

A Comparative View of Eliot's "Prufrock" and Mansfield's "Miss Brill" in terms of the Mental States of Isolation, Alienation, and Anomie

Eliot'ın "Prufrock" ve Mansfield'in "Miss Brill" adlı Eserlerinde Yalnızlık, Yabancılaşma ve Anomi gibi Mental Durumlara Karşılaştırmalı bir Bakış

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Abstract: The meaninglessness of modern life caused by a state of alienation, isolation and anomie has been reflected in literary works forming an important thematic basis in the twentieth century. T. S. Eliot highlights this theme in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock is hereafter abbreviated as 'Prufrock'). Eliot directly focuses on this theme in his literary works and influenced many other prominent writers on this theme. This article draws comparisons in views between how Eliot's psychological evaluation of characters in the case of alienation, isolation, and anomie impacts on other writers such as Katherine Mansfield, who has a Prufrock-like character in "Miss Brill". This, due to the way Eliot defines the psyche of prototypical modern people as he does in "Prufrock". The way Miss Brill behaves reflects her alienation and isolation in her society. In this study, the comparison of a poem and a short story with the same thematic basis shows how writers successfully deal with the same matter in different contexts of different literary genres.

Keywords: Anomie, Alienation, Isolation, Modern Literature, T. S. Eliot, Katherine Mansfield

Öz: Hayatın yalnızlık, yabancılaşma ve anomi gibi duygulardan dolayı anlamsızlaşması yirminci yüzyılda edebi eserlerin vurguladığı önemli temalardır. T. S. Eliot bu önemli temayı "Prufrock" adlı şiirinde vurgulamaktadır. Eliot bu temada yoğunlaşırken aynı zamanda dönemin diğer önemli yazarlarını da etkilemektedir. Bu makale, Eliot'un ele aldığı yalnızlaşma, yabancılaşma ve anomi gibi karakterlerin psikolojik durumlarını, Katherine Mansfield adlı Kanadalı bir yazar ile karşılaştırmaktadır. Mansfield, dönemin modern insanlarını temsil eden Prufrock benzeri bir karakter olan Miss Brill'i "Miss Brill" adlı kısa hikayesinde incelemektedir. Miss Brill'in davranış şekli onun toplumda ne kadar yalnızlaştığını ve yabancılaştığını yansıtmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, bir şiirle bir kısa hikâyenin aynı anda karşılaştırılması, farklı yazım türlerinde bu tematik kavramların ne kadar başarılı bir şekilde irdelendiğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Anomi, Yabancılaşma, Yalnızlaşma, Modern Edebiyat, T. S. Eliot, Katherine Mansfield

The purpose of this article is to address and compare T. S. Eliot's "Prufrock" (1915) and Katherine Mansfield's "Miss Brill" (1920) according to a conventional psychological and sociological thematic basis consisting of isolation, alienation and anomie. The reason for choosing these works of these authors for comparison is that although they are two distinct

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authors, Mansfield portrays an Eliot-like character in her short story. Focusing on such thematic issues, Mansfield records psychoanalytically problematic individuals as Eliot does in his “*Prufrock*”. Through such an exposition, Eliot and Mansfield substantially underline the problematic psychological and sociological feelings and emotions of the modernist world. Many literary critics deal with the mental states of alienation and isolation, however, the consideration of anomie is disregarded in most cases. Thus, in accord with a comparative outlook, this article explores the destruction and fragmentation of the human mind due to the mental states of anomie, alienation, and isolation in the modern period. Dating from the Modernist Movement of the first quarter of the twentieth century, concerned with the growing industrial society and focused on rationality and rationalism through applying new forms and styles of writing. They are searching to find order within disordered social standings. Moreover, Modernism rejects the past to have an idealized future, as Prufrock and Miss Brill do in these literary texts (Cuddon 1998, 515-516).

