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#### Arařtırma Makalesi

## HANIF KUREISHI’NİN *VAROŐLARIN BUDA’SI* ADLI ESERİNDE “ÖTEKİLEŐTİRME”

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### Öz

Yirminci yüzyılın sonları ve yirmi birinci yüzyılın başlarından itibaren, göçmen kimliđi fikri, diasporaların kiřinin kökeninin dayandıđı topraklarla olan bađlarını, kültürel farklılıkları ve peřinen belirlenmiř sınırları sorgulamaya başlamasıyla göçmen kimliđi fikri yeniden irdelenmiř ve sorunsal bir hal almıřtır. Postkolonyal çalıřmalarda merkez/çevre, aidiyet/ait olmama, ulus/diaspora ve ben/öteki gibi tanımları yapabilmek için kullanılan özdeřleştirici bakıř açısı; Avrupa’ya yerleřen Batılı olmayan göçmenlerin kimlik inřa sürecini, kimliklerini Birinci Dünya vatandařı olarak yeniden inřa ettikleri dođrusal bir süreç olarak ortaya koymuřtur. Her kategorinin veya grubun gerçekte, hayali veya metaforik sınırlara (bu sınırlar bedensel, ulusal veya ırk ve etnisite temelli sınırlar olabilir), kendini ötekilerden ayırt etmek adına ihtiyaç duyduđu fikrinden hareketle, bu yaklařımın en yaygın temalarından biri, kolonyal ve neo-kolonyal deneyimlerin belirlediđi katı ulusal ve etnik sınırlar sergilemek ve göçmenlerin baskın söylem içerisinde yabancı olarak tasvir edildiđi temsilleri incelemektir. Kategorisel sınırlar ve bu gruplara atfedilen sosyal anlamlar, bilinçli ve bilinçsiz olarak ötekileřtirmenin yapısal niteliklerini řekillendirmektedir. Kureishi’nin bařyapıtı olan *Varořların Buda’sı* (*The Buddha of Suburbia*) ana karakter Karim, onun ailesi ve arkadařları aracılıđıyla ötekileřtirme ve ırkçılıđın sözel ve fiziksel sonuçlarını irdelleyen önemli romanlarından bir tanesidir. Kureishi, Karim ve ait olduđu diaspora topluluđunun, ana akım Britanya toplumu içerisinde aynı anda nasıl hem bu toplumun bir parçası hem de yabancı olduklarını gözler önüne seriyor. Bu çalıřma, *Varořların Buda’sı*ndaki ötekileřtirme fikrini ve Batılı söylemin ‘öteki’yi Avrupalı etnomerkezciliđin bir parçası olarak asimile eden sabit ve ötekileřtirilmiř bir göçmen kimliđi inřa etme çabasını irdelermeyi amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Hanif Kureishi, *Varořların Buda’sı*, Öteki, Ötekileřtirme, Irkçılık, Ayrımcılık

### “OTHERIZATION” IN HANIF KUREISHI’S *THE BUDDHA OF SUBURBIA*

#### Abstract

Since the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the idea of immigrant identity has been re-evaluated and problematized with the rise of a diasporic questioning of territorial roots, cultural differences and pre-determined borders. Essentializing point of view in the field of post-colonial studies, which is used to define centre/periphery, belonging/nonbelonging, nation/diaspora and self/other, has highlighted the identity formation of immigrants as a linear process in which non-Western European immigrants reconstruct their identities as citizens of the First World. Hinged on the idea that any category or group needs borders that may be physical, illusory, or metaphorical, in order to define and distinguish itself and its difference from the others (these may be body borders, nation borders, or racial and ethnic borders), one of the common themes of such an approach is to display firm national and ethnic boundaries set by colonial and neo-colonial practices, and to analyse representations of newcomers within the dominant discourse as outsiders or aliens. Categorical borders and social meanings attributed to those groups, consciously and unconsciously, shape structural features of othering. Kureishi’s

magnum opus, *The Buddha of Suburbia*, a significant immigrant novel, deals with the verbal and physical consequences of othering and racism through the protagonist, Karim, his family and friends. This paper aims to explore the idea of otherization in *The Buddha of Suburbia*, and how Western discourse tries to construct a stable marginalized immigrant identity through appropriating and assimilating the other as a part of European ethnocentrism.

