

MEMORY AS AN UNRELIABLE SOURCE OF HISTORY AND/OR THE SIMULACRUM OF THE PAST IN JULIAN BARNES'S *ENGLAND, ENGLAND**

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ABSTRACT

Writer of a great number of novels, short stories and essays, Julian Barnes has always been reckoned into the post-modernist canon of English literature especially with the theme of suspicion and defiance of metanarratives dominating his fiction. Much of Barnes' reputation in the last decades of the twentieth century stems from his fearless questioning of totalizing and blindly-accepted narratives that have a claim to ultimate knowledge and meaning. Barnes' *England, England*, his eighth novel written under his own name, presents the reader with the problematic nature of issues like national identity, Englishness and documented history with a satirical tone and political implications. Barnes emphasizes the fallibility of human memory in his questioning of history writing and the notions of reality and authenticity, which is reminiscent of Baudrillard's considerations of meaning and history in the modern world. In this respect, Barnes' post-modern novel *England, England* openly problematizes history writing with explicit references to Baudrillard's theory of the 'simulacra', asserting that documented history is nothing but unreliable copies of the actual past created by a defective memory system. This article illustrates the way Barnes utilizes Baudrillard's theory in an attempt to problematize the claim of personal histories to the status of official history, the simulacrum feigning originality.

Keywords: simulacrum, history, Julian Barnes, *England, England*

JULIAN BARNES'IN İNGİLTERE İNGİLTERE'YE KARŞI ROMANINDA TARİHİN GÜVENİLMEZ BİR KAYNAĞI VE/VEYA GEÇMİŞİN TAKLİDİ OLARAK ANILAR

ÖZ

İngiliz roman, öykü ve deneme yazarı Julian Barnes, özellikle eserlerinin büyük kısmına hâkim olan 'üstanlatılara karşı duyulan şüphecilik ve muhalefet' teması göz önünde bulundurularak, genellikle post-modern bir yazar olarak değerlendirilir. Yazarın 20. yüzyılın son dönemlerinde artan ünü, onun sorgulanmadan kabul edilen, tümleyici, mutlak anlam ve bilgiye ulaşma savına sahip anlatıları korkusuzca sorgulamasından kaynaklanmaktadır. Barnes'ın kendi adı altında yayımlattığı sekizinci romanı olan *İngiltere İngiltere'ye Karşı* da okuyucularına ulusal kimlik, İngilizlik ve yazılı tarihî materyaller gibi konuların özünde yatan çelişkileri iğneleyici ve politik imalarla yüklü bir anlatımla sunar. Romanda yazar, tarih yazımı ve gerçeklik/orijinallik olgularını sorgulamasıyla, Baudrillard'ın modern dünyada anlam ve tarih üzerine düşüncelerine paralel olarak, insan hatıralarının ve hafızasının yanılma payının yüksekliğini vurgular. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmanın amacı Julian Barnes'ın post-modern romanı *İngiltere İngiltere'ye Karşı*'da yazarın Baudrillard'ın 'simulacra' teorisine açık açık göndermeler yaparak tarih yazımını nasıl sorunsallaştırdığını gözler önüne sermek ve yazılı tarihin, insanların sorunlu hafıza sisteminin ürünü olan, geçmişin güvenilmez kopyalarından ibaret olduğunu kanıtlamaktır. Aynı zamanda bu çalışma, Barnes'ın, kişisel tarihin zaman içinde resmi tarih statüsüne erişmesini sorunsallaştırma amacıyla Baudrillard'ın teorisinden ne ölçüde faydalandığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: simulacrum, tarih, Julian Barnes, *İngiltere İngiltere'ye Karşı*

"What happened to the truth is not recorded"
(Barnes, 1985, p. 65)

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INTRODUCTION

Having been reckoned into the author's 'political novels'[†](Freiburg and Schnitker, 1999, p. 61), Barnes' *England, England* first published in 1998 revolves primarily around the themes of national identity, the myth of Englishness and the question of authenticity in modern world. Structured in three parts, the novel concentrates on Barnes' free-spirited heroine, Martha Cochrane, in her fearless questioning and suspicion of validity of generalizing narratives like religion, history and national identity as well as her demonstration that human memory is closer to fiction than reality. For Barnes, the novel is about "the idea of England, authenticity, the search for truth, the invention of tradition, and the way in which we forget our own history" (Marr, 1998, p. 15). Similar to what the author touches upon in his previous fiction-exemplified below-, *England, England* problematizes the modern age's notion of reality and authenticity in a satirical and farcical tone, with direct references to contemporary French philosophers, especially Jean Baudrillard's theory of the 'simulacra'.

