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The Female Construction of the Self in **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** and **White Teeth**

Oranges are not the Only Fruit ve **White Teeth** Romanlarında Benliğin Kadınsal Yapılandırılması

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ÖZ

Bu tezin amacı, kadına erkek egemen toplum tarafından dayatılan toplumsal kimlik rollerinin kadının benlik algısını sınırlandırdığını göstermek ve kadının erkek egemen toplum baskısı karşısında kendi benlik algısını kurma mücadelesini sunmaktır. Feminist perspektif yardımıyla yapılan analizler Jeanette Winterson'ın **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** ve Zadie Smith'in **White Teeth** romanlarında yer alan iki ana kadın karakterin deneyimlerini esas almaktadır. **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** romanında Jeanette benlik algısını cinsel tercihi üzerinden özgün(r)leştirirken, **White Teeth** romanında Irie ırksal kimliği ve kadın kimliğini çözümleyerek kişisel benliğini yeniden yapılandırır.

The Female Construction of the Self

in **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** and **White Teeth**

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Tuğçe Alkış

ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation is to show that the gender roles imposed by male-dominated society restrict woman's sense of self and, to present the woman's struggle to construct her sense of self against the pressure of patriarchal society. The analyses made with the help of feminist perspective are based on the experiences of the two female protagonists who appear in Jeanette Winterson's **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** and Zadie Smith's **White Teeth**. While Jeanette, in **Oranges are not the Only Fruit,** individuates/liberates her sense of self through her sexual preference, Irie, in **White Teeth**, reconstructs her personal self by analysing her racial and female identity.

PREFACE

This thesis consists of analysis of **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** by Jeanette Winterson and **White Teeth** by Zadie Smith. It mainly focuses on the two female protagonists', Jeanette's and Irie's struggles and experiences. Their experiences are analysed with regard to feminist perspective. Female construction represents the feminist perspective to undermine patriarchal dominance and oppression.

This thesis consists of three chapters. Chapter 1 outlines the subjects like binary system, traditional gender roles, patriarchal dominance and the female body. All these subjects are deeply analysed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 in the contexts of the two novels respectively. Chapter 2 deals with Jeanette's struggle to construct her sense of self mainly through a liberation of sexual choice. Chapter 3 focuses on Irie's effort to gain her self-interpretation in a conjunction of racial and gender struggles.

This thesis is also a journey for me in which I sometimes feel refreshed and sometimes depressed. It is a way for me to explore my voice and writing. First, I want to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Assist. Prof. Ferah İncesu for her guidance and patience throughout this study. My road to complete this thesis is mainly paved with Assist. Prof. Ferah İncesu's support, encouragement and patience with me in this challenging process. I would like to extend my thanks to every member of the English Language and Literature Department at Istanbul University where I had the pleasure to be a research assistant temporarily. I am also grateful to my beloved family: my mother Hülya Alkış, my father Refik Alkış, my sister Buse and my brother Yusuf. Lastly, I would like to thank my dear friends Burcu Öztürk, Şeyma Tekintaş, Ömer Şahin Özdemir, Mehtap Akpınar, Gonca Karaca and Merve Bekiryazıcı.

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INTRODUCTION

"Write, dream, enjoy, be dreamed, enjoyed, written,"[1] Cixous uttered. Winterson and Smith "write, dream, enjoy"[2] and we enter their "dreamed, enjoyed, written"[3] worlds to create our writing, dreams and enjoyment about their novels. It is both difficult and joyful to enter the writers' dreamy world and interweave our dreams with their dreams and their words with our words. This thesis enters Jeanette Winterson's and Zadie Smith's fictional worlds with female protagonists.

In **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** (1983) by Jeanette Winterson**,** the fiction mainly focuses on the female protagonist, Jeanette. **White Teeth** (2000) by Zadie Smith presents several protagonists but this thesis will mainly deal with a young second-generation immigrant, Irie whose mother is Jamaican and father is English. Jeanette and Irie not only represent the burden of their gender but also they experience double discrimination because of their differences. Jeanette's sexual orientation as lesbian and Irie's racial difference as black push them out of society. This thesis portrays their developing sense of self against socially-dictated identity and traditional gender roles which ignore their choices and differences.

Both contemporary novels open a way to search for the masculine dominance on woman and woman's sense of self. The aim of the thesis is not to define what the self is or what the woman is. However, this thesis uses the phrases like sense of self, herself and her own self to emphasize woman's own expression and interpretation against imposed and preordained roles and identity. Therefore, female construction of the self represents woman's own choices, desires and decisions. Female protagonists actually try to rescue their perceptions about themselves from the patriarchal definitions which entrap woman into singular and stable self and identity. Woman defends herself against patriarchal dictations and assumptions by constructing her own interpretation. Woman's redefinition of herself does not mean the isolation from the social interaction and its effects on the sense of self. Rather, she struggles to subvert misguided perspective about herself due to the

[1]Hélène Cixous, "Coming to Writing," **Coming to Writing and Other Essays**, Ed. by Deborah Jenson, Trans. by Sarah Cornell, Deborah Jenson, Ann Liddle, Susan Sellers, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991, p. 56.
[2] **Ibid.**
[3] **Ibid.**

patriarchal prescriptions. Female construction of the self symbolizes the undermining of patriarchal suppression, oppression, and ultimate dominance on woman. It is an exploration of woman's voice, her body, and her changing self. It is a subversion of the masculine ideology as the absolute truth. Both Winterson and Smith present their protagonists' manipulated and then reconstructed perspectives about themselves. While Jeanette's mother and the church sabotage Jeanette's point of view, Irie limits her perception to European beauty standards and to her love, Millat's indifference to her. Jeanette's mother or Millat is the mirror of patriarchal dominance that makes woman reflect herself through male dictations and prescriptions. Therefore, Jeanette's and Irie's path to sound their voice is shaped not by the isolation from their own interpretations but by the realization of their choices and decisions. Both Winterson and Smith emphasize the importance of our experiences to construct our sense of self. Thus, Jeanette's and Irie's story is a discovery of their experiences and the reconstruction of themselves.

This thesis aims to show how patriarchal ideology limits woman's sense of self to a monolithic perspective so that woman identifies herself with socially-dictated gender roles. Moreover, it depicts female protagonists' struggle to challenge these roles, assumptions and labels dictated to their sense of self. It presents that woman's sense of self is imprisoned into the dictations and prescriptions of patriarchy that uses its own dynamics such as binary opposition and gender roles to impose its authority. It also shows that woman can go beyond the socially-dictated identity when she reformulates her sense of self through her choices and interpretation.

Patriarchal constitutions like binary oppositions, traditional gender roles, and bodily inscriptions on the female to standardize woman into male ideology are criticised with regard to feminist perspective. All these patriarchal assumptions are the major subjects of **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** and **White Teeth** and they are deeply discussed in the following chapters. Feminist perspective is not held as a one-dimensional theory in this thesis or the subjects are not discussed just from a sole perspective. This thesis is not an application of feminist perspective as a whole. Instead, it picks up the points that are related to the subjects analysed in the two novels and uses feminist perspective to enlighten the subjects with regard to the

female construction of the self. Feminist approach is also so diverse that this thesis can only take significant features of it to discuss its subjects. Tolan states that: "Indeed, feminism can no longer be accurately described as a theory—implying a single and coherent trajectory of thought. Rather, feminism should be understood as a discourse: a discussion of multiple related ideas."[4] When we talk about feminism today, we cannot classify it as a one-dimensional theory that focuses on stable and fixed thoughts and interpretations. Instead, feminism today—with the influence of postmodernism—embodies multiple thoughts and different viewpoints. Both Winterson and Smith criticise one-dimensional perspective that ignores the multiple and different points of view. Their novels gather different perspectives together and open ways for the reader to insert his/her interpretation. Jeanette and Irie are very different from each other. It can be considered that it is a handicap to talk about two different experiences: one of them focuses on sexual orientation and the other centres on racial difference. However, Jeanette's and Irie's different experiences contribute to talk about multiple perspectives and to show that woman has different choices, problems and decisions rather than being restricted into preordained definitions. Therefore, feminism is a shelter for Jeanette's and Irie's experiences to defend their differences against patriarchal oppression and dominance.

Feminism appears as a collage of different perspectives in this thesis. Rupp and Taylor state that: "[D]efining feminism in the twentieth century (and presumably the twenty-first as well) both avoids a static notion of identity and sheds light on how feminists with conflicting interests and ideas are able to talk across their differences."[5] Different kinds of feminist approaches can either contribute to the similar issues or they can contradict to each other based on their own features. This thesis considers feminism as a cocktail to benefit from the contributing features of some theories like postmodernism. Waugh asserts that: "[F]eminism is free to take a strategic stance on postmodernism, selecting those aspects which might be useful to a

[4] Fiona Tolan, "Feminisms," **Literary Theory and Criticism: An Oxford Guide**, Ed. by Patricia Waugh, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 319.
[5] Leila J. Rupp, Verta Taylor, "Forging Feminist Identity in an International Movement: A Collective Identity Approach to Twentieth-Century Feminism," **Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society**, Vol. 24, No. 2, Winter 1999, p. 366.

particular goal at a particular time."[6] Feminism today is a junction of different approaches so it is too diverse to be restricted into a single entity. Jackson and Jones state that:

> [W]hile feminists may share some common assumptions, these do not necessarily lead us to think in the same ways about these shared concerns. There are many strands of feminist thinking and numerous areas of contention and debate within feminism. … Feminist theory has now grown into a vast field. In the 1970s it was still possible for each one of us to keep track of feminist thought as a whole, … Given that it is now so difficult for a single person to have an in-depth knowledge of the whole of feminist theory …[7].

Different kinds of thoughts in feminism put forward new questions and thoughts to be discussed. **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** and **White Teeth** present several subjects, like patriarchal oppression and gender roles, open to discussion and interpretation. While Jeanette and Irie search for their sense of self, we engage with multiple perspectives to discover their experiences. The two novels don't give a single answer to our questions. Rather, we are forced to renew our perception to interpret the subjects differently. Feminism helps us to discuss and interpret the subjects in the novels in a multiple ways. Hutcheon remarks that: "[F]eminism is a 'problematic,' a complex, heterogeneous set of interrelated questions and concerns-with no one single answer."[8] This description makes clear that feminism can no longer talk about women as a stable group to have same characteristics, experiences and struggles. Jackson and Jones state that:

> [F]eminist theory itself becoming more diverse and more inclined to focus on the particular, rather than attempting to capture the generality of women's situation. The recognition of differences among women has become a central theoretical issue in its own right. … [W]omen

[6] Patricia Waugh, "Postmodernism and Feminism," **Contemporary Feminist Theories**, Ed. by Stevi Jackson and Jackie Jones, Edinburgh University Press, 1998, p. 182.
[7] Stevi Jackson, Jackie Jones, "Thinking Ourselves: An Introduction to Feminist Theorising," **Contemporary Feminist Theories**, Ed. by Stevi Jackson and Jackie Jones, Edinburgh University Press, 1998, p. 2.
[8] Linda Hutcheon, "Feminism and Postmodernism," **Donna: Women in Italian Culture**, Ed. by Ada Testaferri, Ottawa: Dovehouse Editions, 1989, p. 26.

> can no longer be thought of as a homogenous group sharing … a common identity. This is not to say that there are not commonalities among us as well as differences. … [W]omen's lived experience is diverse; ... Feminist theory, cannot, therefore, be totalising; it cannot explain the world for all women, at all times, in all places. It has moved away from universalising statements towards the local and particular. It might now be better characterised as a *process* of theorising rather than as a privileged body of knowledge.[9]

Masculine ideology encapsulates woman into a stable and unified group that has same experiences and same interpretations, and destines her into fixed gender roles and sense of self. But one woman's experience cannot be the total reference to another woman's life. Jeanette and Irie have different experiences although they share similarities towards the constitutions of patriarchy. Although they are under the attack of "same structure of [patriarchal] oppression",[10] they have different characteristics, different choices and interpretations about themselves. It is wrong to categorize woman as having a fixed identity and stereotyped roles or to marginalize her because of her differences. Both of the characters are marginalized because of their differences in the novels. Woman suffers from discrimination as becoming the other in patriarchal society. Jeanette's and Irie's sense of self is restricted into sexual preference or racial heritage as gendered bodies. Chenoy states that: "Feminists have deconstructed the notion of difference as essentially oppositional and threatening, and instead have shown difference as part of diversity and existence."[11] Woman cannot have universally-generalized identity. Instead, her differences and her multiplicity enable her to subvert stable sense of self.

Feminism mostly criticizes that masculine ideology manifests its dictations as an absolute truth in oppressive and restricting ways. Jeanette and Irie mostly suffer from these dictations. Female construction of the self for Jeanette and Irie is to prevent generalized gender roles and standards which paralyse their choices and decisions. Ebert states that:

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[9] Stevi Jackson, Jackie Jones, **op. cit.,** p. 6, 8-9.
[10] Teresa L. Ebert, "The 'Difference' of Postmodern Feminism," **College English**, Vol. 53, No. 8, December 1991, p. 901, (Online) http://www.jstor.org/stable/377692 31 May 2014.
[11] Anuradha M. Chenoy, "Identity Politics and Feminist Praxis," **Peace Prints: South Asian Journal of Peacebuilding,** No. 3, Vol. 2, Winter 2010, p. 11.

> Feminism rewrites not only our knowledge of but also our construction of society by inscribing gender in social relations-that is, by articulating the gender differences patriarchy requires but naturalizes "as the way things are," and conceals in the illusion of universality. Feminism exposes the fraud of the inclusivity, justice, and universalism of patriarchal categories-such as "man" and "human nature"-showing how these mask the power relations, exclusions, and exploitation inscribed in them … Patriarchy works through a double move that, on one hand, asserts and depends on binary oppositions of gender differences but, on the other hand, naturalizes these necessary differences as biological and thus the inevitable effect of "nature," thereby making them "unnoticeable" and not in need of change. … we can conceptualize feminism as a dynamic ensemble of contesting re-writings not only of patriarchy but of different feminisms in order to develop more effective practices for transforming patriarchal social relations.[12]

Patriarchy imposes its illusion as a reality in all the social and cultural areas. Binary oppositions are one of the most important weapons for patriarchy to dictate its superiority. The role of feminism is to blur the distinction between the opposites and to challenge the universalized conception of gendered self as preordained and ultimate reality. Jeanette is forced to accept heterosexuality as compulsory while Irie is imprisoned into the idea of whiteness as superior. Their gender roles are indicated according to this dualistic perspective. Irie tries to standardize her physical appearance into white beauty norms while Jeanette is ordered to follow her mother's fanatic religious road against her sexual preference. Both Jeanette and Irie actually attack the patriarchal dichotomies because Irie is an embodiment of the hybrid body, she has both superior/England and inferior/Jamaican characteristics, and Jeanette's sexual preference rejects the clear-cut distinction between man and woman. They can go beyond the oppression of patriarchal binary system when they rescue themselves from ready-made standardization of gender roles by realizing their desires and choices. Patriarchy creates the binary between gender roles and regulates gender roles as natural and biological reality. Feminism attacks the stability of masculine ideology basing all the constructions on fixed dictations and assumptions. Waugh states that: "Postmodern hybridity, ... [and] fragmentation may seem to offer an escape route from biological, social and cosmic determinism."[13] Both feminism and

[12] Ebert, **op. cit.,** p. 888.
[13] Waugh, **op. cit.**, p. 188.

postmodernism reject binary system, stability, and absolutism. In this sense, feminism associates with postmodern thought. However, it does not mean that feminism bases all its structure on postmodernism. For feminism it is a strategy contributing to the "collapse of all those foundations of modern thought which seems to guarantee a reasonably stable sense of Truth, Knowledge, Self and Value."[14] Hutcheon points out that:

> Postmodern thought has challenged our liberal humanist notions of Man-that essentialized, idealized eternal creature-by forcing us to think about the gender of that so-called "universal" humanity. What feminism has done is argue that the predominant, traditional verbal and visual representations of women in our culture are not reflections or presentations of a biologically-given "female or feminine nature"-that is, natural and therefore unchangeable.[15]

Postmodernism and feminism undermine idealized manhood and unchallengeable truth of masculine ideology. Idealized manhood not only oppresses woman but also this ideology forces man to adapt himself to the assumptions of his gender. Front states that: "... also men can profit from the feminist revolution being given the liberty from the burden of gender."[16] Winterson focuses on the female world but Jeanette's father stands as a failure for the stereotypical manhood. He is much more passive than Jeanette's mother and Jeanette's mother is busy with financial issues of home. His passiveness causes him to be disregarded by Jeanette who is overwhelmingly directed by her mother's thoughts. That is to say, man is also under the danger of being outside the society if he lacks the assumptions of his gender. In **White Teeth**, Smith portrays man in a race to prove his manhood. Irie's father, Archie is regarded as an unremarkable man because of lacking stereotypical Englishman identity. Archie's best friend Samad as an immigrant continuously feels the burden of his gender to perform manly acts like being authoritative. Although

[14] **Ibid.,** p. 178.
[15] Hutcheon, **op. cit.,** p. 26.
[16] Sonia Front, **Literary and Cultural Theory, Volume 31: Transgressing Boundaries in Jeanette Winterson's Fiction,** Frankfurt am Main, DEU, Peter Lang AG, 12/2009, p. 202, (Online) http://site.ebrary.com/id/10601228?

this thesis focuses on traditional gender assumptions restricting woman into a stable identity, Winterson's and Smith's novels imply that gender roles can also trap man into a limited area. However, a man uses his illusionary superiority and the dynamics like binary system to dominate woman and label her as inferior. Feminism not only questions the woman issues but also criticises ready-made assumptions and dictations. The sceptic way of postmodernism contributes to questioning established assumptions and dictations of patriarchy for feminism. Waugh points out that:

> [F]eminism has, to some extent, always been 'postmodern'. Feminists have shown how Enlightenment discourses universalise white, Western, middle-class male experience and have thus exposed the buried strategies of domination implicit in the ideal of objective knowledge. Feminists as well as postmodernists have long recognised the need for a new ethics responsive to ... changes and shifts in the understanding between the relations of power and knowledge.[17]

Patriarchy represents itself as the embodiment of authority and culture with its absolutism on binary system and gender roles. However, we live in an unstable and changing world. Rigidity and absolutism of masculine ideology can no longer stand as a response to the issues of the contemporary world. Razia Aziz states that:

> Post-modernism is *deconstructive*: ... It proposes that the selves we think are fixed and unitary are actually unstable, fragmented ... It can thus potentially help us to look at changes and tensions (such as that of oppressor/oppressed) in who we understand ourselves as being. Such a perspective can save identity from 'mummifying' by challenging us self-consciously to deconstruct our [stable sense of self].[18]

Feminism uses deconstruction to rescue woman from the dictated roles and stable sense of self. If woman realizes that she is already castrated in obedience to masculine ideology and she is not the woman that patriarchy describes passive and inferior, she can "break up the 'truth' with laughter";[19] with her own interpretation of

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[17] Waugh, **op. cit.,** p. 179.

[18]Razia Aziz, "Feminism and the challenge of racism Deviance or difference?" **Black British Feminism: A Reader**, Ed. by Heidi Safia Mirza, London, Routledge, 1997, p. 76.

[19] Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of Medusa, **Signs**, Vol. 1, No. 4, Trans. by Keith Cohen, Paula Cohen, The University of Chicago Press, Summer 1976, p. 888.

self. Jeanette's and Irie's realization of their own perspectives on the self is a victory against patriarchal dictations and assumptions. Their struggle to reconstruct their sense of self indicates that masculine ideology can actually be challenged by the revolutionary interpretations going beyond one-dimensional perspective. Butler states that: "[T]he paternal law ought to be understood not as deterministic divine will, but as a perpetual bumbler, preparing the ground for the insurrections against him."[20] Female construction is the realization of patriarchal insecurities. Patriarchy manipulates woman with rigid and fixed sense of self to prevent her from realizing its constitutions as illusionary and changeable.

Oranges are not the Only Fruit and **White Teeth** demonstrate the patriarchal illusion to create dominance on woman's sense of self. Both Winterson and Smith point out that woman should celebrate her differences instead of being marginalized by them. Woman cannot be imprisoned into her gendered and racial body. Waugh states: "Gender, like class, or race, or ethnicity, can no longer be regarded as ... a stable category, nor can it be used to explain the practises of human societies as a whole."[21] Both Jeanette and Irie object to categorizations and labels which scorn their differences and choices. Feminism is a way to show their struggle against the gendered assumptions, dictations and categorizations.

This thesis uses a feminist perspective mostly in postmodern sense to emphasize the contemporary subjects of the novels which are analysed in the following chapters. Chapter 1 stands as an overview of the subjects which are discussed in detail in Chapter 2 and 3. Chapter 1 follows the feminist perspective to subvert the patriarchal constitutions and reconstruct woman's sense of self. The issues such as binary opposition, gender, and body are dealt with regard to the feminist perspective in Chapter 1. All these issues are analysed in contexts of **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** and **White Teeth** in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. Chapter 2 portrays Jeanette's struggle to reconstruct her sense of self and sexual preference against patriarchal institutions, traditional gender roles, male ideology labelling woman as a stable entity. Chapter 3 depicts Irie's road to redefine herself and her body rather than being the victim of European beauty standards. While this

[20] Judith Butler, **Gender Trouble,** New York, Routledge, 1999, p. 38.
[21] Waugh, **op. cit.,** p. 185.

chapter shows Irie's developing sense of self, it is also a criticism of masculine ideology, conventional gendered identity and dualism of patriarchy.

In conclusion **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** and **White Teeth** disclose the girls' search for individualistic identity and fulfilment within antagonistic masculine system. In their struggle and quest, means of dominance and oppression of masculine ideology such as so-called universal oppositions, gender, race and body also become the girl protagonists' vehicles to carry themselves out of and within the opponent system.

1. Female Construction against Patriarchal Dominance

What defines woman's sense of self or identity: her differences and her choices, or the repetitions of preordained roles and labels? Does she have to construct her sense of self through a stereotyped stable entity? What is the woman's destiny if she doesn't fit into the traditional gendered identity with her race or sexual orientation? Can woman liberate herself from social dictations and manipulations of patriarchy by her own interpretations and choices? Jeanette Winterson's **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** and Zadie Smith's **White Teeth** give a chance to search for these kinds of questions. The female protagonists of these novels, Jeanette and Irie stand outside the mainstream. While Jeanette, in **Oranges are not the Only Fruit**, is marginalized due to her sexual preference, Irie, in **White Teeth**, is discriminated as a black woman. The monolithic perspective of patriarchy manipulates the differences like racial and sexual as abject and marginal, and puts woman into the submission of gendered assumptions and stereotyped inferiority. Tolan recalls Kristeva that:

> Kristeva argued that Western philosophy is founded on the repression of difference: anything that deviates from the prescribed norm is labelled criminality, perversion, or madness, and is prohibited. Thus, in language, female difference was suppressed until only the male 'norm' remained as the sole voice.[1]

Woman is diminished into muted and frozen self-expression. Namely, woman interprets her sense of self from the overwhelming one-dimensional perspective constructed by the phallocentric discourse as long as she cannot individuate herself from terrorizing dictations.

Female construction of the self symbolizes woman's resistance to masculine conventions and woman's own challenge to stable hegemonic ideology. This construction does not represent the stable and fixed sense of self. Instead, it is continuously renewed and reconstructed. It is a way to wake up from the illusion of monolithic sense of self. It is not a reaction to the social interaction to construct one's

[1] Fiona Tolan, "Feminisms," **Literary Theory and Criticism: An Oxford Guide**, Ed. by Patricia Waugh, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 335.

self but it is a criticism of the sense of unified self fabricated by patriarchy to control and stereotype woman into a static identity. Cixous states that:

> [T]here is, at this time, no general woman, no typical woman. ... What strikes me is the infinite richness of their individual constitutions. ... The woman arriving over and over again does not stand still; she is everywhere, she exchanges ... (... [not] under the illusion of unitary fusion. ...).[2]

Cixous rejects one-dimensional perspective of patriarchy about woman. Woman is the embodiment of differences to celebrate. Her changing situations and her differences constitute her sense of self.

However, patriarchy regards woman's changing situations as irrational and insecure, causes of inferiority. In the dichotomy between "sun/moon"[3], woman is associated with the moon because of its changing presence and its so-called relation with the menstrual cycle while the sun is associated with man because of being always there with its power, centrality and the orbital control of the moon. The female connection to fluids, akin to water, another metaphor and element of change, again points woman out as an unreliable being. Patriarchy restricts woman's experience of change into biological classification and bodily inscriptions like menstruation and birth. Margrit Shildrick and Janet Price state that:

> The effect for women has been highly deleterious, for in terms of [the] historical oppression and disempowerment, a series of justificatory strategies are founded in the linking of the feminine to body that is curiously and uniquely unreliable, most evidently in the female reproductive processes. The very fact that women are able in general to menstruate, to develop another body unseen within their own, to give birth, and to lactate is enough to suggest a potentially dangerous volatility that marks the female body as out of control, beyond, and set against, the force of reason. In contrast to the apparent ordered self-containment of the male body, which may then be safely taken for granted and put out of mind, the female body demand attention and invites regulation. The age-old relation of between hysteria and the womb (called *hystera* in Greek) is just one example of how femininity itself becomes marked by the notion of an inevitable irrationality. ... Thus women themselves are, in the conventional masculinist imagination, not

[2] Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of Medusa," **Signs**, Vol. 1, No. 4, Trans. by Keith Cohen, Paula Cohen, The University of Chicago Press, Summer 1976, p. 876, 893.
[3] Hélène Cixous, "Sorties: Out and Out: Attacks/Ways Out/Forays," **The Newly Born Woman,** Trans. by Betsy Wing, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986, p. 64.

> simple inferior beings whose civil and social subordination is both inevitable and justified, but objects of fear and repulsion.[4]

While masculine ideology negates the changes on the female body, it privileges male body as ordered and reliable. The association "between hysteria and the womb"[5] is used to rationalize its own assumptions about woman and prove them as accurate. All these changes on the female body are actually foreign to man. Therefore, patriarchy—with the fear of losing its control on woman—dictates these changes as a source of marginalization and otherness and makes woman notice her body through the prescriptions of patriarchy. These prescriptions are dogmatic and stable like gender roles. Woman is actually more than her biological body marked as inferior and irrational. Cixous suggests that: "Women must write through their bodies, they must invite the impregnable language that will wreck ... regulations and codes ...".[6] Woman can rescue herself from the labels and stereotypes through her interpretation. If woman reformulates her perception about herself and her body against dictations, she can disregard the changes on her body as dangerous and unreliable.

Self is a space for woman to regulate, change and reconstruct along with her choices and interpretations. Griffiths states that: "[A] self is made and makes itself in the changing circumstances in which she lives and in a direction strongly affected by her own understanding of herself."[7] Woman's perception about herself is not isolated from social setting but the emphasis is the rejection of social dictations which encapsulate woman into gendered stereotypes. Meyers points out that: "The self is … an unstable discursive node—a shifting confluence of multiple discursive currents ...".[8] Woman's sense of self is dynamic, not simple enough to be based on fixed and rigid codes, labels and clichés. Jackson and Jones remark that: "We have also recognised that the unitary, fixed, rational self is not tenable, that it does not match

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[4] Margrit Shildrick, Janet Price, "Openings on the Body: A Critical Introduction," **Feminist Theory and the Body: A Reader,** Ed. by Janet Price, Margrit Shildrick, Edinburgh University Press, 1999, p. 3.
[5] **Ibid.**
[6] Cixous, "The Laugh of Medusa," **op. cit.,** p. 886.
[7] Morwenna Griffiths, **Feminism and the Self: The Web of Identity,** New York, Routledge, 1995, p. 76.
[8] Diana Meyers, "Feminist Perspectives on the Self," **The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy**, Ed. by Edward N. Zalta , Spring 2010 Edition, (Online) <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2010/entries/feminism-self/>.

the complexities and contradictions of our lived experience as women and as feminists."[9] Both Jeanette and Irie attack the unitary sense of self by exploring the complexities and contradictions about themselves. They reformulate their perspectives about themselves with their experiences throughout the novels. Both Winterson and Smith show their female protagonists' aim to challenge the stable and dictated sense of self and identity. Jeanette and Irie reconstruct their sense of self which is always in progress. At the beginning of the novels, both of them mirror themselves by means of their family's or society's thoughts without criticism. That is to say, the patriarchal ideology is the absolute truth for them before they reform their sense of self. Jeanette and Irie discover the alternative and multiple ways for their interpretations and choices about themselves. Winterson and Smith clearly show how this process is shaped and reconstructed.

Patriarchal ideology controls woman's perception about herself with gendered hierarchal conceptions. Although polarized gender conception is an invention of male-centred world, patriarchy presents the conception of gendered binary system as an absolute truth to be believed. Hutcheon claims that: "... women LEARN to adapt to a socially determined notion of femininity which itself is a PRODUCT of *'traditional verbal and visual representations of women in our culture.'*"[10] Woman is born into stereotyped gender roles and until she realizes that these roles are the products of masculine ideology, she is subjugated into submissive position under the authority of patriarchal system. Meyers state that: "... gendered conceptions of the self contribute to the valorization of the masculine and the stigmatization of the feminine."[11] Patriarchal binarism is totally based on the appreciation of man's superiority while sabotaging woman's presence. Cixous obviously presents the phallocentric dichotomies between man and woman:

> Where is she?
> Activity/ passivity,
> .....

[9] Stevi Jackson, Jackie Jones, "Thinking Ourselves: An Introduction to Feminist Theorising," **Contemporary Feminist Theories**, Ed. by Stevi Jackson and Jackie Jones, Edinburgh University Press, 1998, p. 25.
[10] Linda Hutcheon, "Feminism and Postmodernism," **Donna: Women in Italian Culture**, Ed. by Ada Testaferri. Ottawa: Dovehouse Editions, 1989, p. 26.
[11] Meyers, **op. cit.**

Culture/ Nature,
Day/ Night,
Father/ Mother,
Head/ heart,
Intelligible/ sensitive,
Logos/ Pathos,
…….
Man
Woman.
… woman is always associated with passivity …[12].

This binary system is always ruled by the dominance and the victory of man. Patriarchy, the father of law, holds the power of this hierarchical system and represents its authority through conventional codes and labels. This system indicates woman's inferior place in the male-dominant society. Ebert asserts that:

> The first term of any binary pair is privileged and given priority over the second term, and this primary term, as Derrida, Cixous and others have demonstrated, is always associated with the privileged position of the male, of the phallus in Western society. The certainty or truth of Western thought is thus determined by this hierarchy in which the primary (male) term is not only privileged over its other (female) term but is designated the defining term or norm of cultural meaning. Poststructuralists-de-constructionists and feminists alike-attempt to dehierarchize and dismantle these dichotomies by showing that the seeming priority and identity of the primary term is, in fact, a fraud.[13]

These binary pairs are internalized and naturalized as the pre-existent realities rather than being considered the constructions of patriarchy to impose its hegemony. Woman has to realize that all these constructions are the constraints for her to subjugate.

