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THE NEW WOMAN THROUGH STRUCTURALISM IN SARAH GRAND'S THE HEAVENLY TWINS

(Araştırma Makalesi)

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Abstract

Structuralism is an approach that seeks to decode the encoded whole consisting of a system to explore a textual work's deep structure from the surface structure. This study tries to analyse the 'New Woman' in Sarah Grand's "The Heavenly Twins" (1893) according to the structuralist approach. This novel is analysed synchronically. In terms of syntagmatic relation while Evadne Frayling marries George Colquhoun, Angelica Hamilton-Wells marries Mr. Kilroy. As for paradigmatic relation, homology of relationship is seen between two couples since there are unhappy marriages not only between Evadne and Colquhoun, but also between Angelica and Mr. Kilroy. In terms of syntagmatic relation while Angelica surrenders herself sexually to her husband after the death of her friend Tenor, Evadne surrenders herself sexually to her second husband after the death of her first husband Colquhoun. Syphilis and disguise in the novel's surface structure are closed signs. However, in the deep structure these signs turn to be explicit signs as follows: When the signifier is syphilis, the signified is reprobate and death; when the signifier is disguise, the signified is freedom. In terms of the novel's deep structure, the harmony performs on binary oppositions between Evadne and Angelica as follows: ignorant/educated, imprisoned/free, ill/healthy. Although the novel is over, the melody goes on since Evadne and Angelica can get only the role of a wife and a mother in patriarchal society. As for the novel's deep meaning, women and men have no innate difference for mental capacity, but women face prejudices by patriarchal society because the male-dominant society does not provide women to take the same education as men.

Keywords: *Structuralism, Feminism, 'New Woman', Sarah Grand, "The Heavenly Twins".*

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Sarah Grand'in Cennetlik İkizler Romanında Yapısalcılık Üzerinden Yeni Kadın Hareketi

Öz

Yapısalcılık, metinsel bir eserin yüzey yapısından derin yapısını keşfetmek için bir sistemden oluşan kodlanmış bütünün kodunu çözmeye çalışan bir yaklaşımdır. Bu çalışma, Sarah Grand'ın "Cennetlik İkizler" (1893) romanında 'Yeni Kadın' hareketini yapısalcı yaklaşım açısından incelemeye çalışır. Bu roman, eşzamanlı olarak analiz edilir. Dizimsel bağıntı açısından Evadne Frayling, George Colquhoun ile evlenirken Angelica Hamilton-Wells, Bay Kilroy ile evlenir. Dizisel bağıntı açısından iki çift arasındaki ilişkilerde eşyapılılık görülür çünkü hem Evadne ile Colquhoun arasında hem de Angelica ile Bay Kilroy arasında da mutsuz birer evlilik vardır. Dizimsel bağıntı açısından Angelica, arkadaşı Tenor'un ölümünden sonra kocasına cinsel anlamda teslim olurken Evadne, ilk kocası Colquhoun'un ölümünden sonra ikinci kocasına cinsel anlamda teslim olur. Romanın yüzeysel yapısındaki sifilis hastalığı ve kılık değiştirme kapalı göstergelerdir. Derin yapıda bu göstergeler şu anlamda açık göstergelere dönüşür: Gösteren sifilis hastalığı iken gösterilen ahlaksızlık ve ölümdür; gösteren kılık değiştirme iken gösterilen özgürlüktür. Romanın derin yapısı açısından, romanın uyumu Evadne ve Angelica arasında ikili karşıtlık üzerine şöyle kuruludur: cahil/eğitimli, hapsedilmiş/özgür, hasta/sağlıklı. Roman bitmesine rağmen romanın ezgisi devam eder çünkü Evadne'a ve Angelica'ya ataerkil toplumda sadece eş ve anne rolü tanınır. Romanın derin anlamına gelince zihinsel kapasite bağlamında erkek ve kadın arasında doğuştan gelen bir fark yoktur ancak ataerkil toplumun, kadınlarla ilgili dayattığı önyargılar vardır çünkü erkek egemen toplum, kadınların erkeklerle aynı eğitimi almalarına imkân tanımaz.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Yapısalcılık, Feminizm, 'Yeni Kadın', Sarah Grand, "Cennetlik İkizler".*

