

WORLD LITERATURES

LITERARY CONCEPTS AND CRITICAL CONTEXTS

Editor

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dilek TÜFEKÇİ CAN



WORLD LITERATURES

LITERARY CONCEPTS AND CRITICAL CONTEXTS

Editor

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dilek TÜFEKÇİ CAN

Authors

Abdullah ALAABED – Ahmet URUK – Dilek TÜFEKÇİ CAN
Duygu KORONCU ÖZBİLEN – Fahime SERHATTI – Mukadder ERKAN
Sara Hilal SEDEEQ – Timuçin Buğra EDMAN
Vildan KANSIN ÖKRUCA – Yağmur ORAL – Yasemin ÖZBİLEN

E-ISBN: 978-625-382-369-6

DOI: 10.54637/vizetek.9786253823696

Copyright © Vizetek

All printing, publishing, and sales rights of this book are owned by Vizetek Publishing Industry and Trade Limited Company. Without the prior permission of Vizetek Publishing, no part of this book, including its cover design, may be reproduced, printed, or distributed by electronic, mechanical, photocopying, magnetic recording, or any other means.

This book is published in electronic (e-book) format.

The author(s) bear full responsibility for the content of this book.

Publication Designer / Coordinator: Büşra ÇOLAKOĞLU

Cover Design and Typesetting: Ahmet TUNÇDEMİR

Publication: Ankara | August, 2026

Material Type: Elektronik Kitap (Çevrim içi / Web tabanlı)

Electronic Publication Format: PDF

Electronic Publication Type: Adobe eBook Reader



Seyranbağları Mah. İncesu Cad. 10/2 Çankaya/ANKARA

Tel.: (0312) 482 00 11

Web: www.vizetek.com.tr

E-mail: vizetekiayincilik@gmail.com

Publisher Certificate No: 41575

PREFACE

Literature serves as a vital medium for examining the complexities of individual experience, collective memory, and cultural transformation. Literary texts from various languages, regions, and historical periods preserve a wide array of worldviews and enable dialogues that transcend national and temporal boundaries. In the context of increasing global interconnectedness, characterized by the interaction of agentic and non-agentic assemblages within an onto-epistemological framework, literary studies have expanded beyond national canons to adopt comparative, transnational, and interdisciplinary modes of inquiry. These critical approaches highlight the distinctiveness of local literary traditions while also uncovering shared ethical, cultural, and existential concerns that connect diverse textual worlds. Within this dynamic context, *World Literatures: Literary Concepts and Critical Contexts* brings together critical perspectives that underscore the significance of literary studies in interpreting the complexities of an intra/inter/inner connected world.

Literary works recurrently acquire new meanings as they move across linguistic, historical, and ideological boundaries, prompting readers to (re)consider familiar narratives through diverse cultural perspectives. The study of world literature is thus inseparable from literary theories that facilitate the examination of texts in relation to identity, power, gender, race, colonialism, ecology, religion, class, and history. As such, literary works function not only as aesthetic objects but also as cultural documents that reflect, challenge, and reshape the social realities from which they arise. Critical approaches encourage readers to move beyond the question of *what* literature represents towards understanding *how* meaning is produced, whose perspectives are privileged or marginalized, how power is exercised through language and representation, and how texts mediate relationships among human and nonhuman entities.

World Literatures: Literary Concepts and Critical Contexts aims to provide researchers and academics with new perspectives on literary concepts and critical contexts, while also introducing graduate and undergraduate students to a wide range of contemporary criticism. Additionally, the volume encourages readers from related disciplines to approach literature as an interdisciplinary field that contributes significantly to broader discussions of

