

AN ANALYSIS  
OF SOCIAL PRESSURE AND THE ALIENATION OF WOMEN IN  
ANGELA CARTER'S *THE MAGIC TOYSHOP* AND JEANETTE  
WINTERSON'S *ORANGES ARE NOT THE ONLY FRUIT*

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## ABSTRACT

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WINTERSON'S *ORANGES ARE NOT THE ONLY FRUIT*

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This thesis carries out an analysis of social pressure and the alienation of women in Angela Carter's *The Magic Toyshop* and Jeanette Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. It discusses the effect of social pressure on woman whose sexuality is ignored. This study initially focuses on the development of woman's sexuality in relation to the female model described by heterosexual hegemony. It aims at taking a closer look at the alienation of conformist and non-conformist female characters under patriarchal force in Carter's and Winterson's works. In relation to women's sexual identity, the thesis examines gender roles in the particular works. It discusses how women under patriarchal oppression are identified with passive female roles while men are associated with superior male roles. Thus this study iterates how women are alienated as a result of patriarchal gendering. With this aim, it questions the ways to destroy the patriarchal oppression for Carter and Winterson.

Key Words: Patriarchal oppression, gender roles, female identity, conformism.

## ÖZ

ANGELA CARTER’İN *THE MAGIC TOYSHOP* VE JEANETTE WINTERSON’İN *ORANGES ARE NOT THE ONLY FRUIT* ESERLERİNDE SOSYAL BASKI VE KADININ YABANCILAŞMASI

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Bu tez Angela Carter’ın *The Magic Toyshop* ve Jeanette Winterson’ın *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* eserlerinde sosyal baskı ve kadının yabancılaşmasını incelemektedir. Sosyal baskının cinselliği göz ardı edilen kadın üzerindeki etkisini tartışır. Bu çalışma öncelikle karşıcinsel hegemonyanın tanımladığı kadın modeline göre kadının cinsel gelişimi üzerinde yoğunlaşmaktadır. Carter ve Winterson’ın eserlerinde ataerkil baskı altındaki uyumlu ve aykırı kadın karakterlerin yabancılaşmasını yakından incelemeyi amaçlar. Kadının cinsel kimliğine bağlı olarak, bu tez bahsedilen eserlerde cinsiyet rollerini incelemektedir. Ataerkil baskı altındaki kadının pasif kadın rolleriyle tanınmasına karşın erkeğin üstün erkek rolleriyle bağdaştırılmasını tartışmaktadır. Böylece bu çalışma cinsiyet rollerinin kültürel yolla ayrıştırılmasının sonucu olarak kadının yabancılaşmasını irdeler. Bu amaçla, Carter ve Winterson’a göre ataerkil baskıyı yok etmenin yollarını sorgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ataerkil baskı, cinsiyet rolleri, kadın kimliği, uymacılık.

To My Family,

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims at exploring social pressure and the alienation of women in male dominated society in the works *The Magic Toyshop* by Angela Carter and *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* by Jeanette Winterson. The main argument is the clash between perceptions of sexuality and gender roles which are constituted by patriarchy. It is specifically rooted in woman's perception of sexuality and the view of society on women's sexuality. It is claimed that woman who is under patriarchal oppression suffers from the sexual phenomenon that dictates genders and roles. As a result, she is alienated into her image whether she conforms to social conventions or not. Thus this study is based on the alienation of the suppressed woman in relation to the concepts of patriarchal gendering, heterosexual hegemony and passive female roles in these works. The argument on women's alienation develops in two phases of individuals' perceptions of sexuality and gender roles in society. In dealing with women's position in patriarchy, feminist theorists like Simone De Beauvoir, Betty Friedan, Elaine Showalter and Virginia Woolf are referred to throughout the thesis.

There is a contradiction between women's perception of sexuality and society's perception of women's sexuality. The difference creates the problem related to woman's identity. The problem is that society leads individuals into a heterosexual path and it accepts two sexual categories, male and female. The individuals in turn are expected to conform to either side according to their biological sex. They are supposed to follow the heterosexual path ignoring their sexual orientation because society accepts no other alternative genders. The relationship between sex and gender is so strong that the notions "female and male" are used for both sex and gender divisions. Men and women's sexual preferences are skipped in the process of belonging to a gender. Society accepts sexuality only in accordance with gender roles. That is to say, women's or men's sexuality is only described in relation to terms male and female. Male and female that are associated with men and women are

described within certain sexual inclinations and behaviors. As a result of conformism to social tradition, individuals are expected to have certain roles according to their genders. Women are associated with female roles and men are identified with male roles as a consequence of patriarchal gendering. However, women are considered as subordinate to men in all matters within and outside the house. Female and male roles are thus defined by a social structure that is based on men's superiority and activity as opposed to women's inferiority and passivity. That is to say, gender appears as a social construct which is simply constituted according to people's biological sexes. This is the point where individuals' perceptions of sexuality clash with gender roles. Social pressure on gender roles causes adaptation problems related to sexual preferences. Besides, individuals are not aware whether their perceptions of sexuality match their sexual preferences. The heterosexual hegemony skips individuals' perceptions of sexuality and assigns gender roles based on sexes. Moreover, women and men never gain their true identities because they don't make the decisions themselves. It disturbs woman's identity more than man's identity because it accepts man as superior to woman. The inferior woman is subordinated to man. The gender phenomenon subjects woman to social oppression in her deeds and decisions. She is expected and even forced to have all the subordinate roles like mother, wife, and sister to male authority. As opposed to man, woman is given no recognition in society. She is the repressed being. That is why woman feels a greater dilemma in conforming to social pressure on sexual identity. She experiences self alienation in fitting into her passive image and female roles necessitated by society. First, she develops her female sexual identity accordingly and then tries to have other features related to femininity under social pressure. In other words, woman is first made "female" in conforming to heterosexual hegemony. Then, she is made to have roles of female gender as complementary to man. Most often, women aim at fitting best to the public image of "the female". In other cases, even if woman does not wish to be in the accepted way, she is supposed to become a "female". That is to say, society expects woman to be typical female ignoring her sexual orientation. This creates the clash between her perception of sexuality and the view of society on woman's sexuality.

In both Angela Carter's and Jeanette Winterson's works, woman is depicted as subject to social pressure in all matters. Besides being exposed to oppression on daily deeds and manners, woman has no right to explore her own sexuality. In other words, society accepts woman in a certain frame of female references. Her sexual tendencies, desires and anything that is a part of her identity are ignored. Whether she conforms to social expectations or not does not matter because woman becomes alienated to her identity anyway. As in *The Magic Toyshop* by Carter, woman unknowingly accepts her "female" identity in the heterosexual tradition, thus becomes alienated into the "female image" or, she can't help getting closer to her own sexual perception and thus becomes alienated from the rest of society, as in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* by Winterson. This thesis depicts an analysis of women's alienation under social oppression through a conformist female in *The Magic Toyshop* (MT) and a non-conformist young woman in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* (Oranges). An analysis of the development of female sexuality and alienation under social pressure offers a traditional point of view to these texts. Both works have been examined from theoretical points of view so far. In this sense this study aims at a thematic study of the two novels with the idea of alienation from women's perspective. There are several benefits for such a study. For one, it characterizes the authors' views on the sexual perceptions of women under social pressure. Such an analysis also describes patriarchal gendering and identification. It achieves this by depicting varying roles assigned to male and female in the novels. In other words, it provides a reflection of prescribed roles of the female, the male and of the institutions of authority. It also offers an explanation for family organization as the source of sexual behavior. Both Carter's and Winterson's works depict the patriarchal context that pushes women into alienation by praising male authority in institutions and within the family as opposed to women's subordination.

In *The Magic Toyshop*, Angela Carter depicts a child of wealth in 1930's England named Melanie who is 15 years old. She sets the novel in post-war period in England "where homogeneous Britishness has disappeared" (Gamble, 45). Carter concentrates on Melanie's experiences in exploring her flesh and sexuality and her hesitation between childhood and adulthood. The young woman is often found

theorizing about her sexual appearance in her transition. Even before the action starts in the novel, she is kept by the idea of marriage. She is so much affected by the social pressure that her only concern becomes her future marital status. Melanie's parents' plane crash starts the events in the novel. Ironically the accident happens the day after Melanie's ritual with her mother's wedding dress. Putting the dress on, she creeps into the moonlight garden in her grown-up attitude. Melanie has to climb an apple tree to get back into the house. After the climb, she is back with scratches and blood on her body and the wedding dress gets torn and stained. This experience turns out to be symbolic not only because it somehow brings her parents' death in an accident but also in the sense that Melanie lives through a ritual into adulthood. The novel from this part on depicts the period after Melanie and her brother Jonathan and her sister Victoria are orphaned and sent to Uncle Philip's house in London where "there is a disparate group of individuals in varying relationship to each other" (Gamble, 45). This is a place where Uncle Philip's dumb wife Aunt Margaret -who has been silent since their wedding day- and her Irish brothers Francie and Finn live together. The household here is subject to the pressure of the patriarchal figure Uncle Philip who has been isolated from his early rich family. Melanie feels emotionally and psychologically stranded after her parents' death since she considers herself as the cause of the accident. That is why being sent to London is like a second punishment for her secret ritual. Besides, the experience in this house and the toyshop seems like "a way of revenge-taking for Uncle Philip" (Cantrell, 55). The orphaned siblings seem to be sent to live in a toyshop which implies a fairy tale. However, they live in a dirty, cramped house behind Uncle Philip's toyshop. It is not this decrease in standards of living that is like a punishment but the patriarchal system they are exposed to. Thus, the magic toyshop becomes a sign for the ruling system in patriarchal society. This move to London bears particular importance in the sense that it happens at a time when Melanie is awakening to her sexuality. It becomes the place where Melanie resolves her main obsession and submits to the expectations of society in terms of development of female sexuality. Carter deliberately portrays a conventional group of individuals in the novel. Thus she depicts how women are oriented to be "the female" with all manners, clothing and

behavior. All in all, Carter's story which asserts "the fluidity and malleability of the subject which is not born so much constructed" (Sim, 182) attempts to reflect woman's quest for self-identity. It describes the construction of female identity for women in patriarchal system from a critical point of view.

*Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* which was written in 1985 is a woman-oriented work like *The Magic Toyshop*. Like Carter, Jeanette Winterson discusses a young girl's emotional and sexual anxieties in her narrative. Winterson picks up the story of Jeanette from the young woman's perspective who is supposed to be an adult while narrating. The protagonist retells her life story from the time when she was seven years old. Similar to *The Magic Toyshop*, in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, the reader comes across a young woman's passage from childhood to adulthood with the discovery of woman body and sexuality. Jeanette is an adopted child whose step-mother is a devoted dominant Christian character. Her mother instills in Jeanette the idea that she is unique. She tries hard to make her step-daughter believe that "she will become a missionary to the world in the end" (Cantrell, 64). However, like Carter does in *MT*, Winterson depicts a Jeanette who often questions herself as she grows up. Jeanette is forced so much by the social and religious authority that she even starts preaching at a young age. She cannot oppose the Church and her step-mother. It is only when the Church and others learn about Jeanette's love affair with her friend Melanie that the reader encounters how Jeanette reacts to the social pressure. She experiences a sexual and emotional intimacy with her friend Melanie. From this point on, Winterson deals with Jeanette's sexual tendency which is against socially acceptable ways. Upon resisting the Church Jeanette is exorcised by the pastor and the rest comes. She pretends to repent because of tortures and people's opinions of her. However, she starts another lesbian affair. The novel ends when Jeanette is accepted for higher education. Winterson depicts a successful Jeanette who is an outcast to put forward the idea of non-conformism and alternative ways of gendering. She uses oranges as a metaphor for the sexual alternatives accepted by society. So, the title reveals her suggestion of alternative sexes. On the verge of becoming an adult, Jeanette goes through the same phases like Melanie in *MT*. However, Jeanette becomes an outcast as a result of her sexual preferences that

oppose the Church dogmas while Melanie of *MT* keeps submitting to the accepted realm of female sexuality.

In each novel, the authors depict a protagonist who is just entering adulthood by the end of the novel. Both Melanie (*MT*) and Jeanette (*Oranges*) are in a process of forming their sexual identities throughout the novels. They look for an answer for the question how they will live. As part of the development of sexuality, both works include the childhood of the protagonists. From childhood, the characters are exposed to the circumcision of social pressure. They are under pressure to conform to social prescriptions. Both contexts include a patriarchal figure that represents patriarchy which shapes people's identities as sexual beings. In turn, both protagonists question the authorities which dictate them who to be. Accordingly the authors argue how women react to pressure in the period of becoming a sexual identity. However, they examine two opposing characters under social pressure. Although both protagonists experience alienation from society and themselves, they do not live through the same phases. Nevertheless, both works give one message related to patriarchal oppression. It is depicted that individuals either become conformists with their obedient attitude like Melanie in *MT* or they are simply announced outcasts in society with their rebellious sexual wishes and tendencies like Jeanette of *Oranges*.

Within the analysis, the ways Carter and Winterson deal with the problem of women's perceptions of sexuality are discussed in relation to imposition of "female sexuality" in patriarchy. It is questioned whether conformism to social impositions could repress perceptions of sex with respect to Melanie and Jeanette. Moreover, some concepts related to sex, gender, patriarchal gendering, heterosexuality, homosexuality, male gaze and female passivity are analyzed. However, first Carter's and Winterson's perceptions in their narratives are introduced.

### **1.1 Carter and Winterson's Views on Female Sexuality**

In most of her works, Angela Carter prefers to reflect women's position as opposed to men's authority in society. She uses certain elements in her works which

challenge the patriarchal society. Most critics like Lorna Sage and Sarah Gamble are closely interested in her feminist themes and her ideas on women, women's gendered identity and social forces on women. Carter is particularly interested in socio-cultural dictations on women's sexuality. However, she is sometimes criticized in her conclusions in her works. She is blamed for "reproducing male oppression in her works especially the ones including pornographic elements" (Gamble, 10). She is isolated from some feminist groups in this sense. "Her depiction of violence against women and the way she constructs the female desire as passive and responsive to men" (Watkins, 131) is claimed to be controversial with her feminist ideas. Nonetheless, Carter emerges as a feminist author with all her references to identity construction in her narrative. Despite the accusations, most critics think that she deliberately applies controversy and lets the reader question social values besides the author's and their own. In fact, Carter's open-ended closures in her narratives prove that she aims at introspection on the reader's side. She opposes the idea of oppression on female sexuality. It is important to note that Carter uses female sexuality as women's sexuality like it is used in patriarchal gendering. What she criticizes is the mentality which ignores women's sexual orientation, and dictates passive female roles on women. *The Magic Toyshop* is one of Carter's works in which she keeps the reader question social values and female roles. In the novel, the resolution partly supports male authority and superiority. Yet, at the same time it supports the idea of freedom for women's sexual identity. The thing that Carter makes fun of is the "quest for an idealized notion of home" (Peach, 78) in this novel. In relation to Carter's use of form and style, it can also be claimed that she "focuses on the unraveling of the workings of masculine heterosexual desire through appropriation of narrative form: the fairytale and the Bildungsroman" (Bristow, 76) in *MT*.

Winterson's views on female sexuality seem more challenging compared to Carter's. It is easily noticed from Winterson's protagonists. Among her works, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* bears specific importance for Winterson in that the book invites lots of critical response as it depicts a lesbian protagonist. Winterson states she has been greatly affected by Angela Carter despite "her controversial narrative style" (Sponberg, 41). Like Carter, Winterson posits "postmodernist literary

strategies in the service of her particular politics” (Watkins, 154). Her lesbian politics provides new interpretations and subcultures for postmodernism. Unlike Carter though, she gets no accusation from feminists because her feminism is recognized from her earliest work. That is to say, Winterson reverses gender roles in her narrative and offers “new alternatives for heterosexual hegemony” (Rusk, 106). Winterson points out the problem of pressure on sexual preferences as well as woman identity. As a lesbian feminist author, Winterson backs up the idea of other sexes. Besides, she questions the gender roles which appeal to two sexual categories determined by social system. She displays her own experiences as a lesbian young woman in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. There are parallels between the novel and Winterson’s life. Like her character Jeanette, she is brought up to be an Evangelical preacher at a young age, experiences a lesbian relationship and leaves home. That is why Winterson’s views on female sexuality are more assertive. Unlike Carter, Winterson displays a group of women whose identities are never recognized. She is one of those women who are isolated from society because of their “unnatural passions”. While Carter deals with the oppression on women’s identity as a secondary being, Winterson is more interested in women’s perceptions of sexuality that are against social impositions.

Although both Carter and Winterson seem to be interested in postmodern thought which rejects a central hierarchy and organizing principle, they are not bound to a theoretical framework in their narratives. On the other hand, though “the two writers’ ideological viewpoints differ” (Neumeier, 184), these two postmodern works exemplify the effect of the patriarchal system on identity construction. Carter herself calls her work piece of “materialism” (“Notes from the Front Line”; Carter’s emphasis, 38). On the other hand, while using realist contexts in narrative, the two novelists also apply postmodernist elements like fantastic and language plays. They also use fantastic elements in their realistic narratives, which opens the way for various interpretations. Carter even herself calls her book “fairytale” (Gamble, 84). That is why Carter and Winterson are considered both postmodernists and feminists. As Woolf states on female tradition “women not only write about different things but they also write about them in a different way” (Barrett, 24). The way Carter and

Winterson deal with woman's sexual identity is marginal. They prefer marginalized female characters and question the history of sexuality. Within their narratives, Carter and Winterson reflect the place of women with appropriate manners and clothing in society. Besides, they put forward that having sexual identity is a social process. In fact, both Carter and Winterson work on how the material world affects women. They eminently emphasize the place and roles of women in society. They do not hesitate to characterize the female body as a material object. In this way, they claim that gender is a social construct that is based on biological sex differences. They reflect how male authority is ensured over female inferiority through gender division. They put emphasis on the idea that "the woman emerges as something of a puppet, enacting stereotyped roles imposed upon her by male culture" (Dowson, 192). However much they are alike in their preference of themes and styles, Carter and Winterson differ in their concluding remarks. Although they complement each other's works in ideology, they are different in their thematic conclusions. In this sense, an analysis of two opposing protagonists becomes more plausible. Moreover, their special emphasis on the development of female sexuality requires further analysis. Before starting the analysis, it is better to elaborate on the effect of social pressure on female sexuality along with concepts related to sex and gender.

## **1.2 A Feminist Approach to the Concepts of Sex and Gender**

"Gender is... a construction that regularly conceals its genesis" (Sullivan, 84)

The terms sex and gender are considered to overlap with each other in a patriarchal context. Woman and man are expected to have female and male roles according to their biological sexes. That is to say, the dictation of patriarchal society on man and woman is specifically observable in sexual identity. Patriarchal society does not recognize alternative sexes. As a result, patriarchal gendering includes two categories, male and female. It simply assigns man and woman to be male and female. The hegemony on gender and sex relations brings the matter of heterosexuality. Patriarchal system assigns not only male and female roles, but also

sexual identities. The ones who do not follow the determined path are accepted as odd. It is the point where sexual preferences of such individuals clash with heterosexual hegemony. That is to say, individuals who are under patriarchal pressure are only accepted as male and female sexual identities. If they have sexual tendencies against heterosexual hegemony, they are cast out of society. It is obvious that the system does not consider the individuals' perceptions of sexuality. Patriarchal thought supposes that man and woman can only follow the heterosexual path as male and female ignoring their sexual perceptions. As a result, man and woman become male and female without being aware of their perceptions of sexuality. As stated above, the dilemma is greater for the woman because they belong to the passivized gender. The patriarchal gendering is based on male activity as opposed to the passivity of the female. Thus woman's sexuality which makes her an identity is never recognized. What is more, it brings the idea of the superiority of men as opposed to the inferiority of women in gender roles. That is to say, it is based on authoritative male roles as opposed to oppressed female roles. Again woman becomes the victim in the process because she is the inferior object that is supposed to supply the needs of male through female roles like mother, sister, lover and so on. Moreover, woman is the object of male gaze since one of her roles is to appeal to male taste. Because of her inferiority, woman is exposed to male gaze, which forces her to become "the female" in male mind.

