

Modernization Efforts within the Scope of the Republic Project in Türkiye: The Example of the Novel of the Time Regulation Institute

Türkiye'de Cumhuriyet Projesi Kapsamında Modernleşme Çabaları: Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü Romanı Örneği

Hüseyin ÇELİK*

Araştırma Makalesi | Research Article

Başvuru | Received: 05.10.2023 ■ Kabul | Accepted: 30.12.2024

ABSTRACT

The transformations that unfolded across the globe during the 20th century, underpinned by the ethos of modernism, wrought profound changes in the fabric of societies and human existence. In Türkiye, the trajectory of modernization, initiated during the Tanzimat and constitutional monarchy eras, persisted into the republican era. However, the imposition of modernism from the top down, in a milieu where a bourgeoisie failed to merge fully, engendered various challenges. Notably, thinkers like Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar harbored apprehensions about Türkiye's future within its Westernization endeavor during the Republican era. Tanpınar's novel *The Time Regulation Institute* (1954) vividly captures the trials and tribulations of Türkiye's modernization efforts, particularly amidst the emergence of systemic issues such as the adjuster system. Serving as a literary lens into the transition from constitutionalism to republicanism, from tradition to modernity, the novel paints a rich tableau of Turkish societal metamorphosis. This study explores *The Time Regulation Institute*, employing qualitative semantic content analysis to dissect its thematic underpinnings. Through delineating various categories, the transition from traditional to modern life is meticulously scrutinized in the tapestry of words and expressions throughout the novel. Central to the narrative is the portrayal of a meticulously ordered system orchestrated by the titular institute, presided over by an adjuster. Yet, the novel poignantly underscores the challenge faced by the Turkish populace in embracing this paradigm shift as the traditional, natural, and static conception of time grapples with the imposition of modernity.

Keywords: The Time Regulation Institute novel, Modernism, Traditional Life, Modern Life, Real and Ideal.

ÖZ

20. yüzyıl boyunca dünyada meydana gelen gelişmelerin modernizm temeline dayanması toplum yapısını ve insan yaşamını kökünden değiştirmiştir. Türkiye'de Tanzimat ve meşrutiyet dönemlerinde başlayan modernleşme çabaları cumhuriyet döneminde de devam etmiştir. Ancak burjuvazinin oluşturulmadığı Türkiye'de tepeden dayatılan modernizm çeşitli sorunlara yol açmıştır. Örneğin Türkiye Cumhuriyeti döneminde Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar gibi düşünürler Cumhuriyetin batılılaşma projesinde Türkiye'nin geleceği için devamlı bir kaygı içerisinde olmuşlardır. Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar'ın "Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü" (1954) romanı Türkiye'nin Cumhuriyet dönemindeki modernleşme çabalarını anlatmaktadır. Modern dönemin, yani ayarlı sisteminin sorunları ortaya çıktığı bir dönemde yazılan bu roman bir geçişin haritasını çizmektedir. İnsanların yaşamları meşrutiyetten cumhuriyete, gelenekselden moderne doğru dönüşmektedir. Çalışmada niteliksel semantik içerik analizi yapılmak suretiyle bu roman incelenmiştir. Çeşitli kategoriler oluşturularak romanın içerisindeki sözler ve anlatımlar çerçevesinde geleneksel hayattan modern hayata geçiş süreci incelenmiştir. Romanda enstitü sayesinde her şeyin bir ayar düzeni içerisinde olduğu ve bu düzeneğin başında bir ayarcının bulunduğu bir sistem öngörülmüştür. Romanda geleneksel olan doğal ve durağan zamanın modernizmle birlikte disipline altına alınması sürecinde Türk insanların bunu kabul etmekte zorlandıkları üzerinde durulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü Romanı, Modernizm, Geleneksel Yaşam, Modern Yaşam, Real ve İdeal.



Introduction

The developments that took place in the world during the 20th century were based on modernism, which has radically changed the structure of societies and human life. Modernism, which makes itself felt in all areas, from human life to the organization of states, has radically changed the structure of societies and human life. With the French Revolution and the abandonment of traditionalism to modernism based on rationalism, the era of empires ended and proceeded to the nation-state model. However, this transition was problematic and has led to significant changes in human life. In addition, first empires and then nations fought each other worldwide. The First and Second World Wars were battles fought by relying on war machines produced through rationality. The ongoing wars, inequalities, and the deepening of the gulfs between East and West result from the understanding that has always waged war against the traditional and wants modernism to settle further.

The destruction of the traditional life and introducing a system that sets the conditions and possibilities of a new life with the idea of replacing it can be considered the most critical development of the last few centuries. The changes in the social sphere stemmed from the slow attitude of adapting to the new order in the process of bringing together the masses of people with the pressure of modernism. However, the scientific changes that exceeded this forced them to behave differently. The speed and time offered by science and technology have forced human life, resulting in the French Revolution. The French Revolution is the most essential revolt against traditionalist social management. As a result, revolutions and changes in the social field followed each other, and World Wars took place. The pressure of the changes in the social sphere destroyed four significant empires in the early 20th century. The bourgeois class became rich and began to claim rights in the social and political sphere. Consequently, the bourgeoisie helped to burn down the empires that stood against it, creating nation-states and leading to more trade and sovereignty. Nation states, which

are smaller than these prominent administrations, were created. The nation-states made it possible to move goods and services freely, safely, and profitably. These bourgeoisie moves have made the world much more complicated in social terms, leading to revolutions and destruction in many countries.

As we moved from traditional society to modern society, the sediments of traditional life began to float to the surface of the water, and these sediments caused various problems. All these prove that the multiple features constituting human beings manifest themselves in the modern era too. According to Marshall Berman, together with modernism, all the clothes of the past no longer fit either primitive, classical, medieval, or oriental. Still, there was a period in which all clothes were tried but did not match (Berman, 2004, p. 22).

