

BODILY FLUIDS AND FORMLESS BODIES:
BATAILLE READS KÜÇÜK İSKENDER

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Thesis Abstract

Bodily Fluids and Formless Bodies: Bataille Reads Küçük İskender

This study discusses the works of Georges Bataille and Küçük İskender by comparing the ways these two writers use “bodily fluids” as a subversive tool. A parallel reading of some of the major works of these writers demonstrates that the imagery of bodily fluids is a recurrent motif for both of them. This common imagery reveals similar strategies of resistance for Bataille and İskender, and in the course of this study, the possibilities and limitations of these strategies will constitute the focal point. Through these strategies of resistance, Bataille and İskender imagine an alternative order that is based on chaotic/anarchistic characteristics of fluids. In their models, fluids replace the realm of language which they perceive as the perpetuator of hierarchical power structures. In order to eliminate the power asymmetry that language solidifies, they suggest a “fluid communication” that establishes new methods of connecting different bodies. That kind of a communication, which uses the entire bodily repertoire without excluding the abject, relies on a horizontal principle instead of the vertical/hierarchical principle of language mechanisms. Contemplating on the possibility of such a non-discursive/bodily communication leads us to question our corporeality and inspires us to find new techniques of “bonding” with others. As a result, such an analysis of the two writers triggers many questions regarding contemporary theories of body politics and their relation to the realm of language.

Tez Özeti

Vücut Akışkanları ve Biçimsiz Bedenler: Bataille Küçük İskender’i Okuyor

Georges Bataille ve Küçük İskender’in metinlerini karşılaştırmalı bir okumaya tâbi tutan bu çalışma, iki yazarın “vücut akışkanları”nı kullanma biçimlerini tartışmaya açıyor. Her iki yazarın metinlerinde tekrarlanan bir öge olarak karşımıza çıkan vücut akışkanları imgelemi, Bataille ve İskender’de ortak bir direniş arayışına işaret ediyor. İki yazarda benzerlik gösteren bu direniş biçimlerinin açtığı olanaklar ve bu olanakların hudutları, bu çalışmanın odak noktasını oluşturuyor. Söz konusu direniş biçimleri aracılığıyla, Bataille ve İskender, temeli akışkanların kaotik ve anarşik özellikleri üzerine kurulu olan alternatif bir düzen tahayyül ediyorlar. Onların tahayyül ettiği modelde, hiyerarşik iktidar yapılarını daimi kılan, bu tür yapıları kristalize eden bir unsur olarak gördükleri Dil’in yerini akışkanlar alıyor. Dil’in pekiştirip katılaştırdığı asimetrik güç dengelerini bertaraf etmek için, Bataille ve İskender, bedenleri birbirlerine temas ettirmek için yeni yöntemler sunan bir “akışkan iletişimi” öneriyorlar. Bedene ait tüm repertuarı kullanan ve bedensel atıkları dışlamayan bu tip bir iletişim şekli, Dil mekanizmalarının dikey/hiyerarşik yapısının yerine, akışkanlara özgü yatay bir yapı öneriyor. Söylemsel olanın dışına taşmaya çalışan bu tür bir bedensel iletişim şekli üzerine tefekkür etmek, kendi bedenselliğimizi sorgulamayı ve farklı bedenlerle temas etmenin yeni yollarını aramayı da beraberinde getiriyor. Böylelikle, burada yapmaya çalıştığımız türden bir analiz, çağdaş beden politikalarına ve bunların Dil’le olan ilişkisine dair ilham verici soruların tohumlarını atmayı başarıyor.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

“What was the nature of that fluid which passed with a shock from him to me?” Jean Genet, *The Thief’s Journal*

The point of departure of this comparative reading between Georges Bataille and Küçük İskender is the striking similarity between the imageries of these writers. Their imageries, which are inundated by bodily fluids, seem to denote a common attitude which underlies the diverse writings of Bataille and İskender. In this study, therefore, my aim is to demonstrate that these two writers, who are from two distinct historical periods and intellectual milieux, can enter into dialogue by means of their imageries and their common attitude on which these imageries are built.

This attitude that both writers share is related to what Yaşar Çabuklu calls “anarchy of fluids” (49-52). Anarchy of fluids, as Çabuklu conceptualizes it, makes use of the decentralized, disordered and unstable characteristics of fluids, and turns these features of fluids into a political stance which aims to challenge a “rigid, closed, solid” system of hierarchical power structures (50-52). Likewise, Bataille and İskender propose an alternative mode of existence based on the chaotic nature of fluids. In their perspective, uncontainable fluids are the perfect tools to overturn a solid system that is built on clear definitions and rigid borders. For them, solidity refers to rational classifications, stable identities and essences which categorize every being and act in order to control them. In the imageries of Bataille and İskender, as following chapters will illustrate, this solidity is associated with a hierarchical, vertical and closed system in which there are asymmetric power structures, and such systems can be seen in every level of our existence.

Bataille and İskender attack the solid regime, first of all, on the level of the organism. For them, the organism is a colonization of the body: it restricts the bodily

repertoire in order to establish a closed, integral, functional system with definite borders. Bataille and Iskender try to undermine this system called “organism,” and to achieve this, they propose a reconstruction of our corporeality.

Furthermore, Bataille and Iskender recognize the fact that the formation of the organism and our perception of the body are always mediated through the law of language. In *Powers of Horror*, Kristeva describes this process of “mediation of language” as follows:

[t]hrough frustrations and prohibitions, this authority [repetition of the *laws* of language] shapes the body into a *territory* having areas, orifices, points and lines, surfaces and hollows, where the archaic power of mastery and neglect, of the differentiation of proper-clean and improper-dirty, possible and impossible, is impressed and exerted. It is a ‘binary logic,’ a primal mapping of the body [...] (72)

As the passage above makes clear, the mediation of language “shapes the body” according to the “law of language,” which is based on a system of “binary logic” that imposes hierarchies between terms. The law of language both constructs hierarchies within an organism in the micro level and generates macro hierarchical structures in the society. The law is ubiquitous: it penetrates everything that we can speak of. This law is “the legal, phallic, linguistic symbolic establishment” as Kristeva puts it (72); it is the paternal law which is masculine and heteronormative.

Such a patriarchal law is always associated with solidity, that is, clearly defined identities and borders that compose a stable form. “Anarchy of fluids” that can be found in the imageries of Bataille and Iskender is devoted to the dissolution of such solid forms through every possible strategy that champions “formlessness.” Bataille’s central concept *informe* becomes significant in this context. *Informe*, which can be translated to English as “formless” or “formlessness,” refers to such a strategy which disintegrates the coherent forms. By advocating *informe*, Bataille proposes fluidity as an alternative to these stable forms. *Informe* is, in a way, the

name that is given by Bataille to the process of “melting” the solid contents of things: turning them into fluids. As Paul Hegarty states, “[i]nforme is the state of that which is without form, and thereby threatens form, and all that is solid” (“As Above” 75). The texts of İskender, in a similar fashion, foreground fluidity as a possible way of resisting hierarchical and rigid systems/forms, thereby allowing İskender’s imagery to converge with Bataille’s notion of *informe*.

For Bataille and İskender, the only way to overturn the reign of hierarchical power structures that are associated with solid forms, is to eliminate language, which they see as the perpetuator of power asymmetry. Thus, in the imageries of Bataille and İskender, it is crucial to find an alternative communication instead of language, which is already hierarchically constructed. In order to achieve this, first, they want to unleash the body from the discursive regimes that shape it. In other words, Bataille and İskender want to break the social and cultural confines of the body and re-negotiate our relation to our own bodies. They want to eradicate what Kristeva calls “the corporeal mapping” (72) that language installs around the body.

Secondly, they want to liberate the space between bodies: the inter-bodily realm. For this, they seek ways of establishing an alternative communication between bodies. This is the point where Bataille and İskender resort to bodily fluids. Both Bataille and İskender envisage imaginary models where bodies are connected to each other through bodily fluids instead of the mediation of language. Their search for alternative techniques of connecting bodies is the main point that leads me to analyze the imageries of these two writers. Throughout this study, by scrutinizing the details of their imageries and by putting them in interaction, I will look at the nature of the alternative communication they suggest and discuss the connections between this communication and “anarchy of fluids.”

İskender as Seen through the Lens of Bataille

Although İskender is a very prominent and prolific figure in Turkish poetry since the beginning of mid 80s, there is a lack of critical interest in his poetry. With the exception of Özgür Taburoğlu's article—which will be one of my main sources while exploring İskender's poetry—that discusses İskender's bodily fluids in relation to Bakhtin's carnivalesque, there are very few attempts that situate İskender's poetry in a thematic and theoretical context. I think the poetic energy of İskender's writing and the heterogeneous nature of his style requires an approach that is different from the existing categories of Turkish poetry. This is one of the reasons that I read İskender's imagery with the texts of Bataille. Besides being a writer of fiction, Bataille is also an influential theoretician who had a deep impact on major thinkers such as Kristeva, Derrida, Foucault, Baudrillard and Barthes (Pefanis 42-43) and there is a well-established critical literature on the works of Bataille. Bataille's theoretical concepts and the critical literature based on his texts may help us to find a new perspective on İskender's poetry.

As my title suggests, throughout this study, Bataillean terms will guide my journey into İskender's world and this explains the anachronistic gesture in the title: "Bataille reads Küçük İskender." However, one should not come to the conclusion that reading Bataille and İskender together will not have any effect on the reception of Bataille. I think the interaction of their imagery will also shed a new light on Bataille's *oeuvre*. As I will try to illustrate in the third chapter, İskender's idiosyncratic imagery can function as the embodiment of many Bataillean concepts, and therefore, İskender might help us to re-visualize Bataille's theoretical model.

While reading this study, we should keep in mind that this study aims to make a detailed analysis of the imageries of the two writers. This study does not offer a literary comparison which gives an account of the historical contexts of the

works or the biographical elements of the writers. Moreover, this study does not resort to ready-made tools of analyzing a piece of literature; rather, one of the main concerns of this study is to experiment with new methods of approaching literary works. A comparative reading through “bodily fluids” may provide us with these new methods of reading texts.

It should also be noted that this particular reading through bodily fluids imagery is only one of the many possible readings with which one can approach these writers. This particular analysis of bodily fluids does not exclude any other way of interpreting these writers. In other words, this study does not claim to attain a closure on the interpretation of these writers, and this is perfectly in line with the attitude of Bataille and Iskender who challenge any kind of closure, as we will see in the following chapters.

In the second chapter, I will introduce Bataillean terminology that I will use throughout this study. I will start the discussion with an examination of Bataille’s concepts in relation to contemporary theories about abjection. Abjection is a key term for understanding Bataille’s imagery of bodily fluids. Together with other fundamental concepts of Bataille such as *informe*, excess, non-productive expenditure and heterology, theories of abjection will help us to set the basis of this study. Furthermore, in this chapter, I will provide examples from Bataille’s fictional works which, as Susan R. Suleiman argues, serve as the literary reflections of Bataille’s theoretical arguments (“Transgression and the Avant-Garde” 76). By means of these fictional examples, Bataille’s imagery and his writing style will be addressed in the second chapter.

The third chapter will be devoted to a detailed analysis of the imagery in Iskender’s poetry. Bataille’s terms that are introduced in the second chapter will

provide the framework for this analysis. Moreover, Bataille's central notion *informe* will be essential in describing Iskender's "formless bodies." In this chapter, with various examples from Iskender's works, I will also discuss Iskender's fragmented writing style which subverts syntax and plays with the conventions of genres.

In both of these chapters, I will also examine the ways in which Bataille and Iskender propose an alternative communication. Comparisons between the two writers will reveal the nature of this communication which seeks the possibility of a genuine "bodily language" that is liberated from the dictates of the discursive.

In the concluding chapter, I will talk about the problematical aspects of the models that are suggested by Bataille and Iskender. First of all, while they seem to be challenging the patriarchal and hierarchic mechanisms of language, at the same time they are reproducing the very hierarchical structures they want to undermine, and this raises questions about the subversive potential of their critical approaches. Secondly, their utopian models which offer a total elimination of language reaches us through the very medium they want to evade: language. Since Bataille and Iskender represent their alternative imageries through words, their quest for eliminating the power structures inherent in language entails a paradoxical side. At the end of this study, I will contemplate on the nature of this paradox and try to depict the subversive possibilities opened up by the paradoxical models that Bataille and Iskender propose.

CHAPTER II

BATAILLE, ABJECTION AND INFORME

“Ceaselessly destroying and consuming myself in myself in a great festival of blood. (...) I imagine myself covered with blood, broken but transfigured...” Georges Bataille, *The Practice of Joy Before Death*

Bataille's works are concerned with problems pertaining to very diverse fields of study: philosophy, anthropology, literature, aesthetics, art history, politics, economics, etc. His texts that “flirt” with these disciplines also embody a wide range of genres. Some of his texts can be designated as novellas, short stories, poems, diaries, aphorisms, essays, philosophical inquiries or theoretical writings; however, the majority of his writings are difficult to identify as such since they constitute an amalgam of these genres.

The diversity of genre is visible even within a single text of Bataille. In his texts which are considered widely theoretical such as *Inner Experience (L'expérience intérieure)* and *On Nietzsche (Sur Nietzsche)*, there is always a poetic aspect that accompanies an intense web of aphorisms and autobiographical elements. On the other hand, Bataille's famous pieces of prose fiction like *Story of the Eye (Histoire de l'oeil)*, *My Mother (Ma Mère)*, *Madame Edwarda*, *L'Abbé C* and *Blue of Noon (Le Bleu du Ciel)* are in constant dialogue with his theoretical concepts and philosophical excursions. *L'Abbé C*, for instance, has been defined as “a narrative translation of the themes of *The Accursed Share*” (Rella 118), which is arguably Bataille's most theoretically oriented book. *Madame Edwarda*, a story where Bataille presents the essentials of his views on eroticism and the limits of the self, has been found incomprehensible without the help of Bataille's theoretical book *Inner Experience* (Hollier 161). Other works of Bataille, which are even harder to classify,

such as *Guilty (Le Coupable)* and *The Impossible (L'impossible)* are good examples of what I called “an amalgam of genres.” These texts function as diary, poetry, prose fiction and philosophical texts all at the same time.

What Stuart Kendall states for *Inner Experience* can be generalized for many texts of Bataille: “broken with memory and reference, with conversations and quotations; shifting tones, registers, and even genres: poems disrupt philosophical poetic prose” (162). Bataille is “neither a poet, nor a philosopher, he is both” (Beaujour 156). The ambiguity of his writing style and his interchangeable use of conventions that belong to distinct genres are in accordance with his attitude that defies a literary closure. Bataille’s writing refuses to be situated in a pack of conventions that rely on rigid classifications.

Incompletion

Every literary genre has its own conventions, and these conventions help to construct a “coherent,” “complete” artwork. In Bataille’s case, however, writing practice functions against this very idea of “completeness.” The perspective that Kendall proposes to view Bataille’s corpus is very suitable at this point: “[t]o appreciate his corpus is to revise our understanding of the creative act: he does not write masterpieces, he writes against them” (199). Bataille deliberately moves away from established paths of “building a work,” “finishing a text.” He throws/jettisons/spits thought fragments that constitute a heterogeneous volume of words. This “debris of words” resists assimilation to a “completed work.”

Bataille’s writing is not independent from his conception of “sacrifice” that I will address in the forthcoming sections. Bataille’s words are sacrificed. In his texts “[b]odies, words, books: every partial object is slowly and laboriously sacrificed in

(...) endless movement (...) preventing all this work from becoming ‘perfect’”
(Hollier 75).

