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"From Silence to Anger": Silence and Anger as Modes of Resistance in debbie tucker green's *hang*

"Sessizlikten Öfkeye": debbie tucker green'in hang Oyununda Direniş Biçimleri Olarak Sessizlik ve Öfke

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Abstract

debbie tucker green's *hang* (2015) mainly deals with the emotional suffering wrought by the event of abuse. The black female character, who was abused by an unidentified man, shows her anger to articulate her suffering in the aftermath of abuse, as well as the deleterious impacts of an unspecified crime on her children and her husband. She expresses her discontent with the prolonged process of seeking justice through moments of silence. Her profound anger, coupled with active silences, operates to expose and confront both institutional practices and societal norms that stigmatize black females and the apathy towards cruelty in institutions and the contemporary world. In this respect, this essay seeks to examine tucker green's *hang* from a feminist standpoint, focusing on how silence and anger function as tools of resistance against injustices and inequalities. In order to clarify that emotions serve as a powerful instrument of empowerment, the intricate relationship between anger, pain, and feminism will be explored with references to Sara Ahmed's *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. This essay also aims to explain how the play subverts the archetypal image of a victim, generally characterized as traumatized and silenced, by presenting the black female character who is empowered to challenge the prevailing discourses related to oppression and victimhood.

Keywords: anger; silence; black feminism; trauma; debbie tucker green; *hang*

Öz

debbie tucker green'in *hang* (2015) adlı oyunu, başlıca istismar olayının yol açtığı duygusal acıyla ilgilenir. Kimliği belirsiz bir adam tarafından istismara uğrayan siyah kadın karakter, istismarın ardından yaşadığı acıyı ve belirtilmeyen bir suçun çocukları ve kocası üzerindeki olumsuz etkilerini dile getirmek için öfkesini gösterir. Uzun süren adalet arayışından duyduğu rahatsızlığı, sessiz kaldığı anlarla dile getirir. Siyahi kadın karakterin derin öfkesi, aktif suskunluklarla birleşerek, hem siyah kadınları damgalayan kurumsal uygulamaları ve toplumsal normları hem de kurumlardaki ve çağdaş dünyadaki zulme karşı kayıtsızlığı ifşa etmeyi ve bunlarla yüzleşmeyi sağlar. Bu bağlamda, sessizliğin ve öfkenin adaletsizlik ve eşitsizliklere karşı bir direniş aracı olarak nasıl işlev gördüğünü ele alarak, bu makale tucker green'in *hang* oyununu feminist bir bakış açısıyla incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Duyguların güçlenmeye yol açan bir araç haline geldiğini açıklamak için öfke, acı ve feminizm arasındaki karmaşık ilişki Sara Ahmed'in *Duyguların Kültürel Politikası* adlı kitabına değinilerek incelenecektir. Bu makale aynı zamanda baskı ve mağduriyetle ilgili yaygın söylemlere meydan okuma yetkisi verilen siyah kadın karakteri sunarak, oyunun travmatize edilmiş ve susturulmuş olarak temsil edilen kurbanın arketipal imgesini nasıl altüst ettiğini de göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: öfke; sessizlik; siyah feminizm; travma; debbie tucker green; *hang*

Introduction

debbie tucker green has established her reputation as "the leading black British playwright of the early twentieth century" with her plays that present powerful scenes of social isolation, gender subordination, political oppression, pain, grief, and loss (Goddard, 2015, p. 69). One of the key features of her plays is their acute portrayals of anger, generally directed by black female characters towards racism, gender oppression, global injustices, and the unequal distribution of power and rights. The fact that tucker green positions angry black females at the centre to raise political and social issues demonstrates that anger is politicized for the feminist critique of inequalities and injustices. Sara Ahmed propounds that within black feminism, anger is regarded as the force that empowers individuals to react against "the deep social and psychic investment in racism as well as sexism" (2004, p. 175). Anger transforms pain into a powerful feminist response: "Anger is creative; it works to create a language with which to respond to that which one is against, whereby 'the what' is renamed, and brought into a feminist world" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 176). Anger in tucker green's plays functions as a motivating tactic for resistance against the deep-seated discourse surrounding gender stratification in society and an effective means of coping with pain and grief mainly caused by gender and racial inequalities. In order to exemplify how anger operates, this essay will focus on *hang* (2015). The play mainly deals with the emotional suffering wrought by the event of abuse. The black female character, who was abused by a man, (he is most likely white since Three says that he has blue, blue eyes), articulates her suffering in the aftermath of abuse, as well as the deleterious impacts of an unspecified crime on her children and her husband. Her profound anger operates to expose and confront both institutional practices and societal norms that stigmatize black females and the apathy towards cruelty in institutions and the contemporary world. In this respect, this essay intends to examine tucker green's *hang* from a feminist standpoint and consider how anger functions as a tool of resistance against injustices and inequalities. In this respect, it aims to clarify that emotions serve as a powerful instrument that leads to empowerment. This essay also shows how the play subverts the archetypal image of a victim, usually characterized as traumatised and silenced, by presenting the black female character who is empowered to undermine the prevailing discourses related to oppression and victimhood.

