THE RELATION BETWEEN ETHICS AND AESTHETICS IN PHILOSOPHY
OF MIKHAIL BAKHTIN

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ABSTRACT

THE RELATION BETWEEN ETHICS AND AESTHETICS IN PHILOSOPHY
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My main aim in this thesis is to reveal the relationship between the author and the hero which is quite similar to the relation and the dichotomy between the "I" and "the other" in Mikhail Bakhtin's philosophy. I will extend my analysis in the ethical relation of author-hero to propose a worldview that it is built upon love and sympathy. Finally, I will question ethics in literary genres by focusing on the relationship between the author and the hero. This thesis is devoted to a careful analysis of Bakhtin's literary theory which inevitably brings us to an ethical sphere of aesthetics.

Keywords: Aesthetics, Literature, Literary Theory, Ethics

ÖZ

MIKHAIL BAKHTİN FELSEFESİNDE ETİK VE ESTETİK İLİŞKİSİ

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Bu tezde asıl amacım Mihail Bahtin felsefesinde yazar ve kahraman arasındaki ilişkiyi "ben" ve "öteki" arasındaki ayrıma dayanarak açıklamaktır. Bu çalışmayı yazar kahraman arasındaki etik ilişkinin, sevgi ve sempatiye dayalı yeni bir dünya görüşü tasarladığını öne sürerek genişleteceğim. Sonuç olarak ise yazar-kahraman ilişkisi üzerinden edebiyat türlerinde etiğin rolünü sorgulayacağım. Kısacası, bu tez Bahtin'in edebiyat teorisinin bizi kaçınılmaz olarak estetiğin etik alanına girdiği detaylı olarak tartışılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Estetik, Edebiyat, Edebiyat Teorisi, Etik

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

From the very first moment I have read Mikhail Bakhtin's aesthetic theory, the questions of ethics gained a brand-new perspective in my mind. Bakhtin's philosophy is based on questioning the subject-object dichotomy as a subset of a universal and particular problematic of philosophy. The elegance of Bakhtin's philosophical theory touched me profoundly because of its solid relation with aesthetics. What makes Bakhtin genuine is his articulation of artistic creation within the social, historical consciousness of the author and his/her dialogical relation to the hero. The way Bakhtin uses aesthetics is never an isolated ordinary accumulation of objectified forms of art. In a very similar way, Bakhtin's understanding of ethics is not an abstracted principle, but it is rooted in a dialogical relation. Thus, in this study, I will concentrate only on the views of Bakhtin on the topic of aesthetics, ethics and author's responsibility to the hero.

My problematic is based on this aesthetic-ethical relatedness that nourishes each other in the work of art specifically in literature. I focus on the significance of the literal artistic creation with regard to the author-hero relation in order to question ethical dilemmas. How can an artist participate in an ethical act in his/her creation process? To tackle this problematic in the first chapter of my thesis, I begin with a brief account of the distinction of general and special aesthetics in Bakhtin's theory. I explain his notion of architectonics in aesthetics to demonstrate how the entities that create a certain structure affect the particular art forms. Then I will deepen my analysis by questioning the creation process between the author and the hero by focusing on the triadic theory of the subject by focusing on I-for-myself, I-for-others and other-for me. The relation between these three cognitive moments, I-for-myself, I-for-others and other-for me, is explained in Bakhtin's notion of outsidedness, consummation, love, sympathetic and empathic experience. How

Bakhtin formulates love at the centre of these notions is discussed mainly while thinking about notions of empathy and sympathy in the work of art. After having shown the basic principles of the relationship between the author and the hero, I will focus on the literary genres.

In the second chapter of my thesis I will examine the relation between the author and the hero through different genres in different times to emphasize that literary genres are more than literary media. First, I elaborate Bakhtin's classification of words to point out how they ground the relation between the author-hero-reader triangle. Then I will continue with his typology of discourses. In order to underline the originality of the dialogue I will explain briefly the difference between monologue and dialogue by giving examples of scientific, historic and epic discourses. Finally, I will elaborate dialogical discourse through genres. I will demonstrate the concept of genre within the basis of chronotopes. To study how social and historical contexts affect the work of art and vice-versa I follow the socio-historical way from monologue versus dialogue. Before I unfold the dialogic relation between the author and the hero in the final novelistic discourse, I will explore four genres which are Epic, Socratic Dialogue, Menippean Satire and the Carnivalesque. First of all, I will demonstrate how Bakhtin reveals successfully the change from epic to carnival literature. While laughter destroys the monological, authoritative nature of the epic genre, it gains remarkable power of creation of the open structure of dialogue. With the novel, as Bakhtin points out, a decisive break from the epic world takes place. Thus, the novel removes the author, the hero and the reader from the absolute, unchangeable, fixed nature of the epic by breaking its chain with the past. In doing so, I would like to show how the novel challenges and destroys the monologue of authoritative, one-sided, dominant voice and postulates progressive, open dialogue toward the future by connecting the reader, hero and the author in the polyphonic nature of the novel. In a certain sense, this new artistic creation allows for the presence of a number of heroes which have independence and internal freedom in the novel. For that reason, Bakhtin asserts that the hero is not a voiceless slave of the author or the fixed image of the narration,

rather the hero should be treated as a self-conscious subject which is independent from the author's thoughts. In that regard, I will elaborate Bakhtin's aesthetic understanding especially the author's attitude towards the hero since it has fundamental insights not only on literature but also on the theory of ethics itself.

Close and carefully reading of Bakhtin makes it clear that dialogism is not limited to literature. In the third chapter of my thesis I will concentrate on the relation between the aesthetic and the ethical from a closer look. I will reflect on the possibility of a new ethical dimension originating from the author's consciousness that is concretized and emancipated in the hero's consciousness which is brought to the reader. I discuss the possibility of rethinking the philosophical questions through the aesthetic realm as participatory and complementary. I will ask whether Bakhtin's notion of I-for-myself and I-for-other can be used by all agents in real life. Or conversely, is there a possibility to think about the dialogism as beyond the work of art and real life? First, I will try to ground an ethical approach in his aesthetics by comparing the world of life and the world of culture. How the tragedy of culture is submerged in the existing forms of art and how this tragedy can be overcome. In addition to that I will try to show how Bakhtin uses the intersubjectivity as a revolutionary tool. Then, I will extend my analysis in the ethical relation of author-hero to propose a world view that it is built upon love and understanding each other. Finally, I will question ethics in literary genres by focusing on its emancipatory power. All in all, Bakhtin challenges the universal ethical questions from a very passionate aesthetical dimension. His originality is that he never misses the big picture while appreciating the particular. He posits the grand philosophical questions in his aesthetic theory in a very original way that inspired me to write this thesis.

CHAPTER II

AESTHETIC UNDERSTANDING OF MIKHAIL BAKHTIN

2.1 Preliminary Remarks

Aesthetics which has come to be one of the essential fields in Philosophy, since it is used and nestled under philosophy in 1735 by Baumgarten, is defined as a science of perception. From that time, aesthetics and the concept of art have been examined in the history of philosophy by different philosophers. The main debates evolve around what aesthetics means, what relations could be found in aesthetics and the subject, what purpose could be found in the essence of art. In this thesis, I will concentrate on the views of Mikhail Bakhtin who has a crucial significance in the history of philosophy, the history of literature and the field of aesthetics. At first glance, I will seek to elucidate what the concept of aesthetics means for Mikhail Bakhtin. From this point, I will try to trace in what point his aesthetic understanding differs from the general understanding of aesthetics. Bakhtin starts his aesthetic approach focusing on not only the product of aesthetic activity but also the activity itself. After I delineate what aesthetics is, I would like to show how he specifically focuses on literary aesthetics and the relationship between the author and the hero. In that regard my main aim is to reveal the relation between the author and the hero which is quite similar to the relation and the dichotomy between the "I" and "the other". The second part will be devoted to a careful analysis of the conceptual difference of I and the other which provides the basis for fundamental concepts such as unfinalizability, consummation and outsidedness. In the third part of this chapter, the author's attitude towards the hero is interpreted by focusing on the concept of sympathy, empathy and love. All in all, my main aim is to reveal the question of

what ways the author/Subject/I converges to and diverges from the hero/other/object by laying stress on aesthetic event and aesthetic seeing in Bakhtin's architectonic understanding of aesthetics.

2.2 Aesthetic Understanding

2.2.1 Architectonics of Aesthetics

What the concept of the aesthetics means for Bakhtin is the essential part for this thesis. Bakhtin's central texts on aesthetics start from his early writings. In his central text on this subject, *Art and Answerability*, he differentiates aesthetics into two different categories: general aesthetics and special aesthetics.[1] While general aesthetics encompasses all aesthetic events, special aesthetics especially deals with the specific materials and conditions of a particular art form. Although general aesthetics concerns the question of what beauty is in a traditional way, to Bakhtin, the main problem is that it ignores the aesthetic activities' pivotal concepts such as perception and creation.

Bakhtin defines aesthetic activity by focusing on architectonics which is the concept that deals with how a certain structure is built and how its entities meet up and how it governs the relation between them. In that respect, in the introduction to *Art and Answerability*, Micheal Holquist points out that aesthetics is a subset of the architectonics.[2] In this subset, Bakhtin focuses not only on the aesthetic object but its creator and its creation process also. Specifically, the author's creation process of the hero, how the author approaches the hero as an aesthetic object and the content of the artistic vision are the critical parts of this special aesthetics.

> The basic task of aesthetics is the study of the aesthetic object in its distinctiveness, avoiding the substitution for it of some intermediate stage in the path of its realization. Above all, it is necessary to

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[1] Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist and Vadim Liapunov, trans. Vadim Liapunov (Austin TX: University of Texas Press 1990), p.XXIV.

[2] Ibid., p.X.

understand the aesthetic object synthetically, in its wholeness, to understand form and content in their essential and necessary interrelationship: form as the form of content, and content as the content of form—to understand the distinctiveness and law of their interrelationship. Only on the basis of this understanding is it possible to outline the proper direction for the concrete aesthetic analysis of particular works. It should be clear from all we have said that the aesthetic object is not a thing, since its form (or to be exact, the form of its content, for the aesthetic object is shaped content), in which I feel myself as an active *subiectum*, and into which I enter as a necessary constitutive moment, cannot be, of course, the form of a thing, of an object.[3]

The basic task of an aesthetic event is to create an aesthetic object which is distinctive and whole. In other words, the artistic object should be different from other art works and be completed as a form and content. The main purpose of aesthetics is to reveal the distinctive interrelation between form and content which is done by active subjects – e.g., artists. Bakhtin claims that "the aesthetic object is a creation that includes its creator within itself."[4] In the same way, the creator finds himself in it and feels intensely his own creative activity in it."[5] When presenting this process, he defines aesthetics as a study of the aesthetic object/hero in its distinctiveness and the subject/author who enters as a necessary constitutive moment.[6] According to Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson the architectonics of aesthetics is not about the general concepts or laws but about the general aspects of particular events. The difficulty of this situation lies behind this question "What can we say in general about particular things except that they are particular."[7] In that regard, the distinctiveness of the aesthetic event's components and the relationship between the author and the hero makes Bakhtin's aesthetic understanding different from "general aesthetics".

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[3] Ibid., p.317.

[4] Ibid., p.316.

[5] Ibid., p.316.

[6] Ibid., p.317.

[7] Gary Saul Morson, and Caryl Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics*, (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1990), p.22.

From this perspective, Bakhtin's main aim is to postulate the architectonic relation between the author and the hero. By focusing on this relationship, I will introduce how the author creates and perceives the hero in accordance with Bakhtin's aesthetic understanding. In this attempt, I will briefly introduce and interrogate the development of the "self" as an author and the development of the "other" as a hero. This attempt will eventually bring us from the architectonics of aesthetics to the architectonics of the self as a subject. And finally, as I will precisely show in the last chapter of my thesis, the architectonics of the self is tightly connected to the architectonics of answerability and the ethical side of the aesthetics.

2.2.2 The Architectonics of Self

"Did you ever observe that the face of the person looking into the eye of another is reflected as in a mirror; and in the visual organ which is over against him, and which is called the pupil, there is a sort of image of the person looking?"

Plato, *Alcibiades I*

"As we gaze at each other, two different worlds are reflected in the pupils of our eyes."

Bakhtin, *Art and Answerabilty*, p.23

Bakhtin's aesthetic understanding depends on the relation between two subjects which are the author and the hero in his understanding of architectonics. In *Art and Answerabilty* he builds his theory on the narrativization of the "self". He defines the triadic theory of the subject by focusing on I-for-myself, I-for-others and other-for me. In this trajectory, he interchangeably uses the hero as the "other" and the author as" I" at various times. He postulates this division by focusing on some pivotal notions such as outsidedness, consummation, love, sympathetic and empathetic co-experience.

2.2.2.1 The Existence of the Self

Bakhtin attempts to give an account of the complex existence of the subject as an aesthetic activity in its temporal and spatial existence. This unique existence is not based on a structure which is made of building blocks but on the contrary, it's based on a relational process of the "meeting of two movements on the surface of a human being which consolidates axiological boundaries."[8] At first glance, the aesthetic experience and the mutual relationship between the author and the hero takes place in space and are framed in time. When the author creates the hero, s/he unfolds the other in space and frames him/her in time. According to Katerina Clark and Micheal Holquist, the distinction between the self and the other as an author and a hero makes possible the postulation of two different kinds of time and two different kinds of space.[9] This distinction creates temporal and spatial placement of the self as I-for-myself, I-for-others and the other-for me.

