On the Trail of Diderot

Ufuk Şahin
Asst. Prof. Dr.
Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Letters
Atatürk University
Erzurum
Turkey

Abstract

Written as a result of his real life experiences as a member of the Diderot Project, and also his readings of French philosopher, novelist and playwright Denis Diderot, Malcolm Bradbury's last novel To the Hermitage naturally bears traces of this prominent figure of the Age of Enlightenment. From the first pages, the novel proves that it conveys Diderot's influences including choices of words and phrases, sentence structures, narrative techniques, among others, and also characters and themes discussed in the novel. These stylistic as well as intertextual elements appear sometimes as direct quotations, and sometimes Bradbury adopts allusions and parodies, or some metafictional elements such as interventions, digressions, and comments and explanations. Thus, this article aims to track down those features Bradbury borrows from Diderot in To the Hermitage and contains some selected extracts from the chapters of the novel.

Keywords: Malcolm Bradbury, Diderot, *To the Hermitage*, *Jacques the Fatalist*, style

1. Introduction

British academic, critic, playwright, television scriptwriter, biographer, and (campus) novelist Malcolm Bradbury's last novel *To the Hermitage* was published in 2000. The novel consists of 36 chapters and its plot unfolds on two temporal planes: "now" and "then", thus it has a double narrative. The first concerns an English professor, who is also the narrator, travelling to St. Petersburg on a ferry from Stockholm as a part of Diderot Project and the second is the story of Denis Diderot's trip to the same city in 1773 at the request of Russian Tzarina, Catherine the Great, who had his library, but let him use it in his life time.

Although it cannot exactly be known when Bradbury started reading or to be influenced by Diderot, the revival of this French philosopher in *To the Hermitage* is mostly a result of the real life Diderot Project. Through the end of the 1980s, researchers at the *Swedish Centre for Working Life* started a study on "the nature of human skill and how skills may be enhanced or degraded by the use of different technologies" (Vaux, 1990), and within these studies, in 1988, these researchers organised Stockholm Conference on Culture, Language and Artificial Intelligence. Later on, in the early 1990s, a group of academics, writers and artists including Bo Göranzon and Magnus Florin organized a conference at the Stockholm Royal Dramatic Theatre, where Diderot's dialogues were presented (Vaux, 1990; Göranzon and Florin 1992; Göranzon, 1995). After this conference, to visit the Diderot Library at the Hermitage Museum, and also to track down Diderot, a small group of researchers, including Malcolm Bradbury went to St. Petersburg. This visit and the lady who was responsible for the Diderot Library at the Hermitage Museum enabled Bradbury to make some observations and to collect data for his new novel. (Doering, 2001: 162). Bradbury recounts his experience in St. Petersburg as follows:

The genesis for *To the Hermitage* was a real life 'Diderot Project' organised by the Technical University in Stockholm, attended by several academics and writers from U.E.A. in the early 1990s. Debating the merits of rigorous academic inquiry and artistic freedom, the group ferried across the Baltic to a St. Petersburg caught up in the transition between Soviet and Capitalist Russia, '... I met an elderly Russian librarian who was struggling so hard to save the Diderot Library [it was moved to the Winter Palace after the writer's death]. I was so struck by her that I started the novel the very next day. The following year she had died, been replaced by these spooks who wanted to do deals with you, a few roubles to look at this letter or whatever'. (Doering, 2001: 162)

Mention should also be made of Diderot's criticism of the Enlightenment here that although philosophers such as Voltaire, D'Alembert, Descartes, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Condorcet, d'Holbach, Morellet, and Diderot in accordance with their common purposes, came together and collaborated on the project of the Enlightenment and *Encyclopedia* (Kafker, 1963) to raise awareness about human intellectual powers since they believed that this would improve human life, would lead ultimately to a better, more fulfilled human existence, to freedom, and happiness ("Enlightenment", 2017), the Enlightenment had some drawbacks and contradictions, and Diderot and Rousseau were unique among others since they realized these drawbacks and contradictions. While Rousseau focused on the contradictions in bourgeois society, Diderot those in the Enlightenment (Goldmann, 1973: 41). Diderot, for example, in his *Oeuvres Politiques*, emphasizes the limited value of the Enlightenment: "Nevertheless, we must enlighten and instruct, but not expect too much from this means"(Crocker, 1974: 145). Unlike other philosophers, that Diderot was able to criticize the Enlightenment in this way can be interpreted as another reason why Bradbury, who also criticizes the Enlightenment with ironic or comic expressions, wrote a book about him, or his works.

So, it appears that all these triggers or impulses behind *To the Hermitage* ended up with the traces of Denis Diderot and some stylistic features he used in his works such as *Encyclopedia* (1751-1772), *Jacques the Fatalist and his Master* (1796), *Rameau's Nephew* (1805), *Conversation between D'Alembert and Diderot* (written in 1769, published in 1830), *D'Alembert's Dream* (written in 1769, published in 1830), *The Paradox of Acting* (written in 1773, published in 1830), *Observations on Nakaz* (1774), *Plan of a University for the Government of Russia* (written in 1775), his essays "On the Sufficiency of Natural Religion" (written in 1747, published in 1770), and "Letter on the Blind for the Use of Those Who See"(1749), *The Sceptic's Walk* (completed in 1747, published in 1830), *Conversation of a Philosopher with the Maréchale De——* (written in 1774, published in 1777), *Diderot's Letters to Falconet* (1766-1767), *The Letters to Sophie Volland* (1759-1774), and "This is Not a Story" (1773). Thus, the aim of this study is to track down those features which bear the traces of Diderot. Since the novel offers plenty of examples, I will make do with only some particular examples in order not to fall into repetition and for the sake of saving space.