All these features are part of Bataille’s fragmentary writing: writing as an attempt to resist completion and literary closure. Gerald L. Bruns uses Blanchot’s concept *désœuvrement* in such a context. *Désœuvrement* is the inversion of a writing process that leads to “completion” and a consistent body of work. For Bruns, Bataille’s works fit the concept of *désœuvrement* since they are examples of “writing that is ‘foreign to the category of completion’; writing that begins and begins again as an unconfined murmur” (143).

With the help of this “unconfined murmur,” Bataille escapes the closure that is to be imposed on his works. In his texts, the significations of words and images are slippery; they are in constant flux. Ken Hollings elucidates this point in his essay “In the Slaughterhouse of Love”: “Bataille employs a large number of terms and expressions without limiting their meaning through precise definition: they become viscous, and their power to communicate stems from their perpetual flow and regrouping” (214). For Bataille, precise definitions and fixation of meanings refer to a solid system of rationality. His words and images show a fluid character in order to evade this solidity. Since the meaning of words and images in Bataille’s texts are constantly changing, one cannot fix the interpretation of his texts and analyze his body of work systematically by attributing a unity to it. As Franco Rella puts it, Bataille’s body of work is an “accumulation of fragments” (83); it does not constitute a unity. Bataille’s texts are open to various conflicting readings, and perhaps, this is the reason why his texts have influenced so many theoreticians from different schools of thought.

While examining the works of Bataille, my purpose is neither to erase the conflicting aspects of his theory nor to reduce Bataille's vast corpus to some essential characteristics. Instead, my aim is to analyze Bataille's imagery in terms of his approach to fluids, which he regards as carriers of subversive potential. I will trace this subversive potential of fluids in his works, by a simultaneous reading of his imagery and his theoretical concepts.

Bataillean imagery circles around a constantly leaking, disintegrating body and abjected fluids coming out of the openings of this amorphous body. Therefore, in order to be able to analyze Bataille's imagery, one needs to discuss this imagery's relation to theories of abjection.

Abjection

One name stands out in the middle of almost all discussions about abjection: Julia Kristeva. Paul Hegarty draws attention to the striking similarity between the works of Kristeva and Bataille in terms of their approach to the abject ("As Above" 73). Bois and Krauss claim that "Kristeva would take over from Bataille in her own development of a theory of abjection" (237). In a similar vein, Catherine Marchak argues that Kristeva has a "post-Bataillean position" (361). The prefix "post" refers both to her chronological succession of Bataille and her "elaboration of some of his theories." (361) For Marchak, the bond between these two writers is clearly visible in Kristeva's book *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (361), which starts with an epigraph by Bataille. Since this book is central for Kristeva's formulation of abjection theories, it is significant that she acknowledges Bataille's influence on her thought even at the very beginning.

According to Kristeva, "abjection is above all ambiguity" (9). Abject is not an object, but it does not belong to the subject either. "Not me. Not that. But not

nothing either” (2). It always has this in-between quality: “[w]hat does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” (4). In this way, the abject disrupts the perception of a coherent, integral body. It violates the distinction between the inside and outside of bodily limits. Richard Williams calls it “an unsettling linking of inside and outside” (147). The abject that is thrown out of the bodily boundaries is not an object which can be totally distanced from the body. The abject always stays in a transitory state and it never attains a position where it can be classified or identified within subject-object distinction. In this way, the abject constantly poses a threat to the self and the bodily contours which hold this self together. Thus, as Kristeva argues, the threat of abjection does not stem from “lack of cleanliness or health” but from “what disturbs identity, system, order” (4).

Bodily fluids are the best examples for this in-between quality of the abject. The abject is “always related to fluids and products that traverse the body’s boundaries” (Thomas 14). Bodily fluids can repeatedly come in and out of the pores that are situated on the bodily contours, and that way, they create a constant flow that orbits around the body. Blood, semen, urine, spit, sweat and tears, which are abjected from the organism, can function as extensions of the body. It is true that these abjected materials are not wanted by the body anymore; however, as Berressem argues in his article “On the Matter of Abjection,” the body cannot separate these materials from itself in a safely distanced way because of the “topologies of abjects” that stay “quite close” to the subject (20-21). Therefore, bodily fluids that flow out of the membranes of the body are, in a way, parts of the bodily territory.

Kristeva’s following statement may be read in this light: “what goes out of the body, out of its pores and openings, points to the infinitude of the body proper...” (108). The flow of corporeal materials extends the bodily limits *ad infinitum* “as if

skin, a fragile container, no longer guaranteed the integrity of one's 'own and clean self'" (53).

Although Bataille wrote only a few lines about the notion of abjection itself, his body of work is full of material that wanders around the terrain of the abject. *Story of the Eye*, *My Mother*, *Madame Edwarda*, *Blue of Noon*, *The Dead Man (Le Mort)* or *The Collected Poems of Georges Bataille* are only a few examples of his texts that contain imagery related to corporeal waste. As I will argue in detail towards the end of this chapter, most of the time, this flux of waste material almost seems to replace any form of conventional dialogue between Bataillean characters, who express themselves through urination, bleeding, ejaculation, etc. Saliva, sweat, tears and vomit are also used abundantly by Bataille so that they overshadow any other theme in the text, and their usage becomes a theme by itself. The following passages from *Blue of Noon* and *Story of the Eye* illustrate this aspect of Bataille's texts:

In my drunkenness I had just reopened the cut in my right hand. The bleeding, which I was trying to stanch with a towel, was dripping rapidly onto the floor. Dirty, in front of me, was staring at me with eyes like an animal's. I wiped my face, thus smearing blood over my forehead and nose. (...) my face smeared with blood; I was hiccupping and on the point of vomiting. In terror the servants saw that water was trickling across the chair and down the legs of their beautiful guest. While urine was gathering into a puddle that spread over the carpet, a noise of slackening bowels made itself ponderously evident beneath the young woman's dress. (*Blue of Noon* 8-10)

She took my hand wordlessly and led me to an outer courtyard of the filthy arena, where the stench of equine and human urine was suffocating because of the great heat. I grabbed Simone's cunt, and she seized my furious cock through my trousers. We stepped into a stinking shithouse where sordid flies whirled about in a sunbeam. Standing here, I exposed Simone's cunt, and into her blood-red, slobbery flesh I stuck my fingers, then my penis, which entered that cavern of blood while I tossed off her arse, thrusting my bony middle finger deep inside. At the same time, the roofs of our mouths cleaved together in a storm of saliva. (*Story of the Eye* 51)

Bataille's fictional texts are full of such descriptions where the exchange of bodily fluids is the dominant characteristic of the text. In Bataille's imagery, the constant flow of bodily fluids from the inside and outside of the bodily contours is an essential element. This flow blurs the definitions regarding the bodily limits and destabilizes the bodily integrity. As we will see, the blurring of borders and the disturbance that this brings to the integrity of the body and identity is a common characteristic of abjected materials.

Alongside the never-ending flow of bodily fluids and corporeal waste, Bataille's imagery is also full of other materials that can be considered in the realm of the abject. For instance, images of the "decaying body" and themes of "putrefaction" have an essential place in Bataille's works. As Berressem states, "decaying body" is a main element of the realm of the abject (41). Furthermore, the corpse, as the ultimate decaying body, is a recurrent motif in Bataille's texts. As Hegarty observes, "[t]he corpse is at the start of abjection" ("As Above" 76), or as Kristeva puts it, the corpse is "the most sickening of wastes" (3).

Other than corpses, anything that might signal a dead, useless, dysfunctional body, or anything that violates the image of a complete, integral organism is also an essential part of Bataille's dense imagery: dismembered limbs, deformed flesh, dispersed viscera, etc. Not only everything that is reminiscent of a decomposed body but also everything that is associated with the "low" forms Bataille's imagery. In his works, there is almost no occasion where we do not face something "filthy": In the *Story of the Eye*, at one point, the narrator summarizes one of the leitmotifs of the novella: "I cared only for what is classified as dirty" (42). In a similar way, the narrator in *My Mother* says "I like my filth" (34). In *The Impossible*, in the section called "Oresteia," which is composed of poems, Bataille reiterates his relation with

filth: “I’m hungry for blood / hungry for bloody earth / hungry for fish hungry for rage / hungry for filth hungry for cold” (128). In *Blue of Noon*, “Dirty” is the name of one of the main characters.

Bataille puts the filth obsessively to the foreground. After all, he is the author of such lines: “[t]o the sewer / I am the sewer / alas!” (*The Collected Poems* 87). He does not try to keep his texts “clean” from the ejecta. On the contrary, he deliberately puts them at the center of his writing until they soil the significations of the words with their “filth.” In a way, Bataille wants the filthy materials to replace the meaning of words through their stench or slimy touch. As Hegarty rightly argues, waste materials are “not an adjunct” to Bataille’s texts, but they determine them (*Core Cultural* 144).

Another important aspect of the abject is, as Berressem puts it, its exclusion from “representational logics/economics” of the subject (21). The abject is “fundamentally excluded from language and representation” (39); it is not representable within the discursive rules (38). As Kristeva describes the abject in *Powers of Horror*, it is “ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there, quite close, but it cannot be assimilated” (1). The abject is inaccessible through the Symbolic; it resists assimilation into symbolical exchange mechanisms. Thus, the abject is a perfect tool for Bataille who always seeks ways of contesting the Symbolic. The abject in Bataille’s texts create an ambivalent sphere where limits are dissolved and representational economy collapses.

The non-representable nature of the abject brings us close to an essential Bataillean notion: heterology or the heterogeneous. Heterogeneous things are at the center of Bataille’s theory and they bear striking similarities to the characteristics of the abject.

Heterology, Excess and Unproductive Expenditure

In his book *Organs without Bodies*, Žižek talks about Bataille's concept of heterology. According to Žižek, "Bataille's ultimate horizon is the tension between homogeneity and its heterogeneous excess (...) the domain of exchange, and the excess of pure expenditure" (55). An analysis of these opposite terms (the homogeneous vs. the heterogeneous) is crucial for understanding Bataille's theory in general.

The homogeneous is the name of the realm which is constantly attacked by Bataille. Bataille writes against a homogenized social existence. In its most basic definition, the homogeneous is "what is assimilated, made obedient to rules, made orderly" (Marchak 354). "It is what language is in fact constructed to communicate" (355). In his essay, "The Psychological Structure of Fascism," Bataille describes the domain of the homogeneous as "that of strictly defined and identified objects (basically, it is the specific reality of solid objects)" (143).

From these descriptions of the homogeneous, we can infer what its opposite, the heterogeneous looks like. Perhaps the most important aspect of the heterogeneous is that it resists being reduced to the realm of the Symbolic. What Bataille calls heterogeneous is not assimilable to the system of symbolical exchange—to the realm of language and culture. This is where the heterogeneous gets close to the abject, and in fact, Bataille's heterogeneous also contains the abject and its in-between qualities. In "The Psychological Structure of Fascism," Bataille writes about what he counts as heterogeneous, and this list includes many things that I have addressed while discussing the abject:

(...) everything that is rejected by *homogeneous* society as waste... Included are the waste products of the human body and certain analogous matter (trash, vermin, etc.); the parts of the body... The

numerous elements or social forms that *homogeneous* society is powerless to assimilate... (142)

Another Bataillean term that I should mention in order to fully grasp the heterogeneous is “unproductive expenditure.” An alternative definition of the heterogeneous by Bataille is as follows: “the heterogeneous world includes everything resulting from unproductive expenditure” (142).

What does this term “unproductive expenditure” mean in Bataillean terminology? It is an indispensable element of Bataille’s theory which opposes notions like productivity, efficiency and utility. Instead of a system based on these terms, Bataille offers a perspective which relies on principles of excess, loss, waste, sacrifice and non-utility. This perspective is referred to by Bataille as “general economy.” Unproductive expenditure, which basically means expenditure without return, is the organizing term of Bataille’s general economy which, itself, is a harsh attack on what he calls “restricted economy”—a macro perspective which is still the dominant paradigm of economics. In the first volume of his book *The Accursed Share*, Bataille states that “[c]hanging from the perspectives of *restrictive* economy to those of *general* economy actually accomplishes a Copernican transformation: a reversal of thinking—and of ethics” (25).

In restricted economy, the paradigm is based on the principle of scarcity of resources and an ethics of productivity that should employ these scarce resources as efficient as possible. By introducing general economy, Bataille completely reverses this perspective. For Bataille, the founding principle of an economic approach¹ is not “scarcity of resources” but the opposite of it: the excess. Bataille is interested in the excessive, what he calls “the accursed share” (*La part maudite*) that is present in everything. In the first volume of his book *The Accursed Share*, and in his essay

¹ Here, we should think the term “economy” in the broadest sense, as referring to the symbolical economy as well as the transaction of goods.

“The Notion of Expenditure,” Bataille argues elaborately on the nature of the excess. According to his perspective, the excess in things is destined to be squandered. Such an unorthodox point of view undoes the ethics of conservation that dominates restricted economy paradigm. Furthermore, this new point of view replaces the old perspective with an emphasis on expenditure. As Bataille writes in *The Accursed Share*, now the “the primary object” is “the ‘expenditure’ (the ‘consumption’) of wealth, rather than production” (9). Expenditure, as Bataille conceptualizes it, does not generate any profit, it does not produce any exchange value for the future. Therefore, it is called “unproductive” expenditure. It is not a means to an end. Unproductive expenditure does not increase one’s productivity. It is not an investment. In that manner, it is different from rational consumption that aims for a future gain. Unproductive expenditure is against any kind of utility. That is why it is an indispensable concept for Bataille’s general economy. Bataillean terms like loss, waste and sacrifice get their meaning by resonating with the concept of unproductive expenditure within the frame of general economy.

For Bataille, general economy’s field of application is very broad (Nehamas 32). The perspective of general economy is valid for any kind of transaction that we have in our social existence: individual acts, collective acts, sexual behaviors, rituals, etc. For instance, the collective act of sacrifice in tribal communities such as Aztecs is analyzed by Bataille within the frame of general economy. In *Theory of Religion*, he writes that “[s]acrifice is the antithesis of production (...) In sacrifice the offering is rescued from all utility” (49).

The concept of sacrifice, as it is understood by Bataille, is crucial for our analysis of his theory. As Paul Hegarty states, in Bataille, “the excess of society” must be sacrificed. This excess that Bataille names the accursed share, is “destined

for consumption” (*Core Cultural* 47). This excess must be spent lavishly, without a return. Therefore, sacrifice is not just something that Bataille observes in tribal communities; it is in fact an attempt of illustrating his theory that is based on excess, waste, unproductive expenditure and loss.

All the terms that I have so far employed to describe general economy are parts of Bataille’s attack in order to “undermine homogenizing, ration(alizing) systems that attempt to digest everything,” and the main tool of this attack, as Catherine Marchak indicates, is “wasteful excess” (355). This “wasteful excess” is where Bataille’s theory comes closest to his imagery. What Allan Stoekl says related to Bataille’s notion of sacrifice is also applicable to Bataille’s imagery: “we see a rupture opening to let out the ‘excess’ of an unmaintainable and thus delusive unity, whether that unity is consciousness, the body, a community...” (XXI). This is the case in Bataille’s imagery: the discarding of bodily fluids in Bataille’s fiction is represented in a gesture similar to that of sacrifice. The constant flow of excessive fluids dissolves the unitary body. For Bataille, bodily fluids are, in a way, sacrificed so that the body’s hierarchy, its solid organization, and its unitary structure can be challenged. It is as if the body sacrifices some of its own parts in order to renegotiate the hegemonic codes that are imposed on itself.