culture, society, history, and the environment. By assembling studies that span diverse periods, cultures, and theoretical traditions, this collection seeks to promote dialogue among scholars in various areas of literary research and to support comparative approaches that move beyond traditional disciplinary and geographical limitations.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dilek TÜFEKÇİ CAN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
	Dilek TÜFEKÇİ CAN
 CHAPTER 1	
The Depths of the Mirror: A Comparative Reading of Şehbenderzâde Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi's <i>A'mâk-I Hayâl</i> (1910) and George Macdonald's <i>Lilith</i> (1895) ...	5
	Mukadder ERKAN
 CHAPTER 2	
The Echoes of Strange Fruit: Racial Terror, Assaultive Speech, and the Grammar of Whiteness in William Faulkner's "Dry September" and Eudora Welty's "Where Is the Voice Coming From?"	23
	Timuçin Buğra EDMAN
	Yağmur ORAL
 CHAPTER 3	
From Lagos to London: Material and Discursive Spatial Transformations in Buchi Emecheta's <i>Second Class Citizen</i>	36
	Fahime SERHATTI
 CHAPTER 4	
Buchi Emecheta in the Canon of African Women Writers: Resonances of Permacrises in <i>In The Ditch</i>	56
	Dilek TÜFEKÇİ CAN
 CHAPTER 5	
Ecologies of Black Womanhood: a Comparative Ecofeminist Reading of Toni Morrison's <i>Tar Baby</i> and Alice Walker's <i>The Color Purple</i>	78
	Duygu KORONCU ÖZBİLEN
	Yasemin Güniz SERTEL
 CHAPTER 6	
Othering the Divine in the Gothic: Anti-Catholicism in Matthew Lewis's <i>The Monk</i> and Ann Radcliffe's <i>The Italian</i>	109
	Ahmet URUK

CHAPTER 7

Penelope Ahead of Her Time:
Reclaiming Female Agency in Margaret Atwood’s *The Penelopiad* 127
Sara Hilal SEDEEQ

CHAPTER 8

Socio-Classification in *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys:
Through the Lens of Postcolonialism and New Historicism 138
Abdullah ALAABED

CHAPTER 9

Carol Ann Duffy’s *Everyman* as a Metamodern Adaptation..... 153
Vildan KANSIN ÖKRUCA

Introduction

The chapters in *World Literatures: Literary Concepts and Critical Contexts* demonstrate the diversity and depth of contemporary literary criticism by integrating a broad spectrum of literary concepts and critical contexts. Instead of adhering to a single theoretical paradigm, the volume adopts a methodologically pluralistic approach. The first chapter, written by Prof. Dr. Mukadder Erkan, presents a comparative analysis of Şehbenderzâde Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi's *A'mâk-ı Hayâl* (1910) and George MacDonald's *Lilith* (1895), situating these works within a unified analytical framework. Drawing upon an interpretative model, the study evaluates both novels through a range of generic and structural categories, such as allegorical dream narrative, realism, thesis novel, epistolary form, fairy tale, the fantastic, *mise en abyme*, mirror symbolism, and the dissolution of binary oppositions. By applying this critical framework to *Lilith*, the chapter assesses the extent to which an analytical model originating in one literary tradition can elucidate a text from another. In doing so, it displays the remarkable transferability of literary concepts across cultural and linguistic contexts and demonstrates the significance of comparative criticism.

The second chapter, authored by Prof. Dr. Timuçin Buğra Edman and Yağmur Oral, examines William Faulkner's *Dry September* and Eudora Welty's *Where Is the Voice Coming From?* through the combined frameworks of critical race theory and lynching studies. Utilizing concepts such as whiteness as property, counterstory, critique of color-blind neutrality, and racist language as assaultive speech, the chapter investigates how racial violence is perpetuated through both discourse and social practice. By situating these narratives within the historical context of lynching as a mechanism of racial terror and social control, the authors contend that these literary works anticipate insights formalized by critical race theory. Rather than simply illustrating pre-existing theoretical principles, Faulkner's and Welty's fiction independently reveals the structures of racial oppression. Through the integration of literary analysis and critical theory, the chapter underscores literature's enduring capacity to expose the ideological foundations of systemic racism and violence.

