



لاكانية الذاتية في رواية إليف شافاك "١٠ دقائق و٣٨ ثانية في هذا العالم الغريب": قراءة

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الملخص

الأهداف: تحاول الدراسة الحالية مناقشة الفرضية القائلة بأن الكتابات الذاتية الحديثة للمواطنين الأتراك الذين يعيشون خارج تركيا تعزز صورة شاملة، غير إنسانية، وهيمنية عن الأمة. الهدف الرئيسي هو التحقيق في تعقيدات الذاتية وتشكيل هويات شخصيات شفق من خلال مفاهيم لاكان للواقع، والخيالي، والرمزي.

المنهجية: تتبنى هذه الدراسة مفهوم الذاتية لدى لاكان لتحليل تطور الشخصيات الرئيسية في رواية شفق استجابة للصراعات السائدة بين المجالات النفسية والاجتماعية المختلفة.

النتائج: تُظهر الدراسة أن الصراعات اللاواعية الناشئة عن مختلف الأنظمة النفسية تحاصر بيناز وهميرة باستمرار. ليلى وعثمان قادران على تأكيد ذاتيهما بينما يتسللان في الوقت نفسه إلى النظام الرمزي.

الخلاصة: تشير الدراسة الحالية إلى أن رواية إليف شافاك تقدم تصويرًا للشخصيات يرفض مفهوم الهويات الثابتة ويظهر بدلاً من ذلك شخصيات ذات ذاتيات متنوعة ودقيقة. هذا المفهوم يتناقض مع التصور التقليدي للهويات الثابتة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: شفق، لاكان، النظام، الخيالي، الرمزي

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Subjectivity in Elif Shafak's *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds In This Strange World*: A Lacanian Reading

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Abstract

Objectives: The current study tries to dispute the premise that modern autobiographical writings by Turkish citizens living outside Turkey promote a universalizing, dehumanizing, and hegemonic picture of the nation. The main objective is to investigate the complexities of subjectivity and the formation of identities of Shafak's characters through Lacan's conceptions of the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic.

Methods: This study adopts Lacan's subjectivity to analyze the progression of the main characters in Shafak's novel as a response to the prevailing conflicts between various psychological and societal realms.

Results: The study shows that unconscious conflicts from various psychological orders consistently trap Binnaz and Humeyra. Leila and Osman can reaffirm their subjectivity while simultaneously infiltrating the symbolic order.

Conclusions: The current study states that Elif Shafak's novel presents a character depiction that rejects the notion of permanent identities and shows characters with various and nuanced subjectivities. This concept is in contrast to the conventional conception of fixed identities.

Keywords: Elif Shafak, *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds*, Lacan, The Order, The Imaginary, The Symbolic



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1. Introduction:

An interpretation of literature which provided by the process of psychological analysis is known as psychoanalytic criticism. This method makes use of psychoanalytic approaches to analyze literature. Psychoanalysis is a kind of psychotherapy that is used to determine whether or not a person is suffering from mental health issues. This is accomplished by analyzing the dynamic relationship that occurs between the conscious and unconscious components of the mind. Barry asserts that "the repressed fears and conflicts which are causing the problems are brought into the conscious mind and openly faced, rather than remaining 'buried' in the unconscious"(Barry, 2020, p. 70) , this technique necessitates that the subject matter be handled in a manner that is both open and honest. This method is founded on specific concepts that pertain to the functioning of the mind, instincts, and sexuality. These concepts serve as the foundation for the philosophy. concerning the limitations of the therapeutic efficacy of the approach, there is a debate.

