

**POSTMODERNIST AND POSTSTRUCTURALIST ELEMENTS
IN SAMUEL BECKETT'S *THE TRILOGY* AND OĞUZ ATAY'S
*TEHLİKELİ OYUNLAR***

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this thesis is to analyse the postmodernist and poststructuralist elements in Samuel Beckett's *The Trilogy: Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable* and Oğuz Atay's *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*. One text from English literature and one from Turkish literature will be compared. In Beckett's and Atay's novels the main issues of postmodernism and poststructuralism such as subject-object dialectic, the metaphysics of presence, the correspondence theory of truth, origin, self, language, intertextuality and metafiction will be analysed. Both Beckett and Atay problematize the very nature of narrative and display the inefficiency of language, and they successfully create their own "expression of interface". That is, Atay and Beckett do not try to imitate the "natural world" to reach "meaning" or "reality"; on the contrary, they create a world for the play of signifiers that can be called 'interface'. In other words, both Beckett and Atay create *a new sphere* to show this problem of expression. This new sphere, which is narrated in their novels, is what the thesis will highlight.

Key Words: Postmodernism, poststructuralism, language, expression of interface.

ÖZ

SAMUEL BECKETT'İN *THE TRILOGY* VE OĞUZ ATAY'IN *TEHLİKELİ
OYUNLAR* ADLI ROMANLARINDA
POSTMODERNİST VE POSTYAPISALCI ELEMENTLER

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Bu tezin amacı Samuel Beckett'in *The Trilogy: Molloy, Malone Ölüyor, Adlandırılmayan* ve Oğuz Atay'ın *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* adlı romanlarında postmodernist ve postyapısalcı öğeleri incelemektedir. Biri İngiliz diğeri Türk edebiyatından olan bu metinler karşılaştırılacaktır. Postmodernizmin ve postyapısalcılığın özne-nesne diyalekti, mevcut oluşun metafiziği, gerçek kuramının uyumluluğu, orijin, kişi, dil, metinlerarasılık ve üstkurmaca gibi temel konuları Beckett'in ve Atay'ın romanlarında çözümlenecektir. Hem Beckett hem de Atay, anlatının doğasını sorunsallaştırır; dilin yetersizliğini sergiler ve başarılı bir şekilde kendilerine "arayüzün ifadesi" olgusunu yaratırlar. Yani, Atay ve Beckett "anlam" ve "gerçekliğe" ulaşmak adına "doğal dünyayı" taklit etmezler; bunun tam tersine, 'arayüz' diye adlandırılabilinecek, gösterge oyunları için kurulmuş bir dünya yaratmaktadırlar. Diğeri bir deyişle, ifade etme konusundan kaynaklanan bu sorunu göstermek için hem Beckett hem de Atay, *yeni bir alan* yaratmaktadırlar. Tez, romanlarda da anlatılan bu yeni alana dikkat çekecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Postmodernizm, postyapısalcılık, dil, arayüzün ifadesi.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Twentieth century British writer Samuel Beckett's narrative *The Trilogy* and the Turkish writer Oğuz Atay's novel *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* can be regarded as two examples of the postmodern novel. Postmodernism as a term has always been a controversial one as a single definition of it can hardly be found in any book. As Richard Begam puts forward, "one of the distinguishing characteristics of postmodern is precisely the way it resists all efforts of delimitation, the way it presents itself as a taxonomical extravagance, what cannot be classified or specified...We must, in other words, 'name' the postmodern, but we must name it as in some sense 'unnamable' (12-13). Furthermore, although many critics seem to agree that postmodernism would offer some combination of such themes and techniques as self-reflexivity, the death of the author, *écriture*, heteroglossia, intertextuality, the loss of the origin, the breakdown of the signifying chain, and the deferral of meaning, what motivates postmodernism is an implicit anti-Cartesianism, a rejection of classification that is grounded in subject-object relations. In this sense, Cartesianism has two forms. One of these is 'mimetic Cartesianism,' which treats the work of art as a subjective creation that attempts to mirror an objective situation: world, history, or society. The other is 'expressive Cartesianism,' which treats the work of art as an objective artefact that refers back to an antecedent, subjective condition: the author's intentions or state of mind: conscious or unconscious. Both mimetic and expressive Cartesianism emphasize the establishing of a correspondence between a subjective and an objective state of affairs and determining what kind of fit exists between mind and thing. Moreover, one of the Cartesian inheritances – 'philosophical foundationalism' or Descartes's famous Method – assumes that all genuine knowledge must be built upon the ground of some indisputable first truth—such as the cogito—and that everything that follows from this, if it is soundly reasoned, must be valid. The other inheritance of Cartesianism, 'intuitional

normativism' in which Descartes's empiricism assumes that reality is transparent is that if we are perspicacious in our observations, we shall see the world as it is. However, postmodernists challenge both these assumptions, and they argue that because human beings always perceive reality through linguistically and historically determined schemes, they can never know it directly and immediately without reference to some cultural code. Briefly, postmodernism is a form of anti-Cartesianism that rejects the idea that reality may be known in itself as what is given in the world or self-evident to the senses (Begam 17).

On postmodernism many critics express their thoughts, but the French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard is particularly notable as he is capable of making statements about the postmodern that are straightforward and highly quotable: "I define *postmodern* as incredulity toward metanarratives" (xxiv). Postmodernism, as Lyotard has suggested, represents a radical epistemological break with our understanding of what the human sciences have to offer. What draws the strong lines of postmodernism in Lyotard's mind is the abandonment of those grand narratives that began with the Enlightenment. Moreover, none of these grand narratives can contain the unstable and originless reality of postmodernism. Therefore, as postmodernism rejects all kinds of discourses and meta-narratives, each work of art that is not limited by rules of any totalizing theory can formulate its own rules. Lyotard further elaborates on the postmodern: "It is a conceptual extravagance, something that stands beyond the categories of thought and imagination, that can only be presented as 'unpresentable'; and it is produced out of a process of self-abnegation and self-consumption, a willingness to allow its own identity to dissolve amid an upsurge or backwash of 'differences' (Lyotard 81-2). In Derridean expression, if the postmodern is a *différential* phenomenon characterized by internal contradiction, self discrepancy, and incongruity, and if it actively resists classification and stands outside the intellectual and conceptual boundaries, then it is, at some level, 'unnamable' (Begam 25).

Julia Kristeva is another critic who elaborates on the postmodern in her “Postmodernism?” She argues that the “language-defying style” of postmodern writing leads to a “multiple, heteroclitic and unrepresentable idiolect”. She states that “as far as writing is concerned, it has since set out to blaze a trail amidst the *Unnamable*; ...” (141). This is just what one can find in Beckett’s and Atay’s fiction because in their texts they experiment with words and their arbitrary materiality; they present two of the best examples of this new kind of writing. They are quite aware of the fact that words signify beyond their control and the meaning ultimately becomes unattainable or *unnamable*. Like a war between writers and words, this unending procedure reveals the presence of a world deprived of meaning, and both Beckett and Atay deal with this disunity caused by language, and they express it through creating an interface in their novels. In this interface they do not attempt to solve the problem between language and reality nor are they after a meaning; they just express it as it is.

1.1. Methodology and Limitations

This thesis will analyse the postmodern and poststructuralist features of *The Trilogy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* in five main chapters. The first chapter is the introduction of the study. The idea that Beckett and Atay are similar regarding their use of postmodernist and poststructuralist features is introduced in this first chapter. Besides, the influence of Descartes’s philosophy on postmodernism and anti-Cartesianism will be highlighted. Moreover, the postmodern ways of narration, as the rejection of conventional narration, are analysed in both *The Trilogy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*.

In the second chapter, before analysing the novels, the theoretical background is discussed in detail. The main elements and techniques of postmodernism, poststructuralism and deconstruction are introduced in the context of their theoreticians’ texts. Elaborating the pioneering views of Derrida, Barthes and Foucault helps one find these ideas in the novels. In

addition, in the second chapter, intertextuality and metafiction are also introduced that need to be reviewed before analysing them in the texts.

In chapter three, Beckett's and Atay's views of art and artist are analysed in the light of their texts. It is very essential to understand the similar aspects of their works before studying their novels. As both Beckett and Atay are twentieth century writers, they have been influenced by the contemporary ideas.

In the fourth chapter, the theories are applied to the novels in five sub chapters. The first of these is the characterization of Molloy, Moran and Hikmet. The characters of *Molloy* and Hikmet from *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* are especially studied in detail because these characters display very significant features of postmodernism. They prove to be unforgettable characters of literature because they stand for all mankind and his desperate situation. The characterisations of Molloy, Moran and Hikmet are handled respectively and their similarities are highlighted. The second item of this chapter is the issue of language in *Molloy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*. The role of language under the light of Derrida's contribution to linguistics and philosophy is dealt with. In this section, the concept of both Atay's and Beckett's 'expression of interface' through postmodernist and poststructuralist techniques is underlined. In the third section of this chapter, concepts of Barthes' essay "Death of the Author" and of Foucault's essay "What Is an Author?" are used in analysing *Malone Dies* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*. In the following section, both *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* and *The Unnamable* are analysed according to Foucault's concept of 'The Death of Man' in his book *The Order of the Things*. In the last section, the use of intertextuality and metafiction as two postmodernist techniques in *The Trilogy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* is emphasized.

Chapter five is the conclusion of this study. It first gives a brief summary of the arguments made in the previous chapters. It also focuses on the conclusion that is related to the idea of the expression of interface.

As a last remark, all the quotations taken from *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* and other Turkish books are translated into English by me.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Postmodernism

In the development of this thesis the main approach is postmodernism. Poststructuralism and deconstructive reading are the other approaches to be applied because they can be seen as the theoretical formulations of the postmodern condition. Postmodern fiction has been studied by many critics and writers in order to formulate the main characteristics of postmodern literature. As Aleid Fokkema illustrates, postmodernism is neither fixed nor unified:

French, Italian, Hispanic, German, Austrian, English and American novels were discussed by critics who argued that postmodernism was characterized by the ‘ontological dominant’ (fiction that problematizes “the ontology of the literary text itself or ... the ontology of the world it projects” [McHale 1987: 10]), or by its use of ‘metafiction,’ (“fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relation between fiction and reality” [Waugh 1984: 2]), or by its status as ‘historiographic metafiction’ (the “*engage*, problematically referential” text that “is offered as another of the discourses by which we construct our versions of reality” [Hutcheon 1988: 40]) (14).

Postmodernism, deconstructive reading and poststructuralism have many similarities. In fact, most of the features of postmodernism remind one of poststructuralism’s basic aspects. Therefore, their similarities are highlighted under different sub-titles.

To begin with, no matter how hard one tries, there is no single, unifying definition of postmodernism. Indeed, the impossibility of defining postmodernism is quite proper to its values and practices as any definition will betray its principles. The well-known novelist and critic Umberto Eco argues that postmodernism cannot be defined chronologically, but it should rather be seen as a mode of representation present in every epoch.

The postmodern reply to the modern consists of recognizing that the past, since it cannot really be destroyed, because its destruction leads to silence, must be revisited: but with irony, not innocently...Irony,

metalinguistic play, enunciation squared...with the postmodern, it is possible not to understand the game and yet to take it seriously (155).

Besides, Ihab Hassan's intervention in the postmodernism issue is also very significant as he asserts that postmodernism is an impulse of negation and unmasking, a celebration of silence and otherness that was always present, though always repressed by Western culture. It is an impulse to decentre, to create ontological and epistemological doubts, and become intimate with chaos. It is a chaos or loss of unity which is something to be celebrated (Hassan 444). Unlike modernist thinkers such as Baudelaire, Kafka, Eliot, Woolf, Joyce and Nietzsche, the French philosopher Jacques Derrida and many postmodernist thinkers believe that there is no such thing as objective reality. For them, all definitions and depictions of truth are subjective, simply creations of human minds (Bressler 99). Because these thinkers assert that many truths exist, not *the* truth, they declare that modernity's concept of one objective reality must be disavowed and replaced by many different concepts, each a valid and reliable interpretation and construction of reality. The metaphor used by postmodernists to describe the reality is a 'collage' rather than a map. Unlike the fixed, objective nature of a map, a collage's meaning is always changeable. A collage permits many possible meanings; however, a map allows one interpretation of reality.

Many philosophers from Derrida to the cultural historian Michel Foucault and to Jean-François Lyotard declare univocally the death of objective truth. Unlike modernity, which failed because it searched for an external point of reference - God, reason, science, etc. - on which to build a philosophy, postmodernism does not look for a point of reference because there is no ultimate truth or inherently unifying element in the universe and thus no ultimate reality. Overall, postmodernism's some core characteristics can be stated as in the following: A scepticism or rejection of grand metanarratives to explain reality; the concept of the self as ever-changing; truth as subjective and perspectival, dependant on the cultural, social, and personal influences.

Furthermore, there is not 'one correct' concept of ultimate reality and interpretation of a text. Texts belonging to the postmodern display a tough disruption of origins, of the single, unique text, or of the strictly referential function of language. "The postmodern text, unlike its predecessors, does not even lay claim to being self-contained and self-explanatory; it is by its very nature fragmented, untrustworthy, composed of elements that parody or pastiche other texts" (Pattie 157). Additionally, in postmodernist texts one of the very influential concepts is the function of the centre which is dealt with in the following part.

2.1.1. The Function of the Centre

In structuralism the binary opposition has a great role as one side of a binary has a meaning in relation to the other side, to its opposite. Thus, this idea reveals that every system posits a centre that controls the system. The function of the centre is holding the whole structure in its proper place and appointing each of the binary opposites to its privileged side of the slash. Presence becomes superior to absence or speech superior to writing showing them as presence/absence, speech/writing. "The movement has tended to confine writing to a secondary and instrumental function: a translator of a full speech that was fully present (present to itself, to its signified, to the other, the very condition of the theme of presence in general)" (Derrida 1976: 8). This tradition of privileging speech over writing has been called phonocentrism. As Madan Sarup states, "[Derrida] relates this phonocentrism to logocentrism, the belief that the first and last thing is Logos, the Word, the Divine Mind, the *self-presence of full-consciousness*" (36). In Western philosophy, each centre suggested by Derrida is supposed to have created the system and is outside the rules that govern the system:

Qua centre, it is the point at which the substitution of contents, elements, or terms is no longer possible. At the centre, the permutation or the transformation of elements (which may of course be structures enclosed within a structure) is forbidden. At least this permutation has always remained *interdicted*¹. Thus it has always

¹ Interdite: "forbidden," "disconcerted," "confounded," "speechless".

been thought that the centre, which is by definition unique, constituted that very thing within a structure which governs the structure, while escaping structurality. This is why classical thought concerning structure could say that the centre is, paradoxically, *within* the structure and *outside* it. The centre is at the centre of totality, and yet, since the centre does not belong to the totality (is not art of the totality), the totality *has its centre elsewhere*. The centre is not the centre. The concept of centred structure – although it represents coherence itself, the condition of the *epistémé* as philosophy or science – is contradictorily coherent. [...] From the basis of what we therefore call the centre (and which, because it can be either inside or outside, is as readily called the origin as the end, as readily *arché* as *télos*), the repetitions, the substitutions, the transformations, and the permutations are always taken from a history of meaning (*sens*) – that is, a history, period – whose origin may always be revealed or whose end may always be anticipated in the form of presence (qtd. in *A Postmodern Reader* 224-5).

While Western culture favours “absolute fixity, rigidity, no motion and no play”, Derrida and other poststructuralist thinkers favour “complete movement, constant shifting and continual play” (Klages 56). According to Derrida, the centre limits ‘play’ in especially literary works. When the centre is a part of the structure that is paradoxically inside and outside of it, no centre is truly a centre. In other words, in signifying systems there can be no transcendental signified as all signs have infinite signifiers and meanings.

2.2. Poststructuralism

Poststructuralism can be originally seen as a reaction to structuralism, which claims that language forms a closed, stable system suggesting a delimited structure of meaning. There are many aspects in poststructuralism which are quite similar to those of postmodernism. For instance, its handling of language is worth paying attention to. Like postmodernism, poststructuralism also attacks all kinds of centres and limitations. Both postmodernism and poststructuralism take meaning in the same way as something suspended, held over and still to come. In poststructuralism meaning is just a matter of difference. ‘Tree’ is a ‘tree’ because it is not ‘free’ or ‘cree’. This process of difference in language can be traced round infinitely. Moreover, meaning is always the result of a division or ‘articulation’ of signs. A signified is the

product of the difference between two signifiers. Furthermore, Terry Eagleton explains this situation

There is no fixed distinction between signifiers and signifieds. If you want to know the meaning (or signified) of a signifier, you can look it up in the dictionary; but all you will find will be yet more signifiers, whose signifieds you can in turn look up, and so on. This process is somehow circular: signifiers keep transforming into signifieds and vice versa, and you will never arrive at a final signified which is not a signifier in itself (1989: 128).

This is just where postmodernism and poststructuralism agree with each other. In poststructuralism language is a temporal process and this process cannot come to an end. Eagleton claims that meaning is scattered or dispersed along the whole chain of signifiers: It cannot be easily nailed down, and it is never fully present in any one sign alone but rather a kind of constant flickering of presence and absence together (128). The idea of the modification of the meanings due to different signifiers is quite similar to the idea of postmodernism. In other words, in the process of language the sentence may come to an end, but each word in a sentence carries the trace of others. In this sense “no sign is ever ‘pure’ or ‘fully meaningful’” (Eagleton 128). Furthermore, there is one more thing about poststructuralism which is very close to the system of postmodernism as underlined by Eagleton:

If meaning, the signified, was a passing product of words or signifiers, always shifting and unstable, part-present and part-absent, how could there be any determinate truth or meaning at all? If reality was constructed by our discourse rather than reflected by it, how could we ever know reality itself, rather than merely knowing our own discourse? Was all talk just talk about our talk? (143-4).

Therefore, as Eagleton points out, reality is a groundless area of signifiers in literature, where this ambiguity is most evident, and it directly leads us to a deconstructive reading because literary texts, in some sense, acknowledge their own rhetorical status.

Philosophy, law, political theory work by metaphor just as poems do, and so are just as fictional. Since metaphors are essentially ‘groundless’, mere substitutions of one set of signs for another, language tends to betray its own fictive and arbitrary nature at just those points where it is offering to be most intensively persuasive.

‘Literature’ is that realm in which this ambiguity is most evident – in which the reader finds herself suspended between a ‘literal’ and a figurative meaning, unable to choose between the two, and thus cast dizzily into a bottomless linguistic abyss by a text which has become ‘unreadable’... [Literary texts] implicitly acknowledge their own rhetorical status – the fact that what they say is different from what they do, that all their claims to knowledge work through figurative structures which render them ambiguous and indeterminate. They are, one might say, ironic in nature. Other forms of writing are just as figurative and ambiguous, but pass themselves off as unquestionable truth (145).

In other words, literary works are ironic in nature “which do not need to be deconstructed by the critic: It can be shown to deconstruct itself, and moreover is actually ‘about’ this very operation” (Eagleton 145). In this sense, moving from this poststructuralist aspect one inevitably becomes aware of the metaphorical/ironical nature of all kinds of texts. Moreover, the removal of the author is another characteristic of poststructuralist texts. In this sense, the ideas of Derrida, Foucault and Barthes are elaborated in the next part.

2.2.1. Derrida’s, Foucault’s and Barthes’ Notions of the Author

When anti-authorial discourse is considered, Derrida, Foucault and Barthes are influenced by the French poet Stéphane Mallarmé, who asserts about anti-authorialism:

The pure work implies the disappearance of the poet-speaker who yields the initiative to words animated by the inequality revealed in their collision with one another; they illuminate one another and pass like a trail of fire over precious stones, replacing the audible breathing of earlier lyrical verse of the exalted personality which directed the phrase.

...

The structure of a book of verse must arise throughout from internal necessity – in this way both chance and the author will be excluded... one symmetry, which will arise from the relation of lines within the poem and poems within the volume, will reach out beyond the volume to other poets who will themselves inscribe on spiritual space the expanding paraph of genius anonymous and perfect like a work of art (qtd. in *The Death and Return of the Author* 8-9).

In this sense, Burke asserts that “the disappearance of the writer, the autonomy of writing, the beginning of écriture in an act of textual

dispossession, the power of language to organize and orchestrate itself without subjective intervention ... are laid out in the sparest form by this passage” (9). Derrida, Foucault and Barthes as poststructuralists follow the ideas of Mallarmé, and they also influence each other about the anti-authorial discourse.

Derrida is a critic of poststructuralism who mentions the influence of Beckett on his writings:

[Beckett] This is an author to whom I feel very close, or to whom I would like to feel myself very close; but also too close. Precisely because of this proximity, it is too hard for me, too easy and too hard. I have perhaps avoided him a bit because of this identification. Too hard also because he writes – in my language, in a language which is his up to a point, mine up to a point (for both of us it is a ‘differently’ foreign language) – texts which are both too close to me and too distant for me to be able to ‘respond’ to them (1992: 60).

Derrida, in his book called *Of Grammatology*, mentions the end of the book when the beginning of writing (or *écriture*) emerges.

It merges with the history that has associated techniques and logocentric metaphysics for nearly three millennia. And it now seems to be approaching what is really its own *exhaustion*; under the circumstances – and this no more than one example among others – of this death of the civilisation of the book, of which so much is said and which manifests itself particularly through a convulsive proliferation of libraries. All appearances to the contrary, this death of the book undoubtedly announces (and in a certain sense always has announced) nothing but a death of speech (of a so-called full speech) and a new mutation in the history of writing, in history as writing (8).

Derrida, in this chapter, re-evaluates the long-privileged status of speech over writing. In other words, in phonocentrism, writing has always been viewed as “a secondary and instrumental function: translator of a full speech that was fully *present*” (8). When the idea of the metaphysics of presence is abandoned, it can be easily understood that language has always been a conventional creation invented or structured by human beings. In other words, language is a concept which is both history-oriented and discourse-oriented.

The idea of the book, for Derrida also,

is the idea of a totality, finite or infinite, of the signifier; this totality of the signifier cannot be a totality, unless a totality constituted by the signified preexists it, supervises its inscriptions and its signs, and is

independent of it in its ideality. The idea of the book, which always refers to a natural totality, is profoundly alien to the sense of writing” (1974:18).

Moreover, Richard Begam also states his ideas on Derrida’s claims about the opposition between the ‘book’ and the ‘text’:

The book is unified and linear, moving from a clearly defined beginning to a clearly defined end, fully contained within its own textual boundaries and referring to a reality that stands beyond itself. The text, in contrast, is multiple and nonlinear, without beginning or end, constantly crossing textual boundaries and incessantly preoccupied with its own generation. Whereas the book represents the “encyclopaedic protection of theology and of logocentrism,” the text represents, in all its “aphoristic energy,” the “disruption of writing.” [Derrida 18] (123).

Derrida’s formula concerning the end of the book does not only result in the beginning of writing, but it also makes the idea of the death of the author emerge. As Begam puts,

If what we once called the “book” has ceased to function as a “natural totality,” that is because it is no longer grounded either in the presence of nature – what Derrida refers to as the “totality of the signified” – or in the self-presence of the cogito, in this case the controlling consciousness of the author (123).

As the centre is lost, in the text the interplay of signifiers begins without any subjective intervention. Moreover, Derrida also states in *Of Grammatology*,

The secondarity that it seemed possible to ascribe to writing alone affects all signifieds in general, affects them always already, the moment they *enter the game*. There is not a single signified that escapes, even if recaptured, the play of signifying references that constitutes language. The advent of writing is the advent of this play (7).

The very similar principle is also at work in deconstructive reading as both the addressee and the addressor (or author) in writing are absent. Thus, due to this absence, a multi-reading of a text is attained, and no text can be read in its entirety as the concept ‘what the author wanted to say’ is always dubious. “Linguistic meaning is generated not through reference to the world but by the ‘play’ or movement of signifiers within a given system” (Begam 124).

Another poststructuralist mainly influenced by Beckett is Michel Foucault:

I belong to that generation who as students had before their eyes, and were limited by, a horizon consisting of Marxism, phenomenology, and existentialism. Interesting and stimulating as these might be, naturally they produced in the students completely immersed in them a feeling of being stifled, and the urge to look elsewhere. I was like all other students of philosophy at that time, and for me the break was first Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. (1987: 174).

Michel Foucault's essay "What is an Author" in *Language, Counter-Memory Practice* also deals with the matter of author. Foucault states his objective of writing as follows:

For the purpose of this paper, I will set aside a sociohistorical analysis of the author as an individual and the numerous questions that deserve attention in this context. How the author was individualised in a culture such as ours... for the time being I wish to restrict myself to the singular relationship that holds between an author and a text, the manner in which a text apparently points to this figure who is outside and precedes it (115).

Foucault takes the author as a Derridean 'centre' of the text, the thing that originates the text yet remains outside it. "Then, of course, he will deconstruct that centre/author" (Klages 58). He also mentions the important viewpoint of Beckett in *Texts for Nothing*: "What matter who's speaking, someone said, what matter who's speaking?" (16). As a feature of postmodern writing or *écriture*, none of the texts function as "meaningful" writing:

The writing of our day has freed itself from the necessity of 'expression'; it only refers to itself, yet it is not restricted to the confines of interiority. On the contrary, we recognise it in its exterior deployment². This reversal transforms writing into an interplay of signs, regulated less by the content it signifies than by the very nature of the signifier. Moreover, it implies an action that is always testing the limits of its regularity, transgressing and reversing an order that it accepts and manipulates. Writing unfolds like a game [*jeu*] that inevitably moves beyond its own rules and finally leaves them behind. Thus the essential basis of this writing is not the exalted emotions related to the act of composition or the insertion of a subject into

² As the following sentence implies, the "exterior deployment" of writing relates to Ferdinand Saussure's emphasis of the acoustic quality of the signifier, an external phenomenon of speech which, nevertheless, responds to its own internal and differential articulation.

language. Rather, it is primarily concerned with creating *an opening where the writing subject endlessly disappears* (Foucault 116, my emphasis).

As Foucault indicates, when writing is the subject matter, no boundaries or authorities can resist its word-games, and in the end, the creator of that writing vanishes. In other words, writing is not a vehicle through which the writer's or the reader's emotions or thoughts can be expressed or manifested.

Foucault is also concerned with the relationship between writing and death. Writing, for Foucault, also requires the disappearance of its author. A work of art can only be produced as long as its author is out of this game:

Writing is now linked to sacrifice and to the sacrifice of life itself; it is a voluntary obliteration of the self that does not require representation in books because it takes place in the everyday existence of the writer. Where a work had the duty of creating immortality³, it now attains the right to kill, to become the murderer of its author (117).

As mentioned before, Foucault deconstructs or decentres the authorial centre by requiring the death of the author. The author is dead because in poststructuralism, it is only a subject position, not a centre. Moreover, the author is just a product of a work. According to Foucault, the concept of the work also needs to be elaborated:

We lack a theory to encompass the questions generated by a work and the empirical activity of those who naively undertake the publication of this framework. [Can anonymous texts constitute works, such as *The Arabian Nights* and the *Lives of Diogenes Laertes*?] Such questions only begin to suggest the range of our difficulties, and, if some have found it convenient to bypass the individuality of the writer or his status as an author to concentrate on a work, they failed to appreciate the equally problematic nature of the word 'work' and the unity it designates (119).

Eventually, Foucault's contribution to the concept of the author in poststructuralism goes parallel with that of Barthes: "As a result, the mark of the writer is reduced to nothing more than the singularity of his absence; he

³ Foucault, in this part, mentions the Greek epic, where the hero can die young because his epic guarantees his immortality.

must assume the role of the dead man [*du mort*] in the game [*le jeu*] of writing” (qtd. in *Samuel Beckett and The End of Modernity* 125)

Like Derrida and Foucault, Roland Barthes believes that the thing which makes a literary work is not the author but its own language. If the author was deciphered, the text would not be “a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash” (Barthes 146). Barthes’ essay, in *Image Music Text*, “The Death of the Author” starts with a quotation from Balzac’s novel *Sarrasine*:

This was woman herself, with her sudden fears, her irrational whims, her instinctive worries, her impetuous boldness, her fussings, and her delicious sensibility (qtd. in “The Death of the Author”). Who is speaking thus? Is it the hero of the story bent on remaining ignorant of the castrato hidden beneath the woman? Is it Balzac the author professing ‘literary’ ideas on femininity, is it universal wisdom? Romantic psychology? We shall never know, for the good reason that writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin. Writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away; the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing [...] As soon as a fact is *narrated* no longer with a view to acting directly on reality but intransitively, that is to say, finally outside of any function other than that of the very practice of the symbol itself, this disconnection occurs, the voice loses its origin, the author enters into his own death, writing begins(142).

As mentioned before, Barthes is influenced by Mallarmé, and he asserts his statements about the idea of anti-authorialism as follows:

In France, Mallarmé was doubtless the first to see and to foresee in its full extent the necessity to substitute language itself for the person who until then had been supposed to be its owner. For him, for us too, it is language which speaks, not the author; to write is, through a prerequisite impersonality (not at all to be confused with the castrating objectivity of the realist novelist), to reach that point where only language acts, ‘performs,’ not ‘me.’ Mallarmé’s entire poetics consists in suppressing the author in the interests of writing (which is, as will be seen, to restore the place of the reader) (143).

For Barthes, after the death of the author the modern scriptor’s responsibility is much more different from that of his/her predecessors:

...[for the scriptor] the hand, cut off from any voice, borne by a pure gesture of inscription (and not of expression), traces a field without origin – or which, at least, has no other origin than language itself, language which ceaselessly calls into question all origins [...]

Succeeding the Author, the scriptor no longer bears within passions, humours, feelings, impressions, but rather this immense dictionary from which he draws a writing that can know no halt: life never does more than imitate the book, and the book itself is only a tissue of signs, an imitation that is lost, infinitely deferred (146-7).

As a poststructuralist linguist, Barthes opposes the idea of closing the text. “To give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing” (147). In addition, Derrida also, in an interview with Henri Ronse, elaborates the opposition between the book and the text, which resembles the ideas of Barthes:

In what you call my books, what is first of all put in question is the unity of the book and the unity “book” considered as a perfect totality, with all the implications of such a concept... Under these titles [Derrida’s “books”] it is solely a question of a unique and differentiated textual “operation,” if you will, whose unfinished movement assigns itself no absolute beginning, and which, although it is entirely consumed by the reading of other texts, in a certain fashion refers only to its own writing... Therefore it would be impossible to provide a linear, deductive representation of these works that would correspond to some “logical order” (Derrida: 1972 3-4) (qtd. in *Samuel Beckett and The End of Modernity* 123)

Unlike Foucault and Derrida, Barthes gives a great deal of importance to the reader factor. In the text the reader is the one that must be cared about most:

...there is ... someone who understands each word in its duplicity and who, in addition, hears the very deafness of the characters speaking in front of him – this someone being precisely the reader [...] there is one place where the multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text’s unity lies not in its origin but in its destination (148).

Barthes, in other words, follows the traces of Derrida regarding the operations of the sign as the sign is neither referential nor expressional. Thus, literary text, according to Barthes, does not express the ideas of the author. Moreover, the origin of the text is not the author or his/her life, on the contrary, the number of origins depends on the number of its readers. That is to say, the factor that determines meaning in the text is not the author, but the reader who is able to

question the intentions of the author and see the play of signifiers, and so produce innumerable meanings.

Both Foucault and Barthes accept the removal of the author from the text, but there are some slight differences between their ideas. Foucault accepts the existence of “the author function” (Foucault 125) in the text, but he also claims that it is just a name, not an authority. For Foucault, the idea of the author is a historical institution that cannot be denied without a careful explanation. On the other hand, Barthes tries to reach a universal conclusion by bringing forward the idea of the non-existence of the author. They both agree on the fact that authorship deforms and limits a text. All in all, the ideas of Derrida, Foucault and Barthes shape the contours of the deconstructive reading which is quite related to poststructuralism.

2.3. Deconstruction: A New Reading Strategy

In the mid-1960s the structuralist approach that meaning can be discovered through an examination of its structural codes was challenged by the maxim of undecidability or free play; a text has many meanings, and therefore no definitive interpretation is possible. In this respect, a new approach to reading, deconstruction, asks a different set of questions, endeavouring to show that what a text claims it says and what it actually says are discernibly different. In his writings, Derrida never states the encompassing tenets of his critical approach. He claims that his approach to reading and literary analysis is more a ‘strategic device’ than a methodology, more a strategy or approach to literature than a school or theory of criticism (Bressler 118).

Derrida begins formulating his strategy of reading by criticizing Ferdinand de Saussure’s *Course in General Linguistics*. Derrida accepts Saussure’s assumption that the linguistic sign is both arbitrary and conventional. Moreover, the linguistic sign is composed of two parts: the ‘signifier’, which is the spoken or written constituent, and the ‘signified’, which is the concept signalled by the signifier. Ultimately, meaning in

language for Saussure resides in a systemized combination of sounds that rely chiefly on the differences between these signs, not on any innate properties within the signs themselves. It is this concept that meaning in language is determined by the differences among the language signs that Derrida borrows from Saussure as a key building block in the formulation of deconstruction. In this sense, Derrida's interpretation of Saussure's sign begins with his affirmation that language is a system based on differences. For Derrida, the signified can also be known only through its relationships with and its differences from other signifieds. Accordingly, signifieds often function as signifiers.

Derrida boldly asserts that the entire history of Western metaphysics from Plato to the present is founded on a classical and fundamental error. The great error is in searching for what he calls a transcendental signified, an external point of reference upon which one may build a concept or philosophy. For this reason, a transcendental signified functions as or provides the centre of meaning, allowing those who believe in one or more of them to structure their ideas of reality around such centres of truth. However, a centre of meaning, by definition, could not subject itself to structural analysis because by doing so, it would lose its place as a transcendental signified to another centre. This is the 'decentring' of a transcendental signified. Aleid Fokkema also states that the absence of origins in postmodern texts is quite prominent: "Texts belonging to the postmodern canon display a firm distrust of origins, of the single, unique text, or of the strictly referential functions of language. They may also foreground the plurality of worlds" (15).

