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TEACHINGS OF COSMIC UNITY THROUGH VERTICAL JOURNEYS IN *THE MAGUS* AND *BRIEFING FOR A DESCENT INTO HELL* (*THE MAGUS* VE *BRIEFING FOR A DESCENT INTO HELL*'DE DİKEY YÖNLÜ SEYAHATLER ARACILIĞIYLA EVRENSEL BİRLİKTELİK ÖĞRETİLERİ)

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ÖZ

THE MAGUS VE *BRIEFING FOR A DESCENT INTO HELL'*DE DİKEY YÖNLÜ SEYAHATLER ARACILIĞIYLA EVRENSEL BİRLİKTELİK ÖĞRETİLERİ

GÜVEN ÇAĞAN

Bu çalışma **The Magus** ve **Briefing for a Descent into Hell** romanlarında dikey yönlü seyahatler aracılığıyla birlik düşüncesinin oluşumunu ve evrensel bağlantıları incelemektedir. Dikey yönlü seyahat dağ tırmanışı, uzaya çıkış ve yıldız gözlemi gibi yukarı yönlü; dağdan iniş ve yeraltına giriş gibi aşağı yönlü hareketler anlamına gelir. Diğer yandan savaşlar, deniz yolculukları ve sömürgeci seferler gibi yatay yönlü seyahatler ise benliği, gruplaşmaları, coğrafi bölünmeleri ve sınıf ayrılıklarını ön plana çıkarmaktadır. Ortalama bir insan dünya üzerinde kendi imkanlarıyla herhangi bir yere gidebildiği için kendini güçlü farzeder ve birey olarak hayatta kalabileceğini düşünür. Ancak dikeysellik konusu kişinin hem güçsüzlüğünü hem de makro alemdeki küçüklüğünü gösterdiği için benliğin önüne geçer. Göz önünde bulundurulması gereken bir diğer nokta da yukarı ve aşağının ruhsal çağrışımlarıdır. Dağ tırmanışı veya uzaya çıkış farketmeksizin, yukarı doğru seyahat eden kişi her şeyin kaynağı olan Tanrı'ya yolculuk ediyor sayılabilir zira yüksek yerler farklı zamanlarda ve bölgelerde Tanrı/ların evi olarak kabul görmüştür. Yeraltı da ölen kişilerin gömülmesi geleneğinden yola çıkılarak insanlık tarihinin bulunduğu yer olarak düşünülmüştür, böylece yeraltına inen kişi kendisini insanlık tarihinde bütünün bir parçası olarak bulur.

Tezin birinci bölümü tarih boyunca çoğunlukla Batı medeniyetlerinin yataysallık ve dikeysellik algılarını incelemektedir. Savın tarihsel süreçte analizi siyasi olayların, toplumun değişen düşünce yapısının ve bilimsel gelişmelerin seyahat olgusunu nasıl şekillendirdiğini görmemize olanak sağlamaktadır. Ayrıca farklı dönemlere ait edebi eserlere atıfta bulunarak teorimizin geçerliliği sınanmaktadır. İkinci ve üçüncü bölümde ise **The Magus** ve **Briefing for a Descent into Hell** romanları incelenerek postmodern dönemde evrensel birlik fikrinin dikey yönlü seyahatler aracılığıyla öğretilip öğretilmediği araştırılmaktadır. Çalışma göstermektedir ki her ne kadar yadsınamaz toplumsal gerçeklikler nedeniyle

romanların karakterleri başarısız olsa da yukarı ve aşağı seyahatler bu dönemde dahi öğreti araçlarıdır.

Anahtar kelimeler: dikey, seyahat, evrensel birliktelik, kolektif bilinçdışı, postmodern roman

ABSTRACT

TEACHINGS OF COSMIC UNITY THROUGH VERTICAL JOURNEYS IN *THE MAGUS* AND *BRIEFING FOR A DESCENT INTO HELL*

GÜVEN ÇAĞAN

This study analyzes the creation of the idea of cosmic unity and universal connectedness through vertical journeys in **The Magus** and **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**. A vertical journey means movements upward like mountain climbing, spacefaring, and stargazing, and downward like descending a mountain and entering underground. On the other hand, horizontal journeys like wars, sea voyages, and colonial expeditions feature the self, faction, geographical division, and class distinction. Since an average person can move anywhere on their own on the Earth, they think they are mighty and can survive as an individual. However, as the issue of verticality shows people their weakness and smallness in the macro universe, it prevents the self. Another point to consider is the spiritual connotations of up and down. No matter if it is mountain climb or spaceflight, anyone moving upward can be thought to be journeying to God, the source of everything, as high terrains have been accepted as the home of God/s in different times and places. When it comes to underground, it has been regarded as the realm where the history of humanity lies due to the tradition of the burial of the dead; thus, one who descends into the underworld finds themselves as a part of the whole in the history of humanity.

The first chapter of the study examines the sense of horizontality and verticality of mainly the Western civilizations throughout history. Analysis of the argument in the historical process enables us to see how political incidents, changing social discourse, and scientific developments have shaped the concept of journey. Furthermore, by referring to literary works of different eras, the validity of our thesis is tested. In the second and third chapters, whether the idea of cosmic unity is taught through vertical journeys in the postmodern period is explored by analyzing **The Magus** and **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**. The study shows that journeys upward and downward are means of teaching even in this period even though the characters of the novels fail because of undeniable social truths.

Key words: vertical, journey, cosmic unity, collective unconscious, postmodern novel

FOREWORD

Like many children, I wanted to be an astronaut. I could not be one, but since my childhood, the space research technology has advanced so much that anyone can watch the planet Earth from the live cameras of International Space Station now. After watching our celestial body day after day, I wondered how looking down at the Earth affects our psychology. My research presented me with the overview effect, and I decided to write something on it. This study is a product of a 15-year curiosity, 2-year research, and 1-year effort of writing.

I would like to thank my family for bringing me up with love and care to this day, and my advisor, Asst. Prof. Ferah İncesu, for her patience, support, and tireless effort, this study would be so simple without her help. And I would like to thank my dear friends Ali Can, Mustafa Demirel, and Semih Batur for their sincere friendship. I am grateful to my friend Hasan Demirci for tolerating my endless questions and teaching me research methods and to M. Nurullah Parlakoğlu for joining me in my stargazing hours and taking me to Mardin Castle where I had a chance of overviewing the vast Syrian landscape and realized how empty the conflicts below are from the silent and peaceful high place I stood on. Last but not least, I would like to thank Prof. Aziz Sancar for being an inspirational person for the Turkish academy.

CONTENTS

ÖZ iii

ABSTRACT v

FOREWORD vii

CONTENTS viii

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL AND LITERARY DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA OF HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL JOURNEYS AND THE IDEA OF COSMIC UNITY AND THE SELF

1.1. The Pre-Renaissance Era……6

1.1.1. Ancient Mythologies and Philosophers……..6

1.1.2. The Spring of Major Monotheistic Religions……...13

1.1.3. Middle Ages……..14

1.1.3.1 The West……...14

1.1.3.2 The East……16

1.2. The Renaissance Era……..22

1.2.1. Renaissance Science……...…….25

1.2.2. Renaissance Intellectuality……26

1.2.3. Renaissance Art…….28

1.3. The Post-Renaissance Era……..31

1.3.1. The Restoration Period……..31

1.3.2. The Age of Reason……32

1.3.3. The Romantic Period……34

1.3.4. The Victorian Period…….36

1.3.5. World Wars……...38

1.3.6. The Cold War and the Afterwards……41

CHAPTER 2

THE MAGUS

CHAPTER 3

BRIEFING FOR A DESCENT INTO HELL

CONCLUSION 106
BIBLIOGRAPHY 110

INTRODUCTION

A vertical journey can be defined as physically and metaphysically upward and downward movement of material and non-material beings. **Merriam-Webster Dictionary** defines the word "vertical" as the following: "positioned up and down rather than from side to side : going straight up : having a structure in which there are top, middle, and bottom levels."[1] This master's thesis studies a mixture of corporeality and spirituality of such journeys. In other words, this work analyzes the teachings that physical ascent and descent bring about. Various connotations have been put on ascent and descent in individuals' inner world, public memory, and collective unconscious. Joseph P. Rodriguez basically summarizes these connotations, saying, "[u]pward movement is positive and associated with virtue, downward movement is negative and associated with sin. Climbing is good, falling is bad. Closer to God is better than being closer to Hell."[2] The contrast between "God" and "Hell" here presents the contrast between up and down. In order to elaborate on this contrast, the following questions must be answered: What is up there? And what is down here?

Besides being different physically, up and down are different from each other in terms of symbolism. Things up there are usually associated with good and positive concepts; things down here are usually associated with bad and negative concepts. In this work, what is meant by up physically contains mountains and skies, and what is meant by down contains the earth; metaphysically, up and down refer to the up and down in spiritual levels.

Mountains and the sky have been put on a divine mission and meaning in public memory. Similarly, Carlo Ginzburg tells about the divine space that "we know for a fact that every civilization located the source of cosmic power-God- in the skies."[3] In ancient mythologies and –no matter if monotheistic or polytheistic– religions, the sky is accepted as the source of light, virtues, knowledge, and wisdom. For instance, Prometheus in Greek Mythology climbs Mount Olympus, steals the fire

[1] (Online) http://www.merriam-webster.com
[2] Joseph P. Rodriguez, "Rise and Fall: Tropes of Verticality in Middle English Literature," Diss., The University of Iowa, 2012, p.1.
[3] Carlo Ginzburg, "High and Low: The Theme of Forbidden Knowledge in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," **Past & Present**, Vol.LXXIII, 1976, pp. 28-41, p.32.

up there, which is closer to the sky than the earth is, and gives life to humanity. According to this myth, the source of life is the skies. Similar to this, major religions take the source of life as Heaven located in the skies. According to the theory of creation, the first man and woman were created in Heaven and fell down to our world as a result of eating the forbidden fruit. Additionally, as told in this theory, the knowledge that helps differentiate good and bad is in Heaven, namely skies.

The fact that planets and stars are located in the sky stimulates vertical interactions between people and the sky. Since the source of light is the sky, people have created archetypical associations to this day. Related to the meanings granted to light, Lefebvre says, "[b]y Light, for instance- the light of sun, moon or stars as opposed to the shadows, the night, and hence death; light identified with the True, with life, and hence with thought and knowledge."[4] Beside being a source of light – hence knowledge and wisdom– numerous peoples have regarded planets and stars as sacred beings and worshipped them, which is why the Sun, the planets in the solar system, and some shiny stars have been taken as gods and goddesses in Greek and Roman mythology.

As is in the case of skies, for their peaks located high above the earth, mountains cause psychological and spiritual effect on people. Throughout the history of humanity, "Sinai and Zion in the Middle East, Olympus in Greece, Kailas in Tibet, Tai Shan in China, Fuji in Japan, the San Francisco Peaks in Arizona—all have acquired a special stature as natural objects of religious devotion."[5] Like pharaohs in ancient Egypt who probably used pyramids, which looks like mountains with sharp edges, as a means of reaching their stars,[6] some people have used mountains in order to reach divinities: "From the first traces of human history, archaeological evidence reveals how mountains provided sanctuary and connection with the cosmos."[7]

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[4] Henri Lefebvre, **The Production of Space**. Trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith, Oxford, Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1991, p.34

[5] Bernbaum qtd. in Margaret A. McCauley, "High Terrain: A Depth Psychological Perspective on Psyche and Mountains," Diss., Pacifica Graduate Institute, 2009, p.17.

[6] Tim Radford, "Pyramids Seen as Stairways to Heaven," **The Guardian**, 14 May 2001, 17 July 2015, (Online) http://www.theguardian.com

[7] McCauley, **op. cit.**, p 8

Interestingly, even though up is thought to be a place of favour and grace for its being close to divine beings, light, wisdom, and the like, it also comes forward as a penalty area. People who try to exceed their earth-born limits and have godly acquirements are punished above the earth. For instance, the workers building the Tower of Babel possess different languages and come down the earth in a state of confusion; upon stealing fire from Olympus, Prometheus is punished on a peak of a mountain, and torn apart by an eagle; Icarus who wants to liberate himself from an island and fly much above the limits pays for this, smashing down a sea. However, these stories belong to the times when people did not have as much knowledge as we have today and were occupied by the fear of the unknown. The scientific information we have acquired so far provided us with a wider point of view. As to this change of perspective, McCauley says:

> [W]hen mountains shifted from the sacred to the secular in the collective mind and were no longer outside the human domain, they became tangible rather than abstract, near rather than far. A spirituality of place transformed into a psychology of place: mountains and human beings became physically and psychologically interrelational, each affecting the other in ways both subtle and overt.[8]

The same change of mind has been realized after the manned and non-manned space flights taken in the last six decades.

When human beings discovered mountain peaks and the sky, they realized that there were no visible gods or goddesses there. Nevertheless, as they looked down the earth from above, they found out how those divine beings they put there saw the world. Having a wider viewpoint has enabled individual human beings to grasp the entire world as a whole and to recognize how small they are, compared to that whole. Like Rodriguez says, "such a view of the world below gives the pleasure of 'seeing the whole,' of looking down, totalizing the most immoderate of human texts."[9] The visual angle of a person moving on a horizontal route is stable; nonetheless, "[t]he elevated observer has a clarity of vision and an understanding of

[8] **Ibid.**, p.11-12.
[9] **Ibid.**, p.13.

organizing principle that the pedestrian cannot attain."[10] The sense of egoistic individualism rises in a horizontally-moving person; on the other hand, a vertically-moving person is purified from this sense because he/she merges the self into a unity. Considering these differences and impacts of journeys, the aim of this master's thesis is to analyze the vertical journeys and their teachings of unity in John Fowles's **The Magus** and Doris Lessing's **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**.

Three factors have been taken into consideration in the choice of the novels: 1) There are vertical journeys in both of the novels. The protagonist climbs mountains and hills, travels to a star, and is locked in underground chambers in **The Magus**; in **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**, a mountain climb, an ascent to the outer space, and a descent to the Earth take place. 2) Both novels include teachings on cosmic unity. The intention of the vertical journeys is to apply those teachings into reality. 3) Both novels were published within the ten years following the first manned space flight; that is to say, after human beings saw the world as a whole for the fist time. However, we need to state that the idea of cosmic unity does not come true in **The Magus**; and in **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**, it has already been achieved. For this reason, this study will focus on the teachings, rather than a character development. The theoretical background of the novels is based on major Western (Greek philosophy, European literary movements, and European history) and Eastern (Islamic spiritualism) cultures.

[10] Rodriguez, **op. cit.**, p.14

1. HISTORICAL AND LITERARY DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA OF HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL JOURNEYS AND THE IDEA OF COSMIC UNITY AND THE SELF

Journeys have taken place in various times and different parts of the world through human history. It even took a long period of time for some tribes to adopt a sedentary life. Other than human beings, moving creatures, such as birds, wild animals, and even fish, instinctively migrate in search of better living conditions every year. These journeys affect the mentality of creatures as well as they affect their physical life; and these effects are so variable that the mental change which is observed during the process may differ from the mental change observed at the end of the journey. Having such a sophisticated impact, this historical phenomenon inevitably finds a place in literature. Even some well-known works of literature study this connection between journey and mental shift.

Increasing curiosity with advancing technology, interest for discovering the undiscovered, and the survival instinct as a consequence of the recent wars lead people to take journeys and let this literary tradition to survive in today's world. Title works of this study, **The Magus** by John Fowles and **Briefing for a Descent into Hell** by Doris Lessing, are two of those novels including horizontal and vertical journeys. There are mountain climbing, flights, overseas journeys, ascents, and descents in the novels. In order to figure out the reasons and the consequences of these movements extensively, it is essential to elaborate on the roots of the journey tradition in literature. Besides the fact that a text cannot be studied independently from the era it is written in, postmodern literature shows that it is not even independent from other texts that precede it. According to the theory of intertextuality, all texts are related to each other in one way or another. Julia Kristeva, who has introduced the concept of intertextuality to European literature, teaches:

> […] every word is an intersection of textual surfaces, and so the concept of intertextuality is necessary because no text is self-sufficient, but depends on its relationships with other texts and discourses. Since each expression is pervaded by the traces of earlier uses, the text is not a finished or closed

> product, but a plural productivity in which multiple voices—textual, socio-historical and ideological—coexist and communicate.[11]

As a consequence of these relations, in order to have a better understanding and interpretation of the aforementioned novels, other major journeys and teachings related to those journeys must be surveyed in historical and literary context. Additionally, that our senses and instincts are handed down to next generations as cultural heritage and that knowledge of the world grows cumulatively through time prove the necessity of this background exploration.

This chapter analyzes the historical and literary development of the idea of horizontal and vertical journeys and the idea of cosmic unity and the self, and is divided into three: Pre-Renaissance Era, Renaissance Era, and Post-Renaissance Era. The choice of the Renaissance as the turning point has its source in the fact that people's view of the world and themselves changed to a great extent in this era. Thousands of years of life experience and vast areas of habitation have contributed to the Renaissance's humanist, individualist, and secular view of the world. Even if variable time periods and lands cause differences in the types of journeys, their reasons, their results, and so on, we can generalize the case: while horizontal journeys intensify ego, vertical journeys weaken it and put the idea of cosmic unity forward.

1.1. The Pre-Renaissance Era

1.1.1. Ancient Mythologies and Philosophers

Written works are of great significance in order to explore the living style of past peoples, historical events, and people's psychological worlds in a somewhat detailed context. The oldest known written source of Greek literature, which makes the basis of European literature and discourse, is Homer's **The Iliad**.[12] Combined with **The Odyssey**, **The Iliad** makes the roots of European civilization because the main two sources of Greek mythology whose stories, teachings, and characters are

[11] Carmen Lara-Rallo, "Pictures Worth a Thousand Words: Metaphorical Images of Textual Interdependence," **Nordic Journal of English Studies**, Vol.VIII, No:2, 2009, pp. 91-110, p.92.

[12] Edith Hamilton, **Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes**, New York, Grand Central Publishing, 1999, p.14.

still used in literary works of today's world are these two epics. Mythology is a collection of stories that explain and interpret people's connection to nature, society, history, natural phenomena, and the like, and puts social life in order. **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English** defines myth, "an ancient story, especially one invented in order to explain natural or historical events."[13] Since it has gods and goddesses, the question whether mythology is a religion may come to one's mind; Edith Hamilton explains the difference:

> According to the most modern idea, a real myth has nothing to do with religion. It is an explanation of something in nature; how, for instance, any and everything in the universe came into existence: men, animals, this or that tree or flower, the sun, the moon, the stars, storms, eruptions, earthquakes, all that is and all that happens. Thunder and lightning are caused when Zeus hurls his thunderbolt. A volcano erupts because a terrible creature is imprisoned in the mountain and every now and then struggles to get free. [...] Myths are early science, the result of men's first trying to explain what they saw around them.[14]

Even though Hamilton does not consider mythology a religion in modern sense, it can be described as a pagan belief system with its own metaphysical content such as gods, goddesses, divine power, creation, afterlife, and so on.

Besides what was visible to them, ancient people were also interested in invisible beings, and gave them a place in mythologies. Unknown and distant spaces like mountain tops, skies, and underground were scary and respectable for them. As to the sacredness of mountains, geology professor Celal Şengör says, "in many primitive religions and monotheistic religions emerging afterwards, mountains were usually respected and worshipped as the residence and even the transfiguration of God."[15] The ancient Greek put the Twelve Olympians (except for Hades) in the pantheon located on Mount Olympus. Those gods and goddesses look down to earthlings from the top of the mountain and, if necessary, interfere with human life. When their life comes to an end, mortal beings go to another unknown place, namely

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[13] "Myth," **Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English**, 5th ed., Essex, Pearson Education Limited, 2009, p.1154.

[14] Hamilton, **op. cit.**, p.19.

[15] A. M. Celal Şengör, "Toros Adı Nereden Geliyor?: Toros Adının Diğer Dillerdeki Kaynakları ve Bir Köken Araştırması Yerbilimlerinin En Eski Varsayımının Öyküsü: Dağ Tanrısı," **Bilgiyle Sohbet: Popüler Bilim Yazıları**. Ed. by A. M. Celal Şengör, İstanbul, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2014, pp. 61-73, p.65. (writer's translation)

the underworld. Speaking of Roman mythology, its traces can be followed in today's sky maps. Greek and Roman mythological figures are the eponym of various planets, stars, and constellations; so much so that all the planets in the solar system, except for the Earth, are named after Greco-Roman deities.

The tradition of gods' dwelling at mountain tops has been seen in Asia Minor, the neighbours of Greek civilization. Şengör tells about the emergence of this tradition in Anatolian territory after volcanic eruptions:

> Dark-coloured and double-horned huge mountain [...] grumbles, by darkening and shaking the earth and the sky, rains water and stones over the observers. The observers have no doubt that this monster which rules and sends disasters to the earth and the sky is a god. This god is absolutely one that rules all the lightnings and rains [...] Also a stone to use for making sharp weapons (obsidian) is extracted around this god who is "not giving birth" to food, infertile in other words. This god, of course, must be "male"![16]

The similarity of the myths proves the acceptance of the vertical associations by the societies of different time and space. The lightning of volcanic storms in Anatolian mythology reminds us of the lightning of Zeus who lives on Mount Olympus;[17] also in Roman mythology, the supreme deity, Jupiter, uses lightning as His hallmark.[18*] These similarities indicate the fact that the deification of high places is not peculiar to a nation or territory.

The sense of curiosity which causes the imaginative visualization and interpretation of the unknown has encouraged people to make up stories of journey to the unknown places. The plot of **The Odyssey**, for instance, is a combination of horizontal and vertical journeys. Other epics of various mythologies include far-reaching travels, hence the concept of the hero's journey. The hero's journey happens as follows:

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[16] **Ibid**., pp.69-70. (writer's translation)

[17] Michelle M. Houle. **Gods and Goddesses in Greek Mythology**, New Jersey, Enslow Publishers, 2001, p.33.

[18] Evelyn Wolfson, **Roman Mythology**, New Jersey, Enslow Publishers, 2002, p.31.

[*] The image of deities carrying lightning up in the sky reinforces the argument of verticality, and contributes to the gap between powerful higher beings and weak lower creatures.

> The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation—initiation—return*: which might be named the nuclear unit of the monomyth.
> *A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.*[19]

Nevertheless, it is not possible to find ego boost or spiritual enlightenment in these epic journeys. Epics put social values forwards, not the inner world of individual characters. In addition to that, in regard to the symbolic side of myths, we must take mythological characters as personifications of values, instead of individual beings. For instance, the 15th book of **The Iliad** mentions that Ares brings his sons Deimos and Phobos to the battlefield; we need to consider this a symbolic narration because the names of Deimos (Δεῖμόν) and Phobos (Φόβον) who are brought to war by Ares, the god of war, mean terror and fear respectively.[20] However, some mythological tales show us the cognitive aspects of up and down through vertical journeys. The tale that Prometheus, by fooling Zeus, steals the hidden fire from Mount Olympus and gives life to humanity with it implies that the origins of human life come from mountain top, a high place.[21] In another story, Daedalus and Icarus, his son, are imprisoned in a labyrinth they have constructed and escape it by flying away with feather wings Daedalus builds; however, Icarus does not listen to his father's warning to fly neither too high nor too low, and when he approaches the skies, the heat melts down the wax binding the feathers together and the wings disperse, which causes the fall of Icarus.[22] This narrative shows the earth as a prison, and the sky as freedom. Nonetheless, Icarus becomes the victim of his desires and the lack of self-discipline.

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[19] Joseph Campbell, **The Hero with a Thousand Faces**, New Jersey, Princeton UP, 2004, p.28.
[20] Homer, **Homeri Opera**, Ed. by David B. Monro, Thomas W. Allen, Vol. 2, Oxford, Oxford UP, 1912, book 15, line 119.
Deimos (Δεῖμόν): (Online) http://dictionary.reference.com
Phobos (Φόβον): (Online) http://dictionary.reference.com
[21] Hesiod, **Theogony. Works and Days. Testimonia**. Ed. and Trans. by Glenn W. Most, Massachusetts, Harvard UP, 2006, pp.45-49.
[22] Ovid, **The Metamorphoses**, Trans. by Horace Gregory, New York, The Viking Press, 1958, pp.211-12.

Apart from Greek literature and mythology, Cicero and Virgil, two distinguished writers of Roman literature, tell of imaginary vertical journeys in their works, as well. In **Scipio's Dream** by Cicero, Roman general Scipio looks at the Earth from a cosmic point of view in his dream:

> In his dream Scipio beholds a vision which, beginning with Carthage, ends with a conception of the universe, a realization of the comparative insignificance of this earth, a vast panorama of the " Milky Circle " in which appear " stars which we never see from the earth ... all larger than we have ever imagined ... indeed, the earth itself seemed to me so small that I was scornful of our empire, which covers only a single point, as it were, upon its surface."[23]

His opinion of the world sounds pretty similar to that of astronauts who sees the world from an aerial viewpoint in reality. In addition to that, the Earth's definition as a small object may remind us of Carl Sagan's definition of it as "pale blue dot."[24] In the sixth book of Virgil's **The Aeneid**, Aeneas descends into the underworld and encounters past Roman rulers and armies. Indeed, he symbolically unites himself with other people that have lived in a different period of the same single timeline by having a vertical journey. His descent story has also been inspirational for Dante's **Divine Comedy**.

Apart from the development of the idea of horizontal and vertical journeys, Greek civilization, with its prominent philosophers, contributed to the teachings of cosmic unity. Some of those philosophers were interested in empirical science while others asserted theories on metaphysics and virtue. Those preceding Socrates are called the Presocratics. Even though mythology was the common tool to understand the way of the universe, they, independent from mythological tenets, dealt with natural sciences, "seeing the world as a *kosmos*."[25] Early scientists like Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes belong to this group of thinkers. Pythagoras, another Presocratic,

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[23] Marjorie Nicolson, "Cosmic Voyages," **ELH**, Vol.VII, No:2, 1940, pp. 83-107, pp.88-89.
[24] Carl Sagan, **Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space**, New York, Ballantine Books, 1997, p.7.
[25] Patricia Curd, "Presocratic Philosophy," **The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy**, Ed. by Edward N. Zalta, 2012, (Online) http://plato.stanford.edu, par.6.

