

**T.C. İSTANBUL KÜLTÜR UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**REPRESSED FEMALE BODIES IN CONTEMPORARY FEMINIST
DYSTOPIAS:
LENI ZUMAS' *RED CLOCKS* AND SOPHIE MACKINTOSH'S *BLUE TICKET***

**Master of Arts Thesis by
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Department: English Language and Literature

Programme: English Language and Literature

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Işıl BAŞ DE OLIVEIRA

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APRIL 2024

PLAGIARISM

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ABSTRACT

REPPRESSED FEMALE BODIES IN FEMINIST DYSTOPIAS: LENI ZUMAS' *RED CLOCKS* AND SOPHIE MACKINTOSH'S *BLUE TICKET*

Merve GÜLER ÖZBOLAT

This thesis investigates repressed female bodies and mechanisms that operate on them in contemporary feminist dystopian fiction analysing *Red Clocks* (2018) by Leni Zumas and *Blue Ticket* (2020) by Sophie Mackintosh. Through a comparative analysis of these two novels the common strategies, normalisation, the use of laws on the reproductive rights, and panoptic discipline as exercised by medical institutions and practices, employed by the patriarchal hegemonic structures to oppress female bodies, are discussed. To demonstrate the idea behind the oppression on female bodies this thesis revisits Western traditional mind and body dualism and the operation of power in repression. Referring to feminist theories of Elizabeth Grosz, Helene Cixous, Luce Irigaray the relationship between body and patriarchal power is discussed. Also, the works of Michel Foucault and Foucauldian feminists Jana Sawicki and Sandra Barkty are employed to analyse biopower, medical gaze and panoptic discipline on female bodies. In the light of these theories this study concludes that in both 21st century feminist dystopian novels *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* female bodies are subjugated using similar strategies and, in both novels, dystopic worlds of women are not far from the real one that they experience.

Keywords: Feminist dystopia, body, biopower, medical gaze, Leni Zumas, *Red Clocks*, Sophie Mackintosh, *Blue Ticket*

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ÖZET

ÇAĞDAŞ FEMINIST DİSTOPYALARDA BASTIRILMIŞ KADIN BEDENLERİ: LENİ ZUMAS'IN *KIRMIZI SAATLER*'İ VE SOPHIE MACKINTOSH'UN *MAVİ BİLET*'İ

Merve GÜLER ÖZBOLAT

Bu çalışma çağdaş feminist distopyalarda ezilen kadın bedenlerini ve bu bedenler üzerinde kullanılan mekanizmaları Leni Zumas'ın *Red Clocks* (*Kırmızı Saatler*) ve Sophie Mackintosh'un *Blue Ticket* (*Mavi Bilet*) romanlarını analiz ederek inceler. Bu iki romanın karşılaştırmalı tahlili ile kadın bedenlerini baskılamada hegemonik ataerkil yapılar tarafından kullanılan normalleştirme, üreme haklarıyla ilgili yasalar ve tıbbi kurumlar ve pratikler ile uygulanan panoptik disiplin irdelenir. Kadın bedenleri üzerindeki baskının ardındaki fikri ortaya koymak için bu tez Batı'nın geleneksel zihin ve beden dualitesi ile iktidarın bu baskıdaki etkisini ele alır. Elizabeth Grosz, Helene Cixous ve Luce Irigaray'ın teorilerinden yararlanarak beden ve ataerkil iktidar arasındaki ilişki irdelenir. Ayrıca kadın bedenleri üzerindeki biyo-iktidar, tıbbi bakış ve panoptik disiplini analiz etmek için Michel Foucault'nun ve Foucault'cu feministler Jana Sawicki ve Sandra Barkty'nin eserlerinden yararlanılmıştır. Bu teorilerin ışığıyla bu çalışma her iki 21. yüzyıl feminist distopik romanda, *Kırmızı Saatler* ve *Mavi Bilet*, benzer stratejiler kullanılarak kadın bedeninin bastırıldığı sonucuna varmıştır ve yine iki romanda da kadınların deneyimlediği dünyanın distopik olandan çok da uzak olmadığı görülmüştür.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Feminist distopya, beden, biyo-iktidar, tıbbi bakış, Leni Zumas, *Kırmızı Saatler*, Sophie Mackintosh, *Mavi Bilet*

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to study repressed female bodies and mechanisms that operate on them in contemporary feminist dystopian fiction. To that end I will analyse two novels *Red Clocks* (2018) by Leni Zumas and *Blue Ticket* (2020) by Sophie Mackintosh thereby exploring the ways in which 21st century feminist dystopias are reflections of various practices on women and specifically on women's bodies since they are traditionally defined as such. In the comparative analysis of *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*, these two feminist dystopian novels will be discussed in relation to their common strategies in displaying the hold of hegemonic structures on women in terms of normalisation, the use of laws on reproductive rights, and panoptic discipline as exercised by medical institutions and practices.

Dystopia, though appearing beyond a real time and space, can be considered as a literary genre which reflects the body politics of its own historical context and time. In other words, it displays current political practices by using fictional temporal and spatial planes to warn the reader about them. Feminist dystopian literature specifically presents the realities concerning women and body politics that have a huge effect on women's mobility and agency and have been in place for years which shows how women have already been living in a dystopic reality. In fact, with regard to women dystopia can be a redundant term because in their daily lives women have already been experiencing the patriarchal oppressive regimes and violation of their human rights. In other words, what happens in dystopias is familiar to women, as they depict the realities of contemporary womanhood.

My intention in this thesis is to show that contemporary feminist dystopias employ similarities to the 20th century ones in terms of the depiction of womanhood and body politics. Under extraordinary conditions like a plague, war, famine, or environmental disaster totalitarian patriarchal powers dominate politically and reign over women in the 20th century feminist dystopias, such as Katherine Burdekin's *Swastika Night*, and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*. Likewise, in the 21st century dystopias, as in the novels *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* that this thesis will analyse, the stories are mostly

similar. The repression on female bodies does not happen in distant future or space, the events take place on the earth and there is no threat of disasters or epidemics in the context of the novels. *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* portray the probable outcomes of the present-day politics and power regulations on women's bodies. There is not a big difference in the depiction of womanhood and body politics in various decades of feminist dystopian literature, which unfortunately manifests the state of womanhood has not changed in years. To support this idea this thesis will analyse two 21st century dystopias *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* that reveal the context in which women are subjugated by patriarchal structures of power. To understand the idea behind the oppression on the female bodies through body politics in feminist dystopias this thesis interrogates why feminist dystopias are realistic rather than fantastical, how mind/body dualism affects women's bodies, why women are always associated with the body, which is thought to be inferior to mind, in what ways women's bodies are repressed in contemporary feminist dystopias. It also questions how power operates in repression, and the similarities between *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* in terms of their depiction of repression on female bodies. To find answers to these questions this study refers to feminist theories of Elizabeth Grosz, Helene Cixous, Luce Irigaray for their ideas on the relationship between body and patriarchal power. To analyse biopower, panoptic discipline and medical gaze on female bodies it relies on the works of Michel Foucault and Foucauldian feminists Jana Sawicki and Sandra Barkty.

To situate *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* in the feminist dystopian genre the introduction of this study will discuss the features of feminist dystopias. To understand what dystopia is one must definitely discuss utopia first. For this reason, the introduction of this study focuses on both utopia and dystopia as literary genres. Utopias depict an ideal state and society which excels the one that the writer lives in. Dystopias, on the other hand, work as warnings to the reader because they portray a society which, in many aspects, worse than the one that the writer inhabits. As stated before, feminist dystopian fiction is different from traditional dystopias in that they criticise patriarchal societies and institutions that oppress women in ways and practices unlimited by time and space. Feminist dystopian fiction of both 20th and 21st centuries are the projections of body politics and womanhood of their own time. The only difference can perhaps, be observed

in their contexts. In both 20th and 21st century dystopian fiction totalitarian regimes are in power, however in the 21st century dystopias the events are much closer to women's reality in terms of the setting of the novels. The stories do not take place in a distant time or place they occur on the earth and the events happening are not the result of a catastrophe. Unfortunately, these works of fiction showcase a constant repression on female bodies as it also happens in real life. In *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*, the stories of women in a dystopian society are universal. The novels depict the ways how female bodies are repressed by patriarchal hegemonic structures.

Since I analyse *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* as dystopian novels showing the repressed female bodies in dystopias, in the first chapter of this study, I argue how historical oppositions between mind and body have always been used and abused to vilify women's biology and render it as proof for their weakness and need for control. As the novels I use are from Western literature, first I focus on the body in Western philosophy to understand why women are always associated with the body and why their bodies are subjugated by patriarchy. In the first part of chapter 1, the mind and body duality in Western thought are discussed beginning from Plato to Descartes. Then I refer to the thinkers Nietzsche, Merleau-Ponty, and Foucault who deconstruct mind and body dualism. I analyse their views on the body that challenge the Cartesian dualism. In the second part of the first chapter, I explore feminism and the body politics discussing feminist views on the body in various waves of feminism such as egalitarian-liberal feminism, social constructionist feminism, French feminism, and difference feminism. Finally, in the last part of this chapter I analyse Foucault's concept of biopower and medical gaze and its relation to feminism referring to Sawicki, Bordo, and Barkty.

In the second chapter of this study, I discuss how female bodies are repressed in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* through normalisation, the laws on reproductive rights, and panoptic discipline as exercised by the medical institutions and practices. In this chapter, the utopian impulse in the acts of women characters is also analysed. *Red Clocks* is a feminist dystopian novel written by Leni Zumas and first published in 2018. The novel is set in modern-day America in a fictional town named Newville, Oregon. The narrator

conveys daily experiences and thoughts of five different women, each of whom has different challenges related to their femininity. Each woman is named according to her role and occupation in the chapters that tell their perspectives. Ro is the Biographer, Susan is the Wife, Gin is the Mender, Mattie is the Daughter, and Eivør Mínervudóttir is the Polar Explorer—a fictional one from the 19th century. Ro is a high school teacher, who tries to become a single mother, but in vitro fertilization (IVF) is illegal and adoption for single people is about to be banned. Susan is Ro's best friend, and she is the wife who is trapped in an unhappy marriage with two kids. She attempts to solve the problems in her marriage, but it is difficult with a man who never listens to her. Ro's student Mattie is a promising student, she has an unintended pregnancy, though. In a society where abortion is illegal, she attempts to have an operation to terminate her pregnancy. Gin is the mender who tries to help women with her natural cures for gynaecological problems; however, she becomes an outcast and the common enemy in this society. Finally, the fifth woman is the fictional polar explorer Eivør Mínervudóttir from the 19th century whose life story is told by Ro in her book, which she is currently writing. With the stories of these five women the novel shows how female body is subjugated and politicised and whether struggle is possible or not.

The second 21st century feminist dystopian novel that will be analysed in the second chapter is *Blue Ticket*, written by Sophie Mackintosh and first published in 2020. Similar to *Red Clocks*, in *Blue Ticket* women are trapped in a dystopian world where choice is not possible for them. The novel is set in an unnamed country (which makes it universal) in which girls are given either a white ticket—which means that they must be mothers—or a blue ticket—which refers to a childless life ahead—as a result of a lottery on the day of their first period. Women have no right to choose whether to procreate or not, the lottery decides instead of them. There is no way to change the ticket that women get from the lottery. Calla, the protagonist of the novel, is a blue ticket woman who desperately wants to have a baby tells the story of her struggle in this unnamed state. There is no background information on how that world has become that totalitarian. Starting with the lottery, Calla begins her journey to the city after she gets her blue ticket, then she goes into exile upon getting pregnant. Through her journey she meets other blue ticket women, Marisol,

Therese, and Lila who get pregnant against the rule and one white ticket woman Valerie who deliberately has a miscarriage not to be a mother as the state dictates. Through the novel the reader witnesses the various ways of subjugation of the female body by the patriarchal authorities and the ways how women attempt to challenge them.

In the first part of chapter 2 I focus on the strategy of normalisation in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* as a mechanism of repression. Normalisation is one of the means of biopower used to control female bodies. It is different from laws because women often do not recognise that they are subjugated by the patriarchal structures. Through discourses normalisation operates to regulate and achieves self-regulation of female bodies. By analysing these novels, I aim to show how discourses on expectations from women affect and constrain the female bodily experience. Women's bodies are trapped in this "normalised" world. In the second part of chapter 2 I discuss the subjugation of female bodies through the use of laws on reproductive rights. In both novels women do not have the right to choose either to get an abortion or to bear a child. In *Red Clocks* abortion is illegal so if a woman gets pregnant, she has to give birth while in *Blue Ticket* a woman must have an abortion if she has a blue ticket. In both cases women's bodies are repressed. They cannot decide on the fate of their bodies. The third part of chapter 2 is about panoptic discipline and medical power on female bodies. Patriarchal hegemonic structures employ panoptic discipline and scrutinize women like objects of examination. In *Blue Ticket* emissaries watch women all the time so that women must control their bodies under this constant gaze. Likewise in *Red Clocks* there is a Pink Wall between America and Canada which is monitored by the officers to prevent women from escaping to Canada to have an abortion or a fertility treatment. Through this panoptic discipline solidarity among women becomes almost impossible and resistance is minimized. Also, in both novels male doctors work as representatives of power as medical authorities. They collaborate with the state monitoring and correcting female bodies treating them as medical objects rather than free subjects. The final part of chapter 2 examines the utopian impulse in these two feminist dystopian novels. Although women are subjugated by the patriarchal system, there is still hope in their attempted resistance and solidarity, and the in open endings of the texts.

To conclude, it is the aim of this thesis with a close analysis of Leni Zumas' *Red Clocks* and Sophie Mackintosh's *Blue Ticket* to show the dystopic realities of women in all ages and settings. Comparing both novels this study aims to analyse the repressed female bodies and the mechanisms deployed in this repression in contemporary feminist dystopias. To this end I will first focus on utopia/dystopia as literary genres. Then I will discuss the mind and body dualism in Western thought, its deconstruction, and feminists' views on the body. To understand why women are always linked with the body and hence subjected to control and regulation I will analyse biopower and how it is applied to feminist studies. Finally, I will explore how patriarchal control mechanisms work on female bodies and the ways women attempt to resist them in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*.

1. Literary Utopias and Dystopias

Utopias are thought to be present since human-beings started to create myths and epics. The Biblical Paradise that Adam and Eve are believed to be expelled from because they have sinned or the medieval myth of Land of Cockayne of utmost luxury where you can find all the peace, pleasures, and comfort that one is not able to find in real life are the early examples. As Sargent expresses: "The first eutopias that we know of we usually call myths, and they look to the past of the human race or beyond death.... All these eutopias have certain features in common -simplicity, unity, security, immortality or an easy death, unity with God or the gods, abundance without labor, and no enmity between homo sapiens and the other animals" ("Three Faces" 11). People have always dreamed of a having a better place to live that is why Sargent calls utopia a kind of "social dreaming" ("Three Faces" 12). These dreams are the source of emergence of the utopia as a literary genre. Plato's *Republic*, Thomas More's *Utopia*, Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* are some of the early examples.

To define dystopia as a genre it is essential to start with an exploration of utopian genre. The word "utopia" is thought to be first used by Thomas More in his work *Utopia*. As Sargent explains: "The word Utopia or outopia simply means no or not place. Topos means place; 'u' or 'ou' means 'no' or 'not'. Thomas More, inventor of the word, punned

on eutopia or good place, and we have since added dystopia or bad place” (“Three Faces” 5). Utopias portray an ideal society which is in many aspects better than the society that the writer lives in. In the classical conception of utopia, the writer imagines an ideal society which is governed by reason and formed of strong hierarchies. It can be a fair but not necessarily an egalitarian system of government (Kumar, “Aspects of Western” 4). Even in utopias some people can be slaves, or they are outcasts for some political causes. For this very reason, while this dream society can be a utopia for some readers or critics it can be also regarded as an identical form of an unjust environment that people experience daily. So, in a way it can be said that utopia may include the anti-utopian aspects in it as well. As Sargent quotes Max Beerbohm’s sarcastic remark on utopia:

So this is utopia,
Is it? Well –
I beg your pardon;
I thought it was Hell. (qtd. in Sargent, “Three Faces” 1)

As one of the most significant and influential works of the utopian literature Thomas More’s *Utopia* needs to be analysed to understand the features of utopia and anti-utopia. *Utopia* Book I, which is mostly the critique of More’s England, consists of conversations between Thomas More, his friend Peter Giles, and the traveler Raphael Hythloday who lived on the island of Utopia for five years. Book II, which is the description of the island Utopia as a better society than More’s, portrays the geographical features of the island together with social, political, and religious structure of it. Raphael Hythloday narrates his journey to Utopia and its fifty-four cities. Utopia is a society where there is no private property as it means social inequality among citizens. Everybody speaks the same language, nobody becomes an outcast for their religious beliefs, and there is no yearning for superiority over others on this island.

It is possible to see an opposite social structure of the 16th century England in Thomas More’s *Utopia*. In the 16th century, England was a hierarchal society and class distinctions led to the disintegration of the society. The conditions for the impoverished people became worse whereas with the rising trade the wealthy accumulated more profit. Also, as a result of Renaissance, “[a] new aristocracy was born; not, at first, based on wealth and power,

but on intelligence and knowledge” (Leslie 55), adding another layer to class distinction, dividing people as cultured and uneducated. In line with these changes Thomas More “... attempted to imagine a way to secure justice and a good life for those peasants, unattached serfs, and craft workers who were being displaced from land recently enclosed by profit-oriented landlords” (Moynan, *Demand* 2). One of the defining characteristics of utopia as a literary genre is its connection to reality. Writers of utopia observe the society in which they live and imagine a new one without flaws as opposite to theirs (Vieira 8). Thus, compared to the 16th century England, More depicts a better place to live in terms of justice, equality, and human rights.

Although Thomas More’s *Utopia*, compared to the 16th century England, might be a better place to live in, as contemporary readers what we understand in More’s *Utopia* is another form of hierarchical, non-egalitarian society which cannot be a utopia for the contemporary reader, especially for women. Even though Thomas More depicts a new form of state in which women have the opportunity to work like men and to have a say in politics, these roles are limited. Women can only do some work that is considered fit for their physical strength. “Women, for the most part, deal in wool and flax, which suit best with their weakness, leaving the ruder trades to the men” (51). Their roles are still mostly domestic for example, they are responsible for cooking the meat and ordering the tables at dinner time (58). As More writes in *Utopia* “... the oldest man of every family, as has been already said, is its governor; wives serve their husbands” (57), so women are still thought to be inferior to men. For these reasons, the contemporary women reader cannot read *Utopia* as a completely dream society.

As it is seen in *Utopia*, utopian texts may include anti-utopian features within their contexts. Sargent defines anti-utopia as a “non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as a criticism of utopianism or of some particular eutopia” (“Three Faces” 10). As the definition and the name suggest anti-utopia is a criticism of the utopian thought or fiction. It works to prove the drawbacks of what is regarded as a good society and a good place. In his article on utopian and anti-utopian logic John Huntington expresses the

distinction between utopia and anti-utopia as such: “While the utopia attempts a vision of a coherent preferable world and draws our attention to the way it improves on the world we have, the anti-utopia questions utopian solutions even as it proposes them” (125). Orwell’s *1984*, Zamiatin’s *We*, Huxley’s *Brave New World* can be read as anti-utopias as they show the possible outcomes of totalitarian regimes and the use of technology as opposed to hierarchies and human progress in classical utopias. For example, Orwell’s classic *1984* is a criticism of socialism. Though socialism in theory is based on equality, abolition of private property, human rights, and no class distinctions the novel shows that it may easily turn into a totalitarian regime in the hands of politicians who abuse their power. Likewise, Zamiatin’s *We* and Huxley’s *Brave New World* are anti-utopias as they criticise much praised human reason and progress in technology. For instance, in Zamiatin’s *We* human beings no longer have names they just have numbers which completely erases individuality. They are all uniformed as subjects of the United State and they are always under the state’s surveillance as in *1984* “thanks to technology”. Moreover, with the Green Wall, which separates people from nature and can be read as a reference to the Enlightenment idea of reason, the novel showcases the outcomes of the dream of having a society only based on technology and reason by leaving the nature and feelings behind. The utopia turns into an anti-utopia in a state in which there is no room for feelings, nature, and humanity. However, some critics accept Orwell’s *1984* as a dystopia while regarding Zamiatin’s *We* as an anti-utopia. For this reason, the line between dystopia and anti-utopia may not be clear all the time.

Sargent’s definition of dystopia may help readers differentiate between the two genres, dystopia and anti-utopia. According to him dystopia or negative utopia is “a non-existent society described in considerable detail and normally located in time and space that the author intended a contemporaneous reader to view as considerably worse than the society in which that reader lived” (“Three Faces” 27). Comparing the two definitions of the genres the main difference is seen in the criticism. Dystopia is actually a critique of the society that the writer lives in at present, and it is about the possible outcomes of the current practices people may face in the future. However, anti-utopia is the critique of utopian view and idea, such as criticism of socialism as an ideal form of government in

1984. Despite this difference in the definition, the features of dystopia can be seen in anti-utopia or vice versa. For this reason, Baccolini and Moylan define dystopia as “genre blurring” (*Dark Horizons* 7).

1.1. Features of Dystopias and Critical Dystopias

The term dystopia started to be used commonly in the 20th century, but before that time it was present in English. In 1868, John Stuart Mill used the word dystopia or cacotopia meaning bad place in a parliamentary speech, which is thought to be the first use of the word (Claeys 107). Early dystopias of the West can be dated back to the 18th century. As Claeys states: “The flowering of the dystopian genre was preceded by a variety of satirical tropes. Francis Bacon’s scientific ambitions were brought down several notches in Swift’s famous parody in book three of *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726)” (107). A life only guided by the principles of reason as an Enlightenment ideal was further satirized in Burke’s *Vindication of Natural Society* published in 1756 and Hannah More’s 1797 book *The History of Mr Fantom* (Claeys 110).