**Key Words:** Hanif Kureishi, *The Buddha of Suburbia*, the Other, Otherization, Racism, Discrimination

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Scholars of social sciences have long observed a tendency that any category or group needs borders that may be real, illusory, or metaphorical, in order to define and distinguish itself and its difference from the others (these may be body borders, nation borders, racial or ethnic borders). Categorical borders, and the social meanings attributed to those categories, both consciously and unconsciously, shape structural features of othering. Individuals and societies create borders to portray themselves as “having an identity that is desirable and developed while presenting the identity of who are racially, ethnically or linguistically different as undesirable and deficient” (Kumaravadivelu, 2008: 16). One comes to the realisation of ‘the other’ during the process of such categorizations through which negative and stereotypical images are shaped by the superior discourses.

Otherization is a concept first introduced by Adrian Holiday, Martin Hyde, and John Kullman in 2004. In their description, otherization refers to defining a group or person less than what they actually are. Thus, otherization, along dimensions of difference and sameness, can be defined as “a set of dynamics, processes, and structures that engender marginality and persistent inequality across any of the full range of human differences based on group identities” (Powell & Menendian, 2016: 17). It is likely that “creation of the inferior categories of people, an intellectual process that shares its logic with orientalizing modes of thought, legitimizes political practices, sanctions discrimination and possibly exploitation” (Buchowski, 2006: 476). This underlines that the adjectives associated with the other are not natural but socially and discursively constructed. As Blumer also notes

*Through talk, tales, stories, gossip, anectodes, messages, pronouncements, news, accounts, orations, sermons, preachments and the like definitions are presented and feelings expressed. In this usually vast and complex interaction separate views run against one another, influence one another, modify each other, incite one another and fuse together in new forms. Correspondingly, feelings which are expressed meet, stimulate each other, feed on each other, intensify each other and emerge in new patterns... It is through such a process that a collective image of a subordinate group is formed, and a sense of group position is set. (Blumer, 1958: 5)*

Thus, otherization designates certain groups or individuals as being different or not belonging to one's group; furthermore, it can be regarded as the dislike of a different idea, race, approach, culture, ethnicity or religion.

Edward Said in his *Orientalism* discusses the idea of otherization with regard to colonial and postcolonial discourses. He basically defines otherization as a crude process "of domination, of varying degree of a complex hegemony" (1978: 5) "that ascribes an imagined superior identity to the Self and an imagined inferior identity to the other" (Kumaravadivelu, 2008: 16). What's more, "when people are unable to see the different other as they see themselves, they rely on stereotypical representations of those they perceive as different" (Nelson, 2014: 29); thus, the other is regarded as a threat to the dominant culture which has the fear of losing ethnic, racial, cultural, and political unity. Accordingly, "the sense of difference between the host group and the outsider reveals that at the root of negative stereotyping is the need of the host group to defend its values and beliefs, which it presumes to be under threat from the intrusion of an alien culture that it fully doesn't understand" (Felsenstein, 1995: 15). Another key point to be underlined here is that this causes the majority to exclude, alienate and consider 'the other' as an antagonistic force. In other words, otherization creates fictional and hierarchically created barriers between different social, ethnic and racial groups.

Otherization in colonial discourse, while subordinating the other, creates "an inferiority complex" in the soul of the colonized by destroying "local cultural originality" (Fanon, 1952: 18). During the normalization process of the colonial expansion, the authoritative colonizer creates truths, justifies the spatial expansion, and defines particular roles for the colonized people for the sake of governmentality. Being internalized by the indigenous people, these truths then turn into internalized stereotypes of colonial discourse. Colonial discourse focuses on the "concept of 'fixity' in the ideological construction of otherness" which is considered as the "sign of cultural/historical/racial difference" (Bhabha, 1983: 18). The Western desire for homogeneity and stability of identity based upon the Occident and Orient, or the civilized West and inferior. Other, leads to the silencing of the other, and this silencing is a kind of violence against colonized people. Above all, the dominant group regards itself as the single authority which has a natural right to give orders and dictate over the minority groups sharing the same social and physical atmosphere. By categorizing those who have different ethnic and racial background into otherness, the dominant discourse makes the minorities feel othered and alienated. According to literary critic Karen D. Pyke this "emphasizes the psychic costs of internalized racial oppression defined as the individual inculcation of the racist stereotypes, values, images, and ideologies

perpetuated by the dominant society about one's racial group, leading to feelings of self-doubt, disgust, and disrespect for one's race and/or oneself" (2010: 553). An essentializing view in the field of post-colonial studies refers to firm national and ethnic boundaries set by colonial and neo-colonial practices, so it analyses representations of immigrants within the dominant discourse as outsiders, marginal others or aliens. Consequently, "the racialized body has become the most illegitimate object of social differentiation" and otherization (Fassin, 2001: 3).

