

43. A Life in Exile: An Analysis of the Uncanny and National Identity in Yaşar Kemal's *Look, the Euphrates River is Flowing Blood*

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Abstract

Having a preliminary place and paramount significance among Yaşar Kemal's historical fiction novels, *Look, the Euphrates River is Flowing Blood* is the first book of his quartet entitled "An Island Tale" that was published in 1997. Dealing with the ordeal and uncanny feelings of the Anatolian people after the First World War, Yaşar Kemal recounts the material and spiritual destruction caused by the phenomenon of migration both within and beyond the borders in this work. As a result of the Exchange Agreement signed between Turkey and Greece in 1923, the inhabitants of Ant (Mirmingi) Island, were forced to migrate to lands they never knew. With the population exchange decision taken in Lausanne, the Greeks were sent to Greece and it was decided to settle the people who lost their homeland in the wars on this island in the Aegean. With this news, the people of the island experience some stages of queer, uncanny emotions, such as grief, anger, denial, bargaining, depression, and ultimately acceptance, and step into the Greek lands as an exchange. Vasili Atoynatanoğlu, who is a veteran of the Sarıkamış operation, however, did not participate in this forced migration. People from various origins who take refuge on the island, with the support of Poyraz Musa, launch a new life despite all the pain they have experienced. Predominantly based on Freud, Bhabha, and Kristeva's theories of the uncanny, the paper handles the issues of forced migration between Turkey and Greece and its profound impacts on migrants and local people in the nation-building process of the new Turkish state. The purpose of this paper is to analyse Yaşar Kemal's *Look, the Euphrates River is Flowing Blood* through the theories of the "uncanny" and nationalism by highlighting the uncanny presence of characters within the novel.

Keywords: Yaşar Kemal, *Look, the Euphrates River is Flowing Blood*, uncanny, nation-state, national identity, forced migration

Sürgünde Bir Hayat: Yaşar Kemal'in *Fırat Suyu Kan Akıyor Baksana* Adlı Romanında Tekinsiz Kavramı ve Ulusal Kimlik Üzerine Bir İnceleme

Öz

Yaşar Kemal'in tarihi kurmaca romanları arasında ilk sıralarda yer alan ve büyük bir öneme sahip olan *Fırat Suyu Kan Akıyor Baksana*, 1997'de yayınlanan "Bir Ada Masalı" adlı dörtlüsünün ilk kitabıdır. Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nı anlatan Yaşar Kemal, bu eserinde göç olgusunun hem sınır içinde hem de sınır ötesi yarattığı maddi ve manevi tahribatı anlatır. 1923 yılında Türkiye ile Yunanistan arasında imzalanan Mübadele Anlaşması sonucunda Karınca (Mirmingi) Adası sakinleri hiç bilmedikleri topraklara göç etmek zorunda kalmışlardır. Lozan'da alınan mübadele kararı ile Yunanlılar Yunanistan'a gönderilmiş ve savaşlarda vatanını kaybeden halkın Ege'deki bu adaya

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yerleştirilmesi kararlaştırılmıştır. Bu haberle birlikte ada halkı yas, öfke, inkâr, pazarlık, depresyon ve nihayetinde kabullenme gibi tuhaf, tekinsiz duyguların bazı aşamalarını yaşar ve mübadele olarak Yunan topraklarına adım atar. Sarıkamış Harekâtı gazisi Vasili Atoynatanoğlu ise bu zorunlu göçe katılmadı. Poyraz Musa'nın desteğiyle adaya sığınan farklı kökenlerden insanlar, yaşadıkları tüm acılara rağmen yeni bir hayata başlarlar. “Tekinsiz” kavramı ile ilgili, ağırlıklı olarak Freud, Bhabha, ve Kristeva'nın teorilerine dayanan makale, Türkiye ile Yunanistan arasındaki zorunlu göç ve bunun yeni Türk devletinin ulus inşası sürecinde göçmenler ve yerel halk üzerindeki derin etkileri gibi konuları ele almaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Yaşar Kemal'in Fırat Suyu Kan Akıyor Baksana adlı eserini, roman karakterlerinin “tekinsiz” varlığına dikkat çekerek “tekinsizlik” ve milliyetçilik teorileri üzerinden incelemektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yaşar Kemal, Fırat Suyu Kan Akıyor Baksana, tekinsiz, ulus-devlet, milli kimlik, zorunlu göç

