The Hospital as An Ideological State Apparatus and Disciplinary Agent as Seen through the Main Character in Kenzaburo Oe's *A Personal Matter*

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Abstract

This study attempts to examine the disciplining process of the main character in Kenzaburo Oe's novel entitled A Personal Matter under the light of structural-Marxism theories on ideology, interpellation and hegemony. Bird, the main character, is described as an unruly character that often reacts differently from other characters in dealing with his life. However, at the end of the novel Bird becomes a different person after a series of disciplining process in the hospital. The hospital has employed disciplinary methods such as panopticism, examination and normalizing judgment on Bird. Those disciplinary actions are largely based on the ideology of Marugakae as the ideology of Japanese society. In turn, the disciplinary actions are to inject the ideology of the state to Bird. The shift in Bird's characteristics has rendered him one of the common people subordinated by the common system or ideology. In this sense, the prevailing system in Japanese society as seen in the novel continues to exist.

Keywords: *power, ideology, interpellation, hegemony, panopticism, Marugakae*

Introduction

A Personal Matter tells a story of a man named Bird whose wife gives birth to a sick baby so that she has to stay in the hospital until the baby recovers. As a husband and father, Bird has to accompany his wife and his baby in the hospital. During the period of intensive contact with the hospital, Bird is forced to adapt to the system, rules, and codes of the hospital. Throughout the course of the story Bird has undergone a disciplining process which results in an unnatural change of Bird's characteristics in the end of the story. This paper attempts to see how the hospital is not merely a place to heal sick people but also a place which contributes to the reinforcement of the hegemony of the state's power indirectly funneled through the hospital system. Although Bird's turning point happens when he tries to run away from reality by leaving the hospital and taking the baby with him, it can be seen that the hospital in the novel is a place to initiate the investing of state's power on Bird.

Power and Discipline

The discussion in this paper borrows some perspectives from, firstly, a French structural-Marxist thinker, Louis Althusser and secondly, Michel Foucault. Althusser's theory on state apparatus is actually a modification of Antonio Gramsci's theory. In the quotation below Antonio Gramsci mentions for the first time the existence of state apparatus.

> *The state is the instrument for conforming civil society to the economic structure, but*

> *it is necessary for the state to "be willing" to do this; i.e. for the representatives of the change that has taken place in the economic structure to the control of the state* (Gramsci, 1983: 244).

Concerning the theory of state and its hegemony, Gramsci perceives it as follows:

> *…the state is the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the rulling class not only maintains its dominance, but manages to win the active consent of those whom it rules...* (Gramsci, 1983: 244).

Thus, the state needs an instrument to maintain its power. The instrument is what Gramsci and Althusser called state apparatus. In Althusser's term, the state apparatuses take form as schools, colleges, universities, the armies, police department, legal institutions, and as far as health is concerned, in the novel examined in this paper, it takes form as hospital. Through those state apparatuses, the state spreads and maintains power.

In the Gramscian thought, the state apparatuses are thought to be more repressive as they use physical power or law enforcement. However, according to Althusser, the State actually has two kinds of state apparatuses. To maintain the State's existence (hegemony), the State does not merely needs physical force (repressive state apparatus), but also ideological force (Ideological State Apparatuses/ISAs). The reason is the State needs to plant its ideology on the heads of the people so that the people will help the State to continue its power. The use of physical force in the Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs) is no longer the center of the State's effort for hegemony. Althusser believes that the reason why most regimes or administrations survive without any relatively harmful rebellion or challenges from the people is because of the ideological state apparatuses working for the State do the job well. The absence of potential rebellions is not because the people lack of physical power but because they do not have the will to fight as they are ideologically hegemonized. The people take for granted the norms and laws confining them as a result of the permeation of ISAs. This ideology injected by ISAs forces people to learn and know only 'know-how' things (Althusser,2008: 9). The people just go on with their life without realizing that the daily life they live in is actually formed by the ruling class. People are unaware with the invisible norms and laws in their pragmatic daily life. This unawareness is because they are not ideologically conscious of what they are doing in their lives. 'Know how' things are a part of consciousness injection through ideological state apparatuses to create subordinated positions and functions in the social structure. This process of conditioning is what Althusser called interpelation. Interpelation works by 'hailing' the subordinated subjects to position themselves in an unbalanced imaginary relation to the superordinate by creating imaginary representantion of reality into the mind of the subordinated (Selden, 1993:130).

