Gönderim Tarihi: 23.07.2018

Kabul Tarihi: 07.11.2018

GEÇMİŞ ZAMANIN TARİHSEL ÜSTKURMACASI: KENDİNİ MEYDANA GETİREN ROMAN *TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN*

hiSTORiographic Metafiction of the Past Time:
A self-begetting novel *To Whom It May Concern*

Sümeýra BURAN UTKU

Assistant Professor Dr. Istanbul Medeniyet University,
Faculty of Education Sciences, Foreign Languages Education
sumeyra.buran@medeniyet.edu.tr

ORCID ID: 0000-0003-3273-8125

Çalışmanın Türü: Araştırma

Öz

Postmodern tarihsel anlatılar, tarihçeyi büyük bir anlatı olarak reddederek, kendinden-bilinçli ve kendini yansıtıcı, üstkurgu, kendini meydana getiren (kendi oluşumunu anlatan) ve üstkurmaca gibi yeni deneysel anlatıları ortaya çıkarır. Bu makalede sunmaya çalıştığım, Raymond Federman'ın yazar-anlatıcının yazım sürecini işleyen *To Whom It May Concern* adlı kendini meydana getiren (kendi oluşumunu anlatan) romanında, postmodernizmin dille oyununun geçmişi yeniden inşa etmede ve yeniden yazmasında nasıl önemli bir rol oynadığıdır. Tarihin gerçekliği, tarihin kimin objektifinden anlatıldığına bağlıdır. Bu makalede öne sürdüğüm en önemli nokta, metnin her okunduğunda nasıl yeniden yazıldığı gibi geçmiş ya da tarih de gerçekten hatırlandığı her zaman yeniden yazıldığıdır. Tarih yeniden anlatıldığı sürece başka bir tarih olmaya devam eder. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Raymond Federman'ın gerçekliği ve kurgusu, geçmişi ve gerçekliği, tarihi ve kurguyu, kurguyu ve gerçekliği bulanıklaştıran tarihsel üstkurmaca olan *To Whom It May Concern* romanını analiz etmektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: üstkurmaca, üstkurgu, tarihsel üstkurmaca, postmodern kurgu, kendini meydana getiren roman, Raymond Federman

Abstract

Postmodern historiographical narratives bring out new experimental narratives such self-conscious and self-reflexive as surfiction, self-begetting and metafiction by rejecting history as a grand narrative. I will attempt to present in this article how postmodernism's playfulness on language plays an important role in reconstructing and rewriting the past in Raymond Federman's self-begetting novel *To Whom It May Concern* which weaves the writing process of the author-narrator. The reality of history depends on whose lens of the hiStory is narrated. The crucial point I can assert in this article is how the text is rewritten every time it is read and the history or past is also rewritten every time it is actually remembered. As long as the history is retold it continues to be another history. The aim of this study is to analyse Raymond Federman's historiographic metafictional novel *To Whom It May Concern* which blurs fact and fiction, past and reality, history and fiction, fiction and reality.

Keywords: metafiction, surfiction, historiographic metafiction, postmodern fiction, self-begetting novel, Raymond Federman

*History isn't what happened. History is just what
historians tell us. There was a pattern, a plan, a
movement, expansion, the march of democracy; it is a
tapestry, a flow of events, a complex narrative,
connected, explicable. One good story leads to
another... And, we the readers of history, the sufferers
from history, we scan the pattern for hopeful
conclusions, for the way ahead.*
Julian Barnes

Metafiction, as it has now been named, is often associated with postmodern writers although it has been used as a kind of storytelling tradition throughout history. Linda Hutcheon defines metafiction as a “fiction about fiction-that is, fiction that includes within itself a commentary on its own narrative and/or linguistic identity” (1980, p. 1). Patricia Waugh names metafiction as a “term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality” (p. 2). There is not a certain way to be sure about whether all the characters or the story is all fictional or real as metafiction blurs the line between fiction and reality, and between the fictional world and the world outside the fiction. Our sense of the world is also constructed and if we know how a character is constructed within a novel, then we should question how this character is created in the world. Jeffrey R. Di Leo claims that “far too many accounts treat Federman as merely a member of small group of writers who created through narrative experimentation a pioneering body of ‘metafiction’ or ‘postmodern’ American literature” (p. 2). Hence, the aim of this study is to analyse Raymond Federman’s *To Whom It May Concern* as a postmodern metafictional text that blurs the line between historiographic past and metafictional reality, history and fiction.