> […] presented a cosmos that was structured according to moral principles and significant numerical relationships […] In such a cosmos, the planets were seen as instruments of divine vengeance ("the hounds of Persephone"), the sun and moon are the isles of the blessed where we may go, if we live a good life, while thunder functioned to frighten the souls being punished in Tartarus. The heavenly bodies also appear to have moved in accordance with the mathematical ratios that govern the concordant musical intervals in order to produce a music of the heavens, which in the later tradition developed into "the harmony of the spheres."[26]

Apparently, he thinks spatial objects form cosmic unity which moves in harmony. Another philosopher to adopt the idea of cosmic unity is Heraclitus; related to this harmonious unity, he uses the term **logos** which "refers to an objective law-like principle that governs the cosmos […] There is a single order that directs all things ("all things are one" B50); this order is divine, […] steers and controls the whole cosmos from within."[27]

Unlike the Presocratics, Socrates is remembered for his teachings on ethics and virtue, not scientific exploration. Being the teacher of Plato and Xenophon, he had great impact on the development of European philosophy. One of the things which make him a turning point among the Greek thinkers is his not worshipping the traditional gods and goddesses. Instead of mythological deities, he believed in an absolute beauty which contains and surpasses all beauties. He tells about the phases of reaching this absolute beauty:

> This is the right way of approaching or being initiated into the mysteries of love, to begin with examples of beauty in this world, and using them as steps to ascend continually with that absolute beauty as one's aim, from one instance of physical beauty to two and from two to all, then from physical beauty to moral beauty, and from moral beauty to the beauty of knowledge, until from knowledge of various kinds one arrives at the supreme knowledge whose sole object is that absolute beauty, and knows at last what absolute beauty is.[28]

[26] Carl Huffman, "Pythagoras," **The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy**, Ed. by Edward N. Zalta, 2014, (Online) http://plato.stanford.edu, par.3.
[27] Curd, **op. cit.**, par.25.
[28] Qtd in Canan Şavkay, "Lessing's Engagement with Platonic Idealism in *Briefing for a Descent into Hell*," **Doris Lessing Studies**, Vol.XXIX, No:1, 2010, pp. 9-14, p.9.

Socrates puts that absolute beauty high above in a spiritual sense, not in a physical context. On that account, in search of absolute beauty, one does not ascend to the sky or mountain tops but experiences a moral ascent.

Heraclitus's claim that everything in this universe is in a perpetual change urged Plato to think of immaterial notions because if everything existing in the sensible universe is exposed to change, absolute Forms like the concept of Knowledge, the quintessence of Justice, and sense of Aesthetics must belong to another universe that is "invisible, perceived by intellect, not the senses, unchanging, simple and imperishable."[29] All of the things in our world are the reflections and imitation (**mimesis**) of the things existing in that intangible realm, hence the theory of Forms. Plato uses the allegory of cave to explain the difference between the upper realm and its sensible reflections. According to this theory, people chained and facing a wall in a cave take the shadows on the wall that are cast by the light behind them for real, whereas they are just the reflections of other realities.[30] In relation to the theory of Forms and the allegory of cave, Plato's claim of recollection, which is to be seen in Sufi teachings of vertical journeys, is touched in **Phaedo**:

> [...] our learning is actually nothing but recollection; according to that too, if it's true, what we are now reminded of we must have learned at some former time. But that would be impossible, unless our souls existed somewhere before being born in this human form; so in this way too, it appears that the soul is something immortal.[31]

Accordingly, intangible knowledge belongs to the dimension of Forms and soul, which has lived in that dimension once, possesses this knowledge. Nevertheless, since the body lives in our sensible world, symbolically a cave, it forgets the knowledge. Therefore, learning is indeed recollection of the knowledge.

Aristotle shares a bunch of ideas on metaphysics with his teacher, Plato; however, what differentiates him from Plato is his "down-to-earth insistence, in his early work the Categories, that 'primary substances' are everyday things like a particular man or a particular ox – a direct rebuttal of Plato's relegation of these to an

[29] Lesley Brown, "Plato and Aristotle," **The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy**. Ed. by Nicholas Bunnin, E. P. Tsui-James, 2nd ed., Massachusetts, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, pp. 601-18, p.605.
[30] Plato, **The Republic**, Trans. by Desmond Lee, 2nd ed., London, Penguin Books, 1987, p.317-25.
[31] Plato, **Phaedo**, Trans. by David Gallop, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2002, p.19.

inferior status to the Forms."[32] Though soul belongs to the world of Forms, Aristotle does not study soul separately from body for soul is not functional without body. He says in **De Anima**, "[t]o say that the soul is angry is like saying that the soul is weaving or is building a house. It's better to say, not that the soul is feeling pity, or thinking, or learning, but that the human being is doing so in virtue of the soul."[33] His paying attention to the cooperation of body and soul "may seem to suggest that Aristotle sides with the materialists who seek to account for psychic phenomena purely in terms of the material constituents of the living organism."[34] That Aristotle focuses on matter this much is to be influential in the emergence of a man-centered concept of individualism and humanism during the Renaissance period, which shakes the idea of cosmic unity. The man-centeredness of the Renaissance pulled the focus from the skies to the earth; and one's ultimate goal changed from reaching to God to discovering human capacity in worldly matters.

Last but not least, Plotinus's inner journey is a major step for the development of cosmic unity. Although he was born after Christ, he followed the Platonic tradition. There is **the One** which is above and within all for him. The way of reaching the One is to find one's self first. He claims that the part and the whole are intermingled; the part is a tool to reach the whole. He points out that "going inward you will find yourself, and finding yourself you have found the One and Origin"[35] Additionally, he mystically tells of spiritual vertical journeys in which "[t]he souls have made a descent in order to go creating, and the human souls must find within themselves the way back to the One and Origin, making the ascent to the Father of the universe."[36]

1.1.2. The Spring of Major Monotheistic Religions

Although Judaism, Christianity, or Islam do not cause direct effect on the novels, it is crucial to tell about them so as to prove the argument of the vertical associations' continuity through time and in dominant cultures. Judaism, the first of

[32] Brown, **op. cit.**, p.608.
[33] Qtd. in **Ibid.**, p.610.
[34] **Ibid.**
[35] Qtd. in Th. G. Sinnige, "Plotinus on the Human Person and Its Cosmic Identity," **Vigiliae Christianae** Vol.LVI, No:3, 2002, pp. 292-95, p.294.
[36] **Ibid.**

major monotheistic religions does not provide us with prominent information about Heaven or Hell.[37] When it comes to Christianity and Islam, they have much to share in terms of verticality. In both religions, up is associated with good and Heaven, down with bad and Hell. In these religions, Heaven and Hell are not placed in our physical world; when someone passes over, his/her soul transcends into another realm. In that realm, Heaven is located in an upper state and Hell is located below, each having levels within themselves. According to Bible and Quran, the first human beings, Adam and Eve used to live in Heaven first; then, deceived by Satan, they ate the forbidden fruit and were thrown out Heaven.[38]

The chief religious figures of these religions had vertical journeys for their contacts with God. Ascension of Christ and Mohammed's journey to Heaven are examples of both vertical and transcendental movements. Additionally, both religions' theologies contain teachings of spiritual ascent for common people through prayer and contemplation. However, despite so many common aspects, the followers of major religions could not form cosmic unity and have separated from each other on the basis of belief.

Even if these religions do not directly affect the theme or structure of the novels, subsequent religious scholars, such as Hallaj, Rumi, Yunus Emre, and Idries Shah, have created a blend of religious belief and universal solidarity which is to be seen in the novels. Especially Islamic Sufism explicitly promotes the notion of oneness, which deeply affects Doris Lessing's mind and literary style.

1.1.3. Middle Ages

1.1.3.1 The West*

The West consisted of kingdoms that were continuously fighting in the Middle Ages. People were separated from each other with ever-changing political borders. Those kingdoms were parcelled as autonomous lands by feudal lords, and those lands were isolated from the outer world with high walls, which cut the flow of

[37] Dan Cohn-Sherbok, **Judaism: History, Belief and Practice**, London, Routledge, 2003, p.456.

[38] Genesis 3-24, in The Holy Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments, King James Version, London, HarperCollins, 2001.
Al-Baqara 35-36, in The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an, Trans. by Mohammed M. Pickthall, İstanbul, Çağrı Yayınları, 2015.

* Because the continent America was not discovered by the Westerners until the late 15th century, the term "the West" merely refers to Europe.

information from the rest of the world. At that age, Europe, including Greek civilization, was almost completely Christianized; however, they were divided by Catholicism and Orthodoxy within themselves. Orthodox Byzantine Empire, which was the successor of classical Greek civilization, was advancing in science and art; nevertheless, Catholic kingdoms, under the influence of the church, were mostly interested in religious studies. Scholasticism was a huge obstacle before scientific and philosophical improvement.[39] Because of this lack of knowledge and thinking, this era was considered a "dark age" for the West.[40] Christian religio-centrism regarded non-Christians as infidels and hampered an inclusive solidarity.

Medieval European literature is a collection of hymns, national epics, and morality plays in the main. Morality plays, under the thumb of Christianity and the church, give lessons of Christian morality and virtue, and invite people to religion. In English literature for example, **Everyman** teaches readers moral lessons through allegorical characters. Despite the fact that its title sounds like it takes in all the humanity, the emphasis is on Christianity. Geoffrey Chaucer's archetypical opus magnum, **The Canterbury Tales** is a work of social and religious criticism and focuses on individual characters. The sum and the substance of it, the Western world was far from cosmic unity in the Middle Ages.

When it comes to verticality, the conventional association of up and down with the levels of goodness and evil is found during this period. For instance, in Italian literature, Dante depicts Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven in the context of Christianity, and also uses mountains, the Sun, and similar high places to reinforce his visualization of the abstract concepts and to associate high places with goodness, God, and other positive concepts and low places with the evil, Satan, and similar negative concepts in **Divine Comedy** in which he takes a vertical journey in the afterlife. Apart from that, Bernard of Clairvaux's **The Twelve Degrees of Humility and Pride** "constructs a vision of moral virtue and turpitude that is arranged vertically; indeed, the conceit of a hierarchy in which rising corresponds with virtue

[39] Zuhal Arda, et al., "İlkçağdan Modernizme; Bilim, Sanat ve Felsefe Buluşmaları," **Journal of Research in Education and Teaching**, Vol.II, No:3, 2013, pp. 148-56, p.151.
[40] David Deming, **Science and Technology in World History**, Vol. 2, North Carolina, McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2010, p.47.

and falling with vice serves as the core of Bernard's essay."[41] Besides the spiritual hierarchy concerning the inner world of individuals, people were categorized into royal, religious, military, and social classes in the Middle Ages. A. J. Gurevich explains the relationship between religious and earthly hierarchy:

> With the transition from paganism to Christianity, medieval man's conception of space underwent a radical structural transformation. Cosmic space, social space and ideological space were all given hierarchic structure. The earthly feudal system is an isomorph of the hierarchy of God's creatures and the ranks of the angels; and while the lexicon of relations between lord and vassal is permeated with religious terminology, the vocabulary of the theological tracts is not infrequently laced with terms borrowed from feudal and monarchic procedure. All relationships are vertical, running from above to below; all beings are distributed on various planes according to their degree of perfection which depends on their relative proximity to God.[42]

As Gurevich argues, unlike ancient Greek civilization, medieval Europeans did not pay attention to geographical verticality; instead they created abstract hierarchical classes and applied them to real life.

1.1.3.2 The East

In contrast to the dark age of the West, the Middle Ages is accepted as a golden age for the Eastern world. Advanced in science, art, and philosophy, canonical works were granted to literature in Islamic states. Minorities fleeing from the sectarian strifes in Christian lands took refuge in Muslim lands and translated numerous Western written sources of science and philosophy, including classical Greek works, into Arabic and some other Eastern languages.[43] Therefore, while the West was busy with Christian scholasticism, the East was, under the influence of the Greek works, dealing with medicine, pharmacology, astronomy, mathematics, physics, geography, philosophy, and many other sciences.

Like any other civilization which has progressed in science and art, obtained economic and social welfare, and promoted free thought and debate, Islamic

[41] Rodriguez, **op. cit.**, p.1.
[42] A. J. Gurevich, **Categories of Medieval Culture**, Trans. by G. L. Campbell, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985, p.70.
[43] Chikh Bouamrane, "Ortaçağ İslam Dünyasında Bilim ve Gelişmesi," Trans. by Hüseyin Şimşek, **İstem**, Vol.VII, No:14, 2009, pp. 383-96, p.384.

civilization gave way to the advancement of philosophy. William C. Chittick, who works on Islamic mysticism, explains Sufism's place in Islamic philosophy:

> Sufism is the most universal manifestation of the inner dimension of Islam; it is the way by which man transcends his own individual self and reaches God. It provides within the forms of the Islamic revelation the means for an intense spiritual life directed towards the transformation of man's being and the attainment of the spiritual virtues; ultimately it leads to the vision of God.[44]

The main goal of the Sufi is to be united with God, to melt the self in God's oneness, and to discover the mysteries of cosmic unity. **Cambridge Dictionary** defines the word Sufi, "a member of an Islamic religious group that tries to become united with God by living a simple life and by praying and meditating."[45] This oneness within God is called **wahdat al-wujud**, which can be literally translated as "oneness of being" or "unity of being," in Sufi terminology.[46] According to this principle, there is an Absolute One from which everything in this universe comes; other beings are parts, reflections, representations, and imitations of the One,[47] which is quite similar to Plato's theory of Forms, indeed; the resemblance of Plato's realm of the Forms to God's Presence is out of doubt, both of which, "though immaterial, are not mind-dependent, but it is the task of the mind, or the soul, or reason, to come to knowledge of the Forms."[48] Only when immaterial and material beings merge into each other, does existence become meaningful, and are divine mysteries and the quintessence of being revealed. In relation to the unification of the binary oppositions, Chryssi Sidiropoulou interprets an argument by Kenan Gürsoy, a professor of Sufism and Islamic and Western philosophy: "an individual *becomes* the being he/she is within the relational framework that binds him/her to others, both human and non-human."[49] Be it a human or a germ, all the beings descend from a higher Being and reflect its

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[44] William C. Chittick, **The Sufi Doctrine of Rumi**, Indiana, World Wisdom, 2005, p.9.
[45] (Online) http://dictionary.cambridge.org
[46] Majid Fakhry, **Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Mysticism: A Short Introduction**, Oxford, Oneworld Publications, 1997, p.77.
[47] Abdurrahim Güzel, "Kelam ve Tasavvuf Açısından Tevhid," **Erciyes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi**, Vol.XI, 2001, pp. 193-209, pp.200-01.
Chittick, **The Sufi Doctrine**, p.38.
[48] Brown, **op. cit.**, p.604.
[49] Chryssi Sidiropoulou, "Self, Other and Nothingness in Western Philosophy and in Islamic Mysticism," **Sharing Poetic Expressions: Beauty, Sublime, Mysticism in Islamic and Occidental Culture**, Ed. by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, London, Springer, 2011, pp. 107-24, p.107.

aspects. A short tale Idries Shah conveys visualizes the value of togetherness: "There was once a boy, you may recall, who dismembered a butterfly. Looking at the piles of wings, antennae, legs, head and body, he exclaimed: 'There are the parts all right: but where has the *butterfly* gone?'"[50] Unlike pagan Greek and medieval Christian doctrine of unity, Sufism argues that cosmic unity can only be achieved by diverse peoples and beings. Nobody is alienated from the dervish order because their transcendental experience may make them spiritual masters. A poem, questionably attributed to Rumi,[*] a prominent persona of Sufism, says,

> Come, Come again
> Whoever you are
> Whether you are infidel, idolater or wanderer
> Whether you have broken your vows a hundred times
> Ours is not a caravan of despair
> This is the gate of hope
> Come, come yet again, come[51]

Sufism contains not only Muslims, but also non-Muslims because this difference serves for the formation of identity and self. After all, in order to reach the One and unity, Sufi dervishes conquer their ego and purify themselves from the self through self-discipline. When eluded from identity, labels, titles, ego, and other personal entities, one becomes none and merges into the Whole. In one of his poems, Rumi says,

> I adore not the Cross nor the Crescent, I am not Christian nor Jew…
> Not from Eden and Paradise I fell, not from Adam my lineage I drew.
> In a place beyond uttermost place, in a tract without shadow or trace,
> Soul and body transcending I live in the soul of my beloved one anew.[52]

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[50] Idries Shah, Introduction, **The World of the Sufi**, Ed. by Idries Shah, London, The Octagon Press, 2004, pp. 1-6, p.4.

[*] Besides being called Rumi in the Western world, his full name and titles are Mawlana Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi, which can be translated from Persian as "Our Master Jalal ad-Din Muhammad of Rome." Even though he is known as "Roman" (Anatolia was named "Roman land" due to its Byzantine relations those days; Mawlana was called Rumi because of his dwelling in Anatolia, not because he was from Italy), he is still regarded one of the greatest masters of the Sufi path, which demonstrates how embracing their order is.

[51] "Rumi Club for Interfaith Dialogue," **Princeton University**, n. d., 4 Dec. 2015, (Online) https://www.princeton.edu

[52] Qtd. in Peter Brent, "The Classical Masters," **The World of the Sufi**, Ed. by Idries Shah, London, The Octagon Press, 2004, pp. 7-32, p.9.

Since the goal of getting rid of the self and becoming none/nobody/nothing is to be of the One, "tasavvuf's nothingness is not emptiness, but fullness of being."[53**]

The Sufi idea of oneness explained above is realized through a variety of vertical journeys and associations. **Mirac-i ruhani** (spiritual ascension) is one of the key concepts of Sufism. After a long-term ascetic life, one disposes of the self and tastes divine ecstasy. In order to experience the ecstasy, "[u]nder a master's direction, the aspirant follows an inward journey that must lead him to climb the ladder of the universal hierarchy of Being, just as the Prophet was carried at the time of his nocturnal Ascent (*mi'rāj*) up to the divine Presence."[54] This long-running process is called **sayr-u suluk** (progression on the path) or **sayr u suluk** (journeying and initiation) in the Sufi tradition. **Sayr-u suluk** can be accepted as the quintessential journey of Sufism, which many try to take but few can accomplish.[55] In respect to the place of **sayr-u suluk** in the Sufi order, Leonard Lewisohn states, "[i]n Aristotelian terms, one might say that while the Sufi Path (*ṭarīq*) is the *substance* of the archetypal Journey of the Muslim mystic, *sulūk* incarnates the form, the very process of travelling, of wayfaring upon it."[56] One needs to take a spiritual ascent to reach God, and a spiritual descent to come from God. This transcendental experience consists of four main stages:

Sayr ilallah (journeying to God) is the first step and the preparation period of this progression. During this process, aspirants dedicate themselves to self-discipline and gaining knowledge; they forget the basic worldly knowledge and deal with the superior divine One.[57] Due to the divine knowledge, they realize their lowliness and get rid of their ego. Once they purify themselves from the lower self and worldly entities, they ascend into the Presence of God and experience **fana fillah**

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[53] Sidiropoulou, **op. cit.**, p.119.

[**] **Tasavvuf** (or **tasawwuf**) is the Arabic word for Sufism.

[54] Éric Geoffroy, **Introduction to Sufism: The Inner Path of Islam**, Trans. by Roger Gaetani, Indiana, World Wisdom, 2010, p.8.

[55] "Sayr U Suluk (Journeying And Initiation)," **The Spiritual Life**, 23 Jan. 2013, 26 Oct. 2015, (Online) http://www.slife.org, par.5.

[56] Leonard Lewisohn, "The Spiritual Journey in Kubrawī Sufism," **Reason and Inspiration in Islam: Theology, Philosophy and Mysticism in Muslim Thought**, Ed. by Todd Lawson, London, I. B. Tauris Publishers, 2005, pp. 364-79, p.365.

[57] "Seyr-u Sülûk," **İhvan Forum**, 21 Oct. 2012. 26 Oct. 2015, (Online) http://www.ihvanforum.org, par.12.

(annihilation in God). While experiencing this spiritual state, they forget themselves and all the things in the material universe.

Sayr fillah (journeying in God) "refers to the stage when one is fully endowed with heavenly attributes and when one reaches the spiritual state the very instant the veils are removed, and he begins to see the light of Divine Knowledge."[58]

Sayr maallah (journeying with God) is the stage in which aspirants completely melt into the One and "nothing remains of the believer's ego, his 'I'-ness. He has become one with Reality."[59]

Sayr anillah (journeying from God) is the final stage of **sayr-u suluk** in which aspirants descend into the material world and enlighten others with the divine knowledge they have acquired. While descending, the aspirant recollects the basic worldly knowledge he/she forgets during **sayr ilallah**; this recollection is called **sayr fil ashiya** (journeying in things).[60] This stage of the journey resembles Plato's theory that the soul has lived in the realm of the Forms (God's divine Presence in this case) once and got all the knowledge there; in this world, it only remembers what it knew before. "One who has reached this position sees oneness in multiplicity, and multiplicity in oneness."[61]

Another Sufi ritual that practises verticality is **sama** dance performed by whirling dervishes. During the performance, dervishes connect themselves to the skies and the Earth at the same time. The symbolic movements and gestures demonstrate how those whirling dervishes conquer their ego and annihilate themselves in oneness:

> In the symbolism of the Sema ritual, the semazen's camel's hair hat (sikke) represents the tombstone of the ego; his wide, white skirt represents the ego's shroud. By removing his black cloak, he is spiritually reborn to the truth. At the beginning of the Sema, by holding his arms crosswise, the semazen appears to represent the number one, thus testifying to God's unity. While whirling, his arms are open: his right arm is directed to the sky, ready to receive God's beneficence; his left hand, upon which his eyes are fastened, is turned toward the earth. The semazen conveys God's spiritual gift to those

[58] "Training the Soul (Seyr-i Suluk)," **The Bektashi Order of Dervishes**, n. d., 26 Oct. 2015, (Online) http://bektashiorder.com, par.6.
[59] **Ibid**, par.7.
[60] (Online) http://osmanlicaturkce.net
[61] "Seyr-u Sülûk," par.16.

> who are witnessing the Sema. Revolving from right to left around the heart, the semazen embraces all humanity with love.[62]

Since the idea of oneness goes back to ancient communities, **sama** dance has resemblances with this tradition. For instance, that whirling dervishes point at the skies with one hand and the earth with the other may remind us of Raphael's famous fresco "The School of Athens" in which Plato features the realm of Forms by pointing at the skies and Aristotle puts the emphasis on humanity by pointing at the ground. However, although their hands indicate the separation between human beings and divinities, dervishes create a unity by using both of their hands and pointing at the skies and the earth at the same time. Additionally, their spinning around themselves accompanied by a mystical music is quite like an impersonation of the Pythagorean theory of the harmony of the spheres asserting that the heavenly bodies dance in harmony and produce a heavenly music. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, an Islamic philosopher and professor, argues that whirling of the dervishes "symbolizes the movements of the heavens"[63] and adds, "Rūmī was highly sensitive to the beauty of music […] and received as inspiration from Heaven the form of the Mawlawī *samā'* based on whirling in the earthly imitation of the rotation of the heavens."[64] Moreover, in an article about the Pythagorean influence over the Renaissance dance, Günter Berghaus explains the relationship between numbers and cosmic unity, which makes the basis of the dance of the planets:

> For the Pythagoreans, the whole cosmos is based on the relationships between the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4. […] It is through number that unity as primordial principle of Being extends into the material world and becomes multeity. But the material world, being a physical entity, must have a limit. This limit is inherent in the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4. They create the point, the line, the plane and the volume. Adding up these dimensions, 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10, we exhaust the limits of physical extension. There is no number following 10 that is not incapsulated in the tetrad. Nothing can be added that does not exist as a combination of these four numbers. Tetrad and decad are therefore the models of perfection. They create unity out of multeity, and multeity out of unity. They originate in the unlimited, absolute world, but

[62] "The Fundamental Meaning of *Sema*," **The Whirling Dervishes of Rumi**, n. d., 26 Oct. 2015, (Online) http://www.whirlingdervishes.org, par.7.
[63] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, **The Garden of Truth: The Vision and Promise of Sufism, Islam's Mystical Tradition**, New York, HarperOne, 2007, p.116.
[64] **Ibid.**, p.204.

> when they extend into the physical world, they create a limited, yet perfect, unified system, a *uni*verse.[65] *

Similarly in **sama** ritual, the vertical posture of the chief dancer, with his arms crosswise, symbolizes the Arabic letter **alif** (ا), the first letter of the Arabic alphabet, the value of which in the abjad system is one,** thus illustrating how **sama** dance uses number symbolism to display oneness and universal solidarity.

As Nancy Shields Hardin puts it, "Doris Lessing has been a student of Sufism."[66] Being interested in Sufi doctrine, she has been under the influence of Greek philosophy and Islamic mysticism while writing **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**. As a matter of fact, that they share some common ground in terms of togetherness helps her reinforce the argument of cosmic unity through verticality in her novel.

1.2. The Renaissance Era

The word renaissance literally means rebirth,[67] referring to the revival of ancient Greek classics. Edward Maslin Hulme defines this term: "The story of the Renaissance is the story of the revival of the individual – in science, invention, in discovery, in art, in literature, and in religion."[68] Having focused on religious studies under the impact of Christian theology, Europe could not advance in science, philosophy, and art. Common people were regarded as weak servants before the Almighty God and not allowed to exceed religious limitations.[69] Since the Bible was

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[65] Günter Berghaus, "Neoplatonic and Pythagorean Notions of World Harmony and Unity and Their Influence on Renaissance Dance Theory," **Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research**, Vol.X, No:2, 1992, pp. 43-70, pp.44-45.

* It is crucial to note that the creation of "unity out of multeity, and multeity out of unity" is pretty similar to the impact of **sayr-u suluk** on the aspirant that introduces "oneness in multiplicity, and multiplicity in oneness."

** Abjad is a calculation system in which every letter has a numerical value. It is used to decipher the hidden codes of old texts, or to trickily embed important dates into texts. For example, if used in a poem, one can figure out the year when the poem is written, by deciphering the last line of the poem.

[66] Nancy Shields Hardin, "Doris Lessing and the Sufi Way," **Contemporary Literature**, Vol.XIV, No:4, 1973, pp. 565-81, p.565.

[67] Sandra Sider, Introduction: Origins of the Renaissance, **Handbook to Life in Renaissance Europe**, New York, Facts On File, Inc., 2005, pp. xiii-xvii, p.xiii.

[68] Edward M. Hulme, **The Renaissance, the Protestant Revolution, and the Catholic Reformation in Continental Europe**, New York, The Century Co., 1917, p.61.

[69] Arda, et al., **op. cit.**, p. 139.

written in Latin, people who could only understand local vernaculars perceived religious orders through clergymen's interpretations. However, especially thanks to the Medici family's attempt, the humanist artists were given value in Italy in the 14th century.[70] The Medicis were rich bankers who wanted to glorify their name and provided patronage for scientists and artists.[71] Saving religion from the monopoly of clergymen, scientific knowledge's impugnation of religious dogma, translation of Greek classical works into European languages, people's individual achievements in technical and intellectual fields with the help of the Medicis, and the like introduced humanism, individualism, and secularism, and put the emphasis on human beings who live on earth rather than God who is imagined to live in the skies. Alfred von Martin tells about this shift from up to down:

> The world with which men were fitting themselves to deal had become a world without God. He might conceivably exist somewhere, but he was no longer a part of the world of the living as the Middle Ages had believed. God had been removed to another distant sphere, and bourgeois secular thought everywhere based itself upon practical experience, be it in the natural sciences of Leonardo or in the statecraft of Machiavelli.[72]

The reduction of God's impact over human life turned the aspects inscribed to Him into a more earthly state. For instance, the source of knowledge became the human mind thereafter, not mountains, the sky, or a forbidden fruit in Heaven. This long-standing belief was replaced with a secular view according to which information was taken from other civilizations via horizontal journeys:

> [W]hen mountains shifted from the sacred to the secular in the collective mind and were no longer outside the human domain, they became tangible rather than abstract, near rather than far. A spirituality of place transformed into a psychology of place: mountains and human beings became physically and psychologically interrelational, each affecting the other in ways both subtle and overt.[73]

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[70] "The Medici Family," **The Galileo Project**, n.d., 23 Nov. 2015 (Online) http://galileo.rice.edu

[71] Heather L. Wagner, **The Medicis: A Ruling Dynasty**, Philadelphia, Chelsea House Publishers, 2006, pp.24-32.