2. My Stylistic Quest

From the first pages *To the Hermitage* proves that it conveys the influences of Diderot. His influences penetrate not just into words, phrases, sentence structures, capitalization, and narrative techniques, etc., but also into some of the characters and themes discussed in the novel. Bradbury offers these intertextual elements to the readers sometimes as direct quotations, and sometimes he utilizes allusions and parodies, or some metafictional elements such as interventions, digressions, comments and explanations. For example, by giving the opening paragraph of *Jacques the Fatalist* in the first pages of the novel, he implies that the novel is a copy or a parody of this work:

How did they meet? By chance, like everyone else. What were their names? What's that got to do with you? Where had they come from? The last place back down the road. Where were they going? How can anyone ever really know where they're going? What were they saying?... (Bradbury, 2000)

One can also see other direct quotations from *Jacques the Fatalist*, for example, in the 17th chapter: "'I belong to nobody, and yet I belong to everyone. You were here before you entered, and you will still be here even after you've left.'" (Bradbury, 2000: 439), and from *Rameau's Nephew* in the 17th chapter:

'Rain or shine, it's my usual habit each day around five to take a walk round the arcades of the Palais Royal… My ideas are my trollops. I chase them just the way the rogues and roues pursue the over-dressed and bright-painted whores in these Paris arcades — following every single one of them, finally lying down with none. And when the weather becomes a little too cold or rainy, I resort to the splendid Café de la Régence, and sit down to watch the experts playing their games of chess.' (212)

Among Diderot's distinguishing features is his love of speaking. This causes him to be inattentive towards language rules and style, so almost all his works are composed of dialogues. In the introduction of *Jacques the Fatalist*, David Coward states that "If dialogue is a strength of all Diderot's fiction, so are mime, gesture, and stage directions, which fill in the picture" (Diderot, 1796). Frequent use of dialogues is one of the striking features of *To the Hermitage* as well, and like Diderot's, Bradbury's dialogues include stage directions, for example, in the 18th chapter: "SHE sits on the sofa, stitching at an embroidery frame and looking impatient. HE arrives with his stockings in disorder. SHE looks up crossly." (220), and in the 24th chapter: "He looks into the box. It appears to be full of watches." (303)

Spoken language appears not only in the dialogues, but also in reported speeches, and in the rest of the text while the narrator is speaking. It shows itself, especially through the frequent use of ellipsis as in: "The verses of the noted poets, from La Fontaine to Colly Cibber." (386) in the 29th chapter, through expressions which give a clue that he, like Diderot, contacts the reader as in the 3rd chapter: "And if gloom is what you have, and you're not sure where to take it, then let me advise." (27), and through slang as in the 1st chapter: "The teller reaches into her drawer again, counts out a few crisp American greenbacks, and hands them to me." (14), and as in the 22nd chapter: "This court's full of dotards and professional arse-lickers." (272)

Diderot's *Jacques the Fatalist* and Lawrence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, which is another notable work inspired Bradbury in *To the Hermitage*, are the kinds of novels in which the authors employ tricks or tactics to amuse both their readers and themselves. Such novels frequently present some notes which remind the reader that they are reading books. They enable readers a perspective or enable them to estimate about an event or a situation. However, after a time, the readers let down when they see that something quite different suddenly replaces their logical inferences, and understand that they are deceived by the authors and thus are disturbed. (Fredman, 1955: 57)

Walter Redfern identifies that one of the delaying tactics Diderot uses in *Jacques the Fatalist* to create suspense or to educate the reader not to be so impatient is digression:

Among the tactics used by Diderot to counteract the clichés of traditional fiction are digressions (designed to stop the onward march of predictability) … Jacques and his master habitually interrupt each other, anecdotes dislocate or rather syncopate, the main story. Interruptions, however infuriating to the interrupted one, are the life and soul of social discourse. (Redfern, 2008: 27, 30)

In the same vein, Miyamasu argues that Diderot's major theme in *Jacques the Fatalist* is the nature of the novel and to deal with this theme he employs digression to "distort the chronology of "real" events", and to "frustrate [by frustrating] the reader's expectations regarding the story (since that story flow is constantly interrupted) and thus to prove [proving] that the story is controlled and to reflect its inherent non-linearity." (2000: 102-103)

Sterne's narrator Shandy also adopts digression abundantly. (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2017) Judith Hawley emphasizes the digressive nature of *Tristram Shandy* and states that "… Sterne as Tristram not only digresses but theorizes about the significance of digression…" (2011: 21). Piper, too, indicates the intensive use of digressions in *Tristram Shandy* and classifies them according to their general uses: the explanatory, opinionative digressions and the interlude, and also provides some examples for them. (1961)

Like his predecessors, Bradbury uses digression to break the linear progression of the plot, to reflect the non-linear communication between speakers, and to create suspense. For example, the title of the 19th chapter is "A Small Finnish Interlude", in which he tells his experiences in Finland, and gives information about Finnish history, geography, architecture, literature, language and some Finnish clichés. The readers may curiously wait for the moment when he finishes this story and comes back to the main story or if they are not attentive enough, they may be fascinated by just reading, so they may not care about which story is told at that moment.

Another example is seen in the 2nd chapter where he tells two coexisting stories about how Peter the Great has become a tzar and the building process of St. Petersburg:

When he returned to Russia, became Tzar, defeated the Swedes, retook the eastern Baltic, and decided to build a triumphal capital on the Neva, staring dangerously out through storm, ice and foggy winters at the tempting riches of the West, it was Amsterdam he tried to build. Peter's city would not be another Scythian hotchpotch: mud-based buildings, leaking hovels, bearded boyars, rooting pigs and starving serfs. It would have not just cathedrals and monasteries, fortresses, prisons and arsenals, but canals, palaces, academies, museums, and stock exchanges, the glories of trade and war. He summoned Dutchmen to dig out his canals and embankments. When these seemed smaller than the ones in Holland, he had them filled and dug again. Meantime as the new city began to rise, Dutch ships earned the bricks, Dutch painters decorated the salons, Dutch bankers provided the ready. Swedish slaves and gulaged Russian serfs might have dug the foundations, raised the roofbeams, perished in the Finnish swamplands in their hundreds of thousands. But the peerless new city, which some began to name the city of bones, was raised not just on drowned skeletons but jolly Dutch guilders. (22)