Both Winterson and Smith show how this binary conception restricts the experiences of characters and they also challenge the clear-cut distinctions between binaries. Jeanette's sexual preference is a direct subversion of patriarchal hierarchy and the indicator of crossing the boundaries. Although Jeanette is raised under the control of church and her mother's overwhelming dualism, Jeanette's search for alternative ways—rather than remaining devoted to traditional gender roles like

[12] Cixous, "Sorties," **op. cit.,** p. 64.
[13] Teresa L. Ebert, "The "Difference" of Postmodern Feminism," **College English**, Vol. 53, No. 8, December 1991, p. 893, (Online) http://www.jstor.org/stable/377692 31 May 2014.

passivity— challenges the dualistic concept of patriarchy. Patriarchal binary system orders heterosexuality as a compulsory hegemony so Jeanette, like Neane in **White Teeth**, corrupts the patriarchal dualism. Butler states that:

> [T]he law requires conformity to its own notion of "nature" and gains its legitimacy through the binary and asymmetrical naturalization of bodies in which the Phallus, though clearly not identical with the penis, nevertheless deploys the penis as its naturalized instrument and sign.[14]

Patriarchy naturalizes its supremacy with the power of the phallus. Therefore, woman without penis or the phallus is diminished into inferior position under the regulation of binary oppositions. Man creates his authority through dualistic categorizations.

Winterson and Smith not only attack the dichotomies between man and woman, they also interweave other dichotomies to subvert binary system. Winterson mediates the dualism between fact and fiction, history and story. In **Oranges are not the Only Fruit**, the fairy tales and the intertextual references like **Jane Eyre**, **Alice in Wonderland** and **Le Morte D'Arthur** merge with Jeanette's experiences to blur the distinction between fact and fiction. Winterson's interpretation of history in the fifth chapter of the novel, Deuteronomy, disregards it as a representative of absolute truth and reflects it as somebody's story going under changes. Smith emphasizes dualism between white and black woman as well as man and woman. She presents Irie as the embodiment of both English and Jamaican heritages which challenge the dichotomy between white/superior and black/inferior cultures although she is marginalized as a black woman. Her marginalized presence in English society is the indicator of stereotyped binary system which dictates whiteness as a superiority while her state of being hybrid shakes this system. Smith gathers her characters in multicultural London where all races intermingle and it is useless to search for a pure distinction. She also plays with the English man's superior status to shake patriarchal static dualism. Irie's reconciliation with her body and decisions about herself challenge hierarchical gender roles while Jeanette's sexual preference subverts the heterosexual dichotomy. Although the binary between white and black isn't just a

[14] Judith Butler, **Gender Trouble,** New York, Routledge, 1999, p. 135.

gender issue, it is based on the state of having power just like the dualism between man and woman. The dualism not only creates inequality between man and woman but it also causes distinction among women or men. Therefore, Jeanette's sexual preference as lesbian makes her more inferior than heterosexual woman while Irie's skin colour causes her to be more secondary than white woman.

Phallocentric ideology bases its gendered categorization on the binary system. Although the binary opposition is not just between man and woman, a great amount of opposing pairs like passive/active, body/mind, culture/nature are associated with gendered categorization. Cixous states that:

> Man/Woman automatically means great/small, superior/inferior ... means high or low, means Nature/History, means transformation/inertia. In fact every theory of culture, every theory of society, the whole conglomeration of symbolic systems—everything, that is, that's spoken, everything that's organized as discourse, art, religion, the family, language, everything that seizes us, everything that acts on us—it is all ordered around hierarchical oppositions that come back to the man/woman opposition, an opposition that can only be sustained by means of a difference posed by cultural discourse as "natural," the difference between activity and passivity.[15]

Internalized dualistic system of patriarchy appears autonomously in almost all areas. Religion, art, language and the family stand as primary subsidiaries of patriarchal assumptions and dictations. The phallogocentric language imposes man's superiority and the meanings of the words are generally constructed according to the power relation between man and woman "guarantee[ing] the masculine order".[16] Cixous states that:

> Is the fact that Logocentrism subjects thought—all concepts, codes and values—to a binary system, related to 'the' couple, man/woman? ... There is an intrinsic connection between the philosophical and the literary (to the extent that it conveys meaning, literature is under the command of the philosophical) and the phallocentric. Philosophy is constructed on the premise of woman's abasement. Subordination of the feminine to the masculine order ...[17]

[15] Hélène Cixous, "Castration or Decapitation?" **Signs**, Vol. 7, No. 1, Trans. by Annette Kuhn, Autumn, 1981, p. 44.
[16]Cixous, "Sorties," p. 65.
[17]Cixous, "Sorties," pp. 64-65.

Winterson challenges the authority of Logocentrism by relating the texts of the Bible with Jeanette's life story and by parodying mythic and Biblical stories. Her intertextual discourse and writing about woman is a sign of liberation from the dictation of phallocentric discourse. Smith satirizes the terrorizing effect of phallocentric language on woman and shows especially bodily inscriptions, adjectives which control woman's points of view about herself. Jeanette's life story breaks free her sexual orientation and her body from inscriptions of patriarchal heterosexual discourse while Irie rescues her assumptions about her body from authoritative phallocentrism.

"Woman must write her self: must write about women ..."[18] and speak about the woman from her perspective. As long as patriarchal discourse is the only omnipotent viewpoint in the mainstream, "[woman's] words fall almost always upon the deaf male ear, which hears in language only that which speaks in the masculine."[19] Patriarchy preaches its own rules through logocentric language and dictates the assumptions and reflections like inevitable truths. Coeey states that:

> … within the context of patriarchy as a socioeconomic and political structure, woman-as-woman in relation to man is other-directed, … woman, considered as woman in herself, again in the context of patriarchy, is conceptually linked with what is other to man (as man is identified with culture, mind, and spirit), … nature, embodiment, the material order. In short, woman becomes other in relation to man as self. [20]

According to patriarchal discourse, man is woman's mirror where she realizes her sense of self as inferior and castrated. Woman is depicted as other to man who is the centre of culture and mind. Therefore, woman is encapsulated only into her body which is defined in the patriarchal context: "In short, women just are their bodies in a way that men are not, biologically destined to inferior status in all spheres that privilege rationality."[21] Masculine ideology always wants woman to take place in the secondary or inferior position in the order of dualism. Tolan claims that: "By

[18] Cixous, "The Laugh of Medusa," p. 875.
[19] **Ibid.,** pp. 880-881.
[20] Paula M. Cooey, "Emptiness, Otherness, and Identity: A Feminist Perspective," **Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion**, Vol. 6, No. 2 Fall, 1990, p. 9, (Online) http://www.jstor.org/stable/25002132, 12 May 2014.
[21] Margrit Shildrick, Janet Price, **op. cit.,** p. 3.

refusing to be assimilated into the mainstream (male) ideology, women become subversives or saboteurs."[22] Patriarchy threatens woman—who refuses the control of patriarchy—with isolating her from the mainstream. It is just hypocrisy because patriarchy always sabotages woman's presence in society by calling her other and castrated. Moreover, traditional female gender roles are certainly based on female inferiority in patriarchal hierarchy. Therefore, patriarchy imposes its illusion like an absolute truth which is difficult to escape. Woman can only escape from the patriarchal dictations if she realizes that her differences are not the indicator of being other or marginal. In **Oranges are not the Only Fruit**, Jeanette is ostracized from church and her home because of her sexual difference. However, her isolation from patriarchal institutions like family and church enables her to realize her choices about herself. Actually, being under the control of the masculine ideology is to be away from herself and be foreign to her body. Irie is threatened by the Western beauty standards which should be fulfilled by her to be recognized by patriarchy. But this point of view traps her into the war with her body. Only when she appreciates her differences as a woman of colour, can she surpass the fixed and preordained assumptions about herself. Hutcheon states that: "Difference suggests multiplicity, heterogeneity, plurality, not the binary opposition and exclusion suggested by the idea of otherness."[23] Woman's discovery of her multiple and changing selves is to subvert stable patriarchal hegemony because she is "more complex, more subtle, than is commonly imagined ...".[24] Tolan remarks that:

> ... Irigaray is undermining the masculine binary system of positive/negative, by arguing that the female is not a unified position, but multiple: she is not one, but many. Like the multiple perspectives often used in *ecriture feminism* which disrupt the idea of a single unified voice and a sole objective truth of the one God/father/author, the multiplicity of [woman] defies the masculine compulsion to create strict boundaries between self and other in order to define stable, indivisible self.[25]

[22] Tolan, **op. cit.,** p. 336.
[23] Hutcheon, **op. cit.,** p. 30.
[24] Luce Irigaray, **This Sex Which Is Not One**, Trans. by. Catherine Porter, Carolyn Burke, New York, Cornell University Press, 1985, p. 28.
[25] Tolan, **op. cit.,** p. 336.

Patriarchy opposes multiple selves of woman by dictating its omnipotent presence. It forces woman to "accept an artificially constructed inferiority".[26] If woman discovers the fluidity and multiplicity of herself, she can notice her feelings and her desires. Irigaray points out that:

> (Re-)discovering herself, for a woman, thus could only signify the possibility of sacrificing no one of her pleasures to another, of identifying herself with none of them in particular, of never being simply one. A sort of expanding universe to which no limits could be fixed …[27]

Female construction of the self indicates that woman becomes aware of her desires, feelings and thoughts. In male-dominant society, the female cannot discover her feelings and desires because man exploits the female body for satisfying his own desires. However, if woman realizes herself as having her own desires instead of only contributing to man's satisfaction, she can shatter the stereotyped and rigid assumptions of patriarchy. Woman should rescue herself from ready-made descriptions of patriarchy about her gender, her race and actually about herself. What limits woman is her suppressed perception about herself. Rediscovery for woman is a challenge to conceptualized definitions and prescriptions about herself like being passive, "traditionally use-value for man [and] a commodity"[28] for male pleasure.

Patriarchy uses the dynamics of society such as the family and religion to impose its dualistic hegemony and the fixed gendered concept of self and identity. Family and church is a place for man to exhibit patriarchal dominance disregarding woman's desires and demands while voicing its dominance and precepts. The family is especially the place for displaying the power relation between man and woman in the traditional sense. Winterson subverts the traditional notion of superiority of man in the family by changing gender roles between Jeanette's mother and father. She also shows the oppressive power of church on woman and especially on Jeanette. Although the church members are woman in Winterson's novel, they are still under the law of pastor, the law of the father; namely, they preach words of patriarchy, and almost all support the submission of woman and limitation of her place. Winterson

[26] **Ibid.,** p. 333.
[27] Luce Irigaray, **op. cit.,** pp. 30-31.
[28] **Ibid.,** p. 31.

disturbs the **unchallengeable** authority of church with Jeanette's sexual preference. Church imposes heterosexuality as compulsory. Purvis says that:

> Church and state institutions incited a proliferation of discourses concerned with sex and sexuality, power and knowledge. These same discourses ensured that almost every aspect of daily life was sexualized.[29]

These institutions make clear-cut distinctions between man and woman. Sexualized conception of church or other institutions as advocators of masculine ideology, manipulates woman in a way that power and knowledge are held by patriarchy. Also, Smith presents the dominance of church on woman's presence. Irie's grandmother Hortenso is a fanatic Jenovah's Witness. She interprets her sense of self according to her religion. Although she is active in her religion, she needs a man, Ryan Topps, as a mediator between church and herself because she cannot have a significant place under the law of patriarchal church. Smith criticizes the oppression of church on woman with Hortenso's words as a confession about church which ignores woman's presence.

The family has an important place in **White Teeth**, too. Smith bases her story on three families where she shows the practices of gender relations and submission of woman in gendered conception of patriarchy. Although Irie's father, Archie, isn't a dominant man, there is a gendered hierarchical power relation between her father and her mother, Clara. Irie constructs her sense of self according to this gendered conception before she gains her own interpretation about herself. Discovering the secrets or lies of their families is a turning point for both Jeanette and Irie because they construct their sense of self firstly through their families. While Jeanette internalizes her mother's evangelical teachings as an absolute truth at her early ages, Irie embodies her family's ineffectiveness on her problems as being other or having low self-esteem. Their discovery is an opportunity for them to interpret their own sense of self rather than being limited into one-dimensional viewpoint. In both novels, the family stands as the place for imposing cultural norms and traditional gendered roles on children. Libby and Thomas Blume state that: "Although the

[29] Tony Purvis, "Sexualities," **Literary Theory and Criticism: An Oxford Guide**, Ed. by Patricia Waugh, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 429.

embodying of gender norms in some families may not be carried out according to societal expectations, parents often assist their children in (re)enacting the dominant social discourse in contexts outside the home."[30] That is to say, what patriarchy dictates actually determines the principles of most families. Both Smith and Winterson present the family as an institutional entity announcing its own principles directed by patriarchal society.

Family, such other social institutions as church and school, performs the method of standardization or normalization. Differences are not approved by patriarchal entities. Irie's father predicts that Irie will be born with blue eyes. It is a sign of standardization into English culture. Jeanette's mother adopts Jeanette to bring up her into the standards of her religious beliefs. Therefore, she rejects Jeanette's sexual preference which is depicted as being abnormal and outcast. Both Irie's and Jeanette's differences are exposed to standardization through patriarchal institutions like family, school and church. Chenoy states that:

> [Feminists] reveal how all institutions whether it is of class, race, community or state, are based on patriarchal practices that discriminate against women. These practices in turn are based on the patriarchal conception of power as the ability to use force to influence the other.[31]

Patriarchy always presents its presence by dictating its dominance and power. It manipulates all the institutions to impose its hierarchical hegemony. Patriarchy employs the issues like gender and race through its prescriptions and institutions to restrain woman's sense of self. While Winterson especially focuses on the issue of gender, Smith deals with the issues of both gender and race.

Winterson and Smith touch on the marriage as a legal contract rather than a love bond between couples. This contract generally supports the superiority of man while the authority on the woman exchange from father to husband. In both novels, marriage is reflected as a social and cultural institution which supports the gendered hierarchical oppositions between man and woman. In this sense, marriage stands as

[30] Libby Balter Blume, Thomas W. Blume, "Toward a Dialectical Model of Family Gender Discourse: Body, Identity and sexuality," **Journal of Marriage and Family,** Vol. 65, No. 4, November 2003, p. 789, (Online) http://www.jstor.org/stable/3599890 04 October 2013.
[31] Anuradha M. Chenoy, "Identity Politics and Feminist Praxis," **Peace Prints: South Asian Journal of Peacebuilding,** No. 3, Vol. 2, Winter 2010, p. 2.

an attack on female construction of the self because it strengthens man's authority on woman with legal contract. Meyers state that: "The wife's assuming her husband's surname symbolizes [the] revocation of her separate identity."[32] Moreover, the idea that woman's presence is dependent on man is legalized by marriage according to masculine ideology. Front states that:

> The male body appears meaningful in itself whereas the female one is perceived as meaningless unless a man is mentioned; a woman is unthinkable without a man then, her body gains meaning under the influence of values imposed on it by the dominant culture. She organizes her life around her husband and his needs, passively approving her fate...[33].

Masculine ideology suppresses woman's existence without man. Therefore, marriage appears as an acceptance of man's authority and demands in masculine ideology. Winterson attacks traditional gender roles in marriage by exchanging the roles between man and woman. Jeanette describes marriage like a nightmare and man's demand on the woman's body like an animalistic desire. Smith displays the performance of traditional gender roles in marriages. Irie's father and mother's marriage is a significant example to view the opposing sides together like white/black and old/young. In this way, Smith shows patriarchal ideology on marriage and mediates the opposing sides together. Butler's comment is connected with the ideas about marriage in Winterson's and Smith's novels:

> [Patriarchy] is secured through the ritualistic expulsion of women and, reciprocally, the ritualistic importation of women. As wives, women not only secure the reproduction of the *name* (the functional purpose), but effect a symbolic intercourse between clans of men. As the site of a patronymic exchange, women are and are not the patronymic sign, excluded from the signifier, the very patronym they bear. The woman in marriage qualifies not as an identity, but only as a relational term that both distinguishes and binds the various clans to a common but internally differentiated [patriarchal] identity.[34]

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[32] Meyers, **op. cit.**
[33] Sonia Front, **Literary and Cultural Theory, Volume 31: Transgressing Boundaries in Jeanette Winterson's Fiction,** Frankfurt am Main, DEU, Peter Lang AG, 12/2009, p. 31, (Online) http://site.ebrary.com/id/10601228?
[34] Butler, **op. cit.** p. 50.

Wedding ceremony is the celebration of man's authority. Masculine ideology again creates an illusion for woman to be able to have a securer place thanks to marriage but actually, she is a contributor for intensifying the power of father. She does not gain an identity with marriage. On the contrary, she is entrapped into man's authority.

Jeanette and Irie have different kinds of stories but they try to reconstruct their sense of self free from the traditional norms, dictations and assumptions of patriarchy. They are oppressed for both being woman and subverting traditional gender norms. Masculine ideology presents gender roles "deeming women emotional and unprincipled, ... confining women to the domestic sphere ...".[35] Patriarchy orders woman to "internalize [its] values and norms—that is these pernicious values and norms become integrated in the ... structure of the self."[36] Traditional gender roles are based on hierarchical categorization between inferior/woman and superior/man. Patriarchy creates a fantasy that woman is the passive other while man is the saviour. As long as woman continues to believe this gendered fairy tale of patriarchy, she will be the victim of man's demands and desires. Cixous states that:

> *Once upon a time ...*
> One cannot yet say the following history 'it is just a story'. It's a tale still true today. Most women who awakened remember having slept, *having been put to sleep.*
> *Once upon a time ... once ... and once again*
> Beauties slept in their woods, waiting for princes to come and wake them up. In their beds, in their glass coffins in their childhood forests like dead women. Beautiful but passive; hence desirable: all mystery emanates from them. It is men who like to play dolls.[37]

Patriarchy continuously dictates its gendered categorization as an internalized story to become reality. Cixous depicts the female passivity in fairy tales which are the representatives of traditional gender roles. Woman, like **Snow White** and **Sleeping Beauty**, is encapsulated into their limited place and they are waiting for the prince to rescue them or to satisfy his desires according to masculine ideology. Patriarchy categorizes woman in one dimensional way so that she can always contribute to male

[35] Meyers, **op. cit.**
[36] **Ibid.**
[37] Cixous, "Sorties," **op. cit.,** p. 66.

superiority. Woman is hypnotized by the gendered stories of patriarchy. Meyers points out that:

> What are generally taken to be the facts about gender within given culture are encoded in captivating systems of imagery. In individual figures of speech—e.g., women as babes, dolls, or chicks. And also in myths and cautionary tales populated by protagonists who represent ideals of womanhood—e.g., the beatific mother-or who express prevalent attitudes toward womanhood—e.g., the sinister witch. These images and narratives condense complex behavioral and psychological imperatives into memorable, emotionally compelling figures. As such, they function as a kind of shorthand in which gender norms are crystallized and through which gender norms are embedded … [38].

Patriarchy uses labels, codes and clichés to categorize woman into preordained roles. Woman is blessed like mother and Virgin Mary or damned like witch and whore. Patriarchal norms and assumptions indicate where woman can stand in society. The gendered labels become woman's identity disregarding her complexities or multiplicities. Gender roles are internalized as unchallengeable realities rather than being regarded as socially-constructed. Butler states that:

> Actors are always already on the stage, within the terms of the performance. Just as a script may be enacted in various ways, and just as the play requires both text and interpretation, so the gendered body acts its part in a culturally restricted corporeal space and enacts interpretations within the confines of already existing directives.[39]

Gender roles, under patriarchal script, are performed according to its reflections and dictations. These gender roles restrain the body to be defined with preordained labels and clichés. Meyers assert that:

> … existing gender systems disdain women's individuality, differentially constrain their self determination, and whitewash the wrongs they inflict. As a result, most people-women and men alike believe that gender hierarchies express the natural order of human life.[40]

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[38] Diana Tietjens Meyers, **Being Yourself Essays on Identity Action and Social Life**, Roowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004, p.129.
[39] Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," **Theatre Journal,** Vol. 40, No. 4, December 1988, p. 526 (Online) http://www.jstor.org/stable/3207893, 07 June 2014.
[40] Diana Tietjens Meyers, **Being Yourself Essays on Identity Action and Social Life**, p. xii.

Established gender roles appear as natural with their fixed and domineering presences. Man and woman are petrified into their gendered selves. Patriarchal order privileges man while making woman restrained and limited. The fixed constitution of gender makes it accepted as predestined features and behaviours. Butler states that: "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being."[41] Gender is regulated through repetitions which are ordered as natural, unchanged and pre-existent reality. We are not born with the gender roles. Rather, they are internalized through our acts which are influenced by society and culture, become automatic and appear as a static identity. Butler remarks that:

> ... gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time -an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts. Further, gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self.[42]

Gender is not actually static and fixed to organize all our sense of self and identity. Therefore, gender roles can go under transformation "in the possibility of a different sort of repeating, in the breaking or subversive repetition of that style".[43] Rigidity of patriarchy on gender roles is based on "masculinist domination and compulsory heterosexuality".[44] Butler asserts that:

> [P]olar genders as cultural fictions [are] obscured by the credibility of [the] productions – and the punishments that attend not agreeing to believe in them; the construction 'compels' our belief in its necessity and naturalness.[45]

Binary oppositions between man and woman are manifested as stable and natural. When we consider about woman, patriarchal illusion suggests punishment for

[41] Butler, **Gender Trouble**, pp. 43-44.
[42] Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," p. 519.
[43] **Ibid.,** p. 520.
[44] Butler, **Gender Trouble**, p. 180.
[45] **Ibid.,** p. 522.

woman if she rejects her traditionally fixed gender roles or subverts the clear-cut distinction between the dichotomies. Therefore, especially woman's perspective about herself is diminished into traditional gender roles which "are produced as the truth effects of a discourse of primary and stable identity".[46] Woman is actually under the oppression of patriarchy unless she realizes that patriarchy manipulates her sense of self with its constructions and dictations. Female construction of the self is to understand that "What we take to be 'real', what we invoke as the naturalized knowledge of gender is, in fact, a changeable and revisable reality."[47] In this way, woman rescues herself from the diminished place of gender roles. Butler states that: "... reified and naturalized conceptions of gender might be understood as constituted and, hence, capable of being constituted differently."[48] Realization of the gender roles as "tenuously constituted in time"[49] enables woman to renew and construct her sense of self.

Patriarchy controls the female body just like her gender roles. The female body is a place to perform gender roles and satisfy the demands of man for patriarchy. Woman is encapsulated into gendered self and sexualized body. Her body is stylized as passive and stable. Butler states that:

> … "the body" appears as a passive medium on which cultural meanings are inscribed or as the instrument through which an appropriative and interpretive will determines a cultural meaning for itself. … [T]he body is figured as a mere *instrument* or *medium* for which a set of cultural meanings are only externally related. [50]

Woman is forced to regard her body as the social and cultural inscriptions dictated. Jeanette is punished for subverting a man's demand on her body with her sexual preference while Irie is marginalized for being a woman of colour and not fixing into the western beauty standards. Patriarchy manipulates the female body as an **instrument** to fulfil his demands and dictations. Front sates that:

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[46] Judith Butler, "Bodily Inscriptions Performative Subversions," **Feminist Theory and the Body: A Reader,** Ed. by Janet Price, Margrit Shildrick, Edinburgh University Press, 1999, p. 416.
[47] Butler, **Gender Trouble**, p. xxii.
[48] Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," p. 520.
[49] Butler, **Gender Trouble**, p. 179.
[50] **Ibid.,** pp. 12-13.

> [T]he phallocentric culture submits the female body to the standards of classification; defining category of femininity, setting boundaries, and deciding what evokes desire and disgust; in other words, it submits women to the process of normalization.[51]

Woman is categorized into her gendered body and ordered to perform gender roles inscribed on her body. Patriarchy determines how woman should consider her body. Woman is made to forget about her senses and desires. Cixous states that: "We've turned away from our bodies, shamefully taught to ignore them ...".[52] Masculine ideology hypocritically both restricts woman into her body as the embodiment of male gaze and makes woman foreign to her body. Cixous says that: "Censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time."[53] Patriarchy makes distinction between body and mind by associating woman with body which is irrational and wild. Therefore, woman is diminished into the irrational body to be directed by rational man who is the representative of mind, language, and culture. Standardization of the female body means a passive surface fixed to patriarchal inscriptions. All these inscriptions and assumptions are imposed to woman as unchallengeable realities like gender roles. However, the female body is "in process, never fixed and solid, but always multiple and fluid ...".[54] Butler states that:

> From a feminist point of view, one might try to reconceive the gendered body as the legacy of sedimented acts rather than a predetermined or foreclosed structure, essence or fact, whether natural, cultural, or linguistic.[55]

Male attack on female perception comes from various vehicles. Masculine ideology, discourse, hierarchy, gender patterns and body expressions all come up on the female. When woman understands patriarchal dictations as the constructions to control her and to limit her place, she can challenge these constructions with discovering her sense of self. None of the patriarchal dictations are preordained realities. Patriarchy manipulates woman with its constructions like binary opposition,

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[51] Front, **op. cit.,** p. 25.
[52] Cixous, "The Laugh of Medusa," p. 885.
[53] **Ibid.,** p. 880.
[54]Margrit Shildrick, Janet Price, **op. cit.,** p. 6.
[55] Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," p. 523.

gender roles, and bodily prescriptions. If woman realizes that "she is everywhere"[56] rather than limited into domesticity, gendered self and the body, she can subvert patriarchal dominance by reformulating her sense of self. The dynamics of patriarchy like binary system and gender assumptions are the tricks to restrict woman into a stable and fixed identity. **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** and **White Teeth** enable readers to analyse the subjects like patriarchal dominance, oppression, binary system and gender roles with respect to feminism and both of them show how the female protagonists reformulate their sense of self by subverting patriarchal dictations and assumptions.

[56] Cixous, "The Laugh of Medusa," p. 893.

2. **Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit**

2.1. Criticism of Binary Oppositions, Absolute Truth and Hypocrisy

Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit by Jeanette Winterson—"boundary crossing novel"[1]—focuses on an adoptive child, Jeanette, whose struggle is to go beyond the certainties and dictations preordained by patriarchal institutions like family and church throughout the novel. She tries to manage her life by decentring the patriarchal dynamics like binary system and traditional female gender roles. She is adopted by her foster mother, Louie to be the representative of a missionary life with Evangelical beliefs and church. However, Jeanette crosses her mother's boundaries with her sexual preference as a lesbian. Jeanette retells her own story which shifts from an unquestionable world to the world of her own choices and interpretations.

Winterson shows how the binary oppositions, like any other dictated patriarchal regulations, restrict our perception about ourselves. The female protagonist Jeanette perceives the world and herself through her mother's perspective at her early ages. She assumes that "... [E]verything in the natural world was a symbol of the Great Struggle between good and evil."[2] That is to say, she imitates her mother's ideas as her own reality which supports the war between opposing sides. Her mother's world is full of oppositions: there are good and bad ones, someone/thing cannot have both of them at the same time. Jeanette explains that "She had never heard of mixed feelings. There were friends and there were enemies."[3] On the first pages, we witness clear-cut distinctions between the binaries just like Jeanette who is forced to reject "mixed feelings".[4] Her mother views the world through opposite categories, rejects multiplicity and constructs her ideology according to evangelical dogma.

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[1] Mara Reisman, "Integrating Fantasy and Reality in Jeanette Winterson's 'Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit,'" **Rocky Mountain Review**, Vol. 65, No. 1, Spring, 2011, p.11, (Online) http://www.jstor.org/stable/41289361, 05 July 2013.
[2] Jeanette Winterson, **Oranges are not the Only Fruit**, London, Vintage Books, 2001, p. 21.
[3] **Ibid.,** p. 5.
[4] **Ibid.**

Winterson opens up her book with the dualistic examples of Jeanette's mother to emphasize how binaries rule social life and Jeanette's worldview:

> Enemies were: The Devil (in his many forms)
> Next Door Sex (in its many forms)
> Slugs
> Friends were: God
> Our dog
> Auntie Madge
> The Novels of Charlotte Bronte
> Slug pellets
> and me, at first.[5]

Thus, Jeanette starts to tell her story by giving examples from her mother's dogmatic point of view because she mirrors her mother's thoughts without any criticism at her early ages and her mother is the ruler while she is the ruled one. Winterson introduces us with the dualistic relationship between daughter-mother and her overwhelming authority upon her daughter.

Jeanette's mother, Louie, contradicts to **mixed feelings** but a child's or an adolescent's road to maturation is paved with complexities and struggles which bring her/him to construct her/his potential self because someone cannot gain her/his voice in an easy way of dualistic categorization or through siding only with goodness. While Winterson presents binary oppositions which Jeanette's mother fanatically supports with two lists, she hints that Jeanette is not appropriate for any categories. That is to say, her actual self has both good and evil. Doan also highlights Jeanette's absence from two lists which summarize Louie's overall absolutist ideology:

> It is no accident that only Jeanette fails to fall neatly into one of the two lists that, from macrocosm to microcosm, embody the significant separation of all things into two discrete categories, defining the positive and strong against the negative and weak, from evil to sinful, sinful to perverse, perversities to pests.[6]

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[5] **Ibid.**

[6] Loan Doan, "Jeanette Winterson's Sexing the Postmodern," **The Lesbian Postmodern**, Ed. by Laura Doan, 137, Rpt. in Contemporary Literary Criticism Select. Detroit: Gale, 2008, (Online) http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CH1100043064&v=2.1&u=bogazici&it=r&p=LitRG&sw=w, 5 July 2013.

Louie's two opposite lists also display her hypocritical ideology because Jeanette is her friend if she follows her mother's absolutist path; otherwise, she becomes her enemy when she is directed with **mixed feelings**. Hypocritical way of moral absolutism and binary system is strengthened by Pastor Finch's sayings about the age of seven:

> Then he turned to me and said, `How old are you, little girl?'
> `Seven,' I replied.
> `Ah, seven,' he muttered. `How blessed, the seven days of creation, …
> `Yes,' he went on, `how blessed,' then his brow clouded. `But how cursed.' ...
> `The best can become the worst,'—he took me by the hand—'This innocent child, this bloom of the Covenant.' ...
> `This little lily could herself be a house of demons.'[7]

Pastor Finch claims that the age of seven symbolizes both good and evil so he subverts clear-cut distinction between binary oppositions and he proves that someone/thing can have opposite sides at the same time. Life is not static but changeable as Pastor Finch says: "The best can become the worst"[8] or vice versa. His sayings contradict his own dogmatic ideas like Louie's scheme which leaves Jeanette out of categorization. Winterson disturbs their absolutist binary system with their hypocrisy.