[72] Alfred von Martin, **Sociology of the Renaissance**, Trans. by W. L. Luetkens, Ed. by Karl Mannheim, London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1944, p.21.

[73] McCauley, **op. cit.**, pp.11-12.

Self-consciousness is perhaps the most influential aspect granted to the Renaissance people. They no longer needed Prometheus as their life-giver or Heaven as the source of knowledge in a high place; they needed them**selves** on the earth. In relation to this shift from immaterial to material and from up to down, Hulme states, "The Italian genius [...] did not lend itself to the study of logic for its own sake. It was concerned with the concrete realities of the world rather than with mental abstractions."[74] They defined themselves within worldly paradigms, besides (and separately from) a divine order, which means the strength of ego and the self and the weakness of cosmic unity. As a result of the emergence of self and human creativity, individuals showed up in almost all fields of art. Protagoras's famous statement "man is the measure of all things"[75] caught people's attention again in this era.

The influence of antiquity found its place in politics, as well. Wars and political expansionism, which we can regard horizontal journeys, brought victorious emperors arrogance and self-confidence. As a consequence of the rebirth of Greco-Roman legacy, those rulers associated themselves with antique Roman emperors and titled themselves the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire[76]. Moreover, even though he was not European, Mehmet II of the Ottoman Empire, who was an admirer of Greco-Roman antiquity and the Renaissance,[77] joined this trend and titled himself **Kayser-i Rum** (the Caesar of Rome) after expanding the borders of his empire by conquering the Byzantine Empire (or Eastern Roman Empire).[78]

Journeys in the Renaissance were not only horizontal but also vertical; however, the latter got different meanings. Besides its long-standing holiness, by means of scientific studies and changing perception of the world, up was also presented with scientific and also pagan aspects. This section analyzes the mutual effects between horizontality/verticality and the self/cosmic unity in Renaissance science, intellectuality, and art.

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[74] Hulme, **op. cit.**, p.73.
[75] Plato, **Theaetetus, Sophist**, Trans. by Harold N. Fowler, Cambridge, Harvard UP, 1961, p.73.
[76] Adem Işık, **İlginç Yönleriyle Eski Çağ: Milattan Önce**, İstanbul, Yitik Hazine Yayınları, 2013, p.51.
[77] Nancy Bisaha, **Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks**, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, p.73.
[78] Halil İnalcık, **Rönesans Avrupası: Türkiye'nin Batı Medeniyetiyle Özdeşleşme Süreci**, 4th ed, İstanbul, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2013, p.168.

1.2.1. Renaissance Science

Besides being an age of social developments, the Renaissance is an era of scientific innovation. Contemporary scientists followed the path of ancient Greek scientists and studied natural sciences;[79] thanks to them, this period became an age of discoveries. As a consequence their observation of nature with a secular, empirical, and rational gaze like the Presocratics, they came up with the deduction that science did not verify dogmas, and changed people's view of the world they live in. This change also deeply affected the concepts of horizontality and verticality because scientists could find neither a pantheon nor Heaven up there. Galileo, Copernicus, and Kepler's stargazing and space track with telescopes correctly spotted the location of people in the universe and secularized the idea of verticality. In relation to their method of study, von Martin says,

> Seen by the light of bourgeois empiricism as opposed to the speculation of the cleric and the clerical philosopher, the relations of the individual to the cosmos took on a completely different form. The development was to lead through Giordano Bruno to Galileo, in fact to a completely secularized attitude to the world from which all irrationalism has been expunged. It is the attitude of a type of individualistic intellectual entrepreneur […].[80]

Their astronomical practices also contributed to horizontal journeys because the dogma that the Earth was flat, cylindrical, or square[81] was confuted. As a result, sailors and adventurers were encouraged for sailing further away. Additionally, the Earth's spherical definition in the Greek works that were translated from Arabic to European languages inspired sailors.[82] After these developments, with the help of improved engineering techniques, larger and more enduring ships were built and overseas voyages were made easier.[83] Those successful voyages created courageous,

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[79] Marie Boas, **The Scientific Renaissance 1450-1630**, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1962, pp.18-23.
[80] von Martin, **op. cit.**, p.21.
[81] Donald E. Simanek, "The Flat Earth," **Lock Haven University**, 2006, 24 Nov. 2015, (Online) https://www.lhup.edu
Henry Mendell, "Anaximander's Cosmology," **California State University**, n.d., 24 Nov. 2015, (Online) http://web.calstatela.edu
[82] İnalcık, **op. cit.**, pp.130-31.
[83] **Ibid.**, p.130.

self-sufficient, and self-dependent sailors, which boosted their ego and sense of individualism.

1.2.2. Renaissance Intellectuality

Another factor contributing to the creation of the Renaissance people is the developments in intellectual life. Besides substantially regulating the religious studies of the Middle Ages, they introduced **studia humanitatis** which is "the study of literature, moral philosophy, and history as the disciplines that could best ennoble the human spirit."[84] The Renaissance universities, which taught humane studies as well as religious ones, were producing humanist, individualist, and secular students together with theologians. For instance, in the University of Wittenberg, Martin Luther, a professor of theology, brought, as an alternative to Catholicism, Protestantism[85] in which the rejection of authoritative priests as mediators between God and His servants deconstructed the religious hierarchy of the Catholic Church, and denied their materialism, money-based practices, and public exploitation. Protesting the corrupted institutions of the Papacy, he promoted pure individual perception of religion through main sources of Christianity. Additionally, the translations of the Bible into vernaculars[86] helped ordinary people read and interpret it. With these developments, religion was taken from the monopoly of the Church (vertical hierarchy) and presented to common people (horizontal equality). However, though one would expect these religious developments to have people embrace all others, they failed in creating a unity of all people under God's reign or in God's Divine Being. Luther himself was against Jews and Muslims, apart from the Papacy, especially Turks who were penetrating into Christian lands,[87] which points out the fact that even he, as a religious scholar who must have believed in the creation of all people from the same source as is in Christian doctrine, fed the demarcations between peoples of the world on the basis of belief and nationality.[*] What is more,

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[84] Philip M. Soergel, **Arts and Humanities Through the Eras: Renaissance Europe (1300–1600)**, Michigan, Thomson Gale, 2005, p.254.
[85] İnalcık, **op. cit.**, pp.170-74.
[86] **Ibid.**, p.175.
[87] Scott Hendrix, "Martin Luther, reformer," **The Cambridge History of Christianity: Reform and Expansion 1500-1660**, Ed. by R. Po-chia Hsia, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, pp. 3-19, pp.17-18.
[*] Hendrix makes further explanations on the issue: "The advances of the Ottoman Turks into central Europe did raise legitimate anxiety, but the concern of Luther and other reformers about the Jewish

ironically, the Crusades, a socioeconomic, political phenomenon, which had begun in the Middle Ages in the service of the Papacy,[88] helped the spread of individualism; as Hulme puts it: "The Crusades [...] had much to do with the revival of individuality. They opened hitherto unknown distances to the European mind. They awakened a passion for travel and adventure; and travel is perhaps the best method of setting men free from prejudice."[89] Thus, the Renaissance Era was a multifaceted period in which ignoring and misperceiving the vertical hierarchy opened the way for individualism.

The new humanist university education had great effect in the shift of people's attention from up to down and their starting to study humans rather than God. Aristotelian materialism was influential to a great extent in this issue. Aristotle, unlike Plato, does not desire to reach a metaphysical realm –he even says desire is related to bodily (thus material) movements–[90] but aims at happiness and the common good.[91] Angelo Mazzocco relates **studia humanitatis** taught at universities to the idea of the common good:

> […] by taking a detached view of antiquity, the humanists were able to comprehend the socio-political implications of the *studia humanitatis*. They learned, by examining the works of classical authors, especially Cicero's, that the *studia humanitatis* advocated the pursuit of the common good and that they fostered involvement in the civic life of one's community.[92]

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presence in Europe was irrational. It resulted in part from their disappointment that Jews had not appreciated the evangelical message and converted to Christianity in large numbers [...]." in Hendrix, **op. cit.**, p.18. From this point of view, his political anxiety sounds reasonable; however, we must consider his derogatory expressions on Turco-Islamic traditions and life style (Martin Luther, "On War Against the Turk," Trans. by C. M. Jacobs, **Works of Martin Luther**, Vol. V, Philadelphia, A. J. Holman Company and The Castle Press, 1931, pp. 81-123.) to understand his segregationist attitude.

[88] Dana C. Munro, "The Popes and the Crusades," **Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society**, Vol.LV, No:5, 1916, pp. 348-56, p.348.

[89] Hulme, **op. cit.**, p.65.

[90] Aristotle, **De Anima: Books II and III (With Passages From Book I)**, Trans. by D. W. Hamlyn, Ed. by J. L. Ackrill, Lindsay Judson, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1993, p.69.

[91] Richard Kraut, "Aristotle's Ethics," **The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy**, Ed. by Edward N. Zalta, 2014, (Online) http://plato.stanford.edu
Edward Clayton, "Aristotle: Politics," **Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy**, n.d., 24 Nov. 2015, (Online) http://www.iep.utm.edu

[92] Angelo Mazzocco, Introduction, **Interpretations of Renaissance Humanism**, Ed. by Angelo Mazzocco, Leiden, Brill, 2006, pp.1-18, p.12.

Aristotle's down-to-earth approach to life changed people's (those who were interested in humanities) perception of the world and re-defined the identity of the individual. They located themselves in a man-centered universe and this made them self-dependent individuals. Annette T. Rubinstein defines this new man:

> For the Elizabethan mind, man was, essentially, the hero of his own most dramatic story. And nor a passive hero or a spectator but one who took it upon himself to change the map of the world and the shape of the heavens. Whether he was a king who redefined the channels through which God's rule might be exercised in England, a merchant adventurer who added a new dimension to the earth, or a lord chancellor who 'took all knowledge to be his province,' the representative Elizabethan man was an active and effective force in the world, which centered about him and his concerns. There was nothing he might not dare and little he could not do. And everything he dared or did affected the body politic itself, changing the lives of many of his fellows and making a difference to the whole universe.[93]

While horizontal/vertical journeys triggered the idea of the self or cosmic unity in the previous times, it is this self-confidence and the sense of self that oriented people to journeys this time, because people were not the subject of outer determinants, on the contrary they were "the measure of all things" as Protagoras put it.

1.2.3. Renaissance Art

The Renaissance can be considered as the golden age of art; especially Italy was embellished with works of art created with new styles and techniques. Besides that, the reduction of the religious impact created a pagan atmosphere to those works. For instance, newly constructed high cathedrals and temples were furnished with the statues and drawings of mythological figures.[94] This Greco-Roman influence was also seen in the vertical structure of the famous Renaissance frescoes. For example, Raphael pictures outstanding Greek philosophers in "The School of Athens" in which Plato points at the skies and Aristotle points at the earth, reflecting the idealism and materialism conflict in European intellectual life. Michelangelo's "The Creation of Adam" painted on the ceiling of Sistine Chapel elevates humanity and locates Adam with God at the skies. On the other hand, as stated above, this era is a

[93] Annete T. Rubinstein, **The Great Tradition in English Literature from Shakespeare to Jane Austen**, New York, The Citadel Press, 1999, p.16.

[94] Mark P. O. Morford, Robert J. Lenardon, **Classical Mythology**, 7th ed, New York, Oxford UP, 2003, p.694.

multifaceted one in which horizontality, verticality, the self, and cosmic unity appeared altogether; but different than previous times, horizontality and the self gained much importance. Thus, Renaissance art was not completely freed from the traditional verticality. For instance, "The Last Judgment" by Michelangelo presents the conventional associations of up and down, and illustrates ascents and descents at the same time.

The rebirth of antiquity was influential in the literary works of the era, too. Various authors and playwrights used mythological figures, philosophical thoughts, and historical personas in their works. In addition to that, the emergence of humanism and individualism opened a secular and ethical (in Aristotelian sense) path to follow in literary tradition, which greatly attracted the attention from verticality of the Middle Ages to horizontality. However, this does not mean the West completely left verticality, but means they handled both verticality and horizontality, minding the latter more, though. For instance, in Italian literature, humanist Petrarch abides by the artistic universality, no matter which kind of journey he takes; he "always listens to his heart […]. Completely humane feelings are revealed in him. At the same time, he has the state of a deep dissatisfaction and melancholia. The poet, by isolating himself from the environment, tries to relieve his pain through journeys."[95] In "The Ascent of Mont Ventoux," a letter to a professor of theology in Paris, he tells about his experience of a mountain climbing. When he climbs the mountain he contemplates God, history, and himself, and a sense of unity starts to blossom in him as a consequence of his universalism stemming from being an artist. He thinks of historical characters and his past memories, thus placing himself in the universal timeline. The emotional experience reminds him of his weakness, and he says, "I was glad of the progress I had made, but I wept over my imperfection [...]"[96] and "I was completely satisfied with what I had seen of the mountain and turned my inner eye toward myself."[97] The mountain climbing in **The Magus** is quite similar to that of Petrarch, but the protagonist of the former is not as open-minded as Petrarch. When

[95] İnalcık, **op. cit.**, p.59.
[96] Francesco Petrarca, "The Ascent of Mont Ventoux," Trans. by Hans Bachod, **The Renaissance Philosophy of Man: Petrarca, Valla, Ficino, Pico, Pomponazzi, Vives**, Ed. by Ernst Cassier, et al., Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1959, pp. 36-46, p.43.
[97] **Ibid.**, p.44.

it comes to English literature, **Dr. Faustus** by Christopher Marlowe narrates its religious teachings in a mythological tone: Having sold his soul to Lucifer, Dr. Faustus, instead of looking for salvation, loses himself in worldly pleasures and tries to exceed his human limits, just like Icarus: "In seeking to free himself of the bonds of man, Faustus tries to find his true self by realizing to the full man's godlike potentials, just as at the end he tries to hide himself in inanimate nature to retain his identity, ironically, by dissolving it."[98] As a Renaissance character, he puts himself in the centre of his universe, not divinities, and deconstructs the spiritual verticality of monotheistic religions:

> He stands only for himself. His alliance with the devil is not so much a choice of evil for its own sake as it is a means to an end. Faustus intends to break the bonds that contain his aspiring spirit in any way possible. He has no fears and imagines no regrets, since he knows himself to be more magnificent than the external world and all the spiritual processes that lurk behind its masks.[99]

On the other hand, some of Shakespeare's characters embark on horizontal journeys that are usually taken in search of an identity independent from pressure, hierarchy, and social construction. In **The Comedy of Errors**, having lost their twin brothers on a voyage, Antipholus and Dromio make another voyage from Syracuse to Ephesus, and look for both their brothers and themselves. In **A Midsummer Night's Dream**, Hermia and Lysander reject being the people their society forces them to be, and in order to escape the social pressure, leave Athens and flee into a forest. In **The Tempest**, which John Fowles repeatedly refers to in **The Magus**, Prospero attains supernatural powers on an island and has Ferdinand, who has become stranded on the island after a voyage interfered by a storm, experience a crisis of identity and adopt an ethical and sensitive personality. In compliance with Renaissance values, Shakespearean quest of independent identity promoted individualism and horizontality in literature.

To sum up the related developments of the era, we need to keep it in our mind that what distinguishes the Renaissance from past periods is the emergence and

[98] Frank Manley, "The Nature of Faustus," **Modern Philology**, Vol.LXVI, No:3, 1969, pp. 218-31, p.219.
[99] **Ibid.**, pp.220-21.

dramatic rise of individualism. Though verticality was still in use in literature to make humanity aware of their weakness and smallness, the Renaissance science secularized the concepts of high and down to a great extent. Consequently, this change affected social life and literature, and thus gave horizontality a lead. Besides moral issues embracing all that exists, individualism and free personality often appeared in literary works, which is one of the biggest obstacles to not only cosmic unity but also a societal one.

1.3. The Post-Renaissance Era

The Post-Renaissance Era covers a long period which witnesses positive and negative developments in social life, politics, and art. In this time of upheaval, domestic and foreign affairs of countries were marked by conflicts, traditional and modern colonialism triggered more demarcations among people, strict social norms have gone through a change, and the individual mind has been valued more compared to previous times. The increasing importance of the individual found its place in literature as well. However, since some of those developments are not related to our topic, this section of the study will not cover all political, social, and artistic events and ideas, but rather horizontality-the self and verticality-cosmic unity relations.

1.3.1. The Restoration Period

The Restoration period witnessed a variety of discussions and conflicts in domestic and international affairs; religious and political disputations led violent conflicts and horizontal movements.[100] On the other hand, literary circles used methods to lead people to the common values of humanity that may keep them together. One of the methods they tried is the use of verticality in their works. For instance Henry Vaughan wrote about a country "Afar beyond the stars"[101] to criticize people's not living in harmony and to give them ethical lessons. Another influential work of the period is John Bunyan's **The Pilgrim's Progress,** which was written within the framework of Medieval tradition, and tells of Christian's journey from the

[100] David Daiches et al., **English Literature**, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1965, pp.213-223.
[101] Henry Vaughan, "Peace," **Silex Scintillans**, London, Blackie and Son, 1905, p.97.

City of Destruction (our world) to the Celestial City located on the top of Mount Zion. Considering the journey from the lower city to the higher one, we will analyze some scenes in **The Magus** and **Briefing for a Descent into Hell** in reference to Bunyan's canonical work. In addition to these, John Milton's **Paradise Lost** too tells the Biblical story of the fall of man within the framework of Christian theology. This period thereby had literary works covering vertical journeys against political expansionism, social and political conflicts, and the lack of unity and harmony in society.

1.3.2. The Age of Reason

Scientific thinking and rationalism that came into prominence during the Renaissance Era makes the roots of this period. The Age of Reason is a time when people observed their environment, individual interpretation was valued, and attempts to limit religious and political authorities were witnessed.[102] Renaissance thinkers had essentially focused on human ability to do anything; as their successors, 18th-century people focused on concrete results that human ability could realize. Following in Galilei's and Kepler's footsteps, Newton maintained space-gazing and approached the harmony in the universe through a mathematical perspective.[103] As the spatial harmony was observed through a vertical gaze, and stargazing revealed more of God's perfect design in the universe, deism was on the rise,[104] and the religious order (priests, holy books, scriptures, and the like) between individual and God was eclipsed by the human mind, observation, and individual interpretation.

Natural sublime and harmony display a huge order and people's weakness compared to it, and thus make self-related pride insignificant. Alexander Pope criticised materialist and mechanical society and science:

> Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind
> Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
> His soul, proud science never taught to stray
> Far as the solar walk, or milky way[105]

[102] "The Enlightenment or Age of Reason: 1700s / Eighteenth Century – Europe and America," **University of West Georgia**, n. d. 12 Jun. 2016, (Online) http://www.westga.edu
[103] "Brahe, Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo," **Indiana University Bloomington**, n.d., 26 Apr. 2016, (Online) http://www.indiana.edu
[104] "The Enlightenment or Age of Reason."
[105] Alexander Pope, **Essay on Man**, Ed. by Mark Pattison, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1881, p.30.

Likewise, in **The Magus,** Conchis shows Nicholas some science papers and suggests that they have been useless in reaching the unity; he lets him struggle to reach the Whole in nature by using his own senses and experience.

The number of literate people dramatically increased in this period, and that reading public discussed current issues and politics in coffee houses.[106] Criticizing their rulers, they deconstructed the vertical hierarchy between rulers and themselves, and turned it into a horizontal one. Besides coffee house talks, works of political and social satire were often seen in literature, as well. Narrowed down to our scope, horizontal and vertical journeys were used to criticize the corrupted rulers and citizens. Through voyages in **Gulliver's Travels**, Jonathan Swift uncovers the degeneration in local administrations, colonial powers, and ethically corrupted society.

Contemporary literary genres also included autobiographies in modern sense, which points the increasing value of the individual. Having the same title with St. Augustine's work, which presents a religious account of his life, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's **Confessions** is one of the first autobiographies in modern sense, which includes almost all aspects of his life.[*]

Like many great artists of the previous periods, Samuel Johnson too pointed out and criticized social, political, and military conflicts happening on the horizontal axis. In his poem "The Vanity of Human Wishes," he apparently handles the issue from a higher viewpoint:

> LET observation, with extensive view,
> Survey mankind from China to Peru ;
> Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
> And watch the busy scenes of crowded life.[107]

[106] "Coffeehouses & The Enlightenment," **Bryn Mawr College**, n.d., 26 Apr. 2016, (Online) http://www.brynmawr.edu

[*] Though not directly related to the issue of verticality or horizontality, writing about one's self is a noteworthy progress for its contribution to expressing the self. We mention the emergence of modern autobiographies here as we consider it as a huge obstacle to the conquest of the self.

[107] Samuel Johnson, **London and the Vanity of Human Wishes**, Ed. by I. P. Fleming, 6th ed., London, Longsman, Green, and Co., 1890, p.39.

Although the Age of Reason could not bring about any cosmic or social unity, some contemporary artists like Swift and Johnson revealed and criticized the obstacles before unity through journeys including both horizontal and vertical ones.

1.3.3. The Romantic Period

The French Revolution that started in 1789 was organized as a public activism against upper classes of social hierarchy, and resulted in the recognition of universal human rights held by every single individual.[108] Conflicts between individual and society had deep impressions on this period, and contemporary artists addressed both individualism and sense of cummunity in their works. While some poets searched for cosmic unity, others were interested in solitariness and social alienation. Interpenetrated stylistic and contextual variety brought about ambiguity in horizontality and verticality. However, their common ground was the usage of nature and natural symbolism in their prose and poetry. Away from city, the artist takes journeys into wild, untouched places and admires natural sublime. Comparison of human beings to nature reminds people of their smallness and weakness in the universe, which eventually tames the arrogant self. Artists of the Romantic period used mountains, clouds, stars, lakes, soil, and other geographical and spatial formations in their works to create awareness in people.[**] Thus, the natural sublime became a symbol of greatness once again in human history; it "displayed the power of nature and, indirectly, of the divinity: earthquakes and thunder, for example."[109] Besides this, the significance given to the human mind and imagination brought nature's perception through human gaze into the forefront. In the discourse of the period, "the poet's response to scenes and situations of ordinary life, particularly in rural areas where human behavior has not been corrupted by urban convention, is

[108] "The French Revolution," **California State University, Fullerton**, n.d., 25 Apr. 2016, (Online) http://faculty.fullerton.edu

[**] Thanks to all-embracing artistic sensibility of poets –especially those of the Early Romanticism period, even horizontal journeys were in service of cosmic unity. However, it is essential to note that those journeys are taken into nature where high and low, short and tall, small and large, underground and spatial objects/living things altogether form a vertical order.

[109] Jan Golinski, "The Literature of the New Sciences," **The Cambridge History of English Romantic Literature**, Ed. by James Chandler, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2009, pp. 527-552, p.533.

sensitive and valuable."[110] For instance, in William Wordsworth "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud," the speaker flies over beauties of nature and merges into them:

> I wandered lonely as a cloud
> That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
> When all at once I saw a crowd,
> A host, of golden daffodils;
> Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
> Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
>
> Continuous as the stars that shine
> And twinkle on the milky way,
> They stretched in never-ending line
> Along the margin of a bay:
> Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
> Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.
>
> The waves beside them danced; but they
> Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
> A poet could not but be gay,
> In such a jocund company:
> I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
> What wealth the show to me had brought.[111]

His aerial viewpoint helps him embrace the unified beauties of the landscape "at a glance." On the other hand, the poems of the period also covered untouched, wild parts of nature, ruins, deserted lands, and jungles through which they take horizontal journeys. Misunderstood or not understood at all, the poet is exiled from society and takes a journey into nature. Lord Byron's poetic style, for instance, "suggests the outcast from society, the hero tacitly accused of some nameless crime who is admirable and guilty at the same time."[112] Although these horizontal journeys may not be caused by self-love or any other feeling related to the self, it clearly points out the lack of a unity in the poet's milieu and "the conflict between the individual and society which was a basic part of the world of Romantic feeling."[113] However, horizontal movements do not cause social disconnection, but vice versa this time.

[110] Daiches et al., **op. cit.**, p.406.
[111] William Wordsworth, **The Poems**, Vol.I, London, Penguin Books, 1977, p.619.
[112] Daiches et al., **op. cit.**, p.410.
[113] **Ibid.**

Apart from poetry, which is the dominant literary genre of the period, horizontality and verticality are seen in other genres and forms of art. In Mary Shelley's **Frankenstein**, Victor's excessive self-confidence, which convinces him that he –like a god– can give life to matter, horizontally drives him into forests, islands, and icy lands. However, when he finds himself in despair after the disruptive events his monstrous creature causes, he plans to take a vertical journey to the summit of Montanvert in order to find peace:

> I remembered the effect that the view of the tremendous and ever-moving glacier had produced upon my mind when I first saw it. It had then filled me with a sublime ecstasy that gave wings to the soul and allowed it to soar from the obscure world to light and joy. The sight of the awful and majestic in nature had indeed always the effect of solemnizing my mind and causing me to forget the passing cares of life. I determined to go without a guide, for I was well acquainted with the path, and the presence of another would destroy the solitary grandeur of the scene.[114]

Afterwards, he continues to take horizontal journeys to find and dispel the monster. The description of the icy landscape toward the end of the novel may remind one of "The Sea of Ice" by Caspar David Friedrich, a German Romantic painter. As a Romantic artist, Friedrich mostly paints landscapes, especially mountainous ones, to depict human psychology. For instance, in "Wanderer above the Sea of Fog," one can see the smallness of man compared to the mountains, and interpret man's admiration of the natural sublime.

In sum, Romantic artists seeked for a harmony and unity among all things in nature, regardless of socially constructed demarcations. Thanks to their all-embracing attitude toward humanity and nature, even horizontal journeys sometimes featured a universal union and aimed at abolishing social inequalities and demarcations. However, as those separations came to the forefront from time to time, poets were exiled from society, and horizontal journeys were taken to draw people's attention to this isolation which stems from the lack of cosmic unity.

1.3.4. The Victorian Period

[114] Mary Shelley, **Frankenstein**, New York, Signet Classic, 1983, p.93.