First of all, Bakhtin defines I-for myself in which "a subject consummates another subject and the subject's self at a given moment which is a purely aesthetic moment."[10] The concept of consummation means completing one's life in temporal and spatial terms. To him, the first and foremost condition for an aesthetic moment is to understand the world of other people who have accomplished their lives in it.[11] In that regard he depicts that "If I am consummated, and my life consummated, I am no longer capable of living and acting."[12] Therefore, before death, the consummation of oneself is not possible. Bakhtin defines this situation by postulating the concept of unfinalizability. Thus, I-for-myself is an image of a

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[8] Daphna Erdinast-Vulcan, *Borderlines and Contraband: Bakhtin and the Question of the Subject* Poetics Today, Vol. 18, No.2., (Duke University Press, 1997), p.255.

[9] Katerina Clark, Micheal Holquist, *Mikhail Bakhtin*, (The Belknup Press of Harvard University,1984), p.78.

[10] Micheal F. Bernard-Donalds, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Between Phenomenology and Marxism*, (Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.33.

[11] *Art and Answerability,* p.111.

[12] *Art and Answerability*, p.13.

personality that contains an open-ended, unfinalizable experience. In that trajectory, the consummation of the others keeps the "I" as unfinalizable as long as s/he consummates the other. In that way the self recognizes its own non-consummation. In other words, the consummation of the self is not conceivable since whenever the subject tries to coincide with itself time and circumstances change. The person is not the same person as the one referred to before. However, in the relationship between the other and I, consummation can be established. The subject could consummate the other if the other does not coincide with the subject. In that respect Bakhtin reveals that the aesthetic event and consummation require two different participants namely, two noncoinciding consciousnesses.[13] The second relationship between the I and the other is found in the I-for-the-other. That relation between the subject/I and the other is not an aesthetic event due to the lack of consummation but is a cognitive moment since "the-I-for-the-other" in which the subjects direct activity toward the other."[14]

The last relationship, the-other-for-me is found in lovingly merciful acceptance and justification of the given existence of the other.[15] For Bakhtin, the self needs alterity in order to create an architectonic relationship between the uniqueness of his/her existence and a friendly existence of the other and not that of an alien. According to Holquist, Bakhtin opens a gate and he postulates his ideas based upon welcoming the other as an equal partner rather than seeing the other as a stranger or a mouthless object.[16] Thus, the self needs the other in order to experience himself/herself as I-for-the-other and experience the other as the-other-for-me.

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[13] *Art and Answerability*, p.22.

[14] *Mikhail Bakhtin: Between Phenomenology and Marxism,* p.33.

[15] *Art and Answerability*, p.56.

[16] Holquist, *The Architectonics of Answerability*, p.147.

2.2.2.2 The Outsidedness of the Self

Bakhtin explains the existence of two subjects and the relation between them by focusing on the aesthetic event. In that regard, in an aesthetic event, there are two subjects who are irreducible to each other. "If there is only one unitary and unique participant, there can be no aesthetic event (...) An aesthetic event can take place only when there are two participants present; it presupposes two noncoinciding consciousnesses."[17] If we ask what happens to the two subjects when they are merged with each other, the answer would be that the richness of the aesthetic experience will be diminished because there would be only one subject and in addition to that it is going to just duplicate only one subject's life. Then, the I and the other are reduced to each other and the subject/author canot see himself/herself externally.

The subject experiences the other in the world which means the other is associated with the outside world. Only by contemplating the other from an aesthetic distance is the subject able to achieve this aesthetic seeing. The subject is incapable of experiencing himself or herself in a whole or as consummated, not just because of the physical impossibility of doing so, but also because of the emotional-volitional untruth involved in turning these acts upon himself/herself.[18] In addition to that the subject is incapable of experiencing his/her own birth and death. The subject's birth is axiologically abiding in the world. The death of the subject is an event but neither in the subject nor for the subject itself.[19] The subject cannot experience his/her own birth and death, but s/he is capable of the experiencing other people's birth and death. In other words, only the author consummates the hero since the author is able to see the beginning, the middle and the end of the hero's life from the outside. In that regard, Bakhtin puts outsidedness at heart of the relationship between the I and the other. At this point, Bakhtin postulates the

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[17] *Art and Answerability*, p.22.

[18] Ibid., p.42.

[19] Ibid., p.105.

aestheticization of the subject since the subject has an immediate need for the other in order to be experienced from the outside. To understand what he means by the importance of the aestheticization of the subject for creating the hero, it will be necessary to read the following passage:

> It is a relationship in which the author occupies an intently maintained position outside the hero with respect to every constituent feature of the hero—a position outside the hero with respect to space, time, value, and meaning. And this being outside in relation to the hero enables the author to collect and concentrate all of the hero, who, from within himself, is diffused and dispersed in the projected world of cognition and in the open event of ethical action; to collect the hero and his life and to complete him to the point where he forms a whole by supplying all those moments which are inaccessible to the hero himself from within himself (such as a full outward image, an exterior, a background behind his back, his relation to the event of death and the absolute future, etc.); and to justify and to consummate the hero independently of the meaning, the achievements, the outcome and success of the hero's own forward-directed life.[20]

To explain this point, Bakhtin explains the need for the other to postulate aesthetic seeing. Only with the other's aesthetic vision, outsidedness and consummation can there be a subject recognizes the "other". Thus, what Bakhtin does is to show that the subject needs the other. However, the consummation of the subject and aesthetic seeing does not explain the relationship between the author and the hero. For that reason, this relationship is neither explained by objectified and abstracted forms nor by intellectual and cultural forms, but it is explained through love and sympathy which are actual and exist in the relationship between the I and the other.

2.2.2.3 Empathy, Sympathy and Love

To Bakhtin, the subjective and concrete event-relations between the author and the hero are constructed by value-governed experiencing of love. As it is seen in the event of the life and death, I cannot love myself, only the other can love me, but

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[20] Ibid., p.14.

s/he does not love himself. "In my emotional-volitional consciousness the other is in his own place, insofar as I love him as another, and not as myself. The other's love of me sounds emotionally in an entirely different way to me -in my own personal context- than the same love of me sounds to him, and it obligates him and me sounds in an entirely different things."[21] The upshot of all is that love is, in Bakhtin's understanding, nothing other than co-experiencing: "Aesthetic form is pronounced and justified by an aesthetically productive sympathy or love that comes to meet the co-experienced life from outside."[22] This co-experienced life inevitably brings the distinction between empathy and sympathy. While empathy is a merging act of two subjects, sympathy is a precondition of co-experiencing of the two separate subjects. In order to understand how love makes the relation between the author and the hero, it can be found in the following paragraph:

> Aesthetic consciousness, on the other hand, as a loving and value-positing consciousness, is a consciousness of a consciousness: the author's (the other's) consciousness of the hero's (the other's) consciousness. In the aesthetic event, we have to do with a meeting of two consciousnesses which are in principle distinct from each other, and where the author's consciousness, moreover, relates to the hero's consciousness not from the standpoint of its objective makeup, its validity as an object, but from the standpoint of its subjectively lived unity; and it is this, the hero's own consciousness, that is concretely localized and embodied (the degree of concreteness is variable, of course) and lovingly consummated. The author's consciousness, on the other hand, just like epistemological consciousness, is incapable of being consummated.[23]

All in all, what differentiates the author from the hero could be found in the difference between not only the person who is the consummated one and the person who consumes, but also who loves and who is lovingly consummated. This relationship between two subjects is tied in the architectonic unity. "The unity of the world is arranged around a concrete value-center which is seen and loved

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[21] *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, p.46.

[22] *Art and Answerability,* p.83.

[23] Ibid., p.86.

thought."[24] From this understanding, it would not be incorrect to assert that only love is able to make aesthetic seeing possible by governing two independent subjects rather than one empathetic subject.

> The life situation of a suffering human being that is really experienced from within may prompt me to perform an ethical action, such as providing assistance, consolation, or cognitive reflection. But in any event my projection of myself into him must be followed by a return into myself, a return to my own place outside the suffering person, for only from this place can the material derived from my projecting myself into the other be rendered meaningful ethically, cognitively, or aesthetically. If this return into myself did not actually take place, the pathological phenomenon of experiencing another's suffering as one's own would result—an infection with another's suffering, and nothing more.[25]

Bakhtin reminds that in the aesthetic event, the subject's unique and external existence has pivotal importance because aesthetic activity begins at the point when the subject returns into his/her unique and external existence. In that sense love and sympathy require that there should be two non-coinciding subjects in order to have an aesthetic seeing. One of the important points in the aesthetic seeing is that the subject loves the other whether s/he is good, bad, pitiful or someone defeated and surpassed in every way.[26] According to Bakhtin, in aesthetic seeing the subject loves a human being not because the subject is good, but rather a human being is good because s/he is loved by her/him.[27] The significance of aesthetic love can be considered as the condition of aesthetic-ethic relation, thus what lies behind the multitude of the different subjects whether s/he is good or bad does not matter. Hence, through love we embrace the other in the outside world; through sympathy as a way of co-existence, the author goes outside itself so that the other is integrated into the author. This is the main reason why Bakhtin chooses the concept of love to

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[24] *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, p.61.

[25] Art and Answerability, p.26.

[26] Ibid., p.61.

[27] Ibid., p.62.

build aesthetic understanding, and in particular, the relationship between "the author" and "the hero".

In this chapter, I tried to postulate the preliminary remarks on the relationship between the author and the hero in aesthetic activity. After having briefly dwelt on different moments of the self in a temporal and spatial placement as I-for-myself, I-for-others and other-for me, I focused on the notion of empathy, sympathy and love. As it has already been foreshadowed in the last paragraph, ethics is directly related to these notions. After showing, in the second chapter, how the relation between the author and the hero changes in different genres and in different times in the literary history, I will try to demonstrate that genres are more than a literary media, they are essentially pivotal constituents of literature which bring us inevitably to the sphere of ethics. In that regard, I will argue that Bakhtin's aesthetic understanding has fundamental insights not only on literature but also on the theory of ethics.

CHAPTER 3

AESTHETICS IN LITERATURE

3.1 The Classification of Words

"Language is a skin. I rub my language against the other. It is as if I had words instead of fingers at the tip of my words. My language trembles with desire."

Roland Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse- Fragments*

"Words are events, they do things, they change things. They transform both speaker and hearer; they feed energy back and forth and amplify it. They feed understanding or emotion back and forth and amplify it."

Ursula Le Guin

"The more closely you look at a word, the more distantly it looks back."

Karl Kraus

Bakhtin believes that "a word is a bridge thrown between myself and another. If one end of the bridge depends on me, then the other depends on my addressee. A word is territory shared by both addresser and addressee, by the speaker and his interlocutor."[28] He makes the classification of words which are the primary constituent elements of the written works, and each text is the intersection of the words which could belong to both the hero and the author. In that context, he argues that to understand the narration, the classification of words are of paramount importance. The first category of words are the *direct words* which directly refer back to its object.[29] It does not open to another object or another meaning. In other words, it gives to the writer objective and direct comprehension. The direct word

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[28] M.M. Bakhtin and V.N. Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. L. Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), p.95.

[29] Julia Kristeva, "Word, dialogue, and novel," in *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art*, ed. Leon S. Roudiez, trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press), p.43.

denotes nothing other than what it demonstrates. According to Julia Kristeva, "it knows nothing but itself and its object, to which it attempts to be adequate."[30] When the author uses the direct words, the meaning is limited to its object. The writer is not able to denote any meaning to the words except for its object.

The second category is the *object-oriented words* which have objective meaning in accordance with the writers' orientation and comprehension. An object-oriented word is also direct and objective but it is subordinated to the meaning which the writer gives it. In that regard, it is limited by writer's univocal usage.[31] It lives a tense life on the borders of someone else's thought, someone else's consciousness. It is oriented toward only itself and its referential object in the specific way that is independent from the writer.[32] The meaning of the word cannot go beyond the writer's comprehension. Kristeva exemplifies by using the following phrase: "It is a foreign word, subordinate to the narrative word as object of the writer's comprehension. But the writer's orientation towards the word as objects does not penetrate it but accepts it as a whole, changing neither meaning nor tonality; it subordinates that word to its own task, introducing no other signification."[33]

The last one is *ambivalent words* which arise when the writer uses another person's words and gives a new meaning while retaining the meaning it already has. Thus, unlike the direct words and the oriented words, here, word gains dual signification: on the one hand it signifies the way of the first person's usage, on the other hand, it gains new signification when the writer uses another's word. This system arises when the writer relativizes someone's speech, hence it becomes ambivalent. In this classification, ambivalent words are employed in three different categories. First, the word can be *imitated*, the writer uses the other's word without

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[30] Ibid., p.43.

[31] Ibid., p.43.

[32] Ibid., p.43.

[33] Ibid., p.43.

changing it. It is taken as it is. The second type of ambivalent word is *parody* which signifies the opposite meaning of the word. The writer uses the word in a quite different manner. The last type of ambivalent word is found in the *hidden interior polemics* where the writer modifies another's word in his/her writing. This is the type of active writing that is represented by the narrator who creates a dialogue by using the other's words. Bakhtin argues that ambivalent words are directed both toward the referential object of speech, as in ordinary discourse, and toward another's discourse, toward someone else's speech.[34] For Bakhtin, novel is the only genre in which ambivalent words exist.[35] In addition to that the novel has a double-voiced dialogic structure since it carries another's word and modifies it and creates new meanings.[36] In the light of these characterizations, Bakhtin reaches the idea that different characteristics of words create different discourses that will be either monological or dialogical.

