The Glorious Return of the Supernatural to the Novel: An Analysis of the New Conception of Reality in the Stories of Efrasiyab and the Red-Haired Woman [1] [2]

Hülya BAYRAK AKYILDIZ [3]

Abstract

Realism lingered quite long in Turkish literature. From the 1900s onwards, realism and naturalism were prominent movements. If the often-despised detective novels are put aside, there was hardly any room for the extraordinary in fiction. During the socialist realism era, realism almost became the sole movement and was strong until the 1950s. Despite the appearance of the first modern literature from that time on, it kept its prominent position until the 1970s. What realism skillfully pushed outside the literature were the supernatural, the magic, the extraordinary, the mythical, and the fairy-tale-inspired narration. However, these elements made a comeback in the 1980s and quickly spread in the 2000s. Today, almost all fiction comprises these elements, and this time not in the form of the despised "B-literature," but in a very mainstream way. Today, the fantastic, detective novels, historical/biographical fiction and science fiction of all sorts are living their golden age. Often fused with myths, fairy-tales, epics, and such, this new type of fiction is like a scene where the supernatural has made its glorious comeback. In this paper, I will show the different ways and forms of this comeback in two novels: The Stories of Efrasiyab by İhsan Oktay Anar and The Red Haired Woman by Orhan Pamuk. Analyzing these novels based on their approach to the supernatural, I will try to show how myths and reality mix, what type of novel universe they create, and what this new reality stands for in the postmodern times we live in.

Keywords: *Postmodernism, Postmodern Turkish novels, Supernatural, Extraordinary, Postmodern reality, The Red Haired Woman, The Stories of Efrasiyab*

---

[1] This study does not require ethics committee permission.
[2] This essay is presented as a proceeding at the 6th International Congress of Turkology held in Warsaw in 2022.
[3] Anadolu University, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Turkish Language and Literature, **hbayrak@anadolu.edu.tr,** ORCID: 0000-0002-1382-4047

Doğaüstünün Romana Görkemli Dönüşü: Efrasiyab'ın Hikâyeleri ve Kırmızı Saçlı Kadın Romanlarında Yeni Gerçeklik Anlayışı

Hülya BAYRAK AKYILDIZ [4]

Öz

Gerçekçilik Türk edebiyatında oldukça uzun süre varlığını sürdürdü. 1900'lerden itibaren realizm ve natüralizm öne çıkan akımlar oldu. Genelde bir horgörüyle bakılan polisiye romanlar bir yana bırakılırsa, kurguda doğaüstüne neredeyse hiç yer yoktu. Toplumcu gerçekçiliğin hakim olduğu dönemde gerçekçilik neredeyse tek akım haline geldi ve 1950'lere kadar güçlü bir şekilde varlığını sürdürdü. O dönemden itibaren ilk modern edebiyatın ortaya çıkmasına rağmen, 1970'lere kadar önemli konumunu korudu. Gerçekçilik doğaüstü, sihir, olağanüstü, mitik ve masalsı anlatımı ustalıkla edebiyatın dışına itmişti. Ancak bu unsurlar 1980'lerde geri dönüş yaptı ve 2000'lerde hızla yayıldı. Bugün neredeyse tüm kurgular bu unsurları içeriyor ve bu kez hor görülen "ikinci sınıf edebiyat" şeklinde değil, oldukça ana akım bir şekilde. Bugün fantastik, polisiye, tarihi/biyografik kurmaca ve her türden bilimkurgu altın çağını yaşıyor. Genellikle mitler, masallar, destanlar ve benzerleriyle kaynaşan bu yeni kurgu türü, doğaüstünün görkemli bir şekilde geri dönüş yaptığı bir sahne gibidir. Bu yazıda, iki romanda bu geri dönüşün farklı yolları ve biçimleri gösterilecektir: İhsan Oktay Anar'ın Efrasiyab'ın Hikâyeleri ve Orhan Pamuk'un Kırmızı Saçlı Kadın romanları. Bu romanlar doğaüstüne yaklaşımları temelinde incelenerek, mitlerle gerçekliğin nasıl iç içe geçtiğini, nasıl bir roman evreni oluşturduklarını gösterilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Postmodernizm, Postmodern Türk romanları, Doğaüstü, Olağanüstü, Postmodern gerçeklik, Kırmızı Saçlı Kadın, Efrasiyab'ın Hikâyeleri*

---

[4] Anadolu Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü, hbayrak@anadolu.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0002-1382-4047

Introduction

Turkish literature welcomed the narrative genres of novel and short story relatively late, in the 1860s. First, there were translations of foreign works, then "adaptations" in which local elements replaced the foreign ones.