According to Derrida, Western metaphysics has invented a variety of terms that function as centres: "God, reason, origin, being, essence, truth, humanity, beginning, end, self, etc" (249). In his *Structure, Sign, Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences*, Derrida claims that "it would be possible to show that all the names related to fundamentals, to principles, or to the centre have always designated the constant of a presence-eidos, arche, telos, energeia,

ousia (essence, existence, substance, subject) aletheia [truth], transcendentalism, consciousness, or conscience, God, man, and so forth” (1970: 249). Each can be regarded as self-sufficient and self-originating. Bressler asserts that each of these is created by the tendency of logocentrism: the belief that an ultimate reality or centre of truth exists and can serve as the basis for all our thoughts and actions (120). The logocentric habit of thinking operates in accordance with ‘binary oppositions’. This is the either/or mentality that inevitably leads to dualistic thinking and to the centring and decentering of the transcendental signified.

Derrida asserts that Western metaphysics is based on a system of binary oppositions or conceptual oppositions. For each centre, an opposing centre exists (e.g. God/humankind). Moreover, in each of these binary oppositions or opposing centres, one concept is superior to the other and defines itself by its opposite or inferior centre. That is what Derrida objects to in his *Of Grammatology*, asserting that writing is neither inferior nor superior to speech or vice versa.

Binary oppositions are conceptually established and become the basis of one’s world view. Therefore, Derrida wishes to dismantle or deconstruct the structure of such binary oppositions. In a pair of oppositions one is always privileged, and the other is unprivileged. As mentioned before, Western thought has long privileged speech over writing, which Derrida calls phonocentrism. Phonocentrism treats writing as inferior and speech as superior since a speaker’s words imply presence. However, her/his writing becomes a mere copy of speech, an attempt to capture the idea that was once spoken. Whereas speech implies presence, writing signifies absence, thereby setting into action another binary opposition: presence/absence.

As phonocentrism is based on the assumption that speech conveys the meaning or direct ideas of a speaker better than writing, it assumes a logocentric way of thinking, in which the self is the centre of meaning and can best ascertain ideas directly from other selves through spoken words. In

logocentric thinking, the self, through speaking, declares its presence, its significance, and its being or existence.

Metaphysics of presence encompasses those ideas such as logocentrism, phonocentrism, the operation of binary oppositions, and other notions that Western thought posits in its conceptions of language and metaphysics. According to Derrida, all these beliefs are based on shaky foundations, and he endeavours to deconstruct the basic premises of metaphysics of presence.

2.4. Methodology of Deconstruction:

2.4.1. Acknowledging Binary Oppositions in Western Thought

The first stage in a deconstructive reading is to recognise the existence and the operation of binary oppositions in our thinking. Once any of these hierarchies (e.g. speech/writing, human/animal) is recognised and acknowledged, Derrida proposes that we can readily reverse its elements. Such a reversal is possible because truth is ever elusive; we can always decentre the centre if any is found. By reversing the hierarchy one does not wish to merely substitute one hierarchy for another and involve her/himself in a negative mode. When the hierarchy is reversed, says Derrida, we will be able to examine the values and beliefs that give rise to both the original hierarchy and the newly created one. Moreover, Derrida makes a contribution to "the understanding of certain deeply hidden philosophical presuppositions and prejudices in Western Culture" (Lamont 590), arguing that the whole philosophical tradition rests on arbitrary dichotomous categories (such as mind/body and signifier/signified), and that any text contains implicit hierarchies, "by which an order is imposed on reality and by which a subtle repression is exercised, as these hierarchies exclude, subordinate, and hide the various potential meanings" (Borody 3). Derrida refers to his procedure for uncovering and unsettling these dichotomies as deconstruction. This examining of the hierarchies is what Derrida calls "erasure".

2.4.2. Supplementation

The relationship between any binary hierarchies is always unstable and problematic. Therefore, Derrida wants to show the fragile basis for the establishment of such hierarchies and the possibility of inverting these hierarchies to gain new insights into language and life. Derrida uses the term ‘supplement’ to refer to the lower elements of the hierarchy in a binary operation. In the truth/deception hierarchy, for example, Western thought would assert the supremacy of truth over deception, attributing to deception a mere supplementary role. For Derrida, one cannot determine the centre, the sign which *supplements* it, which takes its place in its absence because this sign adds itself, occurs in addition, over and above, comes as a *supplement*. The movement of signification adds something, which means that there is always more, but this addition is a floating one because it comes to perform a vicarious function of supplementing a lack on the part of the signified (Derrida 289).

2.4.3. Différance

The word *différance*, which was coined by Jacques Derrida, is derived from the French word *différer*, meaning “to defer, postpone, or delay,” and “to differ, to be different from” (Bressler 125). Basically, *différance* is Derrida’s “What if?” question. What if no transcendental signified exists? What if there is no presence in which we can find ultimate truth? What if all our knowledge does not arise from self-identity? What if there is no essence, being, or an inherently unifying element in the universe? What then?

No longer is there an absolute standard or coherent unity from which knowledge proceeds and develops. Therefore, Bressler asserts that all human knowledge and all self-identity must now spring from difference, not sameness; from absence, not presence (126). When a reversal of this pivotal binary operation occurs, two dramatic results come out: First, human knowledge becomes referential—as there is no transcendental signified. Second, one must forgo closure – because no transcendental signified exists, all

interpretations concerning life, self-identity, and knowledge are possible, probable and legitimate. The importance of différance, when reading texts, is that texts can no longer have presence. Because all meaning and knowledge are now based on differences, no text can simply mean one thing; texts become intertextual. A text's meaning evolves from that derived from the interrelatedness of one text to the interrelatedness of many texts. Like language itself, texts are caught in a dynamic, context-related interchange. No longer can one declare one interpretation to be right and another wrong, for meaning in a text is always elusive, dynamic and transitory. Therefore, "Literature for the deconstructionists testifies to the impossibility of language's ever doing more than talk about its own failure, like some barroom bore. Literature is the ruin of all reference, the cemetery of communication" (Eagleton 1989: 146).

2.5. Intertextuality and Metafiction

Intertextuality is a term which was coined by the poststructuralist critic Julia Kristeva, and it is generally associated with other poststructuralist theorists such as Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida. "In Kristeva's radical formulation any text may, as a matter of course, be regarded as an 'intertext,' constituted by the intersection of all other texts, past and future" (qtd. in *Palgrave Advances in Samuel Beckett Studies* 31). It posits the wider view of intertextuality which says that 'all texts are intertexts'. Like in the chain of signifiers a certain text also alludes to others. Texts are seen as 'mosaics of citations' or 'echo chambers', wherein the question of origin loses its importance. Textuality itself controls discourses more than subjects themselves. (Plett 1-4) In his book's introduction part, Graham Allen states on the term:

Intertextuality foregrounds notions of relationality, interconnectedness and interdependence in modern cultural life. In the Postmodern epoch, theorists often claim, it is not possible any longer to speak of originality or the uniqueness of the artistic object, be it a painting or a novel, since every artistic object is so clearly assembled from bits and pieces of already existent art. Intertextuality, as a term, stands at the centre of such contemporary conceptions of art and cultural production generally (5).

In other words, it is the idea that no text makes sense on its own, that every text is related to others of necessity, or more sweepingly, that every text is related to *all* others: “One text reads another... Each ‘text’ is a machine with multiple reading heads for other texts” (Derrida 1979: 107). Poststructuralism and postmodernism readily accept this idea because it justifies some revolutionary ideas of poststructuralism such as the death of the autonomous author, the end of the self-contained text and the stability of meaning.

The term metafiction as defined by Waugh “is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality” (1984: 2). As mentioned before, both Beckett and Atay are quite aware of the theoretical matters involved in constructing their narratives. Therefore, it would be no surprise for the reader to find that both writers employ metafiction in their fictions. Waugh elaborates on metafiction:

Metafictional novels tend to be constructed on the principle of a fundamental and sustained opposition: the construction of a fictional illusion (as in traditional realism) and the laying bare of that illusion. In other words, the lowest common denominator of metafiction is simultaneously to create a fiction and to make a statement about the creation of that fiction (1984: 6).

Metafiction or self-reflexivity is quite interrelated with wordplays and games in fiction. Detweiler argues, “Fiction is primarily an elaborate way of pretending, and pretending is a fundamental element of play and games” (51).

CHAPTER 3

BECKETT'S and ATAY'S VIEWS OF ART

3.1. Samuel Beckett's View of Art and the Artist

Samuel Beckett's early essays, which are written on Joyce and Proust, more or less offer a theory of art. The theory is about the relationship between artistic form and the restriction of human knowledge. "Each individual's view of world is to an extent subjective inasmuch as it is coloured by personal, will-motivated desires" (Acheson 9). Since man cannot have an infinite, extensive and objective perception of the world, it is, to such an extent, impossible for him to understand the world in its totality.

What differentiates Beckett's art from the realist tradition is the realist writers' "great" attempt to reflect the world as a unified one. For Beckett, reflecting the world in an ordered and meaningful style appears to be very deceptive or anti-realist. If man lacks the power to comprehend the complexities of the world, realist writers are then being naïve when they claim to reflect the world at large. Acheson, in this sense, asserts "[Beckett] believes that the world that the naturalists mirror in their works - the world we know through perception - is a simplification of what the world is really like" (14). Moreover, Beckett's works do not look for answers. On the contrary, his works question and reveal the impossibility of finding answers.

Beckett's view of art is also quite a different one from that of his contemporaries because unlike other twentieth century novelists, Beckett does not try to give a meaning to the world around him. Like other modernist writers, he is, of course, aware of the disunity of the world, but he is different from them as he is never after 'an order'. In his fiction, he represents the world in the way he sees it with its chaotic elements. He never tries to reconcile the outside world, which is chaotic, with the concept of order and meaning, which is impossible. Besides, he depicts chaos as it is sensed: "The notion of art seeking as its end not order or clarity but a depiction of the chaos is a theme that will ... be central to Beckett's works" (Ben-Zvi 29). He does not see the

chaos as something to be fixed or reordered through literature. As “both the world and the human mind are infinitely complex” (Acheson 14), the art produced by man about the world is always doomed to falling short of its aims.

For Beckett, art means failure. The ‘art of failure’ is an expression taken from Beckett’s comment in the *Duthuit Dialogues*. Richard Coe, for Beckett, argues;

[art] ... is the elucidation of the impossible. The human condition is that of an indefinable *Néant* within, conscious of a possible relationship with an equally indefinable *Néant* without, yet invalidating that relationship by the very fact of its consciousness. The artist is driven – by the very fact of being an artist – to realise, to create in art, that which is not, which cannot be, because, as soon as it is realised in concrete terms (paint or words) it ceases to be itself. Consequently, it *must* fail. Beckett’s own art likewise is an art of failure: it is by definition trying to do something that it cannot conceivably do – to create and define that which, created and defined, ceases to be what it must be if it is to reveal the truth of the human situation: Man as a Nothing in relation to all things which themselves are Nothing (4).

The artist, for Beckett, is limited on both sides. First, the artist as a human being is a limited creature by nature. Second, s/he is limited with her/his insufficient knowledge to express the world since the world is too complex to be explained. The artist lacks everything to do this challenging task. In other words, s/he is doomed to struggle just as her/his art is doomed to failure. Thus, as a necessity s/he has to portray the chaos, not to explain or express it in her/his fiction. Therefore, as Beckett asserts in *Disjecta*, the postmodern artist has “nothing to express, nothing with which to express, nothing from which to express, no power to express, no desire to express, together with the obligation to express” (139). The word ‘express’ is a term which must be abandoned when the art of failure is concerned. For Beckett, the artist is “limited in what he can hope to learn about the world around him” (Acheson 97).

This idea goes quite in parallel with the idea of deconstructive reading because no signifier in language can reach a signified. Therefore, meaning is never possible or attainable. If there is a ‘meaning’, it is just a socially or culturally constructed one. Thus, he is always sceptical about the possibility of

communication. The meaning-making procedure, for Beckett's philosophy, does never occur in fiction. Like Derrida, Beckett is never deceived by the deceitful power of words. Words, as signifiers, never attain a 'fixed' signified. From this perspective, Beckett always struggles with language, but he is never satisfied as language does not enable him to express the meaning if there exists any. Therefore, Beckett deconstructs his own texts by abandoning old styles of language and by creating "a new language as a vehicle for his thought" (Calder 85). John Calder clearly deals with Beckett's ideas on language, which are close to the concepts of deconstructive reading:

But aside from [Beckett's] technical development of new language as a vehicle for his thought, breaking up the structure of sentences to impart new patterns of imagery and speech into bumpy jumps of consciousness that superposed surprising associations and his personal codification into the stream of narrative, there is also, buried in the text, a system of undermeanings that only close reading can bring out (85).

Beckett's new language is in fact the result of his deconstructing his own texts. To illustrate, he uses Latin, a dead language, or unfamiliar words, often making "neologisms out of the logic of words themselves... to create new language" (Calder 86).

The art of failure in a sense can be seen as the precondition to experience the expression of interface. In the art of failure, although a person is aware of his limited perceptions to succeed, he tries to express his external and internal world and fails in the end. At that point, he can be ready to succeed in creating a new art that is stripped of any unifying order or meanings. When the artist becomes aware of his deprivation to express the world, he begins to experience failure in the expression of interface where the artist can present his attempts and failures. Ironically enough, the art of failure makes the artist successful at not reaching an ordered world in fiction since it is not possible in reality either.

3.2. Oğuz Atay's View of Art and the Artist

Like Beckett, Oğuz Atay also started his writing career by studying such modern writers as James Joyce and Marcel Proust. Yıldız Ecevit notes

that “[Atay] abandons the approaches of the 1950s and 1960s that look for meanings and answers to problems, but he embraces a subjective perception of life” (1989: 9).

The artist, for Atay, must always be productive and innovative. He should be in a struggle with life in order not to express it, but to express the failure of expressing it. Moreover, the artist is doomed to this failure like the artist of Beckett. Furthermore, Atay does not only reflect on the postmodernist artist, but he also portrays such people as his characters in his fiction. His characters are always artists or intellectuals. These intellectual characters portray Atay’s view of art as they are interested in the confusing systems of the cosmos. They are always in conflict with their own inner world and the world around them. However, they always fail to figure out these worlds due to their limited natures and weak perceptions. Thus, art, for Atay, is something destined to failure. Thus, Atay resembles Beckett concerning their approaches to art.

According to Atay, the world is a concept which is controlled by artificial systems constructed by man himself as man tends to ‘fix’ the problematic or chaotic world. However, art is not a concept through which one can compensate for the disunity of the world. Moreover, art is not a notion which can be depicted according to the widely accepted norms of society. “Atay’s intellectuals do not want to perceive the environment in which they live according to the accepted rules of society” (Ecevit 1989: 10). For Atay, the artist should see the problematic sides of society and reflect them as they are. The main problem is trying to express the inexpressible. The artist of Atay, like Beckett’s artist, must struggle to show the indescribable although that is not possible. One of the characters of Atay states “one must die, commit suicide for the ontological issues” (*Tutunamayanlar* 324).

Oğuz Atay’s view of art and the artist is similar to Beckett’s because both use art to show the impossibility of expression. Therefore, for both, art is failure, and their fictions can be considered to be the expression of interface where their characters do everything to show the failure of expression

CHAPTER 4

APPLICATIONS OF THEORIES TO THE NOVELS

4.1. Characterisation of Molloy-Moran and Hikmet

In the realist texts the stable ego is subordinate to a moral problem in the text; the modernist text concentrates on the ego to reveal the complexities and difficulties of attaining a unified self without focusing on the difficulties of representing such a self. However, postmodernist texts deal with “the disintegration and loss of the self, and the conventions of traditional character as subverted” (Fokkema 58). In the postmodern novel poststructuralist elements are used, and as a result of this, the idea of ‘character’ is considered to be the product or subject of discourse. The discourse is, in other words, a context in which certain signifiers are used to refer to other certain signifiers to reach a ‘meaning’. What Eagleton thinks of the game of ‘meaning making’ is stated as follows:

If meaning, the signified, was a passing product of words or signifiers, always shifting and unstable, part-present and part-absent, how could there be any determinate truth or meaning at all? If reality was constructed by our discourse rather than reflected by it, how could we ever know reality itself, rather than merely knowing our own discourse? (1989: 143-4).

Therefore, the concept of character is a problematic one. Furthermore, since postmodern fiction tries to subvert some of the commonly accepted elements of character, and since it takes character as a construct or a subject in discourse, it would be irrelevant to expect a ‘postmodern character’ to preserve any of the qualities which have been traditionally attributed to character.

As a postmodern writer, Samuel Beckett’s two subjects in his first book in *The Trilogy* are Molloy and Moran. These are the author-narrators and protagonists of their own narratives. As a first point, it can be undoubtedly said that Beckett’s handling of characterization quite differs from that of realist fiction. His characterizations apparently prove how little can be known about human beings and the world they live in. Ian Watt clearly states that the realist novel attempts to portray the individual experience:

Modern realism, of course, begins from the position that truth can be discovered by the individual through his senses: it has its origins in Descartes and Locke, and received its first full formulation by Thomas Reid in the middle of the eighteenth century...The view that the external world is real, and that our senses give us a true report of it... (12).

As Watt states, the realist novel's primary criterion has been the truth to individual experience which is said to be always unique and new. However, Beckett, who creates subjects like Molloy and Moran, deliberately portrays them to show a reaction to the traditional realist 'characterization'. In other words, he wants to subvert the realistic modes of characterization by refusing such critical terms as 'character', 'protagonist' and 'hero', and by merely creating subjects. Obviously, neither Molloy nor Moran is a heroic character. On the contrary, as the narrators of their own stories, they parody traditional heroic aspirations.

In this sense, if one wants to deal with the characterization in *The Trilogy* s/he should have a look at Beckett's narrative technique as his subjects are also the narrators of their own stories. Furthermore, the differences between the narrative techniques of Beckett and of the traditional narration modes should be reconsidered. Rimmon-Kenan argues that various features which had been considered the hallmarks of character, modelled on a traditional view of man, were denied by (post)modern novelists alike (28). Accordingly, in realist fiction, the great role of Descartes cannot be denied as his *Discourse on Methods* (1637) and his *Meditations* did much to bring about the modern assumption whereby the pursuit of truth is conceived of as a wholly individual matter (Watt 13). Therefore, according to this view, the realist novel is the most "life-like" kind of fiction.

This afore mentioned idea is one of the main features of the realist fiction, and this is what Beckett parodies in his fiction. As Pultar asserts, the allusion to the "mythological present" is the most explicit statement so far [in *Molloy*] in the volume that suggests that it is in no way a realistic novel (6). "I speak in the present tense, it is so easy to speak in the present tense, when

speaking of the past. It is the mythological presence, don't mind it" (*Molloy* 26). *Molloy* demonstrates, in Pultar's words, "the predicament of the artist or the writer in society" (26).

Beckett's story claims to display 'the condition of man', not a specific individual's past or present experiences. On this, Weinsheimer states "As segments of a closed text, characters at most are patterns of recurrence, motifs which are continually recontextualized in other motifs. In semiotic criticism, characters dissolve" (qtd. in *Narrative Fiction* 31-2). Also, about this, Watt indicates,

[The realist novel is] distinguished from other genres and previous forms of fiction by the amount of attention it habitually accords both to the individualization of its characters and to the detailed presentation of their environment (219).

In contrast to actual people, "illustrative" characters, a term borrowed from Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg (84), "are merely concepts in anthropoid shape or fragments of the human psyche masquerading as whole human beings" (Scholes and Kellogg 88). To Beckett, the artist or the writer is a modern Everyman who is alienated and isolated, and the isolated protagonists of *The Trilogy* are good examples to demonstrate the human condition. To illustrate, Molloy the narrator is located in a room, which once belonged to his mother, and he is all alone and isolated. This situation of him proves the notion of "the predicament of the artist or the writer in society" (Pultar 26). Besides, at the beginning of the second part of *Molloy*, in Moran's part, he acknowledges his alienation and loneliness as in the following:

... all is sleeping. Nevertheless I get up and go to my desk. I can't sleep... I hear the eagle-owl. What a terrible battlecry! Once I listened to it unmoved. My son is sleeping. Let him sleep. The night will come when he too, unable to sleep, will get up and go to his desk. I shall be forgotten (92).

Rimmon-Kenan argues that various features which had been considered the hallmarks of character, modelled on a traditional view of man, were denied by (post)modern novelists (28). Both *Molloy* and *Moran* are "degraded and

mutated into a consciousness representing the human condition” (Pultar 129). The notion of a stabilised character or the traditional view of man is replaced by the conceptions of changeable and diverse characters. As Huxley puts it,

Critics seem to agree that ‘character’ is outdated, that the postmodern novel demonstrates that there are only fragile subject positions, that language is the only constituent of ‘self’, and that multiplicity (of identity, of selves, of subjectivities) has superseded the unified, coherent, ‘old stable ego’ that was already denounced by D.H. Lawrence (qtd. in *Postmodern Characters*, Aleid Fokkema 13).

Upon the conception of character, says Barthes, “What’s obsolescent in today’s novel is not the novelistic, it is the character; what can no longer be written is the Proper Name” (qtd. in Rimmon-Kenan 29).

The story narrated by Molloy in his fiction is one that can be called retrospection. “The narrator’s remarks concerning his writing of the tale ... [and] their nature evolve in such a way as to include questions and assertions concerning the craft of writing itself. It becomes evident that the subject of the novel - as distinct from the subject of the retrospective tale – is the process of writing” (Pultar 6). In this retrospective tale there is one narrator/author Molloy, who records his past events in his mother’s room, and the protagonist Molloy who is a “quester” (8).

Molloy seems to be a retrospective story, but unlike a traditional retrospective tale, it tells *how* Molloy the quester turns into Molloy the narrator, just as Moran the quester turns into Moran the narrator. Contrarily, the retrospective tales of Molloy often reflect on what they mean to describe and narrate. As McDonald states, “Beckett considers how voluntary memory distorts the recollected object because of the accretions of hindsight – things become different through retrospect so that choosing to remember is always misremembering” (95-6). In his retrospective and quest tales, Beckett puts forward his own opinions about humanity by parodying traditional retrospective tales.

The model of a quest, which has been one of the oldest plot structures in literature, has been employed by Beckett in *The Trilogy*. Since both Molloy

and Moran have a quest to accomplish, they start their narratives by searching for someone else but end up as a huge ‘failure’. Molloy looks for his mother, and Moran looks for Molloy. In *The Trilogy* this idea of a quest, which seems to be ‘the idea of origin’, is not employed in the conventional way it has been used because Beckett utilizes this mode of a quest in order to dismantle the notion of origin. As a postmodernist novelist, Beckett not only parodies the idea of a quest, but he also clearly annihilates the idea of origin by using a superficial narrative technique that is the quest model. As mentioned before, the characters of the first book end these quests by giving up or by returning to themselves. In the course of the novel the quests are becoming less and less significant, and they appear to be failures to many readers. The so called ‘fruitless quests’ are deliberately used to empty the meaning of quests and to destroy the existence of the origin. In this sense, their failures lead characters to refuse or subvert the origins and principles. On this issue McDonald argues:

The start of the novel, when Molloy indicates that he is writing his story from his mother’s room, indicates that he may have succeeded in the quest, though that he is on his own, that he has ‘taken her place,’ suggests a refusal of external authority, of inherited notions of identity. This is only one of the many respects in which the quest model is deployed and subsequently subverted and dismantled (91-2).

In other words, the result of the quest motive in non-conventional novels is generally disappointing, unsuccessful, “disconcerting, even staggering” in Wayne Booth’s words (287). In other words, in postmodernist novels quests and their results are always failures, or they are undermined in order to emphasize the non-existence of unifying elements.

Oğuz Atay’s protagonist, Hikmet, expresses Atay’s ideas about man’s desperate situation in such a chaotic and confusing world. His protagonist is an intellectual who feels trapped and alienated in his own body and community.

In many aspects, Hikmet differs from the concept of character in realist fiction. *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* is an example of a postmodern novel because not only many features of postmodernism such as metafiction, intertextuality and pluralism but also many traits of a postmodern character portrayal can be

traced in this text. In Turkish literature until the 1960s the tendency was writing novels which had traits of several meta/grand narratives such as rationalism, positivism, liberalism, Marxism etc. The prefix 'meta' is here used to mean 'about', and a narrative is a story. Therefore, a metanarrative is a story *about* a story. In postmodern fiction grand narratives are absolutely denied because grand narratives or metanarratives are stories about stories, encompassing and explaining other 'little stories' within totalizing schemas. Lyotard's analysis of the postmodern condition goes parallel with poststructuralism's understanding of the novel.

Attempts to construct grand theories tend to dismiss the naturally existing chaos and disorder of the universe. Second, metanarratives are created and reinforced by power structures and are therefore not to be trusted. 'Metanarratives' ignore the heterogeneity or variety of human existence. They are also seen to embody unacceptable views of historical development, in terms of progress towards a specific goal. The latent diverse passions of human beings will always make it impossible for them to be marshalled under some theoretical doctrine (xxiv-xxv).

When the individual's place in postmodernism is considered, unlike the melancholic and introvert characters of modernist fiction, postmodernist fiction tries to reveal the changeable temperament of man's nature and gives him/her more free-will in every sphere. Postmodernism views art as a fiction or a game, and it considers the artist as a wo/man who can fictionalize this artificial world in any way s/he wants. Moreover, the artist can interfere in or participate in the game whenever s/he wants as a 'pivot'. In Yıldız Ecevit's words, "everything is a game played in the artistic plane, and the postmodern writer tends to fictionalize ethical/political or historical materials" (1989: 72) in his texts.

Before the 20th century, "Turkish writers did not pay enough attention to man's inner world, inconsistencies, desires and aspirations" (Ecevit 83). In realist tradition, characters are taken as real people who come from real life with "realistic" experiences. In other words, literature is referential. Therefore, characters were analysed according to their social or political beliefs. Besides, a work of art used to be praised according to its power of reflecting reality. In

Turkish literature many works of art have been expected to be written for the community by delivering a message or by serving for a specific objective or ideology. In other words, art is forced to be realistic, and many realistic novels have been produced. However, “the only indication of the artistic power of art arises from its fiction, construction or form. The subject matter is not what is narrated but how it is narrated” (Ecevit 12-3). Atay’s protagonist Hikmet also speculates on reality: “Reality is an unpleasant measurement that others try to apply to us...Its denomination is man⁴” (109). In realist fiction, both its characters and readers deal with ‘space’, which traditionally has three dimensions, namely width-height-depth, and a ‘linear time’ concept. However, in postmodernism, both time and space are metamorphosed in the dark depths of subconsciousness.

Hikmet is the protagonist of *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, but he is not a hero who exaggerates his successes and failures. Moreover, Hikmet is a character who represents everyman like Molloy and Moran. Hikmet’s world consists of realistic people and materials, but they are brought together in such an original way that no known rules of physics can govern this new world. “His world is an unnamable one, and it does not surround a concrete reality with which we are familiar” (Ecevit 53). Therefore, Hikmet resembles Molloy and Moran-the-narrator as he narrates a blurred version of reality and imagination. Regarding their similarities, each character, Molloy, Moran and Hikmet, can be analysed according to their postmodern representations in the novels.

4.1.1 Molloy

One can investigate the different elements of characterization concerning Molloy. As Rimmon-Kenan successfully puts forward on the issue of characterization:

It may be instructive...to establish which type of characterization predominates in a given text or for a given character. This can then be related, according to the interests of the critic, to the kind of character in question, the thematic concerns of the work, and the genre to which

⁴ Gerçek, başkalarının bize uygulamaya çalıştığı tatsız bir ölçüdür... Birimi insandır.

it belongs, the preference of the author, the norms of the period, and the like” (70).

Beckett’s art is reflected in his way of constructing his characters, and he does not present them as particular individuals. Therefore, he does not provide them with specific names and surnames, and with families, friends, a profession, and an authentic social world that they interact with as a realist writer does it in the traditional way. Thus, he reflects his postmodern ideas by creating unusual and impressive characters. As Fokkema points out, “characters are discontinuous *voices* or *subjects*” (191) in postmodern texts. In this sense, Molloy, who resembles a postmodern character, can be studied according to his physical and psychological conditions. His actions and speeches also reveal his characteristics as a postmodern “subject” (Fokkema 191). Moreover, the characters’ pasts, their names and environment in the course of the novel are important issues to be dealt with respectively.

Firstly, the physical situation of the narrator is presented by himself. As Cohn states “initially anonymous, the protagonist-narrator opens *Molloy* in the 1st person and the present tense: I am in my mother’s room. . . There is this man who comes every week. . . Yes, I work now. . . What I’d like now is to speak of the things that are left, say my goodbyes, finish dying” (Cohn 2001: 162). He starts his account by informing his readers where he is at that moment. He is apparently a bedridden man because he says “I don’t know how I got there. Perhaps in an ambulance, certainly a vehicle of some kind. I was helped. I’d never have got there alone” (7). He must be paralyzed, and he will explain how he has become so in the following pages. As he has mentioned, he simply waits for his death in a bed by speaking, so one can understand that he is quite desperate and has no hopes for the future. His condition is a pathetic one because he is not only a disabled man, but he is also abandoned probably in a hospital. This is the very first impression about Molloy concerning his physical and mental conditions. After introducing himself, but ironically not saying his name, he begins a story about two men, A and C, because there is a

man coming to see him once a week. This is obviously Molloy's editor, who pays him for the pages he writes. He is a writer by profession, "Yes, I work now, a little like I used to" (7).

The appearance of Molloy also helps the reader to understand how Beckett violates the traditional rules of realist fiction concerning the protagonist. Molloy in his bed, as an artist, tries to remember and write about his previous actions not to earn money, but he is still paid. He is not a usual hero of the realist tradition who can evolve or learn his lesson in the course of the narrative. Unlike a hero with personal features in a realist novel, Molloy has no individual traits; he is more or less generalised to represent everyman without place, time, name or personal characteristics. His inefficiencies and primitive sides make him an ordinary man. During his journey, he himself and his clothes physically deteriorate. When he starts narrating his past, he mentions having "a short stiff leg" (23). He also has got crutches. He calls himself "crippled" (16) just after he decides on his quest for his mother. In spite of his stiff leg and his crutches, he can ride a bicycle at first. He seems so dirty and repulsive that the policeman does not find him decent and arrests him as he may be a threat to others. Molloy also finds himself disgusting: "To apply the letter of the law to a creature like me is not an easy matter" (24). However, it is not only Molloy himself, who deserves to be pitied, but all human beings are also like him because he stands for mankind, who has a pathetic and futile existence in the world. His existence does not depend on earthly forms, that is, he does not want to limit the notion of man into the frames of body and blood because body is something which cannot defy time and space. Nonetheless, time and space are also two other things which restrict man.

But it is only since I have ceased to live that I think of these things and the other things. It is in the tranquillity of decomposition that I remember the long confused emotion which was my life, and that I judge it, as it is said that God will judge me, and with no less impertinence. To decompose is to live too, I know, I know, don't torment me, but one sometimes forgets. And of that life too I shall tell you perhaps one day; the day I know that when I thought I knew I was merely existing and that passion without form or stations will have

devoured me down to the rotting flesh itself and that when I know nothing, am only crying out as I have always cried out, more or less piercingly, more or less openly (*M* 25-26).

Molloy is portrayed in this situation: With his stiff legs and faulty memory. He is also retarded and impotent. He is a complete tramp, a vagabond. As Sheringham points out,

The tramp is inherently marginal, belonging neither to country nor town; provisional in his living arrangements, of no fixed abode or purpose, constantly forced to adjust to new circumstances but remaining within the bounds of a strictly limited range of possibilities, repeated in random order, he is constantly in transit.(28)

That Molloy is afflicted by bodily ailments shows man's mortality. "The tramp is the embodiment of Beckett's world," (Sheringham 29) which is chaotic and confusing. In this chaotic world Molloy begins to deteriorate as a result of stripping from his earthly protective layers. As McDonald puts forward, "so the loss of the body is a sort of collapse of battlements, a revelation of a vulnerable self underneath..." (92). His good leg starts to stiffen when he comes to the seashore:

The stiff leg hurt me, admittedly, I mean the old stiff leg, and it was the other which I normally used as a pivot, or prop. But now this latter, as a result of its stiffening I suppose, and the ensuing commotion among nerves and sinews, was beginning to hurt me even more than the other" (*M* 77).

His legs are worse now, and they are of different length. Moreover, he chokes of asthma. He has even lost his toes. In spite of his bodily deterioration, Molloy never loses his passion for life, and he becomes more eager to keep going.

Molloy's actions and speeches are worth talking about to show his questions about narration, remembering and the past. He, moreover, has several habitual actions, some of which are his unending talking, writing, even making up stories about the past. Rimmon-Kenan claims that habitual actions tend to reveal the character's unchanging or static aspect, often having a comic or

ironic effect (61). For the formation of the self, according to Connor, the repetitive actions play a very important part:

It will be the argument of this book that repetition is a central and necessary concept within all attempts to understand individual and social being and representation. While to a large extent repetition determines and fixes our sense of our experience and representations of that experience, it is also the place where certain radical instabilities in these operations can reveal themselves. It is therefore no accident that Samuel Beckett, the writer who in this century has most single-mindedly dedicated himself to the exploration of what is meant by such things as being, identity and representation, should have at centre of his work so strong and continuous a preoccupation with repetition... (1988: 1)

To illustrate, Molloy presents the introduction of his account, which is full of repetitions, and he also problematizes the nature of writing by stating

I began at the beginning, like an old ballocks, can you imagine that? Here is my beginning. Because they are keeping it apparently. I took a lot of trouble with it. Here it is. It gave me a lot of trouble. It was the beginning, do you understand? Whereas now it's nearly the end. Is what I do now any better? I don't know. That's beside the point. Here is my beginning. It must mean something, or they wouldn't keep it. Here it is (8).