In order to recognize how ideological state apparatus actually works, it is necessary to point out two basic distinctions between the two types of state apparatuses. The first distinction is that the RSAs tend to be centralized and homogeneous, whereas the ISAs are less centralized and more heterogeneous. The form of ISAs is more difficult to define and recognize. Secondly, RSAs work in public realm of existence. Every citizen of the State is subjected to it. Its privilege is to have authority on everyone in the country with no exception. On the other hand, ISA can access the private realm of existence of the people. The second distinction lies in how they function. The RSAs function predominantly by violence and repression but may also secondarily function by ideology, while the ISAs function primarily by ideology but may secondarily involve punishment or repression.

In order to understand how the main character in the novel is disciplined by the hospital, Foucault's theory on power relations in meaning finding is required. For a long time, physical punishment in the form of a public torture has been practiced. In the past, the punishment, or "scaffold" in Foucaultian term, was practiced in order to maintain the absolute power of a king or ruler. Yet, in the contemporary society,

according to Foucault, the scaffold is still practiced although in different forms. It disciplines the body although the body is no longer tortured publicly. However, discipline, which is the essence of scaffold to maintain power remains to exist in this system. Foucault wrote in his book *Discipline and Punish: Birth of Prison* (1979).

> *…a punishment like forced labour or even imprisonment – merely loss of liberty – has never functioned without a certain additional element of punishment that certainly concerns the body itself: rationing of food, sexual deprivation, corporal punishment, solitary confinement…in fact it is most explicit practices…* (Foucault, 1979: 15-16)

Prison, school, hospital and other ISAs have been places to enact disciplining procedures. As Foucault writes in the early parts of the book, ISAs act out as the contemporary form of the scaffold and public torture although not in the same forms. The purpose of discipline is to maintain or invest power and to eliminate resistance. Discipline exists for the sake of the ruling class. Both scafold and discipline focus on the body. Yet, what they do to the body is quite different. Scaffold, as Foucault notes, was the way to show power. It was essentially invented to relish the revenge of the King to anyone found guilty by law, by the act of treason, or any serious crime. Crime, in this sense, had a personal relationship with the King for the rules in Monarchy era were made by King and royal advisors. So, the rules violation was considered as the personal insult to the King directly. One important aspect in scaffold was fear. This fear was the real medium of the King in investing his power through scaffold. Anger might even arouse in the midst of the audiences during the procession of dragging the criminal to the scaffold. When that happened, the King could then use the audiences' fear. The audience becomes informed of the crime committed by the criminal during the procession as the he or she was forced to give a speech or show the instrument used in committing the crime. Afterward the audience would agree with the King that he or she had to be brought to the scaffold. Thus, the audience became afraid of the scaffold. They learned about the crime and would strive to avoid the same thing done by the criminal. As the audience participated in the scaffold procession, they, in fact, showed their fear to the King. They knew exactly what the crime was, thus they knew exactly what was going to happen with them when they committed such crime. To this point, the King had succeeded in investing his power through the body of the condemned criminal and eventually to the body of the audiences.

In discipline enactment, this type of fear is not used. What is used in the discipline is the systematical scheme to invest power which leads to obedience. This discipline is more invisible, subtle and more difficult to be recognized by the people. The disciplining power uses the norms and laws that are abstract, yet have the ability to affect people. Power in the disciplining process does not need a condemned body to create fear, but it would rather utilize norms and laws to achieve its goal. These norms and laws reform the body for the body will accept them as the guide in their behaviors. And the body, like in the scaffold system, also acts as the medium, or 'strategy' in Foucault's terminology, to invest the power in their social relationship. The difference is that while the scaffold system invests power through fear, discipline invests power through the obedient (docile) body. The obedient body will infect all the bodies around it and makes a kind of domino effect. Discipline makes the body docile for docile body is easier to be transformed into any kind of body for the sake of power (Foucault, 1979: 15-23).

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that discipline is a new paradigm of spreading power. Power is injected (invested) to its objects not through scaffold system with its show of physical power but through the disciplinary system. Foucault theorizes many ways to impose discipline, among others are examination, normalizing judgment and panopticism.

Examination is the mechanism that is always present in the disciplinary system. Examination is the essential practice to exercise power. Therefore, examination is always found in the ISAs. Below is a quotation

about examination from Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*;

> *…it is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify, and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them. That is why, in all the mechanism of discipline, the examination is highly ritualized. In it are combined the ceremony of power and the form of experiment, the deployment of force and establishment of truth…* (Foucault, 1979: 184)

From the quotation above, it can be concluded that the examination is the fundamental action to establish truth (discourse) on the object of power, especially to those whom power is exercised on. The word "surveillance" is one important thing in the examination. Surveillance provides any information needed by the state apparatuses to build the discourse. Through surveillance, power has the access to the object of power. The information becomes the basic of normalizing judgment toward the object. Then, the discourse of normal-abnormal will be built up. At this point, power is then invested into the body of the object because as the normalizing judgment penetrates the body, the power follows it. After the normalizing judgment, the body that is now docile (disciplined) is completely under the influence of power. The example is the hospital system. Hospital has a system called a visit. In a certain continuous period, an assigned doctor pays visits to his or her patients. During the visit, the doctor will practice "surveillance" to the body of the patient. The doctor will get the information as he or she investigates or examines the patient, and judges whether the patient is sick or not. If the patient is diagnosed with sickness, the patient is rendered sick by the doctor. A discourse then is created from the condition of the patient and afterward the ways to disciple (normalize) the patient will easily follow suit (Foucault,1979: 187-194).