Early Turkish novels were heavily influenced by the romanticism movement. Romanticism was predominant in French literature, the primary source of inspiration for Turkish novel, until recently. Turkish writers mostly read romantic literature and had idols such as Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas. Realism had already risen when the first Turkish novels were written, but romanticism was a far better fit for Turkish writers at the time for several reasons.

First, narrative genres were in verse, such as folktales, or they had a lot of supernatural elements, as in tales and myths. Both of these genres prioritized the use of language, such as rhyme, tropes, meter, rhythm, and supernatural elements.

Early Turkish novel contained extraordinary elements not only because of the romantic impact, but also because of the usual features of the narratives in the tradition and their inexperience in fiction. The plotline was full of miracles or coincidences and extraordinary elements. Fairy-tale effects dominated the entire narrative, from setting to character development.

The main themes of the novels were love, adventure in exotic lands, and the impacts of Westernization on society. The good and the bad, the right and the wrong were as clear as black and white. The events were narrated in a subjective, romantic way, and the author did not hesitate to be partial. The unfettered attitude of the romantic writers toward these issues was convenient for the inexperienced novelists under the influence of tradition.

It was Halit Ziya who wrote the first realist novels, although there were some realist elements in the works of Recaizade Ekrem as well. As realism began to lose its former power in the West, it still elevated the Turkish novel closer to the novel in the Western sense. The fact that fiction was now based on causality, with the influence of the realist movement, gave the novel a plausibility/resemblance to reality. This was a proven method since Aristotle's *Poetics.*

The characters were portrayed in a multidimensional and complex way. Events were no longer governed by fairy-tale optimism or melancholy, but by the laws of nature. The novel differed from fairy-tales, legends, and mythology in terms of its resemblance to reality, as at the time in the West the genre was defined by its absence of supernaturalism often seen in "romances".

Turkish novels clung to realism for many years, which they adopted relatively late. There seems to be a silent consensus that the only way to narrate would be in a direct, unadorned, realistic style. During this period, the extraordinary was excluded from the novel and the short story. The adherence to realism delayed the effect of modernism as well. Imaginary elements, especially brought forward by movements such as surrealism, were almost not seen in mainstream narratives until the 1950s.

The effects of modernism, which began in the 1950s, became more visible in the 1970s and were replaced by postmodernism in the 1980s.

According to Moran's essay "September 12 and the Innovative Novel", the Turkish novel has mostly followed a realist approach, with a few exceptions. However, after 1980, novelists such as Nazlı Eray, Latife Tekin, Orhan Pamuk, and Bilge Karasu started incorporating postmodern features in their work, which deviated from the traditional realist line. The common feature of these novels was the escape from reality. One of the reasons for this deviation was the 1980 coup d'état, which targeted the left and promoted the obsolescence of social

concepts and realism that socialist realist literature was based on. The second reason was the global spread of postmodernism which would not rely on reality with the same taken-for-granted confidence as in the past (2014, p. 50-51-56).

The postmodern approach to reality blurred the line between fictive and objective reality and, therefore provided a good platform for the formerly excluded fictive elements such as the supernatural and mythic elements.

The Concept of Reality from Modernism to Postmodernism

Modernism was based on objective scientific knowledge and organized all aspects of society around this core. It is meant to express the ideology of modernity, though these two terms are often used interchangeably.

Modernity is generally thought to have begun with the Renaissance and was defined in relation to Antiquity. Modernity implies the progressive economic and administrative rationalization and differentiation of the social world (Sarup, 1993, p. 130). The Project of modernity formulated in the 18th century by the philosophers of the Enlightenment consisted of their efforts to develop objective science, universal morality and law, and autonomous art (Sarup, 1993, p. 143).

Modernism in art is a distinct concept. It challenges the concept of objective reality and presents itself in a fragmented, confused, rebellious, and destructive manner towards this imposed reality. However, it is important to remember that modernism still believed in scientific knowledge; in fact, many of its aspects came from Freud's psychoanalytic method, which was considered the most remarkable scientific breakthrough of the time.

Modernism is a particular set of cultural or aesthetic styles associated with the artistic movement that originated around the turn of the 20th century. Modernism developed in conscious opposition to classicism; it emphasized experimentation and the aim of finding an inner truth behind surface appearance or revolting against the imposed reality and the set of values that arise from it.