Introduction

The issue of creating a national identity, which is pivotal to the destiny of nation-states and a precondition for democratic regimes, fashioning the Self, and separating the Self from the Other, gained a great importance as a consequence of increasing nationalist movements and the establishment of the unitary states, with the collapse of the empires. In order to create a collective identity consciousness among a society, literature was utilized as one of the mediums, as it can be used in the service of different ideologies. Charles D. Sabatos notes

The appeal to national independence and national character is necessarily connected with a re-awakening of national history, with memories of the past, of past greatness, of moments of national dishonour, whether this results in a progressive or reactionary ideology. Thus in this mass experience of history the national element is linked on the one hand with problems of social transformation; and on the other, more and more people become aware of the connection between national and world history (Sabatos, 2018: 3).

Having a preliminary place and paramount significance among Yaşar Kemal's historical fiction novels, *Look, the Euphrates River is Flowing Blood* is the first book of his quartet entitled “An Island Tale” that was published in 1997. Dealing with the ordeal and uncanny feelings of the Anatolian people after the First World War in this work, Yaşar Kemal recounts the material and spiritual destruction caused by the phenomenon of migration both within and beyond the borders. He underlines that people brought together by common pains can hold on to life again in unity, and solidarity. The novel takes its name from the image in the Euphrates River, where the dead bodies of Yezidis who were massacred after World War I were thrown. As a result of the Agreement of Exchange signed between Turkey and Greece in 1923, the inhabitants of Ant (Mirmingi) Island, were forced to migrate to lands they never knew.

With the population exchange decision taken in Lausanne, the Greeks were sent to Greece and it was decided to settle the people who lost their homeland in the wars on this island in the Aegean.

With the news of exchange, the people of the island experience some stages of queer, uncanny emotions, such as grief, anger, denial, bargaining, depression, and ultimately acceptance, and step into the Greek lands as an exchange. The only person who did not participate in this forced migration is Sarıkamış veteran Vasili Atoynatanoğlu. In response to the exchange, Vasili hides on the island and presses on the Bible that he will kill whoever sets foot on the island first. This loneliness of Vasili on the island is broken after a short time when Poyraz Musa sets foot on the island. The fate of the island changes with the

arrival of Poyraz Musa. People from various origins who took refuge on the island, with the support of Poyraz Musa, launch a new life despite all the pain they have experienced. The novel is centered around the efforts of the people left from wars, massacres and exiles to start a new life on an island emptied by the Greeks who were sent to Greece. Predominantly based on Freud, Bhabha, and Kristeva's theories of the uncanny, the paper handles the issues of forced migration between Turkey and Greece and its profound impacts on migrants and local people in the nation-building process of the new Turkish state. The purpose of this study is to analyze Yařar Kemal's *Look, the Euphrates River is Flowing Blood* through the theories of the "uncanny" and nationalism by highlighting the uncanny presence of characters within the novel.

Theoretical Framework

The term "uncanny," signals to the familiar Freudian Das Unheimliche, which refers to an instance when we consider something familiar, yet foreign at the same time and which causes the feelings anxiety, fear and restlessness. Freud explicates: "the German word unheimliche is obviously the opposite of heimlich, heimisch, meaning "familiar," "native," "belonging to the home"; and we are tempted to conclude that what is "uncanny" is frightening precisely because it is not known and familiar" (Freud, 1919: 2). Furthermore, "it undoubtedly belongs to all that is terrible—to all that arouses dread and creeping horror; it is equally certain, too, that the word is not always used in a clearly definable sense, so that it tends to coincide with whatever excites dread" (Freud, 1919: 1). According to Royle, the uncanny, then, is a 'peculiar commingling of the familiar and unfamiliar', (Royle, 2003:1) and is often linked with an experience of 'liminality, margins, borders, frontiers' (Royle, 2003: vii). In this context, Bhabha expresses that "the national bond itself has an uncanny aspect in that it is perpetually threatened by the irruption of difference: although the narratives which underscore national identity appear to be stable and confident, they also involve the repression, or rather the disavowal of difference (Bhabha, 1994: 203)" (Macmillan, 2021:124). This paper seeks for the ways how the Freudian notion of the uncanny is highlighted with the migrant's return home in *Look, the Euphrates River is Flowing Blood*.

