A Comparative Analysis of Colonialism and Occupation in *Savushun* By Simin Daneshvar and *Suite Française* by Irène Némirovsky.

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Roozbeh, Roohollah[1]

Abstract:

The novel *Suite Française* bears a remarkable affinity with *Savushun*, as its author was herself a direct witness to and victim of the war (the Nazi occupation of France). A key parallel between this novel and Savushun lies in their depiction of the daily lives of ordinary people in a small town under foreign military occupation. Like Daneshvar, who chronicled the Allied occupation of Shiraz, Némirovsky portrays the occupation of a French village by German soldiers. In her novel, Némirovsky explores the relationships between French women and the German occupying soldiers, a theme that closely mirrors the moral sensibilities present in Savushun (for instance, the relationship of Zari's family with English officers). Similar to *Savushun*, *Suite Française* paints a broad social tableau of the populace's varied responses—from collaboration to resistance—in the face of occupation. Both novels are set against a similar historical backdrop (World War II and the occupation of their respective countries by foreign forces) and both focus on the civilian experience, particularly that of women. The central axis of each narrative is everyday life under the shadow of occupation—the quiet resistance, the moral choices, and the portrayal of national occupation as a kind of sickness. Rather than depicting battlefield scenes, both works expose the creeping, corrosive effects of occupation on normal life.

Key words: *Suite Française*, *Savushun*, colonialism, occupation, resistance

[1]. Associate Professor, Foreign Languages Department, faculty of Humanities, Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman (r.roozbeh@uk.ac.ir)

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Introduction

World War II, as a mega-event in contemporary history, not only transformed geographical borders but also shattered the boundaries of identity, loyalty, and morality. The literature born from this crisis often goes beyond a simple report of wartime events to dissect the collective psyche of occupied nations. Among these, the novels that narrate "everyday" life under the grim shadow of occupation are the most eloquent voices. *Savushun* by Simin Daneshvar (1969) and *Suite Française* by Irène Némirovsky (2004) are two masterpieces of resistance literature that draw on the occupation of Shiraz by Allied forces and the occupation of France by the Nazi army, respectively. Both novels paint extensive social canvases of the varied reactions of ordinary people—from collaboration to resistance.

In these novels, occupation is depicted as a creeping, poisonous "disease" that targets the very foundations of normal life. However, the central question of this article goes beyond describing these conditions: What strategies do colonized (occupied) subjects use to preserve their agency and resist within this oppressive context? Relying on the theories of the prominent post-colonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha, this article argues that resistance in these two novels primarily manifests in subtle, ambiguous, and indirect forms—what Bhaba refers to as the "Third Space." This space is the product of the confrontation and intermingling of the occupier's discourse and the native culture, enabling actions that are neither entirely submissive nor openly rebellious. Bhabha's key concepts such as "mimicry," "mockery," and "hybridity" will be our analytical tools for dissecting these complex strategies. This article will show how pivotal characters, especially women, navigate this "Third Space" and use ambiguity and duplicity to challenge the authority of the occupier.

Homi Bhabha and the Politics of Locating Identity

Homi K. Bhabha, expanding on the theories of Edward Said and others, moves beyond the binary opposition of colonizer/colonized and emphasizes the "interstitial space" where identities and meanings are constantly being negotiated, reproduced, and questioned. According to Bhabha, colonialism never succeeded in its project of creating a complete and subservient replica of Western culture in the colony. The inevitable result of this confrontation is not the victory of one side, but the creation of a "hybrid" condition.

The key to understanding this process is the concept of "mimicry." The colonizer desires to create subjects who are "almost the same, but not quite." This mimicry, however, is always

accompanied by "mockery." When the colonized begins to mimic the colonizer, this mimicry unintentionally takes on an exaggerated and thus threatening aspect. Bhabha writes: "Mimicry is [...] a form of distorted and mocking difference. The emphasis of mimicry on salvation is a colonial process that constructs others through denial to exert power" (Bhabha, 126). This mimicry-mockery destabilizes the colonizer's authority because it shows that his desired identity is unattainable, and any attempt to achieve it will only result in an imperfect and ridiculous copy.

