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## The Role of Imagination in Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and Yaşar Kemal's *the Other Face of the Mountain* Trilogy

*Cervantes'in Don Kişot'unda ve Yaşar Kemal'in Dağın Öte Yüzü adlı Üçlemesinde Hayal Gücünün Rolü*

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### Abstract

Dreams can play a liberating role to free individuals from repression and feelings of helplessness in the face of strict social rules, customs and mores. It may not be possible to lead a satisfying life under the overwhelming burden of social facts. As individuals want to be alienated or distanced from the painful effects of social experiences and realities, they resort to the hypnotizing influence of dreams that alleviate their individual and social problems. In Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's *Don Quixote* and Yaşar Kemal's *Iron Earth, Copper Sky and The Undying Grass*, it is possible to witness how imagination shapes human behaviour and subverts social taboos. The creation of another imaginary world by the characters reflects a desire to escape from the delayed confrontation with unwanted social

### Öz

Hayaller, bireyleri katı sosyal kurallar, adetler ve gelenekler karşısında baskı ve çaresizlik duygularından kurtarmak için özgürleştirici bir rol oynayabilir. Toplumsal gerçeklerin ezici yükü altında tatmin edici bir yaşam sürmek mümkün olmayabilir. Bireyler, sosyal deneyimlerin ve gerçekliklerin acı verici etkilerinden uzaklaşmak istedikçe, hayallerin, bireysel ve sosyal sorunları hafifleten hipnotize edici etkisine başvururlar. Cervantes'in *Don Kişot*'unda ve Yaşar Kemal'in *Yer Demir Gök Bakır* ve *Ölmez Otu*'nda, hayal gücünün insan davranışlarını nasıl şekillendirdiğini ve sosyal tabuları nasıl altüst ettiğine şahit olmak mümkündür. Başka bir hayali dünyanın yaratılması, istenmeyen toplumsal gerçeklerle gecikmeli yüzleşmeden kaçma arzusunun yansımasıdır. Bireyler, mitler, halk

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facts. Characters console themselves and reinforce their hopes through imagination, folk tales and false stories. In all three novels, individual freedom and responsibility outweigh restrictive conventional rules and boundaries in society by transcending time and space. Imagination seems to be the only way of liberation from social and personal depression. Both Yaşar Kemal and Cervantes bear the moral discipline to expose their societies through extravagantly insane characters. Don Quixote is trapped in society and its institutions. He fights against institutionalized society through his imagination, just as Kemal's villagers desperately create stories and believe in them to avoid their oppressive living conditions under the control of domineering people such as Adil and Sefer in *The Undying Grass* and *Iron Earth, Copper Sky*. Both Cervantes and Kemal created characters that live in imaginary worlds and resorted to dreams as an important way to blur the line between reality and imagination. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to explore the effects of imagination and dreams on human behaviour in Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and Kemal's *Iron Earth, Copper Sky* and *The Undying Grass*, which are existentialist works centred on individual and social freedom.

**Keywords:** imagination, dreams, Cervantes, Yaşar Kemal, *Don Quixote*, *Iron Earth, Copper Sky*, *The Undying Grass*

hikâyeleri ve sahte hikâyeler aracılığıyla kendilerini teselli eder ve umutlarını güçlendirir. Her üç romanda da sosyal ve bireysel özgürlük ve sorumluluk, zaman ve mekânı aşarak toplumdaki kısıtlayıcı geleneksel kurallara ve sınırlara ağır basar. Sosyal ve kişisel depresyondan kurtulmanın tek yolu hayal gücü gibi görünüyor. Yaşar Kemal ve Cervantes, abartılı çılgın karakterlerle toplumlarına ışık tutmak için ahlaki disipline sahiptirler. Don Kişot, kendi toplumunda ve toplumunun kurumlarında sıkışıp kalır ve Yaşar Kemal'in *Ölmez Otu* ve *Yer Demir Gök Bakır*'ındaki köylülerin umutsuzca hikâyeler yaratıp, Adil ve Sefer gibi otoriter insanların kontrolü altında baskıcı yaşam koşullarından sakınmaları gerektiğine inandıkları gibi, kurumlaşmış topluma karşı hayal gücüyle savaşıyor. Hem Cervantes hem de Kemal hayali dünyalarda yaşayan karakterler yarattı ve gerçeklik ile hayal gücü arasındaki çizgiyi bulanıklaştırmanın önemli bir yolu olarak hayallere başvurdu. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın amacı, bireysel ve sosyal özgürlük odaklı varoluşçu eserler olan Cervantes'in *Don Kişot* ve Yaşar Kemal'in *Yer Demir Gök Bakır* ve *Ölmez Otu*'nda hayallerin ve hayal gücünün insan davranışı üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmaktır.