The quotation above points out the repetitive speeches and thoughts of Molloy. It also looks like a sort of tongue twister. Molloy in the story of A and C pays attention to their problematic movements:

People pass too, hard to distinguish from yourself. That is discouraging. So I saw A and C going slowly against each other, unconscious of what they were doing. . . Each went on his way, A back towards the town, C on by ways he seemed hardly to know. . . I repeat I watched him recede, at grips (myself) with the temptation to get up and follow him, perhaps even to catch up with him one day, so as to know him better, be myself less lonely (11).

In this quotation, Molloy remembers two men, and he narrates how he hid himself behind a rock to spy upon them. His last words in the quotation, "be myself less lonely," (11) point out his present situation. Furthermore, Molloy the narrator, who is both unreliable and self-conscious, wants to place A and C in an environment, but he is so self-conscious about his setting that he cannot

count on his memory. His narrating some past events makes him ponder on his (dis)ability of remembering:

So I saw A and C going slowly against each other, unconscious of what they were doing. It was on a road remarkably bare, I mean without hedges or ditches or any kind of edge, in the country, for cows were chewing in enormous fields, lying and standing in the evening silence. Perhaps I'm inventing a little, perhaps embellishing, but on the whole that's the way it was (9).

Molloy and his memories about the past are always too uncertain to be believed. This reinforces the postmodern idea of the character in a narrative. As postmodernism emphasizes the constructed nature of a character, the uncertainty of Molloy concerning his memories reinforces this idea. Furthermore, as Ben-Zvi underlines, "any attempt to capture the past will become, of necessity a fiction" because of "the unverifiable nature of the past" (90-91). The unverifiable nature of the past makes it impossible for Molloy to recall and recount a truthful narration of the past. Moreover, Molloy's defective memory and the inability of capturing time also distort the past. Therefore, no matter how hard he tries to narrate what he experienced in the past, in the end it turns into a fictionalized version of the past.

In the *Molloy* part, there is always a consistent "uncertainty concerning time, place and identity" (Kennedy 123). As a self-conscious character, Molloy keeps confessing his perceptions of the past incidents:

And I am perhaps confusing several different occasions, and different times, deep down, and deep down is my dwelling, oh not deepest down, somewhere between the mud and the scum. And perhaps it was A one day at one place, then C another at another, then a third the rock and I, so on for the other components, the cows, the sky, the sea, the mountains. I can't believe it (14-15).

Molloy is not only uncertain about the past incidents, but also sceptical about what his memory will be like in the future. For instance, Molloy reflects on the notion of memory: "A and C I never saw them again. But perhaps I shall see them again. But shall I be able to recognise them? And am I sure I never saw them again? And what do I mean by seeing and seeing again?" (15). Molloy,

who is suddenly on crutches, quits pursuing A and C. Interestingly, he at this point of his narration mentions his having 'crutches'. One piece of memory drags Molloy to another. These are fragments that flash out of an imperfect memory. While he craves for a companion, he remembers having heard of the angelus. That is the first point at which Molloy announces his intention to narrate his quest for his mother in the text.

But talking of the craving for a fellow let me observe that having waked between eleven o'clock and midday (I heard the angelus, recalling the incarnation, shortly after) I resolved to go and see my mother (16).

It is not only the memory of Molloy which is defective, but his mother's memory is also as faulty as his. When he decides to tell about the story of trying to find his mother, he ironically remembers how he used to 'communicate' with her by knocking on her skull. Each knock meant something. "One knock meant yes, two no, three I don't know, four money, five goodbye" (18). This is what Molloy remembers in his present situation, but he also seems to understand his mother's imperfect memory better now:

It was too far for her, yes, the distance was too great, from one to four. By the time she came to the fourth knock she imagined she was only at the second, the first two having been erased from her memory as completely as if they had never been felt, though I don't quite see how something never felt can be erased from the memory, and yet it is a common occurrence. She must have thought I was saying no to her all the time, whereas nothing was further from my purpose (18)

Beckett's usage of the past and memory in relation to Molloy's character underlines his role on the issue of postmodern characters since postmodern characters are thoroughly rootless, without 'natural' parents, living obscurely in a dull society.

The matter of naming is also another important element which makes a character a postmodern one. At the beginning the narrator does not directly say his name. Not until page 23 does he remember his name is Molloy. In his retrospective story the narrator remembers the day he was arrested. As he had not got his papers with him and as he looked suspicious on the road, he was

arrested by the police officer and taken to the police station. During the interrogation he suddenly remembered his name, “Molloy. My name is Molloy, I cried, all of a sudden, now I remember. . . Is it your mother’s name? said the sergeant, it must have been a sergeant. Molloy, I cried, my name is Molloy” (23). This is where the narrator for the very first time gives his name. However, Molloy as a character underlines the insignificant or inefficient role of names when he talks about the subject of ‘Mag and Dan’. “She [*his mother*] never called me son, fortunately, I couldn’t have borne it, but Dan. I don’t know why, my name is not Dan. Dan was my father’s name perhaps. . . I called her Mag, when I had to call her something” (17).

The idea of naming in postmodern texts can be a reaction both to the conventions of realist fiction and the language’s power in expression. On the one hand, in realist fiction both writers and philosophers have given great importance to the particular individual because “the novelist typically indicates his intention of presenting a character as a particular individual by naming him in exactly the same way as particular individuals are named in ordinary life” (Watt 19). Moreover, Watt underlines some features of the traditions that existed before realist tradition:

Characters in previous forms of literature, of course, were usually given proper names; but the kind of names actually used showed that the author was not trying to establish his characters as completely individualised entities. The precepts of classical and renaissance criticism agreed with the practice of their literature in preferring either historical names or type names. In either case, the names set the characters in the context of a large body of expectations primarily formed from past literature, rather than from the context of contemporary life (20).

However, when one considers the name Molloy, which is an Irish name, it is quite different from the naming in conventional fiction. “Although Beckett endows his protagonists with proper (Irish) names, neither name – Molloy nor Moran – designates a character, in the fashion of a traditional fiction” (Cohn 162). Moreover, Watt, about the matter of naming in realist fiction, adds,

Characters in previous forms of literature [before realism], of course, were usually given proper names; but the kind of names actually used

showed that the author was not trying to establish his characters as completely individualised entities... The early novelists, however, made an extremely significant break with tradition, and named their characters in such a way as to suggest that they were to be regarded as particular individuals in the contemporary social environment (20).

Names in realist fiction make characters a part of their society; in other words, names indicate that these characters can integrate with their contemporary society.

As for the idea of the language's power in expression, *The Trilogy* is a great example to demonstrate poststructuralist ideas about naming. Beckett experiments with names. Therefore, in *Molloy* names are never stable. For Molloy, naming things is the synonym of castrating things. Accordingly, he plays with the names of other people by changing them all the time. To illustrate, Molloy keeps changing the name of the woman he met during his quest for his mother. After he killed her dog by accident, he narrates what happened. He once calls her Mrs Loy, then Sophie: "The house where Sophie – no, I can't call her that any more. I'll try calling her Lousse, without the Mrs. – the house where Lousse lived was not far away" (35). Furthermore, Beckett deconstructs the realist tradition by parodying the idea of the fixed identity that a realistic name stands for.

On the other hand, naming is used to attack the language's power of conveying a meaning if any is possible. When Molloy the narrator recounts his memories, he avoids naming a person, a city or a family, or at least he simply keeps changing these names:

Sir, this is X, is it not? X being the name of my town. And this name that I sought, I felt sure that it began with a B or with a P, but in spite of this clue, or perhaps because of this falsity, the other letters continued to escape me . . . when already all was fading, waves and particles, there could be no things but nameless things, no names but thingless names . . . the icy meanings and the world dies too, foully named. (31)

In the quotation above Beckett challenges the attempts of naming because "in many works Beckett tries to erode the sense of a fixed identity that accompanies the naming of characters" (Rabinovitz 201).

When a person names another person, it means limiting and freezing the other. The chance of becoming other than him/her self is eliminated; that is, the possibility of change dies at the moment of being named. However, in postmodernist fiction nothing is stable; everything is in a flux. Therefore, if a person names an object one day, the name may not be able to designate the same thing on another day, so the notion of “thingless names or nameless things” (31) is created. When Molloy narrates his past and people from his past, he is never sure what the names of these characters are. As nothing can resist the rules of the universe, Beckett means, no human being can have a fixed identity. When Molloy recounts his love affairs, he is concerned with the issue of names again: “She went by the peaceful name of Ruth I think, but I can’t say for certain. Perhaps the name was Edith” (56). Rabinovitz’s ideas about naming in *The Trilogy* are also worth noting:

Beckett’s practice of renaming characters reflects his often-expressed idea that language obscures the reality it attempts to depict. A name brings with it a superficial sense of another person’s identity, but as Molloy says, even his own identity seems “wrapped in a namelessness often hard to penetrate.”... Proper nouns, common nouns, pronouns – all such terms are unsatisfactory because they enshroud the idea of the self in language, thus obscuring its deeper reality. Beckett’s narrators finally accept the fact that they cannot get along without names, but they use them grudgingly, knowing that their chances of understanding the deeper self may be weakened if an aura of permanence becomes attached to a particular name (1993: 88-9).

As another facet of the naming matter, the alliteration is also worth noting. In *The Trilogy* Beckett uses it in several names such as Molloy, Moran, Malone, Macmann, Moll, Molly and Mollöse. Also another series of names is Loy and Lousse. He uses the alliteration to weaken the realism that these names could imply.

The other character-indicator in traditional narratives is the objective detailing of the character’s environment. However, in postmodern texts the depiction of the environment is not as it used to be depicted in traditional fictions. As Rabinovitz states,

Beckett rejects the notion that a primary function of art is to depict objects that exist in the outside world...In representational art, imaginary events are usually depicted as if they had actually occurred. Conventional novelists use vivid descriptions of an event to maintain verisimilitude; the accuracy of the setting heightens the illusion that the action is real and not imaginary. This is based on the idea – and underlying assumption in representational writing – that reality resides in the outside world. For Beckett’s characters the reverse is usually true. They seldom trust their impressions of the outside world, and what little reality they apprehend comes as a result of introspection. Beckett’s descriptions of the outer world are often the raw materials for metaphors depicting inner reality. It is unimportant whether the fictional entities conform to their material counterparts. Rather, the issue is how physical objects can be used in portrayals of the world of thought and feeling (1985: 317-8).

Like characters, the things around these postmodern characters hardly represent “the real” world, but they allude to the characters’ subconsciousness. Although the things around Molloy seem to belong to reality, the way he comprehends them is getting more and more unrealistic. To illustrate, when Molloy arrives at a town, he tends to look for a familiar monument to *be able to name the town his own*: “In the end I too went away, when I deemed it prudent, and wandered about the town in search of a familiar monument, so that I might say, I am in my own town, after all, I have been there all the time” (60). The town and the objects around make him plunge into the ruins of his subconsciousness. In contrast, things, in realist novels, are narrated in the way they are appropriate to contemporary culture and society. On this matter Levy fairly argues that man is obliged to live in a society constructed with unverifiable claims and concepts:

The real Fall occurred not in Eden but in our century. After the accumulation of too much history, we have lost the innocence required to believe in any more explanations. The only certainties left are the falseness of all interpretative structures and the radical unintelligibility of human experience without them (10).

Beckett’s fiction does not only subvert the concept of the real, but it also deconstructs the traditional means of creating narrative. That is, *The Trilogy* is structured around “an open ended process of echoes and duplications” (Moorjani 45). In the conventional novels the plot moves from the beginning to

the end in a linear fashion in realistic settings. Whereas neither *Molloy*'s nor *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*'s plot starts from a specific beginning and goes on chronologically. The plots start at a point which can be seen as an ending and end as if they were new beginnings. The protagonists also narrate some memories which do not follow the concept of causality. Unlike a realist novel, *Molloy* does not pay attention to "the individualization of its characters and to the detailed presentation of their environment" (Watt 219). Beckett deconstructs all character indicators, the most important of which is "the objective detailing of the character's environment" (Myers 95) Beckett avoids detailing the environment of his characters in order not to place them in an authentic social world.

At the very beginning of *Molloy* the narrator finds himself in a room (most probably in a hospital). The setting attracts the readers' attention because they expect Molloy to explain why and when he was taken there, but he never explains how and why he is there, but at least Molloy knows where he is at that moment. On setting Rabinovitz states that

many of Beckett's extended metaphors are sustained through a number of works. An example is a series of vaguely similar locale where the heroes rest or seek shelter in the course of their journeys. This type of setting can represent a refuge from the harshness of existence, an interlude in the journey of inner exploration... The locales that figure in these metaphors include houses, asylums, rooms, shelters, cabins, stables, dens, caves, ditches, holes, urns, boxes, subterranean locales, and confined areas of different geometric shapes... These places stress some themes: a loss of possessions, a decline in social status, a physical and mental impairment, or a movement toward death (1993: 120-1).

The movement in the novel is from the outside world to the inside of its characters' consciousness because Molloy begins his narration of the past by giving a detailed description of his outside world. "The road, hard and white, seared the tender pastures, rose and fell at the whim of hills and hollows" (9). This is an "unreal journey" (17) says Molloy, and he wants to depict the natural and "earthly" things around him a last time. He sounds as if he wanted to say

goodbye to everything he finds annoying before he plunges into an unreal journey:

But before I leave this earthly paradise, suspended between the mountains and the sea, sheltered from certain winds and exposed to all that Auster vents, in the way of scents and langours, on this accursed country, it would be ill not to mention the awful cries of the corncrakes that run in the corn, in the meadows, all the short summer night long, dining their rattles. And this enables me, what is more, to know when that unreal journey began... (17)

At the beginning, Molloy is in the town “with its bureaucracy, citizenry and constabulary” (Sheringham 29). He is estranged from his environment, which is a town. When he narrates, he comments on his pathetic situation at that time: “Was there one among them to put himself in my place, to feel how removed I was then from him I seemed to be, and in that remove what strain, as of hawsers about to snap? ...from all my old poisons I struggled towards them...” (21). Molloy deconstructs the inhabitants’ way of perceiving the social and communicative rules. He cannot adjust to the rules of society that are constructed to order or control men’s lives, so for the system he is a threat that deserves to be eliminated. Therefore, a policeman takes him to the police station. This setting is a part of the rational world. At the police station his name is revealed. The social rules are there for carrying out the regulations concerning bicycles, knowing one’s name and “the guiding principles of good manners... of the great English Schools” (*Molloy* 25). Molloy scrutinizes the well-known and widely accepted rules of society. He makes the reader re-think about the authenticity and originality of these ‘good manners’:

For that would have allowed me, before parading in public certain habits such as the finger in the nose, the scratching of the balls, digital emunction and the peripatetic piss, to refer them to the first rules of a reasoned theory. On this subject I have only negative and empirical notions which means that I was in the dark, most of the time, and all the more completely as a lifetime of observations had left me doubting the possibility of systematic decorum, even within a limited area (25).

Molloy, after that, flees from the town to the countryside. Molloy starts wandering around open areas, and he sleeps in ditches in order to get rid of all

definitions of society and self. Then, he accidentally meets Lousse and stays in her house for a while as the replacement of her dog that was killed by him. When he narrates the moment Lousse buries the dog, Molloy thinks of the decaying nature of man and death. Ironically, the more Molloy interacts with people at realist settings like a police station and a house, the more problematic it becomes for him to define what is real and what is not. In this sense, it can be said that Beckett blurs the boundaries between the rational world and imaginary world. Molloy is confused, and his confusion is depicted like this: “It is difficult, is it not, to go to one’s mother with things in such a state, more difficult than to the Lousses of this world, or to its police-stations, or to the other places that are waiting for me, I know” (44). Molloy seems to be lost between these two worlds. The image of his mother is from his consciousness, and others that he calls “Lousses” etc. are from his outside world. For Molloy, Lousse’s house is an “accursed place” (47). It appears that he is urged more by his inner world or his consciousness to keep going. In Lousse’s garden Molloy, “enjoying provisional respite from the anxiety induced by thought, seems to participate in the cycle of the seasons, the earth’s rotation and the alternation of day and night” (Sheringham 39). In this garden which is surrounded by high walls Molloy has “paranoid delusions that Lousse spies on him and is trying to poison him by putting depressants and stimulants in his food and drink” (Barnard 41).

He goes away from society to places like swamps and forests, wandering maybe for months or years. He comes to a place like a seashore where he begins a game with his sixteen pebbles. The game is sucking each stone in turn without sucking the same one again out of its turn. Molloy becomes more and more handicapped on his way to his mother, and then he begins to live in the forest, “crawling on his belly, like a reptile” (90):

The forest was all about me and the boughs, twining together at a prodigious height, compared to mine, sheltered me from the light and the elements. Some days I advanced no more than thirty or forty paces, I give you my oath. To say I stumbled in impenetrable darkness, no, I cannot. I stumbled, but the darkness was not

impenetrable. For there reigned a kind of blue gloom, more than sufficient for my visual needs (83).

Molloy, who is completely detached from civilization, eats mushrooms, roots and berries in the forest. Some days he barely moves. On this matter Barnard states that “he [Molloy] reflects that he might have been content to stay in the forest but for the fact that he would feel it was a sin to go against the voices, which he now calls his imperatives”(43). As this imperative tells him to get out of the forest, Molloy tries to obey it, but he collapses in a ditch on the edge of the forest.

Molloy in the pit hears a voice telling him “don’t fret, Molloy, we’re coming” (91), so Molloy waits for help. After this incident, the reader infers that he is saved and taken to the room, where he narrates this entire story. At the end, Molloy in his mother’s room decides to leave Molloy like this by stating “Molloy could stay, where he happened to be” (91).

4.1.2 Moran

The characterization of Moran is much more different from the characterization of Molloy because Beckett tries to show the insufficiency of the individual’s comprehension of himself and the world by drawing a picture from the opposite point of view. Moran is the opposite of Molloy in that his portrayal enables the reader to see what Molloy was like before his quest. In other words, they may complete each other as they may be the two different phases of the same man. Also, their narrations may also be read in a circular aspect. The narration of Moran may be the beginning of the story of Molloy. Beckett, in this way, manages to show the great changes in man. Alkim indicates that at the beginning, Moran has “an authentic name, an occupation, a certain style of speech, and he is placed in a recognizable setting” (19). Moran, at the beginning of the text, *seems* to be someone, but at the end, he turns into ‘nobody’ or ‘everyman’ like Molloy.

The Cartesian split hinders Beckett’s characters from their ‘original self’ or ‘their vision’. The disunity stems from the split in the character’s identity. In

this sense, Moran challenges the most difficult task. That is, he seems to follow the ancient Greek sages' important teaching which is "know(ing) thyself". The question of "know(ing) thyself" offers him two paths. He takes the easy path by assuming a stable status and routine duties in life. It means 'creating a place' in life. The other, the thorny path, which is looking inward or examining his inner self, is merely ignored by him. Moran as an individual, who confronts the problem of disunity, tends to assign meanings to himself and the world. This idea accords with the existentialist philosopher Jean Paul Sartre's view that "man is nothing else but what he makes of himself. Such is the first principle of existentialism. It is also what is called subjectivity" (15).

About the matter of in/authentic self, Smith states,

If authentic being is an ongoing enterprise, if "existence is indeterminate, as Heidegger suggested" [Blackham 88], then to know oneself is a continuing challenge. To know oneself is not a static goal, but rather a focus of curiosity in an ongoing manner, for one is constantly creating oneself (111).

Furthermore, Blackham reflects, according to Heidegger, "A man is possibility, he has the power to be. His existence is in his choice of the possibilities which are open to him, and since this choice is never final, once for all, his existence is indeterminate, because not terminated" (88). Moreover, Bezirci also claims that "according to the existentialists, man is indefinable, indeterminate, so s/he is nothing then. He becomes something later on, only if s/he creates her/himself. Man is like how he wants to be, not how he understands her/himself" (39). In this sense, existentialists deal with the "authentic" and "inauthentic" versions of self in Heidegger's terms: "Authentic being [is] rooted in the explicit sense of my situation ...; and inauthentic being, moving automatically in the established ruts and routes of the organized world" (qtd. in Blackham 92-93). Moran, who seems to lead a decent life, prefers 'the simple way', which means living inauthentically. As Blackham points out, this is the simple way because

[t]his is the general alibi, the proof that all the time I was in respectable company, the flight from personal responsibility, the

escape into anonymity. Always there is the prescription of what one should do in such a case, and the frown on what is not done. Assimilation to this established general form of human existence necessarily means the sacrifice of my own possibilities, the I remains buried in the one. But I gain the solidity and assurance of this massive existence, and reinforce it with my own acquiescence. To resist and break with this mode of existence in order to realize other possibilities would create a crisis in my personal life. There is in me the strongest tendency to avoid the issue, to take refuge from my original situation, the human plight, in the comfort and assurance of this anonymous and approved mode of existence (91).

Moran also, as a character, functions to show the end of the self as a character. As for the question of the self, Helene Cixous also questions the unity of the self in her article called “The Character of ‘Character’”. Rimmon-Kenan states that the ‘I’, according to Cixous, is “always more than one, diverse, capable of being all those it will at one time be, a group acting together” (qtd. in Rimmon-Kenan 30). Therefore, the character is announced to be “dead” by many (post)modern writers. Characters are just constructs.

Like Molloy, Moran is also the protagonist and narrator of his retrospective tales. When he begins to recount his memories, he sounds as if he were parodying the Moran-before-the quest. This is, of course, a function of the ‘before and after’ structure. In other words, the characterisation of Moran is divided into two as before and after his quest. Moran, at the beginning of the text, is assigned a task which is finding Molloy.

A man came into the garden and walked swiftly towards me. I knew him well...Our dealings were strictly of a business nature and he had journeyed from afar, on purpose to disturb me... He stopped in front of me and we stared at each other in silence... after all he was only acting his part of go-between...Here are your instructions, said Gaber. He took a notebook from his pocket and began to read (93-94).

Until the moment Moran is introduced to “the Molloy affair” (98), he leads a decent, bourgeois life. Moran is the only character in *The Trilogy* who looks like a conventional character. In the second paragraph Moran confidently announces his name, unlike Molloy, he is sure: “My name is Moran, Jacques. That is the name I am known by” (92). Moran seems to live in a world which he constructs for himself and his acquaintances. He has a son

whose name is also Jacques like him. His life appears to be quite ordered, but that is an inauthentic life. As Sheringham states, “Rapidly we become aware that his ordered universe, far from being a natural extension of himself, is the product of strenuous efforts to suppress or conceal latent disorder: his world of principles, habits and possessions is fissured by contradictions which begin to show through the moment he is obliged to address his mind to Molloy” (57).

Moran’s life, before getting the instructions about Molloy from his employer, Youdi, is like a beehive where he and other people fulfil the requirements of their roles. He wants to assign himself to the centre of this hive. He constructs roles for himself and others to live and survive. As mentioned before, this is an inauthentic life. There is no space for his or others’ inner inclinations and uncertainty in this constructed life. In other words, everything is constructed on the idea of ‘perfect idealism’ that can never be questioned. “Everything from his proprietorial spirit to his rationalism, from his religious faith to his chickens, is carefully cultivated to suppress what now, in the shape of his vision of Molloy, threatens to overwhelm him” (Sheringham 59). However, as this narrative of Moran is a report of his quest for Molloy, and as he narrates his adventures as a kind of reminiscence, he has now the ability to contrast his before and after situations. Therefore, he often parodies his perspective on life before he sets out on his mission.

Moran has several roles and several tasks to fulfill. Firstly, he is presented as a practising Catholic of moderately liberal views. In the morning when Gaber visits him, he contemplates on religion and its requirements in his garden planning to go to the service. That scene is important as it reveals his bourgeois life:

It was a Sunday in summer. I was sitting in my little garden, in a wicker chair, a black book closed on my knees. It must have been about eleven o’clock, still too early to go to church. I was savouring the day of rest, while deploring the importance attached to it, in certain parishes. To work, even to play on Sunday, was not of necessity reprehensible, in my opinion. It all depended on the state of mind of him who worked, or played, and on the nature of his work, of his play, in my opinion. I was reflecting with satisfaction on this, that

this slightly libertarian was gaining ground, even among the clergy, more and more disposed to admit that the sabbath, so long as you go to mass and contribute to the collection, may be considered a day like any other, in certain respect (93).

The narration of the scrupulous regularity of his life before the mission is striking because the sudden break down of that routine is experienced soon. Because of Gaber's visit, Moran misses the twelve o'clock mass and decides to go to the presbytery to see Father Ambrose. Gaber is considered to be an intruder as he is a threat to Moran's well-constructed world. Thanks to Gaber, Moran even postpones the lunch, and when he tells this decision to his maid, Martha, she is surprised. She asks if he is ill. Moran also adds: "For I was naturally a rather heavy eater. And my Sunday midday meal especially I always liked extremely copious" (97). Even a passerby, a neighbour of his says "no worship today?" as "he knew Moran's habits, his Sunday habits. Everyone knew them and the chief perhaps better than any, in spite of his remoteness" (98).

Moran considers himself as a sort of magnet and the other people of his house like metals which have to be dependent on him. In other words, he is the centre or the authority of the house. At this point of the text, one can make an analogy between Moran and God. In other words, Moran attempts to play the role of God for the people around him. He likes controlling everybody and everything in his life. Before the quest, Moran was always harsh with his son and Martha. "But no doubt he [Jacques] was afraid of disturbing me and of being reprimanded. For I was sometimes inclined to go too far when I reprimanded my son, who was consequently afraid of me" (96). Besides, he deprives his son of any affectionate behaviour in order not to cause "a blow to [his] authority" (122). Moreover, he is not different when he talks to Martha: "You will not go out today, I said coldly, I regret. She flung herself at her pots and pans, dumb with anger" (97). About Moran's cruelty in his relations with other people Sheringham claims "the image of paternal authority which permeates Moran's narrative has theological overtones. His most characteristic

habit is his desire to check and spy (imitating God's supervision of the universe) while himself remaining inscrutable" (59). Moran does not only try to imitate God, but he also tries to attach himself to his universe. He, who still lives in a "unified" world, gives instructions to his son and maid and takes instructions from his mysterious boss, Youdi. At this point of the narrative, Moran is still powerful physically and psychologically.

As the narrative progresses, another side of his nature is gradually discovered. Just after the visit of Gaber, he goes through both bodily and mental changes: "And yet the poison was already acting on me, the poison I had just been given. I stirred restlessly in my armchair, ran my hands over my face, crossed and uncrossed my legs, and so on. The colour and the weight of the world were changing already, soon I would have to admit I was anxious" (97). First, he experiences the physical changes:

I went up to my room again, drew back the curtains on a calamitous sky and lay down. I could not understand what was happening to me. I found it painful at that period not to understand. I tried to pull myself together. In vain. I might have known. My life was running out, I knew not through what breach. I succeeded however in dozing off, which is not so easy, when pain is speculative (102-3).

When Moran sets out to find Molloy, feelings of estrangement and confusion surround him. This journey that Moran and his son start on causes many problems to Moran. First, "an acute pain shot through [his] knee" (119) and he uses some ointment, "the iodex", for his knee. Moran had everything before the quest, and he did not have the feeling of disillusionment that the quest gives him. As they move on, Moran, like Molloy, experiences some physical transformation; his body gradually deteriorates. In the woods, he and his son wander and try to find Molloy during the day, and at night they sleep on the ground. Suddenly, Moran is struck by "another violent blow" (138) one night. His leg causes so much pain that he wants his son to go to Hole and buy a second-hand bicycle. When his son is away, he thinks:

And on myself too I pored, on me so changed from what I was. And I seemed to see myself ageing as swiftly as a day-fly. But the idea of ageing was not exactly the one which offered itself to me. And what I

saw was more like a crumbling, a frenzied collapsing of all that had always protected me from all I was condemned to be. Or it was like a kind of clawing towards a light and a countenance I could not name, that I had once known and long denied. But what words can describe this sensation at first all darkness and bulk, with a noise like the grinding of stones, then suddenly as soft as water flowing (149).

This is another point where Moran's physical alteration occurs. Moran's physical alteration gives birth to 'a new Moran', who is wiser than the previous one. This is the new Moran, who has changed, and who recounts his retrospective story. Furthermore, another incident which also foreshadows the birth of a new Moran happens. While his son is away, Moran meets a stranger who resembles him very much and is looking for a Molloy figure. After a quarrel, Moran is disturbed by this man and attacks him. He narrates this incident:

But a little later, perhaps a long time later, I found him stretched on the ground, his head in a pulp. I am sorry I cannot indicate more clearly how this result was obtained, it would have been something worth reading... I myself was unscathed, except for a few scratches I did not discover till the following day. I bent over him. As I did so I realised my leg was bending normally. He no longer resembled me. I took him by the ankles and dragged him backwards into the shelter (152).

As the quotation above illustrates, the new Moran emerges immediately as he steps out of his automatic and circular life. In other words, the idea of having a fixed identity is challenged by Beckett. The suppressed side of Moran is revealed with the death of "Jacques Moran the agent". Moran as a self, "who has lost all his fixity, becomes assimilated to a formless space which resists all but 'apophatic definition'⁵– in terms of what it is not" (Sheringham 61-2). However, the new Moran, who can have an access to a more authentic order of selfhood, does not feel as a consistent entity. On the contrary, he feels closer to "an experience of self-scattering and fragmentation prior to any kind of identity" (Sheringham 63).

⁵ Apophatic definition: It is a definition which defines things by the way of negation, or defines something showing what that thing is not.

When they are in Ballyba, Moran and his son have a big fight, and after that, Jacques steals every possession of his father and escapes leaving him in a miserable situation. The Moran part approaches its end with another appearance of Gaber to Moran in the forest. Gaber's coming into view with the instructions of Youdi to return home is accepted by Moran. "Moran, Jacques, home, instanter" (164). Although Moran still seems to follow the orders of Youdi, he does not see himself as a part of the incompatible images of human existence. The implausible Gaber is still the messenger of a fixed, eternal order from which Moran feels excluded, but by a clever reversal this order is now associated with 'ordinary' humanity. Moran narrates how Gaber delivered Youdi's message to him,

[Youdi] said to me, said Gaber, Gaber, he said, life is a thing of beauty, Gaber, and a joy for ever. He brought his face nearer mine. A joy for ever, he said, a thing for beauty, Moran, and a joy for ever. He smiled. I closed my eyes... I said, Do you think he meant human life, I said. I opened my eyes. I was alone (165).

Moran, who goes through the "great inward metamorphoses" (164), detests the rational world and corruption of Youdi, so Moran now realises that the imperatives to which he responds "are internal to him, and at this point in his narrative Youdi becomes assimilated to, or rather displaced by, a voice which is within Moran" (Sheringham 64). What also emphasises Moran's metamorphosis is his asking 17 questions. His questions are related to his circumstances and familiars. A few of these are:

1. Why had I not borrowed a few shillings from Gaber?
 2. Why had I obeyed the order to go home?
 3. What had become of Molloy?
 4. Same question for me.
 - ...
 7. Was his mother in heaven?
 - ...
 9. Would I go to heaven?
 - ...
 11. What had become of my hens, my bees? Was my grey hen still living?
- (168).

Moran, who is on his way home, is quite different from the man who started the journey. He himself is also aware of the fact that he has changed a lot:

Physically speaking it seemed to me I was now becoming rapidly unrecognisable. And when I passed my hands over my face, in a characteristic and now more than ever pardonable gesture, the face my hands felt was not my face any more, and the hands my face felt were my hands no longer... To tell the truth I not only knew who I was, but I had a sharper and clearer sense of my identity than ever before, in spite of its deep lesions and the wounds with which it was covered (170-1).

For Moran all his assumptions about man turn out to be unreliable, and they do not make sense any longer. Moran, who fails the quest, loses many of his possessions and ideas, but he has learned something: “He has learned to imagine or lie; he has learned that words tell truth through lies” (Cohn 91). As a man “exiled in his manhood” (*M* 170), all Moran has is his bees and their dance. “But for me, sitting near my sundrenched hives, it would always be a noble thing to contemplate, too noble to be sullied by the cogitations of a man like me” (*M* 170). Moreover, Moran also accepts that he now listens to imperatives that are not given by Youdi, but he listens to a voice which gives him “orders, or rather advice” (170). Therefore, he accepts to write a report about the Molloy affair. Although Moran cannot understand what this voice wants from him, he later understands it and its advice better. “It told me to write the report” (176). So, Moran starts writing the report, “It is midnight. The rain is beating on the windows”, but he adds “It was not midnight. It was not raining”. This discrepancy indicates the problematic nature of the relationship between fiction and the reality in which it is written. Furthermore, what Beckett wants to underline by creating such an inconsistency is also the unreliable nature of the reality because the beginning of the Moran part also starts with “It is midnight. The rain is beating on the windows”. Moran, who has a new dimension in his identity after all these events, can now see how to bend words and use them. He does not try to dominate words as in his old days he assumed to do. On the contrary, he now joins the game of playing with

words. Therefore, as a postmodern text the second part of *Molloy* also manages to put forward the fictionalised nature of the ‘reality’.

4.1.3. Hikmet

Hikmet is the protagonist of *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*. About Hikmet’s characterisation it can be said that he clearly resembles Molloy and Moran in many aspects. He, like the protagonists of Beckett, is created to indicate the postmodern situation of man in a general sense. He is an intellectual who cannot adjust to the simple games around him, and who is after his original self. As postmodern characters, the similarities of Hikmet and Molloy/Moran can be traced to a few concepts like their physical and psychological traits including their actions, speeches, appearance, and their defective memories about the past.