The basic features of modernism can be summarized as an aesthetic self-consciousness and reflexiveness; a rejection of narrative structure in favor of simultaneity and montage; an exploration of the paradoxical, ambiguous and uncertain, open-ended nature of reality, and the rejection of the notion of an integrated personality in favor of an emphasis upon the Freudian 'split' subject (Sarup, 1993, p. 131). These features, all of which we see in postmodernism as well, make it harder to distinguish one from the other. But, as Jameson (1998, p. 19) states, secondary or relatively non-crucial elements of modernism become primary in postmodernism. Therefore, postmodernism emphasizes more fragmentation, a loss of belief in objective truth, is much more heterogeneous, ambiguous and parodic.

Postmodernity suggests what came after modernity; it refers to the incipient or actual dissolution of those social forms associated with modernity (Sarup, 1993, p. 130). As dangerous as it is to think of the two as binary oppositions, postmodernity is mainly considered to emphasize diverse forms of individual and social identity. Instead of a coercive totality and totalizing politics, postmodernity stresses a pluralistic and open democracy. Instead of the certainty of progress associated with the Enlightenment Project, there is now an awareness of contingency and ambivalence. Puritan asceticism has given way to the pleasure principle (Sarup,1993, p. 130).

In postmodernism, reality is seen as subjective and socially constructed, rather than objective and universal. Postmodernists argue that there is no single objective reality that exists independently of human experience and interpretation. Instead, reality is shaped by the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which it is

perceived. Different individuals and groups have different perspectives on reality, which are shaped by their own unique experiences, identities, and cultural backgrounds. Thus all perspectives matter equally, for example religious convictions or superstitions can be as valid as scientific propositions because science is a narrative as well.

Lyotard (1989) states in The Postmodern Condition that science is also a narrative, despite its previous efforts to differentiate itself from them. Postmodernism starts with the collapse of grand narratives ("grands récits"), the loss of credibility of objective knowledge or general/universal rules produced based on the objectivity of knowledge. The claims of development, rationality, and scientific objectivity of modernism lost their credibility, thus beginning postmodernism and giving way to all kinds of non-scientific narratives that come back as strong as ever.

Reality Shift in Turkish Novel

With the effects of postmodernism, the Turkish novel recalled all the demons of the long realist era. The supernatural made a glorious comeback to literature, after having been firmly excluded for years. Tales, myths, miracles, coincidences, prophecies, demons, fairies, divine intervention, and destiny were now ubiquitous in the narrative. This was also the trend in the West. Prophesies were considered as valid as scientific propositions based on the idea that "science is also a narrative". The positivist and determinist view of realism, and especially naturalism, was being replaced by a mysticism reminiscent of medieval stories.

It was the golden age of the "Marvel aesthetic", anachronistic historical novels, detective stories, science fiction and fairy-tales, which were once perceived as B-literature. Traditional oppositions were replaced by fusion, distinct styles were replaced by intertextuality, resemblance to reality was replaced by metafiction, and parody.

In his novel *The Red Haired Woman*, Pamuk depicts the theme of patricide and writes the story of his hero Cem, combining the stories of Oedipus Rex and Firdevsi's Rustam and Sohrab. The destinies of Cem, his son (whose existence he learned of years later), and his mother all merge with these stories.

In *Efrasiyab's Stories*, Anar establishes a dramatic structure that incorporates fairy-tales and the Marvel universe into the novel. The story is a frame narrative, similar to One Thousand and One Nights and Mantıkut Tayr.

The Red Haired Woman begins with sixteen-year-old Cem, a high school student who wants to be a writer, facing financial difficulties after his father left them and moving from Istanbul to Gebze with his mother. He becomes an apprentice to a man he meets there, who makes money by drilling a well and finding water, and leaves the house to dig a well in an empty field. While searching for water, he listens to stories from his master Mahmut, whom he puts in his father's place. Whereas his father had never told him any tales or stories, Master Mahmut tells stories every night based on an image on television, a problem they encounter during the day, or a memory. Cem likes to immerse himself in these tales.

The stories told by Master Mahmut are adorned with supernatural elements; some of these stories come from the Qur'an and some of them are exemplary, educational tales. Although the narrator's attitude towards these stories seems mostly skeptical, these supernatural events also affect his mind.

"While we were sitting on the edge of the tent, chatting, we often saw shooting stars and talked. According to Master Mahmut, each star signified a life. Almighty Allah made the summer nights starry so that we could remember how many people and how many lives there are. Therefore, when a star fell, Master Mahmut would sometimes worry as if he had witnessed someone's death; he would pray and he would resent it when he saw that

I didn't care, and he would tell a new story immediately. Should I have believed everything he told me so he wouldn't get mad at me? Years later, when I decided that the stories Master Mahmut told me inevitably determined my life, I read many books and researched their sources (Pamuk, 2016, p. 33)."