### ***The Buddha of Suburbia: Markers of Otherness***

Hanif Kureishi, whose career began in 1981 by winning the George Denine Award thanks to his debut plays *Borderline* and *Outskirts*, is one of the most outstanding postcolonial authors. However, in 1999 with the publication of *The Buddha of the Suburbia*, he becomes a well-known writer and succeeds in establishing himself as a major name in literary canon. Born to a Pakistani father and an English mother and growing up in London in the 1970s, Kureishi, like Karim of the novel, socializes into two distinctive cultural traditions, and he learns from childhood that he has two sets of taxonomies to cope with. In *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Karim's subjectification includes never ending racial, cultural, ethnic and psychological border crossings as he tries to find a signified for the signifier 'self' in a multi-racial and multi-cultural society. Characters in the novel explicitly help the reader figure out how Kureishi textualizes the Otherization of non-English people.

Within the framework of Eurocentricism, the process of otherization inevitably brings about binaries, foreignness, monachopsis, ostracism and the formation of a disoriented identity. The identity formation of a postcolonial subject includes a number of othering processes. Since the other in colonial discourse is defined through absences, the postcolonial self has to cross body, ethnic, gender, and cultural borders to re-define the self which is othered in many categories. For Phelan:

Identity emerges in the failure of the body to express being fully, and the failure of the signifier to convey meaning exactly. Identity is perceptible only through a relation to an other - which is to say, it is a form of both resisting and claiming the other...In that declaration of identity and identification, there is always loss and the loss of not being the other and yet remaining dependent other for self-seeing and self-being (1999: 13).

Dividing the novel into two parts as "In the Suburb" and "The City", Kureishi eloquently depicts the large scope of Karim's emerging double identity and his experiences in the 1970s multicultural Britain, in both largely white suburbs and in the multicultural city London. While depicting the otherization processes, Kureishi puts Karim and his close family

in a solitary and disoriented world. Otherization can be witnessed in most of the novel; moreover, the typical dynamics of isolation, racism, marginalisation, disorientation are set forth. The novel portrays a startling world in which individuals with different ethnic, religious or racial backgrounds are regarded as second class citizens and are exposed to xenophobic pressures.

Kureishi, as one of the second generation novelists of the South Asian Diaspora, adds a new dimension to immigrant narrative by shifting the focus from the outer to the inner part of existence, and to the mental and spiritual developments of the characters in relation to racism, rootlessness, and alienation. In the novel, Karim attempts to redefine himself trying to create new self-positions in the dominant discourse. He is the son of an Indian father and a British mother, a mixed breed, who tries to be a part of British society. Although, he and his circle of friends and relatives - Haroon, Jamilia, Jeeta, Amar, Anwar, Changhez, and Tracey– try to regard themselves as British, they are made to feel that they are not so because their skin color always remains a barrier to be thoroughly integrated with the dominant culture, where, as stated by Fanon, “racism is only one element of a vaster whole: that of the systematized oppression of a people” (1952: 33). Similar to Karim, the persistent racism he experienced from peers and authority figures alike makes Kureishi want to erase his black identity entirely, both culturally, and physically: In his “The Rainbow Sign”, Kureishi provides an insight into the characters’ experiences through his own experiences as the “other”:

*In the mid-1960s, Pakistanis were a risible subject in England, derided on television and exploited by politicians. They had the worst jobs [...] They were despised and out of place. From the start I tried to deny my Pakistani self. I was ashamed. It was a curse and I wanted to be rid of it. I wanted to be like everyone else. [...] At school, one teacher always spoke to me in a 'Peter Sellers' Indian accent. Another refused to call me by my name, calling me Pakistani Pete instead. I refused to call the teacher by name and used his nickname instead. This led to trouble; arguments, detentions, escaped from school over hedges, and eventually suspension. This played into my hands (1986: 25).*

*The Buddha of Suburbia* is predominantly about Karim’s subjectification over a period of four years; a period which takes account of Karim’s having difficulties in identifying himself with England and his in-betweenness leading to anxiety, confusion, melancholy and reconciliation of the ethnic heritages, cultures, and histories within himself (Okuroglu Ozun, 2017: 93). In the opening paragraph of the novel, Karim defines himself with the following words, “My name is Karim Amir, and I am an Englishman born and bred, almost. I am often considered to be a funny kind of Englishman, a new breed as it were, having emerged from

two old histories.” (Kureishi, 1990: 3). Having an English mother and an Indian father means that Karim is neither totally British, since he is too brown, nor totally Indian, since he has never been there even once. Thus, he feels that his very existence requires some sort of explanation. Both tragically and ironically, he is the “other” of each culture that he is also part of it.