Hikmet, at the very beginning of the novel, in the part which is called ‘Gecekondu’, meaning a house in a slum, is presented in a mysterious and irrational environment. Atay starts his narrative as if it was a piece of play with its stage directions in the parentheses and speakers’ names:

(Voices of Mrs. Naciye and Asuman are heard from the other room).

HİKMET: Why are they whispering? (He thinks.) When a man is in a bed, all voices sound hoarse to him. No, they aren’t whispering; I think their voices come from far away. God damn it! I understand all that they say. (He lies facedown and pushes his head into the pillow as much as possible, or rather into the cushion which is transformed to a pillow.) Look, I don’t want to hear your angry mutterings...

MRS. NACİYE: I can’t take this any more.

HİKMET: I hope that you will be dead soon, a dead person that nobody pities. (He wraps himself in the quilt.)⁶ (13-4).

The beginning of the novel is like the beginning of a play. As Orhan Pamuk states about Oğuz Atay, “What is in the head of this writer who mocks the

⁶ (Yandaki odadan Asuman ile Naciye Hanımın sesleri duyulur.) HİKMET: Neden alçak sesle konuşuyorlar? (Düşünür.) Yatakta, bütün sesler insana boğuk gelir. Hayır, alçak sesle konuşmuyorlar; sesleri uzaktan geldiği için öyle sanıyorum. Allah kahretsin! Bütün söylediklerini anlıyorum. (Yüzükoyun yatar; başını yastığa, daha doğrusu, kılıf geçirilerek yastık haline getirilmiş mindere bütün gücüyle bastırır.) Duymak istemiyorum homurtularınızı işte!... NACİYE HANIM: Artık dayanamıyorum. HİKMET: Ölürsün inşallah! Kimsenin acımadığı bir ölü olursun. (Yorganı hırsla iki yanına sarar.)

novel but cannot help writing, puts some pieces of plays into his books, and mentions intellectuals from the bronze age, Mr Hegel the Butcher, Jesus and the shanties?” (qtd. in *Oğuz Atay’a Armağan* 274). Atay prefers to introduce Hikmet in a mysterious way to raise the curiosity of the reader. Later it is understood that it was all a part of his dream.

Hikmet is presented in a bed which reminds the reader of the beginning lines of *Molloy*. Where he lives is an old wooden house with three storeys. The setting of the text, as mentioned before in the characterization of Molloy, is very similar to that of Molloy and Moran since they all go toward confined areas like rooms. Hikmet is also depicted in a room that foreshadows “a loss of possessions, a decline in social status, a physical or mental impairment, or a movement toward death” (Rabinovitz 121). Hikmet’s loneliness is shared by an old retired colonel who is called Colonel Hüsametdin. This colonel continuously interrupts Hikmet and warns him not to talk nonsense, and Hikmet immediately listens to his advice. It is understood that Hikmet abandoned his old life and moved into this old house. “Nobody knew I was moving into a slum house⁷” (26). Unlike Molloy and Moran, Hikmet does not write down his memoirs, but he tells them. Hikmet tells two past events at the same time by finding similarities between them. To illustrate, he tells about both his marriage and his moving to the slum house at the same time:

Yes, the beginning wasn’t good my colonel, neither when I was getting married nor moving into this house. Before I transported my belongings here, while I was looking for a truck I drank some alcohol, my colonel. Even on the day I was married I drank alcohol... The truck driver told me that he couldn’t go further on this bumpy road. However, I went too forward, my colonel: I decided to get married⁸ (26).

⁷ Gecekonduya taşındığım zaman da kimsenin haberi olmadı.

⁸ Evet, başlangıç iyi olmamıştı albayım: ne evlenirken ne de bu eve gelirken. Eşyayı buraya taşımadan önce, bir kamyon filan ararken, biraz alkol almıştım albayım. Evlendiğim gece de içmiştim... Şoför, daha ileri gidemem bu bozuk yolda beyim, demişti. Bense çok ileri gitmiştim albayım. Evlenmeğe karar vermiştim.

He now narrates how he has moved into this house and at the same time how he has gotten married. This is not a time concept which is linear, but Hikmet's time forms a sort of zigzag, moving back and forth. First, the reader is given the scene where Hikmet talks to the carrier who carries his furniture to the front of the slum house, and then when he puts his hand in his pocket (to give money to the carrier) he takes out his wedding invitations to show his friends with whom he has been drinking. Hikmet jumps through time and narrates two different memories as if they occurred at the same time or in some parallel times. This situation of Hikmet the narrator directly makes Hikmet a postmodern character.

I didn't know how to tell my friends in the army about my marriage decision as I didn't make it with them. It was a bit strange. (I thought it was a bit strange.) I waited to be drunk to be able to talk. Then you saw me at the door of the slum house, my colonel. What did you think? I looked kind, didn't I? I was tapping on the back of the carrier. (Because he was muttering too much.) Then I gave him an extra five lira. (In order not to spoil our intimacy.) Suddenly I put my hand into my pocket and took out the wedding invitations to distribute to everybody. I had written my friends' names on the envelopes in advance... They asked what the name of the girl was... Then I told them that it was Sevgi with a groaning sound⁹ (27).

Hikmet, as mentioned before, leaves his bourgeois life and wife and makes a fresh beginning in a slum. What is significant about *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* is its parallel presentation of past and future in the course of the novel. Hikmet's leaving his old life behind signifies that he was in conflict in his previous life. This flight of Hikmet has an affinity with the flight of Moran. Hikmet, who finds his life before moving to the slum so 'artificial' or (in Heidegger's words)

⁹ Evlenme kararımı silah arkadaşlarımla birlikte almadığım için onlara ne diyeceğimi bilemiyordum. Durumda bir gariplik seziliyordu. (Ben seziyordum.) Konuşabilmek için sarhoş olmamı bekliyordum. Sonra, beni gördünüz gecekondu kapısında albayım. Ne düşündünüz? Babacan bir tavırım vardı değil mi? Hamalın sırtına vuruyordum. (Çok homurdanıyordu da ondan.) Sonra beş lira fazla verdim adama. (Samimiyetimiz bozulmasın diye.) Birden elimi cebime attım ve nikah davetiyelerini çıkararak, herkese dağıtmaya başladım. Zarfların üstüne, silah arkadaşlarımla adlarını önceden yazmıştım... Kızın adı ne? diye bağıştılar...Sonra, boğuk bir sesle, Sevgi, dedim.

so inauthentic, decides to find his authentic self. Hikmet accuses Descartes of founding such inauthentic lives for humankind:

I will not give them anything, my colonel. I will set an example for them. [Rest of the world] They need to stop being guinea pigs. The world needs to be divided into two now. Everybody lived together too much. Those who want to live according to the rules of Descartes should be sorted out now. This false game needs to end. We need to find ourselves. We shouldn't try to make our dreams real. However, we need to make the real our dreams... There are a lot of lies in the world, my colonel. If we go on like this we can never get rid of these lies... This is really a game, and it is more than real. It is verbiage. There is neither the depiction of nature nor character analysis in this game. I leave these topics to those Cartesian writers who assumed themselves to be anti-Cartesian¹⁰ (TO 350).

However, what Hikmet attempts to manage ends up in failure, which reminds the reader of the destiny of both Molloy and Moran: "I am well-aware of this fact, but I still play it. I'm quite aware of my fall [failure]¹¹" (129).

In his apartment, in the three storeyed house, all Hikmet has is a newly-dyed spring mattress, an old bookcase, a nightstand, an old-fashioned long pillow, a quilt and a little rug as furniture. His two suitcases are full of old and useless jackets, trousers, shirts, underwear, and socks in need of mending. Unlike Molloy and Moran, Hikmet has a clear mind before his quest. In other words, he himself chooses to set out on this journey. Neither Molloy nor Moran accepts his journey willingly. Molloy starts his quest for his mother without planning and without predicting the consequences, he finds himself in that situation. As for Moran, he is assigned to start a journey and a quest for Molloy by his boss. However, Hikmet *decides* to be anonymous or rootless.

¹⁰ Onlara bir şey vermeyeceğim albayım. Onlara örnek olacağım. Birer deneme tavşanı olmaktan kurtulmaları gerekiyor artık. Dünya artık ikiye ayrılmalı. Yeter derecede bir arada yaşandı. Descartes'in kurallarına göre yaşamak isteyenler ayıklanmalı artık. Bu düzmece oyun sona ermeli. Kendi benliğimizi bulmalıyız. Yalvarıp yakarmaktan vazgeçmeliyiz. Rüyalarımızı gerçekleştirmeğe çalışmamalıyız. Gerçekleri rüya yapmalıyız... Dünyada çok yalan var albayım! Dünyaya katılmaya devam edersek bu yalanlardan kurtulamayız... Gerçekten bir oyundur bu ve oyundan da gerçektir. Bir sürü laf kalabalığıdır. İçinde ne gerçek bir tabiat tasviri vardır, ne de derin bir ruh tahlili. Böyle ustalıkları, Descartesçi olmadıklarını sandıkları halde Descartesçi olanlara bırakıyorum.

¹¹ Gene de bilerek oynuyorum: Düşüşümün farkındayım.

“...we are deprived of knowing the end of our life whose real start we have been postponing on various pretexts since the-19...-something until we had arrived at this slum house...¹²” (44). Living with people who try to *order* their lives according to *some kind of instructions and beliefs* is a way of life which is believed to be ‘real’ or ‘factual’ by communities. However, saying and believing that things are real is something very artificial and absurd for Hikmet. Ironically enough what the community takes as a fact is taken as a game by Hikmet. “I was deceived no matter how hard I tried not to be. I was angry about myself: because I was deceived, you see, Hidayet son? I was deceived. I should not have been deceived; they should not have played me games. I had to be wide-awake, and I should not have seen others’ dreams¹³” (63). What Hikmet suspects is the truthfulness and originality of illusions/games because each fact is a construct to shape the chaotic nature of human life. Hikmet, who is now well aware of these games, is ready to play the game according to its rules. Therefore, he decides to counter attack by creating other “facts” or artificialities. Thus, this quality of Hikmet makes him a typical character of black humour. *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, which can be viewed from the postmodern perspective, also carries black humour elements because Hikmet is obviously in conflict with the dominant values. “It disturbs what is settled or accepted, it simply becomes a threat to the dominant discourse...the other explicit feature of black humour is the concept of despair... neither the past nor the future means hope for the black humour artists” (Batur 7-8).

Living in a slum house gradually becomes identical with living in his inner world, or experiencing a spiritual journey. On this journey Hikmet aims at finding his own true self, but what hinders him from fulfilling this task is the uncertainty of the past and future. Many people from his past life are

¹² ... bugün elimizde olmayan nedenlerle son tarafını tayinden aciz olduğumuz hayatımız yani bindokuzyüzbilmemkaç yılından beri gerçek başlangıcını çeşitli bahanelerle gecekondusal yaşantımıza kadar ertelediğimiz müddei ömrümüz...

¹³ Bütün gücüne rağmen oyuna geliyordum. Kendime kızıyordum. Çünkü oyuna geliyordum. Oyuna gelmemeliydim bana oyun oynanmamalıydı. Bütün gücümle uyanık kalmalıydim; başkalarının rüyalarını görmemeliydim.

mentioned in his stories and games. These people are like ghosts from his past which never stop chasing him. Hikmet's daydreams or nightmares prove that like Molloy and Moran, Hikmet also remembers fragmented parts from his past like his university years, his experiences with Mr. Rüstem, but he never recalls and recounts them in a chronological order. It merely shows that Hikmet can never put his reminiscences into order either in a conscious or unconscious space because of the fragmented nature of the past.

In the second chapter called 'Dul Kadın/The Widow Woman' Hikmet's physical situation is narrated by an omniscient narrator. The woman in this part is a production created by Hikmet's imagination. Hikmet creates such characters as Mrs Nurhayat and Colonel Hüsametdin, who suit his new life. The widow woman in this part is an old and poor woman with three children. She lives on the first floor with her two sons as the elder son, Hidayet, is in the army for his military service. Mrs. Nurhayat wants Hikmet to write a response to her son's last letter. The letter makes Hikmet remember some people from his past. Therefore, Hikmet experiences flashbacks and narrates those memories in the letter which is written to Hidayet. He remembers how the translator Rüstem and his secretary (maybe his girlfriend) translated some texts in the coffeehouse. At this point Hikmet shares the feelings of his imaginary friend, of Mr. Rüstem. Hikmet announces his psychological loneliness before and after his divorce. "My wife also abandoned me, Mr. Rüstem. I mean spiritually, my colonel¹⁴" (47). In this part Hikmet again mixes the past and the present. He brings together Rüstem and Nurhayat by narrating:

MR. RÜSTEM: I cut my hand with a needle.

SECRETARY: Oh! What a pity! You are excited, aren't you?

MR. RÜSTEM: Yeah, I am excited... Let's go on: A red drop appeared on the purple background.

SECRETARY (Enthusiastically): Out of your finger!

"We set up the stove, he shouldn't worry", he somehow heard...OK. Mrs Nurhayat; we are writing: We set up the stove, we called Gianmaria, his hand is bleeding, this is the poisoning of love, he sucks

¹⁴ Beni de karım bırakıp gitti Rüttem Bey. Manevi bakımdan demek istiyorum albayım.

his finger. Ah those women! The widow women! Women of love. They have also tortured me, Mr. Rüstem¹⁵ (47).

Hikmet attempts to share the process and aims of his narration. He, as a postmodern character, is a man who rebels against the generally accepted social laws and customs. “We must refuse the destination that is appropriated for us. We moved into this small slum house not to be tricked by small games; we are going to play big games¹⁶” (71). Moreover, Hikmet narrates the power of a book which is called the Constitution. He tends to criticize what is incontrovertible. Moreover, he aims at destroying or, at least, reversing the power balances by telling about a groceryman who has the book of the Constitution instead of a lawyer or a judge. Therefore, Hikmet does not only question and reverse the dominant discourses and values in the society, but he also reverses man’s position and social roles in the same society:

The groceryman Rıza is interested in the Constitution most. According to the rumour there is a small book which is the authority. All errands were done according to its instructions. Man’s suddenly going to some place, his having a few words with others and his listening to the radio all depended on that small book’s permission... It was this book that ruled the whole country¹⁷ (57).

When Hikmet makes fun of the stereotyped values, he enjoys it, and announces his satisfaction by freezing the narration and directly addressing the reader: “One must entirely finish an experience. There shouldn’t be any trace left. For new experiences. If I had known that before I would have a wealth of

¹⁵ RÜSTEM BEY: (Heyecanla): Elime iğne battı. KATİBE: Ne yazık! Heyecandan, değil mi? RÜSTEM BEY: (İlgisiz): Evet, Heyecandan... Yazalım. Mor fonun üstünde kırmızı br damla belirdi. KATİBE: (Coşarak): Parmağından! “Sobayı kurduk, merak etmesin,” sözlerini duyabildi nedense. Son anda yetişirim; dinlemediğimi anlamazlar. Tamam, Nurhayat Hanım; hemen yazıyoruz: Sobayı da kurduk, Gianmaria’yı da çağırdık, adamın eli kanıyor, aşk zehirlenmesiymiş, parmağını emiyor. Ah bu kadınlar! Dul kadınlar! Sevgi kadınları. Bana da işkence ediyorlardı Rüstem Bey!

¹⁶ Bizlere uygun görülen kadere her yerde karşı çıkmalıyız. Küçük oyunlara gelmemek için bu gecekonduya taşındık, büyük oyunlar oynayacağız.

¹⁷ Bakkal Rıza, en çok, Anayasa ile ilgili. Anlatıldığına göre, kendi küçük, hükmü büyük bir kitap varmış. Bütün işler oradan idare ediliyormuş. Bir insanın birden bir yere gitmesi, oturup iki çift laf etmesi, şu radyoyu bile dinlemesi onun iznine bağlıymış... Koca ülkeyi bu kitap çekip çeviriyormuş.

experiences now. Ha-ha¹⁸” (65). He always has his ‘tongue-in-cheek attitude’ when he satirizes generally accepted values.

Atay’s main issue is ‘the individual’ in all his works (Ecevit 1989: 9). However, unlike traditional fiction, he does not let his characters dominate the whole story. As mentioned before, Hikmet is not a hero who has personal traits, successes or failures. On the contrary, he symbolises everyman who does not exist in a specific time and place. Besides, Hikmet can be defined as an illustrative character which carries different characteristics of every human being like Molloy and Moran. He is a complex character that is created to show the constructed nature of man. Hikmet is constructed to be estranged so that he can depict the human condition.

Like Molloy and Moran, Hikmet also experiences some changes when he starts his quest, which is finding himself. Finding one’s original self as a theme seems to be a traditional one. However, what makes Hikmet different from the rest of other traditional challengers in fiction is his way of searching. He thinks that finding man’s original self or his vision can only come true by getting rid of ‘the reality’ that language creates. Therefore, he bravely declares, “Let’s *rewrite* the world history. Let’s *reinterpret* all the incidents. What do we lack to do this?¹⁹” (71). He attempts to make a world for his games that can be called the interface. The interface in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* is like a bridge which brings together both ‘the unnamable’ district that Hikmet seeks and the reality constructed by language. Therefore, the common notion of *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* and *The Trilogy* is attained; that is, their expressing the interface. Furthermore, Hikmet starts this difficult mission, finding an alternative place to reach his original self, on behalf of every human being, but it ends up in failure. This failure is actually his success in depicting the world as he comprehends it.

¹⁸ Bir yaşantıyı tam bitirmeli. Hiç bir iz kalmamalı ondan. Yeni yaşantılar için. Yeni yaşantılar için. Bunu önceden bilseydim, yaşantı milyoneri olmuşum. Ha-ha.

¹⁹ Dünya tarihini yeni baştan yazalım. Bütün olayların yeni yorumlarını yapalım. Bunun için neyiz eksik sanki?

He also acknowledges the constantly changing nature of internal and external rules, so he avoids neglecting each alternative. He starts it with describing his various conditions and situations. As everything is in a flux, Hikmet thinks that man cannot be frozen, so he names ‘a lot of Hikmets’ for a lot of experiences. To illustrate, Hikmet at the time of narration talks about his own old identity that is called with the letter ‘H.’ It is not a full Hikmet but just a H. because according to the Hikmet the narrator, H. had no idea what it felt like to live, and he is ashamed of this idea:

Hikmet... is ashamed of these incidents, teacher; he doesn’t want to talk about him even in the third-person singular pronoun. H. was fed up with thinking about the problems in our country. Books made him a bit dizzy. Books started to annoy him wherever he saw them as if they were his old accomplices. This uneasiness about books made H. collapse from exhaustion²⁰ (117-8).

Atay also uses the main principle of deconstructive reading when he creates Hikmet. “Deconstruction tries to show how such oppositions [high/low, light/dark, consciousness/unconsciousness, Nature/Culture, and so on], in order to hold themselves in place, are sometimes betrayed into intervening or collapsing themselves, or need to banish to the text’s margins certain niggling details which can be made to return and plague them” (Eagleton 133). Hikmet deconstructs the long-accepted rules of the classical world.

Hikmet also adds that

I am not Hikmet, my colonel. I am now an observer who was once Hikmet... There was a ruthless H. who kept quiet inside me... Fool! I don’t know this man, my colonel. I don’t want his memory. I am now an entity who has retired from being human and lives in a slum house²¹ (119-20).

²⁰ Hikmet... bütün bunlardan çok utanıyor, öğretmenim; üçüncü tekil şahıs olarak bile adından söz etmek istemiyor cam. H., ülkemizin sorunlarını düşünmekten yorulmuştu. Kitaplar içinde hafif bir bulantı yapıyordu. Kitaplar, eski suç ortakları gibi, her göründükleri yerde rahatsız etmeye başlamıştı onu. Ayrıca yılların verdiği yorgunlukla birleşen bir kitap rahatsızlığı H.’yi bitkin düşürdü.

²¹ Ben Hikmet değilim albayım. Bir zamanlar Hikmet olan gözlemcinin biriyim şimdi... İçimde acımasız bir H. vardı susan... Aptal! Ben bu adamı tanımıyorum albayım. Ben onun hafızasını istemiyorum. Ben, gecekonduda yaşayan ve insanlıktan emekliye ayrılmış bir adamım.

Hikmet, by revealing different fragments of himself, decentres the notion of man's fixity. He explicitly deconstructs the famous idea of Descartes, 'cogito ergo sum' or I think. Therefore, I am.

I pay my rent - pay attention here: Like all of you - to my landlord. Then, I am. Cogitosuz ergo sum, my colonel. Cogitosuz ergo sum. [In Turkish the suffix '-suz' at the end of the word 'cogito' makes it a negative one, so it can be translated as I *don't* think. Therefore, I am]. Who the hell is H.? It has been mentioned in some cocky books. I haven't read these books. (And I won't read them)...I didn't bring him [H.] here, my colonel so he cannot hinder my games. I will also have a past, my colonel. I will invent it here, in the slum²² (119-20).

Hikmet decides to create characters, and he wants to be an imaginary fictional character like the characters in his mind (329). As Ecevit states,

According to Descartes, cogito that is the alert part of man's brain has superiority to the other; *reality* can only occur when it is related to the cogito. In the Cartesian way of thinking, whose rules were enacted by Descartes, the primary feature of the objects is a spatial movement; this is an idea that is purified from all kinds of metaphysical postulates: Descartes is the father of rationalism. In all works of Atay there is a principle that contradicts with the Cartesian view (350).

Hikmet is also a character that is portrayed to deal with many parts of his own identity in his fiction, so he categorises each fragment of his identity to make his task easier since finding the original self is not a simple thing to do:

In a place, where the concepts of dream and alertness are blurred with barking sounds and the opinion of suicide/death, he sets free all the Hikmets who are the sons of his consciousness in his text. This is a ruthless war of the character that is waged on the superficial *I* in order to be able to identify it with his/her original self. Hikmet complains, "I am fed up with pretending" [TO 409]... Hikmet has to cope with all the Hikmets one by one (2005: 341).

The readers are presented with many Hikmets throughout the text. Atay employs a lot of Hikmets in his text to portray how the subject can or cannot confront his inner conflicts. Therefore, the Hikmets have to settle accounts with each other. As Ecevit states,

²² Ev sahibine, hepiniz gibi –burasına dikkatinizi çekerim: Hepiniz gibi –kırımı ödüyorum. O halde ben varım. Cogitosuz ergo sum albayım, cogitosuz ergo sum. H. de kim oluyor? Yalnız bazı ukala kitaplarda söz ediyorlarmış ondan. Ben bu kitapları okumadım (Okumam da)... Onu buraya getirmediğim albayım, istediğim oyunlara engel olmasın diye. Benim de bir geçmişim olacak artık albayım, onu gecekonduda kuracağım.

In the novel the introduction of *Hikmets*, that is to say, the conflicts in man's personality, can only be resolved within another fiction, which carries the elements of the absurd. The concept of estrangement is employed to make the reader consider the text outside the well-known reading criteria, and it occurs in the episode that displays the French Revolution taking place in a mental hospital (1989: 35).

Hikmet's analysis of his own identity resembles a revolt against himself and the society. Hikmet is broken into fragments. He narrates them:

This mentioned one is Hikmet III, doctor. Let him be together with his friends and look at the other Hikmets. There is also a Hikmet II who was married to Sevgi. Hikmet IV, who is the lover of Bilge, is the king of the slum and a playwright. Hikmet II appeared after his marriage and he sent Hikmet IV into exile and tortured Hikmet III by confining him into a mental house. (See Hikmet III and De Gaulle). When Hikmet II got married to Sevgi he thought he could get rid of all the others and he dismissed them from his house (and his mind)²³ (TO 345).

One of these Hikmets is his subconscious that is filled with childhood memories, the other is a married man who pretends to be a loyal bourgeois, and another is the lover of Bilge, who is the symbol of wisdom. Hikmet III reflects a pathological man who is confined to a mental hospital, and Hikmet V is under the influence of his instincts. All these Hikmets with their complementing or opposing features wrap his identity like a knotted net. "Each Hikmet challenges one value in his society. The modern man in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* emphasizes the conflict between man and society, and he can be regarded as successful as he revolts even if he fails" (Ecevit 1989: 36).

Hikmet keeps telling Colonel Hüsamettin that he has little time, and the colonel warns him: "You are about to create another absurd tongue twister. OK. My colonel, I will. No, I didn't mean that. No, my colonel, I want to

²³ Bu anlattığım Hikmet III, doktor. Onu, arkadaşlarıyla kaptıkaçtının içinde bırakalım ve biraz da başka Hikmetleri anlatalım. Bir de Sevgi ile evlenen Hikmet II var. "Hikmet IV de Bilge'nin sevgilisi. Aynı zamanda gecekondulu kiralı ve oyun yazarı. Hikmet II evlendikten sonra. Hikmet IV'ü bir süre taşraya sürgüne gönderdi; Hikmet III 'ü de akıl hastanesine kapatarak uzaktan işkence etti (Bak Hikmet III ve De Gaulle). Hikmet III'ün hayatında Kafka'nın kardeşi olarak geçen kimse, aslında bu Hikmet II'dir. Hikmet II, Sevgi ile evlenince bütün Hikmetlerden kurtulduğunu sandı ve bunları evinden (ve aklından) kovdu.

create some piece of nonsense. Since I have so little time...²⁴” (123). Hikmet is a character that is shown to be an artist, and he treats the concept of life as a made-up story and all the experiences of man as dangerous games. As a postmodern character, he is able to make up stories and games and reflect both the rational and the irrational; the real and the unreal; and both the past and the present together in his games. As Hikmet puts it:

Do not buttonhole me, my colonel. I have to reorder my dreams before they are here, so that I can keep thinking without being noticed during the horse race. Dangerous games, my colonel: Horse races in the saloon. Bilge Bilge. At last ‘*I found you, my love*’, my colonel. I can’t do without loving. Bilge Bilge. Let’s think let’s think²⁵ (123).

Therefore, Hikmet’s portrayal as a postmodernist character explains his unending talking, even ‘inner chattering,’ writing, dreaming and making up stories. In this sense, like Molloy and Moran, Hikmet also has habitual and repetitive actions which reinforce his postmodernist attitude, and once again create an ironic or even a black humour effect on the text itself. In other words, Hikmet’s games and actions underline that the “real” in fact consists of a fiction or a game, and the real is something subjective.

The matter of naming in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* is also very postmodernist and poststructuralist as it is in *The Trilogy*. As postmodernism has the idea of “anything goes” (Lucy 85), the text of Atay has allegorical names for its characters. Allegory has been used in many works of literature since the classical age. In this sense, Hikmet and the other characters remind the reader of the characters of a 15th century English morality play, *Everyman*. As a postmodern novel, *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*’s characters do not display the features of realist fiction’s characters. Their names are allegorical to reflect the pluralism

²⁴ Yeni bir saçmalık tekerlemesi yaratmak üzere sin. Peki albayım, yaratırım. Hayır, yaratma sakın, demek istedim. Hayır, Albayım; biraz olsun yaratmak istiyorum. Az vaktim kaldı çünkü albayım.

²⁵ Beni lafa tutmayın albayım; onlar gelmeden hayallerimi bir düzene sokmalıyım ki, at yarışları arasında kimseye farketirmeden düşüncelerimi sürdürebileyim. Tehlikeli oyunlar albayım: Salonda at yarışları. Bilge Bilge. Sonunda ‘*I found my love you*’ albayım. Sevmeden olmuyor. Bilge Bilge. Düşünelim düşünelim.

of man's situation. Besides, having allegorical names makes the characters of *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* free from the boundaries of the past and present as these names bring the past and the present together in the same text. Furthermore, as a reaction to the realist characters of the realist tradition, it has already been mentioned that Molloy, Moran and Hikmet represent everyman. *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* is not a rewrite of *Everyman*, but some similar elements are fictionalised and employed according to the contemporary form and conditions by bringing the anonymous and the contemporary together. This makes the text of Atay a postmodern one. The protagonist Hikmet's name means 'Hidden Cause', and he stands for everyman as man's situation is a mystery to himself. Furthermore, his surname is 'Benol' meaning 'be-I'. "Atay... also attracts readers' attention by adding an existentialist tone to Hikmet's surname, Benol" (Ecevit 341). Hikmet longs for becoming a whole by recovering and uniting the lost parts of his identity. Ironically, he wants to resolve the conflict in his name by looking for answers. However, Hikmet's name reinforces his desperate situation as he wants to find his original self. Besides, the beloved colonel of Hikmet is called Hüsametdin 'Tambay'. His surname is also allegorical. As his surname indicates he is 'a sir who is a whole' as he is a perfect character that is created by Hikmet. He is a whole man because he is a product of Hikmet's imagination. About Hüsametdin Tambay's identity Hikmet is ready to object to all critics: "When they say Hüsametdin Tambay is the 'other-I' of Hikmet I would simply respond to them that the other-I is *your mother* [Hikmet insults those critics in a very childish manner]²⁶" (362). Moreover, Hikmet's ex-wife's name is 'Sevgi', meaning 'Love'. However, Hikmet never finds love with Sevgi, and he writes in Sevgi's diary that: "Neither of us belonged to this world. We tried to do something, good or bad. I'm guilty. I kept my difference as a secret from Sevgi. Those who had reacted

²⁶ Hüsametdin Tambay, Hikmet için 'öteki ben'dir dedikleri zaman, hiç çekinmeden 'öteki ben' senin babandır diye karşılık verebilirdim.

to our love proved to be right... That's what I can't bear²⁷ (252). Another character with an allegorical name is 'Bilge' meaning 'Sage'. Hikmet the narrator also emphasises the allegorical implication of their names: "Imagine that my dear sir: 'Hikmet' and Sevgi'. Two holy names! (I really haven't noticed that until now.) I mean dear 'Wisdom' and 'Love', you know? And you are 'Bilge', that is 'Sage'. (Why on earth I couldn't think about this fact!)"²⁸ (448). The real love in Hikmet's life is Bilge. She is one of the petty bourgeoisies from Hikmet's life before the slum. She teaches Hikmet English, and Hikmet admires her beautiful voice and elegant behaviour. Furthermore, Hikmet, like Molloy, either changes other people's names or uses just other meaningless letters to signify other people. To illustrate, Hikmet recalls a memory about a girl on the balcony opposite to his:

I looked at the balcony in the opposite direction, and I waited. The daughter of that house was going to come out to collect the clothes that are hung on the strings of the balcony. I didn't want to think about her, because I was thinking about you at the same time. I didn't want to be unfaithful to you even on the first day of our relationship. She appeared on the balcony. I pretended to look at you, but I was looking at her. She appeared on the balcony. Something 'little' was collecting the clothes: A w. I didn't turn on the light although it was dark. The little w should not have seen us. The light was on, we were seen. I stood up and leaned against the window²⁹ (127-8)

As in the quotation above, like Molloy, Hikmet uses some abbreviations to name some people, especially the female friends of Sevgi, or he even changes some names. For instance, when Hikmet is angry at Bilge, he mocks her:

²⁷ İkimiz de bu dünyanın insanı değildik. İyi kötü bir şeyler yapmağa çalıştık. Ben suçluyum: Sevgi'den farklı olduğumu gizledim. Gene de bizi yargılayanlara karşıyım. Ne yazık, sonunda haklı çıktılar... İşte buna dayanamıyorum.

²⁸ Düşünün bir kere beyefendiciğim: 'Hikmet' ve 'Sevgi'. İki ilahi isim. (Gerçekten de şimdiye kadar aklıma gelmemişti.) Sayın Bilge, 'Wisdom' ve 'Love' demek istiyorum senin anlayacağını. Sen de 'Bilge'sin yani 'Sage'. (Yahu nasıl oldu da bunları daha önce düşünemedim?)

²⁹ Karşıdaki balkona baktım, bekledim. Evin kızı, nasıl olsa çamaşırları toplamaya çıkacaktı. Onu düşünmek istemiyordum, çünkü seni düşünüyordum aynı zamanda. Daha ilk günden sana ihanet etmek istemiyordum. Balkona çıktı. Sana doğru bakıyormuş gibi yaparak, senin üstünden oraya bakıyordum gene de. Balkona çıktı. Küçük bir 'şey' çamaşır topluyordu: Bir w. Hava hafifçe karadığı halde ışığı yakmamıştım. Küçük w'nin bizi görmemesi gerekiyordu. Işık yandı, ortaya çıktık. Ayağa kalktım, sırtımı pencereye dayadım.

Women are stupid, my colonel: They only know how to perceive and wait for things. I call her [Bilge] stupid. And ironically she graduated from the faculty of philosophy! Ha-ha. I'm making fun of her. I call her *Bilmezge*. She studied philosophy instead of sitting at home and waiting for a good spouse. Did she make a mistake? And her name is Bilge. Ha-ha. She knows nothing³⁰ (277).

As mentioned before, Bilge means 'sage' in English, but Hikmet deconstructs her name by calling her *Bilmezge*, meaning ignorant or witless.

The social life, according to Atay, is a game: "We all form small groups to play our daily games by watching each other [unconsciously]³¹" (TO 348). Hikmet thinks that people tend to lead their lives and play the roles assigned by others' expectancies. However, for Hikmet a game is a dangerous means to reach his true self. As Cevat Çapan mentions in the foreword of the book, "Hikmet Benol prefers to deal with reality by making up games. Thus, Oğuz Atay's 'wise human' or 'knowing human' turns into a 'playing human'" (TO 7). In other words, Çapan claims that, for Atay, "Homo Sapiens" is dead and "Homo Ludens" (8) is created out of it. According to Alex Thomson,

Any attempt to stabilize [the truth] and offer an interpretation of a [literary work] by appealing to the [writer's] intentions, to his critical writings, will narrow and reduce our experience of the text as contradictory or paradoxical. What makes the [text] literary is its resistance to any attempt to reduce it to being the vehicle for one message or another (311).