Thus, Cem accepts that the supernatural things he was suspicious of at first determined his life. His destiny will be a combination of the stories of Oedipus and Rostam and Sohrab, which he was interested in and researched.

Pamuk forms intertextual relations by using certain motifs. The narrator, Cem, begins working as an apprentice of a well digger. One of the first stories his master tells him is the story of Yusuf. Yusuf was thrown into a well by his jealous brothers, who were envious of their father's love for him. Cem also abandons his master in a well, believing he has killed him by accidentally dropping the bucket in the well. Later, his son kills him by shooting him in the eye with a gun and throws him into a well. This sequence of events is implied from the very beginning through the motif of the well.

"One evening, a week after we had started digging the well, Master Mahmut told the story of Prophet Yusuf and his brothers. I listened carefully to their father Yakup's loving Yusuf the most among his sons, the jealousy of the other brothers, and the way they deceived Yusuf with lies and threw him into a dark well. Most of all, I remember Master Mahmut looking at me and saying, "Yes, Yusuf was beautiful and very smart, but a father shouldn't discriminate between his sons." "A father must be just," he added later, "an unjust father blinds his child." Why did he bring the word 'blind' into it? Where did that topic come from? To emphasize that Yusuf was at the bottom of the well in pitch black? I have asked myself this many times over the years. Why did this story make me uneasy, why was I angry with my master? (Pamuk, 2016, p. 35)."

These events, which will shape his life and destiny, appear in a story told by his master in the tent theater called "Exemplary Tales Theater" in the town they go to in the evenings, and in the books he reads. These stories tell the fate of Cem, similar to the oracle who tells the fate of Oedipus.

While his master descends into the well, he accidentally drops the full bucket onto him, causing the death of his master or so he thinks. He first runs to the town to seek help, but cannot find anyone he knows. He returns to the well hoping to hear a sound, but he hears nothing. He escapes from there and goes to Istanbul, trying to live as if nothing happened. The guilt in him, however, does not leave him. He believes that he has killed Master Mahmut, whom he sees as his father. At university, he chooses the department of geological engineering. Being a well-digger changes him; he no longer wants to be a writer.

"One of the necessities of pretending nothing had happened was to forget Sophocles' story of Oedipus. I suppressed my curiosity and restrained myself until my third year of college. But then one day in Deniz (the bookshop), that old compilation of dreams came back to me. I read the summary of the story of Oedipus there. I had just realized that the author of this summary was Sigmund Freud. Freud's writing was more about the desire to kill the father that he claims every man carries within him than Sophocles's story (Pamuk, 2016, p. 94)."

When he stumbles upon a translation of King Oedipus in the bookstore, he gets scared for a moment. He reads the book with amazement as if he were trying to discover a secret about his own life.

Indeed, there are many commonalities between Oedipus and his own life. Oedipus is with a woman sixteen years his senior. Just like the Red-Haired Woman who is Cem's first love is sixteen years his senior. Because Oedipus unknowingly killed his father and married his mother, and had four children, a plague broke out in the city, and the perpetrator of the patricide must be found to make it go away. Oedipus also wants this, but in time he realizes that he is the murderer and blinds himself out of guilt.

Years later, Cem learns that the theater actor with the red hair is his father's ex-girlfriend, for whom he had left the house. His story becomes increasingly similar to that of Oedipus, as he tries to escape his fate but fails. Years later, his son, whom he never knew existed, shoots him in the eye and throws him into a well. Before that, just like in the stories of Rostam and Sohrab, Oedipus, and their reenactments in the theater, the father and the son fight one another for a while. Everything that happened to Cem, his son, and the Red-Haired Woman had happened in these stories before.

It is clear that Cem finds his master and his son Enver to be mystical, religious, and somewhat irrational, but in the end, this mystical and mysterious worldview prevails. Pamuk produces a fairy-tale-like narrative by replacing objective reality, determinism, and causality with destiny and prophecies.

The red-haired woman, who is the narrator of the last episode, blames the tales for the development of events in this way: "Life imitates fiction." For example, her son and his actor friends often go to Master Mahmut's house. Master Mahmut has also dug a well in his own garden and put a padlock on the iron cover to prevent the children from falling in. However, the red-haired woman still warns them not to approach the well.

"But I would still go out to the balcony and call out to the children, 'Don't go near the well. For things in old tales and myths can eventually come true. The more you read, the more you believe in tales, the more likely it is to happen (Pamuk, 2016, p. 181)."

His son killed his father, Cem, and since Cem was armed, there is a possibility that this could be considered self-defense. The Red-Haired Woman wants to be able to speak to Cem's wife, Ayşe.