People are so submissive to social imposition of gender roles that they do not even question how it is created. As Judith Butler states, "Gender is... a construction that regularly conceals its genesis" (Sullivan, 84). She refers to the social enforcement of gender on individuals. They unknowingly acquire who they should be without thinking. No sooner are the individuals forced to become somebody than they experience isolation from self. If s/he cannot adapt herself/himself to prescriptions of society, s/he is once again isolated but this time from society. Woman's alienation is more dramatic because of her female roles. Feminist thought here appears as a part of ideologies and movements which examine social forces on sexuality. It is important to mention some feminist authors because they emphasize the development of sexuality under pressure from women's

perspective.

Among theories that criticize social forces, feminism becomes more prominent than the others. It is a discourse that aims at equal rights and legal protection for women. The main concern of feminism which has a lot of directions, movements and theories is the gender difference in society, which leads to the idea of “inferior woman”. As this thesis depicts gender roles and the development of female sexuality in order to reflect the oppression on women, it is necessary to refer to the feminist side of the matter. However, since feminist theory is such a large area to discuss, only some minor concepts are covered in this thesis. Some of the arguments of feminist ideology have been accepted as women rights that are unequal which pertains to “racism, homophobia, classism and colonization” (Selden, 113). However, this thesis relates to how feminist thought describes gender roles that are socially-constructed. That is to say, it refers to how feminist thought explains the creation of inferior and passive image of women as opposed to male authority in gender roles. In fact, feminist thought claims that the main reason behind the inferior woman image is associated with order and authority. That is to say, sexuality serves as “a transfer point for relations of power” (Foucault, 103) in society. It proves that gender roles have been constructed so that social hierarchy between “men and women, young people and old people, parents and offspring, teachers and students, priests and laity, an administration and a population” (104) can be maintained. It somehow brings the issue of superiority of some units within groups of gendered beings. However, patriarchal gendering is always thought to be natural. As Judith Butler suggests, “modern culture tended to use sexual categories as if they were natural, rather than socially-constructed” (232). The reason is that sexuality is there to provide the maintenance for authority to oppress the individuals especially the female for the sake of ensuring a kind of order in relations between people. As Elaine Showalter explains, this view comes from “the Victorian belief that women were partial and defective versions of the full humanity represented by men” (148). That is to say, the inferiority of woman is for the continuation of male authority. Men are called to represent humanity as if it is only constituted by men. That is why women’s sexuality is disregarded in patriarchy. To ensure the inferiority of women,

there is a tendency towards constituting female prototypes. All deeds of women in society are restricted according to the female model defined by patriarchy. In relation to women's problem, feminist movement and theories aim at an action against "a generalization of women's experience in cultural and historical sense" (107). When it comes to the literary side of the movement, the authors like Virginia Woolf, Simone De Beauvoir, Betty Friedan and Elaine Showalter come forward in relation to this thesis. They discuss the problem related to woman's sexual identity, the reasons of passive female image and the ways to ensure equal rights for man and woman. Since both Carter and Winterson are accepted as feminist authors, their opinions on female sexuality are also referred to in this part.

The construction of sexuality has been raised by many feminist theorists and novelists. They put emphasis on identity, the body and essentialism issues. Susan Watkins claims that "such authors were themselves occupied in a similar position which can be described as marginality" (4). She also states that to be on the margin "is a characteristic of femininity" (4). One of those authors is Virginia Woolf who has the most influential feminist texts. Her essay *A Room of One's Own* was published in 1929 which was one year after British women achieved to vote. Her work depicts significant points about the rights of women. In this sense the work is accepted to be "impersonal and defensive" (Showalter, 282) although the author often uses the subject "I". The "I" actually is a persona through which Woolf depersonalizes the subject. In this influential feminist text, Woolf mainly talks about "the social disadvantages for women and lack of personal space" (Watkins, 12). The most important one of these material disadvantages is related to education. Woolf brings the notice to "women's exclusion from educational institutions" (13). Since Woolf is specifically interested in the rights of women as writers, she puts great emphasis on educational rights for women. According to her, such material disadvantages not only restrict women's economic freedom but also show the inferiority of women in writings of men. Woolf supports the idea through her words, "if they [women] were not inferior, they would cease to enlarge" (37). She means that the inferiority of women is a fact related to women's situation rather than their nature. Besides the financial independence for women, Woolf is concerned about the

issues of language and gender. She strictly opposes the force to write by thinking of one's sex. She revolves around the question of being in or outside the center that stands for male thinking. Her words "I thought how unpleasant it is to be locked out; and I thought how it is worse perhaps to be locked in" (Woolf, 25) characterizes how she feels like being on the margins. She is well aware that a marginal position could be a better perspective. Although Woolf is specifically interested in the position of women writers, her words are well applicable to the position Carter and Winterson's characters are in. Melanie and Jeanette exemplify the pair of scales she mentions. Melanie who seems closer to the center feels more incomplete than Jeanette who is considered to be an outsider. Feeling incomplete when one is in the center is discussed in relation to conformism in coming parts.

In her essay "Professions for Women", Woolf suggests two obstacles to women's situation in relation to man. The image of Angel in the House is the first one which is the self-sacrificing woman who "was so constituted that she never had a mind or a wish of her own, but preferred to sympathize always with the minds and wishes of others" (12). It is the same idea of being close to the center that she explains in *A Room of One's Own*. Moreover, she makes references to the male gaze that accepts woman only as an object that is supposed to appeal to his taste. The second obstacle Woolf mentions is the difficulty of "telling the truth about my own experiences as a body" (12). Similarly here, Woolf refers to the idea of being in the margins since such a state is against the ideal, pure image of woman and closer to sexual exploration for woman. It is important to note Woolf's two obstacles to woman's identity because the former relates to *MT* while the second explains what Winterson depicts in *Oranges*.

Just like Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir makes reference to the inferiority of women in her *The Second Sex*. She starts her work with the perception of woman in patriarchy and goes on with the experience of living as a woman. Beauvoir is as interested in women's oppression as any female author. Nevertheless, she is more into the sociological side of the phenomenon. She deals with issues such as biology, race and lesbianism, which makes her work indispensable for feminist writing. Her statement "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (267) describes the way in

which society perceives woman. Her statement is cited in many postmodern feminist works since it summarizes the idea of the imposition of female identity on women. What she specifically means is that women are so brought up to become the perfect models of female gender. Woman is “the Sleeping Beauty, Cinderella, Snow-White, she who receives and submits (291). Most often “no quality is asked of them other than their beauty” (291), which is the case in *MT*. De Beauvoir believes that a woman is born and exists as female prototype as society necessitates. In this way she argues that gender is constructed by sociological factors based on biological sexes. She also mentions marriage as a way of escape for woman from the parental home. It seems like a way to freedom for the young girl. However, woman’s value “compared to the male’s is like a slave’s compared with the free man’s. When she becomes a young girl, the father has all power over her; when she marries he transfers it in toto to the husband” (83). Like most feminist authors, De Beauvoir emphasizes that becoming a woman is a process of “occupying the role as a wife, mother or daughter as complement to male roles” (Raddeker, 65). De Beauvoir “admits that it may be easier to comply with such patriarchal definitions of woman, which may even make us happy” (Watkins, 15), but she again “stresses that our liberty is more important than our happiness” (15). Like Woolf, De Beauvoir is interested in women’s writing which is considered to be inferior to male-authored literature. She stresses that women’s passive status is a result of “woman’s situation as man’s inferior other” (Watkins, 16). She emphasizes the fact that woman’s subordinate roles as a mother, wife, daughter and the like are because of man’s needs and desires. De Beauvoir touches on the matter from a historical point of view. She gives examples from different periods which accept woman as the second sex. It is not only the male power and authority that is emphasized but also woman’s role as complementary to man. Woman’s existence is functional for men in many aspects according to De Beauvoir. She even states that “if she did not exist, men would have invented her” (186), which proves woman’s status as the complementary other to man’s existence. De Beauvoir also mentions the fact that woman’s sexuality is given no recognition. Like in other matters, she is forced to suppress her sexuality ignoring her perceptions. The suppressed young woman is most often inclined to be typical

female. In other cases, De Beauvoir suggests, the oppression may appear as a lesbian tendency either because of the fear of the male or as a result of “the wish to imitate the masculine” (408). This is exemplified in Winterson’s character Jeanette who is so much forced to become the woman that society wants. Woman’s pleasure is then only ensured as long as she conforms to social rules. That is to say, she is happy if she is married and necessary for some men. In other words, she is to be delighted if “her existence is justified by the wants she supplies” (513) as a mother, which Carter exemplifies through Margaret and Melanie.

Presenting the causes and effects of the problem of oppression constitutes the first phase of feminist works. *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan is rather like a work of investigation. It invites the readers to question why so many American housewives suffered from depression and dissatisfaction in the 1950s. Friedan comes up with the reasons of post-war period, capitalism and suburbanization. She restates the patriarchal oppression and its effects on women’s existence. Friedan calls the problem of social oppression on people as “the problem that has no name”. She refers to the problem of identity for woman to whom nobody gives recognition. Like other feminist authors, she discusses the patriarchal privilege that woman is man’s inferior other. Her work covers two ideas. The first one is related to the preciousness of femininity not as complementary to masculinity. She thinks of femininity as a valuable state and redefines it as the pleased state of accepting the attributes described by society (Friedan, 61). Secondly, she suggests that “femininity is best, even only fulfilled through marriage, motherhood, domesticity: what Friedan terms “Occupation: housewife”” (Watkins, 34). Besides the post-war period, Friedan criticizes the Freudian psychology for creating the mystique. She suggests that conventional female roles lead women into depression since it denies the female identity. Friedan is after a “room” for one’s own as a solution to woman’s problematic identity. She supports the idea of creating a self-image for women so that they could gain identity. Like Woolf, she also offers equal rights in education for women to ensure self-worth. All in all, Friedan’s main solution is related to the extent to which women are “aware of and resistant to the dominant ideology” (Watkins, 46). Up to her, it all starts with being able to say no to “housewife image”

(342). From this perspective it seems, Carter reflects the common way in which women act in *MT*. Women of *MT* are simply pushed into alienation and depression.

Friedan's argument makes sense in this analysis since both Carter and Winterson are interested in women's awareness and resistance to the currently existing patriarchal context in their works. Carter's words "Sexuality . . . never takes place in a vacuum" (*The Sadeian Woman*, 11) explains how sexuality is shaped by some force. Sexuality is not something that emerges naturally but it is constructed by social force for some units to gain power as confirmed above. Carter's following statement "Flesh comes to us out of history; so does the repression and taboo that governs our experience of flesh" (11) explains the word "vacuum" better. She refers to the power of social force on even the experiences of flesh throughout history. So, sexuality takes place unnaturally as Carter suggests. In particular she highlights the idea of woman as a secondary and dependent being in society as a part of her sexual role. Carter emphasizes woman's role as an object to appeal to male gaze till marriage which makes her finally recognized in society. She supports Friedan's arguments in *The Feminine Mystique*. In this way she also opposes the psychoanalytic thinking that woman is identified with passivity along with penis envy (Zizek, 4). Most psychoanalytic theories place woman as inferior because they associate castration with female. In relation to castration process for the female, Carter and many other feminist authors criticize the idea that "there is no such thing as woman" (Harris, 106). Woman is accepted to be complete at best when "the man's desire for her affirms her as a sexual being but not as a unique subject" (128) in psychoanalytic thinking. All these male-oriented thoughts support Friedan's argument on women's identity. Since "the feminine is defined as the necessary complement to the operation of male sexuality" (70), woman's sexuality is undermined. Thus it causes women to feel alienated as Woolf explains. Like Friedan, Carter is critical of such theories because of the damage it causes:

Female castration is an imaginary fact that pervades the whole of men's attitude towards women and our attitude to ourselves, that transforms women from human beings into wounded creatures who were born to bleed. (*The Sadeian Woman* 23)

She is disturbed by the idea that this understanding is accepted universally as human sexuality. It is clear that like Showalter, Carter criticizes the Victorian idea that humanity is constituted by man and women exist to supply his needs. As stated above, the inferior image of woman as opposed to man's superiority is depicted by Carter, Winterson, and many feminist authors.

Finally it is necessary to mention Elaine Showalter whose work *A Literature of Their Own* is a reference to Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. The work becomes prominent with its concern with the neglected woman writing. Showalter includes literary subcultures giving birth to diversity in interpretation of femininity. She gives a detailed analysis of woman writing from Bronte of the Victorian period to Lessing of modern era. She briefly makes the distinction as "feminine as bowing to male expectation", "feminist as rebelling" and "female as articulating women's experience". Showalter's work summarizes the emergence and the development of female tradition and aesthetics in the novel. She deals with all subjects concerning women in her work and comes up with the stages of feminine, feminist and female. She explains the three concepts as follows;

First there is a prolonged phase of imitation of the prevailing modes of the dominant tradition and the internalization of its standards of art and its views on social roles. Second, there is a phase of protest against these standards and values and the advocacy of the minority rights and values, including a demand for autonomy. Finally, there is a phase of self discovery, a turning inward freed from some of the dependency of opposition, a search for identity. (13)

In her classification, Showalter identifies the Feminine phase as the period from "the appearance of male pseudonym in the 1840s to the death of George Eliot in 1880" (13); the Feminist phase as 1880 to 1920; "or the winning to vote" (13); and the Female phase as 1920 to the present, "but entering a new stage of self-awareness about 1960" (13). Like Woolf, Showalter depicts the Victorian belief as the origin of women's inferior status. She states "thus women writers often perpetuated the stereotypes of female ignorance and inaptitude" (42). Showalter discusses the duties

of women throughout her work, she points out the true occupation for women. That is to say, she claims that the society calls those happy women “who require nothing but the calm recurrence of those peaceful home duties in which domestic women rightly feel that their true vocation lies” (85). The inferiority of women is so widely accepted that even women writers are thought to “possess the sentiment, domestic expertise knowledge of the female character” (90) and to “lack originality, humor, self-control and knowledge of male character” (90). It is significant to note that *Jane Eyre* -which is referred to in Winterson’s work as well- is considered to “anticipate and indeed formulate the deadly combat between the Angel in the House and the devil in the flesh” (113). It is also evident in the fiction of “Virginia Woolf and other twentieth century British women novelists” (113). Showalter’s analysis of *Jane Eyre* is in line with Woolf’s idea of obstacles before women’s freedom. Like Woolf, Showalter points out the rivalry between the perfect angelic image of female and that of woman body as a sexual and desirous object. Showalter’s most important comment is on Woolf’s imagery that a woman writer must kill the Angel in the House that is the “phantom of female perfection who stands in the way of freedom” (365). She claims, “For Charlotte Bronte and George Eliot, the Angel was Jane Austen. For feminist novelists, it was George Eliot. For mid-twentieth century novelists, the Angel is Woolf herself” (265). That is to say, the Angel is a changeable imagery that represents anything that stands before women’s freedom according to periods. The parallelism between the idea of the Angel and the female model in Carter and Winterson’s works are analyzed in the coming chapters.

Keeping all the sociological background in mind, this thesis aims to depict the enclosed world of young women in two different contexts. It discusses the construction of female sexuality within the socially accepted boundaries. The analysis specifically focuses on manner, clothing, preferences, mothering, domestication, Church, house and routines which are all determiners of social oppression on woman’s identity. The ways to subvert the social force in two works are discussed. That is to say, while Winterson puts forward an untraditional way of understanding to woman’s identity in a lesbian context, Carter emphasizes oppression on women as the female gender. Nevertheless, it is observed that the

characters are in social alienation. It is obvious that sexual preferences are imposed by patriarchal system. The oppression on sexual identity has to be compared to women's awareness and reaction to patriarchal hegemony in two novels. It is discussed how woman becomes alienated under social oppression and whether she is aware of this alienation. Both works depict individuals' subjection - female protagonists in these novels- to social conventions. However, only Winterson's work deals with the issue of reaction on women's side. Within the analysis, there are two chapters in relation to social oppression and the alienation of women. While the first chapter is on the perceptions of sexuality in the development of female sexuality, the second one deals with male dominated gender roles and the female model. In chapter one, the power of patriarchy on women's sexual tendencies is discussed. Both works are analyzed according to the characters' awareness of sexual formation. It is discussed whether belonging to female gender overlaps with women's perceptions of sexuality. The second chapter focuses on the enforcement of patriarchy on gender roles. It includes the accepted gender roles along with the periods which the novels refer to. Moreover, it depicts how Carter and Winterson reflect gender roles within family and society.

## CHAPTER 2

### SEXUAL PERCEPTIONS AND THE ALIENATION OF WOMEN

“How shall I live?” (*Art and Lies*, 23)

The analysis starts with the sexual tendencies of female characters in the narratives. In the chapter, the question “How is sexual identity constituted?” is accepted as the focus. Although it seems that people make their decisions themselves, they are unconsciously inclined to certain paths especially in sexual life. It is mainly because of gender and sex association in male-dominated society. That is to say, gender difference which is based on biological sex division is mainly for the benefit of the male in patriarchal context. Such discrimination in gender relations defines the power structure in society. That is why any heterodoxy in sexual preference is thought to be “a threat for existing power structure” (Rusk, 110). In these particular novels, the authors depict a patriarchal context as the authorizing element. The characters are so placed that they are to live under a patriarchal figure in both novels. Uncle Philip in *MT* and Jeanette’s mother Louie in *Oranges* stand and act as the ruling figures. In turn, the rest of the characters try to find answers to the question -as one of Winterson’s characters poses- “How shall I live?” The characters’ perceptions of sexuality are compared to their reactions to patriarchal enforcement. That is to say, it is analyzed whether characters are affected by social force in their sexual preferences. The most striking point in this context is whether the determining element deviates for characters’ choice of sexual turn. In fact, while patriarchy remains the determiner for Melanie’s sexual preference, it turns out to be her own sexual inclination in Jeanette’s case. As Woolf mentions in her article, patriarchy constitutes the obstacles before woman’s sexual identity. The repression appears either as absence of self worth or as a lesbian identity on her side.

Within this chapter, the process in which woman’s sexuality is formed is closely depicted. The most important point is women’s awareness of their own sexual inclinations. Sexual perceptions are compared to the genders of two

protagonists. Therefore, male gaze is also covered in accordance with the desire to appeal to male taste. The two novels which criticize the male-oriented thinking are used to depict that “female characters are always the object of male gaze and only that” (Selden, 145). In fact, Carter pushes the matter hard and creates a Melanie who dies to appeal best to male taste. On the other hand, Winterson displays the pains of a lesbian because her unnatural passions do not appeal to male taste. It then follows as women’s alienation from society in both contexts.

## **2.1 The Development of Conformist Woman’s Sexuality in *The Magic Toyshop***

Carter displays the development of female sexuality in her narrative. She sets her novel in a patriarchal context where a young lady seeks her identity as a sexual being. As Sarah Gamble states in *Writing from the Front Line*, “the narrative point of view is gendered female and the system it is up against is much more specifically patriarchal” (68). She agrees with Sage in that *MT* is a “woman-centered text”. Throughout the novel, Carter gives examples on Melanie’s monologues about her obsession with her physical appearance. She reflects two phases of Melanie’s becoming a sexual object. She depicts the difference in Melanie before and after going to the magic toyshop. It appears that the magic toyshop brings a lot of changes on Melanie’s side. Carter lets Melanie introspect especially in the second half of the novel. By doing so, she questions Melanie’s awareness and reaction to the development of her sexuality. Her narration depicts how Melanie feels about who she becomes. It turns out that Melanie’s perception of sexuality is actually the perception of society in the end. In this way Carter emphasizes Melanie’s subjection to patriarchy through the title of the book. She depicts the idea that women become puppets in society and that woman is supposed to have the castrated female identity in the patriarchal system. In fact, Carter’s context in the book clearly depicts how a woman becomes a female that exists as complementary to male. That is why, before going into the detailed analysis of Melanie’s “becoming” a female, it is better to elaborate on the background which prepares her to who she becomes.