Accordingly, Hikmet as a Homo Ludens dares to play games, and with the help of his games he deconstructs conclusions and answers. What Hikmet tries to achieve is not uncovering the truth about life. On the contrary, he tries to display the absurd and contradictory sides of "truth" and offer dangerous games instead of totalising conclusions: "Games ... are the best interpretations of the reality... Who can intervene in our games? We can judge everything as

³⁰ Kadınlar aptaldır albayım: Sadece sezmesini ve beklemesini bilirler. Ona, aptalsın diyorum. Bir de felsefe fakültesini bitirmiş. Ha-ha. Onunla alay ediyorum. Bilmezge diyorum ona. Evinde dikiş dikip koca bekleyeceğine felsefe okumuş. Fena mı etmiş? İsmi de Bilge. Ha-ha. Hiç bir şey bilmiyor.

³¹ Küçük topluluklar olarak, birbirimizden bağımsız davranarak ve birbirimizi seyrederek günlük oyunlarımıza başlarız.

we want to³²” (TO 71). Hikmet’s dangerous games, however, never correspond to reality. The more he makes up stories, the more he is estranged from his environment. He successfully fails to adjust to the rules set by his society. As Ecevit underlines, “this dangerous game played by an individual, who has much more different values than his society has, can be considered either successful or fruitless” (1989: 38).

Like Molloy and Moran, Hikmet Benol is also a fictive subject who does not resemble any characters from the realist tradition. Particularly, Moran and Hikmet totally reject reality. Neither of them is satisfied with the ‘answers’ as they are gifted men who can see and hear nature and the cosmos as a whole: “The modern man is a person who is aware of the contradictions in the world and has a new insight to (re)consider things according to this new view” (Ecevit 1989: 43). Moran can hear ‘the voice’ and tries to understand what it says, and Hikmet also passes into a new form or an unnamable one by ‘falling’: “Hikmet grows away from reality, his falling is a mental action; it is a story of abandoning artificiality and sordidness, and entering into an abstract life”(Ecevit 1989: 44).

4.2. The Use of Language in *Molloy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*

Language in the first episode of *The Trilogy*, *Molloy*, and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* can be analysed from a poststructuralist view, and so how the texts deconstruct themselves can be displayed. *Molloy* is also important as in it Beckett reflects his postmodernist tendencies and his ideas on the matter of language. Beckett’s use of language most resembles that of Atay’s in his book, *Molloy*. Both Beckett and Atay are interested in the relationship between language and reality, and that is also a significant concern of postmodern thought.

As mentioned before, poststructuralism and postmodernism are similar in certain respects because the poststructuralist theories also have ideas on the

³² Oyunlar... gerçeğin en iyi yorumlarıdır. Kim karışabilir oyunlarımıza. Her şeyi istediğimiz gibi yargılayabiliriz.

nature of language and its relationship with reality. Poststructuralism like structuralism questions the relationship between reality and language. On the one hand, in the realist tradition, 'the individual' is accepted to be able to apprehend and comprehend 'a real world' through his senses and mind. From this perspective, language is absolutely representational, which means that words can depict the real world in an accurate or recognizable manner. Thus, language is the product of the individual who means and creates something. On the other hand, poststructuralism assumes that language itself creates 'reality', not a capable man. So, reality is something constructed as Mary Klages also puts it:

Poststructuralist theories agree that language is the most important factor in shaping our conceptions about life, ourselves, our world, and literary texts. Rather than language reflecting the 'real world', language creates and structures everything we can know about 'reality'. Furthermore, rather than being speaker of language, we are products of language. Language speaks us. Because all truths are relative, all supposedly 'essential' constants are fluid, and language determines reality, there is no such thing as definitive meaning. There is only ambiguity, fluid meaning, and multiplicity of meaning, especially in a literary text (51).

Due to the idea of *différance*, language cannot convey the meaning, as it can be said that "in the very hold [this word has] upon us, [language] betrays a loose vocabulary, the temptation of a cheap seduction, the passive yielding to fashion, the consciousness of the avant-garde, in other words—ignorance" (Derrida 1998: 6). For both Beckett and Atay language has the utmost importance because its power of being a tool to convey meaning or thought is abandoned. All the words, in *Molloy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, lose their symbolic power and become non-functional:

And truly it little matters what I say, this or that or any other thing. Saying is inventing. Wrong, very rightly wrong. You invent nothing, you think you are inventing, you think you are escaping, and all you do is stammer out your lesson, the remnants of a pensum one day got by heart and long forgotten, life without tears, as it is wept (*M* 32).

Therefore, words can no longer signify anything. As Hikmet reveals, "No, words were deceptive; words were little traps that took us away from the

real³³, (210). Atay like Derrida has no faith in language as a means of conveying meaning. Therefore, Hikmet states,

I sometimes visit Mrs. Nurhayat, we sit together without saying a word. Ahh, not saying a word is so nice... Man, of course, wants to talk, complain about his problem and wants to be justified. But, words betray man, man betrays himself. He hates himself. The widow woman makes me coffee, lights my cigarette³⁴ (385).

In Beckett and Atay, the chain of signification in which words can signify signifieds collapses, and so the meaning is indefinitely deferred. What Beckett and Atay do in their narratives is an attempt to show this deferral or the failure of language. When language is used to depict reality, ironically a gap is created by language itself. Neither Beckett nor Atay proposes a solution to the problem of the inefficiency of language to represent the “real”. They just try to show this problem. Actually, this is what they celebrate in their texts, which can be considered as an expression of interface. They experiment with words not to attain a meaning but to show the interface or the gap between the words and facts.

4.2.1. Language and Selfhood

The poststructuralist thought displaces some of the most accepted ideas from the humanist tradition. In the humanist way of thinking, the ‘self’ is taken as a conscious and rational being that is able to discover the truth out there. However, the poststructuralist ‘subject’ empties the traditional understanding of self, as it is no longer able to deduce ‘meaning’ or ‘truth’:

Within the poststructuralist model, language as structure produces *subjects*, who write, speak, and use signs, but only as the vehicle through which language works, rather than as original creative beings; and *texts*, which are combinations of signs or signifiers which pre-exist any particular subject, and which are the units in the structure of language which are combined according to the structure’s rules (grammar) to create meaning (Klages 89).

³³ Hayır, kelimeler aldatıcıydı; kelimeler, bizi gerçeklerden uzaklaştıran küçük tuzaklardı.

³⁴ Bazen Nurhayat Hanıma gidiyorum; karşılıklı susarak oturuyoruz. Konuşmamak ne iyi, bir bilsen. İnsan elbette konuşmak istiyor; dert yanmak, haklı çıkmak istiyor. Fakat kelimeler insana ihanet ediyor, insan kendine ihanet ediyor. Kendinden nefret ediyor. Dul kadın iyi: Bana kahve pişiriyor, sigaramı yakıyor.

As Klages states language creates subjects, it is not created by them. Selfhood is not something natural. The idea that subject uses language to survive is turned into the idea that language uses subjects. Moreover, the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan introduced his ideas on psychoanalysis in the light of Derrida's theories, turning psychoanalysis from a humanist theory into a poststructuralist one. According to Lacan, 'I/a unified conscious self is only an illusion created by Western Humanist thought. For Lacan, "elements in the unconsciousness - wishes, desires, images - are all signifiers, and they are usually expressed in verbal terms. These signifiers form a 'signifying chain': one signifier has meaning only because it is not some other signifier... there are no signifieds" (qtd. in *Literary Theory* 75). Therefore, as there are no signifieds nothing is stable or guaranteed, in Derrida's sense, "there is no way to stop sliding from one signifier to the next" (75). Therefore, being a stable 'I/self', for Lacan, is a process of trying to fix or to stop the circulation of the chain of signifiers. When the person gets a 'self' he is accepted into the realm of language or vice versa. Moreover, language helps wo/man to reinforce the artificiality of the illusory 'self'; "a-self-in-language" (83). In other words, language creates speaking subjects which have originated from "a never-ending lack or the centrelessness" (83).

In *Molloy* language also creates and underlines the constructedness of the subjects in the texts, Molloy and Moran. As Sheringham states, "[in *Molloy*] the dimension in which language is considered is not as a tool but as a medium in which human subjectivity is reflected" (75). The problematic relationship between language and selfhood is also displayed in the communication between Molloy and the sergeant in the police station:

He listened to his subordinate's report and then began to interrogate me in a tone which, from the point of view of *civility*, left increasingly to be desired, in my opinion. Between his questions and my answers, I mean those deserving of consideration, the intervals were more or less long and turbulent. I am so little used to being asked anything that when I am asked something I take some time to know what...I hasten to answer blindly, fearing perhaps lest my silence fan their anger to

fury...I had no papers...nor any occupation, nor any domicile, that my surname escaped me for the moment and that I was on my way to my mother...And I suddenly remembered my name, Molloy. My name is Molloy, I cried, all of a sudden, now I remember. Nothing compelled me to give this information, but I gave it, hoping to please I suppose (*M* 22-3).

In any civilisation, language enables man to integrate into his society. Language that pre-exists Molloy makes him a piece of the society in which he used to live. When Molloy is taken under custody his language forces him to give his name. The reader can never be sure whether the name really belongs to him or not. Moreover, the sergeant also asks if “that name [is his] mother’s name” (23) or if his “mother’s name is Molloy too” (23); and he answers: “Very likely. Her name must be Molloy too” (23). Here, it is obvious that language that is the combination of signifiers or signs is the most important factor in shaping one’s conceptions about himself or herself. First forgetting, then exposing, and after that denying the name ‘Molloy’, he deconstructs the idea that man is the speaker of language and s/he gets a fixed identity through it. Moreover, Molloy constantly attracts the reader’s attention to his inability to understand ordinary language: “The words I heard were heard [...] as pure sounds, free or all meaning ... the words I utter myself [...] were often to me as the buzzing of an insect” (50). He reinforces the separation of the signifier from the signified. ‘The real’ attained through language is nothing more than another construct like language itself. “Rather than language reflecting the ‘real world’, language creates and structures everything we can know about ‘reality’” (Klages 51). Moreover, Gerry Dukes claims that

Thus, Molloy on the comedy of communication for one who has let lapse his subscription to that social sign system we call language. For Molloy, then, speech has been reduced to a meaningless buzz” (qtd. in *Beckett in the 1990s* 198).

Molloy is constantly in conflict with language. Although he knows how to use which tense for which incident, some signifiers are always inefficient or they simply do not allow him to express his thoughts: “My life, my life, now I speak of it as of something over, now as of a joke which still goes on, and it is

neither, for at the same time it is over and it goes on, and is there any tense for that?" (36).

As mentioned before, the separation of 'Cartesian-man' from his 'non-Cartesian other', in Lacan's and Derrida's sense, leads to isolation in both Molloy and Moran, and Davies states, "language tries to confirm a false independent personality which does not really exist, and doubts itself all the time" (qtd. *Cambridge Companion to Beckett* 47-8). In the second part of the first book, the subject changes, and that is also a proof of the poststructuralist idea that nothing is stable and fixed, but rather things/people are fluid, changing and unstable as they are socially constructed. In the Moran part, the subject is now called Jacques Moran, not Molloy any more. In a flux no names or pronouns can cling to a meaning, and Moran, whether he is the first phase of Molloy or another different subject, is constructed in his own discourse, environment and culture by language. He is another man who uses the pronoun 'I'. As a signifier, its signified constantly changes according to its user.

What Beckett wants to emphasize is the undetermined and inefficient nature of language to designate 'selfhood'. Therefore, the first thing employed in this part of the text is a word-play concerning a name that is given to both father and son:

My name is Moran, Jacques. That is the name I am known by. I am done for. My son too. All unsuspecting. He must think he's on the threshold of life, of real life. He's right there. His name is Jacques, like mine. This cannot lead to confusion (*M* 92).

Beckett criticizes Western thought in which language is considered fixed and meaningful, and when Moran claims that having the same name as his son cannot cause any confusion, Beckett ironically uncovers the relativity and subjectivity of language. In the sentence "His name is Jacques, like mine" (92), the two signified objects have nothing in common, but signifiers are the same. Although Moran denies it, this situation is a source of confusion for the narrator. Before his journey, Moran is under the influence of his 'clear and consistent real life', and so he narrates his belief in the power of language in

communication. Yet, in the course of the text all the words that used to signify things and convey meaning to him start to disappear or lose their power. The more he gets rid of the power of language the clearer he can see how once language was effective to create a self and a life for him:

I could not understand what was happening to me. I found it painful at that period not to understand. I tried to pull myself together. In vain. I might have known. My life was running out, I knew not through what breach (*M* 103).

As it is a retrospective tale, Moran the narrator has a new point of view after the journey he took, and now he is able to evaluate his previous identity and knowledge about other people like Molloy:

I knew then about Molloy, without knowing much about him. I shall say briefly what little I did know about him. I shall also draw attention, in my knowledge of Molloy, to the most striking lacunae. He had very little room. His time too was limited. He hastened incessantly on, as if in despair, towards extremely close objectives. Now, a prisoner, he hurled himself at I know not what narrow confines, and now, hunted, he sought refuge near the centre... He rolled his head, uttering incomprehensible words... This was how he came to me, at long intervals. Then I was nothing but uproar, bulk, rage, suffocation, effort unceasing, frenzied and vain. Just the opposite of myself, in fact. It was a change. And I saw him disappear, his whole body a vociferation, I was almost sorry (113-4).

The subjects in *Molloy* split into many pieces. When the “proliferation of the Beckettian subjects” (Gendron 53) starts, it can never be stopped. Moran also learns this truth when he looks for Molloy:

The fact was there were three, no, four Molloys. He that inhabited me, my caricature of same, Gaber’s and the man of flesh and blood somewhere awaiting me. To these I would add Youdi’s were it not for Gaber’s corpse fidelity to the letter of his messages [...] I will therefore add a fifth Molloy, that of Youdi [...] There were others too, of course. But let us leave it at that, if you don’t mind, the party is big enough (115-6).

As mentioned before, like Molloy the other characters are also proliferated in the multiple names such as Mrs. Loy changes to Lousse, then Sophie, and Ruth becomes Edith and then Rose. They all prove Beckett’s idea of the impossibility of ever forming a whole subject.

As a poststructuralist text, *Molloy* deconstructs itself by depicting its characters as nothing but merely products of language. Moran before the quest for Molloy is under the influence of the ideology that thoroughly constructs him. As Klages defines ideology,

ideology, or ideologies, are the ideas that exist in a culture; there will typically be one or several kinds of religious ideologies, for example, and political ideologies and aesthetic ideologies, which will articulate what, and how, people can think about religion, politics, and art, respectively (128).

Also in poststructuralism, an ideology functions as an illusion. Ideology gives Moran ideas about how to understand himself, his life and others. As it is emphasized in the quotation above, before his journey, Moran's language had values, ideas and images that tied him to the society. The language of Moran before the quest also reveals the language of Moran's own culture and society:

According to Mikhail Bakhtin, in the everyday speech of any person living in society, no less than half (on the average) of all the words uttered by him will be someone else's words (consciously someone else's), transmitted with varying degrees of precision and impartiality (or more precisely, partiality) (Klages 339).

However, after the journey, Moran becomes aware of the fact that the ideology provided him with a false selfhood, and he can see how that ideology shaped his life by imposing some judgments, and it had contradictions in itself.

Beckett's characters lack their own identity as they remind one of Deleuze's 'virtual objects', "an entity that escapes determination, and in particular humanization....Never fully present, they are also never entirely absent. They have the property of being *and* not being where they are, wherever they go" (qtd. in "A Cogito for the Dissolved Self" 51).

As for Hikmet's situation, it can be said that the same influence of language also works on Hikmet, constructing him as a subject. Hikmet, who now lives in a slum, can understand how he used to be a slave of words, and he can now play with words and make fun of his former self:

Words, my colonel, do not convey any meanings. "What, my colonel, do words signify?" "What did you say?" "WORDS! My colonel".

“What do we try to mean through words?” “Which words, Hikmet?” I don’t even understand why I have you with me?
“All words. Words in general”.
“What do you mean, lad?”
“Come on, I mean words, you know. For example, butterfly”.
“What do you mean saying butterfly?”
“Butterfly, you know, it is known by everybody”. He opened his hands and closed them, gesturing a butterfly.
“Ha, that butterfly?”
“Yeah, that butterfly”.
“Do you want to learn where the origin of the word comes from?”
At least we can hold onto that question: “Yes”.
“I don’t know³⁵” (101).

Atay deals with the relationship between words and selfhood especially in naming his characters. As mentioned before, Hikmet’s surname is ‘Benol’ that problematizes the situation of its owner. Atay plays with words to reveal the insufficiency of words to signify man, so he makes fun of words and the people who so tightly stick to one dimension of words. Words can be anything but not things considered as stable. By naming his subjects with such words as Benol, Tambay and ‘Hikmetamca’, Atay mocks the “stable” nature of both words and people. The word Hikmetamca is especially worth paying attention to because Mrs. Nurhayat’s little son, Salim, calls Hikmet “Hikmet amca”, meaning ‘Uncle Hikmet’. His voice echoes, “Hikmet*amca* is funny, funny Hikmet*amca*³⁶” (TO 110). When the two words are combined the Turkish word “tam” is formed, meaning ‘whole’ in English. Hikmet repeats how the kid addresses him and wants to underline the irony about words and selfhood.

According to the poststructuralist idea, language is a symbolic system of signs, and these signs are composed of a chain of signifiers. So, the meaning is scattered among the signifiers. One signifier leads to another signifier in a

³⁵ Kelimeler, albayım, bazı anlamlara gelmiyor. “Kelimeler, albayım, hangi anlama geliyor?” “Efendim?” “KELİMELER! Albayım. Hangi anlamda kullanıyoruz onları?” “Hangi kelimeler Hikmet?” Sizi neden yanımda dolaştırıyorum bilmem ki? “Bütün kelimeler. Genel anlamda kelime.” “Ne demek istiyorsun oğlum?” “Kelimeler canım işte. Mesela kelebek.” “Ne kelebeği?” “Kelebek canım, bildiğimiz kelebek.” Ellerini açtı, kapadı. “Ha, o kelebek” “Kelimenin aslı mı nereden geliyor?” Bu soruyu unutamam hiç olmazsa: “Evet.” “Bilmiyorum.”

³⁶ Hikmetamca komik, komik Hikmetamca.

fragmented fashion. The same pattern is applicable to man during the process of becoming a ‘self’. When man tries to be a consistent entity, he feels a sense of fragmentation in his entity. The reader is presented with many Hikmets in the course of the book. Moreover, the fragmentation is not only available for male characters, the Molloys and Hikmets; another female subject, Bilge, is also presented as a self-scattered person:

Then [Hikmet] suddenly forgot about himself. With himself he forgot all the other Bilges he lived with in his own head: Bilge the married, Bilge who broke up with somebody, Bilge the teenage, Bilge the maid, Bilge the prostitute, the passionate Bilge, Bilge in her thirties, Bilge in her twenties, the naïve and ignorant Bilge, the sly and seducing Bilge, Bilge the friend of his wife, Bilge the lover of his friend...Bilge the student, Bilge with black socks, Bilge the secretary of Hikmet and Bilge in all books³⁷ (164).

In both *Molloy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* language is the most influential element to construct, shape and manipulate the characters. Moreover, language even hinders man from being a ‘total’ entity as man can only reveal himself within the limits of words and dialogues. In this sense, Colonel Hüsamet’in meeting with Bilge is also significant as “the more he [Hüsamet’in] speaks about himself, the more he begins to lose his true entity. He was getting more and more transparent. It was Hikmet, who formed him in this way as he depicted him with his legendary words³⁸” (296). In contrast, “Mrs Nurhayat would not open her mouth to say something. The widow woman has no small calculations like some people who start talking in order to ‘prove’ their identity, whereas she never needs to talk and show her selfhood as a counter-

³⁷ Sonra bir süre kendini unuttu. Kendisiyle birlikte, kafasında daha önce yaşamış olduğu bir çok Bilge’yi de unuttu: Evli Bilge, ayrılmış Bilge, genç kız Bilge, hizmetçi Bilge, fahişe Bilge, ihtiraslı Bilge, soğuk Bilge, otuz yaşında Bilge, yirmi yaşında Bilge, saf ve bilgisiz Bilge, kurnaz ve baştançıkarcı Bilge, karısının arkadaşı Bilge, arkadaşının sevgilisi Bilge... öğrenci Bilge, siyah çoraplı Bilge, müdür Hikmet’in sekreteri Bilge ve bütün kitapların Bilgesi.

³⁸ Fakat her sözüyle gerçek varlığını gittikçe kaybettiğini, gittikçe saydamlaştığını seziyordu. Bütün suç Hikmet’indi. Çevrelerinde bir efsane havası yaratmış; en tabii en alışılmış olayları bir destan havasına bürünmüştü.

response to others³⁹” (385). Moreover, for Hikmet, all the words in dialogues are details, not meaningful conversations:

He was tired. “I’m sick and tired of all these details” complained he. Then I talk about true issues and so commit crimes. They tell me if these dialogues didn’t exist there would not be life. Who knows, if these dialogues weren’t talked about and if life didn’t exist I would find the opportunity to manifest myself and feel negatively about everybody else. Sevgi would talk with her eyes, my colonel, and Bilge uses absurd words⁴⁰ (286).

As it is proven in the characterisations of Molloy, Moran, Hikmet, Bilge, Mrs. Nurhayat and Colonel Hüsametdin, they are all formed and used to emphasize the role of language in the construction of selfhood. Molloy, Moran and Hikmet all emphasize how they are born into language and are henceforth subjected to language.

4.2.2. The Problem of Miscommunication

Language, in Beckett’s and Atay’s texts, creates a lot of problems, and it goes beyond its well-known purposes. Language plays tricks on man’s process of signification. When Molloy is given a shelter by Lousse but Molloy takes it as his replacement of her late dog, his ideas about her parrot reveal his views on communication: “She had a parrot, very pretty, all the most approved colours. I understood him better than his mistress. I don’t mean I understood him better than she understood him, I mean I understood him better than I understood her” (*M* 37). This account about the parrot is very significant in displaying the two dimensions of the impossibility of communication. First, as two human beings Molloy and Lousse are unable to have a proper dialogue, but Molloy clearly states that it is easier to understand even a parrot. Second, his narration of the problem of communication is displayed even at the time of

³⁹ Nurhayat Hanım hiç söze karışmaz; aman işte biri konuşmaya başladı varlığını ortaya koydu, dur ben de bir şey söyleyeyim kişiliğimi göstereyim gibi küçük çabalamalar içinde değildir dul kadın.

⁴⁰ Yorulmuştu. “Bu ayrıntılardan yoruluyorum,” diye yakındı. Ondan sonra da asıl meselelerde suç işliyorum. Bunlar konuşulmazsa hayat olmaz, diyorlar bana. Kim bilir, belki bunlar konuşulmasaydı, belki hayat olmasaydı ben de kendimi gösterme fırsatını bulurdum, herkes hakkında kötü şeyler hissetmezdim. Sevgi, gözleriyle konuşurdu albayım; Bilge de saçma kelimelerle konuşuyor.

narration. That is, Molloy puts forward a statement, “I understood him better than his mistress” (*M* 37), but he immediately notices the probable misunderstanding and restates it, “I mean I understood him better than I understood her” (37).

A certain combination of words does not necessarily convey a meaningful and sound communication between the addresser and the addressee. Furthermore, when Molloy is with the valet in Lousse’s house, he cannot respond to his questions properly and chooses to communicate with him by playing a “little game” (43) that can be called a dusting game. Moreover, towards the end of part one, Molloy sees a man and guesses him to be a charcoal-burner. There is a ‘communication’ between him and Molloy: “I asked him to show me the nearest way out of the forest. I grew eloquent. His reply was exceedingly confused. Either I didn’t understand a word he said, or he didn’t understand a word I said, or he knew nothing, or he wanted to keep me near him” (84). After this dialogue, it is understood that Molloy put the charcoal-burner to death. Besides, language plays tricks on Molloy’s memory and he narrates: “And then sometimes there arose within me, confusedly, a kind of consciousness, which I express by saying, I said, etc., or, Don’t do it Molloy, or, Is that your mother’s name? said the sergeant, I quote from memory” (88).

The text of *Atay* is also full of incidents when Hikmet and Colonel Hüsametdin start to talk; their communication always reaches dead ends:

“You always torture yourself, Hikmet” says Mr. Hüsametdin. Hikmet responds: “Yeah, you are right, my colonel!” he takes the paper from the coffee table: “Manhood is dead. Maybe it has never lived. Maybe I have never had something called manhood. I must have been dragged into false dreams in my own cell. I thought my cowardice was my manhood. I assumed loneliness to be manhood. In Western cultures they do not take such things seriously, my colonel. They know all these things. They see through a man’s soul. But they are not happy either, my colonel. Nonetheless, they know the importance of not chasing false dreams. It’s the lesson they take after so many centuries!” He pretended to ponder about something: “I wonder how these men could interpret my dream last night? “We will never be able to write this play” said Mr. Hüsametdin. “Why do you think so,

my colonel?” “Now you will start to tell your dream. Sometimes I wonder among us who is the older one, I cannot understand it⁴¹” (259-60).

Hikmet and Hüsamettin cannot have a meaningful and intelligible dialogue whenever they try to achieve one. As it can be seen in the quotation above, Hikmet’s thoughts and feelings are so confusing and absurd that the signifiers he uses to tell these thoughts become insufficient to reach their signifieds. Like Molloy, he sometimes feels to have said “too much or too little, which is a terrible thing for a man with a passion for truth like me” (M 34).

4.2.3. The Expression of Interface

As two literary texts, *Molloy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* do not correspond to any specific interpretation. In neither of these texts, language corresponds to the world. However, the discordance derived from the lack of associations between signs and objects is not the objective of *Molloy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*. As David Pattie claims, “the quest for a non-relational art was in itself paradoxical and doomed to ultimate failure, because the art produced would always stand in some relation to the world in which it was produced, even if that relation was difficult to describe” (158-9). In contrast, both Beckett and Atay try to create a world for possible word plays and voices where the restriction of the world is useless.

Interface is a word borrowed from the terminology of computer science. In this field of study, interface

generally refers to abstraction that an entity provides of itself to the outside. This separates the methods of external communication from internal operation, and allows it to be internally modified without affecting the way outside entities interact with it, as well as provide multiple abstraction of itself. It may also provide a means of

⁴¹ “Kendini yakıp bitiriyorsun oğlum Hikmet,” dedi Hüsamettin Bey. Hikmet atıldı: “Değil mi albayım?” Kağıdı sehpadan aldı: “İnsanlık öldü. Belki de hiç yaşamamıştı. Belki de benim insanlığım diye bir şey yoktu. Ben hücremde yanlış hayallere sürüklenmişim. Korkaklığımı insanlık sanmışım. Yalnızlığı insanlık saymışım. Batıda böyle şeylere önem vermiyorlar albayım. Biliyorlar bütün bunları: insanın ruhunu okuyorlar. Fakat onlar da mutlu değil albayım. Ne var ki, boş hayallere kapılmamayı biliyorlar. Kaç asrın tecrübesi, kolay mı?” Düşünceye dalmış gibi yaptı: “Dün geceki rüyamı nasıl yorumlardı bu adamlar acaba?” “Bu oyunu biz hiç yazamayacağız,” dedi Hüsamattin Bey. “Neden, albayım?” “Şimdi de rüyamı anlatacağım. Bazen düşünüyorum da, hangimiz daha ihtiyar diye, bulamıyorum.

translation between entities which do not speak the same language, such as between a human and a computer. Because interfaces are a form of indirection, some additional overhead is incurred versus direct communication (Interface Computer Science, Wikipedia)

Also, Fatih Altuğ defines interface as, “Concepts that enable two linguistic areas to come together and talk to each other. However, the same concepts avoid mingling with each other and violating each other’s rules” (qtd. in *Eleştirel Bakış Açılıarı* 292-3). In the texts of Beckett and Atay the same interface is used and expressed between the words and reality. Judith Dearlove also expresses how Beckett’s technique (interface) works:

...Instead of belabouring the lack of associations between a speaker and his world, Beckett explores the possibilities of a voice unrelated to any world and hence unrestricted. Instead of focusing attention upon the divorce of the mind from the external world, he explores the internal, arbitrary and self-appointed worlds the mind creates. The interior focus in turn makes possible the highly self – conscious and arbitrary constructions of the ‘residua’ in which the artifice and intricacy themselves suggest a more fundamental absence of order. Structure works in opposition to content. In the most recent fictions, rather than attempting to deny, implode, ignore, or controvert the metaphysics of a relational art, Beckett permits the elements of the traditional narrative to commingle with those of a non-relational narrative. It is no longer necessary to isolate or exacerbate either realm. The pieces reconcile, but do not reunite, an impotent speaker with an unknowable world. Beckett accepts both the impossibility of a non-relational art and the improbability of a relational one, and in doing so he finds yet another shape for the ambiguity, fluidity and uncertainty of the human condition (5).

The world, which is created by *a voice unrelated to any world and unrestricted*, is the fiction of both Atay and that of Beckett. The interface enables both Molloy and Hikmet to ponder on words, and they experience a different feeling. Moreover, in the interface, the reader cannot find any dominant discourse, a ‘safe’ reading and ‘normal’ people. The interface is an alternative world where signifiers can never convey a meaning and fail to be understood. Therefore, it is the world of attempts and ‘failures’.

Both Atay’s and Beckett’s art can be considered an expression of interface between the chaos (the non-relational) and the word (the relational).

In other words, they write not to reflect, explain or find a solution to the problem of the real world. Their texts function like an interface between the ordered-world and the world-in-chaos, and they separate these two different worlds from each other, but at the same time, neither of these worlds is neglected. Therefore, the reading of such texts is not an 'easy' experience. In these texts, words are used but in a non-functional way to underline a non-functional man who "is stuck in the narrow road between life and death" (Yüksel 7) in no specific time and place. The man who feels to be stuck in his body and this world is displayed in a tragicomic style. Both Molloy and Hikmet are depicted when they wait and try to fill the 'void' by making up games. Also, Molloy's game about sucking pebbles starts just after his pondering on death: "Yes, the confusion of my ideas on the subject of death was such that I sometimes wondered, believe me or not, if it wasn't a state of being even worse than life" (*M* 68).

They were pebbles but I call them stones. Yes, on this occasion I laid in a considerable store. I distributed them equally between my four pockets, and sucked them turn and turn about. This raised a problem which I first solved in the following way. I had said sixteen stones, four in each of my four pockets these being the two pockets of my trousers and the two pockets of my greatcoat. Taking a stone from the right pocket of my greatcoat, and putting it in my mouth, I replaced it in the right pocket of my greatcoat by a stone from the right pocket of my trousers, which I replaced by a stone from the left pocket of my trousers, which I replaced by a stone from the left pocket of my greatcoat, which I replaced by the stone which was in my mouth, as soon as I had finished sucking it. Thus there were still four stones in each of my four pockets, but not quite the same stones. And when the desire to suck took hold of me again, I drew again on the right pocket of my greatcoat, certain of not taking the same stone as the last time. And while I sucked it I rearranged the other stones in the way I have just described. And so on (*M* 69).

The interface of the texts is expressed through these games. The concept of game is an important tenet of poststructuralism and is very important in both of the texts because game is the most important element when the power and mystery of imagination are manifested in language. That is, a game apparently proves the collapse of "the chain of logic" (Yüksel 16). Molloy's game about

pebbles is also one which expresses the interface between the impossibility of communication and absurdity of life that is doomed to end in death. As for Hikmet, he is also obsessed with the idea of playing games, but, unlike Molloy, he calls his games dangerous. Other characters, like Mr. Selim, also made up stories to forget the unbearable pains of existing and waiting when he was abandoned by his wife, Nazlı:

I got used to this game of waiting [for passengers] in a very short while. I sometimes stopped by train stations to check the timetables. I sometimes asked them by phoning. Besides, I called to learn if there was any delay on the days of train arrivals. While I was waiting in the restaurant I was living the excitement of welcoming the train with other welcomers. After a few waiting [games], I grew to be more brave. I was waving my hand, shouting and calling people. There were people who mistook me for one of their relatives and waved to me... Custom officers and I became acquaintances in a very short time, because there was not any other person who welcomed as many passengers as I did. So I had some privileges... Then I was allowed to go to the platform and wait for my passengers there too. The custom officers were surprised and they always told me, "How many passengers you have every day, Mr. Tahsin!" I didn't want to reveal my real identity and made up a Tahsin, as this adventure was out of the character of Mr Selim... I couldn't put an end to this event and I never did. I kept going to the train station. Fortunately, Nazlı turned back home, but I was dragged to the station even after this. Then I gave up this addiction which was like alcoholism⁴² (TO 207-8).