Wounds, lacerations and other openings that Bataille uses abundantly when he depicts his characters function as ways of escaping from the closed system of an organism. Bataille is always interested in effusions: things that somehow overflow the boundaries and eliminate containers. It is the “excess in things” that creates such an effusion. In Bataille’s imagery, “we see a rupture opening to let out the excess” and this rupture brings us close to another important element in Bataillean imagery: wounds.

Imagery of Wounds

As Sarah Wilson points out, Bataille is obsessed with wounds (177-181). These wounds function as the openings for fluids to go in and out of the bodily frontiers. Together with bodily fluids, wounds and similar imagery (lacerations, cuts) are the most encountered images in Bataille's texts. Wounds, as the spots on the body which may entail pus, blood, bacteria or infection, are *objets par excellence*.

Wounds are essential elements of Bataille's theory which always searches for cracks/holes in any kind of closed system. Therefore, wounds are primarily, the points where he shatters the integrity of the body. The dissolution of the body starts from these wounds. The perpetual flow between the inside and the outside of the body—or any other closed system—uses wounds as transition points. That is why Bataille always refuses to heal these wounds. He talks about the “[u]nstaunchable wound... may it bleed forever...” (*My Mother* 110). Ken Hollings calls this “the perpetually open wound” (“In the Slaughterhouse” 208), whereas Franco Rella describes it as the “wound that cannot be sewn or healed up” (98).

Since Bataille does not only seek a crack/hole on the body but on any other closed system that he wants to challenge, we can generalize his usage of wounds to many things. In *Guilty* he writes: “with any tangible reality, for each being, you have to find the place of sacrifice, the wound” (26). Clearly, a wound is the place of sacrifice for Bataille. For Bataille, sacrifice is a way to dissolve the solid content of any closed system/thing/thought/organism. Sacrifice is the irrational gesture *par excellence* that disrupts the utility-based perspective of any being or system. Similarly, wounds, as the spots where the dissolution of the solid content of things takes place, are the sites of sacrifice for Bataille. This is the reason behind Bataille's

“desire to be wounded” that Carolyn Dean notes in her book about Bataille and Lacan while discussing Bataille’s notion of sacrifice (234).

Again, in *Guilty*, Bataille writes: “alone, wounded, dedicated to his own ruin, a man faces the universe” (31). This “man” is wounded since he has lost something very important for him. He has wounded himself deliberately. He has sacrificed a part of himself in order to dedicate himself “to his own ruin.” What else could be a bigger sacrifice than the “head”—the most privileged part of the body, the top of hierarchy? Sacrifice of the head has a very specific meaning for Bataille. Headlessness, in his imagery, points at “the sacrifice of reason” (Hegarty, “As Above” 79). *Acéphale* (Greek term for headless) is the name of the magazine that Bataille founded with writers such as Pierre Klossowski, Michel Leiris, Roger Caillois and the painter Andre Masson (Beaujour 159). Andre Masson’s painting, a human figure without a head was the symbol of this short-lived magazine. As Beaujour argues, this headless figure was symbolical for “distrust of reason” that *Acéphale* group shared (159).

Denis Hollier also mentions this headless figure in a similar context: “Acephalus was intended to show: the only way for man to escape (...) is to escape his form, to lose his head” (XII). Clearly, there is a parallelism between Bataillean gestures of wounding, losing the head and losing the form. What Bataille refers to as the man’s “own ruin” in the sentence quoted above, is very much related to the “escape from form” that Hollier is talking about. A never-ending destruction of form is at the basis of Bataillean attitude that we can infer from his imagery. All these gestures such as sacrificing the head and wounding the body are meaningful if we look at them in the frame of a “perpetual challenge of form.”

Informe

There is yet another important element in Bataille which is essential to understand his theory in general: the notion of *informe*. After Bataille's introduction of the term, *informe* has been taken up by many theoreticians for different purposes. Among these attempts, Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind E. Krauss' famous book of art criticism, *Formless: A User's Guide* has been the most influential one. In their book, which is published in 1997, Bois and Krauss turn Bataille's *informe* into a major term for contemporary art criticism. They employ *informe* as a theoretical tool to analyze some contemporary artworks that seem to have common attributes. While doing this, they examine paintings such as Jean Dubuffet's *Olympia* and other pieces of plastics arts that belong to artists like Alberto Giacometti, Man Ray and Edward Ruscha.

In order to develop the implications of *informe* into a fully fledged theory, Bois and Krauss describe the realm where *informe* is at work. For them, *informe* is in close relation to the abject². Hence, Bois and Krauss spend a lot of time to situate their theory in the territory of dirt, "decomposing cadaver," "inarticulable waste," liquids and "types of excrement (sperm, menstrual blood, urine, fecal matter)" (43-62). They refer to Bataille's fascination "with rot and waste, with the decomposition of everything, which finds expression in almost every one of his texts" (37). To situate *informe* in such a territory is crucial, since in Bataille there is a link between the excessive use of abject imagery and his interest in the "men (...) who are comparatively decomposed, amorphous and even violently expelled from every form" ("The Use Value" 91). This state of being "expelled from every form" is what

² That is also visible in their selection of the artworks most of which can be categorized as "abject art" in any other exhibition.

Bataille's *informe* is pointing at, and as Bois and Krauss' arguments also show, this formlessness is almost always embodied in the realm of the abject.

In order to describe *informe*, Bois and Krauss get help from Michel Leiris' entry on spittle in "Critical Dictionary" (*Dictionnaire critique*)³. This dictionary (or rather anti-dictionary) is "one of the most effective of Bataille's acts of sabotage against the academic world and the spirit of system" (16). The dictionary entails several entries which are selected arbitrarily and not ordered alphabetically. These entries undermine the logic of a dictionary by avoiding any univocal definitions and by giving vague descriptions for terms. The importance of this "Critical Dictionary" is that it is also the place where Bataille's short article on *informe* is published. In his entry entitled "Informe," Bataille writes:

A dictionary begins when it no longer gives the meaning of words, but their tasks. Thus formless is not only an adjective having a given meaning, but a term that serves to bring things down in the world. (...) What it designates has no rights in any sense and gets itself squashed everywhere, like a spider or an earthworm. In fact, for academic men to be happy, the universe would have to take shape. All of philosophy has not other goal: it is a matter of giving a frock coat to what is, a mathematical frock coat. On the other hand, affirming that the universe resembles nothing and is only formless amounts to saying that the universe is something like a spider or spit. (*Critical Dictionary* 27)

Right after this attack on philosophy/academia because of their desire to put everything into form, the next entry of the "Critical Dictionary" continues from where Bataille ended his entry: spittle. Michel Leiris devotes long descriptions to "spittle" and connects it to the notion of *informe*. Leiris states at the end of the entry: "finally, through its inconsistency, its indefinite contours, the relative imprecision of its color, and its humidity, spit is the very symbol of the formless, of the unverifiable, of the nonhierarchized" (*Critical Dictionary* 31). These lines are very inspiring for

³ "Critical Dictionary" is originally published in *Documents*, a magazine that is founded by Bataille and his colleagues.

Bois and Krauss to formulate theories about *informe*. They see *informe* as an operation. For them, *informe* does not have any stable meaning, it is a process, a task. “It is not so much a stable motif to which we can refer, a symbolizable theme, a given quality, as it is a term allowing one to operate a declassification” (18). For them, this “declassification” is at the heart of *informe*. Bois and Krauss regard *informe* as an operation of “taxonomic disorder” (18), that is, *informe* does not build categories for things; rather, it sabotages these categories and puts them into disorder.

It is significant that the qualities of the spittle, “inconsistency” and “indefinite contours,” may also be attributed to semen (Aydemir XXII) or any other bodily fluids such as blood, vomit, urine, etc. Hence we can regard *informe* as something that champions fluids which are “inconsistent” with “indefinite contours.” That way, we can claim that *informe* is supporting a “fluid character” which is disordered, amorphous and non-classifiable.

While discussing *informe* it is important to note that “the state of formlessness” is not a permanent condition, but indicates a “fluid character” that is always in flux. Bataille’s *informe* pursues the transitory, perhaps momentary states where something dissolves itself, loses its form. The subversive strategy that Bataille offers is to constantly seek these in-between phases of formlessness. He proposes a way of existing which is based on constant dissolution, decomposition of being/thing.

Such an attitude is the natural result of a search for a non-hierarchized way of living: a type of existence that is built on eluding power. When Bataille overturns a hierarchy, he does not want to replace the top of this hierarchy with something else. He wants to blur the high and low, but he also refrains from establishing a new

system instead of the previous one. As Richard Williams puts it, “[i]nforme does not (...) impose a new hierarchy of values” (144).

We can see the parallelism between Bataille’s search for non-hierarchy and his employment of the headless figure *Acéphale*. In *Acéphale*, Bataille decapitates the figure’s head, its hierarchic leader. Then, he does not replace the head with another organ/structure to lead the body. In Bataille’s model, the head of the figure is continuously decapitated, leaving no opportunity for any organ “to be at top” or to take command. Bataille’s subversion of hierarchical structures is based on the dissolution of the structure whenever a new head/hierarchy is constructed.

So, we have the gist of Bataillean attitude: Bataille focuses on the transient phases where things/beings do not have solid structures. He wants to hold on to these transient/fluid phases in order to disrupt the law that encloses the being. His subversive strategy is to disintegrate the body/closed system whenever it starts to lose its unconfined/undefinable character.

This attitude is also at the core of the repetitious process of debunking the high and low of any order. After all, Bataille desires to “cancel the vertical and hierarchical order” (Aydemir 229) and this underlies all of his subversive gestures. In order to understand what the “vertical” symbolizes for Bataille, we should take a look at his attack on the notion of architecture.

For Bataille, architecture is associated with vertical power mechanisms. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that the first entry of “Critical Dictionary” is named “Architecture.” In this entry, Bataille illustrates his criticism of architecture:

(...) only society’s ideal nature—that of authoritative command and prohibition—expresses itself in actual architectural constructions. Thus great monuments rise up like dams, opposing a logic of majesty and authority to all unquiet elements; it is in the form of cathedrals and palaces that church and state speak to and impose silence upon the crowds. (...) Therefore an attack on architecture, whose monumental

productions now truly dominate the whole world, grouping servile multitudes under their shadow, imposing (...) order and constraint, is necessarily, as it were, an attack on man. (*Critical Dictionary* 25-26)

This short entry by Bataille about the role of architecture in enhancing the mechanisms of power and discipline is the starting point of Denis Hollier's discussion of Bataille in his book *Against Architecture*. In Hollier's view, throughout his writings, Bataille "denounces architecture as a prison warden" (IX). For Bataille, "formation of man," which he tries to undo, is "embedded in architecture" (XII). As Paul Hegarty remarks, architecture "imposes itself as power. It is more than simply a reflection of power" (*Core Cultural* 132). Thus, Bataille sees architecture as a structure similar to language: just as language reflects and perpetuates the power mechanisms, architecture both reflects and enhances these mechanisms. In other words, architecture does not only exemplify the hierarchical structures that it represents, but it is a ubiquitous apparatus that imposes these very structures. This is why Bataille's attack on architecture is also an attack on everything vertical such as the Symbolic and the Law. For Bataille, these terms are strongly linked, and a subversion of one of them requires an attack on all of them.

At this point, I should make clear what I mean by the "vertical." All the structures that are based on an opposition of "high" and "low" are vertical. In such structures, there is always a hierarchical order between the high and low poles where one term is privileged, such as "clean vs. dirty" or "heavenly vs. terrestrial." These very well-known binary oppositions are at the center of everything that Bataille fervently attacks. These oppositions pervade our entire social existence by means of discursive regimes—which are already vertically structured. "In men, all existence is tied in particular to language, whose terms determine its modes of appearance within each person" writes Bataille in his essay "The Labyrinth" (173). Here we can see that understanding Bataille's mistrust of language and his attack on the discursive is

essential in order to comprehend Bataille's critical approach in general. For Bataille, language determines the "total existence" of a being. Furthermore, language and discursive mechanisms force us to enter a social existence that speaks in terms of "high" and "low." What Bataille calls "the servility of discourse" in *Inner Experience* (113) makes sense in this context. Discourse constitutes servile subjects who are trapped in hierarchies and utilitarian thinking. Against this vertical nature of the architecture/symbolic/law, Bataille proposes a horizontal way of being that his concept "base materialism" implies.

In base materialism, as Murat Aydemir argues, Bataille first replaces the high with the low (i.e., the pure/ideal with the filthy/debased), but then he also negates such a simple substitution, and, ultimately he "abolishes" the "scale" where we can discern the high and low from each other. At the end, what we have is something "flat" (229). This flatness of the scale is the horizontality that Bataille offers as an alternative to the vertical. However, we should not consider Bataille's horizontality as a static phenomenon. In a similar fashion to Bataille's imagery which is in constant flux (the incessant movement of fluids and other waste), at the basis of horizontality lies a perpetual destabilization of the binaries, and therefore a constant change.

We can discuss Bataille's notion of horizontality together with Deleuze and Guattari's famous account of *rhizome*. There are parallels between Deleuze and Guattari's *rhizomatic* structures, which do not grow upwards but propagate in a horizontal way, and Bataille's horizontality which aims to debunk the high and low. Deleuze and Guattari propose *rhizomatic* structures as an alternative to *arboreal* ones, which are growing vertically, therefore embodying hierarchical structures. Although such a similarity may be limited to very broad generalizations of Bataille's

horizontality and Deleuze and Guattari's concept of *rhizomatic*, we can nevertheless claim that they are fighting against the same "enemy": the vertical.

Another similarity that we can draw between them comes from Gerald L. Bruns' argument on Deleuze. According to Bruns, in Deleuze's terminology, philosophy is *arboreal* (XXI). Also in Bataille's view, philosophy is a vertical and closed system. Bataille perceives philosophy as something that reflects the hierarchical structures since philosophy cannot escape from the mediation of the discursive. Denis Hollier comments on this issue: "[s]cience and philosophy (models of discourse *on*) would like to fix and accumulate meaning in a closed language where clearly defined terms are enumerated hierarchically" (26). Hollier's remark emphasizes an important point. There is a link between Bataille's attack on the closed systems and the tendency of these closed systems to fixate the meaning of words. In other words, for Bataille, a system that folds back on itself is formed by the help of a closure in language. This is Bataille's rationale for approaching language as something to be negated. What he aimed to do in the "Critical Dictionary" was to invert the stability of language. Instead of solidification of terms, Bataille proposes slippage (*glissement*) of meanings.

Hollier explains this as follows: "in (...) Bataille's tongue words do indeed refer to other words (as in any language) but to words that are not where they belong, words out of place because in the meantime they moved. (...) his tongue is produced as a transgression of a lexical stability" (27). Derrida also notices this aspect in Bataille's writing: "[w]e must find, Bataille explains to us, (...) 'words' and 'objects' which make us slide" (114) and he talks about making "the entire discourse slide" through the sliding words (115). In Bataille, this slippage of words is a precaution

against the inclination of discursive mechanisms to reach closure. Slippage opens up a closed language and creates fissures on its surface.

Hollier refers to the fixation of meanings and the closure that this fixation generates as “the system of petrification.” “Discursive knowledge” takes part in this system of petrification, as “the bearer of absolute power.” For Hollier, such a system creates “a unified whole of thought, ‘fixed and solidified’” (50-51).

