

## The Time Regulation Institute as a Satirical Allegory

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### Abstract

### Research Paper

This paper focuses on Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar's *The Time Regulation Institute* (1961) as a modern satirical allegory in order to foreground the novel's critical attitude to the mentality that equates modernization with Westernization. The paper aims to pinpoint that in *The Time Regulation Institute* Tanpınar intends to shed light on the issue of Turkey's problematic engagement with modernity and modernization. Unlike *A Mind at Peace* (Huzur 1949), Tanpınar's narration in *The Time Regulation Institute* is not structured around argumentative dialogues between the characters. Rather, the latter depicts Turkey in transformation as a consequence of the project of modernization; more precisely, this study aims to demonstrate that a version of Turkey before, during and after the transformation is humorously displayed. This study aims to contribute not only to the scholarship on Tanpınar's fiction whose fictional works have rarely been examined as a satirical-allegory but also to the modernity studies.

**Keywords:** Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, The Time Regulation Institute, Modernity and Modernization Studies, Satirical Allegory.

## Bir Satirik Alegori Olarak Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü

### Öz

### Araştırma Makalesi

Bu çalışma Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar'ın 1961 yılında yayımlanan *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü* adlı romanını, modernleşmeyi Batılılaşma ile denk tutan zihniyete karşı takındığı eleştirel tavrı ön plana çıkarmaktadır ve Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü'nü modern satirik bir alegori olarak ele almaktadır. Diğer bir deyişle, *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü*'nde Tanpınar'ın Türkiye'nin modernite ve modernleşme ile olan sorunlu ilişkisi meselesine değindiğini iddia edilebilir. *Huzur*'un (1949) aksine, *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü*'nde Tanpınar'ın anlatımı, bu çalışmanın da göstereceği gibi, karakterler arasında geçen tartışma odaklı diyaloglar şeklinde değildir. *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü* daha ziyade modernleşme projesi sonucunda değişim süreci yaşayan bir Türkiye portresi çizer; daha detaylı söylemek gerekirse, *Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü* Türkiye'nin değişim öncesi ve sonrasındaki hallerini mizah yoluyla ortaya koymaktadır. Bu çalışma, hem eserleri satirik alegori olarak nadiren değerlendirilen Tanpınar'ın edebi metinleri üzerine yazılmış olan eleştirel literatüre hem de genel olarak modernite çalışmaları ve araştırmalarına katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Saatleri Ayarlama Enstitüsü, Modernite ve Modernleşme Çalışmaları, Satirik Alegori.

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## Introduction

As *The Time Regulation Institute*'s title evinces, it is about an Institute which is set up to make certain that all clocks and watches in Turkey, starting from Istanbul, are set correctly and work in a unified manner. The main narrative, however, centers around Hayri İrdal, the protagonist and the narrator, not the Institute mentioned in the title. The reader is introduced to Halit Ayarç, another major character, and the Institute until the page 306 of the novel; so, it can be claimed that the novel is about neither Halit nor the time regulation institute, but about the narrator himself. In other words, the narratives of the Time Regulation Institute and Halit Ayarç are inserted into the life of Hayri İrdal who reflects upon his own life-story. The title also indicates *The Time Regulation Institute*'s major theme: modernization should not be understood as a mere institute/a building/a name. It should not be used to exploit the country's mania for progress. Tanpınar's understanding of the modern as displayed in *The Time Regulation Institute* will be understood better with an exploration of this theme in connection with its suggestions of "Eastern" and "Western" conceptions of time.

*The Time Regulation Institute* consists of four parts which are titled "Great Expectations," "Small Truths," "Towards Dawn" and "Every Season Has an End." The sub-title, "Great Expectations" is clearly an ironical allusion to the Dickensian bildungsroman,<sup>2</sup> and as in any bildungsroman, the deeds Hayri narrates clearly demonstrate how they have changed him or led to his personal "growth." The adult-in-the-making mode is parodied in the novel. Also, Hayri can be taken as a mock-picaro because unlike a picaro who is an outsider and untouched by the rules of society, he is well aware of his own contribution to corrupt society. In this part the reader is introduced to the novel's protagonist-narrator Hayri İrdal and his childhood experiences. Hayri himself depicts how his father's grandfather wanted to have a mosque constructed but could not afford it and left this responsibility to Hayri's father. We learn that Hayri's father also failed to fulfill his father's wish, and, therefore the artifacts, which were already bought to be placed in the mosque once constructed, have to remain in Hayri's childhood home. The reader is informed that Hayri the child was surrounded by such objects as carpets, curtains and a "queer" clock (Tanpınar, 1961: 108) called "the Blessed One," or *Mübarek* (Tanpınar, 1961: 45) since Hayri's mother attributed to the clock a spiritual character as either "saintly" or "evil," and saw it as definitely not from this world. In this part Hayri mentions his inexplicable attraction to clocks and watches. Due to his poor interest in school education, Hayri becomes apprenticed to a clock and watch master called Nuri Efendi<sup>3</sup> who has a watch and clock-setting shop where Hayri helps him repair and

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<sup>2</sup> The relationship between the orphan narrative in a bildungsroman and the nation-building attempt in the context of the modernization project carried out in Turkey will be further explored later in this study.

<sup>3</sup> *Efendi* is used to address men and it means gentleman. Also, in this paper, several other words of addressing and honorifics in Turkish will be used, as they are in the novel, such as *Hanım* (Madam) and *Bey* (Sir).

regulate the watches and clocks. Here Hayri learns his master's philosophy of time and the relationship between humans and instruments that measure time.

The second part, "Small Truths," begins with the announcement of Hayri coming back home from the First World War. Hayri, who is married now, gets a job at the post office thanks to Abdüsselam Bey, a philanthropist and friend of Aristidi Efendi, who deals with alchemy. Hayri lives in Abdüsselam Bey's mansion with his wife Emine and their children Zehra and Ahmed. Hayri gets into trouble due to a complicated situation about a precious stone and is put on a trial and accused of stealing the famous "Sherbet Maker's Diamond," or *Şerbetçibaşı Elması* (Tanpınar, 1961: 98) which, in fact, does not exist. This situation causes Hayri to experience a breakdown and he is handed over to a juridical psychiatrist, Dr. Ramiz. Having been trained in psychoanalysis in Vienna, Dr. Ramiz tends to explain each and every situation of people in Turkey in Freudian terms. This part of the novel exemplifies the novel's satire of Freudian psychoanalysis and the character, Dr. Ramiz, who represents it. As Hayri states, for Ramiz, psychoanalysis "was like a religious order leading one to the eternal truth rather than a process applicable to a patient. This new science seemed everything to him [...] It was the only key to the mystery of life" (Tanpınar, 1961: 104). Hayri is diagnosed with "a typical father complex" (Tanpınar, 1961: 111) by Dr. Ramiz and a comical relationship begins between the two characters. In the course of his treatment, Hayri learns several terms from the field of psychoanalysis. To illustrate, Hayri is prescribed "a list of all dreams [he is] expected to see" (Tanpınar, 1961: 118) by Dr. Ramiz and it is as a part of "the newest and the most personal method to [Hayri's] case, a method devised by [Ramiz who] calls it the 'Guided Dream' method" (Tanpınar, 1961: 119) for the treatment of Hayri's father complex. Dr. Ramiz, after his recovery, introduces Hayri to his friends in the coffeehouse at Şehzadebaşı where the reader through Hayri witnesses how people from all walks of life in Turkey spend their leisure hours. As Hayri quotes from Dr. Ramiz, visitors of the coffeehouse "live in their imagination, in totally different worlds. They dream collective dreams" (Tanpınar, 1961: 131). After his wife's death, Hayri joins the Spiritualists Association where he meets his second wife, Pakize who is depicted as a woman who is sometimes incapable of differentiating the real life from the reality created in American movies. Hayri leads this part of his life by performing magic tricks that he learned from Seyit Lütfullah, a man who seeks the treasure of Andronicus through prayers and magic; and, together with other psychics, who are the members of the Spiritualists Association, Hayri conducts sessions for summoning spirits. This phase of his life, which is full of magic tricks and superstitions, is depicted in terms of irrationality and metaphysics by the narrator himself, and this period of his life is important to the extent that it shows whether or not there is a discrepancy between his life before and after the establishment of the institute. In other words, the novel ironically emphasizes that after the establishment of the institute Hayri's life – as an epitome of the modern Turkey – has grown to be more "rational" and "productive." Therefore, the reader cannot easily identify with Hayri before or after the institute because both phases are equally satirized.