Winterson questions the concept of binary dichotomy as a socially-accepted categorization. This concept causes inequality that one is generally reflected as the superior to the other such as man/woman, white/black, mind/body and culture/nature. Reisman states that:

> Privileging one binary over the other becomes easy shorthand for determining right from wrong, thereby naturalizing moral judgments and perpetuating social, political, religious, and sexual norms.[9]

A binary system creates such a fixed hierarchy that dominant norms and moral codes praise the privileged one over the other. This easy way of categorization determines what is wrong or right with a harsh distinction. One gains superiority thanks to what the other lacks.

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[7] Winterson, **op. cit.,** pp. 15-16.
[8] **Ibid.,** p. 16.
[9] Reisman, **op. cit.,** p. 11.

In Genesis chapter, a story about a hunchback and "a brilliant and beautiful princess [who is] so sensitive that the death of a moth could distress her for weeks on end"[10] evokes the dualistic relationship between mother and daughter. Hunchback as a master orders the princess to deal with some duties which provides a socially-accepted place:

> (1) To milk the goats
> (2) To educate the people
> (3) To compose songs for the festival[11]

When the princess begins to engage with these duties, she becomes less sensitive—"The princess agreed to stay and forgot all about … the moths"[12]—like Jeanette who is prevented from bearing **mixed feelings** because of her mother's expectations as follows:

> a missionary child
> a servant of God
> a blessing[13]

The princess' duty list and Jeanette's mother's expectation list are associated with each other. The more they engage with other people's duties or expectations, the less they regard their own choices so they become the puppets of the social or the dogmatic system contributing to the dualistic world. A binary system is an enemy for a sense of one's own self and it creates a gap between one's perspective about his/herself and a socially-dictated identity. If the princess does not accept to engage with these duties, she will be "in danger of being burned by [her] own flame"[14] as the hunchback says. Similarly, Louie tries to protect Jeanette from being "Heathen"[15] or from her own hell by her authoritative teachings. Winterson asserts that: "What we must not do is accept false choices - fake realities imposed on us by other people."[16]

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[10] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p.13.
[11] **Ibid.**
[12] **Ibid.**
[13] **Ibid.,** p. 14.
[14] **Ibid.,** p. 13.
[15] **Ibid.,** p. 21.
[16] Bill Moyers, "Bill Moyers on Faith and Reason: Jeanette Winterson," **Films Media Group**, 2006. Films on Demand, (Online) <http://digital.films.com/play, 25 April 2010, (qtd. in Reisman **op. cit.,** 21).

She protests against the binary system that restricts our sense of self into one way of thinking to create socially-accepted identity and imprisons us into other people's facts.

Winterson challenges Louie's and church members' moral absolutism by Jeanette's temporary physical deafness which clearly symbolizes her mother's and church members' metaphoric and permanent deafness to the relativity of the truth. They interpret Jeanette's deafness as "a state of rapture"[17] according to their dogmatic beliefs. Actually, her deafness foreshadows her rejection to obey social dictations to her sexual preference just like her realization of her insight and her own preferences. However, she is still under the influence of her mother and the church. Jeanette expresses her deafness like her mother and church community because her personal feelings and beliefs are squeezed into her mother's rigid ideology:

> I had assumed myself to be in a state of rapture, not uncommon in our church, and later I discovered my mother had assumed the same. When May had asked why I wasn't answering anybody, my mother had said, 'It's the Lord.'[18]

Jeanette's deafness also points to her blindness to her own voice due to her mother's harsh authority. She misunderstands her deafness just like others. She writes a note to her mother: "Mother, the world is very quiet."[19] Actually, this world is so quiet for her personal feelings, her sexual and multiple selves that she cannot satisfy with fundamentalist moral explanations when she becomes much more mature. She realizes that "[She] had to find out for [herself]."[20] Namely, she begins to notice that she should discover life with her personal interpretations. Her physical deafness awakens her individual perspective and enables her to question rigidness of her mother's beliefs and church:

> Since I was born I had assumed that the world ran on very simple lines, like a larger version of our church. Now I was finding that even the church was

[17] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 31.
[18] **Ibid.**
[19] **Ibid.,** p. 33.
[20] **Ibid.**

> sometimes confused. This was a problem. But not one I chose to deal with for many years more.[21]

She admits that she has judged the world according to simple binary lines and absolute truth which direct her point of view at her early ages. This overwhelming pressure on her isn't easy to oppose since her life has been shaped for many years according to these harsh regulations. But Winterson implies that Jeanette begins to realize complexities and confusions of the world. Life cannot be based on clear cut-distinctions between binaries so Jeanette should shake single-mindedness and opposing extremes and then she can taste the multiplicity of the truth instead of a monolithic perspective. While Jeanette begins to be disappointed with socially-imposed ideas, her mother is filled with frustration when she learns in hospital that Jeanette's deafness is not a religious rapture but a physical illness. Jeanette's deafness as an illness is noticed by Miss Jewsbury who takes her to the hospital. Miss Jewsbury is a member of church but she is portrayed as a lesbian who notices Jeanette's sexual orientation and has sex with her. Therefore, Miss Jewsbury's notice about deafness foreshadows her awareness about Jeanette's sexual preference. Her mother cannot be aware of her illness because she is only interested in Jeanette's religious training. When Jeanette is at hospital, Elsie—another church member—often visits and takes care of her. Louie leaves her alone because of her engagement with church duties. Louie's interpretation of Jeanette's illness like a religious deed and her absence in hospital indicate that Louie's moral single-mindedness again overthrows her affection of her child and depicts her hypocritical ideology.

Louie wants her daughter to be a servant to God and follow religious precepts so that she can take place in a good side. School is a "Breeding Ground"[22] according to her because Jeanette can produce new ideas and beliefs different from her mother's teachings and expectations. Jeanette's individuation from moral fundamentalism appears as a threat to her mother's and community's authority. Bailey states that:

[21] **Ibid.** p. 36.
[22] **Ibid.,** p. 23.

> Under the Law, Jeanette knows only a world of fixed, absolute meaning. She has no room to doubt the rightness of the Law or of Mother. But when she leaves home at age seven to enter public school, a place Mother refers to as The Breeding Ground, her life is irrevocably changed.[23]

She enters a new place where she is criticised because of her overwhelming religious references in her works and words. She becomes aware of the fact that her mother's and community's teachings can go under criticism just as a rigid and absolutist worldview based on a binary system can be disregarded. The head of the school, Mrs Vole's interrogation about Jeanette's preoccupation with religious dogmas displays her and others' disturbance:

> `Jeanette, we think you may be having problems at school. Do you want to tell us about them?'
> `I'm all right.' I shuffled defensively.
> `You do seem rather pre-occupied, shall we say, with God.'
> I continued to stare at the floor.
> `Your sampler, for instance, had a very disturbing motif.'
> `And why, and this is perhaps more serious, do you terrorise, yes, terrorise, the other children?'...
> … You have been talking about Hell to young minds.'[24]

Jeanette is scorned and picked apart in school because of her excessive moral and religious absolutism which provides her secure place in her home and community. School, as a new place, presents different perspectives to Jeanette and it is the first place that challenges and criticizes her dogmatic beliefs. Her mother's absolutist teachings become invalid and the state of being safe at home thanks to her mother's teachings turns into oddness. She is judged to "terrorize"[25] other students' minds with Hell but school is the first place that individuates her from Louie and the church community. Therefore, she is in difficulty to notice the differences between school and home. Her brain is only washed by dogmatic themes and she learns to read from the Old Testament. Any efforts of Jeanette in doing her works are not appreciated by teachers because of their biases about her. Her works "[make] no impression at all ...

[23] Peggy Dunn Bailey, "Writing 'Herstory': Narrative Reconstruction in Jeanette Winterson's Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit," **The Philological Review,** 32. 2, 2006, p. 62.
[24] Winterson, **op. cit.,** pp. 54-55.
[25] **Ibid.,** p. 55.

[even when] she abandon[s] biblical themes."[26] School, like church, restricts Jeanette's own choices and interpretations. Jeanette's beliefs and behaviours can be different from others but she should be noticed instead of being only judged. She is again forced to behave according to majority and socially-accepted rules dictated to her in the way that she is restricted to survive according to her mother's absolutist evangelical beliefs. Winterson criticizes that people are manipulated by established ideologies of authoritative institutions such as family, church and school which try to impose their worldviews. Jeanette complains about her needlework teacher's point of view:

> ... My needlework teacher suffered from a problem of vision. She recognised things according to expectation and environment. If you were in a particular place, you expected to see particular things. Sheep and hills, sea and fish; if there was an elephant in the supermarket, she'd either not see it at all, or call it Mrs Jones and talk about fishcakes. But most likely, she'd do what most people do when confronted with something they don't understand: Panic.[27]

Jeanette again encounters hypocrisy because she is expected to think or behave according to others' expectations and rules. School as a powerful institution, like church and family, tries to **normalize** or minimize individual differences and it stereotypes people in order to prevent panic against unconventional situations.

Winterson foreshadows that Jeanette would be discriminated by her mother and community as teachers and students do because of her personal differences. Standardization of institutions causes binary opposition between the expectations and individual preferences. Usual/normal must eliminate unusual/abnormal with regard to traditional norms:

> What constitutes a problem is not the thing or the environment where we find the thing, but the conjunction of the two; something unexpected in a usual place (our favourite aunt in our favourite poker parlour) or something usual in an unexpected place (our favourite poker in our favourite aunt). I knew that my sampler was absolutely right in Elsie Norris's front room, but absolutely wrong in Mrs Virtue's sewing class. Mrs Virtue should either have had the imagination to commend me for my effort in context, or the far-sightedness to realise that there is a debate going on as to whether something

[26] **Ibid.,** p. 62.
[27] **Ibid.,** p.58.

> has an absolute as well as a relative value; given that, she should have given me the benefit of the doubt.[28]

She criticizes her sewing teacher Mrs.Virtue's bigotry which disregards the relativity of the truth. Mrs.Virtue turns a blind eye to different perspectives like Jeanette's mother and she interprets everything according to her biases and absolute truth. Namely, her rigidness on her thoughts prevents her from the fluidity of imagination. Winterson inserts Jeanette's made-up story about Tetrahedron—who has so many faces— and emphasizes the subversion of boundary between opposing sides and the possibility of the multiple perspectives. Jeanette's imaginary story is triggered by her changing perspective on absolute truth and one-dimensional thinking. Both her mother and her teachers try to impose their own perspectives as an unquestionable truth. The protagonist of her story, Tetrahedron, does not follow a straight path. Instead, he walks "[r]ound and round"[29] so that he can discover all sides of life:

> One day, a lovely woman brought the emperor a revolving circus operated by midgets. The midgets acted all of the tragedies and many of the comedies. They acted them all at once, and it was fortunate that Tetrahedron had so many faces, otherwise he might have died of fatigue. They acted them all at once, and the emperor, walking round his theatre, could see them all at once, if he wished. Round and round he walked, and so learned a very valuable thing: that no emotion is the final one.[30]

Tetrahedron's story associates with real life experiences which cover both tragedy and comedy. Tetrahedron's ability to perceive opposite sides of life together makes him endure. His open-mindedness enables him to get the idea that the emotions and thoughts cannot be fixed. Instead, they repeatedly go through changes. Jeanette's mimicry of her mother's fixed ideology pushes her to ignore her own interpretation about herself. If she opens her emotions and thoughts to conciliation of opposites, she can rescue herself from her mother's absolutist thinking. Questioning the absolutist thinking opens ways for Jeanette to construct her sense of self. Jeanette's initial doubts about the imposed dictations by her mother, church and school foreshadow her realization of her own choices and desires when she becomes mature

[28] **Ibid.,** pp. 58-59.
[29] **Ibid.,** p. 63.
[30] **Ibid.**

enough. Elsie, who appears like a negotiator between extremes, wants Jeanette to realize that life isn't a choice between opposite sides. She encourages Jeanette to free herself from narrow-mindedness. Elsie, like Tetrahedron, who displays multi-dimensional perspective, says that: "'There's this world', ... 'and there's this world,' ... 'If you want to make sense of either, you have to take notice of both.'"[31]

Winterson portrays Louie as the most notable embodiment of absolutist ideology and binary system but throughout the novel, she also attacks Louie's rigidness with multiple attributions to her personality and her hypocritical acts which disturb binary oppositions. DeLong summarizes that:

> Winterson's narrator continually reworks the figure of the mother, representing her as wise woman, Virgin Mary, Zeus, Satan, orange tree, King Arthur, and sorcerer, manifestations that cross lines of good=evil, male=female dichotomies and thus disrupt binary discourse.[32]

Louie's different representations reveal the impossibility to take place only on one side. She persistently repels **mixed feelings** but mature Jeanette describes her mother as having "a complicated mind"[33] and being "enlightened and reactionary at the same time".[34] Winterson presents that people have actually hybrid emotions, thoughts and personalities which transcend binary oppositions and single-mindedness. What Louie represents for Jeanette changes when Jeanette becomes mature. Namely, her perception of the world transforms from her mother's single-mindedness to open-mindedness in order to discover the alternative perspectives of life. While Louie is the omnipotent leader for Jeanette at her early ages, her mother's presence for mature Jeanette fragments into multiple selves which embody both rights and wrongs. Namely, Louie becomes an ordinary person with her good and bad features according to Jeanette's refreshed perspective rather than being an iconic figure like Virgin Mary.

Winterson challenges Louie's rigid ideology by relating her personality with several figures and she also supports the subversion with attributing different

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[31] **Ibid.,** p. 43.
[32] Anne DeLong, "The Cat's Cradle: Multiple Discursive Threads in Jeanette Winterson's Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit," **LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory,** 17.3-4, 2006, p. 264.
[33] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p.165.
[34] **Ibid.**, p. 164.

meanings to Louie's iconic fruit. Winterson proclaims her immediate intention with the title of her novel which appears as a protest against the absolutist binary system. Orange firstly represents Louise's fundamentalist evangelical beliefs so she overwhelmingly offers oranges to her daughter like her dogmatic teachings. When Jeanette is in hospital for her deafness, she sends oranges as an indicator of her affection or control because she has always dictated as an absolute truth that "Oranges are the only fruit".[35] The fact that oranges are presented to Jeanette as one option not only displays her mother's single-mindedness but also indicates Jeanette's metaphoric malnutrition that restricts her from tasting different pleasures instead of orange: "What about grapes or bananas?"[36] Jeanette counts options in order to show multiple connotations: "Fruit salad, fruit pie, fruit for fools, fruited punch. Demon fruit, passion fruit, rotten fruit, fruit on Sunday."[37] Winterson also associates oranges together with extremes such as Louie's absolute teachings and a demon which encourages Jeanette to travel through her personal and sexual selves. Orange demon appears as her inner voice to sound her sexual preference. Jeanette firstly visualizes orange demon when she is confined by her mother in a room without food to be regretful about her sexual relationship with her girlfriend, Melanie. While orange represents Louie's absolutism and heterosexuality, it transforms into Jeanette's lesbian orientation against compulsory heterosexuality dictated by church. Winterson's combination of orange and demon shatters Louie's clear-cut distinctions between good and evil.

Throughout the novel, the orange image undergoes changes in relation to Jeanette's maturation in order to unsettle the dualistic world and set up Jeanette's personal life. Merja Makinen depicts that:

> Doan gives a personal reading of one of the alternate narratives that points the way towards the possibility of displacing binarism, with the metaphor of the orange, particularly when it is turned into marmalade. Where the orange as a fruit still links through its metaphorical employment to a binary, that of

[35] **Ibid.,** p. 39.
[36] **Ibid.,** p. 143.
[37] **Ibid.,** p. 39.

> inner/outer or self/world, marmalade, she argues, combines rind and segments, inner and outer, in a much more complex confection.[38]

Doan suggests an option to eliminate the binary opposition orange represents with a section from Mrs Beeton's marmalade recipe at the beginning of the novel: "When thick rinds are used the top must be thoroughly skimmed, or a scum will form marring the final appearance."[39] This recipe section underlines the possibility that appearance can be disturbed by the excessive interference of the outer. That is to say, if an individual preference is overwhelmed by the outer effects such as oppressive social norms and codes, it is difficult to discover real essence. Marmalade combines tough orange rind and soft orange slices so that it breaks down dualism between inner and outer. Winterson's placement of the recipe implies that she wants to mediate between dichotomies and spoil the hierarchy which privileges outer to inner, society to person. Dichotomy between the tough orange rind and soft orange slices can also be interpreted that the former represents Louie's rigid teachings which prevent Jeanette from discovering the latter symbol of Jeanette's sense of self versus socially-dictated identity. Orange as a fruit or with its shape and colour opens ways for several metaphoric representations. Orange as a fruit is good for health and contains vitamin C which protects a person against diseases. The shape of slices resembles the lungs which are vital to survive and breathe. However, consuming a lot can cause gastrosis with its acidic essence. Bailey states that:

> In … earlier scenes, the mother may think she is providing healthy nutrition for her child; the problem lies, as in her reiterated narratives, with the regimen's single-mindedness. Oranges *can* be sweet, but they are also acidic. …A steady diet of mainly oranges is far from nutritionally sound, especially for a growing child, who needs a variety of nutrients to develop normally. Mother virtually forces oranges upon Jeanette, just as she forcefeeds her child religious fundamentalism and outlaws any non-religious activity. Jeanette's consumption of the oranges, like her acceptance of Mother's religious beliefs and practices, is a prerequisite for Mother's approval …[40].

[38] Merja Makinen, **The Novels of Jeanette Winterson: A Reader's Guide to Essential Criticism**, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, pp. 10-11.
[39] Winterson, **op. cit.**
[40] Bailey**, op. cit.,** p.64.

Her mother tries to protect her child from immoral deeds like tough orange rind by ordering only fruit or her religious beliefs as an absolute truth. However, consuming just orange or following absolutism cannot provide nutritious or beneficial contribution to Jeanette's interpretation of herself. On the contrary, it causes the decay of her choices and desires. Orange is both sweet and sour so it actually mediates opposing sides just like Winterson's associations of orange with both Louie's absolutism and Jeanette's sexual preference.

As a colour, orange is a stimulating one. Accordingly, Jeanette follows her alternative ways with the help of orange demon. It is also a colour of change, a colour of autumn. This novel is a portrayal of Jeanette's changing perspectives and thoughts. Jeanette's perspective changes from absolutism to multiple choices and interpretations. Actually, the more Jeanette's perception of the world develops, the more metaphors like orange gain alternative meanings.

Winterson's multilayered narrative combines Jeanette's experiences with reinterpretation of Biblical stories, fairy tales and intertextual references such as **Jane Eyre**, **Alice in Wonderland** and **Le Morte D'Arthur**. She names the chapters of her novel with the eight books of the Old Testament but she doesn't construct her narrative on the whole Bible texts. Instead, she uses main themes of stories to tell Jeanette's story. On the other hand, she challenges the authority of Bible stories by associating them with Jeanette's ordinary life experience. Winterson replaces omnipotent perspective of grand narratives with her diverse narratives and multiple discourses:

> In blending Biblical references with Jeanette's story, Winterson deliberately challenges the distinction between fact and fiction as well as between the novel she is writing and the Biblical texts she uses for her parody. These Biblical texts are already problematic; not quite history and not quite story-telling, their position on any kind of fact–fiction continuum changes with the point of view of the observer. In the self reflexive chapter 'Deuteronomy', Winterson suggests that the distinction between fact and fiction arises from self-delusion; history and story are not in opposition but are, like 'knots' in a game of 'cat's cradle', so hopelessly tangled that we must learn to take pleasure in the blend.[41]

[41] Laurel Bollinger, "Models of Female Loyalty: the Biblical Ruth in Jeanette Winterson's Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit," **Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature**, Vol. 13, No.2, Autumn 1994, p. 365, (Online) http://www.jstor.org/stable/464115, 04 January 2011.

Winterson blurs the boundaries between history/fact and story/fiction. She implies that history is not a conveyer of objective reality. Instead, it is a subjective story: "We are all historians in our small way."[42] Winterson asserts that people's thoughts are manipulated by dominant conception of history which is seen as an embodiment of universal and objective reality and "Western history as an imperial construction that seeks to deny and silence alternative ways of describing reality."[43] Jeanette criticizes the dominance of history as an absolute truth:

> People like to separate storytelling which is not fact from history which is fact. They do this so that they know what to believe and what not to believe. This is very curious. How is it that no one will believe that the whale swallowed Jonah, when every day Jonah is swallowing the whale? I can see them now, stuffing down the fishiest of fish tales, and why? Because it is history. Knowing what to believe had its advantages. It built an empire and kept people where they belonged, in the bright realm of the wallet….[44].

Grand narratives make people think in the way of dominant ideology. If they question the validity of ideology, they risk their place in a realm of social norms. Therefore, people prefer to believe what they are dictated is an absolute truth. Political and social ideology supports hierarchical binary systems to privilege established truth against alternative interpretations. Winterson disturbs the rigidness of historical facts which can be shelved due to the new facts opposed to the previous ones: "When the Pilgrim Fathers set sail it was not without the opinion of many that they were crazy. History has now decided otherwise."[45] Winterson objects to clear-cut distinctions between binaries and subordination to fixed ideology without criticism: "If we read ourselves as narrative, we can change the story that we are. If we read ourselves as literal and fixed we can change nothing."[46] Thus, Winterson associates Jeanette's life story with fairy tales and other stories. Throughout the novel, she attacks fixed ideology and socially-dictated norms. She

[42] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 120.
[43] Francesca Cateno Méndez, "The Limitless Self: Desire and Transgression in Jeanette Winterson's Oranges are not the Only Fruit and Written on Body", Master of Arts, Barcelona, University of Barcelona, 2010, p. 27.
[44] Winterson, **op. cit.,** 120.
[45] **Ibid.,** p. 121.
[46] Jeanette Winterson, "Endless possibilities," Appendix essay to **Lighthousekeeping**, London, Haperperennial, 2005, (qtd. in Méndez **op. cit.,** p. 62).

tries to eliminate harsh hierarchy between socially-constructed binaries so she considerably pays attention to the unfair dichotomy between man and woman. Jeanette's lesbianism appears as an attack on traditional Western ideology which creates the hierarchy between powerful man and submissive woman. Winterson rejects traditional gender roles like other fixed and dualistic thoughts.

2.2. Subversion of Traditional Gender Roles

Memorized and dictated norms define gender roles in male-dominated society. Binary conception of patriarchal hegemony principally puts woman into constraints of traditional norms which support man's superiority over woman's inferiority. Therefore, patriarchal society dictates woman to act in just its way or no way. Socially-constructed roles force people to lead fabricated experiences in which they keep pretending to be someone else in order to gain access to social life. Front states that: "Each act of performing gender poses repetition of the codes connected with femaleness and maleness, taking part in the masquerade with pre-given roles and costumes."[47] Winterson rejects traditional codes attributed to man and woman and reverses gender roles. Her female character, Jeanette stands as a threat to patriarchy and traditional gender roles because of her attempt to realize her independence from patriarchal dictations and her sexual preference. Cole points out that: "Winterson suggests that the protagonists' personalities can become fluid and even be freed from their own initially defined identities."[48] Jeanette sets a fire to fixed and predetermined categorizations and she seeks a place where she does not have to hide her choices and desires.

Winterson represents the harshness of patriarchy through an authoritative mother and female members of the church community so she not only challenges stable position of male dominance by giving power to woman with religious doctrines but she also reveals hypocrisy of exposed traditional roles. Louie, the

[47] Sonia Front, **Literary and Cultural Theory, Volume 31: Transgressing Boundaries in Jeanette Winterson's Fiction,** Frankfurt am Main, DEU, Peter Lang AG, 12/2009, p.19, (Online) http://site.ebrary.com/id/10601228?

[48] Emily Cole, "Identity Fiction: The Subversive Role of the Feminist Imaginary in Jeanette Winterson's Oranges are not the Only Fruit and The Powerbook," Master of Arts, Southern Connecticut State University, January 2013, p. 1.

representative of patriarchal mentality, builds walls around Jeanette to suppress her into a submissive and passive position so she blocks her alternative roads to find her sense of self. Louie paralyses Jeanette's own emotions and tendencies with the ready-made regulations of male-dominated society. Winterson both shows destructive power of patriarchy on woman's perspective about herself and she undermines dictated gender roles which trap people into the way society wants. Front says that:

> Jeanette Winterson's characters live in the patriarchal culture in which gender entails the attribution of social roles, appearance and sexual orientation. As they do not identify themselves with these significations inscribed on their bodies, gender becomes a burden for them. They decline to be bestowed identity on the basis of gender and therefore they seek to reformulate their selves.[49]

Jeanette's emotions and tendencies are shaped by her mother at her early ages so she cannot hear her own voice and she mirrors herself with her mother's rigid teachings and traditional female roles. The more she gets mature, the more she questions the predetermined attributions to her body and identity. She comes into realization that the key to escape from the prison of gendered identity is to discover herself free from burden of traditional gender roles. Winterson displays that categorizations like gender put people's sense of self into trouble and make them die inside; namely, they cannot be true to themselves due to the oppressions of traditional codes.

Louie embodies power of patriarchy strengthened with evangelical dogmas and she wants Jeanette to take the road leading her to a socially-accepted place. Louie, like patriarchy, supports binaries which create unfair hierarchy between woman and man like other dichotomies. Pastor Finch's saying emphasizes the patriarchal mentality that restricts woman into vulnerable being:

> It has been known for the most holy men to be suddenly filled with evil. And how much more a woman, and how much more a child. Parents, watch your children for the signs. Husbands, watch your wives.[50]

[49] Front, **op. cit.** p. 19.
[50] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 17.

Pastor Finch underlines woman's potentiality to be evil without man's control so woman, like a child, is confined to protection of a superior one. Front states that: "A woman is then treated as somebody subordinated to man, as his part."[51] Pastor Finch also dictates parents' authority on child like Louie who tries to bury Jeanette's emotional and sexual signs. Woman repeatedly goes under oppression of categorizations and socially-dictated rules which determine her place in patriarchy. Louie, like Pastor Finch or patriarchy, supports traditional norms and male-dominance. Pastor Finch also talks about man's evilness but he does not expect him to be protected or warned by someone else. So-called protection of patriarchy even hints its oppression on victimised woman. Jeanette's mother says to her daughter that: "A girl's motto is BE PREPARED."[52] As Louie dictated, woman should be prepared for the demands of patriarchal society or be prepared against her **mixed feelings** to repel them. Patriarchy wants woman to always be in dignity and be ready for dressing with social norms. Woman is forced to live among dictations to her real emotions and behaviours. A little deviation from the socially-dictated rules would corrupt woman as Pastor Finch emphasizes that woman is much more vulnerable to evil if she is not prepared for acting according to social rules.

Winterson displays Louie both as a representative figure of patriarchy and as a subverting image against compulsory male-dominance. That is to say, Winterson juxtaposes dichotomies in order to show the hypocritical power of binary system and categorization. On the one hand, Louie determinedly objects to negotiation between binaries; on the other hand, she is both "enlightened and reactionary at the same time."[53] She pretends to be the ruler of patriarchal and religious commands but deep inside she subverts traditional female roles. Winterson shifts gender roles based on biological differences between man and woman in order to deconstruct omnipotent presence of patriarchy against woman's labelled absence. She also challenges the "sanctity of family"[54] by changing the power relation between woman and man. The family stands as a touchstone of social norms and traditional roles and as a powerful institution, it praises socially-accepted manners. Therefore, Winterson's attack on the

[51] Front, **op. cit.,** p. 26.
[52] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 20.
[53] **Ibid.,** p. 164.
[54] **Ibid.,** p. xiv.

oppression of patriarchal hegemony starts with the heart of society in order to reverse "both the social discourse on gender and the stability of gender identities".[55] **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** starts with Jeanette's depiction of her family:

> Like most people I lived for a long time with my mother and father. My father liked to watch the wrestling, my mother liked to wrestle; it didn't matter what. She was in the white corner and that was that.[56]

Winterson opens up her novel with a simple sentence that describes ordinary nuclear family but then Jeanette's family structure fails to demonstrate expected gender roles. Wrestling depends on physical power so it is associated with masculinity. Winterson here turns the power of man upside down by placing Louie with an active position while making Jeanette's father passive. In wrestling, competitors struggle to gain superiority over the opponent. Winterson gives Louie a superior position with her appeal to wrestle which is a manly-sport and she invalidates general assumptions about gender roles. In the opening scene, the narrator inserts Louie's overwhelming authority on her family while Jeanette's father is overshadowed with the woman's active role. Patriarchal ideology blesses man especially because of having the power of phallus and woman is seen as castrated due to being object to the male desire or his superiority: "In Lacanian terms, while a man has the Phallus, a woman is the Phallus, that is she continues the object, the Other of male desire, concomitantly connoting the Phallus through being its lack."[57] Contrary to the dominant patriarchal belief, Winterson changes conventional costumes of gender roles between Jeanette's mother and father. While Louie is related with activity and power, Jeanette's father, Jack, is associated with submissive and passive roles. The metaphor "white corner"[58] emphasizes Louise's superiority over her husband and daughter; namely, she knocks down their presence with her dominance. Winterson unsettles "the stereotypical

[55] Libby Balter Blume, Thomas W. Blume, "Toward a Dialectical Model of Family Gender Discourse: Body, Identity and sexuality," **Journal of Marriage and Family,** Vol. 65, No. 4, November 2003, p. 788, (Online) http://www.jstor.org/stable/3599890 04 October 2013.
[56] Winterson, **op. cit.**, p. 5.
[57] Front, **op.cit**. p. 31, (After Butler, Gender Trouble, p. 47).
[58] Winterson, **op. cit.**, p. 5.

determinants of identity [and] the shifting genders constitute a repudiation of patriarchal constructions of genders."[59] Jeanette depicts that:

> Her husband was an easy-going man, but I knew it depressed him. He would have cooked it himself but for my mother's complete conviction that she was the only person in our house who could tell a saucepan from a piano. She was wrong, as far as we were concerned, but right as far as she was concerned, and really, that's what mattered.[60]

Winterson identifies Jeanette's father with woman's traditional roles like cooking and his easy-going presence pacifies him. Thus, man is declined into repressed position while woman is favoured with her dominance. Louie's cooking does not symbolize the traditional gender roles but she sets her authority. Louie's omnipotent presence in her family gives an unquestionable authority to her. Winterson continuously attacks on patriarchal hegemony with its own weapon which declines any judgements about its harshness and fixed phallocentric discourse. Louie is the ruler who determines the gap between rights and wrongs. In other words, she seems to be the embodiment of absolute truth according to her fixed ideology based on evangelical dogmas. Jeanette's father represents the repressed woman, Jeanette says that: "Poor Dad, he was never quite good enough."[61] Jeanette's father, like woman in patriarchy, cannot accomplish his visibility and presence. Woman is associated with absence according to phallocentric discourse. Thus, Jack's lack of authority to gain his visibility hints woman's traditional gender codes such as submission and passiveness. In the dialogue between Jeanette and her first female love, Melanie; Jeanette disregards his father's presence and she pretends as if she did not have a father in order to "make [Melanie—who is fatherless—] feel better."[62] Actually, Jeanette's explanation remarks that she subconsciously rejects the law of father and depicts her father as castrated. Winterson points out the arbitrariness of gender identifications and disturbs conventional assumptions about gender identity by challenging its stability in a way that she interchanges the socially-dictated roles of

[59]Front, **op.cit.,** p. 22.
[60] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 8.
[61] **Ibid.**, p. 15.
[62] **Ibid.,** p. 106.

woman and man. Namely, she "both undermines gender roles and reminds us how unconventional many families are."[63]

Winterson creates ambiguities throughout the novel. Although Louie seems to be the fanatic preacher of the religious precepts who supports the patriarchal superiority, she puts on masculine roles like father and husband. The family, at the core of society, is the bearer of social norms and stereotypical gender roles. Louie's masculine traits and her refusal of sexual intercourse with her husband corrupt the traditional norms of family and social life. The narrator emphasizes the absence of sexual intercourse between Jeanette's parents with her statement: "As long as I have known them, my mother has gone to bed at four, and my father has got up at five."[64] Louie wants to associate herself with Virgin Mary who has Jesus without exposing her body to male desire:

> She had a mysterious attitude towards the begetting of children; it wasn't that she couldn't do it, more that she didn't want to do it. She was very bitter about the Virgin Mary getting there first. So she did the next best thing and arranged for a foundling. That was me. [65]

Louie does not have traditional female traits. Instead, she disturbs male superior function in sexual intercourse and procreation. She converts herself into having the power of phallus instead of being the phallus. Her association with Virgin Mary does not regard conventional attributes of womanhood such as pureness, virginity and angel in the house. Rather, Louie desires the authority of father and subverts heterosexual discourse. Bolinger states that:

> Rather than concentrating on the creative power of an omnipotent Father, the text reproduces the conventionally passive Joseph figure in Jeanette's adoptive father; he has no real role in Jeanette's childhood and appears primarily as a victim of his wife's evangelism. The power of creation rests with Jeanette's mother.[66]

[63] Lauren Rusk, **The Life of Otherness: Woolf, Baldwin, Kingston, and Winterson**, New York, Routledge, 2002, p. 113.
[64] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p.20.
[65] **Ibid.,** pp. 5-6.
[66] Bollinger, **op. cit.,** p. 365.