To liquefy this solid structure is a central concern for Bataille. In his imagery, Bataille starts this process of liquefaction at the level of organism. An organism, as an organization that is structured by discursive mechanisms, colonizes the body hierarchically. In this organization which works according to the principles of effectivity, every organ has specific functions and they should act according to their role within the hierarchy. Organism, as Hollier explains, is “the (complex) architecture of the human body” (81). Hence it is part of an architectural system, a vertical structure. To de-hierarchize the organism is to dismantle this vertical body image. Bataille’s imagery is full of elements that attempt to disrupt the bodily hierarchy. His attitude which flattens the high and low scale starts from the level of organism. In his essay “The Big Toe,” Bataille states: “[a]lthough within the body blood flows in equal quantities from high to low and flow low to high, there is a bias in favor of that which elevates itself, and human life is erroneously seen as an elevation” (20). Clearly, Bataille tries to change the privilege given to the vertical axis in human body. Here, one is reminded of his concept of “base materialism” which aims to create a constant flow between the low and high. Such an incessant replacement between the low and high destabilizes the ground on which they are hierarchically situated, thereby bringing them to the horizontal axis—Bataille’s horizontality.

In another text of Bataille, *Alleluiah*, his frame of mind shows a similar vein: “your face is noble but the parts hidden under your dress bear no less truth than your mouth— those parts that are secretly open to ordure” (qtd. in Wilson, “Fêting the Wound” 184). Here, we see Bataille’s desire to embrace the lower parts of the body.

While discussing the headless figure *Acéphale*, Murat Aydemir gives the essence of Bataille’s attack on the organism. For Aydemir, Bataille champions *Acéphale* since this figure “proposes the structural simultaneity, or isotropy, of mouth, penis, and anus.” In a figure like *Acéphale* which is without a face, and thus, without a mouth, “[n]ot only semen and urine, but also speech and excrement are discharged through the same orifice, and therefore cannot but contaminate each other” (215). Such a figure, in which both speech and waste materials use the lower parts of the body for being discharged, is suitable for Bataille’s imagery that works against the distinction between the “noble” and “filthy” parts of the body.

Aydemir’s reflection on Bataille’s use of bodily fluids is also relevant at this point. According to Aydemir, Bataille mixes several fluids, which differ in their scale of “high” and “low”. Semen, which is regarded “high” (and sometimes even pure) since it has a reproductive function, is brought to the level of wastes such as menstrual blood, saliva and urine which are traditionally deemed “low” (XVIII). In Bataille’s imagery all these fluids are used interchangeably. Most of the time, they are discharged together, in a mixture, as if to make it impossible to differentiate between them. As Murat Aydemir remarks, in Bataille, semen is not only ejaculated, but it is also “vomited, spitted, pissed or shitted” (215). In Bataille’s depictions, semen may come during ejaculation or urination. Blood may be discharged from

breasts⁴; it may leak out from wounds or it may be mixed with semen: “red blood awash in sperm / sperm swimming in blood” (*The Collected Poems* 44).

Barthes observes this in *Story of the Eye*: “[t]he world becomes *blurred*: properties are no longer separate; spilling, sobbing, urinating, ejaculation form a *wavy meaning*” (125). Among Bataille’s intense depictions of these scenes, after one point, the reader loses track of where these fluids are secreted from. We do not know from which part of the body (upper or lower) these fluids are emitted. Blood does not only leak from wounds but also from other openings in the body. Semen is not just ejaculated through the penis, but it may as well be thrown out from other orifices. Fluids that are regarded “low” may be emitted from the orifices which are situated in higher parts of the body, and fluids that are regarded “high” may leak from the “lower parts” of the body. It is as if there is no organism that can control the flow of these fluids. “Urine, sweat, semen and blood flow uncontrollably” (Hollings, “The Dark Night” XI). The body is a surface where fluids flatten everything through their perpetual flow. Any solid structure which faces this flow of fluids melts away.

Such a bodily imagery reminds one of Deleuze and Guattari’s concept “Body without Organs”—a concept that is taken from Artaud and then developed theoretically by them. When talking about a body without organs (*a corps sans organes*), Artaud demanded “a reworking of the human body (...) a self-made body without the hierarchical emplacement of organs (...) who can be retaught to dance inside out...” (Scheer 6). Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of “body without organs” gets its basis from Artaud’s search for eliminating the hierarchical body. Deleuze and Guattari seek a bodily formation which is freed from the hierarchical structure that is called organism. It is interesting to note that the terminology they use about this issue

⁴ “Blood spills from my breasts” writes Bataille in his poem “Coryphea” (*The Collected Poems* 53).

is very similar to that of Bataille. In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari write: “[a]lthough the organ-machines attach themselves to the body without organs, the latter continues nonetheless to be without organs and does not become an organism in the ordinary sense of the word. It remains fluid and slippery” (15). Deleuze and Guattari’s subversive body is “fluid and slippery.” As is the case in Bataille’s theory, they regard fluidity as being potentially subversive. According to Yaşar Çabuklu, Deleuze and Guattari’s “Body without Organs” is “a sort of anarchistic body, a fluid body which provides a location for temporary intensities and formless matter”⁵ (52).

Bataille does not only give a fluid character to the inside of the body, but he also questions the possibility of accomplishing Artaud’s desire to make the body “dance inside out.” In order to do this, he employs the “excess.” In Bataille’s imagery, this excess is constituted of abjected elements—particularly of bodily fluids. As Özgür Taburoğlu argues, an organism requires a body which is shaped according to a certain discursive encoding and this discursive encoding excludes many possibilities of the body while trying to achieve a coherent system. The main elements that are excluded from such a system are bodily secretions, pus, stench and excrement (“Utanç ve İğrenti” 32). Bataille’s excess reintroduces these excluded materials to the realm of the body and breaks the discursive’s clean and functional encoding.

A Communication Based on Bodily Fluids

In Bataille, as the result of his mistrust of the discursive, there is a feeling of guilt that accompanies his usage of words. We can even claim that the title of his possibly the most autobiographical text, *Guilty*, reflects this guilt that stems from the inevitability of expressing himself within the practice of writing. In *Guilty*, Bataille

⁵“(…) Deleuze ‘organsız bedeni,’ bir tür anarşik bedeni savunur. Yoğunlukların gelip geçtiği, ‘biçimsiz maddeden’ oluşan akışkan bir bedendir bu.” *Throughout the text, the translations from Turkish to English are mine.*

writes: “[h]ypocrite! Writing, being sincere and naked—this isn’t possible” (57); “I can’t abide sentences... Everything I’ve asserted, convictions I’ve expressed, it’s all ridiculous and dead. (...) The world of words is laughable” (40).

In Bataille’s poems, we see a similar concern: “all words strangle me” (*The Collected Poems* 13). Bataille constantly questions the validity of his own words: “words lack / and in the end, I do too” (124). Therefore, he desires to negate his own words, to erase the traces they have left behind: “I erase / the footprint / I erase / the word” (38).

It is clear that Bataille is caught in a dilemma: on the one hand, he despises language, on the other hand, he knows that he has to use it in order to write. He despises words because, as Derrida states, for Bataille, they belong to “the language of servility.” Derrida describes this impasse of Bataille as follows: “[n]ecessity of the impossible: to say in language—the language of servility—that which is not servile.” Derrida, then, quotes Bataille: “that which is not servile is unspeakable” (114).

Bataille’s mistrust of language dominates all his texts. In his novellas (*Story of the Eye*, *My Mother*, *Blue of Noon*) and in some of his short stories (*Madame Edwarda*), for example, the dialogues between the characters are always kept at minimum. The characters hardly use words while communicating with each other. In all of these texts, the story is narrated in the first-person, by a male protagonist. The narrator/protagonist describes every transaction between the characters of the story, and almost the entire text is made up of the account of the narrator. Instead of dialogues, the narrative of Bataille proceeds through the exchange of bodily fluids between the characters. Instead of exchanging words, they exchange blood, urine, semen, sweat, tears and so on. It is as if the act of urination, ejaculation or bleeding replaces the function of dialogue in Bataille’s texts.

In Bataille's fictional works, the scenes include intense descriptions of bodily secretions between the characters. The signification of these bodily secretions resists translation into words, because the nature of these transactions transgresses the realm of language. This is the reason why, when the characters bond with each other through the mediation of bodily fluids, their relationship becomes impossible to be described with the already existing terminology. There is simply no counterpart of this bodily communication in the symbolic realm.

To demonstrate my point, I want to examine an excerpt from *Story of the Eye*, from the section "Simone's Confession and Sir Edmund's Mass." This famous section takes place in a church, between the priest, the male protagonist/narrator, his carnal partner Simone and an English libertine named Sir Edmund. After Simone, the narrator and Sir Edmund enter the church, Simone confesses her "dirty secrets" in the confession cabinet and then, the three of them start to include the priest in a chain of bodily encounters. In the following excerpt, Simone, the narrator and Sir Edmund take the priest out of his confession cabinet:

Simone asked him [the priest]: "What's your name?" "Don Amino," he answered. Simone slapped the sacerdotal pig, which gave him another hard on. We stripped off his clothes, and Simone crouched down and pissed on them like a bitch. Then she wanked and sucked the pig while I urinated in his nostrils. Finally, to top off this cold exaltation, I fucked Simone in the arse while she violently sucked his cock (...) Simone began by slamming the base of the chalice against his skull (...) Then she resumed sucking him, which provoked the ignoble rattles. After bringing his senses to a height of fury with Sir Edmund's help and mine, she gave him a hard shake. "That's not all," she said in a voice that brooked no reply. "It's time to piss." And she struck his face again with the chalice, but at the same time she stripped naked before him and I finger-fucked her. (...) Don Amino noisily poured his urine into the chalice, which Simone held under this thick cock. "And now, drink," commanded Sir Edmund. The paralyzed wretch drank with a well-nigh filthy ecstasy at one long gluttonous draft. (...) Four robust arms lifted him up, with open thighs, his body erect, and yelling like a pig being slaughtered, he spurted his come on the hosts in the ciborium... (61-62)

In the scene quoted above, it is very difficult to represent the transactions between Bataille's three main characters and the priest without missing an essential aspect of their relationship. In this scene, Simone and the narrator exercise violence on the priest, while simultaneously getting sexually aroused by these violent acts. There is an intense web of desire between Simone, the Priest and the narrator. For instance, while Simone pisses on the priest, the narrator gets aroused. Moreover, Simone and the narrator also lead the priest to a sexual arousal. They do not only exercise violence on him, but they lead him to "a well-nigh filthy ecstasy."

Their way of relating to the priest has many facets, most of which may seem contradictory when perceived within the domain of language. We cannot explain their actions with the given notions such as "sexual desire," "hatred" or "violence," because their actions seem to entail all of these and much more. When the characters bond with each other through ejaculation, urination or bleeding, the common-sensical meanings of sentences such as "they desire each other," "they want to violate each other's body" or "they manifest a Sadistic desire" are not enough to comprehend the nature of their bond. Bodily fluids used by these characters have a language of their own, and while describing the feelings that these fluids convey, the words always fall short. The discharge of bodily fluids generates an idiosyncratic communication that is unique to that moment of transaction between the characters in this scene.

To consider Bataille's descriptions, which include explicit and detailed depictions of sexual acts, in the frame of "pornographic writing" would also be an insufficient reading of Bataille's work. All the "obscene" scenes described by Bataille in *Story of the Eye*, *My Mother*, *Madame Edwarda*, *Blue of Noon* and *The Dead Man* do not serve the same purpose as "pornographic literature." These scenes

in Bataille's works are never intended to fulfill the voyeuristic pleasure of the reader. Instead, Bataille uses the scenes of sexual intercourse as manifestations of his views on the notion of eroticism.

Bataille's notion of eroticism, as it is particularly conceptualized in his book *Eroticism (L'Erotisme)*, is related to his concepts such as communication, merging, community and continuity. For Bataille, "[e]rotic activity, by dissolving the separate beings that participate in it, reveals their fundamental continuity like the waves of a stormy sea" (22). "[A] total blending of two beings, a continuity between two discontinuous creatures" (20). The erotic acts that Bataille depicts in his texts are an attempt to fill the oblivion between different bodies, what he calls their "discontinuity." Through eroticism, Bataille searches for a way of merging the bodies, "dissolving separate beings," and constituting "a total blending." In Bataille's conception, eroticism is "a state of communication revealing a quest for a possible continuance of being beyond the confines of the self. Bodies open out to a state of continuity through secret channels that give us a feeling of obscenity" (17).

Thus, within the frame of Bataille's theoretical writings, we should consider his "obscene" scenes as a direct reflection of his notions on communication. For Bataille, his characters who engage in sexual acts are in "a state of communication." During these acts, "through secret channels" of the body, the bodily fluids are exchanged in order to link foreign bodies, which are distanced from each other. Therefore, Bataille's communication is a sort of "fluid bonding." Through such a fluid bonding, he establishes a liquid bridge in order to put the bodies in an alternative dialogue.

It is precisely this model of communication that makes Bataille's descriptions of sexual acts important. Bataille's "obscene" scenes should be read in

relation to his writings on eroticism and communication, and that is exactly the point which Susan Sontag misses while situating Bataille in pornographic literature in her well-known essay “The Pornographic Imagination.” In fact, throughout her essay, Sontag defends the subversive possibilities of Bataille’s so-called “pornographic fiction.” She refutes the claims of the opponents of pornographic fiction, who condemn it as a piece of rubbish which only serves the purpose of sexual arousal in the reader. While refuting these claims, Sontag inverts the clear cut distinction made between “high literature” and “pornographic literature.” In her analysis, she mentions *Story of the Eye* and *Madame Edwarda* as texts which have high literary value, but she considers these books within the frame of pornographic literature genre (83-118). Sontag’s attempt is meaningful in that she attacks the problematic distinction between “high literature” and “pornographic literature.” However, she makes the mistake of putting Bataille’s works to the genre of pornography. Such a classification limits the evaluation of Bataille’s works to the conventions of the genre.

The passage below from *Story of the Eye* will help to mark the limitations of such a discussion of Bataille which is limited to the genre of pornography. In the following scene, Simone and the narrator invite Marcelle, a girl who triggers “perverse” sexual desires in both of them, to a tea party which involves many of their friends. Marcelle hesitantly accepts the invitation, and the lines below describe the tea party which turns into a collective frenzy:

All at once, to everyone’s horror, Simone fell upon the floor. A convulsion shook her harder and harder, her clothes were in disarray, her bottom stuck in the air, as though she were having an epileptic fit. But rolling about at the foot of the boy she had undressed, she mumbled almost inarticulately: “Piss on me.... Piss on my cunt....” she repeated with a kind of thirst. Marcelle gaped at this spectacle: she blushed again, her face was blood-red. But then she said to me, without even looking at me, that she wanted to take off her dress. I half tore it off, and straight after, he underwear. (...) I fingered her cunt a bit and kissed her on the mouth, she glided across the room to a

large antique bridal wardrobe, where she shut herself after whispering a few words to Simone. (...) Simone standing with her dress tucked up, was rubbing her bare cunt against the wardrobe (...) And, all at once, something incredible happened, a strange swish of water, followed by a trickle and a stream from under the wardrobe door: poor Marcelle was pissing in her wardrobe while masturbating. But the explosion of totally drunken guffaws that ensued rapidly degenerated into a debauché of tumbling bodies, lofty legs and arses, wet skirts and come. (...) During the orgy, splinters of glass had left deep bleeding cuts in two of us. A young girl was throwing up, and all of us had exploded in such wild fits of laughter at some point or other that we had wet our clothes, an armchair, or the floor.” (16-17)

It would be very reductionist to read this scene as a description of an orgy. Instead, by using Bataille’s theoretical perspective, we can come up with a completely different reading of this scene. The scene epitomizes Bataille’s conceptualization of “feast.” Bataille’s feast is an opportunity for people to break the confines of their every day rational behaviour. In Bataille’s feast, people desire to reach an ecstatic state—a state of rapture where their individuality is effaced.