Due to the fact that literature is a creative subject that requires mental activity, there is a significant connection between psychoanalysis and literature. Shepherdson argues that "any counts of literature and culture have turned to psychoanalysis as a way of breaking the impasse between general, socio-historical modes of analysis and approaches that seek to specify subjectivity more precisely" (Shepherdson, 2004, p. 74). The fact that psychoanalysis has been utilized throughout the entirety of human history serves as the foundation for Shepherdson's claim (Shepherdson, 2004, p. 78). The discipline of contemporary literary criticism has been greatly impacted by psychoanalysis in recent years. The relationship between language and literature is inextricable due to the fact that language is an indispensable component of literature. As a result of the fact that language and psychoanalysis are inextricably linked, psychoanalysis can be seen as a plausible explanation for literary works. Shepherdson draws a reference to Freud's well-known statement, which goes as follows: "I thus expected that psychoanalysis as a whole would be a theory of the peculiar intersection between the organism and language—the vital domain and the signifier" (Shepherdson, 2004, p. 90).

Elif Shafak's work is a postfeminist investigation into the identities of women from the point of view of the author. She describes particular stages in order to symbolically portray the concept of a feminine identity that is marked by disorder and beliefs. She does this by describing specific phases. The oppression of women is one of the most persistent societal issues in Turkey; hence, it is reasonable to assume that diasporic works would concentrate on patriarchal power structures and prohibitions that restrict the social and political freedom of women at some point in the future. As Aslam's statement, the continuing prosecution of notable feminist individuals and social activists is a manifestation of the overall resistance of conventional authority to the involvement, mobility, and growth of women (Aslam, 2017, pp. 49-50).

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The works of Shafak are filled with taboos and common beliefs that have been developed by the community. Shafak's works are filled with these things. Myths and taboos function as unspoken guidance for survival, and are therefore important.

Shafak's "*10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World*" novel serves as a model for people who are regarded as being beneath others in the community due to the work that they do. Leila experiences a heightened state of awareness after the protagonist is killed and placed in a skip outside of Istanbul. While her brain continues to be active for "ten minutes and 38 seconds," her heart has not yet stopped beating. When readers hear Leila's memories, they can be transported back to her upbringing, which took place in a confined setting that was heavily impacted by religion and traditions. She was raised in a polygamous family that consisted of two mothers and a father who gradually became more authoritarian throughout the course of her childhood. In order to escape, Leila travels to Istanbul, where she eventually becomes entangled in the illegal world of sex trafficking.

2. Literature Review:

This study evaluates academic and scholarly works that have previously investigated the case of the current study in order to establish the necessary distinction between the current study and earlier studies on this novel. This differentiation is necessary in order to establish the necessary distinction. Due to the fact that the novel's publishing year, there is a scarcity of pertinent research on the issue. The most significant readings from the novel are presented in this review of the literature. The reader will notice that the author has made an effort to differentiate between the previous literature and the readings that are presented in this study.

Muhammad and Kazmi (2021) in, Elif Shafak's novel "*10 Minutes 38 Seconds in this Strange World*" highlight how the novel depicts a society shaped by social and cultural prejudices, particularly in terms of gender roles. The novel illustrates the societal preference for powerful and dominant men, while women are expected to conform to patriarchal norms, limiting their individuality and independence (Ayub, Kazmi, & Raza, 2021, p. 5770). They argue, that Shafak thinks that a woman's worth extends beyond her physical beauty and personal traits, yet she is often reduced to an object, leading to negative consequences for her social status. Women are always victims they have to bear the oppression (Ayub, Kazmi, & Raza, 2021, p. 5779).

Ali Salami (2022) in "*Silenced Voice: A Feministic Study of Elif Shafak's 10 Minutes and 38 Second in the Strange World*", discusses identity and gender in the novel. Salami argues, throughout her novel, Shafak offers the postfeminist philosophy to satisfy mothers and writers. Women, as she suggests, must embrace completeness rather than struggle with multiplicities. Throughout the novel, Shafak discusses the issue of the 'Other' and identifies two of its key causes. First, dreading the women as 'Other' creates obstacles. Second, if patriarchal culture does not grasp different parts of women's lives, the woman will be





treated as a foreign being (Salami & Taheri, 2022, p. 34). The intertwinement between Shafak's feminist paradigm and her particular narrative strategies plays a double role. On one hand, it explains the relation between power and freedom". On the other hand, it sets the forms for knowing and picturing of the real life. (Salami & Taheri, 2022, p. 34).