Another tactic employed by Diderot and also Sterne to deceive their readers is their interruptions to the narration. Bradbury, too, frequently interrupts the narration and talks to the reader as in the 9th chapter: "I shall simply leave you to speculate as freely as you wish, only offering by way of literary assistance the one small fact that (as I

think I already told you) I am one of those amiable types who, when asked, normally say yes." (131), and in the 27th chapter: "And then one day a letter came from my Finnish publisher (oh, what words!) with a striking invitation." (228)

To show his goodwill, he gives his readers a chance and tries to create an awareness in them not to fall into his traps he will set throughout the novel. Thus, in the very first chapter, he clearly declares to the readers that they are reading a book, fiction: "But America's not where I'm going — or not for many pages yet." (15) However, as the readers will realize later on, this is nothing but one of his subtle tricks to win his readers' trust, and to show himself as if he were at their disposal.

Diderot's another work Bradbury alludes to is his "This is Not a Story" (1773) in which "what he is recounting is not fiction but truth." (Furbank, 1992: 443) Bradbury makes references to this work in the 11th chapter with his fictional paper called "Paper that is not a Paper" but he, unlike Diderot, wants to emphasize again what he is recounting is not truth but story/fiction.

Also, despite predominant postmodern features of *To the Hermitage*, in the following sentence from the 7th chapter, he seems he praises the presence of the author, the tricks or tactics, namely "pleasures" and "mystifications" he or she offers in the work: "As random life is to destiny, so stories are to great authors - who (despite modern theory) really exist, and provided us with some of the highest pleasures and the most wonderful mystifications we can find." (84-85)

In the 9th chapter he gives other clues to the reader such as "'That's it. I'm a writer. I compose falsehoods. How about you? You're a truth-teller? A philosopher? An expert on Diderot?'" (117) to indicate that his writings are not real, they are indeed stories, and he shows himself in the process of novel writing like Diderot in *Jacques the Fatalist* and explains some characteristics of a "writer":

What could have happened next? What might have been said next? What would have been done next? I shall simply leave you to speculate as freely as you wish, only offering by way of literary assistance the one small fact that (as I think I already told you) I am one of those amiable types who, when asked, normally says yes. So I perfectly well could have said yes to this, or even that. (131)

He also frankly indicates even in the Introduction that he will make some deliberate changes in dates, individuals, historical and real events throughout the novel. In the 5th chapter by completing Bo's remarks "We must not always believe what we read in books." (54) with "Especially my books." (54), he approves this characteristic again with his own words. So, another tactic or trick to try his readers' vigilance or which shows he is playing with the reader is the use of anachronism. For example, in the 3rd chapter, there is a mistake in the launch date of the vessel Vasa: "In 1618 it was launched, here in the harbour in front of me." (28), but Vasa was launched in 1628, and like the Titanic, sank on her maiden voyage. (Håfors, 2010: 1)

In the 12th chapter, there is another example for anachronism: the conversation between Tzarina and Diderot:

SHE
I understand you are an atheist, the man who believes in nothing.
HE
Precisely. But I disbelieve with the very greatest conviction, Your Highness.
SHE
So is your morality the same as a believer's?
HE
Why not, if one is an honest man?
SHE
Do you practise that morality?
HE
Like many of us, I do my best.
SHE
You don't rape, don't murder, don't pillage?
HE
I promise you, very rarely.
SHE
Then why not accept religion? (174-175),

in spite of some differences, is indeed between Diderot and the Maréchale in *Dialogues of Diderot*, *Conversation of a Philosopher with the Maréchale De ––*. (Diderot, 1927: 167)

Thus, Bradbury, like Diderot and Sterne, tries to win the trust of his readers by pretending to stand by them or to be at their disposal. However, if the readers are not vigilant enough, they can fall into Bradbury's aforementioned traps, and believe mistakenly, until they read or review the entire novel, that only authority is the author who will guide them, and who will decide and control everything in the novel. (Şahin, 2017, 414)

A diligent examination of the novel also reveals another remarkable stylistic influence of Diderot which is the use of the colon, a punctuation mark Diderot frequently uses, especially in his *Rameau's Nephew* and *Jacques the Fatalist*. Among examples are "The coffee: dark, scented, thick, excellent." (10), "That's to say, I'm a writer: a professionally observant person, one of those collectors of life's little data, an avid thinker of thoughts and a watcher of things, not least big well-dressed blonde Viking girls." (26), "I look around the table: Bo is sitting silent in the grimmest of professorial poses, Alma has become ever more the frozen Snow Queen, her expression made of ice." (179)

Writing the subjects of some sentences, pronouns or proper nouns, especially in dialogues, in capital letters can be considered as another allusion to *Jacques the Fatalist*:

A bright sun is shining through the windows of the Hermitage, casting a liquid light over the waters of the Neva below. The birds in the arbours outside the state rooms are full of song. SHE sits on the sofa, beneath the big portrait of an earlier self. Her English whippets are beside her. The COURTIERS are quiet, the room almost empty apart from DASHKOVA.HE comes in. His hands are behind his back.

HE

My dear lady. The last time. The very last time.