Barnes' interest in such themes as fallibility of human memory, history as fiction, subjectivity of truth and multiplicity of perspectives does not solely pertain to *England, England*, as he dwells upon similar problems in his previous novels. In *Staring at the Sun* (1986), for instance, Barnes challenges the traditional notion of truth through the spectacles of Jean Serjeant who has totally different views of it in her childhood, youth, adolescence and old age. In *Flaubert's Parrot* (1984), the author provides the reader with three perspectives on Gustave Flaubert's life and writing, which do not overlap with each other and thus, disrupt the readers' traditional perception of reality and history. Similarly, in *Talking It Over* (1991), Barnes offers three first-person narratives on the same love issue that widely differ from each other and problematize the possibility of objectivity. Furthermore, in *Love, etc.* (2000), the characters' recollections about the same past events being contradictory reflect the author's discomfort with a blind acceptance of the documented history. Guignery agrees that "*England, England* addresses some of the key issues developed in [Barnes'] previous novels, in particular the evasiveness of truth, the construction of history and the elusive nature of memory" (2006, p. 105).

Above all, Barnes' *England, England* appears as a critique of the formation of and a blind contentment with the image of England totally based on the stale memory of Englishness warmed over and over again to keep up with the times. He voices his discontentment with the illusionary national identity in one of his interviews, saying:

We create something from fragments and bits of memory, national memory, and we stick it together with a very rough glue and then once it's been there for a certain time, like a year, we think it is real, this is authentic, and then we celebrate it. It's fabrication all over again- convincing ourselves of a coherence between things that are largely truer and things that are wholly imagined. (Guignery and Roberts, 2009, p. 63)

The thing is, in many senses, formation of a tradition, a history or a past is inevitably bound to human memory which, through selections, omissions and additions, gives out subjective, constructed and unreliable accounts of the past and forms personal as well as national identity. The novel's respective chapters, thus, follow Martha Cochrane, first falling into this illusion as the representative of the common English citizens, then attempting to revive and reproduce what the whole nation has stuck to for centuries, and finally realizing the impossibility to survive under such false patriotic and equally out-of-date premises. Dwelling much upon Baudrillard's

[†] The novel has been widely discussed as a satire with political implications concerning, particularly, the political rhetoric of England's former Prime Minister Tony Blair whose project of a 'New England' is alluded to by means of Sir Jack's project of England, England. For further details, see: (Romero, 2011, pp. 241-261) and (Stein, 2003, pp. 193-206).

ideas, Barnes criticizes modern individuals readily accepting what is imposed on them and calls for a scepticism on behalf of these individuals towards unauthentic constructs feigning ‘the’ reality such as history and national identity. Barnes implies that documented history is also a subjective, ideological account which is inevitably bound to elusive human memory; yet, individuals’ memories or the replicas of what really happened are served up in such a fashion that they, in time, achieve their autonomy and overpower reality. In this respect, it is essential to reveal how Julian Barnes problematizes the validity of memory as an always-ideological, always-defective copy of what really happened in the past, drawing mainly upon Baudrillard’s theory of simulacra and simulation.

Baudrillard’s Theory of the ‘Simulacra’

Lyotard defines postmodern as “incredulity towards meta-narratives” (1984, p. xxiv), by which he challenges the validity of all totalizing assumptions that have had a claim to absolute knowledge in the course of centuries. This definition calls for a much more sceptical attitude towards pre-established notions that have long been recognized as natural forces marking off the framework human thought must fit in. Furthermore, postmodern thinking emphasizes relativistic nature of all these narratives and reveals their ideological foundations pointing to their constructedness. It blurs the clear-cut distinctions between polar opposites and stresses the fluid and subjective nature of reality in scientific, religious, political and social terms. For Lyotard, the modern era is characterized by legitimation of all-encompassing narratives, including the notion of reality, through Performativity, which makes it possible to master reality by mastering knowledge:

‘Reality’ is what provides the evidence used as proof in scientific argumentation, and also provides prescriptions and promises of a juridical, ethical, and political nature with results, one can master all of these games by mastering "reality." That is precisely what technology can do, by reinforcing technology, once "reinforces" reality, and one's chances of being just and right increase accordingly. Reciprocally, technology is reinforced all the more effectively if one has access to scientific knowledge and decision-making authority. (1984, p. 47)

Postmodern thinking, thus, displays the shakiness of the grounds on which the whole Western Ideology has been established with an emphasis on the historical relativity of the notion of truth and its changeability. In this respect, it can easily be argued that “postmodernism’s answer to the question, ‘Where are we?’, is that we are in a world we have constructed ourselves” (Middleton and Walsh, 1995, p. 31).

