



Minör Edebiyattan Diaspora Edebiyatına Suzan Samancı'nın Kürtçe Öykülerinde Göçmen Kadınlar

From Minor Literature to Diasporic Literature Immigrant Women in Suzan Samancı's Kurdish Stories

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Öz

Yazarlık yaşamına Türkçe yazarak başlayan Suzan Samancı'nın eserlerinin içeriğinin Kürtler hakkında olması onun minör edebiyat içerisinde değerlendirilmesine neden olmuştur. Bununla beraber Samancı pek çok kez Kürtçe yazma isteğini dile getirdiği için Kürt edebiyat çevrelerinde onun Kürt edebiyatı içerisinde değerlendirilmesi gerektiği yönünde görüşler de öne sürülmüştür. Samancı Avrupa'ya göç etmiş ve burada Türkçenin yanısıra Kürtçe de yazarak bu tartışmalara son vermiştir. O artık diasporadan yazan bir Kürt kadın edebiyatçısıdır. Samancı'nın edebiyatının sadece dili değil içeriği de değişmiştir. Türkçe yazdığı dönemde de her ne kadar kadınlar ve onların yaşadıkları sorunlar eserlerinin merkezinde yer alsada Kürtçe eserlerinde kadın kimliği daha fazla ön plana çıkmıştır. Bu öykülerinin neredeyse tamamında göçmen kadınlar ve onların yaşadıkları sorunlar anlatıların merkezinde yer almaktadır. Bu çalışma bu tartışmalardan yola çıkarak ilk olarak Samancı'nın edebiyat yaşamında meydana gelen değişimi incelemeyi daha sonra da Kürtçe öykülerindeki göçmen kadınların nasıl temsil edildiğini göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın sonuçlarına göre öykülerdeki göçmen kadınlar çoğunlukla partnerleri tarafından şiddete maruz kalmakta, dil ve uyum sorunları ile mücadele ederken bir yandan ırkçılık ile mücadele etmektedirler. Göçmen kadınlar özgürlük elde etmek için geldikleri Avrupa'nın da aslında sahte bir hayal olduğunu görmüşlerdir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Diaspora, Minör Edebiyat, Göçmen Kadınlar, Kimlik, Feminizm.

Abstract

Suzan Samancı began her literary career by writing in Turkish, and the fact that the content of her works is about Kurds has led to her being categorized as a minor writer. However, since Samancı has repeatedly expressed her desire to write in Kurdish, Kurdish literary circles have also argued that she should be included in Kurdish literature. Samancı emigrated to Europe and put an end to these debates by writing in both Kurdish and Turkish. She is now a Kurdish literary figure writing from the diaspora. Not only the language but also the content of Samancı's literature has changed. Although women and their problems were the focus of her works when she was writing in Turkish, she emphasizes the female identity more strongly in her Kurdish works. In almost all of these stories, immigrant women and their problems are at the center of the narratives. Based on these discussions, this study aims to first examine the changes in Samancı's literary life and then describe how immigrant women are portrayed in her Kurdish stories. According to the results of the study, the immigrant women in the stories are often exposed to violence from their partners and struggle with racism while dealing with language and integration problems. The immigrant women have also realized that Europe, where they have come to seek freedom, is a false dream.

Keywords

Diaspora, Minor Literature, Immigrant Women, Identity, Feminism.

Introduction

What is Kurdish literature? Is it a literature written in Kurdish or a literature about Kurds? This question has been hotly debated in Kurdish literary circles. The main reason of these debates is that Kurds produce literature in different languages since they live in different areas. Hashem Ahmedzadeh (2004) deal with this problem in his work *Nation and Novel*, arguing that it is problematic to judge a literature only by its language without considering its national and geographical character (pp.155-157). However, Alan (2009) points out that although Ahmedzadeh opposed language-based categorizations, he chose novels in Kurdish for his study (pp.117-121). These debates are mostly focused on writers such as Yaşar Kemal, Ali Eşref Dervişyan and Selim Berekat, who are Kurdish but write in different languages. Cewerî (1996) initiated a similar discussion about the problem in the journal *Nûdem* in which writers such as Mehmet Uzun, Xelîl Duhokî, Rohat Alakom, Naci Kutlay, Hesenê Metê debated about the issue. The general opinion of the writers mentioned is that the language of their works must be Kurdish for an author to be counted as Kurdish literature (pp.139-146). One of the writers at the center of these debates is Suzan Samancı. In his anthology, Cewerî divides Kurdish writers who write in Turkish into two groups. The first group, although they write about Kurds, neither know Kurdish nor intend to write in Kurdish in the future. The second group both knows Kurdish and wants to write in this language, and Suzan Samancı belongs to this group (Scalbert-Yücel, 2011, pp. 177-178).

Unlike writers such as Yaşar Kemal, Samancı's relationship with her Kurdish identity is quite strong, which is reflected in her works. She is one of the most important writers who depicts the political atmosphere of Kurdish geography by taking into account literary concerns (Erbarıştıran, 2019, p. 14). For this reason, it is difficult to exclude her from Kurdish literature such as Yaşar Kemal or Selim Berekat. In this context, Scalbert Yücel (2011) states that it is difficult to consider only literature written in Kurdish as Kurdish literature because Kurdish literature also includes those who write in Turkish. For this reason, Scalbert-Yücel (2012) considers that Samancı is a Kurdish writer (p. 366).