"In the days after my son's arrest, I really wanted to be able to talk to Ms. Ayşe, to comfort her and to lessen her hatred towards us. I was going to tell her that it wasn't our fault; that is how myths and history were written. But Ms. Ayşe was rightly more concerned with what the newspapers wrote every day, rather than with ancient books and myths (Pamuk, 2016, p. 189)."

As can be seen, the narrative is what shapes the reality here. Reality does not depend on objective logic, positivism, or causality, but on how it is perceived and what one believes. Pamuk constructed his novel on a certain fatalism of the kind that can only be found in medieval romances, religious stories, the Shahnameh, and the tales and legends from which it originates. The intrigue factor that modernism has pushed aside returns with a captivating fiction full of coincidences.

The Stories of Efrasiyab was written in the frame story style; Cezzar Dede and Death tell each other stories.

Cezzar Dede is an old man with eleven grandchildren whose time of death has come. He meets Death, who has come to take his life, at a morning coffee shop. Death asks Cezzar Dede for help to take the life of a rowdy, and in return offers him a game: mutual storytelling. During each story, Death will let him live. Meanwhile, Death chases Uzun İhsan, whose life he will take next, from neighborhood to neighborhood, the names of which are the names of the eight gates of Heaven. The fiction is similar to the One Thousand and One Nights and the Decameron Stories in terms of determining a certain theme and telling the stories.

The stories range from vampire tales such as the well-known Count Dracula to Superman, from traditional fairy-tales to Greek mythology. These are stories that parody the originals, not aiming to be believable, and are woven with extraordinary elements, miracles, coincidences, and prophecies.

For example, "Sunny Days" is a vampire story. The story takes place in a boarding school, a prison-style stone building just outside a village in the middle of Anatolia (Anar, 2000, p. 18). The headmaster, who must not be exposed to the sun's rays, is a variant of Count Dracula. A student named Bora Mete paints very well and is assigned by his art teacher to paint nature pictures for the principal, who cannot go outside due to needing to

be protected from the sun. However, the pale-faced schoolmaster, identified with Count Dracula, begins to suck this boy's blood for life, and eventually the boy dies. The art teacher, who has been torturing the children all the time, commits suicide. This is a typical parody of a vampire story in a magical realist style.

In the story "The Curse of Bidaz" told by Cezzar Dede, there is a reference to King Midas, who was cursed and turned everything he touched into gold. Hamdi, a fifty-something-year-old man, lives with his wife and mother-in-law and is dedicated to searching for treasure, though he is constantly persecuted by his mother-in-law. One day, he meets a treasure hunter named Aptülkehribar, who offers to help him find the treasure in the cave where Bidaz was cursed and accidentally turned himself into gold and buried, for a certain amount of money. Hamdi accepts the offer and the two men set out. They soon find the treasure, but as soon as they touch Bidaz, the King comes back to life and attacks them. Hamdi's mother-in-law has secretly followed them and she hits Bidaz on the head with a hammer, killing him, but Bidaz also touches the woman and she turns into gold. Instead of Bidaz, who turns to ashes, Hamdi now has his mother-in-law's body turned into gold as a treasure and becomes very rich. There are also ogres and midgets in the story that are named after prophets and hermits such as Zekeriya, Hıdır, İshak, Âdem, Lokman, İmam, Osman. This story is a combination of a fairy-tale and mythology.

Another story told by Death is about a rich merchant named Abdülzeyyat who is transformed by a dream he had. Despite his religious beliefs, Abdülzeyyat was extremely fond of food and entertainment. In his dream, he sees a hermit named Salih who invites him to find himself on Mount Acıpayam and to distribute his worldly possessions to the poor. Abdülzeyyat refuses to do so in the dream and instead asks the hermit to join his life. The hermit becomes enraged and curses him. When he wakes up, his business starts to go bad and he slowly loses his wealth. Following the advice of a sheik, he sells his shop to him for a bargain price and distributes all his wealth to the poor. Abdülzeyyat sets out to find Salih and faces dangerous adventures on the way, such as hunger, poverty, and thirst. After many adventures, he passes by a double-headed giant and reaches the top of the mountain. Here, Abdülzeyyat starts to wait for Salih and, after a year, he sees his own reflection in the water and realizes that he is Salih.

Transformational stories have an important place in traditional narratives. Feridüddin Attar's Mantıku't Tayr, a mystical masnavi written in the twelfth century, is one of the first examples that come to mind. In this masnavi, the birds make a journey to find Simurg, the sultan of birds. Under the guidance of the Hüthüt bird, thirty birds go in search of this legendary bird. In order to overcome the difficulties of the journey, Hüthüt bird tells various stories to the other birds (in this respect, Mantıkut Tayr is also a story within a story). Eventually, the birds realize that they are the Simurg (meaning "thirty birds" in Persian).