Normalizing judgment is the next step after the examination. If the examination is action of 'establishment of truth', then normalizing judgment is the method to force this truth. According to Foucault, "a small penal mechanism" is always to be found at the center of all disciplinary systems (1979: 177). Thus the discourse of truth created by the application of the examination is forced to the disciplinary objects using a system of punishment. The quotation below will explain the use of this punishment.

> *…the art of punishing, in the regime of disciplinary power, is aimed neither at expiation, nor even precisely at repression…the perpetual penalty that traverses all points and supervises every instant in the disciplinary institutions compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it normalizes* (Foucault, 1979: 182-183).

Punishment is essential in this process of normalizing judgment. Its aim is not merely to hurt or o warn people. It is more than that. Punishment in this sense has a political mission in order to achieve larger goals. Punishment in this sense is called 'infra-penalty' or small penalty (Foucault, 1979: 178). Furthermore, it is not always in the shape of violence. It sometimes takes shape of warning, humiliation, accusation etc. The goals of this punishment are to make the punished knows that what he or she does is not normal. The punished is forced to compare and differentiate his or her behaviors with the behaviors of those who are considered 'good'. They are forced to accept these norms called normality. Then, they are forced to follow that. In other words, the punishment tries to homogenize (to make all people follow the same norms) the behaviors of the people.

By judgment that normalizes, a certain system will be kept alive in the society because everybody is forced to follow the system as the system runs disciplinary system. Power relation works to maintain their existence through this normalizing judgment. It keeps the structures in the society the same from time to time. Therefore, the state can only survive only by practicing and maintaining this system because state needs docility. Docility needs standardization for normal and abnormal. So, every state apparatuses use the same standardization of normal and abnormality to make people docile. The punishment takes

form of a system that Foucault calls 'infra-penalty' system. Infra-penalty system works in a partitioned area and each area has different kinds of methods of punishment. For example, the punishment in school will be different from the punishment in a hospital. In Althusserian term, every ISA has specific methods of infra-penalty to exercise discipline.

Foucault perceives power not as a centralized body in a society that controls everything but rather power is like a micro-organism spread in every relationship among people and between the people and the society. As a matter of fact discipline is "…*a modality of its (power) exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets;…a technology*" (Foucault, 1979: 215), the need of an instrument capable of controlling the whole targets is at present. This instrument is what Foucault calls 'panopticism'. Panopticism is the system that "…*induce in the inmate state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power*… (Foucault, 1979, 201)." In other words, panopticism works as one of the disciplinary method that makes people (object of the discipline) discipline themselves for power has been injected to them through the disciplinary system. In a Panopticon the prisoners are in a rather visible positioning. In this positioning, the prisoners are clearly visible from the central tower. Thus, the illustration shows that power functions automatically. Basically, the prisoners are those who are sentenced guilty for doing something wrong. Prison is meant to be the place to correct them. In a dungeon, the guards have to use physical power to discipline the prisoners to make them docile. Yet, in a panoptical prison, they do not have to do that for the prisoners will do the order by themselves without any physical pressure. It is because they are under constant surveillance of the central tower that they feel they are being watched all the time. With this 'anxiety' of being watched all the time, they will naturally become docile. This is what Foucault means by 'visibility is a trap'. In this process of making the prisoners always within the reach of visibility power is also exercised through the giving order to the prisoners so that eventually they will turn into new men for they have been disciplined. In short, panopticism has two steps, the first is making the disciplinary object visible by putting him in a visible position then monitors him (surveillance), and secondly is the giving the order to be exercised by the object (the exercise).

Foucault believes that modern social, economic, or political institutions (state apparatuses) work in the panopticism paradigm.

> *…and it maybe taken over either by 'specialized' institution (the penitentiaries or 'houses of correction' of the nineteenth century), or by institutions that use it as essential instrument for a particular end (schools, hospitals)…or by apparatuses that have made discipline their principle of internal functioning (the disciplinarization of the administrative apparatus from the Napoleonic period), or finally by state apparatuses whose major, if not exclusive function is to assure that discipline reign over society as a whole (the police)…* (1979: 215-216).