Although “the social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation” (Bhabha, 1983: 2), hegemonic Eurocentric consciousness tries to eliminate the possibility of total integration of minorities within the dominant culture. Therefore, in the novel, “since racism leads to scapegoating people of color for social and personal problems” (Kivel, 2006: 14) and since “black skin splits under the racist gaze, displaced into signs of bestiality, genitalia, grotesquerie” (Bhabha, 1983: 132), immigrants are othered and excluded from the symbolic order of the white society. Particularly in the 70s and 80s, the coloured immigrants, like Haroon and Anwar, are perceived as threats to pure Britishness and they become the objects of hate and contempt. The use of the racist and discriminative discourse in every sphere of social and political life depreciates diasporians’ sense of belonging while reminding them of their otherness. To understand how the discourse of otherness and belonging maneuver, it is highly important to recognize that “the process of self-identification of the national culture is composed of three related parts: to express in one’s own language and action, conscious self-identification, and acknowledgment by others” (Yang, 2006: 280). In the novel, first generation immigrant characters, like Haroon, are disillusioned with the harsh realities of the host culture. He arrives in England, the center of the Empire, in hopes of acquiring the ideal which has been painted to the Indian mind with false grand narratives about British superiority, in his words expecting to “return to India a qualified and polished English gentleman lawyer and an accomplished ballroom dancer” (Kureishi, 1990: 25). It is true that he has made it out of the margin; however, the center is unresponsive and creates a heterotopia out of its suburbs, again marginalizing the unwelcomed subjects. In the novel we see Haroon stuck in the suburbs except for the fact that he travels to London daily for his work. Haroon travels every day to London, not because he is accepted or admitted to the utopia of the city dwellers, but because he works there. His presence in the center has but one meaning: he is one among many who serve the State. When his job is done there, he does not stay since he is no longer needed. As Karim voices; “Dad never socialized with anyone from the office. They too fled London as quickly as they could after work” (Kureishi, 1990: 46). Haroon never socializes with anyone from the city that is the center, because there is no room for him there, he belongs in the suburbs, the margins.

Even "after twenty years of living in England, Haroon's cultural alienation deepens" (Kureishi, 1990: 64).

The other first generation immigrant character, Anwar, also suffers from racism, exclusion, disillusionment, displacement, isolation, and identity conflict. The more he is othered by the white society the more he holds onto his Indian identity; therefore, Anwar tenaciously rejects the idea of integrating himself within Western culture. These coloured immigrants do not feel themselves belong to British mainstream culture since they are not accepted as British citizens by the white majority. The suburbs' function in Kureishi's novel is that of imprisonment and confinement. Just like an othered space where the non-conformants are kept, the suburbs of South London contain those who are not accepted in the utopia of Britishness. This suburban heterotopia situates within its boundaries not only those of "deviant" origins, but also the British working class. The British upper class, which holds authority, seeks to create an ideal society by excluding anything that could bring down this "superior", "ideal" image. Thus, in the novel, the idea of national spatiality comprises various opposing multi-axial locationality and dislocationality in which geographical, social, cultural and political borders are persistently deconstructed and reconstructed.

Flanked by the home and host nations, diasporic in-betweenness in the novel questions citizenship and the idea of other which result in racial discrimination. Karim, in his discussion of the idea of national identity, underscores that besides verbal attacks there are also physical attacks against Asians. According to Karim's portrayal, the suburbs they are "far poorer" and

*full of neo-fascist groups, thugs who had their own pubs and clubs and shops. ... They also operated outside the schools and colleges and football grounds...At night they roamed the streets, beating Asians and shoving shit and burning rags through their letterboxes. Frequently the mean, white, hating faces had public meetings and the Union Jacks were paraded through the streets, protected by the police...Jeeta kept buckets of water around her bed in case the shop was fire-bombed in the night. Many of Jamila's attitudes were inspired by the possibility that a white group might kill one of us one day. (Kureishi, 1990: 56)*

Systematically, the immigrants are always reminded of their otherness, and they are kept away from the centre. There are various examples in the novel of how the Asian characters are othered in several ways. For instance, at school, Karim is "sick too of being affectionately called Shitface and Curryface, and of coming home covered in spit and snot and chalk and woodshavings". He ironically criticizes his father by saying, "all my Dad thought about was me becoming a doctor. What world was he living in? Every day I considered myself lucky to get home from school without serious injury" (Kureishi, 1990: 62). Karim's