Moreover, both psychological and physical transgressions of territorial identities may shatter the sense of national 'homeliness' (Ziarek 1995: 16): migration can highlight the uncanny or the unhomey facet of national identity in Bhabha's translation of "unheimlich" (Bhabha, 1994: 236). Likewise, Kristeva also connects the uncanny with the 'ambivalence and liminality of the national space', (Ziarek, 1995: 7). The migrant is also confronted with an uncanny challenge to his or her identity. While Muslim Turks and Christian Greeks lived in harmony as a hybrid society under the reign of the Ottoman Empire once, their idyllic lifestyle was devastated by the effect of historical events. Especially, the emergence of nationalist movements and nationalist spirit played a critical role in the disintegration of this utopic society, together with the declaration of the Turkish Republic later. After this stage, the villagers were obliged to redefine their cultural identities, depending upon their religion.

On the other hand, as regards the nation and national identity, Anthony D. Smith regards the nation as essential in seeking for one's roots and the cultural and social group one belongs to, but he also warns: "the dangers are clear enough: destabilization of a fragile global security system, proliferation and exacerbation of ethnic conflicts everywhere, the persecution of 'indigestible' minorities in the drive for greater national homogeneity, justification of terror, ethnocide and genocide on a scale inconceivable in earlier ages" (Smith, 1991:176). Therefore, as depicted by Bauman, identities are "the most troublesome incarnations of ambivalence" (Bauman, 2003: viii) and the concept of globalization enables the "juxtaposition of entirely disparate events or intrusion of distant events into the everyday consciousness

of ordinary people” (Benwell and Stokoe, 2011: 2006). In his article entitled “Globalization and Identity” (2001), Manuel Castells makes a definition of identity and presents us a different perspective on the issues of identity and individualization:

Generally, in social sciences, identity is considered to be that process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute enabling people to find meaning in what they do in their life. Through a process of individuation, they feel what they are, they have a meaning because they refer to something more than themselves ... Individualism is a form of identity. There is a form of identity that can be illustrated by the following phrase: “I am the beginning and the end of all things” or “My family and I are the beginning and the end of all things” (Castells, 2010: 94).

In addition to its disadvantages, Smith emphasizes the advantages of having a nation that are composed of homogenous individuals: “Nationalism may not be responsible for the many instances of reform and democratization of tyrannical regimes, but it is a frequent accompanying motive, a source of pride for down-trodden peoples and the recognized mode for joining or rejoining ‘democracy’ and ‘civilization’”. (Smith, 1991:176). For the sake of political solidarity and social unity, nationalism is regarded as a solid means of being identified with the nation and being the basis of joining a more democratic and more civilized life. With a critical eye on the adverse effects of nationalism on ethnic groups, in Yaşar Kemal's intriguing novel *Look, the Euphrates River is Flowing Blood*, the dramatic life-stories of people who were forced to migrate with the decision of exchange after the First World War are analyzed together with the lifestyles of local people in Anatolia that were exposed to the negative effects of the war. The novel handles with the problems and traumatic life stories of migrant identities caused by the decision of exchange. While the novel reflects Yaşar Kemal's opposition to war, it criticizes the point of view of the nation-state discourse which stimulates standardizing by rejecting polyphony and advocating a centrist understanding based on unity. Although the residents of the island have different ethnic and religious backgrounds, they are unwilling to leave the lands which they got used to and regarded as their real “homeland”. The feeling of isolation, exclusion, and homelessness for the Greeks, who suppose that they are considered as redundant in the island by the initial owners of the lands they were forced to migrate, do not belong to the lands they were deported to, and that they are not welcomed by the owners of those lands, transforms all the journey of migration into an unbearable, distressing event.