*The Magic Toyshop* is the story of Melanie who enjoys the middle class comfort of her life. No sooner Melanie and her siblings learn about their parents' death than they are moved to Uncle Philip's house to take up residence. They are sent to live with Uncle Philip, his dumb wife Margaret and her brothers Francie and Finn in lower standards. Since this force means going from middle class to working class, Melanie and her siblings are introduced with new values and standards. Melanie, who has already been on the verge of becoming a part of the society, now faces a different family. This move to Philip's house constitutes the second phase that affects Melanie's sexuality. The crisis of the novel appears when Philip assigns Melanie with the role of Leda whereas he assigns Finn to act as his swan which is a life-size puppet. Melanie is forced to perform Leda's mythical rape. However, the act becomes like a real one that hurts Melanie psychologically. Finn who keeps silent till this part destroys the swan without letting Philip know. The day after Finn's symbolic rebellion, the household celebrate the day as freely as they longed for. With the celebration the reader -along with Melanie- learns about Margaret and Francie's incestuous relationship. When Philip comes back home, he sees his wife and her brother together. He sets fire to the house to kill everyone. At the end of the novel, Melanie escapes with Finn. However, Carter leaves an open end for all the characters. There is no other information apart from the two characters' escape in the end.

To iterate, there are two phases in Melanie's sexual development. While she is exposed to a comfortable life in the first phase, she is subject to the reign of a dictator Uncle in the second phase. Melanie gains her sexual perception within the first phase. Nonetheless, she appears to question who she is becoming in the second phase. In other words, she begins realizing that she is not herself indeed. It turns out that Melanie discovers that her perception of sexuality is an imposition of society indeed. She somehow becomes aware that her obsession with her sexuality is in fact a result of social imposition. In the analysis of Melanie's sexual development, Carter's allusions bear specific importance. Throughout the novel, she makes references to *Genesis*, *Alice in Wonderland* and Freud's essays on female sexuality.

The novel opens up with a profile of Melanie's life in an Edwardian country house where she lives with her siblings Jonathan and Victoria and her nanny Mrs Rundle. Their parents are described to "be away on a lecture tour in the United States" (Gamble, 67). Their father is a writer and their mum accompanies him in this tour. Melanie has quite high standards of living in this extended house with her own bedroom and bathroom. There is a relationship between the place in which one lives and her/his personal development as a young individual. Melanie in this sense "has all the privacy in the house" (Sage, 37), which provides the chance to explore her own body. Not surprisingly Carter often depicts the times Melanie examines her naked body in front of the mirror. She spends hours in front of the mirror. Carter describes her exploration of her flesh in detail:

...she would draw down the long line from breastbone to navel (which was a mysterious cavern or grotto), and she would rasp her palms against her bud-wing shoulder blades. And then she would writhe about, clasping herself, laughing, sometimes doing cartwheels and handstands out of sheer exhilaration at the supple surprise of herself now she was no longer a little girl. (1)

Melanie behaves as if she has just found her body. She is somehow encoded by the rules of femininity. She lives through the process of becoming a young lady in the physical sense with utmost pleasure. She thinks "she reached her peak in terms of physical beauty" (Alison, 45).

It is important to note that Melanie has the luxury to enjoy exploring her flesh in a spacious private room of her own. While she enjoys exploring her body, she is away from a prominent oppressive figure around. Nevertheless, she is never away from the male gaze on her mind. She uses the exact descriptions that a man would do while commenting on her own body. She inspects her body so closely that she thinks, "She was too thin for a Titian or Renoir, but she contrived a pale smug Cranach Venus with a bit of net curtain wound round her head" (*MT*, 2). Melanie is never at ease with her look. She is always in quest for the best physical appearance. Moreover, in her fantasies, she longs for living in Pre-Raphaelite when she experiences moments of delusional ecstasy. She combs her hair in different ways that

appeal to male taste in different periods of history. In some scenes, she is found posing as a model or chorus girl. She feels great pleasure thinking of herself as a model for male artists of the Renaissance period. In this way “she reveals her willing attitude to voyeurism” (Sage, 35). There is no reaction to the idea of voyeurism on Melanie’s side. It is what she desires as a young lady. In some other scenes, she acts out her wedding ceremony in her fantasies. She longs for everything that the conventional woman is expected to wish. In fact Melanie’s obsession with her outlook and desires to appeal to male taste relates to women’s inferior position in society. Carter displays “the young woman’s hesitations within the power structure in society” (Rusk, 117). She refers to the idea that women can only gain identity if they appeal to male taste. Thus it also shows that there is no such thing as woman sexuality within patriarchal system. That is why Carter depicts a young woman who is born with her sexual perceptions accepted by the society. Linden Peach describes what Melanie experiences:

The excitement and self satisfaction Melanie experiences in this narcissistic enjoyment of her own physical being fragments, and is threatened by, the social construction of Woman. As Melanie tries on various preconceived images of woman and female sexuality, the reader becomes more aware than Melanie of the cultural history at her shoulder.” (11)

The word “construction” shows the extent to which woman’s sexuality is disregarded in patriarchy. In her essay “Angel in the House”, Woolf describes the typical female who “rejects the ideal, pure image of woman, frankly exploring sexuality and the unconscious” (Barrett, 12). Like Woolf mentions, Melanie acts like a traditional young woman without thinking about her perception of sexuality. The only thing she cares is to look perfect as a sexual object. It is ironic that Melanie is so much under the effect of social force despite the lack of a patriarchal figure around. Carter draws attention to social force which forms woman’s sexual identity before she recognizes her perceptions of sexuality. Reflections of conventional woman in Carter’s narrative remind Friedan’s remarks on typical female. As she suggests, women are to be happy as long as they could supply the needs of men in some ways. It is clear in that

Melanie has already diverged into the patriarchal female model when she is in front of the mirror.

Melanie is already caught within a web of representations and expectations, symbolized in densely covered opening pages in the mirror before which she stands like the stepmother in the Grimm's "Little snow-White" inquiring theoretically "[a]nd am I as beautiful as that?"(Benson, 218)

As Benson clarifies, Melanie's sexual perception is based on to appeal to the male gaze. This is obvious in her imitations of different images of woman from history. The question "am I as beautiful as that?"(218) displays the effect of male gaze upon Melanie. Melanie represents the female who is expected to be like Snow-White who "receives and submits" (Beauvoir, 219). Her obsession with her physical appearance is a sign of her submission, which is the basic feature of typical female in accordance with woman's inferior state.

Carter refers to the male gaze in different periods in order to emphasize the historical side of social pressure. It could be one of the reasons why she creates a Melanie who is already born with the desire to appeal best to male taste. What really matters according to Carter is the effect of history on individuals. She herself states in *Sadeian Woman*, "Flesh comes to us out of history" (11). It is implied that sexuality is an imposition of society in certain ways. It has always been the same so Carter uses the word history. She deliberately questions Melanie's awareness in her exploration because her fulfillment in discovering her body is interfered by patriarchy. Although Melanie is unaware of the historical force on her shoulders, it is obvious that "she is entrapped by patriarchal gendering" (Benson 219). While posing like different women from different periods of history, she is not aware that she poses in order to appeal to male gaze. Carter describes Melanie in this way to refer to the idea that women are born with the urge to become the female. That is, they exist when they are silenced and appeal to male taste. Thus they become the second sex as De Beauvoir confirms. As she suggests, women unknowingly accept being the inferior sex "whose sexuality is only considered as complementary to male sexuality" (292).

It turns out that all Melanie's struggles to look sexually attractive prove her resignation from her pure existence as a woman. She is already alienated into her female identity prescribed by the society. She knows that she wants to have the beautiful female image. However, she is unaware that her mind is captured by patriarchal gendering that demotes femininity to a simple completion to man's sexual desires. She unconsciously acts out the female role as a sexual object. In this way she is alienated from her actual self- if she has ever had- to a conventional female. She is even unaware of the question how she should choose to live. She feels oriented to become the conformist in all senses. It is important to mention the typical female in patriarchal context. As Elaine Showalter explains;

The middle class ideology of the proper sphere of womanhood, which developed in post industrial England and America, prescribed a woman who would be a Perfect Lady, an Angel in the House, contentedly submissive to men, but strong in her inner purity and religiosity, queen in her realm of the Home. (14)

Showalter's words support Woolf's idea of Angel in the House. All the descriptions of the angel in the house suggest the passive and complementary image of woman. It is emphasized that the same image is the cause which leads women into alienation because it rejects identity for women. They are accepted as the inferior sex.

Although the development of woman's sexuality seems like a usual healthy process in society, Carter reflects the problems for young women through Melanie. She emphasizes the oppression on women and thus displays the fact that it causes obsessions at some point. Melanie, under the effect of social pressure, develops an obsession to marry. The young woman prays, "Please God, let me get married. Or, let me have sex" (8). Melanie's obsession with her appearance turns into another delusion with her future marital status. Her obsession appears as she steps into adulthood as a sexual being. She thinks at one point she is 'too thin', and the size of her small hard breasts is disappointing- yet she is also paradoxically afraid of growing too fat, because 'nobody would ever love her and she would die a virgin' (qtd in Gamble, 69). She desires to be called married when she is grown. Melanie's fears about her future marital status increase as she goes on scrutinizing her

body in front of mirrors. She reminds that she does not want to be like Mrs Rundle, her old virgin housekeeper who chooses to be called Mrs although she is single. On the other hand, Mrs Rundle's preference to be called Mrs is another aspect of pressure. It is in parallel to Melanie's theories about her possible marital status in future.

“What shall happen to me before I die?” she thought. “Well, I shall grow up and get married. I hope I get married. Oh, how awful if I don't get married. I wish I was forty and it was all over and I knew what was going to happen to me” (6)

It is significant that Melanie is worried about her future marital status rather than just being married in future. Melanie's worries prove that her obsession to marry is mainly because of the social pressure. Melanie, just like many others in real life is under the effect of the gaze. She even thinks ““Mrs' gave a woman a touch of personal dignity as she grew older” (*MT*, 3). In such a context, it is not possible to comment on individuals' sexual preferences since their perceptions are disregarded. The pressure on the female is so powerful that even Mrs Rundle is portrayed while praying “Please God, let me remember I was married as if I had really married... Or at least, let me remember that I had sex” (8). Marrying becomes women's *idée fixe* in patriarchal system. Moreover, there is the other side of the coin. Women are not only pushed into such obsessions but they are also left with repressed sexual feelings. In other words, women are not given the chance to acknowledge and experience their own sexuality in the limits of the society. It is striking that both Melanie and Mrs Rundle wish the same. Even pretending that they had sex in their lives makes sense for them. It seems as if Melanie longs for getting married as a young lady; however, Carter implies that it is the gaze that leads Melanie into an obsession to marry. From such a state of mind, Melanie's passage to patriarchy then is “inevitable” (69) as Gamble suggests.

It is important to mention Melanie's ritual which is a turning point in her sexual development before going on with the second phase. Melanie's sexual tendency is already understood when she is living happily and comfortably in her big Edwardian

house without a patriarchal oppressive figure. The reason why they move to Uncle Philip's house in London is their parents' accident. Her ritual happens just the day before the accident. Melanie "who has been living in a world whirling around her" creeps into "the night for a ritual that she is even unaware of" (Sage, 154). In fantasies and thoughts in mind, she wears her mother's wedding dress and walks in the midnight garden. Since the door is locked behind her, she has to climb the apple tree naked to turn back home. Since the ritual happens just after Melanie examines her parents wedding photograph, Carter points to the symbolic interpretations of the ritual.

Melanie's ritual could be interpreted in different ways to explain her sexual perceptions. Firstly, through the ritual, Melanie's "fantasized fairytale marriage finds its synecdoche in the symbolic and virtuous white of her mother's wedding dress (Carter, 13). Her relations with her mother's dress are the very evidence for her devotedness to the patriarchal system. In her mother's wedding photograph, too, the flesh-and-blood mother takes second place to her wedding dress. Melanie's ritual with the wedding dress is "an act which symbolically tries to enter into the frame of a photograph which depicts a scene from which she is separated in time, space and understanding" (Gamble, 34). Thus it could be a reference to Melanie's longing for the times when she was together with her mother. However, her early desires to become the bride prove that Melanie already owns the features of the expected image of woman. She is so born to fit into the image of a female child.

It is worth noting that Carter gives minor importance to the parent role in her narrative. She pictures "a mother who cares less about her children" (Cantrell, 110). The mother leaves the care of her children to a nanny. Moreover, Carter kills Melanie's parents in a plane crash. She somehow reflects her thoughts on the effects of the familial grounds in the development of sexuality. She is opposed to the idea of psychoanalytic theories that reduce the female to the suppressed lacking subjects. This might be the reason why Carter killed the parents early in her narrative. She is into the social side of the matter. Carter leaves Melanie alone on her way to sexuality. Still she refers to the oppression on the young lady whose only dream is to look beautiful. When Carter's emphasis on history is considered, Melanie's ritual in

the middle of the night could also be interpreted as an element of history on her shoulders. Her act could then be a symbolic passage to female sexuality as a replacement for her mother as a female. She takes over the roles of a woman by this very act. She is the heiress to conventional female. Thus Carter puts forward the idea that patriarchy throughout “history dictates the female who to be” (Kristeva, 61) in this way. Women take over their roles as the female throughout history.

Another interpretation for naked tree-climbing is related to Carter’s allusions to Bible in relation to her emphasis on patriarchal oppression. Melanie climbs the tree naked, which can be considered as “her passage to the enchanted garden just like Eve” (Bristow, 35). It is in parallel to Carter’s struggle to depict Melanie as any woman. The reason why Melanie stands for Eve is that she experiences a fairytale like ritual with blood and bruises on her body and the wedding dress. Moreover, Peach discusses that “climbing a tree signifies vaginal discourse” (76) and strengthens the symbolic meaning of the ritual. Like Eve who rebels against God’s prohibition, she is drawn to the “Fortunate Fall” (Gamble, 35). Her awareness of her nakedness is also similar to Eve’s realization of her nakedness after eating the forbidden fruit. It is as if Melanie is marching towards some kind of meaning in her tree climbing. Melanie’s ritual could be considered as a struggle to accept the roles of woman as a secondary being in this sense. It could be accepted as Carter’s deliberate act to satirize the Fortunate Fall. Like Eve who is sent to earth from heavens, Melanie is sent to the patriarch Philip’s dwelling with low standards. Thus, Carter attacks religion as the origin of patriarchal pressure on women’s sexuality. She emphasizes the effect of religion on patriarchal gendering which ignores woman’s sexuality. On the other hand, it is as if Melanie is announcing her sexual preference through a ritual. That is to say, she means to display her submission to her roles as a female. However, her feelings are enigmatic in this act. “She shook with ecstasy. Why? How? Beyond herself, she did not know or care” (*MT*, 17). This sense of complexity implies something about the constructed image of female self in Melanie’s mind. She cannot understand how and why she fits into the female model, but she does.

No sooner does Melanie climb the tree then she learns about her parents’

death. She instantly smashes the mirror upon learning the news. Thus another interpretation for the ritual is Melanie's turn back to reality from the illusionary sweet childhood she has been through. After her secret ritual she drops into a fairy tale of the magic toyshop with her siblings. Benson's description of this act is as follows:

This seeming disenchantment-an apparent turn to reality- in fact marks a step into another realm of fantasy, one in which the complete absence of mirrors marks the breakdown of putative boundaries between the real and the simulated. The tender, budding parts of Melanie is left behind with the broken mirror as she steps into the shadowy, malign fairy tale of the toyshop. (218)

Benson's description of Melanie's ritual confirms the idea that she creeps into adulthood as a sexual being. It also hints her struggle to be the object of male gaze. Benson refers to the fustiness of the toyshop where Melanie and her siblings have to go to live with Philip and his family. He especially mentions the absence of mirrors in the toyshop as a luxury sign. Moreover, the absence of mirrors stands for the controlling gaze that is to appear in their new residence because "a gaze in a fiction... serves to the controlling gaze" (Sarup, 150). There will not be mirrors anymore; neither will reflections of the self. It is as if she has to reflect her femininity from "more ominous gaze of others" (Benson, 219) rather than in her narcissistic fantasy in front of the mirrors. As Linden Peach suggests, "it prefigures more than what is in store for Melanie after the death of her parents" (Peach, 82).

When it comes to the life in the toyshop, it seems that it will restrict privacy, comfort and freedom for Melanie. All her life in the toyshop constitutes the second phase of Melanie's sexual development. First of all, Melanie and her siblings are to live in the rooms above the toyshop. This is a place where she must share a room with her younger sister Victoria. Now she must sacrifice her privacy in her uncle's house. Melanie feels disappointed by the poverty in which her relatives live. She is also shocked and disgusted by the filth and unpleasantness. There is not even running water in the house. Melanie states "And the holes in Aunt Margaret's stockings. And no lavatory paper. It was all disgusting. They lived like pigs" (*MT*, 75). This

decrease in standards of living constitutes the first disillusion for Melanie because she loses her privacy which provides her with the freedom to explore herself. Melanie's first impressions of the toyshop are important because they relate to Woolf's ideas on obstacles. Woolf states that the most important thing that a woman lacks is the personal space. So, losing privacy and self exploration constitutes the initial point which leads Melanie to question. Furthermore, she is subject to the control of her uncle, who rules over his family. It is just like dropping out of Eden for her. Melanie's move into Philip's house is more important than Jonathan's or Victoria's because she accuses herself of her parents' death. The accident happens at the same night she lives through a ritual with her mother's wedding dress. After the trauma of the event, she cannot make peace with herself. She states, "It is my fault because I wore the dress. If I had not spoilt the dress, everything would be alright. Oh, Mummy!" (*MT*, 24). She thinks herself as "the girl who killed her mother" (24). It is as if wearing and blemishing her mother's wedding dress led to their death. In fact, the second half of the narrative is about the results of Melanie's sexual preference if the ritual is considered as a declaration. She starts a romantic relationship with Finn, which releases her from her biggest obsession. As a result, Melanie starts questioning her awareness of her alienated sexual identity. It should be clarified that Melanie by now is not conscious that she owns all the female features that are expected by society. She is alienated into the expected image of female who longs for marriage and appealing to male taste. As Benson states,

M is represented as the archetypal fairytale heroine longing for her phantom bridegroom to legitimize her newly-discovered no-longer sleeping beauty; and Carter uses this familiar situation as a platform from which to explore desire and sexuality, as constructed in, and through representations of femininity (218).

Till Melanie is released from her obsessions in the second half, she represents the typical female. Now she has the opportunity to introspect and see who she becomes. From this part on, the narrative focuses on Melanie's confused mind on sexuality and relations.

In fact, Melanie's experience in the toyshop under her uncle's control is almost

in the way Betty Friedan explains. Friedan delineates the main problem of identity in woman as her roles in society. She states, "Mothering and marriage are the two forces that make a woman an identity in society" (35). This supports the idea of woman's inferiority in power structure. The only way to be an individual for woman is to have some the features of typical conventional female with all manners and inclinations. Although Friedan does not talk about the process of sexual development, she emphasizes the social force that controls sexual preferences and gender roles. In this sense, the second phase of the novel depicts a different Melanie who questions her sexual identity. It is not that she diverges from her heterosexual path. However, she starts questioning whether she herself decided who to become in this part. As Simone de Beauvoir suggests, the narrative now points to "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (1952). She happens to notice that she is accepted only in the limits of her sex which makes her inferior to male gender.

In analyzing Melanie's introspection, it is needed to elaborate on Uncle Philip's patriarchal system in the house. Philip becomes the main reason for Melanie to think about what she is living through because now she is dragged into Philip's world. Now she is able to see a figure that dominates the lives of others. She can observe that Philip creates his own world of life-size puppets. He oppressively rules over the others around him as if they were puppets, too. She also examines his relations with his wife and her brothers. No one in the household reacts to his oppression overtly. His wife gets dumb on their wedding day. Francie and Finn never do something Philip will be angry with. Although these Irish siblings like singing a lot, they keep silent when Uncle is at home. Melanie is well able to notice the submission of the household to Philip. She acknowledges that Philip's oppression is based on silencing.