In the third and most humorous part of the novel, “Towards Dawn,” Hayri encounters Halit the Regulator (*Ayarıcı*), who is amazed by Hayri’s skill with watches and by his concept of time which he learned from Nuri Efendi. So, immediately after their first meeting, Halit offers him a job in his new enterprise, the Time Regulation Institute. Hayri is to be the assistant director. Initially, Hayri has some reservations regarding the Institute; for instance, he questions his state of “having employment but no work” (Tanpınar, 1961: 207). Halit the Regulator tries to influence Hayri via his modern/ “Western” philosophy of time and work, and his capitalistic vision of establishing new markets for the masses. When Hayri voices his doubts about the Institute, Halit condemns him for lacking faith in them and for being conservative. Halit believes that Hayri’s attitude is “outmoded” (Tanpınar, 1961: 202) and “obsolete” (Tanpınar, 1961: 221). According to Halit, lacking faith in the idea of the new stems from the old-fashioned “Eastern” working and thinking habits and they absolutely have no place in the “new world [populated by] the new man” (Tanpınar, 1961: 203). Influenced by the discourse produced by the liberal tradition of modernity, Halit the Regulator identifies the modern and courage with “the West” and the conservative and cowardice with “the East,” so he despises Hayri whom he finds cowardly and “Eastern”. Halit emphasizes the distinct features of the new reality they live in: “[o]riginal and new. Be careful, I’m saying new, NEW! Where there is new there’s no need for any other merit” (Tanpınar, 1961: 202). Bombarded by the words of the master of manipulation (a.k.a Halit the Regulator), Hayri cannot object to his benefactor, and later he yields to deceit and embraces hypocrisy. Nuri Efendi’s sayings about his own conceptualization of time revitalized through Hayri are re-arranged and used for the campaign of disseminating Halit the Regulator’s “modern” and capitalistic concept of time and work. Astonishingly, the Institute thrives and enjoys a worldwide fame. At a point on their way to success, Hayri is even forced to fabricate a great Ottoman thinker of time whose knowledge is comparable to the European great philosophers of the Enlightenment Age, and so Hayri writes a book about Sheik Ahmed the Timely (*Zamani*) Efendi. This very prolific Ottoman philosopher of time, who is imagined to have lived in the seventeenth century, is so popularized by Halit the Regulator’s campaigns that a Dutch Orientalist called Van Humbert pays a visit to Turkey to see his grave. The information regarding Hayri’s bestselling and well-known account on the life of Sheikh Ahmet the Timely and the visit of the Dutch Orientalist are minor details in the novel. However, they can be regarded significant to the extent they contribute to the satirical tone of the novel: the novel satirizes the orientalist viewpoint that stereotypes “the East” as an exotic and fantasy land and criticizes the view that essentializes “the East” as a laboratory where Eastern societies are studied and thereby a view of Eastern culture is fabricated. Also mentioning the Dutch orientalist helps the novel satirize the Turkish wish to be approved by “the West:” the novel satirizes a mentality which assumes that when Van Humbert, a westerner, approves the validity of Sheikh Ahmet the Timely, the Time Regulation Institute – the epitome of the modernization project of Turkey – seems to be more valid and functional.

In the last part of the novel, “Every Season Has an End,” Halit the Regulator wants Hayri to design the most unusual and flamboyant building for the Institute: a building in the shape of a giant clock. When Hayri designs houses for the personnel of the Institute, they object to this idea because when their personal affairs are concerned, they do not seem to be open to change and modernization. So, Halit the Regulator feels disappointed and leaves the Institute. No sooner does he withdraw from the Institute than a group of American experts come to the Institute to explore it. According to American experts’ report there is no point in the existence of such an institute so the Municipality of Istanbul orders its liquidation. As in the visit of the Dutch Orientalist, the visit of American experts is used to make the same criticism: just as the institute’s validity and maintenance depend on positive feedback from a westerner, the decision of its liquidation also relies on “the West.” That is, characters in the novel can believe that the institute is useless and absurd only when “Western experts” report its impracticality. It can thus be argued that the novel is a satire on Turkey’s attempt at modernization, which is narrated by Hayri Irdal whose misadventures can be read as an allegory for the clash between East and West.

### **1. The Modernization Project of Turkey and The Historical Context of The Time Regulation Institute**

The discourse that gives an account of Turkey’s modernization is resting on the liberal tradition of modernity, which emerged during the *Tanzimat* [Reorganization] Period (1839-1876) in the Ottoman Era. The liberal tradition of modernity rests (consciously and non-consciously) on typically “Eurocentric” thinking, as defined by Shohat and Stam (1994; 2-3). It relies on the Western other in its construction of the (western) self-definition of modernity; the construction of an imagined “other” endures as a helpful and fundamental tool in this self-defining project in the West and in the process of history-making. The discourse resting on the liberal tradition of modernity looked at issues through this particular “modern” lens. Turkish society opted for modernization in the early nineteenth century following the willful efforts of the Ottoman intelligentsia to become a part of the Western civilization, and this was based on their belief that civilization should be based on material development. This discourse, which accepted the superiority of “the West,” was produced in the late years of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century by a generation of intellectuals and bureaucrats who had been educated in secular schools. “Their conception of the West was entwined with superiority, which was believed to be springing not only from the power of material civilization such as science and technology, but also from various cultural elements such as clothes, pet dogs, piano lessons, French lessons, opera, balls, dancing, and novel-writing” (Göçek, 1996: 128). Likewise, Hilmi Yavuz criticizes metonymic understanding of modernity and asserts that “Turkish modernization assumed that the piece is the whole itself because it thought that Westernization was possible by means of some concrete and visual symbols; it could not comprehend that civilization acquisition is only probable with abstract phenomena and concepts, not with symbols of status [like speaking French or playing the piano]” (2004: 217). This way of understanding

modernity through material development and in terms of symbols imported from the West continued even after the foundation of the Republic and during the years when Tanpınar wrote his novels.