Metafiction is a self-conscious and self-reflexive writing and is self-aware of the fact that it is a fiction. Unlike previous realist novels that want to persuade readers about the credibility of the story, metafictional novel or story reminds readers that they are reading something fictional, not real. The author tells a story about another story that creates a fictional world and it self-consciously is a story that invents a fictional world too. Metafiction can also embrace other self-conscious writings such as self-begetting and surfiction which like metafiction “imply a fiction that self-consciously reflects upon its own structure as language; [both] offer different perspectives on the same process” (Waugh, p. 14). We can say that as a whole *To Whom It May Concern* can be considered as a kind of self-

begetting novel in which we see the attempts of a writer to narrate his own writing process. Since the self-begetting novel is defined as an “account usually first person, of the development of a character to a point at which he is able to take up and compose the novel we have just finished reading” (Kellman, p. 1245), the author-narrator in this novel tells his struggles and doubts in the process of writing his novel in the first person narration. That is, it is a self-reflective novel that tells a writing process of a novel in which we see the narrator both as a character and a writer.

In a metafictional novel, there is not only one language of fiction and not a god-like author or an omniscient author as in a realistic novel. Metafiction novelists reject the ordered reality forms of the novel; the well-made plot, chronological sequence, the authoritative omniscient author, the rational connection between what characters ‘do’ and what they ‘are’, the causal connection between ‘surface’ details and the ‘deep’, ‘scientific laws’ of existence” (Waugh, p. 7). In *To Whom It May Concern*, the author-narrator creates a fiction and then makes a statement or comment about that created fiction by himself. We do not just hear one voice speaking to us but multiple voices throughout the text; the author narrator’s, Sarah and her cousins’ and the other characters’ and that of text.

In self-begetting metafictional novels, the author struggles to write and discusses the writing techniques. Marcel Cornis-Pope argues that “the narrator struggles with his own sense of absence, trying to fill the void created by history, to speak his characters back into meaningful existence” and he believes that the narrator wants to “create ‘a stereophonic effect’ in the linear discourse of history” (p. 104). In the novel, the author-narrator wants to write an ideal and perfect story with his stereophonic narrative that he sends his projected narrative with its fragments, ideas, and queries to a fellow writer addressing ‘to whom it may concern’ (Di Leo, p. 236). This fellow writer might be the reader whom the author addresses to reveal the sorrow of hiStory (his story) from a different alternative lens, or the fellow writer might be the author himself; the subconscious of the author wants himself to face his past through these letters. Epistolary form of letters functions as a recording document of the history as well. History is rewritten through remembering and telling the past. For example, the story begins with the author-narrator’s dialogic addressing to his fellow writer: “Listen...suppose the story to begin with Sarah’s cousin delayed for a few hours...then after the struggle with words has ended I will step back and watch the lies fall into place to shape a truth ignobly wrestled onto the surface of the paper” (Federman, 1990, p. 9).

The novel can also be considered as a kind of surfiction that the author-narrator always enters into the text to addresses to the (his fellow) reader as if he is talking. The author-narrator undercuts the plot every time by addressing the reader by saying: “Well well, how do you like that! Here I am suddenly in the middle of a good old-fashioned melodrama...pure solid naturalism” and there are utterances talking directly to the reader: “why worry about that now. This is not the final resting place of this book. What has been told so far is only temporary. I’m just trying out things. Later I can always delete the naturalistic stuff. But no need to go on with Josette’s life. You can imagine the rest yourself” (Federman, 1990, p. 136). The author-narrator sometimes talks to himself: “I have not yet found the words, the correct words, the correct words to speak that part of the story. Perhaps next time. I am tired now. All this makes me so tired” (Federman, 1990, p. 143). The author-narrator writes his novel as if speaking directly to his friend: “Hey buddy, aren’t you tired of playing the same song over and over again? No doubt it is a powerful theme, the reconstruction of a traumatic past” (Federman, 1990, p. 17). He even tries to wake the readers up by testing their memory: “this is what I started telling you. Remember?...well, let me go on...Listen...” (Federman, 1990, p. 49). He also wants to keep the readers’ attention by saying: “I’m tired, you too must be tired of all this groping in the dark. But if you care to listen I will tell you more. I will tell you the whole story up to the final flash of panic” (Federman, 1990, p. 97).