The third chapter, authored by Assist. Prof. Dr. Fahime Serhatti explores the interconnected material and discursive dimensions of space in Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen*. It examines how the protagonist Adah's

migration from Lagos to London informs her postcolonial and diasporic identity. Combining Homi Bhabha's postcolonial theory with Doreen Massey's feminist geography, while drawing selectively on Edward Soja's concept of Thirdspace, the study investigates the dynamic relationship between physical environments and discursive formations. By analyzing Adah's educational experiences, domestic life, migration, and daily navigation of urban space, the chapter demonstrates how agency emerges through the interaction of gender, race, class, and spatial experience. Engaging with broader perspectives on intersectionality and spatial theory, it frames Adah's journey as a narrative of resilient becoming, showing how literary representations of space elucidate the complex processes of identity formation, resistance, and belonging in postcolonial world literatures.

The fourth chapter, written by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dilek Tüfekçi Can, first situates Buchi Emecheta within the canon of African women's literature and subsequently examines the dynamics of poverty, sexism, and classism and/or racism across African and British cultural contexts, with a focus on permacrisis *In the Ditch*. Centering on the experiences of the protagonist, Adah Obi, the chapter investigates the intersecting economic, social, cultural, and psychological challenges that shape the life of a Nigerian immigrant woman in Britain. By examining Adah's pursuit of independence within the limitations imposed by the British welfare system, the analysis foregrounds Emecheta's nuanced portrayal of female resilience and agency. The chapter also demonstrates how the novel conceptualizes "permacrisis" as an ongoing condition produced by the interrelated dynamics of gender, race, class, and migration. Ultimately, the chapter affirms Emecheta's significant contribution to African women's literature and to broader discourses on identity, inequality, and social justice in post-colonial literature.

Chapter five, authored by Dr. Duygu Koroncu Özbilen and Assist. Prof. Dr. Yasemin Güniz Sertel, offers a comparative ecofeminist analysis of Toni Morrison's *Tar Baby* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. The chapter investigates the complex interconnections among gender, race, and the nonhuman world, drawing on ecofeminist theory to examine how patriarchal domination, racial marginalization, and ecological exploitation are perpetuated through interconnected systems of oppression. Distinct from conventional ecofeminist approaches, this study foregrounds the intersectional experiences of Black women and underscores the enduring impacts of slavery, colonialism, and systemic racism on both human and

more-than-human relationships. Through an exploration of the ecological dimensions in Morrison's and Walker's works, the chapter demonstrates that the natural environment serves as a locus for resistance, spiritual renewal, and identity formation.

Chapter six, written by research assistant Dr. Ahmet Uruk, examines representations of anti-Catholicism in Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* and Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*, focusing on how Gothic fiction constructs the "religious other" through distinct narrative strategies. The analysis contrasts Radcliffe's emphasis on rationality and implied terror with Lewis's use of supernatural horror and psychological excess, revealing how each novel reflects Protestant anxieties about Catholicism during a period of significant social and cultural change. *The Italian* portrays Catholicism as an external source of oppression linked to the Inquisition, whereas *The Monk* situates corruption within the monastery, highlighting the destructive effects of repression, fanaticism, and moral decay. This comparative approach demonstrates that both novels utilize Gothic conventions to critique religious authority and address broader cultural fears related to identity, power, and ideological conflict.

The seventh chapter, written by lecturer Sara Hilal Sedeeq Sedeeq, examines Margaret Atwood's *The Penelopiad* as a feminist reinterpretation of one of classical literature's most enduring female figures. By establishing Penelope from Homer's *Odyssey* as the narrator of her own story, the chapter explores how Atwood challenges patriarchal interpretations of myth by restoring voice, subjectivity, and agency to a character historically confined to silence and domesticity. Through Penelope's self-narration, the chapter highlights themes of resilience, autonomy, and resistance, demonstrating her negotiation of societal expectations within a male-dominated context and her assumption of responsibilities beyond traditional gender roles. Presenting Penelope as a figure who surpasses the constraints of her classical origins, the chapter emphasizes Atwood's role in feminist revisionist mythology and illustrates how contemporary literature reclaims canonical narratives to center women's experiences and redefine female agency.