As for Philip, he is aware of his domination within his house. He "epitomizes the intrusion of patriarchy: how the male will come between a young girl and her relationship with her mother and will seek to silence and control the female" (Peach, 81). He accepts women around as complementary to his existence. As Patricia Meyer Spacks claims in her "Female Imagination", "for readily discernable historical reasons women have characteristically concerned themselves with matters more or

less peripheral to male concerns, or at least slightly skewed from them” (qtd in Showalter, 275). What women do does not matter to Philip. It all seems trivial to him. Her wife’s muteness does not even matter to him because she functions as a sexual object that is also silenced. The jack-in-the-box that he sent to Melanie as a present is another example of his view of the female. He sends Melanie this toy whose face is a caricature of her own. She is frightened by the toy so much that she associates Uncle Philip with this toy that is “a grotesque caricature of her own face lurked from the head and leapt out at her” (*MT*, 15). Melanie on Philip’s mind is just like the jack-in-the-box in her image. She becomes a toy in the hands of Philip.

Melanie’s association with a toy puppet on Philip’s mind is a reference to woman’s inferiority in society (Cantrell, 116). That is why one becomes a woman before she is born. As Peach puts forward:

Like jack-in-the-box, Melanie also becomes an object into which others, whom we may suspect of not having forged an adequate sense of their own identity, project their own phantasies and desires. (83)

As Peach confirms, Melanie becomes a material object in Philip’s reign. Her reaction to the jack-in-the-box whose face is mimicry of her own shows her reaction to be a puppet. Melanie’s view of Philip is therefore never positive. Even Finn explains Melanie that Philip is a master of his art although Philip domineers and humiliates him. But, Melanie still thinks of Philip as the “Beast of the Apocalypse” that makes “toys that parodied his wife’s innocent amusements and those of her brothers” (76). It is important in that the word “beast” is also used in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. Jeanette thinks of the men as beasts while talking to her first partner Melanie about man and woman. The word “beast” is associated with oppressive men in young women’s minds. That is to say, Melanie’s perceptions of man and her sexuality continue to change as she lives in a real patriarchal household. In fact neither her former life nor present life seems real to Melanie. As stated at the beginning of the chapter, there are allusions to *Alice in Wonderland* in the novel. Lorna Sage comments on Melanie’s journey to the toyshop:

Like Alice falling down the rabbit hole, she is precipitated into a world which is essentially transitional, something which is echoed in her inability to distinguish between waking life and dreams, the original and the copy, the authentic and the reflected self. The text moves not exactly to a realm of fantasy but into a dimension where the real and fantastic mix and mingle. (70)

That is to say, Carter obviously portrays a Melanie who is into a crisis of sexual identity in the second half. On the one hand, Melanie learns the inferior position of her gender as opposed to male power. Moreover, she starts questioning her sexual perception. She does not know whether her intimacy with Finn is what she really wanted. She who has been dying for marrying is now dubious about the urge that made her obsessive. She somehow experiences a kind of awakening to her alienated identity. On the other hand, Melanie is now exposed to a controlling gaze after declaring her preference as a sexual object. That is, she has already accepted being an object in this new house like Margaret, Francie and Finn. She even performs as Philip wishes so. Although she is hurt by the role of Leda, she simply obeys what is told. Her role that confirms women's inferiority clashes with her newly awakening thoughts. That is why the reader always finds Melanie in her confused state of mind in the second half.

Philip's puppet show is the most important event that awakens Melanie to her alienated self. It firstly teaches Melanie the real place of women. Moreover, she becomes aware of her sexuality that is ignored by patriarchal society. That is why the play could be analyzed in terms of power structure in this novel. The idea of reducing women to puppets is exaggerated in Philip's household. Philip, as the owner of his scripts, feels the joy of realizing his versions of the idealized women through his puppets. His life-size puppets display his patriarchal mind. Philip's using Melanie as Leda in his play carry further meanings, though. For one, he has the control over her body as he commands what to do. Secondly, he adds another piece to his collection of puppets. Melanie in turn submits to Philip's commands since she is economically dependent on him. As Friedan and Woolf explain, lacking the economic freedom causes women to obey the male figures and accept their inferior position (Watkins, 16). So the power structure works here for Melanie's survival in

the house. She has to obey whatever is told or commanded by Philip. As Melanie acts Leda, she becomes any woman. She simply steps into the notion of being a woman in patriarchal system. As Wyatt confirms, Melanie's "subjectivity is erased as she is inserted into patriarchal order" (558). Thus Melanie represents the object of male gaze and desire like any woman is expected to be. As Bristow states;

The novel emphasizes that Melanie's way of reading others is also through image and construction and it foregrounds the woman as voyeuristic spectacle within masculine desire. The violent performance of masculine fantasy clearly emphasizes the canceling out or silencing of the possibility of feminine desire. (Bristow, 78)

Bristow refers to the play within the novel by violent performance. Melanie becomes the object of male desire in the rape scene. In this way Melanie now notices the hardships of being a woman in the power structure. She notices that there is no such thing as female sexuality; besides, a woman exists because of her complementary roles to a man. She learns it with experience.

Melanie turns into an object of the gaze through her role of Leda. However, she is still not aware whether she is who she actually wants to be. Her reaction when she sees her reflection proves how she is alienated from her pure identity. After some time passes in the toyshop, Melanie remembers that she had not seen her image for so long. When she suddenly sees her reflection, she utters in panic "Do I still look the same?" (*MT*, 99) What she really cares is whether she is still as beautiful as she thought she was before. So she is still obsessed with the appeal to male taste. It seems that Melanie's perception of her sexuality still has not changed although she starts questioning her position as a young woman. Carter's emphasis on Melanie's stuck mind about her appearance reflects the power of patriarchal gendering. Carter puts forward the idea that "there is no escape from the patriarchal oppression" (Watkins, 77) because it is in people's minds.

Melanie's question is answered when she goes for a walk with Finn towards the ruins of a park. When finally Finn kisses her, she feels no romantic response. However, she feels the pleasure of the experience because it provides some recognition. At that moment she wishes somebody was watching them. Carter

displays the extent to which Melanie is captured by the functional side of the experience. Kissing Finn makes no sense to her. However, she gets relieved after the experience since it makes her feel recognized. Finn's kissing proves her femininity. It can also be considered as a struggle to be an identity despite being a completion to male as Friedan suggests. It is obvious that Melanie does not react to Finn sexually, but she awakens to her feelings. No wonder she thinks:

Is there something wrong with me that I felt such blankness? And after that it seemed so horrible, is there something even more wrong with me because it was so horrible? (*MT*, 107)

The reader realizes that it is not because of Melanie but because of the pressure on her shoulders. It is quite normal for Melanie to feel disgusted because she already finds Finn dirty. Then she goes on questioning and finds out that it might be because it is Finn not one of the men she has imagined. It is not that Melanie's sexual tendency is in fact the other way around; but she suddenly realizes that her obsession to have some relations with a man is a result of social oppression. In addition to her obsession, subjection to her uncle is the other reason why Melanie is attracted to Finn although he is nowhere near as good-looking as she longs for in her dreams.

The last scene to be discussed under sexual perceptions is the closure. Carter makes an open end in her narrative in which the incestuous relationship between Margaret and Francie is revealed. The event is important in that it is the second sexual event that Melanie faces in the toyshop. After her intimacy with Finn, she encounters something totally against the social norms. It is for sure that it affects Melanie's views on sexuality. However, it is never known in what way it changes her. From this moment on Melanie realizes that Aunt Margaret who seems to be the sacrificing maternal sister of the orphan boys is not the submissive female in the household. Although Margaret's muteness seems like a punishment for marrying Philip, it could also be interpreted as a subversive act on Margaret's side. Carter implies through Margaret that the social oppression over women's sexuality may reappear as an incestuous inclination. Although Margaret seems to be the perfect castrated female, she is inclined to escape this oppression (Cantrell, 76). Her act is

therefore considered as a resistance to her alienated self. Through Margaret, Carter also depicts that there is a clash between patriarchal understanding of female sexuality and sexual perceptions of women.

To clarify, patriarchy is based on the power structure which gives no recognition for woman's sexuality. In line with this, all individuals are subject to the castration process which inflects identities according to genders. Woman is expected to become conformists as the female gender even though patriarchal gendering ignores her sexuality. Melanie's sexual formation develops quite in parallel to socially accepted path. Carter aims at projecting a Melanie who is both Eve and at the same time any woman under patriarchy. No matter where Melanie lives, she acts as if she is born with her alienated self that dictates her to appeal best to male taste. Carter reflects the alienation of conventional woman through Melanie. She criticizes that conventional women are not even aware that they live with false identities. Their minds are fully kept with the idea of being complementary to men in some ways. They are not aware of their own perceptions of sexuality. Thus they are alienated from their pure identity. Nevertheless, Carter introduces Margaret in such a way that she turns out to be a seeming conformist in the end. Thus she depicts the possible results of oppression on women. Women who are alienated to their conventional female image could reveal their desires through unacceptable ways. Thus Carter points to the fact that women are doomed to be alienated into the female image. Any heterodoxy by women causes further oppression and alienation.

## **2.2 The Development of Female Sexuality For A Non-Conformist in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit***

The sexual politics of domestic space are designed to control women's sexuality, but an awareness of how those spaces work allows women to assess the damage that has been done and begin again "in a new direction" (*Art and Lies* 42).

In questioning heterosexual patriarchy, Winterson depicts an unusual context in her narrative *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. Firstly, she questions the taboos related to women's sexual development by referring to religious forces. She depicts a

biblical format with the subheadings starting with “Genesis”. In each part Winterson includes Jeanette’s experiences in line with biblical titles. She also subverts the relations between male and female. Moreover, she revises the fairy tale style with a lesbian point of view. Winterson prefers to depict a non-conformist namely a lesbian who is unconsciously inclined to her sexual perception. Instead of a young girl “accommodating to heterosexual relations” (Cantrell, 184), Winterson depicts an adolescent girl’s resistance to the same heterosexual hegemony. In this sense, if Carter’s work is an allusion to patriarchal oppression on women’s sexuality, Winterson’s work is a closer look at what happens in the individual’s world. Her words in *Art and Lies* summarize her aim in this narrative. She criticizes sexual politics in society which ignores female sexuality in all aspects. She thinks the force on sexuality causes individuals especially women to lean to other ways. In this way they recognize who they become.

Before starting with the analysis, it must be reminded that Winterson supports the sexual differences as a feminist lesbian author. She objects to the castration fantasy which causes the individuals to ask whether s/he is a male or female. Winterson’s thoughts on sexual difference suggest alternative sexes as Virginia Woolf describes:

It would be a thousand pities of women like men, or lived like men, or looked like men, for if two sexes are quite inadequate, considering the vastness and variety of the world, how should we manage with one only? Ought not education to bring out and fortify the differences rather than the similarities? For we have too much likeness as it is, and if an explorer should come back and bring word of other sexes [my emphasis] looking through the branches of other trees at other skies, nothing would be of greater service to humanity...(23)

It seems that Winterson and Woolf share the opinion that there must be other sexes. They are against the traditional concept of sexual difference, which is male and female. That is why Winterson puts forward untraditional female and male characters in her work. She is after subverting the stereotypes in this way.

*Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* depicts the story of Jeanette who is an adopted child to be raised as a child of God. Winterson does not emphasize the

subordination of woman to man in her work. Rather, she displays the subordination of Jeanette to her mother with a subtle complexity. Winterson portrays a submissive father within the small family while she places an authoritative mother who rules over the household like the patriarch Uncle Philip of *MT*. In this sense, the power structure is a bit different in *Oranges*. Winterson reverses power relations between man and woman to some extent. She portrays the woman with the exact oppressive qualities of a ruling man. Louie is determined to bring Jeanette up according to the doctrines of Evangelical Christianity. She ultimately causes Jeanette to experience a lesbian relationship with one girl of the same age called Melanie. When the Church and Louie learn about this secret affair, the novel reaches a crisis, which also announces Jeanette's sexual preference. Although her friend Melanie repents, Jeanette does not. Thus, she is exorcized by the leading members of the Church along with her mother. However, she starts another lesbian relationship with another girl, Katy. Then Jeanette is depicted to be accepted by college. At the end of the novel, Winterson presents a grown-up Jeanette who retells her life story. The reader finds Louie presenting a radio programme with the nickname Kindly Light, however. The final remarks of the old lady is important since she states that she no longer thinks oranges are the only fruit. Winterson deliberately depicts such a closure, which provides a better resolution than *MT*.

Like *MT*, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* can be analyzed in terms of the development of female sexuality. Jeanette's becoming a young lady could be analyzed according to the phases which affect her sexual perception. Since she is a lesbian who is not aware of the oddity of her sexual inclination, she has problems with authority figures at two points in the novel. So, an analysis of Jeanette's journey to her sexuality is different from that of Melanie's because Jeanette represents the non-conformist in her sexual tendencies right from the beginning. Moreover, the controlling element in *MT* is the patriarchal authority while it is replaced by religious authority in *Oranges*. Nevertheless, the analysis of Jeanette's sexual perception also develops as a consequence of subordination and resistance to power elements.

It is better to start with the first phases of the novel which shape Jeanette's sexual orientation. First of all, Winterson depicts a neighborhood whose living

conditions are lower than the one in *MT*. Unlike Melanie's rich life in her Edwardian family house in *MT*, Jeanette "lives in a poor terraced house which allows only one room for guests" (Cantrell, 111). In other words, Jeanette is subject to oppression and restriction from the very beginning. Letting alone her authoritative and controlling mother, Jeanette does not have a room which allows space for freedom. What is more, the parlor is kept for rituals for Sunday meetings after churchgoing. Even TV is covered on Sundays. She does not have the privacy that Melanie of *MT* owns in the beginning. That is why Jeanette has never had the chance to explore her sexuality as free as Melanie of *MT* does. Contrarily Jeanette's mother uses her power in the house and keeps the parlor for her prayers on Sundays. She does not reflect her act as power sign; rather, she thinks she does it for God. Jeanette remembers those times as "My mother got up early on Sundays and allowed no one in the parlor until ten o'clock. It was her place of prayer and meditation" (*Oranges*, 4). She describes how it felt usual to her. Obviously Jeanette is more exposed to oppression than Melanie of *MT*. In such conditions which provide no privacy for the young girl, Jeanette moves towards her sexuality. She is unaware of her sexuality which is already repressed by her mother. Leaving her sexuality aside, Jeanette acts the perfect child of God for the first years of her life.

As proved in *MT*, sexual preferences are imposed by heterosexual hegemony in patriarchal cultures. However, the authority unit in *Oranges* is the Evangelical Church instead of patriarchy. Winterson approaches the problem of imposition of sexuality from a religious aspect while Carter holds the subject within the social boundaries. As a result, Winterson depicts a different castration of woman's identity than Carter. Winterson criticizes religious authorities as the controlling elements in the narrative. She questions the roots of patriarchy. She questions the idea of keeping everything under control just like Carter does. To challenge the heterosexual hegemony necessitated by religion, Winterson creates a lesbian context in her narrative. Jeffrey Weeks analyzes the same sex relations and the reactions of society in *Coming Out* which is about the rights of gay and lesbian. Joseph Bristow evaluates Weeks' work, "He indicates how and why sexual relations between men drove at the heart of cultural anxieties" (222). He explains the relation between cultural and

religious forces. Since Church has a great influence on the construction of patriarchal rules, the reaction to sexual heterodoxies are greater. That is why all the people are subject to the values of the Church in *Oranges*. Winterson depicts a system in which especially women are religious. They are also active supporters of the idea of oppression. Although the text is “woman centered” (Watkins, 81), the female characters are ironically representatives of male mind. Jeanette’s comments give some clue about Winterson’s female characters. “The women in our church were strong and organized. If you want to talk in terms of power... I had enough to keep Mussolini happy” (*Oranges*, 124). It is obvious that Winterson characterizes Jeanette in a place where all men and women support pressure on woman’s sexual identity besides providing no privacy to her. She puts emphasis on patriarchal oppression that turns female characters into oppressive figures like men.

With an authoritative mother as opposed to a passive father, family atmosphere in *Oranges* is not like the one in *MT*. Winterson combines the religious authority with the working class family that adopts Jeanette. However, the replacement of the patriarch role by a female figure constitutes the problem. Although patriarchy backs up and praises the male dominance, Winterson displays a female patriarch, a phrase which conflicts itself. Winterson exaggerates the oppressive features of Louie so much that she is much more dominant than Uncle Philip in *MT*. Jeanette’s mother is strictly devoted to the teachings of the Church as a member of the working class. She adopts Jeanette with the aim of bringing up a missionary to God, in this way becomes the spokesperson for the controlling force. Jeanette, under the control of her fundamentalist mother, tries to develop an identity as a healthy missionary as well as a female. Winterson depicts Louie in order to display the extent to which the female is under the pressure of patriarchy. She emphasizes that the female characters even try to be like the male figures in some cases. They own and support the patriarchal system so much that they become the patriarchs themselves. As De Beauvoir claims, women could act like men in authorizing or they “have lesbian tendencies because of the wish to imitate the masculine” (408). Unlike the devoted Christian Louie, Jeanette’s father plays the suppressed identity in the family. In other words, the father represents the oppressed

female in patriarchy. Winterson plays with social rules and family notion which shape people's lives in all ways. Jameson calls such works "protopolitical protests against patriarchy" (289). Winterson in a way reverses the family unit in her narrative. In fact, this complexity within the family implies the problems in sexual development for the little girl.

Like Melanie in the second half of the novel, Jeanette unconsciously acquires the oppressive system she is in. She is submissive to the people and the Church at first. She immediately submits to the pressure of her mother in the house. Even when she is a little child, she is exposed to the gospels in the Bible. She knows all the Bible stories before she starts school. No wonder her primary school teacher is surprised by her mind as a 7-year-old child. Jeanette tries to perceive what she has been through and why she is different from the other children. She is ironically surprised at how the other children do not know what she knows. Jeanette is exposed to her mother's beliefs to a great extent and she acknowledges them. She describes her mother as "Louie keeps the unholy intrusions out of the parlor" (Cantrell, 96). Thus Jeanette's maturation is led by Louie. Louie tries her best to create the female on her mind on Jeanette. In addition to teaching Jeanette her roles as a missionary to God, Louie often reminds her of the heterosexual hegemony. Whenever she feels to remind Jeanette of the necessity of heterosexuality, she gives oranges to her daughter. Jeanette is supposed to be the female model in her mother's mind. Jeanette in turn obeys what her mother asks her to do. In fact her mother is one of those women who prepare their daughters to be the women society accepts. As Rachel Wingfield states:

Oranges charts the territory of women in patriarchal society whose history is fraught with contradictions as mothers are pressurized into colluding with women's oppression and prepare their daughters to be "good women" (72)

While Jeanette keeps her obedience in her small world, she does not even know that she is inclined to the same sex. Jeanette is pushed into her own world while Louie has got her aims on her. A specific episode which affects Jeanette's thoughts on sexuality comes quite early in the narrative. As a child who wants to learn more about life than her mother commands, Jeanette is often found

eavesdropping on neighbors' conversations. She hears a lot about men and marriage especially from the women who run the paper shop. Her mother never approves the women and does not let her daughter go with the women to the seaside. However, she soon finds out why her mother does not like the women. She simply thinks these women deal with "unnatural passions" (*Oranges*, 7), which Jeanette cannot understand at first. Although Jeanette is unable to understand the anxiety of the neighbors about the women, she notices that they do something socially unacceptable. It is her observations that make Jeanette keep her lesbian affair secret later in the novel. Jeanette is not affected by this force on female sexuality in the way Melanie of *MT* does. She stays outside the realm of heterosexuality.