Anger in debbie tucker green's *hang*

By placing the experiences of black female characters at the center, tucker green's plays connect the characters' personal pain with the larger political issues. As David Ian Rabey states, her plays are "purposely, politically, phenomenologically disruptive, insisting on identifying specific causal connections between what is personally experienced and the external social world" (2020, p. 211). Anger in *hang* stems from the interplay of personal and social narratives of injustice since the unnamed black protagonist grapples with deep grief following a horrendous attack and institutional injustices. The entanglement of personal experiences and political issues highlights how pain and anger are used to reveal Three's first-hand experience of injury and discrimination and uncover the marginalization, systemic suppression, and trauma that women endure within the entrenched power structures that perpetuate stigma against black females. Anger, which arises from emotional or physical suffering, emerges as a potent source to dismantle those unjust power structures. Thereby, the play brings pain and anger into the political sphere, highlighting the connections between emotional experiences and political contexts, which will be analyzed throughout the essay.

hang was first performed at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs on 11 June 2015 and directed by debbie tucker green herself. A black woman, who has survived a horrifying crime perpetrated by an unidentified man at an unspecified time and location, is summoned to the government institution. During the meeting with the two officials, the black woman, named Three, will decide how the perpetrator will be punished. The black woman, through her eloquent yet rageful speech, recounts the long-lasting impacts of the assault on her children and husband. After a detailed explanation of available methods of execution, such as lethal injection, gas, firing squad, beheading and hanging, along with an overview of how each method works and affects the perpetrator, the black woman expresses her preference for hanging. Three opens a letter from her attacker, and a photo falls from the envelope, and she has to confront his blue eyes, and her hands tremble.

Although the characters' names are never disclosed in *hang*, the black character is identified as Three, and the officials are referred to as One and Two. As the text indicates, One (female) and Two (female or male) can be of any race but Three is female and black. In this respect, it is important to state that the playwright's decision to portray the characters as nameless may serve to universalize the victimized figures, presenting their suffering as a collective experience rather than an individual condition. The play takes place "nearly now", suggesting a setting in the near past or near future and is set in a dark and sparsely designed room that includes overhanging strip lights, a water cooler with plastic cups standing in the corner and meeting-room chairs (green, 2015, p. 2). The bare stage, devoid of props, and the unnamed characters draw the audience's attention to the poetic style and affective force of the dialogue between the characters.

In *hang*, tucker green employs overlapping dialogues with repetitions, breaks, and punctuation and her lines are elliptical and fragmented. tucker green's lines consist of active silences (she writes the names of characters without accompanying dialogue), allowing audiences to experience communication through the visuality of actors' performances. In tucker green's plays, active silences, which interrupt the flow of verbal interactions, heighten the emotional intensity of the moment and produce an ever-increasing effect to raise debates regarding the politics of race and gender. She also employs overlapping dialogue to create an intensifying effect and evoke powerful emotions (Aston, 2011, p. 196). In *hang*, the dialogues generate a sense of uncertainty since their meanings are layered with repetitions, interrupted conversations and carefully placed silences. This approach invites audiences to interpret what happened to Three since information is not presented explicitly. By focusing on what remains unsaid, audiences can gain a deeper understanding of Three's situation. Furthermore, tucker green's linguistic experimentation in *hang* positions the audience as witnesses to the emotional and psychological impacts of abuse, as well as the failure of empathy in the criminal justice system. Situating the audience as voyeuristic onlookers, tucker green's play enables them to transcend their habitual perceptions of gender and race; thus, they can develop new perspectives on the issues surrounding race and gender. Witnessing the damaging consequences of abuse on stage will prompt the audience to raise ethical questions about the lack of social responsibility and insufficient care that allow cruelty to persist. That is, tucker green's theatre "seeks to dis-ease her spectators into viewing the dehumanizing effects of an inability to care for 'others', locally and globally" (Aston, 2011, p. 184). In this respect, it is significant to argue that taking the audience out of their comfort zone to witness pain, grief, anger, and dehumanization "operates as an ethical and political trope that opens up the space for mobilizing a collective response-ability vis-**à**-vis the value of human life" (Fragkou, 2012, p. 23).