1. Introduction

Structuralism is an approach that seeks to decode the encoded whole consisting of a system to explore a textual work's deep structure from the surface structure (Lane, 1970). Ferdinand de Saussure (1976) handles language as self-sufficient, consistent and understandable. Russian formalism is a reaction to the symbolic and social perspective in literature. As a phenomenon, 'form' in Russian formalism can be studied by itself as both its own integrity and the envelope of content (Eichenbaum, 1965). In any act of verbal communication, Roman Jakobson (1971), a Russian formalist, tells of the following six functions; sender, message, context, contact, code, and receiver. Claude Levi-Strauss (1963) analyses women and men as interrelated elements to establish a general system of unconnected incidents. In this sense, each myth is regarded as a word revealing the structure of language.

Researchers focus on the narrative analysis of folk tale, myth, epic, short story or novel in order to take up its subject of the story, the theme, characters and actions. Being a meaningful whole, the text that expresses the mood of an author consists of the events that make up the story in order to present characters in action. The text's meaning depends on its parts' meaning. The text's each part's meaning is formed by the events happening in its place in relation to the whole. The text's meaning is revealed by syntagmatic constraints in relation to paradigmatic contrasts (Pettit, 1975). The text's meaning is revealed by syntagmatic constraints in relation to paradigmatic contrasts.

After examining Russian folk tales' contents, Vladimir Propp classifies the action's seven spheres as follows; villain, donor, helper, princes, dispatcher, hero, and false hero (Alkan, 2016). Propp (2005) also speaks of thirty-one functions whose order is always the same for the characters' actions in Russian folk tales because all fairy tales are of one type structure. For the action in the narrative plot, Algirdas Julien Greimas (1983) determines six actants as three oppositions on wish, communication, and force axis as follows; subject/object, sender/receiver, and helper/opponent. Noam Chomsky suggests surface structure and a deep structure for each sentence. The surface structure provides explanations for the meaning in the deep structure which is the main form of the meaning of the sentence. Surface structure provides surface meaning, and deep structure provides deep meaning (Chomsky, 1965). Roland Barthes regards structuralist action as an intellectual process which is applied in a systematic way. In order to find an object's laws that are not obvious, he disintegrates the object and reconstructs; however, that object turns to an intellectual object (Barthes, 1972). The invisible system can perform as wholeness on itself in which its each part has a connection with both the next part and the whole (Hawkes, 1989).

In terms of the structuralist approach, this study tries to analyse the 'New Woman' in Sarah Grand's *The Heavenly Twins* (1893) in a synchronic manner. In other words, it focuses only on the text, namely the novel, disregarding the writer's biography and the period of the novel. It deals with the relationships among the elements in the text's structure that is a closed system, and identifies closed signs' paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations relying upon binary oppositions in the text's surface structure. It tries to make them explicit signs in order to get the deep structure. Thus, the surface structure provides the deep structure.

In order to understand the structuralist analysis of the novel in this study, it would be helpful to explain the following main terms of structuralism. Signifier refers to signified, and the sign is formed when the signifier, word 'tree' creates the signified, concept of 'tree' in one's mind (Saussure, 1976). Binary opposition means two theoretical opposites in relation to differences such as cooked/raw, man/woman (Leach, 1973). Homology refers to binary opposition between two things forming together a homology which deals with both two object or people and two relationships (Hawkes, 1989). Synchronic linguistics refers to a language's position in a certain time (Culler, 1973). Paradigmatic relation refers to the relation among language units that can substitute one another on the

vertical axis, but cannot meet in the same sentence (Aksan, 1977). Harmony is the vertical or paradigmatic axis of music. Syntagmatic relation refers to the horizontal relationships among language units in which every unit is in appropriate relations with not only the following part but also the whole. In order to establish a sentence words are put in order from left to right. Melody refers to linear musical tones which are on the horizontal or syntagmatic aspect (Levi-Strauss, 1963). In short, on vertical axis, there is word item of synchronic linguistics in paradigmatic relation which has harmony of music. On horizontal axis, there is word order of diachronic linguistics in syntagmatic relation which has linear musical tones. These terms will be used in the analysis of the novel.