The eighth chapter, authored by Abdullah Alaabed, a PhD candidate, analyzes Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* through the frameworks of postcolonialism and new historicism, examining the influence of colonial power structures on social classification and identity formation. Emphasizing the intersections of race, class, and gender, the study interrogates the

ideological mechanisms by which dominant groups establish and perpetuate systems of exclusion and inequality. By examining the historical dynamics between colonizers and the colonized, the chapter demonstrates how processes of othering and the denial of autonomy are embedded in both the novel's textual and historical contexts. Additionally, it elucidates the intersection of colonial discourse with gendered experiences, highlighting the protagonist's resistance to social categorization and inherited power structures. Through the interdisciplinary approach, the chapter affirms the significance of postcolonial and new historicist criticism in revealing the persistent historical, cultural, and ideological legacies of colonialism.

The final chapter, authored by research assistant Vildan Kansın Ökruca, analyzes Carol Ann Duffy's *Everyman* as a metamodern adaptation of the medieval morality play. The chapter explores how Duffy (re)imagines enduring questions of mortality for contemporary audiences. Utilizing Linda Hutcheon's adaptation theory and the metamodern framework established by Vermeulen and van den Akker, the study examines Duffy's transformation of the medieval focus on salvation and divine judgment into a meditation on secular existence, ethical responsibility, consumerism, and ecological crisis. By shifting between irony and sincerity, as well as despair and hope, the adaptation addresses both individual moral accountability and collective human responsibility toward the more-than-human world. The chapter contends that *Everyman* affirms the ongoing relevance of pre-modern texts through contemporary reinterpretation and demonstrates the value of metamodernism as a critical framework for analyzing literary adaptations across historical periods.

In sum, in *World Literatures: Literary Concepts and Critical Contexts*, the researchers and scholars utilize a variety of critical perspectives, such as comparative literature, postcolonial theory, critical race theory, ecofeminism, feminist criticism, new historicism, spatial theory, gothic studies, adaptation studies, and metamodernism, to analyze literary texts from various historical periods and cultural backgrounds. The studies address works ranging from medieval morality plays and eighteenth-century gothic fiction to nineteenth-century novels and contemporary literary (re)writings.

CHAPTER 1

THE DEPTHS OF THE MIRROR: A COMPARATIVE READING OF ŞEHBENDERZÂDE FİLİBELİ AHMED HİLMİ'S *A'MÂK-I HAYÂL* (1910) AND GEORGE MACDONALD'S *LILITH* (1895)

Mukadder ERKAN¹

Introduction

The closing decades of the nineteenth century and the opening of the twentieth witnessed, in both the British and the late-Ottoman intellectual worlds, a sustained crisis over the authority of scientific materialism. In Istanbul, the positivist and materialist currents associated with Ludwig Büchner's *Kraft und Stoff* –translated and propagated by a generation of Westernising intellectuals such as Abdullah Cevdet and Baha Tevfik–provoked a vigorous spiritualist reaction, of which Şehbenderzâde Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi (1865–1914) became one of the most articulate voices (Aydın, 2007; Noyan, 2019). His *A'mâk-ı Hayâl* (1910) is the crystallisation of that resistance: a dream-vision in which a young intellectual, Râcî, paralysed by the aridity of his modern scientific education, is led by the dervish Âyîneli Baba through a series of visionary journeys toward the doctrine of vahdet-i vücûd, the unity of being. With this work, as the present writer has elsewhere argued, “Ahmed Hilmi sets his name, in Cemil Meriç's phrase, to ‘the first philosophical novel’ in Turkish literature” (Erkan, 2016: 11; all translations from the Turkish are mine).

A strikingly homologous project had already been completed in Victorian Scotland. George MacDonald (1824–1905), himself a dissenter from the Calvinist orthodoxy of his upbringing and an opponent of the mechanistic temper of his age, produced in *Lilith: A Romance* (1895) the darkest and most metaphysically ambitious of his fantasies, in which the bookish sceptic Mr. Vane is conducted by the shape-shifting librarian Mr. Raven –who is also the grave-digging sexton and the primordial Adam– through a multidimensional realm toward an ego-death framed in the language of Christian-universalist mysticism (Himes, 2014). In choosing the figure of Lilith –Adam's rebellious

¹ Prof. Dr., Atatürk University, Faculty of Letters, Department of English Language and Literature, Erzurum, ORCID: 0000-0002-9110-4272.