SHE

The last time, my dear dear Didro. So today there is no paper. (415)

According to Redfern, Diderot believes that "truth could spring only from antagonism, which is one of the main reasons why he persists in antagonizing the reader"(2008: 24), and "Opposites cohabit, wrestle for supremacy: good/evil, truth/falsehood, master/servant." (2008: 35) He relates the past to the present, and offers dialogues with imaginary readers and himself, split in two personalities who have opposite characters, yet complete each other and supply each other's deficiencies like Sancho Panza and Quixote in *Don Quixote*. (Redfern, 2008: 9, 25) In *Rameau's Nephew*, for example, he splits into two: Moi (Diderot) and Lui (Nephew), and talks to his other side. While Moi whose one of the great pleasures is watching chess-players has an orderly world, Lui has an inconsistent and complicated life. He suddenly comes into Moi's life and disrupts it, and becomes "an oxymoron, a living paradox" and therefore "his own alter ego." (Redfern, 2008: 14) In *Jacques the Fatalist*, too, Diderot appears before his reader as both Jacques and his Master. As Jacques, he dispels the boredom of the trip by telling stories to his Master. Throughout the trip they talk about their adventures, and in the meantime, it is proved that how reality contrasts with common sense and foresight, and how the disobedient servant makes his master dependent on him, and how he ultimately emerges as the real master. Although they have disagreements, they are still inseparable. Diderot provides them with a shared past and present. (Redfern, 2008: 25; Furbank, 1992: 434-435)

Like Diderot's works, Bradbury's *To the Hermitage* is full of such binary oppositions. The formation of novel's chapters as "now" and "then", self and other in the forms of moi-lui, master-servant or master-student/pupil, artist-posterity duo are just a few of them.

To accentuate the relationship between the opposite sides of a personality: "moi" and "lui, Bradbury, for example in the 4th chapter, relates how Narishkin turns into Diderot's lui:

After six bumpy weeks of travel, toothache, lost wigs and nightshirts, painful flea-bites, gut-wrenching colic, pinched maids, castled cities, fresh duchies and margravates, crashed coaches, lost coachmen, broken carriage wheels, new and chilly seas, changed borders, occasional poems, he is still he, entirely MOI. It's Narishkin who is no longer Narishkin. When at last they ride back into Russia alongside the bleak bay, cross the River Dwina, and enter the narrow streets of old Riga, he's turned into someone or something else: Lui himself, Diderot's Double. (50)

Another example is the surname "Verso" which means "the page on the left side of an open book." (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2010: 1654) This definition and certain characteristics of him, for example, he is American and deconstructionist and he disappears at the end of the novel, give us the hint that Jack Paul Verso is highly likely Bradbury himself, or in other words he is Bradbury's "lui" or "alter ego". In this respect, Bradbury, like Diderot, divides himself into two and removes Verso, but he keeps the other side, namely "moi" or narrator-main character-fictional author-Bradbury to complete the novel or the story. The disappearance of Verso also reminds us *My Strange Quest for Mensonge*, and consequently Barthes's "the Death of the Author." (Şahin, 2017: 421)

In the same vein, LidiaVianu in her *British Desperadoes at the Turn of the Millennium* states that "It is subtle humour for a very good cause. Actually, Mensonge may be Bradbury at his best" (2005: 163), and citing from Bradbury, she suggests that Mensonge is in fact an absence:

Unlike other Deconstructionists, Mensonge claims to be a "totally absent absence." He is extremely moral in his non-existence. That is why Bradbury considers him to be"...the ultimate case of Deconstructionist integrity – the man who has out-Barthesed Barthes, out-Foucaulted Foucault, out-Derridaed Derrida..." His book ends by proclaiming "the absent absence of Henry Mensonge" – which could also mean an unbearable presence. (2005: 168, emphasis in the original)

Thus, we can infer from these remarks that Bradbury's "absent absence" character, Mensonge, comes into existence as Verso in *To the Hermitage*, and he does his duty throughout the story, and then at the end of the novel, vanishes without a trace, so becomes an "absent absence" again.

Besides, in the 27th chapter, a seller who took his name from Ruslan Chikhikov, the leading character of Nikolai Gogol's *Dead Souls*, appears as lui. Bradbury draws some parallelisms between this seller and Nephew in *Rameau's Nephew*, so the seller can be considered as the parody of Nephew or his equivalent in today's society. By this way Bradbury also draws a parallelism between Diderot and himself:

'Welcome to Russia, British I think,' says the man, who wears a tweedish sort of jacket in an Englishy sort of cut. He has a clubby style of tie that goes with his somewhat Oxford shirt. His smile is brittle, his features heavily acne-ed, his hair firmly slicked down with grease. And he carries a worn leather briefcase which, with priestly veneration, he sets on his knee, and then clicks open with a hey-presto motion.
Galina looks at him dryly. 'Qui estvous, who are you?'
I am Ruslan Chichikov,' says the man, ignoring Galina, holding out his hand to me. (355)

However, while the roles of master-servant/pupil remain the same in Rameau's Nephew: Moi (Diderot) and Nephew, and in *Jacques the Fatalist*: Jacques or his Master, these roles are undertaken by different characters in *To the Hermitage*. For example, in the 35th chapter, this relationship is seen both between Birgitta Lindhorst and Anders Manders, and between Birgitta Lindhorst and Sven Sonnenberg. Moreover, a character who is a servant in one instance becomes a master in other instance(s) or vice versa. For example, while, in the 6th chapter, Diderot is introduced as the master to Falconet even though Falconet no longer thinks so:

Falconet, standing there rigid, is grotesquely explaining that his young son has just arrived from London, where he's studying (what? Art, of course, naturally. . .), and has bagged the spare room already. It strikes our Philosopher something in his manner — an unease? a dismay? an embarrassment? a distance? - suggests the pupil is no longer delighted to see his wise master, the creation no longer feels at one with his creator, (71)

in the 16th chapter, Tzarina reminds Diderot that she has the authority, so she is the master:

SHE
Mr Philosopher. I am myself. In fact I'm more than myself, I'm the state. The sovereign person.
HE
Who authorizes this person?
SHE
I do. I am the author of myself.
HE
In that case you're a despot.
SHE
Now, sir, be very careful— (208-209).