In 2008, Samancı left Turkey to live in Geneva and write in Kurdish, as Cewerî had envisioned. Samancı has evolved from being a minor writer to a Kurdish writer. Not only has the language of Samancı's works changed, but also her subject matter. When she wrote in Turkish, she mainly wrote about the oppression of the Kurds and the traumas that they have experienced, but in her Kurdish works, she mostly dealt with the experiences of immigrants. In her works, female characters are mostly protagonist. In fact, as Kaplan (2019) states, we see the mobilization of women in her Turkish stories. She has created many different Kurdish women characters in her stories, such as peasant, intellectuals, poor and rich women (p. 63). Kurdish women are also the main characters in the Kurdish stories that she wrote in the diaspora. Unlike in her Turkish works, however, these women are immigrant women trying to struggle with the difficulties of life in the diaspora. For this reason, this study will first evaluate these changes and transformations experienced by Samancı within the framework of minor literature, and then, examine how women experience the phenomenon of immigration in Samancı's Kurdish stories based on the features of diasporic literature. To do so, it is first necessary to mention, the relationship between minor literature and diaspora literature.

1. Minor Literature Versus Diasporic Literature

Since the concept of minor literature is based on Deleuze and Guattari's interpretation of Kafka, Kafka's life should be briefly mentioned here because the complexity of his life is also the basis of minor literature. Kafka was an alienated man because he did not belong to all the identities that surrounded him. He was separated from the Czechs because he spoke German, but he was also separated from the Germans because he was Jewish. Although he embraced his Jewish identity, he did not feel that he belonged to the Jewish spiritual community and religion (Garaudy, 1991, pp. 121-122). The Jews of Prague were disliked by the Germans because they interfered in the affairs of others and by the Czechs because they believed that the Germans supported them. Kafka had also similar problems (Friedlainer, 2015, p. 27). Kafka's father acted like an opportunist to overcome this dilemma. First, he tried to become Czech and then he tried to become a part of German society and had his children including Kafka, educated in German schools (Wagenbach, 2008, pp. 20-21). Unlike his father, however, Kafka did not try to break his ties with his Jewish identity but he also did not belong to the bourgeois Jewish community of which his father is a part, and he saw this culture as a distorted existence (Anders, 2017, p. 34). Although Kafka distanced himself from Zionism, he insisted on remaining in his Jewish social circle. He was interested in Yiddish literature and language (Wagenbach, 2008, pp. 93-94). Kafka's complicated life and his relationship to his Jewish identity have strongly influenced Deleuze and Guattari's (2000) reading of Kafka. (I should address that Deleuze and Guattari, in *Anti-Oedipus* and *Schizophrenia*, move away from analyses of ethnicity, language, identity, and gender to critique capitalist modernity. By delving into the roots of capitalism, they analyse how it renders people deterritorialization (See, Deleuze & Guttari, 2014)). They discuss Kafka's literature on political ground and defined three main characteristics of minor literature.

- Minor literature is not the literature of a minority, but rather the literature of a minority in a major language. Deleuze and Guattari use it more in the sense of black literature in English. But they also include Prague German in this category.
- In minor literature, everything has a political meaning. Every individual problem is also a social problem.
- The third characteristic is that everything has a collective value. What the author expresses is also a collective value (p.25-27).

Deleuze and Guattari have politicized Kafka's literature to a great extent, which is typical in minor literature, whereas this cannot be totally a truth of Kafka's literature (Corngold, 1994, pp. 98-99; Edmunds, 2010, p. 364). Nonetheless, their interpretation of Kafka has attracted the attention of scholars, particularly those concerned with ethnic communities. Their reading of minor literature opened up a new field, especially in the postcolonial and later world literature debates. Many problems such as colonialism, migration and above all the recognition of ethnic communities were discussed in this field. Ethnic communities were now attracting more attention not only politically but also culturally. Writers from the periphery became visible in the center (Solà & Vermeulen, 2024, pp. 2-3). In this respect, it can be said that their definition of minor literature is rather inspired by debates within postcolonial literature. In particular, in terms of language, Kafka's situation is comparable to that of an Indian who writes in English or an African who is forced to write in the dominant language instead of his mother tongue. For minor writers, this is not a choice but a necessity. For Kafka, too, writing in German is not a personal choice but a necessity. In this respect, Kafka's situation is similar to that of Joyce and Beckett (Bogue, 1997, p. 15).