Similarly, Lateef Sajida (2022) in "Application of Astrid Erll's Theory of Travelling Memory to Elif Shafak's *10 Minutes 38 Seconds in This Strange World*", discusses traumatic memories. In Shafak's novel, all characters suffer from traumatic memories. The characters of this novel remain prisoners of their past, they do not come out from their deteriorative memory. Sajida notes that social institutions are the major reason for the traumatic memories of the characters which never let them forget their past and compel them to repress their feelings and stay depressed (Lateef, 2022, p. 48).

In the same vein, Muntazar Mehdi (2021) in "Intra family Violence Against Women in Patriarchal Societies: A Thematic Analysis Of Sexual Exploitation In Elif Shafak's Novel *10 Minutes 38 Seconds In This Strange World*" explores sexual harassment and infringements on Women's rights in a patriarchal culture. Mehdi writes "Shafak's novel deals with issues like; child sexual abuse, women's rights violations, sex work", adding that her novel portrays the power of patriarchy and the superiority of men to women, besides violation of women's rights (Mehdi, Ali, & Hashmi, 2021, p. 4086).

Anu Zacharia (2022) in "Boundaries and Taboos of Women: A Close Reading of Elif Shafak's *10 Minutes and 38 Seconds in This Strange World*" studies the novel from the societal portrayal of false morality, gender bias rooted in religious and patriarchal standards, and other discriminatory behaviours experienced by women in Turkey. (Senthamarai & Zacharia, p. 282). Zacharia illustrates how the novel raises uncomfortable concerns regarding the circumstances that drive women into prostitution, as well as the unfair and brutal treatment they face in society. Women are exploited in the name of religion, as supported by Islamic feminists. Religious and patriarchal training of women from a young age produces miserable persons who can never be their authentic selves (Senthamarai & Zacharia, p. 268).

3. Conceptual Framework:

Recent decades have seen an increase in the amount of attention paid to psychoanalysis as a result of the widespread use of psychoanalytic concepts in everyday life. Despite this, there have been a great deal of shifts in this movement for the past ten years, and psychoanalytic theory has been subjected to significant transformations. This movement has been affected by a variety of techniques and disciplines, which has resulted in a change in the way that psychoanalysis is heading. According to Shepherdson, psychoanalysis is always concerned with the subjectivity of the subject; to put it another way, the extraordinary flexibility of its engagement with subjectivity is what makes psychoanalysis so intriguing in the setting of cultural conditions of this kind (Shepherdson, 2004, p. 3). Without passing judgment on the acts that are being observed, the objective of psychoanalysis is to discover the underlying forces and motivations that are





driving behavior. Jonathan illustrates that, "Psychoanalysis seeks to provide an interpretation of people, show them as acting in certain motivated ways and achieving certain gratifications – without thereby rationalizing the acts" (Henriques, URWIN, COUZE, & Walkerdine, 1998, p. 6). This is in contrast to the approach that psychoanalysis takes, which is to provide an interpretation of people.