The Victorian Period is marked by great controversies in politics, economy, and social life, and witnessed remarkable diversity in literature. Charles Darwin's research expedition to the resulted in his substantial contribution to the theory of evolution suggesting that humankind was not created by God.[115] The absence of God would mean that the world, not ruled by a divine order, has to be ruled by the strong, hence the term "survival of the fittest."[116] In this period when the issues of the growing gap between classes, colonization, the extent of individual freedom, and economical and social unequality were thoroughly discussed, people were moved by the idea of survival. Due to decreasing interest in God, people handled with human level rather than higher levels of the divine hierarchy. In their prose and poetry, contemporary writers objected to injustice, inequality, problems of labour, class and gender discrimination, and social pressure. Be it a city or a rural area, protagonists of literary works sometimes take journeys to a different destination from their hometowns and presents the reader with problems in their country. In Charles Dickens's **Oliver Twist**, little orphan Oliver takes a horizontal journey from a workhouse in a town to London through which Dickens shows how people in both locations are corrupted by poverty, moral breakdown, and class division. Similarly in **Great Expectations** by Dickens, Pip moves to London from his town and observes the evil side of human life, no matter where they live. In Thomas Hardy's **Tess of the d'Urbervilles**, innocent young maiden Tess is pushed into an evil world through a series of journeys, and consequently victimized by a society in which only **the fittest** can survive. In **Heart of Darkness**,[*] Joseph Conrad questions the psychology and outcomes of colonial practices. However, as a consequence of horizontality, the focal point of these novels is not the formation of cosmic unity. In conformity with the literary spirit and tendency of the time, a critical attitude was also seen in novels including vertical journeys. Although cosmic unity cannot be realized, obstacles preventing individuals and peoples from reaching it are revealed and scrutinized in those novels. In Lewis Carroll's **Alice's Adventures in Wonderland**, for instance,

[115] Daiches et al., **op. cit.**, p.492.
[116] Herbert Spencer, **The Principles of Biology**, Vol.I, New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1870, p.444.
[*] Although Conrad is regarded a **fin de siècle** novelist, we prefer to place **Heart of Darkness** in this section due to its publication date, style, and moral concern matching with the contemporary literary tendency.

the conventional locations in the vertical hierarchy, which put upper classes higher than lower classes, are ironically turned upside down to emphasize the contrariness of political levels to degrees of morality. When Alice goes down through a hole, she unexpectedly descends into the world of royalties, not ordinary, miserable and ethically low people.

As a result of the materialistic view of the world supported by Darwin's discoveries, works of Victorian art rather dealt with social problems and led horizontal journeys, instead of taking vertical journeys to God. However, we cannot relate those journeys to inflated ego as they were taken to reveal and criticize others' self-centeredness. On the other hand, though few, vertical journeys were used to remove social, economical, political, and sexual demarcations, which prevent people from forming a unity, in literary works.

1.3.5. World Wars

As a result of search for raw material following the Industrial Revolution, dramatically increasing national feelings with the French Revolution, and oppressed peoples' and individuals' struggle to escape from colonial practices, the first half of the 20th century witnessed two world wars. No matter whether we look from spiritual or biological perspectives, all human beings come from the same source; however, those wars, which were horizontal movements,* created more divisions among humanity. Empires and states around the world which were enlarged through colonialism and political expansionism faced off against each other in the first decades of the 20th century and the World War I broke out.[117] As a consequence of the two world wars, some empires disintegrated into smaller states in terms of nationality, and humanity's disintegration by means of narrower citizenship substantiated human reality of political dissolution as an extension of man's failure at universal oneness or one great family. The catastrophic atmosphere of the war, trampling on human dignity, left individuals in a miserable condition. Wilfred Owen's "Dulce et Decorum Est" describes and criticizes the chaotic ambiance of the untruly enshrined battlefield, and concludes:

* During the world wars, jet fighters and nuclear bombs were active tools of mass destruction, which can be regarded as examples of the misuse of vertical movements. They did not bring life, wisdom, peace, and sense of unity to humanity, but physical and moral death.

[117] Michael Howard, **The First World War**, Oxford, Oxford UP, 2002, pp.34-35.

My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est*
Pro patria mori.[118]

A couple of decades later, the world witnessed another horizontal expansionism ending in a worse mass destruction. The World War II is one of the best evidences of the negative impacts of horizontal journeys on the self; it can be even called "the war of corrupted selves." The personality disorder of the contemporary dictators had them associate themselves with higher entities[119] and involve into more horizontal destructive invasions almost all around the world. Consequently, those military engagements cost "39 million deaths in Europe alone"[120] and perhaps posed the biggest threat to cosmic unity throughout human history.

Although the first half of the 20th century witnessed strict divisions among people on societal and individual levels, Carl Gustav Jung came up with an explanation of the similarities of cultural symbols and phenomena existing in different parts of the world. He explains the interconnectedness of instinctual associations and archaic symbols through psychoanalytical analyses, hence the term **the collective unconscious**. The collective unconscious is "an abstraction, a theoretically postulated commonality derived from the phenomena of concrete cultures in which the archetypes exist as actual symbols and images."[121] According to the theory, events, rituals, objects, symbols, and beliefs of mythologies, religions, and folklores around the world have been similar to each other because they originated from primitive sources* and were handed down to succeeding communities. Related to his choice of the word collective, he says:

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[118] Wilfred Owen, "Dulce et Decorum Est," in Robert C. Evans, **Perspectives on World War I Poetry**, London, Bloomsbury, 2014, p.171.

[119] James Fallon, "The Mind of a Dictator," **Psychology Today**, 11 Nov. 2011, 26 Nov. 2015, (Online) https://www.psychologytoday.com

[120] Iris Kesternich et al., "The Effects of World War II on Economic and Health Outcomes across Europe," **The Review of Economics and Statistics**, Vol.XCVI, No:1, 2014, pp. 103-118, (Online) http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

[121] Walter A. Shelburne, "C. G. Jung's Theory of the Collective Unconscious: A Rational Reconstruction," Diss., The University of Florida, 1976, p.27.

* Jung suggests that the spread of symbols and archetypical images stems from primitive human psyche, rather than cultural interactions and attractions: "The collective unconscious, as we

> I have chosen the term "collective" because this part of the unconscious is not individual but universal; in contrast to more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals. It is, in other words, identical in all men and thus constitutes a common psychic substrate of a suprapersonal nature which is present in everyone of us.[122]

He mainly bases his arguments on **archetypes** which have symbolic meanings in various cultures:

> The term "archetype" occurs as early as Philo Judaeus, with reference to the *Imago Dei* (God-image) in man. […] "Archetype" is an explanatory paraphrase of the Platonic εἶδος. For our purposes this term is apposite and helpful, because it tells us that so far as the collective unconscious contents are concerned we are dealing with archaic or–I would say–primordial types, that is, with universal images that have existed since the remotest times[123]

Imago Dei is "the notion that human beings are made in God's image;"[124] thus, Jung theorizes the idea of coming from the One.

Jung is not only interested in mythological or religious symbols, but also psychoanalytical impact of certain movements in people's inner world, or subconscious mind in other words. For him, natural events occurring in the outer world are interpreted through human psychology and adapted into human soul. On this process, he says:

> Primitive man is not much interested in objective explanations of the obvious, but he has an imperative need-or rather, his unconscious psyche has an irresistible urge-to assimilate all outer sense experiences to inner, psychic events. It is not enough for the primitive to see the sun rise and set; this external observation must at the same time be a psychic happening: the sun

---

understand it today, was never a matter of "psychology," for before the Christian Church existed there were the antique mysteries, and these reach back into the grey mists of neolithic prehistory. Mankind has never lacked powerful images to lend magical aid against all the uncanny things that live in the depths of the psyche. Always the figures of the unconscious were expressed in protecting and healing images and in this way were expelled from the psyche into cosmic space." in Carl G. Jung, **The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious**, Ed. and Trans. by R. F. C. Hull, 2nd ed, New Jersey, Princeton UP, 1991, p.12.

[122] **Ibid.**, p.3-4.

[123] **Ibid.**, p.4.

[124] J. Richard Middleton, "The Liberating Image? Interpreting the Imago Dei in Context," **Christian Scholars Review**, Vol.XXIV, No:1, 1994, pp. 8-25, p.8.

> in its course must represent the fate of a god or hero who, in the last analysis, dwells nowhere except in the soul of man.[125]

Saying this, Jung provides us with the theoretical base of vertical journeys, namely ascent and descent. The correspondence of ascension to the sky, mountain climbing, and other types of upward movements is annihilation in God, discovering divine mysteries, dissolving in cosmic unity, and alike in human soul; similarly, the descending to the Earth, going underground, and similar downward movements mean finding the origin of life, being a part of the whole humanity, reaching the roots of history, and so on. Therefore, interpreting some examples of dreams in which the dreamer looks down at the Earth from a mountain top or descends a mountain, Jung comments, "[t]he dreamer descends into his own depths,"[126] "the dreamer, thirsting for the shining heights, had first to descend into the dark depths, and this proves to be the indispensable condition for climbing any higher,"[127] and "[t]he sky-woman is the positive, the bear the negative aspect of the 'supraordinate personality,' which extends the conscious human being upwards into the celestial and downwards into the animal regions."[128] Thus and so, though the first half of the 20th century witnessed two world wars, Jung's theory of archetypes and interpretation of dreams found a common ground to unite people. Using Jungian archetypical symbols, dream-like states, and vertical journeys, Conchis helps Nicholas join that unity in Fowles's novel.

1.3.6. The Cold War and the Afterwards

The military racing between the poles during the Cold War brought a new way of competition: spacefaring. Challenged by each other in terms of land, air, naval, and nuclear forces, the United States and the Soviet Union headed towards the space and their striving for superiority gained a vertical aspect.[129] With this competition, the second half of the 20th century witnessed a leap in space research and human beings' first real contact with the cosmos. The first manned space flight

[125] Jung, **op. cit.**, p.6.
[126] **Ibid.**, p.17.
[127] **Ibid.**, p.19.
[128] **Ibid.**, p.195.
[129] Richard N. Cooper, "Economic Aspects of the Cold War, 1962–1975," **The Cambridge History of the Cold War**, Ed. by Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad, Vol. 2, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2010, pp. 44-64, p.51.

in 1961[130] enabled humanity to look down at the Earth with a wider field of view. Even after the Cold War, ongoing space research programmes have proved that the source of life is up or skies, namely the space: "The nitrogen in our DNA, the calcium in our teeth, the iron in our blood, the carbon in our apple pies were made in the interiors of collapsing stars. We are made of starstuff."[131] Like the myth of Prometheus or the doctrine of creation, one who takes a journey upwards reaches the origins of human life from which all humankind descended.

Another development we will talk about is about the psychology of aeronautics and space research. Speaking of the manned spaceflights, although few could have a chance to go to space, their vertical journeys were enough to introduce a new movement of thought. Just like Cicero's Scipio who gazes at the Earth from space and realizes "how small it really is"[132] in his dream, those astronauts who look down at the Earth from space with a godlike view thought of the emptiness of worldly conflicts, our –as earthlings– aloneness in the universe, smallness and vulnerability of the Earth, the necessity of human unity at least, and the Earth's being our only home. Surveying of several astronauts' spaceflight experiences and their mental states, Frank White found out how spacefaring affected their mind, and "coined the term *overview effects*."[133] One of the former astronauts of NASA, Edgar Mitchell tells about his mental experience:

> What I experienced during that three-day trip home was nothing short of an overwhelming sense of universal *connectedness*. I actually felt what has been described as an ecstasy of unity. It occurred to me that the molecules of my body and the molecules of the spacecraft itself were manufactured long ago in the furnace of one of the ancient stars that burned in the heavens about me. And there was the sense that our presence as space travelers, and the existence of the universe itself, was not accidental, but that there was an

[130] Nicholas J. Cull "Reading, Viewing, and Tuning in to the Cold War," **The Cambridge History of the Cold War**, Ed. by Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad, Vol. 2, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2010, pp. 438-59, p.440.
[131] Carl Sagan, **Cosmos**, New York, Random House, 1980, p.233.
[132] Marcus T. Cicero, **Somnium Scipionis, The Dream of Scipio Africanus Minor, Being the Epilogue of Cicero's Treatise on Polity**, Trans. by W. D. Pearman, Cambridge, Deighton, Bell, and Co., 1883, p.10.
[133] Albert A. Harrison, **Spacefaring: The Human Dimension**, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2001, p.15.

> intelligent process at work. I perceived the universe as in some way conscious.[134]

It is this awareness that had Neil Armstrong define his first step on the Moon's surface as "one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind."[135] Russell Louis Schweickart, an Apollo 9 astronaut, reportedly says, "[w]hen you go around the Earth in an hour and a half, you begin to recognize that your identity is with that whole thing. That makes a change…it comes through to you so powerfully that you're the sensing element for Man,"[136] and reveals the mysteries of cosmic view. On the other hand, upon looking at a photo of the Earth taken far away from it, in which the Earth seems only like a dot, Carl Sagan expresses his sentiments on the solitariness and interconnectedness of humanity in our world, and states that only our effort –rather than any divine intervention– can help us survive here:

> From this distant vantage point, the Earth might not seem of any particular interest.
>
> But for us, it's different. Consider again that dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives. The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every "superstar," every "supreme leader," every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there – on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.
>
> The Earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that in glory and triumph they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot. Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner. How frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds.
>
> Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark.

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[134] Edgar Mitchell, **The Way of the Explorer: An Apollo Astronaut's Journey Through the Material and Mystical Worlds**, New Jersey, New Page Books, 2008, p.16.

[135] "July 20, 1969: One Giant Leap For Mankind," **NASA**, 14 July 2014, 4 Dec. 2015, (Online) http://www.nasa.gov

[136] Rebecca Sato, "Space Euphoria: Do Our Brains Change When We Travel in Outer Space?" **The Daily Galaxy**, 20 May 2008, 4 Dec. 2015, (Online) http://www.dailygalaxy.com

> In our obscurity – in all this vastness – there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.
>
> The Earth is the only world known, so far, to harbor life. […] To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly with one another and to preserve and cherish the pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known.[137]

Charles Watkins in **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**, having such an elevated view of the world, instinctively dissolves himself into the whole cosmos. Therefore, the astronauts' expressions will be another crucial source for us to understand what Charles teaches in the novel.

The rise of capitalism in the 20th century obviously hindered any possible cosmic unity because, in order to sell more products, brands used hand-picked mottos flattering the consumer's ego.[138] Self-centeredness of ordinary people and rulers, like-mania of the social media generations, demarcations among world citizens by means of nationality, religion, politics, social classes, gender, and so on have posed a threat to cosmic unity so far, and they still do. Postmodernist literature criticizes all those socially-constructed behaviours, discourses, and political, social, and economic systems. In his introduction to **The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism**, Stuart Sim states, "In a general sense, postmodernism is to be regarded as a rejection of many, if not most, of the cultural certainties on which life in the West has been structured over the last couple of centuries."[139] The extent of this rejection is so wide that even opposite ideas can be criticized, even attacked, at the same time. For instance, although Tracy Chevalier's **Falling Angels** judges the methods and ideology of First-Wave Feminism and demonstrates why it was a failure, Reta in Carol Shields's **Unless** uses writing to express herself in patriarchal society as Hélène Cixous suggests, "Woman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away [...]. Woman must put herself into the text-as into the world and into history-by her own movement."[140] Furthermore, following Cixous's advice, Margaret Atwood approaches ancient tales from a different perspective and puts the new woman into

[137] Sagan, **Pale Blue Dot**, pp.6-7.
[138] Rainer Funk, **Ben ve Biz : Postmodern İnsanın Psikanalizi**, Trans. by Çağlar Tanyeri, İstanbul, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2013, pp.65-67.
[139] Stuart Sim, Editor's Introduction, **The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism**, Ed. by Stuart Sim, London, Routledge, 2001, pp. vii-x, p. vii.
[140] Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa," **Signs**, Vol.I, No:4, 1976, pp. 875-93, p.875.

history in a deconstructionist way; she retells the tale of Penelope from her point of view and deconstructs the old man-centered narration in **The Penelopiad**. Postmodernists, thus, not only undermine doctrines and ideologies of the last centuries of human history, but also "are invariably critical of universalizing theories ('grand narratives' or 'rnetanarratives' as they have been dubbed by the philosopher Jean-Francois Lyotard)."[141] Since postmodernism's interest includes subjects of vast areas and long span of time (such as ancient philosophy, Renaissance individualism, Enlightenment materialism, modernity, capitalism, nationalism, and so on), we cannot generalize the theory. Though some works come up with constructive criticism and shows a way out for problems, others may just accept or merely present situations as they are.

When it comes to works of art which handle vertical associations and journeys, they have gained importance as a consequence of the increasing concern and interest in aeronautics and spacefaring. Space research programmes could have risky results at first because journeys to the unknown had to be taken. Like their ancient ancestors, 20th-century people were scared by the idea of going vertically too far from the Earth, and some contemporary works of art reflected their fear. For instance, in David Bowie's song "Space Oddity" recorded in 1969, Major Tom, an imaginary astronaut, is despairingly driven away in space:

> Ground Control to Major Tom
> Your circuits dead, there's something wrong.
> Can you hear me, Major Tom?
> Can you hear me, Major Tom?
> Can you hear me, Major Tom?
> Can you...
> "Here I am floating round my tin can,
> Far above the Moon,
> Plant [sic] Earth is blue
> And there's nothing I can do."[142]

On the other hand, with further successful spacefaring experience, this fear has been replaced by hope and awareness of unity. Some contemporary works of art are

[141] Sim, Editor's Introduction, p.vii.
[142] David Bowie, "Space Oddity," **David Bowie**, Philips UK, 1969, (Online) http://www.davidbowie.com

dedicated to deconstructing those settled attitudes through vertical journeys and overview effects. For instance, Björk's song "Crystalline" has vertical symbols in her video clip and includes teachings of disconnection from the self. In the clip, she, like a goddess, looks down at a planet similar to the Moon and witnesses the making of crystals out of elements descending from the space. Meanwhile, the lyrics present how those symbolic crystals leave worldly concerns aside and reach the light in Plato's allegory of cave:

> crystalline
> internal nebula
> rocks growing slomo
> i conquer claustrophobia
> and demand the light
>
> listen how they grow
> […]
>
> it's the sparkle you become
> when you conquer anxiety[143]

Apart from music, vertical journeys have been often used to suggest the idea of interconnectedness in cinema, as well. In **Gravity**, Dr. Ryan Stone and Matt Kowalski remember their past days and memories while looking down at the Earth from above during a space mission. At one of those moments of overview effect and admiration of natural beauty, Kowalski asks, "You gotta admit one thing: Can't beat the view. So, what do you like about being up here?"[144] and Stone's answer is "The silence"[145] since she is detached from worldly concerns. Moreover, like the journey of atomic particles coming from the space and evolving into human beings, Stone descends from the space into a lake and gets stranded on land where she crawls at first and then starts walking like a homo erectus, which suggests a long-term process of evolution and, hence, the common source of life through a vertical journey. In **Lucy**, the protagonist travels in time and goes back to Big Bang. During this time travel, she ascends into the outer space and is merged into the Whole in the core of

[143] Björk, "Crystalline," **Biophilia**, Björk, 2011, (Online) http://bjork.com
[144] **Gravity**, Dir. by Alfonso Cuarón, Perf. Sandra Bullock and George Clooney, Warner Bros, 2013.
[145] **Ibid**.

the universe. When other characters wonder where she has gone, she becomes a text message that emphasizes on cosmic unity: "I AM EVERYWHERE."[146]

As stated above, not all postmodernist works of art come with a solution to problems of humanity or ways of reaching cosmic unity. The exemplified poems and movies use verticality and vertical journeys just to criticize risky attempts of modernity or to demonstrate that we come from the same source. Furthermore, reports, explanations, and memoirs by astronauts and astronomers usually lack a spiritual side to unite all the things. However, there are some other works dedicated to teach people how to unite under the same roof, and one of their efficient tools is vertical journeys. **The Magus** by John Fowles and **Briefing for a Descent into Hell** by Doris Lessing are two of them. Both works are to some extent related to the teachings, literary works, and historical events of the previous times accounted above. In the light of their intertextual relations to other works and vertical journeys (and horizontal ones when necessary) present in the novels, we will explain how Fowles and Lessing give teachings of cosmic unity.

[146] **Lucy**, Dir. by Luc Besson, Perf. Scarlett Johansson and Morgan Freeman, Universal Pictures,2014.

2. *THE MAGUS*

Our theory created, supported, and exemplified by various literary texts, historical events, religious scriptures, and philosophical and psychological theories can also be applied to John Fowles's **The Magus**. In order to analyze the novel comprehensively, it is requisite to give background information first. After that introductory passage, we will study with what intention and how verticality and vertical journeys and –when necessary– horizontality and horizontal journeys in particular situations and actions are used in parallel with the story line. The result of our research validates the view that verticality and vertical journeys, as in other texts referred in the first chapter, are used in the teachings of ego detachment and creation of cosmic unity. Nevertheless, no cosmic unity is achieved in this novel of Fowles inasmuch as what is essential in the novel is Maurice Conchis's teachings, not a successful consequence. Fowles, relating his writing process to the Zen archery ceremony, puts forward that process is of more significance than result:

> [...] It's a monk's exercise. In a Zen temple. They pick up an arrow and fit it to the bow and draw it . . . .
> *Invisible?*
> They have a real bow and arrow. They draw it, and the target's there. And then it's very slow, they draw it back to full stretch, and then the marvelous thing. Where every Westerner would shoot at the target, all the Zen priest does is very, very slowly decontract the pressure and put the bow down. It's a marvelous symbolic way of saying that it's really the—
> *The process?*
> The means that matter, not the end.
> These men have got to the state where they realize whether you hit the target doesn't matter.[1]

That the end of Nicholas's adventure is different from what it is expected to be does not have any negative impact on the fact that vertical journeys function as a means of teaching cosmic unity. One of the most practical and didactical "magic tricks" of the magus of the island, Maurice Conchis, to tame Nicholas's inflated ego is those journeys.

[1] Raman K. Singh, "An Encounter with John Fowles," **Journal of Modern Literature**, Vol.VIII, No:2, John Fowles Special Number, 1980-81, pp. 181-202, pp.192-93.

Although **The Magus** is the first novel Fowles wrote, it is not the first to be published.[2] Moreover, quite interestingly, he rewrote the novel after some years, about which he tells, "I well remember receiving the first bound copy, opening it at hazard, and seeing a flagrantly unnecessary word in the very first sentence my eyes lighted on; […]. Obsessed with story, I had neglected its articulation. I had published before I was ready."[3] The novel bears traces of Fowles's own personal experiences. Just like Nicholas Urfe, who goes to a Greek island (Phraxos) from England, the novelist took a voyage to the Greek island of Spetsai and lived there between 1951 and 1952.[4] It is crystal clear that this voyage contributed to the novel at least in terms of structure. As to the mystical content of the work, another contributor is Fowles's interest in Zen Buddhism, on which he states in an interview:

> [...] it would be an exaggeration to say I write first drafts in a trance-like state. It's not that. Although I'm very sympathetic to that aspect of Indian and Japanese mysticism.
> *That's another point. When I read* The Magus *I was very impressed by what I thought were Indian parallels.*
> Well, I'm afraid ... I'm not an expert on Indian thought.
> *Well, that's why I use the word parallel rather than influence.*
> I mean it would be largely subconscious.
> *Because I can even remember, I think it's chapter 36 in* The Magus *where Urfe is hypnotized or drugged-*
> Yes. Yes. How extraordinary! I was just looking at that this morning.
> *I think it's chapter 36.*
> When I was writing *The Magus*, I was enormously . . . the one Indian thing I was deeply hooked on was music.[5]

Considering Fowles's and Conchis's indirect mystical teachings, the impact –on unconscious level at least– of Asian mysticism on the novel is obvious. In an essay he wrote in 1971, Fowles says, "Some fifteen years ago I became interested in Zen Buddhism,"[6] which means he had been into Eastern spirituality for a decade by the time he published the novel. Buddhist spiritual leader, 14th Dalai Lama, just as

[2] John Fowles, Foreword, **The Magus**, New York, Dell Publishing, 1985, p.5.
[3] John Fowles, "Why I Rewrote 'The Magus'," **The Saturday Review**, 18 Feb. 1978, pp. 25-30, pp.25-26.
[4] Fowles, Foreword, p.7.
[5] Singh, **op. cit.**, pp.188-89.
[6] John Fowles, **Wormholes: Essays and Occasional Writings**, Ed. by Jan Relf, New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1998, p.262.

Conchis does, by directing aspirants' attention into the space –by having them take a vertical journey, in other words– emphasizes the smallness of one's self in his book **The Universe in a Single Atom**. As we learn from his book, other than him, there have been more spiritual leaders who were interested in space-gazing. Looking over the belongings of his predecessors in a chamber of Potala Palace where Dalai Lamas dwell, he speaks of the space research objects he found among other goods: "Most notable were a collapsible telescope made from brass, which could be attached to a tripod, and a hand-wound mechanical timepiece with a rotating globe on a stand that gave the time in different time zones."[7] Fowles, as a sensible artist who responsibly embraces universal values independent from time and space, intuitively reflects Buddhist leaders' interest in space because Conchis too tries to teach Nicholas his place in **kosmos** through space-gazing.

As pointed out above, the structure of the novel is similar to Fowles's own experiences in Spetsai. Young Oxford graduate Nicholas Urfe goes through a relationship based mainly on physical intimacy with Alison Kelly whom he comes across at a party. Because of his selfish and egocentric approach to life, their relationship comes to an end in a short while, and he goes to Phraxos to work as a teacher. Unruffled island life and Alison's absence drag him into depression and consequently a suicide attempt. He even fails in this attempt he makes under the influence of his emptiness and miserable lonesomeness. Conchis, the magus of Phraxos, has his share in this unsuccessful venture, which Nicholas learns later. They meet each other soon and Conchis plays his game, namely the godgame, to make Nicholas question the reliability of what he thinks is true and learn what he does not know about life and interpersonal relations. In fact, while Conchis teaches Nicholas, Fowles enlightens his readers at the same time. What is taught in the novel is addressed directly to Nicholas to some extent and indirectly to the reader. For instance, while Nicholas climbs down a mountain without realizing its mystical meaning, Fowles conveys his secret messages to his readers by creating necessary associations through a symbolic language and intertextual connections to some Biblical stories of ascent and descent, and Petrarch's "The Ascent of Mont Ventoux,"

[7] Bstan-'dzin-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama XIV, **The Universe in a Single Atom: The Convergence of Science and Spirituality**, New York, Broadway Books, 2005, p.18.

which will be explained onwards. Above all, against the horizontal journeys of Nicholas –and hence the reader, Conchis/Fowles uses vertical journeys in order to have him put his ego aside.

As we learn from the beginning of the novel, Nicholas stays at an upper storey than his neighbours, which probably shapes his image of a deity looking down at the Earth from the sky; whereas even his surname, Urfe, draws him down. In the foreword of the novel, Fowles states, "There is a private pun in the family name I gave him. As a child I could not pronounce *th* except as *f*, and Urfe really stands for Earth−a coining that long preceded the convenient connection with Honoré d'Urfé and *L'Astrée*"[8] and reminds both Nicholas and the readers of their place in the universe; therefore, he prevents any misinterpretation of verticality in advance. On the other hand, Delma E. Presley and Şeyda İnceoğlu associate the surname Urfe with Orpheus in Greek mythology in their works.[9] Especially İnceoğlu asserts her claim by means of comparative analysis; however, Fowles's further explanation makes us pay more attention to the phonetic connection between Urfe and the word **earth**: "Conchis is not meant to represent God, but the human concept "God"−an important distinction. Urfe stands for Earth−Everyman."[10] He can be anyone, any of us; the only condition is that he has to be of the Earth in the vertical order.