According to Diderot, future generations have an important role in the creation of a work. They, in fact, encourage the artist to create. He included this belief in most of his works, and particularly in his letters to Falconet. In these correspondences called *Lettres à Falconet* or *Dispute sur la Postérité* (Hill, 1981: 125), and translated into English as *Diderot's Letters to Falconet*, Diderot and his friend, Etienne-Maurice Falconet disputes and express their opposing ideas over posterity:

The "dispute on posterity" between Diderot and Falconet concerns the role of posterity in artistic creation; for Diderot it is the representation of posterity which incites the artist to create; while for Falconet it is an aesthetic imperative which has nothing to do with posterity. In fact Diderot hears, in the most literal sense of the term, the voice of posterity, while for Falconet it is a mental representation which does not affect him. (Buffat, 2008)

James Creech evaluates "posterity" in the context of self and other, and sees it as another form of "other". For him, "The proteiform mark of the other is indeed omnipresent in Diderot, although its name is rarely consistent. It emerges in his *Lettres à Falconet*, for example, underthe name "posterity"" (1978: 443, emphasis in the original), and he, like Vianu, makes an important inference that "… the other, coincident with creative transport, is not just absent; it is absence. It is an absence that is experienced joyously in the *present* creative moment… the other reappears- in its absence- constantly in Diderot's writing…" (1978: 443-444, emphasis in the original)

Thus, Bradbury's inclusion of another "absent other": "posterity" in some chapters of *To the Hermitage* is one of the significant influences of Diderot. For example, in the 15th chapter, when he mentions Scottish encyclopaedist William Smellie: "And, unlike the French, Smellie knew how to pass on what he was doing to Posterity." (192), and in the 20th chapter: "Of course what I have said and done could be the ruin of myself and my Posterity when I return to France— " (251)

While touching upon the relationship between Jacques and his master, Redfern also points out another significant feature of *Jacques the Fatalist*, namely the use of present tense:

Listening to his servant's story about his war-wound, convalescence, and the problems in paying the medical bill, the Maître is so caught up in the narration that he talks in the present tense, as if the past were happening this very moment. 'J'étais à demain' he explains when Jacques yanks him back to the real present where Jacques is safe and sound. This shows the mesmerizing effect of narratives and implicitly invites the reader to feel a similar excited involvement. (2008: 28, emphasis in the original)

This feature can also be considered as one of the reasons why Bradbury wrote both narratives in the present tense.

The fatalist idea that all human destinies are written in advance "on a great scroll" or Jacques's former master's motto Jacques continually repeats: "It was written up there" is frequently adopted in *To the Hermitage* through parody and allusion. It takes the forms such as "the great Book of Destiny above", "the good Lord above", "a divine providence up there in heaven above", "written in the Book of Destiny above", "plotted in the Book of Destiny above", "The Book of Providence above", "the great big Book of Destiny above", "the big book".

In the 5th chapter in the conversation between the main character (Bradbury), Bo and Alma Luneberg, Alma frequently interrupts the conversation and warns her husband about the dandruff on his jacket, and in the 10th chapter, Bradbury describes French Ambassador, Count Durand de Distroff with a habit of wiping his nose continually, which reminds us Jacques's Master and his tic of checking his snuff box and watch. In addition, in the 5th chapter, he draws another parallelism between the Master of *Jacques the Fatalist* and Bo of *To the Hermitage*, therefore, between his and Diderot's work, by using another allusion: While Bo uses an asthmatic nasal spray, Master has a habit of snuff taking:

Meanwhile Bo takes out an asthmatic nasal spray and refreshes his nostrils before interrogating me on various academic matters, mostly to do with the recent divorces or the sudden gay outings of a number of common professorial friends. (53)

Throughout the novel Bradbury draws other parallelisms between Diderot and himself. For example, in the 6th chapter, he says, Archduke Paul's wedding would take place the following day Diderot arrived in St. Petersburg, and he describes the procession. In the 7th chapter, Bradbury-the narrator-main character faces a similar situation. He also witnesses a military parade for an attempted coup, but unlike Diderot, just on television.

Diderot mentions a common centre which records senses, compares as a thing having a memory and provides feelings such as identity and continuity. In order to explain this view, in *D'Alembert's Dream* he uses spider analogy according to which in much the same way that a spider is aware of a movement or a vibration on each string of its web, this common centre is aware of impressions which appear in a particular part of the body and reaches general notions and decisions by comparing these impressions. (Diderot, 1830) Diderot's these ideas about human mind have been considered to be the starting point for information technology and had an important role in the invention of computer and the Internet. So, in some chapters Bradbury uses these ideas and the spider analogy. For example, in the 22nd chapter, he compares Grimm to a spider: "A spider who sits grinning in the middle of a great web." (277), and in the 29th chapter he implies how the web which can be named as today's advanced encyclopedia has woven the whole world like a spider web:

The alphabet was far too simple; what was needed was a new system of interlocks and interfaces. The work would be divided, sub-divided, each new segment turning into a distinct yet interdependent encyclopedia of its own. It was like building a great new capital city. Every street and pathway would be part of the web, linked into every other in an unbroken yet endless chain of universal knowledge which was supplemented every day.
To make Panckoucke's wide-open book, no expense was spared, no talent and no sphere of knowledge was neglected. Great men were summoned; so were big teams of plodding hacks. Flowcharts were plotted, along with formats and concepts and timelines. All forms of organization were employed. Scissors and paste were put to work; textbooks and lexicons, dictionaries and medical works, prayerbooks and opuscules, law-books and primers of botany were gutted, torn up, mixed and matched. As in some great intellectual forest, many different trees of learning were planted together, side by side, and most of them grew fast. (389)

In addition, in the 33rd chapter, in the conversation between the members of fictional Diderot Project, he deals with Diderot Project and such themes as artificial intelligence which was Bo Göranzon (who turns into Bo Luneberg in the novel)'s subject area in the real Diderot Project:

You don't know? Artificial intelligence, it's what we all live by. The thinking machine. The computer. The simulation of cognition and the workings of the brain. Maybe you remember, it was Diderot, who invented the first thinking machine. It was actually a kind of encoding and decoding device that was meant to keep the secrets of diplomats and politicians. (431)

and the 1st computer: "But the Turing Machine wasn't imaginary, was it? I thought Turing devised it to crack the Enigma code, and it became the first computer." (432)