Although there is no concrete evidence that Three is treated differently due to her ethnicity, tucker green's positioning of the black female character at the centre of the play evokes Stephen Lawrence's case.[1] In this respect, *hang* addresses how institutional racism[2] subtly permeates the criminal justice system, substantially affecting the lives of marginalized individuals in negative ways. As Michael Pearce states, though tucker green did not explicitly indicate that she was influenced by the role of Doreen Lawrence in creating her character, a tight association can be established between Three and Doreen Lawrence (Pearce, 2020, p. 34).[3] The way tucker green portrays Three as the black woman who outbursts her rage stands in contrast to "the stoic image of Doreen Lawrence" widely disseminated by the media (Pearce, 2020, p. 35). In the play, Three's anger is verbally expressed. Three's "blisteringly incisive and furiously poetic speeches communicate the emotional complexity of her situation" (Pearce, 2020, p. 33). Three's rage is never translated into action but is visibly apparent in the slight tremor of her hands (green, 2015, p. 2). In *hang*, though Three is positioned as a victim, she shows her determination and strength in resisting against the system. Her resilience provides her with some relief from suffering and empowers her to step out of the state of helplessness and weakness associated with victimization (Pearce, 2020, p. 39). Three's rage acts as a constructive force that "excavates and exposes systemic racism camouflaged within the bureaucracy of western justice" (Pearce, 2020, p. 38). As Sara Ahmed points out, "[e]motions show us how histories stay alive, even when they are not consciously remembered; how histories of colonialism, slavery, and violence shape lives and worlds in the present" (2004, p. 202). In this context, the expression of irrepressible emotions such as anger and resentment positions Three as an "unwanted reminder of histories" of colonialism, slavery and racially motivated violence (Reid, 2018, p. 400). tucker green reimagines the racial dynamics surrounding the Stephen Lawrence case, situating it in the play's liminal space where the lines between fact and fiction, as well as past and present, are blurred. tucker green's centralization of black rage for

1 Stephen Lawrence, an eighteen-year-old black student, was murdered in an unprovoked racist attack by five young white youths in 1993 in South East London. Since the police failed to find enough evidence for the conviction, the attackers got away with murder. In response, Stephen's family initiated a private prosecution. As the family's spokesperson, Doreen Lawrence obdurately advocated for justice and publicly talked about the inequality experienced by the family, and eventually two of the five main suspects were convicted of murder in 2001 (Goddard, 2020, p. 113). In this respect, Neville's remarks "I would bring back hanging for something like this" resonate with the title of the play (Goddard, 2020, p. 121).

2 Six years after the tragic murder of Stephen Lawrence, Sir William Macpherson conducted an inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence, the previous investigation, and the failed trial. In his report, Macpherson acknowledges the presence of institutional racism within the police force. Macpherson defines institutional racism in his report as "[t]he collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin" (6.34). He also states that institutional racism "can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people" (6.34).

3 There have been some noticeable similarities between Three and Doreen Lawrence, who struggled for eighteen years to bring her son's murderers to court. Like Doreen Lawrence, Three has two children, a boy and a girl. Three's husband does not accompany her; in the same manner, Doreen Lawrence's husband went to Jamaica to grieve his son's murder. When new developments emerged in Stephen Lawrence's case, the family confronted bureaucratic processes like Three in *hang*. Furthermore, some lines of Three evoke intimate feelings of the Lawrence family in relation to their suffering and grief, as well as the ongoing and damaging consequences of the traumatic event on Doreen and Neville's marriage and their children's lives. The Lawrence's responses to the murder are reflected in Three's expressions of anger and desire for justice and revenge. Additionally, there is a performative link between these two figures since the actor Marianne Jean-Baptiste, who played the role of Three in *hang*, took the role of Doreen Lawrence in the film *The Murder of Stephen Lawrence* (Pearce, 2020, p. 34-5).

the veiled critique of racist attitudes reveals gender inequality and injustice that cause pain and anger. The marginalized female character challenges racial prejudice and gender discrimination that stigmatize and traumatize black females.

Throughout the play, the black female character shows her discomfort caused by the attacker's actions and the suffering her family has endured, as well as her dissatisfaction with the workings of the criminal justice system. Throughout the first part of the play, One and Two make an effort to create a comfortable environment for Three, stating that the meeting "is about you and about you feeling as comfortable as we can make you feel" (green, 2015, p. 22). They offer her a hot drink, a glass of cold water, and to hang up her coat, but she refuses all of their offers. When One asks her to take a seat, she does not sit down, a situation that can be arguably read as a physical manifestation of her perseverance and tenacity. Only when One says that there are no special seating arrangements, does Three hesitatingly sit. In the conflict zone of encounter, Three shows "a precariously poised, self-consciously volatile coiled energy generated in reaction to, and intensified by, frustration at the entropic formality and studied politeness represented by One and Two" (Rabey, 2020, p. 193). Three's reactive attitude is further accentuated by her succinct and tense responses to One who asks her about how long her prosecution has continued:

One: … How have you been?

Three:

One: It's been a while.

THREE watches her.

couple of years isn't it, how have you been… keeping?

THREE says nothing.

Stupid question I know, but…

Three: Yeah.

Three:

One:

One: I know, I -.

No /I

Three: No. You don't know.

One: I can only imagine.

Three: No. You can't.

One: … I'm just (saying)… You do look surprisingly well considering all -.

Three: (dry) Thank you.