With the values created by modern social life, people constantly wear down and impair themselves. This arrangement is similar to Weber's birdcage and Foucault's fence. No matter what they do inside, they can not get out. Therefore, the insiders' thoughts, needs, and dreams do not belong to them. They have an imposed freedom. This so-called freedom is limited within the framework imposed by modernism. In this system, all needs are managed and programmed collectively to produce desires to meet the social system. People recognize themselves as commodities; their souls are present in cars, music sets, duplex houses, kitchen utensils, and appliances (Marcuse, 2010, p. 99). For this reason, modernity is not the evolution of a human being but the predominance of machines and the establishment of sovereignty in this way. Thus, machines created modernity (Berman, 2004, p. 30). People who have become repetitive mechanical replicas of modernism have created an artificial society with what Foucault calls the "Big Clousure" (Foucault, 2015).

The seductiveness of modernism and its imprisonment of people within itself disrupted the unity of culture. It destroyed the rational cosmology resulting from the regular relationship established

with time and space (Bell, 1978, p. 19). Accordingly, the orderly natural relationship in the universe existing in time was broken, and a new system was created in which everything was mixed in the name of rationality. As Jameson expresses, this order profoundly influenced the society and culture created within postmodernism and *Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. (Jameson, 2005).

It is seen that the rules and practices based on imposition from above took place during the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire, which the French Revolution influenced, lived through the Tanzimat Reform and Constitutional Monarchy periods. After that, it was demolished and replaced by a Republic based on the nation-state model. In this new era, the traditional worldview and modernist thought conflict began between past, present, and future. According to modernism, the world order will be established not “in the future and there” but “here and now” (Gencer, 2011). Modernism will establish the world order through several intellectuals and legitimizing experts, ensuring hegemony by prevailing upon people (Gramsci). Therefore, during both the Tanzimat and the Constitutional periods, as well as the Republican era, Türkiye has tried to realize a top-down modernization. During the Republican regime, that had to be executed faster because Türkiye was far behind the rest of Europe. However, in Türkiye, where the bourgeoisie could not be formed, modernism imposed from above led to several problems. For example, during the period of the Republic of Türkiye, those who thought like Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar were constantly concerned about the future of Türkiye in the Republic’s Westernization project (Aydın, 2013, p. 86). These problems are subjects of the modern Turkish novel, in which the phenomenon of staying in between is tried to be expressed. One of these novels is Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar’s *The Time Regulation Institute*, serialized in Yeni Istanbul newspaper in 1954.

In Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar’s *The Time Regulation Institute*, the difficulties experienced by different segments of society in the final period of the Ottoman Empire and the Republican period,

and the system of different values existing in the society that is being westernized, are ironically described (Aydın, 2020, pp. 30-37). This irony, which arises from the innovation process depicted in the system of emotion and thought and the coexistence of the Eastern and Western cultures, is treated as the common feature of all characters in the novel (Aydın, 2020, p. 37). In the book, the time perceptions of the East and the West are conveyed through the allegorical adjustment of the clocks (Aydın, 2020, pp. 37-38). The emphasis on innovation, on the one hand, and the highly bureaucratic structure and employees loaded with irrational values, on the other, are the symbols of the ironic construction of the institution. In other words, the institution belonging to the new is brought to life by the people who waver between the values of two periods (Aydın, 2020, p. 43). In the novel, the changing mentality of society is addressed through a section built on adjusting the hours. However, it cannot be argued that it adapts sufficiently to the changing mentality depending on the changing social structure (Aydın, 2020, p. 42).

The novel is like the life story of Hayri İrdal. İrdal, who has lived through the periods of Abdülhamit, constitutionalism, and the republic, makes a clean break with the traditional life upon meeting Halit Ayarçı. The idea of establishing the Institute is based on Hayri İrdal’s being introduced to clocks using Nuri Efendi and his association with Halit Ayarçı to establish an institute about clocks. Ahmet Zamani, an imaginary hero invented by Hayri İrdal, is assigned as the idol of the institute, and the establishment is grounded on dreams.

The third part of the novel *The Time Regulation Institute* describes the efforts for modernization during Türkiye’s republican period. The transition from the traditional to the modern is executed by dint of an adjuster (Halit Ayarçı). This adjustment will be carried out with the help of an institute and Hayri İrdal with whom he later becomes friends. Halit Ayarçı thinks of society and people as an object for “adjustment” (Aydın, 2013, p. 90). The most essential instrument of this setting is

the clock. This novel focuses on establishing and developing *The Time Regulation Institute*, an attempt to regulate time and thus build society as machine gear, and it expresses with examples the ways of thinking that represent the traditional and modern understandings. The attempt to change all the habits of society, ironically described in the novel, can be considered a fantastic positivist project (Aydın, 2013, p. 90). Tanpınar is pessimistic about the future of Türkiye that desired to be set up in conformity with the West that he narrates on his novel *Peace*, as being in the eve of the Second World War. In *The Time Regulation Institute*, however, it is observed that all habits are gradually being accepted (Aydın, 2013, p. 92).

This novel (1954), written in a period when the problems of the modern system, namely the adjuster system, emerged, depicts a transition. The transition from the traditional to the contemporary period has been quite painful. While all the problems in modernism were thought to have been solved, it was understood that there were problems in this period, too. For this reason, the door of an era beyond the modern is opened part way. In this new era, people take advantage of idealism as it serves the purpose and try to create a fictional way of life. This new lifestyle is becoming quite different from both traditional and modern life.

What is the understanding in this novel that shifts from the traditional to modern order? Why do those in between and the traditional ones accept reforms to some extent? These are told in the novel through Hayri İrdal himself. He is a traditional person. Hayri İrdal's life is transformed from the constitutional to the republican, from the traditional to the modern. What are the first signs of the establishment of modern life? In what ways do the contradictions between traditional and modern life arise? How did modern life begin to be established? How have modern institutions of life collapsed, and what have they been replaced by?

In order to answer these questions, *The Time Regulation Institute* novel is examined, and

qualitative semantic content analysis is conducted in this study. For this purpose, various categories are created and the questions above are aimed to be answered within the framework of the words and expressions within these categories. In line with these categories, various questions are discussed, and inferences are made. These categories are: (i) Traditional and Modern Life Within Time Frame, (ii) Attempts of Establishing Modernity, (iii) Contrast of Real and Ideal, (iv) New Organization of Life and Post-Regulation.