Jack's castrated position in her family enables Louise to be the ultimate bearer of masculine power. The narrator says "Her flesh now, sprung from her head"[67] in order to make an allusion to Athena's birth from Zeus's forehead. Winterson strengthens Louise's desire for creating power of patriarchy or god's authority in a way that she is identified with Zeus and Jeanette represents Athena: "Thus her mother becomes the instrument for erasing an original maternity and replacing it with the patriarchal reproductive script."[68] Louie's associations with Zeus or Virgin Mary give her a reproductive power without male-dominance. Jeanette's saying—"We had no Wise Men because she didn't believe there were any wise men..."[69]—also underlines female authority instead of masculine power. Although man is traditionally associated with culture and mind, Winterson overturns stereotypical labels and clichés. She shows how fragile gendered roles are by switching conventional assumptions about man and woman.

While the church is the embodiment of patriarchal authority, women dominate the church in the novel. Jeanette's life is oriented with female dominance but this female community is still ruled by patriarchal framework. Carter explains that:

> The situation is complicated by the fact that the church's "strong women"- her mother included- have offered Jeanette role models that have lead her to have *faith* in the power of her own femaleness. Those models, however, are defined and sustained by patriarchal law, and the young Jeanette has not understood the significance of their limitations.[70]

Although Louie and the community threaten the male dominance in private and public lives, they cannot realize their authentic voices free from patriarchal mimesis. When Jeanette gets much more mature, she comes to realize Louie's and community's hypocrisy. Her mother's announcement that she sides with the manly

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[67] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 14.
[68] Doreen D'Cruz, "Recovering an Archaic Innocence: Jeanette Winterson's Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit," **Loving Subjects: Narratives of Female Desire**, New York: Peter Lang, 2002, 166-187, Rpt. in **Contemporary Literary Criticism**, Ed. by Jeffrey W. Hunter, Vol. 307, Detroit: Gale, 2011, (Online)http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CH1100105484&v=2.1&u=bogazici&it=r&p=LitRG&sw=w, 5 July 2013.
[69] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 6.
[70] Keryn Carter, "The Consuming Fruit: Oranges, Demons, and Daughters," **Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction,** Vol. 40, No. 1, Fall 1998, p. 19.

judgement of the church instead of her daughter is a turning point for Jeanette whose lesbian relationship with Katy is discovered:

> My mother stood up and said she believed this was right: that women had specific circumstances for their ministry, that the Sunday School was one of them, the Sisterhood another, but the message belonged to the men. Until this moment my life had still made some kind of sense. Now it was making no sense at all. … She ended by saying that having taken on a man's world in other ways I had flouted God's law and tried to do it sexually. This was no spontaneous speech. She and the pastor had talked about it already. It was her weakness for the ministry that had done it. … I knew my mother hoped I would blame myself, but I didn't. I knew now where the blame lay. If there's such a thing as spiritual adultery, my mother was a whore.[71]

Louie repeatedly manipulates Jeanette and her husband by subverting the patriarchy's authority. However, her devotion to the ministry and dogmatic teachings of the church make Louie take sides with patriarchal authority. Louie's explanation that "the message belonged to the men"[72] signifies her acceptance of patriarchal authority. Jeanette emphasizes that: "So there I was, my success in the pulpit being the reason for my downfall. The devil had attacked me at my weakest point: my inability to realise the limitations of my sex."[73] Women's authority in the church seems to be the refusal of omnipotent power of patriarchy. Therefore, Winterson displays that any threat to male authority makes patriarchy remind women of her association with vulnerability and being the inferior one that is limited to male's approval and superiority. Jeanette is accused of imitating male gender roles and also Louie's and church members' active roles in family and public lives actually put them into the similar situation. If Jeanette's sexual feelings are related with adultery, their mimicry of male roles is as evil as Jeanette's. Winterson not only criticizes religious and patriarchal authority but she also points out that woman removes herself from her own interpretation when she mimics and undertakes harshness of patriarchal authority: "[T]he mother is a 'gatekeeper' of patriarchy and so, in a sense, masculine in outlook despite her female sex."[74] Louie and church members interpret Jeanette's sexual tendencies according to phallocentric discourse and stable

[71] Winterson, **op. cit.,** pp. 171-172.
[72] **Ibid.,** p. 171.
[73] **Ibid.,** p. 172.
[74] Makinen, **op. cit.,** p. 31.

heterosexual framework. Therefore, Louie and church members cannot freely express their own thoughts and choices due to the patriarchal dominance.

While Louie liberates her body from colonising power of male, she masters Jeanette's personal feelings and sexual desires with a colonising power of patriarchy; namely, she tries to write her own thoughts and expectations on Jeanette's body and mind. Therefore, Louie wants Jeanette to be missionary in order to teach evangelical doctrines which Louie fanatically supports and she orders Jeanette to fulfil religious and social expectations. Jeanette says that: "I cannot recall a time when I did not know that I was special."[75] She is special for Louise to realize her fundamentalist beliefs and she adopts "a servant of God".[76] Louie captivates Jeanette's whole life into her authority. Jeanette identifies herself with her mother at her early ages but then hypocrisy and betrayal she is exposed by Louie make her become aware of the fact that she cannot pretend socially-prescribed roles because she learns that a person becomes his/her own fake due to the socially-dictated identities.

Winterson represents Jeanette as a traveller who tries to break away the lies and expectations of traditional gender roles and patriarchal ideology. Throughout the novel, the narrator gives us several hints to understand Jeanette's subverting traits of gender codes and fixed identity. Front says that: "Winterson declares war on clichés in her first novel, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, where the protagonist is continuously brazened out with narrow-minded advocates of clichés."[77] Moreover, "[h]er protagonists explore desires that challenge the common mores of traditional society treating their own identities as mysteries to be unravelled."[78] Jeanette actually begins to oppose to the socially-imposed roles at her early ages. She is irritated with the man's phallocentric language in the post office:

> Sweet hearts for a sweet heart,' he said and laughed. That day I had almost strangled my dog with rage, and been dragged from the house by a desperate mother. Sweet I was not. But I was a little girl, ergo, I was sweet, and here were sweets to prove it. I looked in the bag. Yellow and pink and sky blue and orange, and all of them heart-shaped and all of them said things like,
> *Maureen 4 Ken*,

[75] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 5.
[76] **Ibid.,** p. 14.
[77] Front, **op. cit.,** p. 49.
[78] Cole, **op. cit.,** p. 1.

> *Jack' n' Jill, True*.
> On the way home I crunched at the *Maureen 4 Ken's*. I was confused. Everyone always said you found the right man.[79]

Jeanette protests against social attributions such as sweet and heart to indicate gender identity. This seems to be an innocent identification but actually all these codes manipulate woman's perception about herself. So-called positive association of patriarchal discourse like sweet opens woman's presence to male's approval. The fact that the man in the post-office calls Jeanette as a poppet that seems to be nice and gives her heart-shaped sweets can be interpreted that patriarchy makes woman dependent on his gaze by feeding her appeal "with aesthetic objectifications of femininity and ... a lot of products which accompany gaining perfect appearance since the cultural indicators define femininity as the approval of aesthetic ideal femininity".[80] Jeanette furiously rejects the idealized woman image which satisfies male gaze and her rage is caused by traditional gendered assumptions: "Jeanette refuses to fulfil a model of girl as a well-behaved and pretty creature."[81] When the man says that: "'Sweet hearts for a sweet heart"',[82] she becomes furious. Her rage causes her to be removed from home by her mother. This situation foreshadows her expulsion from both her home and the church because of her lesbian orientation and her rejection to take part in socially-dictated gender roles. Thus, she becomes complicated about the right man. The reason that she eats the sweets written "Maureen 4 Ken"[83] hints her willingness to eliminate patriarchal discourse which supports woman attractiveness for male gaze or desire.

Jeanette is overwhelmingly exposed to the harshness of stable patriarchal ideology and conventional gender roles. Louie celebrates Jeanette's adolescence with a pink raincoat which announces her femininity:

> `Which way round does it go?'
> I was feeling trapped.
> `It'll keep you dry which every way.

[79] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 92.
[80] Rachel Russel, Melissa Tyler after Kowalczyk, "Introduction," in: **W poszukiwaniu malej dziewczynki,** p. 14, Worcklow: Konsola, 2003, (qtd in Front, **op. cit.,** p. 24).
[81] Front, **op. cit.,** p. 24.
[82] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 92.
[83] **Ibid.**

> 'I remembered a film I had seen called *The Man in the Iron Mask*.
> `It's a bit big,' I ventured.
> `You can grow into it.'
> `But Mum….'
> `We'll have it.'
> `But Mum.
> 'It was bright pink.
> We walked in silence to the fish stall.
> I hated her.
> I looked at the shrimps.
> They were pink all over too.
> There was a woman next to me carrying a Battenburg cake.
> It had pink icing and little pink roses.
> I felt sick.[84]

As soon as a child is born, s/he is exposed to gender categorizations that pink is for girl and blue is for boy. That is to say, the child comes into the world with social norms and expectations of gender: "Gender marks boundaries which people are trained to abide by since childhood."[85] Easy way of categorization especially in the gender issue takes control of our lives. Louie, as a patriarchal force, orders Jeanette to experience the pink world which is commonly identified with femininity. Pink, like heart-shaped sweets, is a simple way to manipulate woman with social expectations. Even though these classifications seem to be innocent, they neglect one's free will. The raincoat covers Jeanette's whole body with its bright pink colour. Thus, Louie tries to cover Jeanette's emotions and sexual preference with female codes: "The body surface is thus engraved with gender, and models of femininity ...".[86] But the oversize raincoat symbolizes that Jeanette's body rejects social dictates and traditional gender roles. Jeanette doesn't fit into heterosexual categorization so she feels caged in Louie's fabricated facts which are representative of patriarchal social norms when she wears bright pink raincoat:

> Buying a bright pink raincoat for Jeanette in *Oranges* is her mother's attempt to teach her to live up to social expectations. She doesn't pay attention to her daughter's objections and in consequence, Jeanette feels miserable since she associates the colour both with revolting or bland things.[87]

[84] **Ibid.,** pp. 101-102.
[85] Front, **op. cit.,** p.23.
[86] **Ibid.,** p. 20.
[87] **Ibid.,** p. 24.

Jeanette gets disturbed by her mother's tiresome insistence on fixed categorization and taboos. Jeanette wants to break free from traditional identifications about gender and identity. She is so much overwhelmed by her mother's rigidness that she only perceives pink things and she is disgusted with them. She feels paralysed with Louie's manipulation. Louie's sentence—"You can grow into it"[88]—symbolizes her mother's aim to raise her child according to social norms and expectations and make her learn traditional female roles. Front indicates that: "A woman's body is read as signifier of her identity".[89] Thus, Louie announces Jeanette's femininity with a bright pink raincoat which draws attention in an easy way. Her raincoat "will keep [her] dry which every way"[90]; namely, it protects her body from her socially improper desires and hides her preference. Therefore, she feels like "*The Man in the Iron Mask*".[91] Her emotions and thoughts are disguised by Louie's fixed ideology and the iron mask symbolizes dictated roles which hide Jeanette's own emotions. The pain of her body is masked with Louie's harshness:

> Girl's body becomes her enemy that she is subjugated so as to adapt/adopt it to the future role of woman. She is often expected to suffer, only to make her body fit with the paradigm: Regarded as flawed and defective, the natural body thus pathologized. [92]

Gender assumptions create a gap between one's sense of self and social expectations. Especially women are forced to perform dictated female roles without regarding their emotional expectations. Winterson shows that woman's body is squeezed into taboos and social norms and her body is under attack of male gaze. At the end of the Numbers chapter, Jeanette tells a little story and remarks that: "The women suffer most. Their shoulders bared and white like hard-boiled eggs."[93] The woman body with her gendered costume presented to male gaze/desire enables man to have control over her body and woman suffers from signified "as flawed and

[88] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 102.
[89] Front, **op. cit.,** p. 23.
[90] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 101.
[91] **Ibid.**
[92] Front., **op. cit.,** p. 23.
[93] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 113.

defective"[94] because "her body never belongs to her entirely".[95] Jeanette does not want to fit into heterosexual discourse and be in a submissive position under male-dominance. Her sexual preference appears as a protest against man's control over the woman body and fixed patriarchal ideology. Jeanette's encounter with her first love, Melanie occurs after Jeanette's refusal to fit into her bright pink raincoat. This situation emphasizes Jeanette's subversion of patriarchal hegemony and her removal from Louie's rigid orders and expectations.

Winterson removes her narrative from well-ordered, authoritative and rigid discourse by interrelating made-up stories and fairy tales with Jeanette's journey. She also subverts clear-cut distinctions between genres and rescues her narrative and imagination from the limitation of writing in one-dimensional mode. Winterson's redesigned fairy tales blur the boundaries between fact and fiction, and interrelation between fairy tales and Jeanette's life-story present alternative ways to follow her desires and feelings away from the dictations of real life. Her fairy tales disrupt both patriarchal dichotomy system and dictations of social norms although traditional fairy tales are used to impose socially-expected gender models, cultural and social assumptions of social life: "Fairy tales and children's literature were written with the purpose of socializing children to meet definite normative expectations at home and in the public sphere."[96] Patriarchal discourse manipulates women to be seen as vulnerable as children through the idealized world of traditional fairy tales which actually portrays socially accepted gender roles:

> ... subconsciously women may transfer from fairy tales into real life cultural norms which exalt passivity, dependency, and self-sacrifices as a female's cardinal virtues. ... Fairy tales perpetuate the patriarchal *status quo* by making female subordination seem a romantically desirable, indeed an inescapable fate. ... Traditional fairy tales fuse morality with romantic fantasy in order to portray cultural ideals for human relationships. ... In short, fairy tales are not just entertaining fantasies, but powerful transmitters of romantic myths which encourage women to internalize only aspirations deemed appropriate to 'real' sexual functions within a patriarchy.[97]

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[94] Front, **op. cit.,** p. 23.
[95] **Ibid.,** p. 26.
[96] Jack Zipes **Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion: The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization,** New York, Wildman Press, 1983, (qtd. in Reisman, op. cit., p. 18.)
[97]Karen E. Rowe, "Feminism and Fairy Tales," **Don't Bet on the Prince,** Ed. by Jack Zipes, New York, Rutledge, 1986, p. 219.

Patriarchy creates a fantasy world for woman to direct her into traditional gender roles which provide a secure and idealized place in domestic and public life. Male-dominated society with its fantasy world in fairy tales conveys social taboos and codes into woman's personality and her body. Woman is forced to perform inferior position in which she needs approval of male gaze or desires. Her mentality and her body are served to male's approval. Woman is born into phallocentric discourse that reinforces social and moral norms. Male dominant narratives **normalize** woman's predetermined gender models such as passive and inferior and destine her into misleading assumptions of patriarchy. However, Winterson challenges the notion of traditional fairy tales which are representative of conventional gender roles. While traditional fairy tales remove woman from belonging to her emotions and body and reduce her into dependent and inferior position, Winterson uses fairy tales in a way that Jeanette goes beyond the boundaries of stable and fixed phallocentric discourse and discovers herself and her sexual identity. Winterson celebrates Jeanette's limitless imagination free from man's omnipotent perspective and fixed patriarchal ideology with her reshaped fairy tales:

> Using fairy tale fiction as a toll for law decoding or re-seeing reality allows Winterson to manipulate and complicate the supposed law of Freudian /Lacanian theory. ... Winterson saves women from this automatic subjugation as she reinvests the language of power with female imagination.[98]

> Rejecting conventional gender hierarchies and challenging the cultural construction of heterosexuality, Winterson's storytelling becomes a source of alternative models of female identity. ... Winterson is undertaking the bold enterprise of rewriting the traditional tale in order to reinvent the position of women as gendered subjects in the patriarchal discourse of myth, romance, and fairy tale.[99]

Winterson attacks the constraints of phallocentric discourse with her imagination which appreciates fluidity and multiplicity in interpretations instead of omnipotent

[98] Cole, **op. cit.,** p. 19.
[99] Hilary Hinds, "Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit: Reaching Audiences Other Lesbian Texts Cannot Reach," **New Lesbian Criticism**, Ed. by Sally Munt, Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, 1992, (qtd. in Makinen, **op. cit.,** p. 47).

and one-dimensional perspective. She redesigns fairy tales by juxtaposing traditional gendered behaviours and she unsettles the manipulation of man-made discourse. She underlines that fixed categorization of femininity puts woman into a submissive and passive position ruled by male-dominance.

Winterson's perfection story both shows catastrophe of single-mindedness and challenges traditional gender roles with subversion of general romantic structure in fairy tales. The story begins like other traditional fairy tales with the phrase: "Once upon a time [which] draws the reader into a timeless fantasy realm..."[100] and it seems to be a romantic story about a prince searching for love. However, the descriptions of characters falsify the conventional gender models:

> She was very wise too, being well acquainted with the laws of physics and the nature of the universe. …Meanwhile, in a part of the forest that had become a town, a great prince roamed sadly along the corridors of his palace. He was also quite pretty, though a little petulant at times.[101]

Woman takes active position in which she masters at both culture and nature by subverting dichotomy between them while the prince is portrayed by feminine codes like "pretty"[102] instead of handsome. Also, he has ill-personality as being "petulant"[103] although he searches for flawlessness: '"I want a woman, without blemish inside or out, flawless in every respect. I want a woman who is perfect."'[104] The prince misinterprets the perfection as flawlessness because of his fixed and bigoted ideology like Louie and church members. As an authority, the prince sends his advisor to the perfect woman for being a wife to him. But Winterson's perfection story reverses the romantic status of conventional fairy tales. The heroine appears as an independent and self-esteemed woman instead of being sensitive to romantic assumptions that "Some day my prince will come".[105] She reflects the heroine's subversive presence against stereotypical gender roles with this dialogue:

> `Fair maid,' he began.

[100] Rowe, **op. cit.,** p. 221.
[101] Winterson, **op. cit,** pp. 78-79.
[102] **Ibid.,** p. 79.
[103] **Ibid.**
[104] **Ibid.**
[105] Rowe, **op. cit.,** p. 209.

> `If you want to chat,' she said, `you'll have to come back later, I'm working to a deadline.'
> `But I am royal,' he told her. ...
> … `we've got to get moving, I'm taking you to the prince.'
> `What for?' asked the woman, ladling out her own soup.
> `He might want to marry you.'
> `I'm not getting married,' she said.
> The advisor turned to her in horror. `Why not?' ...
> Three days later, there was a great commotion in the forest. The prince and his retinue were arriving. At the sight of the woman, who was sitting spinning, just as before, he leapt from his pallet, crying, `I'm cured, she must be perfect.' And he fell on his knees and begged her to marry him.
> The court turned to one another, smiling. They could stop all this nonsense now, and live happily ever after.
> The woman smiled down on the kneeling price, and stroked his hair.
> `You're very sweet, but I don't want to marry you.'
> There was a gasp of horror from the gathered court.
> Then silence.[106]

The dialogue between the heroine and the advisor clearly implies that man-made discourse does not appreciate woman's self-expressive language free from phallocentricism. The heroine's disapproval doesn't make any sense to him at all. Instead, he insistently tries to persuade her in a way that he presents himself as a royal man that bears both authority and power. The advisor expects the heroine to be submissive to the orders of patriarchy. Therefore, he gets appalled when the fair lady disregards his offers which are a lady's wishes to come true in traditional fairy tales. She does not signify a fair lady's stereotypical traits like Snow White confined into a glass coffin or Sleeping Beauty silenced by her sleep. Both Snow White and Sleeping Beauty wait for a prince who would come to bestow life force because a prince is seen as a source of life in fairy tales. The heroine of the perfection tale is a self-sufficient and powerful woman who needs nobody's guidance for maintaining her life. The prince's romantic marriage proposal is not accepted by the heroine because she does not want to lose her freedom under man's authority. Her refusal is not only a shock for the prince and his court but also a threat to their authority:

> Portrayals of adolescent waiting and dreaming patterns of double enchantment, and romanticizations of marriage contribute to the potency of fairy tales. Yet, such alluring fantasies gloss the heroine's inability to act self-assertively, total reliance on external rescues, willing bondage to father

[106] Winterson, **op. cit.,** pp. 81-82.

> and prince and, her restriction to hearth and nursery. ... the heroine adopts conventional female virtues, that is patience, sacrifice, and dependency, and *because* she submits to patriarchal needs, ...[107].

The happily ever after ending of fairy tales is displayed by marriage and marriage is portrayed as an all lifetime dream for a woman. Actually, marriage is a bondage transmitted from father's authority to husband's guidance. It is an institution that supports traditional gender roles and imprisons woman into a limited place.

Winterson removes the expected ending of the fairy tale by the heroine's refusal and she poses a problem to traditional structure of fairy tales; namely, she parodies traditional plot and characterization of fairy tales. She interposes Pastor's preaching about perfection with the perfection tale in order to question the ideology of the church which deludes people's emotions and thoughts by its strict and fixed doctrines. Prince tries to persuade the heroine for marriage with his book "*The Holy Mystery of Perfection"*[108] like Louie and church members who try to regulate Jeanette's life according to strict and fixed dictations:

> … the prince began to write a book to pass the time. It was called *The Holy Mystery of Perfection*. He divided it into three sections.
> Part one: the philosophy of perfection. The Holy Grail, the unblemished life, the final aspiration on Mount Carmel. Saint Teresa and the Interior Castle.
> Part two: the impossibility of perfection. The restless search in this life, the pain, the majority who opt for second best. Their spreading corruption. The importance of being earnest.
> Part three: the need to produce a world full of perfect beings. The possibility thereby of a heaven on earth. A perfect race. An exhortation to single-mindedness.[109]

Part 3 is especially an explicit declaration of fixed ideology similar to church members' and Louie's strict dogmas which aim to create flawless people and make Jeanette a perfect advocator of moral and social virtues. This part actually implies that perfection can be created by removal of any threat to authoritative ideology. In other words, the "perfect race"[110] bears stereotypical social and moral roles dictated

[107] Rowe, **op. cit.,** p. 209.
[108] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 80.
[109] **Ibid.**
[110] **Ibid.**

by an omnipotent point of view. This part also warns us that Jeanette's imperfection about her sexual preference would corrupt the utopian idea of creating "a heaven on earth".[111] It is not a heaven in reality but a system of standardization or **normalization** by removal of alternative and multiple characterizations. Moreover, it reminds "a scary Hitlerian synthesis: imperfections must be removed".[112] This part summarizes the strict and dogmatic viewpoint of the whole book: "... the prince begins with the thesis of perfection in religious terms, examines its antithesis of imperfection in worldly terms and concludes with"[113] his manifesto "locked into a single-minded quest for perfection rather than the multivalent quest for subjectivity …".[114] Although the prince intends to show the importance of absolute truth in Part 2, the phrase "The importance of being earnest"[115] alludes to Oscar Wilde's play on the hypocritical assumptions of Victorian society which imprison people into social and moral constraints and make them hide their actual characteristics behind moral norms and social etiquettes of high status. The main character of the play, Jack, creates an alter ego named Ernest in order to rescue himself from his social and moral responsibilities. In a similar way, Jeanette creates an alter ego named **orange demon** to realize her sexual preference free from predestined social and gender roles. Oscar Wilde, like Winterson, satirises stereotypical gender roles in a way that he reflects them superficial and insincere. The name, Ernest is the pun of Earnest that means seriousness and trustworthiness but Jack becomes Ernest in a dishonest way. Oscar Wilde makes an irony with his title; namely, he actually depicts that fixed assumptions and social norms make people untrue to themselves so our own experiences are much more precious than prescribed identities. In the play, Algernon's saying—"The truth is rarely pure and never simple"[116]—outlines the relativity of the truth which Winterson aims to show throughout her novel. In Oscar Wilde's play, marriage which appears as a social contract rather than being the

[111] **Ibid.**
[112] Delong. **op. cit.,** p. 266.
[113] **Ibid.**
[114] **Ibid.,** p. 267.
[115] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 80.
[116] Oscar Wilde, **The Importance of Being Earnest, A Trivial Comedy for Serious People**, The Electronic Classics Series, Jim Manis, Editor, PSU-Hazleton, Hazleton, PA 18202, 2006 – 2012, p. 10, (Online) http://www2.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/oscar-wilde/importance-of-being-earnest.pdf

promise of love is emphasized as in Winterson's novel. She also criticizes the institutional status of marriage which neglects love but involves dependency both on social norms and patriarchal authority. She introduces not only fixed ideology and hypocrisy of the prince's perfection book which contradicts itself but also she intertwines Jeanette's story and some allusions. Winterson makes the independent heroine of the fairy tale refuse fixed ideology of the prince's book and the heroine tries to convince the prince that she is not appropriate to his definition of perfection:

> The woman was indeed perfect, there was no doubt about that, but she wasn't flawless. He, the prince, had been wrong. She was perfect because she was a perfect balance of qualities and strengths. She was symmetrical in every respect.[117]

The prince becomes aware of the fact that he is wrong about his definition but he is the representative of the law. Therefore, he should blame the heroine of being imperfect and reveal publicly her evil side with magical powers. When woman has power and independence, she is immediately associated with evilness and being an outcast like the witch in fairy tales. The heroine's refusal of marriage and definition of perfection lead her into death because woman should not try to destroy the authority of patriarchy in conventional terms. The heroine's death foreshadows Jeanette's dismissal from both church and her home because of her reluctance to realize a perfect mission of being dedicated to fixed ideology and moral absolutism. Both the heroine and Jeanette sabotage inflexibility of traditional gender roles and resist against the oppression of single-mindedness and dualism:

> Winterson intimates that the powerful man is one who insists that his desire dictates reality even predicts it. ... What the Prince does is to extinguish the female thought process, female imagination and desire. The way that Winterson uses fairytales here as a story within a story is indicative of her reflections on binary thinking. The search for perfection is flawed and the idea that people can be controlled and labelled by others is also challenged.[118]

At the end of the fairy tale, the prince encounters an old man who sells only orange. This situation relates with Louise's fixed idea that "Oranges are the only

[117] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 83.
[118] Cole, **op. cit.,** p. 22.

fruit"[119] and the prince's rigid definition of perfection. The prince also searches for a book and the old man offers him **Frankenstein** and then gives information about it:

> And he pulled from his pocket a leather bound book. `I don't know if it's up your street, it tells you how to build a perfect person, it's all about this man who does it, but it's no good if you ain't got the equipment.' ... `It's a bit weird,' continues the old man, `this geezer gets a bolt through the neck….'[120].

Dr. Frankenstein aims to create flawless man but he creates a monster that causes many people's death like the prince who orders the heroine to be beheaded. The heroine's death causes a catastrophe: "Instantly, the blood became a lake, and drowned the advisors and most of the court. The prince only managed to escape by climbing a tree."[121] Louie, symbolised by the prince and Dr. Frankenstein, wants to establish her own authority without thinking about the consequences of her deeds. Bailey claims that:

> Mother adopts in order to indulge her power fantasy of building a perfect creature. But, like the prince, Mother lacks "the equipment" to achieve her goal. Because she eschews all secular knowledge for a decidedly skewed version of Christianity, her project is doomed. She spends much time in Bible study, but only to read the Bible as the prince reads *Frankenstein*: to confirm her own prejudices and sense of superiority.[122]

Jeanette's experiences and struggles are intensified by several related stories. **Frankenstein** is one of the references which help to draw attention to Louie's ill-attempts on her daughter's personal life. Louie uses the Bible as a shield to guard her fixed and dogmatic beliefs, and to manipulate Jeanette's emotions and thoughts. She views the world as if she wears blinders. Both Louie and the prince interpret the world through traditional norms while Jeanette and the heroine undermine pre-destined gender roles. The heroine's refusal of marriage and her independency are well-related with Jeanette's reluctance to a kind of marriage which supports self-sacrifice to male-authority instead of love and intimacy. Jeanette's subconscious fear towards marriage is revealed by her dream:

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[119] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 39.
[120] **Ibid.,** p. 86.
[121] **Ibid.,** p. 85.
[122] Bailey, **op. cit.,** p. 67.