One: I'm not trying to be – and it, I know it sounds (wrong) but you do look well, considering, with all you've…

THREE *exhales slowly*. (green, 2015, p. 9)

Three's cold and responsive attitude reveals One's inability to empathize with her emotional weariness and the profound pain stemming from the horrifying act of abuse. Three articulates her edginess through moments of silence:

One: … Is your husband (coming)? I think you said he was- did you say he was on his way?

Three:

One: Are we… should I…? Is he going to …?

Three:

One: I don't want to – I mean it's fine if you want us to, need us to hang on for a while we're happy /to- (green, 2015, p. 5).

Three maintains her silence during her conversation with One, and concludes it with her straightforward response "He's not coming" (green, 2015, p. 5). One offers to arrange the meeting at a proper time since her husband is at work but Three remains silent. When One asks her if she needs somebody to support her and her friend Suzette is coming or not, she keeps silent again but eventually says that Suzette is not coming. The active silences, which are interwoven with voice meticulously, operate to disturb and unsettle the comfort of One and Two and reveal Three's discontent with the prolonged process of her case. In this respect, silences are a "surrogate language of the body" through which actors physically convey unsaid meanings to both other characters and the audience (Abram, 2014, p. 9). As Elisabeth Massana argues in her examination of the function of silences in *truth and reconciliation*, the silences in *hang* become "productive sites of meaning and ethical encounter between the play and the audience" (2020, p. 263). As Abram Nicola states, tucker green's silence is not merely "an aesthetic tic. The political weight of her plays is borne by her discomfiting insistence on failed communication" (2014, p. 11). Drawing upon this view, Three's purposeful silence can be read against the backdrop of the politics since Three's deliberate refusal to speak has the effect of sabotaging the comfort of the individuals, thereby undermining their coherence, autonomy, and sense of stability. Her silence also disrupts their unity with the system upon which the comfort of the privileged and the powerful is built. As Trish Reid states, Three is the embodiment of the subject that "willfully resist[s] the cultural imperative to follow gendered happiness scripts" (2018, p. 393)[4]. tucker green's impulse to give the abused voice through silence shows that silences can undermine the bureaucratic policies. Subjected to injuries and sanctions, Three sticks to her identity as a black female in the face of the official procedures that work to render her vulnerable, unequal and stripped of agency, autonomy, and rights. Hereby, Three's silence becomes a powerful site of expression, empowering her to confront authority and challenge discriminatory attitudes.

tucker green's treatment of silence in *hang* goes beyond the traditional feminist conceptualization of silence as a sign of weakness and passivity[5]. In the play, silence is a strategy to nurture

4 Trish Reid asserts that debbie tucker green is herself a resistant subject (2020, p. 47). tucker green defies established conventions by keeping her personal and artistic lives private. Additionally, neither the first letters of her name nor the titles of her works are capitalized. Her use of lowercase shows her determination to defy conventional approaches to the text, as well as her understanding that language is a construct that establishes a social value system, thereby shaping our perceptions of racism, sexism, and gender (2020, p. 47).

5 In critical pedagogy, anthropology, postcolonial studies, rhetoric and communication studies, silence is generally equated with passivity and powerlessness while voice is associated with agency and power. As Aimee Carrillo Rowe

Three's energy and determination to expose and undermine the power system that keeps individuals in a state of passivity and silence. In that regard, silence in the play can be perceived as "an indictment of a world in which failure to act amounts to condoning these issues [racial and gender injustices], failing to see, and thus colluding in the silence around them" (Goddard, 2015, p. 93). In this respect, it is significant to argue that tucker green's approach to silence underlines that silence is a potent tool of empowerment for black women in their struggle to liberate themselves from oppression and discrimination and to elevate the presence and visibility of black women in political and cultural landscapes.

In opposition to Three's active silences are positioned the silences of One and Two which reflect their discussion about the most appropriate timing for Three's husband, the unqualified coffee and drinks, and the automatic switch lights. Elisabeth Massana identifies this kind of silence as "(distr)active silence" and in her analysis of how silence is used in *truth and reconciliation*, points out that distractive silence "hint(s) towards the power structures and hierarchies that shape the characters" (2020, p. 264). In this regard, the distractive silences of One and Two signify their privileged positions and accordingly, instead of recognizing the crime as a violation of human rights, they perceive Three's suffering and pain as private and individual matters. Their perspective makes it impossible for them to truly empathize with her situation. As Mireia Aragay points out, they extend empathy "unidirectionally towards Three in a coercive exercise of narcissistic affective/emotional identification" (2021, p. 31).

