

Original Research Article

The Mutability of Identity and Trans-Subjectivation in Jeanette Winterson's *Art and Lies*

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ABSTRACT

The present paper intends to closely analyze the character of Handel as a trans-subject who evolves in the process of the novel of Jeanette Winterson, *Art and Lies*. His oscillation between a priest and a physician would be lime lighted through Catherine Malabou's perspective of plasticity and trans-subjectivation. Hence, the character's mutable stance in regarding his body as a cleric and a doctor would be spotlighted. Significantly, his encounter with a feminine body would be expounded as a path in which he faces the gap within the doctor character and the ecclesiastic one. The procedure of his treating a female body would serve as the rupture inside where he fluctuates between treating the womanly body as a man of God and a medical doctor. Moreover, the transition from destructive plasticity (trauma) to constructive self-realization would be illustrated as trans-subjectivity in Picasso. Demonstrating art as the catalyst which brings about the evolution of traumatic identity, the plasticity of art would be argued. Body as the realm in which I and the other encounter would be spotlighted and the role of other as the path to trans-subjectivation could be analyzed.

Introduction

Broadly accredited as one of the most significant British writers, Jeanette Winterson's works exhibit flitting in time, deconstructing the concept of space and undoing the deterministic and bounded notion of identity. Owing her reputation, as one of the most original voices of the 1980s, to her spectacular style and narrative, she was named as one of the 20 Best of Young British Writers by the literary magazine *Granta*. Winterson's obscurant spectacle on the perception of love and gender shies away from the established and anticipated narratives of her time on passion and sexual category, and dislodges the acknowledged cultural conventions.

Winning Lambda Literary Award twice, Jeanette Winterson's *Written on the Body* unlocks the floodgate of philosophical meditation on love by representing a narrator who is given neither name nor gender. *New York Times Book Review* entitled this beguilingly seductive novel as "at once a love story and a philosophical meditation" (1993) and *Publisher's Weekly* depicted it as "manipulating gender in the eulogy of lost love" (1993). This ambitious work of Winterson betokens the yawning conservatism on the phenomenon of love and constantly exposes the way the physical entity could play the significant role in one's perception of the innermost self and identity.

The present paper first provides the literature review on *Art and Lies*. Then, the Malabouean critical concepts of alterity without transcendence, destructive plasticity, and trans-subjectivation shall be presented. Subsequently, the core section of the study would be presented including "The Threesome in Trans-Subjectivity through Susceptible Bodies" and "Plasticity of Art and Body as Alterity without Transcendence for the Trans-Subject". Finally, the findings of the research would be addressed in the concluding section.

Literature Review

Christy Burns in "Fantastic Language: Jeanette Winterson's Recovery of the Postmodern Word" argues that Winterson's fictional character, Sappho in *Art and Lies* represents the monoglot and flattened aspect of language. "In *Art and Lies* Winterson adopted the voice of Sappho to articulate her concern for the flattened aspect of language" (1996: 278). She declares that not only does Winterson rearticulate the words of the dead, but she also conquers the death of language in her work.

Rina Wiel in *Literary Aesthetics of Trauma* elaborates on the outcome of destructive plasticity in Picasso of *Art and Lies* and asserts that "within the psychoanalytic framework of trauma persistently employed in this book, 'a seismic shock' does not 're-order' as much as overwhelm and damage the capacity to think symbolically." (2014: 158). Obviously, the slippage of meaning and the privilege of feeling over thinking could be the manifestation of the journey from form to feeling.

MerjaMakinen in *The Novels of Jeanette Winterson* elucidates that "here the women identify firstly with their fathers, and secondly with the masculine world of Jove, rejecting radical lesbianism for the position of new women instead." (2005: 144) Intermingling the macrocosm and microcosm, the novel commences with a prologue in which "the fifteenth-century alchemist and astrologer Paracelsus, ... looked for a unified pattern in the heavens that corresponded to the pattern of the human body, and the novel goes on to connect the medieval search for the 'Correspondence' with contemporary theories of hyperspace" (146) both within and without.