3.2 Towards A Typology of Discourses

"The novel is the end of genre."
Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*.

"If I were a writer Owen said", "how I would enjoy being told the novel is dead. How liberating to work in margins, outside a central perception. You are the ghoul of literature. Lovely!"
Don Delilo, *The Names*.

Bakhtin's reflections on the theory of the novel originate from his distinction between monological discourse and dialogical discourse. The monological discourse consists of direct and object-oriented words which denote the writer's comprehension and subordinate it to one direction. Bakhtin states that there are

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[34] Ibid., p.44.

[35] Ibid., p.44.

[36] Ibid., p.44.

three kinds of monological discourses: scientific discourse, historical discourse and a discourse which possesses representative mode of representation as the epic genre. In all these three discourses, the writer submits the rule of "I" who claims itself as the authority and postulates the absolute truth as a single thought in the text. In monological discourse, the writer perceives the world from a dominant perspective, in which the world is perceived by only one subject and explained by one person. With the act of *explanation*, Bakhtin depicts that although there are two subjects (the subject who makes explanation and the *Other* who receives this explanation in a passive way) there is only one consciousness.[37]

In monological discourse, the writer who is closed to all other voices censors the others. In that reason, the other's voice remains unheard. On the other hand, dialogical discourse naturally requires a dialogue which consists at least two different voices. In that discourse, there arises a dialogue between two voices with *comprehension* which requires at least two consciousnesses and two subjects who hear each other's voice. Thereby, they are engaged in a dialogue actively.[38] While in explanation, the subject or "I" turns a deaf ear to other voices and ignores them. However, the cases of being heard and hearing someone make the beginning of a dialogue with comprehension. Both voices want to be heard, understood, responded and to respond to the response. This dialogue would create, produce and reproduce relation/interrelations between the voices. To explain these discourses in a detailed way, Bakhtin provides an account of the theory of genres by focusing on the differences between the epic and novel. In this part, I will explain how different genres are to be considered a fundamental way to understand different discourses. Then, I will focus on the relation between the epic and monological discourse in

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[37] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, "The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology, and the Human Sciences: An Experiment in Philosophical Analysis," in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, tr. Vern M. Mcgee (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 2010), p.111.

[38] Ibid., p.111.

order to show how it changes toward the novel and it evolves toward a dialogical discourse.

To begin with, I will explain why Bakhtin chooses to focus on literary genres in his aesthetic theory. First of all, he argues that aesthetics and literature, like the social sciences, differ from the natural sciences in regard to of their study objects. The natural sciences focus on natural objects which are completely independent and separate from the person who studies them, while human sciences contain their subject in their object of the study. Nonetheless, the object of literature is engaged in a dynamic relation between the author as a producer or the bearer of the word and the reader who consumes the product of literature/the text. Distinctively, literary theory is nourished by different authors, readers and the different texts which affect each other in many different ways.

In that sense, Bakhtin formulates literature as something grounded in the domain of the relationship between these three entities which possess formal and social-historical dimensions. In the formal dimension, he focuses on the relation between different types of genres and different texts. On the other hand, in the social-historical dimensions he examines the relation between dialogical relations. These two dimensions eventually connect intertextuality to intersubjectivity. The notion of intertextuality is tightly connected with dialogical reading of texts. In other words, writing a text is always a reading of the anterior literary corpus and is responded to another text. Thus, "The text lives only by coming into contact with another text (with context). Only at the point of this contact between texts does a light flash, illuminating both the posterior and anterior, joining a given text to a dialogue."[39] The writer breaks through the subordinated voice of the other, invites the other to engage in a conversation and makes the other as the other part of a dialogue. By doing so, the act of writing creates new texts, new dialogues and new

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[39] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, "Toward a Methodology for the Human Sciences," in *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*, ed. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, tr. Vern M. Mcgee (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 2010), p.162.

events by moving into new experiences in close connection with others. In this trajectory, literature is the meeting of two texts (of the readymade one written by another writer and the reactive one) which turns to the meeting of the two subjects and two authors.[40] Thus, Bakhtin postulates his theory by focusing on the authoritative word of monologism which possesses one dominant voice that arises with the epic, and it evolves toward the novel by encountering two different voices as novel. In this context, Bakhtin exerts his aesthetical theory by focusing on the struggle between epic and novel, dialogism and monologism.

3.2.1 The Importance of the Genre

Genre at the most basic definition refers to a classification of written works. For Bakhtin, genre is considered to be the typical form of the whole work in which every constituent element is tightly connected to it. This whole work is "the typical totality of artistic utterance, whole utterance, which refers to a vital totality, a finished and resolved whole."[41] Bakhtin warns his readers not to confuse the finalization of the work of art with its ending. From this perch, Bakhtin maintains his argument by saying that depending on the material and constructive possibilities, every art has its own mode of finalization. Furthermore, every genre characterizes a special way of constructing and finalising a whole, finalizing the work essentially and thematically.

At this point, an artistic whole of any genre has two types of orientation towards reality. The first orientation is towards the listener and the perceiver and toward their conditions of performance and perception. This orientation sets the basis of the chronotopes of the genres regarding their place or their time. The second orientation is towards life itself. Bakhtin emphasizes that the work of art enters life

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[40] Ibid., p.107.

[41] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, P.N. Medvedev, *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship*, trans. A.J. Wehrle (Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1978), p. 129.

and comes into contact with various aspects of its environment. It is the process of the realization of somethings as read, heard or performed in a definite time and definite place in life.[42] For that reason, he believes that seeing and conceptualizing reality have enormous importance for the writer because it is the person who shapes the reality of the genre in his art work. By doing so, the reality of the genre, for Bakhtin, is the process of realization of artistic social intercourse. It is very striking that Bakhtin bases his understanding of the novel on this social intercourse. He argues that "the logic of the novelistic construction permits the mastery of the unique logic of new aspects of reality."[43] The writer can construct the novelistic discourse by mastering new aspects of reality. He takes up the assertion of the conceptualization of reality and gives ideological and social orientation toward the art work. "The conceptualization of reality develops and generates in the process of ideological social intercourse."[44] According to Emerson and Morson, in the Bakhtinian sense, a genre is a way of seeing which is neither a "form" (in the usual sense) nor an "ideology" (as a set of tenets) but "form-shaping ideology" which means a specific kind of creative activity embodying a specific sense of experience.[45]

Bakhtin asserts that literature offers a multiplicity of genres which possess specific modes of thought and reflect different aspects of experiences that shape human thought, the conceptualization of the world, history and culture. Before delving into these relations in different genres, it would be necessary to look at the key features of the genre in the following passage:

> A literary genre, by its very nature, reflects the most stable, "eternal" tendencies in literature's development. Always preserved in a genre are undying elements of the archaic. True, these archaic elements are preserved in it only thanks to their constant renewal, which is to say,

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[42] Ibid., p.176.

[43] Ibid., p.179.

[44] Ibid., p.180.

[45] Gary Saul Morson, Caryl Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin Creation of a prosaics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), p.282.

their contemporization. A genre is always the same and yet not the same, always old and new simultaneously. Genre is reborn and renewed at every new stage in the development of literature and in every individual work of a given genre. This constitutes the life of the genre. Therefore, even the archaic elements preserved in a genre are not dead but eternally alive; that is, archaic elements are capable of renewing themselves. A genre lives in the present, but always remembers its past, its beginning. Genre is a representative of creative memory in the process of literary development. Precisely for this reason genre is capable of guaranteeing the unity and uninterrupted continuity of this development.[46]

Close and carefully reading of this passage makes it clear that genres are key constituents to pursue the historical progress of literature. This is the first reason why Bakhtin chooses literal genres in his aesthetic theory, namely that genres have a tight connection with the past by its very nature of archaic elements. In that regard genres have the possibility to reach into both the past and the future and as Bakhtin states genres are capable of carrying archaic elements, thereby renewing them and conveying them into the future. For this reason, although genres live in their present time, they carry their origin with them. In addition to that, Bakhtin names genres as the organ of the memory because they transport the vision of their times. This vision which is built upon certain experiences is related to the narrated events in genres. Thus, genre consists of both the past and the present as the representation of the memory which shows the unity and uninterrupted continuity of the historical process of literature. He argues that "no new artistic genre ever nullifies or replaces old ones. But at the same time each fundamentally and significantly new genre, once it arrives, exerts influence on the entire circle of old genres: the new genre makes the old ones, so to speak, more conscious; it forces them to better perceive their own possibilities and boundaries, that is, to overcome their own naivete."[47] Every genre is the part of the old and the new one. They are developed by following each other by reading the anterior literary corpus, hence, they are progressive and critical. In each genre, writers try to go beyond the current status of literature. In

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[46] M.M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p.106.

[47] M.M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p.271.

that way, they create a special "generic criticism" in themselves. Thus, literal genres are the best way to demonstrate the progressive and critical status of aesthetics because they reflect the past, present and future status of the current culture, ideology and politics.

Bakhtin follows a chronological order from the emergence of epic and carnival literature to the novel in order to depict the progress of literary theory. While epic literature shows the monologue of the dominant culture of the time, the polyphonic novel characterizes dialogism by unfolding democratic culture. As a result, a view of literary history, depicts not only changes of artistic thinking in genres but also reveals the change in human experiences and thought which also shapes society and history. Bakhtin believes that genre is the important aesthetic way of visualizing the world with "the eyes of the genre."[48] "Only great writers like Shakespeare or Dostoevsky, sense, exploit and contribute to the generic potential in other words they contribute the artistic possibilities of the genre."[49] Thus, in the following part, I will examine epic as a monological genre, then, I will focus on the carnivalesque culture as a transition stage. And finally, I will try to provide an account of the special artistic thinking of the novel which creates a new conceptualization of the world that brings us to the sphere of ethics.

3.2.2 Genres toward Chronotopes

"Time exist in order that everything does not happen all at once...and space exists so that it does not all happen to you."
Susan Sontag, *At the Same Time Essays and Speeches*

"Novel is sculpting in time and space."
Andrei Tarkovsky, *Sculpting in Time*

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[48] Gary Saul Morson, and Caryl Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics*, p.306.

[49] Ibid., p.306.

Bakhtin formulates the difference between monologism and dialogism by focusing on the generic differences between the epic and the novel. By basing his discussion on their differences, he succeeds in explaining the central concepts of time and space in literary genres – namely chronotope – with great precision and conclusiveness. He asserts that "every genre has its methods, its ways of seeing and understanding reality, and these methods are its exclusive characteristic. The artist must learn to see reality through the eyes of genre."[50] For him, human beings perceive and construct the world through space and time. For that reason the notion of chronotope is an important feature in the theory of genre. He gives the name chronotope literally to "time space" in order to show the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature."[51] Tzvetan Todorov asserts that Bakhtin sees genre as a form of a modelling system which proposes a simulacrum of the world.[52] Different genres represents different realms of experiences. In a similar vein, various literary genres refer to a multiplicity of chronotopes. Bakhtin emphasizes that chronotopes not only reflect the fictional world but they also shed light on the human perception which is embedded in the structure of the surrounding world. He develops this idea by emphasizing the link between the work of art and the real world in this paragraph:

> The work and the world represented in it enter the real world and enrich it, and the real world enters the work and its world as part of the process of its creation, as well as part of its subsequent life, in a continual renewing of the work through the creative perception of listeners and readers. Of course this process of exchange is itself chronotopic: it occurs first and foremost in the historically developing social world, but without ever losing contact with changing historical space. We might even speak of a special creative chronotope inside which this exchange

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[50] Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle*, trans. Wlad Godzich (Manchester University Press, 1984), p.83.

[51] *Dialogic Imagination*, p.84.

[52] Ibid., p.83.

between work and life occurs, and which constitutes the distinctive life of the work.[53]

Because of the link between the real and the fictive world, Bakhtin proposes that the work of art and the chronotopes are affected by the real world. It reflects directly or indirectly the current situation of society, history and ideology. In the same vein, the work of art and their attendant chronotopes contribute to the understanding of experiences, thoughts and actions of human beings as well as events in history. By following the chronological order Bakhtin tries to postulate this mutual relationship between the real world and the work of art. He depicts that the chronotopes of a narrative engages with the parallel space-time frames in the real world and the relationship between the two is that the narrative sheds a unique light on the real world.[54] In a very similar way, the actual world is the source of representation for the world represented in the work of art.[55] Here it is important to note that, for Bakhtin, there is continual mutual interplay between the real world and the work of art. He believes that the real world and the work of art are indissolubly tied up with each other. The real world enters the work of art, it becomes the part of the creative process of the work of art by interfering in the creative process of human beings who are a genuine part of the real world. Whenever the real world changes, it affects the process of the creation of the art works. He emphasizes that the historical changes of the social world interfere in the creation of the represented world in the work of art.[56] This continual mutual interaction between the real world and the work of art reveals how important it is to trace the chronological line of genres which illuminates not only the history of art and aesthetics but also social and historical changes. Consequently, Bakhtin realizes that literary history goes hand in hand with historical and social changes, In this trajectory, Bakhtin endeavours to depict how

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[53] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Michael Holquist and Caryl Emerson (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p.254.

[54] Ibid., p.285.

[55] Ibid., p.283.

[56] Ibid., p.254.

different genres arise and create different discourses such as monologue versus dialogue not only in literature but also in a socio-historical way.