In other words, modern society is shaped by those state apparatuses. The state maintains its authority or existence by controlling over the mind of its people through those apparatuses.

The State and its Absolute Power

It noteworthy to mark what Fransesco Carletti said about Japan in 1597,as he found that *"in Japan, it is difficult to do something that is unnoticed by the rulers of the cities"* (Nakane, 1972). *S*uch condition continues to the feudal regime of Tokugawa and a restorative regime of Meiji. The changes and shifts do happen yet not much. A newspaper called The Times Literary Supplement makes the claim that walks side by side with the claim of Carletti, *"…Modern Japan's progress is founded, ironically, on social patterns which existed centuries ago"*. Many countries are originated from kingdoms or using feudal systems, but after centuries of adaptation those countries that are mostly republic now leave the old system behind. Japan is different. The formal system may have undergone some shifts, but the mentality

remains the same since the feudal regime of Tokugawa. In other words, the government may run in a modern system, but Japanese still keep their old feudal social patterns. For example, a mayor will be respected by the people of the city like in the time of Tokugawa regime. People tend to treat the mayor like a samurai ruler in the past (Nakane, 1972: 99).

David Riesman also notes that the Japanese does not get the meaning (political meaning) of democracy because they never really know it. The democracy in the government remains an empty term because democracy of Japan is built with the mentality of old feudalism.

> *…'democracy' does seem a way of doing business that combines commitment and high principle with lack factionalism and internecine conflict. People refer to organization as undemocratic if there is no harmony and consensus. Thus, democracy and politics would seem antithetical.* (Riesman, 1967: 202)

As a result, with the existence of feudal mentality in most Japanese, the laws that are produced are just other forms of feudal laws which lays great power and privilege in the hand of the rulers (government) and the people just cannot do anything because they have to obey them as it is their duty to respect the rulers. This is what makes the State holds the highest absolute control over the life of the people. The State runs the country like a monarch would though there are many changes in the laws in the time of Meiji Restoration.

Robert Ozaki, an anthropologist, writes about the absoluteness of the Japan government's power on their people.

> *…under the constitution of Meiji, what cannot be believed now truly happened. On the 31st of August 1935, Supreme Court of Japan frees a case of single accident that involves a man, who is later permanently physically defected because of a fire-fighter car driven carelessly hits him. The reason presented by the Supreme Court is that the fire-fighter is practicing to run its official duty for his country, therefore no laws can be used to sue the State in the case of driving carelessly and single accident. Thus, any fire-fighter cars in Japan have official right to hit a pedestrian* (107-108).

Ozaki in his books give many fact-findings related to the absoluteness of government power in Japan because the feudal mentality on both sides (the ruler and the ruled). This absolute power makes the people have no right to defend themselves and also no rights to be involved in the government.

Absoluteness of the government that has run for years has shaped the people of Japan and can clearly be seen through the practice of *Marugakae*. *Marugakae* is a belief in the totality of someone to a group where he/she belongs to, like country, association, companies etc. This belief is also a heritage from an old feudal system and is still practiced today in Japan. As a professor of social anthropology, Chie Nakane observes,

> *…a man is classified primarily according to the group to which he belongs to (or the individual to whom he was attached); assessment is in terms of his current activities, rather than the background of his birth…* (Nakane, 1972: 108)

Mura is everything for a person. *Mura* is the thing where a person in completely inside which means that person has to obey the master of the *mura* which is made possible as Japanese believes in *oyabun-kobun* relationship. *Oyabun* is parent and *kobun* is children. The term implies that relation between members of group is determined by seniority which is based on the duration of joining the *mura*. So, every new person in the *mura* will certainly be the *kobun*. In other words, a person is always someone's *kobun* and probably someone's *oyabun*. This *oyabun-kobun* relation is also applied among *muras*. There is a *mura* that is considered higher than other *mura*. For example, Tokyo University is the best *mura* in the field of education and therefore every lecturers and students of this *mura* is socially better respected than every students and lecturers of other *muras* (universities).

Every *mura* has the privilege to discipline its members with its own concepts. But, if there is a higher *mura*, that *mura* will follow exactly the same standards given by the higher *mura*. Thus, every *mura* always has its 'senior' which results in every *mura* following the same system, for they are under one big *mura*, the State. This is why Japanese is homogeneous because they tend to follow or copy-cat people with higher achievement. This kind of structure of society leads to 'consciousness of ranks' which decides to whom they will bow and whom they will oppress. Therefore, the relationship between people is based on domination, as pointed out in the following quotation

> *…in everyday affairs a man who has no awareness of relative rank is not able to speak or even sit and eat. When speaking, he is expected always to be ready with differentiated, delicate degrees of honorific expression appropriate to the rank order between himself and the persons he addresses. The expression and the manner appropriate to a superior are never to be used to an inferior…*(Nakane, 1972: 31)

This system is what makes the Japanese well-known for their hard-working ethics, politeness, obedience etc., for those are the standards put on them. This system does not allow any rebels. They are forced to bow to the 'seniors'. If they do not do that, they will be expelled from their *mura* and everyone will look down on them for they do not involve in any *mura*, they are considered the lowest of all.