In fact Jeanette's view of the women in the shop foreshadows the way in which Jeanette's sexual development will go on. The young girl who has no idea about her sexual tendencies happens to be attracted to her girl friend. It is when she gets to know her first lover Melanie that Jeanette perceives her sexual inclination. She in a way realizes how ignorant she has been of her sexual tendency when the events pop up (Cantrell, 43). However, she has no idea how and why she is attracted to a girl. It happens with no awareness on Jeanette's side. Her belief in "the naivety of what she experiences with Melanie" is so strong (Cantrell, 46). No wonder she rejects repenting unlike her partner Melanie. She tries to make the Church members believe that they did not do something wrong. It is obvious that Jeanette maintains her ignorance of the socially accepted behaviors even after having a lesbian affair. She does not even realize that her attraction to the same sex is unacceptable. Keryn Carter comments on Jeanette's complicated situation:

The church's strong women- her mother included- have offered Jeanette role models that have led her to have faith in her own femaleness. Those models, however, are defined and sustained by patriarchal law, and the young Jeanette has not understood the significance of their limitations. (23)

In this sense, Jeanette shares the ignorance of her sexual inclination with Melanie of *MT*. However, Melanie happens to be the female prototype without an oppressive figure at the beginning. That is to say, she lives through the phases of becoming

the traditional female. What makes Jeanette's case different is that her sexual inclination is against the socially acceptable way. She is closer to her femininity yet she cannot see the limitations of her sex. She is alienated into her homosexual identity whose oddity she cannot acknowledge.

Although Jeanette is aware of the oppressive society she is in, she does not acknowledge that her desire is not appropriate for her gender. She is woman oriented in her desires, so she feels no harm by her lesbian tendency. She dreams of her wedding day. It is like:

Finally we came to the moment, 'You may kiss the bride'. My new husband turned to me, and here were a number of possibilities. Sometimes he was blind, sometimes a pig, sometimes my mother, sometimes the man from the post office, and once, just a suit of clothes with nothing inside. I told my mother about it, and she said it was because I ate sardines for supper. The next night I ate sausages, but I still had the dream. (71)

In fact Jeanette cannot categorize the social and romantic relationships around her. That is why she feels no anxiety to have intimacy with the same sex. She matures into a homosexual identity as if she passes through the normal stages of female sexuality. The important thing is that Jeanette keeps saying that she loves God and the Church. She cannot grasp that the system accepts no such affair between the same sex individuals. No matter how much she confirms her love of God and the Church, it makes no sense for the Church members. No sooner does she repent than she understands the fact that love of God and the Church is for those who represent the accepted images of female identity. This is the point where Jeanette realizes that she is inclined to the unaccepted path in sexual sense. Although everyone thinks that Jeanette gets over her demonic sexual affair, she prefers to keep her sexual preference as a secret (Cantrell, 98).

Johnston's words in *Lesbian Criticism*, explain Winterson's point in depicting Jeanette on the move towards homosexuality. He suggests, "Heterosexual intercourse violated women's bodies because it represented the structural inequality between the sexes" (Elam, 227). Winterson's emphasis on the conflict between Church and Jeanette's futile defense proves the inflexibility of patriarchal gendering. Winterson's aim in leaving Jeanette in a dilemma about religion and sexual

tendencies is ideological. She simply emphasizes that “homosexuality is not a deviation from a supposedly natural heterosexual matrix” (Winterson, 203). She “calls for a theory of gender which moves from the binary opposition between man and woman” (203). In fact, Winterson’s point is that sexual identity cannot be a social imposition. She emphasizes the freedom of sexual preferences and thus restates her suggestion of other sexes in this way.

Jeanette’s sexual affair with Melanie can be considered as a kind of declaration of her preference. It’s like Melanie’s ritual in the night in *MT*. However, the analysis after announcing the sexual preference is different in two works. While Melanie’s ritual is acceptable, Jeanette’s affair proves her anomaly in patriarchal system. In plain words, Melanie’s life in the toyshop constitutes her conformist life after announcing her sexual preference as typical female. When it comes to Jeanette, her life after announcing her sexual preference cannot be like Melanie’s. Jeanette’s heterodoxy simply makes her an outcast in her society. It might be considered as an allusion to the Fortunate Fall after which Eve is left on earth. However much Jeanette tries to combine the two opposing feelings, the system never accepts an unorthodox affair in line with the love of God or Church. Lost in this conflict, Jeanette moves into an alienated self which she conceals from everyone else. That is to say, after pretending to repent, Jeanette does not give up her sexual preference of the same sex. She simply conceals her sexual life. Jeanette’s struggle to hide her affairs might be because “the suppressed part in woman tries hard to conform to the rules” (Butler, 352). Accordingly, she is released from the identity which her mother has been trying to impose. Instead, she is driven into her own world which is this time alienated from the outside world. Unlike Melanie of *MT*, Jeanette is released from her false identity and aims at creating her own. With this purpose she even leaves home and finds a job. This is the very reason that makes Jeanette an outcast. On the other hand, Jeanette’s sexual inclination only exists in an isolated world of which the others are not aware. That is to say, Jeanette continues her homosexual life with a new partner, Katy.

Within the analysis of Jeanette’s sexual development and the grounds which lead to her sexual inclination, it is necessary to elaborate on her relationship with her

two partners. Her first attraction to the same sex is with Melanie. The most important thing is that Jeanette experiences her sexual affairs outside her home, like Melanie's house, Elsie's house where she could have some privacy. Her struggle to gain some privacy is a reaction against her mother's control. In addition, it shows how her sexual life as a young woman is repressed in the house. She is alerted after her sexual tendency is known to everyone. Although she cannot perceive the reason, she realizes the anxiety of the people about teenage lesbian sex. Her second relationship is with another woman called Katy. It becomes a kind of adventure for Jeanette to experience lesbian affairs. She feels that she rebels against the oppression in this way. However, her relationship with Katy is discovered due to their carelessness. Winterson describes the scene as:

I forgot to lock the door. . . . I noticed a thin shaft of light staining the carpet by the edge of the bed. My neck prickled and my mouth went dry. Someone was standing at the door. We didn't move, and after a moment the light disappeared. (129)

Her description tells a lot about the public opinion on the affair. Winterson not only portrays Jeanette in a state of disillusion and surprise but also uses the metaphor light for the discovery. Just like the previous case, Jeanette's reaction is chivalric in that both with Melanie and with Katy she tries to protect her partners. She somehow owns the role of the powerful male in her lesbian affairs. Although she is not successful in saving Melanie from the wrath of the Church, she saves Katy through a lie. It somehow shows that Jeanette tries to look like both male and female, which is an attempt to subvert male-female associated behaviors. Besides, it supports the idea of alternative sexes.

Winterson portrays oppression on women sexuality through Jeanette and Louie. She describes Jeanette outside the borders. That is to say, she is never like the traditional female who is subject to male gaze. Besides, she is attracted to the same sex, which causes others to cast her out of society. In this way, Winterson gives the idea that oppression on female identity is so strong that women cannot even talk about their desires. It does not matter what kind of sexual perception woman has.

Another character who is under patriarchal oppression is Louie. The woman who is obsessed with her missionary role keeps a picture of Pastor Spratt near her bed. This seems as if the woman is so devoted to preaching. However, she is not aware that she is attracted to the pastor. That is why the picture near the bed might be considered as “an attempt to unite with the perfect Christian missionary in Louie’s eye” (Cantrell, 57). She fulfills her desire by the picture. Louie is so much into Christianity as well as Pastor Spratt that Jeanette often finds her mother reading the books that the pastor gives. She shares more time with reading the book than with her husband. Her husband obviously does not attract her. Thus she is a suppressed woman who is in opposing sides with her daughter. Winterson’s aim is to portray the restrictions on female sexuality. She emphasizes that either heterosexual or homosexual; woman’s desire is ignored by patriarchy.

It is discussed how Jeanette is inclined to the homosexual path. Nevertheless, it is necessary to discuss the reasons of Jeanette’s heterodoxy. One reason could be Jeanette’s reaction against her mum as the representative of male mind. That is to say, the reader encounters no places where Jeanette rebels against her mum’s teachings and orders. She might have grown a rebellious sense against her mother; accordingly she might have been attracted to same-sex love affair as a non-conformist act. So, her arousing desire for same-sex could be considered as a rebellion against the patriarchal constructions that is represented by her mother. In fact, Winterson is harshly criticizing the fixity of patriarchal gendering through Jeanette. Diane Elam justifies Winterson’s idea, “the relation between sex and gender is a continuously self-deconstructing one: it produces structures that are called natural only because we have forgotten they are structures” (210). So, Jeanette stands for the individual whose desires conflict with these structures. Another reason of Jeanette’s homosexuality could be accepted as a way of self declaration. This is in parallel to Winterson’s reversal of the family unit. Since the authority in the house is the mother, a female, Jeanette might develop a feeling to be the authority like the mother. That is to say, Jeanette means to have the power through an affair with Melanie. Jeanette supposes the male role as her own just like Louie does.

There are lots of differences between Melanie of *MT* and Jeanette of *Oranges*

since they choose opposing sexual paths. Compared to Melanie of *MT*, Jeanette the adult narrator is aware of how woman is perceived in the community she lives. Although her declaration of her sexual preference proves her ignorance of social forces and limits, it does not take long for her to acknowledge the limits of her sex in society. In this sense, Melanie of *MT* is less conscious of her own identity that seems to be the typical female. Melanie of *MT* reaches the knowledge of social limits and forces much later than Jeanette does. On the other hand, both protagonists seem to own the roles expected from them at the beginning; so, they are alienated into their female identity in the narratives. However, Jeanette is released from the female image and moves towards her own preference in sexual tradition. That is why she is quicker at acknowledging the social restrictions on people than Melanie of *MT*. Nevertheless, Jeanette is further alienated into her sexual identity since she continues her affairs secretly. Unlike Melanie who only begins to understand the social boundaries on sexual preference in the end, Jeanette grasps the oppression upon declaring her sexual preference. While Winterson puts emphasis on the woman's awareness of her sexual tendencies, Carter implies inferiority of woman and her unknown sexuality.

The development of female sexuality is also different in *Oranges* because the protagonist is a non-conformist. Jeanette never experiences the obsessions Melanie of *MT* owns. Melanie keeps her obsession to look beautiful and marry somebody throughout the novel. Her only dream is "to appeal best to male taste as a traditional young female" (Sage, 151). Nowhere in the narrative is Jeanette found in dreams about looking beautiful in the eyes of the male. She is away from the girlish pleasures about the physical appearance. Moreover, Melanie becomes alienated to her pure identity because she is so much obsessed with femaleness. Contrarily Jeanette is into her own sexual inclinations. Thus she starts a lesbian sexual life. Besides, she is alienated from the rest of society. Sheila Jeffrey describes Jeanette's tendency as "the result of alienation and dissatisfaction with social units" (75). So the matter of oppression comes into light again. It seems that unlike Carter who emphasizes the social factors in woman's sexual development, Winterson aims at highlighting woman's own sexual inclination that is initiated by the same social

oppression.

There are also some similarities between the two works though. Neither Jeanette nor Melanie is exposed to an example of active sexual life in their immediate environment. While Melanie has no parents from the middle of the novel, Jeanette owns a step-mother whose only interest is religion. In this sense, both girls are far away from an overt sexual life. More importantly neither protagonist has their actual mothers in these works. Carter and Winterson avoid the maternal bond because it “reduces female sexuality to maternity and feminine identity to mother” (Peach, 81). Thus both authors resist the idea of “simplification of women as a whole” (Woolf, 24).

When it comes to how the novelists deal with the problem of patriarchal oppression on women sexuality, it seems that Winterson draws a better conclusion than Carter. Carter leaves the end open to questions. This is because she reflects the problems of traditional women in patriarchy as they are. She questions the development of female sexuality and lets the reader question in the end. However, Winterson makes a clear ending. At the end of her novel, Winterson makes the closure with a successful and powerful Jeanette. That Jeanette is accepted to higher education displays how Winterson “foregrounds women’s experience without accepting a male valuation of that experience” (Selden, 149). By reversing the traditional roles, she conveys her thoughts on “female ghetto” that is “a safe sanctuary where women are permitted to let off steam and do their own thing” (149). She portrays the success of a non-conformist to imply the necessity of female ghetto. Instead of the male oppression which lets no existence for the female, she introduces a milder and egalitarian suggestion. Moreover, Winterson makes Louie utter that she knows that the oranges are not the only fruit. Louie starts a radio programme with a nickname Kindly Light which ironically represents the oppressive patriarchal mind. Louis’ words as the voice of patriarchy expresses Winterson’s point of view clearly. She uses the word “oranges” as a metaphor for heterosexuality. Laura Doan gives a personal reading of Winterson’s narrative. She points the ‘marmalade’ and argues that marmalade combines rind and segments, inner and outer. “Marmalade embodies the orange’s essence and at the same time, no longer

resembles an orange per se” (Doan, 147). Doan’s argument justifies Winterson’s conclusion that heterosexuality is unnatural whereas lesbianism is natural.

All in all, both Carter and Winterson claim that the development of female sexuality is interfered by patriarchal oppression. Even if she conforms to social forces, woman experiences alienation from her pure identity or from society. Although the sexual developments of Melanie and Jeanette are different, both Carter and Winterson reflect the women under social pressure. While Carter is more interested in the sexuality of traditional women who are alienated into false identities, Winterson deals with the unorthodox sexual inclinations of women who are alienated from society. Nevertheless, both authors agree that along history, woman’s sexuality appears as an imposition of patriarchy to ensure male domination. This is where the analysis points to gender roles.

## CHAPTER 3

### GENDER ROLES AND THE FEMALE MODEL IN PATRIARCHY

The advent of female literature promises woman's view of life, woman's experience: in other words, a new element. Make what distinctions you please in the social world, it still remains true that men and women have different organizations, consequently different experiences.... But hitherto.... The literature of women has fallen short of its functions owing to a very natural and a very explicable weakness- it has been too much a literature of imitation. To write as men write is the aim and besetting sin of women; to write as women is the real task they have to perform.

G. H. Lewes, "The Lady Novelists," 1852

As the extract suggests, women novelists always feel subject to a man-made language and discourse. As Elaine Showalter states, women "were overshadowed by male cultural imperialism" (269). She thinks that women writers suffer from "Great Traditionalism". It is the basic reason why female writers attempt to go out of the traditional style in their writings. Some of the English female writers "openly advocated the use of fiction as revenge against a patriarchal society" (Showalter, 275). In their rejection of the male society and masculine culture, feminist writers are inclined to move toward a separatist literature of inner space. Feminist authors mostly touch upon the issue of female identity as it is a part of "sexual politics" (Eagleton, 47). The setting in most of these novels is a secret and enclosed room and there is an association with female conflict and womb. The movement which *Jane Eyre* starts goes on with the works of Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield and Dorothy Richardson. As the representatives of postmodern feminist writers, Winterson and Carter's works are the examples with their style that is out of bounds. Although Carter and Winterson reflect the twentieth century settings in their novels, they at the same time present the Victorian culture because 20th century culture is inspired by the Victorian culture both in Britain and the USA. It is mostly visible in fictional families that they create. Both Carter and Winterson describe the parlor and other formal rooms like Victorians. What it actually conveys is about the roles of male and female genders within and outside the house. The gender roles in these

works relate to “the woman as an influence on others within her domestic and social circle” (Showalter, 280).

In order to understand how Carter and Winterson reflect the Victorian society, it is better to mention the rules of society at that time. It is the male dominated world where all men have the right to do anything while the women must keep silent and obedient. When it comes to the tradition that brings the girls up in the era, “they are all treated in repression, concealment and self censorship” (Courtney, 281). Victorian society is so certain about gender roles. In fact, even Victorian female novelists are in a dilemma. That is to say, they both want to be equal with men but do not want to seem unwomanly. It is an era when the female ask for equality while they hesitate to seem manly.

The idea of space left for woman constitutes the female conflict in society. In plain words, the place for woman is composed of a room which connotes the womb. The importance of space stems from its association with gender roles. It is a part of female conflict because it means lack of privacy for women. On the use of space in terms of gender difference, Elizabeth Grosz states, "what is at stake [in competing theories of the body] is the activity and agency, the mobility and social space, accorded to women" (19). She relates the female conflict to body and materiality and makes an analogy between space and body. Moreover, *MT* and *Oranges* prove that the enclosed setting separated for women defines female roles to a great extent. It is known that house is the place where the girls are to dwell most of their time. On the other hand, boys are supported to stay outside the house. That is to say, “girls learn to keep their self/other boundaries permeable” (Foucault, 24) since they are to bear the interruptions by their husbands and children. Such prescriptions force women to learn how to submit to the expectations of society. That is to say, they are taught “to expect and accept spatial limitations” (Battersby, 24). Thus they are alienated from their pure identity. Gender roles within society are the theme in most of Carter and Winterson’s works. Within the chapter, the expected male and female roles are depicted in relation to privacy. Moreover, it is questioned whether the enclosed areas are the places for women to live on in terms of individual rights and sexuality. The analysis also includes the family institution in terms of gender roles in two works.

The ideas of comfort, service and obedience are examined from woman's point of view. The chapter finally questions whether the two works challenge "the essentialist notion of patriarchy" (Mchaul, 121) which considers individuals' sexes as their genders in describing their identities in relation to status and power.

### **3.1 Male Dominated Gender Roles in *The Magic Toyshop***

As discussed in the previous chapter, gender roles are determined by power structure. The patriarchal system is so established that the roles of individuals are to protect the privileges of the male. Privacy and rights of the individuals are accordingly defined by the gender of people. Carter presents a patriarchal community which backs up male power and authority. She places her protagonist in the middle of a patriarchal system which praises the male head of the household while ignoring the needs of the female members in the family. That is to say, Carter takes the issue from the aspect of "femininity and female subordination as cultural constructs" (Gamble, 33). She refers to the idea that women are accepted as the female gender that is constructed by society. "Different tools of oppression are experienced by women in different circumstances, but they remain tools of patriarchal oppression" (Madsen, 168). Melanie, the protagonist, represents those women who submit to their female roles as conformists. Melanie examines every inch of her body in front of the mirror and feels great pleasure in watching herself in front of the mirror for hours. It is obvious that she is on the verge of "becoming" in terms of sexuality from the beginning of the book. Melanie who owns privacy in her room in the beginning seems luckier than many others since privacy is privileged to the male in such conventional communities. She "finds herself trapped, against her will, in conventional family roles and structures" (Gamble, 33). Although she is willing to appeal to male gaze in her privacy, she involuntarily owns her female roles as a mother for her little sister Victoria, a wife for Finn, a daughter for Margaret and even for Uncle Philip. Moreover, Philip, Margaret, Francie and Finn all behave according to the roles imposed by society. All the characters in *MT* have particular roles; however, there are certain parts in which some characters swap roles and accordingly

swap the right to authorize in the household.

First of all, Carter analyzes “family” as an institution in detail throughout her work. She examines the family institution in terms of power structure and depicts Uncle Philip at the top of it as the masculine authority. The place Philip occupies in the novel is significant since Carter directly criticizes the system he represents. Uncle Philip stands for the real patriarchs in society. When he is in the house, everyone is subject to his desires. He has to have all the comfort he likes and has the right to command everyone. He has the privilege to scold anyone around any time he feels so. He makes the household live according to his own rules. To illustrate, everyone must be at the dinner table at the same time he wishes. He has no days to celebrate, nor do the others. He wants everyone to dress the way he likes. Although there are male characters Finn and Francie at home, they do not function as Uncle Philip does in the household. So, Philip is a notion rather than a character in the narrative. An example of his status in the house is his scolding anyone in the house ignoring even the gender. Melanie often hears Philip shouting at Finn, “You done it on purpose, you Irish bastard!” (*MT*, 114). Then Finn keeps silent despite his growing anger and hatred towards Philip. On the other hand, the women in the house are depicted as submissive. They simply obey and serve to the male in the house. Carter portrays the family institution as a way to recognize male power.