Moreover, the author-narrator is confused about how to construct his story (hiStory) as he is always in between situation about both his life and work (between fiction and reality). The author-narrator even cannot decide whether to give a name to the cousin: “should this cousin be given a name? A name is so cumbersome. So limiting. It confines a being to the accident of birth, imposes a civic identity. Perhaps, for now, he can simply be referred to as Sarah’s cousin. Yes, SARAH’S COUSIN. Though her name too might be deleted later on” (Federman, 1990, p. 10). Additionally, he questions “how to stage the story of Sarah and her cousin?” or how to begin the story: “I keep searching for a possible beginning, a ready-made model. The kind of opening that sets everything in place and makes the rest of the story happen by itself”, but later he throws it away, “I dismissed it. Too lyrical for me. Too melodramatic. I even tried the good old Once Upon A Time, but even that doesn’t work anymore. We’re not talking about a fairy tale here, we’re talking about a story which in the process of being told might become the absolute truth” (Federman, pp. 18-19). However, later in the following pages, he confesses that “stories full of exaggerations and lies stories that make little boys and girls dream of adventures in faraway places” by

stressing that the story we are reading is fictional and not the absolute truth. Shortly, the in-between situation of the author-narrator continues throughout the novel.

A metafictional novel both use and abuse other previous forms or genres as common in most postmodern fictions. The author-narrator uses different forms and techniques from different periods together such as an epistolary novel technique that was common in the 18th century or stream of consciousness technique mostly used in the 20th century. The author-narrator writes his projected novel in a letter form and sends it each month to his fellow writer. Chapters are divided by dates, so we see ten letters with dates as a kind of epistolary novel. However, although the letters are structured in a linear order, the story is told in a non-linear way using the stream of consciousness technique. In other words, in metafictional novels, authors or the narrators are full of doubt as they are living in an uncertain postmodern world. The author-narrator feels anxiety about finding a proper form of his novel; “my head full of doubt, my body in panic, I did nothing, nothing but contemplate my own lethargy and the futile gestures of my non-writing”, so because of his anxiety and doubt he writes his novel to his fellow friend in case he may fill the absence in his art, “that is why I came up from my basement of despair to ask for your companionship in this adventure” (Federman, 1990, pp. 34-35). Between the pages of 99 and 101, page 100 is intentionally left empty as a sign of absence in his instability or a sign of absence in his past. He goes in between in choosing either a detailed description or a minimalistic style in his narration; “if this book is to gain integrity, it will be from the denial of anecdotes...But what worries me is that if I persist in this refusal of details, the whole enterprise might crumble into vagueness and obscurity, and that might go against the necessity of what must be told” (Federman, 1990, p. 136). History itself is in between detailed recordings and partial minimalistic stories.

Except for the author narrator’s anxiety about his art, his family is also suspicious about his way of art. His wife is mocking with him about his new style of writing and his daughter says: “Pop is going to write a serious book this time. Can you believe that? As if all the others had been game playing. A serious book! Him..? pop will ever be capable of writing something serious?” (Federman, p. 81). The daughter is also kidding with the plot of the novel and she asks if “this business with the terrorists is going to turn this book into a wild adventure story. That would be neat, she says with enthusiasm, lots of international intrigue, lots of action, twisted plots and counterplots. What fun. Guys shooting each other all over the place. And

maybe you can have Sarah's cousin get involved" (Federman, 1990, p. 82). Then, the author-narrator defends himself as he "just want[s] to write something simple about two people tormented by their past, and anguished about the state of their present life. That's all...you don't need violence for that, and certainly not a plot" (Federman, 1990, pp. 83-84). As he says, in a metafictional novel there is no need for a certain plot as life and history is fragmented in several pieces.