For Diderot the actor who acts with his/her passions or emotions is inconsistent, his/her playing will be different from one performance to the next, and to be an ideal actor one should have no uncontrolled passion or should not be over sentimental, so s/he should not give into his/her sensibilities to be reliable in every performance. ("Diderot's The Paradox of Acting", 2009, Diderot, 1883 [1830]) Diderot put forward these ideas, also known as "Diderot's Paradox", in his *The Paradox of Acting*. In the 33rd chapter, besides Diderot Project and artificial intelligence, Bradbury mentions this paradox as well:

Yes, in a sense. You see, Bo arranged for me to give a master class at the Pushkin Drama Theatre. I was trying to explain the Diderot Paradox — the paradox of the actor, the paradox of the comedian. The peculiar fact that the actor must have another self to create the self he or she plays. It's the problem of the face and the mask. How many masks do we take off till we come to a real face? And of course it's not just the problem of the actor, it's the problem of every human being. Are we a man or a mask? (433)

As he mentioned in the first pages of *Rameau's Nephew*; going to Café Régence, Palais Royal and watching the chess-players were moi's, namely Diderot's favourite habits. (Diderot, 1956 [1805]) In some chapters of the novel Bradbury also mentions chess game. Examples include: "Here and there groups of men - some sporting summer shirts, but most in puffed-out winter anoraks — play chess with man-size pieces." (9),"I wander the gusty, drizzly waterfront, sit down on a bench to watch the Munch-like lovers crossing the bridges, and observe the intense contemplative players of chess as they slowly move their pieces." (28), and "In one the chess pieces he scattered across the chessboard." (253)

In especially *Encyclopedia*, *Public Education in all Sciences* or *Plan of a University for the Government of Russia*, Diderot supports technical training. For him, both technical training and compulsory education should be free, regardless of social class, to everyone, and he says that "the best and most rational institutions for the instruction of the young are to be found in Protestant countries.

(Rolland et al., 1953: 269-270) His *Encyclopedia* has different entries, including mechanical and technical sciences. To write these entries Diderot visited ateliers, interviewed with craftsmen and watch them while they were working. (Rolland et al., 1953: 256)

Bradbury reflects this characteristic through Sven Sonnenberg, who is a table craftsman and has come to St. Petersburg to study Russian tables. Also, in the 34th chapter, he gives Diderot's plans for a Russian university as well as his ideas about compulsory education, so alludes to his *Plan of a University for the Government of Russia* once again:

With the great book goes the great plan: the Russian university. He conjures it into existence every night, imagines its grand halls and corridors, always thinking of her serene majesty, who has been so kind to him and who still fills his dreams every night. The Russian university will be built, of course, in the great strange city he has already half imagined. It lies by the water, staring into the Neva. It has high facades, great Aulas and windows. Everyone can attend it — without exception, whether from cottage or palace. It will be a living, moving encyclopedia, and all the fruits that hang on -the living branches of the tree of knowledge will be its province. Except there will be no departments of theology to turn its enquiring students into demons of fanaticism, preachers of only one truth. There will be no departments of medicine, which are otherwise known as departments of murder. No departments of pure philosophy, for they produce ignorant lightweights who become actors, soldiers, tricksters and tramps. There will be no first-year courses in the wisdom of the ancients: who wants to learn how to be a Roman citizen when the age of Rome is done? No one will be compelled to study Greek or Latin, when there are so many new languages to learn. None of the professors will be priests or Jesuits, and no robes or tonsures will be required. (445)

In the same chapter, he also gives Diderot's other positive thoughts about Protestant countries, by telling how Diderot feels himself relaxed when he reaches Hamburg, where there are Protestant churches: "Not till they get to Hamburg does he start to feel safe. Here big Protestant churches rise high on the skyline; fine Hanseatic ships and tarry merchant barges rock back and forth in the inland harbour, spars clicking and chains rattling in a glorious water-music." (443)

In the 20th chapter, he explains sleep and dream by making another reference to *D'Alembert's Dream*:

'Sleep is the condition when our animal ceases to exist as a whole entity. A dream is almost always the result of a sensory stimulation. It's almost a transitory form of illness. When we are asleep, it's the activity of our own continuing consciousness that creates all these sensations we believe we are aware of. Coordination and subordination of the various human faculties are lacking. The master, our self, is thrown upon the mercy of his servants, abandoned to the frantic energy of his own uncontrolled activity. The self at the centre of the human web is active and passive by turns. Hence the sense of disorder so characteristic of dreams.' (255)

'Not quite, what we are looking at is a picture of things that have been taken from experience and entirely reconstructed in the mind,' explains Doctor Bordeu, who stands with his hat off somewhere in the room. 'Sometimes these sensations can actually appear so vivid we aren't quite sure whether we're wide awake or dreaming.' (255)

With another reference to *D'Alembert's Dream* in the same chapter, Bradbury proves that he is interested in psychoanalysis, particularly in Freud's concept of Oedipus Complex as well. In Diderot's dream Tzarina who is also called the Imperial Mother or as Furbank puts it, "the mother of the people" (1992: 387) has a role of a mother and Diderot a role of a son.

From a different point of view, this dream reflects the fact that Tzarina was not entirely influenced by Diderot's ideas and thoughts because she had invited him to Russia just to show herself as an enlightened ruler or to show the Russian Empire to the Western Europe, particularly to France, as a cradle of freedom and equality. For this purpose, she prepared the Great Instructions, also called "Nakaz". However, this project consequently failed mainly because of the war with the Ottoman Empire and the chaos in the assembly. (Verhoeven, 2011: 63; Furbank, 1992: 378)

Since Diderot realized this deception, he wrote *Observations on the Nakaz* (1774) after he returned from Russia. (Diderot, 1992: 78) Bradbury, in the 15th chapter, reveals Diderot's negative ideas about "Nakaz":

HE

I thought it was a . . . really great instruction. I admired it profoundly. A model for all civilized societies. Such a pity the Great Instruction's only a Faint Suggestion.