Traditional and Modern Life within Time Frame

Halit Ayarç is a visionary social engineer deeply rooted in the belief in the transformative power of science. Through the institution he founded, he endeavors to revolutionize society by breaking it free from the shackles of old habits and traditions, instilling instead a new sense of time and a modern work ethic (Aydın, 2013, p. 91). In the traditional way of life portrayed in *The Time Regulation Institute*, stability reigns supreme, rendering the concept of time and the need for clocks virtually obsolete. As expressed by Hayri İrdal, "We are people who live in a world of our own. Everything is just as we like it" (p. 5-6), individuals carve out their existence by their unique perceptions and preferences, orchestrating their days accordingly. Within this paradigm, each person is said to navigate their destiny, with life unfolding in alignment with the divine order bestowed by God. However, as the narrative unfolds, it becomes evident that humanity's innate propensity for inequality persists, subtly perpetuating class divisions within the traditional societal structure (p.15). Despite the intrinsic link between traditional life and religious practice, the advent of modernism introduces a seismic shift in this equilibrium. While Muslims initially embraced watches to regulate their religious obligations, such as the five daily prayers, the transition marked a departure from the purely spiritual realm towards a more worldly engagement with time (p. 26). The symbolic significance of time and clocks extends beyond the mundane, bridging an individual's religious beliefs and their mortal existence. However, for

characters like Hayri İrdal, this transition represents a departure from a cherished, albeit nostalgic, golden age of community and spiritual harmony, underscoring the disruptive nature of modernity (Aydın, 2013, p. 129).

Tanpınar mentions three types of clocks in his novel *The Time Regulation Institute*. The first hour is a part of traditional life, and it simply regulates the traditional life. This clock is a rambling, pensive machine that does not interfere with anyone's business. It does not show the time exactly, it goes around in its way, and suddenly announces a secret and important event, giving a surprise. This clock accepts neither adjustment, correction, nor repair. This hour is thus given traditional, otherworldly meanings, and it is even said to have a relationship with saints or jinns (p. 29). Therefore, this clock, called Mubarak, reflects the traditional life as it is. The second time is the table clock. This clock works properly. It is defined as the clock that shapes and constructs secular, that is, modern life. The third one is a clock that can be repaired by experts, and that comprises both *alla turca* and *alla franca* mechanisms, incorporating both the West and the East and combining the traditional with the modern. The novel aims to depict three different aspects of Turkish society in the process of modernization in terms of their philosophy of view of life by using these three different types of hour.

The first step in the process leading to the modern is the start of social changes. During the constitutional period, which was one of these steps, the city clocks began to increase in urbanization. When these clocks increased, Nuri Efendi, Hayri İrdal's master, while working at the watchmaker, dreaded leaving the clock room for fear that he would see an unadjusted time. This is because he establishes a similarity between a disrupted clock and a sick person. Nuri Efendi believes that Satan tries to destroy faith in Allah by leading people to waste their time using an unadjusted clock (p. 36). Thus, Nuri Efendi establishes a relationship between time as Allah's invention and the clock, which is the token of this on the earth. He thinks

that it is possible to perceive time that shows His existence only when the clock shows the exact time, and thus, man cannot dismiss God from his mind. All the conditions that require adjustment activities are present in the Constitutional period when traditional and modern times are intertwined, it is felt that it is time to break up with tradition, and crucial transformations take place. However, traditional life continues with all its indicators because the traditional structure now sees its own end and understands the need to articulate with the modern. Tanpınar wants to explain this articulation process with the people in the coffeehouse. There are three groups in the coffeehouse. The first group is the world regulators group, the second is Eastern Pleabians and the third is the irregulars. The regulatory group is composed of aristocrats who gather together with the intention of correcting the world. "There was a specific name given to those who discussed serious matters: they were known as the "world regulators", the aristocrats who busied themselves with the regulations of the World" (p. 136). The second group, Eastern Pleabians, is a larger stratum. It is described in the novel as follows:

"Armed with only just enough culture to be active members of the coffeehouse commune, they had little say about life's simple pleasures or even the hardships of making ends meet, preferring instead to indulge in an innocuous flair for the comical by drawing attention to the imperfections of others around them."

These are people who live according to the conditions of daily life and fill the crowd. Therefore, this group is composed of people who "neither flow nor smell".

Apart from these two groups, the third stratum, the irregulars form "a community that could not adapt to the city life which can be referred to as the lower classes" (p. 130-131).

There were "the irregulars"; devoid of social refinement and utterly ill at ease in the urban environment they were men still in thrall to their primal urges. An irregular could pick a fight with anyone, but a plebian or a regulator would fight in earnest only if confronted by an irregular. To some degree the irregulars represented the primitive element, and perhaps because they were the only ones with a subgroup: the "pseudo-irregulars". (p. 136)

Since he does not belong to the lower class (the irregulars), Hayri İrdal counts himself among the world regulators (p. 131). "My reserved demeanor, my preoccupation with my personal affairs, and the seriousness with which I approached this deliberation seemed to place me with the world regulators" (p. 137).

Hayri İrdal thinks of all the people in the café living in some gap and regards them as the ones outside the door. He defines them as follows: They lead indolent lives, half the time taking the World seriously, half the time dismissing it as a joke, simply because their failure to adjust to the modern age has confused them! (p. 133). Hayri İrdal sees these people as living in an interspace distant from real life; and therefore, he thinks it is necessary to eliminate Oriental fatalism (p. 141). The need to convert from traditional to modern life: it is time to reconcile with the innovations brought by modern life because the contrast between tradition and modern time has made this change necessary. In the novel, the similarity between the human who shows the time as God's invention and the clock as his invention is described as follows: "The Great Almighty made man in his image, and men made watches in theirs (p. 29)."

Nuri Efendi, a watchmaker with whom Hayri İrdal worked as a child, positions the watch as a necessity of life and reflects the traditional life. In the novel, Nuri Efendi says: "Man must never forsake his clocks, for consider his ruination if forsaken by God!", and there were those times when his musings on watches and clocks became far more profound: "The clock itself creates space, and man regulates the clock's tempo and time, which means time coexists with space within man" (p. 29). Tanpınar, hence, sees a trinity as combining the trio of clock, time and human, and bringing together the traditional structure, that is, social cement. He expresses that these assemblies, combining traditional and modern life, the parts in a clock, namely the spring, the pump, and the wheels, come from separate factories and workmanship. He accepts them as separate yet existing all together and observes that this is

how our life looks like (p. 30). In this way, he says that everything that constitutes the life of Turkish people is taken from different societies and brought here and built as a life here. He is trying to explain this life with the old traditional style of doing with less, contenting oneself with one bite and one cardigan, (p. 360-361) and as the feature of this life, with the statement that "no account in this realm was free of any crying" (p. 36).