> *…at any gathering or meeting it is obvious at first glance which is the most superior and the most inferior persons present. The frequency with which a man offers an opinion, together with in order in which those present speak at the beginning of the meeting, are further indication of rank…in a very delicate situation those of an inferior status would not dare to laugh earlier or louder than their superior. To this extent, ranking order not only regulates social behavior but also curbs the open expression of thoughts…* (Nakane, 1972: 35)

From the quotation above, it can be recognized clearly who holds the standards of being right or wrong. Those of the superior ranks are the decision makers on one's normality and also dignity.

The Freak Named *Bird*

This part will describe how *Bird*, the main character of the novel is portrayed as a physically weak, alcoholic, perverted and failed man. According to M.J. Murphy information about a character is important in understanding a literary work because it can help reveal the author's intention (Murphy, 1972). The name 'Bird' is given by his friends in high school because his physical figure reminds people of a bird.

> *…it wasn't only that his hunched shoulders were like folded wings, his features in general were birdlike. His tan, sleek nose thrust out of his face like a beak and hooked sharply toward the ground his eyes gleamed with a hard, dull light the color of glue and almost never displayed emotion, except occasionally to shutter open as though in mild surprise. His thin, hard lips were stretched tightly across his teeth; the lines from his high cheekbones to his chin described a sharply pointed V. And hair licking at the sky like ruddy tongues of flame…* (Oe, 2002: 4)

From the quotation above, Oe gives the readers a very clear image of the visual impression one gains in meeting *Bird*. It is the physical code that becomes his identity. He is 'recognizable' and remembered in this image. He is also small and thin, "except for a punch on his belly, remained as skinny as ever…"(Oe, 2002: 4). He is also described as physically different and noticeable among the crowd by his likeness to "a drowned corpse" who "slouched forward when he walked and bunched his shoulders around his neck" like an "emaciated old man who was once an athlete (Oe, 2002: 4)."

The visual impression of Bird as a man who lacks of spirit, loser, strange is emphasized especially by his weak, vulnerable and unattractive physical appearance. His physical appearance points out his substandard condition, and

underscores the fact that he is not deemed unsuccessful, weird and unusually different from the rest of the characters in the novel. The idea of Bird being not normal has already been infused in the novel from the beginning.

Bird is also described as a person with an unusual passion for Africa. He has a big dream of going to Africa. Africa for him is a land of freedom. His intention to go there is shown by his initial attempt to buy road maps of Africa.

> *…"I'm looking for the Michelin road maps of west Africa and Central and South Africa". The girl bent over a drawer full of michellin maps and began to rummage busily. "series number 182 and 185," Bird instructed, evidently an old Africa hand…* (Oe, 2002: 2)

However, Bird's passion for Africa meets many challenges because it will cost a lot of money that he might have to sacrifice his family in order to fulfill his dream.

> *…if he included the money he could pick up as a part-time interpreter, he might manage in three months. But Bird had himself and his wife to support, and now the existence on its way into life that minute. Bird was the head of the family!* (Oe, 2002: 2)

Bird is also addicted to alcohol. Once, he passed four weeks or seven hundred hours drowned in the sea of alcohol, "…like a besotted Robinson Crusoe…" which becomes one of many reasons why his wife, his parent in-laws , and the people around him look down on him.

> *…Bird could imagine how his mother-in-law would react if he arrived at bedside of his wife and new-born child, reeking of whisky*. (Oe, 2002: 7)

His habit of drinking alcohol often leads to irresponsible behavior such as raping Himiko when he is still in high school.

> *…when I was good and drunk I took her virginity in what amounted to a rape, outdoors, in the middle of winter, and I didn't even realize what I was doing!* (Oe, 2002: 72)

Bird is also described as an unsympathetic man whose mind often wanders around things considered as taboo in his society such as having a sexual intercourse with a transvestite or having wild imagination of killing his mistress and rapes the corpse. Bird felt a surge of affection for the young man masquerading as a large woman, would he succeeded in turning up a pervert tonight and making him a pigeon? Maybe I should have found a courage to go with him myself (Oe, 2002: 5-6).