When it comes to the characters of the novel, the protagonist and the narrator of the novel is Nicholas Urfe. Nicholas is a self-centered character whose attitude towards his social circle is rather selfish. Lack of moral concern is the reason of his being insensitive particularly in his relationships with women. That everybody in this world is classified into two, his self and the rest, in his view prevents him from merging himself into unity with others. His short-term girlfriend, Alison, who notices this troublesome self and suffers from it, warns him a couple of times, which helps us undoubtedly figure out what his problem is. Once she complains about this to his face: "Nicholas, you know why you take *things* too seriously? Because you take

[8] Fowles, Foreword, p.9.

[9] Delma E. Presley, "The Quest of the Bourgeois Hero: An Approach to Fowles' *The Magus*," **Journal of Popular Culture**, Vol.VI, No:2, 1972, pp. 394-98, p.397.
Şeyda İnceoğlu, "The Faustus Myth in the English Novel," Diss., Istanbul University, 2008, pp.92-93.

[10] Rowland Molony, "John Fowles: The Magus," **Conversations with John Fowles**, Ed. by Dianne L. Vipond, Mississipi, UP of Mississipi, 1999, pp. 26-32, p.27.

yourself too seriously."[11] On another occasion, Alison sarcastically predicates that he is not much different than anyone again, because of which she feels regretful, and we see how he diagnoses his case:

> When I was going on one day in the car about not having any close friends−using my favourite metaphor: the cage of glass between me and the rest of the world−she just laughed. "You like it," she said. "You say you're isolated, boyo, but you really think you're different." She broke my hurt silence by saying, too late, "You are different."
> "And isolated."[12]

Nicholas thinks that the problem is his alienation, and this is not the only time he thinks this way. Before this dialogue, he utters, "[o]utside the window, past the dark dancers, were dusk trees, a pale amber sky. I had a sharp sense of alienation from everyone around me."[13] However, he is too much blinded by self-love to perceive the fact that isolation is a consequence of his problem, not the problem itself.

Another primary character Maurice Conchis is an old and tricky person who tries to help Nicholas open his eyes. Peter Wolfe finds phonetic similarity between the name Conchis and the word **conscious**.[14] Conchis's steady effort to create a consciousness of being in Nicholas's mind contributes to Wolfe's assertion. The character puts himself into strenuous struggle to have Nicholas leave his self-centered manners and find his place in cosmic unity through hypnosis, theatrical shows, and fictitious life stories and documents. Looking through a wider perspective, it can be proposed that he is an ancient philosopher, a Christian priest, a Sufi master, a Buddhist monk, or a postmodern novelist who aims at enlightening his/her readers.

When it comes to our theory of horizontality and verticality, we can establish a link between Nicholas's ego and horizontal journeys, based on diverse examples. Like a Renaissance sailor discovering new lands or a triumphant warrior conquering and ruling enemy territories, he tends to take those journeys for self-gratification. For

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[11] Fowles, **The Magus**, pp.34-35.
[12] **Ibid.**, p.36-37.
[13] **Ibid.**, p.28.
[14] Roula Ikonomakis, **Post-War British Fiction as 'Metaphysical Ethnography': 'Gods, Godgames and Goodness' in John Fowles's *The Magus* and Iris Murdoch's *The Sea, the Sea***, Bern, Peter Lang, 2008, p.214.

instance, while waiting for job application with Alison, he imagines himself taking horizontal journeys across southern European cities: "I sat under a puce and tomato Matthew Smith in the waiting-room and began to see myself in Madrid, in Rome, or Marseilles, or Barcelona... even Lisbon. It would be different abroad; there would be no common-room, and I should write poetry."[15*] In contrast to northern European countries close to England, fate leads him to a small Greek island, and he moves to Phraxos.

Like explorers did centuries ago, Nicholas travels to distant lands and seeks for new adventures. This horizontal journey pampers his ego, and he comments, "[s]o on top of the excitement of the voyage into the unknown, the taking wing again. I had an agreeable feeling of emotional triumph."[16] Indeed, moving from an island (Britain) to another is a new challenge for him because island, in a way, means a domain of isolation without borders through which one can interact with neighbouring lands. The hero must cope with solidarity and foreignness, and this hassle drags him into despair. Just like the heroes in ancient epics, Nicholas leaves his home country and gets into difficulties in foreign lands; he has to overcome both outer and inner conflicts during his journey and reach an enlightenment. However, contrary to his heroic and romantic adventure plans, "the distant land of torments and delight is Greece; to it d'Urfé is driven by an irresistible impulse and when he finally lands on it he finds that his expectations are surpassed by reality."[17] He is destined to suffer from his psychological insufficiencies and other problems caused by his not comprehending what he is taught by others. Under normal circumstances, the expected result is Nicholas's being enlightened and completing his journey upon coming to his home country back. However, as briefly stated above, what is essential in Fowles's novels is the process rather than the result. In relation to the significance of Nicholas's learning process in **The Magus**, he replies to James Campbell in an interview:

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[15] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.22.

[*] The insight of a universal poet is beyond political or geographical borders; any country, city, or town can be their home. However, Nicholas lacks the Romantic sensitivity for humanity, which is why his journeys do not help him write successful poetry.

[16] **Ibid.**, p.50.

[17] Susana Onega Jaén, "Form and Meaning in 'The Magus'," **Miscelánea**, Vol.VII, 1986, pp. 69-112, p.76.

> *Q*. And the novel is all the time moving towards a reconciliation of Nicholas to his real self?
> *A.* Sort of getting near it. I didn't mean to suggest that by the end he was authentic. But that last chapter in *The Magus* is certainly about achieving authenticity, and for someone with any knowledge at all of what the existentialists were doing in that period, that last chapter is not a problem.[18]

Going to an island is one of the common points of the novel and Shakespeare's **The Tempest** with which the novel has well-rounded intertextual relations. Young and charming Ferdinand is stranded on an island after a tempest and shipwreck, and Prospero, the wizard of the island, takes him into some tests. Similarly, Nicholas goes to an island after an unprosperous relationship and idle life, and Conchis, the magus of the island, teaches him his place in existence through some lessons and tests. On the other hand, one must warily notice that even though some more people other than Ferdinand become stranded on the island, Nicholas chooses to be Ferdinand because of his ego.

Nicholas's climbing a mountain soon after his ego-based horizontal journey is quite functional to explain our theory because these successive movements without any intervals clearly illustrate the sharp contrast between horizontal and vertical journeys. The first two paragraphs of the chapter seven describes his overviewing the city below from Mount Hymettus, which seems to touch him so deeply:

> Four days later I was standing on Hymettus, looking down over the great complex of Athens-Piraeus, cities and suburbs, houses split like a million dice over the Attic plain. South stretched the pure blue late-summer sea, pale pumice-colored islands, and beyond them the serene mountains of the Peloponnesus stood away over the horizon in a magnificent arrested flow of land and water. Serene, superb, majestic: I tried for adjectives less used, but anything else seemed underweight. I could see for eighty miles, and all pure, all noble, luminous, immense, all as it always had been.
>
> It was like a journey into space. I was standing on Mars, knee-deep in thyme, under a sky that seemed never to have known dust or cloud. I looked down at my pale London hands. Even they seemed changed, nauseatingly alien, things I should long ago have disowned.[19]

[18] James Campbell, John Fowles, "An Interview with John Fowles," **Contemporary Literature**, Vol.XVII, No:4, 1976, pp. 455-69, p.466.
[19] Fowles, **The Magus**, pp.50-51.

This admiration process misses the chance of turning into a moment of enlightenment as Nicholas is "alien" to himself and his roots. The character is not indeed at peace with England and the English. For instance, at the party he attends before, he does not choose the conventional "nice English girl"[20] Margaret finds for him, but instead chooses Alison, a distinctive girl from Australia, to have a relationship with; and he does not want to work in England or any other northern countries, but dreams of travelling to the south. He is aloof to the culture he has been born into and potentially "the other" as Fowles portrays. Nevertheless, the passage means much for the reader because Fowles, using Nicholas as an agent, teaches a lesson to his readers. From his agent's point of view, he offers the reader the idea of connectedness and unity by letting them take themselves for other people in a historical and social context. Those visualizing the character's depiction of the scenery in their mind may put themselves in an astronaut's place that is struck with the overview effect, a romantic artist admiring the natural sublime, Cicero's Scipio who looks down at the world in his dream, or a Greek deity watching the life below from Mount Olympus. Furthermore, this depiction is considerably similar to Petrarch's memoir of climbing Mont Ventoux. Petrarch connects the act of climbing to the struggle for reaching a blessed life in "The Ascent of Mont Ventoux." He likens difficulties and obstacles on this climb to earthly pleasures distracting people from virtue. In other words, this vertical journey is analogous to virtuously ascending in the inner world; the upper one climbs, the more burden of ego is left behind, which is one of the reasons of Nicholas's seeing everything "all pure, all noble, luminous, immense." Upon arriving at the top, just like Nicholas does, Petrarch gets overwhelmed by the breath-taking magnificence of nature and expresses his state of mind:

> At first I stood there almost benumbed, overwhelmed by a gale such as I had never felt before and by the unusually open and wide view. I looked around me: clouds were gathering below my feet, and Athos and Olympus grew less incredible, since I saw on a mountain of lesser fame what I had heard and read about them. From there I turned my eyes in the direction of Italy, for which my mind is so fervently yearning. The Alps were frozen stiff and covered with snow - those mountains through which that ferocious enemy of

[20] **Ibid.**, p.28.

> the Roman name once passed, blasting his way through the rocks with vinegar if we may believe tradition. They looked as if they were quite near me, though they are far, far away. I was longing, I must confess, for Italian air, which appeared rather to my mind than my eyes. An incredibly strong desire seized me to see my friend and my native land again. At the same time I rebuked the weakness of a mind not yet grown to manhood, manifest in both these desires, although in both cases an excuse would not lack support from famous champions.[21]

We must note here that Nicholas holds himself at a distance with his homeland and society, which must be dealt with by a guide who will take him through a psychic experience to remind him of his connection to the Whole which includes all that exists. When it comes to Petrarch, he, unlike Nicholas, expresses his "yearning" on the high place he stands.

A point Petrarch notices but Nicholas cannot since he is on an island without political borders notably shows how vertical journeys contribute to formation of cosmic unity: borders' being invisible from a high point. Ascending higher and higher from the Earth's surface, political borders drawn by people themselves, which separate people in terms of citizenship, nationality, or any other political concepts, drop out of sight. On the top of Mont Ventoux, Petrarch cannot see such political divisions: "The boundary wall between France and Spain, the ridge of the Pyrenees, is not visible from there [...]."[22] With this thought of togetherness in his mind, he reads a passage from St. Augustine's book and gets angry with himself for being occupied with human interests: "[a]nd men go to admire the high mountains, the vast floods of the sea, the huge streams of the rivers, the circumference of the ocean, and the revolutions of the stars-and desert themselves."[23] One can deduce from this statement that also for St. Augustine, mountains help people decrease their flattered ego and leave their self. Petrarch's master is both his knowledge and St. Augustine, but Nicholas has nobody to guide him, thus he is not able to elude his self-centered manners. Also in the Sufi path, it is a must for aspirants to have a master who will guide them to a blessed life:

[21] Petrarca, **op. cit.**, pp.41-42.
[22] **Ibid.**, p.43.
[23] St. Augustine qtd. in Petrarca, **op. cit.**, p.44.

> The course of the Path, that is, the long inward journey leading a man who is the captive of his ego to the potential state of "Universal Man," certainly includes too many tribulations and dangers to be accomplished alone. Very early on, shaykhs recommended that aspirants place themselves under the direction of a spiritual guide (*murshid*). […] The outer master is only the *mirror* of the "inner master," of the Self toward which the lower self must evolve.[24]

Since he does not have a master, Nicholas remains captive of his self-centered nature and, after a while, withdraws from cosmic unity he has come closer.

Due to his boring island life stemming from limited social activities and unamusing school works, Nicholas often goes for a walk "to escape the claustrophobic ambiance."[25] These journeys happen to be both vertical and horizontal. In his next vertical journey, he climbs hills and admires nature's beauty and peacefulness. He is about to perceive the harmony between material and immaterial beings:

> I began for the first time in my life to look at nature, and to regret that I knew its language as little as I knew Greek. I became aware of stones, birds, flowers, land, in a new way, and the walking, the swimming, the magnificent climate, the absence of all traffic, […] these things made me feel healthier than I had ever felt before. I began to get some sort of harmony between body and mind; or so it seemed. It was an illusion.[26]

This quotation can be interpreted through philosophical associations. The part "I knew its language as little as I knew Greek" may remind one of Plato's theory that we had all the knowledge in the realm of the Forms, but coming to this world, have forgotten everything. Indeed, Nicholas knew the language of mountains, stones, animals, and plants because he used to live in the realm of Forms where all of them were connected to each other and formed the Whole. Yet, Nicholas, as an existentialist and materialist man who is in need of guidance as the novel implies, cannot see the big picture and perceive the harmony between people and nature, the earth and the sky, mountains and seas, the material and the immaterial, the visible and the invisible, and other divisive binary oppositions, regarding the experience as

[24] Geoffroy, **op. cit.**, p.142.
[25] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.53.
[26] **Ibid.**, p.54.

"an illusion." Though this climbing scene and the others do not mean much for Nicholas, the text presents the reader with the opportunity of reaching the origins and connections of humankind and other beings through the character's experiences.

Lacking the idea of unity of everything in the universe, the lonely and self-centered character drags himself from place to place as if he was a real artist. Even before he comes to the island, he tells about writing poems and reckons himself a poet. Since they have anomalous opinions or are misunderstood by other people, real poets are alienated from society; their bodies and souls are in exile. Nicholas wants to turn his foreignness and loneliness in the island into a romantic deportation and convinces himself that he is in a poetic exile:

> I often started off on a walk out of sheer boredom, but there were always new solitudes, new places. Yet in the end this unflawed natural world became intimidating. I seemed to have no place in it, I could not use it and I was not made for it. I was a townsman; and I was rootless.[27]

Moreover, as a consequence of the fact that he has been brought up in a family ruled by a strict military atmosphere, an ineffective mother, and an uncherishing household, and of his existentialist discourse adopted at university and experimental methods focusing on physical being, he feels metaphysical emptiness apart from physical solitude:

> […] a person who has opted out has only his ability to express his disengagement between his existence and nothingness. Not *cogito*, but *scribo, pingo, ergo sum*. For days after I felt myself filled with nothingness; with something more than the old physical and social loneliness−a metaphysical sense of being marooned.[28]

The feeling of meaninglessness makes Nicholas think he is useless in anything. Not being able to write poems, failure in mutual relationships, and being unable to make friends take the edge off his desire to create something. After a number of horizontal and ineffective vertical journeys on the island, his hopelessness to create something drives him to commit suicide; that is to say, he makes up his

[27] **Ibid.**, p.58.
[28] **Ibid.**, p.60.

mind to create a piece of art out of his corpse: "I had created nothing, I belonged to nothingness, to the *néant*, and it seemed to me that my own death was the only thing left that I could create."[29] Even this melancholy does not make him stop posturing as a god; the last thing he will do is to create. However, this creation bears selfish and vain intentions as he confesses, unlike Providential creation in religious conception. Thinking of being remembered after his absence flatters his ego instead of decreasing it. Death, which would mean evanescence under normal conditions, must let his name last forever in this world. He describes this kind of death:[*]

> I was trying to commit not a moral action, but a fundamentally aesthetic one; to do something that would end my life sensationally, significantly, consistently. It was a Mercutio death I was looking for, not a real one. A death to be remembered, not the true death of a true suicide, the death obliterate.[30]

He plans how to perform his final art and, with a gun in his hand, looks for a proper place. Having found a place where he thinks he is not watched, he starts rehearsing the suicide plan. After choosing the right artistic death position, he loads the rifle and gets ready.

At that terrible moment when he is perhaps about to experience the pinnacle of his ego, the voice of a singing girl comes down from the hills behind and intervenes in the suicidal attempt. The sound's coming down from an upper place is of much importance for our argument. As explained and exemplified in the first chapter, up and high terrains have been mostly attributed holiness throughout recorded history. Considering the fact that up represents deities, the intervention in this case is expected to be assumed as a divine intervention by Nicholas. His description of the song as "without any recognizable melody, in Turkish-Muslim intervals"[31] proves the divine/religious side of the intervention. Moving from the hills to a village below –moving vertically, in other words– the sound prevents the

[29] **Ibid.**, p.62.

[*] In order not to split the explanation of the psychological side of the attempt into two parts, we put the quotation here. Indeed, the character realizes that his action is not moral but aesthetic while getting prepared for the attempt. Then he gets angry with himself and fires the gun into the air, not at himself because of his ego.

[30] **Ibid.**, p.64.

[31] **Ibid.**, p.63.

climax of Nicholas's egoistic action and opinion that he is physically and spiritually alone and not watched by anyone. Together with the mountain god archetype, another archetypical god is present in this scene: the sky god. While listening to the girl's singing, Nicholas turns his face toward the sky and narrates the sight: "Over the mountains there were pinkish bars of high cloud in the still strong light from the set sun. All the land and the sea held light, as if light was warmth."[32] Apart from mountains, also the sky was regarded as a deity in ancient mythologies and pagan beliefs. However, being an atheist, Nicholas does not look for a God neither on mountains nor in the sky. Even so, Fowles reminds his readers of the fact that they are not alone in the world by using mythological and proto-religious associations. Furthermore, he refers to a cultural continuity and unity by using these symbolic gods. Although Nicholas turns his back on monotheistic and polytheistic symbols, light and warmth have crucial meanings in their context. As the myth of Prometheus tells, on mountains, gods' dwellings, is the source of life: fire, namely light and warmth. Moreover, light has also been symbolically used as a substitute for knowledge. Nevertheless, Nicholas has neither a sense of responsibility to steal the fire on Mount Olympus nor a Satan to tempt him to eat the fruit of divine knowledge in heaven –for now, of course. While the voice of the singing girl fades away, Nicholas is interrupted by the siren of a boat approaching the island, and after a while, he gives up his dramatic action. Both interventions' having vertical and horizontal movements promotes the inference that binary oppositions come from the same source; however different they are, they belong to the One. Even though those interventions coming from diverse directions do not help him discern the mysteries of the universal oneness, they make him aware of his not being alone: "All the time I felt I was being watched, that I was not alone."[33] This feeling dissuades him from a possible suicide but cannot stop his excessive self-centeredness; consequently, he keeps on making sentences full of **I**s and **myself**s: "I knew I would never kill myself, I knew I would always want to go on living with myself, however hollow I became, however diseased."[34]

[32] **Ibid.**, p.63-64.
[33] **Ibid.**, p.64.
[34] **Ibid.**

Like former explorers travelling around the world and discovering new lands, Nicholas, goes on short trips around Phraxos, his new little world, and finds out new territories. On one of these trips, he finds Conchis's colonnade, a place he has never been to but feels like he has: "a *déjà vu* feeling of having stood in the same place, before that particular proportion of the arches, that particular contrast of shade and burning landscape outside–I couldn't say."[35] His description of the surrounding includes mountains, the sea, the sky, roads, columns, and arches, that is to say, both up and down. It is quite an ordinary situation to feel **déjà vu** in this place where everything in the vertical line stands together and complete each other. Considering that anatomical codes and cultural heritage have been passed down to us, we can put ourselves anywhere in the timeline of human history. Having inherited the legacy of humanity and being in human continuity, Nicholas has a **déjà vu** feeling at the colonnade. If we have a look at Raphael's "The School of Athens" fresco, we could find out the reasons of Nicholas's familiarity with the place. Strong similarities can be found between Conchis's colonnade and the fresco which was painted in an age when Platonism and Aristotelianism were discussed at the same time. The structure of the fresco includes a centered avenue around which gigantic columns carry huge arches. The front face of the avenue is depicted wider due to the use of perspective view. Nicholas describes Bourani, Conchis's villa, as if he verbalizes the fresco:

> It had been built on the seaward side of a small cottage that had evidently existed before it. It was square, with a flat roof and a colonnade of slender arches running round the south and east sides. [...] I went along the colonnade to the corner of the southern front of the house. There the colonnade was wider and the slender arches more open [...].[36]

The centre of the fresco makes his **déjà vu** feeling more understandable. At the heart of the work, old Plato and young Aristotle, his student, walking among people on the avenue, discuss a matter. Plato symbolically points the realm of Forms, with his right index finger directed upwards; not thinking transcendentally, Aristotle puts the emphasis on humanity, with his right palm faced downwards. From the perspective of historical continuity and cultural heritage, non-transcendentalist Nicholas is

[35] **Ibid.**, p.81.
[36] **Ibid.**, p.80-81.

Aristotle, and Conchis, who educates him, is Plato. The two will walk on the colonnade and talk over subjects including transcendental verticality, such as existentialism, materialism, the afterlife, this world, and deities.

Exploring the territory, Nicholas sees Conchis and makes out that he is expected. Upon his first words to introduce himself, Conchis silences him because verbal language is insufficient to communicate. As worldly things are merely imitations of Forms, words are restrictive shapes of meanings. Moreover, linguistic diversities prevent individuals and nations from understanding each other, and cause separations among them. Conchis, whose intention is to unite people, not to separate them, silences Nicholas and gives him first lesson of unity. He also uses verticality in this lesson: "Once again his arm, brown and corded, swept silencingly towards the sea and the mountains and the south, as if I might not have properly appreciated it."[37] His using mountains and the sea, up and down, at the same time has several crucial meanings. In the historical cognitive tradition, mountains resemble deities, and the surface of the Earth resembles human beings. Showing both in the same frame, Conchis indicates a kind of togetherness. Additionally, this vertical contrast is similar to the levels of spirituality. Like in Clairvaux's ladder, if one disowns ego and is purified from former sins, they rise up to goodness; Nicholas must rise up from the sea to the summit of mountains in his case. Even when we take the sea and mountains independently, we could reach the idea of cosmic unity. Each drop of water, though separate, comes together and makes a sea; a sea is made of drops, and a drop is made of seas. In relation to the subject, Hidayat Inayat Khan states, "like the sea water and the drop, humanity appears to be a culmination of the whole of creation, and at the same time the whole of creation is manifested in the human being."[38] When we look at mountains, we could perceive our weakness and smallness before the sublimity of mountains, and achieve decrease of self. Conchis expects Nicholas to admire the natural sublime, beauty, and harmony like those romantic artists he likens himself to, but he compulsorily returns to their worldly language when Nicholas promises no progress here.

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[37] **Ibid.**, p.82.

[38] Hidayat Inayat Khan, **Sufi Teachings: Lectures from Lake O'Hara**, Victoria, B.C., Ekstasis Editions, 1994, p.54.

They introduce themselves without giving much personal information, which can be interpreted as disregarding their selves. After some talk, Conchis leaves Nicholas alone with an ambiance which has symbols and teachings:

> He walked into the sunlight at the edge of the colonnade, stretched his arms and fingers, and with another gesture to me to help myself passed back inside the room. […] The sun was beginning to float down on the mountains, and the sea glittered lazily at the foot of their ashy, opaque shadows. Then there was an unannounced shock of antique sound, a rapid arpeggio, far too real to come from a radio or record. I stopped eating, wondering what new surprise I was being presented with.
> […] Then came the quiet plangent sound of a harpsichord. […] The music came clearly out of the room, and flowed round me and out through the colonnade into the light. […] The sun crept towards me over the red tiles.[39]

Scenery, sunlight, flowers, cookies, and music activate his five senses but he needs another thing beyond senses. Conchis walks to the colonnade and again attracts Nicholas's attention to mountains, the sky, and the Sun, the images of deities. The music played accompanies those deities' harmony in nature, just as Pythagoras's heavenly music which the harmony of the celestial bodies makes.

Conchis takes the role of the master who will lead Nicholas to the knowledge of Platonic absolutism, wisdom, heaven, mysteries of life, and divine light. Although Conchis is certainly a man made of flesh and bone, and his methods of education may be questionable from the reader's ethical viewpoint, his godgame, in which he portrays the image of God, is metaphorically an animation of everyman's life of spiritual maturity, with its rewards, punishments, tests, and judgment. In the godgame, inner and outer conflicts wait for Nicholas to draw him off the track in this journey. The hero has to challenge both his personality and his master's intrigues, solve crucial riddles, and go back home. Conchis begins his puzzles and lessons from day one and introduces himself as Prospero, the wizard of the island of **The Tempest**; indeed, he is really the magus of Phraxos. He will use similar intertextual relations through time. The intertextuality theory which asserts that all texts are related to each other, and no text can be regarded independent from former texts is a sort of unity, the unity of literary texts. Nonetheless, since he is uneducated yet,

[39] Fowles, **The Magus**, pp.84-85.

Nicholas simply thinks of Conchis's solitude; reminding him of Prospero's having a daughter, he asks, "[y]ou live alone here?"[40] His witty master, by referring to individual's annihilation in the Whole, gives a tricky answer: "What some would call alone. What others would not."[41]

Another way of educating Nicholas who cannot grasp the essence of verticality is to cease the influence of horizontal journeys. As a counter attack to Nicholas's self-made role as Ferdinand, Conchis attempts to humiliate his ego by making him Caliban: "'[…] Come.' He said 'Come' as Greeks prod their donkeys; as if, it later struck me, I was a potential employee who had to be shown briefly round the works."[42] Because Ferdinand is a foreigner on Prospero's island, Nicholas does not feel belongingness to Phraxos. Therefore, Conchis treats him like Caliban that congenitally belongs to the island, and forces Nicholas to disregard his horizontal journey to the island. Apart from this assertion, Michael Boccia interprets the connection between Nicholas's and Caliban's roles on the basis of suffering:

> Music is the art which Prospero uses to enchant Caliban so that he wishes to participate; he yearns "to dream again." Conchis is doing much the same to Nicholas, who can at several times leave the godgame. He does not have to return to Bourani any more than we have to continue to read. But Nicholas is enchanted by the masque and desires to participate, to play his part; in fact by the end of the novel, Nicholas' greatest resentment towards Conchis is "*Not that he had done what he did, but that he had stopped doing it*" (553). In one sense, then, Nicholas is both Caliban and Ferdinand, both of whom are made to suffer so that they might come to a higher understanding of their roles in life.[43]

Conchis takes Nicholas to Bourani to teach him his role in this life and in his godgame. Firstly, he shows him the pieces of art in his villa and gives some information about them. Left alone after a while, Nicholas writes a short poem summarizing the psychological state he is in:

> From this skull-rock strange golden roots throw

[40] **Ibid.**, p.85.
[41] **Ibid.**, p.86.
[42] **Ibid.**, p.87.
[43] Michael Boccia, "'Visions and Revisions': John Fowles's New Version of *The Magus*," **Journal of Modern Literature**, Vol.VIII, No:2, 1980-81, pp. 235-46, pp.239-40.

> Ikons and incidents; the man in the mask
> Manipulates. I am the fool that falls
> And never learns to wait and watch,
> Icarus eternally damned, the dupe of time…[44]

The first chapter of our work, through the myths of the Tower of Babel, Icarus, and Prometheus, puts forward the arguments that besides being a locale of favour and grace, high places have also been accepted as a penalty area, and that though belonging to the Earth, those trying to reach the skies are punished up there. One can infer from his poem that Nicholas is aware of this fact. "The man in the mask" is evidently Conchis, and the impatient "dupe" is him. His choice of Icarus to describe his state is a significant progress because the myth tells of the perilous outcomes of the lack of self-discipline through a vertical journey. Despite being instructed by Daedalus, his father, not to fly too high nor too low while escaping the labyrinth lest the wings Daedalus builds would break apart, Icarus, "the fool that falls," flies too close to the Sun and his wings break into pieces as a consequence of his ambition to go beyond human limits and his lack of self-discipline. As we can observe, Nicholas seems to have got how he needs to behave at Bourani: not to fly too high, to obey his master, be patient to learn, tame his ego, and accept his weakness and smallness.