The tendency of One and Two to follow bureaucratic procedures in order to enhance the satisfaction of the privileged prevents them from developing an empathetic bond with Three. Three defies the protocols, since role plays, extensive and intensive training are inadequate to handle the situation. She raises questions about how they role-play when explaining it to her children and how their performances reflect the genuine reactions and feelings of the family members. Three states that they lack imagination, courage and words and they cannot understand it through paperwork, courses or even mugs of Ikea tea. Additionally, she wonders what suggestions they have to soothe her inconsolable children, repair her spoiled marriage, and resolve the communication breakdown. Three, who lacks faith in the institutional procedures, steadfastly rejects One's attempt to identify with her suffering since One does not fully comprehend the underlying cause of Three's discomfort. One, who cheated on her husband, does not grasp the extent to which Three's family life and sexual relationship with her husband are negatively affected after the crime. Three expresses her anger towards One for finding time for intimacy despite her demanding job and other obligations, and for refusing to reflect on the negative repercussions of the crime, especially its impact on the sexual chemistry between Three and her husband. In a conversation between

and Sheena Malhotra state, the Western tradition, "reiterated from Aristotle to Audre Lorde", positions silence as "a site of reform and privileges voice as the ultimate goal of and means to achieve empowerment" (2013, p. 1). Recently, some scholars have questioned the binary thinking that aligns silence merely with oppression and outlined the divergent situations in which silence can be a source of empowerment for women. Silence functions as "a survival strategy" to deal with the trauma of war and rape (Parpart, 2010, p. 18), and in the society where gender-based violence prevails, silence can be a tactic for "building internal strength, negotiating survival" and for challenging oppressive norms (2010, p. 20). For instance, during the Balkan conflict, many women hid their experiences of rape, thus, they used silence as a powerful means to cope with the harsh judgments imposed by society (Parpart, 2020, p. 320). Jane Parpart argues that many African American women utilized silence to fight against the suffocating pressures of race, gender, and class (2020, p. 321). Thus, the various meanings and interpretations of silence demonstrate that in feminist praxis, silence can be reconsidered and revitalized in diverse and productive ways.

One and Three, Three exposes One's betrayal of her husband through a sexual affair with another man by using "the cruel materiality of language" (Inchley, 2020, p. 183). In fact, Three is unable to truly understand One's emotional state when One explains how difficult the divorce process was since her husband provided various reasons and different accounts of the events, including matters of fidelity and infidelity, throughout the divorce proceedings. Three only says how pressured it must be. Through the troubled interaction between One and Three, the play underlines the absence of empathy and sympathy among the female characters, thereby, demonstrating that the conventional understanding of female solidarity and sympathy is subverted[6]. The lack of sympathy among women is further supported by the distortion of Three's healthy, reciprocal, and mutually fulfilling relationship with Suzette due to her desensitization to Three's situtation. Some time after the crime, Suzette and Three stopped speaking about the event, and Three has lost a sister, an emotional situation that One cannot even imagine. The lack of bonding and solidarity among the female characters deserves nuanced critical attention, particularly considering that One is portrayed by the white actor Claire Rushbrook. In her essay about the solidarity among women, bell hooks propounds that racism constitutes an impediment to the female bonding (1986, p. 130). Hooks states that white females exploit and mistreat black women in their interactions and moreover, "[n]either process of interaction creates conditions where trust and mutually reciprocal relationships can develop" (1986, p. 131). In this regard, it is noteworthy to state that in the criminal institution where racism is covertly operating, One, who occupies a privileged position and adheres to the system, is incapable of fostering a mutually healthy and trustworthy relationship.

Three's deep distrust for the system becomes apparent when One and Two mention a significant development - a letter addressed to Three by her attacker. Challenging the transparency policy that has been role played by One and Two, Three questions whether the development can easily change her decision, whether it is imposed on her or will benefit her. Three vehemently explains the impacts of the crime on her traumatized children who have lost the ability to settle. Her children cannot settle in a school, in a class and in the house since their sense of security is distorted (green, 2015, p. 24). Her seven-year-old daughter's shaking can not be erased and her open-faced and open hearted nine-year-old son spends hours staring into nothing and he unceasingly screams at a high pitch until his voice runs out. Three reveals that she and her husband "have stopped fucking ever since" (green, 2015, p. 35). The developments presented in the name of transparency deeply affect a family's physical and mental health and their ability and concentration to study and work diminish, trust among family members is damaged, and communication within the family breaks down.

Three endures physical and psychological suffering as a result of the traumatic event; throughout the play, her rage is not displayed through overt actions; rather, it is seen as "a slight, nervous tremble in her hand(s) only" (green, 2015, p. 2). This bodily change, though not a disability, stems

6 The failure of feminist sympathy is also underscored in tucker green's play *stoning mary* in which Mary employs powerful poetic diction to criticize women who fail to march and sign a petition for a stay in her execution. She asks: What about the burn their bra bitches? /The black bitches/ The rootsical bitches/The white the brown bitches/The right-on bitches…/The bitches that love to march? /The bitches that love to study…/The lyrical bitches/ The educated bitches…/ The full-uppa-attitude bitches/The high-upsed rich list lady bitch-/Bitches/*whadafuckabout* them? (green, 2005, p. 62). Trish Reid states that the misogynistic word bitch is used purposefully by the playwright to "explode the illusion of a cross-cultural community of women" in the contemporary world fraught with the inequalities between the global north and the global south (2020, p. 46). In this respect, *stoning mary* stands out as an outstanding play in tucker green's oeuvre, challenging the notion that feminism is a unifying and consolidative movement.