In the 19th century Mary Shelly’s *The Last Man* (1826) and H.G. Wells’ *The Time Machine* (1895) are among the most notable examples of anti-utopian/dystopian fiction. They are the products of an era which witnessed dramatic political and social changes. In 19th century England, because of industrialisation, overpopulation, and insufficient sanitation in cities, epidemics were common. Likewise, *The Last Man* takes place in Europe in the 21st century (2073-2100) under the threat of a pandemic which quickly spreads across the world. Lionel Verney is the last man to survive on earth who narrates the story. Shelley’s book, as Lokke states, is an “... apocalyptic response to the horrors of French Revolution, the subsequent carnage of Napoleonic wars, and the metaphysical and cultural uncertainties attendant upon Romantic-era attacks on religious and political authority” (116). It also criticises the Enlightenment concept of progress through collective endeavour (Lokke 128). With her dystopic book, which is a product of the era, Shelly demonstrates the disillusionment upon the failure of these ideals. An apocalyptic world will be the end for human beings as a consequence of the life they lead.

Following Mary Shelley's *The Last Man*, stories of catastrophe began to emerge more frequently as responses to political tension in Europe and as the consequence of anxieties prompted by the advancement of industrialisation and modernisation (Benczik 142). George Chesney's *The Battle of Dorking* (1871) and Richard Jefferies's novel dated 1885 *After London; or, Wild England* are some of the examples (Benczik 142). In addition to this, Darwin's ground-breaking work *Origin of Species* influenced the writers of the time. H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (1895) is one of the significant examples of them. *The Time Machine* is set in the distant future 802,701 AD. The protagonist Time Traveler travels to year 802,701 and observes two classes of creatures Eloi and Morlocks. The Eloi are beautiful, fragile, and peaceful creatures whereas the Morlocks are ape-like creatures living underground. Though the Eloi is an advanced society full of resources they are weaker than the Morlocks. As opposed to their thriving environment the Eloi could not become stronger species instead, they are hunted by the Morlocks who have limited resources. With his work, Wells exemplifies evolution may not be always progressive it may be regressive, so he paints a possible bleak future for humanity.

Similar to the 19th Century dystopias, 20th century dystopias are not independent from their historical context. As in the hope for a better future with the French Revolution there was hope for socialism with the Russian Revolution. However, expectations turned into disillusionments when totalitarian regimes came to power under the name of socialism. Because of these sudden social and political upheavals as well as loss of trust and hope in humanity as a result of the two world wars, utopias and utopian thought continued to be criticised in the 20th century leading the way to the works of Zamiatin, Burdekin, Huxley, and Orwell (*Dark Horizons* 1). Each of their works "... makes us ponder how an originally utopian promise was abused, betrayed, or, ironically, fulfilled so as to create tragic consequences for humanity" (Gotlieb 8). According to Moylan:

Dystopian narrative is largely the product of the terrors of the twentieth century. A hundred years of exploitation, repression, state violence, war, genocide, disease, famine, ecocide, depression, debt, and the steady depletion of humanity through the buying and selling of everyday life provided more than enough fertile ground for this fictive underside of the utopian imagination. (*Scraps of the Untainted Sky* 12)

Because of the collective evil and violence witnessed in the beginning of the 20th century, dystopia takes the place of the utopian narrative. The writers of this form portray a bleak future signalling the probable results of the current hegemonic structures. Similarly, Booker defines dystopian literature as a critical analysis of present circumstances and political systems disclosing their defects and inconsistencies in an imaginative way. He states it is “in direct opposition to utopian thought, warning against the potential negative consequences of arrant utopianism” (*Dystopian Literature* 3). Though dystopias present a dark picture of the future and are the direct opposite of utopian thought, they can also have some hope as a utopian feature. As Baccolini indicates: “Utopia is maintained in dystopia, traditionally a bleak, depressing genre with no space for hope in the story, only outside the story: only by considering dystopia as a warning can we as readers hope to escape such a dark future” (“The Persistence of Hope in Dystopian Science Fiction” 521). So, while warning the readers against the future threats, dystopia may also signal a potential for hope.

The potential of hope in dystopia is not just outside the story. Sometimes, the hope is in the story in its open-ending, or it is in the struggle starting with the individual that eventually spreads to the society. Dystopias which specifically contain this hopeful insight are critical dystopias as Moylan and Baccolini point out. These dystopias let both the reader and the protagonist hope with their ambiguous and open endings (*Dark Horizons* 7). As Vieira explains the intent of open endings in dystopias:

[A]lthough the writers of dystopias present very negative images of the future, they expect a very positive reaction on the part of their readers: on the one hand, the readers are led to realize that all human beings have (and will always have) flaws, and so social improvement – rather than individual improvement – is the only way to ensure social and political happiness; on the other hand, the readers are to understand that the depicted future is not a reality but only a possibility that they have to learn to avoid. ... Their true vocation is to make man realize that, since it is impossible for him to build an ideal society, then he must be committed to the construction of a better one. (17)

Moreover, Moylan suggests two other types of dystopias which are anti utopian and utopian dystopia. He states:

In the anti-utopian dystopia, the best that can happen is a recognition of the integrity of the individual even when the hegemonic power coercively and ideologically closes in; whereas in the utopian dystopia, a collective resistance is at least acknowledged, and sometimes a full-fledged opposition and even victory is achieved against the apparently impervious, tightly sutured system. (*Scraps* 14)

So, taking this definition into consideration Orwell's *1984* is an anti-utopian dystopia or as Baccolini specifies a classical dystopia because it is a closed text which has no hope in it. Whereas Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* is a utopian dystopia since there is collective resistance in the text and with the open ending the reader can still hope for resistance ("Persistence" 521-522).

As it is seen from the definitions utopia and dystopia are not completely different genres. Dystopia often includes utopian thought in it or in utopias dystopic elements can be found. As Booker states: "... [U]topian and dystopian visions are not necessarily diametrical opposites. ... [D]ystopian critiques of existing systems would be pointless unless a better system appeared conceivable. One might, in fact, see dystopian and utopian visions not as fundamentally opposed but as very much part of the same project" (*Dystopian Impulse* 22). Hence, in critical dystopias this utopian impulse is often present.

As stated before, together with the utopian impulse dystopia is the critique of the society and political conditions of the writer's time. Though dystopian texts often take place in future time they refer to the problems of the writer's current reality. Booker points out: "...[D]ystopian fictions are typically set in places or times far distant from the author's own, but it is usually clear that the real referents of dystopian fictions are generally quite concrete and near-at-hand" (*Dystopian Impulse* 26). Because it is possible to refer to the current issues that bother the author, the dystopian fiction is a fertile ground for the writers to criticize the society and politics. For this very reason, women writers are also interested in the dystopian fiction, and they indeed have contributed to it and changed it to a great extent by employing the themes related to maternity, the traditional roles of women, socialisation, care and education of the younger generation as well as the attempts to control nature and women by the patriarchy (Theis 4).

1.2. Feminist Dystopian Fiction in 20th and 21st Centuries

As I have already stated, women are not treated fairly in the classical examples of utopian literature. So, they also write feminist utopias giving voice to women. Alessa Johns briefly explains the history of feminist utopianism. In her article “Feminism and Utopianism” she states that feminist utopian writing can be dated back to Christine de Pizan’s *The Book of the City of Ladies* (1404-1405). Following her, there are various women writers in different centuries who write about the role of women in an ideal society in accordance with the historical period they live in. Mary Astell’s *Serious Proposal* (1694), and Sarah Scott’s *Millenium Hall* (1762) were written when the rise in wealth as a result of colonialism and trade sparked debates about luxury and the concept of having a fulfilled life. Frances Harper’s *Iola Leroy* (1892), Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s *Herland* (1915) were written in an era when the rise of socialist ideologies and the end of Civil War in the United States resulted in profound political transformations as women and emancipated slaves struggled for the right to vote. Ursula K. Le Guin’s *The Dispossessed* (1974) and Marge Piercy’s *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1976) were published when feminists attempted to articulate their aspirations in response to failure of the New Left in advocating for women’s movement (177).

As Booker indicates it has never been easy for feminist writers to imagine a better future. He states: “Of course, the writers of feminist utopias have always been aware that their positive visions were imperiled by the existing patriarchal order and have thereby often included dystopian warnings within their utopian texts” (“Woman on the Edge of a Genre” 4). In time, these warnings in utopian fiction turn into completely dystopian texts. Feminist dystopian fiction started to rise in the 1960s together with the spread of Second Wave Feminism. First Wave Feminism is mostly about gender equality in terms of voting and property rights while Second Wave Feminism has a wide range of issues to debate such as sexuality, reproductive rights, violence against women, equal pay in the workplace. All these issues have been voiced in utopias and dystopias written by women. Moylan also notes on the significance of feminist dystopian fiction: “As feminist criticism expanded our understanding of the utopian text in the 1960s and 1970s -and as feminist writers led

the way in the critical dystopian revival- analyses such as Baccolini and the works of writers such as Atwood, Cadigan, Butler, and Piercy have opened up the dystopia to new possibilities for its creative realization and reception” (*Scraps* 150).

In feminist dystopias women challenge patriarchal norms with the aim of changing them by raising awareness of women about gender inequality. As Lucy Sargisson points out in her book *Contemporary Feminist Utopianism*:

All feminist utopias are political All are concerned to some extent with power relations, all with sexual power, some also with the exploitative relations between patriarchy and nature. Their concerns are with diverse manifestations of sexual power relations. Psychoanalytic utopias, for instance, are concerned in part with the gendered power relations embodied in language, whereas others focus on social and reproductive relations. (17)

Similarly, in women’s dystopian fiction as well sexual politics, power relations, reproductive rights and all the political and social issues that concern women are the main subjects. The writers also depict the possible outcomes of the current political practices on female bodies and agency as a warning to readers.

Similar to Sargisson’s remarks, Cavalcanti also states the features of feminist dystopias: “The feminist dystopias portray patriarchal ‘hells’ of oppression, discrimination, and violence against women, thus mapping our contemporary social environment. ... [T]hey bring patriarchal values and attitudes which in most cases pass unnoticed (because they have undergone a process of banalization) into full view” (*Articulating the Elsewhere* 10). Women writers employ this genre to critique male-dominated societies and institutions which oppress women. Katharine Burdekin’s *Swastika Night* and Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* are some of the significant examples of the genre.

Swastika Night written by Katharine Burdekin and first published in 1937, under the pseudonym of Murray Constantine, is regarded as one of the earliest examples of feminist dystopias. The novel takes place in the German Empire seven centuries after Hitler’s death in the Hitlerian year of 720. The world is divided into two big forces Germany and Japan and these two forces are always in enmity and ready to fight. There is a strong hierarchy

in the social system. The highest are Knights, then come Nazis, Christians and at the bottom of the ranks are women regarded as soulless and animal-like beings. They live in the Women's Quarter, which is a large cage, and they are not allowed to leave it without permission (158). The protagonist Alfred, as an English man, is on a pilgrimage to visit the Holy places in Germany and meets the Knight von Hess. Von Hess has a secret book which covers the time before the German Empire. Reading this book Alfred begins to question the structure of the German Empire and the norms of the society. As a common feature of dystopian fiction, in this earliest example of the 20th century, we witness a hegemonic structure which represses people, especially women, by leaving them ignorant. The highest ranks keep knowledge only to themselves, banning reading except for the Hitlerian Bible and some technical books for military purposes.

As a dystopia, *Swastika Night* manifests the potential outcomes of the Nazi regime for women if it becomes victorious. For Burdekin, Hitler's coming into power is a threat for the agency of women. As Patai states in her introduction to Burdekin's novel:

To a feminist following events in Nazi Germany (and, before that, in Mussolini's Italy), the logic of fascist gender ideology must have stood out. Nazi statements about women were clear enough. In 1932, a year before the Nazis destroyed all branches of the women's movement, the Reichskomitee of Working Women made an appeal to Germany's working-class women. Published in *Die Rote Fahne* (The Red Flag), a German Communist newspaper, the appeal denounced Nazi brutality and called upon women to engage in anti-fascist action, saying: 'The Nazis demand the death sentence for abortion. They want to turn you into compliant birth-machines. You are to be servants and maids for men. Your human dignity is to be trampled underfoot.' (x)

Similarly, in the novel women are both physically and sexually repressed. They are just seen as vessels of reproduction; they are expected to give birth to sons for the future of the German Empire. Also, for bearing men's sons women are expected to be thankful to Lord Hitler because it is bestowed upon women by him (8). Women's physical appearance is also controlled; in order not to attract men's attention they must shave their heads and they are not supposed to appear beautiful to the eyes of men (81). The novel criticizes the time that it was written in as well by depicting how women willingly submit to Hitler and renounce some of their rights. Therefore, in a way the writer manifests the possible future for women and warns them of the consequences.

Patai further argues, in *Swastika Night* the ideas of the fictional knight-philosopher von Wied on women derive from Otto Weininger's book *Sex and Character* published in 1903 (vii). According to him, women are inferior to men, they are submissive by nature. Mothers must not be responsible for the education of the new generation (vii). Likewise in *Swastika Night*, Burdekin depicts women as passive and submissive in line with von Wied's philosophy. From the Knight von Hess' account in the novel, we learn that the German Empire is founded on Von Wied's theories on women. According to him, if women reject men's demands or if they want to live with men as partners, it means an insult to manhood (81). The beauty of women is an insult, too because it gives women sexual power over men, it is unacceptable (81). In the novel rape is not a crime since it means the rejection of men by women, which is out of question in this society. "... [A]s rape implies will and choice and a spirit of rejection on the part of women, there could be no such crime" (13). Women must always obey the desires of men; any protest is immediately punished. There is "no grace, no beauty, no uprightness, all those [are] male qualities. If a woman dared to stand like a man she would be beaten" (12). What Burdekin criticizes here is women's yielding their rights willingly. Von Hess says: "Once they were convinced that men really wanted them to be animals and ugly and completely submissive and give up their boy children for ever at the age of one year they threw themselves into the new pattern with a conscious enthusiasm that knew no bounds" (82). This quotation is particularly important because it reveals women's voluntary collaboration with their oppressors, which is one of the common criticisms in the novels of Burdekin's successors, too.

Another example of the 20th century feminist dystopia is Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, first published in 1985. The novel takes place in a patriarchal totalitarian state, the Republic of Gilead, which is based on strict religious rules. There is a dramatic fall in fertility rates because of nuclear contamination surrounding the country. Under these circumstances, fertile women called Handmaids are employed to produce children for the benefit of the state. The narrator Offred, as a Handmaid, tells the structure of this society now and then. Women become just vessels for reproduction or if they resist

the order, they either serve as prostitutes or are sent to the colonies to work as slaves. There is a strong hierarchy among women as well. Each rank of women has different colours of uniforms, Marthas wear “dull green”(33), Econowives who are the views of poor men wear “striped dresses, red and blue and green (78), Wives wear “blue” (45), Aunts who are responsible for the strict control and education of Handmaids cloth in “dull green” (17) and Handmaids who serve to bear children of Commanders and their Wives are to wear red clothes (72). The dress code is used to separate them from each other, preventing any connection among women. As a dominant feature of feminist dystopias, this is a strong criticism of patriarchy which propagates itself by making women hate each other. As Cixous states in “Sorties”: “[Men] have committed the greatest crime against women: insidiously and violently, they have led them to hate women, to be their own enemies, to mobilize their immense power against themselves, to do the male's dirty work” (68). This is what happens in *The Handmaid's Tale*. By dividing women into different ranks, the patriarchs preclude any relationship among women and perpetuate the system.

As the writer of one of the most influential examples of dystopian fiction, Margaret Atwood reflects politics of the era in her writing. Although she is Canadian, she has lived in the States from time to time, for example, she got her Master's degree from Radcliffe College and started her doctoral studies at Harvard, though she did not complete them (Macpherson 2). She is highly aware of the politics in the United States as well as of Europe. While she was writing *The Handmaid's Tale* in 1984, she was in “West Berlin—still encircled, at that time, by the Berlin Wall” (Atwood “Haunted”). As Van Dyck discusses in the course of the 1980s conservative politicians all dealt with the agency, consent, and reproductive choices of women (115). She describes the political atmosphere of the time when Atwood wrote *The Handmaid's Tale*:

Reagan's conservative agenda included strong support for anti-abortion politics and Margaret Thatcher continuously called for revaluation of traditional family values. It is against this political background, that Margaret Atwood created her speculative dystopia of a society where women have lost all political influence and thus the power to make their own reproductive choices. (115)

Atwood also explains her inspiration in writing this book comes from "... [her] fascination with dictatorships and how they function, not unusual in a person who was born in 1939, three months after the outbreak of the second world war" (Atwood, "Haunted").

Similar to *Swastika Night*'s historical context, in the 1980s, once again patriarchal form of governments, which attempt to restrict the role of women in society, are in power. In accord with this context, in *The Handmaid's Tale* women are not allowed to read, their interaction with the world is limited. Like women living in a large cage in *Swastika Night*, in *The Handmaid's Tale* they rarely leave home. Even Wives, though they hold a relatively higher position than other women, can just go out only by a car (79). Moreover, as breeders, Handmaids do not own the babies that they give birth, they are obligated to give them to their Commander and his Wife. After one of the Handmaids gives a healthy birth, she "... [will] be allowed to nurse the baby, for a few months, they believe in mother's milk. After that she'll be transferred, to see if she can do it again, with someone else who needs a turn" (349). Handmaids must continue functioning as breeders for the sake of the nation.

Like *Swastika Night*, *The Handmaid's Tale* not only criticises patriarchy but also women's contribution to the growth of this totalitarian regime. Atwood shows how women acted before the revolution. They did not care to struggle for their rights, or they willingly submitted to the new system. For example, when Offred mentions her life before the new government comes into power, she accepts that most women did nothing to change the system. They just did not care. She says: "We lived, as usual, by ignoring. Ignoring isn't the same as ignorance, you have to work at it. ... There were stories in the newspapers, of course, corpses in ditches or the woods, bludgeoned to death or mutilated, interfered with, as they used to say, but they were about other women..." (124-125). Because these violent acts were not related to themselves directly, women chose to ignore them. By doing so, they played an important role in this revolution either by supporting the new system or by not protesting it. Therefore, women lost all their rights to choose, to desire, and in the end their individualities. In this respect, the novel is also a warning for the contemporary

reader as a significant feature of feminist dystopias. The message is clear: If you stay passive and do not act, there is a lot to lose.

In addition to criticizing patriarchy and its norms, feminist dystopian fiction also employs open and ambiguous endings which signal the reader the possibility of resistance, change and hope. With the open endings it relinquishes the idea of perfection which finalizes a text and hence the dystopian fiction creates various new places of being and imagining (Sargisson 20-21). As Cavalcanti indicates, “these fictions overtly address a female audience (without dismissing a male one, of course), and thus play a crucial role in the construction of a feminist utopian consciousness, both at the individual and collective levels, and in the formation of a female feminist public sphere” (*Articulating the Elsewhere* 64). This utopian consciousness she points out here is achieved with the open endings of the feminist dystopian texts.

When we take the ending of these two novels into consideration, we see the feature of ambiguous endings and the utopian impulse in feminist dystopias. *Swastika Night* ends with protagonist Alfred’s having the book which is about the world before the truths have been distorted so it refers to a possible revolution starting with the individual. Likewise, at the end of *The Handmaid’s Tale*, we hear Professor Pieixoto’s account after the destruction of the Gileadean regime. Though he also makes some sexist remarks, as readers we learn that this regime has an end and there is hope for a new future for women.

In the works of the 20th century dystopian fiction, the unchanging state of womanhood is presented. The common theme is the patriarchal control over female bodies, on their physical appearance, reproductive choices and opportunities to get involved in social and political life. Likewise, the issue of womanhood and the challenges women face are depicted in the 21st century feminist dystopian fiction. Although the setting may be different, the themes that both centuries’ novels cover are similar because the dystopic realities that women experience hardly ever change. As Dillon points out for the contemporary feminist dystopias: “These texts’ concerns echo those of their twentieth-century predecessors, exploring dominant themes of control of reproductive rights, sexual

and other forms of violence against women, and the balance of power between the sexes” (169). She further argues that 21st century feminist dystopias have gained heightened relevance in contemporary Western society, especially in North America, following Donald Trump’s inauguration. This “... indicat[es] that feminism as a tool for political and social change has not come as far as we might wish to think” (170).

As I have already explained, *Red Clocks* portrays experiences of women which are familiar to the contemporary reader. Each character has an issue with motherhood. Ro desires to be a mother, Susan sometimes wants to be away from her kids and even thinks about suicide, Mattie seeks getting an abortion, Gin has given her daughter for adoption, and Eivør Mínervudóttir does not want to be a mother at all as opposed to the social expectations. As a work of feminist dystopian fiction, *Red Clocks* also reflects the politics of the era that it was written. In one of her interviews Leni Zumas expresses how she is influenced by current politics and personhood amendments that are supported by several lawmakers. She says:

Which, at the time, was a fringe conservative political agenda in the U.S., ... I saw it was one coin. On one side it was restricting abortion, on the other side it was making (in-vitro fertilization) illegal. That really hit me hard. I was thinking about these two opposing things: starting a pregnancy or ending a pregnancy and in both cases it had to do with who was choosing when and how that would happen and what’s the relationship between a woman’s interior, so to speak, and government legislation. (“The Atwood Effect”)

What Leni Zumas depicts in *Red Clocks* has already been happening in the real world. In some parts of the United States, it is almost impossible for some women to have an abortion or to access health care either because of a lack of financial means or lack of the number of clinics (Zumas, “The Atwood Effect”). So, the prohibition of abortion the novel depicts is in a way true for these women.

Similar to Leni Zumas, Sophie Mackintosh is also interested in women’s stories in a patriarchal society. She says in her interview with Nathania Gilson:

There’s still so much buy-in to the Madonna-whore dichotomy culturally, and I’m interested in how we interrogate that. This expectation of docility; how reproductive sex—

as opposed to sex for pleasure—seems a whole different beast in the way we regard it (although I don't know why that still strikes me as faintly absurd because I know we exist in a puritanical society where pleasure for pleasure's sake isn't really trusted). (Mackintosh, "I'm Trying")

As it is evident in Mackintosh's remarks, even in this century women are trapped in dichotomies; they are labelled either as chaste or promiscuous. Sex inside a marriage bond is what is still preached. Similarly, in *Blue Ticket* women who have the blue ticket are regarded as always sexually available, but the ones who own the white ticket are expected to have sex only to procreate therefore, they are deemed more chaste. In addition to this, the politics of the time may have also influenced the writing of the novel. It was the time of Covid-19 when people were all trapped inside their homes and all their private information was shared with the government. There was a rigid control of the state and medical authorities. To prevent the spread of the virus, there were strict controls on the borders of countries and travelling was also banned for a long time. This is very close to the life women lead in *Blue Ticket*. The women in the novel are submitted to their doctors who decide what is good for them. Keeping them ignorant of the system and without any explanations, doctors operate on female bodies. Moreover, if women want to go abroad, their doctors need to approve their visa, which is too difficult to obtain.