Carter’s presentation of Uncle Philip is really harsh in parallel to her critical view of male dominated thinking. Since Uncle Philip reflects the subversive mind, there are certain features that he has as a male. He owns the male roles with all its privileges. He is the owner of the toyshop in which he not only creates toys but also makes up his own plays. He is only at home for dinner after work and he has the privacy as all the males do in this novel. However, Philip, unlike the other males in the novel, has the features that remind little Victoria of a father. No wonder the little girl greets him as “Daddy” when he comes back home. It tells a lot about the roles of a male especially of the father in the family. He is the authority and is only back home after work till it is late in the evening. Even on Victoria’s mind, father figure is associated with Philip’s features. Philip is not a simple male character, and he uses

his power in the best way. Moreover, he makes everyone know about the rules he puts forward. Somewhere in the novel, Finn says when he sees Margaret with the silver collar Philip made for her, “You see, they make love on Sunday nights, he and Margaret” (114). Everything is fixed in Philip’s dwelling where he is the king. It does not even matter that Margaret has been silent all those years. It is already what he wants, namely a silent sexual object. Through Philip, Carter criticizes the structure of family institution that is headed by one male power.

When it comes to how Philip’s oppression is perceived by the household, it is necessary to talk about the male characters first. As stated above, Philip’s representation of the male power and privilege lets him rule everyone. Hence, it is clear that the male has the right to rule in a house in traditional society. Although Carter as a female author criticizes Philip’s force in the house, she does not hesitate to create a Finn who admires his ruling attitude. As a male character in the narrative, Finn is the one who is scolded a lot by Philip. Whereas he is expected to be against his oppression, he is unconsciously affected by his power over others. Even in his rebels against Philip, Finn” discovers himself usurping his position” (Gamble, 34). There is an inner admiration in Finn towards Philip as a male. He cannot help desiring to be “Uncle Philip”. He even internalizes male oppression. For instance, when Melanie wears trousers at home, Finn as if he is the heir to the throne of patriarchy strictly warns her, “No, you can’t wear them! He can’t abide a woman in trousers... No make-up, mind. And only speak when you are spoken to. He likes, you know, silent women” (*MT*, 62). Finn is so much under the effect of Philip’s power in the house, but he does not object to his oppression. In the final scene where Margaret, Finn and Francie celebrate the absence of Philip, they all enjoy themselves. However, Finn’s pleasure attracts attention because he sits on Philip’s seat and feels the joy of coming into the power left by Philip. Although Francie is another male character in the house, he is not even as frustrated as Finn. The reason why the other male characters do not have the same rights as Philip is only understood at the end of the novel. It appears that Francie keeps silent and passive since he has an incestuous relationship with her sister Margaret. Finn who is relatively younger cannot challenge Philip and thus become subject to his rage.

While Finn's rebellious inner thoughts prove that he likes the male role, Francie's milder attitude is because of a secret revenge on Philip. Although Francie's affair with her sister seems to conflict with the male role, he is in fact usurping the male power. That is to say, although Francie seems to rebel against Philip's masculine oppression in the house, his incestuous relationship is a sign of male force.

Some strategies of male power that ensure male sexual access to women include: prostitution, marital rape, father-daughter and brother-sister incest, wife beating (Madsen, 172).

So it once again appears that male superiority is attributed to sexual activity of the male. In plain words, the male is supposed to domineer over the female as a result of sexual activity of man in the affair. The male power in sexual tradition accordingly determines the gender roles in patriarchal system.

Finn keeps envying Philip's power in the household and dreams of usurping Philip's place. Furthermore, Francie realizes his inner desire to have the male power through an incestuous relationship. Hence, it is possible to claim that however much they are oppressed; the male is in quest for power. Carter's aim in depicting such eccentric male characters is to prove that male authority is accepted as a throne to be replaced in male mind. Nevertheless, female characters' perception of Philip's authority is never like admiration. It causes "the sense of fear and silent rebellion" (Cantrell, 78) on the side of female characters. That is to say, they have to have the features of the female even in their reaction to something they do not like. Nowhere in the novel does Carter include a part where Melanie or Margaret desire strongly for the authority of Philip. Moreover, neither Melanie nor Margaret acts against Philip's commands. They have increasing hatred for him, yet they do not feel secret admiration. The difference between the perceptions of male and female characters is obvious at the final scene of celebration. It is found out that everyone is in joy. Melanie even utters, "It was far nicer without Uncle Philip" (*MT*, 19). Nevertheless, her happiness is not because she has the power now, but because there is not a threatening oppressive force in the house. Likewise, Margaret is only happy because Philip is not there to oppress her identity. Carter emphasizes that female characters

are after the idea of equality for genders while the male always want the power.

Before going on with the analysis of female roles, it is better to examine the male power and violence on women in the novel. As explained above, male sexual power could be ensured through some ways including incest and rape. Carter includes the play *Leda and the Swan* in order to refer to male oppression ensured by gender roles.

Rape is a basic trope of our Western cultural heritage. *Leda* is one of the fifty rapes in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* alone. Carter's clumsy swan is a joke on patriarchal mythmakers (Gamble 39).

As Gamble explains in her book, Carter plays with the roots of patriarchal system which constructs even individuals' identities. She points to the idea that all system is based on the superiority of the male gender which is created by sex difference. She refers to the association of power with the male individual as opposed to passivity and submission with the female. She places the rape as the climax and makes her closure with a confession of incestuous relationship. Carter's point is to emphasize the understanding that women are exposed to male decision and command. She is subject to him in all senses. No matter how violent the act is, "rape is a sign of male power and authority over female" (Madsen, 103). The matter is that male domination is all based on sexual grounds. Carter points to sex violence association to ensure male power in gender relations.

When it comes to the incest scene, Carter prepares another mythical trope. That is to say, she describes the incest like the Greek legends. "The brother and sister kneeled. 'It is incest' whispered Melanie. 'Like the Kings and Queens of Ancient Egypt'" (194). Carter problematizes a lot of things through this incest scene. Her allusion to Greek mythology is direct attack to patriarchal myths. It could also be thought as Carter's way of playing with Freudian psychoanalysis. That is to say, Freud uses Oedipus myth as a background to his psychoanalytic criticism. Carter in a way refutes Freud's theory with her emphasis on incest and rape in Greek mythology.

Carter's emphasis on male domination over what happens in the novel is so

strong that she portrays male characters with violent desire. She criticizes that gender roles give the male the right to use his sexuality on women in the way he likes. Thus woman becomes a sexual object. Both Philip and Finn reflect their desires on Melanie. In fact, as explained above, Finn's secret admiration for Philip's power and authority is important. It shows Finn is a real candidate to Philip's throne of domination however much he is subject to Philip's oppression. Melanie who has so long been under Philip's domination turns out to be subject to Finn's authority in the end. As Gamble explains,

Melanie's role is principally that of functioning as the 'object of exchange' between Uncle Philip and Finn, a tug-of-war over which she has no control. The ending of the novel signals the resolution of this conflict between the two men, but only confirms Melanie's powerlessness as she gradually resigns herself to prospect of sex and marriage with Finn: she accepts the roles of lover, wife and mother assigned her by society" (36)

There seems to be no resolution to patriarchal chain of male authority according to Carter. It is ironic that Finn who is frustrated about Philip's oppression is at the same time the most voluntary one to take over his male power. It is obvious in his warning Melanie against Philip's prohibits. On the one hand, "Finn becomes Melanie's comrade in oppression, demonstrating- in true postfeminist fashion- that men as well as women are patriarchy's victims" (Gamble, 37). On the other hand, he waits for the day he will have the power as the male authority. When Melanie discovers the spy-hole into her room from Finn's, she faces the reality that "all the time, someone was watching her" (109). Finn does not hesitate to gaze her like a sexual object. He even attempts to rape her upon Philip's command. When it comes to Philip as the male figure, he is often depicted with his violence towards everybody in the house. Specifically in his version of Leda and the Swan, he complains about Melanie's appearance. He says, "I wanted my Leda to be a little girl. Your tits are too big" (143). Melanie is forced to fit into the image in Philip's mind. Philip aims at fulfilling his fantasies through Melanie. He sadistically commands Melanie to "take on the role of angel- passive and virginal" (Sage, 36). He is kept by the association of female with the emblem of the flesh. He unconsciously sees Melanie as "threat and

reminder of sex and bodily decay” (Bristow, 88). Melanie is treated as if she were a puppet in Philip’s hands. As Paulina Palmer states, the puppet figure becomes the way Carter depicts “a woman’s desperate position in an oppressive society” (qtd in Cantrell, 110). Since Melanie is dependent on Philip economically, she has to obey what he wants. As discussed in the first chapter, Melanie is in the hands of others that act as mirrors for her false identity. Gamble supports the idea and claims that “Melanie’s identity is taken over by Finn and Uncle Philip” (36). So it appears that gender roles violate female identity while permitting male desire to dominate.

It is necessary to discuss the hallucination Melanie sees in the kitchen in relation to the notion of violence associated with male gender. One evening Melanie hallucinates a severed hand lying in the drawer while putting away the silverware in the kitchen. The hand is with well manicured nails and it wears a thin silver ring. “It was the hand of a child who goes to dancing class and wears frilled petticoats with knickers to match” (*MT*, 118). She immediately faints and is revived by Francie. It is obvious that she thinks of Philip’s authority as a sign of violence. The hand hallucination stands for Melanie’s state that is detached from her own body. She sees her years of happiness in hallucination because it is a hand of a young beautiful girl. However, it is severed, so open to male violence. Melanie’s hallucination strengthens the tie between Melanie and Margaret whose silence is a result of male violence. Carter puts forward that male violence is a result of the inferior image of woman. As the second sex, woman who is pushed into alienation in this way starts having obsessions or fears.

Carter also makes allusions to Bible in her work. One of the toys with which Finn is very much interested in is a Noah’s Ark. Carter’s allusion is important because she picks up the story of Noah in particular. She points to the idea of redemption and obedience (Peach, 45). The passage is as follows;

The Noahs were a curious family. Mrs Noah was the traditional peg-shape, as if that was the perfect, only shape for Mrs Noah and the maker had adopted it with relief after unsuccessfully trying out a hundred new variants of his own which had not done... (86)

Although Carter seems to care more about the social aspect, her specific emphasis on Mrs Noah shows that she is also questioning the oppression of the religious authority. Carter leads the reader to the patriarchal mind that tries to propose the female roles with the power he gets originally from religion.

In studying female roles, Carter's female characters require further analysis. On the surface, Carter depicts the female characters with particular roles attached to their gender. That is to say, she seems to present female characters in the submissive mood. They are always in the house and ready for every command. They even dress-up accordingly. Firstly, Carter depicts typical female manners and behaviors. That is why she introduces Margaret and Melanie in the first place. Margaret is depicted as the compassionate mother for all in the house. She does the sewing and mends the clothes of her husband and brothers.

Aunt Margaret presided over the table with placid contentment, urging them to eat with eloquent movements of the eyes and hands. The children ate hungrily relaxing over the meal; she must thought Melanie, be nice if she cooks so well (47).

Margaret represents the castrated woman with all her affection, care and service for the house members along with her respect for her husband. She often flatters her husband with her meals and her smiling face. Although she turns out to be the rebellious female in the end, "she reflects all the expected features of the female" at first (Watkins, 78). When it comes to Melanie, she is pictured as the young lady ready for her roles as a female in patriarchal system she is subject to. She is ready when she is called for work. She does the shopping and is always busy doing something. She behaves according to the way she is expected in the house as if she has to act a daughter's role to Philip or even a wife's role to Finn, the secret junior patriarch. No matter how much she hates Philip, she is always respectful to him and even flatters him in some cases.

It is claimed that Carter imitates the Fortunate Fall in the Bible in her narrative. As analyzed in detail, Melanie's tree-climbing gives the sense that she is Eve who is on the verge of falling down to earth which is represented by the toyshop

(Gamble, 45). Carter's satire in depicting Melanie as Eve is a direct reference to women's intellectual, emotional and sexual oppression with the excuse of gender roles. She herself sees "her novel in terms of Fortunate Fall" (45). The Fortunate Fall "is not only from the toyshop but the cultural myths" (45). As Carter herself confirms, she depicts a Melanie who is a little mother to Victoria, a daughter to Philip and even to Margaret, a wife to Finn. She surrenders the roles assigned to her. As De Beauvoir confirms, "being a woman is a process of becoming a mother, a wife..." (486). Still, *MT* seems like a fairy tale in which the female reaches a happy ending with her prince after tough times when analyzed from Melanie's perspective. However, Carter aims at adapting the traditional style of fairy tales by adding elements of rape, incest and a problematic familial atmosphere.

It is also possible to analyze traditional gender roles in relation to space. It appears that female sexuality and male sexuality are associated with certain places. In *MT*, male and female characters are seemingly traditional. The female dwells in the kitchen. On the contrary, male domination surrounds the parlor, formal rooms, and the house as a whole. The differentiation basically relates to the fact that kitchen calls for familial needs, especially eating. The other places which are under male domination are relatively about the social order in a house. While women are associated with the concept of home-making, the other rooms in the house therefore are designed to show social hierarchy, and accordingly male power (Cantrell, 111). Since gender roles are the result of the male-female binary, there is a hierarchical relationship between male and female. That is to say, male is thus associated with public places while the female is associated with home. It means that the notion of the female calls for the concept of "mothering" in the first place because all primary needs of humans are supplied inside the house where the female is active. It accordingly means that female is subject to man as a complementary unit rather than a separate entity. As Simone De Beauvoir states in *Second Sex*, "this humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him" (16) if woman is to have an identity. As Cantrell explains,

The household take an interest in spatial literacy when they perceive how domestic space can be used to contain and repress female sexuality and,

consequently, to consolidate male sexual privilege and control over the family (105).

She points to the fact that the male knows how to use space to prove his superiority and woman's inferiority and subordination. De Beauvoir describes the case with the term "functional woman". She means woman's existence is functional to men. In fact, it is necessary to talk about the importance of kitchen in relation to female roles. There are many reasons for female association with kitchen. Firstly, the kitchen – particularly in this book- is the safest place where most of the members of the house feel easy and comfortable. It is mainly because it is the place where Uncle Philip rarely comes. When Philip is away, everyone is full of joy since they get rid of the oppression in this way. The members of the house have their bath in the kitchen because they do not have running hot water. So the kitchen is also related to peace for others in the house. It is in this way that kitchen is linked to body which is associated with women. This is in parallel to the male obsession on the female body that is associated with the flesh and materiality. Hence it is also possible to infer that female roles are associated with peace. Woman ensures the peace for the male again as a complementary unit. Her subordination to male power relates to the roles attached to her, in particular her role as peace-giver. Kitchen also bears all embracing quality in the context of the novel. Melanie's often visits to the kitchen make her see the relationship between Jowles siblings. It is again through the kitchen meetings that Melanie is accepted to the Jowles circle. On the other hand, formal rooms are all exposed to Philip's oppression and rage. So, it causes male dominance over these rooms.

The female author writes about things differently as Woolf suggests in her article (Barrett, 24). Although she seems to create traditional female characters, Carter deals with the issue of gender roles in a different way in her narrative. That is to say, she plays with the prescribed roles for individuals by reversing some roles. The most striking effect is on Margaret, naturally. Carter assigns Margaret with the role of a wife to Philip, a mother to brothers on the surface level. Although she is portrayed as perfectly castrated, Margaret's silence turns out to be her rebellion against Philip's oppression. Thus Carter reverses the character in such a way that

Margaret turns out to be a wife to Francie. Ironically, her mothering is for everyone else. Gamble describes Margaret's case "like Bertha, it is Margaret who is responsible for the fire which destroys the toyshop in the closing scene" (37). She refers to Philip who starts the fire after seeing Margaret with her brother. Carter's aim is to question the roles assigned to people according to gender difference. She also clamps down the male dominated power structure in the family in this way. While Margaret turns out to be a non conformist, Melanie experiences a trauma as a result of the oppression and gender roles.

As for Margaret, she is much more rebellious than Melanie. For one reason, her muteness which occurs on the day she marries Uncle Philip is a rejection of his power in the house. Although she seems to show the features of the conventional obedient woman, she represents the non-conformist in the novel. Nevertheless, her seeming conformism tells a lot about the role of the female in society. "Aunt Margaret never went out at all" (Antosa, 89). She owns and acts just like a suppressed woman should do. She prepares food on time; gets ready for Sunday nights and so on. In her silence, though, Margaret acts against the acceptable forms of sexuality in society. She does what a traditional female should not do. Carter satirizes the incestuous relationship:

Francie and Aunt Margaret embraced. IT was a lover's embrace, annihilating the world, as if taking place at midnight on the crest of a hill, with a tearing wind beating the branches above them. The brother and sister kneeled. "It is incest" whispered Melanie. "Like the Kings and Queens of Ancient Egypt". Francie and Margaret locked together in the most primeval of passions down on the floor... (*MT*, 194)

No wonder does Margaret feels upset when it is Sunday. It makes her feel inferior and pushed. At the beginning of the book, it is stated, "when she wore the collar, she ate only with the utmost difficulty" (113). As stated above, Margaret seems to act like the perfect castrated woman in her life in the house. Collar works as a reminder of her role as a wife to Philip. The scene is against the patriarchal understanding of sexuality. Ironically, incest affairs are accepted to be a way of declaring male sexual power on women. Another ironic point is the fact that Margaret regains her ability to

talk the day she frees herself. It seems that Margaret's muteness is another reference to her role as a wife as well as a woman in the house.

When it comes to Melanie, she performs her roles a traditional female. However, in the middle of the narrative, she experiences a trauma. When she utters that "there is too much" (67), Finn replies her, "you've hardly seen anything" (67). In the moment of trauma, Carter describes what Melanie has been in for so long:

This crazy world whirled about her, men and women dwarfed by toys and puppets, where even birds were mechanical and the few human figures went masked and played musical instruments in the small and terrible hours of the night into which again she had been thrust. She was in the night again and the doll was herself. (68)

Melanie all of a sudden acknowledges the reality she has been in. She faces the patriarchal oppression on female roles. She acknowledges that patriarchy suppresses identities of the female and male by turning them into puppets. Melanie is aware that she has become somebody. Yet she also knows that it is not herself who think and act this way. She understands that she has a false identity. Disturbed by this conflict, she associates herself with the doll:

Lying face downward in a tangle of strings was a puppet fully five feet high, a sylphide in a fountain of white tulle, fallen flat down as if someone had got tired of her in the middle of playing with her, dropped her and wandered off. (67)

Melanie sees herself in this doll that has long black hair like her. She remembers the time when she poses in front of the mirror in her bedroom. She is already reduced to one of Philip's toys in this house. All this causes a trauma in Melanie. Then she starts Philip's envisions for her. However, instead of resistance, Melanie sticks to Philip's oppression since she is subject to him in order to survive. Since she is the traditional female, she behaves as she should. The only way for her to free herself is to marry someone in order to get rid of being a puppet in Philip's hands.

As for the relation between male and female roles, it is like the master-slave relationship. That is, a male is always superior to female in patriarchy. For example,

although he is younger, Jonathan is given a room for himself while Melanie is to share her room with her sister. Male master association is more explicable on Philip. He is one male power that commands both the female and the male. All the others including some male characters are slaves of Philip whose commands must be obeyed. He leads all the others in the house no matter what their gender is. Besides he is obsessed with his oppression. He says, "I don't like people playing with my toys". He does not let others to interrupt anything he creates. It seems that all female roles are constituted to ensure the male's comfort. As a result of this, women are subordinated to men. That is to say, woman is depicted as an object that has no feelings. For example, when the play ends, everyone applauds with enthusiasm. Margaret even begs Melanie to applaud more to make Philip feel better. Friedan depicts the reason of subordination as "women's economic dependence on the male" (25). Since woman is not given the chance to have some rights, she is automatically dependent on the male. Melanie's words, "If only I were not dependent" explain her feelings about her subordination to Philip. In fact Carter's female characters are not the one who are "used to come for the weekend at home... with a suitcase full of little black dresses for cocktails and dinner" (95). Instead of the silly "expensive woman" Carter draws the attention to eccentric woman in the magical world that is full of images, incest and music in the toyshop. In this way, she challenges gender roles in traditional sense. She criticizes the simplistic mentality that woman is in the kitchen to prepare food and take care of everything in the house. In other words, she criticizes the male mind that accepts woman who is subordinate to him. That is why, in traditional societies, the only way for women to gain identity is to get married. However, she is subordinated to her husband this time. Moreover, she is subject to her husband even in discovering her sexuality, which makes her an identity that belongs to her husband. It makes her an identity although it is a false identity. Thus it is proved that the roles attached to female are so restricting that women have no identity.