Deleuze and Guattari regard minor literature as a literature of becoming, and this literature cannot be reduced to the literature produced by a minority in the major language. This literature is also a literature of escape. Kafka, from his perspective, attempts to escape the mechanisms of cultural bureaucratic life. Therefore, it also encompasses marginal literature, experimental literature, popular literature, and postcolonial literature (Çörekçioğlu, 2017, pp 62-71). Recently, minor literature has been considered not only in the context of peripheral ethnic minorities, but also in the context of diasporic literature. In this context, for example, "Ausländerliteratur" (literature by foreigners), the literature written in German by writers of Turkish origin, is considered as a minor literature. The main aim of this literature is to address the problems of the Turkish diaspora community (Chin, 2015). Although this is one of the rare examples of a literature being both minor and immigrant literature, Kafka can also be considered both as a diasporic writer and a minor writer. Like many young Jews in Prague, he wanted to return to his homeland from the diaspora by reflecting on his own cultural identity (Casanova, 2015, pp. 54-57). For, he was confronted with racism, discrimination, and the inability to belong, which naturally made him interested in his own identity. Kafka attempted to learn the Hebrew language and when anti-Semitic sentiments arose in Prague in the 1920s, he tried to emigrate to Palestine, but was too ill to do so (Bruce, 2025, p. 44). Bruce (2025), therefore, describes him as a cultural, if not political, Zionist. This Zionism is humanist and secular, but also includes diasporic nationalism (p.28). To summarize, Kafka is not only a minor writer, but also to some extent a diasporic writer.

2. A Story of Transformation: As a Diasporic Writer Suzan Samancı

What makes Samancı a minor writer is the fact that, as already mentioned, the language of his works is Turkish and almost all of their content is about Kurds. In her works, military coups, the oppression of the people by the army, exile and migration are the main themes. In her Turkish works, the main characters are mostly women, and these women try to become subjects by struggling against both state oppression and feudal oppression (Kaplan, 2019, p. 52). According to Gümüş (2012), although the content of Samancı's stories is political, they cannot be interpreted as political stories because the individual stories of the characters in these stories cannot be denied (p.61). However, it is completely wrong to reduce the pain of individuality in Samancı's works. Although Erbarıştıran (2019) also makes similar claims, Samancı's stories are actually quite political stories. Thus, Baran (2014) states that Samancı's works focus on how her characters forget their mother tongue and accept the new language, while focusing on the problem of how these characters remain voiceless among Turkish speakers. Samancı has not only dealt with Kurdish issues in her works but has also tried to make Kurdish identity visible by using Kurdish phrases, words and proverbs. However, according to Alan (1998), Samancı cannot even write the Kurdish phrases and sentences she uses in her texts according to the rules of Kurdish grammar because his Turkish is linguistically deficient (p.35). But this situation is already inherent in minor literature. As Deleuze and Guattari (2000) emphasize, individuals in this literature, are deterred in their mother tongue (p. 29.) For example, according to Kaplan (2019), Samancı intentionally distorts the language while writing in Turkish, in other words, she cannot write in a standard language (p. 52), which this situation is common in the works of writers such as Ali Eşref Dervişyan (see, Rashidrostami, 2016).

Although these characteristics of Samancı's literature are sufficient to define her as a minor writer, the strong relationship of her works with Kurdish literature in terms of theme and content makes this definition ambiguous. As Scalbert Yücel (2012) points out, Samancı's works have been published by renowned Turkish publishing houses such as Can and İletişim. Although it is possible that Samancı is part of Turkish literature, by writing in Turkish she considers herself Kurdish writer within Kurdish literature. Her works were later translated into Kurdish by Kurdish publishing houses such as Avesta and Aram (p. 368). However, as she wrote in Turkish, it was still difficult to consider her within Kurdish literature. When Samancı emigrated to Europe in 2008, she put an end to this dilemma by writing in Kurdish and is now a Kurdish woman writer who writes in Kurdish. During her time in the diaspora, she published two novels, *Payîz an jî Ziyab (Autumn or Ziyab)* and *Mîrzayê Reben (Miserable Mîrza)*, as well as the short story collections *Ew Jin û Mêrê bi Maske (The Women and the Men with the Mask)* and *Çîrokên Jinên Dil Şikestî (The Stories of Heartbroken Women)*. Her Kurdish works mostly deal with diaspora experiences, and the main characters of her short stories and novels are women.

Women and the problems they experience occupy a central position in Samancı's Turkish stories, and in this way, she tries to be part of the struggle of women against the patriarchal social order (Erbarıştıran, 2019, p. 12). However, in her Kurdish stories, she mainly deals with the problems of immigrant women, and in this respect, she is now a diasporic writer. In her stories, women struggle with the difficulties life in diaspora, the most prominent of which is patriarchal violence.

3. Patriarchal Violence is everywhere: Being a Migrant and Woman in the Diaspora

It has always been possible to see a strong feminist discourse in Samancı's stories alongside her Kurdish identity, but it can be observed that feminist discourse is more prominent in her Kurdish works written in the diaspora. To understand this change and transformation, one must understand the change and transformation of the Kurdish women's movement, to which Samancı belongs. For while this movement struggled against the rulers, it also had to deal with the patriarchal behavior of the society, which can also be observed in Samancı's Turkish works.

The relationship between feminism and nationalism is quite variable. Western feminists in particular are distanced from this ideology because they believe that nationalism feeds patriarchy. However, the situation in Third World countries is very different and more complex than in the Western world. According to Kandiyoti (2013), Western feminists try to categorize women outside the West as Middle Eastern and Muslim women, while these women are very different from each other in terms of the society, culture and political systems in which they live (pp.13-14). Within this framework, each women's movement must be evaluated under its specific circumstances. Nevertheless, it can be said that women in countries struggling for national liberation are trying to change these movements by criticizing the patriarchal behavior of the society they live in while participating in this struggle (Mies, 1994, pp. 195-196; O'Keefe, 2013, p. 186; Jayawardena, 2016; Yuval-Davis, 2010).