In a similar vein, Jean Baudrillard, a French theorist usually associated with postmodernism, draws attention to the artificial relationship between signs and meanings in the production of realities; and he argues that reality is constantly imposed on certain negation after which copies of this reality claim their own positions as ‘the’ reality. In this respect, Baudrillard comes to the conclusion that, in the postmodern world, there is not anything that can claim for the position of pure reality; but every single copy of the original achieves hyperreality with no referents in the current of references.

In his theorization of the concept of ‘simulacrum’, Baudrillard draws largely from the Platonic idea of reproduction of the original (or the idea), which he describes as a negative process leading to many realities with no resemblance to any reality in the end (1988, p. 170). In his 1981 book *Simulacra and Simulation*, Baudrillard elaborates on the sign system that modern society has handed all the meaning production over. The linguistic system conveys meanings onto symbols which are individually constructed copies of perceivable reality that make human beings contented with the assumption that there is a ‘reality’. However, Baudrillard argues that

“the simulacrum is never that which conceals the truth — it is the truth which conceals that there is none. The simulacrum is true” (1988, p. 166). For him, modern society’s contentment with and blind devotion to the simulacra blur the distinctions between reality and hyperreality, and in due process, each simulacrum manages to take the upper hand as ‘the’ reality.

Baudrillard draws a map of the simulacrum’s dethroning of reality in his *Simulacra and Simulation*, in which he contrasts simulation with representation in their attempts to absorb each other and concludes that simulation encapsulates the latter giving it a mask of reality. In the long run, the simulacral image comes into being with the claim to replace the reality. Baudrillard mentions four successive stages necessary for the final state of the simulacrum as follows:

1. It is the reflection of a basic reality.
 2. It masks and perverts a basic reality.
 3. It masks the absence of a basic reality.
 4. It bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum.
- (1988, p. 170)

The first phase offers a duplicate of the original sign, which gives the beholder an impression that the representation is faithful to reality and, thus, admissible. In the second phase, the duplicate gains such deep roots for itself that it perverts the reality and makes the beholder believe that the reality is no longer faithful to the image it once signified. The third stage functions to veil the presence of an original image to be represented by the perverted reality and the simulacrum postures as a good appearance with no authentic source at all. By negating all its relations to the reality, the simulacrum achieves its purest form in the fourth stage and claims the signs’ referentiality for itself, thus becoming a reality on its own. After all these stages are completed, the simulacrum becomes "more real than real" (Best and Kellner, 1991, p. 119).

For Deleuze, simulacra are the “systems in which different relates to different by means of difference itself. What is essential is that we find in these systems no prior identity, no internal resemblance” (1968, p. 299). In this respect, any external element is given the chance to negate the value of a sign and redirect it for its own purposes. Although Baudrillard limits his analysis of replications of reality to certain social phenomena such as media, economy and language, the postmodern condition provides the atmosphere for extending his theory into many other fields. For instance, history as one of the Grand Narratives might be challenged as not conveying the truth, since memories of individuals have always disrupted what really happened in the past and insinuated ideological narrations as faithful copies of it. Consequently, human memory can be viewed as unfaithful copies of the past events that eventually manage to sell itself as the ultimate source of human history. This intricate relationship between memory, the actual past and documented history will be analyzed in relation to Barnes’ *England, England* in the following chapter of this study.