3.2.1.1 Epic Genre

In his famous essay, "Epic and Novel", Bakhtin postulates his theory of the novel by comparing the epic to the novel in terms of their notion of chronotopes. He characteristically opposes the epic and the novel regarding their understanding of different chronotopes. He asserts that epic works have completed their development. Thus, works fallen under the genre of epic are antiquated. They are not alive in literary history. Bakhtin characterizes three constitutive features of the epic. The first feature is that the epic has an "absolute past". Bakhtin derives the term "absolute past" from Goethe's and Schiller's terminology.[57] The epic's subject matter is a finalized past. Its world belongs to the national heroic past which refers to the "beginnings" and "peak time" in national history. The epic possesses the world of fathers, founders, ancestors a world of "firsts" and "bests" of their time.[58] However this absolute past is different from the daily usage of a "long time ago". The epic discourse is completely different and remote from the discourse of a contemporary world. The second feature of the epic, which is formed in that absolute past, does not reflect personal experience or free thought. As a third characteristic, it has an "absolute epic distance" from the contemporary world. In other words, "the epic time is sealed off from the present time."[59] The epic has absolutely completed and finished its generic form, in that world everything is finalized. Furthermore, not only time is absolute, the character of the epic hero is also finalized. If the hero has positive characters, he or she will always be a good

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[57] Ibid., p.13. Goethe, contrasts epic not to novel but to drama. "The epic poet relates the evet as perfectly past, while the playwright represents it as perfectly present. Bakhtin uses the absolute past from utilizing this difference". (Gothe, Jubil- dumsausgabe, vol. 36, p. 149) derived from Todorov's book *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle.*

[58] Ibid., p.13.

[59] Gary Saul Morson, Caryl Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin Creation of a prosaics*, p.420.

character. Thus, the epic hero is depicted in this genre as a complete and unchanging person who does not possess ambivalent or contradictory features. For example, an epic hero cannot be portrayed as both ridiculous and serious since these characteristics emerge with carnivalesque laughter.

Having set out these three characteristics of the chronotope of the epic genre, Bakhtin posits and demonstrates the tradition of the epic. First and foremost, he argues that ancient literature provides memory, not knowledge.[60] For that reason, the epic is the source of the tradition of the past. It isolates the sacred memory of the tradition.[61] In a very similar vein, the epic discourse is shaped by tradition. This sacred nature of the epic genre creates a monochronic and hierarchical (valorized) position.[62] Bakhtin clarifies temporal valorisation by saying that:

> [T]he epic past is absolute and complete. It is as closed as a circle; inside it everything is finished, already over. There is no place in the epic world for any openendedness, indecision, indeterminacy. There are no loopholes in it through which we glimpse the future; it suffices onto itself, neither supposing any continuation nor requiring it. Temporal and valorized definitions are here fused into a single inseparable whole las they are also fused in the semantic layers of ancient languages). Everything incorporated into this past was simultaneously incorporated into a condition of authentic essence and significance, but therefore also took on conclusiveness and finality, depriving itself, so to speak, of all rights and potential for a

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[60] In the same page, he clarifies this difference by using the following words: "The novel, by contrast, is determined by experience, knowledge and practice (the future). In the era of Hellenism a closer contact with the heroes of the Trojan epic cycle began to be felt; epic is already being transformed into novel. Epic material is transposed into novelistic material, into precisely that zone of contact that passes through the intermediate stages of familiarization and laughter. When the novel becomes the dominant genre, epistemology becomes the dominant discipline".

Cf. Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, p.15.

[61] The same characteristic could be found in Benjamin. He argues that traditional and archaic art works have ritualistic roots. The traditional work of art which is produced for ritual exercises and ceremonies. In similar vein he believes that the storytelling has sacred and religious character in the history of the art.

[62] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, p.16.

real continuation. Absolute conclusiveness and closedness is the outstanding feature of the temporally valorized epic past.[63]

The absolute and complete form of epic tradition cannot make any change in its "absolute past". The epic world could not change, could not be rethought or evaluated from present time since it is finished and closed like a circle in the absolute epic past.[64] As has been noted, the epic is projected into the sacred memory of the past, it is projected into a valorized past of "absolute beginnings" "absolute ends" and "peak times."[65] This valorisation manifests itself in the idealisation of beginnings and the catastrophic ends which clearly shows the hierarchical events in the epic's absolute past. In this connection, for Bakhtin, the epic is a dead genre since it is based on the finalised absolute past and distant image which cannot be rewritten or be recreated. Thus, the epic is closed, fixed in the hierarchical categories. Words are authoritative and impervious to any change. He adds that not only words, time and structure but also even the gesture and clothing of the hero are symbols of authority.[66]

While he sees the epic as a dead genre, he associates the novel with the eternally living element of language and thought. "The dead are loved in a different way. They are removed from the sphere of contact, one can and indeed must speak of them in a different style. Language about the dead is stylistically quite distinct from language about the living".[67] "But of critical importance here is the fact that the novel has no canon of its own, as do other genres; only individual examples of the novel are historically active, not a generic canon as such. Studying other genres is analogous to studying dead languages; studying the novel, on the other hand, is like studying languages that are not only alive, but still young".[68]As indicated in the

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[63] Ibid., p.16.

[64] Ibid., p.19.

[65] Ibid., p.19.

[66] Ibid., p.20.

[67] Ibid., p.20.

[68] Ibid., p.3.

quotation, Bakhtin asserts that the novel brings a fundamentally new attitude toward languages and thought. However, the shift from the epic to the novel is not an abrupt change. There is a transition process that destroys the epic and its characteristics. Bakhtin proceeds this assertion by laying great emphasis on certain authors like Rabelais and Dostoevsky and different phases in genres such as Menippean satire and the carnival laughter. I will examine this change in the following part of my thesis.

3.2.1.2 The Carnivalesque Laughter

> "To laugh at oneself, just as we would have to laugh in order to laugh entire truths- for this is the best have up to now not had a sense of truth, and the most gifted too little genius! […] Let us beware. There is a foreboding of something bad and evil: incipit *parodia*, there is no doubt."
>
> Nietzsche, *Gay Science*

> "My tension resembles a mad desire to laugh. One should destroy transcendence by laughing. I laugh. It is infinitely harder to do so. Buy my lightness wins over this infinite force resisting it. (…) Outside of freedom, outside of laughter, there is nothing at so divinely, as I laugh at God."
>
> Bataille – *Sur Nietzsche*

Bakhtin conceives Menippean satire and carnival laughter as occupying a central position for the transitionary stage towards the emergence of the novel. He points out that ancient forms of narration such as the Socratic dialogue and the Menippean satire are primitive versions of the novel in comparison to Dostoevsky's novels which are perfectly dialogic. These ancient forms could at best prepare certain generic conditions necessary for the emergence of the polyphonic novel. He first-hand examines this stage by studying François Rabelais's monumental work *The Life of Gargantua and of Pantagruel* in his book, *Rabelais and His world*.[69] This book is devoted to a careful analysis of the *Gargantua and Pantagruel* in the

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[69] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World,* ed. and trans. Helene Iswolsky (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 1984).

popular culture of medieval and Renaissance carnival which indicates the folk culture of laughter.

Carnival play, according to Bakhtin, challenges the authority and social law by questioning logos and power. Laughter challenges Aristotelian discourse by questioning causality, presence and authority. Whereas the epic genre is absolute, complete and closed, the carnival laughter possesses alterity that has the emancipatory power towards social and political change. The carnivalesque literature breaks the stones of authority and established hierarchies by laughing and subverting their position. In this trajectory, in order to explicate the effects of the carnival culture and the notion of laughter, Bakhtin underlines that one needs to understand three ancient forms which themselves are naturally dialogic and carnivalesque: the Socratic dialogue, the Menippean satire and lastly, the symposium. The Socratic dialogue and Menippean satire have enormous significant for shaping the novel as a polyphonic genre. For that reason, Bakhtin examines these two genres in a very detailed manner.

3.2.1.3 Socratic Dialogue

Bakhtin starts his examination by classifying Socratic dialogue as an example of the genre of memoir. In a certain sense, Socratic dialogue consists of reminiscences of actual conversations which are directed by Socrates and they are transcriptions of the remembered conversations of a short story.[70] The central tenet of the Socratic dialogue is revealing the truth through the dialogical nature of human thinking.

> Truth is not born nor is it to be found inside the head of an individual person, it is born between people collectively searching for truth, in the process of their dialogic interaction. Socrates called himself a "pander": he brought people together and made them collide in a quarrel, and as

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[70] M.M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p.109.

a result truth was born; with respect to this emerging truth Socrates called himself a "midwife", since he assisted at the birth.[71]

Bakhtin asserts that Plato's dialogues of the first and second periods possess the dialogic nature of truth, however the final period of Plato's work becomes ready-made ideas which are produced for pedagogical purposes. While the last period is considered as monological, the early periods are independent from established and dogmatic world views of philosophical schools and doctrines. The first characteristic of the Socratic dialogue is that the heroes are ideologists. In the dialogue, Socrates is the prime ideologist who invites his pupils, the Sophists and the ordinary people into a conversation. These conversations generally start with asking the definition of a certain concept which provokes another concept or idea. Thus, Socratic dialogue turns into a purely ideological event of seeking and testing the truth. The second characteristic is, therefore, that each dialogue has an embryonic image of an idea which is created freely and actively by searching for the truth in every conversation. "The ideas of Socrates, of the leading Sophists and other historical figures are not quoted in the dialogue, they are not paraphrased, but are presented within their free and creative development against a dialogizing background of other ideas."[72] In consequence, Socratic dialogue prepares the way for the polyphonic novel by basing its roots on free speech, searching for the truth and having an image of an idea. The *image of an idea* and truth are the products of these dialogical relations between speakers. The important point is, according to Kristeva, that only the Socratic process of dialogically revealing the truth is a kind of a memoir which is framed by narrative.[73] Nevertheless Socratic dialogue does not possess the other crucial features of carnival such as festivity and laughter as serio-comedy which Bakhtin's concept of 'carnival' presupposes. In a certain

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[71] Ibid., p.110.

[72] Ibid., p.112.

[73] Julia Kristeva, "Word, dialogue, and novel," in *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art*, ed. Leon S. Roudiez, trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press), p.51.

sense, Socratic dialogue is important but not a long-lasting genre, but it entails the process of creation of other dialogic genres such as Menippean satire and the polyphonic novel.

3.2.1.4 Menippean Satire

Menippean satire takes its name from Menippus of Gadara whose satires are called "saturate menipeae."[74] When it is compared with the Socratic dialogue, Menippean satire is emancipated from the historical limitations of memory. In that respect, Menippean discourse contains liberated forms of fantastic and adventurous narration. It is characterized by extraordinary features which provokes and tests the philosophical idea and the image of the wise man. By doing so the Menippean hero does not test the particular human character but questions the idea of truth. "The testing of a wise man is a test of his philosophical position in the world, not a test of any other features of his character independent of that position. In this sense one can say that the content of the Menippea is the adventures of an idea or a truth in the world: either on earth, in the nether regions, or on Olympus."[75] It is possible

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[74] M.M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p.112.

Further information for the historical development of Menippea: The genre took its name from the philosopher Menippus of Gadara (third century B.C.) who fashioned it into its classical form, although the term itself as signifying a specific genre was first introduced by the Roman scholar Varro* (first century B.C.), who called his satires "saturae menippeae." But the genre itself arose considerably earlier: its first representative was perhaps Antisthenes, a pupil of Socrates and one of the authors of Socratic dialogues. Menippean satires were also written by Aristotle's contemporary Heraclides Ponticus, who, according to Cicero, was also the creator of a kindred genre, the logistoricus (a combination of the Socratic dialogue with fantastic histories). A classical Menippean satire is the Apocolocyntosis, that is, the "Pumpkinification," of Seneca. The Satyricon of Petronius is nothing other than a Menippean satire extended to the limits of a novel. The fullest picture of the genre is of course provided by the Menippean satires of Lucian, which have come down to us intact (although not representing all varieties of the genre). A very interesting example of Menippean satire is the so-called "Hippocratic Novel"* (the first European epistolary novel). Within the orbit of Menippean satire various kindred genres developed, genetically linked with the Socratic dialogue: the diatribe, the above-mentioned genre of the logistoricus, the soliloquy, aretalogical genres, and others.

Cf. M.M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Politics*, pp.112-113.

[75] Ibid., p.115.

that a hero could ascend into heaven or descend into the world or find himself in unknown magical lands. These fantastic characteristics provide the extreme conditions for the hero. These conditions lead the hero to ask "ultimate questions" about philosophical positions which should be tested by the hero. When it is compared with the Socratic dialogue, philosophical problems are abruptly changed. The hero questions his ethical and practical position in the world.

Another important feature, according to Bakhtin, is that the Menippean discourse opens a moral-psychological part in literary theory for the first time. The Menippean satire has "the unusual, abnormal moral and psychic states and all sorts of insanity, split personality, unusual dreams, passions bordering on madness."[76] These characteristics are not only about a theme but also about a formal generic significance which is completely foreign for the epic and the Socratic dialogue. Unusual and abnormal states, day dreams and madness break down the epic unity and wholeness. Other substantial features of the Menippean satire are "scandal scenes, eccentric behaviours, inappropriate speeches and performances."[77] These scenes shake the roots of the accepted customary course of the events, norms and behaviours that lead to the destruction of the unity of the epic and the Socratic dialogue. In addition to that Menippea is nourished by bipolar opposites such as "sharp contrasts and oxymoronic combinations: the virtuous hetaera, the true freedom of the wise man and his servile position, the emperor who becomes a slave, moral downfalls and purifications, luxury and poverty, the noble bandit, and so forth. The Menippea is fascinated with abrupt transitions and shifts, ups and downs, rises and falls, unexpected comings together of distant and disunited things, mésalliances of all sorts."[78] The inversion of the bipolar opposites provides inner integrity which requires an inner logic and indissoluble elements that accord external plasticity to this genre. All these defining features of Menippea reveal the

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[76] Ibid., p.116.