As in these two previous quotations, the thing expressed with games is the interface between 'the unnamable' and the signs. Neither Atay nor Beckett

⁴² Bu oyuna kısa zamanda alıştım. Arada tren istasyonuna uğrayarak tarifelere bakıyordum. Bazen de telefonla soruyordum; ayrıca, trenin geleceği gün de telefon ederek tehir olup olmadığını öğreniyordum. Lokantada beklerken de, artık trenin geliş saatini bilmenin heyecanını, bütün karşılayıcılarla birlikte yaşıyordum. Birkaç bekleyişten sonra daha cesur olmuştum. Elimi hararetle sallıyor, bağıryor, sesleniyordum. Beni, tanıdıklarından birine benzetip, bana da el sallayanlar oldu... Gümrük memurlarıyla da artık ahbab olduğum için, bana bazı imtiyazlar tanınıyordu... Daha sonraları, perona çıkıp beklememe izin verdikleri için, yolcularımı peronda da görmeye başladım. Tren gelince hemen yolcuların arasına karışıyordum; sonra da gümrükçülere görünmeden ortadan kayboluyordum: Yolcularımı (genellikle birden fazla olduklarını söylüyordum) peronda buluyordum ve kalabalığın içinde beni göremiyorlardı tabii. Gümrükçüler, bazen masama oturuyorlar; ne kadar yolcun var Tahsin Bey, diyorlardı. Beni pek sevmişlerdi. Onlarla Selim Bey olarak konuşmak garibime gittiği için; bu maceranın, Selim Beyin günlük hayatı dışında bir gidişi olduğu için, ben karşılayıcılık işinde Tahsin Bey olmuştum... Fakat ben, bu bekleme huyumdan hemen vazgeçemedim: Bir süre istasyona sürüklendim durdum. Sonra, beni rakı içmek gibi saran bu iptiladan da vazgeçtim.

has an objective like expressing one by using the other. On the contrary, they both show the inexpressibility of these concepts. Being aware of this fact, they create a world for 'the thing which is felt but not-identified' and 'signifiers' in their text to make them *work together*, but they are not united to convey a meaning. In other words, Beckett and Atay, feeling the unreliability of language, try to find a new kind of expression that goes beyond the principle of logic, causality and language. In the interface, the only thing these fictional characters have is an unquenchable passion to speak, especially about things that are always hard to understand and verbalise like 'dance' or 'music'. To illustrate, on his way home, Moran's thinking about his bees and their dance is a matter of mystery for both himself and the reader:

...for my bees danced, oh not as men dance, to amuse themselves, but in a different way, I alone of all mankind knew this, to the best of my belief. I had investigated this phenomenon very fully. The dance was best to be observed among the bees returning to the hive, laden more or less with the nectar, and it was involved with a great variety of figure and rhythms. These evolutions I finally interpreted as a system of signals by means of which the incoming bees satisfied or dissatisfied with their plunder, informed the outgoing bees in what direction to go, and in what not to go. But the outgoing bees danced too. It was no doubt their way of saying, I understand, or, Don't worry about me. But away from the hive, and busily at work, the bees did not dance. Here their watchword seemed to be, every man for himself, assuming bees to be capable of such notions. The most striking feature of the dance was its very complicated figures, traced in flight, and I had classified a great number of these, with their probable meanings. But there was also the question of the hum, so various in tone in the vicinity of the hive that this could hardly be an effect of chance. I first concluded that each figure was reinforced by means of hum peculiar to it. But I was forced to abandon this agreeable hypothesis. For I saw the same figure (at least what I called the same figure) accompanied by very different hums. So that I said, The purpose of the hum is not to emphasise the dance, but on the contrary to vary it. And the same figure exactly differs in meaning according to the hum that goes with it. And I had collected and classified a great number of observations on this subject, with gratifying results (*M* 169).

Moran is amazed by the complex sign-language of bees because, according to Sheringham, "[Moran's] delight springs from the conviction that his hypothesis could never lead to definitive knowledge and from his sense that while the

bees' dance, like Molloy's knife-rest, admits of infinite interpretations, it sanctions none...it affronts man's remorseless, self-serving, anthropomorphism" (65). Bees' language which is beyond words is a mystery for Moran, and so it fascinates him so deeply.

Like Moran, Hikmet also deals with a mysterious way of communication which is difficult to understand with man's reasoning. For instance, Mrs. Nurhayat and he listen to radio programmes which sound like a piece of 'music' to Hikmet:

I only listen to sounds as I am not interested in meaning. It is said that there are people who feel relieved listening to birds' chirping sounds, I am like them. I also listen to news, talks on some specific issues, discussions, panel discussions, commercials and special programmes in the very same manner, like listening to birds. Each bird has its own sound: that's why; I can immediately understand which programme it is without listening to words... In other words, the widow woman and I are in an abstract situation, actually, we deal with the essence of everything⁴³ (385-6).

Apart from word-games, the interface is sometimes shaped through silence as long as words permit it. Harry Vandervlist claims that "throughout *Molloy*, words are presented as *material*. Silence is a space they can fill, and their function is a negative one: to fill up, blacken, block out. Molloy says that "to restore silence is the role of objects (*M* 13)" (qtd. in *Beckett On and On* 180). The words paradoxically create silence as they lack the ability of conveying any meaning in postmodern texts. Furthermore, as José Carnero-González states,

Roughly speaking, silence in Beckett is more akin to Pinter's special type of silence, that is, when "a torrent of language is employed." In Beckett it is not so much a question of a telling silence substituting non-existent words in the process of communication; it is not a question of not finding the proper words. The presence of silence in Beckett is even more paradoxical and discouraging, if that is at all possible; it is more subtle and painful: words exist, they do exist, and the proper ones at that; but even though words are present and are

⁴³ Ben yalnız sesleri dinliyorum, anlamlarla ilgili değilim. Kuş sesi dinleyerek huzur duyanlar varmış; onlar gibiyim. Haberleri de, belli konular üzerindeki konuşmaları da, tartışmaları, açık oturumları, reklamları da, özel programları da aynı şekilde dinliyorum. Her kuşun kendine özgü bir sesi var: Sözleri dinlemeden hangi program olduğunu biliyorum bu yüzden.

used, they say nothing, they transmit nothing (qtd. in *Beckett in the 1990s* 205).

Rubin Rabinovitz also mentions a new type of language, a mode of expression, in Beckett's fiction:

Beckett developed a new type of figurative language, a mode of expression [like the expression of interface] at once less specific and more suggestive than ordinary discourse. This new language is based on Beckett's sense of how we use images of physical objects to depict mental entities, as well as on the belief that elusive figurative expressions provide the best medium for representing indistinct mental processes. The result is a unique way of utilizing interlinked extended metaphors for portraying inner reality (208).

The interface is also felt through some recurring words in both of the texts. These words have some connections with other words. Beckett dismantles the relationship between the signifier and the signified. As Rabinovitz states, "Beckett associates related images by creating interrelated groups – strings – of metaphors. A string, in the sense I am using it, is a group of metaphors linked by one or more transitional ideas" (123). It is not only Beckett who uses such strings in his text but Atay also employs such word games. To illustrate, when Moran meets a man who resembles himself he utters the word "arse" (150) to refer to his mouth:

But all this was nothing compared to the face which I regret to say vaguely resembled my own, less the refinement of course, same little abortive moustache, same little ferrety eyes, same paraphimosis of the nose, and a thin red mouth that looked as if it was raw from trying to shit its tongue (151).

As in deconstructive reading, the string of ideas and their meanings are altered, and they are used in a way opposite to what they have already referred to. Thus, 'the mouth' designates 'the arse', and so Beckett can also annihilate the 'original version' of the relationship. The same idea of problematizing the relationship of signifiers is also manifested in the text of Atay. Hikmet also problematizes the word "gecekondu" (slum house). In public opinion, living in a slum is very derogatory. However, Hikmet prefers to live there and refers to reality by this word: "This Hikmet was not like Dumrul and he wasn't like

Fikret at all. He lived in a wooden house. He called this house a thing, what was that: something that appeared-at-night or was built at night.⁴⁴ In this thing, there were two other things apart from Hikmet, two things like fictional characters⁴⁵” (455). Metaphorically, the slum house is a kind of confinement for Hikmet which represents his ‘confused mind’ in spite of its negative connotations. He plays dangerous games in this house or in the house of his mind. Despite being a shabby house, it means a lot to Hikmet. Therefore, the room of Molloy and the house of Moran also mean the very same thing to them. In other words, the meaning (the signified) that was once attached to every single word is now emptied by both Beckett and Atay as they prefer to melt the ‘word-meaning’ idea in their texts.

In this mode of expression metaphors are so placed as to allow a careful questioning by the observer or the reader. Similarly, in the expression of interface, the interplay between signifiers is never limited. Therefore, in spite of the failures of the characters the reader is tempted by the nature of the unknown. Due to the discrepancy (created by the failure of signs) between language and reality, both Hikmet and Moran are influenced by all kinds of communication that is beyond-language or that is beyond the signifier-signified logic. That is to say, they celebrate this failure and take it as an opportunity to deal with other communication ways which are free of human logic and understanding. Therefore, they, in their narrations, create, live and express the interface in which human beings can never question ‘the communication’ to comment whether or not it can convey a meaning. Finally, between the non-relational and the relational, the interface is a third domain in which both art and theory mingle with each other. In fact, neither *The Trilogy* nor *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* is just a work of art or just a theory. What Beckett and Atay did is

⁴⁴ In Turkish culture a house in a slum is constructed at night without any governmental permission. Therefore, it is described with two words ‘gece-kondu’ in Turkish.

⁴⁵ Bu Hikmet, Dumrul gibi değildi, Fikret gibi hiç değildi. Üç katlı ahşap bir evde yaşardı. Bu eve kendisi şey derdi, ne derdi: gecegeldi, geceoldu gibi bir şey işte. Bu gecegeldide Hikmet’ten başka galiba iki şey daha vardı, roman kahramanı gibi iki şey.

philosophizing or theorizing art/literature in their texts, so that is the expression of interface.

4.3. The “Death of the Author” in *Malone Dies* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*

4.3.1. The Author In *Malone Dies* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*

The problem of placing the author in a text was deliberated by Derrida, Foucault and Barthes, and they all, more or less, reached a consensus: Language particularly in the literary texts is not referential; but instead, signifiers, in any given text, create a system where no authority, including ‘the author’ of the text, can dwell. Therefore, both Atay and Beckett, noticing this system, express it without any worries about proving their existence. They willingly become anonymous as long as they keep writing. They accept being ‘dead’, and this is obviously a “voluntary effacement” (Foucault 117). In the game of writing they are ‘dead men’.

In order to emphasize the idea of ‘the removal of the author’ both Beckett and Atay portray their protagonists as writers of their own texts. These two writers represent the ideas of their writers. That is to say, Malone in *Malone Dies* and Hikmet in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* depict the process of the death of the author. In the course of *Malone Dies* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, these two author-narrators struggle to write, but they cannot ‘write’ until the end of the book and their deaths. In this sense, the beginning of writing coincides with the end of the book and of the author in Beckett and Atay, too.

Malone is portrayed in a room, in bed, writing an inventory of his remaining possessions and his memories. His dealing with writing is demonstrated in the following quotation:

The exercise-book had fallen to the ground. I took a long time to find it. It was under the bed. How are such things possible? I took a long time to recover it. I had to harpoon it. It is not pierced through and through, but it is in a bad way. It is a thick exercise-book. I hope it will see me out. From now on I shall write on both sides of the page. Where does it come from? I don’t know. I found it, just like that, the day I needed it. Knowing perfectly well I had no exercise-book I rummaged in my possessions in the hope of finding one. I was not

disappointed, not surprised. If tomorrow I needed an old love-letter I would adopt the same method (209).

It is the dramatization of journal keeping. H. Porter Abbott suggests that Malone's keeping a journal resembles that of Crusoe:

A more likely inspiration for this novel [*Malone Dies*] in particular is the dramatization of journal-keeping in *Robinson Crusoe*: "My ink, as I observed, had been gone some time, all but a very little, which I eked out with water a little and a little, till it was so pale it scarce left any appearance of black upon the paper" (p. 102). This passage – even its style – seems especially close to the following in *Malone Dies*: "So little by little my little pencil dwindles, inevitably, and the day is fast approaching when nothing will remain but a fragment too tiny to hold. So I write as lightly as I can" (223) (qtd. in *Beckett's Eighteenth Century* 52).

However, his journal-keeping is much different from that of other characters in diary-fiction. That Malone writes much more differently from others is implied by Begam:

In the last chapter of *Diary Fiction* ("The Writer's Laboratory: Samuel Beckett and the Death of the Book"), H. Porter Abbott searchingly explores how *Malone Dies* breaks down the conventions of diary writing in a way that brings "into focus not just a type of writing but writing itself," while at the same time having the effect of "undoing the book" (Abbott: 1984 185).

Malone, as the author of his book, announces his probable and expected decay: "I shall soon be quite dead at last in spite of all" (*MD* 179). However, he makes an equation between death and telling stories/playing games as he adds, "[w]hile waiting I shall tell myself stories, if I can... Now it is a game, I am going to play" (*MD* 180). In other words, the more stories Malone tells, the less he will be alive. It is understood that until the moment of his death writing cannot be achieved. Therefore, his games and stories can only be regarded as the rhythmic 'contractions' that prepare the real birth of writing. Thus, his death will ironically give birth to his writing. At the same time it can be regarded as the author's birth of death. His writing starts his death, so one end is a beginning of something else. In this sense, Malone stresses this fact by using an oxymoron: "born grave" (*MD* 195) and stating, "I am being given, if I

may venture the expression, birth to into death” (*MD* 285). In *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, Hikmet states that “a man who is just about to die should not be afraid of anything. What is death? It is the end of the incidents that I dreamed to be able to live one day or it is only a supposition of man” (*TO*399). The death as a motive interestingly produces new beginnings. In spite of the idea of the death of the narrator and the author, the texts of both Atay and Beckett always work against the definitional boundaries and closures, so “it moves toward *écriture*” (Begam 144).

A very similar idea is evident in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* as well. Hikmet, who is still alive, does his best to produce a piece of writing, but it cannot be obtained totally until the end of the text. He, like Malone, announces he will write and play a game. He tries to write it in spite of his several unsuccessful attempts:

“Write a simple game for us” said Bilge while she was bringing them some coffee. “A game that we can understand.” The entrance of Bilge and coffee has made the dreams fade. “We will write a violent game”, Hikmet responded. “We will slam you all with the violence of our loneliness and being tolerated⁴⁶” (*TO* 147).

Malone and Hikmet are not successful because they cannot get rid of the temptation of the ‘will to power,’ the well-known philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche⁴⁷. Neither Malone nor Hikmet can escape their worldly wills, and when their writings are considered, they always come and go between two ultimate states of existing: Living and dying. In other words, although they mention their approaching deaths, they can never completely let their memories go. In the course of the books, their worldly struggles (i.e.

⁴⁶ “Bize basit bir oyun yaz,” dedi Bilge, kahveleri getirirken. “Anlayabileceğimiz bir oyun.” Bilge ve kahve, hayalleri eritti. “Size şiddetli bir oyun yazacağız,” diye karşılık verdi Hikmet. “Yalnızlığımızın ve hoşgörülüşüğümüzün bütün şiddetiyle hepinizi, yerden yere vuracağız.”

⁴⁷ Nietzsche calls the act of creating a purpose in life the "will to power". He divides this concept into three levels. The lowest level is the will to physically control others. The next level is the will to control the body. He puts the majority of humanity into this category. The highest level is the will to control the mind, through self-actualization, and according to him, very few people reach this level of will.

remembering the past and trying to know themselves) hinder them from creating ‘writing’ until the ending.

On the other hand, even the attempts of playing games or writing stories for both Malone and Hikmet eliminate their authority as powerful writers. That is, their ‘plays’ work against their writers’ existence and dismiss them. Furthermore, both Malone and Hikmet live dilemmas as they “vacillate between the works of introspection and the game of narration, between an *auctor sapiens*, who struggles to know himself, and an *auctor ludens*, who wants only to play” (Begam 126).

The dichotomy between self and story is displayed in both *Malone Dies* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*. Both narrators try to write stories and play games, but what they never want is finding some traces of themselves in these stories. As Malone states when he tells the story of Sapo,

What tedium. And I call that playing. I wonder if I am not talking yet again about myself. Shall I be incapable, to the end, of lying on any other subject? I feel the old dark gathering, the solitude preparing, by which I know myself, and the call of that ignorance which might be noble and is mere poltroonery. Already I forget what I have said. That is not how to play. Soon I shall not know where Sapo comes from, nor what he hopes. Perhaps I had better abandon this story and go on to the second, or even the third, the one about the stone. No, it would be the same thing. I must simply be on my guard, reflecting on what I have said before I go on and stopping, each time disaster threatens, to look at myself as I am. That is just what I wanted to avoid. But there seems to be no other solution (*MD* 189).

Hidayet brother, I also have to write to you. I have to tell some things to some people. This (dramatic) play issue confuses me. I go back and forth... I can't go. This matter of play is maybe an “affair” from my own past. Sorry, I couldn't find any other word as I'm in a hurry. Please, ask it to your lieutenant or look it up in a dictionary [...] I left my plays behind. All were productions of an unskilled person. It's been many years since the last time I stepped on the stage for the very first time. I also acted on the stage, facing the lights and a dark and shapeless crowd that moved but was not seen with many arms, heads...⁴⁸ (*TO* 59)

⁴⁸ Hidayet, kardeşim, ben de sana bir iki satır yazmalıyım; bazı şeyleri birilerine anlatmalıyım. Bu temsil meselesi aklımı çok kurcalıyor. Bir geri gidiyorum, bir ileri... gidemiyorum. Bu oyun işi geçmişe ait bir “keyfiyet” galiba benim için. Kusura bakma, aceleden başka kelime bulmadım. Teğmene soruver, ya da bir sözlüğe falan bakarsın... Benim oyunlarım çok geride

Both narrators try to write stories about some characters, but they are always trapped and find themselves writing their own memories. Their awareness of this trap does not help them stop, and they keep mingling the storytelling with self-reflection.

The matter of the narrator and narrated is also worth paying attention to in *Malone Dies* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* because there is a small difference concerning the texts' handling of the relationship of narrator-narrated. However, one thing that is certain is that it is very complicated in both texts. Unlike Hikmet, Malone is the writer who makes up two characters, Sapo and Macmann, whereas in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, Hikmet leaves it blurred whether Mr. Hüsamettin, Nurhayat, and others are real or fictive characters. At least, Hüsamettin and Nurhayat are not like Sapo and Macmann. This means that *Malone Dies* emphasizes the artificiality of self. When Malone narrates the story about Sapo, it is explicitly told to the reader that a voice manipulates Sapo's every movement: "When he halted it was not to better to think or the closer to pore upon his dream, but simply because the voice had ceased that told him to go on" (206). Therefore, it can be said that Malone is the author of Sapo, and Beckett is the author of both Malone and Sapo, so the author factor is decentred, and it is even emptied by debilitating the role and place of the author in the text. In other words, when the place of Malone is shaken by the narrated, his narration automatically kills its author.

As for Macmann, there are many resemblances between him and his narrator, Malone. Both Malone and Macmann have similar lives. On this matter, Begam states,

Generally speaking, both men begin as tramps, making their way on the open road, and both end in what appear to be institutions, cared for by others. The two sides of their lives – the road and the room – are more specifically represented by the accoutrements they either possess or have lost [...] Both men are attended by women who take

kaldı. Hepsi de acemi işi oyunlardı. İlk sahneye çıktığımdan beri yıllar geçti. Işıklara karşı, karanlık ve şekilsiz bir kalabalığa karşı, kımıldayan ve görünmeyen ve çok kollu ve çok başlı ve yalnız ön sıradakileri ayaklı bir kalabalığa karşı ben de bir zamanlar oynamıştım.

care of them, and in each case this attention involves a well-regulated circulation of feed bowls and chamber pots [...] Finally and most significantly, both men meet their ends (or what appear to be their ends) following an actual or contemplated blow to the head. This is delivered in Malone's case by an unnamed visitor to his room ... In Macmann's case it is threatened by the apparently insane Lemuel (133).

These similarities also put the narrator and his powers under question. Because of the constructed nature of every narrator, the same idea is applicable to the concept of 'the author' of *The Trilogy*, Beckett. Upon this subject, Begam uses the word "vice-existers" (133) for Sapo and Macmann. Even the subject-object binary is questioned through the narrator-narrated. The author is not the centre any more.

Malone kills his own characters, which are his vice-existers, revealing their and *his own* fictionality. He does not only mention Sapo and Macmann, but he also includes some other characters of other books in his list of murders:

But let us leave these morbid matters and get on with that of my demise, in two or three days if I remember rightly. Then it will be all over with the Murphys, Merciers, Molloy's, Morans and Malones, unless it goes on beyond the grave. But sufficient unto the day, let us first defunge, then we'll see. How many have I killed, hitting them on the head or setting fire to them? (236-7).

Then, Beckett also kills Malone, who also stands for his vice-exister. The death of Malone automatically causes its own creator's death as well. Beckett as an author is dead. With the very same attitude, Hikmet also mentions the names of some (of his) fictional and nonfictional people:

... I just bow in front of Caesar's, Cleopatra's and especially Antonius' memories. Heine, Schlick, Hroboviç, Marat, De Gaulle, Rousseau, Mr. Selim, mother, father, Mrs. Safiye, police officers, soldiers, police captains, strangers, young men and those other figurants that I cannot mention their names here...⁴⁹ (435-6).

⁴⁹ "Onunla birlikte Sezar, Kleopatra ve özellikle Antonius'un hatıraları önünde eğilirim. Dostlarımız Heine, Schlick, Hroboviç, Danton, Marat, De Gaulle, Rousseau ve adını sayamayacağım daha bir çok kahraman ve Selim Bey, Rüstem Bey ve annem, babam, ve Safiye Hanım ve adını sayamayacağım birçok kişi ve askerler, asıllar, polisler, komiserler, bir yabancılar, bir genç adamlar ve adını sayamayacağım daha bir çok figüran..."

In *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, Hikmet sometimes believes that both Hüsametdin and Nurhayat are figments of his imagination.

I talk to them in my head, my colonel... Even those characters that I invented in my head oppose me. However, the characters in books listen to each other and this is what they do all the time. That's why they cannot have any time to earn money or a living; they are all nobles of the thought. Even the professors of philosophy cannot have as much time as they do. I also wanted to be a hero of a book like those I invented. That's why I came to this slum house. I was going to invent a story that nobody had ever met before. The inventor was going to live with his heroes⁵⁰. (329-30)

“You know my weak point” “I know them, my colonel. Therefore, you –only you- are going to see the game for nothing. Everybody is going to buy tickets, but you aren't. Because they are real and because you are not real, my colonel. If you really want to see the game this means that you are not real. Then you are also in the game – consequently in my head. Because one who really wants to see the other and plays the game with him can only live in the head of that person [...] Oh! No, my colonel you cannot be real. Such a retired colonel cannot exist. Such a slum house cannot be real... You are getting more and more imaginary [...] You and the widow woman are two imaginary characters⁵¹ (351).

First, Atay creates affiliations between Hikmet and himself concerning their marriage, love affairs and their former bourgeois way of living. Then some incidents are experienced by Hikmet, Hüsametdin and Nurhayat in the slum house. Then, however, Hikmet blurs the boundary between what is real and what is not as he doubts the existences of both Hüsametdin and Nurhayat: “Maybe in the afternoon of a hot day I fell asleep on the sofa on which I lay

⁵⁰ Onlarla kafamda konuşuyorum albayım;... Kafamda yarattığım kahramanlar bile bana karşı çıkıyor. Oysa kitapların kahramanları, birbirlerinin olmadık dertlerini dinlerler; bütün vakitlerini buna ayırırlar. Bu yüzden yemek içmek ve para kazanmak için zaman bulamazlar; hepsi de düşüncenin soylularıdır. Felsefe profesörleri bile düşünceye onlar kadar zaman ayırmazlar. Ben de hayalimde yarattıklarımla birlikte bir roman kahramanı olmak istiyordum albayım. Gecekonduya da bu nedenle geldim. Kimsenin eşine raslamadığı bir olay yaratacaktım. Yaratıcı, kahramanları ile birlikte yaşayacaktı.

⁵¹ “Benim zayıf tarafımı biliyorsun.” “Biliyorum albayım. Bunun için de siz-sadece siz-oyunu bedava seyredeceksiniz. Başka herkes bilet alacak. Çünkü onlar gerçek; çünkü siz gerçek değilsiniz, albayım. Oyunu gerçekten seyretmek istediğinize göre siz gerçek değilsiniz. Siz de oyunun- dolayısıyla kafamın- içindediniz. Çünkü, bir insanı gerçekten seyretmek isteyen, onun oyununa gerçekten katılan biri, o insanın ancak kafasında yaşayabilir... Olmaz, albayım, siz gerçek olamazsınız. Böyle bir emekli albay gerçek olamaz... Gittikçe, Hikmet'in kafasının bir ürünü oluyorsunuz.” Dul kadın da siz de rüya kahramanımanız, albayım.

down: The voices of my wife and maid went away from me and you approached me, my colonel. You all came to me⁵²” (353). So the reader directly has doubts whether Hikmet is a real man or not. His authority is undermined. Furthermore, if Hikmet’s authority is shaken the same idea can be applicable to Atay as an author.

At the end of *Malone Dies* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, the two authors, Malone and Hikmet, representing the death of their authors and the author in general, die, but their deaths cause new beginnings for things that are ‘unnamable,’ but it is clearly not ‘I’. “My story ended, I’ll be living yet... That’s the end of me. I shall say I no more” (*MD* 285). As for Hikmet’s case, the death of Hikmet at the end of the novel is much more certain than that of Malone’s. Hikmet dies, and he contentedly says, “I am thinking” (*TO* 462) that is “düşünüyorum” in Turkish. Interestingly, if the syllable -nü is removed from this word it means “I am falling” that is “düşü(nü)yorum” in Turkish. Thus, the death of Hikmet also designates the notion of the death of the author. Both “authors”, Malone and Hikmet, die in the end. However, in neither of the books does death stand for closure. Thus, Hikmet’s death promises hope for others, and Malone’s death is also hopeful because his death causes the emergence of another text in *The Trilogy*. In postmodernist fiction their sacrifice helps them produce ‘art’ even after their deaths. When Hikmet, seemingly commits suicide, his death pioneers some changes for others. Salim is also encouraged to write stories: “Mother” said Salim. “The teacher assigned us a project: a free writing. While I was waiting for you I wrote a play like Uncle Hikmet and my brother, Hidayet. In this play, Uncle Hikmet...” “You, shut up” reproached him his mother⁵³” (474).

⁵² Belki de sıcak bir günün öğleden sonrasında, uzandığım kanapede uyukladım: Karımın, hizmetçinin sesleri uzaklaştı ve sizler yaklaştınız albayım. Hepiniz bana doğru geldiniz.

⁵³ “Anne,” dedi Salim. “Öğretmen ödev vermişti: Serbest konu. Sizi beklerken ben de bir oyun yazdım, Hikmet Amca ve Hidayet ağabeyim gibi. Bu oyunda, Hikmet Amca ...” “Sus bakalım,” diye payladı onu Nurhayat Hanım.

Both Malone and Hikmet imply their inevitable deaths in order to ‘create texts’. As Pattie asserts, for the deconstructors and poststructuralists,

the text is not the clear indication of the author’s intention: the author has no control over the way in which the text upsets any stable interpretation. The phrase ‘death of the author’ became a staple in poststructuralist criticism... by this they argued that this was not the primary importance in analysing a text. The author has no authority: neither does the text, because under careful scrutiny, it can be shown to sabotage itself. All that is left to critic is the active process of interpretation, which is never-ending, because it cannot reach a conclusion in a definite, finally established truth (156).

Malone and Hikmet, as authors, devote their existences to creating ‘a text/writing’ so the beginning of writing occurs (Erkan 67). In both of the novels the narrators/characters voluntarily die. The deaths of the “authors” of the stories, who are obviously Malone and Hikmet, also correspond to the notion of the death of the author. Besides, their texts are not the direct expressions of their understanding of the world: rather, texts are shown to be infinitely interconnected subversions of the writers’ initial intentions. All in all, as Beckett puts it, “What matter who’s speaking, someone said what matter who’s speaking” (qtd. in *Samuel Beckett and The End of Modernity* 121).

4.4. The “Death of Man” in *The Unnamable* and *Tehlikeli Oyuncular*

The death of man, as another matter in poststructuralism, can be elaborated with the famous writing of Michel Foucault in *The Order of Things*. As it is obvious in the quotation below, Foucault and many poststructuralists believe in the artificial nature of the concept of ‘man’ in Western Society:

If those arrangements [which define man] were to disappear as they appeared, if some event ... were to cause them to crumble, as the ground of Classical thought did, at the end of the eighteenth century, then one can certainly wager [*parier*] that man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea” (Foucault 387).

Beckett follows the ideas of Nietzsche concerning God and man. As mentioned before, in the Beckettian universe, which is abandoned by God, nothing can remain without experiencing changes, so Man is also prone to

change. In this sense, Foucault experiments with the ideas of Nietzsche by stating:

Perhaps we should see the first attempt at this uprooting of Anthropology - to which, no doubt, contemporary thought is dedicated -in the Nietzschean experience: by means of a philological critique, by means of a certain form of biologism, Nietzsche rediscovered the point at which man and God belong to one another, at which the death of the second is synonymous with the disappearance of the first, and at which the promise of the superman signifies first and foremost the imminence of the death of man. In this, Nietzsche, offering this future to us as both promise and task, marks the threshold beyond which contemporary philosophy can begin thinking again (1970: 341-42)

In Beckett's last novel in *The Trilogy*, *The Unnamable*, the handling of the matter of the death of Man differs from that of *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*. First of all, in *The Unnamable* Beckett, like Foucault and Derrida, tries to "develop a language that undermines the metaphysical and humanist traditions" (Begam 152). In Western thought the cogito means all the knowledge that a human being needs. Both Foucault and Derrida elaborate the concept of 'the unword'.

The question is no longer: How can experience of nature give rise to necessary judgements? But rather: How can man think what he does not think, inhabit as though by a mute occupation something that eludes him, animate with a kind of frozen movement that figure of himself that takes the form of a stubborn exteriority? (Foucault 1970: 323).

To 'deconstruct' philosophy, thus, would be to think – in the most faithful, interior way – the structured genealogy of philosophy's concepts, but at the same time to determine – from a certain exterior that is unqualifiable or unnameable by philosophy – what this history has been able to dissimulate or forbid (Derrida: 1972 15).

In other words, one can find a close relationship between Derrida's *différance* and Beckett's unnamable.

Différance has no name in our language. but we 'already know' that it is unnameable [innomable], it is not provisionally so, not because our language has not yet found or received this *name*, or because we would have to seek it in another language ... It is rather because there is no *name* for it at all (Derrida: 1982 26).

The Unnamable, as the subsequent part of *Malone Dies*, which is believed to erase the authorities of both the author and the book, presents to the reader an example of what a pure text/writing is. “Where now? Who now? When now? Unquestioning. Questions, hypotheses, call them that. Keep going, going on, call that going, call that on...” (TU 293). According to this formula of Beckett, the beginning of writing is employed in this part of *The Trilogy*. In this text, there is not a narrator and narrated, or it can be said that it is always obscure who is narrating or who is narrated: “I, say I” (U 293). The word-games again free Beckett from representation and expression. Here, the reader is able to hear the voice of the narrator, but it is never clear to determine who is who. “The Unnamable has not an ‘I’, until it says the word” (Pattie 69-70). Then the voice changes its mind and says: “It, say it, not knowing what... That is all rather obscure” (TU 293-311).

The voice often mentions Malone, and it says he hears some sounds whose source cannot be identified by it. He gradually prepares the reader to announce the end of man: “What kind of creature uttered it ... Not a human one in any case, there are no human creatures here, or if there are they have done with crying” (TU 298). “A speaking voice has dispersed itself across a field of grammatical and referential possibilities; a speaking voice has, in effects, dislocated itself” (Begam 160).

Once the boundary of being a man is surmounted, the thing or the state of being beyond it will be mentioned. This is what the voice tells the reader: “I don’t know why, I shall be able to go silent, and make an end, I know it ... Yes it is to be wished, to end would be wonderful, no matter who I am, no matter where I am” (304). The voice underlines the importance of portraying itself, not Malones, Murphys and Molloyes. Unsurprisingly, from what the voice says the reader cannot picture ‘a normal human being’:

I would gladly give myself the shape if not the consistency of an egg - with two holes no matter where to prevent it from bursting for the consistency is more like that of mucilage [...] No more obscenities either. Why should I have a sex, who have no longer a nose? All those things have fallen all the things that stick out, with my eyes, my hair –

without leaving a trace: fallen so far so deep, that I heard nothing perhaps are falling still, my hair slowly like soot still: of the fall my ears heard nothing [...] I'm a big talking ball, talking about things that do not exist - or that exist perhaps impossible to know, beside the point [...] And why big? Why not a cylinder? A small cylinder. An egg? A medium egg. No, that's the old nonsense. I always knew I was round, solid and round, without daring to say so: no asperities, no apertures. Invisible perhaps. Or as vast as Sirius in the Great Dog. Those expressions mean nothing. All that matters is that I am round and hard. There must be reasons for that - for my being round and hard rather than of some irregular shape and subject to the dents and bulges incident to shock. But I have done with reasons (307).

What the voice wishes is silence, but it says that it is obliged to speak and “invent another fairy-tale” (309) as that silence was taken from it years ago. It starts his first story with Basil/Mahood:

Decidedly Basil is becoming important, I'll call him Mahood instead, I prefer that, I'm queer. It was he told me stories about me, lived in my stead, issued forth from me, came back to me, entered back into me, heaped stories on my head. I don't know how it was done. I always liked not knowing, but Mahood said it wasn't right. He didn't know either, but it worried him. It is his voice which has often, always, mingled with mine, and sometimes drowned it completely. Until he left me for good, or refused to leave me any more - I don't know (*U* 311).

As the quotation above points, it is hard to say whether Mahood narrated the voice or the voice created him and resumed to be a narrator. “The real difficulty here consists in attempting to enforce traditional categories like ‘narrator’ and ‘narrated’ on a text that systematically denies such categories” (Begam 159). Therefore, Richard Begam proposes two other terms for it: “*Locutor* and *dislocution*” (159) that relate the operations of *différance* to narrative:

The locutor should not, in other words, be thought as a character so much as a depersonalized function, a locus or site from which discourse emanates. With the second term [dislocutor], I mean to suggest that the locutor has no fixed residence, that it carries on a kind of itinerant discourse, a locution without a location. Dislocution means that the ‘identity’ of the locutor is shifting and inconsistent: unlike a narrator, a locutor may speak with Basil's voice in one breath and Mahood's in the next (159).