As the plot summaries and historical context of the novels show, the feminist dystopian fiction of the 21st century is slightly different from the 20th century ones in terms of their setting, but the depiction of control of women and their bodies is quite similar. Of course, all dystopian fiction criticises the current society in which the writer lives, but the point here is that in most of the feminist dystopias the plot consists of an environmental disaster, or it takes place in a post-apocalyptic world. As Jameson points out:

Dystopia is generally a narrative, which happens to a specific subject or character, . . . [T]he dystopia is always and essentially what in the language of science-fiction criticism is called a "near-future" novel: it tells the story of an imminent disaster -ecology, overpopulation, plague, drought, the stray comet or nuclear accident- waiting to come to pass in our own near future, which is fast-forwarded in the time of the novel. (39)

In the 20th century feminist dystopias as well, the same pattern applies which is related to the political environment of the time. As dystopias are the reflections of the political conditions of the times they are written, it is not surprising to see post-apocalyptic

societies in 20th century feminist dystopias. Under these extraordinary conditions, totalitarian regimes come into power and men start to oppress women and take their rights away. However, in *Red Clocks*, and *Blue Ticket* as well as other 21st century feminist dystopias like Christina Dalcher's *Vox*, Louise Katz's *The Orchid Nursery* the depicted society is not unfamiliar. The terrible events do not take place in a far distant future and place besides there are no disasters or threats for human existence like an epidemic or infertility. In this respect, the setting is different from and more disturbing than the 20th century feminist dystopias because the world that they portray is so similar to ours. *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* do not represent women in the future anymore, they showcase the possible consequences of the current sexual politics and power relations like their predecessors in the 20th century. For this very reason, the reader feels closer to the dystopian environment depicted in these novels.

In terms of narrative technique *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* employ certain features of dystopian narration which leads the reader to feel familiar to the portrayed environment. As Baccolini and Moylan state:

Since the text opens in media res within the nightmarish society, cognitive estrangement is at first forestalled by the immediacy and normality of the location. No dream or trip is taken to get to this place of everyday life. As in a great deal of sf [science fiction], the protagonist (and the reader) is always already in the world in question, unreflectively immersed in the society. However, a counter-narrative develops as the dystopian citizen moves from apparent contentment into an experience of alienation and resistance. This structural strategy of narrative and counter-narrative most often plays out by way of the social, and anti-social, use of language. (*Dark Horizons* 5)

In accord with the quotation above *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* all start in the middle of the story and with the flashbacks or the accounts of some earlier memories, readers grasp how the society has changed in time. For example, in *Blue Ticket* the text starts with the protagonist Calla's account who apparently is content with the system until she wants to have a baby and begins to question her rights. Similarly, in *Red Clocks* the text opens in a nightmarish society in which the laws have just changed, and the protagonist cannot cope with the new order from the very beginning. In both novels the location is familiar to the reader and gradually the reader learns how women's bodies are repressed and subjugated

and how they struggle to resist the system using the mechanism within the system itself. It is possible for a woman reader to identify with the characters in the novels because they are so close to the reality which surrounds her currently.

Moreover, as Cavalcanti explains in her article “The Writing of Utopia and the Feminist Critical Dystopia”: “The narratives usually referred to as feminist dystopias envision imaginary spaces that most contemporary readers would describe as bad places for women, being characterized by the suppression of female desire (brought into effect either by men or by women) and by the institution of gender-inflected oppressive orders” (49). As feminist dystopias, *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* cover the issues related to women. They depict the erasure of the female body and desire under the hegemonic patriarchal structures. For instance, in *Red Clocks* abortion is illegal and women are severely punished if they seek it, in *Blue Ticket* women cannot choose whether to become mothers or not. By taking these issues into account these novels “paint an exaggerated picture of the existing power relations between the sexes, as if they were placed under a magnifying glass” (Cavalcanti, “The Writing of Utopia” 53), thereby they make the reader question the society that s/he lives in.

In addition to these narrative features feminist dystopias mostly depict women’s desires which is also valid for *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*. Once again Cavalcanti proposes for feminist dystopias: “In an extremely self-reflexive way, they articulate female desire on three levels: desiring women (authors) portraying desiring women (characters) which may, in turn, trigger women’s (readers’) desire. ... they are a specific symbolic system motivated by, an expression of, and able to trigger, female feminist desire” (“The Writing of Utopia” 63). In both novels, the reader witnesses such effects of desire. The novels are written by women who desire to depict female characters struggling to get what they desire. This may arouse women’s interests as readers. In *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*, the protagonists acknowledge the desire of being a mother and they decide to act accordingly. In spite of the strangling system, they attempt to achieve what they demand. In this respect these attempts may offer female readers hope and they may also follow their desires, which shows us the utopian impulse both inside and outside these dystopian texts.

In brief, dystopian fiction deals with the political and social issues that might become threats in the future for society. Therefore, it leads readers to contemplate the current problems that they have, and it works in a way as a warning even if it is sometimes far-fetched. As dystopian fiction is the critique of the current society and the political conditions of the author's time, it is a fertile ground for the women writers as well to make their voices heard. Feminist dystopias are not different from dystopian fiction as they also criticise current political practices, yet they depict possible outcomes of current body politics by focusing mostly on the experiences of women.

PART I: BODY IN WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

1.1. Mind and Body Duality in Western Philosophy

The categorization of men and women as opposites and their being defined against one another is supported by dichotomies like mind/body, culture/nature, spirit/matter, which have been influenced by gender ideologies (King 31). This polarization of man and woman is used to justify the vilification of women through the Western history. As King states on mind/body dualism:

In the mind/body dualism the body and mind are regarded as quite separate, the body is merely the crude container of the mind. Mind and reason are superior to the emotions and senses and divorced from one another. Man is mind and represents culture: the rational, unified, thinking subject; woman is body and represents nature: irrational, emotional and driven by instinct and physical need. Mind/culture/man must harness and control this potentially unruly body/nature/woman through the application of knowledge and willpower. (31)

Western philosophy has adopted dichotomous thinking, which privileges mind over body, for a long time. Philosophers often ignore the body, and they merely focus on the mind. Even when they discuss the body, they associate it with irrationality and hence they condemn it or regard it as subordinate. Though this view has prevailed in the Western thought it is challenged and deconstructed by thinkers like Nietzsche, Foucault, Cixous, and Butler. As the aim of this thesis is to analyse the repressed female body in contemporary feminist dystopias, this chapter offers an exploration of the body in Western philosophy starting from Plato to the Cartesian thought of mind/body dualism. Upon discussing the Cartesian thought thinkers who criticise and deconstruct it will be addressed.

In Plato's *Phaedo* the idea of separation of mind and body is clearly depicted. The 'real' philosopher yearns for death as it means a complete separation of the soul (mind) and body. Socrates as the mouthpiece for Plato asks Simmias if the philosopher should care about bodily pleasures, adornments or sexual passion, and the answer is a "no". Because

a real philosopher “will despise them” (*Phaedo* 9). Socrates goes on asking “... you think that his [the philosopher’s] studies are not concerned with the body? He stands aloof from it, as far as he can, and turns toward the soul? ... Well then, in these matters, first, it is clear that the philosopher releases his soul from communion with the body, so far as he can, beyond all other men?” (*Phaedo* 9). The ‘real’ philosopher despises all bodily pleasures and chooses the soul over the body because the soul is the one that helps him—him because the philosopher is always a male here—to get the wisdom and knowledge not the body.

In *Phaedo* Plato sees the body as a hindrance to acquiring wisdom. The soul attains the truth only when it is not accompanied with the body as the body always deceives it with the senses. The soul “reasons best, when, none of the senses, whether hearing, or sight, or pain, or pleasure harasses it” (*Phaedo* 10). For Plato, it is not possible to understand absolute justice, beauty and goodness with the bodily senses. Man can only comprehend them using his intellect, so his mind needs to be separated from the body. Also, the body needs constant care which prevents the philosopher from getting the truth because it distracts him. So, only after death, the soul can attain knowledge. As the mouthpiece for Plato, Socrates tells his disciple Simias: “... [T]he soul by itself must behold things as they are. Then it seems, after we are dead, we shall gain the wisdom we desire, ... For then ... will the soul exist by itself, separate from the body” (*Phaedo* 12). It is obvious in Socrates’ remarks the body is subordinate to the soul. The body has no place in a philosopher’s world since it just precludes him from acquiring wisdom and truth. As Elizabeth Spelman states in her article on ancient and contemporary views on the body: “What we learn from Plato, then, about knowledge, reality, goodness, beauty, love, and statehood, is phrased in terms of a distinction between ... the rational and irrational. And the body, or the irrational part of the soul, is seen as an enormous and annoying obstacle to the possession of these desiderata” (113).

The body’s being resembled to a container and as passive material continue with Aristotle’s ideas on generation and reproduction. In *On the Generation of Animals*, Aristotle discusses the process of reproduction and generation of all living beings. In his

account the body is associated with women and therefore it is inferior while the soul is superior which links it to men. He describes the process of reproduction in which the male has a superior role whereas “the female always provides the material” (24) and proposes: “... [W]hile it is necessary for the female to provide a body and a material mass, it is not necessary for the male, because it is not within the work of art or the embryo that the tools or the maker must exist. While the body is from the female, it is the soul that is from the male, for the soul is the reality of a particular body” (24). Once again, the superiority of the soul over the body is emphasised. Body is the place that only carries the embryo as a receptacle, but the soul is the significant core which is contributed to the embryo by the male.

The traces of dichotomous thinking of mind and body are seen in Western philosophy since Plato who influenced the philosophical and religious thinking that followed him. In her analysis of Plato and Aristotle Grosz concludes that “the binarization of the sexes, the dichotomization of the world and of knowledge has been effected already at the threshold of Western reason” (*Volatile Bodies* 5). With the Christian tradition, the separation of mind and body continues. The mind or soul is associated with rationality and immortality whereas the body is irrational and mortal. “Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (*ESV Bible*, Matt. 26.41). Flesh is weak so it may lead you astray like Plato discusses in *Phaedo*. Similar to the way Plato and Aristotle depict the body as a cage or a vessel, the body in Christian understanding is portrayed as a container which holds the Holy Spirit in it (*ESV Bible*, Corinthians. 6.19). Body is like a temple which does not belong to individuals but is used only to serve God that is why it must be kept clean from sin. As Butler remarks Christian and Cartesian thought “... understand ‘the body’ as so much inert matter, signifying nothing or, more specifically, signifying a profane void, the fallen state: deception, sin, the premonitional metaphors of hell and the eternal feminine” (*Gender Trouble* 129).

This dualist thinking of mind and body discussed above is refigured by Descartes. In Cartesian thought the mind and the body are separated from each other and the mind assumes the privileged position since it is related to rationality and the intellect. In

Meditations on First Philosophy Descartes expresses how the body is distinct from the mind as such: "...[O]n the one hand I have a clear and distinct idea of myself, insofar as I am merely a thinking thing and not an extended thing, and because on the other hand I have a distinct idea of a body, insofar as it is merely an extended thing and not a thinking thing, it is certain that I am really distinct from my body, and can exist without it" (96). The quotation elucidates how the body is positioned. It is inessential for the existence of the human being because according to Descartes one can exist solely by thinking. In line with this dualism, thought is privileged while the bodily senses are devalued.

Moreover, Descartes regards the body as a hindrance to knowledge like Plato does. He states in *Descartes' Conversation with Burman* that "[t]he body has an obstructive effect on the soul. ... [it] is always a hindrance to the mind in its thinking" (8). The body is being otherized here. It is the polar opposite of mind hence it is insignificant or inessential. As Leder touches upon dualism: "The body is seen not only as Other to the self, but as a definite threat to knowledge, virtue, or continued life. Dualism thus reifies the absences and divergences that always haunt our embodied being" (108). This view of regarding the body as absent or secondary to the mind has prevailed for a long time and somehow it still guides the worldview of masses.

Descartes' dualism is significant since it has influenced the Western philosophy and science as well as everyday thought. Elizabeth Grosz briefly outlines Descartes' dualism: "Descartes ... succeeded in linking the mind/body opposition to the foundations of knowledge itself, a link which places the mind in a position of hierarchical superiority over and above nature, From that time until the present, subject or consciousness is separated from and can reflect on the world of the body, objects, qualities" (*Volatile Bodies* 6). This separation has led people thinking in binary oppositions, which has social reflections. The hierarchies are used to justify the subjugation of the "negative" or "weaker" poles of the binaries like man/woman, culture/nature, white/black, and so on.

1.1.1 Deconstruction of Mind and Body Duality

Starting with the 19th century Cartesian dualism has faced challenges and criticisms. The view on the body in Western philosophy is questioned and the mind and body dichotomy is undermined. As opposed to Cartesian dualism, the body is no longer passive and separate from the mind, now it is regarded as the lived body, thereby playing an active role in acquiring knowledge and understanding the world around us. As it is stated by Leder: "... [T]he lived body helps to constitute this world-as-experienced. We cannot understand the meaning and form of objects without reference to the bodily powers through which we engage them –our senses, motility, language, desires. The lived body is not just one thing in the world, but a way in which the world comes to be" ("Two Bodies" 123). Bodies and senses are not regarded as an obstacle to the mind any more as the Cartesian dualism proposes.

Nietzsche is one of the most significant forerunners who challenged the Cartesian emphasis on reason to attain the truth by interrogating what the truth is. For him there is no way to reach the truth and to know the essence of things because "... truths are illusions of which we have forgotten that they are illusions, metaphors which have become worn by frequent use, ... yet we still do not know where the drive to truth comes from, ..." (*The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings* 146). Intellect which is valued that much can deceive us. "The intellect that master of pretence, is free and absolved of its usual slavery for as long as it can deceive without doing harm, ..." (*The Birth of Tragedy* 151) writes Nietzsche. His ideas shattered the belief held by Cartesian thinkers that rationality alone could lead to attain complete knowledge. Nature has locked knowledge and thrown away the key (*The Birth of Tragedy* 142). So, it is not possible for us to know everything about the universe. Only by deceiving ourselves, do we think we know everything, but this is just an illusion. As Grosz comments on Nietzsche's ideas on acquiring truth: "There is nothing beyond multiplicity of perspectives, positions, bodily forces; no anchor in the real. The body itself is multiplicity of competing and conflicting forces which, ... comes to have a perspective and position, ...". (*Volatile* 128). The body is not a passive receiver as it becomes an agent with different perspectives in attaining knowledge. This idea is

important because privileging reason over senses and body is dislodged, and it opens the way for new interpretations of the body for the later philosophers and feminists.

Furthermore, Nietzsche does not regard the body as an obstacle to knowledge. "... [F]or Nietzsche knowledge is functional for the body; indeed the capacity to acquire knowledge is the most important 'organ' of the human body" (10), writes Lash in his reading of Nietzsche. As Nietzsche himself stresses for judgement to occur "[it is] essential to start from the body and employ it as guide. It is the much richer phenomenon, which allows of clearer observation. Belief in the body is better established than belief in the spirit" (*Will to Power* 289). Here Nietzsche emphasizes the importance of the body to have a clear judgement instead of the mind only. The body is not passive now, it has an active role in producing judgments.

Merleau-Ponty also calls into question the denunciation of the body. Unlike his predecessors, for him, the body is not a hindrance to understanding the world around us. Through the body, we can perceive our environment. As he writes in *Phenomenology of Perception*: "The body is the vehicle of being in the world and, for a living being, having a body means being united with a definite milieu, merging with certain projects, and being perpetually engaged therein. ... I am conscious of the world by means of my body" (84). So, we realise the world through bodily perceptions, which means cognition is embodied. He further states: "... I am my body, at least to the extent that I have an acquisition, and reciprocally my body is something like a natural subject, or a provisional sketch of my total being" (205). The body is not an object for Merleau-Ponty rather it is a subject to acquire knowledge.

According to Merleau-Ponty body and soul work together and one is not superior to the other. "The union of the soul and the body is not established through an arbitrary decree that unites two mutually exclusive terms, one a subject and the other an object. It is accomplished at each moment in the movement of existence" (91). So, the mind and body are inseparable; using both mental features and bodily perceptions we can be aware of our existence. As he puts it: "... the actual existence of my body is indispensable to the

existence of my “consciousness”” (454). Unlike the Cartesian thinking existence does not just depend on the mind or the intellect it also needs the body. Carman comments on Merleau-Ponty’s ideas on mind and body duality: “Merleau-Ponty never doubts or denies the existence of mental phenomena, of course, but he insists, for example, that thought and sensation as such occur only against a background of perceptual activity that we always already understand in bodily terms, by engaging in it” (206). Thus, for Merleau-Ponty the bodily perceptions are significant as much as mental phenomena in our relationship with the environment.

Like Nietzsche and Merleau-Ponty, Foucault also challenges the mastery of mind over body. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault analyses how bodies are regarded in the classical age. Beginning with Descartes the body is accepted as something mechanical and docile which is to “be subjected, used, transformed and improved” (*Discipline* 185-86). In all societies, the body is a site of subjugation, control, and regulation. However, during the 17th and 18th centuries, the body started to be controlled individually not treated as a mass anymore. By the domination of disciplines, docile bodies were produced (*Discipline* 187-88). For Foucault “[d]iscipline increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience)” (*Discipline* 188). Here Foucault explains how disciplines regulate the body and make it docile. The social regulation of the body is important for the production of capitalism therefore it should be passive and subjugated to propagate the system.

In Foucault’s writings the body is the place where power operates, and it is the object on which power is exercised. As Foucault discusses power in one of his lectures: “We have in the first place the assertion that power is neither given, nor exchanged, nor recovered, but rather exercised, and that it only exists in action” (*Power/Knowledge* 89). This power Foucault mentions is exercised through bodies. Grosz concludes upon her reading of Foucault: “... Foucault takes the body as a resistant yet fundamentally passive inertia whose internal features and forces are of little interest to the functioning of power” (*Volatile* 146). Thus, it is not wrong to say that the body is passive in relation to power.

According to Foucault the body has also a significant place in politics. He points out: “[T]he body is also directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs. ... the body is invested with relations of power and domination; ...” (*Discipline* 42). In all levels of society, power operates through the control of the bodies. Foucault indicates that the subjugation of the bodies in order to control the populations manifests the biopower. He defines the “era of biopower” as “... an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations” (*Foucault Reader* 262). Institutions like armies, schools, hospitals are all mechanisms that employ biopower to regulate individuals. As Foucault states:

If the development of the great instrument of the state, as *institutions* of power, ensured the maintenance of production relations, the rudiments of anatomo- and biopolitics, created in the eighteenth century as *techniques* of power present at every level of the social body and utilized by very diverse institutions (the family and the army, schools and the police, individual medicine and the administration of collective bodies), operated in the sphere of economic processes, their development, and the forces working to sustain them. They also acted as factors of segregation and social hierarchization, exerting their influence on the respective forces of both these movements, guaranteeing relations of domination and effects of hegemony. (*Foucault Reader* 263)

So, the bio-power manifests itself through the bodies in daily practices with the help of these institutions and it operates in all levels of society continuing the hierarchization.

In conclusion, throughout the history of Western philosophy mind and body duality has been a controversial issue as I have tried to discuss some main points. From Plato to Foucault there are several arguments on the body and its role in attaining the truth and its relation to power politics. For Plato and Descartes, the body is a hindrance to acquiring the truth and therefore it is subordinate to the mind. For Nietzsche and Merleau-Ponty bodies play an active role in acquiring knowledge while Foucault thinks they are passive and subjected to power play. As Grosz notes: “Where for Foucault the body is the field on which the play of powers, knowledges, and resistances is worked out, for Nietzsche the body is the agent and active cause of knowledge” (*Volatile* 146).

1.2. Feminism and The Body

For male philosophers, the idea of the sexed body is usually missing. In their writings, they accept the body as something universal which is generically a male body even if it is not mentioned overtly. Feminist philosophers and scholars on the other hand take up the issue of the body again with a female point of view. The body is always on the subordinate side of the dualist thinking like women who are thought to be inferior to men. Both the body and the woman are thought to belong to irrationality; therefore, they are either invisible or suppressed. So, feminist thinkers discuss the sexed body, and they attempt to show how the body is used to oppress women or how the body can be used to empower women.

The dichotomous mode of thought tracing back to Plato has been the cause of conceiving the concepts in binary oppositions such as man/woman, mind/body, rationality/irrationality, and culture/nature. In this binary framework, one term of the duality is continuously regarded in a subordinate position to the other. Therefore, woman, body, irrationality, and nature are assigned to the inferior pole of the binary pairs. As opposed to the more elevated realm of the mind, women are historically associated with the body and nature due to their procreative capacity. This positioning of women on the inferior pole of the dichotomies has enabled the continuation of patriarchal control over women's bodies. The patriarchal system of thought has restricted the agency and autonomy of women by subjecting their bodies to objectification and regulation. For these reasons, feminists reconsider the concept of body by challenging the established patriarchal dichotomies.

Each wave of feminism evaluates the body in various ways. Sometimes it must be visible to assert women's rights, sometimes it must be invisible to form a kind of equality between women and men. In each case, the body has an important locus in feminist theory. As James states: "... [M]any feminists have worked to develop philosophical positions which do not devalue the symbolically feminine. They have done so by unsettling the hierarchical relations between mind and body, and between reason and emotion,

approaching their task in various overlapping ways” (29-30). Since the body is symbolically feminine it is re-evaluated by feminist thinkers from various standpoints, thereby I attempt to discuss how the body is analysed in different decades of feminist studies. The feminist views on the body are diverse so in this study the ideas of egalitarian-liberal, social constructionist, French feminists, and difference feminists are discussed.