These processes ultimately lead to what Bhabha calls the "Third Space." This space is a realm where cultural signs can lose their fixed and authentic meaning and take on new, unexpected meanings. Bhabha argues that "the meaning and symbolic exchange of culture can only possess agency in this interstitial space" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 55). This Third Space is the primary arena of resistance; not an overt and heroic resistance, but one based on ambiguity, irony, and redefining conditions from within. This theoretical framework is highly effective for analyzing the complex and tense relationships between French and German characters in *Suite Française* and Iranian and English characters in *Savushun*, where the boundaries between enemy and friend, collaborator and resister, are severely blurred.

Review of literature

Research into *Savushun* reveals that the experience of foreign occupation is deeply embedded in the narrative's very structure and symbolism. From a narratological perspective, the novel's temporal organization reflects a society in crisis. The story's pace is predominantly slow, with a "negative rhythm," indicating that "a minimum speed governs the narrative space" (Ardalani, 20). This deceleration forces a focus on the suffocating, day-to-day reality of occupation, a theme that would resonate with the fragmented lives depicted in *Suite Française*.

Furthermore, a semiotic analysis highlights how colonial pressure creates multi-layered crises. The narrative is structured around signs and "indexes" that expose a society permeated by a "great meta-crisis," where war and its political consequences push crisis into all layers of human life (Heidari Jam-e Bozorgi & Olyaienia, 1). Central symbols like the "bread" at the wedding feast are not just food but a "spectacle," signifying severe economic disparity and foreign-induced famine (Heidari Jam-e Bozorgi & Olyaienia, n.d., p. 7). Similarly, the confiscation of Zari's earrings and her son's horse are "symbols of a looted identity and authenticity," representing how colonialism plunders both material possessions and cultural essence (Heidari Jam-e Bozorgi & Olyaienia, 9). These focused analyses provide a critical framework for examining how Némirovsky uses narrative time and symbolic detail in *Suite Française* to similarly map the

psychological and social corrosion of life under Nazi occupation, suggesting that both novels use form and symbol to articulate the profound trauma of foreign domination. Fariba Raisi Sarhadi, Hossein Khosravi, and Mohammad Ali Atash Soda in their article, “An Archetypal Analysis of the Novel Sovushun” argue that Daneshvar consciously employed archetypal forms to structure her narrative and character development. They contend "The findings indicate that the role-playing of the characters in a society suffering from the 'ultimate alienation of the stranger'... explains the features and concepts of the collective memory of a 'contrary, superstitious, hero-seeking, and messianic' society." (1) Their analysis concludes that the most central archetypal indicator and the most important message of the novel is "rebirth" (2). The article states that through the analysis, it became clear that the society in the novel is terrifyingly characterized by shared traits of duplicity and wearing masks (22).

Abeshirini and Sadur argue that Simin Daneshvar's *Savushun* must be read "from the language of the animals."(59). They contend that the novel privileges an "animal" perspective, which emerges where human language fails. This framework is used to challenge and question the constructs of masculinity, as embodied by Yusef, by contrasting them with the associations between femininity (Zari) and the animal (epitomized by the horse, Sarbaz). The authors posit that characters and states like childhood, madness, and imprisonment, which resist ideological meaning, experience a more vital form of "life" through pure desire and meaninglessness. Ultimately, they conclude that while Yusef's life was a form of death, his funeral (the *Savushun*) allows for a return of "animality" to Zari's spirit, representing a liberation into a more primal and authentic mode of being, an idea prefigured by Daneshvar's own childhood longing for a horse. Their analysis is grounded in the postmodern philosophy of Deleuze and his intellectual circle.

Researchers consistently highlight the unparalleled value of *Suite Française* as a work written *during* the events it describes, free from the distorting lens of postwar knowledge and myths. David Carroll argues that the novel performs a crucial function akin to the work of historians like Robert Paxton, excavating the initial, accommodationist mentality of the French. He writes, "It is as if Paxton, Burrin, and other historians working in the same vein had prepared the way for the positive reception of the novel by arguing for the need of a description of daily life outside or on the margins of ideological conflict and for testimonies written before the war drastically changed with the German invasion of the Soviet Union and the entry of the United States into the war" (Carroll, 75). Angela Kershaw (2007) supports this view, stating that the novel's composition during the Occupation makes it "a document of inestimable value for the historian of mentalities" (109), as it captures the uncertainty and moral ambiguity of the period before the Resistance had gained significant momentum and the full horror of the Holocaust was known.