He is also incapable of showing any affection to anyone, including his newborn baby. He repeatedly thinks that his baby is a "monster" so that he makes some attempts to get rid of the baby. He is also incapable of showing any commitment to his wife or family. He does not enjoy every contact with the hospital, the cram-school where he teaches, the university where his father teaches etc. Bird cannot get along well with the norms and rules in the society because they render him a freak. He is a person who does not have a sense of attachment to anyone or is alienated from every *mura* and everybody.

The Disciplining of *Bird* by the Hospital as an Ideological State Apparatus

As described earlier, *Bird* is not an obedient member of a society so he is a threat to the existing order in the society. He disobeys norms and values in the ideological frame believed in the society he lives in. Because of that, *Bird* has gone through difficult time during his interaction with the hospital which runs its role as an ideological state apparatus functioning to inject state's ideology to its people.

Foucault argues that there is a system called discipline that applies in the society with the state apparatuses as the motor (Foucault, 1979: 15-16). There are many methods of discipline, yet in this research there are only three disciplinary methods i.e. examination, normalizing judgment and

panopticism, to define what the hospital does to Bird.

To start a disciplining process, information on the object of discipline must be obtained as it will become be the base for judgment. Every object of discipline will be made into a 'case', in the sense that the object will be examined and data or information will be gathered from it (Foucault, 1979: 187). The information should be gathered from the object of discipline so that he can be qualified, classified and finally punished (Foucault: 1979, 184). Thus, the information gathered from any object of discipline can be politicized.

The politicization of information also takes place in the interaction between the hospital and *Bird*. Following Foucault's theory of normalizing judgment, the hospital normalizes *Bird* by forcing him to admit the power of the hospital especially in terms of giving information that *Bird* needs.

> *…his eyes were adjusting to the darkness in the room: now he discovered a tribunal of three doctors watching in careful silence as he settled himself in the chair. Like the national flag in a court room, the coloured anatomy chart on the wall behind them was a banner symbolic of private law.*
> *"I'm the father," Bird repeated irritably. It was clear from his voice that he felt threatened.*
> *"yes, allright," the doctor in the middle replied somewhat defensively, as if he had detected a note of attack in Bird's voice* (Oe, 2002: 23)

The relation between *Bird* and the doctors is one between professionals and layman. The hospital underscores this fact by making sure that the layman knows nothing and has to rely heavily on the doctors' expertise if he wants everything to be fine. Bird is also forced to admit that his position is sub-ordinate toward the super-ordinate one, represented by the doctors. The hospital's power on the sub-ordinate is further emphasized when the Director of the hospital refers to the baby as 'goods' instead of beginning an explanation, he took a pipe from his wrinkled surgeon's gown and filled it with tobacco

> *…"would you like to see the goods first? "his was too loud for the small room…"well then, would you like to see the goods?"…"would you explain first, please?" Bird sounded increasingly threatened…"that might be better: when you first see it, it's quite a surprise. Even I was surprised when it comes out." Unexpectedly, the director's thick eyelids reddened and burst into the childish giggle…* (Oe, 2002: 23-24)

To *Bird*, the doctor's choice of word reveals his condescending attitude toward him and his baby, thus highlighting the power of the hospital. 'Panopticism' in the case of *Bird* can be explained by taking the telephone calls from the hospital and the intensive ward quiz as a mechanism of surveillance which enable the hospital to make Bird 'visible' by the hospital. The effect of this surveillance method is Bird's gradual behavioral changes as the result of feeling monitored all the time. In the following quotation, it can be seen how *Bird* becomes confined by the telephone calls.

> *…the phone was ringing. Bird woke up. Dawn, and raining still. Bird hit the dump floor in his bare feet and hopped to the phone like a rabbit. He lifted the receiver a man's voice asked his name without a word of greeting and said, "please come to the hospital right away. The baby is abnormal; the doctor will explain* (Oe, 2002: 20)

The manner of which the hospital phones *Bird* indicates the relation between *Bird* and the hospital. The hospital runs as the commander and *Bird* as the commanded. In this way, the power is invested toward Bird. Bird is forced to 'admit' that the hospital has the power to control him because in that condition Bird has no choices but to follow the order given. Borrowing Foucault's term, it is called the 'exercise'. The hospital gives him orders to follow. Bird that loves to enjoys his time by day dreaming or drinking alcohol no longer has time for it.

> *…all that afternoon, their attention was on telephone. Bird stayed behind even it was time to shop for dinner, afraid the phone might ring while he was out. After dinner, they listened to a popular Russian pianist on the radio, but the volume away down, nerves screaming still for the phone to ring. Bird finally fell asleep. But he kept waking up to the ringing of a phantom bell in his dream and walking over the phone to check* (Oe, 2002:134)

The quotation above shows how Bird becomes disciplined through the process of exercising over and over. Panopticism has been successfully applied on him. The effects of the Panopticism are now started to take over him. He starts to feel afraid to be away from the telephone. He is no longer free but under the control of the hospital.