[77] Ibid., p.117.

[78] Ibid., p.118.

dialogicality of human life and human thought which are present in Dostoevsky's novel. Bakhtin stresses that the Menippea is just the beginning of this generic world, however Dostoevsky is at the very peak.

When Menippean satire is compared with Socratic dialogue which has a rhetorical side, it is noted that Menippea consists of the specific weight of the serio-comic elements. It is obvious from the name of these elements, Menippea has the ambivalent nature of the carnival culture which is constructed towards "debates" between life and death, darkness and light, winter and summer.[79] In the Socratic dialogue, the nature of thought and searching for truth itself, presumes a carnivalistic familiarization of relations among people who have entered the dialogue, it presumes the abolition of all distance between them. In a very similar way, in Menippean satire, laughter presumes carnivalistic familiarization among people. In Bakhtin's own words:

> Let us say a few initial words about the complex nature of carnival laughter. It is, first of all, a festive laughter. Therefore, it is not an individual reaction to some isolated "comic" event. Carnival laughter is the laughter of all the people. Second, it is universal in scope: it is directed at all and everyone, including the carnival's participants. The entire world is seen in its droll aspect, in its gay relativity. Third, this laughter is ambivalent: it is gay, triumphant, and at the same time mocking, deriding. It asserts and denies, it buries and revives. Such is the laughter of carnival. Let us enlarge upon the second important trait of the people's festive laughter: that it is also directed at those who laugh. The people do not exclude themselves from the wholeness of the world. They, too, are incomplete, they also die and are revived and renewed. (…) The people's ambivalent laughter expresses the point of view of the whole world; he who is laughing also belongs to it.[80]

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[79] Bakhtin defines carnival as following "Carnival is a pageant without footlights and without a division into performers and spectators. In carnival, everyone is an active participant, everyone communes in the carnival act. Carnival is not contemplated and, strictly speaking, not even performed; its participants live in it, they live by its laws as long as those laws are in effect; that is, they live a carnivalistic life. Carnival brings together, unifies, weds, and combines the sacred with the profane, the lofty with the low, the great with the insignificant, the wise with the stupid.

Cf. M.M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Politics*, p.132.

[80] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, pp.11-12.

Laughter as the central element is situated in the world of carnival. First of all, laughter always needs the other in order to make somebody laugh. As Derrida emphasizes that "laughter always implies the ear of the other."[81] In that regard the carnival laughter is not exclusionary or discriminatory, rather it consolidates people. It makes a group of people a certain whole by including everyone. In that sense, laughter destroys all differences among people by inviting them to the act of laughing at same thing. For that reason, laughter is universal, it is open to all people. From this perch, Bakhtin argues that, carnival is the source of different voices. Bakhtin states that while the Socratic dialogue has a one-sided rhetorical seriousness, the carnival is the authentic sense of communal performance which is placed in the public carnival square.

> The main arena for carnival acts was the square and the streets adjoining it. To be sure, carnival also invaded the home; in essence, it was limited in time only and not in space; carnival knows neither stage nor footlights. But the central arena could only be the square, for by its very idea carnival belongs to the whole people, it is universal, everyone must participate in its familiar contact. The public square was the symbol of communal performance.[82]

People are direct participants in carnivalistic acts and they are the living part of the carnivalistic world. These features of the carnival make free familiarization of man and the world by destroying epic unity and distance. This destruction starts with the carnivalistic act of the mock crowning and subsequent decrowning of the carnival king. The ritual of decrowning reveals the dualistic sides of the pathos of shifts and changes of death and renewal.[83] Bakhtin emphasizes that these are not abstract thoughts, rather they are the forceful events. For instance, the decrowning of a king

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[81] Jacques Derrida, *The Ear of the Other: Otobiography, Transference, Translation*, ed. Christie V. McDonald (New York: Schocken Books, 1985), p.32.

[82] M.M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Politics*, p.128.

[83] Ibid., p.124.

is the symbol of the destruction of authority which is literally mocked by poor, fool or a mad person. In other words, the carnival challenges hierarchical positions by "bringing together, unifying, wedding, and combining the sacred with the profane, the lofty with the low, the great with the insignificant, the wise with the stupid."[84] By doing so, Bakhtin opposes the authoritarian word to carnivalesque dialogue and opposes the authoritative rule of the culture to carnival. Hence, carnival celebrates all voices that tries to preserve so that the carnival laughter can appreciate all joyful relativity and ambivalences rather than absolutizing them. Consequently, carnival literature affirms the destruction of memory and tradition by destroying the hierarchy and authority and bringing together the profane and the sacred, the wise and the stupid. Thus, the heteroglot, dialogic and public discourse started with the carnivalesque literature as Umberto Eco admits "Bakhtin was right in seeing that the manifestation of a profound drive towards liberation and subversion in Medieval carnival."[85]

3.2.1.5 Novelistic Discourse

> "The novel is a break from the epic world."
> Mikhail Bakhtin

In Epic and Novel, by comparison with the epic, Bakhtin states that the novel is "the only developing genre and it reflects more deeply, more essentially, more sensitively and rapidly, reality itself in the process of its unfolding."[86] It is dynamic and multi-layered genre which renovates the other genres such as epic, Menippean satire and carnivalistic discourse. He postulates three basic characteristics of novel which fundamentally distinguish it from other genres. First and foremost, the novel

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[84] Ibid., p.128.

[85] Umberto Eco, "The Frames of Comic 'Freedom'," in *Carnival*, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Berlin, New York, Amsterdam: Mouton, 1984) p.3.

[86] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, Epic and Novel, p.7.

has to be constructed toward the multi-languaged consciousness. The second one is that novel is the radical change in the temporal coordination of the literary image. This image provides the integrated picture of the changing world and life. The last one is that the novel opens a new zone which is constructed through contemporary reality which brings the active polyglossia* of the new world, new culture and new creative literary consciousness.[87] All these constitutive elements, as Bakhtin states, reveal themselves in the notion of polyphony as a process of creation that engages the author and the readers as well as the characters in the novel. Thus, Bakhtin's notion of polyphony has dual impact on the essence of creativity; the first is that it creates a dialogic sense of truth and the second is it puts the author in a new position which distinguishes it from other genres. In this part, my main aim is to show how Bakhtin and Dostoevsky's novels challenge the fixed anatomy of the subject and object in traditional/monological novel.

In the preceding sections, I demonstrated how Bakhtin reveals successfully the change from the epic to the carnival literature. While laughter destroys the monological, authoritative nature of the epic genre, it gains remarkable power of creation of the open structure of dialogue. With the novel, as Bakhtin points out, a decisive break from the epic world takes place. Thus, the novel removes the author,

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[87] Ibid., pp. 11-12.

* In Bakhtin's own words: "Polyglossia had always existed (it is more ancient than pure, canonic monoglossia), but it had not been a factor in literary creation; an artistically conscious choice between languages did not serve as the creative center of the literary and language process. Classical Greeks had a feeling both for "languages" and for the epochs of language, for the various Greek literary dialects (tragedy is a polyglot genre), but creative consciousness was realized in closed, pure languages (although in actual fact they were mixed). Polyglossia was appropriated and canonized among all genres.

The new cultural and creative consciousness lives in an actively polyglot world. The world becomes polyglot, once and for all and irreversibly. The period of national languages, coexisting but closed and deaf to each other, comes to an end. Languages throw light on each other: one language can, after all, see itself only in the light of another language. The naive and stubborn coexistence of "languages" within a given national language also comes to an end-that is, there is no more peaceful co-existence between territorial dialects, social and professional dialects and jargons, literary language, generic languages within literary language epochs in language and so forth."

Cf. Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, Epic and Novel, p.12.

hero and the reader from the absolute, unchangeable, fixed nature of the epic by breaking its chain with the past. As discussed above, the epic is for the ancient, archaic world which is oriented toward the distant past. However, the novel is for the contemporary world and also it is oriented toward the near future. In addition to that, the first feature of the novel is the possessing of multiple consciousnesses which necessitates polyphonic artistic thinking in this new contemporary world. The artist engages in dialogism in his text by combining various impersonal opinions and socio-ideological multi-voices. Thus, the polyphonic artistic thinking entails the creation of several voices of different heroes who engage in different dialogues in various subjective point of views.

> Dostoevsky, creates not voiceless slaves, but free people, capable of standing alongside their creator, capable of not agreeing with him and even of rebelling against him […] A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic of Dostoevsky's novels. What unfolds in his works is not a multitude of characters and fates in a single objective world, illuminated by a single authorial consciousness; rather a plurality of consciousnesses, with equal rights and each with its own world, combine but are not merged in the unity of the event.[88]

In a certain sense, this new artistic creation makes presence of a number of heroes which have independence and internal freedom in the novel. For that reason, Bakhtin asserts that the hero is not a voiceless slave of the author or the fixed image of the narration, rather the hero should be treated as self-conscious subject which is independent from the author's thoughts. Therefore, Dostoevsky's novel creates a completely new artistic position in literary theory which consists "the fundamental plurality of unmerged consciousness."[89] Bakhtin asserts that the heroes in the Dostoevsky's novel are autonomous subject not the objects. This makes the novel a poly-subjective genre in which the heroes have subjective point of view that makes them ethically responsible for their actions and their consciousness. When

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[88] *Problems of Dostoevsky's Politics*, p.6.

[89] M.M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p.9.

viewed from this aspect, Bakhtin concludes that the novel is based on the polyphonic text which challenges and destroys the monologue of authoritative, one-sided, dominant voice and postulates progressive, open dialogue toward the future All in all, for Bakhtin, when aesthetic creation is completed, an ethical relation starts. It is certain that the relation between the author and the self-conscious heroes manifests new ethical dimensions in the history of the novel. Furthermore, this dialogical relation affects not only the realm of literary theory but also the socio-historical side of the world. As previously stated by Bakhtin, "genre is a way of visualizing the world with the eyes of the genre."[90] The polyphonic novel, thus provides polysubjective and polyphonic visualization of the contemporary world-view. Finally, as it is indicated before, the end of the aesthetic event entails the beginning of ethical events. From this point onwards, I will trace ethical development in the novelistic genre by focusing on the author and the hero in aesthetic activity in the following chapter of my thesis.

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[90] Gary Saul Morson, and Caryl Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics*, p.306.

CHAPTER IV

ETHICAL AESTHETICS

"I do not think we can have a good society if we do not have good poetry."
Octavio Paz

"The object of art is not to reproduce reality, but to create a reality of the same intensity."
Alberto Giocometti

By focusing on the relationship between the author and the hero on the first chapter and the careful analysis of the history of the genre in the second chapter, I tried to show how Bakhtin succeeds in elaborating the certain concepts of aesthetics. Before delving into ethics, it should not be forgotten that Bakhtin's focus is on special aesthetics rather than general aesthetics. In a similar vein, here his approach to ethics would not be a general theory but ethical components of his aesthetic view. In this chapter, I am going to ask the question of whether literature and the aesthetics could point beyond their limits. In other words, I want to explore the possibility of the shift from the aesthetical and historical approach to sociological and ethical one. In doing so my interpretation will be driven by the following interrelated questions: When Bakhtin uses I-for-myself and I-for-other, are these notions just for the author and the hero or are they applicable for all agents in real life? Could we hold the author responsible for what s/he produces? What is the responsibility of the author towards his/her heroes, the readers and the society? Is there any possibility to establish ethics depending not on the hero's narrative frame but on the relation between the author and the hero from outside the narrative? Does Bakhtin use dialogism as a metaphor for the field of the literature or does he apply dialogism as a primary principle of life itself and not just literature and aesthetics? Around these

questions, I will try to establish an ethical approach from Bakhtin's aesthetic understanding.

4.1 The World of Life and The World of Culture

Before delving into the relation between ethics and aesthetics, I would like to focus on the line between art and life. Bakhtin's work, *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, offers us the rudiment of the boundaries between life and art/culture by basing his discussion on experience. He reveals that the human existence is shaped through the opposition between two kinds of experience: The first one which is the world of life, is the experience of life as it is. The second one is called as the world of culture which is systematized in intellectual and cultural forms. For him, these two worlds seem to be mutually impervious up to certain point:

> The world of culture and the world of life, the only world in which we create, cognize, contemplate, live our lives and die or – the world in which the acts of our activity are objectified and the world in which these acts proceed and are actually accomplished once and only once.[91]

The world of life is accomplished only once because human beings are born once and die just once. In that regard, the experience of life is just a concrete process of becoming without coming back. It is subjective, transient and unrepeatable. Contrary to this, the world of culture is objectified and abstracted by intellectual and cultural forms. For Bakhtin, meaning can be established again and again through cultural forms. In other words, meaning unfolds itself through repeatable, abstracted and objectified forms. The importance of the world of culture is that culture does not only lie behind the creation of meaning but also in the transference of the meaning. Although meaning resides in cultural forms, which are abstract, it is transported into unrepeatable events of life by actual human beings who are by answerable subjects. Nevertheless, the creation of meaning and the transference of

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[91] Ibid., p.2.

it postulate some difficulties for the subject. The problem arises when the subject transports meaning from the sphere of the world of culture, he or she removes himself/herself from the world of life. Bakhtin calls this experience of the self-alienation of subject in the creation of meaning "the tragedy of the culture."[92] While the subject has authenticity in the world of life, in the world of culture the subject becomes alien to himself/herself because subjects do not recognize themselves as the creator of the objective cultural values.