A central focus of critical analysis is Némirovsky's unflinching and satirical critique of the French bourgeoisie, whom she portrays as selfish, hypocritical, and driven by base instincts during the crisis. Carroll notes that Némirovsky's approach is to "consider [France] coldly" (p. 81). He elaborates: "Considering France coldly means, first of all, highlighting the greed and selfishness of the rich, their indifference to the plight of those in need. In the chaos of the debacle, very few French in the novel seem to have any soul at all" (81-82). Susan Rubin Suleiman (2006) observes that the novel relentlessly exposes the flaws of all social classes, from the self-serving Péricand family to the brutish orphans who murder their priest. She notes that Némirovsky's portrayal is one of a "society in collapse, where traditional hierarchies and morals have broken down" (para. 4). Alice Kaplan (2006) emphasizes the boldness of this critique, given Némirovsky's own social circle: "She writes about the most 'pure-blooded' French, the people who went along with Pétain, people in her own circle – Catholic French bourgeois. And she does it with supreme lucidity... the book, in its unsparing critique of the part of France she had once emulated, triumphs over her life" (para. 7).

The most debated aspect of *Suite Française* is its near-total silence on the persecution of Jews, despite Némirovsky herself being a Jewish refugee facing imminent danger. Scholars interpret this omission in various ways, seeing it as a narrative strategy, a psychological coping mechanism, or a profound blind spot. Carroll identifies this as the novel's most striking feature: "The most striking aspect of the novel, when it is read as a form of testimony, is that no mention is made of the increasingly precarious situation of both foreign and French Jews in France after the defeat. This omission, a radical denial of her own situation, could also be seen as a form of wish fulfillment..." (81). Nathan Bracher (2007) argues that the absence is a deliberate literary strategy to achieve a kind of universality, focusing on the "storm" of war as a collective human experience. However, he acknowledges that this very absence speaks volumes, creating a "haunting subtext" for the modern reader aware of the author's fate (p. 156). Carroll further connects this to Némirovsky's personal strategy of "endurance," of waiting out the storm. He quotes her notes: "Let us wait" (86). The novel's focus on riding out a temporary catastrophe, Carroll suggests, was Némirovsky's way of sustaining hope that she and her family would survive, a hope that the narrative's omissions actively construct and maintain.

The context of Némirovsky's death inevitably shapes the reading of *Suite Française*, raising questions about how we should interpret the work in relation to the author's biography and her earlier, sometimes controversial, portrayals of Jewish characters. Suleiman (2006) points out the tragic irony that the "point of honor" for the French villagers is to resist living on "German time," while the real, racial laws that would doom Némirovsky are mentioned only in passing. This creates a "poignant, and tragic, discrepancy between the fiction and the author's reality"

(para. 9). Ruth Franklin (2007) offers a more critical perspective, linking *Suite Française* to Némirovsky's pre-war novels, which often featured negative stereotypes of Jewish characters. Franklin argues that Némirovsky's attempt to assimilate by critiquing the French and ignoring the Jewish question was a fatal miscalculation. She writes, "Her tragedy was that she believed she could be the exception... *Suite Française* is the ultimate document of her delusion" (p. 38). Conversely, Carroll sees the novel as implicitly revealing Némirovsky's dawning awareness of the politics that would destroy her. He argues that through the drama of its characters and "in the margins of the fiction it narrates, *Suite française* tells this other story as well. It is the story of Irène Némirovsky's own struggle to come to terms with the German Occupation of France, the politics of collaboration, and Vichy anti-Semitism" (98).

Research Questions

the present research asked the following questions and intends to answer these questions:

How do Daneshvar and Némirovsky utilize the perspectives of female protagonists to critique the gendered experience of occupation and its impact on private life and moral agency in *Savushun* and *Suite Française*?

In what ways do *Savushun* and *Suite Française* conceptualize foreign occupation not as a monolithic political event, but as a pervasive "social disease" that manifests through fragmented community responses and corrupted interpersonal relationships?

It is hypothesized that both authors employ a female-centric narrative to subvert the traditional, male-dominated discourse of war. While both novels show how occupation politicizes the private sphere, *Savushun*'s Zari embodies a journey toward overt political consciousness and national symbolism, whereas *Suite Française*'s Lucile Angellier explores a more internal, ambiguous form of ethical resistance, reflecting differing cultural contexts of female agency in Iran and France. The hypothesis posits that both novels deliberately avoid depicting front-line battles to instead frame occupation as a pathogen that erodes social trust and moral boundaries. *Savushun* portrays this through the lens of collective national trauma and the betrayal of local collaborators, aligning with a post-colonial critique. In contrast, *Suite Française* presents a micro-sociological study of a French village, diagnosing the "disease" through the spectrum of individual moral compromises—from collaboration to passive resistance—highlighting the psychological fragmentation of the occupied society.