Another 'exercise' Bird undergoes is what Bird calls the intensive ward quiz when he is asked by the nurse to identify his baby.

> *…"can you tell me which is yours?" standing at Bird's side, the nurse spoke as if she were addressing the father of the hospital's healthiest and most beautiful baby. But, she wasn't smiling, she didn't seem sympathetic; Bird decided this must be the standard intensive ward quiz..* (Oe, 2002: 91)

Having placed Bird, as the object, the quiz begins. At first, he objects to the quiz as he "*understood that the game had been a kind of initiations into the intensive care ward…"* (Oe, 2002: 94). He understands that he has to able to answer the nurse because that will mean he is normal. That is why he thinks so hard to guess. The nurse forces him to answer by keeping on questioning Bird "…have you guessed?..." (Oe, 2002: 93). After a long pause, she asks again, "..haven't you figured it out yet?..." (Oe, 2002: 93). The continuous questions are intended to function as a normalizing judgment for him. Failing to guess, Bird feels that is wrong, and he feels punished for his lack of care and love indicated by his inability to guess. The quotation below shows the effects of the normalizing judgment on Bird's dignity and his behavior of day dreaming.

> *…Bird gazed forbearingly at the incubator the nurse had indicated. He had been under her influence ever since he had entered the ward, gradually losing his resentment and his need to resist. He was now feeble and unprotesting himself, he might have been bound with strips of gauze even like the infants who had begun to cry in a baffling demonstration of accord. Bird exhaled a long, hot breath, wiped the sweat from his brow and eyes and cheeks. He turned his fists in his eyes and blackish flames leaped: the sensation of falling headlong into an abyss: Bird reeled….* (Oe, 2002: 94)

How different Bird now is. The old Bird will burst in anger which is how he usually reacts when his dignity is violated upon. This means that the infra-penal system works. It works within the object being disciplined by correcting himself after being forced to distinguish the 'normal' from the 'abnormal'. The hospital doctors normalize Bird through a series of discussion about the possibility of the baby's normal future. After the baby is transferred to another hospital, Bird discusses with the doctors the possibility of doing a surgery to the baby. Surprisingly, Bird, being uncertain of the baby's possible survival refuses to let the doctors operate the sick baby. The doctors' reaction are as follows All the doctors stared at Bird and seemed to catch their breath. Bird felt capable of even the most shameless assertions at the top of his voice.

> *…"Will you take the infant with you, then?" he said brusquely, his anger evident.*
> *"Yes, I will." Bird spoke quickly, too.*
> *"Don't let me keep you waiting." The most appealing doctor Bird had encountered in this hospital laid bare the disgust he felt for him. …*
> *"Are you really going to take the baby away?" the young pediatrician asked hesitantly as they stepped into the hall. …* (Oe, 2002: 179)

The young pediatrician also tries to disapprove of Bird's comment on his baby which he think " doesn't look like anybody; it doesn't even look human!" by saying "I wouldn't say that-" although his tone only reflects a feeble reproof before he asks again

in troubled manner "You're sure you won't reconsider?"

When the brain surgeon expresses his disgust at Bird's unwillingness to defend the baby's life and when the pediatrician repeatedly asks him to reconsider his decision, Bird is once again exposed to the standard norms of what is expected from a father in his society. The guessing quiz and the reactions of the doctors are the representation of *Marugakae* system as far as the standard of love is concerned in it. The standard of care and love 'introduced' to Bird by the hospital through the quiz and doctor' reaction is in fact heavily constituted with the family system in Japan, *Marugakae*. *Marugakae* system requires a totality of a person in his *mura*. In the realm of family, a *mura* for a person is his nucleus family (Nakane, 1972: 17). The baby's only *mura* is Bird's family. Thus, Bird has the duty to guide his baby until he finds his other *mura* which is the responsibility of Bird as the head of the *mura*. As a consequence, Bird is made to see that lack of attachment to the baby is considered abnormal. He is not supposed to run away from his responsibility for his family.

The Disciplinary Actions as a process of Interpellation

According to Althusser, interpellation puts the individuals as the subjects of ideology in the social structures which can only be realized by making use State apparatuses (Selden, Widdowson, 1993, 130-131). It is the production of individuals who are made subjects of ideology who should produce sets of norms and rules in accordance with the ideology (Smith, 1984: 128-129). In Foucaultian framework, as Falzon briefly clarifies, it is the process of shaping normality and indirectly shaping human beings (Falzon, 1999: 51-52). This process is what shapes the society. He even gives a distinction on the steps of this production of consciousness. The first is building an absolute truth or normality, taking advantages of power. The second is what he calls as 'enhancement'. Enhancement is the process of directing the individuals to the 'new' consciousness in accordance to the prevailing structures and norms (Falzon, 1999: 48).