Fundamentally affected by the complexities of the modern era, Eliot highlights the fragmentation in the minds of modern individuals through depicting an intellectual and indecisive middle-aged man, J. Alfred Prufrock, who invites his readers to go with him on a journey through the modern city streets in “*Prufrock*” and, thus, undertakes the task of exhibiting the sterile and the deadly images of the city streets. Eliot depicts Prufrock as an individual who expresses his emotions and feelings in his dramatic inner monologue in this poem. Actually, Prufrock is the prototype in modern life for all others experiencing their anxious state of mind. Prufrock becomes subject to most psychological mental states defined by well-known psychologists and sociologists such as Emile Durkheim, Melvin Seeman, Robert Merton and Louis Wirth. Although they lived in different periods, they focused on the same thematic issue that is the subject of this article. Through having such a mental frame, Prufrock has formed the profile of many other characters in many literary works in different genres, as will be depicted through Miss Brill in “*Miss Brill*”. Since Eliot and Mansfield wrote in and after the end of World War I, they portray individuals with damaged psyches and depict how they become psychologically traumatised as a result of that global change.

Katherine Mansfield re-defines the psyche of prototypical modern people when she introduces Miss Brill to her reading public in “*Miss Brill*”. She portrays a Prufrock-like English teacher in a French town who has a tendency to go walking regularly in the park, as well as spending all her Sunday afternoons resting there. The way she behaves just reflects her sense of alienation and isolation within society, just as Prufrock does in Eliot’s “*Prufrock*”. Their emphasis is much more on the individuals’ mental states of alienation, isolation, and anomie. As Eliot and Mansfield reflect the dark side of inner natures, i.e. psychic reality far beyond the urban setting, they can be identified with each other on the thematic basis of psychoanalytical and sociological evaluation.

The idea of anomic characterization plays a significant role in the emergence of the mental states of alienation and isolation in social circumstances, i.e., they all are related to each other. The concept of alienation originated in sociological and psychological philosophies: It was first defined by Hegel and plays a significant role in Kierkegaard, Durkheim, Wirth, Seeman, Marx, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Merton, and Sartre (Schmitt 1994, 42). All of these thinkers express their views on the concept of alienation and isolation from different aspects and explain how individuals consider their existence within their social environment. Having such a wide theoretical range, this article will deal with the concept of alienation in respect to the views of Seeman, Merton and Wirth. Alienation occurs when an individual is unaware of herself or

himself and is in an anxious state deciding to whom his or her personality belongs. The mental state of alienation occurs “*when groups do not participate in [the] process of collective definition of what it means to be a human being, but, instead, have imposed upon them a conception of who they are*” (Schmitt 1994, 46). In this quotation, the emphasis is on how individuals become alone in their surroundings because of feeling anxious of belonging to a specific social group. Thus, a sense of isolation and alienation go hand in hand, so the individual has the inadequacy of becoming a participant of collective definition.

According to Seeman's analysis of the state of alienation, five dimensions play significant roles: powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation, normlessness or anomic mental state and self-estrangement or alienation. Ashley underlines these five dimensions in a detailed theoretical basis (1998, 114). Most individuals experience these socio-psychological states in their lives when they feel themselves to be in a problematic situation within the social system. To illustrate, “*powerlessness*” is in the minds when the individual realizes that he or she is unable to influence their own destinies in industrial society (Israel 1971, 208). This indicates that human beings should conform to limited social organizations but not to their personal wishes or else they will become powerless. Such an evaluation marks a very significant psychological matter.