from the impact of the unidentified event. The recurrent tremor in her hands becomes an apparent sign of the trauma that orients her thoughts and feelings. Three's shaking hands also "reflect, and give physical form to, her emotional state of rage that refuses to give into fear" (Pearce, 2020, p. 33). She testifies about pain, and her pain cannot be dissociated from her anger. Sara Ahmed states in her book *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* that the relationship between feminism and anger cannot be explained without considering the politics of pain (2004, p. 172). Pain is generally regarded as "a private and even lonely experience" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 20), yet the privacy of pain is "linked to the experience of being with others" (2004, p. 29). Expanding upon the duality of private and social aspects of pain, it can be argued that though experienced at the individual level, women's experiences of pain are foregrounded to universalize their suffering under patriarchal dominance. tucker green's employment of pain is informed by "the material and cultural histories of pain that both circulate among and are felt in individual bodies" (Inchley, 2020, p.186). The black female character experiences pain caused by the negative impacts of the tragic event and the bureaucratic system that overlooks her suffering and supports her attacker. In this respect, it is important to state that the play's narrative is layered with historical narratives of pain since Three's dialogues create a valuable space where the audience engage with the emotional experience of pain and reminisce on the historical struggles of women in the face of injustices and inequalities.

Anger requires an evaluation of pain since it can be viewed as an indicator of pain, shaped by our interpretations of what is happening around us; in this context, an expression of anger indicates that something is going wrong. Under any circumstances, it may be challenging to precisely pinpoint the connection between feelings of anger and what one stands against. However, the feminist perspective interprets rage as a catalyst for connecting personal responses to societal forces: "it [feminism] moves from anger into an interpretation of what one is against, whereby associations or connections are made between the object of anger and broader patterns or structures" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 176). Thus, feministic anger is not simply an individual response to the events or acts that provoke anger; it is also a reaction to the pervasive gender hierarchy that permeates all spheres of social life, establishing the dynamics of power relations surrounding race, class, and sexuality, and shaping the ways bodies are viewed and move in society (Ahmed, 2004, p. 176). From this standpoint, it is noteworthy to state that anger gives women the power to confront the pervasive racial and sexist discrimination they endure. Bell hooks claims that when anger is channeled productively, it does not result in pathological behaviour but rather becomes "a useful and constructive response to exploitation, oppression, and continued injustice" (1995, p. 26). In this respect, Three's anger is "a – not always legitimate – response to disturbing, traumatic, and violent events" (Reid, 2018, p. 399). Three's anger is activated as a productive force that divulges the inequality and injustice that underpin institutional hegemony and sustain the comfort of the privileged. Furthermore, Three's strong feelings such as anger, rage, and resentment can be interpreted as the empowering force "uncomfortably challenging social expectations that position the victimised (black) woman as the abject recipient of pain and suffering" (Aragay, 2021, p. 37). Three's body language and actions denote her sense of agency and "profound determination of her self-presentation" in the institution where she is seen as an outsider and her body is "circumscribed as being "out of place"" (Adiseshiah and Bolton, 2020, p. 83). Thereby, emotions are politicized in the play, establishing connections between the individual and society, as well as between emotional experiences and political contexts. At face value, tucker green's representation of rage seems to revive the stereotype of aggressive black women, reinforcing an ideological ratio-

nale for oppression (Pearce, 2020, p. 31). However, green's portrayal of black rage diverges from conventional archetypes through the character of Three, whose embittered monologues, combined with purposeful silence, create "a taut balance between moments of centrifugal and centripetal emotional force" (Pearce, 2020, p. 32). Three's fiery speeches motivate her, yet anger never overwhelms her since a moment of anger is followed by a moment of silent resistance. In *hang*, the verbal and embodied manifestations of Three's unruly feelings signify that as a black female, her body becomes the bearer of pain and trauma caused by imposed gendered and racial restrictions. After learning about different methods of execution, Three strongly believes that hanging the attacker is the most effective way to ensure justice. She signs the death warrant as her hands shake, a clear sign of her ongoing trauma, and later, Two stamps the legal paperwork. As Three openly states, her decision to punish the attacker is not "revenge nowhere near" (green, 2015, p. 60). The justice system, which is expected to ensure justice and protect the rights of individuals, failed to alleviate her suffering and restore her lost faith and warped sense of security. As Inchley keenly observes, her act of signing the paper "inscribes the release of the statutory machinery from any complicity with or responsibility for the histories and genealogies of racialized violence against women" (2020, p. 185). Towards the end of the play, One and Two inform Three about the letter that her assailant wrote to her and they are reluctant to read it for her. The fact that they open the letter earlier and know what is in it shows that they do not abide by legal procedures. Three furiously responds when they want her to take the letter to her home:

> **Three:** You want me to take that thing that he's
> written – written on into where we live, where
> we are, where my kids are – that thing that
> he's written with his, tone. His intonations.
> His accent. His breath, weight of his breath.
> His spit. His smell. His odour, his sweat, the
> weight of his sweat, his…
> Them fuckin blue blue eyes, his eyes in my…
> and it will be in his voice that I hear, that I
> hear it in that I read, that I read it in,
> because you wouldn't read it – no. No. (green, 2015, p. 67).