Although Sarah Grand was born Frances Elizabeth Bellenden Clarke, she uses feminine pen name for her novel *The Heavenly Twins*. Grand criticizes double standard of sexuality, education, and marriage against women in the patriarchal society. Venereal diseases transmitted sexually to men before marriage are transmitted to young wives after marriage, so women give birth to children with syphilis. Therefore, sexual ignorance for women and sexual privilege for men must end (Caine, 1997).

Sarah Grand expresses women's status in the patriarchal society. She rejects the rules of male-dominant society, lives separately from her husband. She also lectures women's rights in both the UK and the United States, and supports women's demand for voting rights (Mangum, 1998). Grand deals with marriage issues in her novels and states the injustice to women. The term 'New Woman' is coined by Sarah Grand (Showalter, 1993). 'New Woman' means a well-educated woman criticizing traditional roles. This type of woman claims equal education for women and wants men to be as chaste as women.

2. The New Woman through Structuralism in *The Heavenly Twins*

Sarah Grand's novel titled *The Heavenly Twins* is analysed in synchronic manner. In the novel's surface structure, its plot focuses on the relationships between Evadne Frayling, George Colquhoun, Angelica Hamilton-Wells and Mr. Kilroy. The novel's surface structure reflects double standard of sexuality, education, and marriage against women in the male-dominant society. The narrator provides information on the importance of women's education: "At nineteen Evadne… wanted to know. She found herself forced to put prejudice aside in order to see beneath it, deep down into the sacred heart of things, where the truth is" (Grand, 1992, p. 3). The patriarchal society in the novel gives poor education to women. However, when Evadne Frayling encounters something she does not understand, she does her best to learn it. While Evadne and her father, Mr. Frayling, talk about women's education, Mr. Frayling expresses his male-dominant views as follows: "Women should confine their attention to housekeeping… It is all they are fit for… and they don't know arithmetic enough… because they have no brains" (Grand, 1992, p. 11). Mr. Frayling tries to break Evadne's enthusiasm for learning by implying that she will not have the capacity to learn like men. Evadne seems quietly to obey but continues to educate herself. Mrs. Frayling agrees with her husband that women do not have the

capacity to know information outside of home life. Eighteen-year-old Evadne meets George Colquhoun, a thirty-eight-year-old soldier, through her father. Evadne, who has been offered a marriage proposal, consults her father about whether Colquhoun will be a good husband, and both her father and mother approve of the marriage. When Evadne is going to have "her own house, her own husband, her own children" (Grand, 1992, p. 58), she is filled with joy of that idea.

Angelica's father Mr. Hamilton-Wells "had old-fashioned ideas about the superior education of boys" (Grand, 1992, p. 123). Therefore, Diavolo has a tutor to teach him while Angelica has a governess to teach her. One day, Angelica disguises herself as her twin brother and realizes that she understands the lesson better than her brother. Like Evadne, Angelica tries to educate herself by reading books and newspapers. Recognizing that women are being oppressed, Diavolo makes an assessment of the situation of women:

> You see, in the old days, women were so ignorant and subdued, they couldn't retaliate or fight for themselves in any way; they never thought of such a thing. But, now, if you hit a woman, she'll give you one back promptly. (Grand, 1992, p. 273)

Angelica wants to get a job in her life to do something for the needy people. When the time comes, Angelica, like all other girls, is forced to marry by both men and women. Angelica associates the disease of her friend Edith and her child with marriage and wants to protect herself from sexually transmissible diseases. In order not to fall into the situation that her friend Edith marries the man chosen by her family and dies due to syphilis from her husband, Angelica prefers Mr. Kilroy, a neighbour who is twenty years older, and proposes to him by saying "marry me, and let me do as I like" (Grand, 1992, p. 321). Although Angelica seems to have agreed to marry by obeying her family's decision, she actually proposes to Mr. Kilroy whom she thinks is healthy in order to have a voice on her own body and mind.