**Keywords:** hayal gücü, hayaller, Cervantes, Yaşar Kemal, *Don Kişot*, *Yer Demir Gök Bakır*, *Ölmez Otu*

## Introduction

One of the most prominent writers of the Western literature, Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra keeps his eminence with his masterpiece *Don Quixote*, which has been accepted as one of the first novels in World Literature by literary circles although it was published in the early 17th century. In his masterpiece, Cervantes made use of the techniques such as irony, meta-fiction, intertextuality, stream-of-consciousness monologues, and playing with readers' sense of reality. Likewise, one of the most significant Turkish writers of the 20th century, Yaşar Kemal is renowned mostly for his novels portraying the lives and customs of the ordinary people in Çukurova region. He also achieved to attract the attention of the Western reader thanks to the translation of his several novels and acquired an eminent place in the World Literature. Both Cervantes and Kemal created characters that live in imaginary worlds and resorted to dreams as an important way to blur the distinction between reality and imagination. Their characters pretend to be insane to realize the aim of their authors to create ambiguity within their texts. Therefore, they blur the line between reality and dream, which enables their texts to be rich in interpretation. In his paper entitled *Don Quixote and the Problem of Reality* Schütz (1964) analyses the constitution of a social system between the world of common sense and the madman's world. Schütz both describes the processes and structures that form a social system and the conditions under which social reality is established in terms of *intersubjectivity*. Schütz's starting point is the theory of multiple realities as outlined by William James (Schlembach 2019, 201). To clarify the question, what is (social) reality, James does not ask what is real? Rather he asks, "Under what conditions do we think things real" (Schütz, 1964, 135). William James claims that the world is differentiated into sectors or sub-worlds, such as myths, art, science, the world of dreams, or even madness: "The theory of multiple realities vis-a-vis a shared social reality based on the experience of intersubjectivity is the starting point for Schütz's analysis of Cervantes' novel. Within this frame of reference, Don Quixote is living in his private sub-world of chivalry, and Sancho Panza lives in the paramount reality of common sense" (Schlembach 2019, 202).

Individual and social freedom, essential to the existentialist idea, constitutes the basis of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and Kemal's *Iron Earth*, *Copper Sky* and *The Undying Grass*. Don Quixote attempts chivalric actions with the purpose of creating a self-identity in a challenge to the patriarchal social structure. Don Quixote desires to reach his beloved Dulcinea el Toboso, an imaginary character who symbolizes ideal love, whereas Sancho materialistically dreams of being a governor. Don Quixote's idealistic manner changes into a realistic one when he realizes he is living in an imaginary world, while Sancho discovers that being a governor is not as easy job as it seems and gives up this occupation and its heavy responsibilities. Similarly, oral culture and storytelling based on gossip, stories, epics, lies or folk songs in Kemal's trilogy have great impact on the villagers. Combined with the stories and dreams of the villagers, Taşbaşı's dreams lead to his death. It is satirical that at first the villagers believe that Taşbaşı is a Saint but Taşbaşı rejects all this story in *Iron Earth*, *Copper Sky*, and later Taşbaşı starts to believe that he is a saint but then the villagers reject it in *The Undying Grass*. Thus, Taşbaşı's tragedy is similar to Don Quixote's fall in that both major characters are doomed to death

when they lose their popularity and position in the society. While Taşbaş is turned into a hero through the stories of the villagers, Don Quixote considers himself as a hero under the influence of the stories that he has read. After they gain fame and status for a while in society, they experience a downfall. Although Don Quixote and Taşbaş are imaginary heroes created by pure imagination, the reader cannot help feeling sorry for both of them. Confrontation with reality makes Sancho more conscious of real life by alienating him from the oppressive atmosphere of working life. He realizes that pursuing his ideals together with Don Quixote is better than reaching his ideals and taking responsibilities, so he becomes more idealistic in contrast to his former realistic identity. Don Quixote and Sancho are two halves of an apple who complete each other on the way to a balance between reality and dreams. Pursuing their imagination and looking for a saviour for their various troubles, the Yalak villagers seem to be communally insane by being the victim of their own speculations and hallucinations. However much they escape from their institutionalized society by playing the role of a “madman” by ornamenting their dull lives with chivalric adventures, confrontation with reality is inevitable. It stands like a wall that sets a barrier in front of their dreams. In fact, madness symbolizes the inner world of Don Quixote as a reality represented by others.