> Contemporary man feels sure of himself, feels well-off and clearheaded, where he is himself essentially and fundamentally not present in the autonomous world of a domain of culture and its immanent law of creation. But he feels unsure of himself, feels destitute and deficient in understanding, where he has to do with himself, where he is the center from which answerable acts or deeds issue, in actual and once-occurrent life. That is, we act confidently only when we do so not as ourselves, but as those possessed by the immanent necessity of the meaning of some domain of culture.[93]

Here Bakhtin describes a complex situation of the tragedy of culture by prioritizating the sphere of life where the human being has to do with himself or herself in its once-occurrent life. However, Bakhtin points out that the subject, rather than feeling at home in this place of authenticity, turns out to be the site of the experience of self-alienation or alienation. Thus, what Bakhtin does is to show that the tragic divide is within the subject itself.

Regarding the tragedy of the culture, Bakhtin asserts that reality has two modes of activity and being. On the one side of reality, the world of life, the mode is "posited", open and in this mode, the subject seeks relations and self-confirmation in his/her life. On the other side of reality, the world of culture, is "given", complete, sufficient and characterized by repeatable, abstracted and objectified forms. With this distinction, Bakhtin contrasts two modes of being as particular and universal. The world of life, which is particular one, "posits"

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[92] Tim Beasley Murray, *Mikhail Bakhtin and Walter Benjamin: Experience and Form*, p.57.

[93] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, pp.20-1.

fragmental parts of life. On the contrary, the world of culture represents universality. Thus, the subject finds himself/herself in the tragedy of the culture where s/he loses both the particular and "posited" parts of life. According to Murray, the ultimate consequence of the tragedy culture is losing touch with life which means that the subject becomes ossified and loses its subjective human aspect.[94] In this regard, the posited, which is open and dynamic, has a risk of being excluded by the universal which involves the finality and ossification of the given so that Bakhtin criticizes the concentration of the universal that is abstract and excludes life as a dynamic, open, unique, and particular process of becoming. The universal creates a world in which the particular subject is excluded, and human beings find themselves to be predetermined and finished so that they do not live. As Bakhtin emphasizes, "we would have cast ourselves out of life – as answerable, risk-fraught, and open becoming through performed actions – and into an indifferent and, fundamentally, accomplished and finished theoretical Being."[95] Nevertheless, Bakhtin is aware of the fact that prioritization of the posited has no use because he sees the theoretical cognition, which is related to "the given", as an indispensable part of experience.

> Theoretical cognition of an object that exists by itself, independent of its actual position in the once-occurrent world from the standpoint of a participant's unique place, is perfectly justified. But it does not constitute ultimate cognition; it constitutes only an auxiliary, technical moment of such ultimate cognition.[96]

Bakhtin tries to eliminate the dichotomy between subjective and objective, the universal over the particular. For him, what is necessary is the unity of these fragmented parts of activity on a plane of higher unity. In other words, he challenges both the idea of prioritization of the theoretical over practice and the reversal of this idea. He intends to overcome the dichotomy through postulating a synthesis as

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[94] Tim Beasley Murray, *Mikhail Bakhtin and Walter Benjamin: Experience and Form*, p.65.

[95] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, p.9.

[96] Ibid., p.48.

"intersubjectivity". This synthesis can be found in a new way to act which is responsible act or participation and which can unite the objective unity of culture and the never repeatable uniqueness of actually lived and experienced life. The split spheres of culture and life, given and posited modes are united together in the responsible participation of human activity.[97]

> Life can be consciously comprehended only in concrete answerability. A philosophy of life can only be a moral philosophy. Life can be consciously comprehended only as an ongoing event, and not as Being qua a given. A life that has fallen away from answerability cannot have a philosophy; it is, in its very principle, fortuitous and incapable of being rooted.[98]

For Bakhtin, responsible participation can be found in "intersubjectivity" where meaning unfolds in a dialogic exchange between the self and others. In this way, through the intersubjective act of responsibility, restoration of the tragedy of the culture can be possible. Only when we accept our responsible position in life, our once-occurent being, can we take the responsibility for it and not treat our life as if it is something provisional and hypothetical. In other words, the intersubjective act or participation of responsibility, which presumes the presentation of ourselves and our lives to the other, thereby involves the hypothetical and theoretical under the particular and concrete. In this vein, the responsible participation or act can re-unite the two modes of experience, the objective and the particular or non-repeatable that is actually lived and experienced. According to Ann Delehanty, Bakhtin embraces the tragedy of culture by focusing on theory in *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, in his corpus *Art and Answerability*, "he seems to find a means of solving that problem by way of literature; where philosophy fails, literature appears to succeed."[99] In this trajectory, Bakhtin invites us to look at the author-hero relation in order to show

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[97] Tim Beasley Murray, *Mikhail Bakhtin and Walter Benjamin: Experience and Form*, pp.62-63

[98] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, p.56.

[99] Ann T. Delehanty. Virtue, Vice, and Bakhtin: Can Literature Represent Ethics Better than Philosophy? *Pacific Coast Philology*, Vol. 36. Penn State University, (The Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association, 2001), p.32.

notably how responsible act postulates dialogism in the relation between the world as "posited" in actions and the world as "given".

4.2 The Ethical Relation between I and the Other

The problematic issue is to construct a realm in the intersection of the subject's actions and a cognitive, cultural and historical context. Bakhtin's dichotomy of I-for-myself and I-for-others can be taken as a proposal to open up this realm in order to reflect upon the two mutually exclusive but also complementary worlds. The kernel point in this problematic is to meet these two worlds which originate and evolve in each other reciprocally in the relationship between the author and the hero.

The originality of Bakhtin's theory stems from its capacity to put together these two worlds without losing the alterity of the subjects by governing two independent subjects. With love and sympathy, the abysm can be tackled, and the distinction of I and the other can be overcome as much as it is needed to prepare an ethical action ground for the responsible agent. As I cannot thoroughly understand another person's value system I cannot think of a universal ethical theory that is applicable to everyone.

> This radical difference (I and the other) is of essential significance not only for aesthetics, but also for ethics. It should suffice to recall the inequality in principle between the / and the other with respect to value in Christian ethics: one must not love oneself, one must love the other; one must not be indulgent toward oneself, one must be indulgent toward the other; and in general, we must relieve the other of any burdens and take them upon ourselves.[100]

From this perspective, Bakhtin's aesthetic theory gives us an ethical approach and the chance to approach to the other with sympathy and love. Through love, we embrace the other in the outside world; through sympathy as a way of co-existence,

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[100] *Art and Answerability*, p.38.

the subject goes outside of itself so that the other is integrated into the subject. This is the main reason why Bakhtin chooses the concept of love to build not only the aesthetic understanding in particular, but his ethical position as well. Despite being the representation of a representation as a consciousness of the author by creating the hero, this accomplished work of art provides an occasion for the reader to participate. I can imagine myself in the series of adventures of the hero before I lived through these events. Whether they occur in a different way, in a different context or not is not important. Ethically what matters is the agent's reaction to once-occurent events.

Objectively, in my necessary impartiality and outsidedness I can evaluate the hero's position in the given situation. I can imagine myself by asking as if I were in the shoes of the hero but with acknowledging my exteriority to the situation. Actually, this approach is ethically what one needs because our answerability is construed on this givenness from a different dimension. Thus, this reflection can open up a way for us to philosophize before possible deeds.

Instead of judging the hero of a novel, instead of memorizing piously ethical theories we can just try to understand the position of the hero in the narration in the process of actions. These actions cannot be taken back, they cannot be changed by the reader they are already given by the author in the wholeness of a story but at least I can think of myself in various positions beside the hero. As I cannot live someone else's life, it would be wrong to think of myself in the place of another's cognition. But I can embrace the other's action if I can develop a similar reflection that is sufficient to clarify the reason behind his action. As Caryl Emerson profoundly states that "I actively "enters in" to the other's position at every moment, a gesture which is then followed not by identification but by a return to my own position, the sole place from which I can understand my "obligation" in its relationship to another. Only then will I nurture an "I" of my own."[101] Thus, what

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[101] Caryl Emerson,. Bakhtin 100: Art, Ethics, and the Architectonic Self: *The Centennial Review*, Vol. 39, No. 3. Fall 1995, p.412.

Bakhtin does is to show that the subject needs the other in order to cherish one's own life.

When we can understand the reason behind the action of the other in a general way it gives us the chance to understand the value system in a partial way. This is what I understand from the dialogic relation between the work of art and the subject in his own answerability. The more I can understand I-for-myself, the more I understand the I-for-other. The other also overcomes its cognitive reduction to an object for the subjectivity of another. Subjects become equal beings in the cognitive system due to this deliverance from objectivity. The subject can maintain a genuine uniqueness liberated from his cognitive loneliness. Hence, he can emancipate himself from contextual givenness in a way.

4.3 Ethics in Literary Genre

Bakhtin delineates the emancipatory power of art by focusing on the dichotomy between the two kinds of experiences: given and posited. While the former is for the objective world of culture which possesses the objective unity of the culture and the tradition, the latter represents the unrepeatable character of the real life. While the world of life is limited and finalised in the face of the experience of the subject, the world of culture that is grounded in artistic experiences is unlimited. Art enriches the world of culture in each aesthetic experience by creating new heroes and new stories, whereas, human experience in the world of life is limited. For that reason, in his understanding, experience in art, which creates the dichotomy between the author and hero, is different from real life.

While the author exists in the limited sphere of real life, he creates the hero who lives in the world of culture possessing the richness of the different kinds of experiences. Bakhtin endeavours to resolve the difference between these two

experiences. He believes that when the author treats his/her character like a real subject who lives in the "world of life", the work of art breaks the sphere of the "world of culture" and touches upon the ethical sphere of the real life. By doing so, the author saves his/her hero from the uncertainty of the richness of experiences and brings them to same level with himself/herself. In this way, the hero is emancipated from the dominance of the author by taking the responsibility of his/her character. In this trajectory, Bakhtin asserts that the novel is the sole genre which overcomes the dichotomy between the subject/the author and the object/the hero. By doing so, Bakhtin evades the binary opposition between fiction and the real. He opens a new dimension in the theory of narration by asserting that "the aesthetic event takes place when two participants are present" which means that the hero and the author have to be noncoinciding subjects.[102] The task of the author is to engage the hero in a dialogical encounter. In other words, the hero is not a voiceless object, rather s/he is a substantive subject who is independent from the author and his/her opinions. By doing so, the author who accepts the hero as an ethical subject and takes the responsibility of his/her words that the writer uses in the dialogues of the hero. In other words, the position and what the hero says in his/her dialogues are in the responsibility of the hero himself/herself. With the responsible participation in the dialogue, Bakhtin recognizes the novel as the polyphonic source for challenging the monologue of the culture and tradition. Especially starting with Dostoevsky, he defines the change from the monological world to the dialogical one as a small scale of Copernican revolution.[103] According to Clark and Holquist, "much as the sun was moved out of its central place to make room for the complex interaction of Copernican universe, so authors are removed from the centre of the textual world to assume their place in the give and take of narrative energy in which the characters exert their own forces."[104] In that regard,

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[102] "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity," in *Art and Answerability* p.22.

[103] *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p.49.

[104] Katerina Clark, Micheal Holquist, *Mikhail Bakhtin,* p.245.

the dialogism entails a new world view which eliminates the hierarchy between the author and the hero by removing the transgredient position of the "authorial I" from the centre. This change is available only when the authors realize that the creation of polyphonic novel is a step forward for not only the artistic genres but also artistic thinking of the human kind.[105] Therefore, Bakhtin makes not only shift of artistic paradigm but also an ethical one. With this revolutionary position of the hero, Bakhtin opens a whole new conceptualization of the world which is grounded on a dialogue between the ethical subjects. For that reason, the novel is the genre of emancipation which changes not only the world of culture but also the world of life as a real world by creating new conceptualization of the world as dialogic and polyphonic.

Thus, the multiplicity of the voices enables readers to face the other as a subject. The dialogical relationship between multiple voices in the novel involves the author, hero and also the reader. When the author sees and comprehends the hero as a subject in polyphonic novel, the reader realizes the existence of the joyous richness of other subjects not only in novel but also in real life itself. While the dominant voice in monological works represents the world in an authoritative and shallow way, the novelistic discourse breaks this isolation and enriches the world by multiplicity of subjects and dialogues. In this vein, each genre provides a different perspective or a mode of seeing the world, in other words, each genre

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[105] It would be helpful to look at the basic definitions of heteroglossia and polyphony. Heteroglossia refers to social heterogeneity as an aspect of social conflicts, different ideologies, values and beliefs. Bakhtin introduces the concept of heteroglossia by using the following words: "Thus at any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth" *in The Dialogic Imagination*. p.291. Polyphony which is used quite frequently by Bakhtin means corporation of many voices, styles, references, and assumptions. Polyphony refers to the autonomy of the characters' voices. Sue Vice explain these notions in the following paragraph: "Polyphony is a way of realizing heteroglossia in the novel, without being identical to heteroglossia. It refers to the arrangement of heteroglot variety into an aesthetic pattern. For instance, one of the principal ways of ensuring the presence of the different voices of heteroglossia in the novel is the creation of fictional characters. These characters may contribute in a number of ways to the heteroglot whole of the novel, both by using a particular kind of language and by having a particular viewpoint on the world around them". pp.112-113.

presents a different mode of thinking. For instance, the monological novel represents the authoritative one-sided voice, the novel shows the possibility of the multiplicity of the dialogues.