Conchis often makes use of mountains, the sea, and the sky in the process of schooling Nicholas. The natural verticality resembles the verticality of human dignity through which one has to ascend by leaving the ego. This ascent, like mountain climbing, is rather difficult and has lots of obstacles. Based on the similarity of these vertical journeys, Conchis implies that Nicholas's education is to be painful: "Greece is like a mirror. It makes you suffer. Then you learn."[45] When Nicholas asks whether he has to learn to live unaccompanied, Conchis suggests he turns his eyes to his inner world: "To live. With what you are."[46] It is impossible to live alone for those who believe in cosmic unity, for they are aware of being a part of the whole universe, and of the fact that the essence of being embraces all that exists. Yet Nicholas has a long way to go in order to grasp these transcendental lessons.

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[44] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.98.
[45] **Ibid.**, p.101.
[46] **Ibid.**

In another session of transcendentalism teachings, Conchis puts forward that he has lived in other centuries and worlds. Nicholas finds it impossible because his mind has been shaped within the framework of natural sciences. Therefore, Conchis pushes him into a vertical journey in order to teach him how to disconnect the self from time and space:

> I was silent. "I give up."
> "Not give up. Look up. What do you see?"
> "Stars. Space."
> "And what else? That you know are there. Though they are not visible."
> "Other worlds?"
> […]
> "You... travel to other worlds?"
> "Yes. I travel to other worlds."
> […]
> "In the flesh?"
> "If you can tell me where the flesh ends and the mind begins, I will answer that."
> "You um... you have some evidence of this?"
> "Ample evidence." He allowed a moment to pass. "For those with the intelligence to see it."[47]

The vertical journey to the sky, space, and stars Nicholas is expected to take has mythological, mystical, and scientific meanings, which creates a consciousness of being. The space and stars Nicholas sees up there are not merely space and stars; they also bear significant mythological and mystical connotations, which are **invisible**. Stars and planets were regarded as deities in antiquity and worshipped. Telling Nicholas to look at those celestial bodies, Conchis wants him to turn his face to divinities. If one reaches divine presence, they elude time and space, annihilate themselves in being and the Whole, and become one with all, hence the expressions living in other centuries and travelling to other worlds. If we approach the issue from a scientific perspective, as explained in the first chapter, the source of human life in this world is the outer space, and the elements and molecules making our body have come from distant stars. Our atomic particles have been present in other planets and stars for billions of years, that is to say, they lived in other centuries and other

[47] **Ibid.**, pp.108-09.

worlds. As to the interpretation, a statement by science writer Brian Clegg provides further information:

> Every atom in your body is billions of years old. Hydrogen, the most common element in the universe and a major feature of your body, was produced in the big bang 13.7bn years ago. Heavier atoms such as carbon and oxygen were forged in stars between 7bn and 12bn years ago, and blasted across space when the stars exploded. […] This means that the components of your body are truly ancient: you are stardust.[48]

Our corporal elements descended upon the Earth and kept on constituting billions of bodies; this reproduction process is going to go on and we will live in more centuries and worlds. Unable to construe Conchis's intention of teaching the universality of one's being, Nicholas anticipates a verbal explanation, but "[t]here are things that words cannot explain."[49] He goes on looking up the signified in the restrictive world of signifiers: "At Oxford we were taught to assume that if words can't explain, nothing else is likely to."[50] Conchis changes the topic upon this because it is waste of time to clarify this matter with words' lack of capacity to signify abstractions. Instead of a language of words, he prefers to use a universal way of communication which also includes vertical journeys.

In an evening of Nicholas's education process at Bourani, Conchis prefers to use the language of "seeing" instead of words and lets Nicholas perceive the meaning once again; he tells his student to look at the distant fishermen. Nicholas looks at them but cannot see the view's essence: "Away at the far feet of the mountains there was a thin dust of ruby lights in the deepest shadows. I didn't know whether he meant simply, look; or that the lamps were in some way symbolic of the elect."[51] Conchis wants to see if his teachings have had any impact on Nicholas but finds that they are still insufficient. Nicholas cannot catch a sight of cultural associations, vertical symbols, and philosophical notions. Three teachings at least can be deduced from the view. Firstly, compared to the mountains, fishermen are rather small, and

[48] Brian Clegg, "20 Amazing Facts about the Human Body," **The Guardian**, 27 Jan. 2013, 13 Mar. 2016, (Online) https://www.theguardian.com
[49] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.109.
[50] **Ibid.**
[51] **Ibid.**, p.112.

their light is suppressed by the shadow of the mountains. No matter how big their ego is, human beings are pale sparkles in the universe, which points out the emptiness of having a flattered ego. Secondly, the view composed by fishermen and mountains is similar to a story in the New Testament. According to the story told in Matthew 4-5, Jesus takes the fishermen near Lake Galilee and some other people around and takes them to a mountainside in order to preach about being blessed of those who are pure-hearted, merciful, and humble –the characteristics Nicholas lacks. Furthermore, Jesus's addressing his followers with the words "Ye are the light of the world. […] let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."[52] at the mountainside seems quite related to the view Nicholas sees at Bourani. The third teaching is about Plato's cave allegory in which Plato illustrates the difference between the concrete world and the realm of Forms through lights and shadows. Although the truth is the light of the absolute and Forms, all we can see in this world is just artificial shadows of Forms. The enormous bulk of the mountains in Nicholas's view overshadows the lamps of the fishermen; When Conchis instructs him to look at their light, he wants him to see transcendental Forms beyond the shadows. Nevertheless, Nicholas cannot deduce these from the scenery and expects an explanation from Conchis. Knowing that words are incapable of conveying such messages, Conchis simply claims Nicholas is a psychic, instead of coming up with a long verbal explanation; however, Nicholas gets more confused upon this. **Merriam-Webster Dictionary** defines the word "psychic," "lying outside the sphere of physical science or knowledge : immaterial, moral, or spiritual in origin or force."[53] Considering the definition, Conchis means being free from time, space, matter, and whence the self, and annihilation in being. On the other hand, Nicholas relates being psychic to religiosity: "'I'm sorry. But I've never had a psychical experience in my life.' I added, naïvely, 'Anyway, I'm and atheist.'"[54] Even though he cannot perceive abstract concepts and transcendental subjects, he creates a kind of material unity of visible objects in his mind. He looks at the skies shortly after the dialogue of being psychic and regards everything his eyes can see as

[52] The New Testament, Trans. by George R. Noyes, Boston, American Unitarian Association, 1869, pp.8-9.
[53] (Online) http://www.merriam-webster.com
[54] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.113.

a whole: “The sky and the sea and the stars, half the universe, stretched out before us.”[55]

Although words are not capable of transferring meaning in its full sense, Nicholas is not promising in understanding abstractions without them; therefore, Conchis begins to tell war stories to elucidate what psychical experience is. As stated in the first chapter, wars are horizontal journeys that may dramatically increase one’s ego. Conchis describes his feelings upon being recruited for the First World War: “I was passed fit, accepted. I was a hero. Lily's father presented me with an old pistol he had. My father opened champagne. […] I cried. Not from fear—for the sheer nobility of what I was doing.”[56] These journeys which cause demarcations, hostility towards foreigners, and mass killings are the source of pride for young Conchis who has not gained the consciousness of living together. However, while having the actual experience of war, he understands that he is in a meaningless conflict and that those he fights against are ordinary people like him, and then questions his position in life. Especially when he is in a crater –when he takes a vertical journey– during the fight, he contemplates deep in existential thoughts:

> But what I thought was fever was the fire of existence, the passion to exist. […] And these recalls, of even the simplest and least sublime things, a glass of water, the smell of frying bacon, seemed to me to surpass or at least equal the memories of the greatest art, the noblest music, even my tenderest moments with Lily. I experienced the very opposite of what the German and French metaphysicians of our century have assured us is the truth: that all that is other is hostile to the individual. To me all that is other seemed exquisite. Even that corpse, even the squealing rats. To be able to experience, never mind that it was cold and hunger and nausea, was a miracle. Try to imagine that one day you discover you have a sixth, a till then unimagined new sense — something not comprehended in feeling, seeing, the conventional five. But a far profounder sense, the source from which all others spring. The word ‘being’ no longer passive and descriptive, but active… almost imperative.[57]

As opposed to Nicholas’s wish to pass away from this lower life, Conchis values corpses, rats, and even non-living things for their existence in the Whole. This vertical journey in the novel is different from the previous ones because it is a

[55] **Ibid.**
[56] **Ibid.**, p.121.
[57] **Ibid.**, p.132-33.

downward movement this time, while the others are upward ones; yet, the teaching is still the same: being a part of the Whole. Descending into the crater and confinement there for a while may remind one of death. Burial of the dead and soul's descent into the underworld are old and common traditions. As a result of the dead's downward journey, all the past history lies beneath the surface of the Earth. Journeying behind the dead takes one to early stages in the timeline of human history, our ancestors, friends and enemies living together, and eventually to a unity. In relation to this issue, Gonca Özmen states:

> Since the underworld includes the secrets, stories and the knowledge of all times, the one who descends into this world will be in touch with the past and will thereby be able to link it with the present and the future, which in turn, allows the artist to transcend the limitations of time and see the whole picture.[58]

Thanks to this alliance of the past, the present, and the future, Conchis places himself in all times and has a sixth sense to see beyond material reality. His profound thoughts let him see parts as a whole –the One– and he defines the casualties of the war within this context: "Thirteen thousand minds, memories, loves, sensations, worlds, universes—because the human mind is more a universe than the universe itself."[59] Since the human mind belongs to the realm of Forms, it is more inclusive than this mimetic universe. With the help of this war story, Conchis verbally teaches Nicholas how the universe and the self melt into each other and what role switching from horizontal journeys to vertical ones has in it.

In order to diminish the influence of Nicholas's ego-flattering horizontal journeys and to remove the contrast between directions, Conchis sometimes uses horizontality and verticality at the same time. An example of this is the use of music coming horizontally from hills and vertically from the sky. When Nicholas is about to sleep –that is to say, when he is about to switch from consciousness to unconsciousness– Conchis plays a music the sound of which come from various directions, mainly from high places. Conchis chooses that exact time because

[58] Gonca Özmen, "The Poet's Descent into the Underworld in Nineteenth Century English Poetry," Diss., İstanbul University, 2008, pp.3-4.
[59] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.134.

Nicholas cannot detect where the music comes from, but he may unconsciously ascribe mystical meanings to the music. His unconscious works at one of those moments but cannot establish necessary contacts: "a lot of men, singing. I thought: fishermen. But why should they be in the hills? Then shepherds—but shepherds are solitaries."[60] These predictions too may remind him of the story of the fishermen and Jesus, who defines himself a shepherd,[61] happening at a mountainside told in the Gospel of Matthew, but it does not. Then the music sounds familiar to him for a moment but he gives up this idea: "I thought for an incredible moment that I caught something familiar in the sound—but it couldn't be."[62] As a matter of fact, Nicholas is really familiar with the music because it is (planned to be) the harmonious celestial music of Pythagorean universe which he belongs to. The music made by the heavenly spheres' movement in harmony must be known by him because he spontaneously describes the music as if he does: "the song came with a dreamlike slowness and dimness, almost as if it was being sung out of the stars and had had to cross all that night and space to reach me."[63] Additionally, he defines it "mysterious, remote-sounding harmonies"[64] during another recital. Nonetheless, because he still does not realize that Conchis teaches him cosmic unity and harmony, and probably because he has restored to consciousness while wandering around, he misses a probable enlightenment. Then he thinks it is a joke by Conchis and enjoys the music to make the most of the moment.

Conchis's tireless efforts lead him to using other examples and methods but it is not likely for Nicholas, whose mind has been shaped by and unlively household and within the frame of atheism, scientific materialism, social Darwinism, and survival instinct in the aftermath of the two world wars, to catch them. Conchis thereby tries to add a materialist aspect to his teachings. For instance, when they go out to the sea to fish one day, Conchis, with an octopus in his hand, asks Nicholas:

> "Well, how do you like the world below?"
> "Fantastic. Like a dream."

[60] **Ibid.**, p.136.
[61] John 10:11 in The New Testament, p.224.
[62] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.136.
[63] **Ibid.**
[64] **Ibid.**, p.158.

> "Like humanity. But in the vocabulary of millions of years ago." He threw the octopus under the thwart. "Do you think that has a life after death?"[65]

Likening the submarine life to humanity, Conchis may be emphasizing the multimillion-year existence and continuity in the evolution. Some evolutionary research puts forward that human beings descended from marine species.[66] Although numerous human beings, animals, and other species have died for millions of years, life on the Earth still holds on, which holds on, which points out the fact that there is a life after death. Even if the octopus is dead, its corporal remnants and atomic particles will find life in another body. Yet, this does not mean anything for individualist Nicholas who ignores the oneness of all that exist. Apart from this scientific-materialistic explanation, Conchis's teaching has a metaphysical aspect. Underwater and underground are similar in that both are below human living space. Conchis expects Nicholas to question the possibility that there can be life underground –in the underworld, in transcendental sense– as there is life underwater; nonetheless, Nicholas supports the idea that there can be life only on the Earth, which proves Conchis's new method of teaching ineffective.

Conchis's using concrete matters so as to clarify psychic issues becomes more and more pointless for Nicholas. He thinks that abstract concepts cannot be unclosed through tangible objects: "how on earth could he expect me even to pretend to believe that what I might touch was 'psychic'? And then what on earth—appropriately, on earth—had these tricks to do with 'travelling to other worlds'?"[67] Conchis must have noticed his scepticism; he adds a more mystical ambiance to his teachings, without leaving verticality aside:

> "On communicating with other worlds?" I didn't bother to keep scepticism out of my voice.
> "Yes. Up there." The star-heavy sky. "Or across there." I saw him look down, making the visual analogy, to the black line of mountains to the west.
> I risked facetiousness. "Up there — do they speak Greek or English?"
> He didn't answer for nearly fifteen seconds; didn't smile.
> "They speak emotions."

[65] **Ibid.**, p.142.
[66] "From Water to Land," **University of California, Berkeley**, n.d., 14 Mar. 2016, (Online) http://evolution.berkeley.edu
[67] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.147.

> "Not a very precise language."
> "On the contrary. The most precise. If one can learn it." He turned to look at me. "Precision of the kind you mean is important in science. It is unimportant in—"
> But I never found out what it was unimportant in.[68]

Referring to the sky and mountains, on behalf of supreme realms, he states that higher beings use a more universal language instead of worldly languages that can be understood only by those who speak them. In fact, NASA launched the Voyager probes with the Golden Record which also had spoken messages from 55 languages and was "intended to communicate a story of our world to extraterrestrials,"[69] namely to communicate with other worlds, in 1977;[70] nevertheless, they have not got any reply, negative or positive, from anything so far. As one leaves worldly matter when taking a vertical journey, we need to leave worldly languages in this ascension to the skies because they are not capable of conveying meanings. In relation to this weak linkage between language and meaning, Michel Foucault notes:

> Between word and image, between what is depicted by language and what is uttered by plastic form, the unity begins to dissolve; a single and identical meaning is not immediately common to them. And if it is true that the image still has the function of speaking, of transmitting something consubstantial with language, we must recognize that it already no longer says the *same thing*.[71]

Since language of words is destituent, and tangible objects cannot signify abstractions, Conchis's teachings have mostly failed so far. Therefore, besides listening to and reading it, Nicholas has to experience the meaning.

To prepare Nicholas for switching from observing the verticality of nature to actual psychic experience, Conchis introduces to him science papers written about the incapability of science in communication and social life. The paper titled "On Communication with Other Worlds" propounds that scientific means are subject to

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[68] **Ibid.**, p.170-71.
[69] "What Is the Golden Record?" **NASA**, n.d., 14 Mar.2016, (Online) http://voyager.jpl.nasa.gov
[70] Doug Bolton, "These Are the Images on the Voyager Golden Record That Nasa Chose to Depict Earth to Aliens," **The Independent**, 13 Nov.2015, 14 Mar. 2016, (Online) http://www.independent.co.uk
[71] Michel Foucault, **Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason**, Trans. by Richard Howard, New York, Vintage Books, 1988, p.18.

time, our communicative efforts thereby take a long time to show progress –for instance, the Golden Record will reach distant stars tens of thousands of years later–[72] but instantaneous communication can be achieved through telepathic powers. In order to persuade Nicholas who gives great importance to science, the writer's being someone whose "interests are purely scientific"[73] is repeatedly emphasized. With the help of this paper, Nicholas is prepared for the experience that will take him to his "true self."[74]

One of the most significant moments when Conchis enables Nicholas to have a grasp of the universal oneness through disowning the self and all other worldly, factious, and individual entities is the hypnotic experience which is quite similar to the Sufi practice of **sayr-u suluk**. **Sayr-u suluk** is, as explained in the first chapter, a vertical and transcendental journey the aspirant, guided by a **murshid**, takes to the supreme realm of God after an education process of self-discipline and disassociation from the self. Before ascending into the Whole, the aspirants have to be purified from worldly matters and worries; during the ascent, they merge into the unity and uncover the mysteries of being; then they descend upon the world and enlighten other people with the divine knowledge of being. Conchis guides Nicholas in his first transcendental journey and gives him some alcohol to help him leave consciousness and to put him in a state in which reality and imagination merge into each other.[*] He first instructs him to gaze upon ***alpha*** **Lyrae**, a star in the constellation Lyra that resembles Orpheus's harp,[75] which confirms the connection between Urfe and Orpheus asserted by Presley and İnceoğlu. Focusing on space indeed means focusing on one's self; the Sufis explains the correlation between the self and space:

> […] way the world or the macrocosm clearly "contains" man who is himself an integral part of it. But man knows the world and, given the principial unity of Being and Knowledge, this means that all the possibilities of the

[72] "Interstellar Mission," **NASA**, n.d., 14 Mar. 2016, (Online) http://voyager.jpl.nasa.gov
[73] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.195.
[74] **Ibid.**, p.199.
[*] Giving alcohol to the subject person is another questionable method of Conchis. However, as he decides to use the shared verbal language to convey his messages to Nicholas after some unsuccessful attempts of using the language of silence to which Nicholas is foreign, now he gives him alcohol to adapt his methods to Nicholas's world.
[75] Milton D. Heifetz, Wil Tirion, **A Walk through the Southern Sky: A Guide to Stars and Constellations and Their Legends**, 2nd ed., Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2007, pp.87-88.

> world are in a virtual and principial sense present in man. Man and the cosmos are […] like two mirrors each reflecting the other; hence the Sufi saying that "the universe is a big man and man a little universe" […][76]

His face turned upwards, Nicholas looks at space like an astronaut waiting for the space shuttle to be launched. Conchis inculcates him with forgetting about all the worldly things, including Julie, as the first step of the journey: "So clear your mind of her. Clear your mind of the other girl. Clear your mind of all your perplexities, all your longings. All your worries."[77] However, since Nicholas insists on actively using his senses and being conscious, Conchis deconstructs linguistic rules while speaking because worldly verbal languages pose a threat to cosmic unity. In the meantime, the aspirant becomes independent from his senses and regular language, and begins losing consciousness and reaching the absolute conscious. The first step of the journey is taken, and Nicholas experiences being all; the sense of direction disappears in him: "Then came a strange illusion; not that I was looking up, but down into space, as one looks down a well."[78] He is now in a state like Plato's realm of Forms or the Sufi's Presence of God where not only physical beings but also abstract concepts are absent: "There was no sensation of beauty, of morality, of divinity, of physical geometry; simply the sensation of the situation."[79] He then experiences the light, the absolute pureness, Plato tells about in his cave allegory. It is better to use the word "experience" here instead of the word "see" because five senses are unnecessary in this realm. "I don't think there was any visual awareness of this,"[80] says Nicholas to describe this state. Thus he has a taste of the quintessence of existence, which is a state "without dimensions or sensations; awareness of pure being."[81] Everything melts into each other and become the One in this perfectly harmonious and peaceful cosmic unity:

> No pantheism, no humanism. But something much wider, cooler and more abstruse. That reality was endless interaction. No good, no evil; no beauty, no ugliness. No sympathy, no antipathy. But simply interaction. The endless

[76] Titus Burckhardt, **Introduction to Sufi Doctrine**, Indiana, World Wisdom, 2008, p.65.
[77] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.241.
[78] **Ibid.**, p.242.
[79] **Ibid.**, p.243.
[80] **Ibid.**
[81] **Ibid.**

> solitude of the one, its total enislement from all else, seemed the same thing as the total inter-relationship of the all. All opposites seemed one, because each was indispensable to each. The indifference and the indispensability of all seemed one.[82]

After journeying in the Whole with similar feelings, it is time for him to descend into human life. Although he had delusions of grandeur before the experience, he regards himself the smallest living being and stresses the significance of its existence in being: "I felt like a germ that had landed, like the first penicillin microbe, not only in a culture where it was totally at home, totally nourished; but in a situation in which it was infinitely significant."[83] While the dizziness of the alcohol and the hypnosis slowly wears off, the transcendental vertical journey is completed, and Nicholas comes back to the physical world. What is expected from him is to keep the consciousness of being in his mind and to lead other people to similar journeys; nevertheless, he prefers not to do so, which forces Conchis to have Nicholas experience further enlightenment.

Alison Kelly, Nicholas's girlfriend in England, comes to Phraxos to meet him, but she is one of Conchis's apprentices in the godgame this time. One of the most important things she does in compliance with Conchis's teachings is a mountain climbing with Nicholas which resembles a vertical journey in his inner world. Climbing the Mount Parnassus is quite crucial in separating high and low places in terms of pureness and peace, providing the reader with an aerial viewpoint through which one sees the world below as a whole, and having symbolic meanings and associations. The muleteer they meet at the beginning of their journey upward gives the reader the quintessence of the course of climbing: "He said he had worked in Athens for a time, but *then hyparchi esychia*, there was no silent peace there."[84] There is no peace in the lower grades of human dignity, either, for the worldly worries and the ego Conchis tells Nicholas to leave during the hypnosis belong to those grades. Since they try a steep route to the peak, they have difficulty in climbing like Petrarch, inasmuch as reaching the top –both literally and metaphorically– is troublesome: "The life we call blessed is located on a high peak. 'A narrow way,'

[82] **Ibid.**, p.244.
[83] **Ibid.**, p.245.
[84] **Ibid.**, p.261.

they say, leads up to it. Many hilltops intervene, and we must proceed 'from virtue to virtue' with exalted steps."[85] After they leave those obstacles behind, they arrive at a platform with a breath-taking scenery in which "land and substance drew up to a narrow zenith, remote from all towns, all society, all drought and defect. Purged."[86] He admires the natural sublime on the peak and experiences the same feelings he had during the hypnosis when he sees the word light in Greek that has been formed by small stones: "The peak reached up into a world both literally and metaphorically of light. It didn't touch the emotions; it was too vast, too inhuman, too serene; and it came to me like a shock, a delicious intellectual joy marrying and completing the physical one."[87] This climb, though physical, creates the same awareness of unity with a transcendental journey since they both have vertical movements. Having both experiences in a short period, Nicholas establishes a bond between the journeys: "There came back the memory of that mind-voyage Conchis had induced in me under hypnosis. They seemed almost parallel experiences; except that this had all the beauty of its immediacy, its uninducedness, its being-now-ness."[88] This ascent too keeps him away from his ego with the help of perfect harmony, pureness, light, peace, and natural sublime; and as he saw himself like a germ, a microbe during the hypnosis, he now defines his situation, "just a mess. A defilement."[89] Since climbing down the mountain would mean descending into the individualist world and the ego for Nicholas, Alison struggles for keeping him in the unity by using various symbols on their way back to the world below. Following a path, they find a small waterfall with a pool; Alison gets undressed and dives the pool which has not been touched by human beings yet. When Nicholas says the water is probably occupied by snakes, she says, "Like Eden"[90] in order to evoke Adam and Eve's life in heaven. She thereby takes themselves for Adam and Eve, and puts themselves in another point in the historical timeline, which is only possible in a unity. He then reluctantly dives the pool after her. We find in Jung's dream interpretations a similar scene of going to water on a mountain. A theologian's dream that "*He stood on a mountain slope with*

[85] Petrarca, **op. cit.**, p.40.
[86] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.263.
[87] **Ibid.**, p.264.
[88] **Ibid.**
[89] **Ibid.**
[90] **Ibid.**, p.273.

a deep valley below, and in it a dark lake. He knew in the dream that something had always prevented him from approaching the lake. This time he resolved to go to the water."[91] is interpreted by Jung as his descent into his inner world:

> This dream shows us the natural symbolism. The dreamer descends into his own depths, and the way leads him to the mysterious water. And now there occurs the miracle of the pool of Bethesda: an angel comes down and touches the water, endowing it with healing power.[92]

Alison, the angel in this case, plunging into the pool, intends to heal Nicholas's sickness of ego. After swimming for a while, Alison lies in the grass and, referring to Virgin Mary,[93] says, "I'm Queen of the May,"[94] and puts herself in another place in the timeline of humanity. However, since he is now closer to the lower world to which his ego belongs, he desires Alison and they make love, instead of contemplating on this continuity and cosmic connection.

After the unsuccessful attempts done until now, Conchis leaves Nicholas a note that says it is meaningless for him to come to Bourani again and he has disappointed him. This solitude greatly grieves Nicholas who has experienced the beauty of living with everything in a unity; he realizes the value of living together when he is seized by nothingness, and questions his previous, current, and possible future states:

> I was being taught some obscure metaphysical lesson about the place of man in existence, about the limitations of the egocentric view. [...] I was drowned in a sea of mistrust—not only of outward appearances but of deeper motives as well. For weeks I had had a sense of being taken apart, disconnected from a previous self—or the linked structures of ideas and conscious feeling that constitute self [...]. and not being quite sure how one put oneself together again.[95]

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[91] Jung, **op. cit.**, p.17.
[92] **Ibid.**
[93] "May Hymns," **University of Dayton**, n.d., 15 Mar. 2016, (Online) http://campus.udayton.edu
[94] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.274.
[95] **Ibid.**, p.393.

He receives more heartrending news to make him feel completely alone and regretful of his past deeds: Alison Kelly has committed suicide, which is a part of the godgame.