The vivid language used to describe the pyhsical state of the attacker recalls the moment of (probably) sexual abuse and visualizes the attack for the audience by referring to his 'intonations, accent, odour, sweat, spit, breath and blue eyes'. The offender's 'blue blue eyes' invite an interpretation of the play through the lens of racism since the crime signifies "the physical pinpointing of the black mother's body as a target of a white man's lust" (Inchley, 2020, p. 186). Thus, Three's physical body is objectified as the target and token of racialized and gendered violence. At the end of the play, Three reads the letter from her attacker, which only contains his apology. His apology creates a moment of suspense where her decision to punish the attacker hangs in the air, generating a sense of uncertainty among the audience about the implementation of restorative justice. Michael Billington observes in his review of *hang* that "the mind of character Three is rigorously made up, and only in the play's dying seconds do we see her fixity of purpose begin to crumble" (2015). The ending of the play does not offer emotional relief for Three, leaving the audience in a

state of limbo where the lack of resolution not only intensifies their sense of uncertainty and but also makes it challenging for them to experience cathartic release. On the one hand, the ambiguous ending offers an opportunity for redemption; on the other hand, it presents a possibility for retribution. This uncertainty, as Michael Pearce states, "provocatively and unapologetically plays into white fears of black empowerment and revenge for past injustices" (2020, p. 38).

Conclusion

tucker green's *hang* presents the emotionally compelling scenes where the black female character expresses her emotional and psychological suffering and confronts the lack of empathy and sympathy for human rights violations in the contemporary world. The black female character in the play assumes a public role to speak out about the experiences of all marginalized, suppressed, and traumatized women. That is to say, by delineating the black female characters who are antagonistic, opinionated, and unsubmissive, tucker green's plays "redress a historic lack of commanding black female protagonists on UK stages while simultaneously rewriting and revising gendered and raced discourses of victimhood" (Adiseshiah and Bolton, 2020, p. 3). In presenting challenging political issues on stage, tucker green moves beyond traditional theatrical norms to create her innovative style characterized by poetic language, thoughtfully placed silences, and profound emotional intensity. In the play, silences function to expose Three's deliberate attempts to disrupt the other characters' integration into the system. Emotions such as anger, rage, and resentment are grounded in the political contexts since Three's speech, marked by expressions of anger, serves both as a reaction to suffering and pain and as a tool to expose institutional practices and societal norms that stigmatize black females. Thus, the play's depictions of sexist discrimination through pointed dialogue and the tenacious and defiant black character engender an ethical encounter between the play and the audience, where they are led to meditate over the cultural practices that uphold and strengthen racial and gender-based norms.

Genişletilmiş Özet

debbie tucker green, toplumsal dışlanma, cinsiyet ayrımcılığı, politik baskı, acı, keder ve kayıp gibi temaları işlediği oyunlarıyla yirminci yüzyılın başlarında önde gelen siyahi İngiliz oyun yazarı olarak ün kazanmıştır. tucker green yalnızca değindiği konular ile değil, metin ve dildeki yenilikler ile de adından söz ettirir. tucker green oyunlarındaki, eksiltili dizeler, sürekli yinelemeler, üst üste binmeler ve sessizlik kullanımı ile geleneksel tiyatro anlayışını altüst eder. Dizeleri seyrek, parçalı ve minimal, diyalogları ise duraklamalar, kesintiler ve noktalama işaretleriyle örülüdür. tucker green'in oyunları aktif sessizliklerden oluşur ve seyirci ve aktörler arasındaki iletişim aktörlerin beden dilleri ile sağlanır. tucker green *hang* oyununda bahsi geçen dil özelliklerini ve aktif sessizliği kullanır. tucker geen'in *hang* oyunundaki dilsel yenilikleri, yargı kurumunda duygusal ve psikolojik istismar ve empati eksikliğinin etkilerini ortaya koyar. Seyirciyi gözlemci olarak konumlandıran tucker'ın oyunu, seyircinin cinsiyet ve ırkla ilgili alışılmış algısını aşmasını, böylece ırk ve cinsiyetle ilgili meseleleri farklı şekillerde görmesini sağlar.