According to Tim Daen (Dean, 2019, p. 249), Lacan's theory of subjectivity de-individualizes our conception of the subject and explains how the subject is significantly more than a synonym for the individual. Subjectivity, according to Giroux and McLaren's definition is "a distinct form of identity that enables us to acknowledge and address how individuals make sense of their experiences, including their conscious and unconscious understandings, as well as the cultural forms that are available through which such understandings are either constrained or enabled" (Giroux & McLaren, 2018, p. 14). Bruce asserts that, every attempt to "demonstrate the existence of the Lacanian subject" is doomed to fail since it is impossible to achieve (1995, p.35). According to Lacan, the subject is nothing more than a hypothesis, often known as an "assumption" (Lacan, The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, 1988, p. 35). This is the reason why this is not possible. Julian argues that in psychoanalysis has "agency is constantly subverted to desire" (Lacan, 1988, p. 205), which makes it an illogical subject compared to psychology. Discursive practices, which do not give rise to fixed identities but rather many subject positions, are to blame for this inconsistent subject behavior. Furthermore, Joan Copjec writes that "The subject is thus split from its desire, and desire itself is conceived as something – precisely – unrealized; it does not actualize what the law makes possible. A desire is not committed to its manifestation unless there is an external impediment to its accomplishment" (Copjec, 1989, p. 61). In other words, the subject senses a separation from its wishes, which raises the possibility that desire is intrinsically unmet and exists more as a potentiality rather than as a concrete embodiment. It is not the case that desires are immediately fulfilled, even though the law presents several opportunities. As an alternative, the realization of want is contingent upon other variables or obstructions, which suggests that desire does not possess an inherent drive toward manifestation. This sheds insight into the intricate dynamics that are at play within the area of human want and societal regulation. It sheds light on the complicated interplay that exists between the subject, desire, and external restrictions. The rational subject of psychology is substituted by an irrational subject of psychoanalysis in the Lacanian interpretation of subjectivity. According to Julian, the irrational subject of psychoanalysis is characterized by the fact that "agency is constantly subverted to desire (Lacan, 1988, p. 205)." "The subject is a theoretical entity that is characterized by the unconscious impulses that it experiences. In this sense, the subjectivity of Lacan might be described as "a subjectivity whose machinery is not entirely accessible because of the subterfuges of the unconscious" (Lacan, 1988, p. 225). On other terms, the subjectivity that Lacan describes is not readily penetrated or fully comprehended because it is impacted by layers of unconscious processes that are generally concealed from conscious





awareness. This makes it difficult to fully understand or penetrate the subjectivity. This approach highlights the intrinsic mystery and opacity of human subjectivity, so challenging standard concepts of self-awareness and agency. It does this by highlighting the significant influence that unconscious factors have on individual identity and experience. In addition, the Lacanian subject is split, and this split is not simply in the sense that it is decentred due to the duality of its conscious and unconscious drives. This splitness manifests itself as a result of the subject's desire (Maleki & Sadjadi, 2018, p. 61). However, Lacan divides the process of subjectivity into three primary orders, each of which is used to categorize the psychological states of the subject. The Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic.

The Real order is comprised of the drives, instincts, and unconscious processes that shape the self, all of which are beyond the capacity of the mind to comprehend. Evans Dylan states that "the real emerges as that which is outside language and inassimilable to symbolization [...] The real is the impossible because it is impossible to imagine, impossible to integrate into the symbolic order, and impossible to attain in any way" (Evans, 2006, p. 163). This viewpoint is consistent with the Lacanian thesis, which proposes that "the real" refers to that aspect of existence that cannot be comprehended and that exists beyond the realm of language or symbolic mediation. The fundamental limitations of human cognition and representation when confronted with the ineffable nature of reality. It also brings to light the unending gap that exists between the symbolic and the real. The most important characteristic of the real, according to Lacan's definition, is that it is not a symbol and cannot be represented, and that it comes before, surpasses, and overrides any attempt to give it a shape that is coherent and understandable. The indefinability of the concept of real is meticulously preserved throughout the process. Bowie (Bowie, 1993, p. 106) suggests that "the real is an uncrossable threshold for the subject, and at the same time, it is not a threshold that can be sidestepped in the analytical encounter". Lacan describes the Real as "the impossible" due to its nature of being unimaginable and unattainable (Bowie, 1993, p. 134). The Real's resistance to symbolization creates a painful characteristic. Lacan posits that the Real contrasts with the Imaginary, suggesting its existence beyond superficial appearances (Bowie, 1993, p. 85). Therefore, the child's needs will remain unfulfilled indefinitely. There is always a remainder. The personality is divided into the conscious self and suppressed wants. Lacan refers to the initial stage of existence, where the kid does not recognise any separation between the self and the external world, as the 'imaginary'. Next comes the 'mirror stage' when the infant begins to recognise itself as a distinct individual and establishes self-identity. It generates a recognisable ego. Upon realising the father's restrictions, the individual transitions into the 'symbolic' realm and becomes conscious of binary oppositions (Estifaei & Yaghoobi, 2020, p. 141).