“four years younger” brother Amar calls “himself Allie to avoid racial trouble” (Kureishi, 1990: 19). As Karim notes in the novel, his British aunt, Jean and her husband, Ted, “never calls Haroon by his Indian name, Haroon Amir. He was always 'Harry' to them, and they spoke of him as Harry to other people [as] it was bad enough his being an Indian in the first place, without having an awkward name too” (Kureishi, 1990: 33). When Ted and Karim are on their way to London, Ted points at some houses and states, “that’s where the niggers live. Them blacks” (Kureishi, 1990: 43), and when they are in the train some “boys smashed” a “light bulb against a wall where an Old Indian man was sitting” (Kureishi, 1990: 44) and “jeered racist bad-mouth at” (Kureishi, 1990: 43). Coloured people in the novel always feel the pressure of ethnocentrism because of their racial and ethnic backgrounds they are emotionally, physically, and psychologically abused and othered. White people’s “Beating Asians and shoving shit and burning bags” (Kureishi, 1990: 56), or hearing the words “Eat shit Pakis” (Kureishi, 1990: 53) are among the typical everyday experiences of the immigrants. In Kureishi’s words, the lives of the immigrants are “pervaded by fear of violence”; thus, “many of the families' attitudes were inspired by the possibility that a white group might kill one of us one day” (Kureishi, 1990: 56). All the examples here highlight that in the novel those who are not British are put in a category of other and they are exposed to verbal and physical racism. More than that, “the black-and-white aspect of the social reality literally reduces them to certain roles which, howsoever they may modify them, they cannot reject or transcend” (Hashmi, 1992: 89). As Karim hints, “sometimes we were French, Jammie and I, and other times we went black American. The thing was, we were supposed to be English, but to the English we are always wogs and nigs and Pakis and the rest of it” (Kureishi, 1990: 53).

Even in the relationship between Karim and Helen, his white girlfriend, an “absolute ‘Otherness’ is [there] to justify unlimited aggression and violence toward the Other” (Blumer, 1958: 190). Once Karim goes to visit Helen, her father opens the door and says, “We don't want you blackies coming to the house.” (Kureishi, 1990: 38). Upon seeing Karim, Helen’s father stresses that Helen cannot “go out ... with wogs” and they “don’t want ... blackies coming to the house” (Kureishi, 1990: 40). People like Helen’s father “are keen to place Karim in a stereotypical role, that as an Indian” (Ambursle, 2006: 28), moreover, what determines the reaction of such people is Karim’s being non-British, the other. Therefore, as others, Karim and his circle do not feel themselves safe and they always have fear of being attacked. However, what these people who are subject to discrimination really need is sympathy. As Jamilla stresses, “this world is full



of people needing sympathy and care, oppressed people, like our people in this racist country, who face violence every day" (Kureishi, 1990: 108).

The second generation characters, like Karim and Jamilla, feel more British than their parents since they were born in England; yet, their skin colour, as a kind of body border, is considered as a marker of their Indianness, their otherness. Although they cannot even speak either Urdu or Punjabi, they have never been to India, and they have read Indian history from British history books which glorify colonial expansion of Great Britain, these characters in many ways are made to feel that they are the other of the pure British identity. Karim voices that they "became part of England and yet proudly stood outside it. But to be truly free" they "had to free [themselves] of all bitterness and resentment, too. How was this possible when bitterness and resentment were generated afresh ever day?" (Kureishi, 1990: 227).

Two terms, sameness and difference, which are discussed deeply by Stuart Hall in his book entitled *Questions of Cultural Identity*, are important to understand how the discourse of otherness is articulated. One's identity is the main ground on which others assert similarity to or difference from him/her. As Stephanie Persson observes, "[b]ecause of the dialectical nature of identity, it is fundamentally both individualistic and pluralistic. It is pluralistic because the individual's identity is created through discourse and relationships with other individuals and groups" (2010: 43). As it is understood from the quotes, identity has a dialectic nature and this is portrayed in Karim's relationship with Charlie. Charlie, though himself lives in the suburbs as well, represents, for Karim, the highest position in the social ladder; therefore, Charlie owns the master discourse which defines and dictates what to be and what not to be. Karim confesses Charlie's impact on him as follows: "My love for him was unusual as love goes: it was not generous. I admired him more than anyone but I didn't wish him well. It was that I preferred him to me and wanted to be him. I coveted his talents, face, and style. I wanted to wake up with them all transferred to me" (Kureishi, 1990: 15). Karim sees the ideal state of Britishness in Charlie and desires -shockingly not even to be like him- to be him. Moreover, there are scenes where Charlie exerts his influence over Karim and goes so far as to tell him what to wear and what to listen to. And he does this in a patronizing manner which makes Karim feel uncomfortable with his identity. When Charlie does not fancy Karim's taste in music, Karim relates this experience in his own words: "I knew immediately from the look on Charlie's face that I'd been an animal, a philistine, a child" (Kureishi, 1990: 14). It is important here to pay attention to the words he uses to describe himself; it is the master discourse at play, dialectically interacting, shaping the identity of the "other". At this point, it should be noted that even though Karim is in Charlie's room, which