Historically, this process was similar for Kurds. By joining the Kurdish movement, Kurdish women sought to become subjects by resisting both the oppression of the states in which they lived and the oppression of feudal society. Therefore, it can be said that the Kurdish feminist movement was born and developed within the Kurdish nationalist movement (Begikhani, Hamelink, & Weiss, 2018, p. 10; Nilson, 2018). However, although the Kurdish women's movement has changed and transformed through the development different struggle practices in different regions, it is said that the most dynamic and successful women's movement can found in Turkey (Alizadeh, Kohlbacher, Mohammed, & Vaisi, 2022).

According to Yüksel (2006), while mobilizing under the umbrella of the Kurdish political movement, Kurdish women had to struggle not only against the sovereigns but also against the sexist approaches of the political movement to which they belonged, and this situation led to the emergence of a feminist political consciousness among Kurdish women (p. 780). In this context, Al- Ali and Tas (2018) emphasize in their study of the political movement in Turkey, that the Kurdish women's movement not only reacted against the patriarchal behaviors that existed within the Kurdish political movement, but also contributed to a major change in the Kurdish movement by establishing its own publications and political institutions (p. 469).

Especially after the 1980s, Kurdish women took very active role in the Kurdish movement, in some cases even participated in decision-making mechanisms by assuming leadership positions. Kurdish women became visible not only in political but also in cultural spheres. After the 1990s, they developed Kurdish feminist discourse through the journals they published (Çağlayan, 2012, pp. 1-2; Çaha, 2011, p. 435).

This form of discourse was carried into the diaspora at various times with the intensive Kurdish migration to Europe. The women's movement in the diaspora is itself quite heterogeneous. The Kurdish diaspora in Europe is ideologically, religiously and linguistically very diverse and is in a state of flux due to current political events. Each group represents different political line depending on its political agenda (Begikhani, 2024, pp. 196-197). It can be said that Kurdish women in Europe also have certain things in common, although their location and position are different. In addition to the political and social problems,

the women had to deal with the problems of migration and immigration, many of which can be found in Samancı's stories. The most prominent of these problems is violence against migrant women.

Immigrant women are often exposed to patriarchal violence in their countries (Allwood & Wadia, 2010, p. 16). Although violence against women is a global phenomenon, some studies have shown that immigrant women are more likely to experience violence than native white women (Fernbrant, et.al, 2011; Guruge et.al, 2012). Immigrant women are often subjected to violence by their partners and often do not seek help from formal or informal institutions due to their cultural norms or immigration status (Raj & Silverman, 2002). This problem is particularly prevalent in Europe but we can see similar situation across the world. Immigrant women are highly exposed to sexual violence and harassment both in their own families and in their new countries (Freedman, 2016).

This situation is not much different for Kurdish women living in the diaspora. Kurdish women are also exposed to gendered discrimination both in the family and their social environment. In some cases, patriarchal behaviors are felt more strongly in diaspora for example women living in the diaspora have sometimes been victims of honor killings. Women also face racism and institutional discrimination and therefore have difficulty adapting to the host society. These women face multidimensional oppression and discrimination. Although they have the opportunity to struggle against these oppressions thanks to the democracy and freedom of expression offered by the Western societies that host them, they cannot act completely independently from the society and culture to which they belong (Begikhani, 2024, p. 199). This situation is also common in Samancı's stories. In fact, not only Kurdish women but also western women are exposed to violence in her stories: In the story *Nîla Dînik*, for example, Silviya is a French theater actress who decides to break up with her boyfriend, but he stalks and stabs her on the shore Lake Lemnan. After reporting this incident, Silviya says: "Jin bi tenê ne welatê we tên kuştin, mêr li her derê wek hev in!" "Women are not just being killed in your country, men are the same everywhere!" (Samancı, 2021, p. 46).

In her stories, both western women and immigrant women from different ethnicities are victims of violence. In the story *Beko Fesado*, the Protagonist, Novîn, meets a Tunisian woman whose husband was abusive towards her. The woman says to her: "Jinika Tunisî jê re dibêje Mêrê rojhilata navîn hemû wekhev in." The Tunisian woman tells him that all men from Middle Eastern are equal (Samancı, 2014, p. 39).

In the story *Ew Jin û Mêrê bi Maske*, Siya is a woman from Baghdad. When her husband became rich, he left her and married a Moroccan woman. Siya, who tries to make money by cleaning houses, has a son and a daughter. The son constantly insults his sister. The girl has become addicted to heroin, slept with her boyfriend and got pregnant, so the dose of violence increases, but her brother can be with whomever he wants (2014, p. 105).

The most striking of the stories is *Le Pertius*. *Le Pertius* is a women's shelter. Women from different ethnic groups come here because they have experienced violence from their partners. Eveliyn is Ugandan, married to a Turk and is here because of violence by her husband. Fitora is also from Kosovo and was exposed to violence by her husband who is also from Kosovo. Zeynep is Tunisian and was the victim of violence at hands of her husband who is an Arab. The most interesting person among them is a Kosovanian woman called Sara. She learned Kurdish from her ex-boyfriend, who is a Kurdish, and listened to Şivan Perwer's song "Li Kolanên Ewropa Keçên Kurd Bê Xwedi Digeriyan" (Helpless Kurdish Girls Wandered on the Streets of Europe) and her ex-boyfriend was a scammer who tried to trap women (Samancı, 2014, p. 82-84).