SHE
I'm sorry?
HE
I understand you've yet to put it into practice.

SHE
That will happen, when the time comes. Mr Philosopher, my country is my greatest experiment. I mean to be careful to see it is a good one.
HE
Then you make an ageing thinker very happy. I've always known the time would come when Enlightenment would sweep down from north to south. Already you're turning the rest of Europe into a wilderness of pagans and savages. (184-185)

In the *Encyclopedia*, following in the footsteps of John Locke, Lawrence Sterne and Francis Bacon, Diderot maintained an empirical sensationalism which depends on physical sensations, observation, experimentation and the operation of mind on these (Fredman, 1955: 18). Bradbury, in the 10th chapter, presents this view in the conversation between Diderot and Durand de Distroff:

Durand taps his cane crossly: 'According to my own understanding of rational philosophy, everything depends on accumulating the evidence of the five senses.'
'In my philosophy I've always said we need more than the material evidence of the senses. We need an honest spirit and a good conscience, for one thing.' (145)

It is also worth emphasizing here that, long before Darwin, Diderot had evolutionist ideas. His essay "On the Sufficiency of Natural Religion", his *The Sceptic's Walk*, and also *Conversation between D'Alembert and Diderot* reveal his evolution from Catholicism to deism and from deism to materialism. (Rolland, et al., 1953: 252; Hollier, 1994: 501) In his especially *Letter on the Blind for the Use of Those Who See*, he starts to rigorously defend materialism and atheism, and he embraces an evolutionist approach. (Jourdain, 1916: 1)

Bradbury presents Diderot's materialist theories on life and nature, for example, in the 8th chapter:

Sculpture is the highest art; it's also the deepest craft. It does not embody realities, depict known myths. It finds itself within the objects of its own use. One should not (he has often said so) suppose that inanimate things lack living characteristics. The world is one. In wood, in stone, in clay, there are vital secrets; and art is craft, a skill in chiselling, shaping, working out the secret of the life within. That is the paradox of art: an imitation of reality that upturns the reality, finds the single pregnant instant, the coup de théâtre, the great decoupage. (102)

'You don't approve?'
'Do you know, I could grind this up and eat it.' 'It's that bad?'
'Not at all. There's nothing I would love better than to be a statue just like this myself. Only without a horse, perhaps.' (103),

and his ideas about evolution in the 26th chapter:

HE- We would all be poor philosophers if we didn't consider the existence of a world without a divine intention. A world that existed not by purposeful creation but by a random evolution, or was made as a world simply by virtue of our own interpretations and understandings. (337)

"Diderot believes in "the great chain that links all things" and does not doubt an order consisting of universal laws and the interplay in the world that results from it" (Crocker, 1974: 15, emphasis in the original). For him, "nature has produced only one act. Everything followed from it in a chain of cause and effect." (Crocker, 1974: 17) Rolland et al. include Diderot's such ideas he put forward in his *Conversation between D'Alembert* and *Diderot* (Diderot, 1956 [1830]):

There is only one substance in the universe, in man or animal…the world is ceaselessly starting and finishing, it is at each moment at its beginning and its end; there has never been any other world and never will be… organs are the cause of functions and reciprocally these functions produce organs (1953: 266-267),

and in *D'Alembert's Dream* (Diderot, 1956 [1830]) which bears traces of Lamarck:

The substance of all beings circulates from one into another, consequently all the species merged . . . everything is in a perpetual flux . . . every animal is more or less man, every mineral is more or less plant, every plant is more or less animal . . . There is only one great individual, and that individual is the whole. (Rolland et al., 1953: 267)

Such a relation in the universe or in the society shows itself in art and in literature as well as in other fields of life. Like Matryoshka dolls or Chinese boxes, each work of art contains previous works, but at the same time has some new characteristics, subjects, characters, etc. This establishes a kind of chain or bond among all works. Thus, all works join the "whole": literature, and ultimately art. Bradbury puts emphasize on this issue in both narratives as well as in the last pages of *To the Hermitage*. For example, in the conversation between the main character-narrator Bradbury and Birgitta Lindhorst in the 9th chapter, he deals with the idea that books/works breed other books/works:

'This Jacques, you know who he is, of course.'
'He's a man who believes in providence, and the servant of his master.'
'No, he's the great factotum. You remember the great factotum?'
'Oh, you mean the Barber of Seville.'
'Did Diderot know Beaumarchais?'
'Yes, he did. They were acquaintances, maybe friends.'
'Well, there in this book there is already Figaro. He must have passed him on to Beaumarchais.'
'Who gave him to Mozart and Rossini.'
'Which shows that your book can turn into my music. And that is why I decide I can like your Diderot.' 'Because you can sing him, you mean?'(129)

He also emphasizes this view with his own theory called "Postmortemism". According to this theory, which at first sight can be considered as a counter-theory to that of Barthes, he argues that even if authors die, they continue to live literally (Şahin, 2017: 417) as also pointed out in the conversation above.

As a matter of fact, this idea has its roots in *Diderot's Letters to Falconet*. James Creech's view he put forward in his article titled "Diderot and the Pleasure of the Other: Friends, Readers, and Posterity" make us think that Bradbury formulated his theory under the influence of *Diderot's Letters to Falconet*:

Diderot tirelessly attempts to convince his interlocutor in these letters that the thought of renown after death excites the genius to that creative passion from which spring all the truly great works of art. But since one's "own" death-as well as posthumous fame- is never something that is experienced as a present reality, we must examine the function and the effects of these references to death and posterity on their own terms. The notion of death emerges in the *Lettres* is only metaphorically related to empirical or biological death; the artist affected by it does not in fact die. (1978: 443, emphasis in the original)

Bradbury, who says in the 28th chapter that Diderot puts some pages of *Jacques the Fatalist* into Sterne's book without writing a proper end, finds these pages in *Tristram Shandy* that Galina gives him in the 31st chapter, which can be seen as a symbolic way Bradbury takes to imply intertextuality or to say his motto "Books breed books.", and to draw another connection between himself and Diderot.