Discussion

Simin Daneshvar's novel *Savushun* is a precise portrait of Shiraz society in the final years of World War II, under the influence of the occupying Allied forces. Daneshvar masterfully depicts the different ways various social classes dealt with the phenomenon of occupation—from the aristocrats and landlords collaborating with the British to the ordinary people and resisting intellectuals. Reading this novel through the lens of Homi Bhabha reveals hidden layers of resistance embedded within seemingly normal, everyday behaviors.

Characters like the judge and some local aristocrats are prime examples of "mimicry" of the occupiers. They try to emulate the customs and manners of the British to get closer to them and benefit from their power. But this mimicry, as Bhabha predicts, always verges on "mockery." Daneshvar's description of these individuals' parties, with their clumsy imitation of Western culture, conveys a bitter irony. The narrator describes one such party: "Their expectations from life were as high as the English, but their means were as limited as the Iranians. That's why they were always angry" (Daneshvar, *Savushun*, p. 87). This sentence clearly shows the gap between being "almost like them" and "not quite like them," turning this mimicry into a factor that destabilizes these characters' social position.

The character of Zari, Yusef's wife, represents a quiet and indirect resistance. As a woman in a patriarchal society under occupation, she exists in multiple marginal spaces. Her actions are not heroic but are based on preserving human dignity in the smallest acts. The Third Space for Zari is defined within the home and the family sphere: the family is pressured to collaborate with the occupiers, and Zari resists with meaningful silence and protesting glances. This silence is a Third Space—it is neither acceptance nor open rebellion. This behavior can be interpreted as an example of "agency on the margins." Zari's resistance lies precisely in this ambiguity and refusal to fully engage. She says to Yusef at one point: "I hate these two-faced people. [...] Can one be with the English and still be a decent human being?" (Ibid, p. 120). This question reveals the core of the ethical crisis in the Third Space: How can one remain a "human under occupation"?

In contrast to Zari's strategy, Yusef symbolizes overt and heroic resistance. He refuses to accept the logic of occupation and is unwilling to make any compromises. Yusef's tragic fate, within Bhabha's theoretical framework, can indicate that unambiguous, head-on resistance against oppressive structures may come at the cost of the activist's physical destruction. This emphasizes the complexity of resistance strategies and shows why strategies like Zari's, which operate in the "Third Space," can be a necessary form of survival and subtle insubordination.

A French Village under Nazi Occupation: Moral Ambiguity and the Formation of Third Spaces in *Suite Française*

If *Savushun* depicts an urban, class-based society facing occupation, Irène Némirovsky's *Suite Française* examines a microcosm of these conflicts in a rural setting and with a more unashamedly intimate tone. Némirovsky, who was herself a victim of the Holocaust, records the psychological and moral complexities of life under occupation with an almost anthropological gaze. In this novel, occupation is not an abstract ideology but a tangible, everyday reality that redefines relationships between individuals—from masters to servants, from urban women to farmers. Reading this novel through the lens of Homi Bhabha, particularly the concept of the "Third Space," reveals how the rigid boundaries of "self" and "other," "collaborator" and "resister," dissolve within these interpersonal relationships, creating new possibilities for agency—even under total suppression.

At the heart of the novel lies the impossible yet profoundly human relationship between Lucile Angellier, a French woman whose husband is a prisoner of war, and Bruno von Falk, a German occupation officer. This relationship is a prime and perfect example of the formation of a "Third Space"; a space where the dominant discourses of nationalism, enmity, and loyalty are sidelined in favor of an individual and emotional connection.

This space is formed not through the complete rejection of authority, but through confrontation and dialogue. Bruno, contrary to the stereotype of a brutal Nazi soldier, is a cultured, musical man with inner doubts. Lucile is not an ideological heroine but a lonely, confused woman yearning for affection. Their common ground is a love for music, which acts as a catalyst, a transnational language, for creating this Third Space. When Bruno plays the piano in Lucile's house, it is the music that breaks down geographical and political borders and creates an intimate space. Némirovsky describes this moment: "When he played the piano, he was neither the enemy soldier nor the German. He was just a man who loved music... Lucile surrendered to this feeling, a feeling superior to any consideration" (Némirovsky, *Suite Française*, 287).