> It was spring, the ground still had traces of snow, and I was about to be married. My dress was pure white and I had a golden crown. As I walked up the aisle the crown got heavier and heavier and the dress more and more difficult to walk in. I thought everyone would point at me, but no one noticed. Somehow I made it to the altar. The priest was very fat and kept getting fatter, like bubble gum you blow. Finally we came to the moment, `You may kiss the bride.' My new husband turned to me, and here were a number of possibilities. Sometimes he was blind, sometimes a pig, sometimes my mother, sometimes the man from the post office, and once, just a suit of clothes with nothing inside.[123]

She gets annoyed with traditional wedding ceremony and it turns into a nightmare. Her sexual preference directly corrupts heterosexual discourse so she cannot imagine a happy union with a man. The phrase "a suit of clothes with nothing inside"[124] highlights that there is not any right man for her. Jeanette refuses her aunt's words: "'There's time enough for you to get a boy"'[125] by saying that '"I don't think I want one."'[126] But the patriarchal world disregards personal preferences as her aunt states: '"There's what we want, [and] there's what we get, remember that."'[127] There are no good examples of marriage: Hilda's husband "drinks every penny and she daren't go to the police"[128] and of heterosexual relationships around her: "the girls were always squashed against the wall".[129] All these cause her to associate men with animalistic and negative features. In patriarchal discourse, woman is not free enough to take over her own preferences as Jeanette's aunt dictates. The groom even becomes her mother who represents patriarchal authority for Jeanette. She assumes that marriage is a patriarchal illusion to be presented to woman in disguise of happiness: "woman is supposed to enter the male world which expects her to participate in it in a passive invisible way."[130] She seeks for reference texts like **The Little Red Riding Hood** and **Beauty and the Beast** to shape her assumptions about marriage and heterosexual discourse. In both fairy tales, male desire/gaze is depicted as an animalistic nature and the woman's body, as a representative of her sexuality, is transparent to male's

[123] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 91.
[124] **Ibid.**
[125] **Ibid.,** p. 94.
[126] **Ibid.**
[127] **Ibid.,** p. 95.
[128] **Ibid.,** p. 97.
[129] **Ibid.,** p. 92.
[130] Front, **op. cit.,** p. 32.

authority. In **Beauty and the Beast**, the heroine marries a Beast to rescue her father. Her complete loyalty to the Beast is awarded: "immediately, the beast is transformed into a handsome young prince, and they both live happily ever after."[131] But Jeanette adds that: "What do you do if you marry a beast? Kissing them didn't always help."[132] That is to say, women's obedience to male authority does not actually bring peaceful life to them in reality. Instead, woman's submissive role is reinforced. In patriarchal discourse, "a woman is considered destined to get married... A woman remaining single would be treated as somebody infringing on nature".[133] Beauty is bestowed with a handsome young prince for fulfilling the tasks of marriage while The Little Red Riding Hood is punished for straying from the right path and being alone in the wood. She has already been in danger because of being alone in woods where she is deceived by the wolf. In this fairy tale, the wolf represents male desire/gaze that victimizes woman in a deceptive way: "... beasts are crafty. They disguise themselves like you and I."[134] Woman is depicted as vulnerable to be taken advantage of and she becomes a victim of patriarchal oppression. Therefore, she is expected to submit to the traditional roles of her gender to have an illusionary place. Otherwise, she becomes completely castrated and marginalized: "Women who cross the boundaries of Mainland into the wild are not tolerated but punished and placed in the social invisibility."[135]

Winterson interweaves her challenging reshaped fairy tales and conventional fairy tales which dress people with gendered costumes in order to show that socially-dictated roles, patriarchal oppression and traditional gender patterns undermine one's sense of the self by highlighting inflexibility of socially-constructed identity. She arranges a journey for Jeanette with alternative stories so that she can discover the fluidity and the multiplicity of herself.

[131] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 93.
[132] **Ibid.**
[133] Front, **op. cit.,** p. 31.
[134] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 93.
[135] Front, **op. cit.,** p. 27.

2.3. Redefine Your Self

Jeanette's redefinition of herself is an individuation from her mother's and church members' established descriptions and dictations. Established and prejudiced thoughts that support the binary system do not give an answer to Jeanette as a matured girl. She wakens from her mother's dreams that lead a straight path of unquestionable and inflexible teachings. She becomes aware that her mother's fixed structure cannot satisfy her feelings and thoughts any more. She says that: "I had often thought of questioning her, trying to make her tell me how she saw the world. I used to imagine we saw things just the same, but all the time we were on different planets."[136] As a child, Jeanette is dominated with her mother's doctrines but her flourishing emotions and thoughts make her understand that her crucial questions about herself and the world do not make any sense in her mother's world. Instead, her curiosity is smoothened by orange although she is "going to need more than an icon".[137] Jeanette and her mother view the world from different perspectives so she should set out on a journey to construct her sense of self unrestricted by prescribed roles and rules. Winterson acknowledges in the introduction of her novel that Jeanette is a traveller who seeks for alternative paths of life which oppose to restrictions of her preordained life by her mother:

> Everyone, at some time in their life, must choose stay with a ready-made world that may be safe but which is also limiting, or to push forward, often past the frontiers of commonsense, into a personal place, unknown and untried. In [**Oranges are not the Only Fruit**], this quest is one of sexuality as well as individuality. [138]

We are born into socially-constructed identities scripted on our skins and are exposed to predestined roles. We need a trigger to overcome limitations of social and moral walls of the established world. Jeannette's sexual preference mainly directs her to search for her own choices and interpretations: "In adolescence, ... she begins to threaten the security of the entire community as she strives to enact her *difference*

[136] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 145.
[137] Ibid., p. 169.
[138] Ibid., p. xiv-xv.

from her mother and her mother' desires."[139] She needs to declare her individuation from her mother in order to redefine herself:

> For Kristeva, as for Freud, the original "not self" of any individual is the mother. As the boundaries between the child's body and the mother's gradually become more and more distinct, the child suffers an enormous sense of loss for the wholeness he or she had once experienced with the mother. Throughout this the "whole," or pre-Oedipal stage, the child had not perceive itself as separate from the mother; the sense of loss that accompanies the child's realization of separateness is, for Kristeva, complicated by fear—even horror. To develop a self the infant must retain its sense of *difference from* the mother: thus, the mother comes to represent the border between the self and the unknown. That border must be maintained at a distance because it retains the capacity to destroy—even devour—the child's emerging self. Paradoxically, the border is necessary to the child's development: It defines the child's sense of self by its very difference, separateness.[140]

Jeanette, as a child, views the world from her mother's mirror, but the mirror cracks when she gets mature and Jeanette understands that her mother's mirror cannot reflect her sense of self any more. Her realization of her mother's hypocritical thoughts, her deceptions and her betrayal is the turning point for Jeanette to redefine herself independently from the mother and her expectations. The distance of the border between Jeanette and her mother is so important that it can corrupt her sense of self while it can provide her with a reconstruction of her perception about herself. Jeanette's individuation from her mother is not a subversion of the love bond between them. Rather, it represents her separateness from her mother's rigidity. But Louie disregards her daughter's declaration of separateness and she damages Jeannette's sense of self because she cannot keep her connection with Jeanette at a safe distance. Jeanette needs a journey away from her home and the church to reach her choices and inclinations. Although her mother's rejection of her sexual identity causes complexities about her own self, it also directs her to a new destination about herself. Jeanette implies her separation from her mother—who has not recognized yet—with this sentence: "In her head she was still queen, but not my queen any

[139] Carter, **op. cit.,** p. 16.
[140] **Ibid.**

more, not the White Queen any more."[141] Her mother's betrayal by burning all her daughter's possessions—which reveal her sexual preference—breaks the bond of trust between mother and daughter. She is no longer the queen who symbolizes trust and adoration for Jeanette although she still tries to dominate her. When she is dismissed from her home by Louie, she expresses her mother's rigidness on her thoughts and authority: "my mother had painted the white roses red and now she claimed they grew that way".[142] Winterson here reminds us of the Queen of Hearts in **Alice in Wonderland** who rules the Wonderland with absolute and fixed rules. Jeanette's sense of self is not what her mother wants it to be so her mother forces Jeanette to be as she desires. The playing cards paint the white roses red in order to convince the Queen that "they grew that way".[143] Louie tricks Jeanette with her fixed ideology in a way that her dogmatic teachings are the representative of the absolute truth in the world. Her mother both plays the roles of the playing cards and the Queen; she both hides alternative ways like the Queen who insists on red roses and she deceives Jeanette like the playing cards who paint the white roses red in order to hide their real colour. Louie cannot accept her daughter's own interpretation about herself so she creates a Wonderland where she aims to fulfil her expectations on Jeanette who is actually frustrated by the hypocrisies and the illusions of Louie's Wonderland. Jeanette's parting from the Wonderland and her mother's kingdom frees her own emotions and thoughts. Her mother says to her that "You can change the world".[144] Although her saying is for Jeanette's mission to be advocated to fixed and moral teachings for rescuing the world from sins, Winterson hints that Jeannette is the only person to have an ability to change her world and find her own voice. Therefore, her sexual awakening removes her from her mother's Wonderland where her mother commits herself to one way of thinking, and makes her enter a new world where she can realize her sense of self.

Jeanette's malnutrition by her mother's absolutism is relieved by Elsie, who appears as a surrogate mother. Her relativism opens alternative ways of interpretation

[141] Winterson, **op. cit.,** 143.
[142] **Ibid.,** p. 174.
[143] **Ibid.**
[144] **Ibid.,** p. 14.

for Jeanette and she "helps her to survive in the secular world".[145] She fortifies her power of imagination and interpretation with poems from such outstanding poets as Blake, Byron and W.B. Yeats, all of whom are famous for their creative power of imagination in their works. One of the texts Elsie reads to Jeanette is **Goblin Market** by Christina Rossetti in which she demonstrates male oppression on woman's colonized body. This poem foreshadows Jeanette's awakening sexuality which she wants to perform without the oppression of male dominance. Elsie is the one who opens her house to Jeanette's first love affair with Melanie and so she encourages Jeanette to experience her own sexual preference and tries to protect them from the danger of Louie's and the church members' oppressive treatments. Her friendship with Elsie is one of the most important steps which lead her to climb over the constructed walls around her. Elsie foregrounds people's capacity to rebuild and gain victory with the quotation from W.B Yeats' **Lapis Lazuli**: "All things fall and are built again/And those that build them again are gay".[146] Jeanette has to shatter the walls of her mother's inflexible beliefs in order to find her sense of self even if she pays for it. Nothing can stand stable, everything goes under changes and even the fallen can be rebuilt. Jeanette lets the constructed identity fall when she realizes her sexual preference. Despite the struggles and difficulties, reconstruction of her sense of identity enables her to gain victory. She discovers the fluidity of herself free from established assumptions: "... [**Oranges are not the Only Fruit**] …where meaning and identity are affirmed, contested, and then either reaffirmed or deconstructed."[147] Jeanette understands that she does not have to follow a written fate by her mother. Instead, she has the ability to redefine herself and her destiny is actually in her hands. She asserts that: "I will not have a seamless wonder but a sandwich laced with mustard of my own."[148] She is not satisfied with her mother's seemingly perfect and orderly world any more, she wants her own subjectivity. She adds that:

[145]Kathryn Simpson, **York Notes Advanced: "Oranges are not the Only Fruit" by Jeanette Winterson**, U.K., Pearson Education Limited, 2001, p. 54.
[146] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 40.
[147] Reisman, **op. cit.,** p. 11.
[148] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 122.

> If you always eat out you can never be sure what's going in, and received information is nobody's exercise. Rotten and rotting. Here is some advice. If you want to keep your own teeth, make your own sandwiches….[149].

Social dictations and prescribed roles remove us from being aware of our choices. We cannot notice what our personal story is unless we release ourselves from ready-made narratives. Jeanette needs to experience her own story rather than being stuck in the walls of her mother's dogmatic authority. Louie's betrayals like burning the letters and lies such as Jeanette's discovery of adoption papers and **Jane Eyre**'s real end weaken the rigid walls around her daughter because she understands that her mother's false narratives distract her from self-knowledge. Whereas Louie adopts Jeanette to be a missionary like Jane who marries St John in her fabricated version of **Jane Eyre**, the girl actually leads Jane's path in which she prefers Rochester—love and desire—to socially-dictated roles: "Jeanette as she grows disputes other peoples' assumptions and resists fitting into pigeonholes: missionary, heterosexual, virgin, demon."[150] Her discovery triggers her scepticism and she questions her constructed identity between the walls of her mother and the church. Her mother's seemingly protective walls turn into the walls between Jeanette's preferences and her mother's monolithic perspective:

> Walls protect and walls limit. It is in the nature of walls that they should fall. That walls should fall is the consequence of blowing your own trumpet.[151]

The walls are constructed by her mother and the church should fall for Jeanette to get rid of the limitations on her preferences. Winterson makes Jeanette appear like Joshua whose "faith in God's promise and his trust in God's instruction to walk around the walls and to blow a trumpet leads to the fall of the city walls...".[152] Jeanette's struggle is not against God but against the manipulations of the church and her mother's evangelical absolutism. Jeanette blows her own trumpet just as she makes her own sandwich. That is to say, she objects to the imprisonment of the walls which are safe on surface but indeed restricts her into the cage of singularity and she

[149] **Ibid.**
[150] Rusk, **op. cit.,** pp. 109-110.
[151] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 143.
[152] Simpson, **op. cit.,** p. 39.

tries to determine her sexual preference which collapses the rigidness of the walls around her. Although she is washed away between her choices and social dictations, she dares to go beyond the wall. Her complexities whether to go or remain are portrayed with her dream to find herself in "The City of Lost Chances"[153] in which "…everyone is who can't make the ultimate decision".[154] Her dream not only reflects her uncertainty and troubles but also helps her to make choice between the walls of self-sacrifice and the fulfilment of her choices. It is not an easy way for Jeanette to make her decision. Winterson's quotation from **Alice in Wonderland**: *'"Now I give you fair warning' shouted the Queen, stamping on the ground as she spoke; 'Either you or your head must be off'"*[155] points out the harshness of her mother's attitude which forces her to leave if she prefers her own choice. Her physical parting enables her spiritual freedom. The reference to nursery rhyme of Humpty Dumpty also emphasizes her way to journey about herself:

> .....
> At one time or another there will be a choice: you or the wall.
> Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall.
> Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
> The City of Lost Chances is full of those who chose the wall.
> All the king's horses and all the king's men.
> Couldn't put Humpty together again.
> …….[156]

The choice of the wall leads people to the refusal of their self-knowledge while the choice of your sense of self damages the walls of constraints. Humpty Dumpty here not only symbolizes Jeanette's fall from the grace of her mother and the church but it also puts forth that she shatters the rigid walls of the patriarchal ideology due to her sexual preference. Jeanette cannot be the same again because she exceeds the protective walls of the garden, her home:

> On the banks of the Euphrates find a secret garden cunningly walled. There is an entrance, but the entrance is guarded. There is no way in for you. Inside you will find every plant that grows growing circular-wise like a target. Close to the heart is a sundial and at the heart an orange tree. This fruit had

[153] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 142.
[154] **Ibid.**
[155] **Ibid.,** p. 163.
[156] **Ibid.,** p. 144.

> tripped up athletes while others have healed their wounds. All true quests end in this garden, where the split fruit pours forth blood and the halved fruit is a full bowl for travellers and pilgrims. To eat of the fruit means to leave the garden because the fruit speaks of other things, other longings. So at dusk you say goodbye to the place you love, not knowing if you can ever return, knowing you can never return by the same way as this.[157]

Winterson alludes to Biblical references to depict Jeanette's quest for self-expression. The river Euphrates symbolizes The Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve break God's law not to eat from The Tree of Knowledge. Jeanette, like Adam and Eve, is made to leave the garden because she follows her desire to eat from the orange tree which symbolizes her sexual preference. Jeanette crosses the walls of the garden in order to experience the changes in her sense of self. She understands that she can never be the same person who lives in the limitations of the straight path even if she returns her home one day. The narrator here gives the clues about Jeanette's new path to realize her individuation from the restrictions of her mother and the church and also her return to home as a mature person who does not escape from her own self any more.

Winterson fortifies Jeanette's self-quest with Sir Perceval's and Winnet Stonejar's stories. She associates Winnet's and Perceval's similar experiences of exile with Jeanette's life in the last chapter, Ruth. Sir Perceval also leads a road to find the Holy Grail in his individuality in the chapter, Ruth. The Holy Grail is "a symbol of perfection sought by many knights"[158] but Winterson uses it as an inner source of harmony and balance for Perceval like the princess whose life is not flawless but bears both harmony and balance: "He sought it again, to balance him."[159] While he, like Jeanette, longs for his home, he also needs to experience his own individuality: "He had gone for his own sake, nothing more."[160] Jeanette seeks a balance in her life out of her mother's sense of perfection: "Thus, like Sir Perceval, Jeanette has to give up the security of the round table (the church) and the love of King Arthur (her mother) and set out on her quest for the Grail (the fulfilment of her

[157] **Ibid.,** pp. 155-156.
[158] Simpson, **op. cit.,** p.27
[159] **Ibid.,** p. 212.
[160] **Ibid.,** p. 221.

desires)".[161] Winnet's story has much more similarities with Jeanette's. She becomes the sorcerer's appreciator when the sorcerer guesses her name true because "Naming meant power".[162] She forgets all about her past. The sorcerer becomes her father and he makes her believe that she "had been specially entrusted to his care by a powerful spirit".[163] Louie also makes Jeanette feel she is special and is a present from God to be a missionary: "You were always mine, I had you from the Lord".[164] Louie rejects Jeanette's real mother's presence by saying that: '"I'm your mother,' … 'She was a carrying case.'"[165] However, both Winnet and Jeanette are forced to leave their homes when they fall in love. Winnet's father thinks that the boy, Winnet falls in love, '"has spoiled [his] daughter [and] [Winnet] ... [has] disgraced [him]"'.[166] Therefore, he says: '"I have no more use for you. You must leave."'[167] Jeanette's sexual preference and her love affairs with Melaine and Katy cause her mother's disgrace. Thus, she has to leave her home like Winnet. Winnet is directed with the raven like Jeanette who is encouraged by the orange demon to go on a journey to search for herself. The raven says that: '"You will find yourself destroyed by grief. All you know will be around you, and at the same time far from you. Better to find a new place now."'[168] A Raven also appears in Perceval's story to rescue him from his thread:

> When he slept that night he dreamed he was a spider hanging a long way down a huge oak. Then a raven came and flew through his thread, so that he dropped to the ground and scuttled away.[169]

But in the Winnet story, the raven cannot warn about her father/the sorcerer "tying an invisible thread around one of her buttons".[170] Similarly, Jeanette says about her

[161] Méndez, **op. cit.,** p. 31.
[162] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 182.
[163] **Ibid.,** p. 187.
[164] **Ibid.,** p. 128.
[165] **Ibid.,** p. 129.
[166] **Ibid.,** p. 188.
[167] **Ibid.**
[168] **Ibid.,** p. 189.
[169] **Ibid.,** p. 221.
[170] **Ibid.,** p. 189.

mother that "She had tied a thread around my button, to tug when she pleased".[171] All the symbolized threads imply Jeanette's love bond and connection to her mother:

> The thread is artificial, a fiction, but is still described as effective as Jeanette realises that she cannot break away from her adoptive mother simply by leaving home. The cord is not umbilical, because of adoption, but with the invocation of a tied thread a parallel is drawn.[172]

The thread is associated with umbilical cord that is a vital connection between baby and mother. The thread makes Jeanette return home. Winterson shows Jeanette's removal from home and her return to home in Ruth, a Book of the Old Testament, which tells the story of exile and a heroine's loyalty to her mother-in-law. Although Ruth is not Naomi's real daughter, her stay with her mother-in-law instead of returning her home symbolizes the invisible cord just like the thread between Jeanette and her mother. Ruth's story focuses on woman just like Jeanette's story. But Ruth marries a man with her mother-in-law's approval. Bollinger states that:

> Ruth's dedication to Naomi represents a radical revaluing of connection between women. … Although the Ruth story offers a powerful model of female bonding, it still visualizes (heterosexual) marriage and motherhood as requisite for female fulfillment. This element becomes the principal point of difference in Winterson's revision of the Ruth text. By focusing her attention primarily on the first chapter of Ruth, Winterson concentrates on the relation between Ruth and Naomi without requiring that her heroine follow any conventional path to marriage, … At the same time, as in the Ruth text, Winterson suggests that maturity must incorporate mother daughter ties; Jeanette does not abandon relations with her mother, despite her mother's rejection of Jeanette's sexuality.[173]

While Ruth tells the story of loyalty, it is also a story of exile. Naomi is exiled from her home and then return to her home like Jeanette who has to leave her home because of her sexual preference. She returns her home when she becomes mature about her choices. Ruth's loyalty to Naomi not only symbolizes the thread between Jeanette and her mother, but also implies her love to Melanie and Katy by disregarding her mother's disapproval. The last chapter, Ruth stands as a summary of

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[171] **Ibid.,** p. 224.
[172] Julie Ellam, "Jeanette Winterson's Family Values: From Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit to Lighthousekeeping," **Critical Survey,** Volume 18, Number 2, 2006, p. 80.
[173] Bollinger, **op. cit**., pp. 369, 372.

Jeanette's experiences: It contains Jeanette's important decision to leave home to search for her own interpretation about life and her return to home although she does not accept her mother's point of view. Thus, her return is not an indicator of her dependency on her mother's fixed ideology. Instead, she is mature enough to realize that she has her own voice. Louie also seems to gain a much more tolerant perspective than she has had beforehand: "After all, said my mother philosophically, '"oranges are not the only fruit'".[174] She does not change radically but she is deeply disappointed by the corruptions in the Society for the Lost, a religious community, where Louie is a treasurer and in Morecambe guest house for the bereaved with which she is engaged. Louie states that:

> ... the Society had been disbanded, that there had been corruption at the Morecambe guest house, and that the Rev. Bone was a broken man. It appeared that most of the money put aside for the fishermen's missions had gone to pay the secretary's gambling debts; the profits from my mother's memberships and sales of religious accoutrements had gone to pay his wife maintenance. His estranged wife. The woman he lived with was his girlfriend.[175]

All these corruptions shake Louie's rigid perspective on perfection, absolutism and dualism. Although she regards her works as purely good, she then experiences that something/one cannot be just good or bad. Winterson criticises Louie's absolutism by showing hypocrisies. Louie's acceptance of her daughter to her home is mainly enabled by her changing approach. Jeanette returns home by knowing that her mother still does not accept her lesbian orientation while Louie no longer forces her to devote her life to her mother's beliefs. Winterson shows that the relationship between Jeanette and her mother is not based on perfection and they have complexities.

Throughout the novel, Winterson intertwines Jeanette's story with other stories in a way that she binds genres and narratives. All these stories make Jeanette realize that identity is not stable and predestined by others but multiple and fluid:

> If I use a metaphysical substance to display my thoughts, I might be anywhere at one time, influencing a number of different things, just as the

[174] Winterson, **op. cit.,** p. 219.
[175] **Ibid.,** p. 209.

> potter and her pottery can exert influence in different places. There's a chance that I'm not here at all, that all the parts of me, running along all the choices I did and didn't make, for a moment brush against each other. That I am still an evangelist in the North, as well as the person who ran away. Perhaps for a while these two selves have become confused. I have not gone forward or back in time, but across in time, to something I might have been, playing itself out.[176]

Jeanette's definition of her presence indicates that she gains a refreshed point of view about herself. Her reconstruction of herself is crossing the boundaries and dualistic thinking. She mediates the religion and her sexual preference which stand at the opposing sides to each other. Her fragmented sense of self subverts socially-constructed stable identity. She has a multilayered and changing self through her own choices and experiences. Reisman states that:

> This theory reworks the binary options and represents a multiplicity of choice. The ability to catch glimpses of other lives makes the possibility of multiple lives more tangible and offers a more positive way of viewing choices.[177]

Winterson rescues Jeanette from constrictions of stable identity dictated by society and presents her with a journey in which she constructs her own choices and interpretations subverting fixed traditional gender roles and binary system. She voices her fluid and changing sense of self through her refreshed point of view. Winterson implies that Jeanette overcomes the pressure of dualism and discovers herself going under refreshments and redefinitions.

Oranges are not the Only Fruit draws that Jeanette's journey is to search for her own choices, her interpretations on her experiences and reconstruction of her sense of self. Winterson enriches her narrative with relating Jeanette's story to intertextual stories. However, these stories have both similarities and differences to imply that everybody has her/his own story and voice. Jeanette directs her focus to her own choices and her sexual preference among the dictations of patriarchal instructions and moral norms in order to construct her vision of the self.

[176] **Ibid.,** pp. 215-216.
[177] Reisman, **op. cit.,** p. 32.

3. **White Teeth**

3.1. Social and Cultural Inscriptions on the Female Body

Zadie Smith's novel, **White Teeth,** which is a representative of multicultural world, focuses on the lives of three families in London: the Jamaican and English Joneses, the Bengali Igbals and the stereotypical English Chalfens. Intertwined stories of the three families and their children show the difficulty of self expression among the overwhelming crowds of social and cultural norms. Although Smith's novel seems to emphasize the portrayals of male characters' struggles and experiences, it also depicts the woman's struggle—especially coloured woman's experience—to survive under the pressure of patriarchy, and social and cultural discriminations. Her novel is not primarily centred on the world of woman like Winterson's novel, **Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit,** but Smith presents the victimized woman under the oppression of male-dominance. Smith does not hide the woman's struggles behind the significant experiences of male characters. Instead, the dominant stories of male characters represent how the stories of women are buried under man's so-called superiority and how the patriarchal discourse manipulates the social point of view. Women share the same problems with the men like the discriminations of race, ethnicity and class. However, man—as a representative of society—is regarded as the protagonist of all these problems while woman is reduced to a minor position because of her underestimated role in patriarchal society. Smith clearly displays all these problems on the lives of both man and woman and she also shows how woman goes under double discrimination because of her gender. Therefore, woman's gendered role intensifies her social exclusion and causes confusions about her sense of self. Ledford states that:

> Rooted in their feminine identity as women of color, the women in Smith's novels must deal with all of the social problems the male characters encounter but the female characters must also deal with sexism and how their socially constructed "gender" affects their identity.[1]

[1]Kathryn Fair Ledford, "A Feminist Reading of Zadie Smith's Novels through the Critical Framework of Interlocking Oppressions," Master of Arts, The College of Charleston and The Citadel, April 2008, p. 5.

Smith's almost all female characters struggle with their gendered roles and identifications in the patriarchal world. However, the female protagonist, Irie Jones—English Archie's and Jamaican Clara's daughter—stands as one of the most prominent representative to embody both social and cultural pressures on the woman's body and identity. Smith divides her book into four sections and only one section is entitled with a woman's name, Irie 1990, 1907. She shows that woman's space sticks into the patriarchal world and man has much more space by placing Irie as the only female voice among male characters. Moreover, Irie's struggle between her Jamaican heritage/her black skin and the whiteness of England makes her "... stuck between a rock and a hard place, like Ireland, like Israel, like India. A no-win situation".[2] Her in-between situation leads her into the dilemma whether to look back or forwards. Howland states that "Irie is, almost literally, … locked between her roots and her future just as her chapters are stuck between that of her father and the potential fathers of her own, unborn child".[3] Throughout the novel, Smith displays Irie's social and cultural imprisonment because of the gendered and racial assumptions about the woman's body and "placing [b]lack females on the margins".[4] Namely, she shows that the black woman's body is subjected to experience both the patriarchal oppressions and the otherness based both on her gender and race.

Smith presents several protagonists to her reader but the focus of this study will be mainly on Irie, who embodies both the common struggles of woman for having a visible status in society and the otherness as a woman of colour under the male dominance. Irie travels both back to her roots and alternative future routes to be able to construct her sense of self. She is alone on her struggle to rescue herself from stereotyped pressures because she cannot get enough support from her family and people around her or she does not have a significant role model. This situation can be interpreted as completely negative but her loneliness on her way actually makes her much more satisfied as a self-confident woman at the end of the novel. Smith

[2] Zadie Smith, **White Teeth**, London, Penguin Books, 2001, pp. 425-426.
[3] Elizabeth E.E. Howland, "A Search for Authenticity: Understanding Zadie Smith's White Teeth Using Judith Butler's Performativity and Jane Austen's Satire", Master of Arts, East Carolina University, July 2009, p. 2.
[4] Debbie Weeks, "Shades of Blackness: Young Black Female Constructions of Beauty," **Black British Feminism: A Reader**, Ed. by Heidi Safia Mirza, London, Routledge, 1997, p. 120.

supports woman's individual experience to discover herself with her following sentences:

> … sometimes it feels like there's no precedent for you and the way you think - and women do think differently and do argue in a different way and they write differently, I think. And it feels like there is no precedent for the person you are and the experience that you have. But in the end I think - and I tried to say this in [**White Teeth**] - role models are another crock and something which limit you. They don't set you free.[5]

She emphasizes that every woman has her specific voice and the role models can restrict one's point of view. Therefore, women should appreciate their differences in order to prevent themselves from being the other. Irie looks at her maternal roots—which define her physical features—to discover herself and to appreciate her difference in the end. She finds similar experiences such as the oppression and the dominance of patriarchy in her maternal past but she understands that none of them can completely tell her story at the end of the novel. Smith not only reflects similar struggles and experiences of women but she also stresses the subjectivity of the stories with her female protagonist, Irie. She both generalizes and specifies her discourse with Irie whose experiences represent not only general problems of woman but also the struggles of minorities:

> Through the characterization of Irie, Smith reveals not only the struggle of a second-generation immigrant, but also the struggle of a contemporary woman searching for her authentic self. This search occurs in the delicate space between Irie's roots and her present life.[6]

Her search about herself is primarily triggered by her dissatisfaction with her body. Smith opens Irie's section with her dream to lose weight and an immediate definition of Irie's bodily features:

> Now, Irie Jones, aged fifteen, was big. The European proportions of Clara's figure had skipped a generation, and she was landed instead with Hortense's substantial Jamaican frame, loaded with pineapples, mangoes and guavas; the girl had weight; big tits, big butt, big hips, big thighs, big teeth.[7]

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[5] Kathleen O'Grady, "White Teeth: A Conversation with Author Zadie Smith," **Atlantis**, Vol. 27.1, 2002, p. 108.
[6] Howland, **op. cit.,** p.2.
[7] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 265.