can be taken to symbolize the “centre”, he is still not allowed to leave his space of otherness. The postcolonial subject is admitted to the city firstly as a work force, as a server to the State. Yet it is not the chief condition to be admitted. In the novel acting, or being an actor, has an important role since, in order to make this transition from the margins to the centre, both Haroon and Karim have to assume different roles. Haroon accepts the role of a yoga guru when Haroon’s mistress Eva introduces him into a white community. He becomes the Buddha of suburbia after “reading books on Buddhism, Sufism, Confucianism and Zen which he had bought at the Oriental bookshop in Cecil Court” (Kureishi, 1990: 5), and his son, Karim, becomes an actor. When one becomes a player, it means that s/he is given a role to play. Here again there is an authoritative white figure who assigns the roles. As for Karim, his initiation into the theatre group comes with the role of Mowgli from Kipling’s *The Jungle Book*. Karim’s Mowgli performance stirs up a different reception in his father and Jamila, who happen to be on the Indian side of the audience. Kipling is harshly criticised by Haroon since he presumes that he knows something about India and Indian culture. It is the stereotyped image of the Indian in the play that awakens anger in him. Also Jamila reprimands Karim for his performance saying, “[I]t was disgusting, the accent and the shit you had smeared over you. You were just pandering to prejudices [...] And clichés about Indians.” (Kureishi, 1990: 157). The play is negatively framed and it puts the non-British in a highly degrading position; furthermore in the play, Karim “is supposed to be the ‘black man’ [although] he is not. But this is what the white men see when they look at him” (Onmus, 2012: 19). Additionally, during their conversation with Shadwell, the director of the play, Karim is reminded of his otherness when Shadwell asks if Karim “finds it difficult” and implies that it “must be complicated for [him] to accept - belonging nowhere, wanted nowhere. Racism” (Kureishi, 1990: 141). This process of otherization is harked back to also by Tracey when she says the play “shows black people, Indian people, Black and Asian people. As being irrational, ridiculous, as being hysterical. And as being fanatical” (Kureishi, 1990: 180). Tracey tries to make Karim realize that he is assigned the role just because he is an Indian, and the expectation of the director is that he should act like an exotic other; however, Karim only thinks that now he is an actor. Tracey criticizes Karim and his ignorance of the character that he is playing:

*How can I even begin? Your picture is what white people already think of us. That we're funny, with strange habits and weird customs. To the white man we're already people without humanity, and then you go and have Anwar – madly waving his stick at the white boys. I can't believe that anything like this*

*could happen, you show us as unorganized aggressors. Why do you hate yourself and all black people so much, Karim? (Kureishi, 1990:180).*

While Tracey severely criticizes the subordination, racialized comments, and practices which are widespread and persistent, people like Changez passively accept their otherization thinking that it is not a big deal for an ex-colonial subject and they should not to be offended; instead, they “must take up the English ways and forget their filthy villages. They must decide to be here or there” (Kureishi, 1990: 210). Drawing upon these characters’ critical approaches to the performance, we see that the role metaphorically assigned to Karim is the one which reinforced the image of the Indian as seen by the British. It is obvious that the British will spare room for the diasporians only on condition that they assume the roles designated for them; there is no other way. Exposure to racial discrimination leads to an inferiority complex in Karim and other immigrant characters making them question their ethnic and racial identities. It is obvious that when we find an answer to Karim’s question below, we might overcome the fictional borders created by hegemonic structures and discourses:

*And we pursued English roses as we pursued England; by possessing these prizes, this kindness and beauty, we stared defiantly into the eye of the Empire and all its self-regard... We became part of England and, yet proudly stood outside it. But to be truly free we had to free ourselves of all bitterness and resentment, too. How was this possible when bitterness and resentment were generated afresh every day? (Kureishi, 1990: 227).*

## 2. CONCLUSION

Othering and otherization have been a focus of interest in literary scope for a long time and gained popularity with the contribution of prominent postcolonial writers who have conceptualized the terms through time, self and experience. Based on a set of processes and structures, racism and ethnocentrism, which are particular expressions of othering, set forth persistent inequalities. Kureishi in his *Buddha of Suburbia* portrays how people lived in the 1970s in England elucidating the differences between the experience of the first and second generation of immigrants, through Haroon and Anwar, Karim and Jamila, and how each character positions “the self” within the context of nation. Attacks including violence, verbal threats or insults, and racist political discourse are some of the examples that coloured immigrants confront since Karim and his circle are seen as aliens who are potential threats for the dominant culture. Karim is a significant example of a character caught between conflicting black and British identities.