This quote clearly shows how, in this musical "Third Space," fixed, pre-defined identities ("enemy soldier," "German") melt away, giving way to "a man who loved music." This is precisely the "ambiguity and duplicity" that, according to Bhabha, threatens the authority of the dominant discourse. Their relationship creates a dangerous and beautiful hybridity—a mixture of love and betrayal, trust and distrust, individuality and nationality. This relationship does not provide a simple answer to the question of "collaboration or resistance?" but complicates it, making it unanswerable. Lucile's action is not a betrayal of France but an action in an interstitial space that challenges the logic governing the war.

Némirovsky skillfully portrays a wide spectrum of reactions from the villagers towards the occupiers. At one end of this spectrum are characters like the Countess de Montmort, who is an example of contemptible and selfish "mimicry." She welcomes the German officers with exaggerated hospitality, not out of respect, but to preserve her privileges and property. This mimicry, as Bhabha points out, clearly has a mocking aspect; she tries to be "like them," but this effort only confirms her greed and fear, making her contemptible in the eyes of the reader.

In contrast, Jean-Marie Michaud, the fugitive soldier, represents active, heroic resistance. But Némirovsky does not simplify even this resistance. The secret help of the villagers to Jean-Marie—a piece of bread, a temporary shelter—are examples of everyday, "quiet" resistance that flow within the "Third Space" of normal life. Here, resistance is not a political proclamation but a human act that blurs the line between helping a compatriot and violating the law of occupation.

Intermediate characters, like Madame Adèle, the shopkeeper, represent the silent majority engaged in a double game. They appear obedient in public but support their neighbors in secret. This duality is itself a strategy for survival and maintaining a minimum of agency in a space where any overt action could lead to the death penalty. These situations show how the traditional concept of "resistance" under total occupation transforms into a spectrum of ambiguous, hybrid, and context-dependent actions.

The Metaphor of the *Disease* of Occupation: Corruption and Forced Hybridity

Similar to *Savushun*, occupation in this novel is also portrayed as a "disease" or "poison" that gradually infiltrates the body of society. Némirovsky shows this corruption not in dramatic scenes but in the simplest relationships: the envy of a French woman for another woman's jewels, who is involved with a German officer; the endless suspicions between neighbors; and the general passivity born of fear and powerlessness.

Yet, from within this very disease, unexpected "hybridities" are born. The relationship between Lucile and Bruno is an emotional hybridity. Even the presence of German soldiers in French homes—the occupation of intimate space—creates an undesirable, forced geographical-social hybridity. Némirovsky subtly shows how this "forced coexistence"—though inherently unjust—sometimes, paradoxically, allows for the possibility of mutual understanding, however small and temporary. This is the central paradox of Bhabha's theory: hybridity, although a product of an unequal power relationship, always contains the potential to question that very power

relationship. When Bruno leaves the town at the end of the novel's first part and looks back at Lucile's house with longing, the reader realizes that he, too, has fallen victim to the same war machine of which he was a part. This moment blurs the simple opposition of "victim" and "oppressor" and shows the tragedy of occupation as all-encompassing and universal.

Suite Française, by focusing on moral ambiguities and interpersonal relationships, provides a powerful display of the formation of "Third Spaces" under extreme occupation. Némirovsky's novel argues that resistance can manifest in the form of a forbidden love, a small secret act of help, or even a piano melody—actions that do not fit the simple molds of resistance or collaboration, but subtly change the human geography of war.

Comparative Analysis: Woman as an Agent of Resistance on the Margins and the Politics of the Everyday

Having separately analyzed *Savushun* and *Suite Française* in light of Homi Bhabha's theory, we can now undertake a systematic comparison that reveals the commonalities and differences between these two works in representing post-colonial resistance. This comparison not only deepens our understanding of both novels but also tests the capacity of Bhabha's theory to analyze occupation situations in different cultural contexts. This chapter will focus on two main axes: first, the pivotal role of women (Zari and Lucile) as agents of resistance operating from the margins; and second, the contrast between different models of resistance (overt vs. ambiguous) and the socio-cultural contexts that shape them.