Barnes’ *England, England* and Memory as the Replica of the Past

The first chapter of Barnes’ *England, England* elaborates on Martha Cochrane’s reflections on history, religion and human memory in her early childhood and adolescence. To stress humans’ inability to remember every single detail in the past, the author begins the novel with a challenging question: “What is your first memory?” (Barnes, 1998, p. 3). As an answer to this question, it is argued that memory is something elusive by nature, and it does not reflect the past as it was, but recreates it as it should be with omissions, additions, embellishments and shadowings:

It wasn't a solid, seizable thing, which time, in its plodding, humorous way, might decorate down the years with fanciful detail — a gauzy swirl of mist, a

thundercloud, a coronet — but could never expunge. A memory was by definition not a thing, it was ... a memory. A memory now of a memory a bit earlier of a memory before that of a memory way back when. (1998, p. 3)

Martha's conception of human memory is masterfully explained by the author with constant references to her big interest in jigsaw puzzles in which she tries to piece the counties of England together in order to come up with a complete picture of her nation. When her father is gone, having left her mother in utter devastation, Martha strives to justify his sudden disappearance by making childish assumptions that he left to find the missing Nottinghamshire piece of the puzzle. Despite her mother's tears as the evidence to the actual reason of her father's disappearance, Martha's personal account of the event attributes certain heroism to his baseness. In other words, Martha's history obscures her mother's. Metaphorically, the pieces of the puzzle refer to humans' inability to fill in the gaps in their memories, a nation's inability to attach itself to a collective set of values and the ever-changing nature of human perception. Without the missing piece of the puzzle, Martha has a broken sense of completeness very much in the way that she always feels the presence of the missing piece of fatherly compassion in her heart. When it comes to memories, human beings are very much like children with their jigsaws, "they just pick up any old piece and try to force it into the hole" (Barnes, 1998, p. 4), as the narrator argues. Human memory has a tendency to appropriate and re-appropriate the past to fill in the gaps in understanding and explaining events. In this respect, every memory turns out to be a lie, to some extent, though artfully arranged.

Memory, despite being a continuing self-deception according to the author, enables Martha to make her jigsaw, her England and her heart whole again. Broken bits and pieces of memory give human beings the power to write a history of their own with or without reference to actual events in the past. The author comments on this subjective nature of human memory system, challenging the essence of human history as the grand narrative that people have always adhered to with unquestioning acceptance:

And there was another reason for mistrust. If a memory wasn't a thing but a memory of a memory of a memory, mirrors set in parallel, then what the brain told you now about what it claimed had happened then would be coloured by what had happened in between. It was like a country remembering its history: the past was never just the past, it was what made the present able to live with itself. (Barnes, 1998, p. 6)

It is inferred from the extract that human memory works according to the principles of omission and addition; and as history is always inevitably informed by this rearrangement of details, it loses its objectivity along with its credibility. The human brain makes selections, pushing some things down into the darkness of oblivion or colouring others to leak out of the person's eyes whenever possible. This is why memory, as a source of recorded human history, can be described as "an element of propaganda, of sales and marketing, always intervened between the inner and the outer person" (Barnes, 1998, p. 7). Humans are ideological beings very much like all narratives that have written and are writing human history. This subjective nature of human history is reflected in the novel when Martha's memory of a historical figure, Francis Drake, contradicts with her Spanish friend Cristina's view of the same person. What Martha's ideologically-shaped memories of the man and the products of the Spanish girl's education reveal is that human memory has the power to create histories, to make the same person a pirate and a hero or damned and glorified at the same time. This innocent conflict between the two girls' views of the same historical personage at the very beginning of the novel functions as a metaphor voicing the author's view of the "essence of history and memory, whose wholeness is a mere illusion" (Guignery, 2006, p. 106). Martha helplessly drifts with this illusive current of her memory system and tries to grasp one single moment of stability out of it, not knowing that

even vegetables have a myriad of varieties in the schedule of prizes: Carrots being long and short, potatoes long and round, eschalots large white and small white, friesian cow in calf and in milk... (Barnes, 1998, pp. 8-9).

Martha's memories constantly draw attention to and focus on the variety of even trivial things like beans being white or green, round or flat, dwarf or broad (Barnes, 1998, p. 11). In such a world of varieties, instead of trying to build up her trust on shaky grounds, Martha ends up with no belief at all. In her adolescence, especially after her father abandons them, Martha believes that she has reached "the age where memories harden into facts" (Barnes, 1998, p. 15). That is why she always feels the necessity to repeatedly say "that was a fact", although she turns a blind eye to the fact that she is just making assumptions, that her father did not go off to find the missing Nottinghamshire piece of the puzzle and that her memories will always lack at least one piece very much like the jigsaw puzzle.