Moreover, like most postmodern fictions, metafiction tells the story from different angles. The author-narrator recounts his fictional story from two different viewpoints of the two main characters, Sarah and her cousin, who is a "world traveller and renowned artist" (Federman, 1990, p. 13). In addition, metafictional novels can be autobiographical as well and through the story of Sarah and her cousin, we learn the autobiography of Federman himself. Before the soldiers came, Sarah's mother sent her to the bakery to buy some bread, so she survived thanks to her mother. In the same way, Federman's parents were sent to the concentration camps but "he himself only escaped because his mother bundled him into a closet before the Nazis came" (Sim, p. 210). After the war, like Sarah's cousin, the author-narrator emigrates to the United States and becomes a postmodernist writer of the 1970s and the cousin becomes a famous sculpture. That is to say, there is an autobiographical side in his novel that he both reflects the history of that time and his personal life through the stories of his characters. Meanwhile, we cannot be sure whether this novel is an autobiographical fiction or fictional autobiography.

Historiographic references in the novel blur the line between fiction and reality. This makes the novel a multi-layered fiction: in the first layer we see the writing process of an author-narrator, in the outer layer of this projected narration we see the story of Federman's own personal Holocaust experiences through the stories of the author-narrator's fictional characters Sarah and her cousin, that is, in the outer layer we see the story of the author-narrator, and in the last layer, in the total narration we see the constructed fiction of Federman that gives the facts of history through fiction. There are three layers of the world in which characters seek for reality and fulfilment in this novel. In other words, the first layer tells a fictional world of Sarah and her cousin and their sorrowful reality, and the second layer covers the first one and tells the writing process and struggles of a writer who sends his projected novel to his fellow friend in letters under the title of to whom it may concern, and the last layer tells the text itself as the outer world. In this text layer, Federman self-consciously and self-

reflexively creates his novel that tells the story of a writer who tries to construct his novel remembering the past experiences of both himself and the cousins.

Therefore, in this metafictional novel or the three-layered world within a world, the relation between fact and fiction is problematized because each story creates a bridge between personal stories of characters and the history itself. Federman constructs his novel by jumping from one layer to another and from one story to another, and from fiction to history as long as the past is remembered. Federman self-consciously uses history in the remembered stories of Sarah and her cousin and in the personal story of author-narrator as well. For example, the author-narrator links his personal story to history in the second part, chapter or letter (December 7) as: “Pearl Harbor Day! Did you know that it was also on a December 7 that mass extermination (of Jews) began at Chelmno” (Federman, 1990, p. 79). That is, in a metafictional novel, there appears a lot of layers in fiction this way; fact and fiction are intermingled

Besides, most metafictional novels have open endings in each layer of its multi-layered fiction since it accepts that it is merely a fiction, so do not need to be ended. *To Whom It May Concern* ends with an open ending as it is one of the features of postmodern fiction. Stephane Mallarme claims that Federman “writes unfinished stories made of unfinished sentences but which pretend to be finished stories made of finished sentences” (Mallarme, p. 85) and for his novel;

one must accept the fact that what makes up his fiction is not necessarily what is there (that is to say what is told, what is visible, what is readable, what is present, what is presented, what is represented or appresented) but what is not there (what is not told, what is not visible, not readable, not presented, not represented or appresented). In other words, what is important to notice in Federman's fiction is what is absent...the central theme of his fiction is ABSTENCE...Federman has perfected the art of cancellation and absence, and he has done so with cunning and devious stratagems. Therefore, what the critic should discuss in his work are the holes, the gaps, the voids, the empty spaces, the blank pages, and of course the closets, the precipices, and especially the four X-X-X-X's which are the recurring key terms that point to that absence (Mallarme, p. 86).