Zari and Lucile: Two Feminine Strategies in the "Third Space"

Both novels place women at the center of the resistance narrative, but their strategies for preserving agency and standing firm are significantly different due to differences in cultural contexts and personalities. This difference itself indicates that Bhabha's "Third Space" is not a fixed formula but a realm that manifests in various forms in each specific context.

Zari in *Savushun*: Introverted Resistance and Protecting the Private Sphere

Zari's resistance is primarily introverted and focused on preserving human dignity and the family unit. In the patriarchal and traditional society of Shiraz, the public sphere belongs to men (like Yusef). Therefore, Zari constructs her space of resistance within the home and through indirect methods. Her meaningful silences, protesting glances, and insistence on performing her traditional duties as a mother and wife are all forms of "everyday resistance." Through these actions, she preserves the family as an "ethical bastion" against the corruption brought by occupation. In other words, Zari's "Third Space" is a defensive and more static space aimed at preventing the complete infiltration of the occupation's discourse into the sacred core of the family. Her question to Yusef—"Can one be with the English and still be a decent human being?" (Daneshvar, 1969, p. 120)—reveals her central concern: preserving "humanity" in inhumane conditions. Her resistance is an ethical-existential struggle.

Lucile in *Suite Française*: Extroverted Resistance and the Search for Transnational Connection

In contrast, Lucile's resistance is more extroverted and based on taking risks for a human connection beyond national borders. In rural French society, although patriarchy exists, Lucile, due to her husband's absence, has relatively more room to maneuver. Her "Third Space" is formed not behind the walls of the house, but precisely at the point of confrontation and interaction with the "Other" (Bruno von Falk). This space is dynamic and relationship-oriented. By accepting the risk of an emotional relationship with the enemy soldier, Lucile challenges the boundaries of national identity and enmity. Her resistance lies not in isolation, but in creating an "emotional hybridity"; a hybridity that, by fostering mutual understanding, neutralizes the ideological foundations of war. Lucile's action says: "You are first a human, then a German soldier." This is a more radical form of resistance that directly targets the discourse of "enemy-making."

Despite these differences, the fundamental commonality between both characters is the search for preserving Agency under conditions where all power has been ceded to the occupier. Both women, in their own ways, refuse to become passive, obedient tools in the hands of history. Zari, by protecting the private sphere, and Lucile, by establishing a private connection, both strive to define a space of independence within the dependent conditions of occupation.

Contrasting Masculinities: The Heroic Yusef vs. Ambiguous and Broken Masculinities

The contrast in resistance patterns is not limited to women. The image of masculinity in these two novels is also sharply contrasted, showing that male resistance can also take various forms.

Yusef in *Savushun*: Traditional Hero and Direct Resistance

Yusef represents the model of overt, ideological, and direct resistance. He acts on rigid principles—national honor, opposition to oppression—and accepts no compromise. His masculinity is of the heroic and self-sacrificing type. His tragic death at the end of the novel, on one hand, turns him into a martyr and a symbol of resistance, but on the other hand, implicitly shows the limitations of this type of resistance: in the face of the oppressive machinery of occupation, direct resistance may come at the cost of the activist's physical annihilation. This is where the "non-heroic" strategies of women—which emphasize endurance and the continuity of life—show their importance.

The Men of Suite Française: Broken, Pragmatic, and Ambiguous Masculinities

In contrast, Némirovsky's novel is full of men who lack Yusef's traditional, heroic masculinity. Lucile's husband is in a prison camp, i.e., physically absent. Other men in the village—like the village mayor—are often pragmatic, cowardly, or engaged in petty power games. Even Bruno, who is a soldier, is portrayed as a sensitive and doubtful individual, not a ruthless warrior. This "broken masculinity" creates a space in which women can play a more active role. In other words, the crisis caused by occupation also destabilizes traditional gender roles, and this instability enables the emergence of alternative resistance strategies (like Lucile's).

Occupation as Disease: The Crystallization of a Metaphor in Two Different Contexts

The shared metaphor of "occupation as disease" crystallizes differently in each novel according to its specific context. In *Savushun*, the disease is more socio-ethical. It shows corruption,

sycophancy, and the disintegration of social bonds. The disease infiltrates the body of society and poisons loyalties. In *Suite Française*, this disease, in addition to its social dimension, also has a psychological and existential one. Occupation contaminates individual feelings and emotions—such as love, loneliness, and fear—and places impossible choices before individuals. The relationship between Lucile and Bruno is itself a sign of this contamination—a love that could have blossomed in peacetime becomes a fatal, forbidden disease in wartime.

