POETICS OF GOTHIC: (RE)PRESENTATION OF THE UNCANNY IN THE GOTHIC RE-FORMED.
A CULTURAL ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

DOKTORA TEZİ

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PREFACE

For almost the last twenty years, pieces of gothic literature have been subject to the challenge of various schools of criticism. It appears that such an acceleration of the preoccupation with gothic literature marks a process in cultural history in which a considerably impetuous change is observed. I consider the end of the millennium as such a period. In Literary History courses, it is always emphasised that literary movements or enormous changes in history requires a certain length of time; however, it seems to me that everything “materialises” as quick and instant as pressing a button in the last years of the millennium and the first years of the new millennium. In this sense, gothic literature can be regarded as a means to trace these issues.

This study is a product of what I have accumulated within the most crucial periods of my life and come to realise the wealth gained through the efforts shown to decipher the relationship between words, instances, people and what builds up the eerie and sinisterly coincidental resemblance among all. I, most kind heartedly, dedicate it to the “fatherly” glimpse of the academia, which embraces one with a most benevolent manner – no matter how “malevolent” my subject matter might seem – though never lets him notice it overtly and to the one(s) who will forever remain as the harbinger of my “literary” awareness and have led me the way to comprehend that true appreciation of literature is to put it into practice or distinguish between its practical and theoretical essences.
First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Nevzat Kayawho has most generously allowed me to benefit from his academic proficiency along with his “very special” library. He has been my mentor all through this long and painful process of writing this dissertation and always supported me during the times even when things turned out to be an abyss: “Sie werden auf ewig mein Mentor sein!”

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Hubert Zapf as the one who has meditated on such a fruitful theory of literature and guided me with his very special insight. Without him, this study with this corpus would not exist.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Prof. Günseli Sönmez İşçi who has encouraged me in all the processes of my academic programme; she has always made me feel her support and guidance along with her understanding.

I would also like to thank Prof. Zeynep Ergun, who has planted the very initial seeds in my literary appreciation and guided me, especially at the beginning of this study and Prof. David Punterwho has sent me his invaluable volumes of The Literature of Terror upon my single request.

I am grateful to my friends and colleagues: Sinem Yazıcıoğlu, for her endless support and encouragement, along with her most precious contributions, especially to my library – whenever I needed her, she was ready to listen to me on the other side of the telephone for hours and hours; Göknur Bostancı Ege, for her dedicated efforts and staying sleepless for nights in order to arrange my documents; Saniye Uysal for helping
me access Literatur als kulturelle Ökologie; Hülya Kaya, firstly for the Turkish translation of Literatur als kulturelle Ökologie and then for her motivation and support; İdil Aydogan, who had a baggage full of my books when returning from England; Orkun Kocabıyık and Banu Toral who took me to the hospital every day for my physiotherapy through the last very crucial months of this writing process; Sinem, Birsen and Evren whose friendship is an indispensable necessity for my existence and who are “still” patiently waiting for me in İstanbul. I would also like to thank Halime Coşkun, the patient and diligent secretary of the Graduate School of Social Sciences, along with my colleagues at the Department of English Language and Literature.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest thanks to my family: my mother Medih Chivelekoğlu and my father Atilla Chivelekoğlu who, most affectionately, chose to make their biggest “investment” in me; Despi, Vehbi, Felix and Hans, the sweet inhabitant of heaven, for their patience and tender touch. This study is certainly the product of their enduring efforts and I dedicate it to the memory of my father who, I believe, will always be with me as my best friend...

Funda Chivelekoğlu

15 July 2008, İzmir
INTRODUCTION

Instrumentalized subjective reason either eulogizes nature as pure vitality or disparages it as brute force, instead of treating it as a text to be interpreted by philosophy that, if rightly treated, will unfold a tale of infinite suffering. Without committing the fallacy of equating nature and reason, mankind must try to reconcile the two.¹

Hubert Zapf’s theory of “literature as cultural ecology,” on the very surface, can be regarded an attempt to liberate literary theory from the utmost influence of cultural theory. Approximately for the last fifty years, the method to approach literature seems to be very much engaged with the reverberation of cultural theory for the sake of enriching the interpretation of literary texts and not undermining an interdisciplinary outlook. This, actually, stems from the fragmented discursive attitude of postmodernism: the ideology of “anything goes” renders the cultural arena of postmodernism diversified; whereas, while chasing behind the resonance of these diversifications it becomes rather a difficult task not to take the essence of literature for granted. Indeed, the recent fashion of literary theory based on multiculturalism, postcolonialism, queer theory, feminism, Marxist criticism, and cultural materialism and ethnic studies can be regarded as flourished by the increasing influence of postmodernism. I do not attempt to say that these aspects of literary criticism tend to dismiss what I call “the essence of literature” completely. However, the tendency of a

disregarding attitude towards the textual dimension of imaginative literature becomes inevitable.

With “literature as cultural ecology,” Hubert Zapf attempts to define the function of literature from an ecological stance by putting forward the basic premise that “literature acts like an ecological force within the larger cultural system.” He makes use of certain devices and terminology of ecocriticism in that he believes that an ecological perspective in any aspect entails the idea that culture and consciousness cannot ever come into existence independently from one another; however, he does not reduce literature to a medium rather anthropocentrically demonstrating the ecological issues such as the recent environmental crisis. Instead, literature as an ecological force, first and foremost intends to take literature as a means to recommunicate the nature/culture dichotomy in order to abolish the common principle that handles nature and culture as mere binary oppositions: literature forms a sphere where this essentialism is overcome. Zapf acknowledges that

The function of literature as cultural ecology thus primarily consists not in the correct representation of some extraliterary reality or ecocentric ideology but in the fact that literature itself, precisely by its aestheticising transgression of immediate referentiality, becomes an ecological force-field within culture, a subversive yet regenerative semiotic energy which, though emerging from and responding to a given

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sociohistorical situation, still gains relative independence as it unfolds the counter-discursive potential of the imagination in the symbolic act of reconnecting abstract cultural realities to concrete life processes.³

Hubert Zapf, to a considerable extent, bases the theory of “literature as cultural ecology” on Nietzsche’s view of art, which accepts the Dionysian impact upon art as the essential aspect of ancient Greek art. That is to say, art is not considered as opposing life, but comprising and displaying life in a more elevated manner, which means art cannot be detached from life. In a similar vein, literature acts as both a force and a space where the restrictions of the existing ideological powers are expressed which renders literature as a necessary catalyst so as to provide the vitality of culture.

Having been basically founded upon the resonances of nature/culture dichotomy, the function of literature as cultural ecology echoes various basic subtexts that not only form the spirit of Western thought, but also have contributed to the development of literary theory. As it is mentioned, at the outset, Friedrich Nietzsche’s Birth of Tragedy in terms of the way it handles ancient Greek tragedy with regard to the effect of Dionysian music: tragedy’s glory lies in the harmonisation of “Dionysian truth of life against its ossification in the institutions and ideologies of a Socratic-Apollonian culture.”⁴

Secondly, the problematic Adorno and Horkheimer put forward in their work, Dialectic of Enlightenment, can be briefly recapitulated as demonstrating man’s failure

³ Ibid., 88.
⁴ Ibid., 85.
in his preoccupation with rationality, pragmatism, knowledge, and technology indeed. Man has received the programme of Enlightenment rather improperly: while chasing after the earthly delights of knowledge and so-called awareness, he tends to underestimate the spiritual concerns. Logos, primarily dominating the human being, has led him to a world where his spiritual values are gradually debased. In spite of its endeavouring attempt to eradicate the myths, Enlightenment cannot escape from the “burden” of mythology, as can be inferred from the following extract:

Mythology itself set off the unending process of enlightenment in which ever and again, with the inevitability of necessity, every specific theoretic view succumbs to the destructive criticism that it is only a belief – until even the very notions of spirit, of truth and, indeed, enlightenment itself, have become animistic magic.⁵

Adorno and Horkheimer’s statements can be regarded as a preliminary step to the ecological view’s supposition that human being is in a constant state of consuming which inevitably results in the threat that the overall balance of life is in danger. Ecological view rather deals with the physical and material instances of consumption and ecocriticism mainly pinpoints the manifestation of this phenomenon in literature; whereas “literature as cultural ecology” makes a synthesis of these issues and points out the rebalancing function of literature as far as cultural history is concerned. In other words, literature acts as a mechanism of building up the reconciliation between

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the hegemonic power of the system and the infinite range of marginalised issues of society.

Thirdly, the cultural ecological function of literature inherently embodies Mikhail Bakhtin’s *Rabelais and His World*: Bakhtin’s approach to the concepts of official and unofficial speeches and his contemplations on the grotesque not only accords with Nietzsche’s aesthetic, but also appears as a reminiscent of Zapf’s theory of “literature as cultural ecology” in that it challenges the sharp opposition “constructed” between nature and culture. Bakhtinian sense of official speech corresponds to the constraints of the prevailing ideological and systemic realities that result in a single-dimensional reality of culture. On the other hand, unofficial speech, primarily foregrounded in the concept of carnival, functions as a means to communicate the issues that are marginalised and left unspoken. Bakhtin’s carnival appears as a social event that involves rituals, means of entertainment, laughter and excess, which forms an alternative and yet free space for man to express himself differently as opposing his appearance within the borders of official space. Michael Gardiner writes:

In the typical carnival image – examples being the ritual uncrowning and debasement of the monarch, or festive parodies of the Catholic mass – we find the “pathos of shifts and changes, of death and renewal,” an “all annihilating and all re-renewing” force worked out in special carnival time, which celebrates the “joyful creativity” of all hierarchical, authoritarian structure. As such, genuine carnival images are profoundly dualistic, and contain within themselves “both poles of change and
crises”: birth with death, youth and old age, and praise with abuse. All such symbolic strategies are designed to violate and “defamiliarize” the commonsensical and the generally accepted.⁶

In this sense, in accordance with cultural ecology, the state of carnival can be regarded as merging several clashing incidents including the cycles of death and birth, regeneration, and the indefinite aspects of the cosmos in the unity of the “indissoluble grotesque whole.”⁷ Hence, it appears that “literature as cultural ecology” accentuates these qualities of the carnival and the grotesque through drawing attention to the inevitable and obligatory processes of transformation and transgression, which brings about the renewal of culture.

Hubert Zapf’s explication of literature’s function as cultural ecology comprises a triadic function model that displays three main procedures. According to this model, literature internalises a cultural-critical metadiscourse representing the description of the deficits and controversies of the prevailing civilisatory powers, which highlights the single-dimensional aspect of culture; an imaginative counter-discourse positing a critical stance towards the repressive aspects of culture while reverberating the neglected, marginalised or the “other” of culture; a reintegrative inter-discourse that forms a relationship between the repressed and systemic realities, through which the

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harmonisation of nature and culture is provided so as to preserve the dynamism of culture.

It is a universal diagnosis that gothic literature emerges as a response to Enlightenment towards the end of the eighteenth century, which also coincides with the emergence of novel. The genre finds its protégés in German Romanticism, which shows a different direction when compared with English Romanticism. The starting point of German Romanticism is considered as a reaction to the excessive rationality of German Classicism. For that reason, primary attribute of the movement can be briefly put as the tendency towards depicting the extraordinary, irrational and inexplicable in opposition to the concerns of the ordinary world. Hence, it displays an affinity with the fantastic; the common motifs appear as nature, ancient myths, travelling, and thus the dream world of fairy tales. Primarily represented by E. T. A. Hoffmann, the darker side of German Romanticism is predominated by the uncanny, the monstrous, and the mysterious vs. the prosaic concerns of everyday life, which stems from the quest for demonstrating the horror behind what is visible. In spite of their enchantment with the uncanny, literary products of this period are never named as works of gothic literature, which forms one of the main controversies of this dissertation: how the uncanny is positioned within the context of gothic literature.

Having emerged in England, the initial examples of gothic literature, among which are Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), Matthew Lewis’ *The Monk* (1796), Charles Robert Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), Anne Radcliffe’s *Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), and Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818), were works that
did not receive much critical attention in their times. They were, actually, gothic romances that were counted among pulp fiction in the sense that they embody clichés such as haunted castles, ghosts, supernatural villains, archaic settings and sublime terrors. On the other hand, it is apparent that the corpus of gothic literature does not only consist of the works embodying these similar concerns. What is utterly crucial about gothic literature is that, in spite of the slight or considerable modifications, it is performed in every age in accordance with the fashion, literary movement and socio-political preconditions, which means gothic literature has been a never-ending symphony for almost two and a half centuries. For this reason, the definition and identification of “gothic” remains rather controversial. To illustrate, in fin de siècle, with the rise of the literature of decadence, gothic literature wore quite another aspect as a result of the sharp influence of Darwin’s theories of evolution, which has led the way to a godless universe. Additionally, the consequence of a godless universe, though indirectly, is perversity. Andrew Smith and Jeff Wallace in their introduction to *Gothic Modernisms* claim that “gothic text and modernist text are joined (…) by their fascination with the potential erosion of moral value, and with the forms that amorality can take.” Simultaneously, with the influence of modernity, afterwards postmodernity with a stronger burden and the world wars it has come to articulate the fear and distrust of the individual towards society, which results in the fact that identity of gothic literature has been transformed into a “fiction of regression.” Fred Botting comments on this period as such:

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The loss of human identity and the alienation of self from both itself and the social bearings in which a sense of reality is secured are presented in the threatening shapes of increasingly dehumanised environments, machinic doubles and violent psychotic fragmentation.  

The relevance of gothic literature and “literature as cultural ecology” arises from the very fact that the motivation and representation of gothic literature specifically corresponds to the articulation of what is left on the margin. Obviously, if there exists an issue which we call “cultural memory” all texts are in a dialogic relationship with one another, but the resonances of the subtexts of “literature as cultural ecology” in gothic literature are more than evident. Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy*, with its emphasis on the intervention of Dionysian forces, recalls the uncanny, unknown, and the unexpected, which are also embedded in gothic literature. Adorno and Horkheimer’s *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is definitely inherent in the motivation of gothic literature since it is an explicit reaction towards Enlightenment. As Fred Botting claims:

> The invocation of enlightenment values that are produced and contested throughout Gothic fiction is made with a significant difference: truth and reason are no longer seen as absolutes or agents of systems of power. They are, instead, ways of reading in which texts

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are left open and plural, their play not subjected to a singular, restricted
and partial – politically interested – meaning.¹⁰

Finally, Bakhtin’s *Rabelais and His World*, with respect to the way it handles the
concepts of carnival, unofficial speech and the grotesque, is regarded as having
common grounds with gothic literature. Rabelais’ sense of the grotesque body, which
is in a state of constant formation, also recalls the gothic body; it can be exemplified
through the body of Dr. Frankenstein’s creature.

Within the scope of this study, in order to illustrate how the theory of “literature
as cultural ecology” applies to gothic literature, four novels written after the year 1980
are scrutinized: Ian McEwan’s *The Comfort of Strangers*, Peter Ackroyd’s *Hawksmoor*,
Stephen King’s *Misery* and Chuck Palahniuk’s *Diary*. The period from the 1980s to the
present is significant since it corresponds to the end of the millennium, which
problematizes gothic literature in accordance with the postmodern critical point of
view. In Chapter I, subtexts of cultural ecology and Hubert Zapf’s triadic function
model have been investigated. In Chapter II, a historical account of gothic literature,
along with its theoretical resonances and its relation to the uncanny is presented.
Besides, the second chapter includes an excursus analysing Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* so
as to prove the validity of my theoretical stance in a classic work of gothic literature.

Then the novels are analysed in a chronological order in separate chapters pointing out
how the cultural-critical metadiscourse, imaginative counter-discourse and
reintegrative inter-discourse work out. The novels I have examined throughout my

¹⁰ Ibid., 173.
study are chosen in accordance with the aspects of the gothic syndrome; that is, each explores the different symptoms of the gothic mode.
CHAPTER I

LITERATURE AS CULTURAL ECOLOGY

1.1 Nature/Culture Dichotomy and Cultural Ecology

From the time man attempts to perceive the world he begins to question the relationship between nature and culture, for the former is what he cannot get rid of and depends on most, and the latter is what he keeps on forming and being a part of. Nature/culture dichotomy is regarded as one of the most significant key concepts that facilitate the interpretation of cultural history and constitutes the basis of contemporary cultural theory. Moreover, the polarities represented by mainly the nature/culture dichotomy are embedded in Western philosophy and form the basis of the patriarchal world order.

Nature/culture dichotomy dates back to Pythagorean philosophy which “saw the world as a mixture of principles associated with determinate form, seen as good, and others associated with formless – the unlimited, irregular or disorderly – which were seen as bad or inferior.” 11 Besides, nature/culture dichotomy is primarily anchored in “male” and “female” duality, which draws a statutory liaison that male is the superior and female is the inferior. Pythagorean Table of Opposites 12, which dates back to the sixth century BC, is considered as the preliminary version of what the essence of nature/culture dichotomy suggests:

12 Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limited</th>
<th>Unlimited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Odd</td>
<td>Even</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>Plurality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At rest</td>
<td>In motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straight</td>
<td>Curved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Darkness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Evil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Oblong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Genevieve Lloyd deems that in Pythagoras’ table, “male” and “female” along with the other contrasted terms, do not indicate literal descriptions; the left side of the table where the term “male” is placed is positioned as superior to the terms placed on the right, which derives from the contrast between form and formlessness in Pythagorean philosophy.¹³

The correlation between male and female depends on the initiative that maleness is associated with activity and determinacy, and femaleness with passivity and indeterminacy, which is related with the form-matter distinction in later Greek philosophy. The motivation of such a distinction arises from the principle that male is

¹³ ibid.
the father, fundamental in sexual reproduction and the assurance of future generations, whereas female is the mother who is responsible for nurturing what is produced by the father.\textsuperscript{14} Certainly, it can never be denied that the manipulation of these attributes of male and female remains the central subject matter of ancient Greek tragedy and forms the essence of literature as well.

Such a hierarchical relationship between nature and culture based on the superiority of man and the inferiority of woman is handled by Hélène Cixous as well. She claims that binary oppositions give a most significant hint about the Western thought where woman is always depicted outside of culture. This actually discloses the attitude of the Occident founded upon the phallocentrism that eliminates woman and nature. Cixous builds a chain in order to express the interpretation of culture by the Occident:\textsuperscript{15}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High:</th>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>Mind</th>
<th>Speech</th>
<th>Man</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low:</td>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Body</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Woman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it can be inferred from this schema woman remains passive through being a part of nature, whereas man is the one to elaborate culture. Here what Cixous attempts to do is to rewrite the nature/culture dichotomy so as to put an end to Occident’s lethal exclusion of woman and nature.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
Hélène Cixous extends Hegelian dialectics, which places man in the centre and woman and nature in the service of man, to Freudian initiative that the primary trauma of man is being cut off from the mother’s body and in order to overcome this trauma he expresses himself through rejecting the other. In order to eradicate this idea Cixous sets out to invent a language for reforming the appearance of woman and nature to generate mental ecology. 16 Woman will build a harmonious relationship with her offspring through language. As Verena Andermatt Conley notes:

There, a masculine language that divides the subject from mother’s body, and teaches him or her through grammar and rules to speak of things from a distance, is replaced with a poetic idiom of proximity. (...) The process is tantamount to bringing into harmony a relation established through poetic language and reveals being. In this apparent collapse of dialectics, women have a conscious and unconscious memory of their childhood as a paradise garden. 17

Here the paradise garden is the metaphorical expression of nature before the ultimate separation of the child from the mother’s body takes place. With regard to the manner that Cixous views nature/culture dichotomy, one can surmise an outlook closer to a sense of harmonious and peaceful nature which is almost impossible to find in real life. Furthermore, ‘naturalness’ celebrates the anti-technological and anti-scientific. Nature for Cixous is an energy that admonishes technology and the distinctions of gender

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16 Ibid., 149.
17 Ibid., 150.
imposed by the elements of technology. In this context, she maintains a perspective closer to ecofeminism via placing woman and nature close to one another by steering clear of technology. This standpoint of hers is slightly engaged with the dialectics of enlightenment; nevertheless, she remains rather shallow in the sense that she fails to assess the other mechanisms of ecologic balance. In other words, nature itself is a double-faced entity which embodies oppositions such as benevolent/malevolent, refined/vulgar, beautiful/grotesque, wild/mild, cultivated/uncultivated and disaster/boon.

The very first statement in Sexual Personae is “In the beginning was nature,” through which Camille Paglia intends to give the word of humanities. According to Paglia, sex and gender can be grasped only if man can understand the mechanisms of nature. In her book, she draws attention to nature/culture dichotomy from a Nietzschean perspective. Nietzsche refers to the dichotomy through the two main art deities of the Greek culture, Apollo and Dionysus, and under these headlines he composes his own table of opposites. He puts forward an aesthetic problematic on the definition of art via analysing the motivation of Greek art. He asserts that the glory of Greek art lies in the reconciliation of Apollonian and Dionysian features. He states that the development of art depends on:

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18 Ibid., 151-152
20 Ibid.
The opposition between Apollo and Dionysus [which] became more hazardous and even impossible, when, from the deepest roots of the Hellenic nature, similar impulses finally burst forth and made a path for themselves: the Delphic God, by a seasonably effected reconciliation, now contented himself with taking the destructive weapons from the hands of his powerful antagonist. This reconciliation is the most important moment in the history of the Greek cult: wherever we turn we note the revolutions resulting from this event. The two antagonists were reconciled; the boundary lines thenceforth to be observed by each were sharply defined, and there was to be a periodical exchange of gifts of esteem. At bottom, however, the chasm was not bridged over.\footnote{Friedrich Nietzsche. \textit{The Birth of Tragedy}. (United Kingdom: Dover Publications, 1995), 6.}

According to Nietzsche, Apollo signifies culture and Dionysus signifies nature. In the context of Greek tragedy, the image of Apollo corresponds to the scheme of the work, the images and the plot itself, and the image of Dionysus reveals itself through the vision of the chorus. He says that what makes drama unique is that it “becomes the Apollonian embodiment of Dionysian perceptions and influences, and therefore separates itself by a tremendous gap from epic.”\footnote{Ibid., 27.} In addition, he makes a comparison of Apollonian and Dionysian music, in that the former is played in suggestive tunes and composed specifically for the representation of Apollonian conditions, whereas the latter one reveals the emotional power of the tone. Through the Dionysian dithyramb,
the essence of nature is now to be expressed symbolically; we need a new world of symbols; for once the entire symbolism of the body is called into play, not mere symbolism of the lips, face, and speech, but the whole pantomime of dancing, forcing every member into rhythmic movement.\textsuperscript{23}

However, Nietzsche acknowledges that the primary thing that makes one stunned is the Apollonian beauty of the Greek artistry. Yet, it is only a “veil” which hides the Dionysian world of barbaric enthusiasm; therefore, that Apollonian beauty and perfection, without the Dionysian, is bound to remain an illusion. On the other hand, with regards to Greek tragedy, satyric chorus of the dithyramb is what renders the Greek art outstanding. This coexistence of the Apollonian and the Dionysian forms the “soul” of tragedy.

Nietzsche relates the action of dream with the Apollonian and Dionysian as well. He states that the instance of dream is Apollonian in the sense that the individual is always aware that he is dreaming at that moment in time; however, s/he is in front of an illusion – so here again Apollo and Dionysus coexist to provide the salvation of man.

Camille Paglia, in \textit{Sexual Personae}, makes an analysis of the history of literature and art. She is on the part of canonical western tradition while she rejects the modernist idea that culture has turned into fragments and meaning is eliminated as

\textsuperscript{23} ibid., 7.
she accounts in the preface of her book. She prefers to take a less travelled road in the sense that she accepts paganism as being still dominant over Christianity in today's humanities and pop culture. She builds her statements mainly upon the dichotomies of Apollonian/Dionysian, Western/Eastern and Chthonian/Olympian. Like Nietzsche, she contemplates on Greek tragedy and makes a comparison of male and female protagonists. She calls tragedy as “a male paradigm of rise and fall, a graph in which dramatic and sexual climax are in shadowy analogy.” She points out that climax is “another western invention,” which was produced by “the agon of male will. Through action to identity. Action is the route of escape from nature, but all action circles back to origins, the womb-tomb of nature.” Conversely, female protagonists of tragedy, like Medea, Phaedrus and Lady Macbeth display a less moral attitude which is a sign of the “chthonian cloud” they are acting under. Paglia scrutinizes female body and deed as chthonian, irrational and a source of crisis which western male eye should overcome in order to prevent chaos. Furthermore, it is significant that tragedy, one of the most ancient but complex forms of writing, appears as the mirror of Snow White’s mother reflecting the contemporary scene in humanities. Apparently, man has made an immense way from paganism; while “nurturing” through knowledge, he arrives at the very identical space. There again we come to the conclusion that in this cyclic order, nature is an entity which man cannot do without, escape or thoroughly avoid.

25 Ibid., 7.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
Therefore, culture should volunteer to reconcile with nature in order to achieve an acceptable sense of harmony.

The term “literature as cultural ecology”, coined by Hubert Zapf, attempts to explore literary texts within the frame of a triadic function model in order to display and yet reshape the relationship between literature and culture through incorporating new developments in literary and cultural studies. Cultural ecology primarily foregrounds the analogical correlation between nature and culture; concisely, culture possesses a system of ecological relationships similar to the one in nature. As Zapf claims, “[verhält sich Literatur] in Analogie zu einem ökologischen Prinzip oder einer ökologischen Kraft innerhalb der größeren Systems ihrer Kultur.” Within this ecological system of culture, literature has a particular function as the realisation of anything excluded or rejected by culture itself.