Irie's body is contrasted with "[t]he European proportions"[8] and her bodily features are associated with her Jamaican heritage from her grandmother, Hortense. Although her mother is a black woman, she has some qualities of European beauty standards. Therefore, Irie feels much more dissatisfied with her physical appearance. She cannot even identify herself with her mother, Clara. Smith uses fruits such as pineapple, mango and guava—which are not indigenous to Britain—in order to emphasize Irie's exotic presence in Britain and her racial association with Jamaica. Sandapen indicates that:"Too often black women who are born into a white dominated culture are measured by 'white' standards of beauty and as a result worry about their hips being too wide, their noses too flat, and their hair too kinky."[9] Dominant masculine ideology creates an idealized feminine profile to standardize woman into his general assumptions and dictations. That is to say, patriarchy tries to iconize woman with feminine standards like a stylised beauty, preordained gender roles of mother and angel in the house, and categorizing woman into an idealized identity. Whiteness is the most prominent feature for woman to be appropriate to the European beauty standards so black woman is automatically identified and disregarded with her race. Although both black and white woman are subjected to fulfil beauty standards to appeal male gaze, black woman experiences double pressure of beauty demands because of her race. Barbie doll is one of the best figures to represent Western beauty standards like being white, blonde and fit. Patriarchy privileges white woman—who can transform into a Barbie doll—against black woman. Patriarchal demands on beauty are so dominant that woman absorbs beauty standards as real and normal. Therefore, Irie feels herself in need of hiding her inherited physical features which do not fit into the stereotyped beauty labels:

> You, you, you, Miss Jones, with your strategically placed arms and cardigan, tied around the arse (the endless mystery: how to diminish that swollen enormity, the Jamaican posterior?), with your belly-reducing knickers and

[8] **Ibid.**
[9] Sheila Françoise Theresa Sandapen, "Being Black, Becoming British: Contemporary Female Voices in Black British Literature," Doctor of Philosophy, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, August 2009, p. 49.

> breast-reducing bra, with your meticulous lycra corseting the much lauded nineties answer to whalebone with your elasticated waists.[10]

She criticizes herself in her dream about her fatness. She tries to cover her **wrongness**. Namely, she wants to hide her different identity from Britain. Woman is identified with her body and the body, as a stage, is expected to show dominant social and cultural inscriptions such as being appropriate to man's appeal and beauty standards. Patriarchy wants to control the woman's body with his idealized beauty standards and all these demands are presented as compulsory and unquestionable requirements for woman to have a visible place in society. Although the perception of beauty is so subjective that black woman can attract white man or fat woman can be attractive unlike the stereotypes, it is socially conceptualized as a homogenised perception to be established on particular standards. Woman, with the fear of being outcast, struggles to fulfil these standards. The pressure of these standards directs woman to overwhelming weight loss programmes and even plastic surgery. Faludi states that: "... Asian American and African-American women have sought facial surgery in order to come closer to the beauty ideal".[11] This example shows how dominant the idealized beauty standards are in woman's life, especially in the coloured woman's. These beauty standards can cause woman to lead unhealthy ways. Elayne A. Saltzberg and Joan C. Chrisler state that: "The beauty-related disorders anorexia nervosa and bulimia have multiple negative health effects, and side-effects of plastic surgery include hemorrhages, scars, and nerve damage".[12] While several women try to reach the idealized beauty, they take a risk to damage their life. The dream to fulfil the beauty standards can turn into a nightmare or a disaster.

Patriarchal hypocrisy is to impose that woman can attract man's attention only when she realizes all the demands on beauty or woman needs man's approval about her body. However, the relationship between man and woman cannot be

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[10] Smith, **loc. cit.**

[11] Susan Faludi, **Backlash: The undeclared war against American women**, New York: Crown Publishers, (qtd. in Elayne A. Saltzberg, Joan C. Chrisler, "Beauty Is the Beast: Psychological Effects of the Pursuit of the Perfect Female Body," **Women: A Feminist Perspective**, 5th Edition Ed. by Jo Freeman, Mayfield Publishing Company, 1995, p. 310.)

[12] Elayne A. Saltzberg, Joan C. Chrisler, "Beauty Is The Beast: Psychological Effects of the Pursuit of the Perfect Female Body," **Women: A Feminist Perspective**, 5th Edition Ed. by Jo Freeman, Mayfield Publishing Company, 1995, p. 308.

generalized into these standards. All these beauty standards are actually the way to categorize and discipline woman. Clichés about beauty create such an illusionary world that most women—especially the women of colour—cannot be aware of their physical features and their own beauty:

> Irie Jones was obsessed. Occasionally her worried mother cornered her in the hallway before she slunk out of the door, picked at her elaborate corsetry, asked, "What's up with you? What in the Lord's name are you wearing? How can you breathe? Me, my love, you're fine you're just built like an honest-to-God Bowden don't you know you're fine?"[13]

Irie actually struggles with the characteristic problems of puberty. However, her depression about her body is mainly caused by her "Jamaican frame".[14] Her tight clothes such as "belly-reducing knickers"[15] and "breast-reducing bra"[16] represent her squeezed position between her Jamaican heritage and beauty standards of the mainstream. Her mother's question—whether she can breathe in her clothes—symbolizes Irie's struggle to live among the expectations and dictations of patriarchal society. She does not want to be stuck into the Bowden body which is inherited by her grandmother because her body distinguishes her from the idealized beauty standards of Britain. She is not satisfied with her mother's attempt to persuade her about her beauty. Her physical difference causes Irie to bear hatred towards her racialized body: "... belief in her ugliness, in her wrongness, had subdued her"[17] and she is "unwilling to settle for genetic fate…".[18] She is so troubled with her body that she dreams a weird scene:

> … knocking on door after door, butt-naked with a clipboard, drenched in sunlight, trying to encourage old men to pinch-an-inch and pledge-a-pound. Worst times? Tearing off loose, white-flecked flesh and packing it into those old curvaceous Coke bottles; she is carrying them to the corner shop passing them over a counter; and Millat is the bindi-wearing, V-necked corner shopkeeper he is adding them up, grudgingly opening the till with blood-stained paws, handing over the cash. A little Caribbean flesh for a little English change.[19]

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[13] **Ibid.,** p. 266.
[14] **Ibid.,** p. 265.
[15] **Ibid.**
[16] **Ibid.**
[17] **Ibid.,** p. 268.
[18] **Ibid.,** p. 266.
[19] **Ibid.**

Smith here emphasizes that the woman body is seen as a product which is served to man's appetite. Moreover, woman's inferiority in patriarchy is intensified with Irie's flesh which can be sold and bought. Her voluptuous body is open to man's victimization and colonization. In her dream, Irie metaphorically presents her naked body to man as if she '"prostitut[ed] herself to the male gaze'".[20] She feels her body as an abject so she tries to get rid of her flesh by making the old man "to pinch-an-inch"[21] and packing her "white-flecked flesh"[22] into the bottles. In this way, she defines her detest to both her overweight and hybrid body. **White-flecked flesh** appears as a metaphor of her hybrid body; in other words, her skin colour declares her multicultural identity which is equipped with matrilineal features rather than with her father's English characteristics. Her unrequited love, Millat Igbal, becomes a shopkeeper who unwillingly accepts to buy her flesh. This situation represents that her sense of beauty is mainly constructed into Millat's gaze and his approval. She needs Millat's love or interest to define her own self. Watkins states that:

> Irie initially allows a man to determine her self-worth. Irie clings to her dream of being with Millat and as a result allows him to treat her poorly. Her reasons for accepting the way Millat treats her have to do with her discomfort in her own body, and in her home country.[23]

Millat disregards her and he has also mocked about her fatness since their childhood. Millat's oppression on her is the embodiment of patriarchal ideology. Irie's attempt to exchange her "Caribbean flesh"[24] with English money defines her desire to have an approvable place in English society by rescuing herself from being identified with the racialized body:

> [She is] waiting … for her transformation from Jamaican hourglass heavy with the sands that gather round Dunn River Falls, to English Rose oh, you

[20] **Ibid.,** p. 372.
[21] **Ibid.,** p.266.
[22] **Ibid.**
[23]Amanda M. Watkins, "At the Root of the Teeth: An Investigation of the Healing Power of Interpersonal and Familial Relationships in Zadie Smith's White Teeth," Master of Arts, McMaster University, August 2007, p. 55.
[24] Smith, **op. cit**. p. 266.

> know her she's a slender, delicate thing not made for the hot suns, a surfboard rippled by the wave …[25].

She always dictates her discomfort with her body shape inherited by her Jamaican roots. Smith makes such allusions that "Dunn River Falls"[26] represents Irie's Jamaican heritage while "English Rose"[27] is the representative of Western beauty standards dictated socially and culturally to the female body. Irie is exactly the opposite of stereotyped norms on beauty so she feels outcast and imprisoned into her **wrongness**. She becomes a victim because of both her gender and race. Male-dominant society manipulates woman with its stereotyped social and cultural inscriptions that determine woman's behaviours, status and even perspective. Patriarchy blesses itself as a preacher or an omnipotent ruler who runs the world according to its rules. Therefore, woman is predestined to obey the dictations to her thoughts and physical appearance. The woman's body is firstly encapsulated with the expectations of her gender, and then her differences such as race and sexual preference "are subjected to stigmatization ... [because of not fitting into] societal norms".[28] Dominant patriarchal ideology forces all women to be submissive to its dictations and norms but black woman like Irie is doubly goes under pressure and oppression of patriarchy. Razia Aziz claims that:

> The point is not, I would argue, that white women experience the state (to take one example) as patriarchal, whereas black women experience the state as racist *and* patriarchal: If state is racist, it is racist to everyone; it is merely more difficult for white people to see this, because of the racism of the state is to treat and promote white-ness as the norm.[29]

London surrounds Irie with the dictated beauty standards about being white. Although she is born there, her skin colour excludes her from having an approved place in her homeland. Therefore, Irie is not only subordinated to her gender identity

[25] **Ibid.,** pp. 266-267.
[26] **Ibid.**
[27] **Ibid.** p. 267.
[28] Ann Phoenix, "Theories of gender and black families," **Black British Feminism: A Reader**, Ed. by Heidi Safia Mirza, London, Routledge, 1997, p. 64.
[29] Razia Aziz, "Feminism and the challenge of racism Deviance or difference?" **Black British Feminism: A Reader**, Ed. by Heidi Safia Mirza, London, Routledge, 1997, p. 72.

but also victimised because of her Jamaican heritage. As a woman of colour, her sufferings are reduplicated by social and cultural dictations of patriarchy.

Smith opens Irie's section when she is in puberty in order to present Irie's intensive struggles with her gender and multicultural identity. Puberty is the climax of important changes on the body and on the awareness of the binary system. The child's body gains the features of adulthood and becomes sexually mature. It is a stage of sexual reproduction and a first step to wo/manhood. Rapid changes in this period affect the individual's perception about both his/her body and identity. The fact that Irie experiences the problems of this period at peak is mainly caused by the lack of self confidence. Irie has been scorned by Millat since her childhood in the way that he calls her "Mrs. Ugly Poo".[30] He attacks her emotions with harsh sentences which paralyse her self-esteem: "You're getting a bit big. I don't like big..."[31] and "Big ain't beautiful".[32] She is coded with negative physical attributions so she identifies herself as being ugly and wrong. As a girl, she experiences much more challenging and complex problems than boys in this period. Entrance to the sexual maturity makes woman feel the dictations of gender roles inscribed on the female body. Woman is born into the hypocritical binary system which claims the superiority of man and the inferiority of woman as traditional gender roles. Puberty makes people enter the world of gender tasks. Labelled differences between female and male are intensified in the period of puberty. Smith shows this clear-cut distinction between Irie and Millat:

> Puberty, real full-blown puberty (not the slight mound of a breast, or the shadowy emergence of fuzz), had separated these old friends, Irie Jones and Millat Iqbal. Different sides of the school fence. Irie believed she had been dealt the dodgy cards: mountainous curves, buck teeth and thick metal retainer, impossible Afro hair, and to top it off mole-ish eyesight which in turn required bottle-top spectacles in a light shade of pink. (Even those blue eyes the eyes Archie had been so excited about lasted two weeks only…) … Whereas Millat was like youth remembered in the nostalgic eyeglass of old age, beauty parodying itself: broken Roman nose, tall, thin; lightly veined, smoothly muscled; chocolate eyes with a reflective green sheen like moonlight bouncing off a dark sea; irresistible smile, big white teeth.[33]

[30] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 149.
[31] **Ibid.,** p. 229.
[32] **Ibid.,** p. 239.
[33] **Ibid.,** p. 268.

Irie emphasizes that her puberty is not just typical hormonal and physical changes for her but it is the announcement of her **wrongness** while Millat is appreciated with his outstanding features. Dictated gender roles sharply split their ways because the patriarchal world imposes different significations of being female and male. Irie's physical features are always described with negative adjectives which clearly point out the disgust about her body. She cannot reformulate her perception regardless of dictated beauty standards and traditional gender roles. Smith shows the perspective of patriarchal discourse that puts Irie into inferior position whereas Millat is bestowed with spectacular and attractive features similar to European beauty standards. Smith's aim is to display the harshness of patriarchy on woman's presence and the huge gap between man and woman in social roles. Irie fails all so-called attributions of beauty with her "Afro hair"[34], "buck teeth"[35] and "mountainous curves".[36] Watkins states that: "She is … clearly troubled by her inability to achieve British society's standards of white beauty".[37] Labelled attributions and stereotyped beauty beset Irie's interpretation of herself. Smith stresses the binary opposition between man and woman in the way that she familiarizes Millat with Britain patriarchy while Irie is distanced and marginalized. Millat's indifference to Irie also symbolizes his stereotyped understanding of beauty according to English standards: "Millat hanging around with God knows what kind of people, always with the white girls, …".[38] Millat's interest in white woman can also be interpreted as he subconsciously wants to have control on white race. Irie or other black women are accepted as outside the mainstream and Millat follows the regulations of patriarchal society. Irie cannot fulfil the expectations of stereotyped European beauty and Millat's desire. The fact that her blue eyes turn into brown foreshadows her failure to realize social and cultural expectations about the female body. Clara convinces Archie that their girl would be born with blue eyes thanks to their **mixed parentage**. The blue eye colour symbolizes the dominance of Archie's English heritage because

[34] **Ibid.**
[35] **Ibid.**
[36] **Ibid.**
[37] Watkins, **op. cit.**, p. 58.
[38] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 286.

blue, as an eye colour, is associated with general genetic traits of English people. Inheritance of English traits like blue eyes would make Irie appropriate to English society and her father's demands. Smith highlights that Irie is expected to be like what others want even before her birth. Howland point out that:

> This sets Irie up for gender performance failure before her birth other words, because Irie is expected to be born with blue eyes, because this is a gender norm imposed upon her by her father, she is destined to fail as a woman because of the genetic disposition for her to be … with brown eyes.[39]

She represents that woman is born into social and cultural expectations attributed to her body and her gender. Patriarchy arranges stereotyped gender roles which fit the woman body into his own expectations. Therefore, woman is forced to live with the boundaries of social and cultural inscriptions on her body.

Irie, as a black woman, goes repeatedly under the manipulation of patriarchal society because of her skin colour and her physical characteristics. In dichotomy between mind and body, woman is associated with body as a stereotyped assumption. Therefore, Irie's sufferings are mainly caused by her otherness from social and cultural inscriptions of English patriarchy about the female body. Irie interprets her bodily features according to dominant European beauty standards so she cannot find her reflection in her surroundings: "There was England, a gigantic mirror, and there was Me, without reflection. A stranger in a stranger land."[40] England stands as a patriarchy which does not appreciate her physical appearance. Frost points to: "The patriarchal society being a mirror in which a woman looks at herself seeking approval and acceptance."[41] England is a multicultural land but it hypocritically does not accept Irie with her difference. She seeks her reflection in the mirror of England and an approval of patriarchy to gain a place in society. In the English course, Irie interprets Shakespeare's sonnets 127, 130,131 and 132—which are about Dark Lady—in a way that she can find a reflection of herself in Shakespeare, the symbol of Englishness. However, her teacher, Mrs. Roody warns her not to read these sonnets in modern sense:

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[39] Howland, **op. cit.,** p. 57.
[40] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 266.
[41] Sonia Front, **Literary and Cultural Theory, Volume 31: Transgressing Boundaries in Jeanette Winterson's Fiction,** Frankfurt am Main, DEU, Peter Lang AG, 12/2009, p. 27, (Online) http://site.ebrary.com/id/10601228?

> "All right, then. Have you anything to say about the sonnets?"
> "Yes."
> "What?"
> "Is she black?"
> "Is who black?"
> "The dark lady."
> "No, dear, she's dark. She's not black in the modern sense. There weren't any .. . well, Afro-Carri-bee-yans in England at that time, dear. That's more a modern phenomenon, as I'm sure you know. But this was the 1600s. I mean I can't be sure, but it does seem terribly unlikely, unless she was a slave of some kind, and he's unlikely to have written a series of sonnets to a lord and then a slave, is he?"
> Irie reddened. She had thought, just then, that she had seen something like a reflection, but it was receding; so she said, "Don't know, Miss."[42]

Irie associates Dark Lady with her Jamaican frame with the hope that black has a reflection or approval in the history of England. She actually wants her body to be the signifier of English heritage rather than the Jamaican one. Her momentary imagination to have a visible status in England indicates that she mostly suffers from her lack of beauty according to idealized European standards. Her body appears as a text where her identity is inscribed so she wants her body to be represented in Shakespeare's writings in order to find her reflection in England. However, her teacher's objections to Irie's way of interpretation intensify the coded inferiority about the black body. Her teacher reminds that the Afro-Caribbean does not have a place in Shakespeare's times. Namely, she emphasizes that Irie's Jamaican heritage is destined to be other in the mirror of England throughout the centuries. Her comparison between a slave and a lord highlights that the former represents Irie's black skin/her Jamaican heritage and the latter symbolizes the whiteness of England/its superiority. Turkson asserts that: "With a reminder it is unlikely Shakespeare wrote sonnets to both lords and slaves, Irie's English teacher reaffirms that Irie has no reflection in the mirror of England."[43] The teacher's authoritative voice about black identity reveals the common European perspective that blackness means the inferiority and the marginalized. Irie's body, indicator of her story, lacks the social and cultural dictations of England about the female body: "In this white

[42] Smith, op. cit., pp. 271-272
[43] Cicelyn Turkson, "Toward A Post-Racial Reading of Hybridity in "White Teeth," Master of Arts, California State University Dominguez Hills, Spring 2009, p. 23.

world [Irie is] a fresh water fish that swims in the sea water. [She] feel[s] the weight of the water ... on [her] body".[44]

Smith quotes from some of Shakespeare's sonnets about Dark Lady to indicate both Irie's difference from the white cliffs of England and her discomfort with her body. Her references to sonnets start with the lines from sonnet 127: "In the old age black was not counted fair, … Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name."[45] Smith's preference of these lines highlights an established assumption that black is not beautiful. Irie's teacher objects to modern sense of interpretation but here Smith criticizes that this established thought about beauty has not changed yet. She uses Shakespeare's sonnet as an allusion to the modern sense of beauty. Although Irie's body is seen as inferior according to beauty standards, her skin colour and her physical appearance stand as a threat to idealized whiteness. Therefore, Smith quotes from the sonnets about Dark Lady which subvert idealized beauty assumptions. The lines from sonnets 127 and 130 do not describe woman in conventional understanding of beauty:

> Therefore my mistress' eyes are raven black, her brows so suited, and they mourners seem ... My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun; Coral is far more red than her lips' red; If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun… [46].

Dark Lady's features are different from the idealized woman in love poems. The comparisons undermine the stereotyped understanding about the beauty of fair lady. These sonnets of Shakespeare appear as a criticism of Petrarchan sonnets which depict woman as perfect with exaggerated metaphors. Shakespeare negates such comparisons as the eyes like the sun and coral lips with female beauty and he parodies the idealization of Petrarchan sonnets. Both Smith and Shakespeare display how woman is represented by the clichés on beauty and the woman body is reduced into the comparisons and definitions of the mainstream. Exaggerated descriptions make woman stand as goddess and distances her from the real life. Namely, this idealization concept causes woman not to exist just like submissive attributions

[44] Felly Nkweto Simmonds, "My body, myself How does a Black woman do sociology?", **Black British Feminism: A Reader**, Ed. by Heidi Safia Mirza, London, Routledge, 1997, p. 226.
[45] Smith, **op. cit.,** 268
[46] **Ibid.**

which exclude woman from social life. Smith keeps Irie outside all these idealized beauty standards to show that woman is expected to fulfil traditional gender roles, social and cultural dictations on her body; otherwise, she is depicted as marginalized. Differences are not appreciated but seen as burden. Irie is squeezed between her differences and the expectations of patriarchal society. Therefore, she takes references from the sonnets about Dark Lady into her life to find identification in the society: "Then will I swear beauty herself is black …"[47] (sonnet 132) and "If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head …"[48] (sonnet 130). She thinks if black has a place in Shakespeare's time, she can have an approval of England. However, her teacher's objection to her comment indicates that her differences are not approved by society and she explains that "... she just has a dark complexion, you see, as dark as mine, probably".[49] Mrs. Roody—who has "the colour of strawberry mousse"[50]—ironizes Irie's interpretation in a way that she compares her own whiteness with Dark Lady.

The lines from sonnet 127 "For since each hand hath put on Nature's power, Fairing the foul with art's false borrowed face"[51] show Shakespeare's criticism that actual beauty is degenerated by make-up and make-up plays the role of nature. As explained in the novel, "... the preference was for women to be excessively pale in those days. The sonnet is about the debate between her natural colouring and the make-up that was the fashion of the time."[52] Smith with the sonnet 127 foreshadows that Irie will change her physical appearance/Afro hair to be favoured firstly by Millat and then society. The reference to the Elizabethan period highlights that the pale skin has been privileged and woman has been surrounded with aesthetic concerns to be appreciated by patriarchy throughout centuries. Smith deconstructs the rigidity of European beauty standards and the dictations about the female by using Shakespeare's sonnets which can be interpreted in multiple ways. Smith attacks the stereotyped beauty with these sonnets which exceed the conventional perspective about the idealized woman. Dark Lady is a woman of flesh and blood

[47] **Ibid.,** p. 272.
[48] **Ibid.,** p. 269.
[49] **Ibid.,** p. 271.
[50] **Ibid.,** p. 272.
[51] **Ibid.,** p. 270.
[52] **Ibid.,** p. 272.

and demolishes the concept of idolized mistress. Irie's attempt to associate herself with Dark Lady can be interpreted that she finds an example of woman who subverts the clichés of standard beauty. However, her discomfort is intensified with the objections of her teacher and her school friends' mocking note that "By William Shakespeare: ODE TO LETITIA AND ALL MY KINKY-HAIRED BIG-ASS BIT CHEZ".[53] This humiliating note appears as an announcement that she lacks the qualities for English beauty standards. Wille states that:

> Both teacher and classmates appear equipped with a comfortable sense of identity and cultural belonging in which Irie cannot share, and part of this comfort derives from their unspoken conviction that Irie's reading of Shakespeare has no place in their version of English culture. Without having consciously been set up to be racist, Irie's schooling … helps to perpetuate the fiction of an English culture that is, amongst other things, essentially white.[54]

Irie is repeatedly reminded that she is different and is put in the place of the other. She suffers from her bodily difference as a burden. Therefore, all these humiliations and disapprovals about her racial heritage and her physical appearance lead her into the beauty salon to transform her Afro hair into straight. She wants to be approved by English beauty norms and noticed by her unrequited love, Millat:

> She had it all planned; she was going to go round to Millat's this very evening with her new mane, all tied up in a bun, and she was going to take off her glasses and shake down her hair and he was going to say why Miss Jones, I never would have supposed ... why Miss Jones, you're …[55].

Stereotyped norms about the physical appearance force woman to sacrifice her differences. Irie imagines about her new appearance which is adorned for Millat. Woman imprisons her body into the gaze of patriarchy with the fear of being apart from social acceptance.

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[53] **Ibid.**

[54] Anna Wille, '"Born and bred, almosté' – Mimicry as a Humorous Strategy in Zadie Smith's White Teeth and Hanif Kureishi's The Buddha of Suburbia," **Anglia - Zeitschrift fr englische Philologie**, Vol. 129, Issue 3-4, p. 449, ISSN (Online) 1865-8938, ISSN (Print) 0340-5222, DOI: 10.1515/angl.2011.044, January 2011.

[55] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 274.

In patriarchal binary system, woman's identity is oppressed by gender-based assumptions on her body while man, as an embodiment of phallocentric discourse, frees himself from being classified mainly with his bodily features. Smith clearly portrays the dichotomy between male and female in "P. K.'s Afro Hair: Design and Management"[56]:

> P. K.'s was split into two halves, male and female. … The male section was all laughter, all talk, all play; there was an easiness that sprang from no male haircut ever costing over six pounds or taking more than fifteen minutes. It was a simple enough exchange and there was joy in it: … In comparison, the female section of P. K's was a deathly thing. Here, the impossible desire for straightness and 'movement' fought daily with the stubborn determination of the curved African follicle; here ammonia, hot combs, clips, pins and simple fire had all been enlisted in the war and were doing their damnedest to beat each curly hair into submission.[57]

Beauty salon for man is an ordinary place where he fulfils his needs like haircut but it is a place of psychological and physical struggle for woman. Woman subordinates her body into the gender performance with her struggle to gain acceptance of male gaze. The ideals of European beauty standards captivate woman into war with her body. Man shows his practical relation with his body while the presence of woman is associated with bodily features: "In fact, men's interactions with their own bodies in P.K.'s [are] short-lived and ... women must endure in their quest for straight, gender-performing hair."[58] The value of woman is based on the fulfilment of beauty standards of society and stereotyped gender roles. Beauty salons are the most noticeable places for woman to perform her femininity. Smith deliberately chooses these places in order to show labelled gender roles of woman. Hair is the symbol of femininity and female sexuality. Therefore, in P.K.'s, women spend great effort to change their hair in a way that they struggle to fit their female features into socially-dictated gender identity. Irie wants to escape from her Jamaican identity so she attempts to disguise her racial difference with "straight and dark red"[59] hair. "Combining race and gender as limiting societal constraints",[60] Irie tries to adopt

[56] **Ibid.**, p. 272.
[57] **Ibid.,** pp. 274-275.
[58] Howland, **op. cit.** p. 14.
[59] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 274.
[60] Howland., **op. cit.,** p. 16.

herself into the standards of England to have a visible identity. Smith not only displays the binary between man and woman but she also emphasizes the dichotomy between white and black woman:

> To which Jackie or Denise, having none of the obligations of white hairdressers, no need to make tea or kiss arse, flatter or make conversation (for these were no customers they were dealing with but desperate wretched patients), would give a sceptical snort and whip off the puke-green gown. "It as straight as it ever going to be!"[61]

The black hairdresser seems to be like a hospital rather than a beauty salon. "[T]he puke-green gown"[62] reminds of the scrub or the patients' gown. The black hairdressers, like surgeons, try to cure their customers'/patients' racial differences which are regarded as disorders in Western culture. The customers'/patients' are "desperate"[63] as if they went under surgery. Smith points out that the standardization of society aims to wipe out individual differences in such a harsh way that people become stranger to their own selves when they try to **normalize** themselves according to social and cultural norms.

Irie's attempt to straighten her hair turns into a catastrophe. The ammonia—which is used to straighten her Afro hair—causes her hair to fall out because it has been recently washed. Hair straightening becomes a painful experience like a surgery rather than just a beauty issue:

> Two minutes after having the thick white ammonia gloop spread on to her head, she felt the initial cold sensation change to a terrific fire. There was no dirt there to protect the scalp, and Irie started screaming.[64]

She wishes for admirable long straight hair: "Straight straight long black sleek flick able toss able shakeable touchable finger-through-able wind-blow able hair."[65] However, her dream turns into a nightmare: "Irie stared at her Hiroshima reflection."[66] The "ammonia gloop"[67] causes her a serious pain and she faints. When

[61] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 275.
[62] **Ibid.**
[63] **Ibid.**
[64] **Ibid.,** p. 277.
[65] **Ibid.,** p.273.
[66] **Ibid.,** p. 279.
[67] **Ibid.,** p. 277.

she recovers, her hair is "only a few inches from her head."[68]She is compensated with "long, straight, reddish-black [Indian] hair"[69] but she becomes much stranger to herself while she is trying to find a reflection of herself in England. The pressure of European beauty ideals causes her to be dissatisfied with her physical image: "Irie desires her English identity to infiltrate her physical appearance."[70] However, the more she rejects her Jamaican heritage, the more she goes through troubles and becomes foreign to her own body. She obsessively wants her hair to be straight because the straight hair not only symbolizes the beauty standards on woman hair but also it represents the rigidity of Western ideology and its social and cultural dictations. Weekes cites historian Walter Rodney's observation on the Caribbean:

> ... 'Good hair' means European hair, ... 'good complexion' means light complexion. Everybody recognises how incongruous and ridiculous such terms are, but we continue to use them and to express our support of the assumptions that white Europeans have a monopoly on beauty, and that black is the incarnation of ugliness.[71]

Irie suppresses her own identity with European understanding on beauty and she represents herself with the codes of Western culture for black people. She is not only subordinated by the dictations of society but she also leads a road dependent on dictations and so she is willing to change her physical appearance. She still hopes to attract Millat with her new hair-style and she has not realized that her intention to change her appearance would result in much more dissatisfaction. When she enters Millat's home, she encounters Millat's mother's niece, Neena and her girlfriend, Maxine instead of Millat. They criticize her because she tries to adopt herself into the Western beauty standards:

> "You look like a freak! Fuck me! Maxine, man, check this out. Jesus Christ, Irie. What exactly were you aiming for?" …
> Neena's 'nasty friend', otherwise known as Neena's girlfriend, … Maxine … gave a pull to Irie's peculiar bangs. "What have you done? You had beautiful hair, man. All curly and wild. It was gorgeous."
> Irie couldn't say anything for a moment. She had not considered the possibility that she looked anything less than terrific.

[68] **Ibid.,** p. 278.
[69] **Ibid.,** p. 282.
[70] Turkson, **op. cit.,** p. 22.
[71] Weekes, **op. cit.,** p. 119.

> "I just had a haircut. What's the big deal?"
> "But that's not your hair, for fuck's sake, that's some poor oppressed Pakistani woman who needs the cash for her kids," said Neena, giving it a tug and being rewarded with a handful of it. …[72].