In *Don Quixote*, narration adds to the theme of imagination. Don Quixote's use of an eloquent language helps himself to pose as a character coming out of chivalric romance because he mostly narrates the adventures of famous knights and always makes quotations from chivalry books. His words are incompatible with his current situation. In addition, Sancho Panza questions whether his master is insane or not at the beginning of the novel, and Sancho Panza is questioned by the reader if he himself is sane or insane since he obeys Don Quixote in most cases. Cervantes comments: “when life itself seems lunatic, who knows where madness lies? Perhaps to be too practical is madness. To surrender dreams — this may be madness. Too much sanity may be madness — and maddest of all: to see life as it is, and not as it should be” (Saavedra, *Don Quixote*). As products of human imagination, dreams can play the role of liberator to free individuals from the repression and feelings of helplessness in the face of strict social rules, customs and mores. The existentialist view puts individual rights and freedom to the fore, so that dreams and the power of imagination can be effective means to challenge rooted social conventions and stereotypical gender and class descriptions. As people are alienated or distanced from the painful effects of social experiences and realities, the hypnotizing influence of dreams can alleviate individual and social problems. Moreover, the destruction of dreams and epics through confrontation with facts can lead to frustration in individuals. Our dreams and illusions are sometimes the only way to maintain hope in life. Otherwise, it may not be possible to lead a satisfying life under the overwhelming burden of social facts and realities. One of the major characters in *Iron Earth*, *Copper Sky*, Zalaca's dreams have deep impact on villagers. Because the villagers owe a lot to Adil and it is very difficult for them to pay him back in a sooner time, they console themselves with some miracles to occur so that they can get rid of their problems. In addition to having a soothing effect on the villagers, Zalaca's dreams play an important role in villagers' turning Taşbaş into a saint. She shares her dreams with Muhtar Sefer and he interprets her dreams according to his own benefits. After a while, villagers start to believe them and live up to dreams. They modify dreams through

addition and exaggeration and this process of story-telling causes distortion. Taşbaş's popularity increases because of these made-up epics and stories. Memidik is another significant character that lives up to dreams and visions. Like Zalaca's dreams, Memidik's visions and dreams strengthen the faith of villagers in Taşbaş's being a saviour for them. Especially when Memidik shares his dream in which he saw hundreds of trees coming closer to the house of Taşbaş as if to pray him and he saw him wandering in the mountains and talking with animals, villagers worship him as if he were a Saint.

In Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and Yaşar Kemal's *Iron Earth*, *Copper Sky* and *The Undying Grass* it is possible to witness how imagination shapes human behaviour and subverts social taboos. In Kemal's trilogy, although the threatening figure in the minds of the people is at first Adil, this figure loses authority through the lies and deceit of Muhtar Sefer, who pressures Adil for the purpose of exploiting the villagers for his own interests. In contrast to the opportunistic Muhtar Sefer, who seeks to maintain his public control, his main opponent, Taşbaş, becomes a saint in the public's eye and keeps his elevated position for a long time thanks to the stories, myths and epics created by the public until his downfall. The villagers and farmers in the Çukurova flatter, sanctify and expect help from Taşbaş until they momentarily overcome their poverty and turn their backs on their holy figure. They expect this figure to help them gain freedom like Don Quixote's quest for freedom. In *Yer Demir Gök Bakır*, the story of Taşbaş they transformed to a saint in order to get rid of this situation is told because of the villagers' fear of their inability to pay their debts to Adil Efendi. In this work, the struggle between Muhtar Sefer and Taşbaş constitutes the focus of the narrative. Towards the end of the novel in *Yer Demir Gök Bakır*, Memidik, who saw lights shine from all sides as a saint and explained this to the whole village appears before us. In his "Preface" to *Ortadirek*, Yaşar Kemal evaluates *The Other Face of the Mountain trilogy*:

This trilogy is the story of the people who continue to live in very heavy, very difficult conditions, with an infinite resistance. [...] When solid facts of nature are very overwhelming, when there is no hope for salvation, they have established themselves a dream, a myth, a legend. If man did not have the quality of creating a dream, a legend, maybe there would not be any human beings. Based on this idea, we can define human beings as follows: Man is a creature that creates myths (Çiftlikçi, 1997, 235-236).