Even though Kureishi's othered characters have the desire to integrate themselves into the dominant culture, which is also the former colonizing power, they only come to pass with suffering physically, emotionally and psychologically. Karim may have made advances towards delimiting his identity and resisting external racist pressures that try to restrict his self-definition and socio-economic success, but the period he is about to enter has the potential to undo the growth he has achieved. Furthermore, Karim's comparative success when presented alongside Haroon's and Anwar's disappointment, failure and, in Anwar's case, death in the face of a racist British society implies that the freedom of a delimited, black "self" is reserved, at best, for the second- and subsequent generation immigrants. Through the journey from the margins to the centre, only the physical position of the diasporic subjects change, whereas their social positions never really leave the boundaries of the heterotopia. Physical transition from the margins to the centre does not necessarily entail a parallel transition in terms of social status. Consequently, the postcolonial subject, no matter where s/he goes, s/he will always end up within a kind of prison made up of the signifiers produced by the master discourse. Presence in the centre is allowed on certain conditions which are decided by the centre and its master discourse. Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* is a significant example of highlighting otherness through which racism is born and gains in strength, and explores the question of the representation of the 'Other'. In *The Buddha of Suburbia*, the language of othering both captures and describes the processes that undergird marginalization and inequality.

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### TÜRKÇE GENİŞ ÖZET

Her kategorinin veya grubun, kendini tanımlamak ve diğerlerinden farklı olduğunu gösterebilmek adına gerçek, hayali veya metaforik sınırlara (bedensel, ulusal, ırksal veya etnik sınırlar gibi) ihtiyaç duyma eğiliminde olması, sosyal bilimler alanındaki araştırmacıların uzun zamandır gözlemledikleri bir durumdur. Kategorisel sınırlar ve bu kategorilere, bilinçli ve istem dışı atfedilen toplumsal anlamlar, ötekileştirmenin yapısal niteliklerini şekillendirmektedir. Bireyler ve toplumlar, kendilerini "arzu edilir ve gelişmiş bir kimliğe ait kimseler olarak, öte yandan ırksal, kökensele veya dil bağlamında farklı olanları ise arzu edilmeyen ve kusurlu bir kimliğe mensup olarak" sunmak için bu sınırları yaratırlar. Birey, üstün söylemlerce şekillendirilen olumsuz ve basmakalıp imgelerle oluşturulan kategorizasyon sürecinde "öteki"nin farkına varır.

Ötekileştirme, ilk kez Adrian Holiday, Martin Hyde ve John Kullman tarafından 2004'te ortaya konmuş bir kavramdır. Holiday ve diğerlerinin tanımına göre, ötekileştirme bir şahsı veya grubu esasta olduğundan daha azına indirgeyerek tanımlamak anlamına gelmektedir. Ötekileştirme, belirli grup ve bireyleri farklı olanlar ve bir gruba ait olmayanlar şeklinde nitelendirir; bu kavram farklı bir düşünceye, ırka, yaklaşıma, kültüre, etnik kökene veya dine karşı beslenen hoşnutsuzluk olarak da görülebilir. Batı'nın, Batı-Doğu, ya da medeni Batı ve geri kalmış Doğu, karşıtlığı üzerine kurulu homojen ve sabit bir kimlik arzusu, ötekinin susturulmasına yol açar; bu susturma eylemi sömürgeleştirilmiş insanlara karşı bir çeşit şiddet eylemidir. Her şeyden öte, egemen grup, kendisini, emir vermeyi ve aynı sosyal ve fiziki atmosferi paylaştığı azınlıklara bir şeyler dikte etmeyi doğal hakkı sayan yegâne otorite olarak kabul etmektedir. Farklı etnik ve ırksal arka plana sahip olanları kategorize edip ötekileştirerek, egemen söylem, azınlıkların ötekileştirilmiş ve yabancılaşmış hissetmelerine sebep olur.