Cultural ecology can be regarded as taking its roots from an ecocritical stance, but it places the function of literature in the centre and employs an ecologically defined function model. The term, ecocriticism is coined in 1978 by William Rueckert in his article entitled “Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism,” by which he meant the ‘application of ecology and ecological concepts in the study of

28 ‘Cultural ecology’ is first used by Julian H. Stewart in 1955, in a cultural anthropological context; then the term is also used by William Paulson in his essay ‘Literature, Knowledge and Cultural Ecology’ (1993). However, Paulson tends to underestimate the significance of classical works of literature in the sense that he thinks that they have lost their relationship with recent discourse(s) and subjects in ecological grounds. In this text, ‘cultural ecology’ is used in terms of Hubert Zapf’s conception of ‘literature as cultural ecology’ unless it is specifically indicated: Hubert Zapf. Literatur als kulturelle Ökologie. Zur kulturellen Funktion imaginativer Texte an Beispielen der amerikanischen Romans. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2002), 55-56.
29 Ibid., 3.
literature.” What he is trying to do is integrating ecological concepts to the study of literature and bringing literature into the context of an ecological vision bearing in mind the First Law of Ecology, ‘everything is connected to everything else,’ in Barry Commoner’s words. Cheryl Glotfelty defines ecocriticism as “the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment.” In this respect, nature/culture dichotomy, in its literal sense, is considered as the primary concern of ecocritics.

Ecocriticism commences in the mid-eighties upon the motivation that human being has consumed nature and there has been an environmental crisis for which he should immediately create a solution. Such an understanding caused the academics of humanities produce their works with environmental concerns so as to contribute to the ongoing crucial situation. In other words, ecocriticism intends to analyse literary texts for the sake of developing awareness towards environmental crisis and thus contribute to restoration. On the other hand, deep ecologists criticise this environmental preoccupation of being superficial in the sense of its anthropocentrism and claim that every form of life on earth has the right to exist beyond the human willpower.

“Literature as cultural ecology” renames the nature-culture dichotomy and asserts that they cannot be separated. Since it does not make a strong distinction

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31 Ibid., 115.
32 Ibid., XVIII.
between text and context, it embodies what other literary theories like postcolonialism, queer theory, feminism, Marxist criticism, and cultural materialism suggest. Here the term, ecology does not represent a concept related with nature in its literal sense. Zapf advocates in the context of ecology and literature instead of a plain transfer of one field to the other, it is significant to build analogy between them. Furthermore, this analogy is rendered invaluable only if the divergence and specific transformation between ecology and literature is realised. As Zapf explicates:

Das ökologische Epistem stellt also eine Erweiterung, nicht eine Ersetzung der Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaftlichen Hermeneutik dar, und die Beschreibung ästhetischer Strukturen mit Hilfe ökologischer Begriffe beabsichtigt eine Ergänzung und transdisziplinäre Öffnung, keine Ablösung von Poetik und Ästhetik.³³

Hubert Zapf creates a universe of cultural history and questions what kind of role literature undertakes in the ecology of this universe. According to cultural ecology, every single work of literature constitutes a unit of the ecological system and it becomes an entity that enables the “whole to be more than the sum of its parts.”³⁴ Moreover, evolution is perceived as “a fact of natural and cultural life” and thus the sense of reality is “a constantly changing and self-transformative process which follows certain linear developments but is at the same time embedded within larger, non-

linear cycles of life and nature.”\textsuperscript{35} If we are to identify nature as encompassing every other “living organism”, indeed cultural history can be regarded as a microcosm of nature and imaginative literature becomes the living organisms in this verbal universe. As Hubert Zapf affirms:

literature is an ecological force within culture not only or not even primarily because of its content, but because of the specific way in which it has evolved as a unique form of textuality that, in its aesthetic transformation of cultural experience, employs procedures in many ways analogous to ecological principles, restoring complexity, vitality and creativity to the discourses of its cultural world by symbolically reconnecting them with elemental forces and processes of life – in non-human nature, in the collective and individual psyche, in the human body.\textsuperscript{36}

In this respect, contrary to the conventional idea that considers nature and culture as mere binary oppositions, the two entities cannot ever be thought as detached from one another. Consequently, literature is a “symbolic reconnection of abstract cultural realities to concrete life processes”, which calls to mind the Nietzschean concept of art as a force to rebalance the “Dionysian truth of life and Socratic-Apollonian culture.”\textsuperscript{37} Nietzsche perceives art as an intense form of life rather than an opposing motive, which is closely related with the ecological function of

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 89.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 93.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 85.
literature. However, within the ecological order, the mutual interaction, yet interdependence of nature and culture can hardly be denied.

1.2 “Subtexts” of Cultural Ecology

In order to have a thorough initiative on the expression “literature as cultural ecology,” it is a must to cast a glance at the primary subtexts of cultural ecology: Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy*, Adorno and Horkheimer’s *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and Bakhtin’s *Rabelais and His World*. The common standpoint in these works is that they ponder the relationship between nature and culture on the whole. Furthermore, I can assert that these texts are not only in a dialogic relationship among each other but also embodied in the theory of “literature as cultural ecology.” Cultural ecology, in terms of its unifying attitude towards literary criticism, receives these theories harmoniously and makes a synthesis of philosophical, sociological and political aspects of literature.

1.2.1 The Birth of Tragedy

Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy* attempts to pore over the poetics of Greek art and thus forms his philosophical stance towards the concept of art. As it is mentioned under the previous subtitle, Nietzsche, by means of the dichotomic image of the Greek deities Apollo and Dionysus, scrutinizes art and comes to a conclusion that the
harmonic combination of these essences is what renders Greek art unique. At the very beginning of his work he asserts:

[The] continuous development of art is bound up with the Apollonian and the Dionysian duality: just as procreation depends on the duality of sexes, involving perpetual strife with only periodically intervening reconciliations.\(^{38}\)

In cultural ecology the basic premise is that literature is the platform where the marginal and problematic issues are metaphorically expressed. Hence, nature/culture dichotomy appears as the key concept in building a connection between fiction and life itself. In Hubert Zapf’s words:


In The Birth of Tragedy Nietzsche refers to the Socratic fancy of knowledge as an instrument to heal the pain of existence, which is the indication of the Apollonian. On the other side is the enchantment of beauty and the metaphysical comfort man gains

\(^{38}\) Friedrich Nietzsche. The Birth of Tragedy. (United Kingdom: Dover Publications, 1995), 1.

through it. He says that culture is an entity made up of the stimulants and according to the intensity of these constituents we have either a Socratic, or artistic or tragic culture.\(^{40}\) However, he stresses the importance he attaches to the Dionysian life and sees the ultimate redemption following the Dionysian festive procession. His emphasis on the Dionysian side is closely linked with the multi-dimensional cultural ecological interpretation of literature for literature functions as the expression of the unspeakable and provides the vitality of culture.

1.2.2 Dialectic of Enlightenment

*Man is an animal that . . . has need of a master. For he certainly abuses his freedom in relation to his equals, and although as a rational creature he desires a law that establishes boundaries for everyone’s freedom, his selfish animal propensities induce him to except himself from them wherever he can. He thus requires a master who will break his self-will and force him to obey a universally valid will, whereby everyone can be free. Where is he to find this master? . . . The supreme guarantor should be just in himself and still be a man.*

Immanuel Kant, “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent”\(^ {41}\)

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\(^{40}\) Friedrich Nietzsche. *The Birth of Tragedy*. (United Kingdom: Dover Publications, 1995), 64.

Enlightenment is both the saviour and the scapegoat of Western world. It emerged as a movement in Europe and America in the eighteenth century as a reaction to institutional religion and abstract faith; reason, rationality and science formed the nucleus of this movement. It fancied knowledge and endeavoured to release man from the influence of dogmatic beliefs and fear, and render him self-governed in front of these mechanisms of authority. Moreover, this process of liberation progressed in terms of man’s relationship with the state as well, which aimed at achieving democracy and liberalism after a long practice of tradition, tyranny and irrationality. Simultaneously, with respect to the progressing industrialism, middle class declared its economic autonomy and thus project of enlightenment started off with the aim of didacticism in almost all constituents of society.

Immanuel Kant views enlightenment as human being’s strive for putting an end to his immaturity which is an expression of his lack of courage towards knowledge. In this sense, enlightenment, with the motto of “Sapere Aude,” is considered as an attempt to reach knowledge without guidance. According to Kant, mere requirement for this process of maturity lies in the capacity of man to use reason in order to reach and analyse knowledge publicly and question what he encounters. However, he also examines the limits of this freedom and what might happen if this freedom is manipulated. Kant acknowledges in his 1784 essay, “An Answer to a Question: What is Enlightenment”:

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42 Latin expression meaning “dare to know.”
The public use of one's reason must always be free, and it alone can bring about enlightenment among mankind; the private use of reason may, however, often be very narrowly restricted, without otherwise hindering the progress of enlightenment. (...) However, insofar as this part of the machine also regards himself as a member of the community as a whole, or even of the world community, and as a consequence addresses the public in the role of a scholar, in the proper sense of that term, he can most certainly argue, without thereby harming the affairs for which as a passive member he is partly responsible.\footnote{Ibid.}

In this context, he exemplifies the case of the citizen and the scholar: as a citizen, man should fulfil his duties in the community he is a part of; however, he has the right to express his opinions about the accuracy of the rules and duties. Under these circumstances, through the below quotation, Kant recites the manifestation of his idealising the process of enlightenment and advocates a harmonious reconciliation of man's capacity to benefit from his reasoning and spirituality and his common sense to maintain the ultimate societal order:

[Once] nature has removed the hard shell from this kernel for which she has most fondly cared, namely, the inclination to and vocation for free thinking, the kernel gradually reacts on a people's mentality (whereby they become increasingly able to act freely), and it finally even influences the principles of government, which finds that it can profit by
treating men, who are now more than machines, in accord with their
dignity.\footnote{Ibid.}

As opposed to Kant’s the optimistic view, Adorno and Horkheimer espouse a
pessimistic stance of the concept of enlightenment in their work, \textit{The Dialectic of
Enlightenment}. One of the central issues they focus on is the ‘mythical’ nature of
enlightenment. While man attempts to eradicate myths, he tends to fail in recognizing
the fact that enlightenment is a myth itself. In other words, the more man endeavours
to flee from myths through his reason and the apparatuses of “culture”, the more
intensely he falls back into it. As they claim:

\begin{quote}
[Enlightenment] still recognizes itself even in myths. Whatever myths
the resistance may appeal to, by virtue of the very fact that they
become arguments in the process of opposition, they acknowledge the
principle of dissolvent rationality for which they reproach the
\end{quote}

This kind of a sublimation of the enlightenment project provides the possible grounds
for a mythical anthropomorphism which inevitably cause man to ignore the
discrepancies of the movement.

Adorno and Horkheimer perceive the program of the enlightenment as “the
disenchantment of the world; the dissolution of myths and the substitution of
knowledge for fancy.” As it can be deduced from this mind-set, it is obvious that Adorno and Horkheimer’s criticism of enlightenment is based on nature/culture dichotomy in the sense that enlightenment project tends to dismiss nature and its components while engaging in a scientific and technological pursuit.

1.2.3 Rabelais and His World

*Rabelais and His World*, in which Mikhail Bakhtin examines Rabelais, one of the most subversive writers of the Renaissance, resulted in the rejection of his doctoral dissertation and was not accurately realized until the 1960s. In his work, he explores *Gargantua and Pantagruel* to demonstrate his ideas on art, the philosophy of art and its context.

Undoubtedly, Bakhtin asserts that life is the blend of human behaviour designed according to the systemic realities organized by society and emphasises the dual nature of art and distinguishes between form and content. Art also functions as a medium that “transforms this organized ‘material’ into a new system whose distinction is to *mark* new values.” Rabelais’ work encompasses much of laughter, carnivalesque and abjection, which Bakhtin associates with the unofficial speech. His differentiation of the official and unofficial speeches stems from the principle that the human being generally tends to speak with someone else’s language in order to communicate

47 Ibid., 3.
himself. With ‘someone else’s language,’ actually the official speech is laid an emphasis on, which is a kind of compulsory act so as to suit the demands of the civilisatory power and the system. Laughter, carnivalesque, folk culture and abjection remain at a distance from what the official speech suggests and form the Dionysian component of culture which is associated with the Dionysian orgy and rituals.

Bakhtinian sense of carnival should not be taken merely as a part of a festive rejoicing legalized by the church or the state (official). It is a medium where people throw away their masks⁴⁹, sometimes through literally putting on them and mostly freeing themselves from society’s demands. The carnival was a moment of liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms and prohibitions. Carnival was the true feast of time, the feast of becoming, change, and ‘renewal.’ It was hostile to all that was immortalized and completed.⁵⁰

Bakhtin’s carnival perfectly accords with the function of literature in cultural ecology. As cultural ecology, literature undertakes the task of recording the deficits of culture. Carnival also appears as a space where man is liberated from these deficits and realises himself and others without the restraint of the official speech.

⁴⁹ Bakhtin claims that “mask is connected with the joy of change and reincarnation, with gay relativity and with the merry negation of uniformity and similarity; it rejects conformity to oneself. The mask is related to transition, metamorphoses, the violation of natural boundaries, to mockery and familiar nicknames. It contains the playful element of life; it is based on a peculiar interrelation of reality and image, characteristic of the most ancient rituals and spectacles.” Mikhail Bakhtin, Rabelais and His World, Translated by Hélène Iswolsky, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984) 39-40.
⁵⁰ Ibid., 10.
Additionally, grotesque – also represented in gothic – is an articulation of Western cultural anxieties in the sense that it celebrates the synchronicity of polarities such as beautiful/ugly, bizarre/ordinary, gay/sad, etc. Dani Cavallaro claims that, “[t]he grotesque, by combining disparate and even logically incompatible elements, undermines the myth of corporeal unity insistently promoted by Western thought.”

In this sense, carnival and the grotesque, along with gothic – through their multiplicity – provide the renewal and dynamism culture.

### 1.3 The Triadic Function Model

Hubert Zapf forms a triadic function model of the cultural-ecological function of literature which consists of cultural-critical metadiscourse, imaginative counter-discourse and reintegrative inter-discourse. He particularly employs the classical works of American literature in his exemplification of the function model in order to prove the validity of his theoretical stance and the applicability of the model. Cultural-critical metadiscourse forms the procedure of representing the deficiencies of existing ideological and utilitarian systems. As Hubert Zapf acknowledges,

> These systems are depicted as often traumatising forms of human self-alienation, which, in their one-sided hierarchical oppositions between

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culture and nature, mind and body, power and love, lead to death-in-life situations of paralysed vitality and psychological imprisonment.\textsuperscript{52}

What is suggested through cultural-critical metadiscourse is the impact of imposing the aspects of the mainstream culture on the individual, which will lead to a monophonic societal order. Zapf alleges:

Hierbei spielt vor allem der Monopolanspruch zivilisationsbestimmender Realitäts- und Diskurssysteme eine wichtige Rolle, in denen einseitig-hierarchische Oppositionen wie Geist vs. Körper, Vernunft vs. Emotion, Eigenes vs. Anderes, Ordnung vs. Chaos, Kultur vs. Natur vorherrschen und die tiefgreifende Entfremdungseffekte und Deformationen im „biophilien“, psychologisch-antropologischen Grundhaushalt der Menschen hervorrufen.\textsuperscript{53iii}

According to Zapf, the deficiencies of these ideological systems are presented in the literary works as the reasons of a deeply distorted balance of life and the eradication of imagination and cultural dynamism.\textsuperscript{54}

As far as the subtexts of cultural ecology are concerned, cultural-critical metadiscourse corresponds to Nietzsche’s Apollonian constituent of art, which comes into view only as an appearance, a veil behind which lies the absolute reality; in other

\textsuperscript{52} Hubert Zapf. “Literature as Cultural Ecology: Notes Towards a Functional Theory of Imaginative Texts, with Examples from American Literature.” In \textit{REAL Year Book of Research in English and American Literature}, edited by Winfried Fluck et al. (Tübingen: Günter Narr Verlag, 2001), 93.

\textsuperscript{53} Hubert Zapf. \textit{Literatur als kulturelle Ökologie. Zur Kulturellen Funktion imaginativer Texte an Beispielen des amerikanischen Romans}. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2002), 64.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
words, the element that becomes void without the Dionysian. In Adorno and Horkheimer’s sense, it becomes reason, rationality, knowledge and science and technology which man goes after while taking part in the enlightenment project; Nietzsche’s Apollonian veil here turns out to be hiding man’s spirituality, which is the *sina qua non* of his identity. It is these entities that demonstrate the defects of existing ideological, indeed dogmatic principles of social systems. Moreover, from a Bakhtinian point of view, cultural-critical metadiscourse suits the elements of official speech: what remains outside the folk culture inhabited by carnival and grotesque. Bakhtin analyses Rabelais’ works in contrast to Renaissance social system where order is built upon the official language and “ideals.” He puts forward the concepts of carnival and grotesque as opposing the demands of society.

The imaginative counter-discourse forms the right side of the so-called triangle and confronts these systems with a holistic and pluralistic outlook which concentrates upon the marginalised, neglected or repressed issues. In other words, it articulates what is deliberately undervalued. In this way, literature “activates and semiotically empowers the culturally repressed as a source of its own creativity, reflecting it up from the amorphous depths of the collective unconscious to the surface of cultural consciousness and communication.”55 The imaginative counter-discourse reveals the pluralistic and multi-dimensional aspect of literature in that it abolishes the

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monotonous voice of the mainstream. In this respect, literature not only calls to mind what is repressed, but also grants a unique power to the marginal. Hubert Zapf deems, [daß sich das] Innovative mit dem Regenerativen, das Modern mit dem Archaïschen, die Grenzüberschreitung des Fingierens mit der Vorgängigkeit des Mythograpiischen in eigentümlicher Gegenläufigkeit zusammen [schließt]. Dadurch wird das kulturell Ausgegrenzte in besondere Weise ästhetisch markiert. Es wird sowohl mit der entgrenzenden Pluralisierung semiotischer Möglichkeiten als auch mit einer mythopoetischen Sinnstiftungsenergie verbunden, die als eine Art ‚magische‘ Gegenkraft zum kulturellen Ausgangssystem aufgebaut und teils fiktional personifiziert, teils in naturnaher Zeichenhaftigkeit konnotiert wird.56

The imaginative counter-discourse assents to Nietzsche’s definition of Dionysian influence. According to the dialectic of enlightenment, it is the opposite of reason and rationality – myths, superstitions, religious beliefs which man endeavours to ignore in order to benefit from the fruit of knowledge. As for Bakhtin, it is the unofficial speech which embraces carnival, laughter and the grotesque. Bakhtin’s attempt to integrate the “unofficial speech” is also noteworthy when we consider the situation in Russia – the use of certain states of irony, laughter and satire was “officially” prohibited after the revolution in order to preserve the integrity of the state.57 In this sense, his work

57 Bakhtin, Mikhail. Rabelais and His World. Translated by Hélène Iswolsky. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), XI.
on Rabelais constitutes an enunciation of imaginative counter-discourse in terms of cultural-ecological criticism.

Lastly, the base of the triangle, reintegrative inter-discourse is the phase where the two former discourses reconcile and the repressed is reintegrated into the whole system of cultural discourses. However, this process of reintegration does not always feature a harmonious resolution of the conflict. Zapf maintains:

On the contrary, the bringing together of the culturally separated spheres characteristically sets off highly turbulent and conflictual processes, which can produce catastrophic results, but which also appear as necessary catalysts for the renewal of cultural creativity.\(^{58}\)

The reason for such a system of balance lies beneath the fact that:

Die literarischen Gegenwelten beziehen ihre besondere kognitive und affektive Intensität aus der Interaktion dessen, was durch Konvention und kulturelle Praxis voneinander getrennt ist – gegeneinander abgegrenzte Sprachregister und Bedeutungsmuster, aber auch die verschiedenen Sphären einer arbeitsteiligen, institutionell ausdifferenzierten Gesellschaft, soziale Rollen und privates Selbst, Öffentlichkeit und Intimität, Intellekt und Leidenschaft, Bewusstes und

\(^{58}\) Hubert Zapf. “Literature as Cultural Ecology: Notes Towards a Functional Theory of Imaginative Texts, with Examples from American Literature.” In REAL Year Book of Research in English and American Literature, edited by Winfried Fluck et al. (Tübingen: Günter Narr Verlag, 2001), 93.
Unbewusstes und, alle durchdringend, die ökologische Basisdimension von Kultur und Natur.  

Reintegrative inter-discourse is the point where literature thoroughly fulfils its function in cultural history. From the Nietzschean perspective, it is similar to the combination of Apollonian and Dionysian elements to achieve the unique sense of art; however this uniqueness does not always represent perfectness. Just as the chaotic sense of harmony literature conveys. While Nietzsche talks about Dionysian orgies he states:

At the very climax of joy there sounds a cry of horror or a yearning lamentation for an irretrievable loss. In these Greek festivals, nature seems to reveal a sentimental trait; it is as if she were heaving a sigh at her dismemberment into individuals. The song and pantomime of such dually-minded revelers was something new and unheard-of for the Homeric-Grecian world: and the Dionysian music in particular excited awe and terror.  

Here the so-called yearning for lamentation and awe and terror stands for the catastrophic results of the cultural ecological reconciliation. If we consider *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkheimer’s imaginative counter-discourse is bound to remain a utopia in the sense of man’s ability to catch the balance in dedicating himself equally to knowledge and reason, and spirituality. This is where the reintegrative inter-discourse appears within cultural history. Finally, if we think in Bakhtinian terms,

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laughter, carnival, grotesque and abject have moved towards the official speech and the thick borders have vanished. We can even expand this idea to the concept of canon as well: in contemporary literature, the definition of canon is modified largely; particularly with the idea of fragmentation in postmodern terms almost every piece of writing has been named and become a distinct genre, and thus formed its own canon. Under these circumstances, as Hubert Zapf reiterates, literature performs the task of staging

the creative regression of rational consciousness to its pre-rational origins, and as such becomes a symbolic mode of expressing the inexpressible in ways that inscribe it, always anew, into the cultural consciousness and memory. It becomes a force of continual innovation and cultural self-renewal by linking the discourses of civilisatory rationality to the living memory of those elemental creative energies that are stored in the history of the literary imagination. 

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CHAPTER II

POETICS OF GOTHIC

2.1 The Gothic Syndrome

Poetics, is originally an Aristotelian term that refers to the devices of poetry; however, the connotation of the term has been transformed to indicate literary theory, certain devices of a specific genre, as well as the aesthetic aspect of the text. In the context of gothic literature, the notion of poetics signifies elements like darkness, the supernatural, the grotesque, and untouched, yet malevolent sense of nature. The canonical definitions claim that gothic signified a mode of medieval architecture and art, and flourished as a literary genre towards the end of the eighteenth century, with Horace Walpole’s The Castle of Otranto, being the initial example.

Literary genres and works belonging to certain literary movements are specified through certain preconditions. For instance, not all literary reflections of incest make a work decadent: in the framework of decadent literature of the fin de siècle, incest can be thought as decadent if only the brothers having an incest relationship are the parts of degenerated ancestors and fascinated by the opera of Richard Wagner.62 Under these circumstances, in the history of literature, incest is regarded as “classical” element in the context of “decadent syndrome.” Likewise, in naturalism, characters are voiced behind local accents for the sake of laying emphasis on the importance of environment in a positivistic manner and on the documentary feature of the work.

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Whether it can be observed a parallel sense of poetics in gothic literature appears as the crucial point within this corpus. The conventional devices of gothic are not the one and only prerequisites of the gothic scene portrayed in literature. Alternatively, one might posit the landscape as the “gothic syndrome” that becomes visible only when various preconditions, most of which consist of certain configurations of motifs, are rendered inside the text.

Literature can be considered as a sponge which absorbs the social, political and artistic values of its epoch and creates a sensibility within itself. That is why, it is indisputable that literary history writes itself somehow in relation to the historical timeline. If we take antiquity as the beginning of literature after the epic works of oral culture and religious texts, we can observe that literary movements – regardless of their own spirit – echo one another in a spiral run. In this respect, it would not be so irrelevant to rummage around for the initial seeds of gothic impulse in the Renaissance although on the surface gothic is claimed to be a response to the Enlightenment idea. Renaissance is synonymous with the “rebirth” of Europe through literature (classics), art and science; it was a period that the value of knowledge was realized which resulted in the Scientific Revolution. “Rebirth” essentially suggests the “regeneration” of antiquity: Renaissance men perceive the Middle Ages as a dark vision which swept away the illumination, wisdom and merit of antiquity. This return to the classical doctrines of antiquity, united with the inclination to scientific and mathematical conceptualization of nature. In this respect, the Renaissance, in spite of an optimistic sense of regeneration, implies the beginning of the end since it is also the trigger of
enlightenment. Therefore, the connection of gothic literature with the dialectic of enlightenment is similar to the yearning for magic and occultism in the Renaissance.

The relatively complicated task of placing gothic in the timeline stems from the fact that gothic, in spite of its declaration as an independent genre, performs as a device to reverberate the reactions against the existing social order. Therefore, it is not so difficult to find bits of gothic imagery either in antiquity or in postmodernity. Furthermore, the gothic becomes a particular issue and indeed a "syndrome," to be traced under certain and universal circumstances; the main issue of gothic is human nature and his response to himself and his environment, which would form the evidences of the syndrome. As a matter of fact, this syndromic nature of gothic renders it almost a timeless mode of writing – although in this study, I claim that it is "reformed," it is the prevailing impetus of the reflections of this syndrome that is being reformed and the process is actually a gradual one.