An analysis of the historical context in which *The Time Regulation Institute* was written and how it was received in society may contribute to our understanding of the novel's depiction of the Turkish modernization process and of how Tanpınar conceptualized his idea of modernity. The Time Regulation Institute was published in 1961 and by then Turkey had started its political era of the multi-party period (1946-present). Like many of his predecessors and contemporaries, Tanpınar anathematized the lack of harmony between Western and Ottoman-Turkish values and mentalities. In one of his letters to Mehmet Kaplan, Tanpınar states "I have seen four eras in this short life of mine: the era of freedom, the era of truce, the era of Republic and the era of democracy. If we add the eras of the *Tanzimat* and of Abdülhamit, which I in some degree know, to this, it makes six eras in total" (1993: 110). Leaning on this statement of Tanpınar, groups of critics such as Mehmet Kaplan and Berna Moran, Beşir Ayvazoğlu and Mustafa Kutlu have identified some allegorical elements in the novel in that they point to a correspondence between the major eras in Turkish history (i.e. the time period between the *Tanzimat* and the early years of the Republic) and Hayri İrdal's life story.

In the novel, as mentioned before, Tanpınar explores the social changes occurring during the process of the Ottoman Empire's transformation into Turkish Republic; in other words, it tells a story of the Turkish project of modernization: the first chapter, "The Great Expectations," refers to the beginning of the project before the *Tanzimat*, the second, "Little Truths," signals the increasing popularity of the project during the *Tanzimat*, its falling in the third "Toward the Dawn" and its breakdown in the last "Every Season Has its End." The titles of the chapters indicate what Tanpınar considers the beginning and the end/failure of the project of modernization in Turkey. Taner Timur holds that the Time Regulation Institute in the novel represents the State Planning Institute,<sup>4</sup> which was established in Turkey during the years when the novel was written (1991: 326-7). Although Timur claims that it is possible to find an exact correspondence between the events in Tanpınar's novel and real historical deeds and institutions in Turkey, I think, Tanpınar's aim is to critique the dominant attitude of modernity in his day; so the target and scope of his satire is larger than an examination of some political periods or a specific institution. Tanpınar's novel is a critique of the mentality behind the establishment of this institute in the novel which aims to justify the systematization of labor to increase the efficiency of work; yet, ironically, turns out to be the very symbol of corrupt bureaucratization. By the early sixties, Tanpınar had a post in the Ministry of National Education and he became a member of the Parliament, so he had a chance to observe

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<sup>4</sup> State Planning Institute (Turkish: *Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı*, DPT), founded in 1960 and its principal tasks were to provide advice to the government on determination of economic, social and cultural goals of the state, and to design Five-Years Plans according to the goals set by the government. In 2011 it was incorporated into the Ministry of Development.

the functioning of the state more closely. With the adoption of the Western time as a consequence of the Gregorian Calendar Act (1927), it was believed that Turkey would gain greater economic productivity. The modern Turkish citizen is imagined as a producer and a consumer in modern life which is divided into certain compartments, in which time was carefully allocated for work, study and other activities.

According to Tanpınar, to cut Turkish people's relationship with their past abruptly and to embrace a project of modernization in Turkey which is orchestrated by the government caused a crisis in people's identity. Tanpınar's novel in this sense indicates that as a result of this crisis, Turkish people keep waging a war on the concept of time: as a result of the modernization project of Turkey, the modern Turkish citizen feels that s/he fell behind the "modern/Western" time (the feeling of belatedness). To Tanpınar, the feeling of belatedness is such a heavy load for the individual psyche that it leads him/her to experience the feeling of in-between-ness and eventually emotional crises. The term "belatedness" which is pertinent in the discussion of Tanpınar's attitude to modernity and modernization are discussed by Nurdan Gürbilek in her article "Dandies and Originals: Authenticity, Belatedness, and the Turkish Novel" as follows:

[a] whole set of social-economic-cultural reasons are at work here: a society that is 'belatedly modernized,' [Jusdanis, 1991:150] a system of thought that has come to accept its insufficiency [or lack] before a modern one presuming to be superior, and a culture that has adopted an infantile role when confronted by foreign modern ideals. What the Greek scholar Gregory Jusdanis calls 'belated modernity,' what the Iranian scholar Daryush Shayegan describes as 'a consciousness retarded to the idea,' [1989: 83] what the Turkish scholar Jale Parla explains by a sense of 'fatherlessness'<sup>5</sup> and what the Turkish critic Orhan Koçak discusses within the framework of a 'missed ideal' [1996: 95] are all related to the traumatic shifting of models generally discussed under the heading Westernization. (Gürbilek, 2003: 599)

As the passage indicates, the sense of belatedness evoked a "lack" in "the people" since, as Meltem Ahıska claims, it "represented the Orient in terms of 'backward' Islamic and Arabic influences" (2003: 365) from the eyes of an Occidental fantasy. Gürbilek holds that in the Turkish novel, the problem of the East/the West and of "the Westernization", that is, the loss of "the Eastern superiority to the West," is the cause of the feeling of belatedness or "a narcissistic injury" (2004: 11, 13). She states that

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<sup>5</sup> Jale Parla argues that the Turkish novel is born into a fatherlessness, not only because the first Turkish novels were about fatherless boys, but also because the first novelists had to assume the role of the father at an early age, being "authoritative children" themselves, to compensate for the lack of political and intellectual power in the society at large (1990:20).

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the discourse of belatedness, which according to Ahıska was created by the members of the national elite to organize “the desire to be modern around the marker of “the West,” which they claimed to possess” (2003: 366), is prevalent in Turkey even today, not only in literary but also in cultural and social criticism because, as Gürbilek thinks, all these fields are stuck between two extremes; they are torn between a detached observation criticizing its object for its lack of adequacy and an ardent search for an authentic localness, or between an unconditional admiration of the stranger and an unconditional hostility to it (Gürbilek, 2003: 602).

*The Time Regulation Institute* indicates that the crisis in people's identity – an issue which was foregrounded in *A Mind at Peace* (*Huzur* 1949) deteriorated more, in that the capitalist mode of production became more alienating force, the process of commodifying human feelings worsened, and the split between *alafanga* and *alaturka* became wider in modern Turkey when *The Time Regulation Institute* was written. Moreover, the novel does not allow a solution to the problems created by the modernization project of Turkey, nor does it offer a catharsis at the end. The novel deliberately leaves the ending ambivalent and makes it clear that the solutions to the problems are yet to be found.

Having discussed the narratives that give an account of Turkish modernization and the historical climate in which Tanpınar wrote his satirical novel, we can now proceed with the exploration of *The Time Regulation Institute* as a satirical allegory.

## **2. Satire + Allegory = A Satirical Allegory**

A satirical allegory is a form of satiric expression and it describes a story that is based on a combination of the elements of allegory and satire, that is, the satirist uses allegory to satirize a subject. It can be claimed that an allegorical mode is quite common in Turkish literature. The early novels written in the *Tanzimat* period such as *The Love of Talat and Fitnat* (*Taaşuk-u Tal'at ve Fitnat* 1875), *The Awakening* (*Intibah* 1876) and *The Carriage Affair* (*Araba Sevdası* 1896) also instrumentalized satirical allegory in order to disseminate their writers' political aims. Tanpınar's novel is an example of satirical allegory. He always dealt with important and controversial issues in his literary and non-literary writings. The Turkey which emerged as a consequence of the modernization project had not much to do with the modern Turkey in Tanpınar's mind, so this problem and its critique constituted the main theme of his writings. In *The Time Regulation Institute* satire is founded, apart from allegory, on irony and a humorous mode. The novel foregrounds some tragicomic and absurd<sup>6</sup> (*abes*) moments and figures through the employment of irony with a satirical purpose. Through the employment of irony, the satire in the novel

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<sup>6</sup> The sense of absurd for Tanpınar is not the same as that of Existentialism. To state it briefly, the absurd in Existentialism refers to the confrontation between human needs and the silence of the world; the absence of meaning in life. However, in Tanpınar's novel the absurd refers to the unreasonable, preposterous and ridiculous situations to consolidate the satirical mode.

becomes more subtle, but not less effective. Humor is also a tool of criticism Tanpınar uses in his novel and his humor causes laughter and provokes thought at the same time. As a satirical allegory, *The Time Regulation Institute* has two levels: Hayri İrdal's autobiographical narrative consisting of characters such as Halit Ayarç, Dr. Ramiz and the Institute constitutes the outer layer of the novel. And through these allegorical figures the reader is led towards the inner layer of the novel: a critique of an understanding of modernity and modernization as experienced in Turkey.