This absence also tells the death and absence of the narrator-author's family (the four Xs are for the mother, father, and the two sisters) as well as the

family of the cousins. However, we cannot erase the past, history. Like lack of chronological plot, theme, and the omniscient author, the end of the story is absent as well. The blank pages, indefiniteness, ambiguity, uncertainty, and doubts will continue to exist with the comma at the end of the book. The author-narrator declares the unfinishedness of the story as “And so, as I continued to listen to cousins, their faces fading into darkness, their voices becoming more and more faint,” (Federman, 1990, p. 185). The novel ends unfinished with a note with absent language:

And so, as I continued to listen to the cousins, their faces fading into darkness, their voices becoming more and more faint, I realized that their story would always remained unfinished...and yet, even though sleep was finally coming to me, I pushed it away so that I could continue to listen to them... (Federman, 1990, p. 186).

Again the notion of absence is seen at the end of the novel which shows what is absent in his story, past and even what is absent in the history. The novel ends with triple dot ellipses by showing that his story will always remain unfinished as the history never ends but continues to be rewritten alternatively as long as it is remembered. Knowledge of certainty is also absent whether the fictional past of the author-narrator is fictive or real. So, it can be asserted that past and fiction unites historiographic metafiction.

Metafiction is often associated with some other genres like feminist, radical or historiographic metafiction and here, this novel is mostly related to Linda Hutcheon's historiographic metafiction. Hutcheon asserts that postmodernism mainly focuses on the narrative “in literature, history, or theory” and she claims that “historiographic metafiction incorporates all three of these domains: that is, its theoretical self-awareness of history and fiction as human constructs (historiographic metafiction) is made the grounds for its thinking and reworking of the forms and contents of the past” (1988, p. 5). In this respect, *To Whom It May Concern* can be considered as a kind of historiographic metafiction with its self-conscious and self-reflexive narrative returning to history problematically. Postmodernist fiction is “at one metafictional and historical in its echoes of the texts and contexts of the past” (Hutcheon, 1989, p. 3). Hutcheon labels that representing past as historiographic metafiction and so we see self-reflexive narratives of such fictions. As Jonathan Culler notes, “history...manifests itself in narrative constructs, stories designed to yield meaning through narrative ordering” and calls the historical narratives as “historicity of articulations” (1989, p. 129). However, we cannot be sure whether historicity reveals the truth of what is being recorded it is because “historical evidence is unreliable; even in the

absence of social pressure, people lie readily about their most intimate beliefs. How much more must they have lied in an atmosphere of unembarrassed repression" (Greenblatt, p. 474)? As Hayden White claims historical contexts are presented in the form of stories by the historians and "historians may not like to think of their work as translations of 'fact' into 'fiction;' but this is one of the effects of their works" (p. 53). As Raymond Federman points out:

*To be a writer is to live in history, that the writer can never escape his time and history, and this because finally history above all language. It is the writer who fabricates history with language after the events occurred. That is why the writer bears such responsibility towards his work, and especially towards the language he uses. If our readers cannot trust our writing (even it is fiction) they will not trust the **story** and **history** in which they live (1995, pp. 22-23).*

In other words, in historiographic metafiction, we see that past events are situated within the fiction and we can see the historical reality behind the text. Historical metafiction constructs history through personal stories and choose characters or events from the history distorting them by fictionalizing into the fiction. Federman's *To Whom It May Concern* turns to the traces of the past, to the events during the Second World War by representing the past in terms of metafictional self-reflexivity. As the history is documented and recorded by a person, interpreting those documents put the history into facts, but in any case history is the victim of subjectivity. Thus, there is no proof of evidence whether recorded history reflects reality. With the help of formal rewriting of remembered events in this novel, we see how historical documents and references jump into a fictional context:

I'm convinced that we must now move beyond mere fables, beyond the neatly packaged stories which provide a chain of terminal satisfactions from predictable beginnings to foreshadowed endings. We have come so far in the long journey of literature that all the stories whisper the same old thing to us in the same cracked voice. And so we must dig in to see where the raw words and fundamental sounds are buried so that the great silence within can finally be decoded (Federman, 1990, p. 86).