Another example of comparison between modern life with tradition is seen when Halit Ayarç states, "I am a result man, not a man of intent! -" (p. 360); thereby, he compares the ideal with the real. He explains the reality as follows: "Innovation! From top to bottom, unfathomable innovation beyond our wildest dreams! Three cheers for innovation! (p. 384)" As required by realism, it is necessary to position modernity as a religion and to push aside and exclude tradition. It was enough that the new building did not contain the original motifs; it was only functional and remained for the offspring. It was enough to be cheap and safe (p. 385). Thus, modernity will be constructed in this manner and transmitted to future generations.

Attempts of Establishing Modernity

It is underlined in *The Time Regulation Institute* that the clock is vital in establishing modernism. In the novel, the need to measure new time, with a habit surrounding the whole society, was vital for the individual who determined the modern time style. The idea of having time is the most essential thing that expresses modernity: "At least now you'll be the master of your time. The rest our God of Grace will oversee!". This discourse shows that the repaired watches were given to people experiencing poverty as gifts and modernity started to be built. But making a present of the watch was not enough. They also had to be adjusted. Nuri Efendi explains the reason for this in the novel as follows:

"Think about the implications of these words, my dear friend Hayri İrdal. This means that a properly regulated clock ever loses a single second! And what are we doing about it? What about the people in this city, in the country at large? We're losing half our time with unregulated clocks. If every person

loses one second per hour, we lose a total of eighteen million seconds in that hour. Assuming the essentially useful part of the day consists of ten hours, we are left with one hundred eighty million seconds. So in just one day a hundred eighty million seconds in other words three million minutes; this means a loss of fifty thousand hours per day. Now perform the calculations and see how many lifetimes suddenly slip away every year. And half of these eighteen million people don't even own watches; and if they do, they don't work. Among them you'll find some that are half an hour, even a whole hour, behind standard time. It's a maddening loss of time ... a loss in terms of our work, our lives, and our everyday economy. Can you now see the immensity of Nuri Efendi's mind, his genius? (p. 30)."

After that time, a divine tax was turned into a humane one thanks to the clock, and it falls to man to adjust it. For this reason, an institution must be established to change the hours. Those at the head of this institution will have people adopt modern life. Modernization will be carried out primarily through this institution. It is thus desired to catch up with the modern that has been missed. One of the institutes' most important slogans and ideas aims to change the practical understanding of individuals to comply with modern society's times: (p. 259). "My good man, first there was man and then work. Work was created by man to be executed by man. And we have created this". Hayri İrdal says on the issue,

"Work makes us pure and beautiful; it is our bond with the outside world and makes us who we are. But work can also take possession of our souls. No matter how meaningless and absurd the job, we unwittingly become its prisoner: from the moment we accept responsibility for its proper execution we can never escape its grip. Herein lies the greatest secret of man's fate and indeed the history of mankind (p. 376)."

In fact, these sentences illustrate that Hayri İrdal is always attached to the tradition. Thus, modernity is desired to be grounded beyond business ethic on a deeper thought that is traditional (Aydın, 2013, p. 92). In addition, Hayri İrdal explains the change as follows:

"Hayri Bey, Hayri Efendi, Hayri my son, Hayri the Fortune teller, Hayri l' Horloger, the orphan Hayri, the wizard Hayri, prodigal Hayri, Hayri the Tippler, the Addict, husband to Pakize Hayri, the brother-in-law to his wife's sisters Hayri—and now Hayri Beyefendi. (p. 210)."

Hayri İrdal begins to live in reality as Halit Ayarç enters his life (p. 53). Now he embraces modern man, modern architecture and modern comfort. He thinks that modern life commands us to stay far from the thought of death (p. 58). It is stated that a good place can be attained in this life, which can be called epicurism¹, by patience and doing the work on time. Those who cannot adapt to this social order created by modern life are doomed to defeat:

"School is of course extremely important for children. Above all else, it allows us to put off answering childhood's most troubling question: what will I be when I grow up? School reminds me of a train that carries you to a destination—providing you arrive on time, make all the right connections and wait patiently for the journey's end. But I had jumped off the train in the middle of a desert, far from my destination" (p. 57).

The Time Regulation Institute, which now represents modernism, has started to be liquidated. In fact, although the dilemma between the old and the new, which has not yet formed its values, has started to be resolved, Turkish society is in a place that can be called neither fully western nor eastern "hybrid identity" in line with Westernization (Aydın, 2013, p. 133). Abdul Hamid II's naval minister Huseyin Avni Pasha's son Celal the Bearded has said for Türkiye: "Türkiye is an eastbound ship forging ahead without stopping, some think they go toward the West by running westward on the deck of the ship." or "We declared the Tanzimat, did not work. We declared the constitutional monarchy; it did not work. We declared the republic; it did not work. If only we would declare a little seriousness!"

The Contrast of Ideal and Real

Hayri İrdal, who tried to adapt to modern life from traditional life, experienced various problems and eventually ended up in a mental hospital. In this hospital, Hayri İrdal is treated with psychoanalysis methods.

1 Epicurism (n) "the practices or tastes of an epicure or an epicurean", "the philosophy of Epicurus who subscribed to a hedonistic ethics that considered an imperturbable emotional calm the highest good, held intellectual pleasures superior to others, and advocated the renunciation of momentary in favor of more permanent pleasures "Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, Merriam Webster Inc., 1991: New York, p.418.

Hayri İrdal, before the modern life, was in court because of an incident, and the court adjudicated that he had a mental health disorder and sent him to Doctor Remzi for treatment. Dr. Ramiz attempted to carry out the treatment not with the traditional methods, but with modern methods of psychoanalysis. This method requires an adjustment for the regulation of a person's entire life including his dreams.