*The Time Regulation Institute* also critiques several belief systems and their outcomes – alchemy, psychoanalysis, spiritualism, politics and the Hollywood movies – through the characters that are used as allegorical figures. To begin with, it can be argued that Hayri is a Turkish Everyman who experiences the modernization project carried out in Turkey because, as Martin Riker puts it, his life-story (and consequently, the entire novel itself) “resembles at many turns the journey of the Turkish people into modernity” (Riker, www.nytimes.com). The whole story in the novel is narrated in the form of Hayri İrdal's memories. Right from the beginning, Hayri represents himself as a lay person who can hardly be considered an intellectual:

[e]veryone knows that I am not much of a scholar. Except for the stories of Jules Verne and Nick Carter, which I read in my childhood, my education consists of what I could glean from the history books I leafed through [...], and from such storybooks as *The Thousand and One Nights*, the *Tale of the Parrot*, and Ebu Ali Sinâ. [...] Before the establishment of our institute, I had, now and then, taken the opportunity of glancing at the schoolbooks of my children. It also often happened that I read articles and serials in the dailies at the coffeehouses of Edirnekapı and Sehzadebaşı where I fooled away my time.’ (Tanpınar, 1961: 27)

Hayri is not a writer as he himself confesses above and he shows himself lacking a literary taste and an artistic compulsion. As noted above, his relationship with reading and writing is a limited one. It can even be claimed that his reading materials, mentioned above, show that his preference of literature is that of a teenager. Hayri is a character who lacks intellectual depth.

It can be asserted that Hayri is a sort of mirror, wherein beholders are expected to discover their own faces. Hayri is a representative of Turkish people who experience modernization as a “break” in their existence, a shift from “the East” to “the West,” and a crisis/a trauma in their identity. To illustrate, when Halit asks him to dress like a bureaucrat and wear a suit, Hayri feels

a dramatic shift in my entire being. New horizons and perspectives suddenly unfurled before me. Like Halit Ayarç, I began to perceive life as a single entity. I began to use terms like ‘modification,’ ‘coordination,’ ‘work structure,’ ‘mind-set

shift,” ‘metathought,’ and ‘scientific mentality.’ [...] I even made imprudent comparisons between East and the West and passed judgments whose gravity left me terrified. [...] In a word, it seemed as if his courage and powers of invention had been transferred to me, as if it were not a suit at all but a magic cloak. (Tanpınar, 1961: 35)

In the quotation above, the novel makes fun of the mentality that sees wearing a suit as a sign of a magical personal transformation. Through Hayri, all Turkish people that awkwardly try to mimic the ways (and words) of Western societies are satirized by the novel. Read as an allegory, Hayri is a microcosm of Turkey which tries hard to modernize, in fact, to Westernize, and ends up with experiencing duality. Tanpınar in his essay, “Medeniyet Değiştirmesi ve İç İnsan (Tanpınar, 1951: 33) states that “duality has first started in the general public life, then it has divided our society into two in terms of mentality, and at last, it has deepened its process by situating this duality inside every individual” (Tanpınar, 1951: 34). Tanpınar’s sociological observation suggests that Turkish society contracted by duality is destined to fail because of a nation-wide inability to understand how modernity can be like and what it can mean in the Turkish context. This duality is foregrounded by Dr. Ramiz when he diagnoses Hayri with a sort of father complex. He claims that Hayri, as the representative of Turkey experiencing the project of modernization, could not live through the oedipal complex and failed to replace his father and reach “the Symbolic Order” in Lacanian terms (Tanpınar, 1961: 65). Ramiz also adds that “instead of taking his [Hayri] father’s] place, you have sought a father substitute all your life. I mean you have not yet reached adulthood. You have remained a child, haven’t you?” (Tanpınar, 1961: 112). Ramiz’s statements can also be read as an allegory of Turkey in that the novel seems to suggest that the newly-founded Republic failed to take the Ottoman Empire’s place completely, and like Hayri Turkey looked for “father substitutes” in “the West” to compensate for its lost past and heritage. This nationalist discourse took its power from a differentiation of “the self” and “the other.” The past and the Ottoman Empire were taken as “the other” and “the self” was ironically invented upon the principles borrowed from “the West,” so this dilemma of the nationalistic discourse in Turkey – differentiation of Eastern civilizations from Western civilizations – caused further problems like the duality in all aspects of life. Tanpınar in the same article, “Medeniyet Değiştirmesi ve İç İnsan”, discusses the duality and the crisis Turkey went through as follows:

[t]he reason for this crisis which makes us doubt not only our deeds but the underlying principles from which they are gaining speed, which make us deal with light matters that reach the point of a joke rather than with important matters pertaining to life, or which change the character of these important matters pertaining to life and turn them into a joke is the duality which has resulted

from our transition from one civilization to another. (Tanpınar, 1951: 34)<sup>7</sup>

In the early years of the Republic, the problem of duality escalated more when Turkey started to look for solutions/substitutions which was thought were in Europe, or, broadly in “the West.” So Ramiz’s diagnosis in fact allegorically reveals Turkey’s problematic understanding and experience of modernization: having “local” problems but looking for their solutions elsewhere, or trying to live borrowed lives. This idea is overtly emphasized when Dr. Ramiz continues to claim that [this complex] “is not so important. It’s even quite natural. Especially in our community today. For, socially we all suffer from this illness. Just look around you, we always complain of our past, we are all preoccupied with it. [...] Young and old, we are all concerned with it” (Tanpınar, 1961: 115). Not admiring “the father” and seeking others for substitution is the metaphorically-explained version of Turkey’s engagement with modernity and modernization. It is implied that in the end Turkey is stuck between a specter of an unappreciated past and a West which is constantly looked up to and idealized. It seems that the novel uses Dr. Ramiz as a tool to diagnose that Turkish people in general are like “infants who lack independence and maturity” (Tanpınar, 1961: 115).

The character Halit the Regulator<sup>8</sup> is one of the most effective allegoric tools in Tanpınar’s satirical novel. He is an allegoric caricature of the kind of mentality the novel satirizes. Through Halit the Regulator, the novel critiques the current state of society when the novel was written. When Hayri (or Turkey) is in a state of despair, Halit the Regulator – an embodiment of a distorted conceptualization of “the West” that emerged in the early years of the new Republic – is introduced into the novel. It is distorted because Halit the Regulator represents “the West” as it is understood and mimicked during the *Tanzimat* and the early years of the Republican period.