The second dimension, “*meaninglessness*”, is the case when the individual interprets her or his existence in a void, being unable to consider the functions of the social organizations. The third term is that of “*normlessness*” which is connected to Durkheim's social theories of anomie. It exists when there is a case of a lack of social norms which regulate individual's moral behaviour. Durkheim explains “*normlessness*” in detail by asserting that individuals become anomic because of their sense of alienation and isolation in society. When Durkheim considers the lack of norms, he emphasizes the discrepancy of “*collective consciousness*”: common beliefs, values and norms in social life. Such a situation refers to the emergence of a disorganization where social rules, norms and thoughts are futile for individuals in the modern period (Ashley 1998, 114). Moreover, anomie exists as the individual is in an anxious state and has an ambiguous position in social conditions which hint at the existence of mental disorder within the individual (Dunham 1964, 128-129; Powell 1988, 8. While defining anomic case in this study, rather than Robert Merton's description of five cultural goals of anomie -conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism and rebellion- his anomic explanation -a distinction of social structural norms- will be taken into consideration). This implies that, for Durkheim, when individuals experience anomie in their lives, they reject common values and meanings in society, as in this article reflected in both Prufrock and Miss Brill. The fourth dimension that Seeman defines is that of “*isolation*” which is followed by the fifth as “*self-estrangement*”. The person feels herself or himself alone in society rather than participating in social solidarity in social standing and experiences a desperate life of loneliness. Finally, in self-estrangement, the person feels alien or alienated from the whole system. These last two dimensions are inter-related with each other: they refer to a lack of involvement in daily life (Israel 1971, 208-213).

After such a theoretical exposition of the psychological and sociological interpretations of mental states, Prufrock and Miss Brill's problematic mental lives will be analyzed in respect to the texts. Yet it is the complexity of urban life that causes these features, because it is predominantly city life as a proper place for the emergence of the states of anomic characterization, isolation and alienation. Wirth describes urban life in the modern era as featured mainly by alienation that embodies isolation and disorganization due to a large, dense, and heterogenous way of life (1938, 1). Wirth asserts that in developing urban life, people consider themselves in

an isolated situation within the complex phenomena of the city. Hence, when Wirth defines urbanism as a way of life, he puts forward the classic description of the social and psychological effects of urbanism on the fragmented mental states of anomie, alienation and isolation in communal life. Wirth remarks on this fragmentation in his exposition:

Large numbers count for individual variability, the relative absence of intimate personal acquaintanceship, and the segmentalization of human relations, which are largely anonymous, superficial and transitory, and associated characteristics. Density involves diversification and specialization, glaring contrasts, a complex pattern of segregation, the predominance of formal social control, and accentuated friction among other phenomena. Heterogeneity tends to break down rigid social structures and to produce mobility, instability, and insecurity, and the affiliation of the individuals with a variety of intersecting and tangential social groups with high rate of membership turnover. The pecuniary nexus tends to displace personal relations, and institutions tend to cater to mass rather than individual requirements. The individual thus becomes effective only as he acts through organised groups (Wirth 1938, 1).

All three states mentioned by Wirth are main characteristics of urban life: cities have dense and heterogeneous social relations formed of large numbers of individuals who have to forget their own individual requirements and obey the “*collective consciousness*” as Durkheim depicts, or else they will be regarded as “*normless*”. Namely, in this large urban framework, individuals are sometimes unable to conform to these social organizations and consequently become anomic characters. When they do not accept the goals of the social organizations, these individuals are considered alienated, isolated and anomic. After analyzing what constitutes the “*urban way of life*”, it is also worthwhile to evaluate Georg Simmel’s essay “The Metropolis and Mental Life” that recounts many of the themes in Wirth’s “*Urban Way of Life* (Georg Simmel produced his classic essay on urban culture thirty-five years before Wirth published his famous essay; “*Urban Way of Life*”). Similar to Wirth, Simmel also considers the metropolis as a site for the lonely and the isolated individuals, who feel the lack of social bonds formed of kin relationships of solidarity. Clarifying how Eliot introduces Prufrock to his reading public, Simmel’s differentiation from Wirth should be defined: Simmel explains four main items that endure in urban life. The first is intellectuality which is more about reasoning rather than feeling. The second is that urban dwellers are calculative and weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of each action. The thirdly one hints at how individuals react indifferently to each other and fourthly, the urban dwellers flight behind a protective screen of insurance and feeling the deficiency of protection in city life (Savage 1993, 111). Thus, such a feeling drives them into a state of alienation, isolation and anomie.