Ötekileştirme konusunu ele alan yazarlar içerisinde Hanif Kureishi çok önemli bir yere sahiptir. İlk eserleri olan *Borderline* ve *Outskirts* oyunları sayesinde 1981 yılında George Denine Ödülü'nü kazanarak kariyerine başlayan Hanif Kureishi, en dikkat çekici sömürge sonrası dönemi yazarlarından biridir. Lakin 1999'da *The Buddha of Suburbia* (*Varoşların Budası*)'nın yayımlanmasıyla, tanınmış bir yazar konumuna erişmiş ve edebiyat dünyasında ismini kanıtlamayı başarmıştır. Pakistanlı bir baba ile İngiliz bir annenin oğlu olarak dünyaya gelen ve 1970'lerin Londra'sında büyüyen Kureishi, romandaki Karim gibi, birbirinden farklı iki kültürel gelenek içerisinde yetişmiştir ve daha çocukluk yıllarında başa çıkması gereken iki farklı sınıflandırma olduğunu fark etmiştir. *The Buddha of Suburbia*'da, Karim'in özneleştirilme süreci, birçok ırkın bir arada bulunduğu çok kültürlü bir toplumda "benlik" kavramının karşısına yerleştirebileceği bir anlam bulma çabasıyla ırksal, kültürel, etnik ve psikolojik sınırları defalarca aşmasını içermektedir. Romandaki karakterler, Kureishi'nin İngiliz olmayan kişilerin ötekileştirilmesini nasıl metinleştirdiğini anlaması için okura aleni biçimde yardım etmektedirler. Avrupa merkezci yaklaşımın kapsamında, ötekileştirme süreci kaçınılmaz olarak iki kutuplu değerler sistemini, yabancılığı, bir yere ait olmama duygusunu, dışlanmayı ve karmaşık kimlik oluşumunu doğurur. Güney Asya Diaspora'sının ikinci kuşak romancılarından biri olan Kureishi, odak noktasını varoluşun içsel kısmına, yani ırkçılık, yurtsuzluk ve yabancılaşıma bağlamında karakterlerin zihinsel ve ruhsal gelişimine yönelterek göçmen anlatısına yeni bir boyut kazandırmıştır. Romanın başkarakteri Karim, egemen söylemin içerisinde yeni benlik pozisyonları yaratarak kendisini yeniden tanımlamaya çalışır. *The Buddha of Suburbia* romanı, ağırlıklı olarak Karim'in dört yıllık bir süreçteki özneleşme sürecini konu alır; bu süreç, Karim'in kendini İngiltere'yle özdeşleştirmede yaşadığı zorlukları, arada kalmışlığının neden olduğu tedirginlik, kafa karışıklığı, melankoli duygularını ve etnik kökeninin mirasıyla iki farklı kültürü ve tarihi kendi içerisinde uzlaştırma çabasını kapsamaktadır. İkinci nesli temsil eden Karim ve Jamilla gibi karakterler, İngiltere'de dünyaya gelmiş olmaları sebebiyle kendilerini ebeveynlerine nazaran daha çok İngiliz gibi hissetmektedirler; fakat bedensel bir sınır olan ten renkleri, Hintli oluşlarının, öteki oluşlarının bir işareti olarak görülür. Urduca veya Punjabi dilini konuşamamalarına, Hindistan'a hiç gitmemelerine, Hindistan tarihini İngilizlerin sömürgeci yayılma politikalarını öven İngiliz tarih kitaplarından okumuş olmalarına rağmen bu karakterlerin birçok yönden saf İngiliz kimliğinin ötekisi gibi hissetmesi sağlanmıştır. *The Buddha of Suburbia* romanında Kureishi, 1970'lerin İngiltere'sinde insanların nasıl yaşadığını tasvir ederken, Haroon ve Anwar ile Karim ve Jamila karakterleri üzerinden birinci ve ikinci kuşak göçmenlerin deneyimleri arasındaki farklılara ve her bir karakterin "ben" kavramını ulus bağlamında nasıl konumlandığına ışık tutmaktadır. Şiddet, sözlü tehdit ve hakaret, ırkçı

siyasi söylem gibi saldırılar, ten rengi farklı olan göçmenlerin karşı karşıya kaldıkları sorunlara örnek teşkil etmektedir; zira Karim ve çevresi baskın kültüre karşı potansiyel tehdit olan yabancılar olarak görülmektedir.

*The Buddha of Suburbia*'nın başkahramanı Karim, Hintli bir baba ile Britanyalı bir annenin oğlu, Britanya toplumunun bir parçası olmaya çabalayan melez bir bireydir. Karim gibi Kureishi'nin ötekileştirilmiş karakterleri, geçmişte sömürgeci güç konumunda olan baskın kültüre entegre olmayı arzu etmelerine rağmen bu sınırı aşmaları ancak fiziksel, duygusal ve psikolojik olarak acı çekmeleriyle mümkün olmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, postkolonyal özne, nereye giderse gitsin kendisini daima egemen söylemin ürettiği tanımlayıcılardan meydana gelmiş bir çeşit zindanda bulacaktır.