Hybrid Society and Hybrid Identities

Poyraz Musa, whose real name is Abbas, is a soldier of Circassian origin. He chose this island as the most suitable place to hide because he was hunted by the Bedouins for killing an Arab tribesman's brother and settled here. He senses the presence of another person on the island and continues her life on the island in great tension. Lena Papazoğlu, whose four sons were martyred in the War of Independence, comes to the island when Musa is convinced that he will no longer find a person to share his loneliness with. Lena Ana escaped from the trip to Greece and returned to her island. Vasili does not hesitate to save Poyraz Musa, who is about to drown in the big storm that broke out the next day. This event brings the trio on the island closer together. In the novel, the polyphonic, multicultural atmosphere that has been preserved for many years in the island is vividly depicted. The unifying element, which enables people from different cultures and religions to come together, made it possible for different ethnic groups to exist and ensured that all cultural colors merged in the same pot and lived in harmony side by side in this composite structure. It is also remarkable to observe this composition in the following words of the Property Manager, who illustrates the multicultural solidarity displayed in the island during the Dardanelles War:

The patients were stacked inside the church. (...) As the patients came, the houses were evacuated and the owners moved to the neighboring houses. I know that ten families are packed into one house. The Greek women and girls of the island were working as nurses and cooks. Sometimes the food was running out, the Greeks brought whatever they had in their homes. There was a moment when there was no food left for the Greeks. That's when the wounded, the Greeks, we were all starving. This time, the Turkmen villages of the region were coming to our rescue (Kemal, 2008: 27).

While depicting the well-known fisherman of the region, Panosaki, the narrator notes: "he had a different place among these people, be it Turks, Greeks, Circassians, Georgians, Kurds" (Kemal, 2008: 70), and the Greek image is reinforced in a positive sense in the eye of Turkish people through this exemplary figure. Panosaki gifts his boat to Kadri, whom he raised very well in fishing, before leaving the island. He is loved not only on the whole island but also in the Turkish town close to the island. The news of Panosaki's breakup leads to confusion and a turmoil in the public and this is the indication of the intensive love for him: "The whole town stood up, in case Panosaki goes, we go too. Women, girls and the elderly also signed" (Kemal, 2008: 71). These words point to the spirit of unity built by the struggle to dissolve the boundaries between 'self' and 'other'.

Furthermore, the relationship between Poyraz Musa, who has a Muslim Turkish identity, and Vasili, who is a Christian Greek in the island, is an outstanding example of cultural integration that presents a different dimension in questioning the relationship of the self with the other. Poyraz took refuge in this island to forget about his past full of dark memories and escape from those who wanted to kill him. Vasili, on the other hand, resisted to stay on the island and leave his native land despite the forced migration. For both figures, the island serves as a "shelter". Vasili's interior monologue, questioning how people who were forced to migrate after the population exchange, could get away from the island, points out that the house is perceived as "home/homeland" with its metaphorical meanings. The feeling of being in the "uncanny" part of the person who moves away from his own home is related to the ties of belonging. Vasili, who stayed on the island, looks after those who have left and ponders over what had taken place: "How could a person leave his land, sea, house, garden, olive trees, peaches and cherries that he had planted with his hands? Without any resistance, without even making a sound, without ever expressing the pain in their hearts... All the islanders believed that they would come back. How can they endure the pain of being taken away from their island even if they do not believe it" (Kemal 2008: 93). The novel tells the story of the mutilated souls, shattered consciousness and unhealed wounds of both characters.

In this hybrid society intermarriages between different religions were also possible. One example of interfaith marriage is based on a love story told in the novel. The figures of love also seek a way to be together despite their differences in religion, language, and ethnic identity. A Greek girl and Kurdish Haydar, who is described as "Babayiğit, handsome, beautiful-eyed, brave", cannot find any other way but to run away to meet each other. Reportedly, they took refuge in a Turkmen village. What is remarkable about their relationship is that "Kurdish Haydar did not convert his wife to Islam even if the girl he loved wanted to be Muslim" (Kemal, 2008: 178). The male subject, who does not put any pressure on his wife to change his religion, epitomizes a humane approach that gives the "Other" a chance to exist together and accepts her as she is.

Spatial elements that enable "collective experiences from cultural form to crystallize and maintain their meaning and existence for centuries" (Akay, 2005: 110) have a significant place in the lives of the characters in the novel. At the end of the novel, when Melek Hanım took a step to settle on the island, "the wrinkles on her face were widened, her face turned into a pink flower of joy" (Kemal, 2008: 318). The desolation of the island, which was emptied after the population exchange, affects its nature.