Both T. S. Eliot and Katrine Mansfield express the problematic minds of individuals as a result of living in their lonely environment. Prufrock and Miss Brill become depressive personalities, as they feel themselves alone and isolated within their surrounding. To illustrate, Eliot manifests all of these fragmented mental formations through Prufrock’s anxious state of mind in which he is indecisive about what to do. Prufrock clearly defines his fragmentation through his opening words in his dramatic monologue. In the opening line, Eliot informs the readers about Prufrock’s split personality within the same human body when Prufrock refers to a listener as “*you*” and himself as “*I*”. “*Let us go then, you and I*” says Prufrock and implies the fragmentation he experiences in his inner world. As literary critics also indicate, his divided self

is the main reason for many problematic mental cases (Ackerley 2007, 13). His recurring phrase "*In the room the women come and go / Talking of Michelangelo*" indicates that he is living in the modern urban world in which there are academics talking about well-known artists. Yet, he also images his alienation and isolation in such academic setting and expresses his loneliness. Here, Prufrock portrays his intellectual side as described in Simmel's famous classic essay quoted in this article. Moreover, he manifests his anxiety, indecisiveness and self-estrangement in the modern world. Prufrock always questions himself in his intellectual and anxious mind:

*And indeed there will be time
To wonder, "Do I dare?" and, "Do I dare?"
Time to turn back and descend the stair,
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair—
(They will say: "How his hair is growing thin!")
.....
Do I dare
Disturb the universe?
In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse* (Eliot 2011, 18).

In this quotation, Prufrock especially notes his own fear and insecurity that accounts for his alienation and isolation from the modern way of living. His ambivalence to "dare" to "turn back" reflects his confusion of mind among many individuals and events. When he asks if he can dare to "*descend the stairs*", he notes his fear of approaching any women in the social gathering and anxiety that generates from his fragmentation and his uncertainty to take a decision to lay his own background aside or not. Eliot presents Prufrock as a critical observer to his readers, especially when he expresses the futility of his own actions and behaviours in his modern environment. His meaningless life does not make any sense for him anymore. He reflects his split psyche:

*And I have known the arms already, know them all—
Arms that are braceleted and white and bare
(But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!)
Is it perfume from a dress
That makes me so digress?
Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl.
And should I then presume?
And how should I begin?* (Eliot 2011, 19).

Due to being familiar with women wearing jewelry on bare arms, but not becoming aware of their substance, Prufrock reflects his disturbance. That is, since he has the consciousness of a modern mind, he experiences all the psychic problems of the city, in particular the discrepancy in interactions with the others because of the complexity and the rapidity of urban life. Here, Prufrock remarks upon the "*large, dense, and heterogenous way of life*" in the city as Louis Wirth underlines in his article (1938, 1). Prufrock displays the fact that he feels ill because of his urban surrounding and, thus, indicates that he is a critical observer in attributing the sense of meaninglessness and futility to his social life. In this case, according to Simmel's interpretation, Prufrock is calculative enough to assess the advantages and disadvantages of his existence in the modern world. To clarify better, Prufrock is indeed well-aware of his environment and reflects the images of the "*stairs*" that he descends slowly. "*City streets*" that he observes carefully,

embody “*smoke and fog*” symbolizing complexity, both in the deserted city streets and his mind (Unger 1971, 205-206). Such quotations externalize the confusion in his mental state and signify how traumatized he is in his inner world. When he is in a dilemma whether to turn back and descend the stairs to approach women, he indicates his assessment of powerlessness in the futility of his life.