Conchis and the others, except for Alison, return to the stage later on, and the godgame resumes on. On a trip, Julie (Lily) takes Nicholas to the underground chamber she says she lives in, which is called Earth. As Fowles states that the surname Urfe is phonetically connected to the word "earth," while entering Earth, Nicholas indeed descends into himself, his inner world. Being imprisoned in Earth by Julie, he is metaphorically confined in his own egocentric world. He is let out half an hour later, and he finds a doll and a skull at the gate of Bourani. For the latter one, he repeats Hamlet's reaction when he sees Yorick's skull: "Alas, poor Yorick."[96] But he does not recall Hamlet's further words– upon seeing the skull (in Act 5, Scene 1)– on life, death, and people's returning into soil afterwards:

> Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam whereto he was converted might they not stop a beer-barrel?
> Imperious Caesar, dead and turned to clay,
> Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.
> O, that that earth which kept the world in awe
> Should patch a wall t' expel the <winter's> flaw![97]

Besides rulers like Alexander, Caesar, and the king of Yorick who resembles worldly enjoyment, Nicholas went down to the grave; when those mighty men turn into soil, owning an inflated ego and locating himself in the horizontal line instead of the vertical one are Nicholas's useless habits.

As a result of his wickedness, egocentric approach to his relations, apathy, and not deriving lessons from his experiences, he is to be called to account for all these through a symbolic death, one's last vertical journey in the world. This death and judgment game of Conchis is envisaged according to Christian doctrine, and Nicholas becomes everyman by turning from the first person to come to the world

[96] **Ibid.**, p.467.
[97] William Shakespeare, **Hamlet**, Ed. by Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine, New York, Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2009, p.251.

into the last person leaving the world.* He takes the opportunity of being alone with Julie whom he desires for a long while, and an intimacy occurs between them. Their intimacy turns sexual, accompanied by frequent thunders; however, unaware of this divine intervention coming from the skies, he eats the forbidden fruit in heaven and makes love with her. Like Adam's fall to the world from heaven, Nicholas is to fall to hell. She mentions a trial after the intercourse and leaves the room upon which three black-dressed men, resembling the torturer demons at the bottom-right corner of the fresco "The Last Judgment," enter the room. It is time for Nicholas Urfe's judgment as an individual, who has not merged into the Whole. They "can't provide the customary flames"[98] but psychological torment is a preferable option. Although their next actions are not acceptable for a sane person, they have allegoric meanings; they do not give him lectures on religious teachings, but have him experience doctrinal afterlife events. In order to remove his sense of time and space, they anaesthetize/intoxicate him for days and keep him in a yacht cabin, like a symbolic coffin, on the sea. Then, when he is unconscious once again, they carry him to an underground room like a cistern which resembles his grave. After a couple of days of hospitality, they take him upwards for a short walk on the surface of the Earth, with miserably worn clothes and a bag over his head. Similarly, the ghost of King Hamlet takes this journey of purification from former sins (in Act 1, Scene 5), which is called purgatory:

> I am thy father's spirit,
> Doomed for a certain term to walk the night
> And for the day confined to fast in fires
> Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
> Are burnt and purged away.[99]

Nicholas is doomed to the same punishment by Conchis who plays god, and will pay for the crimes he committed before his metaphorical death. In the purgatory scene in Charles Dickens's **A Christmas Carol**, Marley's ghost gives the reader clues as to why Nicholas is sentenced to this penance and what will happen to him later on:

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* What is meant by "the last person" is the last one from Nicholas's perspective. Since he will not see anyone dying in the world after his own death, he becomes the last person to die.

[98] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.495.

[99] Shakespeare, **Hamlet**, p.57.

> ‘It is required of every man,’ the Ghost returned, ‘that the spirit within him should walk abroad among his fellowmen, and travel far and wide; and if that spirit goes not forth in life, it is condemned to do so after death. It is doomed to wander through the world—oh, woe is me!—and witness what it cannot share, but might have shared on earth, and turned to happiness!’[100]

Nicholas now has to achieve what he did not before his death, that is to say, he has to disassociate himself from the egocentric self. The demons in black take him into the underworld for the trial this time. He is exposed to shock, fear, and psychological pressure in this process resembling the afterlife. He is the complainant, the accused, and the judge of the case at the same time. Various Jungian archetypes –masks, symbols, god figures, costumes of different cultures, and the like– are exhibited during the trial, which points cosmic connection of all about existence.

Descending into the underworld, one travels to the realm where the good, the bad, kings, vassals, the rich, the poor, believers, non-believers, and all others are, and joins this unity. After the trial is staged with different masks and costumes worn by the same people, which thereby emphasizes the connectedness and continuity of all that exists, in the underground chamber, Nicholas is anesthetized again and left on a hill. As a reward for the courage and conscience he showed during the trial, he is elevated higher now. He finds himself on a hill as if he reached the Celestial City in **The Pilgrim’s Progress**, the City of Destruction lying below with its “Hundreds of stone houses, all ruined, most of them no more than grey heaps of rubble, decayed fragments of grey wall.”[101] Although he stands on the place of grace and favour now, the concrete realities of life pull him lower because he needs to go back to the city life to keep on living. He climbs down the hill, proceeds to the City of Destruction, and carries out his last vertical journey in the novel. The conflict of the hero with his outer and inner enemies comes to an end, and he goes back to his home country. However, Nicholas’s journey has become a tragic journey rather than a heroic one.

After his research on the stories, symbols, pamphlets, imaginary personas, and gestures Conchis introduced on the island enlightens him to some extent, he prefers to conform to the ordinary flow of life. However, we cannot blame only him

[100] Charles Dickens, **A Christmas Carol**, London, Collins Classics, 2013, p.18.
[101] Fowles, **The Magus**, p.542.

for this decision; social factors of that time must be considered in order to analyze why he does so. His survival instinct, for example, may be a motive for this decision since he cannot live an ascetic life in a rural highland as a townsman. His “mistrust—not only of outward appearances but of deeper motives as well” may be another reason to keep him away from Conchis’s way. The reluctance for more physical and psychological torture which may hurt him and others can be taken for another deterrent factor. One way or another, his preference does not refute our theory because, as repeatedly clarified above, what is essential in the novel is not the result, but the process itself. Conchis’s using vertical journeys proves that those journeys upward and downward teach one how to detach from the self and join cosmic unity.

3. *BRIEFING FOR A DESCENT INTO HELL*

The second postmodern novel to test the applicability of our thesis of the relation between vertical journeys and formation of cosmic unity –also horizontal journeys and destruction of cosmic unity when needed to clarify the difference– is Doris Lessing's **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**. Like the previous one, this chapter gives background information about the novel first, and then introduces the protagonist, Charles Watkins, and his unenlightened students,[*] a nurse and two doctors. Like that of the former work, the analysis of this novel serves our thesis that verticality and vertical journeys are used in the teachings of detaching the socially-constructed identity and reaching cosmic unity. However, differently from Nicholas Urfe, having successfully completed his transcendental journey, Charles shows great effort to help people realize universal interconnectedness. In accordance with this purpose, he subtly uses Platonic and Pythagorean philosophy and movements on the vertical axis in the Sufi doctrine.

Briefing for a Descent into Hell, like **The Magus**, bears traces of its author's (a Nobel laureate one[**]) life. However, unlike the latter whose structure was shaped by Fowles's personal experiences, the former reflects Lessing's intellectual orientation. As stated in the first chapter, Doris Lessing was interested in the Sufi doctrine. The impact of Idries Shah, a prominent 20th-century scholar of Sufism, in the development of Lessing's spiritual view cannot be denied. Shah thoroughly studies the basic teachings of the Sufi doctrine, its philosophical sides, and the life and spiritual journeys of the Sufi in his books. In the introduction to his **The World of the Sufi**, he quotes from others and sums the essentials of the Sufi path:

> Professor A. M. A. Shushtery in his *Outlines of Islamic Culture* tells us, 'A Sufi believes that it is by purifying his heart and not by observances of religious rituals, or prayer or fast, one can realize the truth… It is through self-discipline, devotion, virtue and intention that one can know his God. This stage is called *fana-fil-lah* or annihilation in God…' The route is by way of *maqam*, translated as 'stations', each of which corresponds to a

[*] Though they are not really so, we can define them as his potential students as he tries to educate them to be like **murshid**s who have completed their transcendental journeys and devoted themselves to teaching others the mysteries of the Whole.

[**] "The Nobel Prize in Literature 2007," **Nobelprize.org**, n.d., 20 May 2016, (Online) http://www.nobelprize.org

> particular spiritual attainment. Also on the way are experiences of ecstasy — *hal* or *ahwal*, meaning 'state' or 'states' — which, like the stations, have finally to be transcended. The stations are reached by a series of exercises prescribed by one's Teacher, but for the experience of *hal* there is no prescription. 'Hal', wrote Ali al-Hujwiri in the eleventh century, 'is something that descends into a man, without his being able to repel it when it comes, or to attract it when it goes…'[1]

It is quite possible that Lessing was under the influence of similar thoughts on Eastern spirituality because her acquaintance with Shah dates back to a time before the publication of the novel. In a paper she wrote for **The Daily Telegraph** on Shah's passing away in 1996, she states, "I met Idries Shah because of *The Sufis*, which seemed to me the most surprising book I had read […]. It is a cliché to say that such and such a book changed one's life, but that book changed mine. That was in 1964."[2] Considering Lessing's search into Sufism and the publication date of her novel, the thematic influence of Sufism on the novel becomes more obvious. In addition to that, the protagonist's journey substantially represents dervish's spiritual progress. Apparently, Eastern mysticism is influential on the structural organization of the novel, besides its intellectual background. **Sayr-u suluk**, which Shah calls "the route" in the quotation above, is the most noteworthy part of the organization of the novel in terms of verticality, and includes the steps of vertical transcendental journey as Charles experiences. Leonard Lewisohn defines the term: "Sulūk is the Islamic term for the archetypal motif of the 'journey' that mystics of different religious traditions have used to describe the steps which must be taken to leave illusory selfhood behind and realise Union with the divine."[3] This journey and how Lessing uses verticality to teach cosmic unity will be studied thoroughly under the light of explanations by various Sufis, researchers of Sufism, astronauts, and philosophers in the following parts.

Lessing was a demure woman in her mature life; her artistic sensibility and stance against social constructions excluding the other made her a compassionate persona. Therefore she was not seriously attracted by ego-boosting concerns. Even

[1] Shah, Introduction, p.13.
[2] Qtd. in "On the Death of Idries Shah," **Dorislessing.org**, n.d., 21 May 2016, (Online) http://www.dorislessing.org
[3] Lewisohn, **op. cit.**, p.365.

when she was informed about her winning the Nobel prize in Literature in 2007, she did not care much and humbly said "Oh Christ!"[4] Having led a life far from the pride and vanity of winning this prestigious prize, worldly concerns, and self-centeredness, Lessing, as the Sufi path suggests, aimed at teaching this philosophy to others to remove the demarcations among people. Though it was written almost four decades before she won the prize, this intention dominates **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**. Just as Fowles did, Lessing created her characters to symbolize the reader and philosophical thoughts, too. Similar to the relation between Conchis and Fowles, the protagonist in Lessing's novel functions as an agent to educate her readers. Thereby, the recipients in the novel, the nurse and the doctors, symbolically stand for materialist society that is in need of proper education on spiritual issues.

When it comes to the characters, Charles Watkins is a former professor of Classics, who is taken to a hospital to recover his mental state which is stuck in an inner, transcendental journey. When found by the police on an embankment, the only information they could get about his identity is his sex. Like a primitive human being who is not yet given an identity by civilization, the man, whose name is Charles as we learn later in the novel, is free from social constructions of settled life. C. J. Bullock and Kay L. Stewart say his "amnesia has freed Watkins from his middle-class roles as husband, father, and Classics professor."[5] From his story continuing at the hospital, we infer that he intentionally gets rid of his former civil, individual, and distinguishing identity on the purpose of reaching cosmic unity in which all is one. However, since the doctors and the nurse cannot figure out his psychic experience, they consider him mad and describe him through a civil gaze: "They [the police] took him into the station thinking he was drunk or drugged. They describe him as Rambling, Confused, and Amenable,"[6] "He seemed to think it was a boat or a raft,"[7] "He did not seem very hungry or thirsty,"[8] "Police think he was robbed,"[9] "Police

[4] Stuart Heritage, "How to Accept a Nobel Prize with Style," **The Guardian**, 11 Oct. 2013, 20 May 2016, (Online) http://www.theguardian.com
[5] C. J. Bullock and Kay L. Stewart, "Post-Party Politics: Doris Lessing's Novels of the Seventies," **The Massachusetts Review**, Vol.XX, No:2, 1979, pp. 245-57, p.247.
[6] Doris Lessing, **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**, New York, Vintage International, 2009, p.3.
[7] **Ibid.**
[8] **Ibid.**, p.4.
[9] **Ibid.**

say possibly an amateur or a yachtsman."[10] Because Charles does not confine himself into the socially-constructed identity, he is taken for a mad man by standards of judgment of society. Since he does not meet the requirements of sanity, the nurse, the doctors, or anyone who gets in contact with him cannot properly diagnose the patient's problem. His strange behaviours do not conform to the pattern of sanity under ordinary conditions. Similarly in **The Comedy of Errors**, although Antipholus brothers act in a normal way, the people around them think they –taken as a single person– have lost their mind since their individual behaviours, decisions, and words look incoherent to them. As Charles's manners do not meet the expectations of society from a sane person, others assume that he has lost his mind. Although a majority of the other characters are doubtful of his sanity, indeed they are the ones who are mad enough to close their eyes to our real identity, the Whole.

Though the nurse and the doctors working at the hospital Charles is taken to are similar to each other in their materialistic professional approach to the case, they have multi-layered methodical differences. Doctor X and Doctor Y are named as the unknown parts of a mathematical equation. Though X is the unknown in any case, Y is phonetically the same as the word why, which makes Doctor Y a character searching for the reasons of the patient's strange behaviours and words. Talking about the philosophy (why) of leaving the self (who) and merging into cosmic unity once, Charles refers to this phonetic relation: "You are Doctor Why, and I am called Why—that's it, it was the good ship Why that foundered in the Guinea Current, leaving Who on the slippery raft and…"[11] Despite Doctor X's expectation of definite answers with "nothing but Facts,"[12*] Doctor Y focuses on the reasons of the patient's state and often asks why: "But why not?,"[13] "Tell me, why won't you ever talk to

[10] **Ibid.**
[11] **Ibid.**, p.28.
[12] Charles Dickens, **Hard Times**, Hertfordshire, Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1995, p.3.
[*] Doctor X's attitude to the case may remind one of Thomas Gradgrind's authoritative exclamations on facts: "NOW, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts: nothing else will ever be of any service to them." in Dickens, **Hard Times**, p.3. The physical state of something is given more value than its inner being by both characters.
[13] Lessing, **Briefing**, p.8.

Doctor X?,"[14] "Why shouldn't you name the raft?"[15] On the other hand, contrary to Doctor X's perpetual insistence to use drugs and electroconculsive therapy (E.C.T.) to heal Charles, Doctor Y argues that those methods are not necessary for a couple of months. The reason why the patient cannot see Doctor X is perhaps a reaction to the doctor's blindness to the cosmic message brought by him. Doctor X, who is the strongest supporter of scientific methods, is the most ignorant of the philosophy of cosmic unity.

The narration consists of various types of writing: monologues of the patient, his dialogues with the doctors, the nurse, his wife, and another patient in the hospital, the reports by the doctors, and letters. These different parts include different periods of time in the patient's life, which helps us observe the steps of his spiritual journey. The monologues present the protagonist's experience during the journey with a symbolic language and include some horizontal journeys and categorical and cultural separations. The dialogues, on the other hand, focus on the use of the divine knowledge attained during the spiritual experience to enlighten others. Since vertical journeys –and horizontal ones when needed to clarify the difference– are present in the monologues rather than other parts, this chapter mainly elaborates on the monologues.

At the beginning of the story, a patient without identity, Charles, is taken to Central Intake Hospital where medical personnel look after him but cannot understand his teachings. With the use of monologues, dialogues, and doctor reports, Lessing both deconstructs the stylistic traditions and constructs a parallel storyline. Though monologues belong to the present time, they tell about imaginary past adventures. The sentences the patient makes by disregarding linguistic rules sound unusual to the doctors, which makes them assume that he has mental problems; whereas Charles's broken language bears the message that languages belong to our material world and separate peoples from each other. Our invented/constructed communication systems are useful only on the horizontal axis because they are just used by people around the world. Far from having universal validity, a language sometimes lacks local usage and is used by a few people. As we dealt in the first

[14] **Ibid.**, p.27.
[15] **Ibid.**, p.28.

chapter, the reason why NASA's Golden Disc has not received any response from extraterrestrial beings is its including messages given in earthly languages. Therefore, Charles, enlightened through vertical journeys, rejects linguistic rules which are by no means universal.

Just after the reports at the beginning of the novel, a monologue tells about Charles's horizontal journeys. Not enlightened by cosmic unity yet, the character is driven from place to place on the Earth. Besides, he stresses people's attachment to earthly things by referring to five senses in the subsequent monologues. In relation to the psychology of his sea voyage, Roberta Rubenstein says: "The protagonist initially finds himself "at sea," a figurative pun suggesting the nature of his personal crisis as well as the base-element that symbolizes the origin of individual and collective, organic and psychic, life."[16] When the first dialogue appears, he comes to his current state which has been enlightened by the divine knowledge of being and talks to the medical personnel from this viewpoint. The quoted part of the conversation between Doctor Y and him below includes his (and Lessing's) teachings:

DOCTOR Y: What's your name? Will you tell me?
PATIENT: Jonah.
DOCTOR Y: Yesterday it was Jason. You can't be either, you know.
PATIENT: We are all sailors.[17]

Merged into cosmic unity as a consequence of his vertical journeys, Charles considers himself a part of the Whole and finds himself in all other parts, as well. As Jonah and Jason are mythological and religious figures who had famous sea voyages, he easily relates himself to them. Indeed, when we handle the issue from the wide and unifying perspective of the Whole, he is not only parts of those figures, but also the epitome of the Sailor. In another attempt they make to learn who he –separate from any other person– is, he rejects his individual self and draws their attention to a common entity:

[16] Roberta Rubenstein, "*Briefing for a Descent into Hell*," **Doris Lessing**, Ed. by Harold Bloom, Chelsea House Publishers, 2003, pp. 211-34, p.216.
[17] Lessing, **Briefing**, p.8.

DOCTOR Y: What's George's surname? And Charlie's surname?
PATIENT: Funny, I can't think of them … yes of course, we all had the same name. The name of the ship.[18]

Throughout his stay at the hospital, he repeatedly rejects having a name or surname which could bring individualism forward. In another dialogue with one of the doctors, Charles strictly rejects having his former identity again:

Why do you keep calling me Professor?
Professor Charles Watkins. 15 Acacia Road, Brink. New Cambridge.
But I don't want that. I won't accept that.
I'm afraid you have no choice Professor. We know that's who you are.
But I know I am not.[19]

Names pose a threat to the unity of all humankind because they put the "self" forward. A name differentiates an individual from other individuals, and separation among them becomes more and more obvious. Apart from that, adoption of a name also means adoption of the social role and identity given by the prevailing discourse. Preferring being a part of the cosmic harmony to being a separated persona, Charles eludes his self and integrates himself with the Whole.

Even though the monologues tell about his past experiences, we can observe the impact of his current state of mind in the narration since it is a kind of remembrance happening in the present time. These intermingling experiences (past and present) serve his purpose of disconnecting from time and space, inasmuch as the target destination, the transcendental Presence of God in the Sufi doctrine or the realm of Forms, of the aspirant is excluded from time and space. Those subject to them are merely imitations of Forms as Plato explains. In the first memories of the character, we observe how the perception of time is manipulated through words. During a stage of his sea voyage, Charles uses verticality symbolism and recalls a song some girls sing while bidding farewell to Charles and the other sailors:

Under my hand
flesh of flowers
Under my hand

[18] **Ibid.**, p.28.
[19] **Ibid.**, p.165.

warm landscape
...
I dissolve in strong rivers,
I am the bone the flowers in flesh.
...
The whistling hub of the world.
It's as if God had spun a whirlpool.[20]

Though he claims it is just a song sung by prisoner girls waiting for the sailors' coming back, and does not give any explanation, the words of the song bear profound meanings. Especially when we keep it in our mind that this story reflects Charles's metaphorical imagination rather than truth, we can come up with the inference that the song is not a simple text. The words "under my hand" and "whirlpool" remind us of a Sufi ritual: **sama** dance performed by whirling dervishes. As explained in the first chapter, the performers turn their right hands upwards –toward the realm of God– and their left hands downwards –toward those created by Him– during this dance imitating universal harmony and unity. Dervishes whirl in an order and symbolically join the harmony similar to that of Pythagorean universe. The performance of this ritual in company with music can be linked to Pythagoras's celestial music, which the heavenly spheres create. Apart from this, the word "dissolve" in the song is of great significance because dissolution in the Whole is the ultimate phase to reach in the Sufi doctrine. As we will thoroughly study in the further sections of this chapter, one who takes the Sufi journey spiritually ascends and fuses themselves into cosmic unity. However, it is not annihilation in the sense of being nothing, but existing in everything. Repeating this song which includes verticality, he tries to create a glimpse of unity in medical personnel's mind, and Lessing does the same to her readers.

Charles often mentions the material world and the level of earthlings during his sea voyages. In this time when he has not reached the upper realm yet, he is drawn from land to land across seas and feels belongingness to the world by means of his five senses. Additionally, his references to fire, water, earth, and air, which are the "original grounds of all corporeal things" in occult philosophy,[21] reveal how

[20] **Ibid.**, p.16.
[21] Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, **Three Books of Occult Philosophy or Magic**, New York, Cosimo, Inc., 2007, p.38.

much he is stuck in the physical world. Having a helpless horizontal journey like the sailor who has been damned to sail unsettlingly because of his irresponsibility and self-confidence in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," the character must free himself from this desperate state. The inadequacy of the four elements in rescuing him from his aloneness forces him to seek for a fifth element. Only through a vertical journey can he reach the metaphysical being/s which will help him realize that he is not alone at all. However, They do not descend into our realm; he has to find Them by ascending higher and higher. In a dialogue with the nurse, intervening the story, he tells her about the necessity of a vertical journey to reach the higher realm:

> I must come up from the sea's floor. I must brave the surface of the sea, storms or no, because They will never find me down there. Bad enough to expect Them to come into our heavy air, all smoky and fouled as it is, but to expect them down at the bottom of the sea with all the drowned ships, no that's not reasonable.[22]

When the story starts from where it has stopped, he sounds determined to take the journey upward: "there's nowhere to go but up."[23] On the other hand, it is not occasional that the initial letter of a word signifying an upper-realm concept or figure is capitalized in the novel; referring to the concepts belonging to Plato's Realm of Forms, it is conventional to use capitalization: "It has become a widespread practice to use uppercase initial letters (as in Form, Idea, Equality, The Good, The Large) to designate either the eternal and changeless objects posited by Plato or some member of this class […]."[24]

In need of a vertical journey to find Them, he climbs up the Brazilian Highlands and admires the natural sublime like a Romantic artist, and more beauty welcomes him as he ascends higher. Like the summit with silence and peace as the muleteer describes it in **The Magus**, this new land is pure and innocent: "There was no feeling of hostility towards the intruder in this place. On the contrary, I felt welcome there, it was as if this was a country where hostility or dislike had not yet

[22] Lessing, **Briefing**, p.36.
[23] **Ibid.**, p.37.
[24] Richard Kraut, "Introduction to the Study of Plato," **The Cambridge Companion to Plato**, Ed. by Richard Kraut, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 1-50, pp.39-40.

been born."[25] He finds the peace and harmony he lost during his horizontal journey. This land, untouched by human hand and discourse, is foreign to socially-constructed ideologies and discriminatory ideas. Upon coming across a waterfall after enjoying the spectacular view, he realizes that there is always more beauty than what we have seen so far: "If I had not climbed up myself and experienced that rift, I would not have believed in its existence."[26] In his theory of the Allegory of Cave, to remind, Plato tells about those invisible things and their visible and imperfect samples; although the ideal source is one in the transcendental realm, its samples are many in our concrete universe. A great example to visualize Plato's theory –and other teachings of transcendentalism– is the waterfall. Embodied as a whole on a high ground, water flows vertically by force of gravity and is divided into small particles while dropping. Although each single drop of water below is separate from each other, they come from the common source above. As in our explanation of the connection between drops and seas in the second chapter, a whole consists of parts, and parts are connected to each other to make a whole; thus, one and all are inevitably interrelated. By climbing up more and more, Charles finds the embodied source of those separate drops of water turning into spray below. However, the fountain he finds after a toilsome climb like Petrarch's is not satisfactory for him/us because there must be another source from which the water of the fountain comes.[*] After ascending more, he finally reaches a square where he expects the Crystal which has taken his friends away will also take him. Nevertheless, waiting here is a terrific mistake because an ascent must be steadfastly kept on until the aspirant arrives at the ultimate destination. Having a break during a vertical journey may push one to take horizontal ones. For instance, **Takva**, a Turkish movie released in 2006, screens how Muharrem's, a devoted man who humbly tries to maintain his loyalty to his religious circle and ascend to a higher spiritual level, journey to God is turned into a horizontal one. When he gives a break to his spiritual journey and deals with worldly business, the character ruins his life and causes many external problems. As a

[25] Lessing, **Briefing**, p.41-42.
[26] **Ibid.**, p.43.
[*] If we look at the issue from a different perspective, human beings are born by their parents, and those were born by their parents, and their genealogy continues so. Following the line, we could just go back to the Big Bang which is theoretically our common source.

consequence, the unfinished **sayr-u suluk** is never completed and he loses his sanity before merging into the Whole. Charles's leaving his vertical journey incomplete and wandering around the square cause conflicts in the region and demarcations among living creatures there.

The protagonist, after a while, comes across ruins around the square which is located on highlands. Just like Nicholas, he finds himself among deserted stone buildings on a hill. However, though Nicholas is left above the buildings as a result of his purification, the other is on the same level with the ruins since he has not been enlightened or purified yet. Probably because he has ascended some time, he relates himself to other people having lived in that deserted city long before and has a feeling of **déjà vu** like Nicholas does in the colonnade:

> And I need not be solitary. For this city had an atmosphere as if it were inhabited, as I've said. More, as if this city was itself a person, or had a soul. It seemed to know me. The walls seemed to acknowledge me as I passed. And when the moon rose for the third time since I had arrived on this coast, I was wandering among the streets and avenues of stone as if I were among friends.[27]

When people melt themselves into unity, they realize that, like a drop of water leaving a waterfall but still belonging to the same body of water with other drops, they are parts of a whole strongly connected to each other. Both having seen a waterfall and reached a high terrain –though insufficient yet– so far, Charles associates himself with other people, and therefore feels an old acquaintance with walls, streets, and avenues.