In egalitarian/liberal feminism the mind and body dualism still pervades. The body is sometimes disavowed because women need to present themselves as the mind rather than the body. The mind is traditionally associated with rationality so to achieve equality with men women continue with the dichotomous mode of thought and they attempt to demonstrate that they are as capable as men with regard to mental powers. Women’s bodies are used to repress them; therefore, they have to assert themselves as rational beings like men. In order to do this, feminists like Virginia Wolf and Simone de Beauvoir propose an androgynous mind.

The views on the body in egalitarian feminism are various. There are both positive and negative standpoints on the side of the body. As Grosz puts it: “On the negative view, women’s bodies are regarded as an inherent limitation on women’s capacity for equality, while on the positive side, women’s bodies and experiences are seen to provide women with a special insight, something that men lack” (*Volatile* 15). Even on the positive side of the body women are somehow limited by the prejudices of patriarchal thinking because they readily accept the biological differences between the bodies of men and women, which are used to assume women inferior so far in Western thinking. While in the negative viewpoint, women regard the body as a hindrance to equality, it is considered as something that puts restrictions on women’s agency and autonomy (Grosz, *Volatile* 15). According to Kotef’s argument to demand equal human rights with men egalitarian-liberal feminists “... cordon off the body and keep it outside the political game, to construct a new female subject who lacks any concrete attributes, who is nothing but an empty juridical function tying together rights and liberties, a subject whose form was known only as masculine to the politico-judicial discourse of the time. The subject was *the abstract woman*” (500). To

have a say in political and social life as men do, women regard denying their bodies as a condition.

As an egalitarian-liberal feminist Simone de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex* interrogates and portrays the position of women in society. She shows how women are degraded by the patriarchy based on their biology. In the introduction, she states: “Woman has ovaries and a uterus; such are the particular conditions that lock her in her subjectivity; some even say she thinks with her hormones. ... man defines woman, not in herself, but in relation to himself; she is not considered an autonomous being” (31). For Beauvoir woman is trapped in her body by the patriarchy and this becomes an obstacle to her being active both in society and in the realm of knowledge.

According to Mackenzie, Beauvoir’s account of the female body changes throughout *The Second Sex*. On the one hand, she regards the female body as a social construction while on the other hand, she seems to approach the female body like an essentialist does (147). As Mackenzie points out: “The female body, ... is still perceived as socially constructed, but this construction is built upon the material base of an oppressive female biology. ... [T]his oppression is structured upon the ‘fact’ that the female body somehow stands between the female human being and her quest for subjectivity and transcendence” (147). So, in both standpoints, the female body hinders women from gaining subjectivity and confines them to passivity and biology becomes a woman’s destiny.

Hindering the acquisition of knowledge and one’s existence as an intellectual being is also related to women’s reproductive capacities for Beauvoir. For her giving birth and breastfeeding are women’s biological destinies which make her condemned to domestic life (99). She states: “The fundamental reason that woman, since the beginning of history, has been consigned to domestic labor and prohibited from taking part in shaping the world is her enslavement to the generative function” (162). As the quotation suggests, Beauvoir thinks that the female body is oppressive because of its biological function of procreation.

Like Beauvoir, Firestone also holds the opinion that the reproductive function of the female body confines women to the domestic sphere. In *The Dialectic of Sex*, she proposes to use technology to make women free from the burden of childcare. For her, the bodies of women constrain them not because of biology but because of the patriarchal politics. The patriarchal system makes women's bodies an obstacle to being actively involved in social and political life by condemning them to childcare and domestic life. So, Firestone suggests for a feminist revolution women need to get control of both their bodies and reproduction (11). In the "Ultimate Revolution" chapter of the book, she states: "To ... free women from their biology would be to threaten the *social* unit that is organized around biological reproduction and the subjection of women to their biological destiny, the family" (206-7). As the quotation shows she considers biology as restricting for women because society is formed in accordance with reproduction. So, in that sense like Beauvoir, Firestone sees the body as a hindrance to women's freedom.

In Firestone's *The Dialectic of Sex*, it is also possible to see the mind and body dichotomy in which the body is invisible or inessential. She proposes a total separation of reproduction from the female body using advanced technological methods such as artificial insemination and artificial in ovulation. Disregarding the female body, the technological solution she proposes for reproduction to free women from patriarchal oppression assumes traditional mind and body duality. In her future scheme reproduction becomes disembodied so the body turns into a completely passive matter (Caddick 72). Caddick points out that defining pregnancy as barbaric or women's bodies as tyrants Firestone "... divorce[es] the body from the self as the antagonist of rational mind" (72). Although Firestone advocates androgyny, she to some extent devalues the body by separating it from the mind and rejecting its possibilities.

As egalitarian-liberal feminists, Adrienne Rich and Mary Daly hold positive ideas on the body. Both thinkers value the female body and its functions, but they continue the dualistic thinking in terms of sexuality. In *Of Woman Born* Rich analyses the concept of motherhood under patriarchy both as an institution and an emotional and physical reality in women's lives. Throughout the book, she emphasizes the power of the female body

with all its biological functions. For her, feminists embrace disembodiment because of the patriarchal limitation of female biology. In order to “escape the body-trap” (21), and “to think like a man” (21) women underestimate their bodies and make them invisible (21). However, Rich believes that the female body is a resource for women rather than an obstacle. She states: “In order to live a fully human life we require not only control of our bodies (though control is a prerequisite); we must touch the unity and resonance of our physicality, our bond with the natural order, the corporeal ground of our intelligence” (21). Although she has a positive view of the female body, she connects it to the natural order, which is an analogy that patriarchy uses as well to vilify women. Like patriarchy does, she regards the female body as closer to nature.

Daly also values the female body, and she considers women closer to nature. In *Gyn/Ecology* she names patriarchy as the enemy of women as well as nature. She states: “Women and our kind – the earth, the sea, the sky – are the real but unacknowledged objects of attack, victimized as the enemy of patriarchy – of all its wars, of all its professions” (28). Patriarchy colonizes female bodies as it also does to nature. For Daly, patriarchy forms a misogynistic society which weakens women and destroys nature at the same time for its political ends. Moreover, patriarchy is consistently in a war with life and its target is the female spirit/body due to the biophilic female energy. So, she suggests women discover their female selves together by “... igniting the Fire of Female Friendship” (355).

Although both Adrienne Rich and Mary Daly advocate embracing the female body as a powerful source for women to act, they are criticised to be essentialists by feminists like Gayle Rubin, Nancy Chodorow, and M.E. Bailey who propose a neutral body. Their ideas are denounced since they regard the female body as closer to nature thereby strengthening the stereotypes about women. As Bailey comments on Mary Daly’s feminist viewpoint: “Though the feminist goal of replacing the impossible male ideal with a woman-centred perspective was met by Daly’s radical feminism, other needs—for example, the maintenance of certain forms of relationships with men and the struggles for political gains within existing ‘patriarchal’ society—were not” (120). Moreover, elevating women

to a superior position which reinforces the constructed binary oppositions like mind/body, man/woman, culture/nature, and rational/irrational is found problematic. As Baş states:

This homogeneous, unproblematic and ahistorical conception of women, however, neither takes into account the variety of the experiences of women coming from different cultures nor criticizes the fundamental mechanisms of oppressive power based on sex discrimination. Instead, what it offers is a reinvocation of that mechanism, this time founded on a claim to women's superiority. (66)

Social constructivist feminists also positively view the female body. Similar to egalitarian-liberal feminists they believe that the body is not itself oppressive or an obstacle; however, patriarchy makes the female body a hindrance for women through the socially constructed gender roles. Nevertheless, social constructivists do not condemn or elevate the body, they demand a change in social values and norms that have a big role in shaping female bodies (Grosz, *Volatile* 16-17). For social constructivist feminists, body and mind dualism pervades as it also does for egalitarian-liberal feminists. Grosz puts it: "... [T]he mind is regarded as a social, cultural, and historical object, a product of ideology while the body remains naturalistic, precultural; bodies ... are merely media of communication rather than the object or focus of ideological production/reproduction. Political struggles are thus directed toward neutralization of the sexually specific body" (*Volatile* 17). According to social constructivist feminists to disempower women certain biological facts and female anatomy are used to construct gender identities by patriarchy. So, feminists in this group, though they have various views, basically suggest neutralizing the body through changing the ideology.

In *Reproduction of Mothering*, Nancy Chodorow analyses how gender is constructed through motherhood. According to her, gender roles are not just related to biological differences between men and women they are also about the psychological processes. Women rear children because this role is socially assigned to them, and they build relationships with their children in accordance with the gender roles. Thus, they rear 'feminine' girls who want to be mothers and 'masculine' boys who avoid parenting. The socially constructed roles locate women in the domestic sphere while they position men in the public one. As a consequence of this division between sexes, Chodorow points out:

“Men’s location in the public sphere, then, defines society itself as masculine. It gives men the power to create and enforce institutions of social and political control, important among these to control marriage as an institution that both expresses men’s rights in women’s sexual and reproductive capacities and reinforces these rights” (9). With the authority they get in the public sphere, men gain control of women’s bodies and behind this system basically, there is the sex difference.

Like Chodorow, Gayle Rubin also thinks that gender is socially constructed. In her article “The Traffic in Women” she uses the term sex/gender system which “is a set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied” (159). In the article, she gives some examples from different communities and shows how women are oppressed because of their gender in this sex/gender system. Referencing Lévi-Strauss’ analysis on kinship she manifests how women become commodities and are objectified. They are exchanged between men in almost all social systems in different ways (173-76). So, once again Rubin reveals how female bodies are turned into passive vessels of interaction among men.

Both Chodorow and Rubin think that because gender roles are socially constructed, it is possible to transform them. In this transformation they suggest neutral bodies rather than the bodies that are sexually marked. For Chodorow the patriarchal and capitalist system is not our destiny we can change it through questioning biological determinism and hence parental organization (214). Biological determinism is already at root of the oppression of female bodies therefore challenging it makes the change definite. Rubin also suggests that “...feminist movement must dream of even more than the elimination of the oppression of women. It must dream of the elimination of obligatory sexualities and sex roles. [Her dream] is one of an androgynous and genderless ... society, in which one’s sexual anatomy is irrelevant to who one is, what one does, and with whom one makes love” (204). For a stronger political stance women need to challenge the system that is based on biological differences and hence gender roles.

French feminists and difference feminists are concerned with the lived body which is not a passive object. Unlike their predecessors, they are not very interested in the social constructivist theory and biological essentialism. For them, the body is not something given or determined, but it is something lived. For a clear understanding of power relations and the workings of patriarchy, these feminist thinkers do not either denounce the body or accept it as a universal and neutral concept. They analyse the sexed body with all the coded meanings on it which is why sexual difference is important for them. As Gatens explains: "Difference [feminism] ... is not concerned with privileging an essentially biological difference between the sexes. Rather, it is concerned with the mechanisms by which bodies are recognized as different only in so far as they are constructed as possessing or lacking some socially privileged quality or qualities" (232). It is not the biological differences but the "biological raw materials ... which possess no form, order, organisation or meaning before the process of social inscription" (Grosz, *Philosophy, Subjectivity* 142) are important for difference feminism. Most of the feminist thinkers such as Irigaray, Cixous, Butler, and Young are in this group though of course with varieties in their views.

In *This Sex Which Is Not One*, Irigaray analyses female body and sexuality and how women are trapped in man-made discourses. She focuses on the sexed body because while the male body is seen as the universal one in the Western discourse, the female body is encoded by this discourse in a negative way. Irigaray states on how men regard the female body and sexuality: "There is no prediscursive reality. Every reality is based upon and defined by a discourse. ... A woman. A body-matter marked by their signifiers, a prop for their souls-fantasies. The place where their encoding as speaking subjects is inscribed and where the "objects" of their desire are projected" (96). The female body is full of codes defined by men, thereby proposing a neutral body is not the answer for women. Women need to renounce their own bodies and create a female discourse accordingly. As Butler states: "For Irigaray, the possibility of another language or signifying economy is the only chance at escaping the 'mark' of gender which, for the feminine, is nothing but the phallogocentric erasure of the female sex" (*Gender Trouble* 26).

In her article “Philosophy, Subjectivity and the Body”, Elizabeth Grosz comments on Irigaray’s understanding of the body. According to Grosz, Irigaray’s interpretation of the body is associated to the experiences of the sexed body (136), and she further argues that: “Irigaray specifies an account of the body’s *morphology*; ... her object of analysis is the body that is lived, the body which is marked, inscribed made meaningful both in social and familial idiosyncratic terms, the body psychically, socially and discursively established: the body as socially and individually significant” (136). As Grosz discusses in the quotation for Irigaray the body is marked by the male discourse. She gives the example of women’s bodies used as commodities among men in their transactions. Irigaray is of the opinion that women are used not only in “sexual exchanges, but also economic, social, and cultural exchanges in general” (85). In these exchanges women are always the object and their roles are inscribed on their bodies as well.

Like Irigaray, Cixous also thinks that women’s bodies are encoded by the patriarchal discourse. Neither male nor female bodies are independent from the ideologies for Cixous. Women are taught to disregard their bodies, but with the feminine writing, change is possible. In “The Laugh of the Medusa” she claims that women need to create their own discourse because with the male discourse, it is not possible for them to voice their experiences and reclaim their bodies. To create a feminine discourse is to write with the body, with the “white ink” (881). She states: “By writing her self, woman will return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her, which has been turned into the uncanny stranger on display” (880). That is why women need to write about women, because the patriarchal system has distanced them from their bodies, and therefore they assert their voices and experiences.

Both Irigaray and Cixous claim that there is not one united concept of woman. Women are different from men in terms of their sexuality and their bodies, but they have varieties among themselves as well. As Cixous states: “... [T]here is, at this time, no general woman, no one typical woman. ... [Y]ou can’t talk about a female sexuality, uniform, homogenous, classifiable into codes” (876). Also, Irigaray indicates: “[W]omen do not constitute ... a class, and their dispersion among several classes makes their political

struggle complex, their demands sometimes contradictory” (32). Thus, as it is clear from the quotations that they propose a sexual difference approach while keeping the distinctions among women. They do not suggest that women are the same, instead, they value the uniqueness of each and every woman. What women have in common is their sexuality for Cixous and Irigaray. As Jones states: “[For Irigaray and Cixous]: if women are to discover and express who they are, to bring to the surface what masculine history has repressed in them, they must begin with their sexuality. And their sexuality begins with their bodies, with their genital and libidinal difference from men” (366).

Likewise, Young focuses on the lived body and distinct experiences of the female body. Female bodily experiences are not the results of the biological differences, but they are strongly related to the society that surrounds women. In her article “Throwing Like a Girl” Young discusses the differences of bodily movements between women and men, she claims that female body comportment is more constrained than the male one. Women are taught to control their movements and gradually they “[develop] a bodily timidity” (153). Young is of the opinion that it is the consequence of the gendered society and the patriarchal system which objectify the female bodily experience. As a result, she states: “This objectified bodily existence accounts for the self-consciousness of the feminine relation to her body and resulting distance she takes from her body. Thus, to the degree that she does live herself as mere body, she cannot be in unity with herself, but must take a distance from and exist in discontinuity with her body” (154). Women experience a distance with their bodies, they cannot be united with the bodies whereas men do not have a similar experience. Because of this distinction women’s bodies should be taken into consideration separately.

For Butler the body is not just a passive recipient of norms, it is a lived body. Bodies perform differently though within the constraints of the hegemonic structures. She states on gender performativity:

As a public action and performative act, gender is not a radical choice or project that reflects a merely individual choice, but neither is it imposed or inscribed upon the individual, The body is not passively scripted with cultural codes, as if it were a lifeless recipient of wholly pre-given cultural relations. But neither do embodied selves pre-exist the cultural conventions which essentially signify bodies. Actors are always

already on the stage, within the terms of the performance. Just as a script may be enacted in various ways, and just as the play requires both text and interpretation, so the gendered body acts its part in a culturally restricted corporeal space and enacts interpretations within the confines of already existing directives. ("Performative Acts" 526)

As Butler discusses in the quotation above, the gendered bodies are not free from cultural and social constructions though they are not passive. Performativity presents several options for the bodies to act in different ways within a script. According to Butler bodies become gendered through these performative acts and these acts can change through time or they can be challenged ("Performative" 523). So, women can embrace their bodies and like the actors on a stage, they can perform their roles with distinct interpretations.

In *Gender Trouble*, to disrupt established categories of the body, Butler proposes a series of parodic practices with her theory of performativity. She uses drag as an example of performative acts which "effectively mocks both the expressive model of gender and the notion of true gender identity" (*Gender* 137). Although drag is criticised to re-establish traditional dualities and to present a unified concept of woman, for Butler it is subversive since it unfolds the fabricated nature of sex and gender. "*In imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself - as well as its contingency*" (*Gender* 137), asserts Butler. By wearing clothes and adopting acts and behaviours associated with the opposite gender, drag performers expose the constructed and fictitious aspects of gender identity. So, like drag performers women can also challenge gender identities and subvert the oppressive discourse with performative acts.

1.3. Feminism and Biopower

So far, I have discussed several ideas on body by the feminist thinkers. Though they have different insights, what they have in common is that they regard the body as a site for power play. Liberal feminists see the female biology either as something constraining women or as a part of empowerment. Social constructivists claim that body is not neutral. Female bodies become a hindrance for women by the patriarchal and capitalist system. Moreover, French feminists and difference feminists think that body is an active and a lived body encoded by discourses. So, in all these feminisms we see the notion that the

body is used by the patriarchy sometimes together with capitalism to oppress women. Also, the means of oppression is always operated through the female bodies that is why the body is crucial in feminist thinking.

Because oppression of women is operated through the body, the term biopower is a significant start for feminist studies of body and power. Before moving on the feminists' ideas on biopower it is necessary to explain what biopower is. It is a concept of Foucault but in his account, he does not specifically mention the sexed bodies. Although he planned to write about the subversion of the female bodies as well, he could not complete his work. So feminist thinkers, taking Foucault's concept of biopower as a basis, analyse how it works over the female bodies. The term biopower is first coined by Foucault in his lectures in 1975-1976 in Collège de France when he focuses on power and knowledge through war and politics. For him in 17th and 18th centuries new techniques of power emerge which are applied on the individual human bodies to subjugate them. These are disciplinary techniques like separation, serialization, and surveillance. However, in the second half of the 18th century a new form of power reveals which integrates with the disciplinary techniques but also uses various other means to regulate bodies (*Society* 242). This is biopolitics, biopower as Foucault names and he remarks that it involves "... a set of processes such as the ratio of births to deaths, the rate of reproduction, the fertility of a population, and so on" (*Society* 243). Even just this definition already tells us how biopower is very related to female bodies because it is mostly about the regulation and control of populations hence fertility and reproduction.

In addition to fertility and reproduction biopower aims to regulate all aspects of life. That is its difference from disciplines. For Foucault while disciplines seek to train the individual bodies of people biopower works to "[take] control of life and the biological processes of man-as-species and of ensuring that they are not disciplined, but regularized" (*Society* 246-47). Thus, the idea behind biopower is to regulate life through the body both as a mass and individually and define the normal for the society.

As Foucault defines, biopower is a “nondisciplinary power” though it involves disciplinary means of control it does not employ the same means as disciplines (*Society* 242). Biopower seeks to control human species from life to death and it intends to regulate all aspects of life such as “birth, death, production, illness, and so on” (Foucault, *Society* 243). Because biopower is not merely about constant surveillance, body discipline or severe punishments it is a subtle form of power, and that is why it is easier to make people live by it even without recognition. For example, “insurance, individual and collective savings, safety measures, and so on” (Foucault, *Society* 244) are the mechanisms that people choose to do willingly though they are several means of controlling production and economy. Since biopower is not a strict way of power, people usually yield to these control mechanisms voluntarily. One of these control mechanisms of biopower is normalisation. As Rabinow states:

By “normalization,” Foucault means a system of finely gradated and measurable intervals in which individuals can be distributed around a norm—a norm which both organizes and is the result of this controlled distribution. A system of normalization is opposed to a system of law or a system of personal power. ... Normative, serialized (to use the Sartrean term) order is an essential component of the regime of bio-power, ... (20)

So, the use of normalisation helps to control individuals because it does not just operate through laws, or it is not employed by a certain ruler. When something becomes the norm people accept it easily and it is challenging to question norms. Even laws can be norms in time which shows how useful normalisation is in regulating human species.

As an aspect of biopower normalisation helps control, regulate and self-regulate through discourses. As Ramazanoğlu states: “Discourses define what is normal, and what is not normal is then seen as in need of normalisation, or conformity to the norm. Feminists have found these concepts useful in indicating social pressures on women not only to submit to discipline, but also to conform to norms by producing their own docile bodies” (22). Foucault’s concept of biopower and normalisation helps feminists to manifest how female body is attempted to be normalised. For example, as Bordo points out when she analyses the reproduction of femininity: “We no longer are told what “a lady” is or of what femininity consists. Rather, we learn the rules directly through bodily discourse: through images which tell us what clothes, body shape, facial expression, movements, and

behavior is required” (17). Women internalize the norms and behave accordingly to comply with the rules of the society, and this is one of the means used to subjugate women.

In the internalisation of the bodily discourse, for example, we see the power not as a brute force but as something women yield to willingly. This idea of power’s being not just repressive but productive is a novel idea which garners attention among feminist thinkers. As Foucault explains in one of his interviews:

If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (*Power/Knowledge* 131)

Power operates in a subtle way to control people. As Barkty mentions in her analyses of “Modernization of Patriarchal Power” new forms of power and domination may not restrict the mobility of women anymore, but their sexuality and body are in constant control. This control is imposed through media, images, codes of behaviour, medical institutions, which creates “self-policing subject, a self committed to a relentless self-surveillance” (80). Thus, female bodies are not necessarily regulated by force anymore, but women are turned to subjects who try to normalise their bodies to meet social expectations.