As for syntagmatic relation, while Evadne marries Colquhoun, Angelica marries Mr. Kilroy. Both Evadne and Angelica are allowed only to marry. As for paradigmatic relation, homology of relationship is seen between the two couples since there are unhappy marriages not only between Evadne and Colquhoun, but also between Angelica and Mr. Kilroy. Both Evadne and Angelica marry their spouses without love. While Evadne's parents force her to marry Colquhoun, Angelica's parents force her to make a marriage. Both Evadne and Angelica have no sexual intercourse with their spouses.

On the wedding day, Evadne, who learns that her husband's past will endanger the lives of both herself and her future children, does not want to be Colquhoun's wife. Evadne states that pure women, by staying married to reprobate men, ensure the spread of sexually transmissible diseases and increase the reputability of reprobate men as husband in society. In a letter to Evadne, Mrs. Frayling writes: "A woman has it in her power to change even a reprobate into a worthy man" (Grand, 1992, p. 87). This statement

emphasizes the sacrifice of a woman due to her moral responsibility by making efforts to become a good wife without objecting her husband's immorality. Evadne cannot stand the pressure of her family anymore and agrees to live in the same house with her husband Colquhoun, provided that she does not have sexual intercourse with him. Colquhoun accepts Evadne's condition before the disgrace is heard. Evadne does not blame Colquhoun for his reprobate past because "it is the system that is at fault" (Grand, 1992, p. 340). Evadne says that because of society, marriages are based on interests and merge of good and evil. Evadne's sexual disobedience to Colquhoun means she refuses to be his property. Colquhoun asks Evadne to make a promise to limit her freedom: "Promise me that during my lifetime you will never mix yourself up never take part publicly in any question of the day" (Grand, 1992, p. 345). Colquhoun asks Evadne not to speak out against the current situation of women in society and to promise not to act in favour of women. Evadne, who is rejected by her family, deprived of reading, and prevented from setting to work purposefully, is only forced to become the ideal housewife. Evadne stops reading, gradually has a negative mood and burns her books. Evadne, who constantly suppresses her intellectual desires, becomes depressed.

Under her agreement with Kilroy, Angelica does not have sexual intercourse with her husband, and her husband does not interfere with anything, but Angelica is not allowed to acquire a profession because she is a woman. Angelica disguises as a Boy, and as she walks outside at night, she meets a man who is a tenor in the church. While Tenor and Angelica, disguised as Boy, go boating, Angelica falls into the river. Tenor saves the Boy and brings him home. When Tenor takes off Boy's wet clothes to dry them, Tenor realizes that Boy is actually a girl. Angelica wants to move out freely, have fun, and have intellectual conversations with men at any time. However, in the male-dominant society, Angelica is restricted because she is a woman. Therefore, she prepares this disguise and gets a wig in order to get rid of the following pressure:

> But my dress was an obstacle. As a woman, I could not expect to be treated by men with as much respect as they show to each other... Because I was a woman I knew I should be insulted, or at all events hindered, however inoffensive my conduct. (Grand, 1992, p. 451)

In terms of syntagmatic relation, while Angelica surrenders herself sexually to her husband after the death of her friend Tenor, Evadne surrenders herself sexually to her second husband after the death of her first husband Colquhoun.