In Sheikh Galib's "Hüsn ü Aşk" (Beauty and Love), Aşk (Love) sets out to go to Diyar-ı Kalb (Land of the Heart) and bring a certain chemistry so that he can marry Hüsn (Beauty), but he realizes at the end of his long and difficult journey that Hüsn is inside him and the two are integrated with each other.

In this story, Anar reproduces the idea of finding oneself at the end of a journey that we see in masnavis such as "Mantıkut Tayr" and "Hüsn ü Aşk". This mystical journey is also related to the philosophy of "vahdet-i vücud" (unity of existence).

"The Child from the Sky" takes place in a town in the middle of Anatolia. It is the story of a husband and wife who, unable to have a child of their own, are gifted with one when a stork brings a child to their garden from the sky. The mother and father try to raise this child, named 'Gülerk' (resonating "Clark") differently. In the end, the child cannot bear this dilemma and, while attempting suicide on the balcony of a mosque, is blown back into the sky by a stork. This is a reference to Clark Kent/Superman. It is a sarcastic, parodic text.

All eight stories in the book are fairy-tale-like texts with supernatural elements. Fairy-tales, mythology, the Marvel universe, Decameron stories, and the Masnavi tradition form a fusion in these stories. The author emphasizes the fictitious nature of fiction with the use of parody, intertextuality, and the supernatural.

Turkish novel explores and embraces supernatural as a means of adapting to the changing perception of reality which is more plural, flexible, subjective and fictive today. Fairy tales and myths never had a better presentation since the exportation of modern genres such as novel, short story and theater.

Conclusion

Postmodernism has made it clear how narratives have constructed reality throughout history. Humans have always told stories and accepted them as true in an effort to understand themselves and the world around them. The scientific objectivity that modernism claimed was rejected with the objection that science is also a narrative in the postmodern era.

By incorporating elements of the supernatural, postmodernist authors push the boundaries of traditional storytelling and offer readers new ways of engaging with reality. Whether as a tool for deconstructing reality, exploring subjectivity, subverting genre conventions, or embracing ambiguity, the inclusion of supernatural elements in postmodern fiction adds depth, complexity, and richness to the literary landscape, inviting readers to embark on a journey of imagination and discovery.

The intertextuality in these works alludes to the fictionality of the narrative, hence its self-reflexive structure. The use of supernatural elements reinforces the perception of this fictionality. Superstitions, prophecies, fortune-telling, pure luck, coincidences, divine intervention, and legendary quests are a part of contemporary novel writing and they are deemed valid and credible in plot. It appears that the serious attitude of the realist novelist to mimic reality in all objectivity is a thing of the past and the social elements, ethics, and philosophy that were dear to realists are subjects of parody.

Postmodernism challenges traditional notions of reality and blurs the lines between what is real and what is not. Fusing the realism of everyday life with fairy tales, myths, and legends, these novels and stories blur the lines between facts and beliefs, fiction and reality, ultimately making them a reflection of one another.

Whether they emphasize the fictionality of the story by creating a modern parallel of a mythological story like Pamuk, or by an intertextuality extending from the Marvel universe to Persian masnavis like Anar, these texts are constructed in the blur of the border between fiction and reality. In the said novels we see how the authors do not need their fictive work to resemble reality. They can explain the course of events simply by coincidences, prophesies, miracles through parodied or parallel narratives of other stories. This was a literary sin once, when Turkish novel was inventing itself by imitating Western realist works. Apparently, it is no more.

References

Anar, İ. O. (2000). *Efrâsiyâb'ın hikâyeleri,* İstanbul: İletişim.

Jameson, F. (1998). *The cultural turn, Selected writings on the postmodern 1983-1998.* New York: Verso.

Lyotard, J. F. (1989). *The postmodern condition, A report on knowledge.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Moran, B. (2014). *12 Eylül ve yenilikçi roman. Türk romanına eleştirel bir bakış III.* İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

Pamuk, O. (2016). *Kırmızı saçlı kadın.* İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.