According to Foucault disciplines seek to form the docile body by meticulously manipulating its gestures, deportment, and features. By the use of mechanisms of power human bodies are reshaped “[t]hus discipline produces subjected and practised bodies, ‘docile’ bodies. ... [I]t dissociates power from the body; on the one hand, it turns it into an ‘aptitude’, a ‘capacity’, which it seeks to increase; on the other hand, it reverses the course of the energy, the power that might result from it, and turns it into a relation of strict subjection” (*Discipline* 138). Although Foucault does not specifically mention female bodies while defining docile bodies in *Discipline and Punish*, his ideas pave the way for feminist thinkers to show the mechanisms of power in subjugating female bodies

in everyday practices. As Shildrick and Price comment on Foucault's analysis of body: "...[W]hat he calls the 'docile body'—have been a fertile ground for feminist understandings that make clear the links between the everyday body as it is lived, and the regime of disciplinary and regulatory practices that shape its form and behaviour" (15).

In addition to the idea on docile bodies, Foucault's arguments on medicine and medical gaze have attracted feminists' attention. In *Power/Knowledge*, Foucault argues that in 18th century biological traits of citizens become an asset for wealth and economic development of countries that is why there arises a need for an apparatus to guarantee the subjection of the population together with its functionality for the state (172). The kind of constant control that Foucault discusses starts with "[t]he privilege of the child and the medicalization of the family" (172), and it continues with the "[t]he privilege of hygiene and the function of medicine as an instance of social control" (175). The family is not only held accountable for producing children, but also it must ensure the good health of children. Moreover, with the importance given on the hygiene of the population, medical interventions on bodies of people are justified, hence doctors become the representative of medical power.

Also, in *The Birth of the Clinic* Foucault further explores the transformation of medical knowledge and emergence of the medical gaze in the 18th and 19th centuries. As Foucault defines: "[T]he medical gaze ... was no longer the gaze of any observer, but that of a doctor supported and justified by an institution, that of a doctor endowed with the power of decision and intervention. ... [I]t was a gaze that was not content to observe what was self-evident; it must make it possible to outline chances and risks; it was calculating" (*The Birth* 89). The medical gaze is not just a gaze of any passive individual observer, but it is a gaze which is legitimately grants power to the doctor to objectify the body as a site to be examined. Furthermore, as well as diagnosing and curing diseases, medicine also studies "*non-sick man*" (34) and defines what "*the model man*" (34) is. It preaches for a healthy life in accordance with medical knowledge and positioning itself as an authority decrees the norms of interaction among people (34).

As Foucault indicates: "... [M]edicine becomes a political intervention-technique with specific power effects. Medicine is a power-knowledge that can be applied to both the body and the population, both the organism and biological processes, and it will therefore have both disciplinary effects and regulatory effects" (*Society* 252). Like Foucault regards medicine as an intervention to bodies in general mentioning no specific sex, feminists argue medicine and reproductive technologies as another apparatus employed to objectify female bodies. On the one hand with the introduction of the contraceptive pill and other devices used in birth control women gain more power to be in charge of their reproductive choices in the second half the 20th century. On the other hand, with the medicalization of birth and pregnancy, childbirth becomes hospitalised and an increase in the amount of Caesarian delivery begins which is upon the decision of doctors as the authority not women (Van Dyck 27). On the issue of childbirth, women do not have much agency.

In *Disciplining Foucault*, Sawicki analyses Foucault's concept of biopower and shows how in everyday life it is applied to women's bodies. Sawicki notes, for Foucault biopower is essential for capitalism since it uses bodies for production. Likewise, female bodies then are vital for patriarchal power in their use in reproduction (68). Also, she gives the examples of new reproductive technologies and medication which are used to control female bodies by patriarchy like the elimination of midwives and replacing them with a male doctor who is another representative of patriarchy (73-75). Thus, we see how something that is all related to female body when we just even think about the physical and physiological changes that women go through are tried to be controlled and regulated by the patriarchal and capitalist powers together. Sawicki further states:

New reproductive technologies clearly fit the model of disciplinary power. They involve sophisticated techniques of surveillance and examination (for instance, ultrasound, fetal monitors, amniocentesis, antenatal testing procedures) that make both female bodies and fetuses visible to anonymous agents in ways that facilitate the creation of new objects and subjects of medical as well as legal and state intervention. (83-84)

Thus, using the state-of-the-art technological tools, the medical gaze penetrates female bodies, makes them objects of knowledge and examination, keeps them under control.

As well as reproduction biopower also regulates female bodily comportment, gesture, skin, diet, and so on. In this kind of control there is no definite institution like schools, hospitals, and lawcourts that is responsible for the regulation of the female body so as Barkty states that “[t]he absence of a formal institutional structure and of authorities invested with the power to carry out institutional directives creates the impression that the production of femininity is either entirely voluntary or natural” (75). The control mechanisms are in women’s everyday life like their parents, friends, and teachers. That is why it is not clear whether women voluntarily yield to these social constructions, or they are forced into them. Once again Barkty remarks: “The disciplinary power that inscribes femininity in the female body is everywhere and it is nowhere; the disciplinarian is everyone and yet no one in particular” (74). So, women always feel under a disciplinary gaze which is the gaze of the society regulating femininity and female body. Under these conditions it is not possible for them to feel free.

What Barkty argues on the repression of female bodies is panoptic discipline which Foucault discusses as a form of surveillance and control. In “Panopticism” chapter of *Discipline and Punish* Foucault discusses panoptic institutions. Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon is an idea of architectural construction designed to watch the inmates in prison cells, or in hospitals. In this structure there is a central tower from which all inmates are watched by a supervisor. “Each individual, in his place, is securely confined to a cell from which he is seen from the front by the supervisor; but the side walls prevent him from coming into contact with his companions. He is seen but he does not see; he is the object of information, never a subject in communication” (273). The subjects here are always visible to those in power. Even if there is nobody in the tower, the inmates behave like someone is there watching their actions and they act accordingly. The subjects become the objects of constant gaze and observation. This threat of constant surveillance results in self-discipline. So, people begin to control themselves, form their own bodies and behaviour as if they are surveilled all the time. Moreover, in this design the inmates are separated from each other, which is a way of preventing any mutiny or any collective action. People are alienated from each other so that it can be easy to control them. Any connection might end in resistance that is why people are left alone.

This panoptic discipline applies to female bodies, too. Bodies of women are constantly watched; they are always subject to power play. Medical gaze, for example, has long been discussed by radical feminists as a way of controlling female bodies. Technology together with science, while beneficial in many ways, may also pose dangers for female bodies. As Bailey discusses:

Foucault also points to the dangers of turning to science for ‘truth’; this has resonances with many feminist critiques of science and medicine. It also shows the intersection of various interests in the locus of women’s bodies—the interested powers are not just masculinist, but also capitalist and bourgeois, and institutional, as in the case of medicine and science. Bodies are produced, understood, deployed in the service of certain interests and relationships of power. Bodies, thus, are a battleground of interests and power, (114-115)

Because the bodies of women are the objects of power, and the power is everywhere women may try not to deviate from the norms that constrain their bodies, which leads to self-discipline. Thus, women’s bodies are controlled both by the institutions and by women themselves.

PART II: REPRESSED FEMALE BODIES IN *RED CLOCKS* AND *BLUE TICKET*

2.1. Normalisation as a Way of Repression in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*

As I have already discussed in the introduction, dystopian fiction depicts the terrible possible outcomes of the social and political issues in contemporary reader's society. In that way it is a warning for the reader, and it is supposed to encourage the reader to think and act accordingly. The feminist dystopian novels, *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*, which are analysed in this thesis also work as warnings for the contemporary readers. They depict a society which is not far away, not an outer space, but all the events take place on the very earth we live. Moreover, the future that they both portray is very close to women's present day dystopic reality as it is evident in practices of normalisation in both texts.

In the first chapter of this study biopower is discussed as a means of regulating population and individuals by creating docile bodies. Normalisation functions as one of the control mechanisms of biopower. Usually, women do not even realise that their bodies are under constant control of the patriarchal hegemonic structures because of normalisation. Normalisation works through discourses and what is not "normal" then has to be normalized. Thus, women try to fit in the system creating their own docile bodies (Ramazanoğlu, 22). In *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*, normalisation is used to repress female bodies through discourses and bodily norms.

Red Clocks takes place in a fictional town, named Newville in Oregon in the USA. In novel's America, the Personhood Amendment, which bans abortion in all states, is approved. With this law, women are found guilty of murder if they seek abortion or provide it. In vitro fertilization (IVF) is also illegal since embryos cannot be moved without their consent. In addition to the Personhood Amendment, a new law Public Law 116-72 also known as Every Child Needs Two, which prohibits unmarried people from adoption, is to take effect in less than three months' time. In this political

background, readers witness the lives of four different women and the challenges they face. Throughout the novel the effect of normalisation on bodily experiences of women is revealed.

The first chapter where Ro is introduced starts with this sentence: “In a room for women whose bodies are broken, Eivør Mínervudóttir’s biographer waits her turn” (2). At the very beginning of the novel the bodies of women who seek medical help to conceive a child are depicted as broken. These bodies are not as expected, they are failure because their “cells and tubes and bloods are failing at their animal destiny” (2). A completely natural biological reality is seen as failure in this society. In order to be “normally” procreate these female bodies need to be recovered. The idea behind the body’s being a failure is that the body is traditionally seen as a machine to be regulated. As Greil concludes: “In the discourse of medicine, women’s bodies are often seen in terms of mechanical metaphors—as flawed machines, in need of medical intervention” (113). That is why Ro regards her body as broken, not in line with the norms of societal expectations.

In their article “The Normal Body: Female Bodies in Changing Contexts of Normalization and Optimization” Jansen and Wehrle refer to Merleau-Ponty to show how lived body is subjected to normalisation. They state:

As Merleau-Ponty emphasized, as bodily subjects, we are situated in a world and literally *incorporate* the meanings and norms of this world in an anonymous way. Such norms are not only constitutive of the images we have of our bodies, but also have a more direct impact on our experiences, for example, on how we move, eat, sleep, and behave; on how we sense, feel, and perceive the world; and on how we relate to ourselves and others. (38)

According to Merleau-Ponty, human beings perceive the world through their bodies. Through the means of our bodies, we become conscious of the world (84). In this interaction with the world and our milieu norms play an important role. They affect how we think about ourselves, like Ro’s belief that she has a broken body. She thinks so because she compares her body with the other “normal” and “healthy” bodies and then realizes that her body is not normal and needs to be cured.

Likewise, discourses on expectations from women also have a negative effect on female bodily experiences. They are mechanisms of power used to control female bodies. Indeed, as well as behaviours, discourses create certain norms and women feel the need to act accordingly in order to fit into the system. Ro lists in her notebook common prejudices about women which she hears or senses constantly:

Accusations from the world.

1. You're too old.
2. If you can't have a child the natural way, you shouldn't have one at all.
3. Every child needs two parents.
4. Children raised by single mothers are more liable to rape/murder/drug-take/score low on standardized tests.
5. You're too old.
6. You should've thought of this earlier.
7. You're selfish.
8. You're doing something unnatural.
9. How is that child is going to feel when she finds out her father is an anonymous masturbator?
10. Your body is a grizzled husk.
11. You're too old, sad spinster!
12. Are you only doing this because you're lonely?. (8-9)

Ro is 42 and tries to have a baby using IVF. It is not an issue when a man aged 42 wants to be a father; however, if a woman aged 42 wants to be a mother society assumes that she is too old and selfish. Ro's colleague Didier and his wife Susan make fun of her sperm donors (80), and Didier tells her she should avoid being a single mother since she does not have the financial means to raise a child, she has nobody to help her decide what to do if the child gets ill (63), as if she needed somebody to decide for her. Moreover, when she mentions her desire for a child Ro's meditation teacher suggests that she adopt a dog (239). Because of the prejudices about her age and her being single she continuously questions her decisions and blames herself for being a failure (141).

As Foucault states: "There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth In the end, we are judged, condemned, classified, determined in our undertakings, destined to a certain mode of living or dying, as a function of the true discourses which are the bearers of the specific effects of power" (*Power/Knowledge* 93-94). The discourse on female bodies determines in a latent way how a woman should live

as it is seen in *Red Clocks* as well. Ro's already mentioned list shows the "discourses of truth" (Foucault, *Power/Knowledge* 93), produced to repress female bodies. If a woman does not have a male partner, she is not supposed to raise a child. If she raises a child alone, this child is supposed to be a threat to society.

Also, because Ro does not have a male partner her father considers that she is "all alone" (34) and it is high time for her to find somebody (34). In the gaze of this society being in a romantic relationship and then forming a family is the norm, as well as it is obligatory—with the law Every Child Needs Two—if one wants to have a child. Ro does not feel that she is all alone. She has "... friends, neighbours, colleagues, people from meditation group" (34), in addition to this, she enjoys her own company, and she is "[okay] with being by herself" (34), too. Her therapist interprets that Ro feels "undeserving of a romantic partner" (37), but she deludes herself claiming she does not need one. "Nevertheless, before her first insemination, the biographer forced herself to consult online dating sites. ... She browsed and felt chest-flatteningly depressed" (35). Though she does not want to have a partner she seeks for him due to the accusations from the society. That is similar to the polar explorer Eivør Mínervudóttir's case who is thought to be old enough to marry at the age of nineteen though she does not intend on marriage (111). However, since her family dictates so she has to accept it to comply with society's norms.

As Sawicki indicates:

Disciplinary Technologies are not primarily repressive mechanisms. In other words, they do not operate primarily through violence against or seizure of women's bodies or bodily processes, but rather by producing new objects and subjects of knowledge, by inciting and channelling desires, generating and focusing individual and group energies, and establishing bodily norms and techniques for observing, monitoring, and controlling bodily movements, processes, and capacities. (83)

Bodily norms are used to repress the female body in an insidious way. Because how women should look is something commonly accepted, women endeavour to adapt their bodies according to the norms and mostly, they do not even realise that it is a form of repression. For example, in *Red Clocks* Ro writes a memory about her childhood in her

notebook. When she is a child, her mother does not give her more dessert because she is not to “get chubby” (58). However, her brother can get extra cookies probably because it is not a problem for him to be overweight. Here we see how bodily norms are internalized in women’s life. Ro’s appetite is controlled by her mother to make her meet the bodily standards. From a very early age not to get overweight is imposed upon women and by women, which shapes women’s perceptions towards their bodies accordingly. As Zumas points out in her interview with Leslie Hinson:

For a long time now, women have been told that controlling our calories is key to controlling our lives. We learn to aim corrective and punitive energies inward, upon ourselves. Rather than criticize a culture that equates a woman’s worth with her appearance, we should criticize our own appearance. Rather than change the system, we should change our waistline” (“Leni Zumas”).

Regulation of female bodies is not just limited to the visible parts of the body. One of Susan’s friends gets labiaplasty operation after her three births and announces it via a mass email to “seventy nine people” (208) writing: “‘Flappy no more!’” (208). The replies are “‘Tell your javiva congrats.’ ‘Bet your man is luring it!’” (208). When she first gets the email Susan finds it odd and the answers odder. However, later the text hints that she has researched it and found out “[l]abiaplasty surgeons earn up to \$250,000 per month” (271). After this email Susan begins thinking of a labiaplasty surgery because it is common among women. Female bodies go under this operation not just because women desire it but because to make “their men” happy by normalising the look of their labia.

Moreover, in Susan’s consideration about her daughter Bex we see the effect of normalisation on her. She thinks her daughter Bex “... will have purplish circles before long. But who cares what the girl looks like, if she is happy? The world will care” (25). Here it is clear how bodily norms are important in the eyes of society. The female body is assumed to be perfect with no deformations like purple circles around the eyes. Even if the girl is happy with her looks, society’s gaze is there to remind her that her body is not “normal.” As Barkty states: “The disciplinary techniques through which the “docile bodies” of women are constructed aim at a regulation which is perpetual and exhaustive—a regulation of the body’s size and contours, its appetite, posture, gestures, and general

comportment in space and the appearance of each of its visible parts” (80). Thus, the way a female body should look is already regularized and women are expected to comply with bodily rules. If they do not adhere to the norms, they are to be labelled as abnormal as Gin, the “witch” in *Red Clocks*.

Gin Percival is called the mender who provides gynaecological help for her clients using the cures of her own. She is an outsider because she does not fit in the society both because of her looks and her way of life that is why she is called “witch”. She lives in a cabin in the forest without any salary and insurance, taking care of animals, eating from forest (13). She has to leave high school since she “[f]ails to meet minimum standards. Acts deliberately uninterested in what goes in class” (40). As Gin thinks “... humans like to name *these* things normal and *those* things peculiar” (41), people believe that she is “unhinged, a forest weirdo, a witch” (41) just because she does not comply with the norms of the society. Therefore, she tries to be careful not to get the attention of people when she is in town. Moreover, Gin’s physical appearance is not “normal” according to the current beauty standards: “Tall, pale, heavy-browed. Eyes wide and pond-green. Black cloth pinned around her neck. ‘Unusual’” (63). For instance, one of Gin’s clients, Clementine, asks her if she considers waxing her eyebrows and she adds “I mean, not that you *need* to, because big brows are making a comeback, ...” (129). The woman who advises Gin to wax her eyebrows has “bleached curls and fake nails” (129). So, Gin’s client Clementine adapts her body to the current beauty standards, and she wants Gin to do so as well. Once again, we see normalisation is a subtle technique of repression on bodies since women yield to the beauty norms willingly as Clementine does here. Also, in Clementine’s remark “big brows are making a comeback” (129), it is hinted that the norms of beauty change in time and that is why these bodily regulations are tiring and continuous because women need to follow the trends constantly to conform to the beauty standards of the society.

Normalisation through discourses also applies to *Blue Ticket*. *Blue Ticket* takes place in an unnamed country. On their first menstruation girls are taken to the lottery building and they learn whether they are going to be mothers or not as the result of the lottery. Choosing is not an option for these girls, their life ahead is decided by the lottery, which is

completely arbitrary. Once a woman gets her ticket, there is no way to change it. A white ticket means that you can be a mother, but a blue ticket dictates you cannot. Discourses on motherhood and femininity help control women in *Blue Ticket* since they normalise the repression on the female bodies.

In her analysis of power, Sawicki discusses the significance of normalisation. According to her, power does not always mean violence or oppression. "... [I]t also operates by inciting desire, attaching individuals to specific identities, and addressing real needs, then it is easier to understand how it has been so effective at getting a grip on us [women]" (85). In *Blue Ticket*, through normalisation women are attached to specific identities. They are either given white tickets or blue tickets with an attached identity, and are expected to embrace what is given to them. Because the lottery is the norm of this society, the girls are eager to have their tickets immediately. They give advice to one another to reach puberty as soon as they can. As Calla remembers: "Drink a lot of milk if you want to speed it up, the knowing girls told us in the bathroom, between classes, Eat fats and oils, they said" (4). Even the girls' desires are channelled by this patriarchal state. They yearn for the lottery from a very early age without realising that it is a way of repression on their bodies.

Calla's journey starts with the lottery when she is given the blue ticket. She feels "relief" and she is "glad" upon learning that she will not have children (11). Calla knows that her life does not belong to her and "to wish for any other [is] a fallacy at best, treasonous at worst (13), since it is the life that is set for the women in this country. They are born to this system and are taught that having no agency over their bodies is the norm. As Jacobs states: "Much of the repulsive force of classical dystopia comes from its portrayal of a world drained of agency—of an individual's capacity to choose and to act, or a group's capacity to influence and intervene in social formations" (92). Like the quotation suggests women are all devoid of agency in *Blue Ticket*. They do not have rights to act upon their own lives. Moreover, discourses are used to propagate the system. For instance, Calla says what blue ticket means for her: "I was not motherly. It had been judged that it wasn't for me by someone who knew better than I did. There was a lack in my brain, my body,

my soul, or something. There was a flaw I should not pass on” (13). According to this system of lottery, which is completely random, Calla is not appropriate for motherhood, but she accepts it submissively because it is the way this society works. It is already normalised.

Having no agency upon their reproductive choices is internalized by women of this society. As a blue ticket woman, Marisol is the only one who claims that she has passed the border and visited a foreign country. In that country nobody wears locket, so they are curious about Marisol’s life and her feelings about being deprived of agency. She answers them saying: “... [S]ometimes choice was not beautiful or necessary but bewildering, ... I had lived a good life without thinking *what if what if*” (208). Like Calla’s feeling relief after lottery, Marisol is also content with the system since she is not obliged to choose between being a mother or not and suffer the consequences. Sometimes she takes the locket off to let people see it but in those minutes without the locket around her neck she feels “naked” (208). This is yet another striking example of how biopower works attaching women certain identities without any force, in a subtle way.

Similarly, when Calla thinks that there is a mistake with her ticket, she cannot tell anyone. She says: “I could not tell Doctor A about any of this. I could not ask him who gets to decide, who had been behind the machine in the lottery station ...” (17). She cannot ask anyone because it is against the norm. She is not supposed to question it, her road is already chosen for her. Instead of questioning she has to accept her role and be thankful for the ones who decide for her path in life. Furthermore, later in the novel after Calla gets pregnant secretly taking out the wire, which is placed in her body to prevent pregnancy, she asks Doctor A if she could be a good wife and mother. The doctor says: “No, ... with no hesitation, ...” (75) and once he says: “You are made for this life and not the other, ...” (130). As a medical authority he knows better than Calla and immediately says no because she is a blue ticket, and it is the life designated for her. He warns Calla: “You think that you are doing the natural thing, but you are wrong, You think that it’s for you, but I promise it’s not” (54). Though Doctor A knows that the lottery is a pure chance and says,

“[T]here is no order – at least not one that governs the lottery” (263), he propagates the system with the very discourse created to repress female bodies.

Moreover, the objectification of female bodies is also normalised in *Blue Ticket*, and it is also supported by the male discourse. The bodies of women are just an object to be tested or violated. They are disciplined from the very beginning to perpetuate the system. As Irigaray states: “The use, consumption, and circulation of their [women’s] sexualized bodies underwrite the organization and the reproduction of the social order, in which they [women] have never taken part as “subjects”” (84). Similarly, in the lottery building the girls wait in line to get their tickets just like the way “you would take your number at the butcher’s counter” (9). The female bodies are there immobile, waiting in a docile manner for their fate to be decided by the patriarchal system.