In the second chapter of the novel, Martha joins Sir Jack Pitman's group of men of ideas who help him achieve his dream to create an alternative England on the Isle of Wight with replicas of what are globally acknowledged as constituents of the myth of England, including the royal family, the Big Ben, Robin Hood, King Arthur, Harrod's and the Cliffs of Dover. The touristic theme park turns out to be such a great success that it outshines the original England and all people including the managers and the actors "discharge their authentic reality, substituting for it the artificially-simulacral reality of their roles" (Salman, 2009, p. 154). It is the same fallibility and unreliability of memory and accordingly human history which "enable the creators of the theme park on the Isle of Wight to rewrite, simplify and caricature national history so as to meet the expectations of tourists" (Guignery, 2006, p. 106). The dialogues between Martha, who has a degree in history, and Dr. Max, who is the Official Historian of the Project, reveal that history as recorded in books is something changeable, elastic and easily dependable on the perspective of one person, one group or one nation. One of those dialogues reads:

Well, the point of our history – and I stress the our – will be to make our guests, those buying what is for the moment referred to as Quality Leisure, feel better. [...] The point is that most people don't want what you and your colleagues think of as history – the sort you get in books – because they don't know how to deal with it. [...] So we don't threaten people. We don't insult their ignorance. We deal in what they already understand. Perhaps we add a little more. But nothing unwelcomely major. (Barnes, 1998, pp. 73-4)

Similarly, in his interviews with the subjects of his test, Dr Max criticizes people's dominant perception of history as mere chronology of events. He complains that "most people remembered history in the same conceited yet evanescent fashion as they recalled their own childhood" (Barnes, 1998, p. 85), by which he undermines the role of memory in the formation of human history. Such idealistic and critical views towards human memory and history are shattered once more when Martha decides to sack Dr Max from his position as the Official Historian of the Project. With the project's unveiling of the fragility of memory, both as an individual mechanism constituting the subject's present self and as a generalizing constituent of national identity, Martha observes that "the role of the Project Historian ha[s] simply become ... historical" (Barnes, 1998, pp. 198-9) on the dystopian island where copies are appreciated more than the originals.

Barnes' critical and satirical tone comes into play especially towards the end of the novel, through which he voices his criticism of his nation's blindness to the rich, deep-rooted national heritage and overindulgence in and contentment with the copies of the original. For him, although personal memory can be described as a fallible mechanism in the formation of

identities, the cultural heritage of a nation is inevitably bound to the preservation of collective memories, that is, myths, tales and stories of that nation. As Barnes himself points out in one of his interviews:

Getting its history wrong is also part of creating a nation. You have to build up those myths of liberation, myths of fighting the oppressor, myths of bravery. Often they have a certain percentage of truth in them, so they're easy myths to build up. But then being a nation as well as becoming a nation also depends on the continuation of those myths. (Guignery, 2000, p. 65)

What Barnes means here is that myths which create a national identity and cultural heritage are simply positive ascriptions to neutral past events, with a certain degree of factuality, for the sake of creating role models for future generations. In due course, these myths secure their positions as 'official history', a reference point by which nations define their distinctiveness. Disturbed by this factitiousness –rather than factuality-, Martha questions the essence and reliability of the memory system, the source of all attempts to bring the past back into the present. Although she accepts that memory is a way of self-deception, she still believes that “even if you recognized all this, grasped the impurity and corruption of the memory system, you still, part of you, believed in that innocent, authentic thing — yes, thing — you called a memory” (Barnes, 1998, p. 7). Memory, though inescapably processed and evasive, is the commonest process of reinterpreting the past individually, and it leads to a shared tradition: “The past is crystallized into precious moments selected by memory, but also by forgetting, and by desire's distortions and reorganizations” (Phillips, 1985, p. 66). In this respect, it is a true inference that every memory is an ideological, transformed version of reality; but, at the same time a necessary constituent of national myths and stories that keep cultures alive.