Sarup, M. (1993). *An introductory guide to post-structuralism and postmodernism.* Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Genişletilmiş Özet

Amaç

Bu yazı, gerçekçilik akımının egemenliği nedeniyle doğaüstü unsurların romandan uzun süre dışlandıktan sonra görkemli bir şekilde geri dönüşünü ve bu dönüşe yol açan bağlamı iki örnek üzerinden incelemeyi amaçlar. Yazı İhsan Oktay Anar'ın *Efrasiyab'ın Hikâyeleri* ve Orhan Pamuk'un *Kırmızı Saçlı Kadın* romanları doğaüstüne yaklaşımları temelinde incelenerek, mitlerle gerçekliğin nasıl iç içe geçtiğini, nasıl bir roman evreni oluşturduklarını ortaya koyar. Romanlarda kader, kehanet, mucize ve tesadüflerin yer alış biçimini ortaya koyar. Tarihsel süreci değerlendirerek, Türk romanında doğaüstünün yer alış biçimlerini küresel ve yerel nedenlerle ve genel anlamda bir paradigma değişimiyle açıklamaya çalışır. İki roman üzerinden yapılan incelemeyle postmodernizmin doğaüstüne, sezgisel ve mistik olana, bilimsel olmayana itibarını nasıl geri kazandırdığını göstermek ister.

Yöntem

Çalışma kuramsal yönteme dayanır. Türk romanında gerçekçiliğin egemenliğini ve doğaüstü unsurların uzun süre nasıl dışlandığını tarihsel bir temele dayandırarak açıklar. Türk romanının tarihsel süreçteki gelişimi ve egemen akım ve eğilimleri ortaya konarak incelenecek eserler için bir bağlam ve karşılaştırma zemini kurulur. Tarihsel eleştirinin yanı sıra metin analiziyle doğaüstü unsurlar tespit edilir ve bunun nasıl bir felsefi bağlamda gerçekleştiği açıklanır. Gerçekçilik Türk edebiyatında oldukça uzun süre varlığını sürdürdü. 1900'lerden itibaren realizm ve natüralizm öne çıkan akımlar oldu. Genelde bir horgörüyle bakılan polisiye romanlar bir yana bırakılırsa, kurguda doğaüstüne neredeyse hiç yer yoktu. Toplumcu gerçekçilik döneminde gerçekçilik neredeyse tek akım haline geldi ve 1950'lere kadar güçlü bir şekilde varlığını sürdürdü. O dönemden itibaren ilk modern edebiyatın ortaya çıkmasına rağmen, 1970'lere kadar konumunu korudu. Gerçekçilik doğaüstü, sihir, olağanüstü, mitik ve masalsı anlatımı ustalıkla edebiyatın dışına itmişti. Ancak bu unsurlar 1980'lerde dönüş yaptı ve 2000'lerde hızla yayıldı. Postmodernizmin gerçeklik anlayışının edebiyattaki etkileri böylece görünür hale geldi. Çalışma bunu örneklendirerek tarihsel bağlamına oturtur ve çağdaş edebiyatın doğaüstü içeriklerini kuramsal olarak açıklar.

Bulgular: Postmodernizmin Türk edebiyatı üzerindeki en önemli etkilerinden biri, doğaüstü unsurların romana yeniden dahil edilmesi olmuştur. Geleneksel olarak Türk hikâye anlatıcılığının mit, folklor ve masallarda derin kökleri vardır. Bu unsurlar, gerçekçilik ve rasyonaliteye öncelik veren modernist dönemde bir kenara itilmiştir. Ancak postmodernizmin tekil bir nesnel gerçekliği reddetmesi, yazarların bu fantastik unsurları anlatılarına yeniden dahil etmelerine zemin oluşturmuştur.

Doğaüstünün geri dönüşü çağdaş edebiyatı geleneksel hikâye anlatma biçimleriyle yeniden ilişkilendirerek bir süreklilik ve kültürel rezonans duygusu sağlar. Ayrıca, karmaşık insan deneyimlerini ve varoluşsal soruları gerçekçiliğin sınırlarını aşan bir şekilde keşfetmek için bir araç sunar.

Orhan Pamuk'un ait *Kırmızı Saçlı Kadın* adlı romanı mitsel ve çağdaş anlatıların harmanlanmasına örnek oluşturur ve Oidipus ve Rostam ve Sohrab'ın antik mitlerini başkahraman Cem'in hayatıyla iç içe geçirir. Kader, kehanet, tekrarlanan döngüler bu metinler aracılığıyla birbirine bağlanarak anlatılır.

İhsan Oktay Anar'ın *Efrasiyab'ın Hikâyeleri* adlı eseri ise Binbir Gece Masalları geleneğinden yararlanarak mit, folklor ve popüler kültür ögelerini harmanlayan, birbirine bağlı bir dizi öykü sunar. Bu anlatı yapısı, postmodernizmin çoğul gerçekçiliğini, oyunculluğunu ve doğrusal hikâye anlatımını reddedişini yansıtır. Parodi artık anlatının ayrılmaz bir ögesidir ve tarihsel anlatılar, mitler, tiyatro, sinema, çizgi roman türleri parodik yeniden yazımlarıyla geçit yapar.