While waiting for a long and influential vertical journey, the character experiences a short but still didactic one: Interaction with the Moon. When he is about to sink into sleep one night, the Crystal directs his attention to the Moon like a leading wise person, a magus, and a **murshid**. The relation of the spatial object to the Earth and the Sun leaves deep impressions on the character. Like the shadows in the Allegory of Cave, the Moon itself, which lights up the sky at night, is not a primary source of light; there is another source beyond which is the Sun. The Moon "is the middle ground between the light of the sun and the darkness of night, and thus often

[27] **Ibid.**, p.57-58.

represents the realm between the conscious and the unconscious."[28*] The interconnectedness of the three heavenly bodies widens his perspective and lets him thoroughly contemplate on mutual relations. Like Nicholas who becomes one with a star after a time of stargazing under hypnosis, Charles disconnects from his self, as well:

> I began to fancy that the moon knew me, that subtle lines of sympathy ran back and forth between us. I began to think the moon's thoughts. A man or a woman walking along a street gives no evidence of what he is thinking, yet his thoughts are playing all about him in subtle currents of substance. But an ordinary person cannot see these subtle moving thoughts. One sees an animal with clothes on, its facial muscles slack, or in grimace. Bodily eyes see bodies, see flesh. Looking at Moon, at Sun, we see matter, earth or fire, as it were people walking in the street. We cannot see the self-consciousness of Moon, or Sun. There is nothing on Earth, or near it, that does not have its own consciousness, Stone, or Tree or Dog or Man. Looking into a mirror, or into the glossy side of a toppling wave, or a water-smoothed shining stone like glass, we see shapes of flesh, flesh in time. But the consciousness that sees that face, that body, those hands, feet, is not inside the same scale of time.[29]

As a consequence of his vertical journey letting him become one with the Moon, Charles thinks broadly as if he travelled to the realm of Forms, and conveys his messages of union to us. Even in a poem intervening in the storyline, he expresses his thought on the necessity of solidarity: "We have no choice but to partner each other."[30]

Due to the colonization movement which dramatically accelerated and expanded with the help of the Renaissance science and advanced technology, the Western civilization was spread to untouched lands through horizontal journeys.[**] However, this civil expansion made the differences between classes and cultures explicit, and seriously damaged the idea of unity. A great many people were enslaved and murdered due to colonial expansionism. A similar scene is seen in the coming parts of Charles's story in the highland. His having a break during the ascent pushes

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[28] "Moon," **University of Michigan**, n.d., 13 Jun. 2016, (Online) http://www.umich.edu

[*] The Moon is also spiritualized in shamanist, pagan, and folkloric beliefs.

[29] Lessing, **Briefing**, p.63-64.

[30] **Ibid.**, p.65.

[**] Colonization practices were carried out not only by the West, but also by the East. However, since the scope of our study includes the former, we do not mention the activities of the latter.

him to idleness and long horizontal journeys. The ruins he finds around, reminding us of the City of Destruction, indicate he has not ascended enough to leave worldly pleasures and concerns behind.[*] He is still in the realm of human beings and other living creatures and not spiritually purified. Wandering around like an explorer, he comes across a tribal fest. As is the destruction of African tribes living with their own traditions by the Western culture and discourse in Chinua Achebe's **Things Fall Apart**, Charles's contact with this native company causes violence and unconformity. In the fest including songs and dance performance, some members of the tribe sing the song "Under my hand" sung by some other girls bidding farewell to the sailors before. However, the peaceful atmosphere is lifted and a bloody murder is witnessed after Charles's horizontal journey into their fest. Described as "a land which hand never known killing"[31] before, the land now witnesses ethical corruption and violence stemming from Charles's horizontal journeys.

Another example of the destructing colonial impact is the fight between rat-dogs and monkeys. Charles finds an eccentric type of animal he calls rat-dog in the region around the square. Against the thing which he is completely unfamiliar with – though the animal is innocent– he has an instinct to kill:

> I was afraid. It was bigger and much stronger than I was. I thought it might come over and attack me. But I walked towards it and it looked at me without concern. I was thinking then that I should attack and kill it, for I found it disgusting and ugly, as it squatted there, exactly where last night the Crystal had lain shining and vibrating.[32]

The city is occupied by rat-dogs and monkeys after a while. No matter how different the two species are, they do not tease each other first. Nevertheless, whenever Charles brings his language to these animals, a violent polarization and fight separate the species. One of the fundamental elements with which society define themselves is language. Through a commonly-used language, individuals feel belongingness to a collective group which is regarded as nation. The idea of nation is socially

[*] The character's physical ascent proceeds in parallel with his spiritual journey. Thus, this concrete path symbolizes the steps of mystic enlightenment. Since he is not so open-minded and open-hearted as to perceive the quintessence of being, he still has a some way to take on the physical path.

[31] **Ibid.**, p.66.

[32] **Ibid.**, p.79-80.

constructed and even though it brings millions of people sometimes, it excludes the others in the world. The language of that nation has a significant role in determining if an individual belongs to that nation or to another. Therefore, being a socially-constructed phenomenon, language functions as a tool of communication and non-communication at the same time. In addition to these, language bears the cultural and intellectual characteristics of societies they are spoken by. Therefore, when different languages confront each other, not only communicational but also intellectual cleavages appear. As told in the story of the Tower of Babel in the Bible, the more languages are spoken, the more demarcations are seen among peoples of the world.[*] Thus, when colonial expeditions take colonizers' tongues to colonized lands, they also bring incompatibility. In this regard, it is not merely a coincidence that rat-dogs and monkeys start fighting in the very day when they are given a "human speech"[33] by Charles. Furthermore, when the animals hear the language bearing human discourse, they establish a hierarchical order dividing the species into classes. Consequently, this horizontal journey of Charles's damages the idea of cosmic unity, as well.

Having observed the beginning and escalation of the fight inside, the character then is taken to the sky and describes the meaninglessness of the conflict from an aerial perspective. In the second one of the two flights he takes on the back of a big white bird, he views the sea and the land, and witnesses the material and ethical deterioration in the world. His description of the devastation of nature because of individuals' and states' ambitions is a kind social criticism and is probably expected to be taken as a lesson of environmental awareness by the reader. After flying over the sea to the highlands, the bird takes Charles to the city and lets him watch the fight from a lifted viewpoint. Like astronauts overviewing the world from the outer space and realizing that "the conflicts that divide us become less

[*] The story is told in Bible as the following: "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. [...] And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. [...] And the LORD said, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city." in Genesis 11:1-8 in The Holy Bible, p.19.

[33] **Ibid.**, p.88.

important,"[34] he perceives how empty and irrational the fight is upon looking down at the city of ruins and blood:

> […] then my beautiful white bird lifted me up and up and up into the sky and sped back over the trees to the plateau, but now it circled down over the city with its roofless buildings and made me see how underneath me all the city, every building in it, was fouled by war, how everywhere lay the loads of corpses, how in every street groups of beasts fought each other, and now so crazed and weary were they that they fought within the species, without even the excuse of a difference in fur or hide or shape of muzzle or eye. They fought monkey with monkey, rat-beast with rat-beast. Fighting had become its own justification and they could not stop.[35]

The fascination by natural beauty Charles has experienced while climbing up the highlands is gradually replaced with his horizontal journeys. Because of the murders and conflicts happening after his expeditions on the land, he sees destruction rather than natural beauty when he looks down, which deeply grieves him: "On the cliff's edge I tumbled off the bird's warm strong back, and lay face down, weeping. Now I believed that everything was ended, and there was no hope anywhere for man or for animals of the earth."[36] His consciousness of responsibility and catharsis indicate he has successfully completed the process of purification and taming the self, the steps that must be taken before **sayr-u suluk**. The next step is ascent for Charles. A long part of the chapter will analyze the phases of the character's spiritual journey. However, as the book is quite profound and comprehensive, it enables us to explain the process through philosophical views, intertextual relations, and real experiences. Therefore, some multi-dimensional aspects of the vertical journey will be studied in chronological order.

Sayr-u suluk is, as explained before, the Sufi spiritual journey through which the aspirant aims at reaching the One. Although Sufism is an Islamic concept, and the target destination is the Divine Presence of Allah, no Islamic term is used – probably not to exclude non-Muslim readers– in the novel. Moreover, the journey is constructed as a physical one (spacefaring) to make it imaginable for readers who

[34] "Declaration of Visions and Principles," **The Overview Institute**, n.d., 9 Jun. 2016, (Online) http://www.overviewinstitute.org
[35] Lessing, **Briefing**, p.97.
[36] **Ibid.**, p.98.

may not be familiar with spirituality. Related to the issue of cosmic journey and belief, astronaut Chris Hadfield states, "whatever the personal belief system, space flight tends to reinforce it."[37]

The first phase of the journey is **sayr ilallah** –journeying to God, in other words. The aspirant who has left the self in our micro realm moves to a macro realm. Their ultimate goal is to become one with the Whole and uncover the mysteries of being. In the novel, Charles is taken into the Crystal, and his vertical journey to the realm of higher Beings begins. However, this cosmic voyage is neither completely physical nor completely transcendental because, as Canan Şavkay states, "contrary to Plato's division between immanence and transcendence, Charles searches for a way to combine these two modes."[38] In the Crystal rising upwards, he watches both the Form and **mimesis**, and says: "As if this tenuous city, which was a pattern and a key and a blueprint for the outer city, only fitted certain parts or areas or individual buildings in the outer city."[39] As his spaceship ascends more and more, he merges himself into "a whole in such a way that it was not possible to say, Here Charles begins, here John or Miles or Felicity or Constance ends."[40] The Whole covers more than the Creator and human beings. Sufism teaches people to become one also with non-human beings, just as Nicholas associates himself with a star and then with a germ during the hypnosis scene. On the approach of the Sufi to the issue, Burckhardt remarks:

> In the sight of the Essence, which is one, the universe is like a single being. The essential unity of the world is the most certain of things but also the most hidden: all knowledge and every perception, however adequate or inadequate, presupposes the essential Unity of beings and of things.[41]

In this regard, the character is not only metaphorically or symbolically but also existentially associated with other people and things. After uniting with his friends, he connects himself to animals: "It was the mind of humanity that I saw, but this was not at all to be separated from the animal mind which married and fused with it

[37] Chris Hadfield, **An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth**, London, Pan Books, 2015, p.223.
[38] Şavkay, **op. cit.**, p.9.
[39] Lessing, **Briefing**, p.103.
[40] **Ibid.**, p.106.
[41] Burckhardt, **op. cit.**, p.63.

everywhere."[42] He thereby discovers what universal harmony is before completing even the first step of his vertical journey. Besides, by mentioning the light so often, he reminds us of the light in Plato's Allegory of Cave and takes us to the origins of existence.

As he makes more progress upwards, Charles, who looks down at the Earth from a celestial viewpoint like Cicero's General Scipio, sees how weak and vulnerable the planet is. What is more interesting is the similarity of Lessing's descriptions of the Earth to the statements of astronauts telling about the overview effect. Astronauts who have looked down at the Earth during their space missions usually focus on how vulnerable it looks from the outer space, and their statements match with Lessing's words, which makes the novel a timeless work. Charles defines the world from his position in space as a "creature hanging there in space surrounded by its delicate outer envelope"[43] to demonstrate its vulnerability in the entire cosmos. Similarly, Ron Garan, a former astronaut, portrays our atmosphere with similar words in the short documentary film **Overview**: "it really is striking, and it's really sobering to see this paper-thin layer, and to realize that that paper-thin layer is all that protects every living thing on Earth from death, from the harshness of space."[44] Some of the astronauts in the documentary state that their belief in cosmic unity and mysticism has been reinforced after overviewing the planet. Although she has not attended any space mission in her life, Lessing intuitively reflected this celestial view in her novel. As a universal author, her depiction of the Earth as "coloured and tinted here and there, for the most part with the blueish tint of water"[45] is quite similar to the statements "a kind of little island surrounded by the waters of that sea, which you on earth call the Atlantic, the Great Sea, the Ocean; and yet though it has such a grand name, see how small it really is"[46] by General Scipio and "pale blue dot" by Carl Sagan. A common point of all these vertical journeys is their having messages of existential awareness. Like the progress in **sayr-u suluk**, one disconnects the self while rising and perceives being with a broader perspective. In such vertical journeys

[42] Lessing, **Briefing**, p.107.
[43] **Ibid.**, p.108.
[44] "Overview," **The Overview Institute**, n.d., 9 Jun. 2016, (Online) http://www.overviewinstitute.org
[45] Lessing, **Briefing**, p.108.
[46] Cicero, **op. cit.**, p.10.

as Charles's, the point of travelling is "not at all a question of individual entities, as those entities saw themselves, but a question of Wholes, large and small, for groups and packs and troops and crowds made entities, made Wholes, functioning as Wholes."[47]

There occurs a very soft phasic transition from **sayr ilallah** (journeying to God) to **sayr fillah** (journeying in God) in the novel; therefore, we cannot separate the phases with exact lines. Charles's repeatedly mentioning the Whole even when the ascent continues can be taken as a sign of his reaching the next phase. This phase is one of the two in which existential mysteries are revealed and the aspirant is enlightened by the divine knowledge of being. According to the Sufi doctrine, the aspirant annihilates in the Creator; however, the novel replaces the Creator with the Whole for the reason explained above. During the enlightenment process in which all individualistic entities and demarcations are removed, Charles stresses the sameness many times. In addition to that, as astronomers and astronauts do, he tells about the emptiness of the conflicts and controversies when he is in the outer space: "from this vantage point it was amusing to see how passionate hatred, rivalries and competitions disappeared altogether, for the atoms of each of these categories were one."[48] Carl Sagan, too, as quoted in the first chapter, refers to the togetherness of different categories: "The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, [...] every 'superstar,' every 'supreme leader,' every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there." Besides, similar to Sagan's statement "We are made of starstuff," Charles says, "humanity is from the stars"[49] and focuses on not only the transcendental but also the scientific side of the teachings of cosmic unity. While he makes such remarks, we understand that he has reached the Platonic realm. "There was no such thing as judges, but only Judge, not soldiers, but Soldier, not artists, but Artist, no matter if they imagined themselves to be in violent disagreement,"[50] says Charles, which indicates he has ascended from the realm of **mimeses** to the realm of Forms. Judges, soldiers, and artists in this world are merely imitations of their Forms in that higher realm. The character

[47] Lessing, **Briefing**, p.109.
[48] **Ibid.**, p.110.
[49] **Ibid.**, p.111.
[50] **Ibid.**, p.110.

defines this unity as a web since those Forms are linked to each other in a way or another, and he conquers individualism which feeds ego, saying, "there could not be individuals in this nourishing web."[51]

When we look up at the sky and most places on the Earth, we cannot see the imaginary lines which we call latitude and longitude that divide the Earth into parcels; similarly, when we look down at the Earth from the outer space, we cannot see the political borders. Our planet seems as a globe consisting of land, seas, and air from a celestial viewpoint. From this point, one cannot see politically separated regions like continents, states, or cities. Therefore, the disappearance of those borders which separate people in terms of nationality instead of gathering them under the same roof of being human beings is one of the major reasons why vertical journeys are used in teachings of cosmic unity. While educating us about universal connectedness, Lessing tells about the absence of nations from Charles's celestial perspective:

> Each part of the globe's surface of course had its own distinctive physical shade, that was its vegetation (or its lack of it), its plant setting for its animal life, but as distinctive, as clearly differentiated as jungle and desert and swamp and highland was the light that lay above in the aerial map that was its mirror and its sister—its governor. In this map of the currents of the mind and sympathies and feelings, countries—that is, nations—were marked out, and held what was necessary and appropriate to them, and it mattered very much whether a concept "nation" matched with the physical area beneath it, and where these were in discord then there was a discord of light and sound.[52]

Similarly, looking down at the land below Mont Ventoux, Petrarch could not see the border between France and Spain and noted it in his aforementioned letter.

As one ascends higher, the self remains lower and seems smaller and unimportant. Resembling Nicholas's cognitive shift enabling him to see himself as a germ, Charles realizes the smallness of humanity compared to the whole universe: "To celestial eyes," he says, human beings are "seen like a broth of microbes under a microscope."[53] Our addiction to the use of the pronoun I is needless and also

[51] **Ibid.**, p.111.
[52] **Ibid.**, p.114.
[53] **Ibid.**, p.120.

annoying, and means evil to him. While he criticizes our social manners, the focal point turns to the conversation of planets. As mentioned before, the names of all the planets, expect for the Earth, in the Solar System are derived from Greco-Roman mythological deities. Thus, in this part of the novel, ancient deities speak through planets. The heavenly bodies that are the deputies of Father must teach humanity that "there is a Harmony and that if they wish to prosper they must keep in step and obey its Laws."[54]

The conference of the planets and the briefing at the end of it constitute the phase of **sayr maallah**, journeying with God. Since Charles has annihilated in the Whole, he is just in the position of audience. Because the conference is held to present teachings on cosmic unity, they come up with an explanation of the creation of the world, living things, and human history. It is also said in the briefing that the studies of astronomers, astronauts, and others in the name of unity are not enough:

> Each individual of this species is locked up inside his own skull, his own personal experience—or believes that he is, and while a great part of their ethical systems, religious systems, etc., state of Unity of Life, even the most recent religion, which, being the most recent is the most powerful, called Science, has only very fitful and inadequate gleams of insight into the fact that life is One.[55]

Galileo, Kepler, Newton, and others approached the space from a mathematical perspective, and astronauts and archaeologists study and observe the material Earth. In order to grasp the unity completely, one must study immanent and transcendent worlds, conscious and subconscious, light and shadows, body and soul, and dreams and reality as a whole.

When the planets/Deities talk about the demarcations in the world, they sometimes refer to a supreme deity without mentioning a name. Although planets and stars were accepted as gods and goddesses in different time periods and places for thousands of years, this association is related to the concept of deity of humanity. This is why they regard themselves as deputies of that unnamed supreme deity. After they tell of the denouement of previous descents, they appoint Charles for the new

[54] **Ibid.**, p.133.
[55] **Ibid.**, p.142.

descent, hence the title **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**. He is now like a **murshid** who is responsible for enlightening others. Having completed the spiritual journey and been enlightened with the divine knowledge, Murshid's coming back to our material world to guide others to the truth is called **sayr anillah**, journeying from God. They recollect the basic worldly knowledge while descending to our realm, which is called **sayr fil ashiya** in the Sufi lexicon. The aspirants leave everything connected to the material universe behind in their journey to God, and they regain them while turning back into the realm of human beings. Similarly, Plato notes that we do not learn anything in this world but just remember what we have known but forgotten before being born. In a dialogue on remembering between Charles and Doctor Y after the journey, the former says we must remember the knowledge of the transcendental realm that we have forgotten:

> It was there, I know it was. We have to. We have to remember.
> We?
> It's the law of God.[56]

However, the doctors' inability to understand his message –maybe Charles's inability to express himself correctly– makes them assume he has lost his mental health. Instead of explaining what universal connectedness is, Charles's statements on comprehensive unity and harmony and his unifying claim of everyone's being God in a conversation with Doctor Y make the doctors approach the case with more suspicion:

> So you are God, too, are you?
> You as well.
> I don't aim so high, I assure you.
> Stupid. You don't have a choice.[57]

Hallaj, a prominent Sufi of the 9th and 10th centuries, also could not properly explain his message of descent, and his profound exclamation "I am the Real [God]! (*anā al-Haqq*)" was misunderstood by society.[58] Hallaj's and Charles's, two misunderstood

[56] **Ibid.**, p.157.
[57] **Ibid.**, p.162.
[58] Qtd. in Geoffroy, **op. cit.**, p.70.

men, fates are similar; Hallaj was violently executed,[59] and by means of electroconvulsive therapy, Charles's "ego-identity was restored to itself and one is left with the likelihood that Watkins will not again elude his surface self for the archetypal voyage into the core of his being,"[60] which figuratively means his death. Lessing knew about the death stories of famous Sufis,[61] and probably wanted to resemble Charles's symbolic end to theirs.

Since the character is restored to his sanity and individual self, his attempt to educate other is an unsuccessful one. Probably regarding this, Hynes claims, "If we ask whether the book tells us how to create the desired harmony, the answer is no."[62] If we consider the novel's surrender to concrete realities, Hynes is right. However, the result of the efforts to create a harmony is not binding for the methods of teaching, which is the point Hynes disregards. The problem is with the character's guidance and techniques of explaining the secrets of the harmony, not the book's methods of teaching cosmic unity. Even though the character's efforts do not bring about successful reactions, his teachings including verticality may raise awareness of togetherness in the reader's mind and conscience. As we have explained so far –even if we basically focus on them as the most effective way of creating harmony– vertical journeys, both material and spiritual, are demonstrated as teachings of cosmic unity. Another obstacle before unity, bigger than Charles's methods, is society's approach to the issue. Şavkay states in her paper: "Through Charles's failure, Lessing underscores the repressive nature of society that confines individuals unless they conform to a mode of thought that rests on divisions."[63] Besides refuting egocentric/individualistic manners, the novel also functions as a text of social criticism. However, we must note here that the problem is with people's conformist practices. Regardless of whether they are from academic circles or ordinary ones, anyone or anything which poses a threat to universal unity and harmony becomes

[59] Fakhry, **op. cit.**, p.77.
[60] Douglass Bolling, "Structure and Theme in *Briefing for a Descent into Hell*," **Contemporary Literature**, Vol.XIV, No: 4, 1973, pp. 550-64, p.553.
[61] Doris Lessing, "In the World, not Of It," **The World of the Sufi**, Ed. by Idries Shah, London, The Octagon Press, 2004, pp. 57-64, pp.59-60.
[62] Joseph Hynes, "Doris Lessing's *Briefing* as Structural Life and Death," **Renascence**, Vol.XLVI , No:4, 1994, pp. 225-45, p.236.
[63] Şavkay, **op. cit.**, p.13.

liable to criticism. Spatial associations and movements are used as a medium of creating awareness of togetherness and being a part of the Whole. On the one hand, individualism, selfishness, separations, colonialism, and earthliness are demonstrated through horizontal journeys; vertical journeys, on the other hand, are used to teach the reader about cosmic unity, harmony, and universal connectedness.

CONCLUSION

The findings of our research and analysis show that, like many other literary works written so far, **The Magus** by John Fowles and **Briefing for a Descent into Hell** by Doris Lessing use vertical journeys to teach cosmic unity to their readers. The use of verticality for this purpose is a multi-thousand-year tradition. As explained in the first chapter, high terrains have been associated with deities and sanctified in different times and civilizations. On the other hand, the surface of the Earth has been the area of human domination since human beings live on it. The underground, lastly, has been regarded as the realm of the whole human past as a consequence of the burial of the dead. As one can take horizontal journeys on their own across the Earth, those movements make them feel mighty. This self-confidence thereby urges them to categorize them and the rest into separate groups or classes, and tempts them to remove any common roof under which people can gather from the centre of life. God, for instance, can be taken as a common roof for humanity. Believing in God, from which everything comes from, people may find material and spiritual connections with each other. Locating God in the skies or on mountaintops is perhaps the oldest association of verticality with cosmic unity. When it comes to vertical journeys, they have promoted cosmic unity in three ways: The first one was people's inability to reach mountaintops and the sky for a long time, which revealed their weakness and the emptiness of having excessive self-confidence. Similarly, the impossibility of entering into an underworld realm had the same effect. Secondly, the idea of deities living in the sky suggested that a journey upward would mean the journey to God. Reaching God, the source of all that exists, is equivalent to achieving cosmic unity. In order to show success on this path, one needs to leave the self behind. The third way of figuring out the universal interconnectedness through verticality is a modern one, namely the overview effect. A gaze upon the planet Earth from the outer space gives one the opportunity to see humanity and the planet as a whole. Similarly –if done with conscious– looking into the deep space can serve the realization of cosmic unity as it helps one find the connection between living things and stars from which our atomic particles come is scientific diagnosis.

Picking their themes out of real life and imagination, literary works sometimes use journeys to display the demarcations and moral corruption in social and political fields, or to convey messages of cosmic unity and harmony. The works we mention in the previous chapters are only a few examples of them. However, we cannot claim that all the works using verticality have these aims. For instance, although Jules Verne wrote a considerable amount of fiction covering vertical journeys both upward and downward, we cannot analyze his works in reference to our theory as they were not written to suggest the unity of everything, or peoples at least. Similarly, in the movie **The Martian**, released in 2015, though astronaut Mark Watney has taken a long-distance vertical journey to Mars, he, contrary to our theory, displays quite strong, self-sufficient, and even haughty behaviours in the planet.

Horizontal journeys are related to the failure of unity, and vertical ones to reaching the Whole in both novels. **The Magus** scrutinizes the issues of individual revolt against the authorities, lack of the sense of belonging, and individual freedom's being in the forefront in the post-war period, and visualizes these emotional states through a series of horizontal journeys. In the novel the structure of which was shaped around Fowles's journey to Spetsai and Shakespeare's **The Tempest**, young Oxford graduate Nicholas Urfe travels to the Greek island of Phraxos to work as a teacher but cannot find the adventure of his life there, and feels confined, empty, and alone. Indeed, one who is aware of the universal connectedness knows that nothing is alone in this universe. In order to enlighten him on this issue, Maurice Conchis takes him to vertical journeys and implicitly educates him through philosophical thoughts, historical and literary associations, and widely-used symbols. Conchis, on the one hand, tells him how horizontal journeys cause destruction and separate people from each other, by means of made-up war stories; on the other hand, he gives Nicholas the opportunity to join the Whole by letting him relate himself to other people and things through vertical journeys like hypnosis, mountain climbs, and descent into the underworld.

In **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**, the horizontal journeys resemble colonial expeditions, and the novel displays how this expansionism brings destruction to humanity. In the imaginary story of his enlightenment, Charles

Watkins takes the Western discourse and culture to other lands via overseas journeys. The coming of the Crystal becomes a turning point for him as he is lifted up into the outer space from the Earth. This physical ascent is symbolically a spiritual one. By detaching from the lower and narrower self, one reaches the real Self. The character takes a spaceflight from the planet Earth to the macro universe and reaches the neighbouring planets regarded as deities in different cultures. By using a journey upward, Lessing reveals that those different deities are indeed multi-thousand-year human concepts of one God, and points out that differences are just parts of a whole. Additionally, this cosmic voyage of the character resembles **sayr-u suluk**, the spiritual journey of the Sufi tradition. After annihilating in the Whole and uncovering the divine mysteries of existence, Charles must descend to the world and enlighten others according to the Sufi doctrine, but he fails in conveying his messages.

Many scholars who taught connectedness and unity like Socrates and Hallaj have been either executed or exiled throughout history as their teachings were heterodox in their society. This social reality is considered in the novels, and the works demonstrate how the effect of Conchis's and Charles's teachings is overpowered by dominant social norms. Those who realize the emptiness of separations and conflicts through spiritual ascent cannot conform to the social constructions; on the other hand, others who have repressive social practices do not easily submit to messages of unity and harmony. Therefore, Nicholas –for a long time– and the medical personnel react against Conchis's and Charles's teachings.

Another point we infer from the novel analyses is the fact that vertical journeys may not sometimes lead one to the Whole and harmony if they are taken without right awareness. The difference between intentional and objectless journeys is better observed in **The Magus** since it covers both. During the mountain climb he does when he arrives in the island, Nicholas hedonistically admires the natural sublime but cannot achieve unity with it. After he takes part in Conchis's didactical godgame, though, his inattention to universal harmony is slowly altered, and he ascends and annihilates into a star in the hypnosis scene. Similarly, in **Briefing for a Descent into Hell**, Charles is struck by natural beauties during his mountain climb, too, but cannot reach the Whole until his spacefaring.

The recent tendency to shoot space movies like **Prometheus** (2012), **Gravity** (2013), **Interstellar** (2014), and **The Martian** (2015) is a promising development in terms of the use of verticality. New movies may show the planet Earth as a whole and create an awareness of unity and harmony in the mind of their audience. Our study thereby may be useful to analyze similar future works from a different perspective.

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