Whether as the locutor or the dislocutor Mahood is both present and absent. The voice wants to tell one of Mahood's stories and it adds, "or quietly, stealthily, the story would begin, as if nothing had happened and I still the teller and the told" (312) in the story of Mahood. Furthermore, in a postmodern text no narrator can be regarded as trustworthy as the idea of the death of man indicates. The voice/locutor blames all the previous vice-existers or "avatars" (318), including Mahood, of "taking themselves for" (317) the voice itself and of manipulating or even killing it: "Having brought me to death's door, senile gangrene, they whip off a leg and yip off I go again, like a young one, scouring the earth for a hole to hide in" (317).

After the end of the book, it is time to annihilate the man in the text. Like the other characters in *The Trilogy* what reduces and limits Mahood is his being human. Furthermore, his name clearly stands for 'Manhood,' and he has a body, senses and a family. Mahood tells the reader his homecoming from an adventure: "In a word I was returning to the fold, admittedly reduced, and doubtless fated to be even more so, before I could be restored to my wife and parents, you know, my loved ones, and clasp in my arms..." (319-20). These features of Mahood confuse the reader. Moreover, the voice that is constantly ambivalent as it is 'both Mahood and itself,' erasing the logic of *either/or*, confesses that "mine was not to know, nor to judge, nor to rail, but to go" (324). The voice always tries to talk about itself:

It's of me now I must speak, even if I have to do it with their language. It will be a start, a step towards silence and the end of madness: the madness of having to speak and not being able to - except of things that don't concern me, that I don't believe, that they have rammed me full of to prevent me from saying *who I am*, where I am, and from doing what I have to do in the only way that can put an end to it, from doing what I have to do. How they must hate me! (*TU* 326, my emphasis).

As it is pointed out in the quotation above, the voice wants to define itself "with their language" (328). Therefore, it decides to tell a story that will be the last story about Mahood. Besides, the first story of Mahood is at that point ended, and a new story is announced by the voice.

The story is about 'a creature' which does not resemble the previous form of Mahood as it has no arms, legs or speech. It lives in a jar and is looked after by a chop-house proprietress, Madeleine: "And when snow fell she covered me with a tarpaulin still water-tight in places" (330). Their relationship depends on a kind of mutual interest. The creature is cared for well and in return it functions like an advertisement for the lady. "I represent for her a tidy little capital" (331). It even sees this situation as its "occupation" (334). After a while, the voice portrays this creature as stranger than it was: although it resumes existing, it is narrated as if absent. The dichotomy between 'existence and absence' is negated.

This woman is losing faith in me. And she is trying to put off the moment when she must finally confess her error by coming every few minutes to see if I am still more or less imaginable in situ. Similarly the belief in God - in all modesty be it said - is sometimes lost following a period of intensified zeal and observance, it appears. Here I pause to make a distinction. I must still be thinking. That jar is really standing where they say? All right, I wouldn't dream of denying it after all it's none of my business - though its presence at such a place about the reality of which I do not propose to quibble either does not strike me as very credible. No, I merely doubt that I am in it (346).

Feeling nothing, knowing nothing, he exists nevertheless: but not for himself, for others. Others conceive him and say "Worm is, since we conceive him". As if there could be no being but being conceived if only by the beer (349).

Before the voice goes into the details of the second story, it criticises the situation of Manhood by referring to Mahood: "Pupil Mahood, repeat after me, *Man is a higher mammal*. I couldn't. Always talking about mammals, in this menagerie. Frankly, between ourselves, what the hell could it matter to pupil Mahood, that man was this rather than that?" (340). The concepts and teachings about man which have been imposed by Western humanist thought are attacked by this voice/locutor. Moreover, the voice also lacks human features, senses, emotions, prejudices and false beliefs: "*Were I not devoid of feeling* his [Malone's] beard would fill me with pity" (295, my emphasis).

Besides, his perceiving of the time and place is much more different from that of human beings’:

For I am incapable not only of measuring time, which in itself is sufficient to vitiate all calculation in this connection, but also of comparing their respective velocities (301).

When the voice turns back to its story about a creature, it decides to give it a name: “But it’s time I gave this solitary a name, nothing doing without proper names. I therefore baptise him Worm. It was high time. Worm. I don’t like it, but I haven’t much choice” (340). At this point, the differences between Mahood and Worm can be seen, and this comparison is also useful to underline ‘the situation of man just before and after his death.’ The before-phase is described through Mahood’s story, and the after-phase with that of Worm’s.

As mentioned before, Mahood stands for Manhood with some specific expected features when man is concerned, a family, a life most importantly a regular body. However, “Worm is the first of his kind” (340). First, the main difference between Mahood and Worm is that “it is the characteristic of Mahood to note”, but “Worm cannot note” (342). Second, Worm, which is imprisoned in its jar, wears a collar. This is an ambiguous being which resists being consistent. In this sense, the voice approaches the point ‘unnamable’. However, after Mahood, the following creature ‘Worm’ cannot also be the unnamable. However, it is quite obvious that Beckett goes beyond the idea of human when he portrays a nonhuman creature like Worm. On this issue Begam states

The post-Mahood section of Beckett’s novel presents itself not as an unambiguous movement from one thing to another, a simple accession to unnamability, but rather as series of dissolving images, fade-ins and fade-outs, which have the effect of gradually, almost imperceptibly, shifting our frame of reference, of carrying us away from whatever residual identity. Mahood commanded delivering us into the murky regions that lie beyond. It is there that we discover the proto-character, Worm (163).

What the speaking voice cannot achieve is keeping silent because it is felt that language is bound to live on in a posthumous manner. This situation can also

be another side of the unnamable. That is to say, the death of man (and language) causes a situation that is unnamable. The dilemma is that one can neither speak (within language) nor can be silent (stay out of language), so the web of signifiers creates a prison from which no break is possible. This experience can never be named. As mentioned before, the result of this procedure is just a pure writing that is beyond being named. When the binaries are exceeded, Beckett devotes the last section of his text to finding a new third term that is different from both of the two sides of any binary system. Moreover, the idea in the last part of *The Unnamable* resembles the concept of Derrida, namely “tympanum” (Begam 182) that is also used in *The Unnamable* as well:

I'll have said it inside me, then in the same breath outside me. Perhaps that's what I feel, an outside and an inside and me in the middle. Perhaps that's what I am, the thing that divides the world in two, on the one side the outside, on the other the inside, that can be as thin as foil, I'm neither one side nor the other, I'm in the middle, I'm the partition, I've two surfaces and no thickness. Perhaps that's what I feel, myself vibrating. I'm the tympanum, on the one hand the mind, on the other the world, I don't belong to either, it's not to me they're talking, it's not of me they're talking (386).

“The ‘tympanum’ as used by both Beckett and Derrida represents another assault on binary opposition. To formulate it as a third term suggests, however, just the kind of demarcation the ‘tympanum’ seeks to avoid” (Begam 178). Therefore, Begam prefers to use the term “a region or zone” (178) in the text. In other words, it is impossible to define or name this region. Thus, it is a region where language ceases or fails to describe anything, especially man, but words keep flowing in the text.

Esslin asserts that the unnamable voice is speaking for the unidentifiable self:

... [*The Unnamable*] is thus the culminating point of a progressive exploration of the self: it reveals, in the end, that very centre of nothingness; ... the core of the self is pure potentiality, *le Néant* ... (143).

The death of man is a project which Beckett had in mind and carried out in a movement starting with Molloy, and continuing with Moran, Malone, Macmann, Mahood to the Unnamable. In other words, Beckett uses language in such a way in his writings that it works against the prevalent humanist traditions:

Michael Robinson suggested that Beckett's writing is an extended attempt to describe 'the Void of the Self',⁵⁴ an attempt that has failed, and must fail, because the self defies the definition. Similarly, David Hesla argued that Beckett's art is a self-consciously failed attempt to accommodate itself to 'the absurdity of human existence'⁵⁵ (qtd. in *Samuel Beckett's Artistic Theory and Practice* 96).

His aim is going outside the Cartesian boundaries or reaching the unnamable, paradoxically within the symbolic system. The dilemma is that language is an impossible and inefficient medium to express oneself, but getting rid of it is also impossible: "It will be the silence, where I am? I don't know, I'll never know: in the silence you don't know. You must go on. I can't go on. I'll go on (*TU* 418).

Atay's understanding of 'the death of man' is much more different from that of Beckett. In *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, the idea of the death of man is manifested in the attacks of Hikmet on the reflections of the long-prevalent ideas of Humanistic philosophy, and it is evident in the mythical games of Hikmet. As mentioned before, Western thought forces man to experience the Cartesian split and Hikmet the narrator knowing this insistence trespasses the boundaries to live a reunion with his authentic self in spite of the failure at the end of this task. Moreover, at the end of the text, Hikmet the narrator arranges a huge dinner which reminds both the characters of the novel and its readers of 'The Last Supper' of Christ. This religious analogy functions to underline the sacrificial death of man.

⁵⁴ From Michael Robinson's book *The Long Sonato of the Dead: A Study of Samuel Beckett*. London:Hart-Davis, 1969 p.38

⁵⁵ From David Hesla's book *The Shape of Chaos*. Minneapolis: Uni. of Minnesota Press, 1971 p.7

First of all, Hikmet is a man who is unable to hold on to his world. It is impossible for a man like Hikmet, who realises the ‘great lie’ named ‘man’. Therefore, he abandons his pretentious roles and masks in the past to live a happy life. “Atay himself was influenced by the book of Eric Berne called *Games People Play*” (Ecevit 2005: 344). In this book, Berne states, people use procedures and rituals to communicate:

The simplest forms of social activity are procedures and rituals. Some of these are universal and some local, but all of them have to be learned. A -procedure is a series of simple complementary Adult transactions directed toward the manipulation of reality. Reality is defined as having two aspects: static and dynamic. Static reality comprises all the possible arrangements of matter in the universe. Arithmetic, for example, consists of statements about static reality. Dynamic reality may be defined as the potentialities for interaction of all the energy systems in the universe (14).

As far as Berne is concerned, if one wants to achieve his autonomy he should lead a life which has nothing to do with the typical-behaviour-games (Ecevit 2005: 344) because a ‘game’ is

an ongoing series of complementary ulterior transactions progressing to a well-defined, predictable outcome. Descriptively it is a recurring set of transactions, often repetitious, superficially plausible, with a concealed motivation; or, more colloquially, a series of moves with a snare, or "gimmick" (Berne 19).

In this sense, Hikmet takes an innovative step to reach his autonomy by leaving everything behind, including himself, and to move into a slum house. As Hikmet talks to himself about this new experience, “I feel as if I didn’t live any more, and I feel like *watching* a man who once lived (*TO* 195). In other words, man can be dead as soon as a pure writing starts as in *The Unnamable*. What makes Hikmet write is his problems about the ontology, the depths of man (Ecevit 1989: 33). However, unlike the characters of the traditional bildungsroman novels, Hikmet cannot reach a resolution and live in integrity with his society as it is impossible for him.

Atay states that the break between man and his world is portrayed in Hikmet’s “dangerous games” (qtd. in *Ben Buradayım* 332). In one of his

games, Hikmet depicts a character that is called a 'library-mouse'. Hikmet the narrator seems to parody his intellectuality by depicting such a strange being:

Where did we stop last time? We were talking about the memories of the library-mouse. These memories were not of course written in the play form at first. After the death of the mouse I found them among his papers. And I changed them as I wished. And I applied them into my own life. And I made them unrecognizable. I learnt how to write a play as well. I learnt this skill from someone who wrote awful plays. As I mentioned before I used to learn lots of things from everyone else⁵⁶ (TO 361).

Although the library-mouse does not exactly resemble Mahood or Worm, the tone of the voice in Atay reminds the reader of the post-Mahood section in *The Unnamable*. The more the man concentrates on his inner world, where he focuses on his internal conflicts, the more he goes away from the outer realities occurring around him. Atay's narration of him is a bit Kafkaesque and a bit grotesque in this sense. On this matter, Ecevit claims that "in this part, the ironical atmosphere leads to the exaggerated features of the portrait of an intellectual, alienation of subjects and a distance gained by the reader when s/he interprets characters" (1989: 38). Man is depicted to be more grotesque because the metamorphosed or caricatured man (a mouse) quits his position of being *the subject of art*, but he begins to be *the object of art*, and "man becomes just a clown, not a hero in his chaotic world" (Yüksel, in a conversation). In *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* the narrator voice also states:

This man who reads and knows a lot couldn't see the simple games around him like characters in the books. Unfortunately, he was too naïve to see these mean games... I learnt a lot of things from him... I learnt the direct proportion between illnesses and knowledge. He had lots of illnesses concerning his lungs, ears and breathing. He also had an illness in his head and then he died⁵⁷ (358-9).

⁵⁶ Nerede kalmıştık? Kütüphane faresinin hatıralarından bahsediyorduk. Bu hatıralar oyun biçiminde yazılmamıştı. Farenin ölümünden sonra, kağıtları arasında onları ben ele geçirmiştim. Ve istediğim gibi değiştirmiştim. Ve kendi hayatıma uygulamıştım. Ve tanınmayacak hale getirmiştim. Oyun yazmayı da öğrenmiştim. Bu marifeti de, kötü oyunlar yazan birinden kapmıştım. Daha önce de belirttiğim gibi herkesten bir şey kapıyordum.

⁵⁷ Bu çok okuyan ve bilen adam kitaplardaki kahramanlar gibi etrafındaki küçük oyunları göremiyordu. Ne yazık ki, bu kötü oyunları anlayamayacak kadar saf yürekliydi... ondan çok şey öğrendim... Hastalık ve bilgi arasındaki bu doğru orantıyı da ondan öğrenmiştim. Birçok hastalığı vardı ciğerlerinden, kulaklarından ve soluk almaktan çekiyordu. Ayrıca kafasında da bir hastalığı vardı ve sonra da öldü.

Ecevit also comments on Atay's intellectual characters,

In Atay's novels, man begins to lose his physical faculties as he goes deeper and deeper in his inner world. Moreover, when the spiritual features reach their extremity the man can do nothing but dies or disappears at that point [as in the case of Hikmet]... the intellectual in the parody is a 'library-mouse'. While he is a man with strong spiritual traits, his materiality, or his body is sick, he suffers from tuberculosis (1989: 38-9)

Secondly, as mentioned above, Hikmet the narrator also underlines the death of man by including mythical games especially the sacrificial end of Jesus-Christ. In many parts of his text Atay alludes to some elements from Christianity. In part six which is called 'Bilge' Hikmet talks about the Apocalypse "that is the last book of the Bible written by Johanna, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus, which tells the end of manhood and the judgement day" (Ecevit 2005: 348). However, Atay is able to make it a game by his playful narration again. The four horse-riders of the Apocalypses are unfit people who cannot play social games and be happy in society:

In fact we want to punish ourselves with others. We don't deserve to live because we don't contribute to this society; we want to kill ourselves... We; Mr. Mehmet, the lotto man Arif, Mr. Muhsin and the team of Sivas founded a really powerful group... to be the four horse-riders of the Apocalypses⁵⁸" (TO 147).

In this sense, "the myth of the religious book is used to colour the grotesque scenery of the fiction, is estranged and turns into another game in the hands of Oğuz Atay" (Ecevit 2005: 348). For the very first time, the death of Manhood is announced with this religious and mythical game, and then, there are places where man is described as dead or divided into many pieces, as Hikmet announces it as a public notice in one of the newspapers; the headline is "The Death of Manhood" (256):

Manhood also died eventually. According to the latest news manhood, wh(o)ich has suffered from an illness, passed away yesterday...

⁵⁸ Aslında biz kendimizi başkaları ile cezalandırmak istiyoruz. Bu topluma katkıda bulunmak için ölmeyi hak ediyoruz; kendimizi öldürmek istiyoruz. Biz, Mehmet Bey, tombalacı Arif, Muhsin Bey ve Sivas ekibi çok güçlü bir grup kurduk... Apokalipsin dört atlısı olmak için.

Although some people thought that this was wordplay the researches done on it have shown that it was true. Yes, manhood does not exist any more...This huge loss of mankind made lots of people's hearts heavy and dragged them into such a dreadful darkness that many people have started to believe that one cannot talk about a world where manhood does not exist⁵⁹ (TO 255-256).

Atay, furthermore, being influenced by the idea of the 'death of man', which had a great impact on Western literature, problematizes the identity of his characters. He empties their meaning and turns them into mere letters in the end. Hikmet becomes an 'H' and Sevgi becomes an 'S'. "Wasn't the marriage just a game, my teacher? (No, it wasn't. Then, why didn't S tell it to H?)⁶⁰" (TO 119). In poststructuralism this idea is the deconstructing of 'I'. In the pages of Atay's text, first, man is negated and then divided into many pieces which contradict with each other. He portrays man as "multiple and non-totalitarian instead of a totalitarian and stable entity or conscious" (Sarup 31) "Last night in my dream I clearly saw a lot of Hikmets. Then I decided to write an encyclopaedia...the encyclopaedia of Hikmets⁶¹" (TO 332).

To sum up, both *The Unnamable* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* try to demolish the Cartesian epistemology within contours of the idea of the end of man. The idea of a modern subject who searches for the origin in him/herself eventually collapses. Both Beckett (with Malone and Worm) and Atay (with Hikmet "Benol") attempt to focus on the impossibility of reaching a subjective origin and they create successful tragedies by portraying their characters trying to find an unnamable origin. In this sense, it can be said that there is a relation between Foucault's notion of the death of man and both Beckett's and Atay's characters waiting for death; this is the death of the subject who becomes the

⁵⁹ Nihayet insanlık da öldü. Haber aldığımızı göre, uzun zamandır uzun bir hastalıkla pençeleyen insanlık, dün hayata gözlerini yummuştur... Bazıları bu haberi bir kelime oyunu sanmışlarsa da, yapılan araştırmacılar bu acı gerçeğin doğru olduğunu göstermiştir. Evet, insanlık artık aramızda yok... İnsanlık aleminin bu acı kaybı, birçok yürekte derin yaralar açmış ve onları ürkütücü bir karanlığa sürüklemiştir; o kadar ki, bazıları artık insanlık olmadığına göre bir alemde de söz edilemeyeceğini ileri sürmeye başlamıştır.

⁶⁰ Evlilik bir oyun değil miydi öğretmenim? (Değildi. Peki neden S. Bunu H.'ye söylememişti).

⁶¹ Dün gece rüyamda bu Hikmetler kalabalığını ilk defa açıkça gördüm. Bir ansiklopedi yazmayı düşündüm... Hikmetler ansiklopedisi.

object of cogito. *The Unnamable* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* show how one might move beyond the end of man, but both narrators of the texts acknowledge that no absolute transcendence is possible, as in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* man can find the solution in death, and in *The Unnamable* man is in a vicious circle in “a literary domain that is a world of contingency, of fiction and a world not of finding but of making” (Begam 183) that can continue into eternity.

4.5. Intertextuality and Metafiction in *The Trilogy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*

4.5.1. Intertextuality in *The Trilogy*

As mentioned above, the question of origin loses its importance when intertextuality is concerned in *The Trilogy*. To begin with, Beckett’s trilogy is full of allusions to literary classics. As Sheringham puts, especially, “*Molloy* is teeming with the discourses of Western culture; it mixes styles, registers, tones, combines the French language with English idioms and Irish references, engenders anachronism, and creates an overall effect of displacement” (78). Beckett, on the one hand, deconstructs other literary texts, and on the other hand, he distils from them a distinctively Beckettian element.

Molloy is full of reflections of Cartesianism, cultural references and myths that form a network of intertexts. To illustrate, in the Moran part of *Molloy*, when Moran begins to narrate his memories of the journey to Bally he evokes the myth of Sisyphus. In the cultural discourse Moran’s alluding to the figure of Sisyphus creates a comparison between his period of time and the ideas of Camus (Sheringham 80). In Camus’s *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, Sisyphus is eternally doomed to roll a big rock to the top of a slope that ceaselessly rolls back.

But I do not think even Sisyphus is required to scratch himself, or to groan, or to rejoice, as the fashion is now, always at the same appointed places. And it may even be they are not too particular about the route he takes provided it gets him to his destination safely and on time... This would keep hope alive, would it not, hellish hope. Whereas to see yourself doing the same thing endlessly over and over again fills you with satisfaction (*M* 133-4).

Like Camus, Beckett also thinks that hope is a kind of sickness that prevents us from seeing the true meaninglessness of life. In other words, hope blinds man. Furthermore, as for Moran's case, it can be said that not only 'hope' but also 'forgetting the past' (man's memory) makes him go on and live this unbearable life: "And perhaps he [Sisyphus, who forgets the previous journeys,] thinks each journey is the first (*M* 134).

Intertextuality, in the Beckettian sense, changes our reception of the classics, "one literary text echoes, or is inseparably linked to, other texts" (qtd. in *Palgrave Advances in Samuel Beckett Studies* 31). The classics are works that present mythic representations of the human condition and mythic narratives have great intertextual valence. All the protagonists of *The Trilogy* resemble Dante as a character who goes for a quest in *The Divine Comedy*. To begin with, Dante finds himself in the midst of a forest. This scene reminds one of Molloy's wanderings in the forest.

Half way along the road we have to go,
I found myself obscured in a great forest,
Bewildered, and I knew I had lost the way.
...
'Are you indeed that Virgil, are you the spring
Which spreads abroad that wide water of speech?'
When I had spoken, I bowed my head for shame. (*The Divine Comedy*: Canto I, 47-9)

These are the opening lines of *The Divine Comedy*. Dante, who is lost in a forest, meets Virgil and asks for his help. In *Molloy*, there is a very similar encounter of Molloy and a man in a forest:

The forest was all about me and the boughs, twining together at a prodigious height, compared to mine, sheltered me from the light and elements...to say I stumbled in impenetrable darkness... I notably encountered a charcoal burner... I asked him the way to the nearest town, I found the necessary words and accents. He did not know (*Molloy* 83-4).

In *The Divine Comedy*, Dante meets Virgil, who is capable of showing him the right way out of the forest. However, in *Molloy* the stranger who doesn't look like Virgil cannot or does not show the right way and even if he

offered help Molloy would turn down this offer: “Unlike Dante, who immediately consented to follow in Virgil’s footsteps, Beckett’s characters adopt a decidedly sceptical attitude toward offers of assistance, which they regard as either oppressive or illusory” (Cousineau 14). Although the notion of a quest is an allusion to *The Divine Comedy* it is nonetheless parodied in Beckett’s text. Moreover, Dante’s home journey is a successful one. However, ‘Molloy’s journey to his mother, home and meaning’ are just failures. Furthermore as Caselli states “the function of Dante in *Molloy*, *Malone Dies* and *The Unnamable* is more markedly intratextual... towards the beginning of Molloy we read” (132):

He hadn’t seen me. I was perched higher than the road’s highest point and flattened what is more against a rock the same colour as myself, that is grey. That rock he probably saw. He gazed around as if to engrave the landmarks on his memory and must have seen the rock in the shadow of which I crouched like Belacqua, or Sordello, I forget (*M* 11).

This interesting moment of hiding from Dante’s characters and even the confusion between Belacqua and Sordello, according to Caselli, designates that “the ‘I’ identifies himself with the two figures” (132). Moreover, “the name of Sordello and the crouching Belacqua posture recur towards the end of *Malone Dies*, where Murphy, Watt and Quin appear as patients of the asylum/skull” (Caselli 134).

The thin one chafed to run about, but the youth had thrown himself down in the shade of a rock, like Sordello, but less noble, for Sordello resembled a lion at rest, and clung to it with both hands (*MD* 288).

Like the other characters in ‘Beckett canon,’ Sordello and Belacqua have a similar function as they are a part of the narrative that has an open-ended series of repetitions.

Apart from this, the allusions to Dante’s *The Divine Comedy* emerge again and again in *The Trilogy*.

Perhaps six thousand miles away from us
The noon is blazing, and this world extends
Its shadow almost to a level bed,

When What to us are the central depths of the sky
Begin to change so that, here and there
A star fails, and its light no longer reaches us; (*The Divine Comedy*:
Canto xxix, 481).

The visual and spatial images of hell, purgatory and heaven in *The Divine Comedy* are surpassed in Beckett's texts, as well. There are "numerous references in *The Unnamable* to spiralling movement, to islands, sea, and to hell and paradise..." (Caselli 136):

To tell the truth – No, first the story. The island. I'm on the island. I've never left the island, God help me. I was under the impression I spent my life in spirals round the earth. Wrong, it's on the island I wind my endless way. The island, that's all the earth I know. I don't know it either, never having had the stomach to look at it. When I come to the coast I turn back inland. And my course is not helicoidal, I got that wrong too, but a succession of irregular loops... (*TU* 329)

Other examples of intertextuality are the recurrent references to the Bible, which is itself a good collection of texts from different epochs and sources. Beckett's intertextuality, in this case, serves to decentre and defamiliarize the teachings of the Bible. Moran's biblical references (among others) are the ones that are most worth remarking. When Moran is on his way home, he suddenly starts to ask some theological questions. His questions regarding Christianity seem to parody the unquestioned teachings of the Bible about the creation, God, the Original Sin, Jesus Christ, Apocalypses, the devils and Judas:

1. What value is to be attached to the theory that Eve sprang, not from Adam's rib, but from a tumour in the fat of his leg (arse?).
2. Did the serpent crawl or, as Comestor affirms, walk upright?
3. Did Mary conceive through the ear, as Augustine and Adobard assert?
4. How much longer are we to hang about waiting for the antichrist?
- ...
7. Does nature observe the sabbath?
8. Is it true that the devils do not feel the pains of hell?
- ...
13. What was God doing with himself before the creation?
- ...
15. Is it true that Judas' torments are suspended on Saturdays? (*M* 167-8)

These questions of Moran prove his sarcastic and pessimistic approach to Christianity and it is obvious that he has lost all his faith in God. His journey teaches him how man is alone and desperate on earth without any scrap of hope or redemption in the end. Thus, in a tongue-in-cheek manner, after these questions he recites a prayer: “Our Father who art no more in heaven than on earth or in hell, I neither want nor desire that thy name be hallowed, thou knowest best what suits thee. Etc” (*M* 168).

One of the other examples of intertextuality occurs when Molloy talks about ‘the worms’ reminding the reader of Shakespeare’s attributions to worms in his many plays and sonnets:

My life, my life, now I speak of it as of something over, now as of a joke which still goes on, and it is neither, for at the same time it is over and it goes on, and is there any tense for that? Watch wound and buried by the watchmaker, before he died, whose ruined works will one day speak of God, to the worms (*M* 36).

In *Hamlet*, for instance, the repetitious worm metaphor is also used in order to put forward the idea of man’s mortality and inevitable destination:

King: Now, Hamlet, where’s Polonius?
Hamlet: At supper.
King: At supper! Where?
Hamlet: Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms are e’en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, - two dishes, but to one table: that’s the end (*Hamlet* 1098).

In *The Unnamable*, what the narrator voice chooses as a name for one of his characters is again Worm, which designates the concept of the death of man: “But it’s time I gave this solitary a name, nothing doing without proper names. I therefore baptise him Worm. It was high time. Worm. I don’t like it, but I haven’t much choice” (340). The voice has no other alternatives to name this creature because he is the final portrait of man at the background of a void.

Dostoevsky’s *Notes from the Underground* is another text which is considered as one of the “ancestors of the trilogy... There is parallelism with

the trilogy concerning consciousness. Consciousness stems from suffering, the underground man asserts” (Pultar 112):

In despair occur the most intense enjoyments, especially when one is very acutely conscious of one’s hopeless position (Dostoevsky 1960: 8).

Therefore Pultar adds “thus, the consciousness may be said to lead to intensely developed individuality, while involving separation, loneliness and isolation as in the case with Molloy-Moran” (112).

As another significant point it can be noted that Beckett’s intertextual allusions target his own earlier works. In other words, each Beckett text reads the preceding ones and is read by them. These intertextual relationships between earlier and later works could be regarded as continuing on another plane the ‘intratextual’ relationships Beckett sets up between earlier and later parts of the same work—between the two parts of *Molloy*—in the second part Moran has a quest which is finding Molloy. This feature of Moran often makes his readers think that Moran is the first life period of Molloy:

...the similarities between these two men [Molloy and Moran], and the parallelism in their respective adventures, both physical and mental, lead one to conclude that they are actually the same person, Moran being the middle-aged Molloy. In fact *The Trilogy* is one continuous whole in which the ostensibly different characters – Molloy, Moran, Malone, Sapo, Macmann, Mahood – are all the personae of the same essential self, the Unnamable... the story of Moran precedes and elucidates that of Molloy (Barnard 32).

In *The Trilogy* phrases are recycled in such a way that the text seems to feed on itself, and each character is seen to be constructed of recurring linguistic habits. That is why the other protagonists of Beckett are constantly mentioned on many pages of *The Trilogy*. The intratextuality is an aim that Beckett wants to achieve to show the inevitable repetitious talking that reaches a perfect silence like a black hole.

Intertextuality in Beckett’s texts, shortly, does not only enhance his narrative but it is also a critical revision of Western literary tradition. Moreover, the intertextual dimension in Beckett’s texts reinforces the idea that

“literature is the ruin of all reference, the cemetery of communication” (Eagleton 1989: 146) so that his texts, in a sense, recover the vitality of the tradition by displacing the broken and fragmented form.

4.5.2. Metafiction in *The Trilogy*

Beckett’s use of metafiction is quite apparent in *The Trilogy* because he “begins with the perception that habit and routine form the substructure of most individual existences” (Waugh 1984: 44). Therefore, Beckett underlines the fictionality of his fiction from the very beginning of the trilogy to the end.

In *Molloy* the narrator discloses his occupation, a writer, as early as in the tenth sentence of the text: “He gives me money and takes away the pages... Yes, I work now, a little like I used to...” (7). The man, who takes the writings of Molloy, seems to be an editor. In his writings, Molloy continuously addresses his readers to make them not forget that what they are reading is a story. In other words, the reader here witnesses ‘the fiction within a fiction’. That is, Molloy who is also a fictional character makes up stories about himself: “Here is my beginning... Perhaps I’m inventing a little...” (8-9). His own narration is emphasized: “What I need now is stories” (13). He seems to confess his past memories in a diary. “Oh, it’s only a diary, it’ll soon be over... I record them all the more willingly” (62). Furthermore, Molloy frequently addresses the reader which never allows the reader to forget s/he is reading a fictional work. “If ‘you’ don’t mind we’ll leave my mother out of all this” (*Molloy* 56). “What a story, God send I don’t make a balls of it. For the old pain, ‘do you follow me,’ I had got used to it, in a way, yes, in a kind of way” (77). “Between you and me...” (78). These words reinforce the idea that this story told by Molloy is a construct.

In the second part of *Molloy*, Moran deals with writing a report that is ordered by his employer Youdi. What makes the Moran part an example of metafiction is its ending because it blurs the limits of fact and fiction. At the beginning, he writes “It is midnight the rain is beating on the windows” (92); then he finishes or starts his report by noting “It was not midnight. It was not

raining” (176). These last words do not only contradict his opening but they also create a circular structure for the text. In a postmodern mode, the ending of *Molloy*, deliberately makes the worlds of the real and imagination vague. The text seems to have a power that can be called “textual autonomy” (Sheringham 77), thus, Molloy and Moran keep complaining about the betrayal of words as they do not say what Molloy and Moran want to say.

In *Malone Dies* the narrator also decidedly wants to fill the time telling stories which will “minimise the burden of self-consciousness and have as little bearing as possible on himself” (Sheringham 83). “I think I shall be able to tell myself four stories, each one on a different theme. One about a man, another about a woman, a third about a thing and finally one about an animal, a bird probably” (*MD* 181). On Malone’s stories Waugh comments that

Malone tells himself stories that are made to correspond, through his own conceptualizations, with the apparent structure of his life, which itself turns out to be only the story he narrates. He provides variety in this life by means of the slightly shifting repetitions that he consciously forces upon the narrative process. *Malone Dies* (1951) has to be understood in these terms, for the patterns Malone sets up seem to bear not even an analogous relationship to the meaning of the world outside him (1984: 44).

At some parts of his narration Malone notices that he is again talking about himself, so he decides to stop narrating that story.

What tedium. And I call that playing. I wonder if I am not talking yet again about myself... That is not how to play... Perhaps I had better abandon this story and go on to the second, or even the third, the one about the stone (189).

This is another moment of metafiction in the text because a fictional character, namely Malone seems to be bored by being told about it and he autonomously decides to start another story that is original.

Another dimension of metafiction in *Malone Dies* is the time when Malone’s fictional character, Macmann produces a piece of art. Poetry also becomes a literary device for metafiction in the hands of postmodernist writers. In the text, Macmann writes poems for his beloved Moll in the asylum to please her:

Hairy Mac and Sucky Molly
In the ending days and nights
Of unending melancholy
Love it is at last unites.

Another example.

To the lifelong promised land
Of the nearest cemetery
With his Sucky hand in hand
Love it is at last leads Hairy (263-4).

The last story of his that is about Lemuel is a story that includes all the other characters of the trilogy. Surprisingly, the reader discovers that when Malone's characters are dead, he himself can also die. Although he is the narrator in 'the reality of the fiction', he also dies with the last words of the narrative like a character in his own fiction:

Lemuel is in charge, he raises his hatchet on which the blood
will never dry, but not to hit anyone, he will not hit anyone, he will
not hit anyone any more, he will not touch anyone any more, either
with it or with it or with it or with or
or with it or with his hammer or with his stick or with his
fist or in thought in dream I mean never he will never
or with his pencil or with his stick or
or light light I mean
never there he will never
never anything
there
any more (289).