While defining his own psychological traits, Prufrock indirectly depicts himself as an anomic character who experiences all the mental states of meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, self-estrangement as well as powerlessness. Questioning himself with “*Do I dare descend the stairs and turn back?*” Prufrock reflects his powerlessness because of his weakness, in deciding what to do in the following days. Here, Prufrock is utterly unable to express himself to the outside world, i.e., he is incapable of defining himself. In this case, he exceeds all the philosophical territories and clarifies the meaninglessness and senselessness of his environment. In fact, he is so indecisive, unable to decide anything about his own life. This emphasizes that he can be evaluated as a pathetic man who becomes isolated as an outcome of his own anxieties and obsessions. He defines his pessimism:

*Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question
Oh, do not ask, “What is it?”
Let us go and make our visit (Eliot 2011, 17).*

In the opening lines above, Eliot defines Prufrock as a split personality and a patient waiting for an operation after being anesthetized with ether. Similar to Wirth, both Prufrock and Miss Brill attribute an attitude to defining city life involving a dense, large and heterogeneous quality, so that it becomes the reason for their respective mental problematic states. Prufrock defines himself with two different personalities as “*you*” and “*I*” within the same body. While, when Miss Brill leaves all her Sunday activities behind at the very end of the story, she accepts herself as being a different alienated character in her environment, due to the criticism she received from the flirting young girl and the boy.

However, despite having two different personalities, Prufrock notes his pathetic case and looks for a remedy to overcome it by calling upon himself to go visit his empty and deserted city streets. These significant lines also reflect modernist characteristics in which the patient-like individual, Prufrock, does not only consider nature, the sky, the deserted cities, but also imposes his own emotions, i.e., he implicates how he is weak in his inner world, alienated, isolated, powerless and anomic. Thus, he makes a differentiation between the Romantic and the Modernist schools (Ackerley 2007, 14). In particular, the deserted city environment is a sign of his alienation, isolation and anomic mental state. He has been the prominent subject matter of all the concepts of alienation and isolation in his social environment. Having such an isolated and alienated mind drives him into becoming an anomic person, as he is moving towards the end of his life and having the sense of the meaninglessness and the futility of it:

*I grow old. . . I grow old. . .
 I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled
 Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?
 I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.
 I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each
 I do not think that they will sing to me* (Eliot 2011, 19-20).

In this quotation, Eliot expresses how Prufrock is pessimistic and feels the sense of futility of life. He defines how powerless Prufrock has become as a result of his old age and balding and the sense of isolation and alienation in his life. He has a desperate way of life due to his assessment of his life approaching the end, death. Like Prufrock, Miss Brill also feels herself to be an old, rejected and disgusted person at the end of the story.

Prufrock describes his psychological state and implies his tiredness in life. He adds some other emotional expressions of his old age and his powerlessness, yet, he indicates his awareness of his pitiful state in other lines:

*And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!
 Smoothed by long fingers,
 Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,
 Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?
 But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,
 Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon a
 platter.
 I am no prophet—and here's no great matter;
 I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,
 And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker,
 And in short, I was afraid* (Eliot 2011, 21).

Prufrock confuses the past, present and future. He even changes the clock hour forward to the evening which is the time in the beginning of the poem. He also defines his pessimism and tries to begin experiencing his life again, but, he is anxious for his decision of regeneration while stating “*Do I dare to eat a peach?*” That is, he is unable to overcome becoming an old person. He finds the conclusion himself that “*mermaids on the beach will not sing to him*” anymore because of his old age.

Similar to Prufrock, Miss Brill in “*Miss Brill*”, is in an anomic mental state because of her pursuit of loneliness, isolation, self-estrangement, powerlessness and normlessness. The story, published after World War I, depicts the problematic mental state, as in “Prufrock”. Like Eliot, Mansfield also depicts the mental destruction of human beings in the modern era through Miss Brill, and her anxious state of mind. Despite having a more positive psychological state than Prufrock, it is evident that she cannot overcome her depressed psychology by the end of the story, and thus, becomes more isolated and alienated than Prufrock. Although Miss Brill is self-conscious of her alienation when the short story opens, she wishes to lay it aside by having regular Sunday afternoon outings to the park. Like Prufrock, she wishes to lay everything behind and forget her previous days. She seems to be interested in the activities of all the others that come to rest and play in the park. She feels as if she is watching a play constituted of the ones who are resting and chatting there. Miss Brill thinks as if she is on a stage to perform a play, just as the others do in the park. She seems to be a character who sits and observes the participation of all the other individuals there:

Oh, how fascinating it was! How she enjoyed it! How she loved sitting here, watching it all! It was like a play. It was exactly like a play. Who could believe the sky at the back wasn't painted? But it wasn't till a little brown dog trotted on solemn and then slowly trotted off, like a little "theatre" dog, a little dog that had been drugged, that Miss Brill discovered what it was that made it so exciting. They were all on the stage. They weren't only the audience, not only looking on; they were acting. Even she had a part and came every Sunday. No doubt somebody would have noticed if she hadn't been there; she was part of the performance after all. How strange she'd never thought of it like that before! And yet it explained why she made such a point of starting from home at just the same time each week - so as not to be late for the performance (Mansfield 2006, 270-1).

She feels herself to be a player and is in pursuit of her Sunday treats, buying a honey-cake at the baker's when she returns home. Like Prufrock, Miss Brill lives in the modern world and has all her opportunities to lead a conforming comfortable life. That's why she is fond of acting in the theatre as a player. She is relaxed as she thinks others observe her being an important character in the theatre, the park itself. Nonetheless, although she seems to be happy, she is disturbed by her social environment because of her loneliness and alienation:

They did not speak. This was disappointing, for Miss Brill always looked forward to the conversation. She had become really quite expert, she thought, at listening as though she didn't listen, at sitting in other people's lives just for a minute while they talked round her (Mansfield 2006, 269).

This quotation reflects Miss Brill's loneliness. She pretends to be active in the park which is basically described as a theatre, combining the social gathering of players who are, in fact, the walkers there. When Miss Brill becomes an expert of listening and observing but not participating in the conversations around her, she indirectly confesses her loneliness and alienation:

The band had been having a rest. Now they started again. And what they played was warm, sunny, yet there was just a faint chill - a something, what was it? - not sadness - no, not sadness - a something that made you want to sing. The tune lifted, lifted, the light shone; and it seemed to Miss Brill that in another moment all of them, all the whole company, would begin singing. The young ones, the laughing ones who were moving together, they would begin, and the men's voices, very resolute and brave, would join them... And Miss Brill's eyes filled with tears and she looked smiling at all the other members of the company. Yes, we understand, we understand, she thought - though what they understood she didn't know (Mansfield 2006, 271).

This quotation properly defines Miss Brill's psychological and mental state. It reflects her desperate psychological orientation as Mansfield defines her as a crying person: her "eyes filled with tears" when she pursued all the others having a happy life but herself as only a listener and observer. She does not participate in their activities but only "looked smiling at all the other members of the company". This expression substantially implies her loneliness and alienation by

calling the people there the “*other members of the company*”. So, there is a company and she is outside of that company. Such a psychological and mental state represents both Miss Brill and Prufrock's desperate life.

Miss Brill is rich enough not to be regarded as powerless in the world because of wearing a precious fur every Sunday while resting in the park. Yet, when the visitors of the park evaluate her wearing style as ridiculous and mock her, she becomes a really weak person, through caring too much what her social environment thinks about her. Although she even has a fur kept well to wear on special days, she becomes a wholly poor individual in her life, especially, when she loses her ideal, the thought of being appreciated by the others.