Neena and Maxine are harsh on their words about Irie's new hair style because they clearly know that she tries to sexualize her body to draw Millat's attention. Neena makes association between Irie and a Pakistani woman in order to show that Irie sacrifices herself just like a Pakistani woman who sells her hair to meet her kids' needs. Her association also symbolizes the oppressive viewpoint of Western culture because she reflects woman's oppressed presence with the example of a Pakistani woman instead of an English woman. Smith here emphasizes the double discrimination of a woman who has racial or some other differences. Irie wants to escape from the signifiers of her racial and bodily differences, and she is ready to pay for it: "Sometimes you want to be different. And sometimes you'd give the hair on your head to be the same as everybody else."[73] Neena warns Irie to respect her difference and gives advice to her:

> 'Look: you're a smart cookie, Irie. But you've been taught all kinds of shit. You've got to re-educate yourself. Realize your value, stop the slavish devotion, and get a life, Me. Get a girl, get a guy, but get a life.'[74]

Smith names the first chapter of Irie's section "The Miseducation of Irie Jones"[75] to emphasize that Irie goes under standardization and she is forced to behave according to socially-dictated gender roles. Neena advices that Irie rescue herself from the dictations and ill-assumptions of society to reconstruct her own sense of self. Irie should control her own life without searching for the approval of patriarchy or Millat. Her attempt to eliminate her racial difference cannot make her satisfy with her appearence because the mimicry of the English beauty standards makes her presence much more insignificant instead of realizing her dream to become an "English rose".[76] Her reflection in the mirror reveals her failure to adopt English

[72] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 283.
[73] **Ibid.,** p. 284.
[74] **Ibid.,** pp. 284-285.
[75] **Ibid.,** p. 265.
[76] **Ibid.,** p. 267.

standards: “She looked like the love child of Diana Ross and Engelbert Humperdinck.”[77] She is still the hybrid child of her family and dissatisfied with her physical appearance. Mcmann states that:

> While looking into the mirror that is England and not seeing a reflection of herself leads to her painful lesson in beauty, once she has learned that lesson, the face staring back at her in the mirror is even more foreign, and still not legible as beautiful in the narrowly Anglo definition of beauty that Irie has internalized. Once she has jettisoned what she views as the abject—the curly black afro—she actually sees herself as even further removed from the standards of beauty around her.[78]

Smith introduces Irie as a victim of social and cultural inscriptions of masculine ideology on the female body. England imprisons Irie’s perception about her body into its obsessed masculine ideology. Woman’s invisible status in society is intensified when woman has unappreciated features like being black. A coloured woman is pushed into the darkest place of society. Although patriarchy seems to celebrate white woman, it actually causes dichotomies among women and it demands all women to behave according to its dictations. Patriarchy not only makes woman inferior but also determines hierarchy among women. Weekes summarizes Western binary system between white and black woman:

> The entire concept of feminine attractiveness has been heavily based upon dominant definitions of beauty which have far reaching consequences for Black women. Not only has female beauty been constructed to objectify women, the assumption of Whiteness as the norm indicates that Black and White women are objectified differentially. The signifiers of hair texture, skin shade and shape of lips and noses are reacted to in terms of their approximation to Whiteness. ... The effects of White masculine definitions of beauty on Black women have meant racialized criteria of attractiveness are often inextricably linked to the European standard.[79]

The idealization of whiteness as a beauty standard is to celebrate patriarchal national identity. Masculine ideology imposes whiteness as a norm for standardization. Western masculine ideology categorizes white man on the top while ranking black

[77] **Ibid.,** p. 289.
[78] Mindi Mcmann, “British Black box: A Return to Race and Science in Zadie Smith's *White Teeth”* **MFS Modern Fiction Studies**, Vol. 58, number 3, the Johns Hopkins University Press, Fall 2012, p. 630.
[79] Weekes, op. cit., pp. 114-115.

woman at the bottom. Therefore, patriarchy associates beauty with whiteness to make people accept national superiority. Patriarchal illusion on beauty standards is a way to intensify male dominance as a ruler of social regulations and norms.

All women need to reconstruct their own sense of self according to their interpretations and choices and they must be aware of the fact that their differences—such as Irie's blackness and Jeanette's sexual preference—are not their burdens. Ledford states that: "The women create their identity when they both celebrate their difference and also inflate their differences to react to an oppressive society."[80] If the woman lacks respect to her own body and self, she will continue to be the puppet of patriarchal oppressions and dictated gender roles. So as to strip off social and cultural inscriptions on her body, woman should gain or revive her self-value and worth.

3.2. Criticism of Masculine Ideology, Stereotyped Gender Roles

White Teeth portrays mainly the post-war England between the years of 1975-2000. England, like many other nations, experiences the effects of globalization after the Second World War. The stability of nationalism is subverted by the multicultural and postmodern world away from the certain principles of established ideologies. It is useless to search for a pure, stable identity in the concept of globalization which makes different kinds of race and ethnicity gather in the same place. Smith criticizes that nations, like Britain, have still been trying to impose their superiority on the immigrants. The power of nation is associated with masculinity, and conventional masculine ideology makes a male immigrant mostly think that the new place he immigrates will attack his powerful masculine identity. Actually, phallocentric ideology not only pushes woman into established gender roles, but it also makes man embody the burden of his gender. He feels himself in a competition in which he should struggle not to lose ground to someone. Sandapen points out that:

> … an interesting phenomena in which the man often seems to cede his authority of gender when entering into a new society where his inherent authority is questioned and sometimes dismissed by the dominant norm and consider how this relinquishing of authority damages the male ego, stripping him of the role as provider for the family and setting up a conflict between

[80] Ledford, **op. cit.,** p. 22.

> the old cultural norms in which he is invested and the new norms which he distrusts and feels no allegiance to.[81]

Smith shows that gender assumptions determine both man's and woman's roles and behaviours, and also the binary-based ideology continuously makes people rank with their race, gender and class. Multicultural identity of England deconstructs national purity and the authoritative power of masculine ideology. An immigrant male experiences insecurity and the problem of belonging to a new county while white man realizes that the power of pure and stable identity—promised by nationalism—is shattered. The significant expression of Bangladeshi immigrant, Alsana clearly emphasizes the hybrid identity of England: "... it's still easier to find the correct Hoover bag than to find one pure person, one pure faith, on the globe. Do you think anybody is English? Really English? It's a fairy-tale!"[82] It is a daydream to search for a pure and stable identity. Smith emphasizes that the problem of instability or insecurity in society does not only belong to woman. Postmodern perspective undermines the gender-based hierarchical conception.

Smith opens her book with a flashback incident of Irie's father, English Archie Jones who attempts to commit suicide. The fact that he prepares his downfall symbolizes man's insecure position in the troubles of the world. He is not a representative of the English hero but an ordinary man. Although he is the protagonist who decidedly has English heritage in the novel, his personality and behaviours do not represent idealized identity of the Englishman. Beukema states that:

> Unable to live up to the ideals of reason and rationality at the heart of English masculinity (every decision he makes is based on the flip of a coin), Archie represents a "failed" masculine identity. Indeed, because of this "failure," he is a success within Smith's project of challenging the concept of imperial English masculinity.[83]

He even decides his suicide with tossing a coin. He searches a suitable place for an ordinary man's suicide: "It made sense that Archibald should die on this nasty urban

[81] Sandapen, **op. cit.,** p. 55.
[82] Smith., **op. cit.,** p. 236.
[83] Taryn Beukema, "Men Negotiating Identity in Zadie Smith's White Teeth," **Postcolonial Text,** Vol. 4, No. 3, 2008, p. 4.

street where he had ended up, living alone at the age of forty-seven, in a one-bedroom flat above a deserted chip shop."[84] Smith negates the figure of idealized man with Archie. He decides to commit suicide because his wife, Ophelia, ends their thirty-year marriage in which she goes mad. His problems are universalized problems of contemporary persons, but he is not brave enough to face them. Smith here highlights the uncertainty of the postmodern world in which people strive to reformulate their selves. This uncertainty challenges the rigidity of masculine identity. It can be interpreted that Smith deliberately introduces Archie to represent the erosion of the idolized masculinity. Archie does not have typical facets of masculinity like being competitive, disciplined and stable. Smith highlights that the postmodern world blurs the stereotyped gender traits which are socially-imposed and actually unrealistic. Although Archie's attempted suicide can be seen as a rebellion against life, it is an act of a man who feels himself unimportant:

> But dying's no easy trick. And suicide can't be put on a list of Things to Do in between cleaning the grill pan and levelling the sofa leg with a brick. … No matter what anyone says, suicide takes guts. It's for heroes and martyrs, truly vainglorious men. Archie was none of these. He was a man whose significance in the Greater Scheme of Things could be figured along familiar ratios:
> Pebble: Beach.
> Raindrop: Ocean.
> Needle: Haystack.
> He thought about the dent he might make on the world if he disappeared, and it seemed negligible, too small to calculate.[85]

As clearly explained, Archie is not an idealized hero that rebels against life, but an indecisive man whose almost all decisions depend on flipping a coin. He is such an unremarkable man that he associates himself with pebble, raindrop and needle. Smith exaggerates Archie's unremarkable presence in order to subvert traditional masculine assumptions. He lacks the rigidity and authority of masculine identity. Although he has superiority as an English man, his features fail to show the dominant masculine ideology. Smith, in this way, shows that dichotomies like superiority/inferiority are just socially-dictated clichés. Smith emphasizes that

[84] Smith, **op. cit.,** pp. 3-4.
[85] **Ibid.,** p. 11.

suicide is for brave men like heroes and martyrs, and Archie is not distinguished enough to be a hero with his death. Therefore, his attempt at suicide is prevented in an ironic way by the butcher, Mo Husseion-Ismael, whose "Delivery Area"[86] is blocked by Archie's car: "Do you hear that, mister? We're not licensed for suicides around here. This place hal al Kosher, understand?"[87] The butcher tries to protect his own benefit rather than care for Archie's life. Archie is such a little raindrop in an immense ocean that his life is saved not because of being important but because of having the chance to survive:

> It occurred to him that, for the first time since his birth, Life had said Yes to Archie Jones. Life wanted Archie. Although he was not one of her better specimens, Life wanted Archie and Archie, much to his own surprise, wanted Life.[88]

Smith repeatedly presents Archie as an ordinary man. Life wants him back although he is not the best one. Smith does not attack Archie's mediocrity but criticizes that can man have a visible and superior place only when he is the gatekeeper of masculine ideology. Smith points out that Archie is "the antithetical representation of"[89] masculine identity for English patriarchy. She reflects that Archie's best friend, Bengalis Samad Igbal has much more masculine features than him despite his colonized heritage—like being devoted to his roots and being authoritative. Samad stands as a foil character for Archie. While Samad tries to control his life, Archie flips a coin for his important decisions. Beukema asserts that: "Ironically, it is Archie—not Samad—who exhibits characteristics of the not-quite-not-white Englishman. Archie is the epitome of rootlessness and indecision."[90] Smith attacks the commonly accepted issue that English masculinity is the superior one. In the middle of his suicide attempt, he recalls the track cycling in the 1948 London Olympics where he shares thirteenth place with the Swedish Horst Ibelgaufs:

> In 1948, Archie Jones had participated in the Olympics in London, sharing thirteenth place (62.8 seconds) with a Swedish gynaecologist called Horst

[86] **Ibid.,** p. 6.
[87] **Ibid.,** p. 7.
[88] **Ibid.**
[89] Beukema, **op. cit.,** p. 4.
[90] **Ibid.**

> Ibelgaufts. Unfortunately this fact had been omitted from the Olympic records by a sloppy secretary who returned one morning after a coffee break with something else on her mind and missed his name as she transcribed one list to another piece of paper. Madam Posterity stuck Archie down the arm of the sofa and forgot about him. His only proof that the event had taken place at all were the periodic letters and notes he had received over the years from Ibelgaufts himself.[91]

Olympics Games are the international events where sport competitors prove their national success. Although Archie takes the thirteenth place in the game, it cannot be recorded. His place is taken by another man because his success is unrecorded. Moreover, his Swedish opponent is the only one who can prove his thirteenth place in the game. All these reveal that Archie has an unremarkable presence and he needs a mediator to prove his actions just like flipping the coin in order to make decisions. Smith uses universal incidents to challenge the idealized national identity of a man. She makes Archie and Samad meet first when they are assigned to the same mission of the Second World War in the English army tank. Their tank is "bridge-builder, one of the specialist divisions not tied to English county allegiances or to a type of weaponry, but providing service across the army …".[92] They are in this division because they are not suitable to fight and so they are called "the rejects of war".[93] However, Samad praises his heritage in the way that he tells a heroic event about his great-grandfather, Mangal Pande, who shoots the first bullet in the Indian Mutiny of 1857. He explains that he would fight in the war if he did not have a dead hand injured accidently in the Indian army. He is also an educated man and demands higher position than his in the war. While Samad manifests his authority and superiority, Archie tells his ordinariness:

> I'm a Jones, you see. "Slike a "Smith". We're nobody. My father used to say: "We're the chaff, boy, we're the chaff." Not that I've ever been much bothered, mind. Proud all the same, you know. Good honest English stock. But in your family you had a hero!"[94]

Archie emphasizes that he has an ordinary English family. In their genealogy, there is no hero like Mangal Pande. His father also stresses their unimportant presence.

[91] Smith, **op. cit.,** pp. 15-16.
[92] **Ibid.,** p. 86.
[93] **Ibid.,** p. 89.
[94] **Ibid.,** p. 99.

Although Archie is supposed to have a superior status as an Englishman, Smith challenges the superior/inferior position. Archie is a young boy while Samad is twelve years older than him. Therefore, it is easy for Samad to impose his authority on Archie: "It was awkward, an Indian telling an Englishman what to do but somehow the quietness of it, the manliness of it, …".[95] When Archie achieves something, Samad appreciates him as a child: "Good Man".[96] The War field is like Olympics for proving the national championship. Smith deconstructs the idealized English masculinity and makes Archie fail the English man's stereotypical characteristics:

> In short, it was precisely the kind of friendship an Englishman makes on holiday, that he can make only on holiday. A friendship that crosses class and colour, a friendship that takes as its basis physical proximity and survives because the Englishman assumes the physical proximity will not continue.[97]

Smith represents Samad much more authoritative than Archie in order to negate the superiority of national identity and reflects their friendship beyond the binary oppositions like class and colour. Smith introduces Samad as a traditional man who imposes his power on others and Samad "attempt[s] to control and determine identity by clinging to their ancestry and historical roots …".[98] However, Samad is an immigrant who has insecurities away from his homeland, in England. He is an educated man but he has to work as a waiter. He wants his twins, Magid and Millat to be devoted to his roots, Islamic beliefs and his heritage. Therefore, he sends his favoured son Magid to save him from corruption without his wife's, Alsana's knowledge. As revenge, Alsana intensifies uncertainties in his life by "never to say yes to him, never to say no to him, but rather to force him to live like she did—never knowing, never being sure …"[99] until her son returns. Moreover, Samad's plan about her sons fails: Magid becomes an atheist English intellectual and Millat takes part in violent actions in a fundamentalist Islamic group. Samad orders his family

[95] **Ibid.,** p. 93.
[96] **Ibid.**
[97] **Ibid.,** p. 96.
[98] Chiara Maruzzo, "The Ambiguous British Self in Zadie Smith's White Teeth," Master of Arts, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, 2013, p. 26.
[99] Smith, **op. cit.,** pp. 213-214.

and his friend, Archie to fit into his control and wants to feel important through his authority. Smith ironizes Samad's effort to have control over others:

> Last Tuesday he had asked Archie to show solidarity by keeping Irie at home the week of the festival. Archie had hedged and haggled, fearing Clara's wrath, but Samad had reassured him: Take a leaf from my book, Archibald. Who wears the trousers in my house? Archie had thought about Alsana, so often found in those lovely silken trousers with the tapered ankle, and of Samad, who regularly wore a long piece of embroidered grey cotton, a lungi, wrapped round his waist, to all intents and purposes, a skirt. But he kept the thought to himself.[100]

Samad tries to encourage Archie to behave manly by inserting a gender role like wearing trousers. However, Smith immediately attacks the traditional gender codes in a way that Alsana wears trousers while Samad wraps a cloth around the lower half of his body like a long skirt. That is to say, she challenges gender-based clichés. Smith criticizes both idealized national identity of a man and the rigidity of conventional masculine ideology in a way that she associates feminine problems such as feeling insecure and belonging to nowhere with male characters.

Smith not only portrays the erosion of the conventional masculine ideology but she also depicts the on-going gender based assumptions, especially the pressures on woman. After Archie is saved by the butcher, he finds himself in the party where he is charmed by a nineteen-year-old woman, Clara Bowden: "the transformation of Archie Jones in every particular that a man [was caused] by accident. That accident was Clara Bowden."[101] Archie describes Clara with her distinguished bodily features in the way of gender-based assumption that categorizes the female identity into her racialized body:

> But first a description: Clara Bowden was beautiful in all senses except maybe, by virtue of being black, the classical. Clara Bowden was magnificently tall, black as ebony and crushed sable, … She needed no bra she was independent, even of gravity she wore a red halter neck which stopped below her bust, underneath which she wore her belly button (beautifully) and underneath that some very tight yellow jeans. … it seemed to Archie as he turned to observe her, like a reared-up thoroughbred. … Her beauty was not a sharp, cold commodity. She smelt musty, womanly, like a bundle of your favourite clothes. … She wore her sexuality with an older

[100] **Ibid.,** p. 152.
[101] **Ibid.,** p. 23.

> woman's ease, and not (as with most of the girls Archie had run with in the past) like an awkward purse, never knowing how to hold it, where to hang it or when to just put it down.[102]

Smith highlights that masculine discourse makes woman identified with particular images of femininity. The phrase "first a description"[103] means that woman's presence is dependent on the descriptions of phallocentric discourse. While Clara seems to be praised with her attractive bodily features, she is actually seen as a sexual object to fulfil the expectations and desires of patriarchy. Moreover, her blackness is regarded as disability. Although Archie lacks the profile of idealized male authority, his perspective on woman is shaped by the dominant gender-based assumptions of patriarchy. She is attractive to Archie's taste but her blackness makes her fail to be an idealized woman. The sentence—"she wore her sexuality"[104]—clearly summarizes that the body, as a sexual object of male desire, is the indicator of identity, so woman is objectified by stereotypical gender dictations. Even before we hear Clara's voice, she is introduced to us from the perspective of patriarchy. Ledford points out that: "Within Archie's first few seconds of meeting Clara he has determined his opinion of her based on her race and her sexuality; before Clara speaks she is labelled because of her sex and her race."[105] The reason why Smith makes Clara firstly presented with her bodily features rather than her life story is that woman's stories are buried under the pressures of masculine hegemony. Smith humorously explains that she is much more than a body, she has a life story:

> … Archie did not pluck Clara Bowden from a vacuum. And it's about time people told the truth about beautiful women. They do not shimmer down staircases. They do not descend, as was once supposed, from on high, attached to nothing other than wings. Clara was from somewhere. She had roots. More specifically, she was from Lambeth via Jamaica …[106].

Smith criticizes the idealization of a woman through her beauty and her body. Woman is encapsulated into bodily features and the expectations of her gender role.

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[102] **Ibid.,** pp. 23-24.
[103] **Ibid.**
[104] **Ibid.**
[105] Ledford., **op. cit.,** p. 29.
[106] Smith., **op. cit.,** p. 27.

She negates the praise for a woman with a fairytale or mythological features like having wings. Clara is not a dreamy figure but a real person who has a life story. When she meets Archie, she has broken up with Ryan Topps. She has a relationship with Ryan as an escape from her mother's religious fanaticism, but then Ryan is impressed by Hortenso's beliefs and becomes a Jehovah's Witness like her. Ryan's and Clara's final split occurs when they have a scooter accident. She loses her top teeth while Ryan is uninjured. Her missing teeth symbolize her rejection of religious identity and separation from her roots. She clearly wants to remove herself from her mother's and Ryan's religious activism, so she gets married to Archie who is a saviour for her:

> By February 1975, Clara had deserted the church and all its biblical literalism for Archibald Jones, … Was it better to marry? Even if the man was a heathen? There was no way of knowing: she was living without props now, sans safety net. More worrying than God was her mother. Hortense was fiercely opposed to the affair, on grounds of colour rather than of age, and on hearing of it had promptly ostracized her daughter one morning on the doorstep.[107]

Her marriage is a protest against her mother's authority and religious pressure. Archie is a life saver for her rather than a love: "...she did it on impulse and begged Archie to take her as far away from Lambeth as a man of his means could manage …".[108] Although she wants to free herself from somebody's control, she finds herself in a marriage where she has to sacrifice her freedom. She questions whether marriage is better than her current life. She reaches her primary demand that Hortense leaves her free not because of Archie's atheism or his older age but because of racial difference. Her marriage is not based on love but it is a legal contract that imposes particular gender roles. While she escapes from the controlling power of church as a religious institution, she enters into another institution where she is controlled by prescriptive rules. Clara experiences marriage as a life insurance rather than a love union:

> … she had not paid a high price. Only love. Just love. And whatever Corinthians might say, love is not such a hard thing to forfeit, not if you've never really felt it. She did not love Archie, but had made up her mind, from

[107] **Ibid.**, p. 46.
[108] **Ibid.**

> that first moment on the steps, to devote herself to him if he would take her away. And now he had; and, though it wasn't Morocco or Belgium or Italy, it was nice not the promised land but nice, nicer than anywhere she had ever been.[109]

Although Archie cannot completely realize Clara's dream about going far away from home, she thinks that she does not sacrifice much but just love. Archie enables her to be away from her home, but the place they have spent three months in Cricklewood is not good and their new home in Willesden Green is not far away from Lamberth. However, Clara is ready to devote herself to her husband who is a saviour for her happiness. Smith presents marriage as a legal contract which makes spouses pay prices instead of sharing a mutual love and she, like Jeanette Winterson, stresses the institutional status of marriage. Smith also shows the patriarchal approach to marriage. Clara needs a man to realize her wishes and she is supposed to be a performer of traditional gender tasks such as devotion to her husband. Marriage is a place for performing the socially-dictated gender roles:

> Clara understood that Archibald Jones was no romantic hero. … Clara felt, he should at least be utterly devoted to you - to your beauty, to your youth - that's the least he could do to make up for things. But not Archie. One month into their marriage and he already had that funny glazed look men have when they are looking through you. He had already reverted back into his bachelorhood: pints with Samad Iqbal, … every spare moment with the man in that bloody place, O'Connell's, in that bloody dive. … No white knight, then, this Archibald Jones. No aims, no hopes, no ambitions. … A dull man. An old man. And yet ... good. He was a good man. And good might not amount to much, good might not light up a life, but it is something.[110]

Smith highlights that marriage is not a fairy tale in which the knight has an eternal love for the princess. Clara jumps into a marriage as a salvation but in a month she understands the reality that Archie is a good man but he does not make any effort to boost her emotions. Smith makes comparison between romantic hero/knight and Archie in order to show that patriarchal discourse imposes marriage as a whole life dream of a woman for her happiness. Moreover, the woman is regarded as waiting for a knight to make her life better. Archie is such an ordinary man that he spends his time with his friend outside while Clara is limited to domesticity. Before their

[109] **Ibid.,** pp. 47-48.
[110] **Ibid**. p. 48.

marriage, Archie has praised her beauty but her husband changes and makes Clara feel unimportant in their marriage.

Clara and Archie's marriage appears as a meeting of dichotomies. The reason why Smith puts binary oppositions such as man/woman, white/black, old/young together is that the global and postmodern world makes the opposites and differences come together. In the wedding ceremony, she reflects patriarchal binary system which makes clear-cut distinctions between man and woman:

> Archie was passed a pen and put down his name (Alfred Archibald Jones), nationality (English) and age (47). Hovering for a moment over the box entitled "Occupation', he decided upon "Advertising: (Printed Leaflets)', then signed himself away. Clara wrote down her name (Clara Iphegenia Bowden), nationality (Jamaican) and age (19). Finding no box interested in her occupation, she went straight for the decisive dotted line, swept her pen across it, and straightened up again, a Jones. A Jones like no other that had come before her.[111]

All superior features are associated with man while woman is familiarized with inferior codes. The system does not seem to be primarily interested in woman's job and finance. Accordingly, Clara does not have any occupation, so she is dependent on her husband. She is vulnerable to be manipulated due to her age and race. Woman is forced to wear her husband's identity in order to have an acceptable place. Taking the surname of a man is not just a sign of marriage, but it is an acceptance of his authority and culture. In their wedding, she wears "a perfect set of false teeth"[112] as a symbol of her new identity. Her physical appearance, except from blackness, lacks the identification of Jamaican heritage and her false teeth remove her from her own authentic self. The false teeth bestowed by her husband appear as the mimicry of Englishness and also the indicator of gender role imposed on her by patriarchy. Howland remarks that:

> Clara becomes her body devoid of her authentic self, a body made more perfect by the addition of false teeth, a body that performs the role expected of her by both her husband and society as a whole.[113]

[111] **Ibid.,** p. 50.
[112] **Ibid.,** p. 49.
[113] Howland, **op. cit.,** p. 39.

Becoming a Jones makes her adopt her husband's English identity. Although there is not an explicit oppression in Clara and Archie's marriage, the internalized patriarchal approach imposes its dualistic injustice. The surname of Jones makes Clara perform her gender role as a wife and mother. Woman gains meaning through the presence of a man according to masculine ideology. While Smith emphasizes that Clara appears to gain a new identity with her marriage, she also implies Archie's failure to be a stereotypical Englishman because of his marriage with a black woman. His marriage with a coloured woman can show that Archie has an unremarkable place in society and hence he can much more easily exert dominance on a black woman who is considered inferior than a white one.

Smith decidedly chooses Alsana's niece, Neena for a protest against male dominance because her sexual preference subverts the oppressive and compulsory heterosexual discourse. Neena is labelled as Niece-of-Shame due to her sexual preference accepted as abject and marginal. Neena, like Jeanette, challenges socially-imposed traditional gender roles and celebrates her own difference. She gives Clara the books of feminist approach like Bauvouir's **Second Sex** which highlights the submission of women in patriarchal society. She tries to raise awareness towards dictated gender roles and the dominance of masculine ideology. Neena clearly protests against Alsana whose thoughts support the gender-based hierarchical perspective of the male-centred world:

> You don't talk to him, he talks at you. You scream and shout at each other, but there's no communication. And in the end he wins anyway because he does whatever he likes, when he likes. You don't even know where he is, what he does, what he feels, half the time. It's 1975, Alsi. You can't conduct relationships like that any more. It's not like back home. There's got to be communication between men and women in the West, they've got to listen to each other, …[114].

Neena points out that the authority of conventional masculine ideology begins to be shaken by feminist philosophy. Whereas Alsana thinks in the way of patriarchy which makes her comply with her gender role, despite on-going gender-based

[114] **Ibid.,** p. 76.

assumptions of patriarchy, Neena's feminist perspective gives hopes for woman's emancipation.

Smith puts her protagonist, Irie at the core of all these regulations and developments. That is to say, she is the embodiment of both on-going gender-based assumptions and liberal thoughts free from male dominance. While Clara and Alsana symbolize her acceptance of male dominance and gender-based assumptions, Neena represents her reconciliation with her bodily difference and her freedom from socially-dictated norms at the end of the novel.

3.3 Roots and Routes

Smith prefaces his novel with the quote from Shakespeare's **The Tempest**: "What is past is prologue."[115] She intertwines past, present and future in a way that past appears as an introduction to present and future events. In the play, Antonio—the disloyal brother of Prospero—convinces Sebastian to kill his brother Alonso, the King of Naples, so that Sebastian can come to the throne. Antonio says to Sebastian that: "… what's past is prologue, what to come/In yours and my discharge."[116] Antonio points out that what they have experienced is a past and now they will fortune their future with their own decisions. That is to say, our future is in our hands and it is not predestined by the past which is a starter of our present actions not a controller of the whole. Smith accepts the effects of the past on lives but she, like in the play, supports that the future will be shaped with our deeds rather than the past. Smith actually shows that the whole life story cannot be based on the past but the past can be a mediator between our present and future, and between generations. She presents characters both imprisoned with past like Samad and distanced from the oppression of it at the end like Irie: "Smith's characters, … either look at their past as a shelter or are haunted by the possibility it may reappear in their lives."[117] She shows throughout the novel that sticking fanatically to the past harasses the present, so the past should be just an advisor for our present and future actions. While she puts Irie at the centre of the story, she inserts the past events of her family to make her

[115] **Ibid.,** preface.
[116] William Shakespeare, **The Tempest**, http://shakespeare.mit.edu/tempest/full.html.
[117] Maruzzo, **op. cit.,** p. 137.

discover her roots and be able to reformulate her own sense of self. Her dissatisfaction with her Jamaican frame and the problem of belonging to English culture direct her to search for answers about her roots and the routes of her future life. Her father and mother cannot provide a safe place for her reconciliation with herself, so she leads her way to the alternative routes.

Irie is predestined to be OK thanks to her name: "It's patois. Means everything OK, cool, peaceful, you know… It's different."[118] However, Irie is full of discomfort and squeezed between her genetics and English culture. Clara gives this name to her child with a hope that Irie will have a hassle-free life. The name Irie also symbolizes her difference, uniqueness with its Jamaican origin in English while she is wished to be Sarah by her father. Sarah is a proper name in English culture. It is a widespread and ordinary one. Irie's name is the indicator of her difference rather than her peacefulness. Actually, she is caught between being Irie and wishing to be Sarah. Her name foreshadows her potential problems which cannot be sufficiently noticed by both Clara and Archie. Ledford states that: "Irie Jones' name is a primary example of how language shapes the women's lives."[119] Her name's Jamaican origin reduces her to inferiority "within a community full of Sarahs".[120] The phallogocentric language subjugates woman's role and colonizes her. Therefore, Irie is the victim of phallogocentric language with her Jamaican roots. The combination of Irie and Jones is also the representative of being half Jamaican and half English. Irie's life is full of troubles with fitting into English culture. She is always represented by her Jamaican features like big hips, Afro-hair and her black skin which push her out of the mainstream. Irie, lacking self-esteem, defines herself with reference to other people's thoughts, especially her unrequited love Millat's perspective. Her Jamaican heritage is oppressed and humiliated by her friends and teachers. Therefore, she views her body as an abject which cannot fulfil the standards of white culture.

School is a place of standardization which tries to eliminate individual differences. Irie studies at Glenard Oak School, "traced back to"[121] the English colonial in Jamaica, Sir Edmund Flecker Glenard. He brings Jamaicans to England in

[118] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 75.
[119] Ledford, **op. cit.,** p. 21.
[120] **Ibid.**
[121] Smith., **op. cit.,** p. 303.

order that the English teach ethics and norms to Jamaicans while Jamaicans make the English devoted to God. He plans to construct "a 'shelter, workplace and educational institute' used in its time by a mixture of English and Caribbean people."[122] However, his plan is a failure:

> Glenard could not be said to have passed on any great edifying beacon to future generations. … Glenard's influence turned out to be personal, not professional or educational: it ran through people's blood and the blood of their families; it ran through three generations of immigrants who could feel both abandoned and hungry even when in the bosom of their families in front of a mighty feast; and it even ran through Irie Jones of Jamaica's Bowden clan, though she didn't know it …[123]

The plan of teaching English norms makes Jamaican/immigrant "a stranger in a strange land".[124] The notorious history of school displays that it manipulates people rather than educate them. Glenard is also a friend of Durham, the lover of Irie's great-grandmother. Durham "entrust[s] the continued education of Ambrosia Bowden to his good friend Sir Edmund Flecker Glenard, …".[125] However, Glenard tries to abuse pregnant Ambrosia sexually in the name of education: "... Glenard began to touch her. But inside, there was a galloping heart-beat, … that wanted desperately to repel Glenard's attempts at an education."[126] Gleanard considers Ambrosia as erotic, sexually attractive and exotic. Although she is not appropriate to the idealized European beauty standards with her racial body, Gleanard tries to colonize her body. Smith here shows both internalized racial oppression of white man and the illusion of European beauty standards which impose whiteness as a norm. Smith also bases the past of school on the colonial Glenard in a way that immigrant children—called "the disadvantaged"[127]—are colonized to adopt the standards of dominant culture in the name of education. That is to say, they are miseducated and stereotyped regardless of their individual differences.