Methodology

The present study provides a close analysis which consists of selection and discussion of theoretical and descriptive material. The research method of the existing research is, thus, qualitative and categorized as theoretical study. Correspondingly, the existing research will be entirely literature-based in that, in the academic library research, the conclusions are based on the analysis of data of a particular area. Malabou argues the possibility of identity formation out of mere physical and synoptic connections of the brain and she expresses the way the neuronal identity is capable of transforming into a psychical and mental one.

Theoretical Framework: Critical Concepts

Alterity without Transcendence

Considering trauma as destructive plasticity, Malabou contends that the formation or appearance of alterity could be manifested in destructive plasticity where the other is absolutely lacking. In other words, in the notion of alterity without transcendence, the mere other in the experience of trauma could be solely being other to oneself. The condition of the plasticity of existence for Malabou could be "experiencing otherness starting with the defeat of any alterity of pure transcendence without the possibility of an exit" (2010: 70). Putting it in plain words, Malabou's concept of plasticity serves as a realm in which transgressing or shutting oneself seems unattainable. Shying away with transcendence, Malabou claims that alterity without transcendence has its manifestation in plasticity. Going into details, Malabou deciphers that, for Levinas, the alterity of the other occurs on the outside or elsewhere which he calls it metaphysics; however, a world without exteriority takes place in plasticity where the other could not be regarded as someone else.

Malabou persists that trauma inaugurates a new self in which its other is present within itself. She asserts that it is about "the other *of* the self *in* the self; but, here, *it is the self, and not the other, who never lets itself be encountered* when traumatized. It is the self who is lacking, without specular recuperation" (141). Putting emphasis on the metamorphic power of trauma, Malabou delineates that the traumatic event "in a certain sense, invents its subject. The past of the traumatized individual changes, becomes *another past* when it is not pure and simply destroyed or consigned to oblivion" (152). Considering the 'other' for being or an issue beyond essence, Malabou delineates that although transgressing the frontiers of Being seems unattainable, this is the lack of beyond which motivates change and does not imply a lack of alterity.

Contemplating on the notion of essence, Malabou reclaims that through the essence of a thing, it could observe itself foreign to itself; in other words, alterity could be defined as the strangeness within. Calling alterity an unexplored realm of self-identity, Malabou rejects the alterity beyond or transcendental and ventilates that transformation could be labeled as the birthplace of alterity. Elucidating the plasticity of the existence as the state of impossibility of an exit, Malabou adds that alterity could be sought and found wherever metamorphosis is involved.

Destructive Plasticity (Trauma)

Catherine Malabou in her *Ontology of the Accident* redefines trauma through the perspective of neuroscience and elaborates that the transformation of identity after an extreme strain first manifests itself in the brain and then its implications could be visible. “Destructive plasticity enables the appearance or formation of alterity where the other is absolutely lacking” (2012: 11) and “by contrast, the flight identity forged by destructive plasticity flees itself first and foremost” (12). She emphasizes on philosophical aspect of trauma and asserts that “what destructive plasticity invites us to consider is the suffering caused by an absence of suffering, in the emergence of a new form of being, a stranger to the one before” (18). She elaborates on her unique view of trauma as destructive plasticity and asserts that “even if the destructive and disorganizing explosive power is present virtually in each of us, ready to manifest itself, to take body or self-actualize at any moment, it has never received a name in any field whatsoever” (5). She refers to the phenomena of coldness and indifference and regards them as “characteristics of destructive plasticity, of this power of change without redemption, without teleology, without any meaning other than strangeness” (24). In Malabouean standpoint, trauma or destructive plasticity equals the transformation or mutation of body into another body and hence, another identity absolutely diverse from the previous one.

Trans-Subjectivation

In “A Conversation with Catherine Malabou”, Malabou gives details of trans-subjectivation and reveals that the subject “trans-subjects itself constantly;” (2008: 4) however, “trans-subjectivation does not mean that you become different from what you used to be” (5). Delineating the notion of trans-subjectivation, Malabou throws light upon the issue that in trans-subjectivation absorbing the other’s diversity could be unattainable, as well. Illuminating the presence of a space within oneself between two forms of self, Malabou claims that trans-subjectivation is the experience of two opposing forms of self within oneself.