The Imaginary order is consistently linked with illusion, misrecognition, and obsession. Richard Lane defines the Imaginary as the stage in which "a pre-linguistic, pre-oedipal infant, whose subjectivity is formless, shapeless, and otherwise fragmented identifies with her self-reflection and in the process gains



an idealized image of self-unity” (Lane, 2006, p. 193). Maleki and Sadjadi describe the Imaginary as “the source of creativity, in a sense that one’s perception of the surrounding world differs from that of all others” (Maleki & Sadjadi, 2018, p. 135). In point of fact, not only the imaginary individual views, but it also encourages a variety of ways in which individuals understand and engage with the world around them or their surroundings. In doing so, they stress the dynamic and enriching potential of the imagination in terms of stimulating creativity and invention through a variety of perspectives on reality. This is accomplished by appreciating the multitude of subjective experiences. Sajad Kabgani states that the imaginary mostly pertains to the visual system of human beings (Kabgani, 2019, p. 94). During this phase, known as the narcissistic stage, the "Ideal-I" or "ideal ego" is established. As an infant starts to recognise its body as distinct from the world and its mother, a sense of alienation arises. The infant experiences feelings of loss and scarcity when its demands cannot be met. The central theme in the imaginary is the “mirror stage”. In the later part of *Seminar I*, Lacan makes the statement that "it is not the appearance of this behavior at six months which is the most important thing, but rather its dissolution at eighteen months" (Lacan, 1988, p. 168). The mirror stage is what Lacan refers to as "an identification, in the full sense that analysis gives to the term: specifically the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image" (Lacan, Sheridan, & Bowie, p. 2). During the process of identification, the subject not only takes on characteristics of the external picture, but they also go through a process of redefining their own identity. This occurs because they come to embody and internalize the qualities that are contained within the image. This concept highlights the significance of images in the process of molding subjective experiences and highlights the delicate interplay between external influences and interior psychic processes in the construction of identity within the context of psychoanalytic discourse.

In the process of developing one's identity, the Symbolic order is a stage that has a significant amount of influence. The kid is forced to distance themselves from their mother in order to develop into a speaking individual within the domain of the father because this is the environment in which they are exposed to society, "The Law of the Father," and language. The transition from the mother's influence to the authority of the father is what Lane means when he talks about the symbolic change. Fink observation that "it is the symbolic order that brings about the internalization of mirror and other images (for example, photographic images)," because it is primarily owing to the reaction of the parents to such images that they become charged, in the eyes of the child, with libidinal interest or worth (Fink, 2017, p. 36). According to Lacan, the symbolic order is not simply the origin of the ego; rather, it is the production of the Ideal-I that enables a human child to take on, develop, and have a stable identity. "[T]he subject sets itself up as operating, as human, as I, from the moment the symbolic system appears" (Lacan, 1988, p. 52). The Imaginary emphasises visuals and identifications, while the Symbolic concentrates on language. The Symbolic





encompasses organisations, customs, laws, norms, practices, rituals, rules, traditions, or any element that connects individuals to language.

4. Textual Analysis:

4.1 Real Order in *10 Minutes... 38 Seconds*

The Real is frequently linked to traumatic events, the physical body, and unconscious impulses that oppose being represented by symbols. It is known for its resistance to being represented by symbols and its disruptive, unpleasant quality. In Shafak's novel, the Real order is depicted through the character of Binnaz, who is unable to integrate into the symbolic world because she isolates herself from society following her husband's decision to take their daughter "We'll give this baby to Suzan" (Shafak, 2019, p. 13). Binnaz, the second wife of her husband, gets married at an early age. She consistently experienced feelings of insecurity at her husband's residence. Her only chance of gaining recognized status in the household is to have a child "The only hope and a source for her to be secure and ease, is to have a child" (Shafak, 2019, p. 13). On the birth of Leila, her husband tells her that they will give this baby to his first wife, Suzan. Binnaz does not want to let this happen anyway, but her husband, "the Name of the Father," does not leave any room for her to argue and object "because he said this, leaving no room for compromise" (Shafak, 2019, p. 87). At one stage of her life, Binnaz had a desire to cause harm to her husband "I'm not going to let that woman take my daughter" (Shafak, 2019, p. 27). However, she fails to prevent this from happening "Binnaz shook her head, and kept doing so" (Shafak, 2019, p. 27). Binnaz is progressively distancing herself from the Symbolic and gravitating towards the Real, leading to a diminishing feeling of unified self as she persists in denying her truth.