In *Blue Ticket* whether you get white or blue ticket does not matter because both mean repression. The blue ticket women are seen as “sluts” (77, 127,144) even by themselves. As Calla’s friend Iona who is also a blue ticket woman tells her: “... [A]ll the blue-ticket women were just hard-nosed sluts who thought only of fucking” (77). What Iona says is the produced discourse related to the blue ticket women. Likewise, Calla, upon luring a man and then running away from him, thinks that she may be a “slut” (144), but it is “acceptable” (144), it is “not unforgivable the way that being pregnant [is]” (144). Here we see how this discourse is internalized by women. As blue ticket women they are regarded as promiscuous because they are free to use their body in any way except for getting pregnant.

With this discourse, men justify the harassment towards women, and they treat Calla’s body like an object. That is the reason why through her journey Calla is always harassed by men she comes across. When Calla is on the road trying to escape the emissary, she takes a bus. In the bus a man harasses her, and he implies if she has sex with him, he does not tell anyone that she is pregnant. Upon this Calla objects and attempts to leave and the man calls her: “Frigid blue bitch!” (123). Moreover, the male driver continues to harass her when she wants to get off saying that: “What did my friend do that was so bad? So

bad that you want to be left in the middle of nowhere?” (124). The collective violence towards women is normalised through discourses of objectification here. Since a blue ticket woman’s body is regarded as an object for men to use for sexual purposes, they assume they can attack the female bodies any time.

Likewise, on the road Calla gets into a bar and meets some people saying that she is a white ticket named Iris and her husband is back at the hotel because of a headache. They pretend to believe her and then invite her to a party in a man’s house called T. In this house when she goes into the bathroom she is harassed by T and the man with the blue scarf. Moreover, the barmaid, who is also a blue ticket, helps the men to abuse Calla’s body. She says: “You’re as much a white-ticket as I am. Who are you trying to fool?” (101). Once again, the internalization of the discourse towards women’s bodies is apparent here. Even the barmaid assists the men to harass Calla since she deserves it as a blue ticket woman. As Daly states on how patriarchy operates: “Women are spooked by patriarchal males in a variety of ways; Women are also spooked by other women who act as instrumental agents for patriarchal males, concurring, with varying degrees of conscious complicity, in all ... [the males’ manipulative means]” (317). The patriarchal system defies female bodies and normalises this by making women enemies of themselves and each other. Here women cannot act together, they are separated from each other by the system from the very beginning to perpetuate the repression on their bodies.

For the white ticket women, the case is similar. Their bodies are also objectified by this man-made system. As Irigaray points out: “... “[F]emininity” is a role, an image, a value, imposed upon women by male systems of representation. In this masquerade of femininity, the woman loses herself, ...” (84). In *Blue Ticket* women play the roles that are assigned to them by this patriarchal state. For the white ticket women this role is motherhood. They are used as vessels only for reproduction. However, white ticket women are not even allowed to be seen with their babies. The pride is for the fathers. Through the city fathers stroll with prams and accept the gifts for their babies. “It was traditional to press small offerings upon the father. Coins, sweets, handkerchiefs” (53). The men in this society have the chance to choose to be fathers because there is no lottery

for them. Their bodies only belong to them, but female bodies belong to this patriarchal state. As Rothman puts it: "... [G]iven the ideology of patriarchy, the bodies of mothers are not highly valued. The bodies are just the space in which genetic material matures into babies" (73). Likewise, the bodies of white ticket women are mere containers in this society. The lottery assigns them as mothers and when they give birth the child belongs to the father, not the mother.

Overall, in both novels female bodies are repressed through normalisation. Patriarchal system of power normalises certain forms of behaviour or appearance for women by creating its own discourse. Women often without realising become an object under this discourse and strive to conform to the society by acting according to the norms. The women characters in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* have to shape and limit their bodies in the way that is required by the patriarchal society.

2.2. Laws on Reproductive Rights as a Means of Repression in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*

Controlling biological processes of female bodies is another way to subjugate women. To do so patriarchal hegemonic structures determine reproductive rights. By laws related to abortion, birth control, conceiving, use of reproductive technologies, and foetus rights, female bodies are regulated. This is the regulatory form of biopower as it is seen from the 18th century onwards in "the hysterization of women, which involved a thorough medicalization of their bodies and their sex, was carried out in the name of the responsibility they owed to the health of their children, the solidity of the family institution, and the safeguarding of society" (Foucault, *History of Sexuality* 146-147). Similarly, the laws associated with the control of female bodies are introduced for the good of the society and women are expected to abide by them. Furthermore, since these laws are accepted for the so-called benefit of the society, they easily become norms and it becomes difficult for women to act against them, hence the insidiousness of biopower.

In laws which ban abortion the assertion is that the foetus has the right to live. Nevertheless, this argument does not take the rights of women into consideration. The foetus grows in women's bodies and women need to decide what to do with their bodies, not the patriarchal structures of any kind. "Until the baby is born the fetus *is* the female body. It is part of her body/self. Attempts by science and the law to legislate the female body as a separate and adversarial container for the fetus are attempts to reconstruct Woman in a system of patriarchal description and control" (Karpin 326). However, using the techniques of biopower these laws are presented to be introduced for the good of women and overall, the society. Similarly, through the use of biopower together with the laws in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*, female bodies are repressed. The laws are used to regulate female bodies and restrict their reproductive rights. In this way women's bodies are subjugated and they are deprived of agency, which creates docile bodies for the state to rule.

In *Red Clocks*' dystopic America, in all states the reproductive rights of women are restrained by newly adopted legislations. With the Personhood Amendment, women become guilty of murder if they get or provide abortion. In vitro fertilization is also prohibited since embryo transfer is against human rights. In Ro's account the speaker explains the law:

Two years ago the United States Congress ratified the Personhood Amendment, which gives the constitutional right to life, liberty, and property to a fertilized egg at the moment of conception. Abortion is now illegal in all fifty states. Abortion providers can be charged with second-degree murder, abortion seekers with conspiracy to commit murder. In vitro fertilization, too, is federally banned, because the amendment outlaws the transfer of embryos from laboratory to uterus. (The embryos can't give their consent to be moved.). (30-31)

As in the quotation above, the Personhood Amendment totally disregards female bodies. The law is allegedly for the right of embryos to live and to be free; however, women's rights to live and their freedom are ignored. The idea behind the law here is not the care for the foetus, but the opportunity to repress female bodies. Restrictions on the reproductive rights of women are presented to be applied for the benefit of women and the society, as the government proposes the mission of the law is "*to restore dignity,*

strength, and prosperity to American families” (32), on the contrary it is a way of dominating female bodies.

In the novel female bodies are regarded as commodities belonging to the patriarchal state and the determination of women’s future life and social status is vested in the governmental authorities. As Irigaray discusses the role of women in society:

... [T]he widespread availability of contraception and abortion are returning her to that impossible role: being a woman. And if contraception and abortion are spoken of most often as possible ways of controlling, or even “mastering,” the birth rate, of being a mother “by choice,” the fact remains that they imply the possibility of modifying women’s social status, and thus of modifying the modes of social relations between men and women. (83-84)

In *Red Clocks*, on the other hand, not with the availability of abortion but with the intervention on women’s bodies by the ban on reproduction via IVF and abortion women are still limited to one role: being a mother or not. The ones who are not able to bear children are considered as failure, which affects women’s social status and interaction with others. For that reason, Ro hates going to the pharmacy to buy fertility medications. Every time she goes there, she tries to conceal the pills by buying other items hoping not to reveal her failure in being a mother (8).

The women characters in *Red Clocks* face terrible outcomes because of the Personhood Amendment which bans abortion. If a woman gets pregnant there is no way out if it is an unwanted pregnancy. You need to give birth or search for an illegal way to get an abortion. Both options are possible to result in damage to female bodies because in the former one you can have a baby when you are underage or in the latter you may have some health complications due to unsafe abortion. Moreover, if women seek abortion in Canada, where abortion is legal, they “... are returned (by police escort) to their state of residence, where the district attorney can prosecute them for attempting a termination” (87). So, with the international agreements as well as national laws the state takes control of female bodies and limits their mobility.

One of the victims of the law is Mattie's best friend Yasmine whose story we learn from Mattie's account. Yasmine, a high school student, gets pregnant when she is under sixteen although she makes him use a condom (49). When Yasmine realises that she is pregnant the law has just passed. Therefore, she tries to abort the foetus on her own, but her uterus is terribly damaged, and it has to be removed (259). After the operation in the hospital, Yasmine is sent to "Bolt River Youth Correctional Facility [which] is a medium-security state prison for females twelve to twenty years old" (285). Since abortion is illegal it is not possible for women to find safe and hygienic places to get an operation, which causes women to lose their bodily integrity. In Yasmine's case together with her uterus her right to be pregnant again if she wants is taken away from her.

Yasmine is not the only example in this patriarchal state which represses female bodies. From Mattie's account we understand there are other young women who also search for illegal abortions and damage their bodies. For instance, Mattie remembers: "Last year one of the seniors threw herself down the gym stairs, but even after she broke a rib she was still pregnant, ..." (49). Women search for termination houses which provide abortion, but they are not safe. As Ash tells Mattie: "Too dangerous. Clem knows a girl who got such a bad infection at this place in Seattle she had to get emergency surgery and almost died" (259). The ban on abortion causes severe injuries because women attempt to find alternatives to end unwanted pregnancies, which are not safe. Nevertheless, the state is determined: "To help the ban take hold, the attorney general ordered district attorneys nationwide to go after the harshest possible sentences for seekers. Send a message. Girls as young as thirteen were incarcerated for three to five years" (308). Examples should be set to prevent women from deciding what to do with their bodies. Though the Personhood Amendment supposedly cares for the life of the foetus, it takes no notice of the bodies of women who carry it inside.

Like her friend Yasmine, Mattie also seeks an abortion. While she is a successful high school student, she gets pregnant accidentally at the age of fifteen and she wants to have an abortion. She aims to go on her education; nevertheless, with a baby it is not possible for her. Telling her mother that she is to attend a conference she attempts to go to Canada.

However, due to the new law now in the Canadian border there is a Pink Wall closing the border for the women who seek abortion or in vitro fertilization. At the border, Mattie is refused to enter Canada and is sent back home. Therefore, in the end she finds a place to end her pregnancy with the help of Ro. Luckily, she does not get harmed or caught like the others. I define it luckily because after the operation “she should be doing a course of antibiotics” (316), but because the operation is illegal the doctors there cannot write prescriptions. So, if there were any health problems after the operation it was probable that Mattie would be caught like others.

Moreover, what is significant here is I think Mattie has to go through all these struggles and mostly all alone, while her boyfriend does not even know that she is pregnant. He is also responsible for this baby; with his sperm it is conceived, and obviously he is aware of the possibility because he does not use a contraceptive during the sexual intercourse. Despite this, the law only assigns women responsible for conception. As Eisenstein states on the engendered structure of the laws: “... [B]ecause law is engendered, that is, *structured through the multiple oppositional layerings embedded in the dualism of man/woman*, it is not able to move beyond the male referent as the standard for sex equality. ... This epistemological stance – “difference,” which is already in opposition to sameness– establishes men and women as opposites while privileging men” (42-43). Likewise, the Personhood Amendment in the novel is a total privileging of men. While the female bodies suffer under this law, men continue their lives as if nothing happens. Abortion is a crime according to the Personhood Amendment, but there is no punishment for male bodies. That manifests how this law is not about foetus’ rights; it is about repressing female bodies, criminalizing them, and depriving them of agency.

In addition to abortion, with the Personhood Amendment in vitro fertilization (IVF) is banned for women. Also, with the law known as Every Child Needs Two unmarried people are not allowed to adopt children anymore. This law is to take effect in “less than three months” (31). As a single woman, the biographer Ro does not have much time in order to adopt a child or to get pregnant using IVF. When this law comes into operation, there is a chance to adopt from China or Russia, but it is not possible for Ro because her

annual income is not enough for adoption from these countries. It must be at least eighty thousand dollars (170). So, since she has a limited time for both options, she has to endure all the treatments related to her body. She needs to take lots of pills which affect her body enormously. For instance, because of using Ovutran, “[a]nother medication that’s been known to improve the odds in some elderly pregravid cases” (4), her brain becomes “soapy and throbbing” (30), and her reactions are slowed down as a side-effect. This is just another medication together with the others she has used before. She has to accept all these bodily interventions due to her limited time. The law does not leave her any other options, and thus it represses her body.

As Eisenstein points out: “Liberal democratic law helps to structure patriarchy in the way it differentiates woman from man; law embodies the relations of patriarchy through the differentiation, by sex, of gender. Woman is part of nature; man, like law, must sometimes tame and control her” (51). This binary thinking which privileges men still persists in the laws of the dystopian America as well. In Ro’s case the law also controls her and confines her body, not the male bodies. If Ro did not have any limitations with this law, she would have the chance to wait for the adoption and would not waste her time and money with IVF treatment. She says she does want to have a child she does not want specifically to be pregnant. Thus, if it were not that law, she would not have to undergo this artificial insemination process again and again. She is confined to medical power by the new regulation. This is a law which decreases women’s autonomy and eliminates their individuality and experiences.

In *Blue Ticket*, as in *Red Clocks*, the female bodies are repressed by controlling their reproductive rights. Unlike *Red Clocks*, we as readers do not see any changes in the laws of the society since the characters are born into this confining patriarchal system. From the beginning of the novel the narrator tells us about the lottery which operates in choosing the girls who would be mothers in their future life and the rest would be childless. Also, this lottery is probably not a new system because as Calla says: “My mother’s locket waited for me in my father’s sock drawer. It wasn’t locked anyway but it was empty. ... Her ticket might have been buried with her” (5). So, this is a tradition in which lockets of

mothers are inherited by their daughters though the colour of the ticket is determined by the lottery.

The lottery is by itself an intervention to the female bodies. It creates docile bodies to fit into the system. According to the lottery results women's bodies are used for reproduction or the reproductive function of the female bodies is hindered by the medical aids. In this system women have no voice; they are made silent. As Irigaray puts it:

So there is, *for women*, no possible law for their pleasure. No more than there is any possible discourse. Cause, effect, goal ... law and discourse form a single system. And if women - according to him - can say nothing, can know nothing, of their own pleasure, it is because they cannot in any way order themselves within and through a language that would be on some basis their own. Or ... his. (95)

There is no language for women to express themselves in this patriarchal system because the discourse is all male and it works with the law for normalization. This system already accepts that women cannot have any desires of their own, so it makes rules which repress female bodies. In this patriarchal structure women do not even have the chance to realize what they desire. At an early age they are destined to be mothers or not and this is imposed upon them as if it is a "noble sacrifice" or "mercy" (13). As one of the doctors says, "with a terrible benevolence" (10) to Calla and the other blue ticket girls soon after the lottery: "You have been spared, ..." (10). He himself decides that the girls are spared, and their desires are nothing to him.

In the dystopian world of *Blue Ticket*, if a girl gets a blue ticket in the lottery her body immediately undergoes a medical examination without giving her any information about the procedure. After she gets the blue ticket Calla tells:

I lay on a reclining bed with a crisp paper cover, and another doctor, this one a woman and comforting, almost, in the familiar white coat, told me to fold up my knees. She pushed something inside me that hurt, a sharp and spidering pain. What is it? I asked, and she said, Your doctor will explain it all when you get to wherever you're going. She said *when* and not *if*, and I was grateful for that. Behind me I left a large rose of blood on the paper. (10)

She does not even know where to go after the lottery; therefore, once the doctor says “when” you get there she feels relief because it signals at least some sort of certainty. This shows how the system leaves the girls uninformed on purpose. They are not allowed to know anything about their bodies either. The doctor puts something into Calla’s body without explaining what it is. It is a fitting called wire used for contraception, for denying women’s reproductive rights.

Eighteen years after the lottery, Calla decides to pull the wire out of her body. She follows her desire the “dark feeling inside” (21):

My fingertips brushed wire and the meat of myself. There was a feeling of fundamental wrongness, like an electric shock, and I realized I needed the tweezers. Oh please oh please, I said silently, imploring something I didn’t believe in. The flannel was slick with my spit. A third try, this time with the slender pliers I used mainly for small household jobs. A broken sink, a loose bolt. I was attending to myself. I was elsewhere. Inside me, something came loose and I tugged. My hand skidded. I pulled the wire out and it was so small, a wishbone. When I threw it on the floor it beaded blood against the white tiles. More vodka, poured from bottle to mouth, my stomach churning. Easy, easy, I said to my body, like it was a spooked horse. The worst is over now. (22)

Calla knows it is against the rules, she is not supposed to pull the wire out of her body. However, the life determined for her is not the one she chooses. She wants to have a baby and to conceive one she needs to take that birth control device out. So, because of this regulation, this constant control over female bodies Calla has to do this operation by herself and it may well harm her body. She uses tweezers and then pliers which are not healthy options to get the wire out; however, the system forces her to do it. As one of the women she comes across through her journey tells her by taking the wire out “[y]ou could have done yourself real damage just taking out the device. Blood poisoning. Your whole body all septic and green” (114).

In this dystopian state like every other blue ticket woman, Calla has to see a doctor regularly. Doctor A is the man who is responsible for Calla. After Calla has the self-operation, she gets pregnant and hides it for some time. When Doctor A finds out he says: “Choose now, Let me take care of it here, today, and you can walk back into your life like nothing happened. . . . [W]e can’t let you keep it either. You’ll be sent away” (50).

There are two so-called options for Calla, but both of them mean losing the baby. The first one is a forced abortion, and the second one is an exile which is not known. The only thing she knows that she is to be under constant observation from this time forth. As Foucault affirms: “[D]eployments of power are directly connected to the body—to bodies, functions, physiological processes, sensations, and pleasures; ...” (*History of Sexuality* 151-152). For Calla there is no way to follow her own desire, which is to become a mother. In both “options” her body is repressed and controlled by the state.

Calla chooses the second option and begins a journey in which she is followed by the secret emissaries of the state. She hopes to get to the border that she does not know much about and leave the country before being caught. However, both before and through the journey, she needs to hide her body in order not to get any attention. As a blue ticket, being pregnant is a crime so Calla “[feels] compelled to hide her body” (49). She wears clothes that disguise her body, or she drinks alcohol not to reveal that she is pregnant. For instance, when the owner of the liquor shop in her neighbourhood offers her a new drink to taste she has to try it in order not to raise suspicions. Although it tastes terrible for her, she buys a bottle because she must “[h]ide in plain sight” (67). Likewise, while watching a documentary with her friend Iona she “made [herself] drink from the plastic cup of wine” (69), although she knows that she is pregnant. Also, she already wears a “baggy shirt” (69) or “black jumper” (96) to disguise her body. Moreover, during her escape she needs to spend time in some hotels or pubs and once again she has to drink with the others around. Otherwise, she thinks people might realize that she is expecting. She drinks and then pours her drink to the sink (97). In all these examples Calla hides her pregnancy against her will. As Karpin states: “... [I]n the process of regulating the female body, the law legislates its shape, its lineaments, and its boundaries” (325). Because the rules forbid her to bear a child, Calla must shape her body accordingly.

The control on reproductive rights of women applies on the white ticket women as well. Valerie is a white ticket therefore she is supposed to procreate. However, she believes “[c]hildbirth is a kind of death, ...” (195), and she adds: “All my life I’ve been told I can only be complete if I grow something inside of me and bring it into the world” (195). Like

Calla, she feels she is lacking for a long time. Upon getting pregnant, she miscarries the baby on purpose because she does not want to be a mother. Nevertheless, her husband understands that it is not an accident, and he is disgusted with her (191). In a similar way, Calla's partner R is disgusted with her when he learns that she is pregnant (72). In both cases, acting against the man-made reproductive laws of this society Valerie and Calla disturb the social order and their bodies are found disgusting by their male partners. As Miller remarks: "Disgust evaluates (negatively) what it touches, proclaims the meanness and inferiority of its object. And by so doing it presents a nervous claim of right to be free of the dangers imposed by the proximity of the inferior" (9). Moreover, it "helps define boundaries between us and them and 'me and you'" (50). This feeling of disgust is used to justify the repression on female bodies. Women become others when they decide freely what to do with their bodies and act against the patriarchal laws. So, these women are sent away from the society to keep the rest of it intact and to free it from the dangers that they pose.

Overall, in both novels laws on reproductive rights are deployed to control and regulate female bodies. The laws are claimed to be in effect for the good of the society; however, they are the means to subjugate female bodies. In both *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*, the laws protect the foetus and the male citizens whereas women are held accountable if they seek abortion or conceive a child and hence severely punished.

2.3. Panoptic Discipline and Medical Power in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*

Panoptic discipline is another strategy employed to repress female bodies. Using panoptic discipline, patriarchal hegemonic structures like the state, hospitals, and legal agencies turn female bodies into the objects of constant surveillance and thus make these bodies docile. This constant surveillance both can be overt like doctors' examining their patients and saving all their health information in the service of the state or it can be done covertly as it is in self-discipline. Subjects knowing that they are to be punished or excluded from the society start to control their own bodies in accordance with the will of the patriarchal regimes of power.

In the novels *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*, female bodies are repressed by panoptic discipline and institutions. In both novels, we see the medical power of doctors who represent the state and deploy its power over female bodies with constant control. In addition to doctors' control both states have borders which are closed for women who seek their reproductive rights. These borders are solid parts of the panoptic control. Moreover, with self-discipline and auto-regulation women control their own bodies not to challenge authority.

In *Red Clocks* as in *Blue Ticket*, bodies of women are repressed through panoptic discipline and medical power. In *Red Clocks'* America, there are not officials like emissaries of *Blue Ticket* who watch women all the time, but there are the new laws and Pink Wall which prevent women from leaving the country to search for their reproductive rights. When Mattie attempts to pass the Canadian border to get an abortion she is detained by the border officers as accordance with the new law which states: “‘If an unaccompanied minor registers a positive result on a FIRST RESPONSE Rapid Result Pregnancy Test, and cannot verify a legitimate personal or professional purpose in a Canadian province, she shall be taken into custody and returned to U.S. law enforcement officials’” (244). Without women's consent both states have right to test on their bodies.