So, it is understood that woman identity is only possible through her roles which link her to a male. Watkins suggests, "the degree to which the individual can actually resist the situation of oppression in which she finds herself" (14) shows how

she could exist as a part of society. Betty Friedan in *The Feminine Mystique* discusses woman's true vocation as a wife and mother. She emphasizes woman's sexual function and mothering as the roles enabling her to exist. As the roles suggest, woman's existence is directly linked to the primary needs of the male. That is to say, she is responsible for supplying for eating, housework and accordingly male sexuality. In fact, Carter in her narrative reflects the function of woman as a wife and mother rather than as an identity. Friedan terms the problem of identity for those women who "are unable to develop a sense of self-worth and purpose in their lives" (68). It makes sense when the text is analyzed from Melanie's perspective whose only aim is to get married to a man and thus get rid of her biggest obsession. She is forced to survive under Philip's oppression despite her disgust and hatred. Because of her economic dependence she keeps silent and obeys what is commanded. Even when she reaches her aim, she feels blankness. As discussed above, it might be because Finn is not the prince of her dreams. However, Melanie does not stop being with Finn since his existence makes her somebody. The problem of identity that Friedan mentions is depicted in Melanie like all the other traditional women. The only thing that makes her worthy even in her eyes is being with Finn. When it comes to Margaret, she is the silent rebellious angel in the house. Although she is pictured with the perfect qualities of a mother and a wife, she is the real rebel. She has a problem of identity which appears as incest. Nevertheless, she keeps her affair as secret. She feels safer as Philip's wife and the others' mother. It is also important to note that both Melanie and Margaret act their roles as a mother and a wife although neither is a real mother. Likewise, Mrs Rundle -although she has never married- works as a nanny that represents the work of a mother. Even when a woman is not a mother, she functions as a mother towards brothers, sisters even towards the husband. So, it appears that the initial association of the female is with sexual function and mothering. These female roles provide women with some identity which means a completion to a man's needs.

When it comes to Carter's resolution, she offers no end to male oppression. Carter makes Finn destroy Philip's most valuable prop, the swan. All the members of the house celebrate the absence of Philip. It seems that Philip's authority is already

failed by the destruction of the swan. As Philip is the centre of the house, pleasure without him suggests a world without a center which means no gender roles or discrimination. Since Finn is milder than Philip, Carter claims that Philip's authority is not ultimate. However, Finn acts like a substitute to Philip's power as a male. So, Finn's replacement of the throne suggests the chain of patriarchal oppression. Destruction of the swan-the representative of male power- is done by a male. Male violence over another male super power in the house is a postmodern feminist act. It offers a relatively milder approach to male-female relationship. That is to say, it offers equal rights between male and female. However, Carter still poses the superiority of the male. She means to state if there is something rebellious, active and overt, it is the male to realize the act. It is Finn to rebel against Philip's oppression as the supplementary male figure. In this way, Carter emphasizes that "there is no such thing as woman" (Harris, 106) because she can never have her pure identity.

### **3.2 Traditional Gender Roles and Other Sexes in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit***

Gender roles in *Oranges* require a different analysis than *MT* because the novel does not depict the story of a conformist but a non-conformist. That is to say, the analysis of gender roles must be done differently because the protagonist Jeanette is an outsider in the novel. Within this part, how Jeanette becomes an outsider is depicted. The conditions, rules and the understanding that makes her an outcast are explained. Therefore, gender roles for male and female are depicted in relation to Jeanette's growing sexuality and identity. As discussed in the previous part, the patriarchal system supports the male and establishes roles of individuals "to protect the privileges of the male" (Barrett, 20). Gender also determines the privacy and the rights of individuals. Carter introduces a community which is based on male power and authority. However, she depicts her novel at the level of family. Like Carter, Winterson portrays a patriarchal community in order to depict the construction of the notion of gender and accordingly the roles attached to male and female. Gender appears as "a social construct" (Rusk, 86) as it is clear in the analysis above. Since

“sex is a cultural reality” (Wittig, 5), gender roles are to define the position of male and female. It is so established that gender roles determine one’s identity which is firstly shaped by one’s sexuality. That is to say, as one grows to his or her sexuality, s/he gains her/his identity. The basic aim is to ensure that male is the superior unit in the family and society and the female should act as a substitute to him in all matters.

As discussed above, male is associated with, supreme, power, authority, activity, and oppression while female is associated with obedience, the inferior, and submission (Cantrell, 56). That is to say, female roles are defined so that woman could complement man in all matters. The qualities like mothering and caring are some of the functions that women are expected to have. In fact, functional roles that are so assigned to female gender are an important subject of feminism. Friedan comments on functionalism and gender roles. She puts emphasis on the figure of mother who is either remote or overprotective. She concludes that female roles are constituted functionally for the comfort of male. She states:

Functionalism began as an attempt to make social science more scientific by borrowing from biology the idea of studying institutions as if they were muscles or bones, in terms of their structure and function in the social body (Friedan, 41).

Friedan’s use of “social body” explains the imposition of gender based on biology. In other words, Friedan proves that gender is a social term constituted in parallel to biological sex for the sake of male domination in all matters. It creates the notion of “unfair society” in gender roles. As discussed in *MT*, society seeks for the perfect castrated female prototypes like Melanie and Margaret on the surface. They are to realize all the functions of a woman as mothers, wives and sisters just to supply the needs of the male members like father, husband and brother. If they fit the image for male taste, they exist in society. If not, they have to come to terms with the image. Jeanette in this sense stands as the outcast with her unacceptable sexual tendency. It is the reason that all the others try to convert Jeanette to the usual way.

Winterson’s understanding of gender roles in her narrative is more challenging than Carter. For one reason, Carter introduces the incest which is another

unacceptable way through a silent oppressive character. It seems like a sub topic in Carter's narrative. She is more into the family institution and oppression rather than the case of outcasts. That is why she leaves the incest aside and depicts a Margaret who could only confess her choice at the end of the book. What is more, she has to face death when she makes the confession. The survival of the female in her own ways or at least without oppression is only possible if she is alienated from society. That is to say, Carter proposes no solution to problem of oppression for female. She thinks of no escape for "the vicious circle of oppression and submission" (Peach, 54). Nevertheless, she gives the message that the oppression on women shows itself later as another unacceptable way. She also creates a mute Margaret so as to depict a result of oppression. Carter reflects "the phantasms of "man" and "woman" that theatrically produced effects that posture as grounds, origins" (Butler, 21). When it comes to Winterson, she puts the protagonist in the middle of the problem. She depicts the experience of a non-conformist. Through her protagonist, Winterson brings the problem of oppression on women as her initial point. "She approaches the problem from a wider perspective" (Simpson, 97). She discusses the matter on the level of notion. She explains Jeanette's fight for her sexual preference and survival in society. She opposes the association of woman with female gender that is described with certain qualities. As for the resolution, Winterson is more radical than Carter. She offers that patriarchal limits are not the only way. Her most powerful proof is the romantic love between same-sex. She emphasizes other sexes "in the understanding and representation of reality and experience" (Simpson, 96). In this way she subverts gender roles and suggests alternative sexes. The way Winterson introduces her solution needs further analysis.

Winterson introduces the romantic love between Jeanette and Melanie completely against the social boundaries for sexual identities. First of all, the narrative model for romantic love is heterosexual in conventional thinking and writing. However, Winterson depicts their relationship in the way usual romance between man and woman is described. She challenges the traditional roots of sexual and romantic love. "Jeanette and Melanie's eyes meet across a crowded market fish stall" (Sage, 37). Winterson's description of their love clashes with the traditional

heterosexual romantic love. Such a description opens up a gap between lesbian love and conventional love (Simpson, 97). In this way, Winterson not only challenges the traditional imposition of sexual preference but she also claims a lesbian romantic love. Winterson's description of lesbian love is not only at the level of sexual preference and perception. Her projection problematizes the gender roles which are constructed by simple gender difference and male dominance. Winterson's deconstruction which seems to be at the level of sexuality is in fact a total challenge. She deconstructs the understanding of male superiority in gender roles which takes the activity of male in the sexual act. That is why it is not easy to analyze the text in terms of gender roles. Even the mention of lesbian romance deconstructs superior male role within the family institution. That is to say, the idea that male commands all family members is problematized because Winterson reverses the family institution as well (Cantrell, 99). In Winterson's suggestion, there is not even the family but the freedom of individuals. The text itself is a great challenge against the existing system of gender. In parallel to its extraordinary style, the narrative leads the reader to ambiguity and openness starting from the matter of sexual preference.

Winterson's presentation of the oppression on women is based on female victimization. Lynne Pearce suggests that "one way to avoid helpless victim to such ideological forces... is to treat romantic love with irony, to expose it as a fiction, and to reorganize its discursive elements in order to tell the love story differently" (Simpson, 97). Jeanette and Melanie's romantic love which is totally against patriarchy is Winterson's way of getting rid of victimization. Winterson is after resistance to social norms rather than social conformity in her narrative. That is why she keeps her main argument on the formation of identity like Carter as well as deconstructing the established social norms. While Carter puts emphasis on the individual, Melanie, Winterson displays the further level and puts forward a solution for the oppression in identity construction. Nevertheless, Winterson picks up the difficulties one faces in a conventional society, so she portrays a profile of the patriarchal subversion. As Simpson states, Winterson reflects the "social conventions and systems of belief, dominated by the institutions of marriage, the heterosexual family and the Church, restrict the freedom of expression" (Simpson, 91). However,

she reverses male and female roles. There is an oppressive mother with the perfect qualities of a (male) patriarch. The Pastor and the other female characters all contribute to the survival of the evangelical Christian dogmas and accordingly the conventions. The rest of the characters all represent the suppressed ones. Winterson picks up the story of Jeanette, one of the suppressed female characters in this context.

While analyzing such a non-conformist text according to gender profile and roles, it is necessary to examine it in terms of its historical standing. The novel depicts the post-war popular culture with “housing improvements (fitting bathrooms) and CB radios” (Simpson, 91). So, it depicts the time in 1950s and 1970s. It portrays the life of a working class family in northern England. The dominant culture is determined by evangelical Christian dogmas. It means that there are two elements which determine the gender roles in this context. These are the religious authority and postwar period. That is to say, the dominant culture is determined by the evangelical doctrine of Christianity in the post-war period in England. Moreover, it should be noted that the novel is a reflection of Winterson’s life. Winterson who is brought up in Pentecostal evangelism reflects her knowledge of the Bible in her narrative while mirroring the society she describes.

As discussed in *MT*, gender roles are determined by patriarchal authority. In *Oranges*, Winterson questions the religion as the origin of patriarchal gendering. She depicts a context in which religion defines the power structure and gender roles. That is to say, the reader finds a powerful unit that is the Church in the novel. Jeanette’s mother appears as the spokesperson for this authority within the family while the Pastor acts as the primary power figure within the novel’s context. Louie who replaces the role of Uncle Philip of *MT* is the greatest patriarch in the novel. She has the list of friends and enemies that are confirmed by the Church.

She had never heard of mixed feelings... Enemies were the devil, next door, sex (in its many forms) slugs. Friends were God, our dog, Auntie Madge, the novels of Charlotte Bronte, slug pellets... I had been brought in to join her in a tag match against the rest of the world. (3)

As seen in the extract, Louie acts like the pastor although she is a female. She is an

activist for the maintenance of evangelical doctrine. Winterson criticizes religion as the powerful background for the patriarchal system which directs people's lives. Like Carter, she attacks the masculine myth which originates the problem of oppression for women. However, Winterson is more interested in the teleological origin which creates patriarchal system of thought. She criticizes the religious authority not only as the origin and but also as the survival of the patriarchal oppression which defines gender roles and accordingly identity. Winterson's most important attempt is to reverse the structure of religious authority. It is contradictory that a female character that is to represent the suppressed and the inferior appears as the greatest supporter of the system. Louie who adopts Jeanette with the aim of bringing her up as a missionary to God is depicted as the voice of authority. Her commands and sanctions on Jeanette are the extensions of her desire for will to power. In conventional society, the female does not have the right to rule at all. Louie chooses the only way to have the will to power, that is to be a missionary to God. While deconstructing the notion of patriarch through a female figure, Winterson also questions the roots which determine the system. Winterson reflects certain scenes related to Louie in order to refer to the fact that patriarchy uses every means to be the authority. Winterson implies that the system aims to impose certain ideas on individuals. One of the scenes in the novel is when Jeanette finds out Louie's version of *Jane Eyre*. Louie rewrites the ending in the book to ensure that Jeanette's vision is shaped in the exact way she likes. Winterson describes Jeanette's view;

*Jane Eyre* was her favorite non-Bible book, and she read it to me over and over again, when I was very small. I couldn't read it, but I knew where the pages turned. Later, literate and curious, I had decided to read it for myself... I found out that dreadful day in a back corner of the library that Jane doesn't marry St. John at all, that she goes back to Mr. Rochester. (74)

Jeanette feels upset with the betrayal of her mum and is offended by Louie's perception of her. Winterson's description of Louie as a female patriarch depicts how patriarchal gendering inflects ideas, manners, behaviors and tendencies in individuals. As a matter of fact, Jeanette is taught that "being a woman is a process of becoming a mother, a wife, etc."(De Beauvoir, 486). Her mother's religious

identity is a reference to the power behind this teaching.

Another important issue in the novel is the post-war period. It appears as the determiner for gender roles in conventional society. Post-war period affects the profile in society in a way that “it changes the balance of men and women” (Rowbotham, 28). The change in the number of male and female initially causes a psychological pressure on both genders. It automatically reverses the male dominated system in society. As for the context in the novel, Louie represents all the individuals who hold on to the power principle. Within the analysis, conformism should be kept in mind as a way of survival in the post-war period. It somehow ensures the safety of patriarchy in communities. However, Winterson reverses the survivor of the system as the female. Her novel has the features of bildungsroman that is traditionally a boy’s long term life experience. Her choice of a female protagonist is another attempt to reverse the constructed frame of male roles. Moreover, unlike the certain endings of the traditional bildungsroman, Winterson ends her novel open and ambiguous. She leaves Jeanette “in a state of limbo” (Simpson, 68). Jeanette hopes to be saved by “a woman in another place”. Although most of the features in the novel prove the work as postmodern, Winterson depicts a postmodern feminist story. As stated above, she is more into the sexual development and the feminist side of the matter.

When the two works are compared in terms of power structure and social forces, it appears that the system is more overt in Carter’s work. While *MT* represents a prototypical community with a real oppressive patriarch, *Oranges* provides an alternative look at the system of belief as the origin of oppression. Although both works depict a young girl’s passage to her identity, Winterson is more challenging than Carter because she aims at “reflecting lesbian politics” (Watkins, 88). In *MT*, the female is at home and particularly in the kitchen. She is responsible for the housework, eating and all the work relating to male comfort. She exists as a substitute for man. The male on the other hand is the decision unit in all matters. He directs the female and has the right to rule over even the male. He is the superpower in the family. Such roles are easily observed in *MT*. When it comes to *Oranges*, there are references to places of men and women in society. Nonetheless, the rules are not

so overtly inferred. There are some clues related to house and gender roles. Yet, the emphasis is not on the roles of female and male, but on the creators of gender profile and roles. It is because Winterson aims at reversing the system of gender in society. She challenges “the logic of gender based on biology” (Carriker, 45). For example, she portrays a passive father within the family as opposed to an active mother. She describes her deconstructed family as; “My father liked to watch the wrestling, my mother liked to wrestle. It did not matter what. She was in the white corner and that was that” (*Oranges*, 3). Jeanette the narrator portrays her father in the passive mood and mentions him a few times throughout the book. On the other hand, she describes her mother as an activist especially in church matters. Winterson reverses the traditional male and female roles in the family. However, she still pictures Louie as the mother who has all the responsibilities of a woman in the family. She does the housework, and the stuff about the kitchen. Yet she is never away from her religious life as a preacher. Like Louie, Jeanette is portrayed as a young girl who is to know and realize the responsibilities of a typical female. Letting alone Winterson’s aim of destroying the male power through Louie, the novel deals with mother and daughter bond. As discussed in the previous chapter, women surrender “the original mother-daughter bond in favor of heterosexual relationships” (Madsen, 171) because it is crucial to female gender identity. Jeanette’s knowledge of her adoption attacks the bond between Louie and her. Although she observes her mother as a female, she cannot unite with the image she receives. She cannot acknowledge the role of the female like her mother. It affects her sexual tendency as well. Winterson’s reversal of domination in the family is clearly depicted in Jeanette’s homosexual identification. Jeanette who is already under oppression cannot unite with either mother or the father. She ends up with homosexual dominant identity. That is to say, she chooses the same sex in her sexual life, which could be her attempt to unite with the mother. At the same time she is the dominant side in her sexual life, which is a male association and accordingly a tie with the father. Yet, Winterson’s presentation of an active mother and passive father problematizes the family unit as a whole. Sheila Rowbotham explains the importance of family for women consciousness; “the significance of family has become such that it sags with the weight of its unrealized

hopes almost before it creates itself” (60). She point to the function of family that is also constituted by gender roles. In this sense, Winterson’s reversal exemplifies the undone family institution that tries to function properly.

So far it appears that Winterson not only challenges constructed gender roles but she also creates alternatives for gender identifications. First of all, Winterson opposes the idea of imposition of gender based on biology. She puts forward that individuals should choose the ways according to their own thoughts and desires. She is after the idea of “individualism” rather than “gendering”. By ignoring the social inflection of gender, she proposes the idea of individualism in rights and preferences. Her play with the roles of the mother and father also shows that gender roles must not be prescribed but appear naturally. That is to say, she supports the idea of equality for man and woman. She pictures Jeanette as a successful individual who can earn her life in the end. The young lady gains economic freedom although she is an outcast. Moreover, she has the right to have higher education as a successful individual. Her supposition is based on the refutation of economic dependence of women on men. Like Michèle Barret, the author of *Women’s Oppression Today*, Winterson supports the destruction of dependence on male wage and accordingly the transformation of gender ideology (246). It is not acceptable to picture a Jeanette who earns her life and achieves something in traditional sense. Through Jeanette, Winterson rejects gender ideology from economic and sexual aspects. Her alternative for gender identifications is then freedom and equality in rights of male and female.

As mentioned above, Winterson proposes a different approach to gender ideology and refuses totalistic understanding in gender roles. However, while conveying her thoughts, she exemplifies conventional roles in some parts. Like Carter, Winterson reflects the idea that it is male who could have the supreme power in a social context. She makes all the church goers, Louie in particular; obey what Pastor Spratt commands. She installs a male as the important figure within the novel’s context. Winterson’s aim in displaying a male authority is a deliberate act to prove that patriarchal thinking gives the male the right to rule over and command. She criticizes the Church as a unit. Furthermore, the Church members like Mrs White and May mirror the conventional mind. They have the lists of good and evil and are

the prototypes of traditional female. Nevertheless, Winterson's characters are not in line with the roles expected from them. Starting with Jeanette and her two partners Melanie and Katy, they represent the lesbian. They are the outsiders in their community. Mrs Jewsbury who seems to be the typical female turns out to be a lesbian as well. Winterson already reverses the power relations in Jeanette's family. Therefore, it could be said that *Oranges* depict the story of the non-conformists that refuse to abide by gender roles necessitated by biological sex difference.