4.2 Symbolic Order in *10 Minutes... 38 Seconds*

Adulthood is the stage at which a person recognizes his or her shortcomings and losses, at which point they finally become a speaking subject. The symbolic order is a portrayal of adulthood. According to Klages, this stage is characterized by the recognition of reality through the absence of any distorted perception (Klages, 2006, p. 77). Shafak's *10 Minutes... 38 Seconds*, features characters that acknowledge their lack and enter the Symbolic realm. Leila and Osman exemplify successfully entering the Symbolic order by discovering linguistic structure as a necessary for distinguishing their imaginary self from their real existence.

Leila is the main character in Shafak's novel and one of the female characters who explores the symbolism. The story demonstrates a distinct progression from the Real and the Imaginary to the Symbolic. Many occurrences of the Real and the Imaginary take place during her adolescence as she matures. She discovers this after finally being able to mentally detach herself from her family and herself, believing they were just another typical family on the planet. Leila does not yet know that the physical changes that accompany puberty are not the end of childhood; rather, it is the moment when a child's





intellect is finally mature enough to view her existence from an objective perspective. Leila was raped by her uncle and sexually assaulted by her cousin's brother when she was younger. Over time, she tried to tell her family about this matter, but none of them showed any interest. She was also afraid that her family would not believe her and would blame her if they found out the truth until one day she finally gathered the courage to speak up and tell what had been going on all these years. When she confronts her baba about her uncle, she is asked to “learn to respect your elders” (Lear, 1998, p. 96). Finally, the emergence of the Symbolic order is made apparent upon the recognition of her Lack. Her entrance into the Symbolic allows her to gain control over the structure of language as she successfully tells her family, “This house is full of lies and deceptions. Our lives have never been normal” (Lear, 1998, p. 97). However, Leila decides to pay attention to both her conscious and subconscious thoughts. She “left home” gathers her things, packs her bags, and leaves this dark place to start a new life in Istanbul (Lear, 1998, p. 98). She determines what will be beneficial for herself. Regardless of the presence of lack, which in this case is the loss of family, she can break out of her order stage by asserting a subject of her own will.

Osman is the youngest son of a farming family in Anatolia. His adoption of the position of a Greek soldier can be interpreted within the Symbolic Order. “Osman didn’t mind being a Greek soldier though – all you had to do was die quickly and lie still on the floor for the rest of the play” (Shafak, 2019, p. 57). Osman participates in symbolic acts by taking on specific positions, following societal norms, and promoting cultural narratives. His indifferent approach to being a Greek soldier, focusing on the job of dying swiftly and remaining motionless, reveals a separation from the symbolic importance of the roles given. Osman experiences ridicule and bullying due to his painted toenails, which serve to uphold and regulate societal gender norms within the Symbolic Order. Lacanian psychoanalysis allows us to interpret the given text by examining how individuals navigate the Symbolic Order, conforming to or resisting societal norms, and facing the consequences of their symbolic identities. Osman breaks away from his usual routine as he leaves for his mandatory military duty. The military institution, characterized by its disciplined structure and hierarchical organization, can be viewed as a representation of the Symbolic Order. Military service familiarises Osman with a specific set of designated jobs and duties “ In the army, he learned how to clean a rifle, how to load a gun, how to dig a trench, how to throw a grenade from a rooftop – skills he hoped he would never need again” (Shafak, 2019, p. 58). These activities are symbolic gestures in the military hierarchy, where individuals are given specialized responsibilities that help maintain the overall symbolic structure of national security and order. Osman's acquired talents throughout his military service emphasize the symbolic essence of his training. He is learning these activities to never have to use them again, highlighting the possibility of violence and conflict in these symbolic actions. In the military, individuals are socialized into a specific symbolic order, which reinforces national identity and the public expectation of defense. Osman's desire to resurrect his previous shadow plays while serving in the military





creates an intriguing element inside the Symbolic Order. Osman's desire for his shadow plays illustrates the conflict between personal expression and societal norms, showcasing the battle between individual wants and cultural expectations in the military setting.