Bataille’s sentences from *Guilty* are in line with my arguments: “[t]he point of ecstasy is bared if inside myself I shatter individuality that confines me to myself” (35). Bataille’s feast is “the ecstatic world” which is opposed to “a world of language” (37). For Bataille, “[e]cstasy is *communication* between terms (...) and communication possesses a value the terms didn’t have: it annihilates them” (30). According to him, in the state of ecstasy, the meanings of words are effaced. In ecstatic communication, the significations of words are “annihilated.” Herein should we seek the reason of Bataille’s remark “[c]ontrary to what’s usually admitted, language isn’t communication but its negation” (68). For Bataille, language does not lead to real communication. On the contrary, words contaminate the possibility of real communication. The hierarchical power structures, which are intrinsic to language, constitute the obstacle to attaining the real communication. In Bataille’s feast, instead of language, a shared ecstasy establishes the communication between

bodies. Ecstasy is the term used by Bataille in order to describe the inarticulable nature of the communication that takes place in the feast. Ecstasy refers to a collective rapture where separate beings get into contact in a unique way that excludes words. As Martin Crowley puts it, Bataille's communication is "contact through a shared puncture" (768).

In Bataille's feast, in order to be able to contact other bodies, people should be "naked". In his theory, nakedness is a prerequisite for "real communication". "[F]rom the bottom of my heart *I want* to be naked" he writes in *Guilty* (34). "Man is his own law as he confronts the sight of his own nakedness" (41). In order to build a new communicative model that is alternative to the law of the language, one should "confront the sight of his nakedness." In Bataille, nakedness is not only about leaving the dresses that encircle us, but it is also a gesture of getting rid of the discursive rules that surround us: "[n]aked, our being is laid open before the material reality of the body: but this body is no longer the idealized flesh handed down to us by a history of representation" (Hollings 203). For Bataille, a naked body temporarily unloads its burden of the discursive and becomes available for reaching to other bodies.

In the feast described by Bataille, naked bodies are always more inclined to merge with each other. While talking about the notion of eroticism in Bataille, Paul Hegarty draws attention to the connection between nakedness and merging: "[n]akedness is an opening of the self such that the self, in going over to the other, becomes other..." (*Core Cultural* 106). In Bataille's communication, the body is opened and through the fissure that is created by this opening, the individual identities are dissolved. The bodies release their bodily secretions freely through this fissure, and therefore, they generate a stream of bodily fluids through which they

establish a liquid bridge. Within this liquid bridge, different beings merge so that separate identities are lost. While dissolving, the bodies communicate in a truly Bataillean sense.

The passage that I quoted above from *Story of the Eye* is also an instance of “real communication” for Bataille. It is not a description of an orgy where the aim is to describe several possible ways of doing sexual intercourse. Instead, this passage is a perfect example of Bataille’s understanding of “eroticism.” His eroticism is an attempt to merge the bodies, to break the rational confines of these bodies and to constitute a new community with them. Bataille’s eroticism is a kind of “real communication” for him since it speaks outside the rational language of efficiency and productivity.

In his inspiring essay on Bataille that is called “In the Slaughterhouse of Love,” Ken Hollings expands on the issue of Bataille’s eroticism. According to Hollings, Bataille’s conception of eroticism is built as a reaction to an understanding of eroticism “which is linked to work and a system of production and consumption.” Contrary to this dominant perception of eroticism, in Bataille’s model, “where work conserves and regulates human energy, eroticism squanders and exhausts it...” (211). Bataille’s views on eroticism are related to his terms “excess” and “accursed share.” This sort of eroticism is built on the free release of sexual energy and reproductive sources without any consideration for productivity and profit. In this sense, Bataille’s eroticism is always composed of acts of “perverse sexuality,” which Bataille defines as sexual acts that are “deflected from genital finality” (“The Notion of Expenditure” 118). These acts of perverse sexuality do not aim at reproduction. Therefore, perverse sexuality for Bataille is an unproductive expenditure of sexual fluids. In these acts, bodily fluids are sacrificed without the prospect of any future gain. We

can recall Bataille's notion of "unproductive expenditure" as a kind of expenditure which does not culminate in further profit or production. Unproductive expenditure is done just for the sake of expending something; it is the total disregard of effectivity and utility.

If we reconsider the scene quoted above, it is significant that Marcelle, Simone and the narrator spend their bodily fluids lavishly, without any consideration for "genital finality" or reproductive purposes. Bataille's scenes which depict excessive spending of semen make sense in the context of unproductive expenditure. For Bataille, the orgy-like frenzy in such scenes is an act of real communication since it involves a free, uncalculated spending of semen and other bodily fluids. Bataille's eroticism creates a sphere of real communication because it is based on a perverse, unproductive sexuality which breaks the rational confines of a being. That being who is freed from the bounds of the rational—even if temporarily—is "naked" in Bataillean sense, and he/she is ready to bond with another body. He/she is ready for the real communication that is conducted through bodily fluids.

This kind of a communication which uses bodily fluids as "messengers" between bodies is the essential component of my comparative reading between Bataille and İskender. As we will see in the next chapter, İskender also seeks for ways of establishing such a bodily communication.

CHAPTER III

KÜÇÜK İSKENDER'S FORMLESS BODIES

“There is no civilization left in my fluidity.”
Küçük İskender, “Veda Mucidi” (*Ağır Abiler Orkestrası*)

It is difficult to situate İskender's works within a single tradition of poetry. Perhaps the closest attempt comes from Özgür Taburoğlu who sees İskender as a late representative of a French tradition called the “accursed ones” which started with Sade and then continued with Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Lautréamont, Artaud, Bataille and Genet (“Yırtılan Plazma” 40). Such a literary vein seems to be indispensable for explaining the influences on İskender. The emphasis that this literary tradition puts on “perversity” and transgression with an accompanying “perversed” style is also essential to analyze İskender.

Indeed, İskender's references to some of these “accursed” writers manifest İskender's interest in them. In his poem *Hamlet Comes Back!*, İskender talks about the poisonous nature of Baudelaire's words: “there was a drop of urine that has leaked from Baudelaire to the oceans” (*Siyah Beyaz Denizatları* 214). In his book *Galileo'nun Pergeli*, while discussing the topic of “literary courage,” İskender mentions the name Jean Genet, together with Henry Miller—who is also deeply influenced by the French tradition of accursed writers—and Oscar Wilde, a Dark Romantic who used themes similar to the ones of this French canon: “how many of us can live up to Oscar Wilde, Jean Genet or Henry Miller?!” (68). Furthermore, in his collection of critical texts on poetry which challenges the conventions of poetry criticism, İskender writes open letters to Georges Bataille, starting with “Dear Bataille” and quoting some lines from Bataille's book *The Impossible* (*Eflatun Sufleler* 337-340). It is not to say that these references are the proofs of the literary

links between İskender and the “accursed writers”; however, they give us an idea regarding where we should search for the influence on İskender’s themes and writing style. In the following section, the discussions regarding “abject writing” will make the links between İskender and the “accursed writers” clear.

Abject Writing

The notion of “abject writing,” which Kristeva proposes in her book *Revolution in Poetic Language* and then develops in *Powers of Horror*, provides a convenient perspective for approaching İskender’s writing. Kristeva offers the term “abject writing” for a practice of writing which brings the disrupting/blurring effects of the abject to the realm of writing (18). In Kristeva’s understanding of abject writing, names such as Lautréamont, Artaud, Céline (18), Sade and Bataille (Marchak 360) are examples of writers of abjection. What separates these writers from others is the way they carry the disrupting/blurring effects of abjection to their realm of writing, which Kristeva considers as an essential component of abject writing.

According to Kristeva, we encounter a piece of abject writing “when narrated identity is unbearable, when the boundary between subject and object is shaken, and when the limit between inside and outside becomes uncertain” (qtd. in Berressem 37). Thus, for Kristeva, a text reflecting these qualities of the abject can also carry the ambiguous effects of abjection. Such a text is fragmented, defying a claim for the text’s integrity. It lacks a linear, coherent narrative which seeks a closure. Furthermore, it always escapes the boundaries of categories, and has a quality of in-betweenness. Finally, a piece of abject writing “pervert[s] language style and content” (Kristeva 16).

We can claim that İskender’s texts contain these features that are attributed to abject writing. Thus, we can add him to the list of “writers of abjection,” as Özgür

Taburođlu also uses the term abject writing (*zilletli yazın*) describing İskender's poetry ("Yırtılan Plazma" 57). In İskender, "perverting language" —in the sense that Kristeva uses the term—in terms of style is related to what Taburođlu calls İskender's gift for "bending language." "İskender always tries to find a new syntax with which he can fill the natural void between the things. (...) He creates inappropriate mixtures of words which overflow from the determined paths of lexicons"⁶ (39).

According to Taburođlu, İskender fills his writing with images that may have a "disgusting effect" (38). In *Cangüncem*, İskender makes a similar description of his own poetry: "this poetry that is written is (...) repulsive, disgusting; it exhausts you, it puzzles you. (...) it wounds you, it makes you bleed" (70). This takes us back to Kristeva's writer of abjection: "[t]he writer is fascinated by the abject, imagines its logic, projects himself into it, introjects it..." (16). İskender qualifies for such a description as he builds the world of his poems according to the logic of abjection. His imagery is almost entirely composed of abjected fluids, putrefying materials, flesh, diseased cells and dead bodies, which show the extent to which İskender is fascinated by the abject. Moreover, he carries this fascination to the realm of language by perverting the conventions of style.

In İskender, we see this "perversion of style" via different ways. It is very hard to find a single poem of İskender where he does not declare a challenge against the conventional use of syntax, grammar and genre. First of all, it is almost impossible to attribute a specific genre to İskender's writings. Although we call him a poet, and for the sake of simplicity refer to his works as poems, there is almost no single piece of writing where İskender does not blur such classifications. In his

⁶ "küçük İskender, durmaksızın, şeyler arasındaki zorunlu boşluklara denk düşebilecek sözcük dizilişleri bulmaya uğraşır. (...) sözlük içinde belirlenmiş yörüngelerden taşan uygunsuz karşımlar yaratır."

works, there is always an interplay of prose and verse. The genre of his writings changes from one line to the other within a single text. His texts carry the characteristic elements of essays, diaries, aphorisms and poetry in combination. In *Cangüncem*, he attempts to designate the genre of his texts as follows: “poetical ones, daydreams, visions (...) experimental digressions and delusions...” (7).

İskender’s statement in his book *Hasta Hayat Depoları*, which can be generalized to his entire corpus, refers to the fragmented nature of his writings: “it would be better to read [this book] in fragments since these fragments do not make up a single structure. Here, they are put together by extracting them from different wholes by the way of different perceptions” (9). Such a fragmented writing is a way for İskender to undermine the coherent logic of texts. In this manner, he ridicules a text that closes on itself, and his texts open into possible worlds of infinite meanings.

As another strategy disrupting conventional language, İskender plays with syntax by finding new combinations of words, thereby trying to reach new clusters of meaning or “non-sense.” As Taburoğlu states, İskender “creates inappropriate mixtures of words” (39). İskender does not only play with the habitual order of words, but sometimes with the order of letters and syllables, or with the way they are written (either with an upper case or lower case letter). Furthermore, he uses spaces between words as something that he can modify freely, with a total disregard of any rule. The following texts, written as in original, demonstrate some of these playful textual subversions by İskender:

metal lameli toprak lamın üzerine
kapat tılar cesetlere başkalaşım
bulaşmadan dı korkunun vücut
bulduğunu öğrenen akademisyen marihuana
yıkandı ğı bir avuç ormanın karanlığında

(*İskender’i Ben Öldürmedim* 84)

HÜZÜNDEN DERS ALMIŞ GÜLÜM!

b h b c b a b k
i a i i ya da i y i i
r i r n r i r n
n n

(*Gözlerim Sıgmiyor Yüzüme 75*)

In the first excerpt, we can observe that İskender breaks the words into arbitrary pieces. Furthermore, the spacing between the letters, syllables and words also seem to be varied haphazardly. In the second extract, we see that İskender plays even with how we should read the letters. In that poem, we do not read the letters from left to right (as is the convention for Latin alphabet), but from top to bottom.

Through such techniques, İskender plays with the conventional usage of language and produces what Hollier calls “a transgression of lexical stability” (26). In such a way of writing, “[v]iolent syntax undoes the meaning of all words” (27). İskender’s lines become a formless flux in the flow of which the significations are perpetually postponed. With this formless flux of words, İskender’s writing reflects his imagery, which is based on the chaotic flow of fluids which sweeps away everything on its way, effacing everything that has a stable form. In such a manner, İskender’s words, which flow chaotically, leave no trace of meaning where one can hold on to. It may be argued that sometimes he deliberately tries to write non-sense: he wants the words to be indistinguishable, inseparable from each other within his formless flux of words so that they hardly signify anything. İskender’s chaotic words are a reflection of his attitude that favours an uncontrollable, irregular and decentralized “fluid character” which is described by Yaşar Çabuklu as the “anarchy of fluids.”

According to Çabuklu, in contemporary societies, possibilities of resistance reside in “anarchistic fluids.” Anarchistic fluids do not follow a single track, it is impossible to predict their direction. They are in constant change and “they do not fit in sovereign channels”⁷ (52). Anarchistic fluids get their power from their irregularity (52).

In *Hasta Hayat Depoları*, İskender describes a river that corresponds to Çabuklu’s description of “anarchistic fluids.” He writes: “it is important to be like the rivers which do not fit to any pattern or template. To be like rivers which prefer to flow in open land instead of their river beds. That river is a violent river, and on its way, it drags everything with itself” (71).

In İskender’s poetry, the excessive use of the images pertaining to water makes sense in relation to “anarchistic fluids.” Images which seem to be dispersed meaninglessly among İskender’s lines become significant if we consider them in this frame. In İskender’s writings, any image which is related to water/fluidity gets its signification in opposition to the solid. This opposition to the solid is the common denominator of İskender’s bodily fluids, rivers, seas, moisture or any other elements that are related to fluidity. With the help of such imagery, İskender builds an imaginary universe where we clearly sense “the absence of the solid.”

To understand what “the solid” means in İskender’s universe, we can remind ourselves of Irigaray’s well-known text “The ‘Mechanics’ of Fluids.” In this essay, Irigaray offers a “fluid character” which eliminates solid identities (109). Furthermore, she considers the solid character as being inseparable from rationality: “[s]olid mechanics and rationality have maintained a relationship of very long standing, once against which fluids have never stopped arguing” (113). As Yaşar

⁷ “egemen kanallardan dışarı taşan”

Çabuklu states in his article about the political implications of fluids, this solid rationality that Irigaray talks about is related to “disciplinary discourses and practices” and the “modern forms of power.” Çabuklu considers a politics based on fluids as “a way of existing” against such disciplinary discourses and modern forms of power (49). What İskender offers through his imagery is a political stance similar to that of Çabuklu in terms of their usage of “fluid character.”

As Yaşar Çabuklu states, the uncontrollable, anarchistic nature of the fluids is traditionally associated with the feminine, which is traditionally represented as something uncanny, hysterical and totally unpredictable (50). Irigaray’s statement in “The ‘Mechanics of Fluids’” also supports this argument: “historically the properties of fluids have been abandoned to the feminine” (116). According to Çabuklu, the second-wave feminism started to embrace these qualities attributed simultaneously to fluids and to the feminine, and they incorporated these attributions in their political stance. In this manner, some feminists identified their movement with a metaphor of fluidity, through which they can crack the masculine body, which is “rigid, closed, solid, dry, and distanced to other bodies”⁸ (50-52). In place of a masculine body “which preserves its integrity,” “which does not leak,” “which becomes fluid only in the conditions of a competitive market economy,” some feminists heralded a stance based on fluidity which is “amorphous, sticky, dirty (...) irrational, uncontrollable...”⁹ (50).