"I shall write you a list of the dreams you shall have this week. And a few minutes later he handed me a piece of paper. But, Doctor, can dreams be ordered up in such way? A prescription for dreams...? This is impossible. This is a forward-thinking science, my good friend. No objections allowed". (p. 121)

By pointing out the accuracy of positive science and need for obeying it, Hayri İrdal is reminded that a new period has been entered, and that it is necessary to move with the times.

In order to vindicate his diagnosis, Doctor Ramiz asks him to have a particular dream, yet in the beginning, Hayri İrdal cannot dream it. Following the end of the treatment, he has the dream at issue. He has also been acquitted from the lawsuit filed against him. When he returns to the outside world, Doctor Ramiz introduces him to Halit Ayarç. Hayri İrdal tells him about his life and thoughts. As he relates the story of his life, he says:

"Some people spend their lives making good use of time, but in my life, it has always stuck a foot out in front of me. I have tripped over time (p. 200)."

He emphasizes that he wishes to influence time accordingly but fails to do so. Thus, it is stated that modern life is always missed.

Halit Ayarç replied that the criteria he thought of were left behind, that the classical things he learned were transmitted as letters from master to master, that they were no longer in a complicated period, and that new things were important. Then, he added the following words:

"Yes, that's the problem. You lack entrepreneurial spirit. You're an idealist. And you fail to comprehend the reality around you. In short, you're old-fashioned. A shame, what terrible shame! If only you had a shred of realism in you, just only so much, a wee bit. Oh, then everything would change (p. 232)."

The discrepancy between Newtonian and Aristotelian thought is reached by establishing a distinction between the ideal and the real. Being modern is always about getting a regular and adjusted life. Thus, Hayri İrdal says that he is a realist who sees everything as it is. However, Halit Ayarç states that being a realist is not seeing real life as it is and it is defeatism.

"To see the truth as it is... is to admit defeat. Yes, it is the very definition of defeatism, for it is its very genesis. You, Hayri Bey, are a man poisoned by words, which is why I said you were old-fashioned. But the realism of today's man is something else. What can I make with the material at hand, with this very object and all it has to offer? That's the question to ask (p. 233)."

Accordingly, he says that modernism will be established by not adhering to the past yet being a realist. Halit Ayarç gives an example:

"If Newton had considered the apple that dropped onto his head as nothing but an apple, he might have deemed it rotten and tossed it aside (p. 233)."

It is pointed out that new possibilities should be availed of to the full. Halit Ayarç suggests a solution as follows:

"Then you'll do what I just told you. Remember that in this day and age, and especially with matters of this sort, all you need to do is desire the change. Life goes on, Hayri bey. As you go on your way, stymied by words at every step, life discovers something new every day (p. 234)."

He argues that new things will be discovered in life by the force of a strong desire. In response, Halit Ayarç states that he believes in Acemişiran, not life. Acemişiran is the name given to Iranians who are non-Arabs and who do not speak Arabic well. It indicates being torn between.

Halit Ayarç found the following slogans to establish and develop the planned institute:

"Metals never regulated on their own.
Regulation is chasing down the seconds (p. 238)."

Hayri İrdal adds to these slogans:

"Shared time is shared work.
A true man is conscious of time.
The path to well-being springs from a sound understanding of time (p. 238)."

Halit Ayarç says that counting is always deceptive; it leads us to ridiculous and incomplete results, and it is not possible to count anything. He would believe in statistics if human beings were one-dimensional, and man is complicated and changes constantly (p. 257). Since man continually changes, his state, movements and thoughts cannot be predicted by statistical science. Clock and time, modern life is for real life, the dead have nothing to do with time (p. 257). Modern life commands us to stay far from the notion of death (p. 56). For this reason, it is emphasized that the watch is humane and has become the most important means of determining the truth.

It is maintained that all work done in real life comes to the world after human being, real life is to know how to have time and use it as it flows; therefore, it is imperative to imbue people with time consciousness.

"Work is a matter of mastering one's time, knowing how to use it. We are paving the way for such a philosophy. We'll give our people a conscious-ness of time. We'll create a whole new collection of adages and Jeas and spread them all over the country. We shall declare hat man is first and foremost a creature who works, and that vrk itself is time (p. 259)."

He proposes that the clock is a tool and a means, that progress begins with its development, and that people are detached from nature by looking at their watches. Hence, the watch is a humanitarian tool that works separately from nature (p. 259).

"A clock is an instrument, a tool, albeit a very important one. Progress begins with the evolution of the timepiece. Civilization took its greatest leap forward when men began walking about with watches in their pockets, keeping time that was independent from the sun. This was a rupture with nature itself. Men began following their own particular interpretation of time. But that's not all. For a timepiece is time itself, we mustn't forget that! (p. 259)."

In the novel, it is pointed out that the institute has attracted significant attention in a short time thanks to the promotional campaign surrounding the whole society, and the new time-setting habit that the institute strives to spread has struck root permanently (Ayдын, 2013: 129).

As he explains how the staff working at the institute should be, Hayri İrdal states,

"We'd draw more business if our staff were to speak in sweet and measured tones whenever they interacted with customers, and even more so if we were to teach them to be deferential, polite, and professional. If they could learn to speak about the institute and timepieces in a uniform way, relaying exactly the same information every time, and with the air of a serious professional, without adding extraneous information, and, perhaps most important, if they themselves behaved like timepieces, constructed to do this very job, saying only what was needed, ~ speaking with a seriousness of purpose that might seem strange coming from the mouths of employees of certain ages, and then falling silent (p. 265)."

Halit Ayarç replies as follows:

"A kind of automaton, then? The greatest weakness of our age is its greatest strength. The foundation, the very backbone, of a new, hyperorganized Middle Ages, as we prepare to enter a new period of enlightenment. You're right, Hayri Bey. Better said—you're an absolute genius! You've made a remarkable discovery. People will be just like alarm clocks, speaking when fixed to do so, and then remaining silent when they're not on duty, isn't that it? The human being on vinyl. Fantastic! (p. 265)."

