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**A STUDY OF MARGARET ATWOOD'S DYSTOPIAN
NOVELS: *THE HANDMAID'S TALE* AND *ORYX AND
CRAKE***

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ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

Margaret Atwood'un Distopik Romanlarının Bir İncelemesi:
Damızlık Kızın Öyküsü ve Antilop ve Flurya

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Margaret Atwood'un *Damızlık Kızın Öyküsü* ve *Antilop ve Flurya* distopik roman türüne örnek olup korku temasını yansıtmıştır. Distopyalar, ütopyaların aksine, toplumun bulunduğu koşulların negatif yönlerinin yansıtılmasıdır; ve hatta gelecekte nasıl bir felaket olabileceğini sunmaktadır. Bu açıdan, distopik romanlar bizi bekleyen korkunç geleceğin uyarıları olarak nitelendirilir.

Korku teması için kullanılacak en iyi yöntem psikanalizm, ve en çarpıcı fikirleri sunan psikanalist Jacques Lacan'dır. Lacan, Freud'un psikanalizini genişleterek imgesel, simgesel ve gerçeklik kavramları ve imgeseldeki "Baba'nın Adı" üzerinde durur. Dilin bilinçaltındaki önemini, ve psikoseksüel gelişimin en önemli aşaması olarak "ayna dönemi"ni, yani çocuğun aynada kendisini fark etmeye başladığı dönemi vurgular. Bu aşamada çocuk, yansımasını benliğinden farklı algılayarak yabancılaşmanın ilk adımlarını atmaya başlar. Diğer bir çatışması ise, annenin varlığının sembolik düzendeki çocuğa olan "hadım edici" etkisidir. Margaret Atwood dilin önemini vurgulayarak, *Antilop ve Flurya* hariç diğer romanlarında kadın baş kahramanlar kullanarak anlatımını gerçekleştirmiştir. Atwood'a göre "içerik her şeydir".

Bu bağlamda, *Damızlık Kızın Öyküsü*, 1980'lerdeki Amerikan toplumunun ve üreme politikasının nasıl kadınları kurban ettiğinin bir kadın anlatıcısı tarafından sunulmuşudur. Kadınlar, kendi vücutlarına yabancılaşmış, kendi içlerinde bölünmüşlerdir. Bunun başlıca nedeni okuma ve yazmalarının yasaklanması, bir başka deyişle dil üzerindeki hakimiyetlerinin kalması; "Baba'nın Adı"nın dominant olmasıdır. *Antilop ve Flurya* ise erkek sunuşuyla biyoteknolojinin yaratabileceği cehennemi yansıtmaktadır. *Damızlık Kızın Öyküsü*'nde olduğu gibi, "babanın adı" ve dil, bölünmüşlük, annenin etkisi üzerinde durulmuştur. Bu iki romanının biri kadın diğeri erkek tarafından anlatılsa da, ikisi de korku temasını yansıtmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Margaret Atwood, *Damızlık Kızın Öyküsü*, *Antilop ve Flurya*, Distopik roman,

ABSTRACT

Master Thesis

A Study of Margaret Atwood's Dystopian Novels: *The Handmaid's Tale* and
Oryx and Crake

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Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake*, as dystopic novels, reflect the theme of fear. Unlike utopias, dystopias present ills of society and even how far the disaster can be. In this respect, dystopic novels are described as warnings for horrifying future.

For the theme – fear, the best approach is psychoanalysis, and the most significant psychoanalyst is Jacques Lacan. Extending Freudianism, Lacan introduces imaginary, symbolic, real orders; and “Name of Father” within imaginary. He points out the importance of language within unconsciousness and “mirror stage”, as a part of psychosexual development, in which a child, for the first time, recognizes his/her body as something separate from his/her identity; thus, he/she is alienated. Another challenge for child is “castrating” impact of his/her mother. Highlighting the importance of language, Margaret Atwood has used female protagonists in her novels except for *Oryx and Crake*. To Atwood, “context is all”.

To this extent, *The Handmaid's Tale* is female presentation of American society of 1980s and their victimhood for reproduction politics. Women are alienated and fragmented because of the prohibition of reading and writing basically; in other words, the predominance of “law of father”. Via male narration, *Oryx and Crake* reflects how a hell biotechnology can create. Like in *The Handmaid's Tale*, “law of father”, language, fragmentation, and the influence of mother are indicated. Both novels are representations of fear although their presentation are made by two people of different genders.

Keywords: Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Oryx and Crake*, Dystopian Novels

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THE HANDMAID'S TALE AND ORYX AND CRAKE

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INTRODUCTION

This study is about Margaret Atwood's two dystopian novels – *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake* which were written with the dystopian tradition of the twentieth century. Unlike Sir Thomas More and many other dreamers, Margaret Atwood became the follower of George Orwell's and Aldoux Huxley's point of view reflected on their *1984* and *Brave New World*. These dystopian writers opposed idealism with worst-case scenarios. The common points of dystopian literature are the ills of totalitarian regime, the intervention of politics into many subjects, the manipulation of language, and therefore the unavoidable terror. In most cases, terror comes with the technology orientation of the world because most of the works of the dystopian literature present a world of mad people who try to control the world via biotechnological advancements.

Brave New World by Aldoux Huxley portrays a society passivated by the government via drugs. These people are made to work for the government and wait for the death time. The use of drug is a way to take the traits for granted while bad events are cleared from their memories. *1984* is the presentation of another society – “Ocenia” in which people are made passive. In the end, like in *Brave New World*, injection is made to passivate the protagonist. Therefore, the common cases of dystopian novels are the enslavement of people for the sake of totalitarian government. In this respect, *The Handmaid's Tale* is the story of handmaids who are captured to produce child. In *Oryx and Crake*, the male protagonist of the novel is made passive by the genius mad men of science, and he remains as a “word-serf”. My interest is that *The Handmaid's Tale* represents the female perspective of the dystopic genre; however, *Oryx and Crake* is another dystopia narrated by a male unlike the protagonist of Atwood's many other novels; and they are the novels of the theme of fear although they are presented differently. Therefore, Atwood demonstrates the ill traits within society reflecting the both genders. In this respect, language and fragmentation are the most significant elements of the basis of fear.

In the atmosphere of repression, fear becomes the policy in every unit of the civilized world. The anxiety is created in our unconsciousness via institutionalized language, fragmentation and social fragmentation as being “the other”; and cultural bias causing that woman is the weakest link, are inescapable outcomes of such instilment. One of the forerunners of psychoanalytic approach – Jacques Lacan suggests that it is language that sets the social status of men and women and so the superiority or inferiority of people. The first pain for a child is fragmentation; separation from mother’s womb. Mother’s womb is the place where an infant feels secure and united with the mother as the Lacanian idea of child’s first developmental stage – Oceanic Stage. This means endless security and affection inside for the child. Thus, the first event which threatens child is its birth. However, the first real alienation, the evoking of feeling “the other”, fragmentation occurs when the child begins to recognize himself/herself in the mirror. This transformation from Oceanic Stage to Mirror Stage is crucial because it is the first experiment of one’s recognition of his/her self or identity. In the mirror, child sees itself as somebody different, strange, or apart from his/her body. One might say that this alienation is fragmentation and the separation of one’s identity from his/her body. As a result, when he/she understands the invisible practices of institutions or social norms, he/she tries to define the expected roles of his/her sex; that is socially committed form of sex status – gender. Lacan believes that in such a patriarchally institutionalized world as the result of the order of “Law of Father”, language elaborates those social roles. Within pre-school period, children are freer from such unseen rules; nonetheless, they observe the social roles within their family. Their father rules the house as the authoritative figure and more confident than mother not only inside, but also the outside the house. However, mother is symbolically “castrated” and devilish character of the house for she envies the symbolic function of father’s penis. While children are growing up, boys are getting to resemble father because it is the better solution to get rid of mother’s “man-made” weak character, passive life. Unfortunately, girls are already doomed to be the mini form of the mother as “the other”. Unless a boy is on his father’s side, he becomes “the other” like a girl castrated and silenced. These positions are taught them by language - the language which belongs to the symbolic father; and

this is the Lacanian concept of the “Name of the Father”. The Name of the Father functions as subject’s positioning via naming. In the novels, subjects are the protagonists. Because of this naming process, these characters, in their early childhood, yield in the father’s symbolic order which is the implication of phallogocentric world, and this imaginary and symbolic order is called “Law of Father”. Thus, the microcosm of adult’s real world – family imposes fear according to such criterion. Fragmentation as the notion of fear and the impacts of language in the way of creating fear for the sake of politics will be the subjects of the last two parts of the chapters - “*The Handmaid’s Tale*” and “*Oryx and Crake*”.

The first chapter will be about the genre – dystopia compared to utopia and atopia. The first part of this chapter is the presentation of the utopia and dystopia with comparisons. Utopia, as Michael W. Barclay defends, is the portrayal of an ideal society to criticize the society in which a writer lives. The term stands for “nowhere” or “no place” referring that the place that it represents is the place of perfection so that it cannot be real; and the first utopia was written by Sir Thomas More.

Nevertheless, Barclay suggests that the genre of utopia and dystopia are both perspectives, not the origins of a situation. Thus, both can be protests for the ills of society in which writer lives and narrating the story within a positive frame or a negative frame depends on the writer who chooses his/her genre. In addition, both of them have the politically-coded effects on psychology thanks to language and rhetoric. According to Barclay, dystopia, in fact, is a protest to utopian positive perspective ignoring the problems within society. Eugene Zamiatin’s *We* (1921), Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932/1939), George Orwell’s *1984* (1949), Kurt Vonnegut’s *Player Piano* (1952/74), Anthony Burgess’ *A Clockwork Orange* (1962), and Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985/86) are the most remarkable examples of dystopia. I will discuss *1984* and *Brave New World* within the following segments of this part. Unlike these novels, Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* introduces a female perspective to the genre with a female narrator and protagonist. While it is thought to be a feminist dystopia, *Oryx and*

Crake presents a male narration (different from Atwood's former narration style) which has the same psychological themes related to the theme of fear. In the second part, the genre – atopia and the characteristics of the dystopian literature will be defined. The clearest definitions and why the dystopian tradition is more significant from utopian one will be discussed. In this regard, it is discussed that dystopian literature has the impact of warning society about the evils of today's traits and unless the society do something to stop these traits, the nightmare will be real end of the world. Hence, dystopian literature has much more impact of creating the society of harmony. In the end, *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake* will be examined briefly.

The second chapter is about psychoanalysis method in which Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, and Julia Kristeva will be mentioned. A short biography of each of them will be given. In the first part – “Freudianism”, Freudian concepts will be explained from Rod W. Horton and Herbert W. Edwards's work called *Backgrounds of American Literary Thought* from the Chapter – “Freudianism and Other Currents”. Transference of love, Freudian psyche: Conscious, Pre-conscious, Unconscious; Id, Ego, and Super-Ego; and Oedipus Complex are the concepts which will be explained. The second part is the comparison of Freudianism and Lacanian psychoanalysis. The early parts vividly define Lacan with his life and philosophy. The following paragraphs consist of their comparisons. Like this part, the third part is another comparison of Lacanian psychoanalysis and Julia Kristeva's perspective of psychoanalysis. The most remarkable notion which is comparable is the function of mirror in psychoanalysis, the function of language, and women's significance in psychoanalysis.

The third chapter is about Margaret Atwood. Margaret Atwood is the prophet of disasters which are true to life, in other words, she can easily perceive the world as it is – coming to a nightmarish end. In fact, she does not suggest an end of life; Atwoodian world just gets worse day by day, although her imaginary world resembles or even identical to our real world. She foresees the bad consequences of today's nightmarish realities. In her *The Handmaid's Tale* and

Oryx and Crake, she appeals to Lacanian aspects of fear. Although they are presented in different ways, they can be compared since both of them reflect the same subject. In fact, their being completely different but ideally identical is quite crucial to point out that fear is everywhere in life. Atwood's style and impact on the literary world will be examined within the first part. The second part is the submission of her novels: *The Edible Woman* (1969), *Surfacing* (1972), *Lady Oracle* (1976), *Life Before Man* (1979), *Bodily Harm* (1981), *Cat's Eye* (1988), *The Robber Bride* (1993), *Alias Grace* (1996), *The Blind Assassin* (2000), and *Penelopiad* (2005). *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) and *Oryx and Crake* (2003) will be mentioned within separate paragraphs.

The fourth chapter is about *The Handmaid's Tale*. The first part gives historical background of the novel and concentrates on the 1980s in the United States and the era of Ronald Reagan. After the revolutionary era of the 1960s and 1970s, Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, and many others had to do something to prevent traditional values as the ideology of their policy which is indoctrinated via fear. Quotations from Frank Furedi's *The Culture of Fear* are the indication of fear within sociological aspect.

Secondly, I will examine the characters of the novel. The protagonist and the narrator – Offred is of course the most remarkable character of the novel. Through her narration, the reader is given a story within a story and she portrays the repression and fear as the conclusion skillfully. Other characters which are necessary to discuss are the Commander, Moira, Serena Joy, Nick, Luke, and Aunts. Commander Fred is a figure of oppressive regime. Moira is Offred's close friend as a rebellious character where as Serena Joy is the defender of traditional roles as Commander Fred's wife. Luke is Offred's husband, and Nick is another trust-worthy male character. Aunts are handmaids' supervisors who teach them how to be traditional.

The context and the plot of the novel will be given within the third part. The reflections of religious extremism, ideology of 1980s leading to anxiety of ambiguity, problems of intrust will be given through the synopsis.

The fourth part of this chapter will be the definitions or comments on the novel made by some famous critics; such as, Lucy M. Freibert, Coral Ann Howells, Barbara Hill Rigney, and Michael W. Barclay. The last two parts of this chapter will be about fragmentation creating fear, and the function of language.

Unlike the analysis of *The Handmaid's Tale*, the fifth chapter about *Oryx and Crake* does not have the historical background part. This novel is presented differently from *The Handmaid's Tale*. It is due to the fact that the narration and the society are shown in a different way. In the former novel, a female narrates the story about repression of the system especially on women while the latter one is narrated by a male and the story indicates the males' world generally. However, Atwood gives a story within a story, thus the outcomes of both are the same. Repression in *The Handmaid's Tale* and greed in *Oryx and Crake* lead to isolation through the process of fragmentation and the effects of language.

The first part of the chapter – *Oryx and Crake*, includes the analysis of the characters. Jimmy/Snowman is the narrator and the protagonist of the novel. While Jimmy is being told about, his mother, his father and their effects on Jimmy's psychology will be mentioned briefly. Crake and Oryx are the other phenomenal characters.

The context of the novel and critics are the focuses of the second part. Critics defining the novel and commenting on it are Shannon Hengen, Martha Montello, Anthony Griffiths, and Traci Warketin. Aforementioned characteristics of fragmentation and language will be the subject of the last two parts of the fifth chapter. Therefore, Atwoodian understanding of "context" reflects the impacts of language which leads to fragmentation and these themes are coming to be the basis of anxiety or fear of the characters of both novels. Although Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* is thought to be written with the elements of feminist literature,

it is the equivalent of *Oryx and Crake* narrated by a male protagonist. Hence, no matter how gender are presented, Atwood seems to suggest that sex or gender is not all to deal with in order to protect people from psychological suffering; and Lacan is the one who points out the gender-based establishments and codes in human psychology are the most remarkable threats.

I. DEFINING THE GENRE: DYSTOPIA

The genre of Margaret Atwood's Novels *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake* is dystopia. A dystopia is the creation of a new society which is an opposition to utopia. A dystopian society is thus the creation of a place where life is extremely bad – full of diseases and pollution and where human are miserable, poor, oppressed. A dystopia therefore does not pretend to be utopian; in fact, it is a fatal flaw or destruction or twisted the intention of utopian world or concept.

Dystopia is a term used to describe the negative form of utopian and utopian thinking called negative utopia or counter-utopia. Therefore, it is crucial to explain the utopia. Within the framework, utopia and atopia are the concerns to be evaluated to define dystopia and the perspectives of dystopian novels. To eliminate the extremes, Atopia is suggested as a genre which is presented as the synthesis of utopia and dystopia

1.1. COMPARISON OF UTOPIA AND DYSTOPIA, AND THE NOVELS

Utopian thinking reflects the society within a more positive way enhancing the qualities of society and offers a more peaceful life of friendship. "Utopia has traditionally provided an imaginary perspective (utopia = 'nowhere' or 'no place') from which to critique existing societies" (Barclay, 30). Stating that utopian tradition began with Sir Thomas More in 1516, Michael W. Barclay regards that utopia includes criticisms within metaphoric terms (Barclay, 30). He explains and discusses the terms utopia, dystopia, and atopia in his thesis defining utopian thinking:

The concept of utopian thinking reflects the opposite discovery of the political struggle, namely that certain oppressed groups are intellectually so strongly interested in the destruction of transformation of a given condition of society that they unwittingly see only those elements in the situation which tend to negate it. Their thinking is incapable of correctly diagnosing an existing condition of society. They are not all concerned with what really exists; rather in their thinking they already seek to change situation

that exists. Their thought is never a diagnosis of the situation; it can be used only as a direction of an action. In the utopian mentality, the collective unconscious, guided by wishful representation and the will to action, hides certain aspects of reality. Mannheim (1936) *Ideology and Utopia* (Barclay, 1).

In this respect, utopian or, as one may suggest, dystopian thinking is not directed to the origin of the situation. These are merely the perspectives that a writer wants to suggest; hence, there are more than one perspective within a situation. Barclay states that utopianism is labeled as the definition of the change of structures according to good, efficient, and rational person (Barclay, 2). It is the idealized characterization of human which leads to human perfection. However, such an idealized version of human presence is misguidance in psychotherapy (Barclay, 8).

In addition to these ideas, utopian thinking has political impacts on psychology coded by language (Barclay, 8) which is one of the most effective concerns of dystopian tradition. "Psychology has political implications" (Barclay, 8). Utopia is the re-formation of a world which is away from the recent social problems and in which people are shown to live within their fantasies. The main implication of dystopian tradition is thus the escape offered by utopian thinking (Barclay, 9).

Barclay suggests two kinds of utopian thinking in psychology: theoretical and practical. He defines a variety of writers of theoretical utopias from Plato to Sir Thomas More, with whom it became utopia, to dystopias where it became negative utopia or counter-utopia.

With respect to utopian thinking, Barclay defines dystopia as "no less a dream than the utopian tract" and "it is simply a bad dream" (Barclay, 11); and he continues as follows:

At the root of bad dream, psychoanalytically speaking is a wish. The wish is really not that different from the wish at the root of the utopian dream: to better the condition of human life. The dystopian

form of this wish presents its message in the caveat. The dystopian novel warns us.

Because the dystopian novel might be construed as a dream (similarly to utopian works) and because interpretation of the text is essential to the proposed project, I intent to use s method of study which combines textual interpretation (hermeneutics) and psychoanalytic dream interpretation as models ... (Barclay, 11)

In other words, in the base of utopian thinking there is the wish to see the idealized version of situations like the inclination toward seeing a negative way of utopian thinking is a choice in dystopian tradition. Dystopian thinking is the rise of post-modern ideas given by the gloomy themes of nihilism, pessimism, and relativism as well as optimism, new-age spiritualism, and dogmatism (Barclay, 31-32). Therefore, Dystopia enables a way to express negative feelings about future and this is a kind of warning about future. The female protagonist of *The Handmaid's Tale*, Offred starts to find herself in dangerous situation because of the power structure of the masculine utopia (Barclay, 53). One might suggest that in *Oryx and Crake*, men's social conditions reflect another masculine utopia which is the following dystopian novel of *The Handmaid's Tale*. However, this masculine utopia ends with another nightmare.

This conscious choice of seeing the negative side of the world is best represented in Eugene Zamiatin's *We* (1921), Aldoux Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932/1939), George Orwell's *1984* (1949), Kurt Vonnegut's *Player Piano* (1952/74), Anthony Burgess' *A Cloakwork Orange* (1962), and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985/86) (Barclay, 10). Atwood's novels *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake* are rooted back to Orwell's and Huxley's dystopian tradition.

Written in 1949 by George Orwell, *1984* is a fiction which tries to indicate the malfunction of an authoritarian regime of the society - Oceania. The protagonist of the novel is Wilson Smith, smart worker of Ministry of Truth, tries to escape from the pressures of the society. However, he is arrested and psychologically tortured. This novel is one of the first examples of the condemnation of social control, repressive regime, and the idea of "Big Brother" which observes the

citizens of the society to prevent disorder and rebellion. Women issues and the control over sexuality is just one of the elements of the novel. *Brave New World* (1932) is a reflection of a so-called hedonistic society where drug use and promiscuous sex are free. However, intellectual activities are limited for the sake of the new society and people are unable to be with their family freely. Therefore, intellectual progress is cut. Henry Ford is the idol model of the society; thus they have to work hard to achieve their goal. However, everybody lives in the same standards, and government makes its citizens use drugs to eliminate their bad memories. Here again, social control is at the highest level. Control over mind is provided through drugs.

The images of power are the strongest motives of these novels. *The Brave New World* and *1984* “make use of cinema and television to draw an extremely pessimistic picture of humanity’s future, emphasizing their role as essential means for distorting reality and, in case of Fordian society, also for providing artificial pleasures which dim the mind (Varricchio, no pag.)”. In such standardized societies individuality and personal life are ignored or intentionally denied. According to Mario Varricchio, Huxley’s dystopia is the reflection of American society because people do not want to be cultured and are not interested in the higher life while Orwellian society is just like the totalitarian regimes developed in the Soviet Union and Germany in 1920s and 1930s (Varricchio, no pag.). Hence, these dystopias are not the alarms of a nightmarish future; they were the cultural products of the society of those years.

The Handmaid’s Tale is a different aspect of dystopia for it defines the world from women’s perspective. Unlike *The Handmaid’s Tale* and Margaret Atwood’s many other novels, *Oryx and Crake* is a fiction which is narrated by a male character. They represent the same ideas, notwithstanding both are presented uniquely.

1.2. DEFINING ATOPIA

Atopia is a new ground to explain the dialectic of utopia and dystopia. Like utopia and dystopia, atopia is a place and “each is a manner of speaking, really – places from language from which critiques, recommendations or warnings can be offered” (Barclay, 32). However, atopia “provides a discourse which accepts limits, celebrate differences, and rejects the possibility of a totalizing, dominating discourse which seeks homogeneity” (Barclay, 33). Thus, atopia offers a new place in which people are free from labels and do not mind limits; nonetheless, totalitarianism cannot even exist within any structure.

With respect to these ideas, atopia is a new perspective which diminishes non-totalization as the understanding of utopia. Nevertheless, it omits the extremes of utopia and dystopia as the synthesis of thesis (utopia) and anti-thesis (counter-utopia/dystopia) and it includes the elements of both utopia and dystopia.

1.3. CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSTOPIAN LITERATURE

The most remarkable genre of the twentieth century is constituted by double negative sources which is called “literary example of reverse psychology” by Michael W. Barclay (Barclay, 94). This type of literature is a reaction to ideally good motives dominated utopia and gives to messages from utopia.

Some critics comment that utopia does not indicate any political or philosophical point of view; thus it is not a protest behind the idealized world of criticism mask (Barclay, 94). However, as Barclay defends, in respect of dystopia, the message and the resistance is shown through the illusionary world of nightmare equating ideology and utopia. The dystopian novel is then the action of “warning; the totalitarianism which it imagines is dehumanizing, of course, but furthermore, it is hostile, manipulative, cruel, invasive, perverting, virtually uncontrolled, uncreative, unimaginative, without conscience with respect to individual human lives” (Barclay, 94). While utopia is good, it is evil.

Within the framework of these ideas, Michael W. Barclay suggests that dystopia is based on the utopian ideals (to reach the perfect harmony of the world) behind the image of evil. In this regard, the ambiguity is made vivid within the dialect of utopia and dystopia. The exaggeration of the systems simply evokes the feelings that are not wanted as the presentations implying the opposite. The ideal world which implied by both utopia and dystopia is full of humanism, beyond hostility, kind, unintrusive, imaginative, creative, controlled, with the conscience and in support of individual freedom, in short - a society of harmony, concordance (Barclay, 94).

Indicating the negative future of the world and warning about it, dystopia is, in fact, supposes a possible future. Novels are presented in a negative way as the extension of ideology, according to Barclay. The dystopian genre warns the reader that unless they avoid the positive, disregardful style of utopian thinking, the future of a nightmare will be unavoidable. Thus, evil dystopia will be unavoidable reality. "The implied nature of utopian message gives it its character as an ideology. Thus the equation of ideology and utopia" (Barclay, 94).

With respect to these ideas, Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake* are written with a fear of an unavoidable nightmarish future; and thus they warn the reader.

In *The Handmaid's Tale*, the reader is shock by the themes of inevitable causes of totalitarian regime which affects women mostly. In addition, the awakening of the protagonist – Offred points out that acceptance of oppression is not always the best way to reach peace in mind. If she believed in the goodness of the inevitable power by ignoring the fear she feels, the world for her would be worse than ever. In *Oryx and Crake*, the reader is presented a passive male character who suffers from loneliness after his mothers' abandonment and who cannot keep pace with the powerful figures – his father and his friend Crake. Therefore, in his world of wounds and weaknesses, he cannot escape from the catastrophe because he just observes and obeys. In short, Margaret Atwood has

tried to warn people with her narration showing the negative traits of the society and the system which she is in.

II. DEFINITION OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

Psychoanalysis begins with Sigmund Freud. Jacques Lacan and Julia Kristeva are his followers. One might say that Lacan presents a more modern perspective of Freudian ideas, thus his ideas are more applicable to the novels. The Chapter – “Freudianism and Other Currents” from Rod W. Horton and Herbert W. Edwards’s work named *Backgrounds of American Literary Thought* simply mentions Freud’s life and his psychoanalysis. The ideas given in the first part will be quoted from their work. The second part is the explanation of Lacanian psychoanalysis and a comparison of Freud and Lacan. The third part is also a comparison eliminating Lacan’s and Kristeva’s ideas.

2.1. FREUDIANISM

First of all, according to them, the decade of the Twenties is popular of sociological movements of it although it was far from being hectic. The decade of the Twenties is regarded as the age of the corruption of values and taboos; however, it was also the decade of intellectuals; such as Marx and Freud. Freud was almost a prophet of that era because he portrayed the immorality of the people while, as one might say, he was making the decadence acceptable as it is the issue of the sexual power coming out of the repressed human nature. It is because of Freud’s suggestion: “Everyone should get rid of repressions” (Horton and Edwards, 339).

Born of Jewish parents, Freud was interested in literature, especially in romantic literature. He observed the importance of love in human relationships. He began to have university education in 1873 and he was fond of working on the problems related to nervous system. After a break, he went on his neurological studies. He met with Dr. Josef Breuer – an expert of hypnosis – as he is studying the treatment of nervous disease (Horton and Edwards, 341).

In his Autobiography, Freud indicates the sexual origins of neurosis after experiencing that hypnotized patients were telling about their erotic fantasies. He thought that the stories told by the patients showed the abnormalities of sexual functions. Then, he categorized them into two groups. The first one is anxiety neurosis which is related to sexual fulfillment, the second one is about the excessive sexual activity (Horton and Edwards, 343).

Trying to heal his patients, Freud used the method of “transference of love” which enables the emotional identification of the patient with the analyst in order to meet the patient’s need for emotional outlet. Freud developed another method to make the patients just talk; that is, “free association”. However, he faced a difficulty as one of the patients resisted to the questions of the physician. He seemed to forget; in fact, he did not want to remember. Freud thought that there must have been an irritating situation which makes him forget. This situation can be a bad, disagreeable, shameful thing related to the patient’s standards. Thus, his mind rejects remembering this irritating situation. “This counter-force Freud called repression”. In addition, Freud learnt that the analyst must be very patient and tolerant with violent acts as the patient struggles with the childhood sexual repressions and frustrations as a part of reliving (Horton and Edwards, 344-345).

After dealing with hypnosis and its ways of treatment, one should mention Freudian “psyche” as Freud calls. There are three important parts of Freudian psyche: Conscious, Pre-conscious, And Unconscious (Horton and Edwards, 345).

“The Conscious was the part of the mind immediately in contact with the external world.” Thus, one may say that it is the part which is shaped by the world around us, by culture (Horton and Edwards, 345).

“The Preconscious was conceived of as the storage place for the entire individual’s past experiences and impulses while the Conscious was, as its name indicates, a deeper reservoir containing the primordial urges of the nature”. Here the Unconscious was only observed with hypnosis, and it also reflected to the

patient's day dreams, fantasies, and slips of the tongue. "Libido, or sexual energy, was the basic motive force of all human action, projecting the impulses from the Unconscious while the censor was the inhibitory effect of the individual's awareness of social and moral taboos" (Horton and Edwards, 345). Thus, sexual energy is hidden human's unconscious owing to the repressing the repressing force of social and moral taboos. Freud found out that dreams were always the wish-fulfillment of the desire deriving from the Unconscious (Horton and Edwards, 345).

According to Horton and Edwards, the weakest part of this formulation is the denied power of freewill; whether the censor wall appeared instinctively or with the act of will by the individual, is a confusing or unclear issue of Freudian psyche (Horton and Edwards, 346-347).

Horton and Edwards also describe the new psychic zone as Id, Ego, and Super-Ego. The Id is the original place of all instinctive energies and the storage place of libido. Hence, it is the place of all immoral and illogical impulses. The Ego is the extension of the Id but shaped by the external world. It transforms the erotic libido of the Id into Ego-libido. The Ego is also "subject to two conflicting pressures: one from the libido of the Id, and the other from the censor, which is an opposing force stemming partly from within the individual and partly from the social mores". Thus, the function of the Ego is to allow the urges of the Id if suitable for the external world. To Horton and Edwards, the Ego is therefore not so successful to oppress the urges but it just finds out the reasonable times to let the urges out. The Super-Ego functions as the censoring agency which controls the actions of individuals. "It is independent of the conscious Ego and largely inaccessible to it". In addition, it stores all past experiences (Horton and Edwards, 348).

Freud also defines the stages of development of the love impulse. He categorizes the development of the love-impulse as auto-erotic (instinctive), self-

love (the growth of the Ego), and allo-erotic (transfer of love to another) (Horton and Edwards, 350).

Another motive that Freud realized is that the fantasies can overlap the realities in human psychology. In this respect, he understood that patients were confused about fantasies and actual happenings. This is, as he was told, “a wish-fulfillment of a suppressed desire to experience the seduction itself” and “from this knowledge of Greek tragedy he drew the analogy of the story of Oedipus, fated to kill his father and marry his mother, and invented for the incest-wish the term Oedipus complex” (Horton and Edwards, 350). One can define Oedipus complex as a kind of child’s competition with the father to “possess” the mother; however, this incest wish indicates the implied devil side of the mother who causes the disaster.

Furthermore, Freud suggests that the father should be potent in the family for the infant’s psycho-sexual development. In addition, Horton and Edwards state that Freud’s ideas on infant’s psycho-sexual development indicate that both sexes have erotic wishes on the mother and have a growing hostility toward the father to get the maternal affection more. Thus, father becomes the rival (Horton and Edwards, 350, 351). In terms of adolescent, Freudian psychosexuality is described by Horton and Edwards as follows:

... At puberty active sexual life is resumed, but now there is a struggle between the impulses of the early years (including the motivation of the Oedipus complex) and the repressions of the latency period. If the outcome is favorable, the individual ultimately attaches his desire to a suitable person of the opposite sex and carries out a normal sex life. (Horton and Edwards, 348).

In other words, normality in puberty causes normal relationship with the opposite sex. If there are still the effects of Oedipus complex, the relationships will not be proper then. It is because that there will be some psychological problems.

2.2. LACANIAN PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE SIMILARITIES OF AND THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FREUD'S AND LACAN'S IDEOLOGY

Jacques-Marie-Émile Lacan, who was born in 1901, was a French psychoanalyst, psychiatrist, and a doctor. He made remarkable contributions to the psychoanalytic movement. He conducted seminars every year in Paris from 1953 until his death in 1981. These seminars were a major impact in the French intellectual milieu of the 1960s and 1970s, particularly among post-structuralist philosophers. Lacan's main concern was about Freudian concepts such as the unconscious, the castration complex, the ego, focusing on identifications, and the centrality of language to subjectivity. His interdisciplinary work portrayed linguistics, philosophy, mathematics, etc. Lacan's ideas can be framed as critical theory, literary studies, twentieth-century French philosophy, as well as psychoanalysis.

Jacques Lacan emphasizes the existence of Freudian ego psychology and criticizes Freudian idea of primitive or archetypal form of unconsciousness; and he states that "the unconscious is structured like a language" highlighting that unconsciousness is coded by language. Hence, there occurs linguistic ego. In addition to Freudian concepts, Lacan defines three orders of being – the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real.

The first order is the "imaginary order" which gives the definition of alienation as a result of the relation of ego and the reflected image which is thought to be narcissistic. Images and imagination are the concepts of imaginary. The imaginary is constituted by the symbolic that stands for the involvement of linguistic dimension. Basically, the imaginary includes the relationship of subject and its own body.

The symbolic order is the ground of radical changes which appeals to the practice of other and unconsciousness. Language is the sine qua non of the symbolic. The dimension of language and the intervention of symbolic to the imaginary make the symbolic more dominant than the imaginary.

Unlike the former ones, the real order always keeps its place and it has no relationship with the ambiguity of the imaginary and the symbolic orders. It is constituted outside the language; thus distant from the symbolic. It is the field of anxiety which lacks any mediation.

Lacan's one of the most famous concepts is the stage of a child's psychosexual development - "mirror stage" which defines a child's place as an everlasting subject and which serves the body as the focus of libidinal attention in Lacanian imaginary order. In this respect, the life is the composition of dual relationships. Mirror stage leads to the child's alienation from his/her self since it indicates a body image separated from his/her emotional reality. Ego is formed by a process of objectification. The child is thus threatened by his/her own fragmented body image. Mother, the omnipotent figure of the early ages of childhood is another risk for child's psychology. The mother image recalls the Lacanian symbolic order, as well.

Another remarkable concept is "The other". In the imaginary and the symbolic order, Lacan believes in the existence of two types of "other". The first one is "Little other" which a child experiences through the mirror stage in imaginary order. The idea of fragmented body is the beginning of the creation of a new person through one's own mirror image. The second one - "Big other" is the assimilation and identification process via the structuralized language and the law. The big other appeals to the imaginary order; however, its relationship with the other subject is included in the symbolic order.

To compare Freud's and Lacan's ideology, one should first mention Freudian penis envy. In this respect, Gerard Pommier defines Freudian violence and the relation of "fellow creatures". To him, Freud highlights the "love thy neighbor as thyself" idea. However, he shows the violence among fellow creatures "abusing one another sexually and brutally". Therefore, violence is the outcome of the resistance and the subject mystifies violence. Pommier gives the reasons of the violent relationship between "fellow creatures" as penis envy:

If we return to Freud's simple sexual pattern, we may consider that each human being has been conceived according to the desire of his mother. Why has she got this desire to have a child, which is not at all a natural one? Desire, you know, is always shocking! Freud says: according to the desire of the penis, according to the penisneid. Children come in the place of the missing penis. That means that each human being is first required to identify with the phallus. The whole body becomes the phallus, but a special phallus, since the mother has no phallus. The child is thus required to become nothingness, and the child's first encounter with the demand of the mother is encounter with the death drive. For the mother's sake, the child is confronted with death (Rabaté, 76-77).

In this respect, the power comes with the penis idea, and association with mother is the symbol of death. The child has the demand for mother, but child begins to have fears of death since he/she is getting closer to the mother. Hence, there happens, as Pommier states, a dilemma of "being" and "nothingness", and the "dialectic tension and resolution" (Rabaté, 77). "Being" and "nothingness" drive fellow creatures competitive, and Freud asserts that signifiers face repression by philosophy. Therefore, the constant violence is the result of the subjects' struggle against becoming nothing and striving for "being" (Rabaté, 77).

Gerard Pommier continues asserting that Lacan uses Hegelian dialectic of master and slave emphasizing the "discourse of the master". He states that "the discourse of the Master is only a part, the homosexual part (its more presentable part), that love is the master". He says the subject is with the look of the other, so that it should treat the other with love because of the mirror stage. The aim here is to stop being nothingness. Moreover, to Pommier, this creates the connection between love and death (Rabaté, 78).

In addition, Pommier regards the relationship between fellow creatures as "a specific instance of the Master's discourse" or "this particular link of jouissance"; in other words, a life being dependent on fellow creatures to get rid of being a part of nothingness; and this relationship is a model of capitalist structure. That is why one sees the violent resistance. In such a Master-Slave relationship, Master exploits the Slave to reach his jouissance. However, if the master wants his

jouissance be effective, he must forget the sexual extension of it. Hence, the opposition of the unconscious knowledge and love begins. In order not to make his jouissance disappear, the Master prefers not to know anything about the sexual extension. (Rabaté, 78-79). Pommier gives an example to prove his idea: “if a man can truly see that in a certain woman he loves only his mother, he will surely have some difficulty in making love to her as a consequence” (Rabaté, 79). The same thing can be considered for all kinds of exploitation. In this respect, men will make up other ideals to resist his knowledge of unconscious desire. These invented ideals can be neuroscience or ego psychology.

To make the violence as an acceptable event, as mentioned before, men will make up new ideals. In terms of justification of the violence in the social link, “men will invent special pseudo-sciences, for example, the so-called laws of the market, they will say that those laws work as ‘natural laws,’ just to forget the *jouissance* of the commodity fetishism” (Rabaté, 79). Pommier states if a man becomes aware of his unconscious desire, he would become the subject of his act because of the ethical problem. He thinks that this is not his act because he prefers to consider that the act is the universal – “universal laws of humanity or universal law of psychology”. This understanding makes him innocent as he does anything to objectify himself. Jouissance demands for objectification. For jouissance needs objectification, unconscious is also required. This is, to Pommier, the only aspect that psychoanalytic discourse can intervene; therefore, jouissance is a Lacanian dimension and has a lot of impact on psychoanalysis (Rabaté, 79-80).

If one has to define the term castration in Lacanian viewpoint, Pommier asserts that it is the cutting off the genitals, eliminating the desire, sexual potency, and so, the prevention of jouissance (Rabaté, 90).

According to Michel Tort – in his essay “Lacan’s New Gospel”, the condition of Oedipus complex is not merely about parental objects to Lacan. It is associated with the inscription of Desire in the other. The other thing is “oedipal normalization” which the subject abstracts the position of the being the object of

desire. The final Lacanian idea given by Tort is that this situation becomes the exclusion of the subject in the relationship of the desiring relationship of the parent. Lacanian ideas on Oedipus complex rely on these three points. Tort finalizes these ideas saying that he calls these ideas “parental solution” (Rabaté, 169).

Tort extends his ideas defining “Lacanian Mother”. To him, Lacanian mother is, structurally, “prey to penis envy”, so she is the “fundamentally dissatisfied character” (Rabate, 169). She is in the state of dependence and frustration. Michel Tort quotes some lines from Lacan’s *Séminaire IV: La relation d’Object* as follows:

This unfulfilled, unsatisfied mother, around whom is constructed the child’s entire progression towards narcissism, is a real person, she is here, and as all unfulfilled people, she is looking for what she is going to devour – *quaerens quem devoret*. What the child found earlier as a way of erasing his devoret. What the child found earlier as a way of erasing his symbolic frustration, is now revealed right in front of him as an open mouth. ... Here is the real danger which his phantasms reveal to us – the danger of being devoured. (Rabaté, 170)

These lines indicate us Lacanian Mother’s frustration and her eagerness to destroy her child. As an unfulfilled person, she is frustrated and she wants to consume the child and the child has the dangerous fantasy of being destroyed.

This situation shows the confusion of the fantasy and the devour or destruction of mother. Lacan, to Tort, blames Oedipus’ mother, Jocasta. He says:

Throughout the seminar on Ethics, Lacan blames the mother of Oedipus, Jocasta, for her criminal and incestuous desire – Hamlet’s mother suffers a similar fate – thus finding the father innocent, while at the same time repressing the incestuous relation between Antigone and her father. Lacan’s passionate antimaternalism is of course barely evident in the purified schema of the paternal metaphor, which presents the mother as completely oriented towards the phallic object of her desire; it remains true, however, that she is the foundation of the schema (Rabaté, 170, 171)

In other words, the mother of Oedipus – Jocasta is the devil side for she is unconsciously obsessed with the paternal metaphor. In addition to these ideas, Tort believes that Lacan's ideas have originated from Christianic model of *In the Name of the Father*, and the paternal metaphor is the outcome of Oedipus. Lacan's general view includes two ideas. The first one is related to the Freudian schema – Father's uncertainty, and the cultural superiority of the father over maternity which Lacan calls the supremacy of the symbolic. Thus, paternity derives from "the Father as Master in name and only through his own words". Within the framework, Tort says, "this is model of political and religious paternity that until recently dominated the west. It is this father, who is 'firmly installed in the culture,' whom Lacan invokes" (Rabaté, 171).

The other idea that Tort suggests is the dilemma of the explainable side of how a man can be the object of his mother's desire whereas the oedipal child can separate himself from being the object of mother's desire. In terms of this philosophy, Lacan's solution is the father. It is because of the intervention of the father who is powerful and potent (Rabaté, 172). Furthermore, Tort asserts that, for a child, it is the mother who establishes the Name (of the father), and creates the position in the symbolic order. The contradiction here is that father makes the law, for the sake of his Master Father until a new process. Therefore, he seems to depend on the mother and "the father is presented as the one who deprives the other and relegates the mother to a law which is not of his own making. Along the way, he does not seem to subscribe to his own desire. He rules but does not desire" (Rabaté, 172).

In short, Tort believes that Lacan combines the traditional father figures. Father imposes his law as the law of desire. Lacan's description of "maternal castration is something symbolic and the "Lacanian mother set up this phantasmagoric enterprise". Tort asserts that Lacan believes it is the mother who gives importance to the father's speech. Mother has the "desire of the [potent] father". Owing to the speech of the father and his naming, mother surrenders the "symbolic order" where the father is the law maker (Rabaté, 173). Thus, father is

responsible of regulating the maternal Oedipus, according to Tort. The symbolic order is totally related to the paternal order (Rabaté, 174).

Aforementioned ideas indicate the similarities or the differences between Freud and Lacan. Tort states one of the differences between their philosophies is that Lacan does not defend Freudian Oedipus complex:

Lacan proposed that the Freudian Oedipus complex was “unusable,” a Freudian invention dictated by the position of the idealized father in “which the hysteric placed him. And in Seminar XX, Lacan explains that it was Freud who “saves the Father” once again (after Christ) because he was “a good Jew, who was not entirely up-to-date” (un bon juif pas tout á fait á la page) (Rabaté, 180-181).

In terms of Lacanian opposition to the Freudian Oedipus complex, one may summarize that Lacan seems to find Freud pious.

In the conclusion part of his essay, Michel Tort gives his analysis of Lacanian Father and divides his ideas into two segments. The first idea “elaborates strongly on the Freudian opening up of the Oedipus complex by making explicit the conflicting nature of the relations of desire between the sexes”. The second one conflicts with the first idea as it goes back to the forefather’s – Freud’s idea of implied rejection of the feminine (Rabaté, 183). Tort also compares Freud and Lacan briefly. He simply portrays the similarities and differences. The quotation below is marvelous to understand Freud’s and Lacan’s identical points:

Psychoanalysis confronts head-on the debasement of the feminine, against which it erects the phallic theory of which Lacan has produced a cleaned-up version. The Freudian female of the Lacanian Woman both designate the power of impulse and desire, which have to be mastered. The Lacanian preoccupation with the preservation of desire in the act is closely related to anguish in the face of detumescence, which permeates the whole seminar on Anxiety and which is intended to provide a model for desire. The jouissance of sexual power, so often passed over in silence, has nothing to do with the obsession with a phallic object fetishized by both sexes. It is foreign to the Hegelian-Christian model that assigns an essential dissatisfaction to desire and orients it towards a forcibly sublimated satisfaction (Rabaté, 186).

In other words, both of them think that woman is the symbol of impulse and desire which is the reason of woman to be mastered. Anxiety as the term is the reflection of desire. The jouissance of sexual has no connection with a phallic object. The combination of two models; Hegelian dialectic philosophy of Master and Slave and Christian model of the sublimated and saved father figure represents “*sublimated* satisfaction”. Therefore, just like libido, satisfaction here is a thing that must be oppressed or sublimated as it cannot be accepted. That is, Hegelian-Christian model benefits to solely masculine side and this idea satisfies man – the Father, but it is kept as a secret. We only see its reflections in some other ways.

Joseph Smith offers a similar way to define the idea of anxiety in his article “Lacan in America”. He believes that Lacan’s idea of anxiety is the combination of Freud’s first and second idea of anxiety. Freud’s first theory is that an object can be the reason of either anxiety or desire; or it relates them so that it means, as Freud asserts, anxiety is the converted state of libido. His second theory is that anxiety indicates danger and causes repression in order to prevent the danger indicated by anxiety, not the anxiety itself. (Rabaté, 34) This Freudian idea shows that he believes in the existence of dilemmas in human psychology which an object can be perceived both good and bad at the same time; and the pleasure can be regarded as the cause of anxiety. In addition, Smith says that Lacan follows Freudian idea of anxiety.

In addition to Smith, Michel Tort’s comments on Freud and Lacan also indicate their deviation. Tort regards Freud’s ideas as dogma, and suggests that Lacan helps us to comprehend “the other” concept of psychoanalysis as the reflection of Christian religion. To Tort, it is an invention of a golden age for fathers to create a wonderful history of paternity as the illusion of “paternal solution”. Lacan challenges this superiority and presents the “history of the death of God”. Tort calls the history “phantasmagoric schema of origins and a history mystified by religion” (Rabaté, 186). He continues evaluating by saying that Lacanian Oedipus complex is just the promotion of the father, and asserting that

ideas can be analyzed without any construction based on faith which merely needs virtue for its defenders. He states as follows:

Not only is the stereotype of the decline of the paternal function inconsistent with minimal historical rigor. It is also an imaginary solution because it deflects attention from the real psychoanalytic problem: the problem of relations between the sexes and between generations, which Freud named the Oedipus complex. For Freud, the complex originally remained disconnected or disjointed from the doctrine of the father. When establishing the connection in his own particular way, Lacan produced a remarkable version of the Oedipus complex dominated by an unconscious theory of promotion of the father. From our own experience we know full well that analysis occurs without a construction based on a faith that needs virtue as a totem for its community of believers (Rabaté, 187).

In conclusion, Tort suggests that we should end the analysis of parents and our “nostalgia for the father in theory”. He calls this “future of an illusion”, so the idea will remain in the future; and we can see its effects in the Islamic world: “The Rush die affair reminds us of the price Islam will still have to pay to kill the father *symbolically*” (Rabaté, 187), suggesting that psychoanalysis has always fought with culture.

In addition to Tort, Joan Copjec in his essay “The Body as Viewing Instrument, on the Strut of Vision” shows the repression over desire. He asserts that body sublimates *jouissance*. One should quote a paragraph from his essay to explain the idea:

... And what is the difference between those notoriously slippery terms, sublimation and repression? To Freud’s murky distinction, I would hazard the following clarification: sublimation inhibits *jouissance* by converting it into a signifier; the surplus that remains after this operation is, by definition, repressed. One can still turn this clarification into nonsense, however, by imagining that this signifier has any positive content, that *jouissance* can be signified. This false step would once again sink the concept of sublimation, which is meant to explain how a subject can produce thoughts that are not symptomatic, that are neither inhibited by sexualization nor burdened by sexual content. If *jouissance* can become a signifier, the only signifier it can become is a negative one. Sublimation must be,

then, the articulation of a limit, an inhibition. As signifier, jouissance signifies its own prohibition (Rabaté, 302).

Copjec seems to defend that if we consider jouissance as the signifier, we will see that jouissance signifies prohibition. Thus, it enables its own prohibition, and so the body prohibits its own desire.

Aforementioned ideas make the reader think that *The Handmaid's Tale* captures such kind of dilemmas. Offred's libido is repressed as she represents the oppressed ones of the society. It is certain in the novel that even her unintended touch to Nick – a guardian in Gilead - is pleasurable for her. However, she feels both the pleasure and the fear of feeling something wrong. In *Oryx and Crake*, Jimmy is not oppressed like Offred, but he is anxious inside.

2.3. LACAN'S PSYCHOANALYSIS VS. KRISTEVA'S IDEOLOGY

To introduce the reader Julia Kristeva, one should mention who Kristeva is briefly. Born in 1941 in Bulgaria, Kristeva has been a well-known Bulgarian French philosopher, literary critic, psychoanalyst, feminist, and novelist. She is mostly interested in cultural studies and feminism after publishing her first novel- *Semeiotikè* in 1969. She works on semiotics, intertextuality, and abjection with respect to linguistics, literary theory and criticism, psychoanalysis, biography and autobiography, political and cultural analysis, art and art history which have made her one of the forerunners of structuralists; and her works contain lots of post-structuralist elements.

One of the most remarkable aspects that Lacan and Kristeva agree is the issue of mirror in psychoanalysis. Lacan believes that the only animal which is able to recognize itself in the mirror is man. They see the root of the development of signification in the thetic stage in this discovery of specular image. Kristeva agrees on the following Lacanian idea:

The child must remain separate from the mirror image in order to capture it, to identify with it and the agitation caused by this separation in the semiotic chora fragments the self which strives to capture, more than the representation of himself in the image unifies. This primary narcissism leads to the constitution of objects outside the semiotic chora, and thus to a model for the constitution of a world of objects outside the self. To reject the mirror is a quasi-suicide, as is the abandonment of language: in the narrator's idiolect a resignation from humanity only to find some other decorum to supervene upon the humanity imposed by the mimetics of the mirror (Mycak, 113).

According to Elenora Rao, feminist critics have used Lacan's psychoanalysis which points out "the importance of gender and sexual ideology in the constitution of subjectivity as well as on the structure of the language and signifying practice within the symbolic order has produced a development and critical elaboration of Lacan's theory" (Rao, xxii). In this respect, Rao explains Lacan's and Julia Kristeva's ideas and their connection with the dominant ideology.

To Rao, French feminist theorists have used Lacanian formulations which are the combinations of materialist theory of ideology and gendered subjectivity. Lacan's psychoanalysis is based on structural linguistics and subjectivity structured through language. Lacan's linguistically structured ideology suggests the phallus as the master representative of lack that structures language. She continues:

As a result sexual difference is mapped onto linguistic difference. Access to signification for a woman thus becomes problematic, as Lacan aligns the phallus with the Symbolic order of communication, and posits woman as existing in a different, if not deficient, relation to language and therefore in a different subjectivity (Rao, xxii).

Hélène Cixous, Lucy Irigaray and Julia Kristeva have agreed to Lacan's ideas which show women's position within language, and culture is defined by her negative entry into Symbolic order. They have implied that women's location is far away from the dominant structure, outside language and ideologies, and Atwood's femininity represents negativity (Rao, xxii).

These critics have also underlined the positive aspects of femininity. They have valued women's marginality and ambiguity. To Irigaray, women's anatomy represents their multiplicity. Rao quotes her ideas: "Women do not have one sex organ. They have at least two, which cannot be identified singly. Actually women have many more than that. Their sexuality, always at least double, is plural/multiple" (Rao, xxiii). Thus, otherness and alterity are inside women. Irigaray and Cixous define phallic libidinal economy as something rigid and theological so they cannot accept the alterity. On the contrary, femininity, as they believe, is "circular, plural, without goals" (Rao, xxiii). Atwood's writing focuses on the difference emphasizing gender constructions instead of biological existentialist position. Her writings of the late 70s, and 80s points out the combination of feminine "self" and the male "other" showing the importance of alterity and difference over identity (Rao, xxiii).

Within the framework of these ideas, Jacques Lacan is a modern psychoanalyst; thus, he proves that he is the most suitable psychoanalyst to apply the psychoanalytic approach to the novels *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) and *Oryx and Crake* (2003).

III. MARGARET ATWOOD

Born in 1939 in Canada, Margaret Atwood is a remarkable poet, novelist, literary critic, feminist, and activist. She has won Arthur C. Clark Award, and Prince of Austria's Award for literature. She has been nominated to Booker Prize for five times, and won once. Afterwards, she has been the finalist of Governor General's Award for seven times and won twice. Atwood has been the most-honored of all fiction writers of recent times. She has also written many poems which have consisted of the elements of mythology and fairy tales.

3.1. ATWOOD'S STYLE AND IMPACT

Atwood has been a popular writer and her novels are bestsellers all over the world. They are also read and taught in schools and colleges on such courses: English literature, Canadian and postcolonial literature, American literature, women's studies, gender studies, and science fiction courses (Howells, 1).

Jonathan Noakes et al. imply that Margaret Atwood is somebody courageous. She goes to some strange places with people she does not know. Therefore, she is a phenomenon. She has proved that she is one of the most important writers of her generation. She has published novels, poems, essays which are consistently challenging, innovative, original, intelligent and uncompromising. She has won lots of prizes, and her work has been translated into many languages, and is read all over the world. "It is created by a fiery intellect, but is also has tremendous popular appeal" (Noakes, et. al., 5).

When Noakes et.al. interviewed Atwood, they asked about the strangest episodes she could remember in which people had used her ideas for their own purposes. They quote Atwood's response as follows:

There are some wonderful things like that. Actually there are several with cult followings of that kind. One is *The Edible Woman* in which people make Edible Woman cakes, get their pictures taken around

the cake, and then get pictures taken of themselves eating it, and then send me the pictures. In fact, I was in France for my birthday the year that they put *The Handmaid's Tale* on with More's *Utopia*, so I did a few little things, speeches on it. And the French are sentimental about birthdays, and I was at the Sorbonne and these French professors had made me an Edible Women cake.

So there's that. People have dressed up as characters in *The Handmaid's Tale* quite a bit. They've dressed up in the costume. Usually in connection with book bannings and things like that. And they will even, in a more frivolous way, dress up for costume parties. Last Halloween, four people – not all of them women- arrived at my house dressed as the four characters from *The Robber Bride*. And I suppose it's really quite a compliment, because it means that the people in the book have taken on a life their own in the popular imagination.

I'll tell you an unlikely thing to do with *The Handmaid's Tale*. When it first came out, someone went to the sea walk along Santa Monica, California Venice Beach. And they wrote, in big letters, 'The Handmaid's Tale is Here'. I know people who live there, they saw it. I did a talk show in San Francisco when it first came out there – that would be 1985. And the presenter decided to be devil's advocate and said, 'Well, surely all of this is very silly? I mean, none of it will happen.' And the switchboard lit up. It just lit up like a Christmas tree with people phoning in saying, 'It's already happening.' (Noakes et.al, 5-6).

In other words, it is clearly understood that Atwood appeals to people's own lives with her fiction; thus, she provides a critical way of thinking about the world the world and their place in the world (Noakes et.al, 7).

Noakes et.al. explain the necessity for this critical thinking. According to them, Atwood's writings are based on the actual observations of the physical world: the flowers, the clothes, the smells, and such real stuff of life although the reader is oriented without a bigger picture. There is always another story behind the visible one and it is reflected into the visible story. She reflects Greek mythology, or Romantic fiction, or Utopian fiction, or Gothic fiction in which people have a chance to think about world and what it is. However, the reader does not need to know all the references. Some of her works are relate to another fiction. For instance, "Blubeard Egg" is the rewriting of Blubeard myth. Her novels *The Robber Bride* (1993) and *Lady Oracle* (1976) and her poem of the same name in her collection *Interlunar* are based on the same myth. *The Handmaid's Tale* is the

rewriting of Bluebeard story “with many wives locked away, forbidden to know too much, used and discarded”. The situation of women is the same in *The Blind Assassin*. There is a mute girl, and the story resembles to the Bluebeard story again since there is a curiosity and control relationship of men and women (Noakes et.al, 7-8).

Noakes et.al. point out the vitality of the motive of language in Atwood’s works. They suggest that Atwood is the critic of Western Culture and society, and that she passionately commits herself to the place of language in the world. “In *The Handmaid’s Tale*, one particular tragedy of Offred’s situation is that she is forbidden to read, she is denied language”. They continue by quoting some lines from the novel: “If it’s a story, even in my head, I must be telling it someone. You don’t tell a story only to yourself. There’s always someone else. Even when there is no one” (Noakes et.al, 8). In these lines, the protagonist of the novel Offred highlights the strict relation of language and identity. Using the language, telling your own story enable ones existence. In *Blind Assassin*, Alex and Iris imply their relationship via the story of planet Zycroon. In *Bluebeard’s Egg*, random tones of oral history define characters, families and nations to everybody (Noakes et.al, 8). In *Oryx and Crake*, it is the use of language that shows social situations, cultural background, and the alienation of people leading to the fragmentation of society.

Noakes et.al. suggest that Atwood, as a Canadian writer using her national heritage, is interested in identity through expression. In addition, she exploits her heritage and identity. For instance, *Cat’s Eye* and *The Blind Assassin* are the representations of Toronto. In *Surfacing* and even *Bodily Harm*, in her *The Journals of Susana Moodie* or her poems like “Marrying the Hangman” the pioneering history of Canada can be observed. Moreover, in *The Handmaid’s Tale*, she indicates that the United States is a corrupted country while Canada - as the place of safety - offers a chance to escape from the United States (Noakes et.al, 9).

In addition to these ideas, Atwood always believed in the elaborated function of language in literature. The function of language in not only Margaret

Atwood's novels, but also our world can be best explained through Margaret Atwood's own words. Here is a part from an interview made in 2001:

MR: ... one of the bits love in *The Handmaid's Tale* is the Scrabble game. In the process of that Offred says 'Context is all'. Is that a kind of motto for you?

MA: I think it's probably a motto for human society. It's not an original thought of mine: anybody given to the study of anthropology or history, or even the history of fashion design, will tell you exactly the same thing. Simple example: this year's hot dress number is going to be very ancient in five years. But it might have been quite desirable at the time. You know, we do code everything as to whether it's the new and upcoming thing, or whether it was last year's thing, and we code many things in our lives in the same way that we code fashion.

MR: Code really intrigues you, doesn't it? Laws, systems of social behavior, what's normal, what isn't normal?

MA: Well, let's go back to Scrabble for a minute. Once something becomes forbidden, it also becomes potentially transgressive, and therefore it acquires an electrical charge. Under slavery in the United States it was legally forbidden for a slave to read or write; it was one of the things they didn't want them to do, because they might get ideas. And the regime in *The Handmaid's Tale* says, 'We won't make that mistake again' – i.e. letting women read.

MR: It also gives you a good game with words.

MA: Well, if it's forbidden, and suddenly there are these two people in a room a done of the people who shouldn't be doing it is doing it, then it requires a sexual charge. The language itself – just the permission to use it, or the little window of opportunity to use it – becomes very appealing to her, and probably has a certain kinky attraction for him as well.

MR: The first section of *The Handmaid's Tale* ends of course with the girls, who are being trained by the Aunts, speaking to each other. The last line is their names – the names that will than be lost: 'Alma', 'Janine', 'Moirra'. What does this question of naming mean to you?

MA: I think it is at the heart of the – shall we say – human experiment. We are the animal with syntax. We have the past tense, we have the future tense, we have the ability to put together subordinate clauses and qualifying phrases. So that seems to be at the

centre of who we are. Language is therefore very important. And the real name of someone – their I, their ego – is very much attached to what kind of language they find themselves embedded within. It's in every child raising book: don't tell your child, 'You are stupid'; say 'That was a stupid thing to do.' In other words, do not attach that word 'stupid' to the child. Attach it to the act. In a way, you could say that each one of us is composing a narrative, composing 'the story of my life' at every stage of that life. That you are your narrative. If you read accounts of people who've completely lost their memories you realise how attached to our narratives we are, how much we define ourselves by them. It's used to be that this was attached to the ancestral roll call – all the 'begats' in the Bible, or people who would write out their ancestry, with all of the various noble escutcheons, like dogs' pedigrees. You were not only the history of your own life, you were the history of all your ancestors' lives as well. I think it is deeply important. And to have your name taken away from you, and be assigned a number (which is what happened in the [Nazi-run concentration] camps), is a deeply depersonalising thing to do to someone. (Noakes et.al., 14-16)

In other words, language is so important that it gives the sense of freedom and it reminds us of our identity. It makes us who we are. *The Handmaid's Tale* reflects an authoritative totalitarian society – Gilead where language is an instrument of power and controlled by the authority restricted for the sake of politics (Freuer, no page). Margaret Atwood, as she asserts above, believes that reading and writing was legally forbidden under slavery in the USA because language enlightens our lives and gives enough power to question the regime. In addition, Atwood believes that all grammatical clauses, the past simple, and future tense have such importance that one can define himself/herself and compose “ ‘the story of my life' at every stage of that life”. The reader is never given Offred's real name, “not only because her identity is subsumed by her status as handmaid (and she is therefore of-Fred, her commander), but because that name is a link to her past, her unique individual self, and her society destroys that past effectively” (Freuer, no page). As a result, language reveals one's history, ancestral ties, and even one's emotions. Thus, there has always been an unrestrainable force of language and Atwood is the expert of a writer who uses a powerful rhetoric.

In conclusion, this phenomenal character has a load of works and each of them has a variety of subtexts which are highly worth evaluating. Her phenomenal aptitude of writing with the theme of fear can be best observed in her dystopic novels *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake*. Here are her significant works and their evaluations:

3.2. ATWOOD'S WORKS AND IMPACT

Margaret Atwood is a fantastic writer whose all thirteen novels (one of them is due to be published in 2009) and most of poems are well-known all around the world. She has also written non-fictional books and children's books. In this part, Atwood's novels will be evaluated. She began writing in the early 1960s. The first novel she wrote in 1969 - *The Edible Woman* is about a woman who belongs to a consumer oriented world.

In the story of the novel, after her engagement, the woman character – Marian feels that she is fragmented because of the difference of her body and soul. She finds herself in a situation that she cannot eat which is called metaphorical cannibalism. With this work, Atwood has become a significant prose writer. In three years time, she wrote her second novel – *Surfacing* (1972).

Surfacing reflected the elements of national and gendered identities. It is “actually an-anti-romance novel like Samuel Beckett's *Molloy*. ... *Surfacing* features one of Atwood's most unreliable narrators, a nameless commercial artist who illustrates Quebec fairy tales and lies about being married, having child, seeing her own brother drown, and many other aspects of her life” (Howells, 178). Separation from the environment, feminism, and language. According to Sharon R. Wilson, camera images of the novel, as in many Atwoodian novels, are the symbols of unseen eyes leading to the fragmentation of identities (Howells, 179). Language becomes an instrument of the rhetoric to convince people. For instance, one of the characters – Anna preferring not to have sex tries to find the best use of vocabulary to dissuade David. Thus, language here is proved to have vitality even in the trifles

of lives and split subject or fragmented identities are Atwood's way of presenting the narrator or personae as implied in *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake*.

Like in *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake*, *Lady Oracle* (1976) has flashbacks of the protagonist. Joan Foster, the protagonist, is first introduced as a fat child whose mother always criticizes. The novel, as "one of the earliest metafictional novels to expose the trite conventions of formula writing, has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention" (Howells, 125).

Life Before Man (1979) is Atwood's first novel to be the finalist of Governor General's Award of that year. The novel is "a tale of marriages, affairs, divorces, suicides, and other deaths in the center of the city of Toronto" (Howells, 80). There are three main characters who will approach their most basic nature; that is, natural environment (Howells, 80).

Atwood wrote her fifth novel – *Bodily Harm* in 1981. This novel is "much more than Atwood's indictment of Canada's insensitivity to social issues that plague so much of the world" (Howells, 20). It is a challenge to people who stand back and wait passively. Atwood's heroine's problem is that she cannot create her own life due to her fear of commitment and her unwillingness to have personal responsibilities for her own actions throughout her life. In the end she goes back to Canada (Howells, 20-21). By contrast, the protagonist of *The Handmaid's Tale* cannot go to Canada easily and happily (Nischik, 247). Offred is shaken by anxiety.

After publishing *The Handmaid's Tale* in 1985, Atwood wrote *Cat's Eye* and it was the finalist for the 1988 Governor's General Award. In the novel, painter Elaine Risley clearly reflects her childhood and teenage years. Elaine's paintings promise "another version of automatic writing where this time images write the fractured history lodged in the fictive autobiographer's unconscious mind" (Howells, 66). Thus, there is another story within the story and psychological themes are vividly portrayed in this novel.

The Robber Bride (1993) is set in the present Toronto, Ontario; and the story begins with three women who eat a meal together once a month. According to Coomi S. Vevaina, in the novel, these three women create the character Zenia in their own mind, or Zenia is dead and lives in their heart. No matter what she is, Vevaina suggests that “the plural nature of both external reality and the human self make the word, whether written or spoken, seem completely unreliable (Howells, 94)” and “both the word and the visual image are unreliable, but we obsessively continue to re-create the past and refuse to let bygones be bygones (Howells, 95)”. Therefore, people need such lying truth-tellers and the confusion of fiction and reality exists. One might suggest that this unreliability and the need for fiction indicate the vitality of language.

Alias Grace (1996) won the Canadian Giller Prize and was nominated for the Booker Prize. The novel is based on factual events despite the presentation of some fictional events. The character of the novel, according to Coomi S. Vevaina, the characters have multiple selves or at least dual selves (Howells, 93). Lorna Irving comments on the novel as follows:

... She [Atwood] confesses that part of her fascination with the nineteenth century (the century in which *Alias Grace* is set) is occasioned by the emphasis placed by that century on memory and certain concomitant emotions: “Nostalgia for what someone else once did to you, regret for what you once might have done but did not do” (10). Apart from the fact that nostalgia, guilt and revenge, and regret are at the heart of most works of fiction, Atwood’s emphasis on the tension between forgetting as a central act of the late twentieth-century imagination and the nineteenth-century emphasis on memory permeates her work ... (Nischik, 202-203)

In other words, *Alias Grace* is grounded on the nostalgia and the emotions that Atwood cannot leave behind.

The Blind Assassin (2000) is one of Atwood’s best-sellers. It won the awards of Booker Prize in 2000, and the Hammett Prize in 2001. In 2000, it was also nominated for Governor’s General Awards, Orange Prize for Fiction, and the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award in 2002. The novel is a fictional

autobiography of Atwood's female writer who is engaged in acts of self-presentation. Her female narrator's body is her story and she uses a language which is capable of expressing both. Thus, Atwood uses the idea of the connection between body and text (Howells, 60). She uses the same technic in *The Handmaid's Tale*.

After publishing *Oryx and Crake* in 2003, Margaret Atwood wrote her last published book – *Penelopiad* (2005). The book is a re-telling of a classical myth that Atwood has chosen. It questions the fairness of justice and the double standards of identities structured on genders and classes. Atwood's latest book – *God's Gardener* is due to be published in 2009.

With respect to this analysis of Atwood's novels, one might suggest that Atwood uses the connection between body and the text, she believes in the firm and elaborated place of language in narration, she pictures split subjects as protagonists and narrators of her novels. The reader can observe these qualities in *The Handmaid's Tale* and in *Oryx and Crake*.

IV. THE HANDMAID'S TALE

In the futuristic novel *The Handmaid's Tale*, Margaret Atwood presents a dystopian vision of a world in which the American New Christian Right and neo-conservatives of the 1980s have seized power in a totalitarian theocratic republic that was violently installed on the east coast of the United States in the year. The story of this experiment is told by one of the victims (Steals, 157).

This is one of the briefest and basic definitions of the novel at first sight. In contrast to this quotation, one might suggest this story of psychological sufferings demonstrates deeper problems as the outcome of the dominant ideological attitude. Atwoodian dystopia of *The Handmaid's Tale* is more remarkable than Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984* because it is not only the presentation of a petrifying world of restriction, but it also examines the gender roles in the society. Hence, some might say that this is a feminist dystopia; however, world-wide fears have more effective role in the novel.

The Handmaid's Tale is a dystopian novel published in 1985. The novel focuses on women's subjugation and offers a backlash to the establishment of totalitarian regime. Social codes have effective roles over the new society of conservatives leading to social control. The novel is taught in schools and colleges in many courses related to literature.

4.1. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE NOVEL

The historical background of the novel is crucial to understand the underlying causes of the novel portrayed through the narration. Margaret Atwood wrote the novel after the election Ronald Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain. This meant the rise of conservatives who are well-organized and favoring strictly religious interests and who criticized the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s. Therefore, they increased people's fear of going back to previous decades.

In the novel, Atwood mirrors the hysteria of which women suffer in a nightmare world of Gilead governed by the representatives of conservative religious extremists. The society of Gilead has experienced a return to the old times which makes the novel a dystopia of going backwards. In 1960s and in 1970s, feminists fought for the liberation of women from the conservative gender roles. They managed to get the right to vote and to have politically active roles. Abortion became free so that they had their own control over their bodies. However, women in Gilead cannot control their bodies, and they do not even have the right to read and write. The purpose is to control reproduction against the danger of pollution and infertility which are the main fears of 1980s'.

Within the framework of the hysteria of 1980s, Frank Furedi states as follows:

Where conventional morality failed, the new etiquette succeeded. Since the early 1980s, sexuality has been recast in a more conservative mould. Many of the core ideas of the new etiquette have been increasingly associated with being at risk. The idea of sex as fun now competes with views which emphasize the problems of harassment and abuse. The reinvention of sex as a profoundly risky affair is inextricably linked to ideas about human beings as damaged and of men as being innately violent. The equation of masculinity with male violence and the representation of penetrative sex as a mild form of rape have created a climate where recreational sex is increasingly dismissed as irresponsible (Furedi, 165).

Furedi, clearly asserts that 1980s was the survival era of conservative ideas blaming sexually liberal people for spreading the risk. Since the beginning of the 1980s, the core of sex creates double threat of male harassment and violence while sex for fun can cause irresponsibility. Hence, for the government, prohibitions about sex was the easiest way to control people and reproduction and this idea is portrayed by Atwood.

In short, *The Handmaid's Tale* is the most effective dystopia to represent the negative sides of the intervention of politics into sexuality.

4.2. ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTERS

The Handmaid's Tale introduces the reader many characters; such as, handmaids, Aunts, the commander, and other male figures. Offred, the Commander, Moira, Serena Joy, Nick, Luke, and Aunts are worth discussing.

Offred is the most remarkable character as she is the narrator and the protagonist of the novel. Her narration includes flashbacks. She has a husband called Luke, and a daughter. She is labelled as Offred which shows that she belongs to the commander – Fred. In the chronological beginning of the story, she loses her job and the bank refuses to give her money back. In such a depression, she tries to escape to Canada, but she is captured. She is prepared as a handmaid in Gilead. She is a potential child-breeder for elite couples. However, she cannot conceive. Forced by Serena Joy, she becomes Nick's lover. She escapes from Gilead in the end. She reveals physical and psychological burden of Gilead, and she is repressed with fear as a result of politics of fear.

The Commander – Fred has a group of handmaids to copulate like many other commanders as the official of the Eyes. He is solemn and mild in behaviour, yet he is cynical. Although he represents a negative figure in the novel, he behaves Offred as if she were a little child. He is fond of Offred's skill in scrabble. In other words, he projects a freer life for Offred. Offred begins to love him when she sees his loneliness inside, and he is a father-like figure for her.

Moira is Offred's friend who never stops being joyful and rebellious. She tries to escape in past, thus she is tortured. When she and Offred become friends, she goes on living the traditional way of life; and she works as a prostitute at a night club. However, she seems to be happy there being with different kinds of people.

Serena Joy is an old gospel singer and she is Commander Fred's wife. She is the defender of the Gileadean woman roles. She lives in a traditional way as

required in Gilead. Nonetheless, she hates his husband's and handmaids' copulation practices for their marriage can be jeopardized.

Nick is a trust-worthy, non-authoritative character and he helps Offred for her escape. Serena Joy, defending Offred-Nick relationship, blames Offred for their relation is a part of adultery committed against the commander. Luke, as another non-authoritative male character, is Offred's husband, but he never loves his mother-in-law due to her feminist ideas. After the formation of Gilead, his money is taken by the government. He is thought to be shot when he tries to escape to Canada with his family. Yet, even Offred is not sure whether he is still alive.

Aunts, in general, are irritable figures favoring traditional roles. They often warn handmaids against being immodest. They control and supervise handmaids.

The story is based upon these characters. Here are the context and the plot of the novel:

4.3. THE CONTEXT AND THE PLOT OF THE NOVEL

To mention the context briefly, there is a society called Gilead. This society is the future form of the American society of the 1980s. In Gilead, the purpose of the government is to annihilate homosexuals, infertile women, abortionists, other religious sects; and condemning Jews, non-white people, and rebellious people by resettling. Women, fertile and worked for the sake of the government, are chosen to be the police of Commanders. Most of the characters are women in Gilead, and they are ruled by male commanders. In fact, they are the possessions of commanders. Women live together in houses like prison and they have to wear red uniforms which reflect their sexuality, but prevent them seeing the world as it is because they have wings by their eyes. They do not have the right to control their bodies and their reproductivities. As possessions, they cannot resist commanders when they rape them. This is not even "rape", as Offred believes, because rape is an action made without the willingness of man or woman; however, they cannot

say whether they want or not – even when they want. Offred is the main character and the narrator of the novel. Her real name is not Offred; “Off” – “Fred” means “belonging to Fred”. Therefore, like other handmaids in the story, she is called via whom she belongs to. They are punished by death when they do something wrong – or against the rules. They do not even have to do something wrong; they are killed even when they are doomed to be infertile. Thus, the novel represents the interrelation of politics and sexuality. The novel is about handmaids’ lives in Gilead and the writings of Offred’s own story which is the mixture of past and now, reality and fantasy. Throughout the novel, the reader can observe handmaids’ effort to survive from their life full of uncertainties, insecurities and alienation, but they cannot see the survival of handmaids’. Questions do not vanish even in the end.

The story begins with a description of a place where is indicated to be lived by a group of people. After this brief introduction, the narrator implies his/her feelings through narration:

There was old sex in the room and loneliness, and expectation, of something without shape or name. I remember that yearning, for something that was always about to happen and was never the same as the hands that were on us there and then, in the small of the back, or out back, in the parking lot, or in the television room with the sound turned down and only the pictures flickering over lifting fresh. We yearned for the future. How did we learn it, that talent for instability? It was in the air; and it was it was still in the air, and afterthought, as we tried to sleep, in the army cots that had been set up in rows, with spaces between so we could not talk. We had flannelette sheets, like children’s, and army-issue blankets, old ones that still said U.S. We folded our clothes neatly and laid them on the stools at the ends of the beds. The lights were turned down but not out. ... (*The Handmaid’s Tale*, 13).

The narration gives the reader clues about the gloomy atmosphere of the setting and the narration is the manifest of the dystopian tradition of fear because of repression. The narration continues with the introduction of the characters and almost all chapters begin with such description of the setting as the implications of

feelings. The reader is kept curious story the causes of this pessimistic narration throughout the first chapters. Thus, the reader is inclined to emphasize the narrator.

The narrator, Offred is one the handmaids living in the repressively conservative society of Gilead. Offred is Luke's wife and she has a five-year-old child. She is captured when she tries to escape to Canada, and she is separated from her family. Her mother is lost; in fact, she is thought to be resettled due to her feminist activities. As Offred seems to be alone and ready to be indoctrinated, she is chosen to be potential child-breeder. Rachel and Leah Re-Education Center is the indoctrination center where they are forced to repeat the teachings of Bible. When she gets to know Moira, she begins to be affected by her rebellious spirit. They survey the surroundings including Aunts wearing khaki dress as the police of commanders. They observe women suffering from repression, or women an deven men punished by the authoritative figures because of their attempts to escape.

After her failed attempt to concieve, Offred is given to the new commander's – Fred's governance. She is bored with the routine of the new place. Once a month, they copulate with a holy ceremony near Fred's wife – Serena Joy who is a miserable gospel singer. After a while, Fred invite Offred for night visits for chatting, playing scrabble, kissing. He even gives hand lotion, magazines, make-up materials as present. One night, Fred takes her to a night club which is staffed by prostitutes and Arab bussinessmen. Offred sees Moira there and learns that her mother is doomed to be Unwoman living in radioactive Colony.

One day, Serena accuses Offred of disloyalty. Therefore, she would be punished severely. Offred has to do something to survive. Planning to escape, she accompanies Nick; and Nick prepares a black van for this escape. Although the risk taken, Offred gets in the van. The end is cut with ambiguity of whether she manages to escape or not.

The last part of the novel – “Historical Notes” is a kind of a report of an academic symposium made in 2195, over two centuries after the formation of Gilead’s theocratic dictatorship. An archivist – Professor James Darcy Pieixoto reveals the evidence of Offred’s experiences with a cassette of the speeches. There is one responding voice of a person who sounds like a Commander. It is stated that Offred escaped. However, with a political tone, some realities are concealed. In the end of the novel, as one may say that it is also Atwoodian irony, the ambiguity of reality is pointed out by the speaker:

... As all historians know, the past is a great darkness, and filled with echoes. Voices may reach us from it; but what they say to us is imbued with the obscurity of the matrix out of which they come; and, try as we may, we cannot always decipher them precisely in the clearer light of our own day (*The Handmaid’s Tale*, 324).

4.4. CRITICS AND THE NOVEL

The Handmaid’s Tale is generally thought to be an activist outcry of feminism. However, with this novel, Margaret Atwood’s aim is not to protest man, but she brilliantly rejects gender-favored practices. It may be suggested that not only females but also males are suffocated within the society although the pressure is felt more by women. Hence, rather than a feminist reading, psychoanalytic reading is more suitable to apply to this novel. Some writers; such as, Lucy M. Freibert, Coral Ann Howells, Barbara Hill Rigney, and Michael W. Barclay has defined the novel and commented on it.

Lucy M. Freibert says that generally people call “political science-fiction, but what she calls “speculative fiction”, and it represents “the cultural, historical, philosophical, and literary facets of western tradition”, and so the roles of women in that society. Atwood shows the comedy of western patriarchal teleology that woman’s biology is her destiny (McCombs, 280). Hence, the novel – as a dystopic novel - represents a gloomy atmosphere in which a repressed handmaid – Offred suffers and, consequently criticizes the present situation. Her story portrays the

victimhood and indoctrination of totalitarian theocracy. The common issues in the novel are unemployment, homosexuality, pornography, abortion, sterilization and traditional values.

According to Lucy M. Freibert, “Atwood rotates Offred through three psychological states: fear, despair, and boldness”. Offred has fears owing to the authoritative figures, but actually, everybody around her can be threat for her existence. Her boldness raises her creativity. However, “while Offred’s fear, despair, and boldness evoke the reader’s empathy, it is Atwood’s attention to voice that creates the illusion of reality and elicits pity and fear for Offred despite the high burlesque of the tale” (McCombs, 286). Thus, the story with its creativity make the reader empathize with the character, and appeals to the readers’ most common problems that they have in mind unconsciously. Atwood just tries to make us recall our repressed fears and suggest an escape from oppression which makes the story worth-reading. Atwood also demonstrates the instinctive sense of survival as the outcome of social control and unavoidable isolation. Offred needs isolation and sterility to compose herself or to get rid of fragmentation. Freibert states that in the third epigraph, Atwood reflects her ideas of social control using the sufi proverb:

The Third epigraph, the sufi proverb “In the desert there is no sign that says, Thou shalt not eat stones” (7), epistomizes Atwood’s view of social control. It implies that on the most basic level of survival human beings instinctively know what to do and what to avoid; it suggests the corollary that authorities should avoid unnecessary regulation. Sufi simplicity counterpoints the outrageous legalism of Gilead’s political structure and pleads for human freedom and survival. The proverbial desert evokes the sterility and isolation in which Offred must compose her being. The title and epigraphs together tense the critical antennae for the tale (McCombs, 285).

The reader can observe the theocratic ideology. The rulers envisage the “imitation of biblical land of Jacob and Laban, where Laban restored hope and fertility with the help of Handmaids (*Genesis*, 30)” (Steals, 157). Such biblical implications and reminders cannot make handmaids relieved. Instead, this coded Christianity force them feel doubtful and irritated. Furthermore, there seems to be

the unity of the purpose as the society's main aim is to have more and more children, but the devotion to this ideology makes the situation harder for many of the citizens. The handmaids are compelled to stay in their Commanders' houses, they are just child-breeders, the tool of reproduction whereas they do not feel secure as they are all isolated; doomed to comply with the rules and; forced to accept their "man"-made faith as well. Being in such situation takes away the standards of being a normal citizen. For instance, handmaids do not have the right to have their former names. Offred's name actually indicates that she belongs to Commander Fred: Of-Fred. By this way, they have to show that they belong to their commanders. They do not have anything, and they cannot possess anything. Thus, handmaids' names given after the establishment of the society – Gilead are the biggest symbol of their being totally nothing.

In her *Margaret Atwood*, Coral Ann Howells describes *The Handmaid's Tale* quoting some sentences from the novel as follows:

My room, then. There has to be some space, finally, that I claim as mine, even in this time. (The Handmaid's Tale, p. 60) These words spoken by Atwood's Handmaid, deprived of her own name and citizenship and known simply by the patronymic 'Offred', might be taken as emblematic of a woman's survival narrative told within the confines of a patriarchal system represented by the dystopia known as Gilead. Restricted to private domestic spaces and relegated to the margins of political structure which denies her existence as an individual, nevertheless Offred asserts her right to tell her story. (Howells, 126)

Howells points out individuality destroying society – Gilead oppresses women via the political structure. Handmaids are even deprived of the status of citizenship and names. Therefore, Howells continues telling that Offred's storytelling; however, shows the significant shift from "history" to "herstory". That is, storytelling is "resistance to imprisonment in silence, just as it becomes the primary means for her survival. In the process of reconstructing herself as an individual, Offred becomes the most important historian of Gilead" (Howells, 126-127).

“Offred is isolated and rendered mute by a prohibition against communication, and by her own solipsistic wish for survival” (Rigney, 116). She keeps her silence; does not share her experiences with any of Commander’s wives who are the puppets of ideology although they are aware and unhappy. Hence, she prefers her own survival to sisterhood. Consequently, she rejects her own integrity; she becomes fragmented (Rigney, 116).

To Howells, *The Handmaid’s Tale* is “Atwood’s most popular novel, which is perhaps surprising given its bleak futuristic scenario”; and it is clear that women endure every structural repression. Offred’s story is a story of a woman who tries to speak as a challenge to the regime (Howells, 127). In addition, Lucy Freibert asserts that Offred’s uncomfortable relationship with her activist mother, and the loss of her mother, daughter, and husband make Offred feel in a daze. Freibert quotes these lines from the novel: “I’ll pretend you can hear me. But it’s no good, because I know you can’t”(50). Thus, Atwood emphasises the sense of isolation to indicate that Offred’s risk-filled story is her source of freedom (McCombs, 286).

The novel presents us the classification of people in the society and everybody has to keep his/her own position, or border. Howells states that

individual freedom of choice has been outlawed and everyone has been drafted into the service of the state, classified according to prescribed roles: Commanders, Wives, Aunts, Handmaids, Eyes, down to Guardians and Econowives. There is strict censorship and border control, as Offred reminds us in her recurrent nightmare memory of her failed escape to Canada with her husband and daughter, which has resulted in her being conscripted as a Gileadean Handmaid (Howells, 127-128).

In addition, Howells defends that the basic motive in the novel is the politics; and women are the worst since they are only child-breeders in a society where there is a threat of extinction because of pollution, AIDS, and natural disasters. Women are called “two-legged wombs” which underlines women’s deprivation of freedom of sexual choice. Not only women but also men are

oppressed. In this extent, male sexual activity is restricted. The situation is worse for homosexuals, Roman Catholic priests and Quakers of both sexes. They are doomed to be executed (Howells, 128).

Within the framework of these ideas, Michael W. Barclay has made the most remarkable assumption about the novel. In his thesis, Barclay defines *The Handmaid's Tale* as dystopia that reflects the psychoanalytical aspects. He states:

Her focus is specifically on the sexual domination of women by the (phallogentric) utopian society in which women are known by the men they belong to: Offred, the protagonist, is 'of Fred' as it were ... Atwood elaborates by focusing on the appropriation of women's reproductive function by men. ... This appropriation obliterates the connectedness of this function with the way a woman structures her life in meaning and identity the caveat in this dystopia warns of the thread from men which, given a utopian purpose, might produce a catastrophic separation of the two aspects of women's lives: the body and the subject. Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* continues the tradition of the dystopia. (Barclay, 18-19)

Barclay defines the novel as a dystopia showing the separation or one might say fragmentation of women's lives.

Aforementioned ideas suggest that *The Handmaid's Tale* is the presentation of fear in terms of psychoanalytic approach. The psychological oppression makes us consider Lacanian psychoanalysis since it is basically connected to existentialist power ideologies instead of merely patriarchy. It is because that even some men suffer from the power of predominant ideology. Moreover, this predominant power, one might call the "Law of Father" symbolically castrates men, and fragments women.

4.5. FRAGMENTATION AS THEME OF FEAR

The sense of fear begins with the beginning of life just like the fragmentation's beginning with the birth. Atwood's protagonists of two novels – Offred in *The Handmaid's Tale* - experience fragmentation within the first minutes

of her life; and she – like all human beings – cry out against the dangers and uncertain threats to their existence. This means that she has faced the troubles of living and the threats of the surroundings; and fragmentation is the beginning. Lucy M. Freibert believes that the protagonist of *The Handmaid's Tale* - Offred's daily risks are no great than before although she has always fears about everything. "In the womb Offred developed an affinity with risk – her mother risked everything by conceiving her at her thirty-seven (130)" (McCombs, 287). These fears derive from phallogocentricism of the society and religion and there are too much about mythic, biblical side of sexual politics.

On psychoanalytic theory, Elenora Rao believes in the existence of a link between body and the self which appeals to *The Handmaid's Tale*. This link is about the fragmentation of the body. She quotes from *The Handmaid's Tale*: "‘I’m sorry, there is too much pain in this story. I’m sorry it’s in fragments, like a body caught in a crossfire or pulled apart by force. But there is nothing I can do to change it’ (279).” In these lines, Rao underlines the anxiety and fear of violence due to bodily and mentally harm. The story she mentions is the story of a handmaid who is the slave of reproduction. Therefore, the prominence of only the womb makes her mind and soul totally alienated, and also her womb becomes alienated from her identity. This physical fragmentation resulting as alienation influences also psychological side of a woman. In a society where women are called “walking wombs” or “chalices”, there is no way of refraining from the society of unfairness. While “Law of Father” is taken for granted, women automatically lose their confidence. “Unlike the disorder and laughter of a feminine ‘economy,’ this masculine ‘economy’ generated by “Law of Father” silences and ‘decapitates’ women through rigid inculcation” (Wilson, 278). Inculcation is practised by the culture for culture makes the things easily acceptable. However, even an average person can understand that those inculcations are unreal or hard to believe. These ideas create conflict in mind. Consequently, there is no way for women to abstain from fear and paranoia. Therefore, Rao’s lines above, points out the double-sided threat to her existence. She thinks that fragmentation and dissolution of the ego is directly proportional;

and she goes on asserting that corporal disintegration that the reader can see in the text can be regarded as a threat to the unity of the self. Psychoanalytic theory justifies the connection between bodily fragments and the dissolving ego (Rao, 83). Elenora Rao states:

The total image of the body is seen as the moment of production and structuration of identity through the mediation of the body image. According to Jacques Lacan, for example “the image of total body is necessary to the creation of national unity” ([L’*éclatement* du Subject, p.10]). On the other hand, representations of bodily fragmentation indicate that the unified and transcendent ego is threatened with dissolution. (Rao, 83)

Within the framework, fragmentation in *The Handmaid’s Tale* is also about narration. This theory suggests “a sense of a lack of a rationalizing and unifying entity at work in the text” (Rao, 83). In addition, Rao believes that these features are embodied in the “the tale without an author” in the fictive reality; and Offred’s narration which is full of uncertainty deriving from “doubts, rethinking, and retelling what has been already been presented as true” (Rao, 84). Rao concludes her ideas on *The Handmaid’s Tale* and fragmentation: “Memory and identity have vague outlines in this text. The former includes imagination and desire, and like the image in the mirror, cannot be grasped” (Rao, 85). In these lines, Rao underlines the fragmentation of the self from history or so-called reality like Lacanian idea of evolutionary mirror stage in which a child grasps that he/she cannot intervene the existence of the other or becoming the other “I” image in the mirror.

According to Joel Dor, Lacan identifies mirror stage as the arousal period of “*the fantasy of the fragmented body*” (Dor, 95). It is an experimental era in which a child turns out to be the master of his own body. While structuring his own identity, he puts an end to the total image of his body. This is, as Lacan calls, the aforementioned fantasy of the fragmented body. Before the mirror stage, as Dor asserts, the child has not experienced the unity of his own image, he regards it as something “disjointed”. The mirror stage is a type of test which tries to neutralize this fantasy and the subsequent processes of psychotic breakdown (Dor,

95). In other words, the confusion between self and other comes out (Dor, 96). In this respect, one might say that this confusion is a real pain for one's own psychology. Although this developmental phase is about children, one can grasp the reflections of it in Margaret Atwood's both *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake*. Offred reflects this psychotic breakdown: "I have been obliterated for her. I am only a shadow now, far back behind the glib shiny surface of this photograph. A shadow of a shadow, as dead mothers become. You can see in her eyes. I am not here" (296). These lines point out the isolation from the self and from the society.

In addition to these ideas, one might say that fragmentation in body can be seen in the novel as established identity which is made up only for the sake of reproductivity. It is due to the fact that handmaids are forced to forget about their body, and merely their reproductivity is pointed out. They are not allowed to wear what they want, they cannot use to soften their skin; thus, they cannot do anything to feel better and powerful. They are made passive to forget their identity and reduced to "womb" and "chalices". In this respect, they are forced to believe that the only vital thing in them is their wombs, the rest of their body is useless. Moreover, Offred asserts that they are nothing but containers:

I rub the butter on my face, work it into the skin of my hands. There is no longer any hand lotion or face cream, not for us. Such things are considered vanities. We're containers, it's only the inside of our bodies that are important. The outside can become hard and wrinkled, for all they care, like the shell of a nut. This was a decree of the Wives, this absence of hand lotion. They don't want us to look attractive. For them, things are bad enough as it is (*The Handmaid's Tale*, 107)

Here Atwood shows women's anxiety about the uselessness of their skin and their body except for the organs of reproduction and how the women suffer because of lacking the so-called vanities which makes them alienate from the "I" image they have constructed. Hence, one may suggest that it is a kind of fragmentation for not only their wombs are segregated, but also this causes their segregation from the society which is another type of fragmentation of society. Such fragmentation makes the situation harder for women since there happens the

decline of trust in the society. Therefore, handmaids' ego is highly wounded and they cannot protect their rational unity to keep them upright; subsequently, this situation ends in fear and anxiety. In this respect, Frank Furedi reveals the decline of trust in society and the sequent fear in his *Culture of Fear*. Furedi says that:

Perceptions of risk are strongly shaped by the prevailing absence of trust in humanity. The decline in trust has been widely acclaimed as the cause of society's sensitivity to risk. As an explanation, the decline of trust is not particularly helpful. Such explanations beg the questions of why trust has declined. Trust is not so much a cause as a symptom of our consciousness of risk. As a result of the decline of trust, there is a tendency to view people's actions as at least potentially dangerous. As one major study of risk argued, 'both institutions and individuals have a strong interest in under-assessing and underestimating risk'. The belief that risks are continually 'underestimated', 'ignored' or 'covered up' strengthens the convictions that in many situations there are hidden or invisible risks lurking under the surface. One of the consequences of this development is a strong undercurrent of fear about the side-effects of any technological innovation or social experience. This suspicion of side-effects is one of the central motifs or risk consciousness (Furedi, 29).

As Furedi states, the increase of risk hysteria is due to the absence of trust in humanity. According to Furedi, this is the result of technological advancement since all innovations make people understand that there are masses of things that they do not know and they cannot estimate the side-effects or results of these innovations. Therefore, they people are getting hesitant to get closer to each other. They may be right as they do not know who is dangerous for them. In addition, Frank Furedi believes that people in the modern world are highly influenced by the dangers that people face. He states as follows:

Life is portrayed in as increasingly violent. Children are depicted as more and more out of control. Crime is on increase. The food we eat, the water we drink, and the materials we use for everything from buildings to cellular phones, have come under scrutiny. However, reactions to such routine dangers pale into insignificance in relation to the big threats, which are said to put humanity's survival into question (Furedi, 20).

These line above points out that today's man is getting more and more suspicious about the life he is in because there remains no essential evidence of the purity or innocence of his/her surroundings.

Offred's and the other handmaids' such social isolation is much like a slavery. This is due to their non-involvement and they have no right to be free, to have an identity and memory as well. In fact, they their roles were the same and they did not have their surnames before the establishment of Gilead. Thus, this cannot something strange for them. All of them wear uniforms which are colour-coded to their functions: "the Aunts who run the 'Rachel and Leah' Re-education Center', where the indoctrination of the Handmaid's begins wear Brown" whereas the "Marthas" wear green, and wives of "commanders" wear Virgin-Mary blue which may refer to their infertility. The handmaids wear the same dresses which are red. These red dresses have religious connotations, and the peaked hats make them see only the thing in front of them (Rigney, 116-117). The most important deprivation for the handmaids is the lack of personal property. Mirror is the greatest symbol of identity. Depriving of mirror, handmaids have to see themselves through other handmaids' eyes literally in order to understand that they exist (Rigney, 117). Hence, the search for purity and security and the threat of isolation are the basic motives of fear; and the handmaid's are the little others who do not even have a chance to look at the mirror because they do not have the right to control themselves. In addition to these ideas, the lack of mirror prevents handmaids from facing the contradiction of their body and emotional reality. They are symbolically castrated by the big others.

Aforementioned ideas are highlighted in Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*; especially when the reader considers Furedi's ideas about the fear of epidemic, he/she directly finds its relation with the novel. Furedi believes that:

During the past decade, supposed threats to human survival have been declared so frequently that the expectation of an apocalypse has become rather banal. Our imagination continually works towards the worst possible interpretation of events. Expectations of some far-reaching catastrophe are regularly rehearsed in relation to

a variety of risks. Thus fears about an explosive epidemic of a lethal infectious disease reinforce anxieties about the dangers of nuclear war, global warming and other environmental disasters. AIDS has retained its status of modern equivalent of the plague, only to be joined by new threats to health – such as Ebola and mad cow disease – and the re-emergence of old dangers, notably cholera, malaria, tuberculosis and diphtheria, often in drug-resistant forms (Furedi, 20-21).

With these threats and common anxieties, people have the tendency to believe in worst-case scenarios and the so-called doomsday scenarios according to Furedi. Some might say that these ideas are another kind of fragmentation; it is the fragmentation of the world, literally; and the fear as a result of it. However, one of such doomsday stories come true in *Oryx and Crake*. Moreover, these stories require a good command of language for narration.

4.6. THE FUNCTION OF LANGUAGE AS THE POLITICS OF FEAR

Language is an unavoidable force in life as Atwood has always implied the essential role in a good presentation and rhetoric. Barbara Hill Rigney, who is one of the critics of Atwood's works, states that Atwood supposes writers to be the reflections of society. "He may unconsciously examine it and project the ways of changing it; and the connection between the writer and the society will increase in intensity as the society...becomes the 'subject' of the writer" (Rigney, 121). Consequently, society is definitely Atwood's subject; and "language, in itself, is the ultimate affirmation and the greatest revolution" (Rigney, 121).

In her *Women Writers: Margaret Atwood*, Rigney evaluates effects of language within the framework of feminist literature which Atwood calls "one-dimensional" or gender-based (Rigney, 128). According to Rigney, Atwood believes that "feminist critics are as guilty as other critics", and she suggests the "development of a vocabulary that can treat structures made of words as though they are exactly that, not biological entities possessed of sexual organs" (Rigney, 128).

In this respect, Offred blames her mother about her feminist activities since she could not change her position in the society and she is doomed to be “unwoman”. Offred implies that the problem should not be feminists’ concern for it is a real existentialist problem; hence, the whole system should be changed. Offred believes that the problem cannot be solved with the essentialist approaches because her mother condemns the magazines including pornographic pictures, she helps others burning the magazines, just like religious fundamentalists. She believes “othering” is not the solution. According to Lois Feuer, Atwood portrays the similarities between religious ideas and feminist essentialism. “Each sees its opponents as ‘the other,’ abstracting so that it may dehumanize (FN17)” In each case this abstracting is based on essentialist notions of ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ that belie their various mixtures in the unique individual, or deny the possibilities of a life without such labels” (Feuer, no pag.). Feuer seems to believe that in both cases othering is practised in the same way and it is dehumanization rather than defending the extremes. Consequently, the handmaids’ suffering never should not be dealt with the essentialist way; or else it can never end since each extreme has its opposite to start the endless fight. In this case, the problem is not about the evil side, it should be discussed within a wider perspective. Offred and her mother has faced this problem since they were in the mother-womb due to the “Law of Father”. Jacques Lacan believes that daughter’s identification with her mother begins before birth. Sons are also attached to the mother before birth and they identify themselves with the mother; however, they realize that they are the follower of their strong fathers. In this perspective, being a daughter is the doomed to be the weaker one due to the identification or biological resemblance to the “weak” mother. Offred is not fond of her mother’s behaviors since she is weak no matter how she strives. In addition to these, she is blind to see the so-called reality of the world which sets them to the weak status. It is because that the reality of the world has been made up for the sake of men. Offred does not want to be called “like her mother”. Barbara Hill Rigney states, in terms of Atwood’s *Bodily Harm*, female bonding cannot be observed, even in connection with their own mother. It is because that “Rennie” and other characters of *Bodily Harm* reject other women with the tendency of male-identification in order not to see their own weaknesses

mirrored by the other women (Rigney, 112). One might say that Offred feels the same about her mother; she does not want to be weak like her. Thus, she prefers not to identify herself with her. Yet, women's fate is all the same, they are all associated with the mother with respect to Lacanian idea of "law of father".

Before mentioning "law of father", one should deal with the father image within Lacanian perspective. Father image is not related to patriarchal indoctrination merely. Barbara Hill Rigney believes that not "paying attention is the great fault of Offred's entire society" (Rigney, 113). Unlike Orwellian dystopia of *1984*, Big Brother "is not simply an embodiment of patriarchy, nor God, but rather of ideology in general; ..." (Rigney, 114). The struggle is quite ideological therefore father image is a symbol of the ideology as paternal metaphor. Lacan identifies paternal metaphor as the strongest element "for the thesis that the unconscious is structured like a language" (Dor, 83). To evaluate this subject, one must first remark phallic object. "These remarks are called for because the *phallus* is one of the most misused concepts in psychoanalytic commentaries, and because the phallic object is the keystone of Lacan's recentering of the problematics of the Oedipus complex and of castration within the context of the paternal metaphor" (Dor, 83). Therefore, Freudian terms of Oedipus Complex and castration are not concrete facts; to Lacan, they should be discussed within symbolic perspective - paternal metaphor.

Dor states that "for Jones (1927), aphanisis refers to the disappearance of sexual desire" (84). This concept suggests a kind of fear which appeals to both men and women: castration. To Jones, aphanisis is the abolition of sexuality so the fear of castration is nothing but "a concrete expression of aphanisis" (Dor, 85).

On the contrary, Lacan suggests a more abstract form of castration; that is, as Lacan implies the "confusion between the penis and phallus" (Dor, 84). Lacanian concept of fear of aphanisis in women reflects as the fear of separation from the loved object. In other words, "Jones misses the very meaning of the reference to the phallic object. This is not a reference to castration via penis, but a

reference to the father, to a function that mediates the relationship of the child to the mother, the mother to the child'' (Dor, 85). Therefore, one may suggest that the symbolic existence or non-existence of penis creates the problem; however, it is tied to the existence of mother. Being a mother means being castrated, resembling biologically to the mother is likewise a handicap in social life, or even feeling close to the mother castrates the child. Joel Dor states that:

....we should not lose sight of the fact that, even if this phallic reference is prevalent in Freud's work, it is very often implicit, and as such it metaphorizes the subjective status of the phallic object. The subject never stops trying to justify his possession of it; at the same time he assiduously claims that he does not have it – when, in the end, no one has it. That Freud's phallic references, while numerous, are mostly implicit can be accounted for by the underlying mechanism that makes the phallic reference operative, namely what Lacan calls the paternal function (Dor, 86).

Therefore, Freud's phallic references, paternal function in Lacanian terms reveals the subject's ongoing search for the phallic object. According to Joel Dor, Lacan defends that Freud's work implies that the phallus does not include the concrete existence of penis. In addition, even in Oedipus Complex, father is the third element because of the phallus as he is tied to the phallus. Laplanche and Pontalis (1973) asserts that Freudian "phallic" image has a reference to the symbolic function because "it is clear that for Freud the function attributed to such an object could never be reduced to the circumstances of having an object could never reduced to the circumstance of having or not having a penis. So if the phallus is predominant, it is so only as a symbolic referent" (Dor, 86-87).

In fact, sexual differences depend on the existence of lack. This is because that:

the feminine genital organ is different from the masculine one only because it lacks something...This conception of something lacking inevitably assigns what is thought to be lacking to the only place possible for it, imaginary order. ... This imaginary construction, imperatively summoning up the idea of a lack in the face of the reality of the difference between the sexes, implicitly postulates the existence of an object that is likewise imaginary: the phallus. This

imaginary object provides total support for the child's fantasy when he tries to conceive of something lacking that he imagines should be there (Dor, 89).

Therefore, the biological difference of the sexes creates the idea of lacking something, and in a child's imagination symbolic order is shaped in accordance with the visual genital organs.

Offred in *The Handmaid's Tale* challenges to her mother since her mother is picked on and doomed to be "unwomen" though her mother's fierce struggle against the mainstream society. She could not win the fight. She could not run away from the everlasting seal of patriarchy. Everybody knows that she is not something strange, something apart from women; nonetheless, she is just called a weird thing and she goes on living with this new etiquette (but, of course, if she has managed to survive). The situation is absolutely the same for Offred. She strives to be with her family but she cannot get rid of the oppression of the patriarchal society; and her etiquette is being "chalice" or "walking womb". The major threat to the individuality is "abstractions about gender" or gender reductionism as Lois Feuer defends that:

The novel's characters debate the theory of "essentialism," the notion that gender distinctions denote some fundamental and crucial differences between human beings. The Commander's essentialism is evident in his "women can't add" point, and gender abstractions are easily visible elsewhere in the novel, as when the doctor whom Offred visits offers to impregnate her and thus save her from the death accorded to unreplicative Handmaids: "'It'd only take a minute, honey.' What he called his wife, once; maybe still does, but really it's a generic term. We are all honey (79). This gender abstraction is adopted by both sexes, of course: Aunt Lydia refers to all men as "them," but Nick calls Offred by her real, individual name as evidence of his good faith in helping her escape at the end of the novel (Feuer, no pag).

Feuer, in the lines above, implies that abstractions about gender or regarding genders as one – all the same, destroys individuality. It annihilates individuals' past, characters or their wills. Furthermore, the situation would be far more

destructive for women's psychology if it is practised by the patriarchal, totalitarian society.

In one part of her *The Cambridge Companion to Margaret Atwood*, Coral Ann Howells deals with *The Handmaid's Tale*. In her analysis of the novel, she underlines the vitality of language in the construction of dystopias. Not having their own names, handmaids has no individual rights "but instead has been conscripted into sexual service to the state, reduced by its doctrine of biological essentialism to her female role as a child breeder, a 'two-legged womb' " (Howells, 165). Offred's story telling has two purposes, the first one is telling about her counter-society – Gilead, and the second one is the way of self-rehabilitation against the "‘deadly brain washing’ ([Hélène] Cixous phrase) of the totalitarian state" (Howells, 165). She has such shocking sense of anxiety that the opening scene, according to Howells, introduces the reader the "sense of dislocation" (Howells, 166). Therefore, language is something unreliable and Atwood portrays today's familiar "twentieth century obsession with the unreliability of language and narrative" which is a part of self-reflexivity of the novel today (Freuer, no pag.). To sum up, "Offred's story telling helps her to survive the psychological oppression of Gilead" and also she has the chance to reverse masculine genre of dystopia love"; however, the sense of insecurity and the step to the unknown world go on irritating the reader while arising fear or anxiety even at the last scene of the story. (Howells, 169). At the beginning of the first chapter, Offred implies the cultural bias and the logical dilemma of the use of language:

...I remember walking in art galleries, through the nineteenth century: the obsession they had then with harems. Dozen of paintings of harems, fat women lolling on divans, turbans on their heads or velvet caps, being fanned with peacock tails, a eunuch in the background standing guard. Studies of sedentary flesh, painted by men who'd never been there. These pictures were supposed to be erotic, and I thought they were, at the time; but I see now what they were really about. They were paintings about boredom. But maybe boredom is erotic, when women do it, for men. (*The Handmaid's Tale*, 79).

This quotation from the novel gives a picture of a harem and women in it; however, the picture shows the situation which women in Gilead are in. While Offred is criticizing the women's situation, she is also mirroring the some words which have taken for granted before the establishment of the Republic of Gilead. Offred is now aware that there cannot be only one meaning for a word, and so one has to realise the biased interpretations in language. The last line of the quotation above, clearly indicates the ambiguity of the meaning of erotic and how the society of patriarchy interpretes it on the side of men because harems can just be favorable for men due to the chance of having the variety, just like in Gilead, but they mean boredom for women as Offred suggests. Moreover, harems were the places where women were just possessions. In this respect, Barbara Hill Rigney believes that writing becomes a political act; the writer's words are all about truth although the subject is fiction (Rigney, 111).

Keith Booker has similar ideas on *The Handmaid's Tale*, and he believes in the power of language. In the novel, Atwood

... does emphasize that the brutal treatment of women in Republic of Gilead is largely linguistic in nature. The handmaids in Atwood's dystopian Gilead have no identity except as potential childbearers; they're even stripped of their original names; which are replaced with possessive nominations such as "Offglen", "Offwayne", or "Offwarren", indicating their status as mere property of their commanders ("Glen", or "Fred" or "Warren") (Booker, 264).

In this respect, women in that society are solely possessions of men, and this is made legal with the help of language. Nevertheless, Atwood suggests the goodness of individuality playing the language as Lois Freuer states as follows:

In what initially appears to be merely another in a series of remembered conversational fragments, the Commander tells Offred that "Women can't add"; "For them, one and one and one and one don't make four" (240). She thinks at first he's making the customary condescending point about women's mathematical ability: "What do they make? I said, expecting five or three"; but his point is in fact a great if unintended compliment: women can't add one and one and one and one, a sense of the irreducible value of the individual. Women cannot think abstractly, says the commander,

quoting Lenin on making omelettes (273). The point of course, is that the eggs broken to make the “omelette” are people, and whether women deserve the commander’s compliment or not, Atwood’s focus is on this affirmation of individual human uniqueness in the face of those who are able to destroy it because they can abstract, can will themselves not to see the individual life. Offred muses later: “What the Commander said is true. One and one and one and one doesn’t equal four. Each one remains unique, there is no way of joining them together. They cannot be exchanged, one for the other” (248) (Freuer, no pag.).

It is surprising that commander suggests an agreeable point for Offred by implying that no human being resembles to each other, there is no way to consider them as one diminishing their qualities and each individual has his/her own way of life as Freuer sates above.

In aforementioned ideas, it is suggested that everybody is something unique and language is an effective instrument that handmaids do not use. Booker continues asserting that Louis Althusser argues that “linguistic interpellation of subject begins even before birth in the complex of expectations that the family and society develop concerning the infant-to-be. In particular, ‘it is certain in advance that it will bear its Father’s Name, and will therefore have an identity and be irreplaceable. Before its birth, the child therefore always already a subject’ (Althusser 176)” (Booker, 264). Likewise, Jacques Lacan considers that “naming is a paradigmatic enactment of the rule of the Law of the Father” (Booker, 264).

Within the framework of these ideas, handmaids, as subjects, are the “slave of language” since they cannot choose their own name; and, they are labelled before birth like all human beings. Lacan underlines that naming is a universal process in which the subject’s “... place is already inscribed at birth, if only by virtue of his proper name’ (148)” (Booker, 264).

In order to mention naming, it is crucial to remember that such sort of naming and “renaming” have continued in western civilization for hundred years by the use of “Mrs.”, where women are their father’s girl, then they are compelled

to be the husband's via renaming. However, this is just about women's surnames today whereas Gilead wipes out even the first names. Offred regards this renaming as a kind of threat to her being or her personality, and she wants to use her former name although "it was given by someone else":

I tell myself it doesn't matter, your name is like your telephone number, useful only to others; but what I tell myself is wrong, it does matter. I keep the knowledge of this name like something hidden, some treasure I'll come back to dig up, one day. I think of this name as buried. This name has an aura around it, like an amulet (Booker, 264-265)

As pointed out, names are our *sine qua non* of our personality, it is the most basic way of telling who we are. When the women in Gilead introduce themselves, they have to tell somebody's name. This is another kind of isolation and the fear of not being heard by the other people. Lacan gives a similar aspect of language. His view on subject as "slave of language" gives a Picture of women's "domination by men" and it significantly appeals to feminist interests. Lacan believes that this is the "symbolic order of language, and it indicates masculine superiority" (Booker, 265). Booker quotes Teresa de Lauretis's sentences:

[For Lacan] writing is the masculine activity par excellence, because it exists in the order of the symbolic where language, the circulation of signifiers, and signification itself are subjects to the name of the Father, to the structure of symbolic castration in which the phallus is the signifier of desire. Writing thus presupposes possession of the phallus – symbolically speaking, of course; and for a woman to write is to usurp a place, a discursive position, she does not have by nature or by culture. (80) (Booker, 265).

Lauretis claims that all about language is masculine activity, so women cannot possess it because it is not given to women culturally. In the Republic of Gilead, handmaids are not even allowed to read and write. Atwood directly relates this strong control over written language with psychoanalysis via one of the doctrines of Gilead: "Pen is Envy" (241) (Booker, 265). Obviously, Freudian concept of "Penis Envy" is implied and ironized. Freudian "penis envy" can be explained as a reaction of a girl who begins to be aware that she does not have a penis during her psychosexual development.

In short, Atwood seems to satirize the term that the lack is not penis but the pen - the freedom of writing, having the power of language. With respect to *Oryx and Crake*, the power is with man; however, Jimmy becomes the victim of his own talent of play on words

V. ORYX AND CRAKE

Oryx and Crake is a dystopic novel like *The Handmaid's Tale*. It is often called science-fiction; however, Margaret Atwood labels it as speculative fiction. These two novels reflect different scenarios. While *The Handmaid's Tale* presents a decay of women's roles for the sake of a conservative society of a totalitarian regime via a female's narration, *Oryx and Crake* indicate how so-called biogenetic advancements can be a disaster through a male narration. However, implications are the same. Basically, the collapse of American society and civilization is portrayed and thus fear is the fatal consequence.

5.1. ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTERS

The main characters of the novel – Jimmy/Snowman, Crake, and Oryx - reflect a love triangle. These characters are the cause and also the victims of the disaster of the end of the story. Jimmy's mother and father, and Ramona are the other characters who have affected Jimmy immensely.

The protagonist and the narrator is Jimmy whose name changes as Snowman in the end. For the first time, Atwood uses a male narration, but the themes narrated by both Offred and Jimmy are alike. Throughout his narration, the reader is presented flashbacks of his childhood. His existence as isolated and cursed Snowman begins with his being Crake's prophet in the world of Crakers. When he is a young boy, Jimmy is a witty boy who uses language to make his friends laugh. He observes his mother's and father's relationship, and he portrays his family's conflicts. He sees that his mother is a disappointed housewife who is never truly interested in him. When he drives her crazy, he is satisfied. Yet, he loves his mother. The mother is a woman "who abandons him for a life of resistance to the status quo, decries the experiments with reproduction and replacement of human organs, including the neocortex, that Jimmy's father is conducting as 'immortal' and 'sacrilegious' (Howells, 82-83)". Her language is a call for spirituality and ethics. Jimmy lives his life coldly after her mother's abandonment.

His father, as Jimmy implies, is an enigmatic man who is an expert on biogenetics and its business. He is eager to do more about his job, consequently he has never paid enough attention to Jimmy. Ramona, the promiscuous figure, is his father's co-worker. She courts Jimmy's father and they become lovers.

Crake is Jimmy's schoolmate and his name is originally Glenn. He has been an excellent student and awesome genius of biogenetics. He tries to reach the form of homo sapiens to create a new world for "crakers" to make the world far away from destruction. Nevertheless, he becomes the creator of destruction as a mad scientist. Oryx and Crake are cynical about realities. Crake, not believing in God states that he does not believe in Nature either, or even the capital N. He does not even believe in the existence of spiritual love stating that love is "hormonally induced delusional state (p. 193). (Howells, 83)". He is eager to redesign the ancient primitive brain. However, the world he creates is full of people who are "lack of sense of humor or ambiguity of loss, and they cannot read (Howells, 83)". Crakers do not have a skin code so that, as Crake believes, hierarchy would no longer exist among Crakers. Once, Oryx is one of the victims of her national identity.

Oryx is an unpredictable mysterious woman who has been a victim of child-pornography as an Asian girl. Jimmy and Crake never learn her real name. For the first time, Jimmy sees her on the internet. She becomes Crake's and Jimmy's lover, but she belongs to Crake mostly. In this love triangle, Oryx is the subject of abuses. In the world of Crakers, she serves as a reverend who is responsible with the teachings. Oryx and Crake are not considered to be humans, they are the embodiments of human feeling of uncontrollable greed (Howells, 83).

These characters, as mentioned before, are the creators and victims of their own catastrophe. In other words, they have high impacts on fearful biogenetics and they direct their own life into a nightmare. As greedy figures, Oryx and Crake do not suffer much in the end unlike poor Jimmy.

5.2. THE CONTEXT OF THE NOVEL AND CRITICS

Oryx and Crake has enigmatic characters who cannot be more attractive than the plot of the novel. However, the plot of the novel should not be regarded as something independent from the characters. The satire depends on the two boys' adventures which turn out to be the nightmare of the society for they are the reflections of the society. The protagonist of the novel is Jimmy or Snowman who appears to be the last human being who survives. In fact, he is not alone. There remain wolvogs, pigeons and rakunks – the hybrid animals which are life-threatening to human existence. The story is narrated with flashbacks of Jimmy's childhood memories. He lives in the 21st century and in a society which is shared by multinational corporations. These corporations keep their employees' families in privileged compounds to protect from a global lower part of pleeblands.

The story rises when Jimmy meets a charismatic boy Glenn and they become friends. Although Jimmy never confessed that he was irritated by Glenn when they were younger, in the end of the chronological end of the story when Jimmy is Snowman and Glenn is Crake, Jimmy curses his fate and Crake. Atwood's criticism lays behind these two boys' dull activities; such as playing computer games, watching live executions. Their favourite online computer game is "Extinctathon" which requires immense knowledge about the nature of living creatures and which inspires Crake to take over the control of extincts.

Another thing about internet is child pornography portrayed through Oryx character in the novel. Jimmy and Glenn first meet Oryx via a pornographic film in which Oryx acts. Afterwards they become friends, and she becomes Crake's lover; that is, his prostitute, and Crakers' teacher. In this way, she continues working for the sake of man, making the things easier for them. She never achieves her goals of life. In fact, the reader is not given any single clue about her feelings, ideas.

Crake becomes the master of the world using the power of biotechnology. He tries to create a society which will live harmoniously with themselves and the

nature. Yet, he cannot prevent the world from the virus that he creates himself. Thus, he tries to create a new society – Crakers while he lets people die due to contagious illnesses, viruses that he has activated. His intention here is just to let the people die, and to separate the Crakers and make them live in a good place. Hence, some people have to pay the price of the others' good living standards. Shannon Hengen describes the character of the novel as “driven by greed” (Howells, 82). As a genius, Hengen asserts, Crake creates new projects as challenges to our century and over population. One of them is BlyssPlus pill which offers higher libido and a return to younger ages, and a protection to sexual diseases. The other one is the creation of humanlike creatures who will take over the world. Crake knows that the consumer oriented society would value BlyssPlus so that he uses the pill to demolish humanity via a virus for “rouge hemorrhagic (p. 325)”. Crake makes Jimmy immune to the disease; hence Jimmy will look after the Crakers (Howells, 82).

Jimmy often muses about the Crake's creations and he believes that these productions produce illusions of invulnerability: “[The body] must have got tired of the soul's constant nagging and whining and the anxiety-driven intellectual web-spinning of the mind ... It had dumped the other two back there somewhere, leaving them stranded in some damp sanctuary of stuffy lecture hall (p. 85)” (Howells, 82).

Snowman finds himself the guardian or messiah of the Crakers as the only human being who can survive. He does not want to be, but Crake has made him so. In the end of the story, Crake kills Oryx, and Snowman kills Crake in rage and with an unconscious nervousness because of which he feels that it is Crake's uncontrollable ambition. Snowman,

the proverbial last man alive, describes how the primal landscape came to be after the evisceration of bioengineering gone awry. A modern-day Robinson Crusoe, Snowman is marooned on a parched beach, stranded between the polluted water and a chemical wasteland that has been stripped of human kind by a virulent

plague. Once he melts away, even the vague memories of what was will have disappeared (Montello, no pag.).

As Martha Montello states, Snowman is doomed to be the only man survived from the technological disaster and the causes and effects of the end of humanity will vanish forever. Therefore, Atwood seems to suggest that human beings always do the same mistakes to their existence, in addition, some people have to pay the price of the others' ambition. The unfavorable conditions of the world of Crakers and Snowman's protest to the anxiety because of the created hell is states as follows:

He [Snowman] scans the horizon, using his one sunglassed eye: nothing. The sea is hot metal, the sky a bleached blue, except for the hole burnt in it by the sun. everything is so empty. Water, sand, sky, trees, fragments of past time. Nobody to hear him.
"Crake!" he yells. "Asshole! Shit-for-brains!"
He listens. The salt water is running down his face again. He never knows when that will happen and he can never stop it. His breath is coming is gasps, as if a giant hand is clenching around his chest – clench, release, clench. Senseless panic.
"You did this!" he screams at the ocean.
No answers, which isn't surprising. Only the waves, wish-wash, wish-wash. He wipes his fist across his face, across the grime and tears and snot and the derelict's whiskers and sticky mango juice.
"Snowman, Snowman," he says. "Get a life." (*Oryx and Crake*, 11-12).

These lines clearly indicate Snowman's passivity because of the life prepared for him as a victim. He faces his fear hidden in his unconsciousness. Now, the life is just the nightmare composed of his fears although he has once envied the lonely wizards of biotechnology. Although he has always wanted to be somebody respected, he has never wished to live in such an invented world. Here are the other critics and the novel within their perspective:

Anthony Griffiths defines the plot of the novel as "simply put" but "in a not-too-distant future" and a modern version of Dr Frankenstein which is the ill outcome of misused genetics. Crake uses technology to create weird animals, and

finally the virus that he creates causes the end of humanity. There are two main characters in the novel; hence there are two aspects in the novel. One is the enigmatic love interest Oryx, “and the shallow sidekick Jimmy (alias Snowman)”. However, the story has lots of irritating details though “the satellite of these two people”. For instance, Oryx is, in fact, is a sexual-slave who was sold to western man. Her story is subplot which indicates the sufferings and the story of abuses (Griffiths, no pag).

In the abstract of “Dis/integrating animals: ethical dimensions of the genetic engineering of animals for human consumption”, Traci Warkentin suggests that the concepts of natural and artificial, contamination and purity, integrity and fragmentation, and body and mind are discussed in the novel. Therefore, according to Warkentin, Atwood offers a “medium for exploring these highly contentious practices and ideas as it provides hypothetical narratives of possibility”. Futhermore, “it is used to highlight contemporary hegemonic assumptions and values in ways that make them visible. Particular attention is paid to issues of growing human organs in pigs for xenotransplantation...” Warkentin concludes his ideas stating that *Oryx and Crake* implies ongoing moral deprivation of human experience, “potentially resulting in a future mechanomorphosis, the extreme manifestation of an existing mechanomorphism” (Warkentin, no pag.).

All of these subjects of the novel make the reader consider the psychological aspects of fragmentation and language.

5.3. FRAGMENTATION AS THE THEME OF FEAR

As mentioned before, the term - fragmentation means being apart or in pieces. One of the most remarkable causes of social fragmentation is being “the other”; thus resisting to have such an intimidating label evokes fear.

With respect to Jimmy character of *Oryx and Crake*, he is not the first subject of fragmentation in the story. He becomes a creep at the end of the story.

In fact, story begins with the end; the last chapter starts with the first lines of the novel. The sense of hopelessness, everlasting loneliness, and isolation from the society is highlighted. He is doomed to be isolated and he symbolizes the invisible minority of the society of fragmentation.

The most distinctive fragmentation in Jimmy's story is corporal fragmentation of animals around him. Margaret Atwood suggests hypothetical possibilities by giving the "concepts of natural and artificial contamination and purity, integration and fragmentation, and mind and body" in *Oryx and Crake* (Warkentin, no pag.). Traci Warkentin has written a significant thesis revealing the biotechnologic nightmare and the possibility of a disastrous future as Atwood also underlines. Traci Warkentin defines Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* and his paper on *Oryx and Crake* as follows:

While this news article may seem commonplace now, it is headlines such as this one that inspired Margaret Atwood to write a book of speculative fiction on how genetic engineering may continue to shape life on Earth in the future. Her novel, *Oryx and Crake*, published in 2003, opens with a description of an ominous and barren landscape and it becomes immediately apparent that Atwood's vision of the biotechnological future is dystopian to say the least. The take-home messages are deeply humbling as Atwood presents her readers with provocative and disturbing possibilities. As such, *Oryx and Crake* provides a transitional narrative space for the discussion of current biotechnological philosophies and practices in Western society and where they might lead to in the not-so-distant future. While the book covers many aspects of society and technology worthy of discussion, this paper will focus on issues of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), particularly 'transgenic organisms'². A transgenic organism is one that has been microgenetically engineered so that its genome contains genetic material derived from a different species (Wheale and McNally 1990, p 285). For example, a 'geep' is a sheep and goat hybrid, containing genetic material from both species (Wheale and McNally 1990, p 276). (Warkentin, no pag.)

In these lines, Warkentin seems to believe that corruption and integrity makes this novel representing mechanical reduction so disturbing. Such integrity creates fragmentation, "the mutilation of bodies into machine-like components,

unsettling in subtle and sometimes dramatic ways” (Warkentin no pag.). To Warkentin, “integration” and “fragmentation” as terms irritates Western Culture, especially in the perspective of “radical discontinuity between human beings and nature”. “Manmade” or “unnatural” disturbs the society for it appeals to ethnicity and religion (Warkentin no pag.). This disturbance results in the fear of corporal disintegration and being something fragmented like “pigoons”, “rakunk” in the novel. The other kind of fear due to this fragmentation, according to Warkentin, is the fear of contamination. General concepts of “blood purity and contamination may be more dangerous in terms of racism and classism” (Warkentin no pag.). Warkentin quotes some lines from the novel to show the subject of contamination of the novel:

*‘We’ve done it,’ said Jimmy’s father’s voice. ‘I think a little celebration is in order.’ A scuffle: maybe he’d tried to kiss her.
 ‘Done what?’
 Pop of the champagne cork. ‘Come on, it won’t bite you.’ A pause: he must be pouring it out. Yes: the clink of glasses. ‘Here’s to us.’
 ‘Done what? I need to know what I’m drinking to.’
 Another pause: Jimmy pictured his father swallowing, his Adam’s apple going up and down, bobbity-bobble. ‘It’s the neuro-regeneration project. We now have genuine human neocortex tissue growing in a pigoon. Finally, after all those duds! Think of the possibilities, forstroke victims, and...’
 ‘That’s all we need,’ said Jimmy’s mother. ‘More people with the brains of pigs. Don’t we have enough of those already?’ (p 56)
 (Warkentin, no pag).*

Racist and classist ideology may be inteded in these lines. This motto brings the discussion of superiority of human species all over the world. Interchangable DNA motto incites this discussion as the boundries of species begin to dissolve and people start to think that there should be biological territorial boundaries. Thus, ‘this presents us with an apparent paradox in which ‘genetics as system of representation both challanges concepts of species as fixed (in the practice of, for example, transgenetics) and reinforces them (by incorporating notions of essence) (Birke 1994, p 84)’ (Warkentin, no pag.). This is the defeat of uegenics which is argued for hundred years (Griffiths, no pag.).

In Lacanian sense, this fear of contamination, as one might say, is considered as a threat to bodily unity as, in the novel, contamination is seen mutilation which can be said to be another type of fragmentation. Therefore, “unnatural” or “manmade” is interconnected to fragmentation which results in anxiety.

In addition to this anxiety within Lacanian ideology, in Traci Warkentin’s thesis, the base of anxiety is explained via the effects of biotechnology as “the fear of death due to fragmentation”. To underline this relation, Warkentin quotes from A. Hollands’s book on biotechnology as follows:

There is a distinction between using another creature’s end as your own – which is acceptable – and disregarding that other creature’s ends entirely – which is not. A problem, however, which Kant’s notion does not seem to address...comes when the genetic engineer starts to redesign those ends (1990, p 170; emphasis added). (Warkentin, no pag.)

Another disturbing reality about biotechnology is the use of some species for the sake of economic interests. Traci Warkentin points out Jimmy’s disturbance while visiting his best friend – Crake at Watson-Crick Institute. He gets shocked to see chickens which are just designed to eat and get fat (Warkentin, no pag.). Jimmy expresses his feelings:

“This is horrible,” said Jimmy. The thing was a nightmare. It was like an animal–protein tuber. ‘Picture the sea-anemone body plan,’ said Crake. ‘That helps.’

“But what’s it thinking?” said Jimmy” (Atwood 2003, p 202).

In response, Jimmy is told by one of the student scientists involved that it’s not supposed to think that “they’d removed all the brain functions that had nothing to do with digestion, assimilation and growth” (Atwood 2003, p 203).

“No need for added growth hormones,” said the woman, ‘the high growth rate’s built in...And the animal-welfare freaks won’t be able to say a word, because this thing feels no pain” (Atwood 2003, p 203).

Jimmy’s immediate response of horror and his question of “what’s it thinking” speak to an agency in chickens that has been dramatically violated and distorted. Atwood then makes allusions to the already

tight relationship between present-day research in biotechnology and big business through its commercial applications:

“‘Those kids are going to clean up,’ said Crake after they’d left. The students at Watson–Crick got half the royalties from anything they invented there. Crake said it was a fierce incentive. ‘ChickieNobs, they’re thinking of calling the stuff.’ ‘Are they on the market yet?’ asked Jimmy weakly. He couldn’t see eating a ChickieNob. It would be like eating a large wart” (Atwood 2003, p 203). (Warkentin, no pag.)

In these lines, Jimmy portrays the food industry and the diabolic production of food in Watson-Crick Institute. He feels shocked and he is disgusted because of ChickieNobs. The predominant subject in Jimmy’s mind is the annoyance resulting from chicken-like creatures which are functionally chicken but merely designed to be fed and eaten. This is a kind of violence; and whether people will be subject of such violence is an unknown issue. Although his being one of the dwellers of that country, he is the little other who is different in mind; and his mother and the society is big other which seems to be threat to his identity as castration complex. He feels castrated; hence, fear arises in Jimmy’s mind.

In short, insecurity of the environment, the idea of fragmented bodies are the sources of fear and the consequences of the ideas of “the little other” and “the big other” which might be applied to *The Handmaid’s Tale* and *Oryx and Crake*. One of the most remarkable causes of social fragmentation is being “the other”; thus resisting to have such an intimidating label evokes fear.

In his article on *Oryx and Crake*, Stephen Dunning deals with fear and “othering” as the main reason. He begins telling his ideas after comparing well-known dystopias such as George Orwell’s *1984*, Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*, and Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale*, and *Oryx and Crake*. He thinks that *The Handmaid’s Tale* is like *1984*, and *Oryx and Crake* is just like *Brave New World*. He suggests that like the latter one, *Oryx and Crake* portrays a world of disasters, torture and death Dunning, no pag.) and writes about the culture shown in the novel as follows:

This culture grinds on without what Neil Postman labels a necessary “god”, without a story that “tells of origins, and envisions a future, a story that constructs ideals, prescribes rules of conduct, provides a source of authority, and above all, gives a sense of continuity and purpose” (5-6) (Dunning, no pag).

Therefore, in the novel the reader are presented a strong authority which nobody can get away from. Dunning also asserts that Atwood tries to present the devil of technology. She “recognizes that a world devoid of qualitative distinctions will be driven by base appetites and fears, stimulated by the latest technological innovations and marketed for maximum profit” (Dunning, no pag.). Moreover, Atwood’s aim is not only warning about the danger coming, but reflecting the reality of society.

In addition to these ideas, Dunning states that the novel offers the victory of scientific whereas this means the destruction of the world. With respect to the characters, he says that Snowman is close to both Oryx and Crake, and Oryx is the woman whom Snowman loves. Like *The Handmaid’s Tale*, the narrator is aware of the future disaster which is coming within a short time; however, the “catastrophe goes well beyond the predictable...for Snowman initially appears to be only *human* alive” (Dunning, no pag.). Therefore, one might say that othering process can be observed with Snowman’s remaining as the onlt human in the story. In fact, Snowman’s isolation began a long time ago when he was Jimmy. It is so long ago that Jimmy generally implies the isolation via his narration. Being the other has been the problem in the society for eveyone, and he has become the only alive victim of othering; he is forced to live with homo sapiens. Although he acts as a holy person as Crake’s prophet or the new messiah, he suffers a lot from the bitter isolation and being something different from the new kind of homo sapiens. He is more like a creep in the new society – Crake. Dunning also states that Oryx, as an enigmatic character, “emerges as the oppressed ‘Other’ incarnating possibilities of communication and love that neither Snowman nor Crake can fully grasp”; nevertheless, she believes in Crake’s therapeutic mission (Dunning, no pag.).

Moreover, Dunning suggests that there are other reasons of fear and being the Other in *Oryx and Crake*. Hence, he presents other perspectives. The first perspective is political isolation. The only respected or valued people are the ones who have the power of numbers. Life is much more unbearable and brutal for the unprotected ones. However, the elite ones who can afford protection is also frustrated, anxious, and isolated for they cannot even describe the area they live; or tell their address. In this respect, Dunning highlights the importance of education. Corporation compounds provide a special kind of education for the children of their employees. The level of security is connected to the education. Thus, less educated people are doomed to live in insecure places. “Numbers” people who are gifted in science and technology are systematically privileged. “Word” people, like Jimmy, can only profit in some situations such as advertising (Dunning, no pag.). Therefore, “numbers” people and their ideology are reflected as “Law of Father”.

The political isolation and fear as the outcome can be observed in *The Handmaid's Tale* as well. With the new era of conservative politics, the return of biological safety and traditional norms were supposed to spread widely. To achieve this, politics is used as the instrument of indoctrination. All women in Gilead are not only denied identity but symbolically dismembered. “When Offred's Compucard is canceled because she is female, in a marriage no longer legally recognized, she feels as if her feet, symbolically the freest part of her, have been amputated (188, Motif S162)¹⁴.” Red center is the place of indoctrination recalling Jane Eyre's Red Room, where women's feet and hands are thought to be inessential for Handmaid's and sometimes disfigured (Wilson, 279). “Historical Notes” part portrays the blindness of the society about the horrors in the history, “including witch burning and other sexism, facism, homophobia, racism, and religious persecution, ‘objectively’ (Wilson, 291)”. Politics, in this respect, acts as base of fear. The political hysteria of that era – 1980s tied women to the bottom level as the oppressed ones.

Lack of love is another subject Dunning mentions. Broken families, the necessity of the survival of relationships, and mutual exploitation is pointed out in

Oryx and Crake, and, one might suggest, in *The Handmaid's Tale*. Dunning states that the people of the society in the former novel are aware of their deprivation, as the cause of their loneliness. Communication is needed. Dunning shows the relationship between communication and technology. Technology does not make communication easier unlike to the common idea about it. In fact, people use technology just to entertain or distract themselves. Internet acts as the mind-altering substance. Furthermore, technology becomes the extension of violence for it demolishes taboos and conventions. Computer games are boys' main form of entertainment and formative education. They learn how to handle monopolies or scientific disasters. Snowman calls them "wicked". Unlike many other games "Extinctathon" domesticates death via naming it.

Snowman describes it as an "interactive biofreak masterlove game" in which players adopt the names of extinct animal species (hence *Oryx* and *Crake*), and traffic in the data of biological genocide. The game thus exploits the culture's pervasive anxiety over death by offering players like *Crake* position of authority, rather than simply leaving them to wait passively for their own extinction (Dunning, no pag.).

Hence, cyber games evoke the idea of authority while they are the reminders of non-cyber existence of death, and then the fear of death becomes unavoidable. Dunning believes that technology, or simply computer games violates human relations. For instance, *Crake's* owing two computers is privation and loss. When *Crake* and *Jimmy* want to play games, they sit back to back. "This image, of two friends facing away from each other, intent upon a two-dimensional visual world that mediates their relationship, captures something of both the forces that violate human communion and the results of that violation" (Dunning, no pag.). They do not even look at or talk to each other. Dunning suggests that they are not even virtually present. One might say that this way of using technology means making the other each other which they regard one another as rivals. Therefore, the one who loses, has to accept psychologically, that he is the Other, and the winner rules. In conclusion, technological society reduces our capacity for, need of linguistics and emotional sensitivity.

Unlike *Oryx and Crake*, the reader cannot observe the direct effects of technology in, *The Handmaid's Tale*.

In *Oryx and Crake*, Crake is the new god. His therapeutic approach, according to Dunning is nothing more than Freudian pessimism. The ego has to defend itself against the threats of the instinctual Id and the cultural superego. "With Freud, Crake (in contrast to many sanguine post-Freudians) recognizes the murderous threat posed by unrestrained instincts. Similarly, he treats high culture as a sublimation of genital urges" (Dunning, no pag.).

To conclude, *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake* are the novels which point out the theme of bodily and social fragmentation which ends up with the unavoidable fear and Lacan's ideas are remarkable to apply with the readings of the novels. Language can be said to be the way to fragment individuals and society.

5.4. THE FUNCTION OF LANGUAGE AS THE POLITICS OF FEAR

As mentioned before within Chapter Four, language thus narration and rhetoric is the unavoidable element of life. With respect to *Oryx and Crake*, Jimmy is portrayed as a strong character when he is a child for he has the power to "name" and play with language. This gives him the power to be a sociable boy; thus he has some friends. However, he is irritated by the new enigmatic boy – Crake as he seems more intellectual than him. Although he never accepts, Crake resembles to Jimmy's father who has a charismatic and powerful personality. Unconsciously, Jimmy feels inferior when he is with his father; and he can never identify himself with him because he cannot meet Jimmy's need for love. Although he seems powerful, he suffers a lot due to the plays on language. He cannot grasp the reality or lies given by the language. Consequently, he becomes isolated in dilemmas and in psychological pains. Here is a quotation of his isolation and anxiety, and the his blurry use of language:

“Now I’m alone,” he says out loud. “All, all alone. Alone on a wide, wide sea.” One more scrap from the burning scrapbook in his head.

Revision: seashore.

He feels the need to hear a human voice – a fully human voice, like his own. Sometimes he laughs like a hyena or roars like a lion – his idea of a hyena, his idea of a lion. He used to watch old DVDs of such creatures when he was a child: those animal-behaviour programs featuring copulation and growling and innards, and mothers licking their young. Why had he found then so reassuring? (Oryx and Crake, 10)

...

Oh, nice abs! comes the whisper, interrupting him. Honey, just lie back. Who is it? Some tart he once bought. Revision, Professional sex-skills expert. (Oryx and Crake, 11)

...

He listens. The salt water is running down his face again. He never knows when that will happen and he can never stop it. His breath is coming in gasps, as if a giant hand is clenching around his chest – clench, release, clench. Senseless panic.

“You did this!” he screams at the ocean. (*Oryx and Crake*, 11-12)

In these lines above, the reader can observe the loneliness, fear, and the game on language in Snowman’s life. In the last sentence above, he blames Crake because, Crake – as a god figure - has forced him to live in this new world. By Crake, Jimmy is castrated and isolated.

Coral Ann Howells has similar ideas about *Oryx and Crake* and the effects of language in the novel. She states as follows:

After the catastrophe, however, Snowman finds himself stranded and displaced in an alien environment. In this new context he is portrayed as the ultimate outsider, possibly the last survivor of the human species. Snowman is in a position where he feels excluded from other living beings but obscurely related to them, and he wishes that he could make them understand that relationship, and so recognize the kinship with himself...He is outside the world of the living and of the living of the dead, but somehow still in both of them. He remains an in-between figure, a state that anthropologist Victor Turner has called “liminality,” where a group or individual, having separated from an established place in the social structure, is “neither here nor there, betwixt and between all fixed points of

classification” Like a foreigner in a culturally and linguistically alien environment, Snowman must be always on the alert; like a foreigner he is profoundly alone in his condition, cannot share his pain with anybody, and lives haunted by his memories (Howells, 109).

In other words, Jimmy cannot keep pace with his environment, he does not feel that he belongs to somewhere. He is totally alienated from the environment and language has one of the biggest effects on his alienation. Howells continues mentioning Jimmy’s alienation with respect to language:

In such a displaced condition Snowman’s relation to the language soon becomes one of estrangement. Like an exile, he experiences a vertigo of meaning, as English starts to become like a foreign language to him. Snowman’s peculiar relation to language comes, however, not as a surprise. In his prior life as Jimmy, the protagonist of this novel, he is defined as “word person.” The thematics of language, of different sensitivities towards it, is highlighted by the constant distinction in the text between “word person” and “numbers person.” Jimmy/Snowman is repeatedly defined as a “word person,” unlike his father and Crake, who as scientists are definitely “numbers persons.” (Howells, 110)

As Howells suggests, Jimmy begins to get confused about the meanings of the words; however, one may say that he is confused as he does not have the power to control the language like the others – “numbers persons”. Therefore, he cannot keep pace with his father and Crake who holds the power as the reflection of “Law of Father”. Jimmy is a man so he should not identify himself with his mother; however, he does not have the power of numbers. He is much like his mother. In addition, Elenora Rao asserts that when Jimmy is caught in the middle, and begins to feel that he suffers owing to the crisis and depression, “Jimmy’s relation with language changes dramatically. When the sense of temporariness and rootlessness overwhelms him, language loses its ‘solidity’; it becomes ‘thin, contingent, slippery’ (p. 260)” (Howells, 110). She concludes that this condition turns Jimmy into Snowman. This is the outcome of Jimmy’s in-between identity and the following nothingness due to this dilemma.

Rao believes that *Oryx and Crake* puts forward the balance of binary oppositions “representing process of inclusion and exclusion of inside and outside” and “the protagonist’s isolation and temporal displacement makes him the ultimate outcast, compelled to ‘live’, albeit surreptitiously, in the past, a past which is populated by reveries, dreams, memories, and nostalgia” (Howells 108). She continues defining the protagonist as “displaced in an alien environment” and “portrayed as the ultimate outsider” (Howells, 109). According to Rao, he is in-between figure, as mentioned before. As a result, he has fears about his non-brilliant past, and his indefinite but probably nightmare future. He is always nervous about every second of his life. This is because that he simply ignores or he is made to ignore the strong father figure, so he has nothing to do with that strong father figure who is the law. This is resulted as his castration in symbolic sense.

Snowman or Jimmy in *Oryx and Crake* also suffers a lot during his life. Throughout his childhood, Jimmy observes what is going on around him. He reflects his father’s powerful and calm personality while he gives away his mothers anxiety and sequent bad treatments. Although her mother is wise, as he implies, she has had to quit the job, and she has become a witch housewife. In fact, Jimmy loves her mother. However, he can’t help teasing her and making her lose her temper. There seems to be a problem between his mother and father; yet the problem is not clear. The only thing told by Jimmy is that her mother does not favor Jimmy’s father’s uncontrollable ambition as he may destroy something and give harm to humanity:

At school, he [Jimmy] enacted a major piece of treachery against them. He’d draw eyes on each of his index-finger knuckles and tuck his thumbs inside his fists. Then, by moving the thumbs up and down to show mouths opening and closing, he could make these two hand-puppets argue together. His right hand was Evil Dad, his left hand was Righteous Mom. Evil Dad blustered and theorized and dished out pompous bullshit, Righteous Mom complained and accused. In the Righteous Mom’s cosmology, Evil Dad was the sole source of hemorrhoids, kleptomania, global conflict, bad breath, tectonic-plate fault lines, and clogged drains, as well as every migraine headache and menstrual cramp Righteous Mom had ever suffered. This lunchroom show of his was a hit; a crowd would collect, with requests. Jimmy, Jimmy – do Evil Dad! The other kids

had lots of variations and routines to suggest; filched from the private lives of their own parental units some of them tried drawing eyes on their knuckles, but they weren't as good at the dialogue (*Oryx and Crake*, 60).