In these evaluations, Yaşar Kemal uses the concepts of "dreams", "stories" and "epics" interchangeably. In his article entitled "On Yasar Kemal's Trilogy", Murat Belge (1994) comments on these three novels in terms of religious beliefs. In his book entitled *Yasar Kemal's Novelism*, Fethi Naci (1998), focuses on the life of the peasant in the trilogy and the awliya and myth making. In his book *History, Society and Identity in the Ottoman-Turkish Novel*, Taner Timur (2002) emphasizes the patterns of creating a saint and "obliged village", while Gürsel Aytaç (1983) deals with the distinction between dream and reality with a focus on Taşbaş's sainthood in her article titled "Dream and Reality in Yaşar Kemal: A Study on *Iron Earth and Copper Sky*". The narrative style of Yaşar Kemal is coherent within the fictional tone of events, which creates suspense. Especially with the help of stream-of-consciousness monologues of characters, Kemal creates suspense and a sense of ambiguity. Uncertain

about the accuracy of what is told, readers strive to dig into their own imagination in order to make their subjective observations, analyses and comments. Suspense leads to the appearance of rich ideas in readers, just as the uncertainty about authorship in *Don Quixote* decolonizes the minds of readers and liberates them from fixed ideas and meanings. Besides dreams and imaginary characters, Cervantes emphasizes the importance of imagination by playing with the narration of the novel. In several parts of the novel, he claims that he is not the writer of this novel, but he just translates a text by an Arabic author called Cide Hamete Benengeli. The reader realizes that this Arabic author is, in fact, another fictional character. Cervantes plays with the reader's sense of illusion and reality by passing Benengeli off as the real author of the text.

On the other hand, the chivalric figure Don Quixote is an epic character who rebels against the social and cultural traditions of his time in a bid for individual freedom. He believes that protecting and defending other people's freedom are the principal purposes of his existence. In fact, his incredible adventures are the product of his imagination and are fostered by the chivalric stories of his time. Whether people humiliate him or find his manners ridiculous, he serves a holy duty to enable the individual existence of others in their struggle for freedom. The aim of this chapter is to explore the effects of imagination and chivalric narratives upon human behaviour in *Don Quixote* and Kemal's trilogy, which are existentialist works centred on individual and social freedom.

*Don Quixote*, which is regarded as the prototype of the modern novel, is a parody of literary genres that incorporates miscellaneous styles, satire and a criticism of institutionalized society through the decomposition of fixed boundaries of genres. This novelty of style suggests a freedom from the stereotypical features of a specific genre in the writing process. Among the parodied genres are chivalric stories, pastoral romance, picaresque tales, folk tales, epics and myths. Hence, as J. M. Sobre puts it: "Cervantes' idea of a hero upside-down created the necessity for this new ground in the literary experience. It is not a realistic portrayal of life that brings about the figure of the mad country gentleman; it is the upside-down hero who causes well-founded reality to enter the pages of the book" (Sobre 1976, 139). As regards the authorship, Cervantes follows an ambiguous policy. He gives the impression that he is not the real author of the book but the stepfather of it. He quotes references from Cide Hamete Benengeli so that the book shows the developmental process of narration through the subjective comments and interpretations of Cervantes, which allows us to enter into the mind of the author. However, Cervantes' denial of authorship destabilizes the authority of the author and opens the way for different interpretations of the book for readers. Roberto A. Veguez claims that "this is what Cervantes left in the DNA of the novel as genre: irony and ambiguity as a way of understanding the world" (Veguez 2005, 110). In some parts of the book, stories are unfinished but completed later when the missing information is found from another source. This gives the impression that the book is a translation or a collective effort rather than by one author alone. Even while the author expresses his inability to write a good classical preface, he writes a modern preface in opposition to the clichéd styles of prefaces. When he criticizes institutionalized language, he also breaks with tradition. The ambiguity and inconsistency in style, authorship and content make us question the usual