Both Smith and Winterson assert the institutional power of schools on standardization which tries to eliminate or restrain the individual differences. Irie is

[122] **Ibid.,** p. 304.
[123] **Ibid.,** p. 307.
[124] **Ibid.,** p. 206.
[125] **Ibid.,** p. 358.
[126] **Ibid.,** pp. 360-361.
[127] **Ibid.,** p. 303.

forced to **normalize** herself into social and cultural norms dictated both by school and society. Therefore, school cannot satisfy Irie to define her own self, instead it presents a world where she feels herself as the other or **disadvantaged**. When she is caught with Millat's marijuana by the headmaster of school, both she and Millat are punished to study courses in Chalfen's household with Mr. Chalfen's son, Joshua. Mr. Chalfen's son involves in this event but he is innocent. The headmaster describes the study programme:

> '… I think it's a really interesting idea. This way Joshua's strengths can be shared equally amongst you, … I hope you'll see that it's more than punishment. It's constructive. It's people helping people. And I really hope you'll do this wholeheartedly, you know? This kind of thing is very much in the history, the spirit, the whole ethos of Glenard Oak, ever since Sir Glenard himself. … ' … the exciting thing is, this could be a kind of guinea-pig project for a whole range of programmes, … Bringing children of disadvantaged or minority backgrounds into contact with kids who might have something to offer them. … We could get funding' At the magic of or A funding, the headmaster's sunken eyes began to disappear beneath agitated lids.[128]

Joshua, as a member of an English family, is in the superior position while both Millat and Irie are reflected as a disadvantaged and minor group. Although the headmaster presents the programme as a contribution to children's education, his actual aim is implied as gaining money. He also claims that this programme has "the spirit, the whole ethos of Glenard"[129] in a way that it helps children improve their abilities. However, this spirit symbolizes the colonization that the disadvantaged are civilized by the advantaged.

The Chalfen household is the microcosm of ideal English society for Irie. Therefore, it is a way for Irie to enter the English world. Marcus Chalfen is a genetic engineer whose significant experiment is a FutureMouse. In his experiment, the DNA of a mouse is modified to control the process of cancerous tumours at certain time. His wife, Joyce is a horticulturalist and writer, and they have four children, including Joshua who is interested in Irie. The Chalfens are a portrayal of the intellectual English family. The Chalfens are described as masters of perfectness:

[128] **Ibid.,** pp. 303, 308.
[129] **Ibid.,** p. 303.

> Every Chalfen proclaimed themselves mentally healthy and emotionally stable. The children had their oedipal complexes early and in the right order, they were all fiercely heterosexual, they adored their mother and admired their father, and, unusually, this feeling only increased as they reached adolescence. Rows were rare, playful and only ever over political or intellectual topics (the importance of anarchy, the need for higher taxes, the problem of South Africa, the soul body dichotomy), upon which they all agreed anyway. The Chalfens had no friends. They interacted mainly with the Chalfen extended family … Chalfens didn't need other people. They referred to themselves as nouns, verbs and occasionally adjectives: It's the Chalfen way, And then he came out with a real Chalfenism, He's Chalfening again, We need to be a bit more Chalfenist about this. Joyce challenged anyone to show her a happier family, a more Chalfenist family than theirs. Chalfenist about this. Joyce challenged anyone to show her a happier family, a more Chalfenist family than theirs.[130]

The Chalfens appear as a miniature of idealized patriarchal English nation. They are described as too good to be real. Smith actually reflects them as caricatures rather than real people. They stand alone with their greatness like powerful nations that need nobody. They construct their own ideology "Chalfenism"[131] and they also create a private language which reflects their "Chalfenist"[132] features. They celebrate their perfectness both healthily and intellectually. There is no chaos in their household and they are the representative of peacefulness and absolute truth: "Truth was truth to a Chalfen."[133] The surname Chalfen represents the origin of father, Marcus. Therefore, the celebration of **Chalfenism** is the praise of patriarchy. **Chalfenism** symbolizes the law of the father and the emphasis on heterosexuality reminds of its compulsoriness in patriarchal and gendered ideology. Smith exaggerates the portrayal of the Chalfens in order to show that Western ideology imposes its perspective as an absolute truth by celebrating its superiority. Therefore, the Chalfens stand as a step for Irie to realize the standards of Western ideology. Smith makes Irie enter the household of the Chalfens to indicate her struggle to be a part of English culture. Entrance to the household of the Chalfens is a remarkable path for Irie to reach English culture:

> She had a nebulous fifteen-year-old's passion for them, overwhelming, yet with no real direction or object. She just wanted to, well, kind of, merge with them. She wanted their Englishness. Their Chalfishness. The purity of it. It

[130] **Ibid.,** pp. 313-314.
[131] **Ibid.**
[132] **Ibid.**
[133] **Ibid.,** p. 312.

> didn't occur to her that the Chalfens were, after a fashion, immigrants too (third generation, by way of Germany and Poland, nee Chalfenovsky), or that they might be as needy of her as she was of them. To Irie, the Chalfens were more English than the English. When Irie stepped over the threshold of the Chalfen house, she felt an illicit thrill, like a Jew munching a sausage or a Hindu grabbing a Big Mac. She was crossing borders, sneaking into England; it felt like some terribly mutinous act, wearing somebody else's uniform or somebody else's skin.[134]

The Chalfen family is Irie's new route to search for an acceptance of pure heritage away from her family's diverse and chaotic genealogy: "[S]he wanted to merge with the Chalfens, to be of one flesh; separated from the chaotic, random flesh of her own family …".[135] She wants to escape from her multicultural identity and be appreciated by English culture. She accepts the Chalfens in such a superior position that she contributes to their manipulations. The Chalfens are the representative of stereotypical norms and dictations of the mainstream. Therefore, she feels herself as if she is a foreigner and in "somebody else's skin"[136] when she enters the Chalfen's house. Actually, Irie wants to be an "English Rose"[137] by wearing the Chalfen skin or uniform. The phrase "wearing somebody else's uniform"[138] also symbolizes that the female body is shaped according to social and cultural dictations, so she becomes dissatisfied with her body unless she performs stereotyped roles. Irie identifies herself with her bodily features. Thus, she can gain a new identity when she is disguised into **somebody else's skin**. Wearing the Chalfen skin means the adaptation to European standards. While Smith makes Irie wholeheartedly praise the perfectness of the Chalfens, she hints that the Chalfens do not have a pure heritage which Irie desires to have. English culture is a lifestyle and a social norm for the Chalfens rather than inherited biologically. Therefore, the novel shows that culture is socially constructed rather than just preordained. Smith emphasizes that searching for a pure root or identity is a futile effort in the multicultural world. She also points out that dominant ideology blinds people in order to prevent them from making their own interpretations. Irie, completely under the influence of European ideology, cannot

[134] **Ibid.,** p. 328.
[135] **Ibid.**
[136] **Ibid.**
[137] **Ibid.,** p. 267.
[138] **Ibid.,** p. 328.

become satisfied with her Jamaican roots and fails to define herself independently. Therefore, **wearing someone else's skin** seems to be a proper way for her to depart from her racialized body. Her appreciation of the Chalfen family also directs her to make clear-cut distinctions between her family and the Chalfens:

> … she was fascinated, enamoured after five minutes. No one in the Jones household made jokes about Darwin, or said 'my foot and mouth are on intimate terms', or offered choices of tea, or let speech flow freely from adult to child, child to adult, as if the channel of communication between these two tribes was untrammelled, unblocked by history, free. … there existed fathers who dealt in the present, who didn't drag ancient history around like a chain and ball. So there were men who were not neck-high and sinking in the quagmire of the past.[139]

She is amazed with their freedom from the past while her father and Samad stick to the past events like the memories of World War II. Her father and Samad shoulder the past as a burden and their attachment to the past causes a huge gap with their children. The Chalfens live in present and they can communicate with their children. Irie suffers from her family's ignorance to her problems: "Irie thought of her own parents, whose touches were now virtual, existing only in the absences where both sets of fingers had previously been …".[140] Therefore, the Chalfen house appears as an intimate and welcoming environment for her. She studies with Marcus and she also becomes interested in Marcus' project, Futuremouse. In his project, a mouse is born in a lab to develop cancer, it shows the process of cancer and the mouse dies seven years later. Irie's interest in this project can be interpreted that she wants to "transgenically fuse with"[141] Chalfen, remove herself from the Jamaican heritage and become English/Chalfen. Marcus controls the whole lifespan of the mouse and his attempt is seen as reaching perfection. His project is perceived as not "determining the future of a cancer, or a reproductive cycle, or the capacity to age"[142] but as "determining the future of the *mouse*".[143] His book about his transgenic mouse is also assumed that "[t]here's just something a little fascist about the whole deal".[144] People

[139] **Ibid.,** p. 326.
[140] **Ibid.,** p. 322.
[141] **Ibid.,** p. 342.
[142] **Ibid.,** p. 419.
[143] **Ibid.**
[144] **Ibid.** p. 418.

suspect that his project is a way of playing God's role and can turn into a Hitlerian project, creating a perfect race. Smith makes the transgenic mouse escape at the end of the novel in order to show the impossibility of controlling life and reaching perfectness. She also subverts the idealized masculine ideology and the rigidness on perfection with the escape of the mouse: "Its escape, … [is] a celebration of the reality that no man is perfect, nor should he be bound to societal constraints and demands."[145] Both Smith and Winterson attack the rigidity of masculine ideology and the aim to predetermine life and identity. They assert that identity is not stable and cannot be based on rigidness and perfection. Smith also challenges Marcus's authority with his son Joshua who becomes an activist of animal rights. He leaves home as a protest against his father's project. Joshua not only challenges the father's authority but he also subverts the notion of idealized English family. Smith also emphasizes that the Chalfens, the representative of an idealized English family, can share similar familial problems with the immigrant family like the Igbals.

Although the Chalfens seem to be the embodiment of the contemporary English family, they cannot go beyond the conventional assumptions of the gender-based dualistic world. As soon as Irie enters the Chalfen house, Marcus Chalfen visualizes her as having a sexual body: "Marcus was standing on the garden steps, quite openly admiring Irie's breasts …".[146] He calls her with words based on her gender and race: "You are a big girl"[147] and "the big brown goddess".[148] As a stereotypical male, Marcus imprisons Irie's identity into her body and he highlights that her body is open to colonization and manipulation. Marcus also views her as "a mountain range from that angle; a soft and pillowy version of the Andes".[149] He associates her body with a large area that does not take place in England: "Her body is the visual representation of all the ways in which she does not belong in England, the ways in which her performance has failed her and further reduced her."[150] Marcus observes Irie's body as a discovery of a new land out of England. Marcus, as an embodiment of patriarchal ideology, interprets that the female body is a land where

[145] Beukema, **op. cit.,** p. 5.
[146] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 317.
[147] **Ibid.**
[148] **Ibid.,** p. 329.
[149] **Ibid.,** p. 342.
[150] Howland, **op. cit.,** p. 46.

woman's identity belongs. Joyce Chalfen also defines Irie's difference from England: "You look very exotic. Where are you from, ...".[151] Her body, as her land, reflects her Jamaican heritage and her racial skin. Her bodily features are under the gaze of patriarchal colonization. On the radio programme, Gardener's Question time, Joyce explains that: "I always think of a garden's soil like a woman's body …".[152] Soil needs somebody to be cultivated in order to be fertile. Joyce's association stresses that the woman body is regarded as being in need of cultivation. Irie continually tries to cultivate her bodily features such as her Afro hair according to European beauty norms dictated by patriarchy. Patriarchy determines the state of female presence/existence. Irie's Jamaican body is the symbol of a colony much more open to exploitation and cultivation than the white female body. The woman body is regarded as a mysterious land needed to be discovered by the male in order to gain meaning. Her racial difference makes her body much more mysterious and exotic. Even she is foreign to her own body and she interprets herself by depending on patriarchal norms and dictations. She absorbs the patriarchal dictations as the absolute truth about herself. Therefore, she tries to regulate gender-based assumptions of patriarchy to construct her sense of self. Cixous explains patriarchal attributions to the female body:

> As soon as begin to speak, at the same time as they're taught their name, they can be taught that their territory is black: because you are Africa, you are black. Your continent is dark. Dark is dangerous. You can't see anything in the dark, you're afraid. Don't move, you might fall. Most of all, don't go into the forest. And so we have internalized this horror of the dark.[153]

Cixous shows how patriarchy determines woman's perception. Masculine ideology makes woman think about herself as imposed and her knowledge about her body limited to the assumptions of patriarchy. The association between female and Africa displays masculine ideology that regards the female body as wild and mysterious. Thus, the female body is a black continent to be discovered and colonized by man. Irie's racial difference makes her exactly a dark continent because she is much more

[151] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 319.
[152] **Ibid.,** p. 402.
[153] Helene Cixous, "The Laugh of Medusa, **Signs**, Vol. 1, No. 4, Trans. by Keith Cohen, Paula Cohen, The University of Chicago Press, Summer 1976, pp.877-878.

mysterious than white woman and much more open to colonization. The pressure of patriarchal assumption causes Irie to bear hate towards her body and base her perspective about herself on patriarchal ideology. Patriarchy manipulates woman according to its rules. Marcus disregards Irie's interest into his project when Magid, a representative of intellectual man, comes to work with him. Marcus talks about Irie's lack of intellect in his letter to Magid which is read by Irie:

> Well, things are the same round here except that myfiks are in excellent order, thanks to Irie. You'll like her: she's a bright girl and she has the most tremendous breasts .. . Sadly, I don't hold out much hope for her aspirations in the field of' hard science', more specifically in my own biotechnology, which she appears to have her heart set on ... she's sharp in a way, but it's the menial work, the hard grafting, that she's good at she'd make a lab assistant maybe, but she hasn't any head for the concepts, no head at all. She could try medicine, I suppose, but even there you need a little bit more chutzpah than she's got.. . 50 it might have to be dentistry for our Irie (she could fix her own teeth at least), an honest profession no doubt, but one I hope you'll be avoiding ...[154].

Marcus again identifies Irie with her bodily features and celebrates Magid's intellect while he scorns her mind. Smith shows the binary oppositions between man/woman and mind /body. Joyce also supports the superiority of man's intellect: "it was always my aim to marry a man cleverer than me."[155] Although she calls herself feminist, she talks in favour of masculine superiority. Marcus reduces Irie's abilities into fixing his documents as a secretary and stresses that she does not have enough ability to take place in his project. Smith not only portrays the Chalfens with their ultimate perfectness, but she also reflects their hypocritical behaviours and prejudices. Wixted states that: "As the reader learns more about them, the family's contradictions and inconsistencies become increasingly apparent."[156]Although Irie firstly becomes frustrated when she reads the letter, she decides to be a dentist. Her fast recovery from frustration also highlights that she begins to be confident about herself and decisive on her thoughts thanks to the enrichment in her intellect although her intellect is disregarded by Marcus. Her decision to be a dentist can be interpreted that

[154] Smith, **op. cit.,** p. 368.
[155] **Ibid.,** p. 324.
[156] John P. Wixted, "On Boredom and Being Saved: Postmodern Malaise and Emancipation in the Novels of Zadie Smith," Master of Arts, Villanova University, April 2007, p. 6.

she needs to search her own roots rather than try to modify her Jamaican frame just like a dentist who primarily strives to save and fix natural teeth instead of inserting false ones. She wants to be proficient about her life story like a dentist who is qualified at the details of teeth.

One of the most striking moments in Irie's life is a decision to search her own roots when she discovers her mother's false teeth. Until that moment, she has not known about her mother's false teeth: "another item in a long list of parental hypocrisies and untruths".[157] She finds out her mother's false teeth when she tries to get permission about helping African people for a year before going to university. She attempts to persuade her mother when she is sleepy in bed and vulnerable. She is really vulnerable because she talks like a little child without her teeth: "Why can't you just sit up properly and talk to me properly and drop the ridiculous little girl voice."[158] Clara, without her false teeth, is reduced to child position because her false teeth are the symbol of patriarchal authority and her gender performance. Her words cannot be understood properly without them. Irie's discovery of Clara's false teeth is painful both metaphorically and literally: "Irie kicked over a glass … Then, … Irie had the strange and horrid sensation that she was being bitten".[159] This bite awakens her impulses to know about her roots: "She was sick of never getting the whole truth."[160] Therefore, she decides to go to "deep into the heart"[161], Hortense. Before she leaves for Hortense's house, she thinks to go to the Chalfens "but she knew already there were no answers there, only more places to escape."[162] Hortense's house is a prologue for Irie to search for her maternal roots which characterize her physical appearance. Her grandmother's house is the world of nostalgia with the old family photos; namely, past is locked "[i]n cupboards and neglected drawers and in grimy frames".[163] Smith shows that past can be a prologue to our life but sticking to the past is useless. Therefore, she presents Irie with the past in the forms of

[157] **Ibid.,** p. 379.
[158] **Ibid.,** p. 378.
[159] **Ibid.**
[160] **Ibid.,** p. 379.
[161] **Ibid.**
[162] **Ibid.**
[163] **Ibid.,** p. 399.

photographs instead of informing her about the whole past of her family while she informs us about the whole story.

Irie's grandmother, Hortense is a religious woman fully devoted to Jenovah's Witness. After her husband dies, she lives with Ryan Topps who is a mediator between church and Hortense because church does not want woman to involve in their issues. Church, as an embodiment of patriarchal authority, views woman as ignorant. Hortense explains that to Irie:

> 'I gat so tired wid de church always tellin' me I'm a woman or I'm That heducated enough. Everybody always tryin' to heducate you; heducate you about dis, heducate you about dat .. . Dat's always bin de problem wid de women in dis family. Somebody always tryin' to heducate them about so meting pretendin' it all about learnin' when it all about a battle of de wills. My mudder was strong-willed deep down, and I'm de same. Lord knows, your mudder was de same. And you de same.'[164]

Although Hortense is fanatically devoted to her religion, she admits that church ignores woman's presence and makes her always in need of education. She also points out the hypocritical ideology of patriarchy which manipulates woman in the name of education. Hortense's mother, Ambrosia Bowden falls in love with Captain Durham and gets pregnant when she is educated by him. She thinks that he really loves her, but he loves her "just as the English loved India and Africa and Ireland"[165] The Bowdens share the similar experiences under patriarchal oppression, so they are "like Russian dolls, Irie back in Clara, Clara back in Hortense, Hortense back in Ambrosia …".[166] Irie's section titled with the years of 1990, 1907 also stresses the similar experiences of the Bowdens by going back to 1907 when Ambrosia Bowden is born. Smith highlights that woman is under the oppression of patriarchy throughout centuries. However, Hortense's emphasis on being "strong-willed"[167] reflects that woman is strong enough to construct her interpretation about herself when she becomes independent from the patriarchal authority. While Smith points out that the past has an effect on our present life by going back to 1907, she stresses that past can be a starter but not the ruler of an entire life. When Irie asks about

[164] **Ibid.,** p. 409.
[165] **Ibid.,** p. 361.
[166] **Ibid.,** p. 356.
[167] **Ibid.,** p. 409.

Ambrosia, Hortense says that: “You know enough already. De past is done wid. Nobody learn nuttin' from it. She means that it is useless to repeat the past and stick to it.”[168]

The turning point in Irie’s life to remove herself from past is that she has sex with Magid after she has sex with Millat. This results in pregnancy without knowledge of who the father is. She is fed up with her family’s obsession with past, she wants to leave behind the roots and the past. Millat is her unrequited love who harasses her perception about herself, so her sex with him symbolizes that Irie makes her own decision and gets control of her body rather than waiting for Millat’s approval. She decides to tell neither Millat nor Magid about her child. Paternity test also cannot reveal whether Magid and Millat is the father. Therefore, Irie has the power of deciding and her pregnancy gives her power of creating. Her pregnancy also enables her to establish intimacy with her body, so she rescues herself from the burden of being different. She subverts the omnipotent power of patriarchy. She wants her child away from the harassment of the past:

> In a vision, Irie has seen a time, a time not far from now, when roots won't matter any more because they can't because they mustn't because they're too long and they're too tortuous and they're just buried too damn deep. She looks forward to it.[169]

She wishes to rescue herself and her child from the control and certainty of the past. She wants to be free from the oppression of the past and construct her future with her own decisions. Her child will be “free as Pinocchio a puppet clipped of paternal strings”.[170] Irie wants to challenge the predestined gender roles dictated by patriarchy. Therefore, she frees her daughter from being a victim of the patriarchal authority. Her motherhood is her own choice rather than a woman’s predestined gender role dictated by patriarchy. At the end of the novel, Smith gives information about Irie’s and her child’s future life. They are with Joshua and Hortense in Jamaica. Irie and Joshua become lovers. These future events point out that Irie leaves behind her obsession about Millat and constructs a new life in Jamaica. Her life in

[168] **Ibid.,** p. 410.
[169] **Ibid.,** p. 527.
[170] **Ibid.,** p. 541.

Jamaica and the presence of Hortense symbolize her reconciliation with her body which is inherited from both Jamaica and Hortense. Smith makes Irie respect her body and redefine her sense of self free from the oppression of the past and constraints of the European masculine ideology. Irie also subverts the notion of pure root with her child who bears the union of all characters' ethnicities like English, Bangladeshi and Jamaican. Smith attacks the rigidity of masculine ideology. Although Smith firstly portrays Irie as a victim of patriarchal authority, Irie's struggles both in her family and society, her experience to enrich her intellectuality and her search for her roots bring her into conclusion that she is the one who can define her choices. Past is a prologue for Irie but her future life is shaped by her own decisions.

Smith, like Winterson, shows how women are marginalized and become the other because of their differences from the mainstream. Women are forced to internalize the patriarchal dictations and gender roles as their only way to follow. Although Irie's and Jeanette's paths to redefine their own selves are different, they both experience the patriarchal oppression. Both Jeanette and Irie can only realize their sense of self when they accept their differences regardless of masculine ideology. They rescue their body from the desire of male colonization. Irie makes this in the form of respecting her bodily difference and refusing the dictations of patriarchy while Jeanette follows her sexual preference by subverting compulsory heterosexuality.

CONCLUSION

This thesis delves into the narratives of **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** by Jeanette Winterson and **White Teeth** by Zadie Smith to discover the female protagonists' experiences about themselves. Jeanette and Irie are major characters going through social marginalization. Jeanette's sexual preference and Irie's racial difference cause them to be regarded as the other in society. Jeanette Winterson and Zadie Smith point out that social life, mostly directed by patriarchy, holds onto standardization and regulation to disregard personal differences. While Jeanette and Irie are in the way of learning that their differences are the key to realize their choices and reformulate their perspective about themselves, they aim to manage their lives rather than to mirror the other's perceptions about themselves. Although Jeanette's sexual orientation in **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** and Irie's racial heritage **in White Teeth** seem to be the major themes of the novels, regarding these novels just as a coming-age story of a lesbian or a black girl will narrow the alternative interpretations. These two novels present us with several questions to search about woman and masculine ideology in the contemporary world. **Oranges are not the Only Fruit** and **White Teeth** not only focus on two female protagonists, Jeanette and Irie, with regard to their experiences under the dominance of patriarchy but also they emphasize the issues about woman and patriarchy giving examples from other characters' experiences. While this thesis bases its central point on Jeanette and Irie, other characters like Jeannette's mother Louie and Irie's father Archie are portrayed to highlight the issues on woman and masculine ideology. The thesis analyses the subjects and topics with regard to feminist perspective in a contemporary world.

Jeanette's and Irie's gender and their differences make them be exposed to double discrimination in patriarchal society. Patriarchy, as the embodiment "of the signifier that would take [woman] back to the authority of a signified",[1] imposes preordained gender roles and restricts woman into inferior and signified positions. Jeanette and Irie experience handicaps of their gender as well as their differences.

[1] Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of Medusa," **Signs**, Vol. 1, No. 4, Trans. by Keith Cohen, Paula Cohen, The University of Chicago Press, Summer 1976, p. 892.

This thesis points out the oppression of masculine ideology on woman and woman's effort to change the established dictations and assumptions about her. The controlling weapon of patriarchy is its prescriptions based on gender and binary system. Jeanette's life is mainly controlled by her mother—the advocator of patriarchy—who orders her to follow the rigidness and dualism in order to construct a social self while Irie is primarily directed by Western beauty standards which privilege whiteness and contribute to patriarchal demands on woman. Cixous emphasizes the order of patriarchy for woman: "we're going to do your portrait, so that you can begin looking like it right away."[2] The similar oppression on Jeanette and Irie is to force them to evaluate themselves through the lens of others and patriarchal assumptions. One of the ways to challenge this kind of oppression is to become aware of the fact that patriarchy manipulates woman not to construct her independent sense of self. What is defined about them then becomes their reality. Their differences are reflected as inability or failure. They are alienated to their desires, choices, thoughts and bodies. Patriarchal illusion is to present race or sexual preference as concerns to marginalize woman and to take advantage of what contributes to its superiority. While Jeanette mimics her mother's religious and rigid dictations, Irie tries to get rid of her racial body to adopt herself to English society. Therefore, they have remained foreign to be themselves until they realize that they have the power to shape their lives through their choices and interpretation. When they subvert patriarchal illusion—which imposes itself as unchallengeable and compulsory—they will speak up their liberated voice and thoughts.

Jeanette's and Irie's experiences are analysed mainly with the topics like binary system, gender roles and the female body in this thesis. Masculine ideology generally manipulates woman with its dynamics like binary system and traditional gender roles. Jeanette and Irie struggle to rescue themselves from the predestined assumptions and roles which imprison them into a stable identity. Female construction of the self is the subversion of a stable self dictated by masculine ideology. Patriarchy wants woman to act and think in the way of its demands.

[2] **Ibid.**

Regarding itself as the preacher of knowledge and culture, patriarchy pervades its authority. Jackson and Jones state that:

> Thinking as a feminist involves challenging much of what has counted as 'knowledge'. Because we have historically lived in male-dominated societies, women have more often been the objects of knowledge than the producers of it. As a result, much of what has passed as objective knowledge of the world has been produced by men, framed by their particular location in society as men and usually white, middle-class and heterosexual men. Feminist modes of theorising contest androcentric (or male-centred) ways of knowing, calling into question the gendered hierarchy of society and culture.[3]

Patriarchy encapsulates woman's perspective about herself and the world into its knowledge. It privileges whiteness and heterosexuality as universalized norms. Therefore, Jeanette and Irie cannot have visible identity in the hegemonic order of patriarchy. They have to undermine the notion of patriarchal knowledge as an absolute truth and they should reformulate their perspectives. Jeanette's declaration of her sexual preference is a challenge to the heterosexual binary system and gender roles while Irie's liberation from Western beauty standards and respect to her racial body make her reverse the patriarchal hegemony on woman. Female construction of the self for Jeanette and Irie is a way to protest against patriarchal dualism considered as the touchstone of social regulations. Hutcheon asserts that:

> [T]here have been liberating effects of moving from the language of alienation (otherness) to that of decentering (difference), because that centre used to function as the fulcrum between binary opposites which always privileged one half: white/black, male/female, self/other, intellect/body, West/East, objectivity/subjectivity-the list is now well known. But if the center is seen as a construct, a fiction, not a fixed and unchangeable reality, the old either-or begins to break down, and the and-also of multiplicity and difference opens up new possibilities.[4]

Patriarchy centres its presence as a rigid and absolute entity. In the hierarchy of masculine ideology, patriarchy always associates so-called primary items like white, signifier and culture with itself while making woman stand as secondary. However

[3] Stevi Jackson, Jackie Jones, "Thinking Ourselves: An Introduction to Feminist Theorising," **Contemporary Feminist Theories**, Ed. by Stevi Jackson and Jackie Jones, Edşnburgh University Press, 1998, p. 1.

[4] Linda Hutcheon, "Feminism and Postmodernism," **Donna: Women in Italian Culture**, Ed. by Ada Testaferri. Ottawa: Dovehouse Editions,1989, pp. 31-32.

rigid patriarchal hegemony is, woman have the power to shake its fixed authority as long as she wakes up from the illusion and considers dictated gender roles and binary system as a hegemonic construction of patriarchy to insert his superiority. Actually, gendered assumptions and binary system cause both woman and man to be frozen within a stable identity but man has the opportunity to rule social regulations to his advantage. While Winterson and Smith depict their protagonists' struggle to go beyond the gendered dualistic assumptions, they also show the patriarchal institutions used to control and standardize woman into the female gender roles and social norms. School and family appear as the centres of standardization and the places to perform gender roles for both Jeanette and Irie. Church is also the primary patriarchal institution for Jeanette to suppress her point of view, and dictates heterosexuality as compulsory while church stands as an absolute truth for Irie's grandmother. In both novels, marriage is portrayed as a legal contract to intensify patriarchal authority rather than a love bond. All these social institutions mostly contribute to the rigidness of patriarchy. Both Winterson and Smith attack the standardization of patriarchy through its constitutions under the disguise of providing a visible place.

Jeanette and Winterson criticise the monolithic perspective of patriarchy which obstructs alternative ways. Feminism is the mentor of multiple possibilities and alternative ways against the fixed and one-dimensional perspective. Today, feminism—with the contribution of postmodernism—deals with the woman issues in diverse approaches. Jeanette and Irie have different experiences and struggles, but they are under the same oppression of patriarchy. Feminism not only criticises masculine ideology but it also subverts one dimensional approach of this ideology on woman. Jack and Jones state that:

> Postmodernism shares with feminism a scepticism about universal truth claims, an awareness of knowledge as something constructed from specific locations. Like feminism it questions the idea of a stable, pre-social self and casts doubt on the pretentions of ... rationality.[5]

[5] Stevi Jackson, Jackie Jones, **op. cit.,** p. 9.

Jeanette and Irie follow a sceptic way towards universalized assumptions to reconstruct their sense of self rather than remaining to be encapsulated into stable and preordained self. Women have different identities and multiple selves. Therefore, this thesis shows that woman cannot be categorized into a stable group. Rather, they have different experiences from each other; their selves are always in process and fluid.

Jeanette's and Irie's struggle is to celebrate their differences rather than being marginalized by them. They redirect their ways through their choices and interpretations. Cixous states of women that: "We inspire ourselves ... without running out of breath, we are everywhere."[6] Winterson's and Smith's narratives give inspiration to us for diving into Jeanette's and Irie's experiences. While Jeanette and Irie find satisfaction in tasting their desires and choices at the end, we feel both their and our refreshed perspectives.

[6] Cixous, **op. cit.,** p. 878.

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