The most apparent gender association is mother-daughter bond in Winterson's novel. As opposed to Margaret and Melanie of *MT*, Jeanette and Louie are depicted as mother and daughter. Winterson deals with the role of mothering differently. Indeed, it should be noted that although Margaret is not Melanie's mother, she acts as a substitute mother for her. She shows affection of a mother and realizes all the functions of a mother not only to Melanie but all the rest. As for Louie, she is Melanie's step-mother; however, she acts partly like a mother. Although she has manly attributes like authority in the house, she displays the roles of a woman as a mother in matters of primary needs. She does the cooking, housework and so on. Besides she teaches how to do housework. She also reminds Jeanette that "a girl's motto is to be prepared" (Fifer, 15). When it comes to mother-daughter relationship, it is complicated in that Winterson creates an oppressive mother who acts like a father. Her firm and stable mind about the teachings of the Church is an example for her male side. Contrarily Elsie, one of the old women, acts as a substitute mother for Jeanette in every ways. When Jeanette stays at hospital during her deafness, Elsie visits her frequently. Jeanette even stays a few more days at Elsie's house till her mother is back from a church trip. Another example could be Jeanette's sampler. Louie ignores her daughter's works at school. Contrarily Elsie frames Jeanette's sampler and hangs it in her parlor with pride. She is attributed with the features of mothering for Jeanette. Winterson again challenges the traditional understanding of mothering.

Winterson questions not only the mothering issue but also women's role as wives. Unlike Margaret of *MT*, Louie is not afraid of her husband. She only cares about "the limits of her evangelical teaching" (Cantrell, 111). Louie, with all her

devotion to Christianity, stands for Virgin Mary who is the mother of Christ. Her adopting Jeanette is another sign for her identification with Virgin Mary. In return for Louie's desire for representing Mary, Jeanette tries to satisfy her mother's religious desire. Jeanette the narrator explains the case;

She had a mysterious attitude towards the begetting of children; it wasn't she couldn't do it; more that she did not want to do it. She was very bitter about the Virgin Mary getting there first. So she did the next best thing and arranged for a founding. That was me. (3-4)

Louie has the features of Virgin Mary more than of a traditional mother. Just like the other women in the novel, she does not have happy union with her husband. Her husband is like a shadow in the narrative. Winterson also challenges woman's role as a wife in this way. No wonder she makes Jeanette talk about men as beasts in many parts in the narrative. She gives no examples of happy united woman with the husband. Thus, she attacks the function of the woman body as complementary to male taste. As Fifer states, "even the inner spaces of their bodies do not fully belong to them" (20). On the other hand, Louie's compassionate activism for the survival of Evangelical Church is Winterson's way of criticizing the religious authority in constituting gender identities. That is to say, Winterson's first aim in creating a Virgin Mary in Louie is to reverse the religious authority which dictates people's sexual identities. Secondly, she deconstructs the passive role of women in society as opposed to male domination. It is the very reason why Winterson takes a deeper look at the problem of identity.

Winterson subverts traditional gender roles as discussed above. It is also depicted in the relationship between places and gender roles. Winterson puts forward a challenging house design by attributing opposite roles to male and female. As stated in *MT*, the house is the smallest unit where male and female relations are constructed. The main characters in *Oranges* live in "a terraced house in a working-class neighborhood" (Cantrell, 67). It is a small place with two functional rooms which are the kitchen and the parlor. Unlike Carter who reflects the real place of women in the kitchen, Winterson aims at eliminating gender biases in the house.

That is to say, she replaces the place and role of powerful male with an authoritative female figure in the house. By keeping the father submissive, Winterson reflects a powerful and even oppressive female within the house. It contrasts with the image of female that is isolated into the kitchen. Unlike the traditional understanding of the submissive role of the female, Winterson demonstrates the possibility of subverting male domination in the family. However, Winterson also problematizes the notion of power by attributing it to Louie. Nevertheless, Louie is like Philip who maintains “surveillance over her daughter’s sexuality” (Cantrell, 69). It “resembles male efforts to curb female sexuality” (69). Louie authorizes in every part of the house. She warns everyone about the use of the parlor on Sundays. In *MT*, the parlor is a place where male dominance is ensured. In *Oranges*, the parlor is a place where religious authority reigns. Louie even covers the television on Sundays for prayers. Thus it appears that Winterson reverses the association of gender and places. Moreover, parlor is used as a way for Winterson to deconstruct the taboos related to gender roles. A female, Louie reigns over the parlor. Besides, Jeanette and her first partner have affair in Elsie’s parlor. The parlor then stands for freedom for all. It is in parallel to Winterson’s suggestion of alternative sexes. Once again it appears that Winterson plays with the social norms which create gender roles within the house. Then it is possible to say that she destroys superior male roles through Louie; moreover, she attacks the religious authority by displaying it with the attributes of male power (Barrett, 43).

Within the analysis of gender roles in *Oranges*, it is necessary to talk about sexual binary because Winterson deals with it in order to subvert gender roles. Laura Doan argues the matter;

Winterson’s lesbian subject, though imbued with a voice and granted a threatening masculine power, still cannot transcend the condition of binarism, a predicament that interferes with the complete overthrow of heterosexual hegemony... For the lesbian writer, the task, the political agenda if you will, is to displace and explode the binary. (1994, 147)

Winterson “explodes the binary” as a feminist lesbian writer. She displays homosexuality and heterosexuality through her characters. By reversing the

power relations, she displaces the hegemony on sexual preference. Moreover, although she presents the story of lesbian love, she displays the oppression on Jeanette. Jeanette cannot feel comfortable with what she experiences. She describes, “We made love and I hated it and hated it, but would not stop” (106). It is obvious that Jeanette acknowledges that homosexual tendency is against the social frame. Her uneasiness stems from her conscious knowledge of social norms. Jeanette’s state of conflict is just like Elizabeth Barrett Browning explains the feminine role conflict in *Aura Leigh*:

You misconceive the question like a man  
Who sees the woman as the complement  
Of his sex merely. You forget too much  
That every creature, female as the male,  
Stands single and responsible act and thought...

(Book II, 460)

Browning’s view on feminine role conflict reflects Jeanette’s state. Browning emphasizes the equality between sexes rather than male superiority over female. All her struggles are indeed for becoming complementary to man. Winterson’s play with binaries is mainly focused on the right and the wrong. Towards the end of the book, Jeanette seems to acknowledge the fact that she “loved the wrong sort of people. Right sort of people in every respect except this one; romantic love for another woman was a sin” (127). Carter reflects the binaries as they exist in social life. Winterson is more critical of sexual binary than any other binary. For this reason, she assigns the attributes to opposite genders.

While presenting the female with the attributes of male power, Winterson also uses the notion of violence. In *MT*, Carter deals with the question of violence in social aspects. She simply reflects the patriarchal violence through Philip, the male power in the family. As for Winterson, she depicts the notion of violence as a part of religious authority. When the Church finds out Jeanette’s lesbian affair with Melanie, the members led by Pastor Spratt exorcise the young girl. They keep the girl inside a room for two days till she repents. Winterson’s association of violence with religious authority is different from that of Carter’s. Violence which is associated

with male power is replaced by the system of belief in *Oranges*. Moreover, the Church members humiliate the girls the very first day they discover the lesbian relationship. Despite Jeanette's protests of faith in God, Louie dismisses her out of their home. She faces violence when her deed is against the teachings of the Church. Whereas Carter depicts violence as a part of social norms within the family, Winterson portrays violence as a part of religious authority which is the origin of oppression in her view (Cantrell, 110).

It should be noted that Winterson's work is rather assertive in conveying postmodern feminist views of the author. Compared to Carter's work, Winterson applies many elements of postmodern female writing. In addition to deconstructing gender roles within the family, she depicts the survival of a non-conformist in her narrative. She backs up the idea of freedom as opposed to a "centered" approach. That is to say, all Winterson's aim in attacking the religious authority stems from her objection to the understanding of a center as the ruling unit. Her main argument is through the lesbian affair in her book because

lesbian existence challenges not only the strategies of male power through compulsory heterosexuality but also the underlying assertion of the male right of sexual, emotional and economic access to women (Madsen, 173).

It is possible to find the same idea of pleasure in the absence of a center figure in *MT*. When Philip is away and the rest is enjoying, they celebrate the absence of the authority and feel the joy without the head. However, Carter is not overt in her postmodern views in *MT*.

When it comes to the end of the novel, Winterson seems to put forward a totally radical solution to female oppression. In *MT*, Carter makes Finn destroy the swan that represents Philip's oppression. It is important that Finn is a male character who unconsciously adores Philip's domination. In plain words, Carter suggests equality between sexes. The destruction of male power with the hands of a male is a great challenge to male domination and it offers equality for male and female. Nevertheless, Carter depicts a Melanie who holds onto Finn, a relatively milder male than Philip. It gives the idea that submission to male figure is Carter's solution to

female oppression in society. As Simone De Beauvoir offers, Carter points to the idea that “humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself, but as relative to him” (16). Like Beauvoir, Easton Alison analyzes Carter’s ending as:

The closing of the book encourages the readers to hope that the destruction of Philip’s factory of patriarchal fantasies opens up before Melanie and Finn an uncharted space free of the old gender demarcations. Or does it? (Alison, 77)

Alison questions the ending of the novel just like a reader. In fact, Carter aims at making the reader question the possible solutions she offers in the end. When it comes to *Oranges*, it proposes a completely assertive solution. Winterson, who reverses all the structure in society from the beginning to the end of the novel, offers freedom for female and rejects economic dependence of women on men. She points to the possibility of economic freedom for women who are alienated when their sexual preference is against social norms. Compared to *MT*, *Oranges* offers a non-conventional resolution in the end. At the end of the novel, Louie starts making a radio programme for which she uses the name “Kindly Light”. Then she utters that the oranges are not the only fruit. Winterson changes even Louie’s stiff mind about sexual preferences and gender roles in the end, which is a radical attempt. By picturing a successful Jeanette who has the right for higher education, Winterson claims a healthier community when individuals especially the female are freed from oppression.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION

Feminist ideology is mainly based on the idea of equal rights of male and female. The works by feminist authors deal with women's oppression in male dominated society. Patriarchal system which is based on male superiority over the female does not let woman have the same rights as man. Women's lack stems from social disadvantages like financial dependence, exclusion from education and lack of privacy in the house. As it is clear, woman who is accepted as "female gender" is given no chance to explore her sexuality. She is led to the female image that is prescribed by patriarchy. She is supposed to have the sexual perception expected from her. Thus woman is described with the idea of lack in comparison to man's superiority. Accordingly, she is subordinated to male in all her deeds. She is thought to be a complement to man's existence. The idea of inferiority of women by biology brings the subject of identity. The only way women could be complete is through marriage. Through marriage, she gains identity. However, even the idea of marriage means dependence of the female on the male. The problem of woman's identity is depicted in the development of female sexuality, sexual perceptions and gender roles within society. Women are expected to choose the right sexual path and behave according to female gender. Thus they are alienated into false identities.

As postmodern feminist authors, Angela Carter and Jeanette Winterson reflect women's oppression in *The Magic Toyshop* and *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. Both Carter and Winterson describe a young lady who is on the verge of developing a sexual identity. They depict a young woman who is exposed to the oppression of society they live in. While Carter approaches the matter from the conformist's point of view, Winterson pictures the non-conformist's perspective. There are lots of similarities and differences between two works in terms of women's sexual preference, perception and gender roles.

Both works have the type of bildungsroman; that is to say, the authors depict the life of a female protagonist. Bildungsroman is traditionally the life story of a male

protagonist. In this sense, both works have the postmodern style since they display the story of the female protagonists. Furthermore, both works mock the fairy tales which are constituted suitably for the patriarchal system. That is to say, Carter introduces a Melanie who in a way looks for her prince. Melanie who is full of dreams of marriage as typical female is relieved when she encounters Finn. Although Finn is not like the prince in his dreams, she sticks to him as her lover. Carter pictures Melanie in a quest for identity. She often questions herself as a sexual being. Nevertheless, she unites with her female identity alienated from pure self. When it comes to Winterson, she reverses all the traditional bonds and rules in her narrative. She not only reverses gender roles, but also mocks the fairy tales. Unlike Carter, she displays the alienation of a non conformist woman from society. Moreover, both Carter and Winterson make allusions to Bible stories. They include stories of Noah and others in parallel to events in their novels. It is more important for Winterson's text because religious authority is what she is most critical of. She questions the system of belief as the origin of oppression on the female. Since she is a lesbian author, she is more assertive in displaying a non-conformist.

The matter of sexual perception is the first thing that is dictated by society. Since sexuality is the first determiner of identity, social norms firstly dictate one's sexual preferences. Heterosexual hegemony is so strictly defined that individuals are supposed to choose one way according to their biological sex. What Carter and Winterson criticize is this logic of constituting genders according to biological sexes. They criticize that sexual perceptions of individuals are ignored in the development of sexuality thus they are pushed into alienation.

Carter reflects the phases one has to go through before she or he becomes an identity in the traditional sense. Carter's criticism begins where she first introduces Melanie. Melanie spends hours in front of the mirror looking at her naked body. She imitates the types of women from Renaissance in front of the mirror. Although she finds herself beautiful, she cannot escape the male gaze on her. She lives with the fear of looking ugly and not appealing to male taste. Carter dramatizes the little girl's anxieties in her descriptions. It is ironic that Melanie is kept by the fear of dying virgin when there is not an oppressive figure around either male or female. Carter's

description of Melanie's fears is important because Carter makes the reader question the social force. She points to the fact that Melanie is unaware of the oppressive male perspective that sees her as a complementary unit. Her perception of sexuality is actually the perception of society. Unaware of her obsession's absurdity, she waits and hopes for the person she will get married one day. Thus she is alienated into her female image necessitated by society. She experiences a ritual in the middle of the night, which could be considered as a way of declaring her sexual preference. Carter's description of Melanie's naked tree climbing is an allusion to Fortunate Fall of Bible. Like Eve, she experiences a symbolic night with her mother's wedding dress. After Melanie's ritual, Melanie and her sister and brother go to their uncle's toyshop. Uncle Philip who is Carter's parody patriarch rules everyone in the toyshop then on. Carter questions whether perceptions of individuals are their pure sexual preferences in the second part of the novel. She challenges the force on sexual definitions of man and woman through Melanie and Margaret. More importantly she attacks patriarchal gendering which ignores woman's sexuality and leads her into alienation.

When it comes to *Oranges*, Winterson's work is a reversal of the traditional norms. Winterson puts emphasis on matters about woman's sexuality. She reverses the power structure within the family. That is to say, she reflects an authoritative mother Louie and a passive father as opposed to patriarchal system. She pictures the female with power and oppression in the house. Moreover, she describes a community that is full of strong women who are members of the Church at the same time. Winterson accuses religious authorities as the origin of oppression because she is grown up with the same oppression. Unlike Carter, Winterson criticizes the pressure on people's sexual tendencies. That is why she reflects the oppression on Jeanette in the family and the Church. Jeanette who lives among a group of women gets closer to her femininity. The little girl is inclined to the same sex as she gets to know her sexuality. Winterson pictures Jeanette as unaware of social norms. She feels no harm in her attraction to the same sex. Winterson means that sexual perception is something that appears and develops naturally. Even after Jeanette repents her sin, she goes on her homosexual life secretly with another partner.

Nevertheless, she is alienated from society and becomes an outcast. Jeanette's insisting on her sexual preference implies that sexuality is a natural process which relates to one's own feelings and desire. Winterson's ending in her narrative strengthens her idea. She displays Jeanette who gains the right for higher education. Jeanette is released from her dependence in all senses. Winterson reverses women's dependence on male financially. Jeanette who is dependent on her mother till the end is able to stand free and successful in the end. She supports the existence of other sexes.

Another notion that is raised in these works is the gender roles and the traditional female model. Both Carter and Winterson think that society inflicts certain gender roles as one's sexual identity develops. That is to say, male dominated society inflicts the roles for male and female regarding the superiority of the male. Female roles are so defined to complete male actions. She is to do the housework, kitchen work and be a sexual complement to male. Her place is the kitchen in the house. The male on the other hand is the ruling power figure in the house or in the church. He commands the others in the house. He is the king of the house. The relationship between male and female is like that of master and slave. Carter and Winterson criticize the idea that the inferiority of the female causes woman's alienation from her pure identity because she is restricted in all ways.

In *The Magic Toyshop*, Carter depicts a sample traditional community. In parallel to her conformist protagonist, she displays typical female characters like Mrs Rundle and Margaret who do everything expected from them. Carter portrays a young girl's becoming a sexual being who learns her role as a female. She provides a closer look at the development of female sexuality in patriarchy. She deals with place and gender relationship. It appears that female is to be in the kitchen as the supplier and complement to man. She also depicts men have the male superiority within the house. Starting with Philip who is the master of the house, Finn, Francie and Jonathan are reflected with their privileges. Philip is the inevitable oppressive patriarch. Finn is the secret admirer of his authority in the house. Moreover, he attempts to rape Melanie, which is a sign of male violence. Francie who has the incestuous relationship with her sister proves his masculinity because incest is

accepted as another sign of male violence. However, like Winterson, Carter portrays a non-conformist female. That is to say, Margaret who has incestuous relationship with Francie is against the traditional norms. Although she seems to be the perfect castrated female, Margaret is the only one to subvert the patriarchal pressure. Carter's description of Margaret is a challenge against oppression on women. She refers to the fact that women who are identified with female roles are given no recognition as identity. So they are alienated from the pure self. Carter suggests that the restrictions on female roles could turn into unacceptable desires in the end. Carter's ending is open to questions in that Philip is killed in the fire he starts. She destroys the male patriarch. However, Margaret and Francie are also killed in the fire. So, Carter also destroys the incest which is another sign of male violence. Only Melanie and Finn are saved in the end. It seems that Carter is after equal rights for male and female. She does not offer a marginal solution to gender problem unlike Winterson. However, through Finn, Carter also gives the message that male power is inevitable because Finn is the secret admirer of Philip's authority in the house despite being a victim of his ruling.

As Winterson reverses some of the notions in patriarchal thought, she deals with gender roles differently in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. She does not depict a traditional community unlike Carter. As described above, she depicts a women centered society that is oppressive ironically. Winterson applies a different version of gender roles. She puts all the qualities of traditional male on Louie, Jeanette's mother. Contrarily, she pictures the father with passive features. Although Winterson mocks the oppressive male through Louie, she still adds Louie womanly qualities like cooking and housework. Winterson reverses the roles in such a way that all the women characters are depicted outside the house. They are active church members. It is challenging in that woman is always described within the house. Winterson brings a different approach to gender roles. That is to say, she attributes all male power onto religious authority. All the others who are subject to church are attributed with female roles. They have the roles of suppressed women like the slaves in the command of the master. Moreover, Jeanette is not at all like Melanie of *MT*. She does not display the features of typical female. She knows the kinds of work

associated with female; however, she has lesbian tendencies that have no relations with the female in patriarchal system. On the other hand, Jeanette seems dominant like the male in her lesbian affairs. Winterson reverses all the gender roles in her work in parallel to her postmodern feminist views. The ending of the novel proposes a new alternative. Winterson opens ways to the possibility for other sexes. In this way she refutes the traditional female model which leads women into alienation.

To conclude, Carter and Winterson object to patriarchal oppression which castrates women's sexuality to ensure male superiority. They oppose the dictation of sexual preferences because it ignores women's perception of sexuality. Women are given no chance to explore their own perceptions of sexuality. The women who are expected to become the female are alienated into false identities. They become alienated from their pure identities. That is why both Carter and Winterson oppose the idea of gendering based on biological sexes. They also pinpoint the ambiguities in women's position in society through their protagonists. Both authors specifically oppose financial dependence of women on men. However, their works differ in that while Carter simply suggests equality for female and male, Winterson goes beyond equality. Winterson suggests the existence of alternative sexes. That is to say, while Carter emphasizes the problems of gendering, Winterson criticizes the oppression on women's sexual tendencies and preferences. Nevertheless, both authors support the idea of privacy for women to ensure freedom of sexual preference, tendency and behavior. They give the idea that the problem of oppression especially on women's sexuality could be worked out through independence for women and equal rights in education and in the house. Thus they mean to destroy the idea of gender as a social construct because it leads women into alienation.

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