Thus, the different genres represent different possibility of the worlds. Bakhtin concludes that the novel is a decisive break from the monological world. It destroys the monologue of authoritative, one-sided, dominant voice and postulates progressive, open dialogue toward the future. As it has already been foreshadowed above, the dialogical understanding of the literature theory possesses the ethical aspect not only for the creation of the work but also the possible effects of the work on the reader and the world itself. It is very striking that, as we saw in Bakhtin art gains the power for the change of human perception and society by destroying the authoritarian power of monologism. In that regard, taking the dialogism as its first principle, it might be the only way to postulate an ethical position not only for art but the life itself. All in all, when the hero is emancipated from the author's authority, there would be a possibility to establish emancipatory relation between the other and I. When dialogism exists between I and the other as an ethical principle, the other becomes an equal being rather than a stranger, owing to the loving and caring other as author. Thus, dialogism offers a new emancipatory experience which depends on dialogical commitment and loving attention between subjects not only in aesthetics but in the real life itself.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The main purpose of this study is to show how Bakhtin's aesthetic understanding brings us the sphere of ethics. Bearing in mind his aesthetic understanding is quite different from the "general aesthetics". In a very similar way his ethical understanding does not depend on abstracted principles. He incorporates the ethical by postulating dialogical relationship between I and the other. He constructs "special aesthetics" that requires two non-coincided subjects. By doing so, he challenges not only the dualism between I and the other but also the authoritative monologue. Therefore, Bakhtin postulates his aesthetic and ethical understanding by focusing on dialogical relation that entails not only sympathy but also love as an ethical principle.

In that regard, in the second chapter, I pursued the similar aesthetic understanding in Bakhtin's theory of the literary genre. First, I explained why Bakhtin chooses to focus on literary genres in his aesthetic theory. Close and carefully reading of his theory showed that the nature of the literature depends on the aesthetic activity of writing which creates new texts, new dialogues and new events by entering out new experiences in close connection with others. In that regard, I concentrated on the two modes of discourses: monological and dialogical which are shaped towards different genres. Thus, this part is the broad outline of the development of genres: the epic, the carnival, the Socratic dialogue, Menippean satire and finally with the novel, aesthetic genres reach the peak times in the history of the literature. In doing so, I showed that how the novel challenges and destroys the monologue of authoritative, one-sided, dominant voice and postulates progressive, open dialogue toward the future by connecting the reader, hero and the author in the polyphonic nature of the novel. The power of bringing people together with experience and mutual insistence on the responsible participation in aesthetic activity provide a strong connection between ethics and aesthetics.

Having shown the general characteristics of art and aesthetics, in last chapter I endeavoured to depict the ethical dimension of the aesthetics. The emancipatory power of the art work is marked by the sense of responsibility. He postulates the new conceptions such as dialogism and polyglossia which are revolutionary in artistic endeavour as well as the historical and social thought. In Bakhtin's understanding, the novel has the liberatory power for postulating dialogical relationships among the reader, the writer and the hero and by creating heteroglossical and polyphonic nature, the novel provides the field which is open to joyous richness of other subjects. Thus, in the conclusion chapter, I emphasized the ethical aspect of the aesthetic experience pointed out by Bakhtin who challenges the validity of the forms of aesthetic experiences through taking the responsible act in the aesthetic event. What I realize at the end of this thesis is that Bakhtin believes wholeheartedly that the aesthetic experience possesses power to transform the social reality by revealing the strong connection with ethics and aesthetic or the art work and responsibility that strive to resist the authoritative, one-sided, dominant voice in not only literature but also real life itself. Without eliminating the gap between I and other and the authoritative relationship between the author and hero, it would not be possible to postulate dialogism outside from the literary frame. What I realized at the end of this thesis is that Bakhtin believes wholeheartedly that aesthetic experience possesses power to transform the social reality by revealing the strong connection with ethics, aesthetics and responsibility that strive to resist the authoritative, one-sided, dominant voice in not only literature but also in the real life itself. Therefore, a touchstone for this thesis is the postulation of the dialogism, it is not only an aesthetic concept but also an ethical principle.

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APPENDICES

A: TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu yüksek lisans tezinin amacı Mikhail Bahtin'in felsefesini etik ve estetik açıdan ele alarak etik-estetik ilişkisini ayrıntılı bir biçimde göstermektir. İlk olarak Bahtin'in estetik anlayışı açıklanarak edebiyatın estetik ile ilişkisi üzerinde durulacaktır. Bu bağlamda Bahtin edebiyatı genel bir estetik yaklaşım olarak değil, arkitektonik ilişkiye dayalı özel bir estetik ilişki olarak tanımlar. Bu özel estetik ilişkiyi yazar-kahraman arasındaki ilişkiye odaklanarak detaylı bir şekilde inceler. Bu açıdan yazar ve kahraman arasındaki ilişkiyi "ben" ve "öteki" arasındaki ilişki ile analoji kurarak detaylı bir şekilde anlatır.

Yazar-kahraman arasındaki ilişki, buradan yola çıkarak sadece estetik bir ilişki olarak değil aynı zamanda etik bir ilişki olarak ele alınacaktır. Yazarın kahramana karşı tutumu empati, sempati ve sevgi nosyonları çerçevesinde detaylandırılacaktır. Daha sonra edebiyat tarihinde, kahramanların genel özellikleri farklı edebi türler çerçevesinde incelenecektir. Bu arada asıl amaç gelişen her edebi türde yazar-kahraman ilişkisi arasındaki değişimi göstermektir. En sonunda ise bu değişimlerin bir sonucu olarak öznenin kendisini bir kültür trajedisi (*tragedy of culture*) içerinde bulması ve bu trajedinin roman sayesinde aşılıp aşılamayacağı tartışılacaktır.

Bahtin, *Sanat ve Sorumluluk* adlı eserinde arkitektoniği nesnelerin birbirine nasıl bağlandığını ve bu bağlantıdaki ilişkiler ağını gösteren bir kavram olarak ele alır ve bu bağlamda estetiği arkitektoninin bir alt kümesi olarak ele alır. Bu alt kümede estetik, estetik aktivite olarak incelenmektedir. Bu aktivitenin asıl amacı estetik nesnenin nasıl yaratıldığı, bu yaratımın ayırt edici özellikleri ve bir bütün olarak nasıl var olduğudur. Bu açıdan estetik nesnenin formunun ve içeriğinin aktif özneler tarafından yaratılıyor olması Bahtin'in üzerinde durduğu en önemli

noktadır. Buradan yola çıkarak estetik nesnenin yaratımında aktif öznenin varlığı ben ve öteki ilişkisi ile açıklanacaktır.

Bahtin yazar-kahraman arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemeye ben (*self*) kavramı ile başlar. Yazarı ben kavramı ile eşleştirirken kahramanın konumu yazara karşı her zaman öteki olarak yer alır. Ben kavramı estetik etkinliğin içerisinde ontolojik olarak uzamsal ve zamansal olarak yer alır. Bu bağlamda yazarın kahraman ile buluştuğu aksiyolojik nokta ben ve ötekinin müşterek ilişkisine dayanır. Buradan yola çıkarak iki farklı özne farklı zaman ve farklı mekanlarda yer alır. Bahtin bu birbirinden farklı iki öznenin aksiyolojik düzlemde birbiri ile çakışmaması gerektiğini, bu iki öznenin tek özneye indirgendiği durumlarda ise estetik etkinlikteki deneyim zenginliğinin yok olacağını dile getirir. Yazar, kendini kahramanın dışında konumlandırdığında ve kahramanı dışarıdan deneyimlediğinde, birbiri ile çakışmayan iki öznenin aksiyolojik varlığından söz edilebilir. Yazarın dışarıda olma durumu kahraman ile olan ilişkisinde estetik deneyimdeki en önemli nokta olan tamamlama/tamamlanma (*consummation*) durumunu ortaya çıkarır. Yazarın kahramanı tamamlaması için, kahramanı onunla bir olduğu iç deneyim ile değil, kahramandan bağımsız ve kahramanı dışarıdan deneyimleyen bir özne olarak konumlanması gerekmektedir.

Bahtin yazarın kendini ve başkasını deneyimlerken ortaya çıkan öznenin mekânsal ve zamansal farklılığından yola çıkarak üç farklı deneyim türünden bahseder. Bunlardan ilki öznenin kendisini içten deneyimlediği kendim-için-ben kavramıdır. Bu kavramı tamamlama durumu çerçevesinde öznenin hiçbir zaman kendini tamamlayamayacağını çünkü kendisini dışardan deneyimlemesinin imkânsız olduğunu öne sürerek açıklar. Özne kendi doğumunu ve ölümünü deneyimleyemediği gibi kendini tamamlaması da imkansızdır. Bu açıdan kendim-için-ben, benim tarafımdan tamamlanması imkânsız açık uçlu (*open-ended*) bir deneyimdir. İkinci deneyim biçimi olarak ise başkaları-için-ben (*I-for-others*) kavramını ele alır. Başkasının beni dışardan deneyimleme imkanına sahip olduğu ve kendim-için-ben durumunun aksine tamamlama durumuna müsait bir deneyim

türüdür. Son olarak ise benim-için-başkası (*the-other-for-me*) deneyimini ele alır ve bu bağlamda ben ve öteki ilişkisini sempati, empati ve sevgi kavramlarına odaklanarak açıklar.

Bahtin öznenin kendi doğumunu ve ölümünü deneyimleyemediği gibi kendini sevmesinin imkânsız olduğunu öne sürer. Sevgi için öznenin dışardan görülmeye ve bir bütün olarak deneyimlenmeye ihtiyacı vardır. Bu açıdan estetik deneyim iki ayrı öznenin örtüşmeyen varlığına dayanır. Ben ve öteki arasındaki diğer bir ilişki türü ise empatiye dayanan ilişkidir. Bu durumda özne kendini diğerinin yerine koyarak onunla aynı şeyleri deneyimleme olanağına sahip olur. Bu deneyim halinde ise özne kendini ötekinin yerine koyarak deneyimin dıştan değil, öznenin içinde onunla bir olarak gerçekleşmesini sağlar. Bu durum öznenin özellikle yazar-kahraman ilişkisinde dışsal konumunu yok eder. Yazar kendini kahramanın yerine koyarak onunla aynı düzlemde var olur. Bahtin bu deneyim şeklinin yazarın biricik dışardalık konumunu yok ettiğini, bu açıdan da yazarın kahramanı empati ile deneyimlediğini vurgular. Bu minvalde, empati yazar-kahraman arasındaki iki ayrı özne olma durumunu yok ederek, estetik etkinliği tek bir özneye indirger. Empati ile kahramanı içerden deneyimleyen yazar, kahramanı dışardan görme ve tamamlama olanağını kaybeder. Bu durum ise estetik etkinlikte, yazar ve kahramanın örtüşmesine neden olarak ben ve öteki pozisyonlarını kaybetmelerine neden olur.

Bahtin, estetik deneyimin birbirinden ayrı iki özne gerektirdiğini vurgulayarak empati durumunda tek özneye indirgenen yazar-kahraman ilişkisinin bir tamamlama ve dışardan deneyimleme durumu içermediği için estetik deneyim olmadığını vurgular. Bu bağlamda, estetik etkinliği tek bir özneye indirgeyen empati yerine, her iki öznenin de dışsallığını koruduğu sempati kavramına dayandırır. Ancak öznenin ötekine bir yabancı olarak değil, sevgi ile yaklaştığı empati durumda iki özne birbirinden ayrı olarak var olabilir ve bu durumda estetik deneyimden söz edilebilir. Daha sonra göreceğimiz gibi sadece estetik etkinlikte değil, diyaloji kavramı ve diyalojik ilişki içinde iki ayrı öznenin varlığı

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gerekecektir. Bu açıdan hem ben-öteki hem de yazar-kahraman arasındaki ilişkinin sadece estetik değil aynı zamanda etik bir ilişki olduğu bu tezde işlenmek istenilen asıl konudur.

Yazar-kahraman ilişkisini ben ve öteki arasındaki ilişki çerçevesinde inceledikten sonra, yazar-kahraman arasındaki ilişkinin farklı edebi türlerdeki özelliklerini ele almak için tezin ikinci bölümünde edebi türlerin tarihsel gelişimleri incelenecektir. Bahtin *Karnavaldan Romana* adlı yapıtında türlerin temel bileşenlerini uzam ve zaman özelliklerine odaklanarak kronotop (*chronotope*) kavramı ile ifade eder. Her tür kendi içinde farklı zamansal ve mekânsal özellikler içerir. Bahtin bu incelemeye arkaik forma sahip en eski tür olan epik ile başlar. Bu türün en önemli özelliği zamanı "mutlak geçmiş" olarak ele almasıdır. Bu "mutlak geçmiş" mutlak başlangıçları (*absolute beginnings*), mutlak sonları (*absolute ends*) ve döneminin önemli durumlarını gösteren zirveleri (*peak times*) içerir. Bu mutlak geçmiş kişisel deneyimlerden ve özgür düşünceden uzak tek bir inanç sistemi ve tek yazar söylemi ile temsil edilir. Kahramanlar ve anlatıcı arasında mutlak bir zaman ve mekân farkı bulunmaktadır. Bu açıdan bakıldığında epik tamamlanmış ve değiştirilmesi imkânsız bir dönemi işaret eder.