genres, social conventions, and institutionalized language and society that we tend to take for granted. Theodore Holmes, in *Don Quixote and Modern Man*, states that: “every speech Don Quixote makes is a critique of himself in action. In this, he reflects much of the situation of the modern man” (Holmes 1970, 42). Each episode is a mosaic of intertextual references. Don Quixote does not lead his own life but acts as if he were a fictional hero from his chivalric books. Moreover, from time to time, Don Quixote alludes that he knows about his fictional character, and this form of self-referentiality within the text gives the reader a sense of metafiction. In *Iron Earth*, *Copper Sky* and *The Undying Grass* intertextuality is directly connected to the element of suspense that provides the ambiguity between reality and imagination. Kemal creates honest, rational and fearless Taşbaş, who does not bow to injustice and will be the myth of the villagers in the future in his work *The Wind from the Plain*. Yaşar Kemal expresses this epic narrative and mythical richness as follows: “isn't it this magic in our world that binds us to life? Isn't it this joy of living? Isn't the source of this joy of life these myths that we have to create?” (Kemal 2010, 192). As can be seen from Yasar Kemal's comments on the trilogy in Ramazan Çiftlikçi's (1997) book *Yasar Kemal: Author-Work-Style*, the novelist emphasized that people who are often stuck and desperate created a world of myths and dreams in this trilogy (233-239). If people believe and become deeply attached to what they desire or what others say, that belief or supposition can be regarded as true in time owing to the constant repetition of social assumptions or expectations through oral tradition, as seen in the lives of villagers in Çukurova and in Don Quixote's blindness to the outer world. The line between reality and dream may become ambiguous since we all live in our own imaginary world and have our own perceptions of reality. Activating the imagination in the interpretation of events or situations totally changes one's sense of reality. Schütz analyses the problem of reality in three steps:

(1) He shows how Don Quixote's world is constituted and kept intact when it gets in contact with the world of everyday life; (2) He analyses how the two sub-worlds of Sancho and Don Quixote intersect and how it is possible that they find some common ground for interaction (This is the problem with which Laing deals in *The Divided Self*); and (3) He establishes an argument on how the reality that was constituted between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza breaks down by fraudulent interventions from outside. I want to argue that the breakdown of reality as described by Schütz is of the same nature as the disjunction of social relationships as outlined by Laing, leading to ontological insecurity which causes the breakdown of Don Quixote's identity and, as a consequence, his death (Schlembach 2019, 202).

Both Don Quixote and Taşbaş prefer death to living when they realize all things surrounding them are, in fact, just a dream. All magic disappears when their imaginary world is shattered. What keeps the characters alive is their illusionary world of deception. Even if Don Quixote is aware that the world in which he lives is imaginary, he tends to continue living in his imaginary world to relieve himself from the claws of institutionalized society. Sancho Panzo is also eager to play this deceptive game by obeying Don Quixote despite his insane deeds, just for the money. To realize his desires and ambitions Sancho sets out with insane Don Quixote, who promises him high positions and material

things in exchange for his accompaniment in this chivalric struggle. Despite the opposite characteristics between themselves on the surface, Sancho is the mirror image of Don Quixote. As double characters they complete each other, in contrast to the classic understanding in which Sancho is often considered a realist, whereas Don Quixote is characterized an idealist. Indeed, this situation is reversed by the exchange of their roles, particularly in Part II. Where Don Quixote becomes more realistic, while Sancho becomes more idealistic. As noted by John A. Moore in *The Idealism of Sancho Pancho*: "Don Quixote becomes completely realistic at the end, while Sancho has become hopelessly infected with the virus of chivalric adventure. Such an interchange of character traits would not have been possible had not the seeds of realism been deeply rooted in Don Quixote and those of idealism firmly centred in Sancho's basic nature"(Moore 1958, 73). Both characters are set adrift by their imaginations to struggle against social disorder. As a way of relief, they strive to create their own social order through chivalric attitudes.