Defining it as a journey within oneself, Malabou affirms that plasticity and trans-subjectivation could be two sides of the same coin. Consequently, Malabou’s notion of plastic self could bring about a political and an emancipatory outcome as plastic subject is capable of transforming its way of being. Catherine Malabou in *What Should We Do with Our Brain?* intertwines the concepts of subjectivity and plasticity and states that “between the upsurge and the explosion of form, subjectivity issues the plastic challenge” (2008: 82). In other words, Malabou argues that in the journey from self to self, the distance between self and self could be considered as the product of transformation which she names it trans-subjectivation.

Results and Discussion

The Threesome in Trans-Subjectivity through Susceptible Bodies

Expressing his doubtful mind on the mundane and the sacred, Handel brings about the question of the supernatural. Being both a doctor and a priest, he asks “a few lines of physics had been turned into a miracle. Or: A miracle has been turned into a few lines of physics?” (1994: 1) Commenting on the notion of God as incomprehensible, Handel, the priest-doctor, pays attention to the liminality of the profane and the pious which is ‘body’. Delineating the subtle border between masochism and piety, Handel asserts that “I prefer to be slightly cold, slightly hungry, to spend less on myself than I could, more on others than I should. I do not think of myself as a masochist, not even when I rise in the early morning dark to run my blue body through a mile of frost” (3). To be able to deal with the problem of desire, Handel settles on considering the other bolder than the I.

Yearning for women, yet being religiously restricted by priesthood, Handel articulates that “I like to look at women. That is one of the reasons why I became a doctor. As a priest my contact is necessarily limited. I like to look at women; they undress before me with a shyness I find touching” (4). Not only does he select a career as a physician but he also appears to serve as a gynecologist. Touching the feminine body in the most private parts and not being touched, it could be expounded that Handel takes an elusive method to get away from the process in which the reversible body operates. Handel endeavors to observe the body of the other, however, not to be watched. Attempting to avoid his body being noticed, he mentions that “the riskiest thing you can do is to be naked with another human being” (4). Shying away from the reversible body which concomitantly touches and is touched, Handel expresses interest in susceptible body which expresses you before I. Regarding the body of the other prior to his own body, Handel commences a process in which he gains knowledge of his body and hence identity through the body of women.

Yearning to feel, Handel asserts that “reportage is violence. Violence to the spirit” (6), and “I too long to feel, but feeling genuine and deep” (7). Discovering the feminine body as the mere path to the realm of feeling, Handel “was becoming the

thing he feared" (7). Expressing death as the routine which "passes under my hands" (10) or child bearing which "I have to confess that babies do not move me much (10), Handel contemplates "what of me is mine?" (11) Profoundly delving into the question of subjectivity, Handel lime lights the prison of language in which he is restricted by as the first problem. "Can I speak my mind or am I dumb inside a borrowed language, captive of bastard thoughts?" (11) Believing in 'KyndlyEnclyining,' Handel articulates that "things move violently to their place, but calmly in their place" (11). Elaborating the plasticity of identity, Handel elucidates that "Self is not a random collection of stray desires striving to be satisfied, nor is it only by surpassing such desires" (12). Mulling over the question of self, Handel finds it interwoven with the question of how to live.

Weighing up the plasticity of subjectivity, Handel reveals it intermingled with the plasticity of mind and time. Delineating the fact that "impossible to detach the observer from the observed" (15), Handel brings about the problem with the notion of neutral observer. Demonstrating the impossibility of distinguishing any experiment and experience from the observer, Handel amalgamates the plasticity of memory and temporality. Undergoing a clash between his identity as a doctor and the opposing one as a priest, Handel casts doubt on every narration per se and elucidates that "I know how difficult it is to say *exactly* what happened even a moment earlier" (15). Regarding 'remembering' as "the most awkward fact," (15) Handel merges fact and fiction to emphasize on the plasticity of time and memory.