tucker green'in oyunlarının en önemli özelliklerinden biri, genelde siyah kadın karakterler tarafından ırkçılık, cinsiyet baskısı, küresel adaletsizlikler, güç ve hakların adaletsiz dağılımına yöneltilen öfkedir. tucker green'in politik ve toplumsal sorunları gündeme getirmek için öfkeli siyah kadınları merkeze yerleştirmesi, öfkenin feminist eşitsizlik ve adaletsizlik eleştirisi için politikleştirildiğini gösterir. Sara Ahmed öfkeyi ırkçılığın ve cinsiyetçiliğin derin toplumsal yapılanmasına karşı tepki gösterme gücü olarak görür. tucker green'in oyunlarında öfke, toplumdaki

cinsiyet ayrımcılığı üzerine kurulu derin söylemlere karşı bir direniş taktiği ve cinsiyet ve ırk eşitsizliklerinden kaynaklanan acı ve kederle baş etmenin etkili bir yolu olarak işlev görür.

hang oyununda, büyük ihtimalle beyaz bir adam tarafından istismara uğrayan kadın, istismarın ardından yaşadığı acıyı ve zamanı ve mekanı belirtilmeyen bir suçun çocukları ve kocası üzerindeki olumsuz etkilerini dile getirmek için öfkesini gösterir. Three, suçun, yerleşme yetilerini kaybeden çocukları üzerindeki etkilerini anlatır. Güvenlik duyguları zedelendiği için çocukları okula, sınıfa ve eve yerleşemez. Yedi yaşındaki kızının titremesi geçmez, dokuz yaşındaki açık yürekli ve dürüst oğlu saatlerce boşluğa bakar ve sesi kısılana kadar aralıksız bağırır. Ana karakterin kurumda çalışanlara gösterdiği öfke her ne kadar bireysel olsa da, feminist bakış açısı öfkeyi, kişinin kendi tepkisini toplumsal güçlere bağlamasına aracı olarak yorumlar. Sarah Ahmed *Duyguların Kültürel Politikası* adlı kitabında, feminizmin öfkeden kişinin neye karşı olduğuna dair bir yoruma geçtiğini, böylece öfke nesnesi ile daha geniş kalıplar veya yapılar arasında çağrışımlar veya bağlantılar kurulduğunu iddia eder. Bu bağlamda, feminist öfke, öfkeyi ortaya çıkaran olaylara, eylemlere veya bir şeye karşı sadece bireysel bir tepki değildir. Feminist öfke toplumsal yaşamın tüm alanlarına nüfuz eden ırk, sınıf ve cinsellik gibi güç ilişkilerinin düzeylerini belirleyen cinsiyet hiyerarşisine bir tepkidir. Bu açıdan bakıldığında, öfkenin kadınlara yaygın ırksal ve cinsiyetçi ayrımcılığına karşı tepki gösterme dürtüsü ve enerjisi verdiğini belirtmek önemlidir.

Oyunda yalnızca öfke değil, sessizlikte bir direniş biçimi olarak kullanılır. Three olarak adlandırılan karakter, One ve Two isimli karakterlerin soruları karşısında sessiz kalır. Oyunda sessizlikler, Three'nin diğer karakterlerin sisteme entegrasyonunu bozma çabasını açığa çıkarır. Ayrıca, sessizlikler Three'nin istismarcı olayı kınamasını ve uzun süren cezalandırma sürecinden duyduğu hoşnutsuzluğunu gösterir. tucker green'in istismara uğrayanlara sessizlik yoluyla ses vermesi, sessizliklerin bürokratik politikaları baltalayabileceğini gösterir. Yaralanmalara ve yaptırımlara maruz kalan Three, kendisini savunmasız ve eylem özgürlüğünden, özerkliğinden ve haklarından yoksun bırakan resmi prosedürler karşısında siyah bir kadın olarak benliğini korur. Böylece Three'nin sessizliği, otoriteye ve ayrımcı tutumlara karşı koymasını sağlayan güçlü bir ifade ve eylem alanı haline gelir. Sessizlik, siyah kadınların baskı ve ayrımcılıktan kurtulma ve siyasi ve kültürel alanda görünürlüklerini artırma mücadelelerinde etkili bir güçlendirme aracıdır.

Özetle, öfke, hiddet ve kızgınlık gibi duygular politik bir arka plana sahiptir çünkü Three karakterinin öfkeli konuşması, acı ve ıstıraba bir tepki olduğu kadar, acı ve ıstıraba yol açan güç yapılarını ortaya çıkarmak için de bir araçtır. Sessizlik oyunda karakteri pasif bir konuma düşürmekten ziyade, ona sistemin aksaklıklarına karşı koymak için bir ifade alanı yaratır. Ayrıca, öfke ile harmanlanan sessizlik ana karakteri öfkeli siyah kadın figürü olarak görmemizi engeller çünkü oyunda öfke anlarını sessizlik takip eder. Oyundaki cinsiyetçi ve ırkçı ayrımcılığın diyaloglarla betimlenmesi ve sessizlik anları, seyircilerin ırkçı ve cinsiyetçi kurum ve normları destekleyen ve güçlendiren kültürel yapılar üzerine düşünmelerini sağlar.

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