The underlying reason for the creation of another imaginary world may be the desire to escape from the delayed confrontation with unwanted social facts. Throughout *Iron Earth*, *Copper Sky*, and *The Undying Grass*, the blurring ambiguity between reality and illusion keep our interest alive, provide us, as readers, with a chance to question, and draw different meanings from the inner world of the characters. At first Taşbaş does not believe that he is a saint, but he forces himself to look for signs of his saintliness under the spell of the myths the villagers create about him, and this tendency, together with Taşbaş's later statement about seeing the green light on the roof of his house, gives us some clues about Taşbaş's desire to believe in this social ideal. As charisma is an attractive part of identity for leading individuals, Sefer and Taşbaş compete with each other to capture the reins of society. Having their words influenced by other people becomes highly significant and critical, since they believe they are the leaders and need to make the right decisions for the future of society. Acting as a collective consciousness, the villagers conform intellectually and practically. While Cervantes' villagers do not believe the madman (Don Quixote), Kemal's villagers believe the madman. Their dependency on Taşbaş for hope and to ameliorate their wretched indebtedness to Adil reflects how helpless they are and how they seek shelter in this saintly figure, Taşbaş, who is the work of their imagination. Nonetheless, after the villagers see they will overcome their miserable situation by gaining enough money from picking cotton, their dependency on Taşbaş disappears, and they ignore him when he returns to Çukurova as a destitute man with no trace of his former physical appearance. The change in their view of Taşbaş, who they no longer believe is a saint, indicates the conflicts in their perceptions. Their complex behaviour suggests that they are in fact subconsciously aware of their inaccuracy in making Taşbaş a saintly figure from the beginning.

Both Yaşar Kemal and Cervantes expose their societies through extravagantly insane characters. While Kemal's characters are obsessed with dreams and visions to the degree of insanity, Cervantes' protagonist creates an imaginary world for himself intentionally and pretends to go insane to find a way of escape from social pressure and search for freedom and a solution to social ills. Don Quixote is trapped in institutionalized forms of rationality in the constitution of modern society by



routines, and he fights against it with his imagination, while Kemal's villagers desperately create stories and believe in them to avoid their oppressive living conditions under the control of domineering people, such as Adil and Sefer. Actually, Don Quixote and Sefer are similar as they both try to impose their visions of reality on society. However, Don Quixote contributes to the theme of individual freedom and independence by struggling in an imaginary world rather than the real oppressive world, while Sefer creates his own reality and imposes it on the villagers for his own benefit. Sefer acts more egoistically by considering only his public charisma, whereas Don Quixote struggles for the ideals of a more democratic and egalitarian society. On the other hand, Don Quixote creates a self-identity and puts forward his self-definition against the institutions of his society, while Memidik puts an end to Sefer's life after hesitant moments, which can be regarded as a blow to the fascist rule in the village. The individual existence of characters is more prominent in *Don Quixote*, whereas communal existence and collective action are much more dominant in Kemal's trilogy. As an individual, Don Quixote is conscious about his deviant behaviour, and his blindness as a consequence of imagination is deliberate. He reacts against society by following an unusual way in contrast to how ordinary men think and act.

Don Quixote has no tolerance for the captivation of human beings by force, as he thinks it is against the nature of humans created by God as free and independent beings. He is of the opinion that human beings should not be forced to do anything and they should even not be punished for their crimes by force. When he frees the galley slaves, Don Quixote interrogates each convict to learn about their crimes and discover that the convicts were sent to the galley against their will. His morality commands him to free these convicts, irrespective of how guilty they are:

Because I know that one essential part of prudence is never to do by force what can be achieved by consent, I hereby request these guards and this sergeant to be so kind as to release you and allow you to go in peace, for there will be no lack of other men to serve the King in happier circumstances, and it does seem excessively harsh to make slaves of those whom God and nature made free [...] these poor men have done nothing to you.  
(Cervantes 2000, 183)

In this thought-provoking, high-spirited speech, it is evident that Don Quixote ignores the authority of the King but acts according to the codes of chivalry. Nevertheless, his claims and reasons for freeing these captives are quite convincing because this forced march is against individual liberties and Christian belief. Ironically, after he saves these convicts he follows chivalric tradition by asking the released convicts to visit the lady Dulcinea Del Toboso, yet he is beaten by the ungrateful convicts. This complication between Don Quixote and the captives mirrors the problems of Spanish society in the seventeenth century.