Sir Jack's insistence on the most popular and marketable elements that are generally associated with Englishness shows that replicas are naturally much more desirable to consume and easier to produce compared to the deep-rooted originals. Leaving out such negative attributions to Englishness as being “cold, snobbish, emotionally retarded and xenophobic” (Barnes, 1998, p. 110), Sir Jack's creation of a polished England echoes the way human memory works; picking bits and pieces, mostly positive, from the past, giving them a desirable shape and pretending that they were real. The author, thus, emphasizes that the outcome of such mending is never an authentic whole but loose engagement of replicas always lacking some pieces very much like Martha's memories and jigsaw puzzle. What Sir Jack easily accomplishes with the Island Project also shows that human memory and history as a product of it are flexible and fragile concepts that can be driven to any direction if necessary. He teaches people and people readily learn “how to deal with history, how to sling it carelessly on [their] back and stride out across the down land with the breeze in [the] face ... [as] no-one wants to know any of Dr Max's old history” (Barnes, 1998, p. 208) any more. The Island Project is a proof that history is a narration, a story written in pieces of false memories, “an acceptable variant, even an improvement on the original [past]. The glory is the story... It would be, if only it were true” (Barnes, 1998, p. 225). Martha's interview with Sir Jack's committee also displays that documentation of past events are always open to ideological alterations, omissions and additions. When she is asked by Sir Jack about some inaccurate detail in her CV, Martha recklessly answers: “It's as true as you want it to be. If it suits, it's true. If not, I'll change it” (Barnes, 1998, p. 47). Martha implies with this statement that truth and the documented data about one's personal history are relative and modifiable under different circumstances.

The final chapter of the novel presents the reader with an older, but wiser Martha whose “memory become[s] more random [...] with all sorts of litter from the past [blowing] about” (Barnes, 1998, p. 250). Martha now begins to understand how quickly things have unravelled, how easily Old England has lost her power, wealth and history, as she comprehends that

“memory is identity” (Barnes, 1998, p. 259). In the pastoral setting of the third chapter, which is “a potential site of renewal and realisation of England’s traditions” (Miracky, 2004, p. 169), Martha awakens to the vital significance of a collective memory in the formation and continuity of a national heritage. She begins to realize the necessity to protect England’s collective memory and deep-rooted myths very much like Jez Harris cutting the grass that makes it impossible to see the names on the tombstones and thus bringing some memories to light.

After all these issues are raised, it would not be far-fetched to claim that Barnes intentionally makes use of Baudrillard’s ideas to emphasize his negative views towards human memory system and to reveal that memories are no more than inaccurate replicas that eventually claim for historical factuality. Miracky also contends that Barnes’ *England, England* “is a reflection on the postmodern theories of French philosopher Jean Baudrillard about reality and simulacrum” (2004, p. 163). Barnes even goes further to introduce a character, an unnamed French intellectual, to deliver a speech on replicas and representation; and the intellectual states: “We must demand the replica, since the reality, the truth, the authenticity of the replica is the one we can possess, colonize, reorder, find *jouissance*[‡] in, and, finally, if and when we decide, it is the reality which, [...] we may meet, confront and destroy” (Barnes, 1998, p. 57). With this propulsive speech, the company creates a history of their own with an indiscriminate concentration of fragmentary memories until “there [is] no history except Pitco history” (Barnes, 1998, p. 207).

Barnes never undermines the power of human memory in creation of histories and national identity throughout the novel, yet he openly parodies the way the whole world readily consumes these histories regardless of their ideological backgrounds. Barnes makes use of the theory of ‘simulacrum’ to imply that human history is comprised solely of individual memories after a process of selections, elections, omissions and additions and these memories follow Baudrillard’s recipe to achieve authenticity as ‘the’ history.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, *England, England* can be described as “a farcical novel about the invention of English tradition” (Guignery, 2006, p. 3), and it offers a dystopian vision of modern England with an emphasis on the evasive nature of individuals’ memory and its inadequacy to write the history of a nation; a history that claims to provide a flawless picture of all those complicated and interpenetrated traditions, myths and stories as old as history itself. The novel draws portraits of contemporary individuals each of whom is “a falsification, often a caricature, of questionable memories and nostalgic contrivances” (Bradford, 2011, p. 93). Through these individuals, Barnes manages to affirm that Englishness, in the sense of a mask that modern individuals wear on, is a mere illusion; the core of this collective memory is so much deep-rooted that it cannot be excavated by the efforts of the individual memory and struggle.