İskender’s concern with the Symbolic should also be searched here. İskender sees the Symbolic as the designer of the rigid, closed, solid and dry masculine body. Furthermore, the interaction of these masculine bodies with other

⁸ “(...) eril beden sert, kapalı, katı, kuru, diğer insanların bedenlerine mesafeli...”

⁹ “(...) amorf, yapışkan, kirli, bulamacı andıran, irrasyonel, kontrol edilemeyen, doğal kadın sınırları erilliğin kültürel, rasyonel sınırlara dayalı, katı yapısını zorlar.”

bodies is also determined by mechanisms of the Symbolic, which constructs them according to the patriarchal law along with the codes of heteronormativity.

İskender's anarchistic fluids follow the path that is opened by the second-wave feminists, using fluidity as something that can transgress the patriarchal law. Fluids' uncontrollable and unpredictable nature provides İskender with maneuvers that can subvert the prevailing codes of heteronormative masculine body. Using the "feminine" fluids, İskender attempts to undermine the Law of the Father, and instead, he proposes a flux that is constantly refreshing itself. This is perfectly in line with Çabuklu's description of anarchy of fluids, which he sees as the only possible way of resistance in our contemporary society. Such a resistance is composed of fluid organizations which are "loosely organized." These organizations that are in constant movement are "resisting against definitions." They are "fragmented, autonomous, irregular, unstable (...) non-linear, heterogeneous (...) unplanned, disordered, decentralized..."¹⁰ (52). Çabuklu's adjectives to describe anarchistic fluids are highly relevant to İskender's way of utilizing fluids in his works.

Abjected Fluids in İskender

As in Bataille, we see in İskender a recurrent interest in abjected matter, which include things that are thrown out either from the symbolic or bodily economy. İskender's texts are full of those kinds of materials which have lost their power to play a role in symbolical exchange mechanisms. By using them, İskender tries to establish a field of transaction that cannot be predetermined by the symbolic. Waste materials, dead bodies and bodily fluids that are thrown out of the bodily system are, in a way, "recycled" by İskender just as Bataille had done before him.

¹⁰ "(...) tanımlanmaya karşı direnen (...) parçalı, otonom, kesintili, dengesiz, başı sonu olmayan (...) lineer olmayan, heterojen (...) plansız, programsız, düzensiz, merkezsiz..."

In this context, it is important to expand on İskender's interest in the things that are associated with the "low" and the "filthy." İskender addresses his relation to the filth in a direct manner in various occasions: "I am intimate with the filth" (*Ağır Abiler Orkestrası* 79). İskenderian body is a massive domain of filth itself: "the body is the filth; it does never get old" (*Galileo'nun Pergeli* 27). For him, a body is "the garden of pus" (*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 122). İskender always suggests that his readers be engaged with materials that are considered filthy: "adorn yourself with blood, paint yourself with lymph, dress yourself with excrement" (171).

Excrements, other waste materials and bodily fluids are the basic elements of İskender's imagery. Like Bataille, İskender is generous in describing a body which is ejecting and leaking blood, sperm, vomit, pus, breast milk, menstrual blood, sweat, and the like. Throughout his imagery, İskender draws a bodily picture in which fluids and other bodily waste exercise a constant pressure on the limits of the body. They are always on the edge of the corporeal limits, as if they want to open up the anatomical structure in which they are trapped in.

In his article which addresses the role of fluids in İskender's poetry, Özgür Taburoğlu draws attention to this quality of İskender's writing. According to Taburoğlu, İskender's repeated descriptions of skin, bodily contours and membranes are defining characteristics of his poetry. İskender illustrates the moments of transition between the inside and outside of membranes and bodily limits. He observes the intermediary states of fluids and other waste materials: the state where they are on the limit. ("Yırtılan Plazma" 38).

In İskender, there are also several depictions of the moments of discharge where bodily fluids and other waste materials are thrown out of the body: "discharge your interior. Discharge it outside, to the streets" (*Ağır Abiler Orkestrası* 152). The

discharge of blood is the most dominant image in his poetry. As İskender himself puts it, he is “busy bleeding” (*Cangüncem* 137). It is hard to find a poem in his corpus which does not make reference to blood or bleeding. At some points, blood is used mixed with other bodily fluids: “the drops of semen mixed with heavy blood” (*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 228). In İskender’s imagery, there is “a dance of blood and urine” (*İskender’i Ben Öldürmedim* 15) that surrounds the body.

The incessant transition of this mixture of fluids between the inside and outside of bodily contours confuses us. We do not know whether these fluids belong to the inside or outside of the body. The topology of inside/outside becomes ambivalent. We do not know where the fluids should be considered filthy and where they should be considered clean. We do not know when they are part of the body and when they are not. The perpetual discharge of corporeal matter blurs our conceptions about what should be counted as the extensions of the body, and what should not be.

Another feature of İskender’s imagery, which again brings him close to the realm of the abject, is his setting the background of his poems as a place where dead bodies constitute the texture. Taburoğlu expresses this as follows: “in ruins which are full of waste and corpses—the most horrifying of jettisoned things—, İskender searches for the images that he can attach to his pen”¹¹ (37). İskender’s texture is a filthy soil that is interwoven with the dead bodies, sliced organs and anything that is useless or redundant for a living organism. In a way, he is writing from the “graveyard.” Graveyard is the background of his texts. In *Gözyaşlarım Nal Sesleri*, he writes: “what is the importance of staying alive if you are wandering in the graveyard!” (31). In this graveyard, everything is left to putrefy: “we have chosen to leave the proof of our putrefaction by writing...” (*Hasta Hayat Depoları* (10). “I am

¹¹ “Atıklarla ve atılmış olanların en dehşetlisi cesetlerle dolu bir enkaz yerinde kalemine ilıebilecek imgeyi arar.”

putrefaction, inside and outside! / I am putrefaction, inside and outside!”

(*Gözyaşlarım Nal Sesleri* 29). By writing, İskender desires to trace the process of putrefaction: the process whereby the body is decaying and getting closer to extinction.

A Search for a New Corporeality

Reconstructing the human anatomy is an essential component of İskender’s poetry, and İskender uses “the theme of putrefaction” in this manner, as a tool of reshaping the corporeal mapping. That is, he uses putrefaction in order to undo the pre-determined structures on the body. Since İskenderian bodies are in a process of constant decay, bodily parts no longer work properly and the body is continuously transfigured. This transfiguration—what Artaud called “a reworking of the human body” (Scheer 6)—is one of the main themes in İskender’s poetry. There is another aspect of İskender’s poetry that should be considered in relation to this desire for “transfiguring the body.” In his texts, the characters are almost always trying to deform some sections of their bodies, either by cutting their skins with razor blades, or using knives to deform their bodily structures. In *Karanlıkta Herkes Biraz Zencidir*, İskender writes: “these knives will open vicious doors on my insidious body, I know!” (22).

In İskender’s poems, there are also excessive references to anatomical structures, dysfunctional organs, physiological notions and surgeons which give the reader the feeling of being in a surgery room. The abundance of such elements gives İskender’s texture the feeling that we are reading the description of a surgery. İskender’s characters are continuously undergoing surgery. It seems that none of these characters are satisfied with the current structure and organization of their bodies. Therefore, they want to operate on their bodies, aiming at opening “doors” on

their bodies. Through cuts and wounds, they want to reconstruct their anatomy. In this manner, they want to break the confines of their organism and renegotiate their relation to their own bodies. This is the reason that İskender's characters are so obsessed with the tools of deformation such as razor blades, knives or scalpels. In his poems, every person is a "surgeon who searches for the unnamed color within the body of the diseased, with a scalpel in his hands..." (*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 249). By taking scalpels, razors or knives in their hands, they aim to determine their own bodily organizations, and they call for a new corporeality: "I cut every place, everyone, everything / the fate line is hidden in the hand that carries the knife!" (*Karanlıkta Herkes Biraz Zencidir* 72).

Against Sterile Bodies

Another method for İskender to subvert the bodily encodings is through inserting "pathological elements" between his lines: diseases, infections, tumors, viruses, plague and leprosy constitute a recurring theme for İskender. He uses such elements in order to attack the discourses of the body which impose a sterile way of living by limiting the bodily repertoire. İskender's viruses and tumors intervene with the discourses of health and cleanliness. He tries to contaminate the discourses of the "sterile body" by way of his "viruses." In İskender's perspective, bodies that are formed by the "discourses of sterility" are obedient and submissive: "here, all of them are hygienical and obedient" (*Ölü Evinde Seks Partisi* 56). With the introduction of the pathological, he wants the body to be transformed. Instead of being shaped by the discourses of sterility that impose a "normal," "functional" and "effective" living, İskender's body prefers to be left to decay and to disappear: gradual putrefaction by means of the disease. This is the reason behind İskender's repeated use of images pertaining to diseases.

Accordingly, in his book *Cangüncem*, he talks about “taking the responsibility of a giant organization based on the tumor” (21). In İskender’s imagination, the disease is always contagious, as if he wants every person to get the virus, thereby corrupting his or her body: “leprosy is spreading out” (*Cangüncem* 76); “behind us are the convoys of the chronically diseased / the writer is epileptic / the meaning is leprous / it’s a massacre” (*Siyah Beyaz Denizatları* 31). Taburoğlu describes this imagery as a “world that is furnished with infected, tumorous and leprous bodies which are excreting ceaselessly, without a break”¹² (37).

Connecting Formless Bodies

İskender outlines new models of bodily organization and new ways of connecting the tissues, blood cells, veins and organs. His models of re-shaping the corporeal are constantly changing, as if he can never be satisfied with any stable model.

Taburoğlu’s observation on İskender’s poetry is useful for analyzing this issue. For Taburoğlu, İskender “desires to be the last witness of any substance before they disappear in the flux that [he] is creating”¹³ (“Yırtılan Plazma” 38). Related to this observation, we should recall Bataille’s term *informe* for approaching İskenderian bodies in a new light.

Informe is related to the moments where an entity cannot be defined, where it cannot be put into a form (Bois and Krauss 18). These moments of “indefinite shape” are what İskender is interested in. The alternative body models that İskender offers always display this transitory quality. In other words, we know that the body models that İskender offers (the diseased, wounded, bleeding and liquefied bodies) are not durable. With the help of these body models, İskender describes an imaginary

¹² “Bu dünya iltihaplı, tümörlü, yapışkan, cüzamlı, ara vermeden bir şeyler salgılayan bedenlerle donatılır.”

¹³ “Şeyler birbirine bitişik anonim bir akışkanın içerisinde biçimsizleşir (...) küçük İskender maddenin bu nedensiz akış içerisinde kaybolmadan önceki son tanığı olmak ister.”

mode of living, where he focuses on the moments of “formlessness.” These moments of formlessness are the temporary states, in which the body is in a kind of purgatory between its solid shape and its disappearance within an all-embracing flux.

İskender’s interest in these temporary states is the point where he comes closest to Bataille’s *informe*. Without having a pre-determined way of working, the operation of *informe* is focused on dissolving everything that is solid, by means of liquefaction.

We can claim that the operation of *informe* is exemplified in the alternative “body models” of İskender. İskender’s imagery emphasizes the ways in which we can think of his constantly dissolving/decaying bodies together. These bodies are “formless” since they are in a process of continuous reconfiguration. In İskender’s imagery, these “formless bodies” merge within a flux, and in this way, they communicate with each other. In *Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası*, İskender writes: “by touching him I start a flood (...) / in the flood, I am a bodiless drop, too” (232). This communication is always based on liquid-transfer: “I am leaking towards you...” (*Karanlıkta Herkes Biraz Zencidir* 97). Moreover, this communication is, most of the time, described by way of some bodily fluids: “from every human being leaks the blood of another human being” (*Zatülcenp* 15). Taburoğlu states that “İskender always traces the ones who are wounded, the ones who are bleeding. He traces the moments of adjunction, where the ones who are bleeding are coming together, dissolving there, without being able to take a form because of their bleeding”¹⁴ (“Yırtılan Plazma” 37). What Özgür Taburoğlu claims for İskender’s poetry seems to be valid also for this community that is constituted of amorphous bodies: in this community, “there is no room for anything that has found its form”¹⁵ (37).

¹⁴ “küçük İskender’in izini sürdüğü, ‘hep yaralı, hep bir tarafları kanayan’ ve bu kan kaybıyla biçim bulamadan çözülen şeylerin yapışık biraradalıdır.”

¹⁵ “Bu uzayda şekil bulmuş olana yer yok gibidir.”

What Taburoğlu refers as “the flux” that “İskender creates” within which “the substances are disappearing” (38) becomes important in the framework of “fluid communication” between İskenderian bodies. This flux generates a field where İskender’s formless bodies come together, melting within waves of fluids. This flux is an important element of İskenderian universe since it denotes to a specific way of establishing communication between different bodies, a communication which is not based on a vertical principle, but instead, on a horizontal flux of bodily fluids.

The first step of İskender’s challenge against the vertical is achieved through the liquefaction of the bodies that are standing vertically, steep, and erect. By cutting the vertical body into pieces, by deforming its rigid structures and by making it constantly bleed, İskender tries to bring the upright body down to the horizontal axis. Once the bodies are liquefied and once they are brought to the ground level, the vertical structures lose their power to build hierarchies.

This brings us to a significant point about İskender’s critical approach. İskender’s ultimate aim is, as Taburoğlu argues, a phase of impotency, “a phase of non-power” (*liyakatsizlik evresi*) where everything is mixed in an undistinguishable way (“Yırtılan Plazma” 38). Indeed, the horizontal flux that is proposed by İskender seems to be suitable for such a desire for “non-power.” However, at this point, there is a question to be asked about İskender’s flux: is it possible to speak within this horizontal flux? How can one distinguish among different subjects in such a ubiquitous flux which sweeps everything away? Is there any position left within this flux that one can take up as a subject?

One can argue that İskender proposes, in the final analysis, a phase of total annihilation of anything that is nameable. After suggesting a decay and disintegration of the body, he now seems to come up with a model of complete destruction of

bodies and entities so that, at the end, no subject is left to use the language. Since, in this model, there is no subject left that we can speak of, it seems to be impossible to practice such a model, because once İskender's ubiquitous flux is accomplished, there is no being—as we know it—any more. In İskender's horizontal flux, what is left is an endless stream of formless bodies.

One can easily argue that İskender's model is just a nihilistic vision offering nothing but a chaotic flux where nothing can be separated from each other. Such a criticism of İskender would be valid up to some extent. The misanthropy that can be observed in his texts makes such interpretations possible. However, we can also try to view İskender's imagery in a different light. It is important to ask the following questions regarding his imagery: why does İskender come up with such a model where he offers a total liquefaction of anything existing? What is it that leads İskender to such extreme models of existence?

We should seek the answers to these questions in the “anarchy of fluids” that İskender seems to advocate. Through anarchistic fluids, İskender constantly searches for ways of eliminating the solid, and the solid is a symbol around which everything related to the rational power mechanisms is united. At this point, we should once again turn to Irigaray: “what structuration of (the) language does not maintain a *complicity of long standing between rationality and a mechanics of solids[...]*” (107). This is at the core of İskender's questioning of the solid rationality, and here İskender comes very close to Bataille's stance one more time. İskender's model of horizontal flux is a way of imagining an escape from the realm of the language. In İskender's view, language should be eliminated precisely because it structures the solid rationality. Just like Bataille, İskender wants to come up with a model that can inspire ways of eliminating the mediation of language. So, this is

where we should search for the merit of İskender's writings. It is easy to label his works as pieces of non-sense offering impossible, pessimistic, misanthropic modes of being. However, once we analyze the underlying philosophy behind his model, we clearly see that İskender's model might be very useful in questioning our current relation to language, and finding ways to shatter the power structures.