Satire, as mentioned before, originates from the discord between traditional, social and moral values and the acts contradicting these in life so, there must be a rational system of norms shared by the implied author and the presumed reader. As Moran puts it, *The Time Regulation Institute* is a satire of the “notions, attitudes, behavior, and idiocies of our society caught between two civilizations” (Moran, 1983: 274). *The Time Regulation Institute* targets those who trespass these norms and Halit the Regulator is the main target of the novel’s critique because he is displayed as the most corrupted man in the society depicted by the novel. His mistakes stand for what Tanpınar considers a major misunderstanding characterizing the modernization project: putting an end to the struggle between the old and the new and embracing the new. This means that when the old/the past is ignored or denied, it results in a break, a duality and a state of rootlessness in consciousnesses because, to Tanpınar,

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<sup>7</sup> Translated by Berna Moran in the Introduction to the English translation of Tanpınar’s *The Time Regulation Institute*.

<sup>8</sup> Halit the Regulator’s name, which indicates his manipulative personality, will be dealt with in the following section where Tanpınar’s use of onomastic satire in *The Time Regulation Institute* is analyzed.

the struggle between the old and the new refers to a richness and a harmony and this way of seeing is parallel to his idea of “to change by continuing and to continue by changing” (Tanpınar, 1951: 16-37). That is, when the old and the new exist together, their struggle, which is regarded as a positive and constructive feature, paves the way for harmony, the very idea Tanpınar called *terkip*.

Halit the Regulator is a master of manipulation and the first of his manipulative acts in the novel occurs when he tries to convince Hayri that the latter’s older sister-in-law who has no talent for music can be a great singer because, to Halit, “today’s art is a question of the masses. What the crowd applauds and what it doesn’t nobody can tell. [...] We’re living in the age of radio, first a little fame on the radio, and then perhaps she becomes a famous singer in a club, or maybe a professional vocalist ... And *voilà!*” (Tanpınar, 1961: 201) Before proceeding further, it can be claimed that *The Time Regulation Institute* through Halit the Regulator seems to illustrate the mentality of popular culture that the Frankfurt School theorists criticize in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944). According to Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, the advance of monopoly capitalism and technology serve the culture industry which produces popular culture, consumer manipulation and product standardization (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1944: 135). Halit the Regulator, who is a representative of “modern times,” expresses the mentality of capitalist reason which aims to produce standardized entertainment for mass consumption through a product of technology such as the radio. Hayri objects to Halit saying that “she [his sister-in-law] knows nothing at all about music. She has no understanding of Turkish *makams*: she can’t tell the difference between a *Mahur* and *İsfahan*, a *Rast* from an *Acemişiran*”<sup>9</sup> (Tanpınar, 1961: 201). Yet, after a week, with Halit’s help, the sister-in-law, who has no talent for music, starts singing in a club and everybody applauds her with loud cheers. This dialogue between Hayri and Halit the Regulator also reflects the novel’s satirical attitude to the musical taste of people who cannot even differentiate one *makam* from the other. So, after this, for Hayri, Halit the Regulator becomes a great man who has power to keep the promises he makes and to realize the most unlikely dreams. This fraud, presenting the masses with a meritless singer as if she was a great artist, is the first of his manipulations and tricks played on people around him. Halit the Regulator’s philosophy of life is based on understanding “today’s reality” (Tanpınar, 1961: 202) and for him it entails “to ask how he can benefit from people and things” (Tanpınar, 1961: 203). This is what he calls “entrepreneurial spirit” (Tanpınar, 1961: 202). In their several discussions about understanding “today’s reality,” (Tanpınar, 1961: 202) Halit the Regulator wants Hayri to stop living according to the criteria of the past because he claims that today people “are no longer confined by the traditional mode” and “everything today is a matter of the new” (Tanpınar, 1961: 202) and “desire the change” (Tanpınar, 1961: 203).

The most significant fraud of Halit the Regulator in the novel is the establishment of the Time Regulation Institute, which he decides to set up on the

<sup>9</sup> *Mahur*, *İsfahan*, *Rast* and *Acemişiran* are tones or *makams* in classical Turkish music.

basis of theories and principles learned from Hayri's master, Nuri Efendi. When Hayri tells about Nuri Efendi, Halit the Regulator cheers up and explains his amazement, "[y]ou don't say so! A man of such caliber among us! My dear, this is a real philosopher, and a philosopher we are in need of... philosophy of time... you see? Time, that means philosophy of work... You are yourself a philosopher, Hayri Bey, a genuine philosopher" (Tanpınar, 1961: 198). Halit the Regulator aims to regulate time through an institute which is established without even a pre-defined function. The institute represents Turkey and its experiences during the modernization project. *The Time Regulation Institute* seems to deal with the gap between the premises of the Republican reforms and the ways they are carried out, "in the staged dysfunctionality of an institution devoted to accelerating the modernization of a new nation and the modern automatization of its new national subjects" (Ertürk, 2011: 117). The novel is critical of the institutes, organizations, agencies and the system of bureaucracy established during and as a part of the modernization project of Turkey. Their nature of necessity, function, efficiency and contribution to the country's well-being are ridiculed and satirized through the institute allegory. The institute, where all of the posts are given to Hayri's and Halit the Regulator's relatives and friends, is therefore run on the basis of favoritism. Halit the Regulator's false convictions and beliefs are adopted from trade strategies of industrially advanced Western countries such as England and the USA, in that he is called "the little America" by Zeynep Bayramoğlu (2001: 141) on the grounds that Halit the Regulator affects judgments of the masses by means of creating false needs which aim to integrate individuals into the existing system of production and consumption via manipulative and catchy slogans, mass media, advertising, and industrial/bureaucratic management. As pointed out by another Frankfurt School thinker, Herbert Marcuse, this way of thinking eventually results in a "one-dimensional" society (1964: 38) which consists of the masses having a uniformity of thought and behavior. Concordant with Marcuse's ideas, the novel expresses its satirical position due to a growing dissatisfaction with reforms and changes introduced in Turkey as a part of the project of modernization founded on the liberal tradition of modernity.

Another satirical point in the novel is the power of language and the influence of the slogans on the masses. For example, when Hayri's sister-in-law is to be introduced as a singer in public, Halit the Regulator, like a manager or an advertiser, knows how to use the correct words for her publicity: "[I]et's sum up now what we have. You say that she is *ugly*, that means in terms of present-day concepts, she's *sympathetic*. You say that her voice is *bad*, that means it is *touching and favorable* for certain airs. You say she's *untalented*, that means she is *original*. I'll take care of her tomorrow" (emphases added, Tanpınar, 1961: 204). Halit the Regulator in *The Time Regulation Institute* cunningly alters and manipulates Nuri Efendi's sayings for the sake of his personal interests and commercial purposes. Some of these slogans that indicate his propaganda are "metals are never regulated on their own," "regulation of time necessitates the chasing of seconds," and Halit the Regulator

himself also makes up more creative slogans such as “shared time is shared work,” “a true man is conscious of time”, and “the path to well-being springs from a sound understanding of time” (Tanpınar, 1961: 207). As mentioned before, what the novel mainly satirizes through its allegorical character, Halit the Regulator, is the instrumental rationality and pragmatism. Thanks to his pragmatism, or in his words, “entrepreneurial spirit” (Tanpınar, 1961: 202), he becomes a successful businessman for a while.