Gothic literature emerges as a literary genre at the end of the eighteenth century, which coincides with the period of romanticism. The emergence of such a genre is said to be associated with the consequences of science causing a sense of depression, disbelief and uncertainty on human being, which is an enunciation of the impact of enlightenment. The basic intuitive needs of the individual have been taken for granted by a mass of reconstructions. That is, as Adorno and Horkheimer demonstrate in Dialectic of Enlightenment, the human being has inevitably become detached from their spiritual concerns: gods have left the individual to a grotesque
(since it is unlimited, and half-formed, it is bound to remain so) body of science, scepticism and industrialization.

The emergence of gothic literature is undoubtedly nourished by anti-classicist movements through the end of the eighteenth century, as well as the attempts to oppose the literary canon. This opposition signifies a common ground in the context of the romantic roots of gothic literature and decadence literature. These diverse tendencies overlap at a remarkable point where both of them are based on romanticism; they find identical protégés such as E. T. A Hoffmann and tend to resist official culture.

Literature of decadence is also regarded as a response to enlightenment, which means decadence and gothic convey identical attributes by nature. Therefore, the mutual relationship between gothic and decadence movement in literature mainly derives from the fact that both of them are the products of a period of transition between romanticism and modernism. Fin de siècle can be regarded as an extended and intensified panorama of romanticism in the sense that those symptoms observed in the period of romanticism reach a point of excess: the individual has become a void entity in front of science, an instrument of demystification. The impact of the so-called groundbreaking project of enlightenment can further be traced in the decadent literature of fin de siècle. Max Nordau’s elaboration on the word fin de siècle is essentially related with the consequences of enlightenment. Nordau states:
Fin de siècle means a practical emancipation from traditional discipline, which theoretically is still in force. To the voluptuary this means unbridled lewdness, the unchaining of the beast in man; to the withered heart of the egoist, disdain of all consideration which enclose brutal greed of lucre and lust of pleasure; to the conterner of the world it means the shameless ascendency of base impulses and motives, which were, if not virtuously suppressed, at least hypocritically hidden; to the believer it means the repudiation of dogma, the negation of a supersensuous world, the descent into flat phenomenalism; to the sensitive nature yearning for aesthetic thrills, it means the vanishing of ideals in art, and no more power in its accepted forms to arouse emotion. And to all, it means the end of an established order, which for thousands of years has satisfied logic, fettered depravity, and in every art matured something of beauty.\(^{63}\)

Nordau’s statement can be related to Kelly Hurley’s conceptualization of fin de siècle revival of gothic. It is not pure and direct any more, yet it has turned out to be more complex and multi-dimensional. Hurley positions gothic genre as emerging as an anxious response to the scientific discourses such as “evolutionism, criminal anthropology, degeneration theory, sexology, pre-Freudian psychology – all articulated new models of the human as abhuman, as bodily ambiguuated or otherwise

discontinuous in identity,” which results in the “horrific re-making of the human subject.”64 With respect to the correlation between gothic and literature of decadence, Oscar Wilde’s The Picture of Dorian Gray portrays a remarkable example. Being a decadent hero, Dorian wanders in a Victorian-Gothic universe; that is, while disrupted aging and perennial beauty belongs to the narcissistic world of fin de siècle, the sudden deconstruction of this process belongs to the gothic territory.

2.2 The Uncanny: Freud and Otto

The uncanny, within the scope of this study, can be described as the unique concept that accumulates and reinforces the aspects of the gothic syndrome. The term is first defined by Sigmund Freud in his 1919 essay, “The Uncanny.” The English term uncanny, meaning “unhomely” when translated word for word, is not the exact equivalent of the German “das Unheimliche” in the sense that the German word carries the (in)familiarity and (un)rest related with the notion of “home,” along with its other implications as far as mainly German language is considered. Freud roughly describes the uncanny as the “class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar.”65 Though, as he himself acknowledges, not everything unfamiliar has to be necessarily have to be frightening; in order to create the uncanny effect, something has to be added, which means the uncanny appears under certain

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circumstances that must be present in the literary work. Quoting Ernst Jentsch, Freud claims that the uncanny effect is achieved best when the reader is led to a sense of uncertainty. Yet, there appears the similar problematic: not all the sources of an uncertain condition have to convey the sense of uncanny.

Freud examines E. T. A Hoffmann’s prominent long story, “The Sandman” in order to show the characteristics of the uncanny. Hoffmann, as one of the major representatives of German Romanticism at the point where it has turned out to appear with its darker aspects, sought to reveal what lies beneath the “ordinary.” In this sense, the main attribute of the uncanny is that it very much depends on the subjective vision of the individual. Namely, the perception of the uncanny is mainly rooted rather in personal illusions, which also forms the basic point of departure to distinguish the concept uncanny from the gothic syndrome. Gothic syndrome embodies the phases of the uncanny, whereas the uncanny, having originated from German Romanticism does not have to represent all the aspects of the gothic syndrome.

Sigmund Freud’s sense of the uncanny and his interpretation of “The Sandman” comply with his psychoanalytic stance. The loss of the eye archetypally corresponds to the fear of castration. Freud argues that although one might view the eye unrelated to the male sex organ and the act of castration as of no importance, he cannot deny the

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66 Ibid., 347.
67 E. T. A Hoffmann’s “The Sandman” tells the story of Nathaniel, a student who carries a fear of the monstrous Sandman who steals the eyes of children. In his mind, he relates the vision of Sandman with the unpleasant Coppelius who becomes associated with the death of his father, and later he again encounters Coppelius who disturbs him in his mind. Although he is engaged, he is charmed by an automaton built by Coppelius believing her to be real. The discovery of the trick gets him mad, and he ultimately flings himself to death.
fact that the so-called relevance widely exists in dreams, myths and fantasies and the
“castration complex” of the neurotic patients is deeply dominant in their mental lives.
In this sense, he regards the uncanny effect “The Sandman” creates upon the reader as
the “anxiety belonging to the castration complex of childhood.”68 This analysis of
Freud’s highlights once again the dimension of the uncanny related with the inner
fears of the human being. Such an extent of subjectivity in terms of the protagonist’s
experiences in the analysis of the uncanny in “The Sandman” rather leads to a rather
uncertain dimension of the term.

Freud touches upon the theme of the ‘double’69 as a means to enhance the
uncanny effect. Reciting Otto Rank, he draws attention to the aspect of the ‘double’ as
“an insurance against the destruction of the ego,” and “a preservation against
extinction” claiming that it has “its counterpart in the language of dream, which is fond
of representing castration by a doubling or a multiplication of a genital symbol.”
Furthermore, he relates this to the primary narcissism that is dominant in the child’s
and the primitive man’s mind.70 He further asserts that

(...) the quality of uncanniness can only come from the fact of the
‘double’ being a creation dating back to a very early mental stage, long
since surmounted – a stage, incidentally, at which it wore a more

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69 The term stands for doppelgänger, which is the equivalent of “double-goer” meaning somebody who
is acting the same way as another person.
70 Ibid., 356-357.
friendly aspect. The ‘double’ has become a thing of terror, just as, after
the collapse of their religion, the gods turned into demons.

Freud’s notion of the doppelganger is a significant issue in gothic literature which most
often reveals itself metaphorically as the two sides of a character, such as the case of
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Dr. Frankenstein and his creature, and Dorian Gray along with
Dracula who provides a double for English society in the sense of his being an outsider
and intruding their (the Londoners) lives. The Doppelganger performs as a device to
convey the most essential themes of gothic literature such as the harmonisation of
body and soul, narcissism, sin and redemption and the possible consequences of
personal manipulation.

In his work *The Idea of the Holy*, Rudolf Otto explores the “non-rational” aspect
of the holy, which he calls mystery as the primary element in all religions. He conveys
this alleged mystery with the word “numinous,” derived from “numen” which refers to
a deity or god and is *a priori* and *sui generis*, as Otto himself states, in all religions. In
order to explicate the term he declares that

There must be felt a something ‘numinous,’ something bearing the
character of a ‘numen,’ to which the mind turns spontaneously; or
(which is the same thing in other words) these feelings can only arise in
the mind as accompanying emotions when the category of ‘the
numinous’ is called into play.71

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This special emotional condition created by the numinous finds expression in the feeling of *mysterium tremendum*. Rudolf Otto’s term *mysterium tremendum* recalls the characteristics of the uncanny in the sense that both suggest a different and extraordinary sense of fear. Moreover, the uncanny can be considered as the “secular” version of *mysterium tremendum* since the latter is usually evoked by a strong and sincerely felt religious feeling. The effect *mysterium tremendum* creates is related with the common grounds it shares with the notion of the numinous, which can be summed up with the attributes of unconditional inaccessibility, power and the force of an energy. This perception, actually depends on the inaccessible, powerful and urgent (as the wrath of God) qualities of the numinous. Rudolf Otto depicts the instance of *mysterium tremendum* as such:

The feeling of it may at times come sweeping like a gentle tide, pervading the mind with a tranquil mood of deepest worship. It may pass over into a more set and lasting attitude of the soul, continuing, as it were, thrillingly vibrant and resonant, until at last it dies away and the soul resumes its ‘profane,’ non-religious mood of everyday experience. It may burst in sudden eruption up from the depths of the soul with spasms and convulsions, or lead to the strangest excitements, to intoxicated frenzy, to transport, and to ecstasy.\(^{72}\)

One of the major prerequisites of the gothic syndrome as it is conveyed in literature, is attained through the representation of the uncanny, which has been subject to alteration with the impact of postmodernism. The instances that evoke the uncanny have become the combination of human being’s inner fears with the external effects. In this sense, the source of the uncanny has become more concrete, but it addresses human being’s more archaic fears.

2.3 Gothic Re-Formed

Within the scope of this study, my crucial aim is to illustrate the re-formation process that gothic literature has gone through in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Having addressed the historical development of the genre, the question why gothic literature is always contemporary has become more evident.

First of all, the definition of the term gothic has been diversified and subject to numerous controversies and challenges based on not only the narratological issues, but also its corpus. Several questions regarding the nature of gothic fiction is raised: is it a separate genre? Does it have subgenres? Is it a subgenre? Can it be identified in a literary genre other than novel? Is it a mode? Is it a motif? Is it a motive? What is actually worth interest is that the one single answer to all these questions might be “YES.” The reasons of such a positioning, however, stems from the fact that gothic literature has preserved its vivacity since the time it flourished at the end of the
eighteenth century. Gothic literature, since it inherently displays a rebellious manner, functions as a catalyst to decrease the tension especially at times of upheaval.

Gothic literature does not show clear-cut phases of development due to the fact that it has a liquid nature that takes the shape of the vessel it is poured into. That is, its motivation is determined according to the direction of its critical attitude. It is certainly an instrument of displaying the “imaginative counter-discourse” of the ongoing Enlightenment; however, the borders of enlightenment do exist, but has been drawn rather dimly. That is why, the human being has always been vulnerable to the fallacy of falling prey to the hegemonic and yet commanding attitude of enlightenment.

Through the end of the twentieth century, a similar tendency of distrust towards the society to the one in fin de siècle has been observed. This time, human being has consumed every single material object as well as his incorporeal spirit and has completely lost his connection with his outer world. Simultaneously, the dynamics of his inner world have been transformed as well. For the individual, who has experienced two world wars and then is exposed to technology to a great extent, the source of the uncanny has changed. After all, it is not the untouched nature that provides the possible grounds for the gothic scenery, but more familiar and rather constructed issues have settled down in the subconscious of the human being and tend to oppress him. To illustrate, while it was the haunted castles and districts, dark mansions with ghosts and beasts, wild creatures and inexplicable curses providing the uncanny atmosphere during the time when gothic first entered the literary arena, the problematic of the mode in the twentieth century and onwards has been modified a
considerable deal: the city centres have become the foremost topography and the possibility of death comes upon answering a phone call.

2.4 Gothic Literature as Cultural Ecology

_The life of man entire is misery:_

_he finds no resting place, no haven from calamity_

_But something other dearer still than life_

_the darkness hides and mist encompasses;_

_we are proved luckless lovers of this thing_

_that glitters in the underworld: no man_

_can tell us of the stuff of it, expounding_

_what is, and what is not: we know nothing of it._

Euripides

from _Hippolytus_

The main common ground gothic literature and cultural ecology share is that their main problematic is based on nature/culture dichotomy, which is also rooted in the subtexts of cultural ecology. To illustrate, in _The Birth of Tragedy_, Nietzsche acknowledges that the Apollonian beauty of the Greek artistry is only a “veil” which hides the Dionysian world of barbaric enthusiasm; therefore, that Apollonian beauty
and perfection, without the Dionysian, is bound to remain an illusion. On the other hand, with regards to Greek tragedy, satyric chorus of the dithyramb is what renders the Greek art outstanding. This coexistence of the Apollonian and the Dionysian forms the “soul” of tragedy. A similar constellation is also at hand in gothic fiction: Nietzsche’s Apollonian “beauty” is identical to “the guilt of the revolutionary haunted by the (paternal) past which [man] has been striving to destroy.” Leslie Fiedler further states:

The fear that possesses the gothic and motivates its tone is the fear that in destroying the old ego-ideals of Church and State, the West has opened a way for inruction of darkness: for insanity and the disintegration of the self. Through the pages of the gothic romance, the soul of Europe flees its own darker impulses.73

In this respect, gothic becomes the Dionysian force that unveils the “illusionary” Apollonism of Europe and forms an imaginative-counter discourse,74 which contributes to the “constant, creative renewal of language, perception, communication, and imagination” through forming a “sensorium and imaginative sounding board for hidden problems, deficits, and imbalances of the larger culture.”75

It would be an illusion to consider gothic literature as articulating merely the fear of the unknown; yet, it is actually the “outcome” of discovering the limits of one’s

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74 See “The Triadic Function Model.”
imagination. In other words, gothic literature is a product of the unspeakable, the subconscious of human; a manifestation of the margin. With respect to the function of literature within the cultural system – that it acts as an ecological force – gothic elements function as providing the imaginative counter-discourse which reverberate the deficits of the civilisatory power with what is marginalised, neglected or repressed by the systemic realities. Likewise, Valdine Clemens draws attention to the fact that gothic literature turns out to be a manifestation of decline, havoc, and disaster in that it gains emphasis in such periods; besides, it has a balancing influence upon crisis periods. She asserts:

    The usual interpretation of the historical connection between Gothic horror and periods of social unrest is that Gothic registers or reflects these moments of radical cultural shift. [...] This type of fiction does more than simply reflect popular attitudes, however; it also influences them. In both its literary and cinematic forms Gothic horror can actually facilitate a process of cultural change.76

    In this respect, it is not mere coincidence that the idea of dialectic of enlightenment and emergence of gothic literature almost coincide in the time line; gothic literature is essentially the articulation of the realisation of enlightenment and its dialectic put into practice.

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Cultural ecology also contributes to the perception of the mystified realities of human nature within the scope of gothic literature. The emergence of gothic literature dates back to romanticism, also the first ecologic era as far as literature is concerned, which strengthens the relationship between gothic literature and cultural ecology.

The relation of gothic literature and cultural ecology stems from the fact that the former is directly the presentation of the imaginative-counter discourse in the sense that the subtexts of cultural ecology are also inherent in gothic literature. Among the other genres, motives and motifs, gothic is thought to reflect the aspects of “literature as cultural ecology” most thoroughly since it has a critical point of view, it pursues the marginal and reveals how, why, and in which preconditions the marginal (dis)integrates the society. Furthermore, gothic literature enunciates the “deficits of civilisatory power” and contributes to the formation of a harmonious balance through demonstrating what remains on the margin. Through this process, it “contributes from the margins to the continual renewal of the cultural centre.”77 Under these circumstances, gothic literature appears as a point of break in the map of literature where culture and nature come together.

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2.5 Excursus on Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*: Bacchanalian Transgression and Eleusinian Counter Discourse

The gothic syndrome, like the grotesque, flourishes in the periods of upheaval.\(^{78}\) However, there is the difference that the grotesque undermines the official discourse, whereas the gothic syndrome is to be read in the context and as the result of the “dialectics of enlightenment.” The fin de siècle is a “classical” age of upheaval. It symbolises the historical period in which the hegemony of the bourgeoisie gradually wears off and the western culture reaches a state of deep uncertainty. This has manifested itself politically as well: the state of the powerful empires of Central and Eastern Europe – represented by the German Kaiser and the Austrian Emperor, the Russian Tsar and the Ottoman Sultan – in the eve of the First World War, before they develop into totally different governmental systems. Frederick A. Lubich proclaims for this epoch the symbolic death of the father figure\(^{79}\): society mutates to a fatherless society and fin de siècle represents itself as the decadence and twilight of patriarchy. This sense of decadence in literature reveals itself as the ritualistic aversion to everything that belongs to nature, since nature is associated with femininity. On a psychomythical level, nature corresponds to the emergence of the Magna Mater that is sublimely manifested in various masks of the femme fatale. The degenerate women of the fin de siècle are, the centre of attraction of not only the criminals, lunatics and perverts but also of science, find their equivalent in Dionysus’ maenads.

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Bram Stoker’s 1897 novel, *Dracula* has been an icon of both gothic literature and the decadence literature of the fin de siècle. The novel is written in the form of journals, diaries, letters, telegrams, and newspaper articles through which Stoker maintains his solemn attitude towards subject matter. This technique of narration not only renders the incidents “real” but also provides an insight into multiple points of view, and thus leaves the initiative to complete the pieces of the puzzle to the reader. What is more, the narration invites the reader into the Dionysian sphere where subjectivity is reinforced and invokes the Apollonian sphere through the action of “writing.”

The time *Dracula* was written and first received, coincides with a point of intersection of a significant period, which embodies various social and literary movements: late nineteenth century followed the zenith of the age of enlightenment, and it was the precursor of “decline” as far as classical ideals are concerned. Within the scope of my dissertation, *Dracula* is the only “classical” work of gothic literature and it is scrutinized in relation to the motivation behind the emergence of gothic literature. My reading of the novel structurally comprises the Eleusinian mysteries and textually covers Euripides’ fifth century tragedy, *The Bacchae*. The reasons why I choose to elaborate on the reception of these two contexts is first the decadent character of *Dracula* and second its connection with the dialectic of enlightenment.

As it is put forward in the theoretical chapters of this study, “literature as cultural ecology” is a most effective standpoint to elucidate the stimuli for the genesis of the gothic mode in literature. According to the cultural ecological viewpoint, literature
functions as a device to record the “unspeakable” of the history of culture and anthropology and thus construct a mechanism of reintegration to the prevailing system of reality. In other words, literature creates an earthquake storm affect to relieve the tension of the units of cultural history. Hence, imaginative literature undertakes the function of acting as a regenerative force; Hubert Zapf explicates this process of regeneration as such:

[Literatur, F. C.] inszeniert die Rückkopplung des rationalen Bewusstseins mit seinen prärationalen Ursprüngen und wird so zu einem symbolischen Medium, das das diskursiv Unausdrückbare stets aufs Neue in das kulturelle Bewusstsein und Gedächtnis einschreibt.\(^{80\text{vi}}\)

In order to fulfil such a task, literature renews its repertoire in terms of not only the cultural categories forming its fabric but also its collection of symbolic forms and aesthetic methods. This way, literature reflects the experience of the unfamiliar and thus preserves the productivity of cultural memory.\(^{81}\)

Jonathan Harker sets off his journey from London on 1 May to Transylvania where he first recounts his passage from the West to the East on 3 May. Harker’s journey insinuates one of the most central issues in the novel: the dichotomy of west and east. In other words, Harker is traveling from the cradle of ‘culture’ to the wilderness of ‘nature.’ Before reaching his ultimate destination, he finds out that the district that is inhabited by “the nobles” of the country remains “on the borders of


\(^{81}\) Ibid., 67-68.
three states Transylvania, Moldavia and Bukovina, in the midst of the Carpathian
mountains; one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe."^82 He also adds
that Count Dracula’s castle is impossible to locate in any map: the West; thus, the
apparatuses of culture remain insufficient to work out in the east, which is bound to
embody all the connotations of the unknown. Under these circumstances, Transylvania
implies a metaphorical “exosphere” when juxtaposed with the familiar England. From
this instance on, Bram Stoker invites the reader to a sharp polarization of the west and
the east through Harker’s initial impressions of Transylvania:

All day long we seemed to dawdle through a country which was full of
beauty of every kind. Sometimes we saw little towns or castles on the
top of steep hills such as we see in old missals; sometimes we ran by
rivers and streams which seemed from the wide stony margin on each
side of them to be subject to great floods. It takes a lot of water, and
running strong, to sweep the outside edge of a river clear. At every
station there were groups of people, sometimes crowds, and in all sorts
of attire. (...) The women looked pretty, except when you got near
them, but they were all very clumsy about the waist. (...) The strangest
figures we saw were the Slovaks, who are more barbarian than the rest,
with their big cowboy hats, great baggy dirty-white trousers, white linen
shirts, and enormous heavy leather belts, nearly a foot wide, all studded

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incorporated in parentheses.
over with brass nails. They wore high boots, with their trousers tucked into them, and had long black hair and heavy black moustaches. They are very picturesque, but do not look prepossessing. On the stage they would be set down at once as some old Oriental band of brigands. They are, however, I am told, very harmless and rather wanting in natural self-assertion. (10)

In this long paragraph, Bram Stoker depicts Transylvania as a wild and multicultural landscape with which Jonathan Harker seems unfamiliar: streams to form future floods, pretty but uncanny looking women, barbarian but charming nations, Oriental and brigand but so-called harmless people. Harker is observing the scenery and people in an otherising manner.

I will apply Hubert Zapf’s triadic function model to the novel mainly in the light of the topographies of England and Transylvania along with their connotations, which will also comprise Eleusinian mysteries and Euripides’ 5th century BC tragedy The Bacchae. According to the triadic function model, England suggests a cultural-critical metadiscourse representing the deficits of the dominant ideological system83 and Transylvania the imaginative counter-discourse, which allows the unknown or the marginalised to come into existence. In other words, Transylvania seems to activate the deep and amorphous layers of the unconscious and the other nature that is not

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83 Hubert Zapf. Literatur als kulturelle Ökologie. Zur kulturellen Funktion imaginativer Texte auf Beispielen des amerikanischen Romans (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2002), 64.
possible to reach through discourse. The most representative symbol of the “other” nature is woman. The anxieties of the age are manifested in the pejorative-feminine attributes. When the novel is read from the perspective of “literature as cultural ecology,” it articulates the defeat of patriarchy through the feminine mysteries. In this sense, my argument is that in Dracula, the archetypal starting point in Euripides’ The Bacchae is repeated. This repetition is not based on an intertextual interconnectedness – though the perspective of “literature as cultural ecology” also suggests such a viewpoint – but stems from the proposition that literature fulfils the task of conveying the unconscious of culture. In this sense, the similar cultural-historical dynamics enable literature to respond in a similar vein.

The most remarkable attribute of Bram Stoker’s novel is that the feminine characters do not have fathers. Neither Mina (the letter on 18 September) nor Lucy is under the authority of a father figure, which appears as the crucial indicative of the “Twilight of the Gods” of patriarchy: here rules a vacuum to be filled by Dracula throughout the novel. Since these women are surrounded by the “fatherly” vacuums, Bram Stoker has filled this vacuum with the symbolic agents of the patriarchal order: Mina’s fiancé is Jonathan Harker, the solicitor, representing the law of the father and Lucy Westenra is going to marry a representative of the English Empire – Sir Arthur Holmwood who represents the superiority of the English colonial power. Accordingly, two separate literary topographies are constructed just as it is in Euripides’ The Bacchae. In this topography, the English one represented by Jonathan Harker and

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84 Ibid., 65.
Arthur Holmwood corresponds to the patriarchal Britain. Therefore, Harker’s journey to Transylvania marks a transgression: Harker is symbolically leaving the literary topography represented by himself and Arthur Holmwood and thus the symbol of patriarchy. The homeland of Count Dracula consequently turns into an anti-topography. Jurij Lotman remarks on the phenomenon of transgression as follows:

Once the agent has crossed a border, he enters another semantic field, an ‘anti-field’ vis-a-vis the initial one, if movement is to cease, he has to merge with the field, to be transformed from a mobile into an immobile persona.85

It is transgression itself that constructs the binary literary topographies, which appear as one of the most important features of gothic literature as well.86 As a matter of fact, Jonathan Harker leaves not only the order of the father, but also the realistic-scientific viewpoint of the Occident. The so-called transgression is from the European Enlightenment mindset to the irrational and fantastic world of the Orient. The Babylonian confusion and the Balkanic mixture of peoples are the harbingers of the dissolution of the absolute and masculine logos. The dissolution of the fatherly logos also points to the construction of the topography of the imaginative counter discourse. The imaginative counter discourse is topographically represented by the sublime

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nature. In Brittnacher’s words, she appears as a “mistress” collaborating with the evil as far as gothic novel is concerned:

Von der düsteren Stimmung scheint auch die Natur ergriffen: Sanfte Wiesen gehen über in eine schroffe und düstere Gebirgslandschaft, die Pferde scheuen, und in der Ferne heulen Wölfe im Mondlicht. Erhabene Natur ist im gotischen Roman die Komplizin des Bösen, dessen Tun sie mit den ihr eigenen Erregungszuständen, mit Donner und Blitz, prasselndem Regen und vom Wind gepeitschten Bäumen begleitet.87vii

Besides, Brittnacher regards Dracula as the “landlord of the horrific aura both nature and architecture,” which accords with the aspects of the gothic syndrome.88 In this respect, Jonathan Harker’s transgressive journey forms a “rite of passage”:89 England represents the symbolic sphere of the cultural-critical metadiscourse; his destination, Transylvania symbolises the imaginative counter-discourse. Under these circumstances, we can argue that Jonathan Harker’s transgression corresponds to the surreal regression from culture to nature. Advancement does not appear only in a spatial platform; there occurs a mental journey as well: from the Apollonian consciousness to the Dionysian unconscious – in Freudian terms, from super ego to id. Jonathan Harker’s journey, however, is definitely not a significant incident that the novel centres around. The actual one is Count Dracula’s journey to England, through

88 Ibid., 120.
89 Arnold Van Gennep. The Rites of Passage. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), 66.
which an exceptionally archaic example is reconstructed: Euripides’ *The Bacchae*
telling how Dionysus epidemically occupies Theben, Pentheus’ city. Dracula absolutely
forms an alter ego of Euripides’ Dionysus; he is the stranger coming from the east,
always referred to as the “coming god,” and wanting his religion to be introduced and
the cults to be performed. Jean-Pierre Vernant and Pierre Vidal-Naquet’s description
of Dionysus can precisely apply to Dracula:

Dionysus cannot be pinned down in any form, he plays with
appearances, confuses what is illusion and what is real. But his
otherness also stems from the fact that, through his epiphany, all cut-
and-dried categories and clear oppositions that impart coherence to our
vision of the world lose their distinctiveness and merge, fuse, changing
from one thing into another.90

Vernant and Vidal-Naquet’s “cut-and-dried” categories and clear oppositions for
Dionysus include the male and the female, the young and the old, the far and the near,
the beyond and the here and now, Greek and the barbarian, the wild and the
civilised.91 Barbarism is inherent in his nature; he is the wild and he is the civilised92
since he intrudes on “civilisation” with his wilderness. Furthermore, Vernant and Vidal

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90 Jean-Pierre Vernant, Pierre Vidal-Naquet. *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*. Translated by Janet
91 Ibid., 398-399.
92 In the film *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*, Professor Van Helsing in his initial lecture on blood diseases remarks
“Venereal diseases (the diseases of Venus) imputes to them divine origin. They involve the sex problem
about which ethics and ideals of Christianity are concerned. Civilisation and ‘syphilisation’ have
advanced together.” In this respect, it can be claimed that blood-sucker Dracula appears as a warning
against enlightenment.
Naquet’s description of “wild and civilised’ as far as Dionysus is concerned is worth considering in terms of Dracula as well:

Dionysus makes one flee from the town, deserting one’s house, abandoning children, spouse, family, leaving one’s daily occupations and work. He is worshipped at night, out on the mountainside, in the valleys and woods. His servants become wild, handling snakes and suckling the young of animals as if they were their own. They discover themselves to be in communion with all beasts, both the wild and the domesticated, and establish a new and joyous familiarity with nature as a whole.\(^{93}\)

Just like Dionysus, Dracula has a mesmerising effect on the people he wants: Jonathan Harker, Lucy, Mina and even Prof. Van Helsing. His servant, Renfield, the former solicitor, becomes wild, fond of spiders and various animals and finds himself in a close relationship with the beasts establishing a different sense of unity with nature, and he dies completing the “cycle” at the end.