A Language of Blood

The underlying theme of İskender's imagery is similar to that of Bataille in that both rely on bodily fluids in their quest of putting bodies in an alternative interaction. The dominant element of İskender's fluid communication is blood. "What is the nature of this blood which spurts from everything all of a sudden" (*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 67) asks İskender in one of his poems. In İskender's imagery, it is this "spurting blood" which traverses the distance between bodies. The circulation of blood connects different bodies to each other.

Through lacerations and wounds that they open on the body of the other, İskender's characters establish a new way of relating to the other. In other words, they enable a channel of communication. That communication, the medium of which is blood, is unique to the bodies which are connected to each other through their wounds and lacerations. Just like Bataille's characters that communicate through bodily fluids, in İskender's imagery, the bodies "understand" each other through the language of blood. That way, as in Bataille, İskender offers a model of reaching to the other which cannot be assimilated into the Symbolic order. This is a bodily communication that is unknown to the realm of culture and language.

When İskender's characters operate on each other's bodies as if on a table of surgery, they express their desire in a way that invalidates the classifications of language. Words, syntax and grammar always prove inadequate to perceive the

nature of this desire depicted by İskender. This desire is not just a sexual desire or a desire to wound/violate the other. It would also be reductionist to label this as a Sado-masochistic desire. İskender's imagery refuses to desire the other in given ways. İskender's ambition is to negate the terminology which imposes us how to desire. The categorizations of desire that are intrinsic to language are what İskender tries to avoid by offering a communicative model through blood. When language classifies the possibilities of experiencing desire, it also fixes our desire and our way of manifesting this desire. In İskender's imagination, the characters, which communicate with each other with the help of blood, break the hegemony of language on their manifestations of desire. The nature of this "bloody" desire transgresses the discursive, and in that manner, provides the body with infinite possibilities of desiring another body. In other words, the free-floating nature of desire is attained only through such a fluid communication—a "real communication" as Bataille would call it.

An Example of Fluid Communication

In order to comprehend the nature of such a communication of bodily fluids, we can, at this point, consider another medium. Cinema, as a visual medium, provides us with more possibilities than words for illustrating the alternative models that are suggested by İskender and Bataille.

We can visualize the communication that is conveyed via bodily fluids, with the help of a movie by David Cronenberg: *Naked Lunch* (1991). In this movie, adapted from William S. Burroughs' famous book *Naked Lunch*, Cronenberg makes use of many scenes which do not exist in the book. One of these scenes takes place between Bill Lee, the protagonist who is a character based on Burroughs himself, and his typewriter called Clark Nova. While Bill Lee tries to finish his novel, he writes

his sentences with the help of Clark Nova. However, Clark Nova is not just a mechanical object that helps Bill Lee to write. Bill Lee and Clark Nova have an organic relationship. After a while, Clark Nova becomes an extension of Bill Lee's organism. They connect to each other through some anatomical parts. Once the integration of Bill Lee and Clark Nova is complete, they start to establish a unique relationship. When Bill Lee writes something, Clark Nova releases a fluid through the organic channels that connect them. Their relationship is based on an exchange of strange fluids which help them "understand" each other in an exclusive way. Clark Nova does not resort to words, instead it makes use of a language that appeals to different sensory receptors of Bill Lee: Clark Nova's fluids have a particular odor, a particular tactile sense, and perhaps, a particular taste. These fluids may be slimy, stinky or aromatic. All these features help Clark Nova's fluids to create a different channel of communication. These fluids that are perceived through different sensory receptors make it possible to carry the relationship between Bill Lee and Clark Nova outside the realm of language.

This scene from Cronenberg's *Naked Lunch* is a perfect example to approach the nature of communication that Bataille and Iskender propose. Similar to the relationship between Bill Lee and Clark Nova, both of these writers draw a model where the exchanged bodily fluids appeal to different senses. They envisage a communication in which it is not only about speech and hearing, but also about touch, smell and taste. Bataille and Iskender incorporate different sensory receptors in the process of communication and these receptors enlarge the possibilities of sensations that are formed during the transactions between bodies. In this manner, they aim to eliminate the hegemony of *logos* over the field of desire and sensation.

One of İskender's poems from *Cangüncem* draws attention to this point: "he said I don't believe in the meaning of words / than his nose released a fluid, a white fluid" (14). In this example, the white fluid which replaces words is very similar to the fluid that connects Bill Lee and Clark Nova in *Naked Lunch*. İskender's distrust of words and his replacement of their function with fluids are also evident in some of his poems. For instance, in *Galileo'nun Pergeli*, İskender utters a cry for help: "from now on, it is obligatory that someone translates all that is happening to a language which we can also understand" (15). We can interpret "this new language" that İskender longs for as a bodily language. İskender clearly feels distanced from the language that is in use. That is why he talks about "a mouth that is not used for talking... a skin that is very talkative" (*Ağır Abiler Orkestrası* 132). İskender searches for a bodily language, and circulation of blood is at the basis of this bodily language: "I could not teach a single word to blood" (*Karanlıkta Herkes Biraz Zencidir* 149). He bases his model on the flow of blood, because no one can force codes of behaviour or morality to blood: "come on prove your morality to the blood that is flowing!" (*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 186), thus blood becomes an emblem of autonomy for İskender.

A bodily language, where the body can manifest its entire potential, can only be reached through a communication in which different sensory systems are included. Perhaps, İskender points at such a communication when he writes: "the butterfly that is seeking its own shape / with the animal secretion of high communication" (*Bir Çift Siyah Deri Eldiven* 57).

İskender's poems are very useful for inspiring us to find ways of breaking the limitations that are exercised on our bodily potential. His texts are full of

uncontainable energy and chaotic images, which never stop triggering the readers to question the current state of their bodies and to envisage new bodily models.

CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION

Throughout this study, my aim has been to demonstrate that both Bataille and İskender try to undercut the vertical power structures and replace the hierarchical order with a horizontal flow of formless fluids. With the help of a strategy based on “anarchy of fluids” that highlights chaotic and uncontrollable nature of fluids, they try to undermine every closed system that is part of the vertical order. The paternal law of language is their main target in their fight against the hegemonic structures since, for them, the vertical hegemony is established and perpetuated through the medium of language which is encoded according to the laws of patriarchy and heteronormativity.

In order to eliminate the vertical mediation of language, Bataille and İskender propose a horizontal communication between bodies which is based on exchange of bodily fluids. By dissolving everything that has a stable and rigidly defined form, the horizontal flow of fluids creates a sphere where bodies can interact with each other independent of the impositions of the social and cultural discourses. Within this sphere, bodily acts are not encoded according to the rules of the paternal law. Furthermore, in this horizontal sphere, inter-bodily communication is not shaped according to some historically and culturally determined conventions of sexuality, where sexuality and desire are classified and thereby controlled. The horizontal communication, as it is envisaged by Bataille and İskender, liberates the bodies and provides them with the formless quality of their desire.

In such a horizontal model, there is constant destabilization of the vertical power structures and the most significant aspect of this model is not to replace the vertical structures with new ones. According to Allan Stoekl, Bataille achieves this

state of constant destabilization: “what Bataille works out is a kind of headless allegory (...) The fall of one system is not stabilized, is not replaced with the elevation of another” (XIV). There is no desire in Bataille to construct a new hierarchy of values and alternative power mechanisms: he longs for a state of powerlessness. Accordingly, James Creech describes Bataille’s “sovereign operation”—an operation that defies the servility of the subject who is submissive to the discursive rules—as a search for “impotence” (68). In fact, in Bataille’s writings, there are several references to the state of impotence or powerlessness: “I confess my powerlessness” (*Unfinished System* 266); “a kind of impotence made him tremble” (*Impossible* 94). In *Guilty*, Bataille offers ways of eliminating power: “[i]f power remains in me, I exhaust it (...) by being elusive, by wordlessly disengaging myself from what seems to confine me” (19).

However, there have been discussions about Bataille’s use of “powerlessness” finding it problematic and controversial. Some theoreticians consider Bataille’s fiction as reflecting a “masculine sexual economy” (Suleiman, “Transgression and the Avant-Garde” 83), and yet others find his writings “phallogentric” and “sexist” (Dragon 32). Indeed, Bataille’s so-called erotic fictions contain many passages that can be interpreted as describing a phallic sexuality:

I would arouse her [Simone’s] breasts from a distance by lifting the tips on the heated barrel of a long service revolver that had been loaded and just fired (...) At the same time, she would pour a jar of dazzling white crème fraîche on Marcelle’s grey anus, and she would also urinate freely in her robe or, if the robe were ajar, on Marcelle’s back or head, while I could piss on Marcelle from the other side (I would certainly piss on her breasts). Furthermore, Marcelle herself could fully inundate me if she liked, for while I held her up, her thighs would be gripping my neck. And she could also stick my cock in her mouth, and what not. (*Story of the Eye* 33)

In the above quotation, for instance, both the revolver and the cock can easily be associated with a phallic sexuality. The way the male narrator describes the sexual

act may be argued to reflect a male gaze which objectifies the female body and dominates it through the phallus. However, there are also several elements of Bataille's fiction that defy such criticism. As Susan R. Suleiman argues, although many texts of Bataille are "inflected in masculine terms," Bataille's radical approach "bypasses the opposition between ordinary masculinity and femininity" and "undercuts the notion of phallic mastery" through his concept of "sacrifice" ("Bataille in the Street" 26-43). In Suleiman's understanding, Bataille's insistence on the sacrifice of the symbol/structure of power denotes to the sacrifice of phallus if we consider the issue in terms of gender. Suleiman talks about Bataille's endeavour to find a "third term" that can eliminate the dichotomy of masculine/feminine and the importance of phallus (26-43). In a similar way to Suleiman, Steven Shaviri states: "(...) despite Bataille's frequent sexual stereotyping and invocations of virility, his 'interior experience' does not culminate in phallic mastery" (*Passion and Excess* 37).

Murat Aydemir observes the two conflicting sides of the discussion as complementary: "[t]he Bataillean paradox, then, entails, the double movement of both rejecting and championing masculinity" (217). If we follow Aydemir's argument, this raises a question about Bataille's stance which challenges everything related to the patriarchal and heteronormative law of language: if Bataille's texts reproduce some elements of normative masculinity, how is it possible to talk about the absence of power structures in Bataille's model? If Bataille speaks with the terms of masculinity in a "masculine sexual economy," then our claim that Bataille's attitude is built on constant destabilization of the hierarchical law of language would be problematic. In other words, if Bataille reproduces masculinity in some respects, then we should withdraw our claim that Bataille does not replace any hierarchy with a new one, because normative masculinity always entails some hierarchical

structures. Thus, the issue of “powerlessness” in Bataille is an indecisive matter, and it requires further study.

If we consider the case of İskender, we can claim that his bodily fluids which connect different bodies also aspire to reach a state where the solid law is liquefied and thereby invalidated. As in the case of Bataille, İskender’s bodily fluids try to dissolve everything that is associated with the law (of language). In such a theoretical model, the ultimate aim of İskender is to reach what Özgür Taburoğlu calls “non-power” (*liyakatsizlik*)—a state where “everything that has a durable form is disintegrated and diffused in a way that nothing can be distinguished from each other, anymore”¹⁶ (“Yırtılan Plazma” 38). Through such an extreme state, İskender wishes to achieve the ultimate stage of a utopia based on “anarchy of fluids”: a world composed of nothing but the anarchistic fluids which are in constant flux. In this utopian universe, there is no place for the regimes that shape desire and control ways of interaction between bodies. In such an imaginative universe, the solid structures of the discursive regimes are absent, and therefore, the patriarchal and heteronormative norms that they impose are absent too.

İskender, as a writer who foregrounds his queer identity and champions a queer way of connecting bodies, envisages a universe of total dissolution where normative gender roles are erased. Accordingly, he writes that “in poetry there is a thin but enormous vein of androgyny” (*Cangüncem* 104). He equates the gaze of the camera with the masculine, while he identifies poetry as genderless (*İkizler Burcu Hikâyeleri* 61).

However, if we analyze İskender’s texts, we see some remnants of masculinity and virility which contradict with the ideal universe that he depicts.

¹⁶ “Şekil bulmuş her şey bir ayırmsızlık içinde etrafa dağılırarak, ‘liyakatsizlik’ evresine taşınmak istenir.”

There are many references to the erectile body which heralds a kind of male virility: “I am in a state of erection. My entire body and everything that is outside my body to complete it are in erection” (*Cangüncem* 88). These remnants of masculinity are parts of what Mehmet Yaşın criticizes in İskender. According to Yaşın, İskender reproduces the masculine and patriarchal vernacular of a Beyoğlu male underground society (38-41). When İskender depicts the rough bullies and villains of Beyoğlu, he also reproduces the inherently chauvinistic and misogynistic language of these “underground male heroes.” That way, he contradicts his own attempt of erasing the masculine codes of behaviour. This characteristic of İskender’s writing deserves a study by its own and it exceeds the limits of this current study.

In the introductory chapter of this study, I mentioned a more fundamental contradiction that exists in İskender and Bataille’s struggle to find a non-discursive communication. While they exert a fight against language, they do so through the medium of language since they construct their utopian models through *writing*. Bataille recognizes this paradoxical nature of his struggle against language as he writes in *Eroticism*: “I have cautioned you about language, I must therefore caution you at the same time against my own words” (264). Bataille is aware of the fact that the words he uses cannot be devoid of binary power mechanisms of the law of language, but he resorts to words nevertheless since he chooses to express himself through writing. In one of his texts about literature, he describes this impasse perfectly:

In fact, a writer, as averse to the discursive as he may be—to the “order of things” and to the servile language which expresses it—cannot limit himself to turning his back upon it; he is forced to express himself on the level of discourse (...) It is painful to him: he does it unwillingly, he gnashes his teeth, he manifests his impatience. (qtd. in Beaujour 169)

As Denis Hollier puts it, Bataille acknowledges “the impossibility of being cut off from words” (65); nevertheless, he continues to pursue his project of disrupting “the servile language” and his project regarding language is what Foucault describes as “what may already be a ruined project” (31). The project is already “ruined” since it is trapped in the realm of the law of language, even if it transgresses its borders from time to time. Nonetheless, Foucault gives credit to Bataille’s endeavour of fighting language within language and trying to find ways of transgressing its reign (37-38). After all, these attempts of transgression disrupt the discursive unity of the law of language and help us to reformulate some given codes of thinking and behaviour. Similarly, İskender’s effort to destruct the syntactical, grammatical and other linguistic rules should be appreciated since he constantly tries to make holes on the closed system of language. However, like Bataille, İskender is trapped in the realm of language since he represents his attack through *writing*.

At this point, the question that we should ask is: how would the subversive potential of İskender and Bataille’s struggle change, if they would choose a different medium than *writing* for expressing their utopian universe which eliminates language? This is a question that is worthy of discussion. For instance, what would happen if İskender and Bataille would have chosen to represent their communication of bodily fluids through a medium like painting?

We can consider the case of Yüksel Arslan, a painter who generates his painting material from an amalgam of soil, excrement, blood, urine and other bodily secretions (Sayın 82). Arslan turns those kinds of abjected material into his medium of expression. What he envisages is represented on canvas with the help of some bodily fluids. Such a method of expression seems to be convenient for İskender and Bataille who distrust the mediation of the discursive. However, we should also

problematize Arslan's painting style: is it sufficient to use painting material composed of bodily fluids in order to establish a direct contact with the bodily? Is Arslan's representation on canvas liberated from the realm of the discursive? How is it possible to conceptualize a style of representation that is independent of the mechanisms of language—the very mechanisms that shape our concepts and methods of conceptualizing.