It is described that along with the innovations brought by reality, mechanization that results from modernism has been adapted to people and suggested that the enterprise should keep up with the times accordingly. It is pointed out that standardization will be ensured thanks to an order in which modernism will regulate the lives of people. However, certain things are kept apart from modernism. Employment of men and women in this regard is summarized as follows:

"If you ask me, I say we restrict the personnel in the regulation stations to women and young girls. Let's not post any men there. From what you're saying, the only ones to whom we'll be able to teach such manners and etiquette are young girls. We'll have to find something else for the men to do. Why would we need to turn a whole army of men into automatons! We wouldn't be able to do it anyway. Today's women can get on with young and pretty women just as well as men can. It's obvious from the way they admire all the new movie stars. (p. 266)."

Thus, women will be turned into vending machines in order to establish this order, while men will do other things. Hayri İrdar subsequently thinks,

"If nothing else I was quite sure that there were just as many brainless men as there were women. No, I thought both should receive the same training, but I didn't insist because something else came to mind. We would definitely need a fashion advisor, regarding dress and uniforms. I wondered if

we couldn't employ both Selma Hanim and Nevzat Hanim. I brought this up, and my face blushed bright crimson. He agreed with me in principle, but he was hesitant about the persons in question. So, trying out my new approach, I called his bluff (p. 266)."

"As manager of the institute, your grace suggested Sabnye Hanim, and I accepted. So I in turn shall choose Selma Hanim as she is a close friend of mine (p. 266)."

By availing of the female and male arrangement Halit Ayarçı planned, he intends to employ Selma Hanım, whom he loves. Halit Ayarçı accepts this offer (p.266). In this way, people who are responsible for the regulation of male and female conduct, are determined. Hayri İrdal incorporates his desires too into the process of this arrangement.

The New Organization of Life and Post-Regulation

In the later parts of the novel, Hayri İrdal made up a man named Ahmet Zamani Bey and continued to lie that he was one of the famous scholars of the seventeenth century, that he was an essential watchmaker in that period and founded a school specifically for this craft, and that he was a student of Muvakkit Nuri Bey who was among the students of this school. With the lie developed around this person, the "Time Regulation Institute" acquires a false prophet. This person will serve the development of the "Time Regulation Institute" with his doings. Hayri İrdal describes this person in such a way that he has become a leader of the "Time Regulation Institute" with this fabricated person. A leader has now been found for this arrangement. Leaders are needed to implement modernist ideas. Leaders are idealized to ensure that they are loved and appreciated by people.

The words "A modern man" and "Totally one of us" were welcomed because, being willing, disciplined, abstinent and monogamous, this person, who was positioned as us, was suitable for the time. The person who entirely fits modernism and is intended to be used as a tool to consolidate the order has now been found. People other than this person can not hold on and live in uncertainty. For people who have attempted to find themselves amid uncertainty in their efforts to become modern, and who are stuck in a tragicomic situation, Hayri

İrdal says: "*You might see them as the ones who have been locked out. They lead indolent lives, half the time taking the world seriously, half the time dismissing it as a joke, simply because their failure to adjust to the modern age has confused them! Surely this has something to do with their ties to some distant past or another! (p. 139)*"

When he learns that the "Time Regulation Institute" was a genuine stage in the history of bureaucracy, Halit Ayarçı says:

"Whoever wrote that piece truly understands what we're doing. An intelligent man indeed! Above all else he understands our modern age. It's been given many names, but first and foremost it is the age of bureaucracy. All the philosophers from Spengler to Kieserling, are writing about bureaucracy. I would go as far as to say that it is an age in which bureaucracy has reached its zenith, an age of real freedom. Any man who understands is a valuable figure. I am in the process of establishing an absolute institution—a mechanism that defines its own function. What could be closer to perfection than that? (p. 286)"

Thus, after finding the spiritual leader of the institute, it was time for bureaucratic arrangement. It is planned that bureaucratic order is established by this institution, which is the most crucial feature of modernism, and that the institute is used as a tool. The bureaucracy century is thus registered. It is seen that this period is a system that desires to be institutionalized and seeks perfection after the War of Independence. However, it is mentioned that it will not be easy to be civilized in fifty years, and that the "Time Regulation Institute" will gradually develop and find its way. It is stated that it is standard for people raised by this institute to be compared to Voltaire, Faust or Balzac and Zola (p. 289).

"Do you think it's easy for civilization carrying so much history on its back to catch up in just fifty years? A little exaggeration along to way is only natural. A novelist will be likened to Zola, and you will be compared with this or that philosopher. Truth is, I am shocked by this attitude of yours! You should be glad that I'm not jealous of you, instead you're angry with me, even aggressive! If I were you, I'd stay quiet and focus on my work ahead. You need to pull yourself together and write your book, and then come up with new ways to expand our institute! These are all such simple tasks--they'll soon be second nature, as you'll see. What I am saying is that you're there already. You were in a rage last week when you read that article that was so critical of you. But to me it seems

there is nothing to get so riled up about. I mean, if what you are telling me now is true, why then, you should have welcomed this article with open arms. For that journalist was describing your life as you yourself have explained it to me. But the piece angered you, and that can only mean you were pleased with the others! (p. 289)"

The life and thoughts of Hayri İrdal are thus idealized. He is still having trouble getting used to his new life. Hayri İrdal thinks that his wife exaggerates everything in an interview she gave to a newspaper, and he becomes very angry with her. Halit Ayarç says that all that is said is true and that it should be kept pace with innovation. Hayri İrdal is gradually convinced, but Halit Ayarç objects to this.

"You're changing, Hayri Bey, you're changing. And this should be a source of happiness. A new life, a new man. And there's no other choice, as you won't be coming back a second time. If I were you, I would try to be the man my wife wants me to be. Consider the interview a road map and follow it devoutly! (p. 291)"

Hayri İrdal, who claims that this new formation is imperative and a fact of the new life and has to convince others to believe in this, begins to drift into a dead end. On the one hand, he staggers between his old and miserable life and his rich and new life.

Halit Ayarç says that traditional life creates a culture of man's facial styles and the traditions and customs that form the culture disappear with modernism; for example, error exists for those who correct that mistake. Every person is creative, and this creativity can succeed only when given to man (p. 357). He adds that knowledge created by culture delays people and can grow with creation, but knowledge prevents it (p. 359). But modern life is an irreversible life. It is impossible to return from here after benefiting from the blessings of epicurism. Halit Ayarç expresses this situation as follows:

"Managing people is incredibly difficult and it takes time. The important thing is to set the stage. Humans then live what they have been given. The trick is to give humankind a chance to be creative. I don't like the theater. I am a man who likes life to unfold naturally! (p. 357)".