Although patriarchal behaviors against migrant women are generally seen in the stories, Kurdish women are at the center of the stories. Women who have managed, often with great difficulty, to migrate to Europe have not been escaped male violence here either. In the story *Şeva Newrozê*, the protagonist was imprisoned for 10 years. When she arrives in Europe, she meets Samet, an Iranian, and lives with him for 8 years, but he eventually cheated on her. Samet is outwardly a civilized man but feudal in spirit. The protagonist says to Samet: "De dev ji van listikên xwe berde, ez rihû zihniyeta mêrên rojhilata navîn dizanim, eger em bi yekê re nebin em paşda mane, ku em serbest bin û wek dilê xwe bijîn qehpik in ne!" (Samancı, 2021, p. 66). "Stop playing these games, I know the spirit and mentality of men in Middle Eastern. If we are not with someone, we are obscurantist. If we are free to live as we please, you call us a whore!"

Although Samet is an Iranian man in this story, Kurdish men in general have not been able to free themselves from patriarchal behavior. While they often appear civilized on the outside, they exhibit feudal behavior in the home. In the same story, many Kurdish men try to deceive women with the appearance of being writers and intellectuals. In the story *Beko Fesado*, Novîn's husband was killed an unidentified assassination. When she arrives in Europe, meets Baran who is a translator. Baran tries to befriend Novîn. Even though, he is married, and eventually divorces his wife and marries Novîn and continues his feudal behavior. So they often do not get along. Novîn says to him:

Ez rihê te yê du şikil û du perçe qebûl nakim, ev ne dexesiyek, ev ne dexesiyeye erzan e, ez dixwazim mêrê min zelal û bi prensib be, li ba min rola mêrekî nûjen dilîzî, diçê derve bi telefonê diaxivî bi zihniyeteke feodali, tu wiha bî, xêra te ji tu kesî re tune. (Samancı, 2014, p. 37)

I do not accept your two-faced, two-faced soul, this is not a trick, this is not a cheap trick, I want my husband to be clear and principled, for me you play the role of a modern man, you go out and make calls with a feudal mentality, you are like this, you are of no use to anyone.

According to Novin, Kurdish men are quite contradictory in terms of their actions and practices. At home, they are the biggest despots, even though they constantly talk about freedom and democracy (Samancı, 2014, p. 38). In the story *Yadigar*, Xidir was imprisoned for 10 years as he was a political activist. When he is released, he comes to Yadigar's house as a party member, brings her a letter from her brother who has joined the organization and introduces himself as a freedom fighter and intellectual. He persuades Yadigar to come to Europe, but constantly belittles her. Although he is officially divorced from his ex-wife, he wants to continue their relationship. Before the marriage, he constantly harassed her and forced her to marry him through threats and blackmail (Samancı, 2014, pp. 45-46). He inflicts violence on Yadigar and sometimes cheats on her (2014, p. 50).

In the story *Ew Jin û Mêrê bi Maske*, Aram is interested in politics and helps Şîlan to show how civilized he is in front of others, but when no one is around, he has a feudal mood and often looks down on Şîlan and inflicts violence on her. Şîlan usually forgives him because she has no choice but to forgive him (Samancı, 2014, p. 107). In Samancı's stories, male violence reaches such a level that we see men who are jealous of their wives even from the dead people and commit violence. In the story titled *Tardo*, the protagonist, who visits cemeteries from time to time because she is bored, overhears the conversation of the relatives of a dead person named Tardo, and as she feels a closeness to this dead person over time, her husband Heydaro accuses her of being in love with this dead person named Tardo (Samancı, 2014, p. 92)

Not only spouses but also children cannot escape male violence. In the story *Cara Yekemîn*, Selim wants to bring his daughter to live with him because he sees her with a man, but she refuses, he inflicts violence in the middle of Geneva on her. Therefore, he is arrested (Samancı, 2014, p. 73). In the story *Gestopayê Binevşê*, the story begins with the death of Binevş's father Xalito in Germany. Xalito is a feudal man who constantly oppresses his children, does not allow Binevş to study and prevents her from marrying the man she loves. He constantly abused Binevş's mother and turned life into a dungeon for his children. Thus, when he dies, Binevş rejoices instead of mourning

Keça wî Binevşê mîna ku hê ji dayik bibe, wisa rehet û bikêf bû! Dibe ku hema bi gotineke tenê wê bika hirra hirr û bikeniya. Li asiman dinêre dure heriya şil û kêlê tirba wî û dibêje:

"Tu qurbana diya min bî, tu têra xwe jiyayî, de îcar here! (Samancı, 2021, p. 79).

His daughter Binevş was as happy and content as if she had just been born! She could have burst into laughter and tears with just one word. She looked up at the sky from the wet mud and clay of his grave and said:

"Be sacrificed to my mother, you lived long enough, go now!"