Federman himself calls this postmodern metafictional novel as surfiction "not because it imitates reality, but because it exposes the fictionality of reality" (*Critifiction*, p. 37). Surfiction blurs the balance between autobiography and fiction. Federman's playing with the past,

dealing with the writing process of fiction and rewriting the history by blurring fact and fiction based on his own historical past experience as a survivor of the Holocaust. Rewriting this tragic history, especially writing the unspeakable historical event is problematic, so the novel is in between history and fiction. That's why he calls his novel surfiction as a kind of constantly re-inventing the history or rewriting the 'fictionality of reality'. He brings conditions of fact into fiction by blurring the real and fictive hiStories. That is, Federman mixes "the reflexively fictional with the verifiably historical" (Hutcheon, 2002, p. 34).

The title of the novel refers to the ambiguity between fiction and reality as the addressed person in the novel is unknown such as the reality of the truth and history cannot be known. The sorrow of history is told from a different alternative perspective and the fellow writer as might be the subconscious of the author who wants himself to face his past through remembering the history by the help of writing these letters. History is rewritten through remembering and telling the past. There is a critical return to history in postmodernism which has brought a new and diverse perspective to history. That is, history and fiction are intermingled:

[History and fiction] have both been seen to derive their force more than verisimilitude than form any objective truth; they are both identified as linguistic constructs, highly conventionalized in their narrative forms, and not at all transparent either in terms of language or structure; and they appear to be equally intertextual, deploying the texts of the past within their own complex textuality. But these are also the implied teachings of historiographic metafiction. Like those recent theories of both history fiction, this kind of novel asks us to recall that history and fiction are themselves historical terms and that their definition and interrelations are historically determined and vary with time (Hutcheon, 1988, p. 105).

In this historiographic metafiction, the author-narrator attempts to narrate the story of two cousins who fell apart during the wartime simultaneously with the Jew's round-up in Paris. Like Federman himself, Sarah and her cousin (nameless) having survived and escaped the Holocaust in France had settled down in America and Israel while their family was sent to death in Nazi camps. Thirty-five years later the two cousins arrange a meeting in Israel (Federman, 1990, p. 21). The author-narrator in the novel tries to find out a way how to narrate that painful past to reveal the truth. He prefers to narrate in writing letters addressing "to whom it may concern" as the title of the novel named, but the only way he can talk to that past is his

act of writing, so history is told through remembered events of Sarah and through the writing process of the author-narrator. It can be said that this surfictional story of Federman is created by fragmented historical events and author-narrator's fictive historical writing is also the fictive writing of Federman who is the author of the text. Fragmented past stories of the author-narrator are intermingled with the history itself, so the metafiction meets with the history. In other words, the historical past story of the writer gives birth to the fictional story of Sarah. Therefore, by the help of this three-layered fictional writing of history, history is seen within the fictitious context of Federman's text while keeping the value of the historical document.

Just like a fiction, we cannot be sure about the credibility of history because there is no certain way of being sure about the exact history or past, it can be either fictitious or historical. Likewise, Federman himself defines his historiographic fiction as "clear as water. No more camouflaging the facts. Everything in it is the truth, but again a truth that cannot be verified" (*Autobiography & Avant Garde*, p. 448). Federman rewrites the history as a fiction by describing the past as a story of "a traumatic past" (Federman, 1990, p. 17). These fragmented histories are in the form of stories and the author-narrator in the novel states that:

Fictitious life created from real LIFE MAGAZINE pictures. I could even stick some of the pictures inside the book and have a Technicolor story full of solid historical facts. But listen, historical facts are not important, you know that. Besides, they always fade into banality. What matters is the account and not the reality of events. So once again I am contemplating a story which will be nothing more than the speculations on ways to tell that story. I am incurable. (Federman, 1990, p. 38).

The novel points out the ways of telling a story that is associated with history; this story is one of the examples of rewritings of history. One version of historical war contexts might differ from the others in postmodern style because there might be various viewpoints and alternatives in history. As the author-narrator says "what difference does it make when and where it happened, since none of it is verifiable" and adds that "We're not dealing with credibility here, but with the truth. That's not the same. Certain truths do not need the specifics of time and place to be asserted. A war is a war, doesn't matter where and when it happened. And suffering is timeless" (Federman, 1990, p. 39). That is, fiction is self-consciously intermingled with history, memory and the past in a self-reflexive narration.