Even if there is no one visible to watch women, they need to take precautions in order not to be caught by the authorities. Therefore, women need to act as if they were monitored all the time, which creates constant anxiety like it does on the inmates in Panopticon: “The more numerous ... anonymous and temporary observers are, the greater the risk for the inmate of being surprised and the greater his anxious awareness of being observed” (Foucault, *Discipline* 202). For instance, once again when Mattie's bus is stopped at the Canadian border, she fears police dogs thinking that they are able to smell her pregnancy (227). Another example is the Polyphonte Collective which secretly provides abortion for the women in need. The collective has to use temporary sites like a mobile clinic in order to ensure safety and not to be detected by the authorities (312). Its headquarters is hidden in the forest “by vine-clogged chain link and a live oak dangling with metal figurines. The

front door can't be seen through the bushes. The fence gate is padlocked" (312). It is designed as a derelict house because they "take the surveillance state and male-supremacist legislation pretty seriously" (312). In addition to the self-discipline caused by the panoptic control, the state also employs medicine and science for its own purposes to regulate the female body. Banning IVF for single women procreation is confined to the heterosexual family, which strengthens the state because it aims to focus on the nuclear family that is easy to control. The mission of the new law is: "*to restore dignity, strength, and prosperity to American families*" (32). What the state claims to care about is the heterosexual families not the individuals, especially women.

Moreover, in this new America of *Red Clocks* women are stuck in the borders. Abortion, and IVF for single women are illegal in the United States and if they seek them outside the borders, the Pink Wall, which is the border between Canada and the US, hinders women. "Healthcare providers in Canada are also barred from offering in vitro fertilization to U.S. citizens" (87), which is always reminded with the billboards around the town to female citizens:

A billboard on Highway 22 is a stick drawing of a skirt-wearing person with a balloon for a stomach, accompanied by:

WON'T STOP ONE,
WON'T START ONE.
CANADA UPHOLDS U.S. LAW!. (86)

With these constant threats women feel the repression on their bodies. Likewise, once Ro watches on TV "the funeral of a politician's wife who had used IVF to acquire two children and thereby had summoned (said the church's press release) her own death by cancer. She and her husband coveted things that were not theirs, ..., and meddled in matters of the womb. The politician's wife was now a resident of hell. Flee her example" (200). The examples are shown to women to make them deter from their reproductive decisions, as a result women lose the power to decide on their reproductive choices. Women can never be sure when they are visible to the power mechanisms. Like the inmates in Panopticon, having the central tower in front of their eyes, women face the

threats in the forms of billboard warnings and TV programmes all the time. Also, women like the inmates do not know when they are looked at exactly, so they need to control their own bodies continuously.

In *Red Clocks* solidarity among women is not always possible because of this panoptic control. The new laws may immediately turn women into criminals if they seek or provide help. When Mattie consults Gin to get an abortion, her friend Ash refuses to accompany her because “[i]f they were caught, the police might think she was seeking one too, and she’d be charged with conspiracy to commit murder, and she’s already sixteen, and at sixteen you can be prosecuted as an adult” (150). Moreover, Ash does not accept to ask her sister the number of the term house she has applied before because it is too dangerous. Also, they cannot trust online term houses since they can be traps (258). Thus, we see how panoptic discipline constrains women and their mobility. As Foucault states for Panopticon: “He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection” (*Discipline* 276). Likewise, women here become the ones who control their bodies according to the commands of the state. The female bodies are both regulated by the institutions and by the self-discipline which is shaped by panoptic control.

Doctors also play a significant part in controlling female bodies as medical authorities. In the novel, Dr Kalbfleisch is responsible for Ro’s IVF treatment. He is the expert so Ro cannot question his treatment even when she wants to. She thinks “she is submitting her area to all kinds of invasion without understanding a fraction of what’s being done to it” (5). Ro’s body becomes the object of medical intervention. As Van Dyck states: “The tendency to define reproduction as a primarily biological or genetic process occurring within a corporeal vessel is enhanced by the power of medical knowledge to count as the only legitimate way of knowing” (32). With the effect of medical knowledge, the body is seen just like a container or vessel designed to carry the foetus. As a result, women’s experiences and feelings are completely dismissed in this process and that is why Dr

Kalbfleisch could “[smile] while citing bleak statistics” (3), and he does not look at his patient “even when asking a direct question” (87). The doctor is emotionally distant because what he does is to examine an object of knowledge, which is a female body. As one of his patients “describe[s] him as a NILF: Nazi I’d Like to Fuck” (44). This kind of treatment toward women’s bodies finds its roots in Cartesian thinking according to Capra as she states: “The Cartesian division between mind and matter ... has kept doctors from seriously considering the psychological dimensions of illness, and psychotherapists from dealing with their patients’ bodies” (59-60).

Ro trusts Doctor Kalbfleisch as he is a “trained professional” (3). However, he does not even realise that Ro might have polycystic ovary syndrome though she sees him for over a year. When Ro goes to Gin for infertility treatment, just in the first examination Gin says she may have polycystic ovary syndrome which hinders ovulation. “The hair on Ro’s upper lip. The irregular bleeding. The scummy tongue. The dryness” (45), seeing these symptoms Gin makes an initial diagnosis. However, Dr Kalbfleisch has not checked Ro for PCOS, yet. Only after Ro asks for a check for PCOS, he does it and the result is positive: Ro has PCOS. The doctor announces the results saying that: “As you know I was concerned about the possibility of you having polycystic ovary syndrome” (145). He talks like he is the one who is concerned. In fact, it is upon Gin’s advice that the doctor decides to check for polycystic ovary syndrome. Dr Kalbfleisch fails even diagnosing one of the most common fertility problems in women. This can be related to the medicalization of childbirth, which takes the control of women’s bodies from themselves to the male doctors by excluding women’s bodily experience. As Sawicki summarises: “... [F]eminists describe the “medicalization” of childbirth as the transformation of pregnancy into a disease and the takeover of a female centered natural process attended by skilled and caring midwives by a group of male physicians interested in establishing and expanding their practices, their occupational status and authority, and their control over women” (75). In Dr Kalbfleisch’s and Gin’s case, we witness how the male doctor takes the control of the female bodies though Gin, like a midwife, is more experienced than him. This does not mean that medicine or medical technology is totally repressing, but it depends on who uses it for what ends. In this novel, medicine is under the total control of the state which

regulates all operations on female bodies. Therefore, Gin is punished because she provides gynaecological treatment for women who do not have enough money or insurance. Punishing Gin, the state confines female bodies to the medical authorities which collaborate with the state only, not with women.

Panoptic discipline causes women to control the gestures and movements of their bodies as well. Because women are the objects of the patriarchal gaze, when they face with its representatives, they control their bodies, hiding the emotions and feelings. For example, when Dr Kalbfleisch tells Ro that she suffers from PCOS, Ro “recruit[s] her facial muscles into a smile” (145), and she does not cry in front of the doctor (146). Likewise, once Gin is arrested because of medical malpractice she demands the number of the post office from the police officer and the officer asks: “‘The one in Newville?’ She smiles because a nod would shake the tears out of her eyes and down her face” (162). In order not to be subjected to the manipulations of the doctor or the police officer, Ro and Gin choose to suppress their gestures. As Young concludes her discussion on differences between male and female bodily movement:

[T]he woman lives her body as object as well as subject. The source of this is that patriarchal society defines woman as object, as a mere body, and that in sexist society women are in fact frequently regarded by others as objects and mere bodies. An essential part of the situation of being a woman is that of living the ever present possibility that one will be gazed upon as a mere body, as shape and flesh that presents itself as the potential object of another subject's intentions and manipulations, rather than as a living manifestation of action and intention. (153-154)

Gin and Ro know that they are already treated as just bodies and objects to be scrutinized; that is why they prefer not to display their emotions. They limit their bodily movements when faced with the patriarchal males.

Like in *Red Clocks*, the nameless state itself in *Blue Ticket* is strikingly similar to a Panoptic place. Women always feel under the constant gaze of emissaries about whom they do not have much information. In the beginning of the novel, upon Calla's lottery result we as readers learn about the emissaries. Calla says: “At the desk, the emissary who had been on the door wrote down the results, to communicate to homes, to clinics, to

places distant and important that we did not know about. One by one we were called into another room, a different room to the girl who had pulled the white ticket” (19). The women are like objects of observation here. The emissary notes down the results and shares the information with the other institutions. Also, from the beginning women are divided into two groups as blue and white tickets and no connection between them is possible. They are sent to different rooms first in the lottery building and then to different places to live later, which is to prevent any collective resistance. Blue ticket women live in the city centre whereas the white tickets live in “the more docile suburbs” (35).

Moreover, immediately after the lottery both groups blue and white ticket are given supplies to reach the city on their own. The aim of this journey is not explained to the girls, but probably it is a way of proving their adulthood and it just shows how women’s bodies are subject to the powerplay of the state. As Calla remembers the day of the lottery: “An emissary handed us each a bottle of water, a compass and a sandwich from the table, wrapped in a napkin. We did not get to pick the filling. The bottle given to the white-ticket girl was larger than ours, I noticed, and she received two sandwiches” (11). From the beginning the white tickets are favoured. As would-be mothers they are protected by the state. Once again as Calla mentions: “On the road all those years ago I had seen something I do not think I was supposed to see. The white-ticket girl in the back of a car driven by an emissary from the lottery building. ... She looked wild, but I do not think she was being stolen away. She was being protected” (16). Whereas blue ticket women need to find their own means to reach the city. The girls do not know where to go and they feel bewildered. So, losing no time, soon after the lottery their paths are diverged (11) by the surveillance state.

In this state solidarity among women is almost impossible. They are divided into blue and white tickets and even among their own group there is almost no possibility for connection. Foucault describes in Bentham’s Panopticon the walls between the inmates hinder their connection and the supervisor who is supposed to watch them is invisible. “And this invisibility is the guarantee of order” (*Discipline* 274). Like the supervisor in Panopticon, the emissaries in *Blue Ticket* are not always visible so that women cannot

trust each other and act together. Women are kept ignorant about how emissary functions, so they regulate their actions accordingly. For example, Calla starts to disguise her body from the first weeks of pregnancy because she says: “Women would be the ones who knew. Women were my enemies now” (49). She does not know who follows her, who is the emissary for sure; therefore, she needs to hide her body from the very beginning. Moreover, women are constantly watched by the emissaries for that reason they abide by the laws and condemn the ones who do not obey the authorities. As Cummins states: “Under panoptic discipline, oppression comes in the form of the male gaze upon the female body, as well as the disciplining of women by other women” (36). When Calla is banished from the society and told to leave her home the summons is done discreetly. But while leaving she says:

... [T]here was no need for discretion now. In fact it was better that everybody knew, so that there was no way back. If I tried to return, my law-abiding neighbours would pelt me with vegetables, or worse. I would return to find the windows of my home smashed and my objects ransacked, and if I dared show my face they would drive me away again, or kill me with their bare hands. (83)

Because of the constant threat of being watched, women collaborate with the authority. They submit to the rules which repress their bodies and help the men in power. “Hence the major effect of Panopticon: to induce the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures automatic functioning of power” (Foucault, *Discipline* 274). Using the emissaries, the state exercises its authority without bare force. Like the inmates in a Panoptic institution, women do not resist or if someone among them resists they do not support her.

Calla is punished due to her pregnancy and an emissary brings a pack for her to take when she is set to leave the country. The pack contains “[o]ne small tent, a magic-trick tent, the type you shake out rather than assemble with ropes and pegs. A rudimentary map, eight packets of noodles and four of dehydrated meat, iodine tablets, a small knife, and a pistol that looked very old, antique even. Implements of basic survival” (56). She is sent on a journey again as if she had a choice. When the time to leave comes, an emissary appears on Calla’s door and gives her a yellow envelope saying “You’ve got to go at once, You get a half day’s head start, as an acknowledgement of your good service” (84). Calla

opens the envelope, and she sees it is empty. There is no warning or legal information about her banishment in the envelope. This shows how manipulative the state is. The emissaries follow Calla after twelve-hour passes and since they are everywhere it is clear from the start that her journey is futile. It is once again like an arbitrary game of the state on the bodies of women. There is no way to escape from this state because of the arbitrary rules and regulations; however, the authorities treat women as though they have an opportunity to decide on their fates.

As I have already mentioned, since women do not know how the emissary functions, they have to watch the way they act and behave constantly. Upon her banishment, Calla starts her journey and she is aware of the emissaries keeping track of her although they are not visible. Under this invisible threat she devises some plans to escape from the state officials obliterating her trace. Calla says: “I was not totally sure what was expected of me. Every so often I would veer on to another side road, take a circuitous route to make me harder to track. The lack of visible threat was unnerving, lulling, like I was drugged” (95). Because she does not know how she is supposed to act she feels she needs to control her steps all the time. She occasionally pulls her car over and writes the license plates of the cars trailing behind her pondering whether a detectable pattern exists or not (105). We witness how manipulative the state is and how “unverifiable” (Foucault, *Discipline* 201) the power is: Calla never knows if she is followed or not; however, she must be sure that she may always be under surveillance.

While Foucault discusses Panopticism and disciplinary power he gives the example of the measures taken by the authorities of a plague-stricken town in the 17th century and he clarifies how this system of surveillance operates:

The plague-stricken town, traversed throughout with hierarchy, surveillance, observation, writing; the town immobilized by the functioning of an extensive power that bears in a distinct way over all individual bodies—this is the utopia of the perfectly governed city. The plague (envisaged as a possibility at least) is the trial in the course of which one may define ideally the exercise of disciplinary power. In order to make rights and laws function according to pure theory, the jurists place themselves in imagination in the state of nature; in order to see perfect disciplines functioning, rulers dreamt of the state of plague. (271)

This dream state has come true in *Blue Ticket* for patriarchal powers, but it becomes a dystopia for women. In this state, women are like sick people in a plague who are supposed to need constant control and whose contact with the outside world is hence banned. Firstly, immediately after the lottery women's bodies are coded with blue or white tickets in the lockets thus, they are classified as objects. The locket is already something strangling which women have to wear around their necks all the time as Calla says after the lottery, "... the locket was around my throat now" (10). Moreover, women are not allowed to leave the country unless their doctors, whom they must pay regular visits, permit. When Marisol describes the country behind the border she says: "You cross, and then you take the locket off. Nobody sends their children into the country or follows anyone else around. Nobody has to see a doctor all the time. Only if you want to. Only if you're sick" (207). Since the country behind the border is a free one in comparison to this state, it is hard for women to get a visa to cross the border.

In *Blue Ticket's* world doctors who monitor, and control female bodies are the representatives of power. All women either white or blue ticket have to see their doctors regularly. As Foucault states in the 18th century "[t]he doctor becomes the great advisor and expert, if not in the art of governing, at least in that of observing, correcting and improving the social 'body' and maintaining it in a permanent state of health" (*Power/Knowledge* 177). Similarly, in this state doctors work for the welfare of the state monitoring and correcting female bodies. They examine women and collect information. Calla reports one of her interviews with Doctor A and portrays how he works: "He filled vials with my blood for mysterious purposes and observed the fluctuations of my weight and blood pressure. He nodded and gave me prescriptions written on yellow paper ... He was just part of my routine" (23-24). Doctor A regularly checks Calla's body, but she does not know the purpose of it; she just submits her body to the authority because Doctor A assures Calla: "Trust that I know you better than you know yourself" (37). After Calla is arrested by the emissaries Doctor A "corrects" her body once again without telling her anything. "... [H]e pushed his latex hands inside me. Only a couple of stitches, he said from between my legs. You're a little torn. I felt him piece my skin back together, sharp pain, then something different. Don't move, he said. An object scraping inside me, the

little wishbone of wire. My body tensed. No, no, I said” (257). Although Calla protests, Doctor A disregards her objections under the presumption of superior knowledge and expertise. He puts the birth control device inside her once more, as it is done at the beginning of the novel, and she is sent to a different city to live as a blue ticket again. It is a vicious circle for Calla, there is no way out for her. The doctor controls Calla’s body without her consent to propagate this patriarchal system.

Moreover, in the novel women are deliberately kept in ignorance about their bodies. Blue ticket women know little about pregnancy and childbirth because they are not supposed to be mothers. What they learn is just what the doctors and state preach. When Calla gets pregnant, she says: “I knew that my bleed would stop if I was pregnant. That was the only thing I had been able to pick up across all the years of my adulthood, and even that could have been an urban legend” (43). She is not sure about even this little piece of information. Also, she does not know how to feed a baby. When she witnesses a baby sucking her mother’s milk, she is astonished. She expresses how she feels: “... I realized that the baby was attached to her nipple, its mouth locked on her flesh. I thought about the heaviness of my breasts, hard and blue when undressed, and it made a terrible new sense” (240). As Calla’s statements reveal women are attempted to be alienated from their bodies by the panoptic state. For instance, in the art centre of Calla’s neighbourhood a documentary about childbirth is featured. It is “a little reminder of how lucky [the blue tickets are]” (69). Its purpose is to show how painful and “disgusting” (69) the childbirth is. Calla describes the process: “On the screen woman’s mouth was open in a scream of pain that had seemed to last for years, ..., the ridged wetness of her throat visible, ... I realized with mounting horror that the same pain lived inside of me ...” (69-70). Likewise, Sophie Mackintosh expresses what she has heard about pregnancy in her interview with Claire Armitstead: “I have had a lot of pregnant friends and family members and, hearing them talk about it, a lot of it is very weird: your teeth fall out, your hair falls out. My mum used to say people don’t tell you about it or you wouldn’t have a baby. So I was thinking of it as horror – of the pregnant body as a site of metamorphosis” (“Sophie Mackintosh”). Like in the real world, in *Blue Ticket*’s dystopic world pregnancy is regarded as an illness by blue ticket women, as something harmful to women’s bodies.

As Foucault puts it: “Generally speaking, all the authorities exercising individual control function according to a double mode; that of binary division and branding (mad/sane; dangerous/harmless; normal/abnormal)” (*Discipline* 272). Similarly, in *Blue Ticket* this control mechanism of binary division is applied to women. Women are both labelled as inferior to men (because there is no intervention to male bodies, no lottery for them) and also, they are divided into two separate groups, which makes them easy to be managed by preventing collective actions. Thus, in this example of childbirth documentary blue ticket women are both made to thank for their tickets because they will not experience that pain and they are disgusted by the white ones, or they pity them. In fact, it is a biological process of the female body; however, the state chooses to present pregnancy as something scary, something women have to avoid. Therefore, it controls and shapes the bodies of women.

Overall, in both novels panoptic discipline and medical control are used to repress female bodies. State officers in borders in *Red Clocks* and emissaries in *Blue Ticket* watch women and keep their gaze on them so they restrict women’s bodily movement. Also, doctors in both novels operate with the state turning women’s bodies into objects of examination and depriving them of their agencies.

2.4. The Utopian Impulse in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*

The novels *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* that I have attempted to analyse so far are the descriptions of highly oppressive patriarchal regimes for women. These fictional dystopian regimes portrayed in the novels bear similarities to the patriarchal social structures that women encounter in their very daily lives. For that reason, women as readers may feel close to the environment and the political manipulations on female bodies described in the novels, which is one of the features of the feminist dystopias. They work as a warning to the readers—especially women readers—and aim at raising awareness. This awareness raising is built with the utopian impulse in and outside the text. As Cavalcanti states: “In the feminist dystopias, the critique of the present is manifested in

the stylization and exaggeration of ‘what we have now’, and the women's move against the status quo is enacted as a utopian counterpart” (*Articulating the Elsewhere* 144). In *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* the utopian impulse is first in the composing of these novels by women writers, second in women’s acting against the totalitarian regimes, and third it is in the readers’ gaining insight about their desires.

The first utopian impulse in the novels is the act of writing by women writers Leni Zumas and Sophie Mackintosh. According to Cixous: “Woman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies ... Woman must put herself into the text as into the world and history—by her own movement” (“The Laugh” 875). As Cixous points out, writing about women is an act of resistance to the patriarchal discourse. In *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* both Zumas and Mackintosh resist the man-made discourse depicting their desires as women together with how these desires are attempted to be erased by the society and political actions. Both Mackintosh’s and Zumas’ experiences on fertility and reproduction issues might have had an influence in the context of the novels since each of them had similar experiences to the women characters in their fictional works. Zumas first attempted to conceive a baby via sperm bank like Ro does in *Red Clocks*, but years after she bore a child from her partner via IVF (“Leni Zumas”). Mackintosh, on the other hand, convinced in her early twenties that it was impossible for her to be a mother like Valerie; however, in her late twenties suddenly she wanted to have a baby like Calla in the novel (“Sophie Mackintosh”). It is likely that due to this familiarity the content of the novels is so close to our contemporary reality as women.

Together with their desires related to motherhood the writers also portray the desires of women living in the contemporary era. They become the voice of these women and show in a way that they are not alone in their struggles surviving in society as women. As Leni Zumas points out in writing the novels she contemplated on female bodies and desires:

... — [O]ur bodies — are seen more like spaces for public debate than the loci of our private decisions. It's really strange and horrifying. The biographer's question — how much of her desire to become a mom is biological, and how much of it is culturally

inherited, and how much of it is just her temperament — is a very real question for me, and for a lot of us, not just in relation to motherhood, but to the things we want in general. How do we come to want what we want? Does that desire just belong to us, or is it a product of history and socioeconomic factors? (“Powell’s Interview”).

As Zumas states these issues about female desires are questioned in the novel and probably lead the reader to think about their relations with their bodies and how society functions in the desires of women. Like Zumas, Mackintosh has a desire to write about the stories of women’s struggles. She remarks: “Living in a patriarchy, women’s stories are important for me, ... I’ve always been interested in alternative support structures, how to gather groups with everything going to pieces, and how women can look after each other but also betray each other” (“Sophie Mackintosh”). As she says so, in *Blue Ticket* Mackintosh portrays relations among women, their support structures together with their rivalries as blue and white tickets. These expressions of women’s needs and desires may have a vital role in shaping a critical feminist readership as Zumas hopes that her novel tends to be the one which might awake people politically (“An Interview”), and Mackintosh states she wants to make a change with her texts (“I’m Trying”).