For Diderot "to be just is the only virtue, to be happy the only duty", and he says, "I should desire, then, that the notion of happiness would be the fundamental basis of the civil catechism." (Crocker, 1974: 129) His ideas, as Crocker indicated, found their way into the American Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. (The Declaration of Independence, 1776: 3)

Thus, as he implied in the first chapter, Bradbury gives information about America, and he brings Diderot and Thomas Jefferson together at the end of the novel.

Diderot had no optimistic views about history. He adopted a view that claims history had witnessed great progresses, but these progresses had sometimes been cut by revolutions, and major disasters had appeared, empires and civilizations had gone out of existence. So, "the life of nations follows the same course of disorder-order-disorder that constitutes the universal order of things." (Crocker, 1974: 159) This view, which also reminds us Percy Bysshe Shelly's "Ozymandias", is presented in the 36th chapter in the conversation between the characters:

'No, sir, Russia isn't new, it's just pretending. You went for the right reason to the wrong place. North America is the first time civilized human beings have ever been in a position to devise an entirely new society without suffering the weight of an old history.'
'Then you do need philosophers. After Eden there has to come civilization.'
'And after civilization?'
'Decay and ruin, such is the course of empire.'(474)

In fact, Bradbury, too, is not a supporter of revolutions. This can be understood from his description of five years before French Revolution with the sentence "There are still five more sunny years to go before the age of reason turns into the age of bloodletting.", particularly with the metaphor "sunny years":

It's the late summer of 1784. There's still fresh scent from the lime trees. Beaumarchais' Marriage of Figaro is playing at the Comédie-Française, and Rameau's Gallant Indians at the opera. Montgolfier is taking people up in his fire-propelled balloon, and d'Abbans has set an amazing paddle-steamer chugging up and down the Seine. There are still five more sunny years to go before the age of reason turns into the age of bloodletting. (495-496)

Apart from Diderot's abovementioned works and ideas, in the 26th chapter to allude to Diderot's *The Letters to Sophie Volland* (1972), he presents Diderot's ideas about philosophy and philosophers in the letter he wrote to Sophie Volland:

As you know, I believe in a philosophy that endeavours to lift up humanity. To degrade ideas and create false societies is to encourage men to despair and vice. So I myself seek to study the foundations of a fresh human civilization - one that is free of superstition, oppressive custom, bad morals and false tyrants, yet which has not lost its roots in all that's good from the past. (330-331)

More importantly, in just the same way as Diderot did in the *Encyclopedia*, Bradbury aims to give information about many subjects in *To the Hermitage*. For this reason, both in the dialogues between the characters and in the rest of the novel, he discusses a wide range of themes such as *Encyclopedia*, computer, the Internet, fact/history and fiction, simulacra, Sweden and Swedish democracy, Finland, Russia and Russians' desire to reach warmer seas, differences between West and East, anti-Semitism, America, silence, individual who is nullified by economic powers, the situation of family members and families that are deprived of common values which unite family members, shopping, academic environment, the death of the author, otherness, multiculturalism, globalisation and so on.

He presents some examples for naturalism while describing St. Petersburg, for feminism, particularly with Agnes Falkman's exaggerated objections to the use of the pronoun "he", and for impressionism while portraying the Tzarina like an impressionist tableau which seems beautiful from a distance. He also parodies or makes explicit or implicit references (allusions) to some other remarkable authors/artists and their works including Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, Gogol's *Dead Souls*, Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*, Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*, Beaumarchais and his comedy the *Barber of Seville* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Shakespeare and his *Hamlet* and *As You Like It*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, Michel Foucault's *The Order of Things*, Swedish author Par Lagerkvist and his famous work *The Hangman* and Swedish novelist and playwright Johan August Strindberg, Percy Bysshe Shelly's poem "Ozymandias" while describing Stalin's statue, and also his own works such as *Rates of Exchange*, *Why Come to Slaka?*, *The History Man*, *My Strange Quest for Mensonge*, *Cuts*, and *Doctor Criminale*, and to philosophers such as Descartes and his Cartesian philosophy, Voltaire, Rousseau and d'Holbach, painters such as Rembrandt, Rubens and his "Adoration of the Magi", Caravaggio and his "Assumption of the Virgin Mary", composers such as Mozart and Rossini and their works, opera singers such as Swedish opera singer Jenny Lind, who is known as "Swedish Nightingale" which is also the title of Birgitta Lindhorst in the novel, and director Ingmar Bergman and his movies *Winter Light* and *Summer with Monica*, among others.

3. Conclusion

This article set out to explore philosopher, novelist and playwright Denis Diderot's influences on Bradbury's style in his last novel *To the Hermitage*, which can be considered as a reflection of his observations and experiences in the real life Diderot Project as well as his readings of this French philosopher, and the Enlightenment. Starting from the very beginning, Bradbury borrows various features from Diderot including choices of words and phrases, sentence structures, narrative techniques.

He also introduces themes and characters which are reminiscent of this prominent figure of the Age of Enlightenment and his famous works: his moi-lui or master-servant/pupil duo, his ideas about materialism, evolution, the Internet, technical training, compulsory education, protestant countries, sleep and dream, among others. These intertextual elements appear sometimes as direct quotations and sometimes Bradbury adopts allusions and parodies or some metafictional elements such as interruptions, digressions, comments and explanations.

And all these brief analyses also indicate that based on the characteristics of *the Encyclopaedia*, *To the Hermitage* gives information about themes related to history, politics, society, economy, philosophy, geography, and architecture besides many fields of art, particularly literature and about different theories and movements, and introduces lots of examples for them. Bradbury also makes references to some other famous artists and literary figures and to their works and also his own works. For this reason, *To the Hermitage* can be considered as an encyclopaedia or from another perspective a parody of the *Encyclopaedia* as well.

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