We can also consider another case where the medium of expression is different from *writing*. For instance, we can think of a contemporary art performance where the artist exhibits his/her own bodily fluids. Would such a performance “guarantee” that the representation of bodily fluids belongs “genuinely” to the field of corporeality—a field into which discursivity cannot gain access? Is it possible to talk about such a field where discursivity is absent? These questions should be discussed in further detail so that we can come up with a conclusion regarding the subversive potential of the alternative communicative models suggested by İskender and Bataille. However, this does not diminish the value of their effort to imagine an alternative way of existing since it is this very effort which inspires us to pose such questions. As the following section shows, reading Bataille and İskender simultaneously can also add new dimensions and new questions to current discussions of body politics and “queer pleasures.”

New Layers of the Body: Multiplication of Points of Pleasure

In her essay in which she takes up the issue of “queer pleasure” in Bataille, Shannon Winnubst talks about the implications of Bataille's texts. According to Winnubst, the way Bataille emphasizes sexual “acts or pleasures that offer no clear or useful meaning” makes him an important name to be discussed in the frame of “queer pleasures” (90-91). As Winnubst argues, “queer pleasure de-centers us from the grip

of reproductive sexuality and its heteronormative coding of the body” (90).

Winnubst’s definition of queer is perfectly in line with Bataille’s writings: “[t]o queer may mean to be involved in acts of pleasure that offer no return to the closed economies of societal meaning that are driven by utility and the mandate of closed, concise, clear endpoints” (90). At another point, Winnubst mentions “a general economy of excessive pleasures that are gloriously useless” (85).

These analyses by Winnubst show the links between queer sexuality/pleasures and Bataille’s concept “general economy” that is built on “excess” and “uselessness.” Bataille depicts a sort of sexuality that is in response to “the purity of a historically dominant sexuality which, cleansed by social and cultural discourses, has been absorbed and rigidly defined by language” (Hollings 200). For Bataille, “the sexual act has been closely circumscribed and defined by those processes implicit in social and cultural discourse” (201) and this discursive determination of sexuality should be broken.

Similarly, İskender also tries to unleash sexuality from its constraints. In *Galileo’nun Pergeli*, he talks about “an individual’s adventure of eroticism which is controlled by the state.” This eroticism is experienced “according to the official portfolio of sexuality” which dictates how to “live, produce and reproduce” (67). İskender tries to liberate the body from this “official portfolio” which limits the possibilities of bodily acts. In order to do this, he wants to reconstruct the body and reformulate our relation to it. As Taburoğlu asserts, “İskender’s writing is an assault on the disciplines constructing the body”¹⁷ (“Yırtılan Plazma” 47). Therefore, İskender asks “what kind of a regime is controlling my body?” (*Güzel Annemin Hayal Gücü* 58). He wants to “strip off the etiquette that surrounds the body” (*İkizler*

¹⁷ “küçük İskender’in yazdıkları bedeni kuran disiplinlere karşı toplu bir saldırıdır.”

Burcu Hikâyeleri 23). This etiquette is something that is challenged by Bataille, too: “social and cultural discourses” that impose certain behaviours on the body by suppressing other possible behaviours. By eliminating this etiquette, İskender multiplies the possibilities of bodily acts. He deconstructs the established bodily encodings and offers infinite ways of reconstructing them. In this manner, he adds new layers to the body and multiplies its potential.

According to Winnubst, queering the body and its pleasures means “to live in the world transformatively, with an eye always toward how relations of bodies and pleasures can be multiplied and intensified” (90). That is exactly the point that İskender can add to the theory of Bataille: multiplication of ways of reaching to other bodies and multiplication of points of pleasure. While İskender’s bodies connect to each other in new combinations, they also redefine the way one body desires another one. Furthermore, İskender’s alternative communication is also an attempt to find new ways of demonstrating this desire. Accordingly, İskender’s characters constantly search for new openings on other bodies. They want to construct their unique way of manifesting their desire without yielding to predetermined ways of touching others. For İskender, the points of pleasure on the body cannot be fixed: “the body of my lover is a map of treasure / in every single lovemaking of ours, the location of the treasure changes” (*Sarı Şey* 46). In İskender’s model, “sexuality covers the entire body” (*Galileo’nun Pergeli* 68) and erogenous zones are disseminated all over the body.

İskender’s works always revolve around the following set of questions regarding sexuality/desire and its manifestation through bodily structures: how do we gain the knowledge of which bodily fluids are to be kept within our bodily contours and which of them are to be disseminated? How do we determine the particular

bodily fluids with which we can enter other bodily openings? How do we learn to get pleasure from some of our bodily openings and not from the others? How do we know the specific bodily parts that should contact each other and how do we learn to exclude other possible contacts? How do we learn to get pleasure from some of these contacts and not from the others? How do we decide that some contacts are sexual, whereas others are not? How do we decide that some zones of the body are erogenous, whereas others are not?

This permanent questioning of bodily transactions is the main point that makes İskender's works significant for discussions of queer sexuality. This is also the main point where we can discern İskender's "queer identity." İskender's queer identity is not only evident in the autobiographical elements that he puts in his works, but also in these kinds of inquisitions that he pursues in almost every text he writes.

In *Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası*, İskender writes: "(...) I ask you / where is the door of the human body / to enter it, to exit it, to lock it" (75). For him, no one can limit the manifestation of desire to particular holes—or "doors"—on the body. Only by liberating the body and giving it back its infinite possibilities we can unleash a desire that speaks with a bodily language. This bodily language can create a new map of sensations and feelings that we cannot represent through language, and this new map of sensations and feelings may form alternative models to the established ones.

A simultaneous analysis of the imageries of Bataille and İskender leads us to search for possibilities of new bodily schemas, new models of communication, and new ways of demonstrating our desire. That is why such an analysis is connected in many respects with contemporary theories of body politics. The struggle of Bataille and İskender with the mechanisms of language is another point that makes

these writers significant for body politics. Their texts can trigger many questions regarding our corporeality and its relation to the realm of language. Therefore, scrutinizing their texts can contribute a great deal to current discussions of body politics.

APPENDIX

The original texts of Küçük İskender quoted in the main text (in the order they appear in the text). All translations in the main text belong to me.

In Chapter III:

3.1 “okyanuslara Baudelaire’den bir sidik damlası düştü”

(*Siyah Beyaz Denizatları* 214).

Trans.: There was a drop of urine that has leaked from Baudelaire to the oceans.

3.2 “Aramızda kaç Oscar Wilde, Jean Genet, Henry Miller dolaşabiliyor ki?!”

(*Galileo’nun Pergeli* 68)

Trans.: “how many of us can live up to Oscar Wilde, Jean Genet or Henry Miller?!”

3.3 “Medeniyet kalmadı akışkanlığımda.” (*Ağır Abiler Orkestrası* 66)

Trans.: There is no civilization left in my fluidity.

3.4 “yazılan şiir, (...) iğrendirir, tiksindirir, bunaltır, şaşırtır. (...) yaralar, kanatır.”

(*Cangüncem* 70) Trans.: this poetry that written is repulsive, disgusting; it exhausts you, it puzzles you. (...) it wounds you, it makes you bleed.

3.5 “şiirseller, hayaller, görüntüler (...) deneysel değinmeler ve heyezanlar...”

(*Cangüncem* 7) Trans.: poetical ones, daydreams, visions (...) experimental digressions and delusions...

3.6 “Parçalara ayrılarak okunması, daha doğru. Çünkü parçalar, bir yapı oluşturmuyor; farklı bütünlerden farklı algı yollarıyla çıkartılarak biraraya getirilmiş ve buraya konmuşlardır.” (*Hasta Hayat Depoları* 9) Trans.: It would be better to read [this book] in fragments since these fragments do not make up a single structure. Here, they are put together by extracting them from different wholes by the way of different perceptions.

3.7 “Bir kalıba, bir şablona, bir cetvele yakışmayan, yatağında değil de önüne çıkan arazide akmayı seven nehirlerle benzetmek önemli. Bu nehir, vahşi bir nehirdir ve yakıp yıktığı herşeyi suyuna katıp sürükler.” (*Hasta Hayat Depoları* 71)

Trans.: It is important to be like the rivers which do not fit to any pattern or template. To be like rivers which prefer to flow in open land instead of their river beds. That river is a violent river, and on its way, it drags everything with itself.

3.8 “Kırle Samimiyim.” (*Ağır Abiler Orkestrası* 79)

Trans.: I am intimate with the filth.

3.9 “Beden eskimez; kirdir o.” (*Galileo'nun Pergeli* 27)

Trans.: the body is the filth; it does never get old.

3.10 “Cerahat Bahçesi” (*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 122)

Trans.: the garden of pus

3.11 “kanla süslen, lenfle boyan, dışkıya bürün” (*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 171)

Trans.: adorn yourself with blood, paint yourself with lymph, dress yourself with excrement

3.12 “Boşalt içini, içini dışarıya, sokaklara boşalt. (*Ağır Abiler Orkestrası* 152)

Trans.: Discharge your interior. Discharge it outside, to the streets.

3.13 “kanamakla meşgulüm” (*Cangüncem* 137)

Trans.: [he is] busy bleeding

3.14 “ağır kanlı sperm damlaları (*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 228)

Trans.: the drops of semen mixed with heavy blood

3.15 “kan ve üre dansı” (*İskender'i ben Öldürmedim* 137)

Trans.: a dance of blood and urine

3.16 “Canlı kalmanın ne önemi olabilirdi ki dolaşırken mezarlıkta!” (*Gözyaşlarım Nal Sesleri* 31) Trans.: What is the importance of staying alive if you are wandering in the graveyard!

3.17 “Biz, çürüdüğümüzün belgesini yazarak bırakmaktan yana tavır koyduk...” (*Hasta Hayat Depoları* 10) Trans.: We have chosen to leave the proof of our putrefaction by writing...

3.18 “içim dışım leş! / içim dışım leş!” (*Gözyaşlarım Nal Sesleri* 29)

Trans.: I am putrefaction, inside and outside! / I am putrefaction, inside and outside!

3.19 “bu bıçaklar sinsî gövdeme biliyorum hırçın kapılar açacak!” (*Karanlıkta Herkes Zencidir* 22) Trans.: These knives will open vicious doors on my insidious body, I know!

3.20 “adsız bırakılmış bir rengi arar cerrah, hastanın vücudunda bir elinde neşter...”
(*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 249) Trans.: [a] surgeon who searches for the unnamed
color within the body of the diseased, with a scalpel in his hands...

3.21 “her yeri keserim, herkesi, herşeyi keserim / bıçağımı taşıyan elde kader çizgim
de gizli!” (*Karanlıkta Herkes Biraz Zencidir* 72). Trans.: I cut every place, everyone,
everything / the fate line is hidden in the hand that carries the knife!

3.22 “Burada hepsi hijyenik ve itaatkâr” (*Ölü Evinde Seks Partisi* 56)
Trans.: Here, all of them are hygienical and obedient.

3.23 “bu tümörü dev bir organizasyon olarak sırtlanmak” (*Cangüncem* 21)
Trans.: Taking the responsibility of a giant organization based on the tumor.

3.24 “cüzam yayılıyor.” (*Cangüncem* 76)
Trans.: leprosy is spreading out.

3.25 “ardımızda kronik hasta konvoyları / yazarı saralı / anlamı cüzam / bir
toplukıyım o” (*Siyah Beyaz Denizatları* 31) Trans.: behind us are the convoys of the
chronically diseased / the writer is epileptic / the meaning is leprous / it’s a massacre

3.26 “ona değerek bir sel başlatıyorum (...) selde ben de bedensiz bir damlayım”
(*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 232) Trans.: by touching him I start a flood (...) / in the
flood, I am a bodiless drop, too

3.27 “Ben sana doğru sızıyorum...” (*Karanlıkta Herkes Biraz Zencidir* 97)
Trans.: I am leaking towards you...

3.28 “Her insandan bir başka insanın kanı sızıyor.” (*Zatülcenp* 15)
Trans.: From every human being leaks the blood of another human being.

3.29 “nedir bu durup dururken her yerimizden fişkırın kan” (*Lezzetli Tümörler
Lokantası* 67)
Trans.: What is the nature of this blood which spurts from everything all of a sudden

3.30 “kelimelerin anlamlarına inanmıyorum dedi. burnu aktı. burnu bembeyaz aktı.”
(*Cangüncem* 14) Trans.: he said I don’t believe in the meaning of words. than his
nose released a fluid. a white fluid.

3.31 “Birinin tüm olup bitenleri bizim de anlayabileceğimiz bir lisana çevirmesi artık şart.” (*Galileo'nun Pergeli* 15) Trans.: From now on, it is obligatory that someone translates all that is happening to a language which we can also understand.

3.32 “Konuşmak için kullanılmayan bir ağız... çok konuşkan ten.” (*Ağır Abiler Orkestrası* 132) Trans.: A mouth that is not used for talking... a skin that is very talkative.

3.33 “kana tek kelime öğretemedim” (*Karanlıkta Herkes Biraz Zencidir* 149) Trans.: I could not teach a single word to blood

3.34 “haydi kanıtlayın ahlakı akan kana!” (*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 186) Trans.: come on prove your morality to the blood that is flowing!

3.35 “Kendi biçimini arayan kelebek / yüksek iletişimin hayvani salgısıyla” (*Bir Çift Siyah Deri Eldiven* 57) Trans.: The butterfly that is seeking its own shape / with the animal secretion of high communication

In Conclusion:

4.1 “in poetry there is a thin but enormous vein of androgyny” (*Cangüncem* 104) Trans.: şiirin içinde ince, irice bir androjen damarın dolaştığını biliyorum.

4.2 “cinsiyetsizlik” (*İkizler Burcu Hikâyeleri* 61) Trans.: genderlessness

4.3 “ereksiyon halindeyim. tüm vücudum, vücudumun dışında olup da vücudumu tamamlayan herşey ereksiyon halinde.” (*Cangüncem* 88) Trans.: I am in a state of erection. My entire body and everything that is outside my body to complete it are in erection.

4.4 “Bireyin erotizm macerası devletçe denetlenmeye başlar böylece. Hatta, resmi bir cinsel portföy şemsiyesi altında yaşanır, ürenir, üretilir.” (*Galileo'nun Pergeli* 67) Trans.: [he talks about] an individual's adventure of eroticism which is controlled by the state. [This eroticism is experienced] “according to the official portfolio of sexuality” which dictates how to “live, produce and reproduce.”

4.5 “nasıl bir yönetim şekliydi bedenim” (*Güzel Annemin Hayal Gücü* 58)

Trans.: what kind of a regime is controlling my body?

4.6 “gövdemi kuşatan etiket sıyrılıp düşüyor.” (*İkizler Burcu Hikâyeleri* 23)

Trans.: [to] strip off the etiquette that surrounds the body

4.7 “Sevgilimin gövdesi bir define haritası / Her sevişmemizde değişiyor hazinenin yeri” (*Sarı Şey* 46) Trans.: The body of my lover is a map of treasure / in every single lovemaking of ours, the location of the treasure changes

4.8 “Cinsellik tüm bedeni kaplar.” (*Galileo'nun Pergeli* 68)

Trans.: Sexuality covers the entire body.

4.9 “(...) sorarım / insan bedeninin kapısı nerede / girilsin diye, çıkılsın diye, kitlensin diye (*Lezzetli Tümörler Lokantası* 75) Trans.: (...) I ask you / where is the door of the human body / to enter it, to exit it, to lock it

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