The imaginative counter-discourse of the novel is embedded in these ritualistic tendencies. Dionysus introduces himself in the prologue of *The Bacchae* in the following lines:

> From the fields of Lydia and Phrygia, fertile in Gold,

> I travelled first to the sun-smitten Persian plains,

> The walled cities of Bactria, the harsh Median country,

Wealthy Arabia, and the whole tract of the Asian coast

Where mingled swarms of Greeks and Orientals live

In vast magnificent cities; and before reaching this,

The first city of Hellas I have visited,

I had already, in all those regions of the east,

Performed my dances and set forth my ritual

To make my godhead manifest to mortal men.\(^9^4\)

Here, Jonathan Harker’s orientalistic views are turned upside down, since the civilised-Western England turns out to be the target of the stranger god coming from the east, who strives for performing his own rituals there. In this respect, Dracula can be seen as an energy that “postcolonises” the colonial forces. It is exactly this point, at the latest, where the topographies have become intermingled and dichotomies of east/west, nature/culture are subverted. The intermingling of the topographies implies the confrontation process of the cultural-critical metadiscourse and imaginative counter-discourse has started, which signals the intervening of the reintegrative inter-discourse. Count Dracula embodies, not only postcolonial, but also feminist and ecofeminist attributes in the sense that the women that are infected by him resemble the Theben women in Euripides’ *The Bacchae* who, leaving their homes and children, remain outside the patriarchal discourse. The prefiguration of the “new woman” emerges as the “weird sisters” attacking Jonathan Harker in Count Dracula’s castle. In

this sense, the independence of women draws a dissimilar image to the typical Victorian image of women. It is as if Count Dracula establishes women mysteries in the midst of the patriarchal England. Count Dracula appears as the archetype of Dionysus, with respect to Johann Jakob Bachoffen’s comments on Dionysus: “Dionysos ist vorzugsweise der Frauen Gott. Alle Seiten der weiblichen Natur finden in ihm ihre Befriedigung.” The degeneration of women or the transformation process from “beauty in the house” to fin de siècle femme fatale implies the Twilight of Patriarchy. The reason why Count Dracula chooses the name Count Deville in England is related with the decadence literature of France in the sense of the history of literature. As Salli J. Kline maintains, Bram Stoker presents Count Dracula as a degenerated decadent who takes in women:

The more aggressive, heartless and uncompromising, the more independent and immoral woman was seeming to become, the more terror she inspired in the hearts of men. Widely viewed as a godless creature with a vitality gained and nourished at the expense of patriarchal society, the New Woman was experienced as a vampire from the start.  

This godlessness signifies the contradiction of the diametrically opposite discourses: Count Dracula, a prefiguration of Dionysus, appears as the representative of the

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democratic-permissive mother right. As a representative of fin de siècle, Bram Stoker equates this sphere with evil and godlessness. From the patriarchal perspective, evil is always associated with the maternal. Count Dracula’s ability of transformation (especially to a bat) opposes all the views of the grotesque body. Additionally, his affinity to unclean animals (like insects and rats) and ability to transform into green mist contrast with the classical-static ideals of body. Wolfgang Kayser explains the attachment to the material-maternal and the undomesticated as such:

Certain animals are especially suitable to the grotesque – snakes, owls, toads, spiders – the nocturnal and creeping animals which inhabit realms apart from and inaccessible to man. (...) It belongs not to God but to the evil powers. (...) The grotesque animal incarnate, however, is the bat (Fledermous), the very name of which points to an unnatural fusion of organic realms concretized in this ghostly creature.  

Count Dracula’s preoccupation with unclean animals symbolises his affinity with the wild and uncultivated nature as well: he can even control winds. The dynamism of Count Dracula’s ability to transform completely resists the static-platonic ideals of patriarchy which has a tendency to rationality.

Another aspect that undercuts patriarchy is the construction of a metaphysical system that opposes the religious system of the West, Christianity. This “other” system appears as the parody of the antique cult, Eleusinian Mysteries. The essence of

Eleusinian Mysteries is simply the reunification of Demeter’s daughter, Persephone, abducted by Hades, with her mother. In the absence of Persephone, the world gets in an eternal winter since Demeter who is responsible for the earth and anything related with the earth; thus, her grief leads her to impede the growth of plants in the absence of her daughter.

On the other hand, Demeter’s relationship with civilization is rather ambivalent as well. Demeter is a Chthonian three-masked goddess of fertility, but also Persephone, her daughter and maiden version, and Hecate, the goddess of crossroads and “nocturnal sorcery who is able to enter the underworld.”98 Persephone’s happy return from the underworld conveys, according to Burkert, “a double existence between the upper world and the underworld: a dimension of death is introduced into life, and a dimension of life is introduced to death.”99 When Demeter is scrutinized from the perspective of the topographies of life and death, it is evident that she is a transgressive goddess. In this metaphysical system, topographies are not binary and thus hermetically separate as it is in the father-son religions of the patriarchal system whose ultimate aim is the heaven in the other world: in the patriarchal religion, even death is a step only for the development of the soul.

It is utterly crucial that the name of the ship taking Count Dracula to England is Demeter. In the ship, the count has fifty boxes of homeland earth since in the daytime he can sleep merely in the homeland earth, and at night, he can walk about as an

99 Ibid., 161.
“undead.” In this respect, Dracula resembles Demeter in the sense of his ambiguous position towards the concepts of “this world” and the “other world.” Accordingly, Demeter is not only the goddess of fertility, but also of death: fertility enables death to come into existence, which clarifies the ambiguity of Demeter along with the reason why the ship taking Count Dracula to England is named Demeter. The uncanniness of Count Dracula stems from the fact that his epiphany appears as a Dionysian-Demetrian mysterium tremendum. His monstrosity is reminiscent of the horrific images of gods in archaic cults:

And so it comes about that the horrible and dreadful character of primitive images and pictures of gods, which seems to us today frequently repellent, has even yet among naive and primitive natures – nay, occasionally even among ourselves – the effect of arousing genuine feelings of authentic religious awe. And, vice versa, this awe operates as a supremely potent stimulus to express the element of terror in different forms of imaginative representation. The hard, stern, and somewhat grim pictures of the Madonna in ancient Byzantine art attract the worship of many Catholics more than the tender charm of the Madonnas of Raphael.  

At this point, fear of the woman and misogyny of the fin de siècle reaches a peak level: death is woman. She is only responsible for the material (mater-ial=  

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mater=mutter=mother) continuance of life; every other phallic and linear progression is the work of man. Woman who is giving birth gives birth but to death. She is beyond the linear time: she is the personification of cyclical time where the starting and finishing points are life and death. In this respect, from the gender perspective, we can arrive at very remarkable conclusions about Count Dracula: he is more of an androgynous Dionysus given birth by a mortal woman, or the phallic element of the Great Mother. His teeth look like vagina dentata, and his existence can be abolished only with his phallic head cut off, when he is castrated, and his heart is taken out by a phallic stake. He cannot bear the cross, the symbol of spiritual eternity, nor can he stand the Apollonian light of the sun, which is the implication of his progressive rationality. Even Mina Harker is capable of giving birth to a son and naming him Quincey, right after Dracula is murdered by the fascist-homosexual brotherhood. Patriarchal system is reconstructed and the law of the father defeats the desire for the mother, but at the cost of what? Woman is cast for the part of the “beauty in the house” in a more settled position. Lucy is transformed into a vampire as a “new woman” and slain by the group of men.

Bram Stoker’s Dracula appears as a misogynist novel of restoration and its impetus is so drastic that a grotesque masculine character is felt necessary for the mystification of the feminine threat.

The following schema regarding how Dracula employs the functions of the cultural critical metadiscourse and imaginative counter-discourse can be drawn:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural-critical Metadiscourse</th>
<th>Imaginative Counter-Discourse</th>
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<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>Transylvania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture: Apollo/Athena</td>
<td>Nature: Bacchae/Demeter/Dionysos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Harker</td>
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<td>Arthur Holmwood</td>
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<td>Dr. Seward</td>
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<td>Van Helsing</td>
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<td>Quincey Morris</td>
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<td>Lucy</td>
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CHAPTER III

GOTHIFICATION THROUGH AN UPSIDE-DOWN INTERTEXTUALITY: THE

COMFORT OF STRANGERS

Volumes of stupor and stone, back and forth

In this hour among the few alive . . .

But the light advances in great strides,

Shattering yawns and agonies.

Exultance, radiances that tear apart!

Dawn throws its first knife.

Octavio Paz

(from "Masks of Dawn")

With Cesare Pavese’s words, “Travelling is a brutality. It forces you to trust strangers and lose sight of all that familiar comfort of home and friends. You are constantly off balance. Nothing is yours except the essential things – air, sleep, dreams, the sea, the sky – all things tending towards the eternal or what we imagine of it,” begins Ian McEwan’s novel The Comfort of Strangers, which coincides with the utterly cathartic scream of Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz: “There’s no place like home”102 (9).

Ian McEwan’s novel, The Comfort of Strangers tells the story of an English couple, Mary and Colin experiencing utterly bizarre incidents on their vacation in

102 Inspired by the presentation made by Dr. Carol Davison at the Gothic Conference in November, 2005, in Nijmegen - the Netherlands.
Venice where they make friends with another couple, Robert and Caroline. The novel unseals the dichotomy between nature and culture mainly in the silhouette of the cities of England, the mark of culture, and Venice of nature. The title *The Comfort of Strangers* remains as a vague one in the sense that in the novel, the identities of the “strangers” are ambiguous. In other words, whether it is the regular inhabitants of the city of Venice, or the people visiting Venice are the strangers remains rather controversial. Thus the word comfort implies an ironical statement depending on which side – Mary and Colin, or Robert and Caroline – experiences it. Thus the epigraph by Cesare Pavese gains a meaning: being a stranger you are delivered to the hands of strangers by yourself and you are away from home, where the “heimliche” turns into “unheimliche.” You are by yourself in a place where nothing belongs to you and all you have are the “essential” things, like Mary and Colin having nothing else but each other and themselves. Therefore, their vacation in Venice is significant since it gives an opportunity to focus merely on their relationship; their relationship is completed, modified, revealed and interrupted by the locale Venice and two Venetians they come across.

Throughout the history of literature and culture, Venice has an image that brings an intricateness that is related with the dichotomous nature of the city. Actually, Venice owes its eeriness to the sea; in spite of the conventional purifying image of water, the city Venice embodies the uncanny, mysterious picture of the sea due to its “fluid” borders. That is to say, Venice has been not only a point where nature and culture intermingle, but also a heterogeneous mixture of the two entities throughout
history. This so-called heterogeneity is what renders the city the centre of hermeticism. Again, due to the Adriatic Sea that connects it with the east, Venice has been a centre of trade, a commercial port to the Orient, especially following the Fourth Crusade. The economic wealth of Venice also paved the way to host the most gifted artists and become one of the most significant cities of Renaissance. Moreover, Venice is a city made up of small islands which played an important role in its inhabitants’ safety against the attacks of foreign armies. This relative inaccessibility and the geopolitical situation caused Venice to be among the most powerful republics of the world until the plague which demolished the peaceful atmosphere of “La Serenissima” in the mid-seventeenth century. Essentially, plague, the expression of a most severe face of death, causing the downfall of Venice, contributes to Venice’s intricate identity which can be detected within the history of literature as well, such as Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Mask of the Red Death” depicting the dreadful personification of the plague as an uncanny stranger that does not distinguish status quo. Thus, it can be acclaimed that the plague appears as the most significant incident that reinforces the image of Venice as the uncanny setting of world literature.

3.1 The Representation of the Repressive “Classicism”

Classicism refers to the revival of the ideals of antiquity. Apart from its terminological use, it connotes symmetry, proportion, lucidity and sophistication which are essentially

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the ideals of ancient Greek art. In *The Comfort of Strangers*, classicism appears as a repressive ideal, which is not flexible by any means and bound to be broken. The classical conception of art is definitely necessary to form an appreciation of art and beauty, but throughout the centuries classical movements were always followed by a reaction. Sooner or later Apollo should be accompanied by Dionysus in order to achieve the ultimate balance, which is never attainable in a harmonic manner.

I will refer to the legacies of German archaeologist and art historian, Johann Joachim Winckelmann and Friedrich Nietzsche in order to display the reflections of repressive classicism in *The Comfort of Strangers*. Winckelmann can be regarded as among the founders of Philhellenism in the sense that his revolutionary work, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums (History of the Art of Antiquity)* was a landmark in reconstructing ancient Greek art in an attempt to point out the differences between ancient and modern culture. *History of the Art of Antiquity* was not only a meditation on the history of antiquity, essentially, putting the differences between Greek and Graeco-Roman traditions, but has also contributed to the understanding of neoclassicism that "helped spur the radical rethinking of artistic and cultural norms initiated by later German writers of the Sturm und Drang and Romantic periods such as Johann Gottfried von Herder, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and G. W. F. Hegel."¹⁰⁴ Moreover, as Alex Potts states in his introduction to Winckelmann’s work, his perspective prepared the possible grounds for archaeological activity in Greece and

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Near East at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Winckelmann’s analyses are based on the premise that the finest examples of ancient Greek and Roman sculpture appear as the universal ideals of excellence and beauty. What he accomplishes as an art historian is to relate the chronological data and artistic works of Greek and Roman antiquity with the cultural milieu of both their and his time, which provides a thorough outlook on the subjects such as the value of the artistic and aesthetic and the perception and representation of beauty. Alex Potts further acknowledges:

Winckelmann’s historical reconstruction of the Greek ideal in art was particularly valued because he was seen as having recovered it in its integrity, uncontaminated by modern revivals and appropriations. In so doing, it appears, he for the first time made obvious how alien, if still transfixing and significant, this ideal was to modern culture.

His zealous devotion to the concepts of artistic and aesthetic was noteworthy also for the later German writers; Winckelmann pointed out for the first time that artistic sensitivity is essential to human subjectivity. His meditation on ancient Greek art “helped form the growing preoccupation with the aesthetic as a domain that merited serious investigation in its own right, alongside the ethical and rational.”

Winckelmann claims that the concept of universal beauty lies in the individual knowledge of human being which renders it difficult to achieve a comprehensible

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105 Ibid., 3.
106 Ibid., 4.
107 Ibid., 30.
108 Ibid.
explanation. He regards the highest beauty being in God and, and thus it becomes “like a spirit separated from matter by fire that seeks to create a being conforming to the exact image of the first intelligent creature sketched in the mind of God.”¹⁰⁹ In this respect, beauty becomes the reflection of unity and simplicity which enhances the perception of harmony in human being. Winckelmann extends this idea of beauty as such:

According to this conception, beauty should be like the purest water drawn from the source of a spring: the less taste it has, the healthier it is seen to be, because it is clear of all foreign particles. Just as the state of happiness, that is the absence of pain and the enjoyment of contentment, is the easiest one in nature, and the path to it is the straightest and can be maintained without trouble or cost, so also the idea of the highest beauty seems the simplest and the easiest, and it requires no philosophical knowledge of man, no investigation of the passions of the soul and their expression.”¹¹⁰

He then, citing Epicurus, asserts that human nature does not have a midway state between pain and pleasure. Therefore, pure beauty cannot be detached from its state of action and passion to create the ultimate effect; at this point, this so-called concept of beauty comes into existence through the concept of “expression.”¹¹¹ Winckelmann

¹¹⁰ Ibid.
¹¹¹ Ibid., 196.
seeks the appearance and experience of beauty in the imitation of a beautiful subject, which finds its expression in gods and goddesses modelled on beautiful women and youths practicing sports in the gymnasiums displaying a sense of androgyny as well. Furthermore, he deems that the artist finds the essence of beauty in unity, variety and harmony which comes into existence in the beautiful body which is perceived with its continually changing centre point: the source of beauty cannot exactly be determined by the observer, but rather it is the combination of forms, [and thus] beauty of the whole.\footnote{ibid., 197.} At this point, Winckelmann likens the unity in the beautiful youth to the one in the surface of the sea, “which from a distance appears flat and still, like a mirror, even though it is constantly in motion and rolls in the waves.”\footnote{ibid.} Accordingly, Winckelmann’s definition of beauty remains rather metaphysical with respect to the individuality of perception and its godly expression. In Winckelmann’s perception of beauty, description of the Greek sculptures of the young male body is given a specific emphasis in the sense that it is closer to sense of beauty than an androgynous body exhibits. Among these works of art the description of Apollo Belvedere is fundamentally noteworthy, which I will touch upon afterwards in detail.

It is obvious that in his reception of Greek antiquity, Nietzsche has been influenced by Winckelmann to a certain extent. However, he rather criticises Winckelmann’s clear cut and overtly Apollonian perception of Greek art. Nietzsche, rather than emphasizing the Apollonian features, rejoices the Dionysian confrontation
as the aspect providing the superiority of Greek art. He relates the greatness of Greek perception of art to the opposition, or the reconciliation between the “Apollonian art of sculpture and the non-plastic, Dionysian art of music,”\textsuperscript{114} which forms the essence of Greek tragedy. He maintains:

These two distinct tendencies run parallel to each other, for the most part openly at variance; and they continually incite each other to new and more powerful births, which perpetuate an antagonism, only superficially reconciled by the common term ‘Art’: till at last, by a metaphysical miracle of the Hellenic will, they appear coupled with each other, and through this coupling eventually generate the art-product, equally Dionysian and Apollonian, of Attic tragedy.\textsuperscript{115}

Nietzsche invites us first to perceive the two distinct art-worlds of dreams and drunkenness: he associates the former with Apollo and the latter with Dionysus. Apollo, being the god of sun and light, also rules the inner world of the human being. Hence, he has the faculty of healing and helping in dreams, which is related with the sedative effect of art rendering the meaning of life for the individual.\textsuperscript{116} In addition, Nietzsche, citing the man wrapped in the veil of Māyā in Schopenhauer’s \textit{Welt als Wille und Vorstellung} (\textit{World as Will and Idea}), relates Apollo with the individual responding calmly to the worldly distresses depending merely upon his \textit{principium individuationis}. He further states:

\textsuperscript{114} Friedrich Nietzsche. \textit{The Birth of Tragedy}. (United Kingdom: Dover Publications, 1995), 1.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., 3.
In fact, we might say of Apollo, that in him the unshaken faith in his *principium individuationis* and the calm repose of the man wrapped therein receive their sublimest expression; and we might consider Apollo himself as the glorious divine image of the *principium individuationis*, whose gestures and expression tell us of all the joy and wisdom of “appearance,” together with its beauty.\(^{117}\)

Nietzsche’s *principium individuationis* here stands for one of the expressions of repressive classicism which is bound to collapse when the laws of reason are subject to an exception. These moments of “exception” require an insight into the Dionysian impulses; otherwise, man is to lose his belief in his spiritual capability. In other words, man’s rationality and devotion to his individuality should go hand in hand with his perception of Dionysian urges in order to reach the harmonious reconciliation between man and nature.\(^{118}\)

Classicism can be regarded as the practice of Olympian order. The main concern of classicism is the “ideals” which appears as the articulation of clear-cut borders and norms. However, Nietzsche rather mocks the Olympian order while pondering on the Apollonian. He suggests that one would get disappointed upon approaching the Olympians with another religion. All he can observe would be a superficial deifying of everything no matter they are good or bad. He asserts:

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\(^{117}\) Ibid.  
\(^{118}\) Ibid., 4-5.
And so the spectator may stand quiet before this superfluity of life, asking himself what magic potion these mad glad men could have imbibed to make life so enjoyable that, wherever they turned, their eyes beheld the smile of Helen, the ideal picture of their own existence, “floating in sweet sensuality.” But to this spectator, who has his back already turned, we must perforce cry: “Go not away, but stay and hear what Greek folk-wisdom has to say of this very life, which with such inexplicable gayety unfolds itself before your eyes.”

This is the point where the cultural-critical metadiscourse in Hubert Zapf’s triadic function model reveals itself as the representation of repressive classicism and has to be confronted with the imaginative counter-discourse. In the Comfort of Strangers, Colin appears as the articulation of Apollonian “beauty,” and thus classicism; in this respect, his appearance at the balcony becomes almost the twentieth century flesh and blood form of Apollo Belvedere in the eyes of Mary:

Through the half-open French window she could see Colin on the balcony. Dressed in all white, he sprawled in the aluminium and plastic beach-chair, his wrist dangling near the ground. He inhaled, tilted his head and held his breath, and breathed smoke across the pots of geraniums that lined the balcony wall. (15)

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119 Ibid., 8.
120 See Appendix 1.
This very look of Colin turns out to be a blatant manifestation of Winckelmann’s description of Apollo Belvedere. Winckelmann regards the statue of Apollo as the “highest ideal” of art among antiquity that has survived until now. Apollo is frozen and shows no symptom of life at all: no sign of life, no sign of emotion, but a sublime look:

His build is elevated above the human, and his stance bears witness to the fullness of his grandeur. An eternal springtime, like that of the blissful Elysian Fields, clothes the alluring virility of mature years with a pleasing youth and plays with soft tenderness upon the lofty structure of his limbs. Go with thy spirit into the realm of incorporeal beauties and seek to become a creator of a heavenly nature, so that the spirit might be filled with beauties that rise above nature – for here there is nothing mortal, nothing that betokens miserable humanity. No veins or sinews heat and move this body, but rather a heavenly spirit that, flowing like a gentle steam, has saturated, as it were, every contour of this figure.121

Colin, standing on the balcony, all in white is exhibiting his Adonic beauty with his unnatural gestures and no sign of emotion but for an aberrant self-confidence. His beauty and Winckelmann’s description of Apollo Belvedere corresponds to the single-dimensional Apollonian outlook that Nietzsche criticises. Moreover, the artistic power of the statue drags Winckelmann into a feeling almost like the Stendhal syndrome, which is in fact an evidence of Dionysian impact of artwork upon its observer.

Winckelmann seems to be somehow conflicting with himself in the sense that the feeling he gets in front of Apollo Belvedere corresponds to the “neutralising”122 Dionysian effect of music: he is defining an Apollonian work of art, indeed the sculpture of Apollo itself; however he reveals the “Dionysian ecstasy” he gets upon viewing it:

In gazing upon this masterpiece of art, I forget else, and I myself transported to Delos and to the Lycian groves, places Apollo honoured with his presence – for my figure seems to take on life and movement, like Pygmalion’s beauty. How is it possible to paint and describe it? Art herself must advise me and guide my hand to convey henceforth the main features that I have sketched here. I place the concept of this figure that I have conveyed at its feet, like the wreaths offered by those who could not reach the head of the deities whom they wished to crown.123

As in Winckelmann’s description of Apollonian beauty, Colin appears as the reminiscence of Apollo Belvedere and becomes an object of beauty in that his observers are fascinated through his magnificence. His beauty creates a sense of Dionysian ecstasy as Winckelmann experiences; however, this almost sucks his emotions and causes him to be as static and stagnant as can be. What he is merely preoccupied with is beauty; his own beauty and thus his ego. Hence, beauty forms the

122 In Nietzschean terms.
essence of his identity, his relationships and his perception of his environment. Such a
fascination, indeed a fixation of beauty and appearance, naturally assimilates the
ability to grasp the essence of the cosmos’ “order,” whose Apollonism denotes a
different sense from the Apollonism that “repressive” classicism demands.