Her iki roman da kurgu ile gerçeklik arasındaki sınırın bulanıklığında inşa edilmiştir. Pamuk, mitolojik bir hikâyenin modern bir paralelini yaratarak, Anar ise Marvel evreninden İran mesnevilerine uzanan bir metinlerarasılıkla hikâyenin kurgusallığını vurgularlar.

Türk edebiyatında doğaüstü ve mitik unsurların yeniden canlanması, daha geniş kültürel ve felsefi değişimlerle uyumludur. Bilimsel rasyonalizmin ve nesnel hakikatin giderek daha az ikna edici bulunduğu gerçek-ötesi çağda, postmodernizm öznel deneyime ve kültürel özgüllüğe değer veren yapısı doğal bir kültürel sonuç gibi görünmektedir.

Türkiye'nin siyasi ve tarihsel bağlamı da postmodern edebiyat ortamının şekillenmesinde önemli bir rol oynamıştır. Örneğin 1980 darbesi, ülkenin edebiyat tarihinde bir dönüm noktası olmuştur. Dönemin siyasi iklimi, toplumcu gerçekçiliği bastırmaya ve daha apolitik bir edebiyat biçimini teşvik etmeye çalışmıştır. İlerleme ve rasyonaliteye dair büyük anlatıların bastırılması, istemeden de olsa postmodernist tekniklerin kabul görmesinin önünü açtı. Egemen ideolojilerden hayal kırıklığına uğrayan yazarlar, biçim ve içerikle ilgili deneyler yapmaya başladılar ve bu da daha çeşitli ve canlı bir edebi çıktıya yol açtı. Doğaüstünün önünü açan yerel nedenler bunlardı.

Sınırlılıklar

İnceleme tarihsel ve kuramsal bir bağlam içinde iki roman üzerinden yapılmıştır. Daha fazla sayıda romanın incelenmesi çıkarımları destekleyici kanıtları arttırarak güçlendirebilir. Dünya edebiyatıyla yapılacak karşılaştırmalar Türk edebiyatında gözlemlenen bu durumun Dünya edebiyatında nasıl yer bulduğunun tespit edilmesini sağlayabilir. Bu tür incelemelerde yazarın bakış açısından çok hâkim paradigmaların etkili olduğu savunulabilir. Edebiyat incelemesinde bu ayrımların nesnel bir şekilde gösterilmesi güçtür.

Öneriler

Postmodern edebiyat incelemeleri felsefi bağlamından koparılarak çoğunlukla göstergelerin incelenmesi şeklinde yapılmaktadır. İncelemelerin postmodernizmin çok parçalı ve interdisipliner yapısına uygun bir biçimde güncellenmesi metin analizlerine derinlik kazandırabilir. Bu doğrultuda incelenecek eserler kültür tarihinin analizine katkı sunabilir. Türk edebiyatında son elli yılda üretilmiş hemen her eser postmodernizmin, yani çağdaş ideolojinin etkilerini taşır. Bu ürünlerin niteliği felsefi bağlamıyla ortaya konmalıdır. Dünya edebiyatından eserlerle yapılacak karşılaştırma, küresel kültürel eğilimlerin neresinde olduğumuzu tespit etmeye yardımcı olabilir. Bu tür çalışmaların çoğalması kültür tarihine ve hâkim paradigmalara ilişkin anlayışımızı derinleştirebilir.

Özgün değer: Postmodern edebiyat eleştirisi çoğu kez felsefi ve kültürel bağlamından kopuk bir göstergeler incelemesi şekline dönüşmüş durumdadır. Postmodernizm içinde nefes aldığımız bir ideoloji olarak göstergelerden fazlasıdır. Çoğul anlatıların inşa edildiği bir dünya çoklu ve değişken gerçekliklerin inşa edildiği bir kurmacaya yol açar ve kurmacanın sadece kurmaca adı verilen eserlerle sınırlı olmadığı anlaşılır. Bu çalışma iki örnek üzerinden çağdaş edebiyatta postmodernizmle birlikte gerçeğin çoğullaşmasını, bilimsel olmayan yöntemlerle edinilen gerçekliğin egemenliğini gösterir. Edebiyat eleştirisi kültür tarihinin ve bu bağlamda anlatı inşasının, gerçek kurgusunun çözümlenmesinin bir aracıdır. Bu yazı, Türk romanında 1980'lerden itibaren görülen bir eğilimi tarihsel bağlama oturtarak ortaya koyması açısından özgün değer taşır.

Araştırmacı Katkısı: Hülya BAYRAK AKYILDIZ (%100).