As in this story, although women migrate to Europe, the cradle of democracy and freedom, they cannot escape the violence of their husbands, fathers or brothers. Women face not only violence but also problems in adapting to the new culture.

4. Acculturation and Racism

While immigrant women struggle with patriarchal violence in their new countries, they also try to adapt to the existing social life and culture in these countries, and the most important tool that can help them is learning the language of the host country. For women who are not fluent in the language of the host country, adaptation becomes more difficult (Menjívar & Salcido, 2002, p. 903). In France, for example where Samancı lives, many immigrant women cannot find work due to employers' prejudices or their inability to speak French, so they often have psychological problems and have to work in less qualified jobs (Allwood & Wadia, 2010, p. 116). This is also true for Kurdish women living in the diaspora in general. When these women come to Europe, they often find it difficult to adapt to their new country because they do not speak the language (Hardi, 2005, p. 149-152). The situation for well-educated women is not much better. When these women reach Europe, they cannot find a job in their field of study and have to start their lives all over again. While they have to learn a new language and adapt to a new social environment, also have to struggle with many different problems such as racism and discrimination (Begikhani, 2024, p. 201). A similar situation is often encountered in Samancı's stories. In the story *Comédie Hôtel*, the protagonist expresses how unfamiliar new surroundings were when she arrived in Europe:

Jiyan çiqas efsûnek ecêb e! Rojê min ê nûh bûn, ku ez hatibim Ewropayê. Di her tiştê nûh de, êşek, xeribiyek veşartiyê; bêhn xerîb e... mirov dibe lal, dibe reben; wisa ku mirov xerîb e, deng xerîb e, mirov dibe lal, dibe reben; wisa ku mirov bi dar û bera re, kevir û newala re diaxive, hevalê herî baş dibe siya mirov (Samancı, 2021, p. 17).

What a wonderful magic is life! The day I was born, when I came to Europe. In everything new, there is a pain, a strangeness hidden; the smell is strange... a person becomes dumb, becomes a fool; just as a person is a stranger, the sound is strange, just as one speaks to a tree and a beech, to a stone and a valley, a person's shadow becomes her best friend

In Samancı's stories, almost all women try to learn the host language in order to adapt to the new culture. In the story Marisa, Emîne constantly tries to speak in French (2021, p. 36), and in the story Nîla Dînik, Zerî tries to speak in broken French (Samancı, p. 45) and decides to take a French course, and the majority of the participants are Kurds (p. 46). In the story Gestopayê Binevşê, Binevş tries to learn German as soon as she arrives in Germany because one cannot live here without knowing the language. In the story Jinên Dilşikestî, Sosin tries to learn French from her Portuguese friend, but she thinks of her mother who is trying to learn Turkish (Samancı, 2021, p. 95). In Beko Fesado, Novîn tries with all her heart to learn the language.

Young immigrant women are often exposed to pressure from their own families. Many behaviours that are considered natural for men, such as having girlfriends, going to university and getting an education, and drinking alcohol, are not considered appropriate for young women. Their families are afraid of young women meeting and marrying someone from a different language and culture, so they want to control them more (Hardi, 2005). To achieve this, they try to prevent young women from learning languages and thus participating in social life. For example, in the story "Schizophrenia", Emîna enrolls in a course to learn language; however, her husband attempts to prevent her from doing so as he believes that women who learn a language and engage in social life are at risk of morally corruption and may be drawn into prostitution (Samancı, 2014, p. 61).

The main reason for women's efforts to learn the language is to acquire a social status, because without knowledge of the language they are unable to carry out a job that match their abilities. Thus, migrant women are forced to work in sectors that are considered as more specific to women, such as nursing, hospital and care services, domestic work, catering and entertainment, and the sex industry (Allwood & Wadia, 2010, p. 52). Nîla is one of the most important examples of this situation. She had to follow her boyfriend to Europe for political reasons, but he abused her and slept with young women, and despite all this Nîl could not leave him because she was economically dependent on him. In fact, she graduated from Boğaziçi University which is the best university in Turkey, but her diploma is not valid here and she needs a document in order to participate in economic life here, and since she does not have a document, she has to work mostly in cleaning houses and washing dishes in restaurants (Samancı, 2021, p. 49).

Their spouses are not the only obstacles for women learning the language and trying to adapt to the social and cultural environment. Immigrant women also struggle with xenophobia (Allwood & Wadia, 2010, p. 2-3). As Hardi (2005) points out, belonging to a migrant community is often a cause of stigmatization, and Kurdish women experience a similar situation and are sometimes exposed to racist attitudes. In Samancı's stories, there are women who face racism. While older European women are more friendly towards immigrants, racist sentiments are observed among the younger generation. In Marisa, for example, Marisa is a well-meaning old French woman, but her children have racist tendencies. Her son does not like people from Middle East and her daughter works for right-wing parties. According to Emîne, some Europeans are racist and see refugees as insects: Tu dizanî hinek ewropayî me dikin dewsa mêşînên reş, min carekî di afîşekî de dîtibû: mêşîna spî pehîn li meşîna reş xistibû! (Samancı, 2021, p. 37). "You know, some Europeans replace us with black bees, I once saw it on a poster: a white bee had beaten a black bee." Similarly, in the story Maria Luisa, Maria Luisa is an old French woman whose children mostly ignore her and her elder daughter is an enemy of refugees (Samancı, 2021, p. 104). More interestingly, in the story Jinên Dilşikestî, despite being an Iranian Jew, Maya mistreats Sosin and says the following: "Em ji bo penaber û biyaniya dişûxilin, hema bêje nîvê maaşên me ji we re diçe. Hûn çima naçin welatê xwe, ma li vir pere ji asiman dibarin! Li vir rehetî xweşa we diçe! (Samancı, 2021, p. 97)." "We work for refugees and foreigners, almost half of our salaries go to you. Why do not you go to your country, money is falling from the sky here! You are enjoying your comfort here!"

