylece kadının sessiz sesinin de gösterdiği gibi özneliği hem simgeselden bir kopuştur hem de ona çaresizce geri dönmektir.



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Soyadı / Surname : ALTUNSOY

Adı / Name : Şafak

Bölümü / Department : English Literature

TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English) : FEMALE SUBJECTIVITY

IN THE POETRIES OF EAVAN BOLAND, KATHLEEN JAMIE AND GÜLTEN AKIN

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