Tenor begins to treat Angelica as a different and unequal woman. When Tenor takes Angelica home and returns to his house, he gets very wet and sits with his wet clothes in the room with opened window all night long, and dies of pneumonitis. The results of the actions of a woman who is deprived of acquiring a profession in her life are shown in the case of Angelica to demand change in the position of women. Angelica, who thinks that her husband is a good man, fears that she might lose her husband's affection. Angelica tells her husband that she wants to start all over again and be a loving wife:

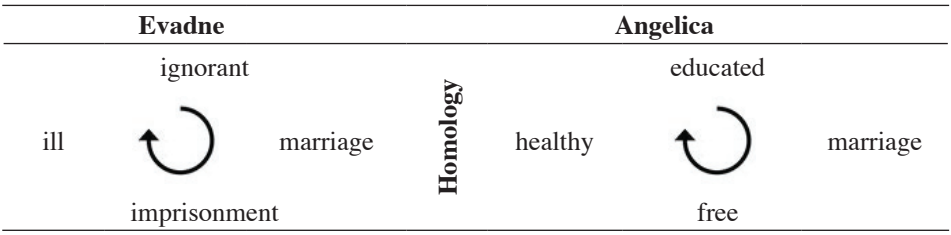
> I wish I could be different… I wish I could undo the past and begin all over again—begin by loving you as a wife should… I have felt a sense of security in the certainty of your affection for me. (Grand, 1992, p. 546-7)

Angelica embraces her sexual role as a wife and puts herself in the arms of her husband Kilroy. Angelica consciously assumes the role of 'wife', writes speeches defending women's rights, and has her husband read them in Parliament. Angelica struggles for women's education and for the end of the sexual double standard and the injustice.

Dr. Galbraith becomes concerned with Evadne's treatment. After Evadne's husband dies of a heart attack, Galbraith declares his love to Evadne and gets married. Evadne's depression turns into hysteria during her pregnancy. Evadne attempts suicide because she is afraid that her future daughter will die of syphilis like her friend Edith. When Evadne gives birth to a son, she gets rid of her worries. Evadne, like many women, now says she wants to lead an ordinary life as follows: "I will do nothing but attend to my household duties and the social duties of my position… I will play with my baby by day, and curl up comfortably beside you at night" (Grand, 1992, p. 672). Evadne tells Dr. Galbraith to burn the books because she can be the most obedient woman as long as she forgets the knowledge she has acquired. When Evadne gives her second birth to a daughter, she becomes hysteric again.

Syphilis and disguise in the novel's surface structure are closed signs. However, in the deep structure these signs turn to be explicit signs as follows: When the signifier is syphilis, the signified is reprobate and death; when the signifier is disguise, the signified is freedom. Binary oppositions are as follows: ignorant/educated, imprisoned/free, ill/healthy. In terms of paradigmatic relation, Evadne who is left ignorant is forced to marry. Angelica who receives the same good education with her twin brother is also forced to marry. Evadne does not have sexual intercourse with her husband Colquhoun due to the fear of syphilis from her husband through sexual intercourse, so she is imprisoned in the house. Angelica does not also have sexual intercourse with her husband Kilroy due to her agreement with him, so her husband does not interfere and she disguises as a boy, moves freely outside and talks to a tenor without prejudice. While Evadne is depressed because she is imprisoned in the house, Angelica maintains her mental health by wandering out and having fun. After the death of her husband, Evadne marries Dr. Galbraith who is treating her, believes in his affection and surrenders herself to him sexually. After the death of her friend Tenor, Angelica fears to lose her husband's affection and surrenders herself sexually to her husband. In terms of the novel's deep structure, the harmony performs on binary oppositions between Evadne and Angelica as in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Harmony of binary oppositions between Evadne and Angelica.



5. Ethical Considerations

Scientific, ethical and quotation rules were followed in the writing process of the research article titled "The New Woman through Structuralism in Sarah Grand's *The Heavenly Twins*".