According to the narrator, who defends the idea that everything starts with people and is meaningful and beautiful with people throughout the novel, “nothing has any taste without people” (Kemal, 2008:102). The author regards Poyraz Musa and every person on the island, especially Vasili, as the representatives of a new hope for the rebirth of space that opens the way for new heterogenous societies and hybrid identities. Through the end of the novel, the flowers of joy blooming on Melek Hanım's face symbolize this hope for the re-existence of both humans and space. While expressing what happened on the island of Ant before and after the population exchange, the author draws attention to the identity and memory construction process of individuals and communities in the novel, which also reflects the anti-war perspective of Yaşar Kemal.

Displacement and Uncanny Effect

Wars have a negative effect on not only individual but also cultural identities. The author presents a critical approach in the novel to the monistic structure of management, which discriminates individuals who fight shoulder to shoulder at the front for their homeland according to their ethnic identities, religious beliefs and differences in language, and draws borders. The problem of belonging in the people who had to leave the island due to forced migration is discussed together with the feeling of homelessness created by being uprooted. What makes the novel striking is that the author tackles the breaking points in the lives of not only the Greeks who are forced to migrate, but also the Turks who settled on the island by coming from Greece. The island represents the heaven for Lena and Vasili, who did not want to go away from the island, while it represents the hell for Ali Pasha Selim Bey, who was forced to return from Greece. How the sense of unity and solidarity has been preserved and reinforced is directly related to the question of how the multicultural structure in the island lands has been maintained for many years.

The author stresses the importance of some moral values such as tolerance, kindness and friendship in the construction of a common culture and universal peace among different communities. Particularly, exemplary figures, such as Kadri Usta, Pericles and Panosaki Usta, all contribute to the preservation and enrichment of the collective culture. *Look, the Euphrates Water is Flowing Blood* can be considered as the novel of past memories and future dreams for the communities, who were inclined to give up their dreams under the devastating and overwhelming effect of wars and migrations. Vasili turns into a leading figure as the forerunner of the other novels of the quartet, which recounts the adventures of the island. He gets rid of his loneliness and starts to build a new identity for himself thanks to his friendship with Lena and Poyraz Musa. That's why “the novel reflecting a human-centered approach is a humanist lament for the multicultural structure of Anatolia (Mignon, 2014:170). The author reflects the interrelation between the concepts of identity, memory, recalling and forgetting in the lively imagination and depth of the inner world of the characters, especially Poyraz Musa and Vasili, who come to terms with the traumatic events of the past.

According to Bergson, “there is no perception that is not impregnated with memories. We add thousands of details of our past experiences to the immediate and present data of our senses. Often these memories displace our true perceptions (Bergson, 2015: 27). The characters cannot get rid of the suffocating effect of the war they joined as they were exposed to the inhuman scenes of war including murders, freezing to death, stinking corpses. They are obsessed with those blood-chilling scenes of wars all the time. Poyraz Musa escaped from the Yezidi massacre, in which the blood of corpses flowed for days on the Euphrates, and he adopted the island as his homeland.

He is pursued by those who want to kill him until the last volume. He is a conciliatory figure who cooperates to unite people and help them live harmoniously in the same island. The novel clearly illuminates Poyraz Musa's inner conflicts, his past, his testimony, his humanity lost before his eyes in the wars, the great migration to which his Circassian ancestors were exposed, and the traumatic memories of being deported and uprooted even if years pass. He supports everyone to settle on the island and contributes a lot to the multicultural texture of the island. Thanks to his efforts people learn to accept the 'Other' as it is without any expectation or self-interest. While creating a colorful world in a utopian island on the one hand, Yaşar Kemal tries to draw attention to moral erosion and shows how important it is to create a multicultural society for the healing of traumatized people (Kemal, 2012, p. 221-243) on the other hand.