The most complicated use of metafiction occurs in *The Unnamable*, the last novel of the trilogy. All the narrators of the previous novels of the trilogy are reduced to the surrogates of the narrator of *The Unnamable*. "Malone, Moran, Molloy... All these are denounced as stand-ins, gross caricatures, which have usurped his place and wasted his time by luring him, by their proxy, to conceive of himself in *their* term..." (Sheringham 84). The existence of all the previous narrator-characters is put into question in this text, so the linguistic universe points out the reality as a construct. The narrator voice in *The Unnamable* theorizes the relationship between the words and reality or fiction:

Where do these words come from that pour out of my mouth, and what do they mean, no, saying nothing, for the words don't carry any more, if one can call that waiting, when there's no reason for it, and one listens, that stet, without reason, as one has always listened, because one day listening began, because it cannot stop, that's not a reason (373).

In metafictional novels, the reader is urged to ask some philosophical questions concerning reality and fiction: Does the organisation of words create a simulacrum of 'reality' for man? Can words be used to create other simulacra/worlds for fiction? Which is fiction, then? Both? Or is there a 'reality' at all?

The postmodern novel explores the notion of reality as a construct through textual self-reference. The reader is, therefore, told not the events but instead the process of 'narration'.

How, in such conditions, can I write to consider only the manual aspect of that bitter folly? I don't know. I could know. But I shall not know. Not this time. It is I who write, who cannot raise my hand from my knee. It is I who think, just enough to write, whose head is far (*TU* 303).

As Waugh argues, "Metafictional texts show that the literary can never imitate or 'represent' the world but always imitates or 'represents' the discourses which in turn construct that world" (Waugh 1984: 100). Writing a fiction is a part of the plot in metafictional texts like the trilogy.

4.5.3. The Intertextuality in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*

As a postmodern text, *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* is also an intertextual novel. Ecevit puts forward that Oğuz Atay admired those writers who especially dared to free their protagonists to face their own darkest sides in their fictions (2005: 337). From Russian literature, Dostoevsky was the most influential writing figure for him. From Turkish literature, Sabahattin Ali's *The Devil Inside Us* (*İçimizdeki Şeytan*) and Vüs'at Bener's *Virus of the Ice Age* (*Buzul Çağının Virüsü*) also influenced Atay. What impressed Atay was the beautiful narration of man's dark side in these novels. However, the difference between these novelists and Atay is his using irony and humour alongside pessimistic and

melancholic elements in his own texts (Ecevit 2005: 339). “Atay mentions three books while he was getting prepared to write *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*... From his *Günlük (Journal)* we learnt he read Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, Dostoevsky’s *Notes from the Underground* and Eric Bernes’ *Games People Play* to construct the background of his next novel” (Ecevit 2001: 113). Atay in his *Journal* states “In the last book’s words that I read (*Games People Play*) they play ‘bad games’ to each other, like the characters in *The Underworld*- in the idea of Dostoevsky” (G 60). Hikmet like the characters in these mentioned texts laughs at his pathetic situation. He even personifies this tragicomic state: “Then, let’s laugh. Ha-ha. I only get on well with this Ha-ha, that’s all. Because I do not say it aloud. Ha-ha, buddy, make everyone ridiculous, Ok?⁶²” (TO 89).

The first allusion used in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* is to Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* which occurs when Hikmet is in the house of Mrs. Naciye. He is found to be in a room as if he was imprisoned there like Raskolnikov.

Hikmet: (Screams) I am not a boy. (He wants to turn the other side of the pillow.) It is getting hot. (He feels a wet and soft thing in his hair.) A snail! Basement. Dampness. (He shudders.) Again? That’s right, the pillow fell down. (To the next room) Naciye Hanım! What a bad hotel this is! (He tries to smile.) Which side did I put the armchair?... Such disgusting things only happen to me in this house. That’s because you are guilty. They are also guilty. This doesn’t reduce your guilt. I feel sick⁶³ (*Tehlikeli Oyunlar* 17-8).

He [Raskolnikov) longed to run away from the place as fast as possible. And if at that moment he had been capable of seeing and reasoning more correctly, if he had been able to realize all the difficulties of his position, the hopelessness, the hideousness and the absurdity of it, if he could have understood how many obstacles, and, perhaps, crimes he had still to overcome or to commit, to get out of that place and to make his way home, it is very possible that he would

⁶² O halde gülelim. Ha-ha. Bir bu ‘ha-ha’ ile iyi geçiniyoruz, o kadar. Çünkü içimden söylüyorum onu. Ulan Ha-ha! Herkesi gülünç duruma düşür, olur mu?

⁶³ Hikmet: (Bağırarak.) Ben oğlan değilim! (yastığı çevirmek ister.) Çok çabuk ısınıyor artık. (Eline ıslak ve yumuşak bir cisim takılır saçlarının arasında.) Sümüklüböcek! Bodrum. Rutubet. (Ürperir) Gene mi? Öyle ya, yastığı yere düşürmüştüm. (Yandaki odaya seslenir.) Naciye Hanım! Burası ne biçim bir otel? (Gülümsemeğe çalışır.) Koltuk hangi taraftaydı?... Yalnız benim başıma gelir böyle iğrenç olaylar bu evde. Suçlusun da ondan. Onlar daha suçlu. Bu senin suçunu azaltmaz. (Saçlarını hırsla yastığa sürer.) Midem bulaniyor.

have flung up everything, and would have gone to give himself up, and not from fear, but from simple horror and loathing of what he had done (*Crime and Punishment* 325).

Hamlet is also a text which inspired Atay. Hikmet, whose name echoes the name Hamlet, is similar to Hamlet because both have the same depressing and rebellious attitude, being against the established order. Moreover, the scene when Hikmet reads the letter of Mrs. Nurhayat's soldier son, Hidayet's letter can be another allusion to other texts. The play written by this young soldier apparently alludes to the ghost scene in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Soldier: At night everything seems to be disguised. Branches look like people who open their arms. Leaves look like people who rub their hands to be warm.

General: (seems to be angry due to the soldier's words, frowns) I don't think so. (in fact he is not angry).

Soldier: Man feels anxious till he hears the cock. According to a rumour, ghosts go into their graves to sleep when they hear the crow of a cock.

General: This is a superstition! (this time he is angry) Do you understand me? (*Tehlikeli Oyunlar* 42)

This excerpt from the play of Hidayet evokes the scene in *Hamlet* where the late King's ghost appears and disappears during the watch of the soldiers:

[cock crows] [Exit Ghost]

Marcellus: 'Tis gone! We do it wrong being so majestic,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Bernardo: It was about to speak when the cock crew.

Horatio: ... I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of the day; and at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine: and of the truth herein
This present object made probation (*Hamlet* 1073).

Moreover, Hikmet parodies the death of Polonius: “This man called Polonius, my colonel, is like Damat Ferit Pasha⁶⁴ of the English⁶⁵” (TO 71). Hikmet parodies him by likening him to a toady figure in the Ottoman Empire.

The intertextuality has a very significant function in the text of Atay. Atay uses the mythical and Biblical allusions to decentre the classical understanding of the West by alluding to the Cartesian thinking and the Bible, which formed the basis of Western thought. After disclosing these references, he deconstructs these myths and rewrites them in his own text. “We need to divide the world into two, now... Those who want to live according to the rules of Descartes should be sorted out now. This false game needs to end⁶⁶ (TO 350).

The Christian allusion, The Last Supper, becomes a parody in the context of intertextuality in the part named ‘Son Yemek/The Last Supper’ where every character is summoned to have a feast at Hikmet’s slum house. “Atay keeps the outer form of the myth but he changes the content. Hikmet’s dining with his fictional friends like Jesus’ having supper with his apostles is the outer form” (Ecevit 2005: 348). This part of the text resembles the last supper of Christ with his apostles. This allusion is obviously done on purpose because one of the characters reinforces the scene by saying “I once saw a religious man dine at such a long table with some men with beards” And Mr. Rıza reprimands his wife saying “you foolish woman, that is The Last Supper. God forbid that⁶⁷” (430). Here, Hikmet is in the role of Jesus and his neighbours in the slum and

⁶⁴ Damat Ferit Paşa, who was the grand vizier of the Ottoman Empire in 1920, is infamous for his irrelevant friendship with England and bad decisions for the Empire.

⁶⁵ “Bu Polonius, albayım; İngilizlerin Damat Ferit Paşası.”

⁶⁶ Dünya artık ikiye ayrılmalı... Descartes’in kurallarına göre yaşamak isteyenler ayıklanmalı artık. Bu düzmece oyun sona ermeli.

⁶⁷ “Bir din adamının böyle uzun bir masada, bir takım sakallılarla birlikte yemek yediğini görmüştüm,” diye bilgiçlik tasladı Bakkal Rıza’nın karısı. Rıza Bey karısını payladı: “Aptal, o son yemek. Allah göstermesin.”

friends from his past are the apostles. They talk about the betrayal of Judas Iscariot:

In fact there was a sin there, but that sin was not the sin of betrayal as Judas assumed. The sin was, in fact, abandoning the difficult and unbearable path of Jesus... however, one -at least one person- needed to take on this huge responsibility, and show this to people. Neither Jesus nor other apostles could set an example for manhood. Because they were strong, because they knew their responsibilities, because everyone knew that they could endure till the end. Only a person like poor Judas could set an example for manhood. Therefore, Judas was the only hope. That's why Judas betrayed mankind⁶⁸ (TO 434).

The idea of betrayal and resistance in Judas' case goes parallel with Hikmet's resistance to the constructed nature of social values. Like Judas, he needs to shoulder a responsibility that is far beyond his powers. He insists on attaining his authenticity despite his weaknesses. Both Judas and Hikmet (were)/are too weak to cope with the material world in which they live. "Hikmet's situation is much more difficult than that of Judas" (Ecevit 1989: 43).

Like Beckett's texts, Atay's second novel, *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, alludes to his first novel, *Tutunamayanlar*, concerning the character names. "The names of the protagonists, Selim, Turgut and Süleyman, in *Tutunamayanlar* are used in this novel as well. Atay's each new protagonist seems to be the continuation of the previous ones" (Ecevit 2001: 116).

Intertextuality is indispensable in Atay's texts because the acquisition of writing is based on a multiplicity of texts. In intertextual texts there is neither origin nor end; therefore, in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* in spite of Hikmet's death writing seems to be kept on by Salim, the little son of Mrs. Nurhayat.

⁶⁸ Aslında bir günah vardı ortada; fakat bu günah Yahuda'nın düşündüğü gibi bir ihanet suçundan doğmuyordu. Aslında günah, İsa'nın zahmetli ve katlanılmaz yolundan dönmektir... Fakat dünyada bir kişinin- hiç olmazsa bir kişinin- kaldıramayacağı bir yükün altına girmesi gerekiyordu, dayanamayacağı yolda yürümesi gerekiyordu, bunu insanlara göstermesi gerekiyordu. Ne İsa, ne de öteki havariler bu konuda insanlığa örnek olabilirdi. Çünkü onlar kuvvetliydi, çünkü onlar sorumluluklarını biliyorlardı, çünkü onların sonuna kadar dayanacağını herkes biliyordu. İnsanlığa bu konuda ancak Yahuda gibi bir zavallı örnek olabilirdi. Bu yüzden bütün ümit, Yahuda'daydı. İşte Yahuda bunun için insanlığa ihanet etmişti.

4.5.4. Metafiction in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*

The most powerful element, maybe the main principle in the plane of the narration of *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* is metafiction. There are lots of levels of reality that make the concept of 'real' vague. As Ecevit states

Atay creates three levels of life on a slippery ground. 1) Reality, plane of *concrete* life: the biographic life of Hikmet. At the same time, Hikmet's fictional plane in which he and Colonel Hüsametdin create stories/games. 2) The plane of *fiction*: Hikmet's and other characters' stories, games and dreams. 3) The plane of *linguistic* life. Hikmet's inner world: Memories and inner talks (2001: 102).

Tehlikeli Oyunlar starts within a dream frame where Hikmet sleeps and sees nightmares about his staying at Mrs. Naciye's house. "Maybe it's all a dream⁶⁹" (17). It is implied that this dream goes on till the end of the text. In other words, Hikmet's death is blurred with a sleep or dream concept again: "He lay down and covered himself with the quilt and said "I'm sleepy; I must sleep⁷⁰" (*TO* 423). The idea of sleep makes the boundaries of reality and imagination vague. In this frame, space and time are also blurred: "Was the slum-house three-storeyed? Maybe it was two-storeyed⁷¹" (277). "Adem Tambay after his son Zühtü's birth continued to live thirty and four hundred-six years more...⁷²" (78). This ambivalent atmosphere creates many more inconsistencies and uncertainties that reach a perfect chaos. This situation reminds one of Derrida's ideas of 'aporias', the irresolvable nature of any text. Atay negates the one-layered plot of the classical novel by writing a *multi-stratified* and *heterogeneous* text.

In *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, with the help of the 'game' motif, it is constantly underlined that the plot, characters of the book, and particularly life itself, are fictional. Hikmet wants to play games as he detests realities. "Reality is an

⁶⁹ Belki hepsi rüyadır.

⁷⁰ Yatakta yan döndü, yorganı üstüne çekti, "Uykum var," dedi. "Uyumalıyım."

⁷¹ Gecekondu üç katlı mıydı? Belki de iki katlıydı.

⁷² Adem Tambay, Zühtü'nün tevellüdünden sonra, daha otuz ve dört yüz altı yıl yaşadı...

unpleasant measurement that others try to apply to us” (109). If life itself is a game he wants to play his own game with his own rules.

Game in the text is a very significant element with many variations. Other characters join Hikmet in playing myriads of games. As Ecevit states “Atay, *plays* with the concept of ‘game’ in a great variety, from the game of life, football, wordplays, and children’s games to cliché behaviour games” (2001: 105). The game idea is reinforced with ‘writing’ in metafiction. That is, the word ‘play’ functions as a pun, and designates one of the genres of literature, drama, and Hikmet inserts some plays into his fiction.

He takes the real events and interprets them according to his own will, and writes them. Historiographic metafiction is employed in this case as Hikmet takes one of the events in the world history as his subject in his play. Historiographic metafiction approaches both history and fiction with suspicion by questioning “their common use of conventions of narrative, of reference, of the inscribing of subjectivity, of their identity as textuality, and even of their implication in ideology” (Hutcheon 830-1). Hikmet presents the history as unstable, contextual and relational. He asks a question about his attempt, and then narrates his play:

Is it possible to write a play in the play?...

(A plain near Austerlitz. The headquarters of Emperor Franz. In the tents of infantrymen. Evening. Captain Heine walks in front of the tent.)

Heine: (to himself) We must win this battle. However, it is as if a voice inside me told me we’d lose it.

(The wind blows. Heine goes into the tent. He is seen again with his jacket. Enters Commander Hroboviç.)

Heine: Hey, bro. (Smiles scratching his chin.) it seems to me we will lose the battle. That’s odd.

Hroboviç: I think you are obsessed with your own failures, not battle. (laughs pretentiously.)⁷³ (TO 264-5).

⁷³ Oyun içinde oyun olur mu?... (Austerlitz yakınında bir düzlük. İmparator Franz’ın karargahı. Piyade birliklerinin çadırları. Akşam karanlığı. Yüzbaşı Heine, çadırının önünde gezinmektedir.) HEİNE (kendi kendine): Bu savaşı kazanmalıyız. Fakat içimden bir ses,

Hikmet uses his pen to take revenge on all the unjust people he lived with in the past. He punishes them with the power of writing, using ‘the grammar terminology’ and ‘brackets’: “Even when I was there, they used to say, ‘He listens to nobody’... They used to make me *the third person singular*. (So I shall make you *third people plural*, and I shall say ‘They don’t listen to anybody’)⁷⁴ (86, my emphasis). Furthermore, Hikmet “with a comic but rude manner draws a parallelism between the symbolic appearance of the female sexual organ and the letter ‘W’ in the Western alphabet” (Ecevit 2001: 107). “All friends of Sevgi were an annoying chorus of a W⁷⁵” (TO 128).

As for the actuality of such characters as Hüsamettin Tambay and Nurhayat İyicel, it can be said that it is always open to question. The reader can never be sure whether or not they really exist. Throughout the text, Hikmet cannot be sure what he should think about them either. “It is doubtful that the colonel and the widow woman are objective phenomena, and it is also possible that Hidayet, who is known to be in the army, and the wife of the colonel are just two characters of a surrealist game⁷⁶” (TO 325). All characters, even if they claim to be real, are just constructions; they are “wo/men made of words” in Ecevit’s words. (2001: 108).

Hikmet and the other characters, even Hikmet’s fictional characters, ask themselves the question of ‘how should one write?’ It is also apparent that almost all the characters of *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* deal with writing. At the

yenilgiyi haber veriyor sanki. (Rüzgar çıkar. Heine, çadıra girer, ceketini giymiş olarak tekrar görünür. Soldan binbaşı Hroboviç girer.) HEİNE: Merhaba dostum. (Çenesini kaşıyarak gülümser.) Kaybedeceğiz gibi geliyor bana. Ne garip. HROBOVİÇ: Savaşı, kendi yenilgileriyle karıştırıyorsun galiba. (Sahte bir kahkaha atar.)

⁷⁴ Ben bir yerde olsam bile benden öyle bahsederler: ‘Kimseyi dinlemez,’ derler. Oysa ‘Kimseyi dinlemiyorsun,’ demelisiniz. Albay, okumasını sürdürdü. (Ben de sizleri üçüncü çoğul şahıs yaparım: Onları dinlemezler.)

⁷⁵ Sevgi’nin arkadaşları, can sıkıcı bir W’ler, korosuydu.

⁷⁶ Albayın ve Nurhayat Hanımın nesnel birer olgu olması kuşkulu olduğu gibi, bunların dışında- ikinci dereceden olgular diyebileceğimiz- albayın karısı ve askerliğini yaptığı söylenen Hidayet de gerçeküstü bir oyunun kahramanlarından ibaret olabilir.

beginning of the text, Hidayet in his letter asks Hikmet how he should write a good play to be performed on the day of the Republic Bayram (41). Colonel Hüsametdin also has doubts about the title of his poem: “I couldn’t find a good title for my poem. I will call it *To Mankind, an Address from the Viewpoint of History* or *The Triumph of Mind*⁷⁷” (97). Moreover, Hikmet stops asking *how*, but instead he starts asking *why* man writes. To answer this question he philosophizes on the activity of writing: “...I am not writing as my life is a novel, to be read while I live, I write a game, I have to make up new games to be able to live one more day and to see the sun rise one more time, if you were a bit sophisticated I would give you the name Scheherazade ...⁷⁸” (317). This reasoning of Hikmet reminds the reader of the situation of Malone and Scheherazade, the legendary Persian queen and the storyteller of *One Thousand and One Nights*. She has to tell a story to be able to live one more day like Hikmet and Malone.

As another feature of metafictional texts, the reader is not also neglected in *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*. The reader is a part of the text in this sense. Hikmet, who thinks what he wrote is a play, and who takes everybody as his audience, warns his readers/audience to be careful when they read/see his text/play:

Do you understand? No, you don’t. You try to compare this with the plays you saw before. Then, why did you come here? Why did you buy tickets in vain? You think you have seen this play before, then why do you waste your time with us? And why do you make us waste our time with you? How can we tell you that this is a new play? We do not know any other way to explain apart from the one you taught us. What should one do?⁷⁹ (364)

⁷⁷ “İyi bir isim bulamadım şiiire; şimdilik ‘Beşeriyete, Tarih Zaviyesinden Bir Hitap veya Aklın Zaferi’ demek niyetindeyim.”

⁷⁸ ...hayatım roman olduğu için yazmıyorum, onu ben yaşarken okuyun, ben oyun yazıyorum, bir gün sonraya çıkabilmek için ve güneşin bir gün daha doğmak üzere olduğunu görebilmek için her gün yeni oyunlar icat etmek zorundayım, biraz okumuş olsaydın sana Şehrazat filan derdim...

⁷⁹ Anlıyor musunuz? Anlamıyorsunuz. Eski bildiklerinizle karıştırıyorsunuz. O halde buraya neden geldiniz? Neden boş yere bilet aldınız? Bu oyunu daha önce gördüğünüzü sanıyorsanız, neden bizimle oyalanıyorsunuz? Ve neden bizi de boş yere oyalıyorsunuz? Sizlere, bunun yeni bir oyun olduğunu nasıl anlatmalı? Sizin öğrettiğinizden başka bir yol da bilmiyoruz ki. Ne yapmalı?

After Hikmet's death what Hüsamettin writes in a newspaper is also significant. Whether Hüsamettin is imaginary or not in Hikmet's fiction, he seems to write an elegy after Hikmet or Atay addressing his unfaithful friends and future readers:

He, who did his best to be a unique playwright, was an excellent writer ... Mr Hikmet who had to leave this mortal world and without writing all the plays he had dreamt of... is a real loss for our intellectual society. Society was deprived of a great man of letters by abandoning him when he was alive. I assure you that if society keeps ignoring writers like him we can never reach the level of contemporary civilisations... The important thing is creating a pleasant circle that such important playwrights like Hikmet need; such rare roses can only grow up in very fertile soil⁸⁰ (470-1).

In *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*, as a metafictional text, the concept of death happens when Hikmet stops dreaming of stories. From the very beginning of the text till the end, Hikmet dreams and makes up stories and games, but in the part named 'Düşüş/The Fall' the last words are "I am thinking". As mentioned before, with the word "Düşünüyorum" (462) - I'm thinking -Hikmet again plays with the words because this word evokes other Turkish words such as "düşmek/düşlemek/düşünmek" (Ecevit 2001: 109) - falling/dreaming/thinking. When "Hikmet begins thinking instead of dreaming his fiction comes to an end and he dies. Thinking means the end of dreaming for an artist" (Ecevit 2001: 109).

⁸⁰ O, beni kanaatimce emsalsiz bir piyes muharriri olmak için fevkalade gayret sarfeden mümtaz bir kalemdi... Hikmet Bey, sanat dünyamızın hakiki bir kaybıdır. Cemiyet, bu aziz şahsiyeti yalnız bırakmakla büyük bir facia külliyatından mahrum kalmıştır. Sizi temin ederim ki, eğer gene aynı alakasızlık devam ederse kat'iyen muasır medeniyet seviyesine çıkamayız... Asıl mesele, bu piyes muharrirlerinin ihtiyaç duyduğu geniş ve samimi bir muhitin teşkilidir; böyle ender nebatat, ancak münbit bir arazi üzerinde neşvünema bulabilir.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The thesis attempted to analyse the postmodernist and poststructuralist elements in Samuel Beckett's *The Trilogy: Molloy, Malone Dies* and *The Unnamable* and Oğuz Atay's *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*. It has been found that, like Beckett's novels, Atay's novel discusses the metaphysics of presence, the correspondence theory of truth, origin, self and language. This study has shown that postmodernism can be found in the texts of these novelists, who were regarded as modernist writers. There are considerable postmodernist similarities in the way Beckett and Atay create their narratives although Beckett's novel is a trilogy, and Atay's is a single novel divided into chapters. It is also shown that many notions of postmodernist and poststructuralist critics, such as Derrida, Foucault, Barthes and Eagleton, can be traced in both *The Trilogy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*.

The second chapter discussed the theoretical background in detail before analysing the novels. Although by their very nature postmodernism, poststructuralism and deconstruction resist explanation, their main elements and techniques are introduced in the context of their theoreticians' texts. Postmodernism can be regarded as an inevitable wave of negation, a rejection of metanarratives and an idea that shakes the binaries that have dominated Western culture. Likewise, poststructuralism has originated from the idea of the loss of centre. In language, according to poststructuralism, when 'the centre' or 'the meaning' that is signified by signifiers is lost, all the text has is a chain of signifiers that never conveys a definite and frozen meaning. Mankind who 'speaks' a "centreless" (Eagleton 145) language, or a language that lacks meaning, in all fields of science, including the everyday life, in fact communicates by language. Therefore, language, which is fictional by its nature, becomes very powerful wherever or in what area it is used. In addition, all the things accepted to be the unquestionable truth become prone to be questioned due to the fictive nature of language. It is understood that language

has a capacity to 'create' facts and dismantle them at the same time like a 'puzzle', a sort of game. Furthermore, when the unquestionable is questioned, the idea of deconstruction is produced. Deconstruction is based on the maxim of the 'free play' of binaries, on 'différance' and on 'supplementation'.

Analysing the articles written by Derrida, Foucault and Barthes enlightens the removal of the author factor, which is one of the most significant aspects in postmodernist texts. Begam asserts "Beckett has decisively influenced the work of poststructuralism's two leading practitioners, Foucault and Derrida" (185). Intertextuality can also be seen in the ideas of Beckett, Derrida and Foucault. Therefore, in the second chapter, each critic's relevant article was elaborated, and it was pointed out that as postmodernist thinkers Derrida, Foucault and Barthes were urged to remove the idea of the author(ity) as it stood for a sort of centre/origin/signified. That the destination rather than the origin of a text matters is the novelty, and the mentioned critics tried to underline as they claimed that once the author was removed, the text was freed. In addition to these, in the second chapter, intertextuality and metafiction that need to be reviewed before analysing them in the texts were also introduced.

The third chapter of the thesis looked into Beckett's and Atay's ideas of art and the artist to understand how these two twentieth-century novelists could produce such influential postmodernist texts in the modernist age. In the study first Beckett's philosophy of art is analysed. As it was mentioned before, Beckett's view of art is quite a different one from that of his contemporaries, because unlike other twentieth-century novelists Beckett does not try to give a meaning to the world around him; on the contrary, he shows the impossibility of finding meaningful answers. The artist for Beckett is doomed to fail in this sense. It is the art of failure that Beckett creates. That is the very characteristic that Atay shares with Beckett. The similarity found in the study is both Beckett's and Atay's portraying the attempts and failures of their characters. The failures of the characters are also reinforced by language. They show the impossibility of achieving a meaningful goal and the impossibility of

conveying a meaningful expression through language. In spite of being aware of the futility of chasing a meaning they, Beckett and Atay, let words flow on pages, and their characters endlessly try to express the inexpressible.

In the fourth chapter, the theories mentioned in the second chapter were applied to the novels. Firstly, the differences between characterisation in the realist tradition and characterisation in postmodern texts were established in the thesis. In the first sub-title, as a plot structure the model of the quest is used and the constructions of Molloy, Moran and Hikmet as postmodernist characters are analysed respectively. Most importantly it was found that the characterisation of Hikmet resembles that of each character of *Molloy* and *Malone Dies*.

In this chapter the matter of language in *Molloy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* was also analysed. The role of language under the light of Derrida's contribution to linguistics and philosophy was dealt with. As Molloy puts, "Not to want to say, not to know what you want to say, not to be able to say what you think you want to say, and never to stop saying, or hardly ever, that is the thing to keep in mind, even in the heat of composition" (28). Although there is "nothing to express and with which to express" (Beckett 139), writing still keeps moving obsessively, it is pure art that is free from meaning.

In the third sub-title of this chapter, concepts of Barthes' essay "Death of the Author" and of Foucault's essay "What Is an Author?" are used in analysing *Malone Dies* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*. There is a parallelism between Malone-Hikmet pair and Beckett and Atay because they all willingly let their writings kill them or their authority. It was found that the loss of the authority of the author in the texts makes the origin of the text vague and this contributes to intertextuality. In the following part of chapter four, both *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* and *The Unnamable* were analysed according to Foucault's concept of "The Death of Man" in his book *The Order of the Things*. The thesis showed that 'man' is a fictional concept that is created by language. However, Beckett's handling of the death of man is much more different from that of Atay. It was

underlined that in *The Unnamable* Beckett's man turns into being a non-human creature that is freed from the imposed identity, characteristics and physical appearance, an 'unnamable' creature. On the other hand, Atay's depiction of man does not imply the unnamable. That is, he blurs the boundary between the real man and the fictive one to react to the understanding of Western culture's man; he envisages an unnamable portrait of man, but Atay's protagonist, Hikmet still resembles a realist portrayal of man. All in all, what Beckett and Atay wanted to indicate is how man can move beyond 'the end of man' or 'the myth of man'. The thesis wanted to show how *The Unnamable* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* were successful at shaking the ground of the classical thought concerning man. In the last sub-section of this chapter, the use of intertextuality and metafiction as two postmodernist techniques in *The Trilogy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* was emphasized. Intertextuality is a result of language because like in the play of signifiers that cannot attain a master signified but can only reach other signifiers, a specific text cannot move within a certain frame, but like a signifier, it also alludes to other texts. Therefore, in the texts of Beckett and Atay, it was found and underlined that many texts were alluded to from classical works to the Bible. Moreover, both *The Trilogy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* take fiction as their subjects; as there is nothing to write about, writing fiction forms the subject of the texts. In this study, it was highlighted that 'writing' is the main activity of each character and also the reader can find an activity or object related to writing almost on every page of the texts.

The most remarkable idea in the thesis is the expression of interface (See Appendix). In other words, the essence of this study is showing the expression of interface. It has been shown that both Beckett and Atay tried to find a 'new writing' by experimenting and playing with words. The expression of interface is a revolutionary style of writing in which Beckett and Atay mingle philosophy with art. In other words, they choose neither the arena of philosophy nor that of art; instead they prefer to create another arena where they can use both in their texts. In this sphere they do not neglect to subvert the

foundation of Western tradition from 'within' and dismantle it from the 'outside'. After analysing language in *Molloy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* it is highlighted that it is the literature of unword that Beckett and Atay create. As mentioned before, the interface is expressed in various ways; it is sometimes expressed with the playfulness in language, with pure silence, or with all forms of game. At some levels, the interface comes into prominence with the help of other forms of art such as dance and music.

In both *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* and *The Trilogy*, the first way of expressing the interface is 'making up games'. The word game is used in its many dimensions. For instance, dance and music have always become the subjects of games. To illustrate, Molloy is allured by the game of sucking his stones, which resembles a sort of dance with specific rhythms and movements, and moreover, Moran is enchanted with his bees' extraordinary dance of communication. Likewise, Hikmet is also surrounded by all sorts of games that consist of dances and music. For instance, the children of the slum play games in the street, and Mr. Selim also tells the reader the game of waiting for his wife at the train-station. Beckett and Atay take games seriously as they provide mysterious, unrelated, unrestricted, but suggestive and tempting alternatives for the reader.

The second way of expressing the interface used by Beckett and Atay is 'the playfulness' that language holds. The broken chain of signified-signifier results in this playfulness. As mentioned before, in both *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* and *The Trilogy* several metaphors gradually evolve, and they function in the fashion of strings of metaphors by unveiling ambiguous and fluid inspirations for the reader.

Another method of expressing the interface in Beckett's and Atay's texts is formed with the desire of pure silence if it is possible. Paradoxically, both Beckett and Atay manage to experience and make their readers experience the painful and discouraging 'silence of words'. The paradox is that 'words keep coming, but they do not make any sense, so they just become a part of silence'

for both Beckett and Atay. In Beckett's words, "Every word is like an unnecessary stain on silence and nothingness" (in an interview in 1969). However, neither Beckett nor Atay can give up writing because they only create the long-wished silence with words. The function of words as silence is another way of expression of interface itself. Therefore, both Beckett's and Atay's texts make the paradox, "where I am, I don't know, I'll never know, in the silence you don't know, you must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on" (418) echo in the ears of the reader.

In conclusion, as it was mentioned in the introduction, twentieth-century British writer Samuel Beckett's *The Trilogy* and the Turkish writer Oğuz Atay's *Tehlikeli Oyunlar* can be regarded as two examples of the postmodern novel. According to this assertion, Beckett's and Atay's use of postmodernist and poststructuralist devices and themes such as portraying multiple planes of reality-fiction, wordplays, intertextuality and metafiction, and moreover, their questioning of the truth, origin, self, shortly the logic of Western logocentric thought proves their similarity in that both Beckett and Atay create their expression of interface.

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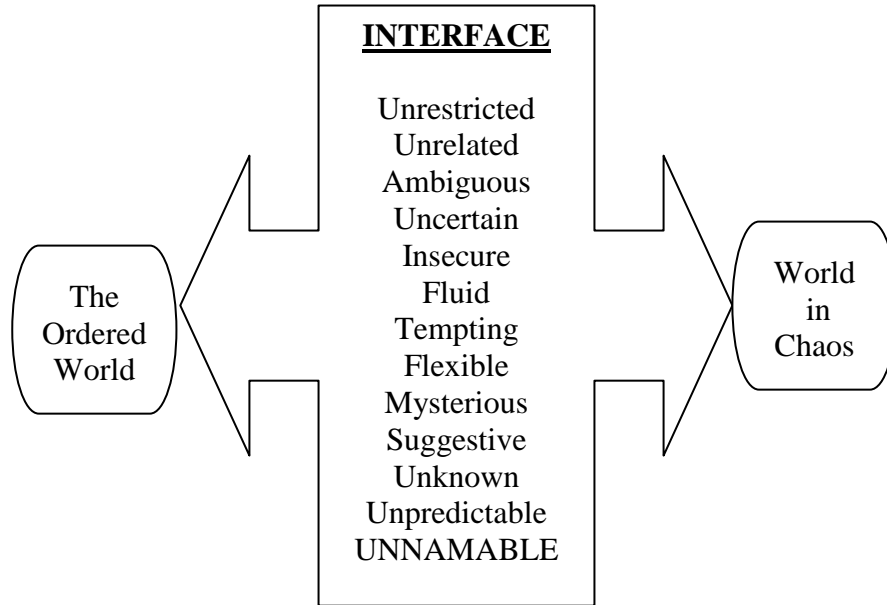
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APPENDIX

The Expression of Interface in a Diagram



Three Ways of the Expression of Interface in *The Trilogy* and *Tehlikeli Oyunlar*:

