SEFAD, 2017 (37): 153-164
e-ISSN: 2458-908X
DOI Number: http://dx.doi.org/10.21497/sefad.328401

STRANGERS IN THE SAME COUNTRY: THE COMPLEXITY OF SISTERLY SOLIDARITY IN CATHERINE FILLOUX'S *THE BEAUTY INSIDE*

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Abstract

Through the depiction of a sisterly solidarity and the priority of our responsibility for the other, French-American playwright Catherine Filloux's play *The Beauty Inside* makes its audience bear witness not only to the tragedy of honor killings in Turkey but also to an amity that flourishes between a Westernized lawyer Devrim and a rape survivor Yalova introducing a form of familial bond that stems from our shared ethical space. With the help of its unique characters and stress on compassion, *The Beauty Inside* exemplifies an outstanding play that enhances the publicity of the theatre genre itself. This paper argues that through its rendering of two noteworthy characters from two conflicting sub-cultures of Turkey and their attempts to acknowledge their responsibility for the other, the play portrays a complex sisterhood that justifies the uplifting impact of face-to-face interaction and proposes a novel approach to humanitarianism in human rights theatre. Moreover, it accentuates travel, both as a physical expedition and a mental exploration, in its attempt to encounter the other and "the non-intentionality of consciousness" – to quote from Emmanuel Levinas. Divided in two major sections, this paper first discusses the theoretical perspectives surrounding travel theory and the concept of witnessing vulnerability and atrocities by referring to human rights theorists as well as Levinas's concept of "face-to-face interaction" and then includes a close reading of *The Beauty Inside* as a distinguished play that aptly utilizes the theatre genre to serve a dual function: to publicize violations and to deliver an eye-opening alternative to our fear of the other by curtailing the proximity to the vulnerable.

Keywords: Human rights theatre, contemporary women playwrights, honor killings, bearing witness.

AYNI ÜLKEDE YABANCI OLMAK: CATHERINE FILLOUX'NUN *İÇTEKİ GÜZELLİK* OYUNUNDA KIZ KARDEŞLİĞİN KARMAŞASI

Öz

Fransız Amerikalı oyun yazarı Catherine Filloux'nun "İçteki Güzellik" adlı oyunu, sahnelediği kız kardeşlik teması ve vurguladığı ötekine olan sorumluluğumuz kavramlarıyla iki önemli amaç ortaya koymaktadır: Seyircisini Türkiye'deki namus cinayetleri hakkında bilgilendirmek ve onlara Batılı bir avukat olan Devrim'le tecavüz mağduru Yalova arasında filizlenen arkadaşlığı göstererek ortak bir etik alanının olduğunun altını çizmek. Özgün karakterleri ve merhamet kavramına verdiği önemle, "İçteki Güzellik" tiyatronun halkla iç içe bir sanat olduğunu da gösteren seçkin bir oyundur. Bu makalede tartışılan nokta şudur: Türkiye'nin iki farklı alt-kültüründen gelen iki karakter ve onların ötekini anlama çabaları sonucu, bu oyun

Gönderim Tarihi / Sending Date: 23-02-2017
Kabul Tarihi / Acceptance Date: 18-04-2017

"yüz yüze etkileşimi" haklı gösteren ve insan hakları tiyatrosunda hümanitarizm kavramına yeni bir alternatif sunan kardeşce bir dayanışma ortaya koyar. Dahası, hem fiziksel hem de mental bir arayış olan seyahat kavramına ve onun ötekiyle karşılaşma arzusuna, ya da Emmanuel Levinas'in deyimiyle "bilincin niyetsizliğine", dikkat çeker. İki bölümden oluşan bu makalenin ilk bölümünde seyahat teorisi çerçevesinde ve insan hakları ihlallerine şahit olma kavramı kapsamında insan hakları teorisyenlerinden ve Levinas'in "yüz yüze etkileşim" kavramından faydalanılmaktadır. İkinci bölümde ise, "İçteki Güzellik" oyununun detaylı bir okuması, bu oyundaki iki önemli kavramın (1-ihlalleri duyurma ve 2-ötekiyle olan mesafeyi kısaltarak yeni bir alternatif sunma) altı çizilerek yapılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İnsan hakları tiyatrosu, çağdaş kadın oyun yazarları, namus cinayetleri**,** şahit olma.

I. INTRODUCTION

In a recent edited volume on human rights theatre, namely *Imagining Human Rights in Twenty-First Century Theater,* Florian Becker, Paolo Hernandez, and Brenda Werth underline "*publicity*" and "*public imagining*" as the specific characteristics of theatre that pertain to human rights (2013: 3). What makes theatre and human rights align is the former's publicity and immediacy that will endorse the latter's attempt to create public awareness. Correspondingly, the majority of human rights plays, from Ariel Dorfman's *Manifesto for Another World* to Sonja Linden's *Crocodile Seeking Refuge*, take on worldwide human rights violations and aim to publicize these atrocities. Rarely do they function a dual purpose: to broadcast violations and to propose solutions to the conflicts through the use of the immediacy of theatre. French-American playwright Catherine Filloux's *The Beauty Inside* is one of these outstanding plays that not only brings awareness to honor killings in Turkey but also delineates a sisterly solidarity that flourishes between a Westernized and an educated lawyer, Devrim, and a rape survivor, Yalova, introducing a new form of familial bond that stems from our responsibility for the other.

This paper argues that through its delineation of two noteworthy characters from two conflicting sub-cultures of Turkey and their attempts to grasp their responsibility for the other, *The Beauty Inside* renders a complex sisterhood that transcends boundaries and justifies the uplifting power of face-to-face interaction. Moreover, it places emphasis on travel, both as a physical expedition and a mental exploration, in its attempt to encounter the other and "*the non-intentionality of consciousness*" – to quote from Emmanuel Levinas (2009: 82). It is through our proximity to the other that preconceptions and the fear of the other are eliminated. In the two sections below, the first is going to focus on the theoretical perspectives surrounding travel theory and the concept of witnessing vulnerability and atrocities by referring to human rights theorists as well as Levinas's concept of "face-to-face interaction." The second section includes a close reading of *The Beauty Inside* as a distinguished play that aptly uses the theatre genre to serve a dual function: to publicize violations and to deliver a mind-boggling alternative to the hatred of the other by bridging the gap between the self and the other.

II. TRAVELING OUT OF COMFORT ZONES: ONE'S PROXIMITY TO THE VULNERABLE

In *Questions of Travel: Postmodern Discourses of Displacement*, Caren Kaplan argues that travelers engage in creating their romanticized and distorted versions of the travel experience. According to Kaplan, the voyagers produce "*the mythologized narrativizations of displacement without questioning the cultural, political, and economic grounds of their different professions, privileges, means, and limitations. Immigrants, refugees, exiles, nomads, and the homeless also move in and out of these discourses as metaphors, tropes, and symbols but rarely as historically recognized producers of critical discourses themselves. Euro-American discourses of displacement tend to absorb difference and create ahistorical amalgams*" (1996: 2). It is this tendency to eliminate difference and establish sameness and link with the new culture that lies beneath the Euro-American discourse of travel experience. It is not uncommon when travel writing incorporates a distorted version of the travel experience, an exotic and an orientalizing depiction of the city travelled, as seen in travelogues such as Lucy Duff Gordon's *Letters from Egypt*, Mary Kingsley's *Travels in West Africa*, and Julia Sophia Pardoe's *The City of the Sultan* and in fiction such as Ahdaf Soueif's *The Map of Love*. The Western traveller inclines to annihilate difference and construct similarities between her home and the new cultural expedition. The composition of a fictional version of travel and the travel experience further aligns links to the narrative and romanticized version of the expedition.

An extensive criticism on the romanticized and voyeuristic experience of the traveler in a non-Western setting and the perpetuation of superior attitudes illustrated in fiction and travel

writing have been frequently dealt by scholars.[1] In *Tourists with Typewriters,* Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan argue that "*travel writing frequently provides an alibi for the perpetuation or re-installment of ethnocentrically superior attitudes to 'other' cultures, peoples, and places*" (1998: 7). Likewise, in the twenty-first century, this colonial phenomenon has molded into a different form that emphasizes humanitarian aid and travel. Moreover, it is these superior attitudes that Holland and Huggan underscore that mark why humanitarian travel and travel writing are worth critiquing. Similarly, in human rights memoirs such as Ishmael Beah's *Long Way Gone* and John Bul Dau's *God Grew Tired of Us*, the merits of humanitarian aid and the superiority of the U.S. culture are frequently accentuated and even utilized for capitalistic means.[2]

Though slightly deviating from Holland's and Huggan's argument, Jonathan Culler takes a varying but equally valid perspective on travellers and tourists in *Framing the Sign.* In Chapter 9 "The Semiotics of Tourism," Culler warns about the authenticity markers that the tourists and travelers fall victim to (1989: 159). According to Culler, the will to visit the authentic markers and the interest in buying authentic souvenirs not only make up those markers but also lays out the clear cut distinction between a traveler and a tourist (1989: 159). Furthermore, he claims that they are heavily coded and are only viable within the parameters of multinational capitalism. Establishing this organic bond between authenticity markers and multinational capitalism, he writes: "*Like tourism, this capitalism seeks to make the world a series of accessible sites, equivalent as markets for goods and interchangeable as sites of production according to the momentary advantages of wage scales and local conditions. … Tourism reveals difficulties of appreciating otherness except through signifying structures that mark and reduce it*" (1989: 167). Likewise, in contemporary plays such as Christine Evans's *Trojan Barbie*, the protagonist Lotte is mesmerized by the impoverished girl selling lemonade in the city of Troy and purchases souvenirs reminiscent of the ancient city. The tourist's infatuation with the exotic and the vulnerable metamorphoses commodity.

Despite the extensive criticism on travel and the encounter with the other in fiction and travel writing, little has been written about the corresponding experiences of travelers in drama. Only recently it has become an area of interest with the publication of Emma Willis' *Theatricality, Dark Tourism, and Ethical Spectatorship*. In her book which argues the interactions among tourism, theatre, and voyeurism, she raises a challenging question on whether this spectatorship is socially responsible witnessing or self-serving voyeurism. Moreover, in her book in which she takes the roles of a tourist, a scholar, and an artist, she proposes theatricality as a vital medium to grasp the underlying factor beneath the interest to dark tourism sites: "*An ethics of spectatorship to such sights might be said to begin with the acknowledgment that, despite an arrival that is never completed, and a lack of presence, we are nonetheless located within a shared ethical space. That is, by our own emplacement – our appearance – we acknowledge our responsibility towards the disappeared, towards those who have exited. Furthermore, by our presence we are dramaturgically implicated in the ethical and representational breaches that mark the sites*" (2014: 8). Willis's argument on shared ethical space goes hand in hand with Levinas's theory of face-to-face interaction. It is this ethical shared space - and response-ability that Kelly Oliver emphasizes – that enables the spectators to act out their ethical responses. Moreover, the superior's interest in visiting dark touristic sites and the efforts of humanitarianism stresses the spectacle aspect of this interaction and thus becomes a fitting venue for theatre and its audience interaction.

Needless to say, French philosopher Emmanual Levinas' theory of face-to-face interaction has been of great interest for scholars who specify in human rights theatre.[3] Basing his arguments on Husserl's intentionality of consciousness and Sartre's theory of the Other, Levinas introduces

[1] See Blunt and Mills.

[2] *A Long Way Gone* was sold nationwide and it promoted its financial contribution to formerly child soldiers whereas Dau's memoir has been advertised as allotting funds to Dau's college education and his NGO "The Lost Boys of Sudan."

[3] See Grehan and Ridout.

his theory of face-to-face relations and foregrounds the non-intentionality of consciousness as being the driving force behind an individual's recognition of his responsibility for the Other. The proximity to the face, he writes, appears through different masks and precedes the self-consciousness (2009: 82-3). Furthermore, he states: '*The Other becomes my neighbour precisely through the way the face summons me, calls for me, begs for me, and in so doing recalls my responsibility, and calls me into question. Responsibility for the Other, for the naked face of the first individual to come along*" (2009: 83). Accentuating *mauvaise conscience* as a vital portion of being and as fostering responsibility, Levinas argues that the human being is inescapably responsible and this responsibility lies in "*the anteriority and uniqueness of the non-interchangeable*" (2009: 84). It is through our proximity to the vulnerable and our "bad conscience" that is aware of the shared ethical space that makes humanitarian efforts inevitable. Moreover, applied to the theatre genre, this proximity is further shortened, in terms of sharing the actual physical space, and thus theatre paves the way for a mutual understanding of the self and the other through its face-to-face interaction.

Along the same lines with Levinas, Kelly Oliver defines the process of witnessing as requiring an address and a response in *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition*. Introducing the two terms address-ability and response-ability as integral aspects of witnessing, Oliver argues that subordination or trauma undermines the possibility of subjectivity, which also destroys the possibility of witnessing. Arguing that address-ability and response-ability are inherent parts of witnessing, Oliver discloses, "*If we conceive subjectivity as a process of witnessing that requires response-ability and address-ability in relation to other people, especially through difference, then we will also realize an ethical and social responsibility to those others who sustain us. … Witnessing is the heart of the circulation of energy that connects us, and obligates us, to each other. The spark of subjectivity is maintained by bearing witness to what is beyond recognition, the process of witnessing itself*" (2001: 19-20).[4] Bearing witness stands out to be the ultimate entity to resist violations and burdens the witness with responsibility to take action. In *The Beauty Inside*, Catherine Filloux engages in a likeminded strategy of bringing two women from different backgrounds face to face with the help of the publicity and the immediacy of theatre.

In "Savages, Victims, Saviors: The Metaphor of Human Rights," Makau Mutua argues that the current Eurocentric discourse of human rights is based upon the triangle of a barbaric savage, vulnerable victim and the white, Christian savior. Stating that the construction of the three-dimensional prism "*falls within the historical continuum of the Eurocentric colonial project, in which actors are cast into superior and subordinate positions*", Mutua calls for a change in the human rights discourse, which perpetuates the savage-victim-savior triangle (2001: 204). In the same manner, Filloux challenges this paradigm as a response to the Western-based human rights discourse that is oriented towards vulnerability and sees humanitarianism as a civilizing mission. In her play *The Beauty Inside*, Mutua's theory of a savage-victim-savior triangle is invalidated as the two women achieve to surpass their familial bonds, their blind-sided ideologies and cultural baggage and form a complex sisterly solidarity that eclipses affected human interactions.

III. SISTERLY SOLIDARITY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW FAMILIAL BOND IN *THE BEAUTY INSIDE*

French-American playwright Catherine Filloux is renowned for her humanitarian work in Cambodia and her research on the Khmer Rouge regime during the Cambodian genocide (Erincin 2009:56). The majority of her plays focus on the portrayal of aftermath of the Pol Pot dictatorship in Cambodia. Having taught playwriting to college students in Cambodia in the post-genocidal

[4] Analogously, Bryan Turner takes a more optimistic approach in his belief in vulnerability as being an ontological aspect of human beings. In this definition, he writes, "*Human rights can be defined as universal principles, because human beings share a common ontology that is grounded in a shared vulnerability*" (2006: 6) and displays his belief in human capacity to offer compassion. See Turner.

period, Filloux delineates the psychological impact of the genocide in the late 90s in her plays (Sok 2009: 177). Her detailed research on the emergence of psychosomatic blindness among Cambodian women has frequented her plays and short pieces (Sok 2009: 177).

Her most autobiographical play, *Killing the Boss*, narrates the story of an American playwright, who travels to Cambodia for writing workshops and is being detained and punished by the Boss, a dictatorial figure symbolizing Pol Pot himself. Apart from writing this play as a reflection of her humanitarian travel to Cambodia, Filloux strives to convey the deep chasm between herself and the Cambodians. In this self-critical play, Eve, the protagonist of the play, is unable to understand what other people are going through and feels guilty for not behaving accordingly at the end of the play (2011: 196-7). Eve's clumsy attempt to assassinate the Boss produces a self-reflexive and critical viewpoint to Filloux's own drawbacks as a Westerner. As Eve remains alienated from the Cambodian culture, Filloux's self-criticism to her dark tourism sites surfaces. A parallel miscommunication and lack of compassion abounds in *Eyes of the Heart* and *Silence of God*.[5] American journalist Sarah in *Silence of God* finally acknowledges the complicity of American politics in the Cambodian Genocide during her travels to Phnom Pehn and her conversations with poet Heng. In this constant wandering between reality and dream scenes, the play sets a hazy background for its audience and the formation of a compassionate relation falls short of expectations.

Although *The Beauty Inside* is Filloux's one of the very few non-Cambodian plays, it depicts an analogous problem in that an absence of compassion occurs between two women from the same country. In the play, Filloux accentuates the absence of mutual understanding and the feeling of alienation towards one's culture through a variety of characters. Her characters are representative of contemporary Turkish cultural and political realm and represent the existing political tension between the East and the West in the last few decades. In her foreword to the play, Filloux explains how she has been profoundly affected and inspired by the story of a murder of a fourteen-year-old Turkish girl in name of honor and in addition to this particular story, the moon eclipse that coincided with the earthquake in 1999 in the vicinity of Istanbul triggered her to compose the piece (2009: 62).

In her introduction to the play, Serap Erincin highlights the divided atmosphere of the Turkish politics in 2007 prior to the presidential elections.[6] Summarizing the initiation of rallies and protests by the opposition party against the candidacy of the pro-Islamist Abdullah Gül, Erincin characterizes the political strife in Turkey in regards to the East vs. West dyad (2009: 56). Furthermore, she argues that this strain, unfortunately, represents a microcosm for the accelerating intolerance and hatred throughout the world. She writes as such:

> *The Beauty Inside* may have been inspired by a particular case in Turkey, but despite its focus, the relationships in play, like the current situation in Turkey, model the major complications in the world right now. The division and the tension between the east and the west, between people, groups, and nations with different spiritual beliefs, moral values, ways of living have always existed. However, in the past decade, at the beginning of a new millennium, the world, instead of becoming a place where we embrace our differences more, has become a place where hatred, intolerance, aggression, and, most of all, fear of the other have increased (2009: 59).

[5] *Eyes of the Heart* tells the story of a Thida, a Cambodian woman, who has taken refuge in the US. She is one of the many women who experience post-traumatic blindness, a psychosomatic blindness that flourished among Cambodian women after the genocide. Despite the fact that these women experiences psychosomatic blindness have no physical problems, they still are unable to see; a possible explanation for their unconscious to refuse to remember and relive what had happened. *Eyes of the Heart* incorporates an American doctor who wrecks his brains to logically explain the cause of Thida's blindness.

[6] Although Erincin mentions the secular and the religious division of 2007, the current political setting in Turkey, as of 2016, is even more divided than 2007 especially before and after the general elections of 2015.

In a similar vein, *The Beauty Inside* begins with two clearly defined subcultures within the same country and they portray an evolving tolerance and mutual understanding through the sisterly solidarity formed by Devrim and Yalova at the end of the play. Even though they appear as two strangers residing in the same country in the beginning, their face-to-face interaction and witnessing each other's vulnerability unites them around a mutual goal.

The Beauty Inside opens with simultaneous scenes that are staged side by side. By itself, this synchronic staging of the two distinct worlds and mindsets are evocative of the play's general scheme. In Act I Scene 1, Devrim and Nazim, the lawyer and her father, converse about Devrim's mom "*standing on a balcony, looking out at the Bosporus*," which is a clear indication of their well-off and educated status, and the light suddenly shifts to southeastern Turkey and to Yalova and her rapist (2009: 68). The continuous back-and-forth of the two scenes dominate the opening and the audience is made to bear the witness the vast schism of the two cultures.[7] Moreover, certain props such as Nazim's cigar and whiskey glass and Yalova's headscarf and bucket clearly draw attention to this cultural and socio-economic distinction.[8] [9]

In addition to the stage props, more significantly, Filloux composes the character of Nazim, a wealthy, secularist lawyer, who derides those from underprivileged backgrounds. Devrim's father, Nazim, who takes his name from the famous Turkish communist poet, Nazim Hikmet, is an adamant supporter of Western education and personal perseverance. As a proud father, he is very glad that Devrim, having been educated at Harvard, accepts the job offer in New York and will be living in the US and stay away from primitivism, tribal customs, and corruption (2009: 68-70).

In the opening synchronic scenes, both women are supported by their parents and thus their lives fall further apart. As Nazim endorses his daughter's decision to live abroad, Peri, Yalova's mother, rushes to save her daughter upon hearing her cries during the sexual assault. This father-daughter bond that is further bolstered since the death of Devrim's mother is juxtaposed to the close affinity between Peri and Yalova, as both women share parallel victimization under a patriarchal society. The two clusters of parent-child relations and their disparate distance are further symbolized by the moon eclipse at the end of the scene (2009: 71). The coming together of the moon and the sun is believed to bring omen symbolizing Yalova's rape (2009: 71).

As Devrim's tight paternal bond evolves to disintegrate due to her father's suspicious "condo deal" with a corrupt businessman that is revealed right after the 1999 earthquake, she is astounded to hear the bravery of Yalova, her survival of the honor killing and filing a case against her family and, so, Devrim postpones her new job and takes the case (2009: 72). Infuriated with her father's recent scandal and involvement with a corrupt man, Devrim is further determined to defend Yalova. Taking the role of a Western tourist, she is eager to mentally travel to dark touristic sites and shorten her proximity to the vulnerable. Ironically, she cancels her trip to New York but has to engage in a new kind of travel within her native land. Though she makes up her own "mythologized narrativization" in Kaplan's words, her voyage demands her to don a new perspective.

Correspondingly, as her intricate bond with her father dismantles, Yalova's distance from her mom is widened as well. She resists against her mom's pressure to acknowledge that she has brought honor to the family and revert the charges against the male members of her family (2009: 76-77). Their dissonance is clearly staged when Peri testifies against her daughter and accuses her

[7] The play takes place in three symbolic locales in Turkey: Istanbul, Antalya (a Western city by the seaside), and a village in Urfa (a city in southeastern Turkey), respectively.

[8] A headscarf and a young girl carrying a bucket, possibly to fetch water, are signifiers for an impoverished and underprivileged background in Turkey. In that sense, Filloux cannot avoid falling into stereotypical depictions of the two cultures in Turkey. However, this clichéd description will shift to a more eye-opening one in the second half of the play.

[9] However, there is still one significant moment when Devrim feels the moment of rape as she is talking to her father (2009: 68).

of disobedience during trial (2009: 104). Abandoning her village and traveling to Western cities like Istanbul and Antalya liberate Yalova's stance and further dissociate herself from her background and family.

In "The Tradition Effect: Framing Honor Crimes in Turkey," Dicle Kogacioglu warns against the tendency to regard honor killings in Turkey as part of a regional, particularly Kurdish, problem, that is culminated by a backward culture. Arguing for an alternative discourse that is liberated from the discourse of tradition and a sub-culture, Kogacioglu states that "*this alternative discourse must be attentive to the many forms of knowledge about honor crimes and to the relationship between these forms of knowledge and different kinds of power relations. It must make visible the ways in which honor crimes come to be formulated by different institutions in line with their particular agendas*" (2004: 141). Likewise, in *The Beauty Inside*, until the end of the play, Devrim and her father tend to disregard the power relations underlying the honor killings. Denoting honor killings to a particular group of people or a region further delays the process of mutual understanding and compassion and leads Devrim to adopt a condescending attitude towards Yalova. For instance, Nazim insists that "*these people live by primitive customs. We can't apply our values to them. They're backwards*" and accuses Devrim of getting too attached to this girl from an impoverished background (2009: 74; 87). Moreover, he utters: "*you can do all the philantrophic work you want later*" revealing the superficial façade of humanitarian aid (2009: 94). His ideas do fall within the Euro-American discourse of humanitarianism and fail to move beyond solidarity and the recognition of Oliver's shared ethical space.

In contrast, Yalova and her mom Peri humiliate Devrim and her posture. In their first encounter in Act I Scene 3, Yalova mistakes Devrim for a prostitute due to her make-up and clothing (2009: 75). Despite Devrim's desperate attempts to help Yalova and her mom, Peri rejects her help on grounds that "*she is not from here!*" (2009: 78):

> DEVRIM: I'm from Istanbul! For generations, for my father's side.
>
> PERI: Istanbul!
>
> DEVRIM: You're right. We might as well be from two different countries. … I will protect her now.
>
> PERI: And our family? Will you protect us? Without a husband and son I will become so poor that I will survive on handfuls of dirt. All my village, talking: 'There goes the dishonored one' (2009: 78).

Unable to understand their mutual bonds, Devrim even further patronizes over Yalova when she is taken to a domestic violence shelter in Antalya, another act that Yalova totally objects to (2009: 80). It is during their conversation at the shelter that their disparate worlds surmount. For instance, Yalova cautions Devrim to find a husband as soon as possible and not to "dry up like a fig" and Devrim is surprised to see that Yalova sleeps in a funny gown instead of a fancy lingerie (2009: 83-5).

The eagerly awaited sisterly solidarity appears through the end of Act I when Devrim wishes to learn the famous traditional Turkish wedding song "Yüksek Yüksek Tepelere" (The High, High Hills, translated by Filloux) (2009: 88). The fact that the song captions a longing for the family that the bride has left behind applies to the two women, both of whom establish a new form of familial bond that is devoid of blood relations. Having been educated in New York and having grown in a Westernized upbringing, Devrim surprises the Turkish reader for her ignorance of the famous song but her attempt to memorize and understand the song and the customs surrounding it and her mutual singing of the song with Yalova beckon to the emerging solidarity between the two women.

Another significant point that inaugurates the sisterhood are the major transformations that both women go through. When Devrim confronts her father and destabilizes her link with her Western past, she approaches Yalova in a friendly way. Acknowledging that taking Yalova to a shelter out of her own will and assigning her an alibi without her consent in the name of protecting her was not a well-thought out act, Devrim debunks the paradigm of "*discovering and naming*" (2009: 89).[10] Furthermore, taking the upper hand, Yalova becomes a more independent and assertive woman especially when she changes her mind and refuses to give away her baby for adoption (2009: 99).

However, this sisterhood is slightly disrupted when Devrim finds out that Yalova secretly sent a postcard to her family revealing her location and putting her life and others at risk. Complaining about her recklessness to her co-worker Zeki, Devrim wishes she had listened to her father and not taken her case:

> DEVRIM: He was right, Zeki, I should have gone to New York! She *wants* to live in the dark ages, she's happier that way!
>
> ZEKI: You're not seeing it with the proper distance.
>
> DEVRIM: Distance? Do you know how many hours I've spent with her in Antalya? Talking to her? Trying to make her see. She'll never know what she wants.
>
> …
>
> DEVRIM: It's pathetic how we can't get anywhere in this country. We won't help ourselves. (2009: 96)

When he was alluding to distance, Zeki was right in his evaluation of Devrim's preconceptions. The closer she gets to Yalova and strives to grasp her motives, the stronger their affinity becomes. For instance, Devrim's anger and regrets are quickly resolved when Yalova's baby is born (2009: 97). The baby, whom Yalova names Devrim meaning revolution, hints at the new and revolutionary form of a family that cherishes love and understanding.

A groundbreaking scene materializes when Devrim visits Yalova's village to show the picture of the baby to Peri upon Yalova's request and is labeled to be a tourist (2009: 108-9). She is ostracized by the villagers since she is the woman who brought further shame to the village by helping Yalova take the case to the court. As one of the villagers threatens her by reminding her of Yalova's survival from her brother's shooting: "*You're just a tourist – don't you know where you belong? [Peri's] daughter didn't die but that was lucky. Are you lucky?*" (2009: 109). Along with this intimidating statement, Devrim is blacklisted just as the white savior in Mutua's triangle of savage-victim-savior. However, she manages to dismantle this triangle by endowing a stronger and a revolutionary familial bond with the victim/survivor. Moreover, the fact that she travels to Yalova's hometown having completed her mental expedition to a different culture locates her in a unique stance as a tourist and enables her to fully experience the act of traveling.

The ending of the play solidifies the sisterly solidarity between the two women. First of all, the reappearance of a moon eclipse that has now turned into a more upholding image notifies the coming together of two disparate and contradictory things: the moon and the sun. When both women confess that their mutual bond stands between day and night, in an eclipse-like mode, they finally form this unique bond and link the East and the West like Bosporus:

> YALOVA: The Bosporus is so beautiful – like a black sea.
>
> DEVRIM: It's the center of the world. It separates east and west.
>
> YALOVA: Or joins them depending on the movement of the earth's plates. … What will happen?

[10] When Yalova teases her of discovering and naming her like all famous people did, Devrim apologizes to her.

DEVRIM: I'll teach you to swim.

YALOVA: Do you think I can?

DEVRIM: Yes. As my mother said, the past is reflected on this water (*holding her*) and I see the future in your eyes. (2009: 111)

The lights black out when Devrim looks at the future in Yalova's eyes, a literal face-to-face interaction, and through their revolutionary familial bond that permeates any boundaries, they celebrate the possibility of compassion and foreground our shared ethical space and responsibility for the other by curtailing their proximity to one another.

IV. CONCLUSION

Karen Malpede coins the term "Theatre of Witness" to define "*a new ritual poetic theatre whose substance is the inner life as lived in the presence of history – a form … which by becoming cognizant of the extremity of the twentieth-century violence poses the question: what does it take to be human in such an age as that?*" (1996: 122). Breaking with classical tragedy and building on Brecht's anti-Aristotelian theatre, theatre of witness "*takes form which connects self to deeper, previously hidden layers of self; connects self to the other; and provides a renewed connection to the social world*" (1996: 134). It is this renewed connection to the social world that enables theatre a unique genre to publicize conflicts and wars, to call for bearing witness and ethical responsibility, and to create a new form of spectatorship, which resists empathy and the cathartic experience.

In the same manner, through the construction and depiction of a sisterly solidarity and taking steps towards our responsibility for the other, Catherine's Filloux's *The Beauty Inside* insists on making its audience bear witness not only to the tragedy of honor killings but also to a humanizing and non-conventional solution to an underlying problem. With the help of its unique characters and emphasis on performativity as well as sisterhood, Filloux's play exemplifies an outstanding and an inspirational play that might further enhance the publicity of the theatre genre itself. Thanks to both women's literal and mental expeditions to the other, the play celebrates the power of travel and Levinas's face-to-face interaction with the other as a means to propose an alternative to human rights theatre. Utilizing the face-to-face interaction and the immediacy of the theatre genre, *The Beauty Inside* ventilates our ontological shared ethical space and downsizes our distance to the other. As the audience witnesses this mutual bond and is integrated into it through her own face-to-face interaction, the play creates a secondary dimension of making an ethical call to the people who watch it as it is being performed.

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