In the novel the relationship between Hayri and Halit the Regulator is explicitly likened to the pact made between Faustus and Lucifer in Christopher Marlowe’s play *Dr. Faustus* (1604). As in the case of Faustus, who offers his soul to Lucifer in return for a twenty-four-year of servitude from a demon called Mephistopheles, Hayri’s allegiance with Halit the Regulator provides him with prosperity, wealth and success as a result of their trickery. In Tanpınar’s novel, after the success of the Institute is acknowledged by the public, the journalists write that “Hayri İrdal is but a reappearance in our contemporary life of this oriental Faust” (Tanpınar, 1961: 245). This parallelism between Halit the Regulator and Mephistopheles drawn by the novel contributes to Halit the Regulator’s portrayal as an evil character. Yet, it would be incorrect to claim that Hayri is a completely innocent and honest man who merely accepts and applies his benefactor’s ideas and orders because Hayri is well aware of Halit’s fraud and manipulative acts, and he deliberately lets Halit manipulate him. He interferes with Hayri’s way of thinking and speaking, and even how he dresses. Cognizant with Halit’s fraud and lies, Hayri states that

I would never deny that our institute was the fruit of Halit the Regulator’s productive mind. He was a great friend to me, a benefactor in every respect. But I had never been an instrument of the institute, or a docile medium [...] but all my life I had to live through the contingencies which contributed to the erection of the institute, and I paid a price for them. The institute is the fruit of my life. [...] Even though I was among a host of lies there was a big reality that could not be refuted: the Time Regulation Institute [...]. (Tanpınar, 1961: 38-9, 243)

When Hayri is accused of being Halit’s “puppet” (Tanpınar, 1961: 248) by the journalists, he resents them and wants to emphasize his role and contribution to their success. The point emphasized here is the fact that there are not any characters who play a judgmental role in *The Time Regulation Institute*. The novel lacks a character that represents and verbalizes what the text considers the ideal. Hayri does not emerge as a character who criticizes Halit the Regulator. On the contrary, overtly influenced by Halit, Hayri grows to resemble Halit the Regulator, and he is as guilty as his benefactor, whom Hayri calls “the saintly creature” (Tanpınar, 1961: 30). Along with Hayri, the whole society in the novel is dragged towards the way directed by Halit the Regulator and they all “participated in the frenzy” (Tanpınar, 1961: 38) of time

regulation and its fining system since people voluntarily pay the fine if their watches and clocks are not regulated correctly.

Halit the Regulator wants Turkey to create “the new man” by eradicating “the old” completely. He is unaware of the dangers in pursuing such desires. The desire to regulate, engineer and “modernize” the country and its people by regulating all the clocks and watches does not solve the problem Halit the Regulator diagnoses: a sense of “pure time” (Bergson, 1946: 2) or in his words, “living according to the different times” (Tanpınar, 1961: 180) in Turkey. What is “pure time” for Henri Bergson is called “the inner time” or “the inner man” (“*iç zaman - iç insan*” Tanpınar, 1951: 27) by Tanpınar. At this point it can be argued that Halit the Regulator is an allegory of the kind of mentality the novel severely satirizes because he confidently argues that: “the watch is but an instrument, an important one, no doubt. Progress begins with the evolution of the watch. Civilization took its gigantic step when men started to carry their watches in their pockets and reckoned time independently from the sun. Thus, they were severed from nature. They started to count an independent time” (Tanpınar, 1961: 223).

### 3. The Modern Time

Tanpınar’s target and scope of satire in this part of the novel is larger and he produces a more universal satirical attitude to the understanding of the modern time. In keeping with Bergson’s philosophy, Tanpınar’s novel suggests that when humans separate themselves from nature, or when they view themselves as superior to nature, they tend to invent a new dimension of time, which is “independent,” or, in Bergson’s terms, “mathematical time” (1946: 2). The novel satirizes the mathematical time which entraps human beings and divides their life into segments. It is a kind of imprisonment enacted on human beings via the mathematical counting of time. Therefore, the novel’s purpose is to satirize the idea of progress, which Tanpınar, like the Frankfurt School thinkers, took as something that imprisons people between the tick tocks of time. In other words, due to the understanding of time in narratives resting on the liberal tradition of modernity and the idea of progress, the modern individual has started to regulate his/her life according to regulated, objective, mathematical time, or in Tanpınar’s words, “independent time” (Tanpınar, 1961: 223). Therefore, the novel critically attracts attention to a long-neglected understanding of time; that is, time as a relative entity. Hence the satire in the novel is also directed to the modern way of living and the idea of progress which prioritizes the kind of time which is expressed in terms of minutes, hours, or work. So, Halit the Regulator claims that “to work is to be a master of one’s time and to know how to make use of it. We, as pioneers, will pave the way. We shall inculcate into people’s minds the consciousness of time. We shall toss in the air a host of words and ideas. And we shall declare that man must work above all, and work is time” (Tanpınar, 1961: 222). So, relying on Halit the Regulator’s statements, one can contend that Tanpınar’s novel criticizes the fact that time and time regulation are taken as a meta-narrative or a *façade* through which people are “taught” the principles of the modern

labor, which necessitates people to regulate their experiences in order to meet the needs of the capitalist modern age. And as a consequence of these arguments, one can also claim that the novel's critical engagement with the idea of progress is similar to that of the theorists of the Frankfurt School in that they all believed that progress may bring development in the material resources of a nation but it may not lead to a spiritual progress. Therefore, *The Time Regulation Institute* is a novel which foregrounds the devastating desires of a pragmatist man like Halit the Regulator.

Dr. Ramiz, a psychoanalyst, is another allegorical figure in the book. Through Dr. Ramiz the novel does not aim to satirize psychoanalysis *per se*; rather its target of criticism is the figure of the scientist and the intellectual who lives and interprets life solely through theoretical information. In other words, the novel emphasizes that science and technology should be in the service of human beings to make their life easier, and scientific theories should be based on life, not vice versa. In Tanpınar's novel Dr. Ramiz is a scientist figure who tries to shape life according to theories. He tries to convince Hayri to mold himself according to theories of psychoanalysis. As mentioned before, he even prescribes certain dreams Hayri should see. Hayri the narrator comments on one of Dr. Ramiz's absurd speeches as follows:

[p]erhaps because of his fatigue and nervousness, he [Dr. Ramiz] didn't like the dreams I told him. He was accusing me of not seeing the dreams that men who disliked their fathers, who sought fathers wherever they went, should see. "I don't understand," he [Dr. Ramiz] said. "How can a personality like you not see a single dream suiting his case? Try to see it next time at least. [...] I am giving you now a list of all the dreams you are expected to see this week." (Tanpınar, 1961: 117-8)