Don Quixote takes refuge in insanity as a way of escaping from the restrictive chains of society while his ultimate desire is to provide freedom, unity and justice in society. When he finds that he will not be able to escape through insanity, he has no other choice but death. However hard the priest and the barber try to dissuade Don Quixote from his chivalric journeys under the guise of a different

persona, their influence remains partial. In contrast to Don Quixote, Cardenio's temporary madness in *Don Quixote* is a means of consoling himself in the face of sorrow and misfortune. Unable to forget the treachery, Don Fernando and Luscinda's beauty, he loses his reason and performs mad actions. This half-insane mood relieves him from his wretched position and unrequited love.

Don Quixote is rather awakened to reality in a natural way because of the fact that the people around him are themselves both ensnared and enraptured by the power of their imagination, considering the unbelievable plots and tricks they prepare for the purpose of entertainment. Busi expresses this reflection as such:

The refutation of the knight's imagination is not directly achieved by the well-meaning plots of his friends to bring him back to reality: rather it is effected indirectly when the knight realizes, quite unintentionally, his true nature as the reflection of himself as seen in other characters (Busi 1974, 881).

The theme of freedom, which permeates almost all chapters in *Don Quixote*, is directly related to Cervantes' own years of captivity as a soldier, and the holy duty of freeing others belongs to Don Quixote, who is the liberator and mouthpiece of wretches, captives and helpless people under any force or oppression. Another oppressed character in *Don Quixote* is Marcela, a "pastoral Don Quixote" (Parla 2000, 63) who challenges the stereotypical gender roles of her society. She prefers freedom and independence in the wilderness to the institution of marriage. She refuses to be the sexual object of men and creates her own identity and order in nature. The patriarchal society accuses her of causing the death of her lovers, especially the suicide of her passionate suitor Grisóstomo, by not reciprocating their love. However, Marcela reminds the shepherds around her of the fact that she is not obliged to love her suitors in return for the love they show her. She reasons: "I can't conceive why, for this reason alone, a woman who's loved for her beauty should be obliged to love whoever loves her" (Cervantes 2000, 109), putting forward very persuasive and rational remarks related to free will and free choice. She claims that: "true love can't be divided, and must be voluntary, not forced on you. If this is so, as I believe it is, why do you think I should be obliged to give in to you, just because you love me dearly? (Cervantes 2000, 109). She defends the basis of her existence: "I was born free, and to live free I chose the solitude of the countryside" (Cervantes 2000, 109). In her search for a new self-identity, freedom becomes her main principle and that is why she desires to live without oppressing others or being constrained by others.

In chapters 39 to 41 of Part I of *Don Quixote*, the captive's tale shows parallels with the life story of Cervantes himself, who was captured as a soldier and ransomed by his family. Viedma ends up a captive like Cervantes and he struggles for the sake of gaining his liberty at a time when slavery is a common phenomenon considering that slaves were a great part of the population of Algiers. Viedma's adventures and experiences as a soldier and a slave are a means of criticising Spanish military tradition and the convention of slavery by focusing on the significance of gaining freedom after a long period of captivity, as confirmed by Roberta A. Veguez:

The Alba episode is just the first of a series of criticisms of Spanish military

actions in this part of the narrative. Eventually Viedma returns to Italy, and like Cervantes, joins the Holy League and finds himself in Lepanto, but, unlike Cervantes, he is captured in the battle and is made a galley slave. As such, he is a rower in the battles that the Turks fought with the Spaniards in Navarino and in La Goleta; in these two battles Cervantes had participated on the Spanish side. It is evident that Cervantes used Rui Perez de Viedma as a mouthpiece for his views on these and other issues. Again, like Cervantes, Viedma is taken to Algiers (Veguez 2005, 104).