Charles Baudelaire’s poem “Beauty” is another enunciation of the repressive
classicism which articulates itself in *The Comfort of Strangers*:

**Beauty**

I am as lovely as a dream in stone;

My breast on which each finds his death in turn

Inspires the poet with a love as lone

As everlasting clay, and as taciturn.

Swan-white of heart, as sphinx no mortal knows,

My throne is in the heaven’s azure deep;

I hate all movement that disturbs my pose;

I smile not ever, neither do I weep.

Before my monumental attitudes,

Taken from the proudest plastic arts,

My poets pray in austere studious moods,

For I, to fold enchantment round their hearts,
Have pools of light where beauty flames and dies,
The placid mirrors of my luminous eyes.\(^{124}\)

The poem perfectly accords with Winckelmann’s description of Apollonic beauty; and in the case of the novel, the persona becomes Colin. Colin, too finds himself “as lovely as a dream in stone,” as he is the mark of opaque beauty. With his beauty and faint relationship, he becomes the source of inspiration for perversity; he is a sphinx that lacks emotion and chases emotionless passion, he does not show a symptom of smile, nor sorrow; he is nothing but a piece of marble that is impossible to bend and thus bound to break due to its stiffness. The last three lines of the poem proclaims the essence of decadence of classical ideals: the hearts that embody the “pools of light,” which do not let beauty remain evergreen, yet are the serene mirrors of bright eyes. Here, Baudelaire is reading antiquity à rebours to illustrate a decadent image; however, Ian McEwan takes a step further and makes an à rebours reading of the à rebours, which renders the novel a parody.

In the light of the above discussion, the so-called repressive classicism appears as the expression of cultural-critical metadiscourse in terms of Hubert Zapf’s triadic function model. The Comfort of Strangers embodies the cultural-ecological function of literature mainly in terms of topography: Britain vs. Venice. Britain becomes the articulation of classicism with all its repressive attributes, which is also the mark of

culture. Furthermore, Mary and Colin carry the impact of Britain not only in their manners, but also in their relationship. In the novel, Venice, involving a sense of distance, becomes a hermetic setting interfering and ambivalently nourishing their relationship. In other words, being on the side of culture and civilisation, Britain becomes “the representation (...) of typical deficits, contradictions and deformation in prevailing political, economic, ideological and utilitarian systems of civilisatory power,”¹²⁵ which also has an alienating influence upon Mary and Colin.

3.2 THE UNCANNY INTERTEXT: DEATHS IN VENICE

The Comfort of Strangers employs many intertexts that depict a similar aspect of the city of Venice. Venice, though never mentioned explicitly, is the unique setting of the novel, which adds a sense of an uncanny ambiguity. The descriptions and details certainly belong to Venice, but it is never named, which contributes to the controversial and hermetic identity of the city and the symbolic existence of the imaginative counter-discourse.

If we consider that the cultural-critical metadiscourse in The Comfort of Strangers is expressed through the image of Britain, the imaginative counter-discourse is revealed by a literary tradition that is conveyed through the decadent Venice. With regard to these uncanny intertexts, the following schema appears in the novel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural-critical Metadiscourse</th>
<th>Imaginative Counter-Discourse</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britain / London</td>
<td>Italy / Venice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colin</td>
<td>Robert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apollo</td>
<td>Dionysus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dream</td>
<td>Drunkenness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law of the father</td>
<td>Desire for the mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crystallized</td>
<td>Amorphous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infertility</td>
<td>Fertility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The city of Venice, gaining its identity mainly from the ambivalent nature of the sea, “appears as an intuitive force that confronts the chaotic influence of London with a holistic and pluralistic outlook.”\(^{126}\) The influence of water (the sea) makes Venice a female city; indeed, it is the representation of the womb. However, in the case the literature of the *fin de siècle*, this womb turns out to be the form of vagina dentata in that it is always the male characters experiencing a “death in Venice.” The intensity of McEwan’s *The Comfort of Strangers* mainly derives from the fact that it demonstrates

the destiny of these characters both directly and in a symbolic manner. Colin’s beauty becomes equivalent to the grandeur of an antique statue, which corresponds to the western patriarchal enlightenment tradition and rationalism, and repressive classicism that is previously mentioned. Consequently, in Daphne du Maurier’s “Don’t Look Now,” John Baxter’s fondness for rationality compares to Colin’s beauty. Likewise, in Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice* Gustav von Aschenbach, comes across a mysterious “stranger” in his own place where he is a disciplined man of letters and falls prey to his urge for seeing a tropical city. There, he is going to become acquainted with the love of his life, Tadzio which will prepare his end. Conversely, in *The Comfort of Strangers*, unlike Tadzio, Colin, as the object of beauty, becomes the prey himself, which stresses the parodic aspect of the novel. Robert appears as the decadent aesthete of Venice, recalling Jean Floressas des Esseintes127 with his marginal character and attachment to extravagant luxury. The story related to his childhood renders him the son of Magna Mater in that he is contantly beaten up by his father and fascinated by her mother. In this schema, the topography of Venice becomes the empire of Magna Mater.128 Hence, for Robert, Colin’s death, unlike his attraction to his wife Caroline, becomes an instrument to avenge his father resulting in the triumph of Erinyes and Magna Mater upon Apollo, which appears as the demonstration of parodied Oresteia.129 Furthermore, since Colin is photographed by Robert, he becomes imprisoned in a

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127 The protagonist of Joris Karl Huysman’s novel *À Rebours*.
129 Ibid.
frame, which is a very common topos of Western literature. To illustrate, Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Oval Portrait” depicts the story of an artist who draws the picture of his beautiful beloved and thus imprisoning her into a frame. Besides, Nathaniel Hawthorne’s story “The Birthmark” portrays the tragic death of the scientist’s wife as a result of his attempt to “cure” the stain in her face, which expresses how hazardous the obsession of beauty can be.

In The Comfort of Strangers, the unfortunate destiny of the object of beauty is actualised by Robert, the image of Magna Mater and the genius loci of the city of Venice. Besides, as far as Colin is concerned, fascination with beauty and “worldly concerns” is punished through the hands of nature.

The most significant aspect of the intertexts of The Comfort of Strangers is that they accentuate Venice as the topos, and the topography of Thanatos. It is the same case in Ian McEwan’s novel as well, but the effect is achieved through parody. Colin’s destiny appears as the manifestation of classicism succumbing to romanticism and from the Nietzschean and Pagliaesque point of view: “the crystallised and ‘hard’ Apollonism [is] substituted by the amorphous and ambiguous Dionysicism. Discipline is replaced by Anarchy, and Civilisation capitulates to Barbarism.”130

At the end of the novel, the reason why Mary does not die is essentially the fact that she is redeemed by the death of Colin. Mary belongs to the imaginative counter-discourse in the above schema. She finds the opportunity to get free from her “British” responsibilities and focus on her intuitions; that is why she perfectly accords with

130 Ibid., 91.
Venice. In the novel, her children are repeatedly touched upon and the fact that their father is not Colin is purposely accentuated. Thereupon, the ambivalent face of Venice comes into existence in the shape of Robert and it almost shrieks in order to show its intention. However, Colin is so much preoccupied with his own beauty – the phenomenon of classicism – that he is not able to figure out his approaching end.

3.3 Dissolution of the Classic Male Body / Dissolution of the Canon

In McEwan’s novel can be regarded as the point of climax where with the effect of Dionysian art of “music” in a metaphorical stance. The ideals of antiquity gradually become subject to dissolution and thus decadence, which can be considered as the process of the formation of a reintegrative inter-discourse. Moreover, the characters that experience a sense of transgression are also related with reconciliation of the cultural-critical metadiscourse and imaginative counter-discourse.

The demonstration of the sharp opposition between Britain and Venice is the main problematic of The Comfort of Strangers, which resembles the one between Britain and Transylvania in Bram Stoker’s Dracula. Jurij Lotman claims that the opposition between literary geographies is surmounted through transgression, which is associated with the existence of a reintegrative inter-discourse. Jurij Lotman explicates the issue of such a transgression with these words:
A god takes on another form of existence in order to descend from the world of bliss to the mundane world (he acquires freedom with respect to his environment), he is born into the world (the crossing of the border), becomes a man (the son of man) but does not blend in with his new circumstances [...]. While in the mundane world, he is part of another world. His death (the crossing of a border) and resurrection are related to this fact. The persona merges with his environment, and the action comes to a halt.\textsuperscript{131}

What Lotman maintains can be thought as building a parallelism to Colin’s situation: through his death and the way his death is performed, he becomes a part of another world. He can be considered as crossing a border and even being resurrected. Just like Count Dracula going to Britain, Colin travels to Venice where they both take another form of existence.\textsuperscript{132} In this sense, Colin’s death appears as a balancing power as in the harmonisation of the conflict in Hubert Zapf’s reintegrative inter-discourse. His sense of reintegration is not necessarily demonstrated through the happy ends, though it is crucial for providing the dynamism of culture. As Zapf asserts:

\begin{quote}
On the contrary, the bringing together of the culturally separated spheres characteristically sets off highly turbulent and conflictual
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{131} Jurij Lotman. \textit{The Structure of the Artistic Text} (United States: University of Michigan, 1977), 241.

processes, which can produce catastrophic results, but which also appear as necessary catalysts for the renewal of cultural creativity.\textsuperscript{133}

In \textit{The Comfort of Strangers} the realisation of the reintegrative inter-discourse is achieved through the dissolution of the canon as well. The novel posits a parody of the canon by deconstructing the traditional image of “the beautiful boy as destroyer.”\textsuperscript{134} The aspect of parody reveals itself in the case of Dorian Gray as well. Colin, unlike the object of beauty in Oscar Wilde’s novel becomes the sacrifice himself. In other words, the phenomenon that Camilla Paglia brings up as “beautiful boy as destroyer” becomes the “beautiful boy destroyed.” Camille Paglia comments on \textit{The Picture of Dorian Gray} as follows:

The painting feeds on Dorian, until in desperation he murders Basil, a propitiatory blood-sacrifice before an \textit{objet de culte}, from whose bondage he fights to be free. But the painting will be satisfied with no other victim but Dorian. The finale is one of the uncanniest moments in literature. Killing Dorian, the painting achieves its ultimate vampirism, triumphantly regaining ‘all the wonder of [its] exquisite youth and beauty.’ The painting finds the elixir of eternal youth by shedding Dorian’s blood.\textsuperscript{135}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{133}{Hubert Zapf. “Literature as Cultural Ecology: Notes Towards a Functional Theory of Imaginative Texts, with Examples from American Literature.” In \textit{REAL Year Book of Research in English and American Literature}, edited by Winfried Fluck et al. (Tübingen: Günter Narr Verlag, 2001), 93.}
\footnotetext{134}{Referring to the chapter entitled “The Beautiful Boy as Destroyer: Wilde’s The Picture of Dorian Gray” in Camille Paglia’s \textit{Sexual Personae}.}
\end{footnotes}
In conclusion, the gothic syndrome in *The Comfort of Strangers* is implied through the employment of intertextuality in a reversed mode. That is to say, the novel becomes a parody of almost all the intertexts that might be considered as the classical examples of gothic literature – both forming an imaginative counter-discourse and bringing forth a criticism of the systemic institutions and realities.
CHAPTER IV

BEYOND THE TEMPORAL MIRROR: HAWKSMOOR


[D]just isn't a bad thing. Besides having the taste of ancient biscuit and the smell of an old book, it is the floating velvet which softens hard surfaces, the fine dry wash which takes the garishness out of crude colour schemes. It is the caparison of abandon, the veil of oblivion. Who, then, can despise it - aside from certain persons whose lamentable lot must often have wrung a tear from you?

Joris Karl Huysmans, Là-Bas (29-30)

Time is one of the most significant issues that engender conflict in that it is the projection of man’s struggle with his own subjectivity and the objective constraints of the Apollonian sphere; that is why it is – whether directly or indirectly – frequently challenged and manipulated in gothic fiction. Likewise, the question of time very much fits into the scope of postmodernism in terms of the way it treats absolute truth and subjectivity.

Published in 1985, Peter Ackroyd's prolific novel Hawksmoor employs the devices of postmodern fiction, which is an overt manifestation of a subversive attitude towards the uncanny. The novel tells two seemingly disparate stories, one of which is set in the eighteenth century London and the other in the twentieth century London.
Peter Ackroyd’s primary resource in forming his narrative is the story of an English architect, Nicholas Hawksmoor who lived between the years 1661-1736. Hawksmoor was the student of Christopher Wren, one of the most paramount architects of England, having designed fifty-three churches in London including St. Paul’s cathedral. Nicholas Hawksmoor was amid the commission given the task of building fifty churches in London by an Act of Parliament in 1711; however, until the project was over in 1731, only the twelve of the churches had been built and out of these, six were among the masterpieces of Hawksmoor where he displayed his distinguished gothic style. Ackroyd in *Hawksmoor*, builds two characters out of Nicholas Hawksmoor: Nicholas Dyer, the architect and Nicholas Hawksmoor, the detective whose stories proceed simultaneously throughout the novel. It is significant that an architect and a detective are put together: the former works to remain for the future and the latter is in search of the past so as to illuminate the present. Besides, these stories overlap and somehow complete one another in spite of the two hundred years between them; the result is a narrative overtly challenging the gothic syndrome mainly with its attitude towards the concept of time and its explicit criticism of enlightenment.

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4.1 History/Linearity

*Hawksmoor* begins with the dialogue of Nicholas Dyer and his pupil Walter Pyne where Peter Ackroyd gives the gist of his novel: “I have imparted to you the Principles of Terrour and Magnificence, for these you must represent in the due placing of Parts and Ornaments as well as in the Proportion of the several Orders: you see, Walter, how I take my Pen?”\(^{137}\) Being an architect, Dyer from the very beginning brings up the crucial essence of Enlightenment. Terror and Magnificence can be regarded as the maxim of Enlightenment, a phenomenon that unMASKs man’s greed for perfection and immortality which would predictably result in chaos. Namely, the indispensable urge for glory and the inevitable tendency to terror also stand for the common attributes of the architect and the detective.

In *Hawksmoor*, the cultural medium of Nicholas Dyer is London, towards the beginning of the Age of Enlightenment, which also matches up with the physical reformation of the city after the Great Fire. Correspondingly, the Age of Enlightenment marks cultural reformation right after the rather dogmatic and monotonous concerns of Restoration. Being an architect stands for Dyer’s rivalry with Time so as to remain immortal, which is an articulation of his Apollonian character. His unique talent of constructing enables him to travel within different dimensions of time: “Thoughts were running on my seven Churches and were thus in quite another Time: like a Voyager I am confin’d in my Cabbin while yet dreaming of my Destination” (6).

Even in the light of the juxtaposition of the two separate periods of time, we can say that Hubert Zapf’s triadic model designating the function of literature as cultural ecology is, very mechanically inherent in *Hawksmoor*: eighteenth century London vs. twentieth century London. In this respect, not only Nicholas Dyer and Nicholas Hawksmoor, but also the two images of London form an alternative to one another. Furthermore, the plot also displays this mutual relationship with reduplications of certain characters and instances, which create leitmotifs enhancing the existence of the cultural-critical metadiscourse in the novel. To illustrate, the transition from Chapter 6 to 7 in Part Two: at the end of Chapter 6, Hawksmoor asking the time to his assistant and at the beginning of Chapter 7, Walter Pyne asking Dyer “What a Clock is it, dear Mr. Dyer? I have let my Watch run down,” (127-128). Hawksmoor’s question is directly related with man’s struggle for knowledge and “enlightenment”; conversely, the twentieth century detective’s assistant tries to forget about the constraints of linear time, which is rather a postmodern way of coping with complexities. According to the below diagram, Nicholas Dyer and his assistant Walter Pyne belong to enlightenment, whereas Hawksmoor and Walter Payne represent postmodernism. In the first constellation it is the master that is in search of the Apollonian apparatus; however, in the second constellation it is the apprentice who takes that emblem of the Apollonian for granted. The utilisation of such leitmotifs indicates Peter Ackroyd’s critical mind-set against the slippery and pragmatic attitude of postmodernism.
The major standpoint of the emergence of gothic literature is that it is a reaction to the Enlightenment ideals in the sense that human being's spiritual concerns are taken for granted. Written in 1985, at the end of the twentieth century, *Hawkmoor* challenges the mood of the Enlightenment through juxtaposing the two centuries. In Peter Ackroyd's version of “mystery,”* a twentieth century London becomes an alternative to the eighteenth century London being a setting of Enlightenment. Detective Hawksmoor and his assistant Walter’s main problem can be traced in the dialogue between them:

‘We don’t have the facts,’ Walter was saying ‘and that’s our problem.’

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*a In the novel, history is referred to as mystery in a subtle manner: “In History class (which was known to the children as the 'Mystery' lesson), for example, he liked to write down names or dates and watch the ink flow across the spacious white paper of his exercise book” (29). The metaphor closes up the two notions, regardless of the fact that they might be situated in the two different poles while forming the central imagery of the novel.*
'You know about facts, do you, all these facts we don't have?'

Hawksmoor was very grim. 'In your experience, Walter, do any two people see the same thing?'

'No, but –'

'And so it's your job to interpret what they have seen, to interpret the facts. Am I right?'

The conversation puzzled Walter, and he decided to retire from it.

'Yes, sir.'

'And so the facts don’t mean much until you have interpreted them?'

That's right.'

'And where does that interpretation come from? It comes from you and me. And who are we?' Hawksmoor raised his voice. 'Don't you think I worry when everything falls apart in my hands – but it's not the facts I worry about. It's me.' (200)

This dialogue appears as an emphasis of the subjectivity of truth, indeed an indication that the “rules” of Enlightenment are no longer valid at all; what is more, this axiom applies to a “universal truth.” Nevertheless, carrying the aspects of Apollonism, though misleading from time to time, eighteenth century London becomes the point where the cultural-critical metadiscourse comes into existence. Nicholas Dyer was educated by his master Christopher Wren, one of most the brilliant architects of his time; he himself becomes a unique architect, as well. This master-apprentice relationship is another articulation of Dyer’s having received an Apollonian discipline. Besides,
engaged with an underground sect through Mirabilis whom he comes across as a school boy, he shows up as a Faustian figure:\(^{139}\) Mirabilis is the leader of this sect and he is the one to make Dyer participate in a satanic rite. This participation also functions as a “rite of passage” announcing his initiation, which is also declared by himself:

And thus began my strange Destiny. I rested with Mirabilis seven dayes, and if any Reader should inquire why I did so I will answer: Firstly, I was a meer poor Boy and had seen my Mother in his Glass; Secondly, the teachings of Mirabilis are trew ones, as I shall explain further hereafter; Thirdly, the most wonderful thing in the Plague Year was that his intire Assembly had been preserv’d from Contagion by his Practises and his Prophesyings; Fourth, I was curious about all these Matters and Hunger and Thirst are not Appetites more vehement or more hard. Now what I know I would be glad to unknow again, but my Memory will not let me be untaught. (20)

To put it briefly, Nicholas Dyer has arrived at a point of awareness where he does not have the opportunity to manoeuvre his mind into the “cave.” Peter Ackroyd’s preoccupation with satanism reminds us of Joris Karl Huysman’s novel \textit{Là-Bas (Down There)} which is not only among the foremost works of decadence literature, but also

\(^{139}\) During the rite Mirabilis addresses Nicholas Dyer so because of with his interest in Dr. Faustus: “Don’t be afraid, little Faustus, he continues, there shall Nothing hurt you nor speak to you and ...” (20).
known as “a virtual apology for satanism.”¹⁴⁰ LÀ-Bas depicts the story of the writer, Durtal who is working on Gilles de Rais¹⁴¹, known as the legendary child-murderer, satanist and sadist in the fifteenth century. He is described as “a simply religious bell-ringer, a learned astrologer, a medical doctor versed in homeopathy and occult lore, and (...) a sheltered, unsatisfied bourgeoisie by day and mysterious succubus by night.”¹⁴² Durtal, as a writer, unlike his contemporaries, has a detached life due to his fascination with the Middle Ages. In Hawksmoor, Nicholas Dyer has attributes very similar to Durtal. While Dyer, though maybe unconsciously, seeks immortality through constructing buildings and thus somehow interferes history towards his environment, Durtal does the same through writing on a legendary character in history. Partly as a result of their preoccupations, they tend to conceal their identities and live on in disguise. Durtal’s fascination of Gille de Rais and Mirabilis’ influence upon Nicholas Dyer appear as the aspects leading them to a satanic universe. In Hawksmoor, these mutual relationships evoke the cultural-critical metadiscourse in Hubert Zapf’s triadic function model, in the sense that they appear as clinching the Apollonian sphere where Satanism suggests an à rebour reading of Catholicism, the mark of religious authority.

¹⁴¹ A.k.a Barbe-Bleue (Bluebeard).
4.2 Simultaneity as Imaginative Counter-Discourse

As it is mentioned before, the main issue that Hawksmoor subverts is time, various existences of time, and space. The concepts of time and space are the instruments of providing human being’s orientation to the Apollonian world order. Besides, time is particularly among the most significant issues that are associated with the Enlightenment’s attitude towards the issue of truth through scientific laws. In Hawksmoor, the interconnection between Enlightenment and the concept of time mainly stem from the fact that time becomes the articulation of the so-called truth. Time also suggests a sense of universality in the sense that it is expected to signify linearity from the Apollonian perspective. The concept of time mentioned up to here is linear time, which goes hand in hand with the manifestation of the cultural-critical metadiscourse.

The most significant connotation of time in Hawksmoor is “dust,” which is repeated as a leitmotif in different contexts. Essentially, dust is directly related with cyclical time or timelessness: it is a stain coming from the past and cannot be totally wiped out. The below conversation between Nicholas Dyer and Walter Pyne posit dust as the emblem of immortality:

It cannot be helped, says he, for when the Dust is cleared away it returns again directly.
I was disposed to be Merry with him now: Is Dust immortal then, I ask’d him, so that we may see it blowing through the Centuries? But as Walter gave no Answer I jested with him further to break his Melancholy humour: What is Dust, Master Pyne? And he reflected a little: It is particles of Matter, no doubt. Then we are all Dust indeed, are we not? And in a feigned Voice he murmured, For Dust thou art and shalt to Dust return. Then he made a Sour face, but only to laugh the more. (17)

The master and the apprentice arrive at the conclusion that the origin of the human being is dust and the ultimate and inevitable point he is to disembark is but dust, definitely conveying the dichotomy of life/death, and thus mortality/immortality. Consequently, the enunciation of dust imagery with all its connotations becomes the manifestation of imaginative counter-discourse in that it recites the “dialectic of enlightenment”: the origin of life and death can never be explained through the apparatuses and “blessings” of knowledge. At this juncture, Peter Ackroyd’s critical stance towards enlightenment has been revealed through the emphasis of man’s limited capability to cope with the ideological and systemic realities. Hence, the following schema marks the mechanism of the triadic function model as it appears in

*Hawksmoor:*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural-critical Metadiscourse</th>
<th>Imaginative Counter-Discourse</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enlightenment</td>
<td>Postmodernity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear Time</td>
<td>Dust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Occultism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortality</td>
<td>Immortality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternity</td>
<td>Evanescence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hubert Zapf argues that through a counter-discursive function, literature performs as “a form of retrospective self-renewal which only restores to culture the experience of its vital complexities, but also by bringing collective repressions to the surface, keeps alive the cultural memory.”\(^{143}\) In the case of *Hawksmoor*, enlightenment appears as the realisation of the utilitarian systems of civilisatory powers in the sense of its embodiment of the “single-dimensional hierarchical oppositions between culture/nature and mind/body,” which has the potential to result in the traumatisation and self-isolation of human being; it is not surprising, indeed, that once more the

opposition between nature and culture comes into existence as the essence of the problematic of Western thought.

Imaginative counter-discourse emerges and provides the confrontation of the so-called systemic realities through a close examination of what is marginalised, neglected or repressed. Yet, what is specific about Hawksmoor is that Peter Ackroyd attempts to read the concept of enlightenment against the grain: while the eighteenth century architect is depicted as a rebel, mainly in the sense of his preoccupation with occultism and his urge to advocate the reverse of Catholicism, the twentieth century detective, almost “born” in a “postmodern” society and having the opportunity to free himself from the inflexibility of certain systemic realities, appears as among the major advocates of that rigid way of thinking. Hence, Ackroyd turns this image upside down and demonstrates a critical standpoint towards the so-called flexibility of postmodernism. I will show this confrontation with two obvious examples from the remarks of Nicholas Dyer and Nicholas Hawksmoor. Dyer states:

So lives the Power of Imagination even in this Rationall Age. (...) For those who wish the Sight of such Ghosts and Apparitions I say this: it is of no long Duration, continuing for the most part only as you keep your Eyes steady (as I have done); the Timerous see meerly by Glances, therefore, their Eyes always trembling at the first sight of the Object, but the most Assured will fix their Look. There is this also: those who see the Daemon must draw down their Eyes with their Fingers after. (101)
Nicholas Dyer, in spite of the “repressive classicism” of enlightenment is still in search of imagination, which finds its exponents in the underground practices. On the other hand, the “loser” detective Nicholas Hawksmoor is vigilantly in search of the “mysteries,” but he cannot succeed at all. The conversation with his assistant is as follows:

Walter was now preoccupied with another subject: ‘Do you believe in ghosts, sir?’ he was saying as Hawksmoor stared gloomily out of the window.