Illustrating the unreliability of memory and the past, Handel comments on the plasticity of memory and argues that "when I am alone, and the experience, the emotion, the event, was mine and mine alone, how can I say for certain that I have not invented the entire episode, including the faithful memory of it?" (15) Displaying the plasticity of being as a combination of temporality, locality and memory, Handel does away with his past, objectivity and science identifying himself as a fiction, space and light. "On what can I depend, if not my past, if not objectivity, if not the clean white coats of science? Should I acknowledge the fiction that I am? A man made of nothing but space and light" (15). Pondering on the significance of being and subjectivity, Handel concludes that it is more trans-subjectivity rather than reaching an ultimate and fixed subjectivity. "And myself? Observe me. There is something to be gained from my surface uses, and perhaps a little more from my lower depth, but my very bottom? That's where I am alone, the observer and the observed" (16). Confirming the existence of at least three simultaneous forms of being, Handel opens up an observing space between his two opposing selves.

Adoring the body of the beloved; yet avoiding any sexual intercourse, Handel spotlights that he reached the ground zero of being in the zero ground of December while touching the beloved's breasts. Enlightening his experience, Handel gives details that "I had my hands on her breasts, but, and I know this is bizarre, I felt as though her breasts were holding me, safe, firm, sexed. I wanted to stay there, on the zero ground, my hands on her breasts. We didn't make love" (59). Turning away from love and sex, Handel seeks the other not in the other women but in the other breasts as a physician. Amalgamating the priest-doctor ideology, Handel ponders the affinity between divinity and body. "I don't want to be a pedant, but surely a phallus is only divine when it is strapped on to a god? Does the god make the phallus or does the phallus make the god?" (64) Endeavoring to unite the sacrosanct and the secular, Handel refers to himself as a Centaur and interprets darkness as another form of light. Considering priests, the adorers of sins and the doctors as the admirers of wounds, Handel poses the question whether he could be semi man and semi beast.

Considering Catherine Malabou's definition of the procedure of subjectivation, it could be asserted that Handel reaches perceiving the state of trans-subjectivity via his body particularly his sexuality. Malabou in *Changing Difference* argues that

to construct one's identity is a process that can only be a development of an original biological malleability, a first transformability. If sex were not plastic, there would be no gender. If something were not offered for transformation in the natural and anatomical determination of sex, then identity construction would not be possible (2011: 138).

Consequently, Handel enters the process of trans-subjectivity, yet, he desires a female body while abandoning sex with her. Regarding the word 'sex' as both gender and sexual intercourse, it could be asserted that Handel, by discarding sexual relationship with his beloved, observes both his body and his sexuality as alterable. Depicting himself as "I, Handel, lover, fool, priest, madman, doctor and death warrant" (94), Handel decides on the plasticity of narration to convey who he is and has "only time to tell what is left before the end" (94). Amalgamating trans-subjectivation, sexuality and godliness, Handel refers to the notion of 'resistance' by which trans-subjectivity crosses the threshold of subjectivity. "There's legend, isn't there, that Lucifer had no genitals until he rebelled against God, thereby grew the monstrous sacks and the thick pole of popular envy and fear" (94). Expressing the concept of plasticity, Handel expounds that "surely a transformer should be

transformed" (94) and delineates that "what we think we see, we don't see, I know that. I know that colour is an intervention of light" (96). In other words, Handel concludes that having a bird's-eye view, plasticity demonstrates itself as the plasticity of being.

Contemplating on being, birth, receiving of the soul by the embryo, and identity, Handel wonders whether there is a fixed self and identity or not. "if there is no Self to control?" (98). Wrapping it up with the conceptualization of plasticity of identity, Handel pays attention to the "gene pool that has made you one shape rather than another" (100). He illuminates the issue that "is that you? Look deeper: how much of your thinking has been thought for you by someone else? Speak Parrot!" (100). Not being able to trust language or memory as the sources of self-realization, Handel returns to the body of the other as the source of being and knowing. However, knowing the other's body contradicts half of him as a priest, therefore, he becomes "defrocked for slipping [condoms] in the free Bibles" (103). Endeavoring to solve this contradiction, the mere solution appears as being a physician; nevertheless, Handel opts on treating female rather than male bodies.