Dr. Ramiz can be considered an example of the dandy figure which first emerged in Turkey in the novels of the *Tanzimat* (Gürbilek, 2003: 48). According to Nurdan Gürbilek, who discusses in detail the dandy figure in Turkish literature, early novels in Turkish literature, such as Mahmut Ekrem's *The Carriage Affair* (1896), Halid Ziya's *The Blue and Black* (1897), and Yakup Kadri's *The Rented Mansion* (1921), used the dandy figure to display the Western influence on Turkish people, or Turkish people mimicking Western people (2003: 47). For example, Mahmut Ekrem's dandy character, Bihruz Bey is an obsessive fantasizer or dreamer who truly thinks that the imaginary worlds he reads in such novels as Lamartine's *Graziella* (1849) and Rousseau's *Nouvelle Heloise* (1761) can be real. Also, Bihruz Bey is overtly influenced by the novels he reads: Bernardin de Saint Pierre's *Paul and Virginia* (1788), Prevost's *Manon Lescaut* (1731) and Dumas's *The Lady of the Camellias* (1848). In the early Turkish novels, the dandy figure who is at the same time "an orphan" (Gürbilek, 2003: 48) allegorically stands for the Turkish society vulnerable to foreign influences in the absence of the past. In this sense, it can be asserted that in Tanpınar's novel the orphan narrative is suggestive of the nation-building process in Turkey. According to this perspective, the figure of the orphan

that is embodied by Dr. Ramiz is a metaphor for Turkey; an orphan is deprived of parents, bereft of advantages, protection, happiness and benefits, previously enjoyed. So according to the nation- and state-building ideology, Turkey (like an orphan) was vulnerable and miserable due to the feeling of an absent past, therefore in need of (a family) protection and social engineering. The state-building ideology thus needed to fabricate the idea of an orphan Turkey to build the state and nation, and this ideology also “modernized” the nation and reaffirmed its own legitimacy by means of the orphan discourse. The feeling of an absent past in fact stems from the feeling of a lost powerful and glorious past. That is, the feeling and idea of owning the power and glory in the past and lacking them in the present indicates the impasse of belatedness.

Hayri describes Dr. Ramiz as follows:

Ramiz Bey, upon a first encounter, left a discordant impression which could not be easily accounted for. Much later, when I grew accustomed to him, I realized that this was due to a disharmony existing between his protruding forehead, the bony regular features of his face, and his chin of which all the lines seemed to try to escape somewhere. But this fugitive chin was far from having a natural ending. Nor had he a natural voice. He began with strangely uttered sounds that gradually turned themselves into a confused murmur as if they wanted to disappear without leaving a trace behind. I do not know why, but this face and this voice always reminded me of spirals made of irregular curves. He had just come back from Vienna where he had completed his studies. (Tanpınar, 1961: 104)

The repetition of similar words like “discordant,” “disharmony,” “[un]natural,” “strange,” “confused” and “irregular” in the portrayal of Dr. Ramiz contribute to his caricaturization demonstrating the novel’s critical attitude towards pretentious intellectuals like Dr. Ramiz. Also, Tanpınar’s novel has an ambivalent attitude to Freudian theories, that is, the novel seems to ridicule Freud and his ideas through a caricature character like Dr. Ramiz, who himself feels like a misfit in his society and consequently he seems to be in need of psychological treatment. Freudian psychiatry is admired by Dr. Ramiz since he sees it as a field of science that represents “the West” and so needs to be immediately imported to Turkey to “solve” Turkish people’s problems. Yet, the novel at the same time overtly makes use of Freudian theories such as “the father complex” to explain Hayri’s psychological problems. In other words, as reflected in *The Time Regulation Institute*, people in Turkey who experience the modernization project suffer from some psychological complexes and the problem of inner restlessness that need some serious treatment. So, it can be argued that the use of Freudian theories in Tanpınar’s fiction is a contradictory issue in that the novel paradoxically both ridicules and benefits from Freudian ideas.

#### 4. Onomastic Satire

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Tanpınar uses onomastic satire in his novel. He gives several characters fanciful names and they serve to satirize sham and hypocritical people. To illustrate, Halit the Regulator is a figure of the hypocritical bureaucrat who aims to “regulate” or “modernize” society by using and manipulating the people around him. He is the embodiment of pragmatism. Halit the Regulator aims to homogenize society by means of regulating the concept of time and rendering it the same for everyone in the country. He even intends to create employees who are like “automatons. [...] 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?” (Tanpınar, 1961: 227). In planning the preparation of the institute’s employees who will dress in uniform and “act like set clocks,” and speak, smile, and pause at set intervals while giving memorized speeches, Halit states that automatization is “the greatest strength and dependence of this century” (Tanpınar, 1961: 227). Their duty is to extend a new sense of temporality. Halit the Regulator indirectly encourages Turkish people to ignore their past when he intends to wipe out people’s public memory and bring about a societal amnesia about local history. Consequently, he aims to replace public memory with a narrative of the modern adopted from “the West,” which merely serves for him to establish a capitalist system. Behaving like a promoter, Halit the Regulator sets out to be both the founder and publicist of the Time Regulation Institute and sells his new ideas about work and time.

Naming in the novel signals its humorous and satiric point of view when especially Sheik Ahmed the Timely Efendi is introduced into the story. He is one of the caricatures in the novel. When the dialogue between a group of authorities and Hayri about Ahmed the Timely is recounted, the sense of the absurd and irony escalates rapidly. What makes this scene ironical and absurd is that Halit the Regulator and Hayri rely on a made-up character on whom they build their vision and project of modernization.

‘[w]hat sort of a man was he [one of the authorities asks]?’ [...] ‘Well, he was a patron saint!’ But who was a patron saint of liars? I wondered. ‘He was tall, fair with a brownish beard, and with black eyes. He used to stammer in his youth. But they say that he cured himself thanks to his own will. More exactly, my late teacher Nuri Efendi used to say so. He had strange whims. For instance, although he produced excellent fruit he ate only grapes. He never touched honey or sugar. He was from the order of the *Mevlevi* dervishes. He was the son of a rich man. He was not appreciated in his lifetime as he was against polygamy.’ [Halit the Regulator interferes,] ‘So he had a modern mind like us, eh?’ (Tanpınar, 1961: 239)

Ahmed the Timely is a fabricated character and the novel seems to suggest that he represents the modernization project of Turkey. The narrative of Ahmet the Timely as the representative of the modern provides Halit the Regulator with a tool

to make his “modern” ideas look more local and authentic. Therefore, to Halit the Regulator, Ahmet the Timely becomes a need of the present and history is re-constructed to the extent it serves the needs of the present. This could be interpreted in the light of Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger’s notion of “the invention of tradition:”

‘[t]raditions’ which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented” ... The invented traditions seem to belong to three overlapping types: a) those establishing or symbolizing social cohesion or the membership of groups, real or artificial communities, b) those establishing or legitimizing institutions, status or relations of authority, and c) those whose main purpose was socialization, the inculcation of beliefs, values systems and conventions of behavior. (9)

So, the notion of the invented tradition foregrounds that no matter which type they fall into, traditions are invented, constructed or formally instituted in the present. Hobsbawm and Ranger also claim that traditions are often invented to serve particular political ends. Hobsbawm and Ranger argue that “the increase in the political invention of traditions can be seen as an effort to protect the ruling classes and monarchies from the emergence of democracy and political liberalism” (1992: 210). The idea of the invention of tradition is also pertinent when one explains its use in the modern development of the nation. Relying on the insight attained from the notion of invented traditions, it can be argued that Tanpınar’s novel also attracts attention to the invention of the distinction between tradition and modernity. That is, since there is an invented distinction between modernity and tradition, then it means that modernity needs and constructs tradition through which it defines itself. One can state that in *The Time Regulation Institute* the modern, which is identified with Halit the Regulator, invents and makes use of (a representative of) tradition, Ahmet the Timely, first to define itself and then to consolidate its validity and magnitude. The novel from this perspective underlines the fact that tradition and the modern are two interrelated terms in that they invent one another.