For humans, life now wends its way ceaselessly.

"It was strange to see how, in countries ill disposed to such institutes,' the authorities felt compelled to supply the public with dear and concise reasons for their opposition. In almost all cases the announcement was in fact the same: "Our industries are developed to a degree as to preclude the need for such an institute. (p. 366)".

This institute has been established to reinforce this carousel order because people need it to move from traditional to modern life. However, there is no such need in developed countries (p. 347) because those countries completed this work and switched to modernism. Procedures will be applied one by one by making modern life realistic to the modern man and by not accepting uncertainty (p. 347). They must take every precaution to avoid traditional life and make it visible in buildings.

"All too forced! A window's a window. But this isn't a window at all! If I simply rubbed off the designs on the sides, it would look just like Gothic stained-glass. No, we're looking for something else. We want the concept of a timepiece to be embodied in the very structure of the building. They should be as one! We don't want motifs soldered on. We want to see our programs and goals manifested in the building itself. (p. 370)".

In this way, new architecture will be created. It no longer depends on traditional rules. Now it has an abstract architectural understanding (p. 384).

At the end of the novel, the construction of a building for the "Time Regulation Institute", supported by everyone, is completed. However, when it comes to constructing of employees' own homes, they all refuse planning for their homes. They consider it sufficient that these houses are solid, cheap and safe (p. 385). "We want a home, not a clever work of art!" and they add, "Don't confuse such thing, my dear friend! A house is one thing--science and the subconscious quiet another!" (p. 385). Thus, those who applauded the change in a public building, reacted strongly when it came to their home. Hayri İrdal says: "When public funds were involved, they were generous, enthusiastic, proud of my work, and enthralled -by its innovation, but when it touched on their personal interests, they flipped sides." (p. 386).

"No, they weren't lying," I said. "They were sincere on both occasions. They adore innovation providing it doesn't affect them personally. And they continue to adore it but with this one condition. In their personal lives they prefer to be safe

and secure”

"How can that be? Can a human being think about something in two entirely different ways? Can two different sets of logic coexist in their heads?"

Halit Ayarçi was truly in despair.

"Of course. Or, better said, when personal interests shift, logic follows suit."

"Truth is, I just cannot comprehend such a thing. All my life's work has collapsed before me. This institute is no longer mine! (p. 386-387).

It is thereby seen that Turkish people thought of pursuing traditional life at home and sympathizing with modern life in public, and that they behaved traditionally when their interests were concerned.

At the end of the novel, a new era begins with the arrival of the head of the American delegation, as the symbol of mastermind, for the Time Regulation Institute established in the name of the public. The head of the delegation calls 0135 and asks what time it is. Then, the following sentences appear in the novel that initiate the closing stages of the institute:

"Glancing at the clock on the wall, he turned to me and asked: When it's that easy to ascertain the time, where is the need for such an institute? This was more or less the same question I had been asking Halit Ayarçi since the day the institute was establish..." (p. 389-390).

A higher adjuster has arrived and brought a new adjustment to the institute. As a result, the institute is closed, but Halit İrdal found a traditional solution to the modern Time Regulation Institute through the disciplinary commission. This traditional solution is an essential step of modernism, which disappeared within tradition, such as the Time Regulation Institute:

"Please forgive me. I could only make it back just now. I have had the decision amended. That's to say, the decision to abrogate had been suspended, but in order for the institute to remain in a permanent state of liquidation we need to form a (committee for continuous liquidation. All our friends will have positions in this new entity." (p. 393).

By finding a liquidation commission to close the institute, an intermediate solution is made. Hence, it becomes possible to establish new institutions according to the setting of the new adjuster.

Conclusion

The novel aims to reveal the maps of the two periods. Tanpınar lived through the whole period called *alla turca* and *alla franca* and faced a period that included both features. During the 1950s, people living in Anatolia and Rumeli regions within Türkiye's borders were in a confused state of mind. People have started to live both traditional and modern lives together. Time is left to itself in traditional life and there is no need for external intervention. Time is shaped around idealism, and people establish life accordingly. However, this is not an absolute. When modern life emerges, the watch, which is a mechanized tool, begins to control man. People first desire to conform to this new order, but afterwards, they feel like to find a cure, a midway between the traditional and the modern.

In the novel, Hayri İrdal faces contradictions as he enters this modern life. This is because he lived in a traditional society in the past. He thinks that a transition can be realized by combining the trio of clock, time and human in order to overcome the difficulties of transition to modern life. Hayri İrdal stays in the mental hospital for some time during his transition period before meeting Halit Ayarçi, and here he is treated with a new method of psychoanalysis, a new invention by Doctor Remzi. With this method, people can gain insight into their problems, increase awareness of ways to change and achieve more rational control over their lives. He is taught that he must have dreams in a way that would include what psychoanalysis anticipates because positive science is the only force that can create modernism. He was discharged from the hospital after learning all the elements of modernism and understanding that positive science is a solution to all questions. In the sense of modernism, the clock is only a tool and must be benefited for success.

In order to combine the order of the clock with the order of modernism, all parts of the clock functioning regularly in a system are held up as examples. Halit Ayarçi is the person who will

bring these together. As it is understood from his surname, Ayaracı (Adjuster), who establishes an institute to regulate life, aims to establish a giant system that brings everything in order and functions in harmony like a clock.

Hayri İrdal thinks of humanizing time with the belief that an order will be established through clocks, and thus, people will comply with the new time. He envisages that time, as God's invention, can be controlled by man. In this way, modern life will be grasped, and the wealth attained by the West will be achieved. Hayri İrdal and Halit Ayaracı aim to reach this goal using the institute.

Transformation is an indispensable requirement of this new order. However, the old life keeps chasing them. It isn't easy to get used to the new life. Creativity, one of the human characteristics, is prevented, and people who act together always follow the words of a particular person. Thus, problems arise, and the development that the West has reached cannot be reached in any way. Halit Ayaracı and Hayri İrdal, who want to actualize this quickly, cannot achieve it quickly. The person representing a superior mind (The United States of America) learns the time by phone and says there is no need for an institute. In other words, it is suggested that a country wishing to reach the West's level of development cannot achieve this, and it needs to be managed by a higher mind. The products and services produced by the West must be consumed. The Time Regulation Institute is thus not required, and others regulate time. The institute staff will now work on closing this workplace and will be busy with it. It is because these people need to consume, not produce. Therefore, they have to keep busy with other tasks.