Her choice of Sunday treats in the park also suggest that she is not satisfied with her comfortable life and decides to go to a different district to relax and, thus, she leaves her monotonous life behind. Such a tendency refers to her search for having the self-reliance to lead her life, i.e., she is in search of identity trying to fulfill her ideal of finding a better and more confident way of life. She experiences a meaningless and futile life in her inner world, just like Prufrock. In this case, similar to Prufrock, she is isolated and alienated when she leaves her daily life behind, in other words, she becomes an anomic character because of becoming normless and preferring not to belong to a specific social gathering. This becomes evident with her buying a honey-cake treat every Sunday that changes as a young boy and a girl flirting mock Miss Brill for wearing a strange fur:

Just at that moment a boy and girl came and sat down where the old couple had been. They were beautifully dressed; they were in love. The hero and heroine, of course, just arrived from his father's yacht. And still soundlessly singing, still with that trembling smile, Miss Brill prepared to listen.

"No, not now," said the girl. "Not here, I can't".

"But why? Because of that stupid old thing at the end there?" asked the boy. "Why does she come here at all—who wants her? Why doesn't she keep her silly old mug at home?"

"It's her fu-ur which is so funny," giggled the girl. "It's exactly like a fried whiting".

"Ah, be off with you!" said the boy in an angry whisper. Then: "Tell me, ma petite chere—"

"No, not here," said the girl. "Not yet". (Mansfield 2006, 271-2).

The flirting young boy and girl call Miss Brill a “stupid old thing” and question the reason for her sitting there. This is a ridiculous situation for Miss Brill and she becomes terribly depressed because of this. This should be the climax of the short story in which Miss Brill decides to keep herself once again to her little room and hides her fur in the box forever. This is a means of having a desperate worldview: a time for her loss of self-reliance and a point of climax which underlines the existence of all the dimensions of alienation in Miss Brill's life. She feels her life to be meaningless and is unable to continue it forever. When she neglects everything, she also tastes normlessness and, thus, dives into the depth of isolation and alienation. This is the exact time when she can be considered an anomic character that leaves every social norms behind because of her alienation and loneliness. The change in her mood and behavior also leads her in the transformation of her regular daily activities:

But to-day she passed the baker's by, climbed the stairs, went into the

little dark room - her room like a cupboard - and sat down on the red eiderdown. She sat there for a long time. The box that the fur came out of was on the bed. She unclasped the necklet quickly; quickly, without looking, laid it inside. But when she put the lid on she thought she heard something crying (Mansfield 2006, 272).

This final quotation also depicts the conclusion of the story. Mansfield hints at Miss Brill's dark room in which she has a desperate life and begins crying at the end, depicting her damaged and fragmented psyche, just like Prufrock who underlines his anxious state by questioning himself as "*Do I dare to descend the stairs*". It is significant to emphasize that "*Miss Brill*" is ironical, because although Miss Brill is well aware of her alienation in life, she tried to revive herself by going to the park and refresh herself as a happy and self-confident individual. However, all the players in the park approved of her isolation and self-estrangement, thereby, they become a means to regenerate Miss Brill's alienation at the very end. She can be regarded as an anomic character especially when she leaves all the world behind and keeps herself and her fur in her room. That is, she hates all her social gathering in the park and rejects everything she owns. She feels that her life is meaningless and considers herself to be a powerless person in her social environment.

Conclusion

Finally, Prufrock and Miss Brill are isolated, alienated and anomic characters in these literary works as they manifest their split psyches. Mansfield reflects the significance of split mental cases for creating new writing in women studies. Although they are written in different contexts, they can be evaluated in portraying similar mental and psychological cases. They detest their social gatherings and manifest their hatred through their mental states of alienation, isolation, meaninglessness, powerlessness, and anomie. Actually, what Prufrock and Miss Brill reflect through their anomic mental state is the concept of escapism from their social gatherings and from their city lives. After assessing such types of mental states, it is possible to interpret Prufrock's so-called "*love song*" as "*the song of departure*" from his social environment. Both these literary works hint at the worthlessness of all social circumstances because of the loneliness of protagonists lives. This indicates that loneliness, yet, it is the reason for new creative works. As they are alone, they express themselves emotionally by means of their writing. Such a thematic comparison points to fragmented and split personalities and indicates that although being two distinct literary writings, they share the same thematic basis.

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