3. Discussion

The surface structure of *The Heavenly Twins* reflects the male-dominant society's double standard of sexuality, education and marriage against women in terms of feminism. The male-dominant society gives legal rights and economic and power to men only so that women are subject to men (French, 1983). In the Middle Ages, a married woman's economic existence belongs to her husband who also represents her legal entity (Cannon, 1999). Women are forced to spend all their energy and time to domestic affairs (Mohl, 1933). The ordinary woman is not expected to be intellectual, but to be a virgin or chaste when married (Gies, 1980). In the Renaissance period, the woman is expected to do the housework and obey to her husband's authority (Michel, 1993). In the seventeenth century, women are considered not to understand the complexities of public affairs because of weakness of intellect (Boulding, 1976). Consequently, women's basic duties are to give birth and do domestic affairs in the traditional structure (Doğramacı, 1992). The education for women provides skills for domestic crafts, prudence, productivity, care and good governance (Barker, 2005). When women begin to demand freedom and legal rights, the basis of feminism appears. Feminism refers to the women's liberation movement (Kayahan, 1999). Liberal feminism indicates women's freedom and equality with men (Çaha, 2003).

As liberal feminists Mary Wollstonecraft, Harriet Taylor and John Stuart Mill not only demand the rights of women but also argue the problems of women. In *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), Mary Wollstonecraft (1988) demands women's rights by reasoning the national education for women. In *The Enfranchisement of Women* (1851), Harriet Taylor (1994) criticizes that women are deprived of professions and are forced to do their maternal duties as wives and mothers. In *The Subjection of Women* (1869), John Stuart Mill (1869) states that he wants to make certain full equality between women

and men. These thinkers and writers emphasize that women are deprived of legal and political rights, and confined to the house (Alkan, 2018). Thereby, they claim equality in education, human rights and political process (Ramazanoğlu, 1998).

Sarah Grand's idea of marriage gives women control over their minds and bodies so that a woman should not completely surrender herself sexually to her husband. Due to the prejudices of the male-dominant society in the novel, Evadne and Angelica are not allowed to get a good education for acquiring a profession, but left with the only choice of marriage. It is emphasized that the deprivation of women from education and job opportunities can have dangerous consequences for women. While Evadne becomes hysteric, Angelica causes the tenor to die. When a woman receives a good education, she will be able to work in the public realm, ensure her economic liberty, meet different men and get experienced. Thus, women and men have no innate difference for mental capacity, but women face prejudices imposed by patriarchal society.

4. Conclusion

Sarah Grand's *The Heavenly Twins* is analysed in synchronic manner. In novel's surface structure, the plot focuses on the relationships between Evadne Frayling, George Colquhoun, Angelica Hamilton-Wells and Mr. Kilroy. The novel's surface structure reflects double standard of sexuality, education, and marriage against women in patriarchal society. As for syntagmatic relation, while Evadne marries Colquhoun, Angelica marries Mr. Kilroy. Both Evadne and Angelica are forced to marry. As for paradigmatic relation, homology of relationship is seen between the two couples since there are unhappy marriages not only between Evadne and Colquhoun, but also between Angelica and Mr. Kilroy. Both Evadne and Angelica marry their spouses without love. While Evadne's parents force her to marry Colquhoun, Angelica's parents force her to make a marriage. Both Evadne and Angelica have no sexual intercourse with their spouses. In terms of syntagmatic relation, while Angelica surrenders herself sexually to her husband after the death of her friend Tenor, Evadne surrenders herself sexually to her second husband after the death of her first husband Colquhoun. Although the novel is over, its melody goes on since Evadne and Angelica can get only the role of a wife and mother in patriarchal society.

Syphilis and disguise in the novel's surface structure are closed signs. However, in the deep structure these signs turn to be explicit signs as follows: When the signifier is syphilis, the signified is reprobate and death; when the signifier is disguise, the signified is freedom. As for the novel's deep structure, the harmony performs on binary oppositions between Evadne and Angelica as follows: ignorant/educated, imprisoned/free, ill/healthy. As for the surface meaning, Evadne and Angelica are not allowed to receive a good education or profession, but are forced to marry. Being left without purpose in a marriage has dangerous consequences because in that case Evadne becomes hysteric and attempts suicide while Angelica causes someone to die. As for the deep meaning, women and men

have no innate difference for mental capacity, but women face prejudices imposed by patriarchal society. This is why the male-dominant society does not provide women to take the same education as men.

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