In Samancı's stories, women experience mental and psychological problems due to these problems, which is a situation generally experienced among refugees (Bughra, 2004).

5. Mental Problems

People migrates because of many different political, social, cultural, economic and individual reasons. Although not all migrants have the same experiences, the experiences they have before, during and after migration have an impact on their mental and emotional health. In particular, those who migrate for political reasons are more prone to stress due to the

experiences of the group they belong to (Bughra, 2004, p. 246). In addition to political reasons, those who migrate as members of a particular cultural group tend to experience more stress than those who migrate as individuals because in such cases they feel a collective responsibility towards the group to which they belong. These individuals experience stress more intensely (Bughra & Arya, 2005, p. 134). In the case of Kurds, both cases are seen because Kurds migrate en masse, often for political reasons. This has led to the emergence of mental health problems among Kurdish immigrants. For example, a study conducted with Kurdish immigrants in Sweden found that Kurdish immigrants have more mental and psychological problems than Swedish citizens (Taloyan, Sundquist, & Al-Windi, 2008). This situation is also common among Kurdish migrant women. Many women lose their former home, family, social and cultural status, which often takes a psychological toll (Hardi, 2005, p. 149). This situation is also observed in Samancı's stories. Women have to struggle with problems due to both patriarchal violence and the difficulties of life in diaspora. In the story *Comédie Hôtel*, it is mentioned that almost everyone living in the diaspora has psychological problems:

Ziravika pişta herkesî diêşê, yê ûlsera wan tunebe û nece psîkologa, dibin mijarê tinaza. Li welêt hedê yê xwende ye bi şaşî jî here psîkologa, ji wan zêde bû ku biçûna, heta mirinê, wê divûkê dinîtiyê li pey wa rêz bûna (Samancı, 2021, p. 17).

Everyone's back hurts, anyone who does not have an ulcer and does not go to a psychologist is ridiculed. In the homeland, even the most educated people do not go to a psychologist by mistake because if they do, they will be mocked by people until death.

The story "Schizophrenic" tells how Eli drove his wife mad. When Eli's wife returns from the country, he reports to the government authorities that his wife has gone mad and might kill herself and her children. For this reason, his wife was arrested and sent to a refugee center. Unable to make her voice heard, the woman finally found the solution by committing suicide (Samancı, 2014, p. 58-59). Immigrant women often try to overcome these psychological problems by showing solidarity with other women or participating in political activities. This is often the case in Samancı's stories.

6. Political Activism

Exile does not always have negative consequences for women, but in some cases, women also have the opportunity to fight against patriarchal oppression by taking advantage of the social, cultural and economic freedoms in their new country (Hardi, 2005, p. 163). According to Mojab and Gorman (2007, pp. 59-68), Kurdish women from different political backgrounds have established rights-based organizations in the diaspora and have shaped their struggles in three main areas. Fighting oppression against Kurds, liberation from male violence and ending racism in the diaspora. To achieve these goals, they have organized many conferences on violence against women and gender inequality. They founded several women's associations and also broadcast on the radio. While making national demands, Kurdish feminist have also criticized the patriarchal characteristics of Kurdish nationalist movements. They also founded immigrant associations to protect the rights of immigrant Kurdish women. From her personal experience, Begikhani (2024) states that Kurdish women living in the diaspora have to struggle with both the patriarchal behavior of Kurdish society and the racism and discrimination that exist in Europe. She quotes a Peshmerga commander as saying that the Kurds are afraid of her more than Saddam Hussein (p.204). Based on Begikhani's words, we can say that there is politically active Kurdish women movement in diaspora.

In Samancı's stories, we see politically active women, and these women often develop various means of resistance against male violence. In the story *Eyşe Qirşê*, Eyşe was subjected to severe violence in the country simply because she wore a miniskirt. But instead of submitting to violence, she joins the political movement and emigrates to Europe, where she becomes a free and strong woman. She also helped Fatê to come to Europe. Fatê is surprised to see her in Europe and says: *Hela hûn li Eyşe Qirşê binhêrin! Hatiye Ewropayê û qûna xwe ji tuman avêtiye dibê qey mirov wisa dike* (Samancı, 2021, p. 25). "Look at Ayşe Qirşe! She came to Europe and got her ass out of the way, as if that's what you do."