Menippos yergisi, epikten hemen sonra mutlak söylemi yıkmaya çalışan bir tür olarak ortaya çıkar. Epik zamanın mutlak başlangıç ve sonlarının aksine, Menippos yergisi şimdiye odaklanır. Bu açıdan epiğin tamamlanmış, mutlak döngüsünü kırarak zamansal olarak anlatıcı ve kahramanı aynı düzleme çeker. Epik türde kahramanlar genellikle tanrılar, şövalyeler ve soylu insanlar iken, Menippos yergisinin kahramanları yüksek kültürü eleştiren ve bunun parodisini yapan kahramanlara dönüşmüştür. Bu kahramanlar içlerinde köle-efendi, soytarı-kral gibi çeşitli zıtlıkları barındırdığından çokluğuna dayandığından çoksesliliğin ilk nüvelerini bu türde görmek mümkündür. Menippos satirinde yüksek kültürün eleştirilmesi türe özgürleştirici bir güç kazandırmıştır.

Bahtin'in ele aldığı bir başka tür ise Sokratik diyalogtur. Menippos satirine benzer şekilde kahramanlar arasında geçen diyaloğa dayalı olan bu türde, hakikat

kahramanlar arasındaki diyalojik sohbet ile ortaya çıkar. Bu sohbet sırasında kahramanlardan biri ideolog olarak yer alır ve sorulan sorular çerçevesinde, verdiği cevaplar aracılığı ile hakikate ulaşmaya çalışır. Bu açıdan Sokratik diyaloğun en önemli özelliği, hakikatin iki insanın diyalojik deneyiminde ortaya çıkmasıdır.

Romandan önceki son edebi tür olan karnaval Latinceden gelen carn/et vale/veda sözcüklerine dayanır. Özellikle Katoliklerde hayvansal ürünlere veda anlamı taşıyan büyük perhizden hemen önce yapılan, insanların değişik kılıklara bürünerek kutlandığı festivaller karnaval kültürünün temelini oluşturmaktadır. Özellikle karnavalın mekân olarak kent meydanı gibi halka açık yerlerde gerçekleşmesi tüm insanlara açık olması çoksesliliğe zemin hazırlaması açısından önemlidir. Diğer bir önemli özellik ise taç giyme ve tahttan indirme seremonilerinde soytarı ve hükümdar arasındaki hiyerarşinin yok olmasıdır. Bahtin'e göre karnaval, içerdiği zıtlıklar ve gülme (*laughter*) özelliği otoriteyi ve teksesliliği yıkar. Bu nedenle edebiyatın gelişimine en büyük katkının karnaval türü sayesinde olduğunu savunur.

Bahtin epik, Menippos yergisi, Sokratik diyalog ve karnaval türünü tamamlanmış edebi türler olarak görürken bunların karşısına hala gerçekleşmekte olan roman türünü koyar. Diğer türler zaman zaman diyalojik özellikler gösterseler dahi çoksesliliğin ve diyalojizmin hayat bulduğu tek tür romandır. Unutulmamalıdır ki Bahtin'e göre her roman diyalojik değildir. Bahtin diyalojik/çoksesli romanın karşısında monolojik/eşsesli klasik Avrupa romanını konumlandırır. Monolojik romanda kahraman, anlamsal sınırları bakımından kapalıdır. Nesnel varoluşa sahip, hareketsiz sonlu bir tözdür, yani gerçeklik olarak var olduğu düzlemin sınırları içerisinde hareket eder. Diyalojik romanlara baktığımızda ise kahraman öz-bilince sahiptir. Bahtin'e göre "bilincin başladığı yerde diyalog da başlar." Yazar, "kahramanın herşeyi yutan bilincinin karşısına kahramanınkiler ile eşit haklara sahip öteki bilinçlerin dünyasını koyar." Kahramanın karşısına konumlanan öteki bilinç sayesinde diyalojik romanın temeli atılmış olur. Fakat romandaki söylemde, kahramanları cisimleşmiş öteki bilinçler şeklinde görmek doğru olmayacaktır.

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Diyalojik romanı, epik dünyadan bir kopuş olarak nitelendiren Bahtin, bu görüşünü kahramanlar arasındaki çokseslilğe dayandırır. Çoksesliliğin kurulması için gereken en temel özellik yazarın kahramana karşı olan otoriter tutumu bırakarak teksesliliği terk etmesi ve daha önce anlatılmış olduğu gibi kahramana sevgi ve sempati çerçevesinde yaklaşmasıdır. Yazar ve kahraman ilişkisi, birbirinden bağımsız iki ayrı özne olarak kurulduktan sonra ancak ben-öteki hiyerarşisi aşılabilir. Yazar-kahraman arasındaki sempati ve sevgiye dayanan bu ilişki sayesinde hem yazar hem de kahraman teksesli otoriter monologu yıkarak çoksesli romana geçiş yapabilecektir. Böylece çokseslilik ve diyalojizm sadece kahramanın değil yazarın da özgürleşmesini sağlayacaktır. Ancak bu iki özne arasındaki hiyerarşik ilişki aşıldıktan sonra kahramanlar arasında çoksesli bir romanın varlığı mümkün olabilir.

Ben-öteki ve yazar-kahraman arasındaki ilişkileri çeşitli şekillerde ele aldıktan sonra bu ilişkilerin etik boyutu tartışmak amacıyla Bahtin'in B*ir Eylem Felsefesine Doğru* metnine odaklanarak sanat ve yaşam ilişkisine odaklanacağım. Bu metinde Bahtin kültür (*the world of culture*) ve yaşamı (*the world of life*) birbirinden ayrı iki alan olarak tanımlamaktadır. Kültür alanı düşünsel ve kültürel formların sistematik bütünlüğünden oluşurken, yaşam öznelerin dünya üzerindeki biricik konumlarındaki tekil deneyimlere dayanmaktadır. İnsanların bir kez doğup yalnızca bir kez ölümü deneyimledikleri gibi yaşam alanında her an tekrar edilemeyen, kısa süreli, öznel deneyimlerden oluşmaktadır. Bu açıdan yaşam geri dönüşü mümkün olmayan, bir oluş halidir. Yaşamın taşıdığı bu özelliklere zıt olarak ise kültür alanı nesnel, soyut, tekrar edilebilir düşünsel ve kültürel formlardan oluşmaktadır. Anlam kültür alanında bu nesnel, soyut ve tekrar edilebilir formların tekrarlanması ile ortaya çıkar ve yeniden farklı biçimlerde aktarılabilir. Bahtin'e göre kültür trajedisi (*the tragedy of the culture*) öznenin kültür alanından elde ettiği anlamı hayata taşıması sırasında ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu açıdan sanat ve yaşam, bireyin anlam arayışında bir kesişim noktasına sahiptir.

Bahtin'e göre kültür alanı özneye verilmiş (*given*) tamamlanmış (*completed*), uygun (*sufficient*) formlar bütünüyken, yaşam alanında özne belirlenmiş (*posited*) durumları deneyimlemektedir. Bu da öznenin kendisini kültür alanındaki evrensel formlar ve yaşam alanındaki tekil deneyimler arasındaki zıtlık arasında bulmasına neden olur. Bahtin, öznenin aşması gerektiği bu durumu kültür trajedisi olarak adlandırır. Özne, yaşam alanında biricik, tekrar edilemez ve öznel konumu ile, kültür alanında evrensel, soyut, düşünsel formlar arasında anlam aracılığı ile ilişki kurmaya çalışır. Anlamın soyut ve evrensel kültür alanından alınarak öznel ve tekil yaşam alanına uygulanması sırasında ortaya çıkan ve trajedi olarak adlandırılan bu ikilik, Bahtin'e göre ancak öznelerarasılık (*intersubjectivity*) ile giderilebilir.

Bahtin öznelerarasılık kavramı ile öznenin yaşam ve kültür içerisindeki konumunu yeniden ele alarak bu ikiliği sorumluluk kavramı ile aşmaya çalışır. Edebiyat da kültürün ayrılmaz bir parçası olduğundan bu çalışmaya yazar-kahraman arasındaki ilişkiye odaklanarak başlar. Kültür ve yaşam alanının bir araya gelerek karşılıklı olarak etkileşimde bulunmalarını sağlayan tür Bahtin için edebiyat, özellikle de roman türüdür. Bu bağlamda yazarın kahramana karşı sorumlu tutumu, kahramanı kendinden bağımsız ve aynı düzlemde bir özne olarak ele alması ve kahramana kendi sesini yaratacak alanı sağlaması öznelerarasılık kavramının önemli unsurlarındandır. Bu açıdan öznelerarasılık sadece estetik etkinliğin değil aynı zaman da etik değerlerin yaratımı için de önem arz eder.

Kültür trajedisini aşmanın yolu olan öznelerarasılığını öncelikle yazar-kahraman arasında kurulan ilişkide aramak gerekmektedir. Daha önce de belirtildiği gibi yazar-kahraman ilişkisi ben ve öteki arasındaki ilişkiye benzer şekilde kurulmaktadır. Yazarın kahramanı bir nesne ya da yabancı olarak değil, sevgi ve sempati ile yaklaşarak onu kendi ile eşit gördüğü bir özne olarak kabul etmesi öznelerarasılığın ilk koşuludur. Bahtin'e göre ancak bu şekilde iki ayrı özne ile estetik etkinlik meydana gelebilir. Bu açıdan estetik etkinlikte yazarın özne, kahramanın ise sadece bir nesne olduğu konum terk edilir. Yazar/özne ve kahraman/nesne ayrımı terk edilip iki ayrı öznenin etkileşimi ile doğan estetik

etkinlikte anlam özneler arası diyalogdan doğacağı için, anlamın yaratılması ve taşınması sırasında ortaya çıkan kültür/yaşam ayrımı da aşılabilir.

Bahtin'e göre yazar, yaşamın biricik, tekil ve sınırlı alanında yer alırken, kahraman kültür dünyasına ait olan soyut, tekrar edilebilir, çeşitli düşünsel ve kültürel formların yer aldığı edebiyatın alanında farklı deneyimlere sahip olabilir. Bahtin, bu iki farklı dünya arasındaki ayrımın yazarın, kahramanı yaratırken yaşam alanından çıkarak kültür alanına girmesi ile aşılacağını söyler. Anlamın kültür alanında ortaya çıkması ve yazarın kahramanı yaratırken kendi öznel ve biricik yaşamından ayrılarak, kültür alanına girmesi bu ikiliğin aşılmaya başlandığı noktadır. Yazar, kahraman ile olan ilişkisinde yaşam alanındaki tekil deneyimden değil, kültür alanındaki evrensel formlardan faydalanır. Bu açıdan yazar-kahraman ilişkisi anlamın yaratılması ve aktarılması hususunda da önemlidir.

Kültür alanında ortaya çıkan yazar-kahraman arasındaki ilişki sadece estetik değil aynı zamanda etik bir ilişkidir. Yazarın estetik etkinlikte yaratım süreci ve kahramana karşı olan tutumu etik olarak incelendiğinde yazarın kahramana karşı otoriter tutumu monolojik olarak adlandırılırken, iki ayrı öznenin çoksesli ilişkisi diyalojik olarak adlandırılır. Bu açıdan yazarın özne, kahramanında nesne konumunda olduğu monolojik ilişkinin yerine, Bahtin yazar kahraman arasındaki ilişkinin iki özne arasında gerçekleştiği diyalojizmi ve öznelerarasılığı estetik etkinliğin etik bir koşulu olarak görür. Yazarın kahramana öteki yahut dilsiz bir nesne olarak değil, kendinden bağımsız ayrı bir özne olarak yaklaşması ve bunu sempati ve sevgi nosyonlarını kullanarak yapması, kahramanın estetik etkinlikteki etik duruşunun nasıl olması gerektiğini göstermektedir. Kısacası, estetik etkinlikte yazar-kahraman arasındaki hiyerarşinin kalkması, romanın teksesliliklerinden çoksesliliğe geçmesi ile sadece edebiyat ve kültür alanında değil aynı zamanda ben ve öteki ilişkisinin yer aldığı yaşam dünyasında da ikiliği aşmak için de bir olanak sağlayacaktır.

Sonuç olarak, öncelikle yazar ve kahraman arasındaki ilişkinin sevgi, sempati ve çokseslilige dayanması, ardından bu yaratım sürecinde yaşam ve hayat

arasındaki trajedinin aşılması Bahtin'in edebiyat teorisine borçlu olduğumuz diyalojizm ve öznelerarasılık kavramları ile mümkündür. Bahtin, teorisini edebi türler üzerinden inşa etmiş olsa da bu tezin sonunda görmekteyiz ki sadece edebiyat ve kültür alanında değil yaşamın kendisinde de ben-öteki ikiliğinin aşılmasında diyalojizmin ve öznelerarasılığın önemi büyüktür. Yazarın kahramana sempati ve sevgi ile yaklaşması onu bağımsız etik bir özne olarak ele alması yaşam alanında da ben-öteki arasındaki ikiliğin aşılması açısından umut vaat etmektedir.

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