Observing gender and sexuality as svelte and mutable, Handel enlightens the concepts of boy-woman, male-mother, and woman father. Moreover, truth is replaced by the image of truth and memory by the invention of memory. "But if what can exist does exist, is memory invention or is invention memory?" (108) Lime lighting the plasticity of gender, memory and truth, Handel gives detail about language particularly naming. Expounding a complicated relationship with another man, Handel asserts that "he called me by name, not my Christian name, which is Frederick, but his own name, in love and play and out of our shared delight. Handel. I kept the name but lost the namesake, Handel, a composer happy in his own enchantments" (108). Observing the process of naming as a self-destruction, it could be argued that Handel "destroys the outer shell in order to liberate the living kernel within" (2005: 60). Deconstructing himself by demonstrating his name as a bare signifier seeking out a signified, Handel mentions the spacing of time. By merging locality and temporality, Handel alters the notion of deconstruction and illuminates the concept of plasticity. Believing in "that which is lost is found" (111), Handel concludes that "the majority of things in the world are such, that one would not believe them if one were told about them. Only those who experience it believe and do not know how" (111). Plasticity as the ever-mutable essence of everything lays itself bare in Handel's perspective over life, being, gender, memory, language, sex, and feminine body.

It could be concluded that the feminine body as the liminality between godliness and prostitution manifests itself as a paradigm by which Handel achieves trans-subjectivation. By being acquainted with the female body as a physician, he opens up a gap between his subjectivation as a priest and the one as a doctor. The course of being familiar with the female body, in fact, serves as a rupture through which Handel's subjectivation forms and deforms. Chewing over temporality, locality, language and memory due to discerning femininity, Handel observes the mere plasticity of them and eventually womanliness expresses itself as plastic in the novel.

Plasticity of Art and Body as Alterity without Transcendence for the Trans-Subject

Picasso or Sophia, the second characters represented in *Art and Lies* manifests herself as a person who achieves self-realization as a type of trans-subjectivation through art. Art as the other of the self demonstrates itself a path by which the subject distinguished between the self and self in the self. "When she liked a picture, she found that she was liking some part of herself, some part of her that was in accord with the picture" (20). Endeavoring to flee from the gap released by art in the self, Picasso first expresses abhorrence. "She shied away from what she couldn't understand, and art first, disliked those colours, lines, arrangements, that challenged what she thought she knew, what she thought had to be true. It was an ordinary response to an extraordinary event" (20). Displaying the plasticity of art, Picasso delineates that art not only does creates a gap but it is also a gap in which the fears, limitations and ideas could be slipped in between.

Juxtaposing being and knowing, Picasso articulates that they are interchangeable as they could be regarded plastic. Putting understanding of art adjacent to being able to read, Picasso narrates them as transposable. "There was a day when Picasso understood. The only comparable day had been when she was a little child learning to read. The forms of the letters had hurt her eyes, she found them ugly, crude, arrogant, nothing" (20). Putting body and being side by side, Picasso lime lights that the reason why she became able to learn is due to the fact that she ceased thinking. Illustrating her body as a meaningful form, she argues that a true knowing which equals being merely occurs in the absence of thinking. Clarifying the delicate border between knowing and being it is asserted that "she started at the page. It meant nothing to her. She started at the page. It meant nothing to her. She started at the page. It meant nothing to her, and without thinking, she read it. The harsh

closed letters sang into being. Sang into her being. She could read" (20). Knowing as another version of being and body as the manifestation of the path to this being lay themselves bare in Picasso's stance.

Divulging the plasticity of art and its combination with being as a higher form of knowing, it is elucidated that "when Picasso looked at a Cézanne apple, she felt all the desire of Eve standing on the brink of the world, paradise falling away" (20). The collapse of the paradise as the destruction of any transcendental signified could disclose the alterity without transcendence in the art for Picasso. Art as the expression of other not transcendental but mundane paves the ground for discovering the other of the self in the self.