Consequently, as an experimental writing of a postmodern novel, metafiction is concerned with its own fiction writing process which is self-reflexive and self-conscious. Federman's *To Whom It May Concern* is a historiographic metafiction that tells a story about a story, a novel about writing a novel or a fiction about a fiction, and this kind of fictional writing is self-conscious and self-reflexive reminding the readers that they are reading something fictional, not real. This self-begetting novel is also in between about which one is more difficult; writing the unspeakable historical past or the process of writing the text itself. The novel is an unfinished hiStory that ends with triple dot ellipses by showing that their story will always remain unfinished as history never ends but continues to be rewritten alternatively as long as it is remembered. This historiographical metafiction advocates for a multiplicity of reality rejecting the standards on the past. It crosses the boundaries of fiction and moves to history by incorporating the past into the present. The author-narrator cannot escape hiStory. The truth of history cannot be verified and this self-conscious and self-referential novel blurs fiction and reality and his story (author-narrator's) and history is blurred in the novel. Shortly, Federman blurs the line between history and fiction by creating multiple layers of reality self-consciously. Since history can find its footprints in the present through an alternative lens, it transforms into a new beginning of diverse reality rather than becoming the end of reality, thus turning into an alternative way of understanding history.

REFERENCES

- Barnes, J. (1989). *A history of the World in 101/2 chapters*. London: Picador.
- Cornis-Pope, M. (2001). Going to BETHICKETT on the way to heaven: The politics of self-reflection in postmodern fiction. Henry Sussman and Christopher Devenney (Ed). *Engagement and Indifference: Beckett and the Political* (pp. 83-111). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Culler, J. (1989, 1982). *On deconstruction: Theory and criticism after structuralism*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- Di Leo, Jeffrey R. (2011). Other voices: The fiction of Raymond Federman. Di Leo, Jeffrey R. (Ed). *Federman's Fictions: Innovation, Theory, Holocaust* (pp. 1-38). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Federman, R. (1993). *Critifiction: Postmodern essays*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Federman, R. (1990). *To whom it may concern*. Boulder: Fiction Collective Two.
- Federman, R. (1995). *The supreme indecision of the writer: The 1994 lectures in Turkey*. Ankara: The Poetry/Rare Books Collection. 1995.
- Freiburg, R. & Schnitker, J. (Ed). (1999). Do you consider yourself a postmodern author?. *Interviews with Contemporary English Writers*, Münster: LIT.

- Greenblatt, S.. (1989). Invisible bullets. Robert Con Davis and Schleifer Ronald (Ed). *Contemporary Literary Criticism: Literary and Cultural Studies* (pp. 474-506). New York, London: Longman.
- Hutcheon, L. (1980). *Narcissistic narrative: The metafictional paradox*. Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Hutcheon, L. (1988). *The politics of postmodernism*. London: Routledge.
- Hutcheon, L. (1989). Historiographic metafiction: Parody and intertextuality of history. Patrich O'Donnell and Robert Con Davis (Ed). *Intertextuality and Contemporary American Fiction* (pp. 3-32). London: John Hopkins University Press.
- Hutcheon, L. (2002). *Politics of postmodernism*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.
- Kellman, S. G. (1976). The fiction of self-begetting. *MLN*, 91(6), 1243-1256. doi: 10.2307/2907134.
- Mallarme, S. (1993). Federman on Federman: Lie or die (fiction as autobiography/autobiography as fiction). Raymond Federman (Ed). *Critifiction Postmodern Essays* (pp.85-100). Albany: State University of New York.
- Sim, S. (2005). *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*. London: Routledge.
- Waugh, P. (1984). *metafiction; the theory and practice of self-conscious fiction*. London: Routledge.
- White, H. (1978). The historical text as literary artifact. Robert H. Canary and Henry Kozicki (Ed). *The Writing of History: Literary Form and Historical Understanding* (pp. 41-62). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.