Symbolism in Suite Française and Savushun

Suite Française is deliberately structured in two parts, "Storm in June" and "Dolce," which function as distinct but interrelated panels. "Storm in June" employs a chaotic, multi-linear narrative, jumping between various Parisian refugees. This formal choice creates a sense of collective panic and social collapse, where the central "event" is not a battle but the disintegration of the national community. "Dolce" narrows the focus to a single village, but its power comes from the juxtaposition of numerous, limited perspectives—from the occupying German soldier Bruno von Falk to the conflicted Lucile Angellier and the various collaborating or resentful villagers. The novel's lack of a unified resolution (it was intended to be a five-part epic) itself formalizes the ongoing, unresolved trauma of occupation.

While centered on Zari's consciousness, ***Savushun*** ‘s structure is built on a series of stark juxtapositions that create formal tension. The idyllic, detailed descriptions of the garden, the rituals of daily life, and the preparation for Nowruz are systematically contrasted with the intrusions of political violence, economic exploitation, and Yusef's activism. This structural opposition between the cyclical, pastoral world and the linear, destructive force of colonialism and war is the engine of the novel's tragedy. The plot (*syuzhet*) is not driven by action sequences but by the gradual erosion of the former by the latter, culminating in Yusef's death, which is not depicted directly but is felt through its shattering effect on the novel's established order.

Both authors use recurring symbols and motifs to make the intangible forces of occupation tangible.

The Garden vs. The Barren Land: In *Savushun*, Zari's garden is a powerful symbol of life, culture, and fragile order. Its systematic violation—through the slaughter of sheep, the uprooting of trees, and the eventual use of its water for a ritual of mourning—serves as a formal motif that charts the progression of the colonial "sickness." The garden's defilement is a defamiliarization of political occupation, presenting it not as a policy but as a visceral attack on life itself.

Food and Consumption: In *Suite Française*, the motif of food and meals is a primary formal device for exploring power dynamics. The scarcity of food among the French versus the relative abundance of the Germans, and the tense, ritualized act of sharing meals (as in the Angellier household), formalizes the relationship between occupier and occupied. It transforms an abstract power dynamic into a daily, humiliating physical reality. The act of eating becomes a complex signifier of dependency, resistance, and moral compromise.

Music and Sound: Both novels use music ironically to create formal dissonance. In *Suite Française*, Bruno's piano playing in Lucile's home is a profound violation of domestic space, and the beauty of the music creates an aesthetic and moral tension that disorients both Lucile and the reader. In *Savushun*, the cheerful, mundane music from the governor's party contrasts sharply with the funeral procession, using auditory juxtaposition to highlight societal indifference and injustice.

Both authors use defamiliarization to complicate the image of the occupier. Némirovsky defamiliarizes the German soldier by presenting Bruno von Falk not as a monolithic Nazi, but as a homesick, cultured individual. This formal choice does not excuse his role but forces the reader (and Lucile) to confront the enemy's humanity, thereby making the moral predicament of the occupation more complex and terrifying. The enemy is not a distant monster but a man in one's living room. Daneshvar employs a similar, though more politically charged, defamiliarization through the character of the British officer, Mr. Fenton. He is often polite, cultured, and seemingly reasonable. This civilized facade makes his colonialist actions and attitudes more insidious. By presenting him as something other than a caricature, Daneshvar formalizes the deceptive nature of colonial power, which often masks exploitation under a veneer of civility and order.

conclusion

The comparative analysis of these two novels shows how Homi Bhabha's key concepts—especially the "Third Space" and "hybridity"—are flexible tools for analyzing situations of occupation. These concepts allow us to move beyond the simple binary of "resistance/collaboration" and understand a wide spectrum of ambiguous, complex, and often paradoxical actions. Both *Savushun* and *Suite Française* prove that resistance can manifest both in the form of guarding the private sphere (like Zari) and in forming a connection with the "enemy" (like Lucile). These novels teach us that in the context of major historical crises, it is often these "non-heroic" everyday actions that preserve the threads and roots of life's

continuity and humanity. Both works, by showing the tragic consequences of direct resistance (Yusef's death) and the ethical complexities of ambiguous resistance (Lucile and Bruno's relationship), offer a rich and anti-sloganeering narrative of "resistance literature."

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