Juxtaposing art and body, Picasso narrates the history of her raped, abused and molested body by her brother. "Until I was fifteen, my brother used me, night after night, as a cesspit for his bloated adolescence" (21). Enlightening her destructive plasticity, Picasso becomes suicidal after her body being mal-treated. "She had learned to hate her body because he said he loved it" (43). After the most traumatic night and being found naked on top of the house, Picasso was taken to mental hospital. "Picasso had come back from the dead and she wanted life. She wanted to force life through the hour, to make it yield up its secrets, to waste no days of her reprieve in a self-built tomb" (46). Commencing a process of altering the destructive plasticity into constructive one, Picasso depicts art and her own artistic style as the other which sets her free from herself.

Reprobating the existence of solid subjectivity, Picasso argues the issue of trans-subjectivation and the gap created by art in her. "Myself imprisons me" (46). Endeavoring to open up a space in the self, Picasso seeks help from art as she believes that "art defeats time" (45). Putting her body adjacent to art, Picasso expresses the way her destructive plasticity transformed by art. "Pantophobia. Fear of everything. Fear of everything keeps me sealed up against everything. I fear the coloured world on my neutral body" (47). Conversely, Picasso achieves a moment of self-realization by the rupture crafted by art in her. Vividly observing the traumatic event of her life, Picasso perceives art as a slit inside. "There's no such thing as art" (49). Yet, she gains the power to distinguish this nothingness as the manifestation of the crack inside and asserts that "I blame myself for my part in my crime. Collusion in too little life, too little love. I blame myself. That done, I can forgive myself [...] enough to live wedged in by fear. Call the rain [...] I will not be what I was. The rain transforms the water" (50). Marking the plasticity of art out, Picasso enlightens that she has gained the ability to observe the gap within by the mutability of art.

Catherine Malabou in her *Plastic Materialities* argues that "in truth, art will have already produced her 'inedited' events calling for another responsibility that, without certainty on the form of their 'resolution,' in the very caesuras or derangement of the order of time, will promise the coming of the other" (2015: 151). Merging trans-subjectivity as a fluctuating state of concurrently being oneself and the other of oneself, Malabou includes the issue that

if the 'revolution' breaks with subjectivity, history, and knowledge, art will have always already plasticized and deconstructed its 'representation,' offering its absolute hospitality—without 'identity' and in 'radical difference'—to *l'a-venir*, where the 'unknown' can only be 'wondered' at (151).

Deeply delving into the plasticity of identity, Picasso ascertains that the mere perceiving of the self-results in comprehending the gap as the center of the self. "How shall I stretch out my hand to touch another when I am unable to touch myself?" (86) Exhibiting the knowing of the self-prior to discerning the other, Picasso paradoxically gains knowledge of herself through her body as the other and art. "Touch you. I can't. Touch me? You can't. How can you touch what doesn't exist. Existere Existence: to Stand Out. Ex: Out. Sistere: To stand. What makes a person stand out? A sense of self. To get beyond everyone else's lies I shall have to cut a figure of my own" (1994: 86). Realizing the self as a fissure in the self, Picasso comes to a decision to create a self which could be once more svelte.

Characterizing art as "the mirror of life" (86) which makes "the stale self unrhythmed" (59), Picasso seeks refuge in plasticity of self rather than rigidity of identity. In other words, the volatility of art brings about the instability of subjectivation and the detection of trans-subjectivity. To represent a response to the question of "how can I be what I know I am?", Picasso selects painting as her main career. Nevertheless, due to the plasticity of art, the mere result would be spotlighting the inconsistency of the subject. Lime lighting the transition of destructive plasticity into a constructive one which leads to trans-subjectivity, Picasso alters the hatred toward his father into a self-realization. "I decided to kill him. VICTORY [...] I picked up the kitchen knife and stabbed him [...] I shot him with his own intruder rifle [...] all this I did but he did not die. Impossible to murder the dead" (87). Extending the feeling of hatred to a weird numbness, Picasso endeavors to be similar to her father in order to be

able to get rid of him. Amending love to abhorrence, Picasso expresses the plasticity of affection superior to that of detestation.