The novel problematizes the common assumptions that adaptations of the long-lived traditions to modern times with the hope that this will cure the social vices is a huge mistake and “the ‘echo-chamber’ supposedly ringing with voices and traces of the past is shown to be curiously hollow, consisting at best of names, dates or meaningless catch-phrases” (Nünning, 2007, p. 66). The creation of a new identity for a nation is ultimately bound to patched memories, fictive history books and artificial ideological realities. As can be seen in the case of the theme park named ‘*England, England*’, “instead of retrieving ‘echoes’ of shared experiences, the attempt to

[‡] Widely used by poststructuralist, psychoanalytical and feminist literary critics (particularly Roland Barthes, Jacques Lacan and Judith Butler), the term ‘*jouissance*’ refers to the feeling of extreme enjoyment whose object (or rather ‘*objet petit a*’ in Lacan’s terminology) is both unattainable and pleasurable at the same time. Barnes, in the novel, uses the term to describe a moment of crossing long-lasting boundaries of desire, a desire which, in the long run, becomes its own object, hence a simulation.

trace Englishness always involves the invention of something new under the guise of a time-honoured tradition” (Barnes, 1998, p. 66). Heindl also contends that Barnes calls for a distinction between individual memory and collective memory in the novel and that the latter should be relied upon while the former cannot be trusted (2009, n.pag.). The myths, legends and stories rooted in a nation’s cultural heritage are serious components of the collective memory, or unconscious, which keeps nation well and sound; however, individual memory system is an inadequate mechanism to re-write those stories and consequently the history of a nation on its own.

Yet, these individual memories have gained a seat for themselves since they were documented by some means on some piece of paper. The past incidents have been decorated according to the interests of the age and these replicated stories have begun to replace actual events bit by bit until their factuality has become unquestionable. As Barnes exemplifies with the case of the theme park, writing histories is equivalent to writing stories. The replicas easily overcome the originals; and whatever sells becomes reality in the modern era. In the case of her childhood memories, Martha concludes that history is a matter of remembering, whoever remembers best re-members most.

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Uzun Öz

İngiliz roman, öykü ve deneme yazarı Julian Barnes, özellikle eserlerinin büyük kısmına hâkim olan 'üstanlatılara karşı duyulan şüphecilik ve muhalefet' teması göz önünde bulundurularak, genellikle post-modern bir yazar olarak değerlendirilir. Yazarın 20. yüzyılın son dönemlerinde artan ünü, onun sorgulanmadan kabul edilen, tümleyici, mutlak anlam ve bilgiye ulaşma savına sahip anlatıları korkusuzca sorgulamasından kaynaklanmaktadır. *Flaubert'in Papağanı* (1984), *Gündoğumuna Yolculuk* (1986), *Seni Sevmiyorum* (1991), *İngiltere İngiltere'ye Karşı* (1998), *Aşk vs.* (2000) ve *Bitiş Hissi* (2011) gibi meşhur romanlarında Barnes, doğruluk olgusunu, nesnelliğin imkânını, geleneksel gerçeklik algısını ve tarihsel verilerin geçerliliğini ustaca sorunsallaştırır. Barnes'ın kendi adı altında yayımlattığı sekizinci romanı olan *İngiltere İngiltere'ye Karşı* da okuyucularına ulusal kimlik, İngilizlik ve yazılı tarihî materyaller gibi konuların özünde yatan çelişkileri iğneleyici ve politik imalarla yüklü bir anlatımla sunar. Romanda yazar, tarih yazımı ve gerçeklik/orijinallik olgularını sorgulamasıyla, Baudrillard'ın modern dünyada anlam ve tarih üzerine düşüncelerine paralel olarak, insan hatıralarının ve hafızasının yanılma payının yüksekliğini vurgular. Yazarın politik romanlarından sayılan *İngiltere İngiltere'ye Karşı* 1998 yılında yayımlanmıştır ve ulusal kimlik, İngiliz olma miti ve modern dünyada özgün olabilmenin imkanı gibi konuları sorgulamaktadır. Üç bölümden oluşan romanda yazar, özgür bir ruha sahip olan Martha Cochrane isimli kadın kahramanı sayesinde, din, tarih, ulusal kimlik ve insan hafızası gibi genel bilgiye yönelik anlatıları eleştirerek bu anlatıların gerçeklikten ziyade kurguya daha yakın olduğunu iddia eder. Buna paralel olarak, roman modern dünyanın gerçeklik ve özgünlük algısını iğneleyici bir dille eleştiriye tabi tutar ve bunu yaparken de çağdaş Fransız felsefesinin en ünlü temsilcilerinden Jean Baudrillard'ın 'simülasyon' kuramından çokça faydalanır. Roman ayrıca, artık bayatlamış olan İngiliz olma idealinin üzerine kurulmuş İngiltere imgesine körü körüne bağlılığı sorgular. Bir geleneğin, bir tarihin veya geçmişin oluşması kaçınılmaz şekilde insan hafızasına bağlı ve bağımlıdır. Bu hafıza sistemi ise yaptığı seçimler, eklemeler ve çıkarmalarla birlikte geçmişin tamamıyla öznel, kurgusal ve güvenilmez versiyonlarını ortaya koymaktadır. Romanın genelinde Martha Cochrane karakteri ilk başta İngiliz vatandaşlarının bir temsilcisi olduğuna inanma gafletine düşer, sonra İngiliz olma idealini canlandırma ve yeniden yaratma yolunu seçer ve son olarak da bu gibi sahte vatanperver idealler ışığında yaşamının imkansızlığını kavramaya başlar. Baudrillard'ın fikirleri ışığında kurgusunu oluşturan Barnes, modern bireylerin kendilerine dayatılanları kolaylıkla kabul etmesini eleştirerek tek gerçekmiş gibi görünen ama öznel olmaktan öteye gidemeyen tarih ve ulusal kimlik olgularına karşı uyanık olmayı salık verir. Barnes'ın romanına göre, tarih kitaplarında yer alan bilgiler öznel ve ideolojik anlatılardır ve