‘Ghosts?’

‘Yes, you know, ghosts, spirits.’ After a pause he continued. ‘I only ask because of those old churches. They’re so, well, old.’

There are no ghosts, Walter.’ He leaned forward to turn off the song on the radio and then he added, with a sigh, ‘We live in a rational society’.

(158)

Here, it is Walter Payne, Hawksmoor’s assistant who demonstrates an opposing attitude towards the radicalism in Hawksmoor’s fascination with rationality. At the end, as Roger B. Salomon puts it, “Hawksmoor fails, and in failing moves close to Dyer’s position of enduring mystery, darkness, and death.”

4.3 Detecting the “Truth”

In essence, *Hawksmoor* elaborates on the aspects of and the ways to reach truth: truth beyond enlightenment through the architect, Nicholas Hawksmoor and truth via enlightenment through the character of the detective, Nicholas Hawksmoor. These quest-like struggles stand for the systems of discourse and counter discourses prevailing both on the mainstream and margin. However, these discourses have to be in a dialogic relationship with one another so as to provide “harmony”\(^{145}\) and reconciliation. In terms of cultural ecology, this appears as the point where the “reintegrative inter-discourse” should intervene so as to render the dynamism of culture. The reintegrative inter-discourse in the triadic function model reveals itself towards the end of *Hawksmoor*, where the two separate stories somewhat intersect. Nicholas Dyer ends up with such an emotional state after the death of Walter:

> The Church was above me now and, tho’ I was plunged into Shaddowe, I did not move but waited until my Eyes had cleared a little. Then I opened the Door and crossed the Threshold. I walked forward saying, From my first Years Thy Honours have I endured with a troubled Mind, and I stood in the Aisle looking upwards till I could look on more: I had run to the end of my Time and I was at Peace. I knelt down in front of the Light, and my Shaddowe stretched over the World. (209)

\(^{145}\) In Hubert Zapf’s term.
He is ready to confront whatever he might come across; he does not fear from death or pain since he is aware of the fact that he has already endured the worst in his life on earth (205). As a result, he reaches the light and his shadow stretches over the world, which means he has already left a permanent mark through his art and his existence on this world.

On the other hand, Nicholas Hawksmoor ends up in failure, and he is made to leave the case. The reason for his failure is his pathological fascination with rationality; in other words, he falls prey to his rationality. Yet, his tragedy lies beneath the fact that he has experienced his initiation only after the apprehension of his own failure:

He had come to the end by chance, not knowing that it was the end, and this unanticipated and uncertain climax might yet rob him of his triumph: his will was emptied, replaced by the shape of moving things as he sat in his dark coat and watched the sun rolling across the roof-tops. Then he shook his head and stood up with an urgency which suggested that he wished to forestall, at least, another death. (215)

The failure of Nicholas Hawksmoor corresponds to Hubert Zapf’s emphasis that the expression of a reintegrative inter-discourse should not necessarily be in a peaceful manner. That is to say, the dynamism of culture also depends on the possible catastrophic results. In *Hawksmoor*, we see both faces of the mirror: Nicholas Dyer, conscious of his deeds, silently incorporates his destiny and is ready to pay his dues. However, failure is almost like a shock for Nicholas Hawksmoor. He comes to figure out
what he has already experienced; nevertheless, he is experiencing a regression and cannot yet help his greed for eternity: “And then in my dream I looked down at myself and saw in what rags I stood; and I am a child again, begging on the threshold of eternity” (217).
CHAPTER V

THE RETURN OF MAGNA MATER: MISERY

Their story sounded louder than the hum
Of bug and stick noises that brought up the rear,
Trundling it along into a new fact of day.
These were meant to be read as any
Salutation before getting down to business,
But they stuck to their guns, and so much
Was their obstinacy in keeping with the rest
(Like long flashes of white birds that refuse to die
When day does) that none knew the warp
Which presented this major movement as a firm
Digression, a plain that slowly becomes a mountain.

from “Scheherazade” by John Ashbery

When someone goes on a trip, he has something to tell about.

German proverb

All art is quite useless.

Oscar Wilde

Stephen King’s novel, Misery (1987) perfectly fits into the problematic of gothic fiction discussed in this study in terms of both the changing face of the genre or mode

through the end of the millennium and its function as cultural ecology. Stephen King, being among the leading “best-seller” writers of the world, renames the function of literature within cultural history and attempts to deconstruct the classical notion of the literary canon by putting forward the clash between the best-selling and the canonical work. He supports his argument via employing metafictional motifs such as novel within a novel, the protagonist being a writer and the process of writing.

The protagonist of Misery is a best-selling author Paul Sheldon who has an accident and is found unconscious by one of his “constant readers,” in fact his “number one fan,” Annie Wilkes. He is gradually given rebirth by Annie through the possibility of death in her hands. Accordingly, King’s novel becomes symbolically the emblem of Paul Sheldon’s Bildung. The famous writer, imprisoned in a desolate area, is forced to tell the story of Misery Chastain, the protagonist of his sequel novel, who was killed. The death of Misery Chastain causes Annie Wilkes’ delirium and frustration. Thereupon, Paul Sheldon becomes the (post)modern Scheherazade figure who endeavours to save his own life by “telling” his story; Annie Wilkes makes this evident saying “You owe me your life, Paul.”147 Walter Benjamin in his prominent article, “The Storyteller” asserts that

narrower sense) is its essential dependence on the book. The dissemination of the novel became possible only with the invention of printing. What can be handed on orally, the wealth of the epic, is of a different kind from what constitutes the stock in trade of the novel.\(^{148}\)

In this respect, Stephen King, by juxtaposing storytelling tradition and the mechanisms of printed media along with the devices of metafiction, demonstrates a polarity which forms the basis of the novel in terms of a cultural-ecological analysis.

## 5.1 “Literariness” as Authority

Walter Benjamin distinguishes the novel from other forms of prose writing, particularly storytelling. He states that it does not share any common grounds with oral tradition. However, *Misery* depicts not only Paul Sheldon’s experience that will result in the audience’s internalisation, but also his identity as an “isolated” novelist. As Benjamin states,

> The birthplace of the novel is the solitary individual, who is no longer able to express himself by giving examples of his most important concerns, is himself uncounseled, and cannot counsel others. To write a novel means to carry the incommensurable to extremes in the representation of human life. In the midst of life’s fullness, and through

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the representation of this fullness, the novel gives evidence of the profound perplexity of the living.\footnote{149}

Benjamin’s differentiation of storytelling and novel corresponds to the clash of the two genres in Misery: the novel, while embodying the elements of a story, is not only technically a novel, but also begins with the Apollonism of the genre. The “novelistic” remark, reminding us of “Genesis,” can be traced in the following lines:

Let there be light (even of the hazy variety), and the light was good, and so on and soon? Had those sounds existed in the darkness? He didn’t know the answers to any of these questions. Did it make sense to ask them? He didn’t know the answer to that one, either. (3)

This is actually the enunciation of Paul Sheldon’s “authoritative” identity as a creator, though not an omnipotent one as long as he is surrounded with darkness and incapable of knowing the answers to his own questions.

Writing Misery, Stephen King in fact implies the “decadence” of classical works and literary canon in the midst of a postmodern arena where literary production is determined by the mechanism of supply and demand, which renders the reader as the institution of authority. Consequently, the existence and direction of literature become dependent on a certain market divided in itself, which goes hand in hand with the concept of fragmentation within the scope of postmodernism. Hence, there occurs a situation that not only every fashion of writing, but also every single writer has their

\footnote{149} Ibid.
own target readers and “fans,” which results in the formation of several communities. In this respect, the qualification of a literary work to be classical and writer’s autonomy correspond to the cultural-critical metadiscourse in Hubert Zapf’s function model.

Although Annie Wilkes does not know anything about the process of writing a novel and the devices or the mechanisms of the work, the fact that she is the “constant reader” renders her authority. In the novel, it is stated through the following lines:

Annie Wilkes was the perfect audience, a woman who loved stories without having the slightest interest in the mechanics of making them.
She was the embodiment of that Victorian archetype, Constant Reader.
She did not want to hear about his concordance and indices because to her Misery and the characters surrounding her were perfectly real.
Indices meant nothing to her. (63)

At this point, the writer – in Misery, it is Paul Sheldon – becomes but a mediator in order to fulfil the expectations of the (constant) reader, and he relinquishes his identity as an autonomous writer. Hence, as he is imprisoned – actually he is “nourished” as well – by Annie, one of his fans, she becomes a force dominating his writing. Paul’s inner voice speaks as follows:

Had he once thought of her as the perfect audience? Oh boy. Have to give you credit, Paul – when you make a mistake, you go whole hog.

Constant Reader had just become Merciless Editor. (106)
From then on, Annie Wilkes becomes the cruel editor of the best-selling author who almost dictates what he is going to write.

The so-called autonomy of the writer, which becomes the representation of the cultural-critical metadiscourse in Zapfian terms, is also associated with the notion of canon. In *American Heritage Dictionary*, canon denotes first “a basis for judgment, standard, criterion,” then “the books of the Bible officially recognized by the Church,” and “an authoritative list, as of the works of an author.” In the light of these definitions, canon implies authority in the first place, which means that the boundaries of canon are determined by some official criteria. Harold Bloom, in *The Western Canon*, maintains that the criteria for a writer or a work to be among the canon are certainly not related with moral issues. Bloom states,

The SILLIEST way to defend the Western Canon is to insist that it incarnates all of the seven deadly moral virtues that make up our supposed range of normative values and democratic principles. This is probably untrue. (...) The West’s greatest writers are subversive of all values, both ours and their own.

In *Misery*, Stephen King also juxtaposes the canonical and the best-selling works. Paul Sheldon, as a reader, questions the problem of readability and regards the “famous

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authors” away from the normative values that the literary canon should have embraced. He, in a way, recites what Harold Bloom maintains:

I've read about some so – called "famous authors", and I know that often they are quite unpleasant. Why, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway and that redneck fellow from Mississippi – Faulkner or whatever it was – those fellows may have won National Pulitzer Book Awards and things, but they were nothing but cockadoodie drunken burns just the same. Other ones, too – when they weren't writing wonderful stories they were drinking and whoring and shooting dope and heaven knows what else.

(214)

However, as the writer of best-seller novels, he cannot help being terrorized by the representative of his readership. He may not be considered among the canonical writers, but he gradually loses his independence during his process of creation. Above all, Stephen King, via Paul Sheldon, is essentially meditating on the question of creating art and the identity of the artist, along with the function and essence of literature. In a way, King makes the artist talk as the authority; in addition, an authoritative figure attempting to deconstruct the monotonousness of the so-called famous writers is the expression of art’s regenerating function. Hubert Zapf asserts,

Der einem ökologischen Denken zugrundeliegende Realitätsbegriff ist nicht statisch, sondern als lebendiger Prozess fortwährender Selbsttransformation gefasst. Daraus ergibt sich auch die Funktion
literarischer Kunst, der stets drohenden Erstarrung kultureller Denk- und Lebensformen, aber auch der Konventionalisierung ihrer eigenen Ausdrucksformen im Sinn ständiger Selbsterneuerung entgegenzuwirken.\textsuperscript{152ix}

Namely, art has a function to step in upon the danger of the rigidity of cultural thinking and life itself, as well as somehow traditionalising them for the sake of regeneration. This is the point where the cultural-critical metadiscourse is confronted with the imaginative counter-discourse to form the true function of imaginative literature.

5.2 “Literary Market” as Imaginative Counter-Discourse

In \textit{Misery}, the imaginative counter-discourse in Hubert Zapf’s function model corresponds to Johann Jakob Bachofen’s theory of mother right. Through Annie Wilkes, Stephen King attempts to find the answer to the question, “to what extent the literary market is powerful upon the writer?” Annie Wilkes, being the representative of the mother right, essentially represents how “nature” can be dominant over culture.

In his prolific work \textit{Mother Right: A Study of the Religious and Juridical Aspects of Gynecocracy in the Ancient World} (\textit{Das Mutterrecht: Eine Untersuchung übers die Gynaikokratie der alten Welt nach ihrer religiösen und rechtlichen Natur-1861}) consisting of several volumes, Johann Jakob Bachofen works on the history of antiquity

\textsuperscript{152} Huber Zapf. \textit{Literatur als kulturelle Ökologie. Zur kulturellen Funktion imaginative Texte an Beispielen des amerikanischen Romans}. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2002), 14.
and tries to prove the matriarchal roots of the Eastern Mediterranean and Central Asia. Being a jurist he is interested in Roman law which led him to a close examination of ancient symbol and myth resulting in developing his theory of mother right.

Within the scope of the cultural-ecological analysis of contemporary gothic literature, I have defined three major subtexts which are embedded both in my theoretical stance and the problematic of gothic literature: Nietzsche’s The Birth of Tragedy, Adorno and Horkheimer’s Dialectic of Enlightenment and Bakhtin’s Rabelais and His World. The common point of these three texts is that they deal with the dichotomies which also form the essence of gothic literature. However, Bachofen’s Mother Right appears as the enunciation of these dichotomies from a mythological outlook. Above all, it should be kept in mind that Nietzsche owes much of his assertions to Bachofen, especially their time together in Basle. In Mother Right, Bachofen’s standpoint is the polarities that mainly stem from paternity and maternity which he relates with other dichotomies such as material/spiritual, real/fictive, Apollonian/Demetrian, life/death and light/dark.\(^{153}\)

Bachofen claims that civilisation started in the Orient before it expanded in the Occident, which is closely related with the dominance of matriarchy. Although it has been almost common knowledge that classical antiquity, along with western civilisation, is based on a patriarchal societal order, to Bachofen this is difficult to prove.

in that it is rather a “product of historical evolution.” In his work he deals with the first two stages since both of them signify mother right, in other words, matriarchy. Bachofen’s description of hetaerism is closely related with human being’s instinctive nature; he emphasises that woman is not supposed display her charm so as to live her whole life in the arms of one man: “the law of matter rejects all restrictions, abhors all fetters, and regards exclusivity as an offense against its divinity,” which indicates the hetaeric pursuits put into practice around marriage. The second level of maternity, gynaecocracy is regarded as a higher level where the Demetrian law of marriage, appearing as the prerequisite to the development of the patriarchal system, reveals itself. In order to distinguish between the two maternal stages of civilisation, Bachofen asserts:

Hetaerism is bound up with the lowest level of plant life, matriarchy with the higher stage of agriculture. Hetaerism finds its principle embodied in the vegetation and animals of the marshy lowlands, which become its chief gods; matriarchy reveres the ear of grain and the seed corn, which become the most sacred symbols of its maternal mystery.

Furthermore, the difference between these two stages is conveyed in numerous myths and rites and their association of them is stressed by nature goddesses. In essence, as

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154 Ibid.
156 Ibid., 94-95.
157 Ibid., 98.
158 Ibid., 97.
Justin Stagl remarks, “the transition from hetaerism to gynaecocracy means the ascent from a ‘precultural’ to a ‘cultural’ state and a first step towards spiritualization,” which also caused the status of women to achieve a higher position.\(^{159}\) In order to elucidate the transitions among Bachofen’s cultural stages, where he lays a specific emphasis on the maternal ones, Stagl sketches a chart\(^{160}\):

| Stage 1 | Promiscuity. Sexual Love. Hetaeristic maternity, no marriage.  
\textit{Ius naturale}. Pre-culture, prehistory. Food-gathering.  
Cult of the earth (symbol is the fertile vegetation of the swamps).  
Chaos, anarchy, primeval fullness.  
Abuse of women by men. |
| Stage 2 | First form of marriage under the domination of women.  
Motherly love.  
\textit{Ius civile}. Culture, prehistory.  
Agriculture and trades. Tribal communities, city states.  
Cult of moon and night, preference of the left side. Beginning, depth, matter.  
Gynaecocracy, Amazonism. |
| Stage 3 | Second form of marriage under the domination of men. Fatherly love.  
\textit{Ius civile}. Culture, history.  
Agriculture and industry. States, empires.  
Cult of sun and day, preference of the right side. End, height, spirit.  
Androcracy, fatherright, imperialism. |

If there is a final stage, it has not been described by Bachofen.


\(^{160}\) Ibid., 190.
These cultural stages not only form the very essence of contemporary cultural theory, but also illuminate the origins of western (patriarchal) ideology. Additionally, it is coherent with the analogies that “literature as cultural ecology” puts forward.

*Misery* depicts the outcomes of matriarchy, practiced thousands of years ago in the shape of Annie Wilkes who is referred to as “Hurricane Annie.” Stephen King describes Annie with these words:

She was a big woman who, other than the large but unwelcoming swell of her bosom under the gray cardigan sweater she always wore, seemed to have no feminine curves at all — there was no defined roundness of hip or buttock or even calf below the endless succession of wool skirts she wore in the house (she retired to her unseen bedroom to put on jeans before doing her outside chores). Her body was big but not generous. (7)

It can be well grasped by the above lines that Annie is the representative of a distorted Magna Mater figure with her ungenerous body lacking feminine curves. However, she fulfils the “ambivalence of the primordial archetype with her combination of good and evil. Moreover, when the primordial archetype is formed in the imagination of man, it is often monstrous. Erich Neumann defines this step of formation as “the phase of the chimerical creatures composed of different animals or of animal and man (...) and also of such monstrosities as phallic and bearded mothers.”

161 Annie Wilkes cutting Paul

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Sheldon’s legs off is related with the monstrosity of the phallic mother; besides, the mechanism is very similar to the “repressive classicism” that kills Colin in The Comfort of Strangers. Annie Wilkes embodies not only the positive but also the negative features of the great mother archetype, which is illustrated in a schema by Neumann. He explicates the mechanism of the Great Mother as such:

She has three forms: the good, the terrible, and the good-bad mother.

The good feminine (and masculine) elements configure the Good Mother, who, like the Terrible Mother containing the negative elements, can also emerge independently from the unity of the Great Mother. The third form is that of the Great Mother who is good-bad and makes possible a union of positive and negative attributes.¹⁶²

Annie, in spite of her passionate, yet imprisoning attitude towards Paul, has saved his life no matter what the consequences are. Furthermore, she has her “own interior set of rules”: she refuses to give Paul his medicament until his pain hits the peak, makes him burn the one and only copy of his novel; however, she never attempts to take his money or any other material belongings and she feels responsible for feeding animals (12, 158). Correspondingly, for Paul, Annie is both a beast and a muse. Stephen King in his memoir On Writing comments on Annie Wilkes as such:

Annie Wilkes, the nurse who holds Paul Sheldon prisoner in Misery, may seem psychopathic to us, but it’s important to remember that she seems perfectly sane and reasonable to herself – heroic, in fact, a

¹⁶² Ibid., 21.
beleaguered woman trying to survive in a hostile world filled with
cockadoodle brats.\footnote{163}

Erich Neumann in his \textit{The Fear of the Feminine}, relates the stages of patriarchate
and matriarchate with a variety of developments in the consciousness and unconscious
of human being. Matriarchate does not only indicate the supremacy of the Great
Mother, but rather a psychic situation in which the unconscious is dominant where the
masculine have not reached a point of independence. Likewise, patriarchate does not
designate man’s authority, but again a psychic stage that is dominated by a masculine
consciousness.\footnote{164} Since consciousness is associated with masculinity, memory can also
be regarded as a masculine concept for it is the latter psychic stage. Hence, In \textit{Misery},
remembering is attributed to the author. Paul Sheldon is capable of remembering
every single detail of the books he is working on, though his mind is like a blank sheet
of paper when it comes to the instance of his accident, just like the crash victims he
interviews while writing his \textit{Fast Cars}. However, he should not have experienced this
oblivion; Paul talks to himself:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Because writers remember everything, Paul. Especially the hurts. Strip a writer to
the buff, point to the scars, and he’ll tell you the story of each small one. From the big ones you get novels, not amnesia. A little talent
is a nice thing to have if you want to be a writer, but the only real requirement is that ability to remember the story of every scar.}
\end{quote}

Art consists of the persistence of memory. (237)

In this respect, it is obvious that Paul Sheldon is under the spell of the mother right and indeed expressing a regression. He is no longer the authority; the feminine authority symbolically reflected by Annie Wilkes is dominating over him. Above all, the initial image of Annie Wilkes before Paul Sheldon’s eyes, apart from her being a big woman without the feminine curves is similar to an African idol from H. Rider Haggard’s She or King Solomon’s Mines:

That prescient part of his mind saw her before he knew he was seeing her, and must surely have understood her before he knew he was understanding her – why else did he associate such dour, ominous images with her? Whenever she came into the room he thought of the graven images worshipped by superstitious African tribes in the novels of H. Rider Haggard, and stones, and doom.

When Paul Sheldon decides to kill Misery Chastain before his encounter with Annie, his mere attempt was to free himself from the boundaries of trivial literature; he even screams triumphantly as soon as he types the ending remark: “The End.” Likewise, Misery Chastain’s death in childbirth implies his own rebirth, new life and fertility. Indeed, this was an act of breaking the chains; however, it later becomes his imprisonment by the horrible Annie Wilkes. Jack Morgan associates the appearance of Annie with Camille Paglia’s description of Venus of Willendorf. He asserts,

165 Here, there is also a reference to Salvador Dalí’s famous painting “The Persistence of Memory.” This painting symbolically articulates the situation of Paul Sheldon. See also Appendix 2.

Camille Paglia’s description of the primitive “Venus of Willendorf”\textsuperscript{167} – 30,000 B.C. – would fit the gruesome Wilkes rather precisely: “She is mired in the miasmic swamp . . . slumping, slovenly, sluttish, in a rut” (Personae 57). Wilkes embodies the harpy, that “aspect of femaleness that clutches and kills in order to feed itself” (Personae 51).\textsuperscript{168}

Within the context of the novel, the following diagram can be drawn with respect to Hubert Zapf’s function model:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural-critical Metadiscourse</th>
<th>Imaginative Counter-Discourse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriarchate</td>
<td>Matriarchate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father right</td>
<td>Magna Mater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>Unconscious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy of the writer</td>
<td>Literary market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law of the father</td>
<td>Desire for the mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tide</td>
<td>Lunar presence of Annie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{167} Venus of Willendorf is a statue of a female figure discovered in 1908 at a Palaeolithic site close to Willendorf, an Austrian village. See also Appendix 3.

\textsuperscript{168} Ibid., 172.
5.3 Reintegration: Annie is Dead, Long Live Misery!

The last phase of the triadic function model, reintegrative inter-discourse can be defined as the process of the reconciliation of the territory of the culturally repressed or separated with the systemic realities. As it is also mentioned before, this reconciliation should not always have to be a peaceful one, but rather a stage that provides the balance and dynamism of cultural history.

In the context of Misery, to briefly recapitulate the instances corresponding to the stages of the triadic function model, we can say that the classical concerns\textsuperscript{169} regarding the literary work form the cultural-critical metadiscourse, and the interference of Magna Mater with all its implications including the regression experienced by the protagonist appeals to the imaginative counter-discourse. The reintegrative inter-discourse comes into existence through the end of the novel where Paul Sheldon, the postmodern Scheherazade, is redeemed through his “story,” Misery’s Return while Annie Wilkes, the mark of the mother right, is killed by the typewriter. Sheldon’s last moments of struggle when the state cop arrives is depicted as such:

Paul groped on the knickknack table, knocking figurine over. Some fell to the floor and shattered. His hand closed around one, and that at least was like a book; it held the roundness novels delivered precisely because life so rarely did. It was the penguin sitting on his block of ice.

\textsuperscript{169} With the phrase “classical concerns,” I mean the prerequisites of a piece of literature to be counted among the canon.
NOW MY TALE IS TOLD! the legend on the block read, and Paul thought:

*Yes! Thank God!* (325)

What is utterly noteworthy – and revealed later in the novel – is that it is the coincidental strike of the typewriter, but not Paul Sheldon himself that defeats the dominance of the literary market, signifying the triumph of literary concerns, but having undergone some serious modifications. That Paul Sheldon is able to walk with a limp for the rest of his life can be regarded as among the apparent results of this so-called modification. On the other hand, *Misery’s Return*, written through Sheldon’s enslaving muse, becomes his “best” novel in terms of the responses he receives from the “market.” What is more, despite his efforts to come to terms with his days of imprisonment, Paul can never forget Annie Wilkes who is ready to rise up like Cain from behind the sofa (335). Although Annie is dead just like Misery Chastain, her memory does not leave Paul alone, as can be inferred from the following lines:

That was all in the past, though. Annie Wilkes was in her grave. But like

Misery Chastain, she rested there uneasily. In his dreams and waking fantasies, he dug her up again and again. You couldn't kill the goddess.

Temporarily dope her with bourbon, maybe, but that was all. (336)

Towards the end, Paul is offered a nonfiction book composed of his account of his imprisonment which would outsell Lee Iacocca’s books. At first, he thinks that he can never write such a book since he is a novelist and he knows that he will never be ready to put down all he survived on paper. His inner voice tells him:
It would start out as fact, and then I'd begin to tart it up . . . just a little at first . . . then a little more . . . then a little more. Not to make myself look better (although I probably would) and not to make Annie look worse (she couldn't). Simply to create that roundness. I don't want to fictionalize myself. Writing may be masturbatory, but God forbid it should be an act off autocannibalism. (332)

Paul Sheldon’s view that writing has its “autoerotic side” now turns into avoiding the autocannibalistic dimension of writing (244). He has not only experienced a serious period which he will never be able to disregard all through his life, but also his artistic manner has become subject to a radical change. The above quotation can be regarded as the harbinger of Paul Sheldon’s retaining his autonomy.