Conveying the concept of art as not only life but also “the secret of life” (121), Picasso gets hold of the point that “more life into a time without boundaries” (87) could be her real victory against her father. “As the days passed, and I breathed hate, ate hate, plumped up hate for my nightly pillow, I felt a strange numbness, new to my body. In my efforts to be rid of him, I was becoming like him, his rage, his misery, his methods, his pain circulating my veins” (87). Drawing attention to numbness, Catherine Malabou asserts that “this breaking off would tear the psyche away from both love and hate. There are psyches that are beyond both love and hate, without being either sadist or masochist” (2012: 199). Demonstrating the power of creation by death, Picasso delineates that by becoming not only like his father but also his father, “the dead reproduce themselves” (1994: 87). Regarding Malabou’s viewpoint on hate and death, it could be argued that “the death drive possesses its own power of formal creation” (2012: 192). Considering destruction as a slit in life, Picasso alters the “morbidissima” (87) into constructive plasticity via life and art. Expressing creation in the heart of demolition, Picasso presupposes that plasticity of life devours destructive plasticity if alterity without transcendence could be encountered in the self.

Explicating the new-fangled commencement by the transformation of hatred, Picasso declares that it is “a beginning outside of hurt. A beginning outside of fear” (88). Narrating her traumatic childhood in which Picasso sought out for paternal affection, Picasso recounts that her father “pushed me off the roof” (84) and “as Picasso fell she thought, ‘He will love me now. My father will love me’ ” (84). The accident coincides the time Picasso struggles to inform the police of being molested by her own brother. Analyzing hate as an outcome of love, it could be clarified that “*the plasticity of love is superior to that of hate*” (2012: 192). Nonetheless, Picasso once more encounters with the revolution of hate into love by perceiving art. Reversing the process of self-hatred and masochism, Picasso terminates the narrative by revealing the fact that she is the illegitimate offspring of her father and “a Spanish maid who came to live in the attic. Her body was the colour of the sun. In the dark house, where no light was, she spread threads of gold from her hair” (111). Divulging the affair done by his father and juxtaposing it with herself being sexually abused by her brother, Picasso concentrates on life brought to the house.

As a conclusion, it could be asserted that Picasso or Sophia represents the transition from destructive plasticity to constructive one through art. Knowing her body via traumatic events of rape, murder and depression, Picasso seeks refuge in the realm of art. Juxtaposing the plasticity of art, Picasso reveals that being and art could be considered alike. Contemplating on the notions of being and knowing, Picasso concludes that the ultimate form of art would be obtained through being. Observing the gap created by perceiving art in herself, Picasso determines to know herself. Yet; she comes to the conclusion that not only is the subject alterable, but it is also a trans-subject concomitantly perceiving at least three states of being. Art as the trigger of realizing the other of the self in the self illuminates itself in the novel where Picasso observes art both as the other of herself and the mirror of the other of the self in the self. It could be claimed that the plasticity of art unbolts a space within Picasso’s self where she become competent to recurrently distinguish herself from herself. Revolutionizing her stance, Picasso shies away from being Sophia which indicates wisdom and exhibits more of an iconoclastic figure of Picasso. Moreover, Picasso deriving from a Latin word which implies magpie manifests extraordinariness within triteness; the way Picasso ventures to communicate through the plasticity of her art.

Conclusion

It could be concluded that the characters of Handel, Picasso or Sophia, and Sappho, represented in *Art and Lies*, displayed the manifestation of trans-subjectivity. It could be expounded that Handel as a physician and a priest crosses the limits of subjectivation and portrays himself as a trans-subject. By mulling over a feminine body, Handel experiences an open space within which observes his two identities as a clergyman and a doctor; Handel ultimately defines himself as a trans-subject. Endeavoring to alter destructive plasticity into constructive one, Picasso accomplishes her quest in search of herself and through the medium of art, she obtains her self-realization as a trans-subject. Sappho explicates the plasticity of language, literature and love in order to contemplate on the plasticity of form and its evolution into the process of plasticity. Merging language and identity, Sappho eventually exhibits herself as a trans-subject who believes in a genderless and limitless love.

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