Certainly, the paragraph above clearly portrays the conflict between the couple; and Jimmy seems to call his father bad or "evil" while he also teases his mother. One might say that Jimmy admits that his father is strong but there are also bad sides of his personality. Jimmy never believes that his father and his mother truly loves him and Jimmy has always repressed his need for love:

When Jimmy was ten he'd been given a pet rakunk, by his father.

...

The occasion for the gift of the rakunk must have been his birthday. He's repressed his birthdays: they weren't matter for celebration, not after Dolores the live-in Philippina left. When she was there, she had always remember his birthday; she'd make a cake, or maybe she'd buy one, but anyway there it would be, a genuine cake, with icing and candles – isn't that true? He cluthes on to the reality of those cakes; he closes his eyes, conjures them up, hovering all in a row, their candles alight, giving off their sweet, comforting scent of vanilla, like Dolores herself.

His mother on the other hand could never seem to recall how old Jimmy was or what day he was born. He'd have to remind her, at breakfast; then she'd snap out of her trance ad buy him some mortifying present – pyjamas for little kids with kangroos or bears on them, a disk nobody under forty would ever listen to, underwear ornamented with whales – and tape it up in tissue paper and dump it on him at the dinner table, smiling her increasingly weird smile, as if someone has yelled Smile! and goosed her with a fork.

Then his father would put them all through an awkward excuse about why this really, really special and important date had somehow just slid out of his head, and ask Jimmy if everything was okay, and send him an e-birthday card – the OrganInc Standard design with five winged pigeons doing a conga line and Happy Birthday, Jimmy, May All Your Dreams Come True – and come up with a gift for him the day after, a gift that would not be a gift for him the day after, a gift that would not be a gift but some tool or intelligence-enhancing gane or other hidden demand that he measure up. But measure up to what? There was never any standart; or there was one, but it was so cloudy and immense that nobody could see it, especially not Jimmy. Nothing he could achieve would ever be the right idea, or enough. By OrganInc's math-and-chem-and-applied-bio yardstick he must

have seemed dull normal: maybe that was why his father stopped telling him he could do the much better if he'd only try, and switched to doling out secretly disappointed praise, as if Jimmy had a brain injury. (*Oryx and Crake*, 49-50)

As the reader sees, Jimmy's soul has big gaps because he has made to feel inferior instead of feeling loved. Jimmy loves her mother but he cannot be on the side of mother because she is weak or fragile, and she does not love him much. Therefore, Jimmy questions what has been taught him so far – the maternal bond after his mother leaves home:

Maybe she had loved Jimmy, thinks Snowman. In her own manner. Though he hadn't believed it at the time. Maybe, on the other hand, she hadn't loved him. She must have had some sort of positive emotion about him though. Wasn't there supposed to be a maternal bond? (*Oryx and Crake*, 61)

Jimmy is shocked to see that his mother has never loved him when his mother escapes. However, seeing that ideas about motherhood are not true, Jimmy begins to question the ideas or concepts of life. Something wrong must have been taught to Jimmy. It does not matter whether it is right or not; the clearer thing is that Jimmy cannot be on his mother's side.

In addition, as the reader can understand from the quotation about Jimmy's birthdays, he feels that his father will never be closer to him. Such a gap between father and son results in Jimmy's symbolic castration. Jimmy loves his father but he cannot be with him either. His father makes him feel inferior or something looking like a creep. With his Evil Dad show, Jimmy becomes popular in the school; and in a way, he feels loved. However, this does not last long: Crake, who has a strong character just like his father, comes to the school as a student. They become friends whereas Crake's charisma destroys Jimmy's popular image. This is something that Jimmy is familiar with; this is just like his father's effect. Crake is always the better one since he has intelligent, calm personality which makes in another leader of biotechnologic business and which makes Jimmy the servant. That is, his father's and the other father-like figure's power and Jimmy's hopeless paces to reach the power have always damaged him.

Jimmy's narration portrays the psychological damage done by his family; especially by his overwhelming father. When Jimmy tries to remember the old words, he feels as if he were in a daze. He perceives the senselessness of words as well as modern man's - especially his father's apathy or lack of communication as follows:

From nowhere, a word appears: Mesozoic. He can see the word, he can hear the word, but he can't reach the word. He can't attach anything to it. This happening too much lately, this dissolution of meaning, the entries on his cherished wordlists drifting off into space. (*Oryx and Crake*, 39)

...

Jimmy's father had been apologetic towards him lately, as if he'd punished Jimmy for something Jimmy hadn't done and was sorry about it. He was saying Right, Jimmy? A bit too much. Jimmy didn't like that - he didn't like being the one handing out the good marks. There were a few other moves of his father's he could do without as well - the sucker punches, the ruffling of the hair, the way of pronouncing the word son, in a slightly deeper voice. This hearty way of talking was getting worse, as if his father were auditioning for the role of Dad, but without much hope. Jimmy had done enough faking himself so he could spot it in others, most of the time. He stroked the little rakunk and didn't answer. (*Oryx and Crake*, 51-52)

Consequently, Jimmy is anxious and has had negative feelings throughout his life. Some might say that this situation has created unsolvable crises in Jimmy's personality. No matter what others say, he calls his rakunk - a newly invented pet, "Killer". Hence, he tries to show his fear and hatred while he is trying to prove that his father is not the only one who can give names to everything. One can say that this is a way of showing that he has the masculine symbolic power; nonetheless, he cannot get rid of the castration. This is because that he does not realize that Crake is much more better than him. Consequently, his ability to play with language turns out to be his end which castrates him. This is due to the fact that language is the cultural extension of idea of "Law of Father". Like Offred, he is fond of telling old words in order not to forget the past, and so, his identity. Yet, his narration is based on fantasy and reality like Offred's.

In contrast to these ideas, one might suppose that there must be a difference between Offred and Jimmy owing to the different gender identities, they cannot share the same oppression. The difference is that Jimmy becomes, ironically “word-serf” who is isolated though his rhetorical ability:

Snowman’s “conversations” are with aspects of his old self (when he was Jimmy) and with the people who belong to the past. He, like Offred, exists in a state of double consciousness, working by associative leaps between “now” and “then” in an effort to escape from a devastated world littered with the wreckage of late twentieth-century civilization reminding him daily of what he has lost. So great is his need to hear a human voice that he hallucinates voices in his head: Oryx’s “storytelling voice” (p. 371) and the voices of Crake, his mother, and his former lovers. Even old books “speak” to him, but it is only when he thinks he hears a slug answering that he begins to fear for his sanity. As his narrative slips strangely between reality, memory, and fantasy, we come to realize that Snowman like Offred is telling stories in a desperate bid to reclaim his own identity, ironizing his present situation, and delighting in language and word play. However, there is now a new urgency for it is Snowman’s unique task to rescue words from oblivion: “‘Hang on to the words’, he tells himself. The odd words, the old words, the rare ones. Valance. Norn. Serendipity. Pibroch. Lubricious. When they’re gone out of his head, these words, they’ll be gone, everywhere, forever. As if they had never been” (p. 78). Snowman, champion of the values of art and literature, degraded to “wordserf” in his former life as writer of advertising copy, takes up his word warrior role again when there is nobody to listen. The Crakers would hear him, but with brains from which passion and imagination have been erased, they would not understand him. It is the lack of these distinctively human qualities in Crake’s Houyhnhnmlike creatures which reminds Snowman of his radical isolation (Howells, 172).

In this perspective, Jimmy’s and Offred’s storytelling, Jimmy’s schizoid character due to his perceiving unsaid words are just the reflections of their isolation and their wish to protect their past and so their identity. This indicates the vitality of language and how it protects or devastates one’s identity as well.

These ideas show the reader the importance of language and how people who have the strongest ideology have also the power of using the language for

their own sakes. To Lacan, it is a world-wide idea (although people do not realize) that, due to the symbolic order, most of the male members of a society get the power of language; and the one who cannot have this power are sealed as the castrated ones reflected on *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake*.

CONCLUSION

Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and *Oryx and Crake* present us a nightmare. The first one makes us realize how dangerous a phallogocentric world can be. However, not only women but also men suffer in Gilead. In the beginning of *Oryx and Crake*, we can observe a so-called utopic heaven in which biotechnology is advanced. This novel serves the motives of the results of masculine utopia dominated by greed and how it becomes a nightmare for even men. Therefore, Atwood suggests a world which is away from sexism and the sanctions of politics. The politics becomes the only thing in the basis of social life since it is indoctrinated by social laws or norms which become the unbreakable rules of the government.

The first chapter is definition of genre comparing utopia, dystopia and brief information about atopia. The genre – atopia is the synthesis of the extremes of thesis – utopia and antithesis – dystopia. The genre – dysopia suggest these themes as presented also in George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. The motto of these novels is enslavement leading to repression. *The Handmaid's Tale* introduces slaves of reproduction whereas the ability to play on words makes the protagonist of *Oryx and Crake* the slave for the sake of a new sterile world of Crakers. Unlike utopias, these dystopias are the rejections of idealized happy societies with their shocking scenarios. To Barclay, these scenarios are more effective to wake people about the negative traits and abuses as the consequences of the regime. Therefore, it is the presentation of psychological states of people indicated unsad by utopia:

Dystopian novels (i.e. "utopian satire"), then, are based on the assumption that the technological or scientific control of environment does not necessarily increase man's control over his destiny – and in some cases, the bid for his control creates a more horrendous state of affairs. Dystopias take targets as totalitarianism and imperialism. Dystopian satiric arrows strike at the assumption that the destiny of the individual needs the complete direct of governing body. ... Dystopia reveals the unique individual as detrimental to utopian aims. The uniqueness of individual presents an anomaly to the generalization of laws regarding human

behavior and thinking. ... Utopia seeks homogeneity and promotes the possibility that scientific control of community can create happiness for the individual by limiting his or her very individuality. Thus, the dystopian premise rests on the primacy of individual. Dystopias focus on the psychological impact of the utopian political schema (Barclay, 178)

In other words, this presentation of the psychological impact of the utopian political schema increases the value of individuals while it includes criticism on the value of the commonness within totalitarian ideology. The idea of eliminating the uniqueness of individuals due to totalitarian force is pointed out in the fourth chapter with respect to the novel – *The Handmaid's Tale* and in the fifth chapter – *Oryx and Crake*.

The second chapter is the explanation of the approach and mostly the Lacanian way of psychoanalysis. Lacanian psychoanalysis reveals the psychological basis of fear. According to him, the developmental stages of a child is worth evaluating. The existence of a child begins within a mother's womb. He/she cannot recognize his/her self and boundaries. He/she feels secure because he/she is protected against everything outside. When he/she is born, he/she recognizes the world outside as a threat to himself/herself for he/she has separated his/her protected world inside. He/she needs to protect his/her own unity to take over the control of his/her own body.

Within the framework, the feeling of insecurity and inadequacy of himself/herself increases the anxiety. Mirror stage is the ground of psychosexual development of a child. Lacan asserts that the only animal which recognizes itself in the mirror is man and he believes that mirror has an immense role in children's development. Thus, children's meeting with the mirror is a remarkable event to Lacan. When a baby recognizes his/her body in the mirror, he/she realizes that he/she can be somebody strange to his/her identity. The person in the mirror can be his/her enemy. No matter what he/she feels, he/she understands that he/she can be something apart from his body which evokes fear. For the first time, he/she feels fragmented.

Fragmentation which is explained in this chapter and extended within the chapters about the novels, can be observed physically and ideologically. The physical fragmentation is first separation from mother's body, the second one is seeing the reflection in the mirror. The third type of fragmentation is social fragmentation – “the other” which Lacan conceptualizes as a part of symbolic order. According to Lacan, the little other is not really other, not something apart from the self. It is a reflection of the Ego, the image in the mirror as a part of imaginary order. However, the big other is the part of symbolic order; therefore the other is not real, and it exists through language and law.

In this respect, language is quite important as evaluated within the chapters about the novels. It is because that language is the only way to name people or in other words, it is the only way to undermine or sublimate individuals. By calling women chalices or walking wombs, the masculine-dominated society undermines women. In this respect, women are in fragments in the society and also within their body. This is the most significant way to threaten them. Men who have no power on language like Jimmy – the slave of language, and the ones who are “named” homosexuals or the others not called commanders share same fate with women. Lacan believes that a child is the subject of the “Law of Father” since the beginning of its life. The first fragmentation is infant's separation from his mother's body. The other fragmentation process is in the mirror stage in which the baby realizes its appearance and somebody which is itself but apart from its own body. This is the other process of fragmentation which results in the othering process in someone's own self. Although these ideas seem a bit different, one cannot separate the idea of language, fragmentation and othering from each other. Each of them is one another's reason or result.

The child experiences the first anxiety in itself with mother. According to Lacan, infant's cry is the can be the first alarm against the witch mother. Mother is called witch because she unconsciously uses her baby to achieve her wish to be loved. This means that she fulfills her wish to be desired which Lacan calls narcissistic desire. Therefore, mother is always a handicap in her baby's life. In

Jimmy's life mother is the source of affection but she has already lost her this feature. She is just like a witch, and she cannot be powerful like his father. Like her, Offred's mother is such an ineffective character. She was once rebellious and challenging; however, it was not hard to get her down onto her knees. It is because that what she once thought was that the survival of feminism; but as Atwood suggests, this cannot be the solution. Thus, Offred has challenged her rebellious mother and her mother's weakness against the institutions. Jimmy cannot escape from his weakness and he is enslaved like Offred. He becomes the word producer section of the institution; thus, he cannot get rid of the chains of ruling body - Crake.

The Lacanian mother protects her baby against the world outside, but unfortunately this is just an attempt to protect her own identity against the world of the Law of Father. In fact, she is "the Other"- the big other who can never be accepted as the equivalent of the father. Under such pressure, child tries to recognize the world outside. He/she observes that father is somebody apart from him/her, but much more powerful than the mother; and the power is reflected by the language. The child, then tries to be on the side of the father. Of course, it is much easier for boys to be in a part of "Law of Father". They realize the function of language, so they use it for the sake of father to be a part of his ruling company. Unfortunately, girls are always associated with the mother. Language or naming do not let them enlarge their area. Crake is the lucky one in the way of ruling the language. He is "numbers person" as he has already managed to be the ruler as an expert of biogenetics. Poor Jimmy is just the "slave of language" as if he were a worker in Crake's government's language producing factory.

Within the framework of these ideas, some oppositions; such as nature – mind and nature – culture occur as the result of society of fragmentation, the effects of language, "the Other" in the society and its process, and the threat of being woman or mother. Philosophers working on gender studies have always examined the bias within society, the ill treatment to women on the biological grounds. It is an undeniable fact that women are more fragile against the forces of

phallogocentric world. However, Atwood's case is not about sex, or feminists. She condemns sex – biased philosophies in her *The Handmaid's Tale* and she has managed to express the same motives of fear through a male narration in her *Oryx and Crake*.

The third chapter is an answer to who Margaret Atwood is. As a phenomenal novelist, Atwood's style and works are evaluated in this part. Atwood's brave personality, Canadian style, her impacts on people – with her own words, and her assertion of the importance of language are discussed. Margaret Atwood asserts that “context is all”, thus she implies the use of language and ideas given by it. Through her narration, the reader is immensely affected by the ideas given with an excellent writing skills. When she says “context is all”, she extends the context of her ideas and points out the importance of the use of language. If one considers the ideas she gives, they are similar to that of George Orwell and Aldous Huxley. Therefore, it is the language which shapes the context and which makes her a unique writer of this genre – dystopia. She is the expert of portraying that fear is context, and details given by language shape the context. Atwood's understanding of details, or story within a story style enable us recognize the fears which we have already absorbed.

In the fourth chapter, it is stated that the reproduction policy of the 1980s is reflected on *The Handmaid's Tale* (given within the part about historical basis of the novel), but sanctions are more effective in women's life. They become the machines of reproduction, they are only chalices or walking wombs. In *Oryx and Crake*, women are not effective characters. They are just mothers or whores. This means that they are possessed by men via marriage or sexual domination. Like in *Oryx and Crake*, women of Gilead are slaves. The only thing to make women obey this system is to repress them using fear. When they are terrified, they cannot move on easily and they cannot share the pain they have. This hardship leads to the insecurity and decline of trust which make the fear felt more effective.

Nevertheless, as portrayed in the fifth chapter, the politics in *Oryx and Crake* is in the hands of a mad scientist – Crake. Jimmy/Snowman’s best friend Crake sometimes irritates him. Jimmy’s father is an expert of biotechnology and he ignores Jimmy throughout Jimmy’s life. Suffering from this irritating situation, Jimmy tries to belong somewhere; however, his “weak” mother is not the right person to belong. Besides, she leaves him to release herself in the nature. Therefore, the only powerful character to belong seems Crake who is just like his father, and Jimmy tries to compensate for his search for father. Yet, his searching makes him castrated because that powerful figure castrates Jimmy and prepares his position as a Crake’s slave. In this respect, Jimmy experiences fragmentation within his decayed family relationships. The other aspect of fragmentation is corporal fragmentation which evokes fear of diminishing human qualities. For instance, Jimmy gets irritated when he sees chickens produced to get meal have only organs of digestion. Like Offred, Jimmy gets the idea of the importance of one or two segments of body. Offred, as a child-maker, feels that it is only her womb which is crucial for her existence. In addition, like Jimmy, she is isolated from the rest of the society as the social fragmentation. She is labeled “handmaid” or “Of-Fred” and she belongs to a group of people of Freds – Fred’s community of child breeders. In this respect, the function of language was the must to discuss for these novels. In both novels, it is language which label people or which dominates our mind with its implications. Jimmy or Snowman becomes the word-serf to create a new society where the uniqueness of individuality is inhibited like in Gilead; a new ground for a group of people who are enslaved like handmaids. To this extent, neither Jimmy nor Offred is the one to blame or not the one who is content with the conditions. Both are “tamed” through fear for the sake of civilization, for the sake of the ideals for a new society.

To conclude, it can be suggested that the society is the subject of politics of fear. To make the politics, in general, more effective the society is polarized because bias will break the unity of the society; therefore ideologies can be easily applied. Such fragments in the society influence women more than men for language has been established for the sake of men. Since birth, we strive to

achieve our own being and we have hardships in this way. The first threat is being born; however, it is not as effective as mirror stage. We are inclined to create the idea of “the other” and to feel that we are “the other” which intimidates and alienates us. Moreover, being the other is also the extension of language. Therefore, we should be aware of the sanctions of language in order not to be the prey of it. If we realize the indoctrinations made by the language, we can get rid of repression and our fears. It is due to the fact that if we prevent ourselves from the codes in our unconsciousness, we will never be preys of fragmentation and “the Other”. Otherwise, fear will always be a part of our lives in every field. Therefore, femininity and motherhood will no longer be the subjects of society anymore. This non-feminist, existentialist problem will be solved. *The Handmaid’s Tale* and *Oryx and Crake* were proved to be written to demonstrate that context is all that we have to define, no “-ism”s can find our way to be firm; hence, both men and women suffer from the totalitarian state of the government. Within the framework, Margaret Atwood suggests a world of people who are aware of their own identity and who want to protect their identity through the use of language and the best frame to build their own context. She does so creating “herstory” which solely means her own story - against all types of repressive forces imposing fear, instead of a challenge to the idea for the word - “history”. With Offred’s “herstory” and Jimmy’s “history”, Margaret Atwood uses Hegelian dialectic and she has created her own synthesis – Atwood’s style of dystopia which is established upon fear as the most primitive (de)motivating feeling of our existence – suggesting a better world in which everybody lives really happily.

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