It is also worth mentioning that Sheldon’s novel turns out to be a gothic novel, which is probably intentionally indicated by Stephen King, referring to the reception of gothic literature when it flourished: since it was kind of a rebellion against the rationality of the age of enlightenment it was detached from “serious” form of literature. Through Paul Sheldon, Stephen King describes gothic literature as “more dependent on plot than on situation” and representing more constant challenges (167). Paul figures this out by Annie’s remark, which is an allusion to the Victorian literary arena, dominated by female readership.

170 In the novel, the autoerotic side of writing is expressed through these lines: Yes, he supposed he had been his own Scheherazade, just as he was his own dream-woman when he grabbed hold of himself and jacked off to the feverish beat of his fantasies. He didn't need a psychiatrist to point out that writing had its autoerotic side – you beat a typewriter instead of your meat, but both acts depended largely on quick wits, fast hands and a heartfelt commitment to the art of the farfetched. (244)
In conclusion, as a novel, *Misery’s* most prominent impact upon contemporary
gothic fiction is manifesting a meditation on the function of literature through a self-
referential gothic novel. In a medium of communication, Stephen King excellently
reflects the instance of communication breakdown and drags the reader into an
abyss,\(^{171}\) as well as evoking claustrophobic feelings upon the reader. David Punter
comments on the irony the novel conveys as such:

If all writing is communication, all a question of letters, then it is
precisely Sheldon’s success, his prestige, which causes this final
reduction of all his efforts at writing to a non-communication; or rather,
to a communication only with the unreadable and unreaderly psychotic
dimension which Annie represents, while all his attempts to get a
message through to the outside world meet with failure, until the final
point where he himself becomes the killer, thereby vindicating the idea
that his need to write overrides human life, that ‘in the beginning was
the word.’\(^{172}\)

The irony that Punter mentions is also manifested in Paul Sheldon’s conflictual inner
dialogue. Before Annie captivates him he used to be in between creating “serious
fiction” and being the puppet of the literary market. Just as he decides to put an end to

\(^{171}\) Referring to the epigraph by Nietzsche: “When you look into the abyss, the abyss also looks into
you.”

his enslaving Misery series, he himself gets enslaved by a “unique” representative of the market. His dilemma is expressed through these lines:

Not kidding yourself, Paul. Tell the goddam truth. Lying to yourself. A guy who makes up stories, a guy like that is lying to everyone, so that guy can’t ever lie to himself. It’s funny, but it’s also the truth. Once you start that shit, you might as well just cover up your typewriter and start studying for a broker’s license or something, because you’re down the toilet. (286)

Being an example of gothic literature both “fictionally” and metafictionally, Misery traces the triadic function model of Hubert Zapf. The Magna Mater figure in Annie Wilkes’ silhouette as the representative of the “literary market” reads as the existence of an imaginative counter-discourse. Through the polarities and juxtapositions, the novel very well fulfils the function of literature as cultural ecology.
CHAPTER VI

THE GROTESQUERY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MIRROR: DIARY

For in these pictures the painter gives his costliest possession – he gives his soul – his sorrow, his joy – he gives his heart’s blood. He gives the person – not the object. These pictures will – they must be able to grip more strongly – first the few – then more – then everyone.

Edvard Munch, 1891

On close inspection, all literature is probably a version of the apocalypse that seems to me rooted, no matter what its socio-historical conditions might be, on the fragile border (borderline cases) where identities (subject/object, etc.) do not exist or only basely so – double, fuzzy, heterogeneous, animal, metamorphosed, altered, object.

Julia Kristeva, from Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection

Look when a painter would surpass the life

In limning out a well-proportioned steed,

His art with nature’s workmanship at strife,

As if the dead the living should exceed;

So did this horse excel a common one,

In shape, in courage, colour, pace, and bone.

Shakespeare, from “Venus and Adonis”

Literature has the very task of preserving the vitality of cultural history as far as its cultural ecological function is concerned. This so-called vitality of culture is rendered
through the never-achievable balance in terms of the dichotomy of the Apollonian and the Dionysian. In the history of literature, it is observed that the reactions leading the literary movements stem from the excesses closely related with the political, economic and sociological conditions of the age. Moreover, like every epoch, every literary movement is actually a yearning for the ideal; however, the ideal is unattainable as long as human nature is among the cast. In Renaissance, the ultimate aim was getting free from the dogmatic demands of Christianity and achieving enlightenment through the revival of antiquity, which resulted in a significant progress in literature, art, and science. Yet, man's desire for "every" kind of knowledge brings about the tragic end of Dr. Faustus. In the Age of Reason, man's preoccupation with knowledge, along with a certain tendency to didacticism, transforms literature to a means of education, which gave rise to works of prose and non-fiction. The primary concern of man becomes rationality and pragmatism; therefore, while man tries to get rid of myths, he turns enlightenment turns into a myth himself, which ends up with a blurred perception of "reality." In this respect, it should be agreed that literature performs as both a catalyst and a reconciliatory force amongst the polarities that the human being has always remained incapable of balancing. Imaginative literature fulfils this function through a live documentation of what cultural history experiences, the point where fiction turns out to be non-fiction. Hence, literature becomes the intermediary between the official and unofficial speeches in Bakhtinian terms; it is the outburst of the marginal that is always oppressed by the common ideology. That is why the subtexts of the theory of
“literature as cultural ecology” are closely related with the dichotomy of the Apollonian and the Dionysian.

6.1 Life as Art

Grotesque is one of the most significant devices that reinforce the cultural ecological function of literature. Primarily, in Rabelais and His World, Bakhtin argues “The essence of the grotesque is precisely to present a contradictory and double-faced fullness of life,”\(^\text{173}\) which might be considered as the genuine spirit of grotesque. Grotesque deals with the multiple levels of reality and thus demonstrates the marginal and the perverse to form an imaginative-counter discourse. The history of grotesque dates back to late fifteenth century excavations in Rome and later in other parts of Italy. However, it did not belong to the Roman tradition and arrived in Italy as a new mode of art at the beginning of the Christian era. It was subject to various condemnations and criticisms due to its preoccupation with exaggeration, excess and hyperbolism, which is opposed to the Renaissance tradition of art employing realistic human figures, perspective, and vigilant use of light and shadow. Yet, in spite of these disparagements, grotesque was celebrated in Renaissance art to the extent that the word became synonymous with the dreams of painters (sogni dei pittori).\(^\text{174}\) Wolfgang Kayser explicates the process as follows:


By the word *grottesco* the Renaissance, which used it to designate a specific ornamental style suggested by antiquity, understood not only something playfully gay and carelessly fantastic, but also something ominous and sinister in the face of a world totally different from the familiar one – a world in which the realm of inanimate things is no longer separated from those of plants, animals, and human beings, and where the laws of statistics, symmetry, and proportion are no longer valid.¹⁷⁵

Then throughout the sixteenth century, the grotesque broke out of the borders of Italy and became eminent as a new type of art in the rest of the Europe.

Bakhtin refers to grotesque mostly in terms of the human body; he defines the grotesque body as being in a continuous state of change while fulfilling its requirements such as eating, drinking, defecation, etc. These bodily mechanisms also point to a sense of regeneration and renewal which Bakhtin associates with the beginning and the end of life.¹⁷⁶ In other words, the grotesque body according to Bakhtin is in a state of constant formation, to which the instance of death is also included.

Chuck Palahniuk’s 2003 novel *Diary* is written in the form of a “coma diary” kept by Misty Tracy Wilmot. It conveys the gothic syndrome mostly in terms of the grotesquery inherent in almost all the levels of the narrative. Misty Wilmot pens her

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¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 21.
diary mainly addressing to her husband Peter, which brings back the epistolary tradition in the classic works of gothic literature. In other words, diary becomes the expression of unreliability that misleads the reader on purpose and thus strengthens the effect of uncanny. In this respect, the novel forms a counter discourse at first sight in terms of its narratological features: diary is a personal account, the owner of the diary is free to reveal his/her fantasies and distort reality, and hence the diary lets its potential readers into a vision of carnivalesque, possibly displaying “the other side of the mirror.” In other words, Chuck Palahniuk exposes a distorted narrative by formulating the novel through a coma diary: the vision becomes a detail from Hieronymus Bosch’s “Garden of Earthly Delights”\textsuperscript{177} in the sense of its grotesqueness.

Kayser claims that the grotesque can be located in three different spheres: the creative process, the artwork itself and its reception. He states:

This threefold aspect is characteristic of the work of art in general which, in direct contrast to all other forms of production, is literally "created." Its unique structure enables the work of art to preserve its identity however much of its "cause" it may have absorbed. It has the strength to rise above this "occasion." And finally, in contradistinction to other and different kinds of use, the work of art is "received." It can only be experienced in the act of reception, regardless of any modifications arising from it.\textsuperscript{178}

\textsuperscript{177} See Appendix 4.
He also deems that the grotesque can be practiced only in the act of reception, which I relate with its abruptness since the effect it creates is a pornographic one. This abruptness of grotesque actually stems from its association with nature. As nature is an entity which is in a continuous process of formation, it provides most convenient grounds for grotesque to come into existence. However, grotesque remains at the point of intersection where nature and culture unite.

Catastrophes are completely grotesque incidents as Nevzat Kaya acknowledges, never does grotesque occur in traffic accidents, earthquakes or in volcanic eruptions more intensely and immediately than any other media. What is significant here is the instance of metamorphosis, decomposition, and disintegration, the moment when masks are worn or taken off.\textsuperscript{179} Moreover, grotesque also accentuates the dichotomic relationship between nature and culture: “Daraus läßt sich folgendes ableiten: je näher die Kultur an der Natur, desto geringer der Raum für Groteskes, jedoch: je mehr sich die Kultur von der Natur entfernt, desto paradiesischer die Biotope des Grotesken.”\textsuperscript{180}

\textsuperscript{180} Ibid., 3-4.
The more culture is close to nature the less space for grotesque to exist; when culture gradually declares its independence from nature, grotesque biotopes find the necessary space to grow.

Thus starts *Diary* with an unsuccessful suicide attempt of Misty Wilmot’s husband Peter. He is dragged into a coma, which is the basic grotesque imagery throughout the novel: “Everyone’s in their own personal coma,”¹¹ as Misty says; this is what makes Misty recount her own coma, along with the other islanders’. The distorted image of Misty’s diary is embedded in its “ill” nature and so is grotesque. Moreover, as a narrative form, diary is in a constant state of formation, which points to one of the preliminary traits of the Bakhtinian grotesque. However, *Diary* suggests a bitter sense of carnival, which coincides with Wolfgang Kayser’s view of the grotesque. Kayser defines grotesque as the “estranged world,”¹² in which the protagonist Misty finds herself. Misty and Peter, “a boy from a place called Waytensea Island,” meet in art school where they fall in love and decide to marry (11). Waytensea Island seems a paradise-like place at the first glance and “poor little Misty Marie Kleinman” is greeted by the whole island as the bride of Peter Wilmot; everyone rejoiced her arrival (13). This is actually the time when Misty comes to figure out that she will have to “put her plans for being a painter on hold” (13). Furthermore, she states that when you are young you tend to believe in the person who says he loves you; so does Misty Kleinman for the reason that “it wasn’t a career as an artist that she wanted. What she

really wanted, all along, was the house, the family, the peace” (13). Then she comes to Waytansea Island “where everything was so right. Then it turned out she was wrong” (13). Afterwards, in the new place where she inhabits, she is to “wait and see” what is going to come next. Her illusionary state can be likened to the one Nicholas Van Orton experiences in David Fincher’s film The Game. The peaceful “appearance” of Waytensea Island can be likened to the gift Van Orton receives from her brother: a game that consumes his whole life. Likewise, Misty’s marriage and art become a consuming aspect in her life.

The diary, being a manifestation of Misty’s actual experience in life, juxtaposes art and life in the form of literary expression. However, creating art becomes Misty’s own coma in two respects: firstly, she is dragged into coma while writing her diary; at the same time, she is forced to paint in spite of the pain she utterly feels; secondly, her process of creating turns out to be her liberation, rendering art as an instrument of redemption. Through her diary, she communicates her misfortune and through her painting, she is going to save the island and thus herself. The novel’s preoccupation with the grotesque is evident in its attitude towards aesthetics; in other words, Diary appears as the flesh and blood form of the grotesque as an aesthetic category. In the novel, we see Kayser’s three spheres of grotesque through Misty’s experience. Initially we witness her creative process, then her artwork (both her diary and her paintings) and the reception of her artwork, which will lead to the salvation of Waytansea Island, like grotesque art as the “dreams of painters.”
Art is associated with the Apollonian since it is said to be the imitation of nature and artistic delight basically depends on certain acceptable proportions and measures; similarly, as Kant posits, taste is a critical rather than a productive faculty.\textsuperscript{183} However, artistic genius is directly associated with nature; in Kant’s words, genius is

[the talent] (natural endowment) which gives the rule to art. Since talent, as an innate productive faculty of the artist, belongs itself to nature, we may put it this way: \textit{Genius} is the innate mental aptitude \textit{(ingenium) through which} nature gives the rule to art.\textsuperscript{184}

Nietzsche extends Kant’s perception of art as a compact version of life rather than putting the two concepts in opposition to one another. In the context of literature as cultural ecology, Hubert Zapf interprets the Nietzschean ideology as such:

The affirmation of life as an elemental, creative-destructive force within and beyond the human individual is a central part of Nietzsche’s aesthetic, which considers art not in opposition to life but instead as a specifically condensed and enhanced form of life.\textsuperscript{185}

It is cultural critics’ failure to consider nature and culture and their ramifications as two separate entities and everything as nothing but cultural constructs. On the contrary, neither nature and culture nor art and genius are concepts placed in the two


\textsuperscript{184} Ibid., 182.

poles. Instead, they complete one another and should remain in reconciliation. As Nietzsche, with reference to the ancient Greek culture, accentuates at the very beginning of *The Birth of Tragedy*:

Through Apollo and Dionysus the two art-deities of the Greeks, we come to recognize that in the Greek world there existed a sharp opposition, in origin and aims, between the Apollonian art of sculpture, and the non-plastic, Dionysian, art of music. These two distinct tendencies run parallel to each other, for the most part openly at variance; and they continually incite each other to new and more powerful births, which perpetuate an antagonism, only superficially reconciled by the common term “Art”; till at last, by a metaphysical miracle of the Hellenic will, they appear coupled with each other, and through this coupling eventually generate the art-product, equally Dionysian and Apollonian, of Attic tragedy.\(^\text{186}\)

Furthermore, regarding the razor-sharp opposition between the two deities’ resonances dangerous, he emphasizes the importance of their reconciliation along these lines:

This reconciliation is the most important moment in the history of the Greek cult: wherever we turn we note the revolutions resulting from this event. The two antagonists were reconciled; the boundary lines

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thenceforth to be observed by each were sharply defined, and there was to be a periodical exchange of gifts of esteem.\textsuperscript{187}

Camille Paglia broadens the Nietzschean idea in her meditation by claiming that the two great western principles, Apollonian and Dionysian rule sexual personae in life and art. She addresses Dionysus as identification and Apollo as objectification. While Dionysus is the emphatic, the sympathetic emotion enabling us to transform into other identities, other places and other times, Apollo is the hard and cold of western personality and categorical thought.\textsuperscript{188} She further states:

Complete harmony is impossible. Our brains are split, and brain is split from the body. The quarrel between Apollo and Dionysus is the quarrel between the higher cortex and the older limbic and reptilian brains. Art reflects on and resolves the eternal human dilemma of order versus energy. (…) Every excess breeds its counteraction. So western culture swings from point to point on its complex cycle, pouring forth its lavish tributes of art, word, and deed.\textsuperscript{189}

The plot of the novel is based upon a hereditary curse that the inhabitants of Waytansea Island experience once in three generations, when the islanders consume all their wealth. A young artist is deceived by seemingly antique and valuable jewellery and peaceful atmosphere of the island, becomes pregnant, has children, and hence is

\textsuperscript{187} Ibid., 6.
\textsuperscript{189} Ibid., 96-97.
bound to live on the island. Her husband, during middle age, dies and she is informed of her daughter’s death; additionally, she is forced to reveal her genius and create art. Then her paintings are exhibited in a big organisation at the hotel where a fire is started and the residents die as a result of their mesmerised state. Consequently, the islanders claim a huge amount of money from the insurance company, which will bring back their prosperity and luxurious life style for the next three generations. The motif of hereditary curse is one of the typical features enhancing the gothic syndrome in the sense that it forms a counter discourse on the opposite side of the naturalistic aspect of heredity: curse points to evil that can hardly be investigated through reason which uncovers Dionysian forces. *Diary* is a perfect illustration of the modification of gothic norms in contemporary literature. The plot, though it might seem very complex at first sight, is actually very simple and based on the fundamental concerns of today’s consumer society. The ultimate reason for such a scenario is nothing but to gain or preserve capital, which again points to the changing values, hence the changing source of the uncanny. Moreover, the inspiration for the unknown has become more visible, but significantly more insidious and perhaps more intense. This time the curse is impeded though; Misty Marie Kleinman remains at least “undead” after unveiling the reality behind the curse notwithstanding she has learnt that her husband was bisexual, she demonstrates her genius compulsively, she mentally and physically suffers, and she almost loses her one and only child.
6.2 Disintegration as Imaginative Counter-Discourse

That the setting of *Diary* is an island indicates various points as far as my subject matter is concerned. At the outset, the island is a mark of an alternative, an (un)ideal world which attaches dystopian features to the novel. Misty is fascinated by the island, the place of “happiness and peace and comfort,” puts away her dream of becoming an artist, and works as a waitress at the local hotel (36). She is in love with Peter, or taken in by some jewellery and leaves the college to marry him and leave her past life. Yet, she is face to face with a conspiracy at the cost her own life, which results in painting her own bloody utopia in distress:

It’s Xanadu. San Simeon. Biltmore. Mar a Lago. It’s what people with money build to be protected and alone. The places people think will make them happy. This new building is just the naked soul of a rich person. It’s the alternate heaven for people too rich to get into the real thing. (147)

At the same time, the island refers to the imaginative counter-discourse remaining on the margin when compared to the mainland. In this sense, the novel gives its clues from the beginning regarding the possible unexpected occurrences: it would not be so odd to claim that Waytansea Island turns out to be a Mr. Hyde figure. Misty describes the island as the skeleton of a fish, which again turns out to be the mark of infertility and a foreshadowing of the curse:
PICTURE THE WAY a little kid would draw a fish bone—the skeleton of a fish, with the skull at one end and the tail at the other. The long spine in between, it’s crossed with rib bones. It’s the kind of fish skeleton you’d see in the mouth of a cartoon cat.

Picture this fish as an island covered with houses. Picture the kind of castle houses that a little girl living in a trailer park would draw—big stone houses, each with a forest of chimneys, each a mountain range of different rooflines, wings and towers and gables, all of them going up and up to a lightning rod at the top. Slate roofs. Fancy wrought-iron fences. Fantasy houses, lumpy with bay windows and dormers. All around them, perfect pine trees, rose gardens, and red brick sidewalks.

(8)

Misty’s stream of consciousness unites the “dead” image of the island with her childhood experiences: her hippie mother works two jobs, she has never known her father and everything is ugly (10). Misty’s imminent dystopia is once her utopia:

And the more she could imagine this island, the less she liked the real world. The more she could imagine the people, the less she liked any real people. Especially not her own hippie mom, always tired and smelling like French fries and cigarette smoke. (10)

The secret begins to reveal itself through the notes sealed in the walls of the houses Peter has worked. She reads various humiliating remarks about herself and figures out that her husband did not love her at all. Furthermore, she finds notes
written by Maura Kincaid and Constance Burton, the previous victims of the island’s conspiracy. Examining these notes and taking the book Graphology from Angel Delaporte, Misty gains an awareness of how one’s handwriting might be an evidence of his/her personality. Writing, handwriting, the expression in one’s face, the artwork he/she creates – Misty gradually realizes:

Your handwriting. The way you walk. Which china pattern you choose. It’s all giving you away. Everything you do shows your hand.

Everything is a self-portrait.

Everything is a diary. (132-133)

Step by step she is detecting the mechanisms of her misfortune and potential to revive the prosperity of the island.

During her husband’s coma Misty is with her daughter Tabbi and her mother-in-law Grace who play the leading role in her imprisonment. Like the rest of the islanders, they are mesmerised by their ultimate task and perpetuate evil in a very natural manner. Evil has become the reflection of nature throughout the novel. The islanders and Misty’s so-called family actually do not have anything to do with crime or assassination; they have just internalised their mission and follow their noses, the point culture loses its dominancy over nature. In this respect, the islanders represent the Dionysian impulses nurtured essentially by culture: their passion for prosperity and comfort, but lazy life becomes the gazelle for the lion in Serengeti, which prepares the convenient grounds for grotesque biotopes to multiply.
Misty’s relationship with Tabbi reminds us of Rosemary, who keeps on loving her devil baby out of motherly intuitions. Tabbi is also mesmerized by the aim of the island’s regaining its wealth; besides, she is the product of an erroneous relationship, which reinforces her “evil” side. Therefore, not only is there room for her to act decorously, but also she is far from nature. In the episode where she and Tabbi take a walk in the woods they see a bronze statue of Apollo, which Misty hallucinatively sees as a naked flesh and blood man and of Diana as a dead body with a “pale white breast” and a “severed arm” (108). Artemis, the Greek version of Diana is the twin sister of Apollo and the goddess of hunting and hunters and the mistress of animals, patnia theron (in the Iliad). Walter Burkert states, “This Patnia Theron is a Mistress of the whole of wild nature, of the fish of the water, the birds of the air, lions and stags, goats and hares; she herself is wild and uncanny and is even shown with a Gorgon head.” Artemis is also associated with virginity, but not asexuality as in the case of Athena. Hers stem from the ancient hunting taboo: “The hunter too must be continent, he must be pure and chaste; thus he can win Artemis’ favour.” Artemis invokes the grotesque as well; Burkert asserts:

According to a cult, “[the dancing girls of Karyai and Karyatides] make sport wearing phalloi ... or else they wear grotesque masks such as those discovered in the Ortheia sanctuary as Sparta: the girls like their

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190 Referring to Ira Levin’s novel *Rosemary’s Baby*.
192 Ibid., 149.
193 Ibid., 150.
goddess, may assume the aspect of a Gorgon: in this way their exceptional status in the wilds is played out even more drastically. ¹⁹⁴

Misty carries the characteristics of Artemis, but appearing as a dead body with a severed arm. In other words, she is a false version of Artemis since she cannot unite with nature thoroughly; her arm is broken in the metaphorical level, besides she later injures her leg. Her hallucination becomes her own vision. Her grotesque state, “personal” coma and its outcomes is another articulation of her correlation with Artemis. Likewise, Tabbi says “the statue of Apollo does not have a dick,” right after Misty accounts for its perfection, its being the “golden mean of composition” and “the Greeks’ formula for why we love what we love” (109). This imperfect reproduction of Apollo statue represents the loveless relationship between Misty and Peter. Their possible love can only be the feeling among brothers and sisters, but they become a couple for the superficial reason for saving the island. The Bronze Apollo might also suggest Misty’s inappropriate connection with the Apollonian world. Consequently, the rest of the episode pinpoints Misty and Tabbi’s detachment from nature and one another. The nature drawn here is indeed not a proper nature, as explicated below:

[The grotto (again related with the grotesque) they pass by] is cluttered with carved angels that hold stone garlands of apples, pears, and grapes. Stone wreaths of flowers. All of it streaked with dirt, it’s cracked and pried apart by tree roots.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 151.
In between are plants that shouldn’t be here. A climbing rose chokes
an oak tree, scrambling up fifty feet to bloom above the tree’s crown.
Withered yellow tulip leaves are wilted in the summer heat. A towering
wall of sticks and leaves turns out to be a huge lilac bush.

Tulips and lilacs aren’t native to here.

None of this should be here. (110)

Later, Misty’s hallucination of the Apollo statue becomes her sexual fantasy. She is
seduced by its nakedness and refers to herself as “the naked soul of a horny middle-
aged artist,” (117). This scene actually stands for her unfulfilled sexual relationship
with her husband who in her fantasies, becomes the god of love, Apollo. The episode
is on Tabbi’s birthday and Grace’s and her actual intention is to leave Misty alone in
the woods to start drawing her redemptive paintings. However, Grace leaves a rotten
sandwich on purpose, most probably to increase the effect of her creativity, as “Peter
would tell Angel Delaporte that suffering is his [Kant’s] key to inspiration” (140) and
Dr. Touchet would claim “all [the] mystics, throughout history, all over the world, they
all found their way to enlightenment by physical suffering” (187). That day becomes
quite fruitful since the painting, interestingly enough, turns out to be Hershel Burke’s
Renaissance Revival armchair, and she creates her art in spite of all the grotesquery
she is subject to. She is poisoned and her unexpected defecation makes her endure
the worst feeling. This scene appears as the heart of the repetitive grotesque imagery
throughout the novel. Misty daydreams:
Even the idea of walking into the dim woods to sketch a falling, crumbling statue made the little hairs stand up behind her neck. The fallen sundial. That locked grotto. Christ. Here in the meadow, the sun was warm. The grass was humming with bugs. Somewhere beyond the woods, the ocean waves hissed and burst. (115)

Her fantasies, pointing to her manifestation as a Jesus Christ figure, also stresses her masculinity. She keeps on letting her imagination run riot and fantasizing about the statues of Apollo and Diana:

Just looking into the dark edges of the forest, Misty could imagine the towering bronze man parting the brush with his stained arms and watching her with his pitted blind eyes. As if he’s killed the marble Diana and cut the body to pieces, Misty could see him stalking out of the treeline toward her. (115)

Misty herself is killed being watched and by Peter and she has been torn into pieces, which also becomes the articulation of her grotesque decomposition.