The decision of compulsory migration between Turkey and Greece taken in 1923 contained all Christians and Muslims who were the citizens of Turkey and Greece. The exchange was implemented rapidly and harshly. After more than ten years of fierce war menacing with the fear of death and violence, their legal identity was changed into Turks and Greeks. The official narrative notes the exchange as "coming home", whereas the term "home" inhabits various connotations and the intricate feelings of refugees in their recollections. In her book entitled *Imagined Communities in Greece and Turkey: Trauma and the Population Exchanges under Atatürk*, by arguing how Greek and Turkish society perceived the exchange, Emine Yeşim Bedlek featured different voices and perspectives in her book. In the perspective of Greeks, the exchange was a consequence of military defeat, while it was the result of military victory in Turkish viewpoint. Bedlek defines the co-existence of Orthodox Christians and Muslims as inter-communality. Bedlek demonstrates that

Modern Greeks and Turks, two neighbor communities of the Aegean and once the subjects of the Ottoman Empire, live in their ancestors' past because they became enemies in the first quarter of the twentieth century due to the rise of nationalism. Renee Hirschon states that, with the rise of nationalism and the population exchanges, the people of the Aegean have lost 'familiarity which carries with it the possibility for understanding and respect, and this is all too often replaced by suspicion, hostility, and the inability to cooperate (Bedlek, 2016:2).

In her book, Bedlek "intends to deconstruct the conventional understanding of Modern Turks and Greeks that displaced peoples of the Aegean were the local peoples of their homeland, and to argue that the population exchanges were not a repatriation, but a form of exile" (Bedlek, 2016: 9) Underlining that contemporary Turkish and Greek understanding of the Lausanne Convention and the population exchanges were based on nationalism, Bedlek points out:

The Asia Minor Catastrophe of 1922 was a turning point in the lives of the Orthodox Christians and Muslim Turks as they were forced to migrate across the Aegean to be integrated into the nation states of Greece and Turkey, respectively. The main motivation that led the Greeks and the Turks to clash in the twentieth century, with thousands of people killed and the rest facing famine, hardship and the compulsory exchange of populations, was nationalism (Bedlek, 2016: 4).

Granting that having the identity of a foreigner inhabits a two-fold identity challenge, Kristeva stresses that 'by explicitly, obviously, ostensibly occupying the place of the difference, the foreigner challenges both the identity of the group and his own' (Kristeva 1991:41-2). Besides, Clark illustrates the queer experience of migrant people affected by the forced migration who never feel homely or have a sense of 'coming home' although their new living place was 'in theory at least, their national motherland' (Clark, 2009: 3). In accordance with Bhabha and Kristeva's views, the migrant both triggers and goes through the uncanny or unhomely situations or feelings.

Yaşar Kemal's Humanist View

Yaşar Kemal is of the opinion that the world can only be better with people. For this reason, he always keeps the hope alive in people. The hopeful wait of the characters in the worst conditions and the belief that people cannot do evil make the atmosphere of the novel optimistic. Her novel's heroes trust people in all circumstances. Because in his narrative, "nothing without humans has no taste" (Kemal, 2001: 96). When the Greeks leave the island, Vasili, one of the few people who hide in the island, befriends a cat. He criticizes the war that caused the depopulation of the island. His concern about the war is conveyed as follows:

War is over. Maybe it's still going on, you say, these people can't end the war with this mind, these people, they think they are the smartest creatures, the most pathetic creature of these creatures, the most stupid of all creatures, the most stupid of these creatures, who killed their own life, the most stupid creature of all creatures. The worst creature is a sucker who does not know that this earth he lives in is a paradise, what he eats, drinks, the rising sun, the running water, the wind, the flying cloud, the falling rain, the blooming flower, the growing fruit, the bud, the seed struggling underground, the flying bird, the bee in the honeycomb. too asshole to know that countless, billions, billions of radiant colors are a miracle, asshole, asshole. This terrible creature will again start a war, burn forests and destroy cities that it has built for hundreds of thousands of years... (Kemal, 2001: 109).