As another example of Tanpınar’s ironical use of naming, one can talk about the name of a female character, Hayri’s second wife Pakize, which literally means “pure and innocent.” Unlike, Nuran (whose name means “the moment of heavenly light”) in *A Mind at Peace* who is depicted as a well-educated woman and Hayri’s first wife Emine (whose name means “trustworthy, benign and innocuous”), Hayri’s second wife, Pakize (and her two sisters), are projected as “petty” females who have no depth and as characters unable to differentiate reality from dreams inspired by an American style of life demonstrated in Hollywood films. Tanpınar portrays them as women who have no real contact with reality. All these characters and their behavior in fact contribute to the absurdity in the novel. Pakize thinks that she is a movie star; her older sister wants to be a singer and the other sister wants to win a beauty contest. These dreams of the female characters also strengthen the same satirical point of the

novel: aspiring to success and wealth via the shortest way possible. Hayri, by contrast, feels that “there was something wrong with Pakize. When I sensed this, the person whom I had been hugging and with whom I had been sharing the responsibilities of my life began appearing to me hopelessly disabled and half-witted” (Tanpınar, 1961: 147). “Pakize’s escapism” (Tanpınar, 1961: 146) into movies functions in two ways in the novel. Firstly, her portrayal in the novel is used to demonstrate women who, according to Tanpınar, are more prone to be influenced by lives described in the novels and films made in Europe and America, and so she tends to create her life based on lives adopted from “the West.” And secondly, Pakize’s escapism helps Hayri use it as a pretense for his unfaithfulness to his wife. That is, Hayri deems her “hopelessly disabled and half-wit” and so justifies his affair with another woman, his boss’s wife Selma.

One may think that in a work of satire it is natural to satirize the characters and their behavior; however, Tanpınar’s criticism gets harsher when he depicts the behavior of female characters and their choice of entertainment. In *The Time Regulation Institute* some female characters like Pakize and Hayri’s aunt are reflected as good-timers who pass their time by dealing with “stupefying” activities. After the establishment of the Institute, these characters start to throw home parties almost every night just because they would like to appear more “Western” and “modern.” They believe that having parties like they saw in Hollywood movies will make them “modern” people who belong to “the West.” So, the novel emphasizes that unlike the function of *fasıls*<sup>10</sup> in *A Mind at Peace*, these house parties in *The Time Regulation Institute* are the types of leisure-activities which do not improve characters, particularly the female ones, artistically, philosophically or intellectually.

Gürbilek also discusses a similar point as she claims that several male novelists in Turkish literature, like Peyami Safa, Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, Namık Kemal, Ahmet Mithat and Hüseyin Rahmi, are inclined to portray their female characters in keeping with their idea that women are more apt to be influenced by novels and films than men do due to their “weak” nature<sup>11</sup> (Gürbilek, 2003: 19-50). When Hayri talks about his second wife, he states that “Pakize was not a person involved with watches and clocks, with psychoanalysis, and superior knowledge. She was a modern lady. She liked movies. She watched the universe on the white screen. [...] This woman is stark raving mad an idiot... She is a liar” (Tanpınar, 1961: 247, 249). Ironically enough, a character like Hayri who earns his life by lying and deceiving others accuses Pakize, his wife, of lying. The novel is critical of her understanding of the modern. It can also

<sup>10</sup> Fasıl is a kind of musical entertainment in which singers and instrument players perform classical Turkish music together and the audience accompanies them generally by drinking alcohol. These classical Turkish songs are also called *fasıl*. These *fasıls* are named according to the tone they are composed in such as *peşrev*, *kar*, *beste*, *ağır semai*, *şarki*, *yörük*, *semai* and *saz semai*.

<sup>11</sup> Gürbilek does not include Tanpınar in this list because her focus of interest in that chapter of her book is mainly Tanpınar’s poetry and *A Mind at Peace*. Yet, when Tanpınar’s attitude towards women in *The Time Regulation Institute* is discussed, I think it can be regarded as an example of this inclination.

be claimed that the kind of understanding of the modern the novel is critical of is illustrated via a female character.

The characterization of women in Tanpınar's novel, by and large, fails to represent women as full agents; rather they are portrayed as mere tokens which help the implied author convey his/her social criticism. The female characters in the novel can become nothing more than mouthpieces of their "corrupt" societies because they are shown as representatives of the ideas, behavior and rituals which the satirical novel aims to criticize: Halit the Regulator claims that they should hire young girls and women for the positions which are suitable for "girls' nature:"

[i]f you ask my opinion for the proposed regulation station personnel we should limit our choice exclusively to young girls and women. Let us engage no males. A training such as you are contemplating [working like automatons] can be given only to young girls. For males we can find other jobs. Why should we turn a mass of young men into automatons? Moreover, we could not do it even if we wanted to. (Tanpınar, 1961: 228)

Tanpınar's satirical novel does not spare the female characters from being criticized. Yet, if we re-consider the way women are treated by other characters, particularly by male ones, and which social status the female characters are granted in the novel, the fact that the novelist's tendency to underrate women and his failure to satirize them effectively becomes clearer. It is also interesting that the *The Time Regulation Institute* never mentions the names of Hayri's sisters-in law. These two women, who are mentioned in the novel to exemplify and prove Halit's power, are not even given names. Thus, it can be argued that female characters in the novel are used as tools to criticize the state – along with bureaucratization and institutes – (and interestingly, the state/institute rulers are all male characters) that seeks to submerge the individual in burdensome and soulless duty. Unlike such male characters as Hayri İrdal and his son Ahmet, neither Pakize nor any of the other female characters in the novel are depicted as misfits, rebels or as characters who question the state and its system. On the contrary, the female characters are depicted as tools that have exceedingly adopted and conformed to the political, economic and social norms and standards depicted in the novel.

## Conclusion

To conclude this paper, it can be argued that *The Time Regulation Institute*, which is constructed as the autobiography of a protagonist-narrator surviving his country's passage from an empire to a republic, registers Hayri's adventures who ends up as the assistant director of a fictive Time Regulation Institute to synchronize all the private and public clocks in Turkey. Like *A Mind at Peace*, *The Time Regulation Institute* is a novel in which Tanpınar explores Turkish modernization and the societal effects of this process. Unlike *A Mind at Peace*, however, *The Time Regulation Institute* is a more overtly political novel which questions the very

foundations upon which the modernization project of Turkey was placed, such as progressivism, bureaucratization and the belief that there is a binary opposition between modernity and tradition. The state-led Turkish modernization project is depicted in Tanpınar's novel through a time regulation institute that struggles to "modernize" citizens; and this struggle is epitomized through Hayri and Halit the Regulator's institute that demands people to synchronize their lives with that of their nation's. This simplistic account of the narrative of linear progress is satirized in Tanpınar's novel. Turkish modernization, as suggested by *The Time Regulation Institute*, is not a process of linear progress but a more complex process including alienation of individuals and displacement of identities. From this perspective, *The Time Regulation Institute* is a novel which reminds us of the significance of the idiosyncratic characteristics and complexities of Turkish modernization – which is by nature heterogeneous. As one of those complexities, Tanpınar claims the fact that Turkish modernization created a crisis (*buhran*) in the shattering of the cultural connections of Turkish society with its own history. Yet, as mentioned earlier, Tanpınar was not a conservative writer who blindly longed for the past. On the contrary, he did not approach the issue of Turkish modernization from a simplistic perspective: he did not see it as a dichotomy between modernity/future and tradition/past. By emphasizing the connection between fabrication and the modern, and between invention and tradition, *The Time Regulation Institute* equally parodies "the new" and "the old" in the context of the modernization project of Turkey.

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