Another expression of the imaginative counter-discourse in Diary is the utilisation of the lunar calendar, which also refers to the image of Misty as an Artemis figure and her lunacy. Lunar calendar is also an illustration of the moon as a conventional metaphor signifying the female, Dionysian, unreachable, Roman goddess Diana, and Isis in Egyptian mythology. Misty’s account commences under a three-quarter moon and on June 21, the time of summer solstice, develops up to first-
quarter moon, and ends in September 3, in the first-quarter moon. June 21 is
supposed to signify the beginning of summer, which is supposedly the harbinger of
regeneration, happiness, beauty, fertility and fulfilment. On the contrary, this date
happens to be the time when Misty admits the calamity she gradually experiences.
Although diary, as a literary form, is considered an evidence of chronological order,
ocasionally there can be observed shifts of time in the novel, which Palahniuk rather
makes it complicated to recognize at the first glance.

Misty’s coma diary is supposed to be kept during the period of her husband’s
com, but it is herself who experiences this coma more vividly, along with the rest of
the islanders. In her account on June 28, she says as a leitmotif throughout the novel:

Another longest day of the year.

It’s a game anybody can play. This is just Misty’s own personal coma.

A couple drinks. A couple aspirin. Repeat. (18)

Peter’s coma turns out to be her own, a platform where she comes to face her own
reality through her diary. Though the novel is a personal diary, the writer deliberately
chooses to use second person narrative. Misty is mostly talking to Peter, yet she
addresses herself as a third person, which once more implies her alienated state of
mind. The above quotation is also the indication of Misty’s identification with the
Dionysian. She is constantly drinking and taking pills implying her ill state of mind.

It is notable that in her “lunar” diary, Misty never mentions the crescent phases
of the moon, which is a manifestation of her Isis-like nature. The Egyptian goddess Isis
is the wife and sister of Osiris and mother of Horus and she is often depicted with a crescent. She is the chief mourner at the funeral of her husband murdered by her brother Seth. As the wife of Osiris, she discovers and reunites the pieces of her husband’s dead body and brings him back to life with her magical power. As a mother, she defends Horus, whose only aim is to avenge his father against snakes and scorpions. During the battle between Horus and her brother Seth, Seth is beheaded in spite of Isis’ mercy. Regardless of this situation, Isis and Horus were considered as perfect mother and son by the Egyptians. Thus, Isis is regarded as an archetypal wife and mother figure as well as a principal deity related with the dead; through her magical powers, she is the one who cures the sick and brings the dead to life and as a mother she is a life-giver. That Misty’s coma diary lacks the crescent phase of the moon designates that she appears as a deficient Isis figure in the novel: she can never fulfil her tasks not only as a wife and mother, but also as an artist that is associated with the magical attributes of Isis. She is deceived by her husband and disrespected by her daughter, Tabbi. Apart from her domestic roles, Misty is also a genuine artist who is supposedly encouraged to paint; yet, she performs as a hotel waitress instead. The fact that she has occasionally hard times during the instances of creation is an allusion to her deficient Apollonian features. Besides, her affliction while creating artwork is an insinuation of her true genius which also recalls the moment Peter says “You’ll need to suffer to make any real art,” and shows his nipple with a brooch pinned through as an illustration of real art (47). In this sense, Misty is a person who constantly remains in between her Dionysian-lunatic nature, genius and her artwork, an enunciation of her
Apollonian side; therefore, she is bound to have a “misty” vision all through her life. Yet, she is aware of what she is to endeavour being a painter:

As an artist, you organize your life so you get a chance to paint, a window of time, but that’s no guarantee you’ll create anything worth all your effort. You’re always haunted by the idea you’re wasting your life.

(168)

Misty Wilmot wanders between her multiple identities in the course of the novel: Misty Kleinman, before her marriage; Misty Tracy Wilmot after her marriage; and Misty Marie Wilmot as a brilliant and genuine artist. Yet she can never run away from her “misty” personality and the “misty” events, she is to come across all through her life. Nevertheless, towards the end, just before the opening of her ultimate exhibition, her identity seems to be moved away from its vague impression and fortunately enough, Misty comes to realize this so-called fact:

And now she’s Misty Marie Wilmot, but only her name changes. She has always been an artist. She will always be an artist.

What they don’t teach you in art school is how your whole life is about discovering who you already were. (242)

According to the cultural ecological viewpoint, the novel appears as a cluster of imaginative-counter discourses in the triadic model of Hubert Zapf. At the outset, the setting of Waytansea Island, as it is detached from the mainland, is quite convenient to get stuck in. In this respect, it articulates the margin remaining outside the
mainland, the mainstream. The pronunciation of the word Waytansea also recalls “wait and see,” which is an indication of the mysterious occurrences that will take place in the course of the novel. In spite of all the negative aspects of Misty’s Waytansea experience, the island provides the possible grounds for her to face her inner self and express herself. Secondly, diary as a literary form is another manifestation of the imaginative counter-discourse since it is written for the self and being read by others is the writer’s secondary concern. Although Misty keeps on repeating she is writing down her accounts for Peter to read should it be possible for Peter to get out of his vegetable state, it is for herself as she constantly states, “Everything is a self-portrait. Everything is a diary” (132-133). She is, in a way, sketching her own self-portrait along with the others’ with all her artistic gift. In this sense, among other literary forms, diary is bound to remain a counter-discourse. Thirdly, the deployment of lunar calendar instead of the conventional solar calendar is again an expression of imaginative counter-discourse; the Moon stands for Misty, marginalised, neglected and repressed by the community she strives within due to her her artistic skill and her gender. Moreover, I can also claim that – though obliquely – it is the Moon’s influence upon her intricate descriptions of the weather, which divulges her state of mind.

Hence, the following schema appears when cultural-critical metadiscourse and imaginative counter-discourse are placed:
6.3 Rebirth as the Reintegrative Inter-Discourse: Misty as the “Phoenix”

In spite of the conspiracy arranged for the redemption of the island, and her death, Misty succeeds in staying alive and is reborn like a phoenix. Her redemption is closely related with her “desire for the mother,” which implies the function of the imaginative counter-discourse through the process of reconciliation, in Hubert Zapf’s terms, reintegrative inter-discourse. All through her imprisonment, she always thinks of
taking Tabbi and returning to her mother’s home. In the symbolic level, salvation at “home” refers to Misty’s overcoming her problem with the Apollonian sphere through her Dionysian intuitions. To put it another way, art becomes a means of death and rebirth, and thus regeneration, which can be demonstrated by Grace’s remarks while preparing Misty’s dress for the exhibition night: “We all die. [...] The goal isn’t to live forever, the goal is to create something that will,” and “Just from the feel, Misty knows it’s white satin. Grace is cutting down Misty’s wedding dress. Remaking it. Making it last forever. Born again. Reborn. Misty’s Wind Song perfume still on it, Misty recognizes herself” (198). This is one of the most remarkable moments of the novel that marks the reconciliation of the margin and the centre. However, we can observe that this reconciliation is not a peaceful one for not only Misty, but also the islanders.

Through the end of the novel, the bronze statue of Apollo is depicted again. When Misty and Tabitha pass by the statue, meadow, crumbing mausoleum, and a bank with the iron gate where there is nothing but darkness. This time, Tabitha becomes a stranger and she is not part of her mother anymore. She pours the urns of her grandparents: “The long gray cloud of what’s inside, the dust and ash, it fans out the breeze. It sinks into the ocean,” (258). Misty is suffering what she has all experienced in Waytansea Island; her mere aim was to survive the plans of the islanders and leave the island taking her daughter with her. However, her daughter is indeed one of the islanders; from this moment on, her daughter is with her, but she is

195 She is no longer Tabbi, she wants to be called Tabitha by her mother, which points to her alienation, becoming detached from her mother.
“proud of”\textsuperscript{196} what she has done. Under these circumstances, all Misty can do is coming to terms with the present situation; the image of the disappearance of dust and ash through the breeze, in the ocean contributes to this as well, which is another indication of the reintegrative inter-discourse in \textit{Diary}.

In her account on August 28, right after the “unveiling,” Misty’s self-realisation is supported by the images of cave allegory the sirens, pointing to Misty’s reconciliation with the apollonian order and her Dionysian nature and experiences. Chuck Palahniuk directly refers to Plato in Misty’s account on August 28:

\textbf{ACCORDING TO PLATO,} we live chained inside a dark cave. We’re chained so all we can see is the back wall of the cave. All we can see are the shadows that move there. They could be the shadows of something moving outside the cave. They could be the shadows of people chained next to us.

Maybe the only thing each of us can see is our own shadow. (252)

According to Plato’s cave allegory, man is imprisoned in a cave\textsuperscript{197} from his childhood with his back turned to the entrance of the cave with his head and legs chained so that he can see nothing but the wall. There is a fire behind the prisoners and between the prisoners and the fire and above them there is a curtain-wall facing the road, which Plato likens to “the screen at puppet shows between the operators and their audience,

\textsuperscript{196} Tabbi says that she is proud of what she has done referring to her contribution to the conspiracy and starting the fire (258).
\textsuperscript{197} Cave means “grotto,” which is a leitmotif throughout the novel and the root of the word “grotesque.”
above which they show their puppets.198 The puppets form shadows on the wall, which reflect the sound and when the puppet-carriers talk, the prisoners think they are hearing the puppets.199 This is the mere “truth” they are exposed to and that is why they are bound to believe so. If some of the prisoners are somehow released from their chains they will walk and look through the fire, and seeing the real objects will cause them pain; if they directly see the light of the fire their eyes will be hurt and they will not be able to see the things they were told was real.200 At this point, Plato states:

‘Because, of course, he would need to grow accustomed to the light before he could see things in the upper world outside the cave. First he would find it easiest to look at shadows, next at the reflections of man and other objects in water, and later on at the objects themselves. After that he would find it easier to observe the heavenly bodies and the sky itself at night, and to look at the light of the moon and stars rather than at the sun and its light by day.’201

However, if he is to return to the cave somehow, his eyes might get blind since he has been exposed to the sunlight, in other words reality, which might result in his death since others would not believe what he has already seen. Through the cave allegory, Plato intends to stress that truth is relative and limited with the borders of experience;

199 See Appendix 5.  
201 Ibid., 258.
besides, “it is only known to god.”\textsuperscript{202} Additionally, what is achieved as the latest truth is the “form of the good,” which can be accomplished only through difficulty.\textsuperscript{203} Here, Plato brings up the issue of state of awareness, which renders man responsible for generating “light” all through his life.

Through mentioning the allegory of the cave, Chuck Palahniuk highlights the relativity of truth and the “other side of the mirror” that Misty dwells in. She is almost done with her diary. She has found out and revealed her own reality. She has performed as an artist. She is under arrest. She has “experienced” transgression and she is transformed as well; she remarks, “How your head is the cave, your eyes the cave mouth. How you live inside your head and only see what you want. How you only watch the shadows and make up your own meaning” (253).

Then she hears the sirens for the fire. The sound of the sirens is associated with the seductress, islander nymphs in the shape of bird in Greek mythology, who are considered to be among the feminine figures of death.\textsuperscript{204} I will elaborate on the significance of the sirens by exemplifying from Ovid’s Metamorphoses and Homer’s The Odyssey. In Metamorphoses, they were with Persephone when she was abducted by Hades. She was seduced by the song of the sirens calling her to the underworld. However, before she was sent to the world so as to stop the catastrophe Demeter has caused, she was given pomegranates by Hades, which obliges her to come back to the

\textsuperscript{202} Ibid., 260.
\textsuperscript{203} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{204} Jean-Pierre Vernant; Anne Doueili. “Feminine Figures of Death in Greece.” Diacritics, Vol. 16, No. 2. (Summer, 1986), pp. 54-64.
underworld once a year. One of the implications of this myth is that once you are caught by the charm of the underworld you are bound to be a part of it, signifying the similar sense of awareness and experience as in the allegory of the cave. In Greek mythology, the seductive song of the sirens creates a feeling of ecstasy on the mariners; and they get stuck in their island forever and die. However in *The Odyssey*, Odysseus is prepared for the potential damage caused by the sirens; he puts wax into his ears and thus escapes. Sirens, in spite of its denotative meaning at the first glance, demonstrate Misty’s condition as an Odysseus figure in a mythopoetic level. However, she is not prepared and she is exposed to the “sound” of the sirens; hence, she is bound to die. In addition, this death is associated with her daughter’s detachment from her; she is redeemed, she has escaped but her near future is subject to controversy. The sound of the sirens appears as an instrument to demonstrate Misty’s gaining “knowledge,” which costs the “dissolution” of her life. Although the novel’s ending suggests a metaphorical death, the reintegrative inter-discourse is achieved through the implication of regeneration and a new life.

Chick Palahniuk’s *Diary* makes a tasty combination of grotesque imagery along with mythological references to provide the prerequisites of the gothic syndrome. We observe a rather secular version of gothic which is liberated from the influence of religious beliefs. This can be explained through the newly establishing tradition of the 2000s, in which the source of horror, uncanny, and even *mysterium tremendum* has been changed. What we have reached is outwardly simpler symptoms of these concepts, but the effect created is much stronger: we have an apocalypse that is no
more sublime at all and we have characters experiencing transgression at almost all the phases of their lives. That is to say, the expression of the gothic syndrome, in a way, has become pornographic in the sense that the issues creating the very uncanny effect are more direct, evident and yet material.
CONCLUSION

This study on postmodern representations of gothic literature attempts to show the evidences of the transformation gothic literature has undergone towards the end of the twentieth century, by applying Hubert Zapf’s theory of “literature as cultural ecology.” It is noteworthy that gothic literature, originated at the last half of the eighteenth century, has preserved its “contemporariness” for two and a half centuries. The evidence of this premise lies in the fact that pieces of gothic literature, regardless of the question of “literariness,” have been written and widely read since The Castle of Otranto. However, it is an undeniable fact that literature, due to its vitality and vitalizing influence, is subject to certain alteration in relation to a range of social, political, economic and socio-historical phenomena. So is gothic literature. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, at the dawn of its emergence in England, it was written and received as a means to express the ongoing reaction towards the Enlightenment along with the genre’s entertaining aspect. The nineteenth century presents an intricate portrait: the rise of the middle class, the influence of the Victorian hypocrisy, the release of Charles Darwin’s The Origin of the Species and last but not least, the impact of the literature of decadence.

Hubert Zapf’s theory of “literature as cultural ecology” can be regarded among the constituents of a (re)turn in literary theory in that it complies with the hermeneutic aspects of literary texts contrary to the manner of the recent fashion in cultural studies. Literary studies is undoubtedly a part of cultural studies; however, too much
concentration on the cultural aspects inevitably leads to the misconceptualized reception of literature. Namely, literary criticism has turned out to be culture criticism and “literariness” of literary texts is taken for granted, which results in a rather single-dimensional reading of them. Such a move in literary studies happens to be the consequence of the postmodern trend, which has “haunted,” and indeed “hunted” the literary arena. The failure of cultural critics mainly lies in the fact that they tend to regard nature and culture as two separate entities remaining at the opposite sides, which invites the common suggestion that “everything is a construct.” This proposition is actually an overt manifestation of a very crucial inaccuracy: we can never know when the “right” time for Demeter to play with her toy will come, nor can we predestine her clumsiness. Through enlightenment, rationality and knowledge human being is capable of expanding his “awareness,” but he can never get nature completely under control.

Literature’s function as cultural ecology consists of keeping an account of cultural history and stepping in when the right time and preconditions are achieved. That is to say, literature acts as a medium where the unspeakable, repressed, neglected or the marginalised finds a platform to communicate itself. The hegemonic powers and the malfunctions of the dominant ideology, with their traumatising impact, lead the human being to self-alienation. Besides, they have also established one-sided binary oppositions such as nature/culture and mind/body. These societal institutions are confronted with an “imaginative counter-discourse” where imaginative literature acts as a means of confrontation with systemic realities through a pluralistic attitude.
Literature focuses on the fallacies of the prevailing ideological system and fulfils the function of articulating the marginalised through creativity.

The main motivation of this study was my urge to explore the transformations of gothic literature throughout the twentieth century through a “literary” stance. In the end, it has been reassured that the cultural-ecological approach to literature perfectly fulfils this task. The aim of applying a theory of general literature to a specific genre actually stems from the very diagnosis that gothic literature specifically encompasses the aspects of the theoretical background of “literature as cultural ecology.” It is observed that the main subtexts of cultural ecology and gothic literature are similar since both deal with the nature/culture dichotomy on the very surface and each comprise an imaginative counter-discourse as it can be seen at the end of the first chapter. Moreover, gothic literature was formerly counted outside the literary canon, which makes it complicated for it to reach the ideals of “high” literature; in fact, even presently, the description of a literary work with the mark of gothic in a review indisputably increases the circulation in the shopping carts. Nevertheless, at present, such a circulation is not the essential mark of literariness, nor being widely read takes anything away from the literary value of a work. Gothic literature’s relation with the concept of canon is another indicator of the validity of my theoretical stance.

Throughout this dissertation, I preferred to identify the gothic attributes as “gothic syndrome,” in that the gothic attributes in the novels emerge as a cluster of miscellaneous syndromes. To illustrate, in Ian McEwan’s *The Comfort of Strangers*, the gothic syndrome is displayed by the topography of Venice and the prospective results
of a repressive perception of classicism. Secondly, the gothic syndrome in Peter Ackroyd’s *Hawksmoor* is achieved through the shifts in time and language, along with the challenge of “dark” anxieties. Thirdly, Stephen King’s *Misery* reveals the phenomenon in problematizing the literary market in the face of a malevolent Magna Mater figure and the uncanny experience of a writer. And lastly, in Chuck Palahniuk’s *Diary*, the gothic syndrome is provided through the demonstration of how the grotesque works within the frame of gothic literature by pinpointing an illusion behind a reflection. The application of Hubert Zapf’s triadic function model has also enabled me utilise the true devices of literature as well as cultural studies, which are mythology and theology in general. Since the origins of the archaic fears and regression of man can be but deciphered in myths and an anthropological approach to religion, “literature as cultural ecology” also serves to unveil the world of mythology.

In conclusion, it can be claimed that the function of gothic literature as cultural ecology attempts to draw attention to the existing tension between the separate spheres of the multivocal dimension of life, culture and civilisation. In this respect, I feel the need to recite the assertion of Hubert Zapf by applying it to gothic literature:

> [Gothic] literature in this sense of an ecological force of cultural self-exploration and self-renewal is, however, no longer situated only in the tension between literary and cultural history. Rather, it is a form of textuality that relates cultural history to its vital interconnections with
natural history. Literature keeps alive its creativity by reconnecting the cultural memory with the biophilic memory of the human species.\textsuperscript{205}

In other words, gothic literature in terms of its “concerned” attitude towards civilisation and through its warning of “syphilisation,” fulfils the very task of preserving the dynamism of culture.

\textsuperscript{205} Hubert Zapf. “Literature as Cultural Ecology: Notes Towards a Functional Theory of Imaginative Texts, with Examples from American Literature.” In \textit{REAL Year Book of Research in English and American Literature}, edited by Winfried Fluck et al. (Tübingen: Günter Narr Verlag, 2001), 99.
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APPENDIX

1 Apollo Belvedere
2 “La persistencia de la memoria” (“The Persistence of Memory,” Salvador Dali, 1931)
3 Venus of Willendorf
4 “Garden of Earthly Delights” (Hieronymus Bosch, 1503-1504)
5 Plato’s Cave
ÖZGEÇMİŞ

ÖZET


diğer bir deyişle kültürün “ötekisini” dile getirir. Uzlaştırıcı söylemlerarasılık sayesinde ise dışlanan ile kültürel gerçeklik sistemi arasında ilişki kurulur.

Edebiyatın kültürel-ekolojik işlevi kültür tarihinin ‘vicdan’ olmasında yatar; bu anlamda, edebiyata daha bütüncül bir anlam getirerek ‘doğa’ ve ‘kültür’ oğullarının aslında birbirine karşıt birer söylem değil birbirlerini tamamlayan olgular olduğu iddia edilir. Böylece, son dönem kültür eleştirmenleri tarafından sergilenen ‘her şey aslında bir konstrüksiyondur’ dan ibaret bir edebiyat anlayışına ciddi bir sekte vurulmuş olur.
ABSTRACT

Having emerged in England in the eighteenth century, the first examples of gothic literature, are considered to be works of romances that embody supernatural villains, archaic settings and sublime terrors. However, today it is obvious that the corpus of gothic literature does not only consist of these clichés; taking the attributes of the literary movement and socio-political conditions of the epoch it preserves its contemporariness. In fin de siècle, especially due to Darwin’s The Origin of the Species, gothic literature points to a godless universe where perversity almost reigns. With the influence of modernity and postmodernity gothic literature has become a literature of regression articulating the individual’s fear and distrust in society.

In this study, gothic literature is examined through Hubert Zapf’s theory, “literature as cultural ecology” and four gothic novels written after 1980 are analysed: The Comfort of Strangers, Hawksmoor, Misery and Diary. “Literature as cultural ecology” discusses the function of literature in the ecological balance of the universe. According to the triadic function model of Zapf, a work of imaginative literature embodies a cultural-critical metadiscourse describing the fallacies of the dominant ideological civilisatory system, an imaginative counter-discourse expressing the repressed and marginalised aspects of the so-called system, and a reintegrative inter-discourse attempting to reconcile the two poles by building a relationship between the aspects of civilisatory system and which remain outside of this hegemonic powers.
The cultural-ecological function of literature is that it records every single instance and thus performs as the “conscience” of cultural history. In this sense, regarding nature and culture as complementary entities literature gains a holistic outlook contrary to the view of most cultural critics that claim that nature and culture are two opposing forces. Consequently, the common initiative in cultural studies that “everything is a construct” is eradicated through proposing a multi-layered perception of literature.
END NOTES

i Bu ekolojik bilgi, demek ki edebiyat bilimsel ve kültür bilimsel hermeneotığın yerine gelen bir şey değil, bu bilgiyi genişleten bir şeydir; ayrıca estetik yapıların ekolojik kavramlar kullanılarak tasvir edilmelerinin amacı da poetika ve estetünün yerine geçmek değil, bu yapıları tamamlamak ve disiplinlerüstü bir açılım sağlamaktır.

ii Kültür ekolojik bir perspektifte – nasıl aktarılmış olursa olsun – edebiyatın tarihe ve yaşam dünyasına olan bağlı, acil sorun yapılarının sembolik olarak işlenmesi açısından temeldir. Bu esnada kültür/doğa ayrımının etkinleştirilmesi, en geniş anlamda metinde kurnaca ve hayat arasında gelsen geri bağlama ilişkisi açısından önemli bir olnak sunmaktadır.

iii Bu esnada özellikle tine karşı beden, usa karşı duygu, öze karşı öteki, düzene karşı kaos, kültüre karşı doğa gibi tek yanlı hiyerarşik karşılıkların hüküm sürdüğü ve insanların ‘biyofil,’ psikolojik antropolojik temel yapısındaki derin yabancılaştırma etkileri ile deformasyonlara yol açan medeniyet şekillendirendirici gerçeklik ve söylem sistemlerinin tekellik iddialarını önemli bir rol oynar.

iv Bu mantıka yenilikçi olanla yeniden yapılandırıcı olan, modern olanla arkaik olan, kurgulamanın sınır aşımıyla mitografiğin olaysalığı kendine has bir karşılık içerisinde birleşir. Böylece kültürel açıdan dışlanan, özel bir biçimde estetik olarak işaretlenmiş olur. Kültürel olarak dışlanan, hem göstergesel olanakların sınırları kaldırın coğaltımı ile hem de mitopoetik anlam yaratıcı bir enerjije birleştirilir. Bu enerji, kültürel çıkış sistemine karşı bir çeşit ‘büyüli’ karşıt enerji olarak yapılandırılır ve kismen kurnaca
olarak kişileştirilirken kısmen de doğaya yakın bir göstergesellik içinde yan anlamlar kazanır.

v Edebi karşısında dünyaların özel bilişsel ve duygusal yoğunlukları, gelenek ve kültürel uygulamalar ile birbirinden ayrılmış olanların etkileşiminden kaynaklanır – bunlar sınırları belirlenmiş dil düzeyleri ve anlam kalıpları ama aynı zamanda da işböülümcü ve kurumsal olarak ayrılmış bir toplumun çeşitli alanları, sosyal roller ve kişisel benlik, kamu ve mahremiyet, akıl ve tutku, bilinç ve bilinç dışı ile kültür ve doğanın bunların tamamına nüfuz eden ekolojik temel boyutudur.

vi Edebiyat, bilincin usoncu kökenlerine bağlılığını sahneleyerek söylemsel açıdan ifade edilememeyeni devamlı olarak yeniden kültürel bilinç ve belleğe yazdırılar sembolik bir araç haline gelir.


viii Dionysus öncelikle kadınlara tanrısıdır. Kadının doğası tüm yönleriyle onda tatmin bulur.

ix Ekolojik bir düşünmenin temelinde yatan gerçeklik kavramı, durağan değildir, aksine devamlı bir öz dönüşümün canlı bir süreci olarak alınmaktadır. Edebi sanatın, kültürel düşünme ve yaşam biçimlerinin kalıplaması tehlikesine, ama aynı zamanda kendini
sürekli yenileme uğruna kendi ifade biçimlerini gelenekselleştirmesine karşı etkide bulunma işlevi bundan kaynaklanır.

Bundan şu sonuç çıkarılabilir: Kültür doğaya yaklaştıkça groteske daha az yer vardır, ancak kültür doğadan uzaklaştırıca groteskin biyotopları da tam bir şölene dönüşür.