bunlar insan hafızasının noksanlıklarına tabi oldukları için kusurlu bilgiler içerirler. Hatta bu anlatılar zaman içerisinde gerçekliğin yerini alabilecek kadar güçlü bir kitlesel etki yapabilirler. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmanın amacı, Julian Barnes'ın post-modern romanı *İngiltere İngiltere'ye Karşı*'da yazarın Baudrillard'ın 'simülasyon' teorisine açık açık göndermeler yaparak tarih yazımını nasıl sorunsallaştırdığını gözler önüne sermek ve tarihin, insanların sorunlu hafıza sisteminin ürünü olan, geçmişin güvenilir kopyalarından ibaret olduğunu kanıtlamaktır. Bu amaçla, roman ve kuram arasında paralel okumalar yapılarak Barnes'ın Baudrillard'a yaptığı bilinçli göndermeler gün ışığına çıkarılacak ve romanın altında yatan ve aşağıda detaylandırılan genel eleştirel düşünce vurgulanacaktır. Roman, modern İngiltere'nin distopik bir resmini göstererek bireylerin anılarının tarihi yazma konusunda baştan savmacı ve yetersiz bir güç olduğunu ortaya koyar. İnsan hafızasının sayısız, karmaşık imgeler ve hikayeler arasından kusursuz ve doğru bir geçmiş tasviri yapması imkansızdır. Bireysel hafızanın yanı sıra, toplum hafızasının da ulusal kimliği oluşturmada seçici ve yetersiz olduğu iddiası romanda kendisine yer bulur. İngilizler'in İngilizlikle tanımladıkları ve bir maske gibi yüzlerine geçirdikleri şey, aslında bir aldatmacadan ibarettir. Bir ulus için yeni bir kimlik oluşturmak en nihayetinde yamalı anılara, kurgusal tarih kitaplarına ve yapay ideolojik inançlara bağlıdır. Romanda kurulan ve 'İngilere, İngiltere' adı verilen eğlence parkı her nasıl o geleneksel İngiltere'yi geri getirmek yerine, gerçek İngiltere'nin yerini almaya başlamışsa, insanların bölük pörçük anıları da geçmişteki gerçekliklerin yerini almaya başlar. Bir kağıda kaydedildiği andan itibaren bu anılar artık gerçeklik iddiasına kavuşur ve tarih adını alır. Geçmişte yaşananların anıları içinde bulunulan zamanın şartları, kişilerin taraflı algıları ve çıkarları doğrultusunda bambaşka bir kılığa bürünerek yavaş yavaş gerçeklik statüsü kazanır. Barnes'ın romanında yaptığı da tarih yazımının aslında hikaye yazmaktan farksız olduğunu, hatalı kopyaların gerçeklerin yerini aldığı, tarihsel anlatıların güvenilir olmadığını ileri sürmektir. Roman ayrıca, tarihsel olayların kişiler üzerinde bıraktığı izlenimlerin, tarihin yerini alması konusunu tartışmaya açar. Romanda çocukluk anılarını hatırlayan Martha'nın da dediği gibi, tarih bir hatırlama meselesidir ve tarihi yazanlar, geçmişi en doğru hatırlayanlar değil, doğru hatırladığını daha büyük kitlelere dayatabilecek güce sahip olanlardır.