Related to the existentialist view, the anxiety to survive permeates Kemal's trilogy, there is a thin line between life and death in this competitive, ignorant and malicious society, because most of the characters are obsessed with ideas of death and decay. Just as Hamlet questions human nature, life and death when he prepares to take revenge upon his villain uncle, so Taşbaş evaluates his former and current identity in the minds of his people and is driven to despair when he finds out his former image has already been ruined. The well-known existentialist question "to be or not to be" becomes his focus, as there is no difference between living and dying for him now, and life has already lost its meaning with the destruction of his public image in *The Undying Grass*. On the other hand, unlike Hamlet, Don Quixote acts impulsively. As Jale Parla notes: "Hamlet is too slow to take a murderous step because of his engagement in deep thoughts unlike Don Quixote" (Parla 2000, 16). Don Quixote attacks windmills that he supposes to be ferocious giants without much consideration, just as Memidik impulsively kills Şevket Bey instead of Sefer. Memidik is so identified with the corpse of Şevket Bey day and night that the body becomes his whole life, like an indispensable possession. He cannot stay away from the body and feels the need to check it often because it is "his corpse." This dead body becomes the main subject and focus of the early chapter of *The Undying Grass*. It is like an animate being that blurs the boundaries between life and death.

The idea of death and the removal of dreams are interrelated themes echoed throughout *Iron Earth*, *Copper Sky* and *The Undying Grass* as well as *Don Quixote*. Almost every character oscillates between fear and death. Fear triggers the occurrence of false stories and myths as a consequence of desired living conditions. Conflicting between fear and their dreams, Hüsne and Recep condemn themselves to absence in a way. It seems as if death provides an escape from the oppressive effects of social and individual troubles. Similarly, Koca Halil attributes social deprivation to his personal decision to pick cotton in infertile fields and he is afflicted with the fear of being killed by the villagers. Social pressure urges him to abandon his village to save his public face, although Uzun Ali claims that Muhtar Sefer is the guilty person because he led the villagers into such barren cotton fields. Supposing that staying in Yalak village longer will taint his honour in the face of furious, revengeful villagers, Koca Halil escapes to another village during a blizzard. In *The Undying Grass*, Meryemce, who is abandoned by her son Uzunca in the village, experiences the fear of death while Ali and the other villagers are picking cotton under the burning sun in Çukurova in order to pay their debts to Adil and

survive. During this dreadful waiting for the return of her sons, Meryemce clings to her dreams. By expecting that her son will come and save her, she motivates herself to remain alive. Even when Ömer arrives at the village to kill Meryemce, she welcomes him so happily that he almost gives up the idea of killing. Her vivid dreams and hopes are the mainstay of her survival.

Temporary madness, like a reactionary state of mind, provides Don Quixote and the other afflicted characters in the novel with relief from their helpless, miserable positions for a short while. Imagination is identified with life and life is unbearable without dreams and illusion. It is the main purpose of individual existence in *Don Quixote*. Likewise, *Iron Earth*, *Copper Sky* and *The Undying Grass* are perfect novels in which people are dependent on dreams and false beliefs to relieve them from their various personal and social problems. Taşbaş, like a statue worshipped, is the symbol of their saviour, while Don Quixote is a symbolic hero with his imaginary battles with the windmills all over the world. Imitating and depending on others in actions, far from individual desires and decisions, obstruct salvation for the villagers. Dreams also play a crucial role in shaping their actions. Instead of evaluating events or conditions from a realistic perspective, they prefer to act according to what they want to believe. This imaginary way of behaving even risks the lives of worshipped characters like Taşbaş and Kul Murtaza. Once elevated and praised, Taşbaş is ignored and scorned with the elimination of social problems. He is victimized by the hypocritical society that destroys his charisma unexpectedly. Epics and dreams made him a Saint and again dispossessed him from this title. While Taşbaş is a rational man who does not believe he is a saint at first, he is deceived by his imagination and enjoys playing the role of "Saint." However, the villagers turn their face to reality in the end, although they worship Taşbaş and call him "saint" at first. This deceptive outlook eventually creates a psychological healing of the villagers who are faced with arduous living conditions. Taşbaş's recognition that he is not a Saint and the destruction of his public charisma drive him to suicide. At this point, imagination is replaced by reality, just as Don Quixote is forced to confront the real world differently from his imaginary one while he is dying. In all three novels, social and individual freedom and responsibility outweigh restrictive conventional rules and boundaries in society by transcending time and space. Moreover, individuals console themselves and reinforce their hopes by epics, folk tales and false stories. Consequently, imagination seems to be the only way of liberation from social and personal depression. If characters are deprived of imagination, this loss of imagination causes boredom and loss of meaning in their lives, and unconditionally requires their literal death. In a way, for them there is no sense in leading a dull, monotonous life without dreams, fantasies and mythic stories.

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