The second utopian impulse in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* is that though they depict countries run by totalitarian governments which dismiss women’s will and choice limiting their rights, the novels suggest hope. As Cavalcanti puts it: “... [T]he existence of the feminist dystopias in itself contradicts any hopelessness to the extent that the texts manifest social acts of liberation which are both generated by and directed against a male-centred culture” (*Articulating the Elsewhere* 3). Even in these bleak environments, women attempt to employ their agency by challenging the repressive mechanisms of biopower, laws, panoptic control, and medicine. In addition to this with their open endings both novels provoke readers for the possibility of change and endeavour.

In *Red Clocks*, women characters’ resistance to dystopic states and regulations suggest hope for the reader. Although seeking and providing abortion is a criminal act with the new law, Mattie seeks an abortion to achieve her dream of joining the Math Academy thereby becoming a scientist in the future. Ro helps Mattie, because having a baby at the

age of sixteen would be a hindrance to her education, and takes her to the Polyphonte Collective, which is an underground resistance organisation formed by women to offer affordable abortion (314). Apart from abortion the collective also provides other services such as: “Sliding-scale mental-health counseling. Sliding-scale legal services for women who are unhoused, undocumented, battered, addicted. Free childcare during court appearances. Cop watching at protests” (314-15). Even under this totalitarian government resistance groups are formed to be in solidarity with women.

Though solidarity among women is limited due to the surveillance state, Susan also succeeds in helping Gin to be released from the prison. Gin stands trial for medical malpractice and conspiracy to commit murder. She is accused of assisting Sarah Dolores Fivey to terminate her pregnancy by giving her some oil including some herbs. Although Sarah has never been pregnant, she lies to the court because she is afraid of her husband, who is the school headmaster Mr Fivey. She is constantly exposed to violence by him that is why Gin gives her some oil for scars to heal the bruises left by the severe beatings. However, in the court to conceal the husband’s violence against herself, Sarah first accuses Gin of providing abortion. While watching the trial Susan remembers her chat with Sarah’s cousin Bryan, who mentions Sarah is beaten by her husband, but the family does nothing for her because “you don’t go into other people’s marriages uninvited” (304). Susan gives this information to Gin’s lawyer and together they convince Bryan to act as a witness for Sarah’s beatings in the court. Upon hearing Bryan’s statement Sarah admits she is threatened and beaten by Mr Fivey and she adds “I’m done doing his laundry” (305). During the trial Susan thinks she is too tired to care about politics on women’s bodies: “The Personhood Amendment, the overturning of Roe v. Wade, the calls for abortion providers to face the death penalty—the person she planned to be would care about this mess, would bother to be furious” (252). Upon that realization she decides to help Gin thereby with Susan’s tracing evidence Gin becomes free from imprisonment.

In addition to these instances of support among women, the open ending of *Red Clocks* signals hope for the reader in this dystopian time. The women characters develop through the novel and assert themselves. Susan tells her husband Didier she wants a separation

which she intends to talk about from the beginning of the novel. She decides to leave all the housework and the role of being a wife saying “Goodbye, house. Goodbye wife” (326). Mattie joins the Math Academy and plans to study marine biology. Ro perceives that “she wants more than one thing” (348) and she is capable of realising her dreams. She decides to be an active agent in her life from now on. Instead of writing accusations from the world on her notebook, she now focuses on her desires:

To write the last sentence of *Minervudottir*.
To write the first sentence of something else.
To be courteous but fierce with her father’s doctors.
To be a foster mom.
To be the next principal.
To be neither.
...
To quit shaking her head.
To go to the protest in May.
To do more than go to a protest.
To be okay with not knowing.
Keep your legs, Stephens.
To see what is. And to see what is possible. (348-49)

She desires to stop reducing life to a “checked box” (348) and to see the possibilities around herself.

Similarly, in *Blue Ticket* it is possible to see the utopian impulse in women’s resistance to the regulations and in the open ending of the novel. Although women live in a highly panoptic state, they still question the rules of the society and attempt to follow their own desires to be a mother or not. The lottery assigns a blue ticket for Calla, Marisol, Therese, and Lila but acting against the law they choose to be a mother. Lottery defines the role of women in the novel like the society does. In the lottery clinic a slogan is written on the wall for young girls: “Be careful in your wanting” (4), which dictates how to live and works as a threat at the same time. Acting against the lottery suggests a possibility for the reader as well to make their own choices. The fugitive women in *Blue Ticket* assume the position of proactive participants rather than mere spectators though their rebellious acts may not consistently achieve the intended outcomes and may inadvertently reinforce the patriarchal standards they seek to challenge. With their endeavours, both the women

characters in *Blue Ticket* and the writer exemplify the ongoing struggles involving in reshaping the identity of women.

As in *Red Clocks*, in *Blue Ticket* solidarity among women is limited because of the panoptic state; however, the fugitive women attempt to form an all-women society in the forest helping each other in the relatively safe world they have created. On her journey Calla meets Marisol who is also a pregnant blue ticket woman like her. They continue the journey together during which they form a special bond—they become emotionally close to each other as both being friends and romantic partners. In the cabin they find in the forest Calla and Marisol live the life that they desire for—away from the restrictions of the society. As Calla puts it: “We had meant to stay a night, maybe two. Suddenly we had been there for a week, and then longer. ... It was hard to move on from somewhere like that. From the quiet that lay on the trees after rain fell, the earth muffled with brown leaves and pine needles” (167). In time the cabin becomes their safe place and other women Therese, Lila and Valerie join them, together they form a kind of sisterhood. They bath each other, varnish each other’s nails, find food and share, talk about their feelings and experiences on being pregnant. Upon these acts and conversations Calla discovers the “kinship” (192) among women.

However, the solidarity among women in the cabin could not last long. Upon the death of Therese, the sisterhood they have formed begin to fall into pieces because Therese’s death reminds the other women the threat of the emissaries who follow them. As Calla states: “The safe place was no longer safe; we had been there too long, outstayed our welcome. ... I couldn’t help but dwell on it when I woke early in the morning: Therese on the ground and the mud staining her makeshift pregnancy clothes. Even the comforting sound of the leaves had become sinister. The earth itself had turned on us” (224). Once again, they realize they have to continue the journey, the cabin is not safe anymore thereby the women start to leave the cabin one by one ending the solidarity. Nevertheless, as I have already stated before, even if the life in the cabin does not happen to be longer, the act of resistance itself and forming an all-female society in solidarity manifest the utopian impulse in the novel. Under this totalitarian patriarchal regime being an active agent may lead a change.

Even if Calla could not succeed in her endeavour at the end, she has changed through the journey discovering her desires and identity. Through the journey she learns how to survive on her own overcoming the challenges. Also, she finds out her desire toward Marisol and let a romantic relationship begin with her.

After Calla leaves the cabin, she goes to the beach with Marisol and lives in a tent for a short time. When she is in the beach, she is in the last period of her pregnancy, but she does know nothing about giving birth. So, she breaks into a white ticket woman's house who has a new-born and seeks help from her. Although this patriarchal state attempts to make women enemies of each other separating them as white and blue ticket this woman supports Calla telling her all she knows about pregnancy, delivery, new-borns, and motherhood. "The baby will come out on a cord, and you have to cut the cord, but not too soon. You have to wait until placenta comes out, that's the red thing on the end, ... Babies cannot control their temperature. They cannot regulate their emotions. They are wholly dependent on you" (240-41). We see the solidarity between white and blue ticket women here. Even this little act of sharing experience is a rebellious act in this state since there is supposed to be no communication between these two groups.

In the open ending of *Blue Ticket*, the utopian impulse is also apparent. At the end of her journey, Calla is arrested after giving birth to her daughter Nova and taken to a clinic by the emissaries. Marisol is there waiting for her. She has made a bargain with the authorities; she is supposed to find fugitive women on the road and deliver them to the emissaries in return for leaving the country with her own child (265). Marisol's baby is stillborn, so she leaves the country with Nova for a new life free from the restrictions of this state. Calla says: "I imagined my daughter grown, a locket around her neck, but only decorative. Only hollow. Nothing inside to tell the world her future, or where she came from. ... I imagined her running fast but not away from anything" (273). Though Calla is trapped in this system at the end of the novel, she is put into a bus and taken to a city to live as a blue ticket again, there is still hope for the ones who can leave to live in another country as well as for the ones who react to the norms of this society. As Baccolini states for the open ending of the critical dystopias: "... [A] sense of regret and of missed

opportunity accompanies the awareness and knowledge that the protagonists have attained. Instead of an easily compensatory and comforting happy ending, the critical dystopia's open ending leaves its protagonist dealing with his or her choices and responsibilities" (*Dark Horizons* 130).

The utopian impulse lastly lies outside these dystopian novels in their working as warnings as Baccolini states ("The Persistence" 520). Because both *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* are about the experiences, dilemmas, and struggles of contemporary women, they are supposed to raise women's awareness of their own bodies, desires, and in total the lives they lead. The novels are close to the contemporary realities of womanhood with their depiction of patriarchal restrictive regimes, the changing laws that attack female bodies directly and criminalize women, and ordinary day situations manifesting to the readers that they already live in a dystopic world. Thus, this may provoke women to take action strengthening the support structures with their fellows and free themselves from the limitations with the rebellious moves like the fictional characters do in the texts. As Cavalcanti rightly points out: "What may be learned during a voyage throughout the realms of the feminist dystopia is that if you look long enough and engage with the texts in their full potentialities, you will see the picture of utopia forming" ("The Writing of Utopia" 65).

CONCLUSION

Feminist dystopian fiction is never far from politics. Through this genre women writers critique the society and governments of their own time as well as patriarchy. As Sargisson remarks: “Engagement in debate and critique of the status quo remain characteristic features of utopian thought. Debate is engaged because the author is politically or ideologically committed in some way to the project in question. A primary function of feminist utopian thought is, unsurprisingly, to criticize patriarchal society” (27). In the novels *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* which are the subject of this study, patriarchal system of thought and governments are criticized. In both of these fictional worlds, like in reality, female bodies are repressed through normalisation, the use of laws on reproduction, and panoptic discipline as exercised by the medical institutions and practices. In this sense the novels are close to our contemporary world because in this century reproductive laws on abortion and in vitro fertilization, how women should look in public and what they should wear, and the strict control on pregnant bodies by the medical authorities are still controversial issues. These novels reflect the dystopic realities of contemporary womanhood. That is the reason why I analysed these two novels comparatively in my study and attempted to show how female bodies are repressed by the patriarchal hegemonic structures in contemporary feminist dystopias.

Booker points out: “The principal technique of dystopian fiction is defamiliarization: by focusing their critiques of society on spatially or temporally distant settings, dystopian fictions provide fresh perspectives on problematic social and political practices that might otherwise be taken for granted or considered natural and inevitable” (*Dystopian Impulse* 26). What Booker defines here is true for both 20th century feminist dystopias, *Swastika Night* and *The Handmaid’s Tale* that I briefly analysed comparatively in the introduction. In these two novels, the settings are distant with regard to time. Both novels are the products of their own historical context thereby depicting the repression of patriarchy on women’s bodies. They portray women’s experiences living under totalitarian regimes covering the strict control on women’s education, appearance, reproduction, which causes

restrictions on their lives. Under patriarchy women completely lose their agency, which is a warning for the reader of the possible outcomes of the current practices: In *Swastika Night*'s context it is the rise of Nazi ideals and in *The Handmaid's Tale* it is the conservative governments both in Europe and America and their policies on female bodies like controlling reproduction and abortion.

Unlike what Booker comments in the quotation above in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* the settings are not faraway lands or distant time. In *Red Clocks* the events take place in The United States, not very different from today's America. Also, in *Blue Ticket* the story sets in an unnamed country, which makes it universal, and this country is on the very earth we presently inhabit. So, these fictional worlds are similar to the society we as readers live in in terms of place. Like their predecessors in the 20th century, the novels work as warnings of the consequences of the current political and social practices since the events happening in the novels are close to contemporary realities of womanhood. As Baccolini states: "...[D]ystopia shows how our present may negatively evolve, while by showing a regression of our present it also suggests that history may not be progressive" (*Dark Horizons* 115). For example, *Red Clocks*, written in 2018, depicts an America in which abortion is illegal no matter what. Likewise, just recently, on June 24th, 2022, in the USA The Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* "the ruling that in 1973 declared abortion a constitutional right. The court has thereby torn up a right it granted almost half a century ago" ("The Supreme Court's Rejection of Roe"). This showcases how real the repression on the female bodies is and how dystopias are close to women's current reality. As it happens in *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*, women's right for abortion could be violated at any time, which is a real and ongoing threat for female bodies.

In both novels I attempted to analyse, female bodies are repressed through various mechanisms of power. One of the questions of this study is why female bodies are continuously repressed and regulated by the patriarchal structures. To this end I have researched the traditional views on mind and body in Western philosophy. First, I have discussed Cartesian dualism of mind and body. In Cartesian thought mind and body are opposite to each other, while mind represents rationality, body stands for irrationality and

hence it is connected to women. This division of mind and body is used to justify the subjugation on women's bodies. Since the body is irrational, it needs to be tamed by patriarchy. As McNay states: "One dualism of central importance to Classical thought is the Cartesian opposition between mind and body. This dualism privileges an abstract, prediscursive subject at the center of thought and, accordingly, derogates the body as the site of all that is understood to be opposed to the spirit and rational thought, such as the emotions, passions, needs" (126). Because women are categorised as emotional, passionate, and irrational as opposed to men, they are associated with the body and thus their bodies are to be controlled.

Feminists regard the sexual differences between men and women as the core of the oppression on women, so the body is an important concept to debate on. As McNay states: "... [A] notion of the body is central to the feminist analysis of the oppression of women because it is upon the biological difference between the male and female bodies that the edifice of gender inequality is built and legitimated. The idea that women are inferior to men is naturalized and thus legitimated by reference to biology" (128). To overcome gender inequality, feminists posit various ideas. Liberal-egalitarian feminists see the female body either as something constraining so it should be disavowed to be equal with men, or as an effective resource for women's empowerment thus it should be embraced by women. On the other hand, social constructivist feminists do not denounce or glorify the body, they appeal for a transformation in social values that are coded and marked on bodies. Moreover, French feminists and difference feminists regard the body as a lived one. It is not a passive object or vessel, and it is not neutral. This group analyses the sexed body with all the social and political meanings it carries. Since the body is not neutral, the meanings put upon it can be transformed and rewritten by women embracing their differences among them.

To understand the ways female bodies are repressed, feminists employ Foucault's concept of biopower. In all aspects of life biopower manifests itself in regulating bodies through discourses and normalisation. This form of power is different from the disciplines because it is exercised in more subtle ways, it does not use physical force instead it employs

internalization and normalisation as a means of repression. Thus, people yield to these power mechanisms without difficulty. As Foucault remarks with this new form of power “... the law operates more and more as a norm, and that the judicial institution is increasingly incorporated into a continuum of apparatuses (medical, administrative, and so on) whose functions are for the most part regulatory. A normalizing society is the historical outcome of a technology of power centered on life” (*Foucault Reader* 266). Normalising society is one of the issues that feminists discuss since the norms have an enormous effect on female bodies. They restrict the possibilities of the bodies, but mainly insidiously. Most of the time women do not even realize that they are under the grip of normalisation that is why it is hard to resist. As Barkty comments on biopower over female bodies: “This disciplinary power is peculiarly modern: It does not rely upon violent or public sanctions, nor does it seek to restrain the freedom of the female body to move from place to place. For all that, its invasion of the body is well-nigh total: The female body enters “a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it”” (79-80). Barkty’s analysis clearly shows how biopower operates on female bodies. Overtly, it does not limit the mobility of women; however, subtly it regulates the body without using any force.

As being one of the means of biopower, normalisation operates through discourses on female bodies. In *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*, normalisation affects and limits women’s bodily experiences. In *Red Clocks*, women internalize the discourse on their bodies. Ro thinks that her body is “broken” and a “failure” just because she cannot conceive a child (2). Also, her mother does not give her cookies when she is little in order not to make her “chubby” whereas her brother can eat more (58). Likewise, Susan is worried about her daughter Bex since she is going to have purplish circles under her eyes. Both getting chubby and having purplish circles under eyes are opposed to the society’s beauty norms. In order to fit into the society’s expectations, women regulate their own bodies. Similarly, in *Blue Ticket* normalisation operates on the female body. From the very beginning of the novel, the female characters long for the lottery that determines their life ahead. It becomes something they yield to willingly. The girls try to reach puberty as soon as possible to get their tickets without realising that it constrains their bodies. The lottery becomes the

“normal” of the society; therefore, nobody questions it. Calla even feels relief because she does not have to choose between being a mother or not (11). Moreover, blue ticket women are regarded as “sluts” (77, 127,144) even by the very women themselves. This is the prevalent discourse on blue ticket women, normalised by this society, and women already internalize it.

Another means of repressing female bodies is the laws on reproductive rights. Through these laws women’s bodies are made invisible and their experiences are not considered. The laws on reproductive rights, which are usually gender-blind, are claimed to be enacted for the benefit of the society. For this reason, it is difficult to challenge these laws, which shows the subtle form of biopower. As Karpin indicates: “It is the constant subject of a legislative force to recreate Woman in the image of a certain political project and thereby make that project the ‘natural state of affairs.’ Thus, a political battle is being fought on and in women's bodies” (327). The laws become norms and they are presented as “natural”, and all that is played on female bodies to form a certain docile subject. Female bodies are seen as commodities belonging to the state especially after they get pregnant. The rights of the foetus override the rights of women on their bodies.

In *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket*, reproductive laws on abortion and in vitro fertilisation also laws on adoption restrain female bodies. In *Red Clocks*, a new legislation, The Personhood Amendment, which bans abortion and in vitro fertilisation is approved. Moreover, another law Public Law 116-72 also known as Every Child Needs Two is to be enacted in less than three months’ time (31). With this law adoption is prohibited for unmarried people. Since Ro has a limited time due the new regulations, she both tries to have an IVF and to adopt a child. To this end she has to use a lot of medication which damages her body. Likewise, Yasmine, Mattie’s friend, who gets pregnant when she is under sixteen, attempts to stop her pregnancy on her own and does a self-operation because abortion is illegal, and women are charged with murder if they get an abortion. However, after the operation her uterus is damaged, and it is removed (259). Then she is sent to “Bolt River Youth Correctional Facility [which] is a medium-security state prison for females twelve to twenty years old” (285). Because of this law Yasmine, being not the only girl in the novel, loses her bodily

integrity. Whereas for the man who has a part in conceiving the baby there is no law, no restriction. Women are the ones who are held accountable and punished by the law, not men. Thus, under this political environment women do not have a lot of options, other than restricting their bodies or losing its integrity.

Similarly, in *Blue Ticket* women are repressed through laws on abortion. Unlike *Red Clocks* there is not a recent change in the rules of this society, but the women are born into this system of lottery. For men the lottery does not apply, they can choose the life that they want to lead. However, the lottery decides for the reproductive rights of women. If a woman gets a blue ticket, a wire is put into her body to prevent pregnancy. If she has a white ticket, it means she is supposed to be a mother even if she does not want to be. In both options female bodies are invaded by the regulations. Upon realising that she desires to have a baby, Calla takes the wire out from her body, which is a dangerous operation for her because it is not hygienic; however, that is the only option she has. After getting pregnant she needs to hide her body with special clothes like “baggy shirts” (69) in order not to be recognised by people and the emissaries of the state. Like Calla, Valerie’s body is also repressed as a white ticket woman. Although she is to procreate because of the lottery, Valerie does not want a baby and has a miscarriage deliberately, which results in her exclusion from the society. Once again, as in *Red Clocks*, women are left with limited options regarding their bodies. The laws decide for them.

The last mechanism of repression I have analysed in this comparative study is panoptic discipline and medical power on female bodies. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault describes how panopticism operates on people. The idea comes from Jeremy Bentham’s architectural design for prisons and hospitals. In Panopticon the inmates are constantly watched from a tower, which is in the middle of the structure, surrounded by the cells the inmates stay in. For the inmates the tower is visible, but they do not see if someone is in it or not. So, they have to behave as if somebody watches them all the time (273). No connection or communication is possible among the inmates because they are divided by the cells (273). Likewise, in patriarchal societies women live like the inmates in panopticon do. They are always under the constant gaze of the society, so they have to

regulate their own bodily movements and experiences. Also, together with the society doctors might work with the authorities using medical records to control female bodies. That is why radical feminists think "... patriarchal medicine monopolizes control over women's procreative bodies and reduces women to passive objects of medical surveillance and management" (Sawicki 76). Through medical processes, female bodies are turned to objects to be examined and they are not treated as independent subjects.

In *Red Clocks* and *Blue Ticket* like in *Panopticon* female bodies are repressed through constant threat of visibility as well as medical authorities. In both novels there are strict border controls for women who try to leave the country. Since women are watched overtly and covertly all the time, solidarity among them is almost impossible. Panoptic discipline makes them regulate their bodies as well as other female bodies around. Pink Wall in *Red Clocks* is the border between Canada and the US, which prevents women from entering Canada to have an abortion or IVF treatment. In *Blue Ticket*, to go abroad women need a visa, which is almost impossible to get, approved by their doctor. The doctors in both novels are the representatives of the patriarchal authorities. They collaborate with the state and propagate the system. Both Doctor Kalbfleisch and Doctor A regard their patients as objects to be examined and that is exactly what the state also does: taking the agency away from women and determining their lives with laws and norms.

Overall, as Foucault states in *The History of Sexuality*: "Where there is power, there is resistance, ..." (95). Even in these dystopias, women attempt to demonstrate their agency by challenging the repressive mechanisms of biopower and panoptic control. In *Red Clocks* Mattie's having an abortion with Ro's help shows that solidarity can be achieved despite the restrictive laws. Likewise, in *Blue Ticket* Calla strives to follow her own desire for being a mother and dares the authorities. In her journey other women, white or blue ticket, accompany her from time to time forming a kind of sisterhood and solidarity. In the end Calla has to surrender and continue her life as a blue ticket again, but her baby Nova is to live in another country with Marisol. The open endings of both novels signal hope for women. As Baccolini remarks: "[T]he ambiguous, open endings maintain the utopian impulse *within* the work. ... [T]he presence of utopian hope does not necessarily

mean a happy ending. Rather, awareness and responsibility are the conditions of the critical dystopia's citizens" ("Persistence" 520-521). With their open endings both novels leave readers with hope for a better future as well as provoking them to act for change before it is too late.



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