4.3 Imaginary Order in *10 Minutes... 38 Seconds*

In the Imaginary, people imagine themselves as connected to the world while going through experiences. Eagleton defines imaginary as a "fictive sense of unitary selfhood by finding something in the world with which we can identify" (Eagleton, 2011, p. 143). Therefore, imagination is a unique form of selfhood. As a result of confusion between one's reflection and one's own identity, Pourjafari, and Anjomshoaa contend that it is a well-known phenomenon that occurs during this period that individuals mistakenly recognize a mirror image as their own. When the "self" becomes merged with images and morphs into an extension of the items that surround it, it is effectively transformed into an abstract concept. (Pourjafari & Anjomshoaa, 2013, p. 118).

Humeyra one of Leila's five closest friends creates an image of someone else onto herself rather than embracing her true identity. She fails to recognize "the Name-of-the-Father" as a figure of authority in their society, allowing herself to be controlled by the Imaginary order instead of his rule or the symbolic order. She receives abuse at the hands of her husband, which compels her to leave the house she shares with him. He treated her "like a servant-a – a servant without a name" (Shafak, 2019, p. 137). As a result, she packs her belongings, leaves her house, and flies to Istanbul. She thinks that Istanbul is a city of respect, opportunity, safety, and a new beginning of the relationship. Humeyra sheds awareness on the challenges women face in Turkish society, positioning herself as a victim of societal norms as she is labeled a fallen lady. Humeyra's desired identity as a singer in the Imaginary realm is perceived as her real self, which she mistakenly identifies as her true identity. In Istanbul city, she quickly acquired many skills - such as navigating in high-heeled shoes, straightening her hair with an iron, and applying makeup that appeared captivating in the presence of neon lights. She made her "fake ID" giving herself the name from her infancy Humeyra and procuring a counterfeit identification document (Shafak, 2019, p. 137). Her melodic voice and extensive repertoire of Anatolian songs enabled her to secure employment at a nightclub. During her initial performance, she experienced trembling akin to a leaf, although fortunately, her vocal abilities were intact. She leased the most affordable accommodation available in Karaköy, situated immediately adjacent to the area known for its brothels. Lately, her participation in the prostitute sector her caused a conflict with her religious beliefs, leading to a sense of identity crisis. and becomes a "victim of an honor killing" (Shafak, 2019, p. 173). Her self-identity evolves as she connects with the changing environment in the novel. While the fictional self offers potential for her future, this progress contradicts the authority of "the Name-of-the-Father" or her husband. Humeyra's fractured ego is permanently submerged in the unconscious and unable to transition into the Symbolic realm.





5. Conclusion

This study provides an analysis of the novel "10 Minutes... 38 Seconds" written by Elif Shafak by examining it through the lens of Lacan's subjectivity, which includes the Real, the Symbolic, and the Imaginary. Through the experiences of the characters Binnaz, Leila, Osman, and Humeyra, this study investigates the complexities of subjectivity and the formation of identities. While Leila and Osman traverse the Symbolic realm, dealing with cultural values and personal autonomy, Binnaz deals with the disruptive aspects of reality as she experiences trauma and loss. Binnaz is also coping with the elements of reality that are disruptive. Humeyra is unable to escape the realm of the imagination, where she is attempting to find solace in idealized identities, but ultimately, she is forced to deal with the consequences of being divorced from reality. The novel by Shafak provokes thought about how the mind of an individual interacts with the norms of society. It highlights the ongoing search for self-awareness and independence within the context of a complex network of social, cultural, and psychological factors. Shafak explores the complexity of subjectivity and the ongoing search for identity in the chaotic domain of human existence via the experiences of the people in his novel.

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