Politically active women in Europe are often the nightmare of men. Gelawêj and Sosin, for example, have worked in the field of human rights. When they come to Europe for political reasons, they continue their political activities here. Sosin's husband does not want her to participate in political activities (Samancı, 2021, p. 91). In the story "Tardo", Heydero adjusts his behavior only when people from the party come, so much so that even his wife, who groans under his pressure, is surprised by this situation (Samancı, 2014, p. 89). For this reason, most men do not want women to participate in political activities. In the story "Schizophrenic", Hidayeto, who later becomes crazy, thinks that women who are politically active are corrupt, but he cannot express these thoughts openly because he is also afraid of the political Kurdish women movement and says the following:

Ku du jinên siyasetmedar hatin mala wan, Hidayeto kete tayê, rûçikê wî soro moro bûn, nizanibû çî bikira... Hêzil û Sozdar bere xwe dane Emîna, gotin heta niha tu çîma di hûndir de yî ku tu di hundir de bimînê tê birizî, ma tu ne ji Colemergê yî? Hidayeto weke lîstikvanekî got: " Ez her roj jê re dibêjim tu çîma naçî ziman hîn nabî, tu çîma naçî çalakiyan lê xwe kiriye hûndir, ez nizamim çîma? (Samancı, 2014, pp. 60-61).

When two female politicians came to their house, Hidayeto had a fever, his face was red and swollen, he did not know what to do... Hezil and Sozdar turned to Emîna, saying why are you still inside? You will languish inside, are you not from Hakkari? Hidayeto said like an actor: "I tell her every day why do not you go and learn the language, why do not you go to activities, but you have kept yourself inside, I do not know why?"

Despite all this, women continue to take part in the political movement. As in this story, Emîna goes to the Women's Association where she realizes that women should fight for their freedom (Samancı, 2014, pp. 60-61). In *Ew Jin û Mêrê bi Maske*, these associations are portrayed as the only place where women can breathe (Samancı, 2014, p. 104). In Samancı's stories, immigrant women are mostly unhappy because although reaching Europe is often seen as salvation for them, it turns out that this is not the case, and for this reason, women often long for their country, which is why the theme of return is at the center of diasporic narratives.

7. Longing for home

Home occupies an important place in the narratives of the diaspora and is often closely linked to place of belonging and identity. The difficulties that exile and migration entail often strengthen this identity and encourage the desire to return (Amato, 2025). Samancı's stories are mostly the difficulties of her life in Europe. This feeling is clearly expressed in *Comedie Hôtel*. "Li welêt gava ku digotin Ewropa, ava deşt û newala disekîni, bihuşta derewîn bû bo me. Em dibînin çî bihûşte! (Samancı, 2021, p. 20)." When they talked about Europe in our country, we supposed that Europe was a land of stagnant water and a false paradise for us. We see what a paradise it is!"

Many characters in her stories remember their country in the face of all difficulties, yes, even in the country there are great difficulties, but in Europe every character is isolated. Li Ewropayê weku moriya xewê dikeve ûstiyê mirov, ev çî giraniye wisa! Her tişt reşahiya şevê ye! Rojên welêt dibin evînen mezin, em her yek dibin tenêtiya Şahmaranên xwe de, tenêtiyeke hîç û pûç! (Samancı, 2021, p. 35)." "In Europe, like a sleepyhead, it is so heavy! Everything is the peace of the night! The days of the country turn into great loves, we each become the solitude of our own Shahmarans, a meaningless and empty solitude!"

In the story *Serê Salê*, despite all the difficulties, everything reminds her of the good times she had in her country and says: "Mirov tu tiştî ji bîr nake; dengê, rengê, sûretek, dibe sedem û wek kûlîlkan dibişkivin, pir caran ez di nava kûlîlkan de sero bini dibim û bi qîrînen xwe yê bêdeng re bi veşartokê dilîzîm. (Samancı, 2014, p. 12)." "One never forgets anything; a sound, a color, an image, becomes a cause and blooms like flowers, often I find myself immersed in the flowers and play with the secret with my silent cries."

As can be seen here, although there are many difficulties in the country, there are also difficulties that come with diaspora life, which is why the character lives with the desire to return, dreaming that one day their country will return to good times.

Conclusion

Suzan Samancı's journey as a writer has gone through many stages. When she was writing in Turkish, Samancı gained an important place in Turkish literature, but she still saw herself in Kurdish literature. When Samancı immigrated to Geneva, she overcame this dilemma by deciding to write in Kurdish. Writing Kurdish shows that she strongly embraced her Kurdish identity but her works' content dramatically changed and she criticizes patriarchal attitudes of Kurdish society in Europe. Especially in her stories, which are the subject of this review, Samancı emphasized the difficulties of diaspora life. This has made her a diasporic Kurdish writer. Although difficulties such as adaptation to life in diaspora and learning language are central to her stories, she also strongly criticizes the patriarchal behaviors that exist in the Kurdish society, which she belongs to. On the one hand, Kurdish men in the diaspora give a civilized appearance that is at peace with the world due to the conditions they are in, on the other hand, they exhibit very feudal behavior at home and try to keep women under surveillance by using violence. Another important aspect of Samancı's stories is that the experiences of not only Kurdish women but also immigrant women in general are at the center of the narratives. In this respect, it can be said that what unites the women of different ethnic groups in Samancı's stories is womanhood, which indicates the presence of a strong feminist discourse in her stories.

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