It is understood that in the institute, modern man must be obedient and seen as part of mechanization. A system is envisaged in which everything is in an order of adjustment, and an adjuster is at the head of all arrangements. However, the system of adjustment is created by idealizing because the idealized new realistic structure will lead people in a number of ways.

References

- Aydın, Mehmet (1993) *Kayıp zamanın izinde: Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar*, Ankara: Doğu Batı
- Bell, Daniel (1978) *The cultural contradictions of capitalism*, New York: Basic Books.
- Berman, Marshall (2004) *Katı olan her şey buharlaşıyor*, İstanbul: İletişim.
- Faucault, Michel (2015) *Hapishanenin doğuşu*, Ankara: İmge.
- Gencer, Bedri (2011) *Hikmet kavşağında edmund burke ile ahmet cevdet*, İstanbul: Kapı.
- Jameson, Fredric (2005) *Kültürel dönemeç*, Ankara: Dost.
- Marcuse, Herbert. (2010) *Tek boyutlu insan: İleri işleyim toplumunun ideolojisi üzerine incelemeler*, İstanbul: İdea.
- Gramsci, Antonio (1986) *Hapishane defterleri: Seçmeler*, Çeviren: Kenan Döner, İstanbul: Onur.
- Tanpınar, Ahmet Hamdi (1961) *Saatleri ayarlama enstitüsü*, İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi.
- Tanpınar, Ahmet Hamdi (1961) *The time regulation institute*, Translated: Maureen Freely and Alexander Dawe, London: Penguin Books.

Extended Abstract

The fact that the developments taking place in the world during the 20th century are based on modernism has inevitably led to the questioning of this formation. Modernism, which makes itself felt in every field from human life to the organization of states, has radically changed the structure of societies and human life. The destruction of traditional life and the introduction of a system that puts the conditions and possibilities of a new life with the idea of replacing it can be considered as the most important development of the last few centuries. The changes in the social sphere

stemmed from the slow attitude of adapting to the new order in the process of bringing together the masses of people with the pressure of modernism. It is seen that the rules and practices based on imposition from above took place during the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire, which was influenced by the French Revolution, lived through the Tanzimat Reform and Constitutional Monarchy periods. Thereafter, it was demolished and replaced by a Republic based on the nation state model. In this new era, the conflict between the traditional worldview and modernist thought began to take place between past, present and future. Modernization efforts that started in Türkiye during the Tanzimat and constitutional monarchy periods continued during the republican period. However, in Türkiye where the bourgeoisie could not be formed, modernism imposed from above led to several problems. These problems have been subjects to the modern Turkish novel, in which the phenomenon of staying in between was tried to be expressed. One of these novels is Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar's *the Time Regulation Institute*, which was serialized in Yeni Istanbul newspaper in 1954. This novel, which was written in a period when the problems of the modern system, namely the adjuster system, emerged, depicts a transition. The transition from the traditional period to the modern period has been quite painful. In fact, while all the problems in modernism were thought to have been solved, it was understood that there were problems in this period too. For this reason, the door of an era beyond the modern is opened part way. The novel, which was written in a period when the problems of the modern system, namely the adjuster system, emerged, depicts a transition. The lives of the Turkish people have been transformed in the course of transition from constitutionalism to republic, from the traditional to modern. In this study, *The Time Regulation Institute* novel is examined, and qualitative semantic content analysis is conducted. For this purpose, various categories are created, and the transition from the traditional to modern life is examined within the framework of the words and expressions found in the novel. In line with these categories, various

questions are answered and inferences are made. These categories are: Traditional and Modern Life Within Time Frame, Attempts of Establishing Modernity, Contrast of the Real and Ideal, The New Organization of Life and Post-Regulation. In order to combine the order of the clock with the order of modernism, all parts of the clock functioning regularly in a system are held up as examples. Halit Ayarçı is the person who will bring these together. As it is understood from his surname, Ayarçı (Adjuster), who establishes an institute to regulate life, aims to establish a giant system that brings everything in order, and functions in harmony like a clock. Hayri İrdal thinks of making the time humanized with the belief that an order will be established through clocks, and thus people will comply with the new time. He envisages that the time as God's invention can be controlled by man. In this way, modern life will be grasped, and the wealth attained by the west will be achieved. Hayri İrdal and Halit Ayarçı aim to reach this goal by means of the institute. The novel propounds that, as a consequence of the establishment of the time regulation institute, modern man must be seen as submissive and a part of mechanization. In the system that is envisaged, everything is in an adjustment order, and there is an adjuster at the head of the whole arrangement. It is depicted that the natural and traditional stationary time is brought under control with modernism, and the Turkish people, who are wedged between the east and West, have difficulty in accepting it. We are faced with the fact that the West will not allow Türkiye to benefit from the certain parts of modern life even though the country has adopted them, and the Turkish people will be constantly reminded that they are easterners. It is understood that in the institute, modern man must be obedient and seen as a part of mechanization. A system is envisaged in which everything is in an order of adjustment, and an adjuster is at the head of all arrangement. However, the system of adjustment is created by idealizing because the idealized new realistic structure will lead people to a number of ways.

Yazar Bilgileri

Author details

(Sorumlu Yazar **Corresponding Author**) Prof. Dr.,
Aydın Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi,
huseyin.celik@adu.edu, Orcid: 0000-0001-9375-9320

Destekleyen Kurum/Kuruluşlar Supporting-Sponsor

Institutions or Organizations:

Herhangi bir kurum/kuruluştan destek alınmamıştır. None

Çıkar Çatışması

Conflict of Interest

Herhangi bir çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır. None

Kaynak Göstermek İçin

To Cite This Article

Çelik, H. (2024). Modernization efforts within the scope of the republic project in Türkiye: The example of the novel of The Time Regulation Institute. *İletişim Kuram ve Araştırma Dergisi*, (66), 175-189. <https://doi.org/10.47998/ikad.1371832>