Later, Lena does not comply with the exchange decisions and returns to the island with the longing of her children in the military. The dimensions of Poyraz Musa's esteem, generosity and benevolence, who settled on the island, will become evident in the next volumes for the inhabitants of the island. Poyraz Musa opens a door to hope with his experiences, and the remnants of his life in order to hold on to life. The reason why he came to the island is that when he witnessed the Yazidi massacre, he was seen among the people responsible for one of the killed Bedouins. What Emir Selahaddin Sultan, who he took refuge in after this incident, told Poyraz became his permanent life philosophy and experiences for a lifetime. To delve into the socio-cultural foundations of humanism, it is meaningful to look over and reflect on the following sentences of Emir Selahaddin Sultan:

If one person suffers, all people suffer. These Yezidis have been suffering for hundreds of years, they have been killed, they are extinct... Those who kill are dying with them just as much as they are, or they do not realize that they are dying or rotting... Humanity is very old, my son. Millions, billions of people have created billions of thoughts. They have created billions of epics, songs and poems. The first problem of these people has been the effort to reach the secret of themselves and people. Today, man knows nothing in the universe as much as he knows man. Ever since he became a human being, he has been disgusted with killing and war, or he has killed anyway (Kemal, 2001: 243-245).

The author envisions a good life with strong human relations, the richness of nature and social integration. For the basis of a good society in the novel the author points to a multicultural understanding that necessitates mutual sharing, developing friendships, condemning wars, and respecting everyone's personality and tolerating cultural differences. Each individual enables the development of social democracy by allowing one to live the cultural identity of another with their own cultural identity. The humanism that he prioritizes in coping with social suffering on the island he has constructed, unites people from different socio-cultural backgrounds, and turns into a humane meaning for the reader in the collective memory.

Despite all devastating effects of the war, migration, and displacement on his characters, Yaşar Kemal dreams an optimistic future and illustrates a hopeful picture for the inhabitants of the island. Even the sea smells of spring in the island. Peach blossoms, wild mints, pink flowers, blue flowers, white wild roses, marigold-red lavenders, colorful butterflies, daffodils, cacti etc. It is seen that the sea, which has

a coast to the island, harbors an ecological richness with fish species such as red mullet, swordfish, tuna, angler fish, carpenter fish, haddock, bonito and sea bass that have not decreased in density yet. The island, which has been a home to people for years with its vegetation, living creatures and sea, does not stay silent for a long time even if it is left without people for a while after the population exchange. It opens its territory to people from a wide variety of societies, cultures and identities.

Conclusion

Drawing on memory heavily and skillfully in his novels, Yaşar Kemal tends to relate his own imagination to the recollection of his characters under the intensive effect of their traumas and fear of death. In a similar vein to Yaşar Kemal's own tragic life story, his protagonists are mostly traumatized. Witnessing his father's murder left in him "deep traces [that] were never erased" and "first made him a fearful child and later a novelist whose main obsession was patricide" (Gürsel, 2000: 130). As Çulhaoğlu notes it, "one can feel that the painful memory of his father's murder is always at the back of his mind and the shadow of death is always there in the backdrop of his novels" (Çulhaoğlu, 2017: 44). Aiming to "reach the deepest part of human psychology" (Yaşar Kemal, 2005:286), the author furnishes the memories of his characters with amazing psychological depth. We witness the inner world of characters haunted by the torturous moments or scenes rooting from their traumatic experiences. Obsessed with the memory of their trauma and extreme fear of death like the author himself, characters uncover their inner world through daydreaming, flashbacks or the playful feature of their imagination and memories.

Vasili and Poyraz Musa were exposed to various atrocities in the war, which harms their psychological balance. Vasili fought in Sarıkamış and Çanakkale wars and whenever he remembers the horrible scenes from the wars or his painful experiences, his mood instantly changes for worse, and he feels as if those scenes revive in his imagination in a fearful state of mind. Poyraz Musa needs to spend more time in nature to overcome the negative effects of the war. He witnessed the massacre of Yezidis in the southern part of Turkey and his mind becomes confused and he starts to lose his mental and psychological balance whenever he recalls how Yezidis were exposed to genocide, especially how Yezidi women's breasts twitch on the desert sands after they are cut off and thrown away. His witness to women's being dumped into the Euphrates River obstructs him from developing a sound relationship with his beloved in the next volumes. Daydreaming helps recuperate the psychology of characters in Yaşar Kemal's novels. Depending on the causes of trauma, such as displacement, war, psychological violence, it is inevitable for characters to be subjected to the uncanny effect of their exilic life or their initiation into a new, queer life in an isolated scope with the traces or memories of a culturally harmonious society in a cosmopolitan world. Nobody can bring the past back and each individual struggles to survive in a desolate, alienated place with divided, fragmentary identities with a disorientating state of mind and a fearful, unsettled psychology incessantly.

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