This study will not treat the disciplining actions done by the hospital or apparatus as merely actions to discipline people but as actions that inject a consciousness in accordance to the prevailing systems and their values and norms. As Falzon identifies, subjects of the new consciousness (ideology) will actively produce the ideology, or in other words, preserving the existence of certain values and norms as injected to them. After the process of interpelation, they become the agents of the State's ideology.

In relation to Bird's case, the process of interpellation results in his new consciousness which eventually preserves the continuity of the systems along with its values and norms. Bird has been through the disciplinary systems in the hospital. He has been the object of the discipline. He has been put as the object of panopticism and the politics of informations as the method in examination and normalizing judgment which is intended to evoke his obedience and admittance of power. The main characteristic of obedience is the loss of will to resist and the willingness to succumb to the system or power. Bird, in the earlier part of the novel is a person detached from his society and from everyone except his girlfriend, Himiko. He is a kind of person who defies the system. However, after the disciplining process in the hospital he has had a whole new perspective.

> *...He thought about that thirty thousand yen he would have to pay the hospital. He had already decided where he would get the money; and for just the instant needed for the decision, the sensation of shame was displaced by a despairing rage at no one in particular, that made Bird tremble...* (Oe, 2002: 103)

Bird in the quotation agrees to pay the money though he has been through some 'inconvenient' treatment. He does not complain through in the way he usually does. He is now aware that he is a part of a system, a strong one, that he has not enough power to break it. Bird now has a larger picture of his environment. He is aware that he is merely a small dot in many bigger boxes and every box

has its norms and systems. He understands that he cannot get outside the box. He is a part of the box.

Bird is also finally aware of the unbalanced relationship between him and the apparatus. The relationship between the patients and the hospital is of subordinate and superordinate one. This consciousness is injected through the disciplinary actions like the phone call, the intensive ward quiz and the doctors reaction at his decision to give up on the baby. This also triggers the consciousness of Bird as a citizen. The consciousness as a citizen is not merely an understanding that he is a part of the State but also that he is the subject of the norms and system believed by the state. This consciousness is an admittance or agreement with the formal systems. Bird, in this sense, has become a subject of the ideology given to him. He is a part of it and continues too reserve the ideology. Thus, with the new consciousness, he is an agent of the State's ideology as seen in the following quotation.

> *…I've decided to forget about a career in college teaching – I'm thinking of becoming a guide for foreign tourists. A dream of mine has always been to go to Africa and hire a native guide, so I'll just be reversing the fantasy: I'll be the native guide, for the foreigners who come to Japan."* (Oe, 2002: 214).

> *"…"in a few weeks' time you've become almost another person, that probably explains it"*
> *"do you suppose?"*
> *"You've changed." The professor's voice was warm with a relative's affection. "A childish name like Bird doesn't suit you anymore."* (Oe, 2002: 214).

It is the new consciousness of Bird to take a responsibility for his life and family. Rather than going to Africa, Bird turns his dream into becoming a guide for foreign tourists. The essence of freedom has left him as Africa stands for his craving for freedom and personal adventures. He also comes to says that *"…All I want is to stop being a man who continually runs away from responsibility"* (Oe, 2002: 211). Bird feels that he has the responsibility to get a job and whether he realizes it or not, he has indirectly contributed to the stability of the economic system of the State as a whole. In *Marugakae* belief, as Japanese do, two people cannot make a relation in a horizontally balance because *Marugakae* believes in *oyabun – Kobun* logic of relationship. As the effect, a person in a face to face relationship with other person has to take a position above or below the other. So, a person has to be as productive as possible to get a better position in the relationship. This force to be productive is run by the hospital well. Bird is forced to be productive by those disciplinary actions. Through the disciplinary actions Bird is forced to fell remorse for his unproductive behaviors like day-dreaming or selfish dream to go to Africa to seek freedom. This value of productivity is one reason he chooses, now willingly, to join in a *mura* again.

Conclusion

The ideology of the State is well transferred to Bird through the system of the hospital. Bird's shift of behavior at the end of the novel clearly shows the success of the interpellation process. The quotation of the happy-ending of the story represents the society acceptance or, in a rather cynical way, a celebration of the success of Bird's normalization process. The hospital, as the ideological state apparatus, works to inject the ideology believed in a country into the heads of its people in order to keep the hegemony continue rolling. The attempts done by the state apparatus force the changes in Bird's self which is initially pictured as unnatural.

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